

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

other names/site number Furniture Associates, Bandy-Jones Chair Company, Precedent Chair Company, Pinnacle Furniture

2. Location

street & number 20 East 19th Street not for publication **N/A**

city or town Newton Vicinity **N/A**

state North Carolina code NC county Catawba zip code 28658

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

national statewide local

Signature of certifying official

Date

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills
 Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina
 County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING: manufacturing facility
 COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete
 walls: Brick, concrete
 roof: Asphalt
 other: Steel (windows)

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills comprises two buildings on a generally flat, roughly trapezoidal, 2.89-acre parcel approximately 1.5 miles north of the Catawba County Courthouse, in an industrial corridor that extends along the railroad right-of-way between the Catawba County seat of Newton and the town of Conover. The property is bounded on the south by East 19th Street, on the west by North Main Avenue, on the north by East 20th Street, and on the east by the tracks of the Norfolk Southern Railway. To the east and west are residential neighborhoods consisting primarily of modest, one- and two-story dwellings of wood frame construction that likely housed workers in the nearby industrial plants. The lot is grassy and open, with a dense row of trees lining the east boundary between the property and the railroad tracks. A chain-link fence surrounds the east and north sides and most of the west side of the property.

The principal building is situated at the east side of the parcel, near the Southern Railway tracks, close to and facing south toward East 19th Street. Constructed in 1946–1947 to serve as a furniture plant for the Prestige Chair Company, the building originally had an L-shaped footprint. Banked into a steeply sloping hill that rises to south, the building was one story tall at the south end and two stories tall to the north. It was substantially enlarged to a rectangular massing by the Prestige Chair Company in 1951, 1953, and 1955. The 1951 addition extended the two-story section of the building to the north. Two phases of additions in the spring and autumn of 1953 filled in the right angle of the L. The 1955 addition extended the 1953 additions north to be flush with the north elevation of the 1951 addition. After the property's 1959 sale to Knitmode Mills, the textile company enlarged the building circa 1960. These circa-1960 additions extended the building to the east, closer to the railroad tracks, and introduced a small loading dock on the west elevation of the 1951 addition. Knitmode Mills continued to use the property until 1971, when it closed the plant. The Pinnacle Furniture Company built a modest, two-story addition on the west elevation of the two-story 1946–1947 building in 1982. Both the one- and two-story sections of the building have brick exterior walls. The only exception to this is the metal sheathing on the north and south elevations of the circa 1960 addition on the east side of the building and a small area of metal on the circa 1960 loading dock addition to the west side. Notably, most of the window openings hold original 20-light industrial steel sash. The main body of the roof is flat and shielded by a low parapet wall. The flat sections of the roof are covered in tar and gravel, and some areas have deteriorated, allowing water infiltration in some areas. The interior features an open floor plan with production and storage space on the first and second stories. The interior finishes include brick walls, exposed steel framing, a concrete floor on the lower level, and wood floors on the second story. At the south end of the building, which is banked into a steeply graded hill leading up to East 19th Street, the building is one story tall on a basement. The upper level houses administrative offices and storage space that was later converted into offices. The offices have wood-paneled walls, smooth-finish ceilings, and tiled floors. The windows in the offices hold double-hung, eight-over-eight and six-over-six steel sash.

The second building is a warehouse that was constructed in 1946 for the Twin City Pontiac Company. It housed an automobile salesroom until 1954, the Prestige Chair Company acquired the property. When the Prestige Chair Company sold its main plant to Knitmode Mills in 1959, the sale included the former Twin City Pontiac Company. Circa 1960, Knitmode Mills constructed a one-story hyphen connecting the two buildings. The Twin City Pontiac Company is a one-story, concrete block building with a bowstring-truss roof and 12-light industrial steel-sash windows. The building sits at the southwest corner of the parcel, close to the intersection of East 19th Street and North Main Avenue, with an asphalt-paved parking lot to the north.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY

SETTING AND SITE

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills is located at 20 East 19th Street in Newton, the Catawba County seat, approximately 1.5 miles north of the county courthouse. The property is situated within an industrial corridor that follows a spur of the Western North Carolina Railroad—later the Norfolk Southern—between Newton and Conover. The immediate area is heavily industrial and surrounded by numerous one- and two-story frame houses constructed from the 1920s through the 1950s, primarily for workers in the nearby manufacturing facilities. To the north, across East 20th Street, is Ridgeview Hosiery Mills. To the south and west is a collection of commercial and light-industrial properties along the railroad tracks.

The nominated property is a 2.89-acre parcel bounded on the east by the Southern Railway, on the north by East 20th Street, on the west by North Main Avenue, and on the south by East 19th Street. The original furniture plant is situated on the east half of the parcel, which quickly slopes downward to the west from the railroad and to the north from East 19th Street. The south and east sides of the manufacturing plant are banked into the hillside. The warehouse is approximately 50 feet west of the manufacturing plant, at the southwest corner of the parcel. Connecting the two buildings is a one-story hyphen whose south elevation is fully banked into the hill at the south edge of the property. Because East 19th Street descends as it proceeds west from the railroad, the downhill grade softens near the southwest corner of the property. As a result, only the lower portion of the warehouse's south end is banked into the hillside. The warehouse is sited close to the poured-concrete sidewalk that lines North Main Avenue and East 19th Street. The area between the sidewalk and the west and south elevations is grassy. To the north of the warehouse is a nearly square asphalt-paved parking lot that is approximately 4,220 square feet in area. Historic aerial imagery indicates that this paved area dates at least to 1951 and was slightly larger than it is at present.¹ The northern portion of the parcel is open and grassy.

The edges of the property are clearly defined. A dense border of trees lines the east side of the property between the furniture plant and the railroad tracks, which are elevated on an embankment that is partly retained by a concrete block wall at the north end of the parcel. At the south edge of the property is a narrow margin of poured-concrete pavement that serves as a parking lot in the narrow margin between the furniture plant and East 19th Street. Between the manufacturing plant and the warehouse, the concrete paving extends over the one-story hyphen that connects the two buildings. A chain-link fence lines the northern edge of this hyphen and the east and north property lines. On the west side of the parcel, the chain-link fence encloses the grassy yard and wraps around the north and east sides of the asphalt-paved parking lot north of the warehouse.

¹ Nationwide Environmental Title Research, 1951 Aerial Imagery, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>, accessed August 2025.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

PRESTIGE CHAIR CORPORATION—KNITMODE MILLS PLANT (1946–1947, 1951, 1953, 1955, ca. 1960, ca. 1982), Contributing Bldg.

When constructed in 1946–1947, the Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills plant had an L-shaped footprint (**Figure 1**), with the horizontal side of the “L” sited parallel with and proximal to East 19th Street. This section is approximately 38 feet deep by 150 feet wide and one story tall due to the higher elevation of East 19th Street above the rest of the parcel. Its total area of 5,700 square feet originally held the administrative offices to the west and storage space for finished products to the east.² The vertical side of the “L” is two stories tall and extends to the north from the one-story section flush with its west elevation. This section of the building is approximately 150 feet long by 50 feet wide. Its total area of 15,000 square feet originally housed the woodworking operation on the first floor and the upholstery division on the second floor.³ When the plant was constructed, a small, one-story, 1,000-square-foot wing of unknown use extended from the north elevation of the two-story section of the building.

The plant experienced five phases of expansion during its ownership by the two companies (see **Figure 1**). In 1951, the small, one-story wing at the north end was removed and replaced with a two-story addition that extended the footprint of the “L” to the north. This addition is approximately 70 feet long by 40 feet wide and is roughly 5,600 square feet in total area. In April and October 1953, the Prestige Chair Corporation constructed two large, two-story additions that filled the interior corner of the “L,” giving the building a rectangular footprint. These additions were two stories tall with a combined 26,100-square-foot footprint, giving the building a total area of 52,200 square feet. Circa 1960, Knitmode Mills—the plant’s then-owner—constructed two additions. The first was a small, one-story loading dock addition on the west elevation of the 1951 addition. The second addition constructed by Knitmode Mills was a long, slender addition on the building’s east elevation. At this time, Knitmode Mills also constructed a one-story hyphen to link the plant to the warehouse approximately 50 feet to the west. Circa 1982, the Pinnacle Furniture Company constructed a two-story brick addition near the center of the west elevation. It is approximately 30 feet long and 15 feet deep.

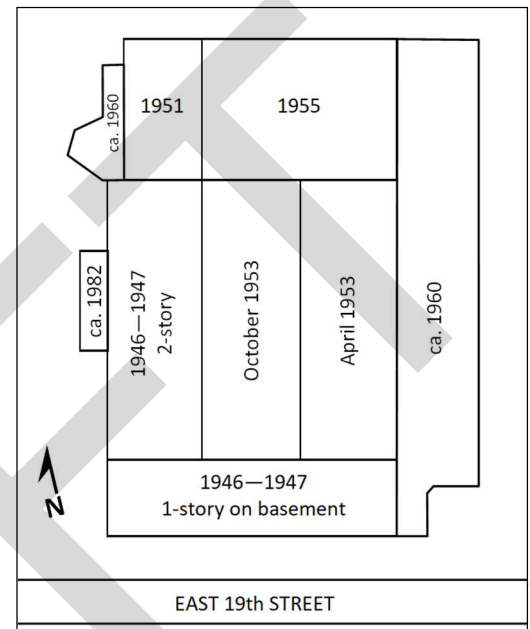


Figure 1. Illustration showing the evolution of the Prestige Chair Corporation-Knitmode Mills Plant from 1946–1947 to circa 1982.

Exterior

The plant sits on a poured concrete foundation. The structural system is concrete block with steel beams and posts that support the roof. The roof is screened by a low parapet wall that obscures a view of the cladding. The roofs of the 1946–1947, 1951, 1955, circa-1960, and circa-1982 sections are flat. The roofs of the two 1953 additions at the center of the building are nearly flat and have a pitch that is roughly 2-in-12 that rises to the center along a north–south axis. There has been some deterioration at the junction between the 1953 additions and the one-story section of the 1946–1947 section that has resulted in water infiltration. Rising from the north end of the roof is a small, one-bay-square, brick stair tower with a low-pitched pyramidal roof covered in asphalt shingles. The walls of the original sections are faced with brick laid in five-to-one common bond. A clay-tile coping caps the low parapet. The building’s primary elevation faces south toward East 19th Street (**Photo 1**). Roughly 30 feet from the southwest corner is a pair of adjacent entrances (**Photo 2**). The west entrance consists of a single-leaf glass door in a metal frame that provides access to the plant offices. To the west of this entrance are three evenly spaced windows with double-hung, eight-over-eight metal sash with cast concrete sills. Between these windows, the brick wall is detailed with a recessed stretcher row every six courses to create a decorative banding pattern that aligns with the top and bottom of the windows as well as the meeting rail and horizontal muntins in the upper

² Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Map of Newton, Catawba County, North Carolina* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1950), 14.

³ Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Map of Newton* [1950], 14.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

and lower sash. This modest brick detail and the use of double-hung windows distinguish on the exterior the interior's division of space and hierarchy of use. Roughly 4 to 5 feet to the east of the single-leaf entrance is a wider doorway with a double-leaf glass door in a metal frame that provides access to the storage area. A poured concrete slab that is low to the ground spans the two doorways. An asphalt-shingled hipped roof supported by metal posts with scrollwork shelters the entrances and concrete stoop. The roof was added after 1965 to replace an original flat-roofed canopy of the same dimensions.⁴ To the east of the double-leaf entrance, the south elevation of the storage area has seven large, evenly spaced window openings that hold 20-light industrial steel sash with cast concrete sills. The decorative banding is absent from this portion of the façade (**Photo 3**). At the east end of the elevation is the circa-1960 addition, the roof of which is slightly lower than the rest of the building (**Photo 4**). A short section of common-bond brick wall that is 14 feet wide is flush with the south elevation of the 1946–1947 building. The addition then steps back 28 feet, and its east end is also common-bond brick. The set-back section of the south elevation is 29 feet wide. Here, the addition's frame structural system is sheathed in metal siding, with a metal roll-up garage door at the center of the set-back section of the elevation.

The west elevation faces North Main Avenue. At the south end of the elevation are five roughly evenly spaced double-hung windows that light the offices (**Photo 5**). The outer four of these windows contain eight-over-eight metal sash, while the central window is shorter and narrower and holds six-over-six metal sash. All of these windows have cast concrete sills. Between these windows is the same recessed banding present on the west end of the south elevation. Below the smaller central window and two double-hung windows to the north is the hyphen that connects the Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills plant to the warehouse (**Photo 6**). To the north of these windows and the hyphen is the two-story section of the 1946–1947 plant. Near the center of the elevation is the two-story addition faced in stretcher-bond brick and constructed circa 1982 by the Pinnacle Furniture Company (**Photo 7**). The west and north elevations of the 1982 addition are blind, and small, horizontally oriented three-light windows pierce the first and second stories of the south elevation. A large painted sign that reads "PINNACLE/FURNITURE COMPANY" is located high on the west elevation of the addition. Between the circa-1982 addition and the circa-1960 hyphen to the south are six evenly spaced bays of 20-light industrial steel sash windows at the first and second stories. Between the 1982 addition and the 1951 addition at the north end of the building are five evenly spaced bays of 20-light industrial steel sash windows at the first and second stories (**Photo 8**). In place of the central window on the second story is a solid steel door that opens onto a metal landing with stairs that descend south to the ground level. At the north end of the west elevation, the west elevation of the 1951 addition is recessed by one bay from the west elevation of the 1946–1947 building. On the second story of the 1951 addition are five evenly spaced 20-light industrial steel sash, with a sixth window on the exposed north elevation of the 1946–1947 building. Below these windows, the circa-1960 loading dock addition projects slightly from the first story of the 1951 addition. The circa-1960 addition consists of two parts. The north half is of stretcher-bond brick with a low-sloping shed roof covered in standing-seam metal. It is blind on the west elevation with a large, square louvered metal vent centered on the north elevation. The south half of the circa-1960 addition is clad in metal with a flat roof covered in standing seam metal. This section of the addition houses the loading dock.

The north elevation consists of the 1951, 1955, and circa-1960 additions (**Photo 9**). The fenestration on this side of the building is irregular. At the west end of the building, the north elevation of the 1951 addition has a single 20-light industrial steel sash window centered in each of the two stories. For the sake of clarity, the north elevation of the 1955 addition is described here in east and west halves. The west half of the 1955 addition originally held four 20-light industrial steel sash windows on the second story. The easternmost window was later removed and the opening infilled with brick and converted to a wide, single-leaf, metal pedestrian door that opens onto a metal landing with stairs that descend westward along the wall. On the first story, the west half of the 1955 addition has four irregularly spaced openings. At the west end was a large window or door opening that was partly infilled with brick—likely in the late 1960s. In place of the earlier window or door is a single-leaf wood pedestrian door with six lights above three horizontal panels. The door is centered below a wide, eight-light steel transom. The two openings to the east are windows that hold 12-light industrial steel sash.

⁴ "Knitmode Mills, Inc. Hemlock Manufacturing Co., Inc. Salute North Carolina," *Hickory Daily Record* (Hickory, North Carolina), September 11, 1965, 149.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Below the second-story door and offset to the east is a large roll-up metal garage door. The east half of the 1955 addition's north elevation has six 20-light industrial steel sash windows in the second story. In the first story, near the roll-up door, is a wide doorway with a double-leaf wood door with five horizontal panels in each half. Three 20-light industrial steel sash windows are irregularly spaced across the wall between the double-leaf door and the northeast corner of the 1955 addition. At the east end of the 1955 addition is the north elevation of the circa-1960 addition, which is two stories tall and sheathed in metal siding with no windows. Although the siding in the eastern two-thirds of the elevation is relatively intact, a strip of metal siding next to the 1955 addition has failed. Hanging from the wall, its deterioration has exposed the interior to water infiltration.

The east elevation, which faces the railroad tracks, consists entirely of the circa-1960 addition. Because of the building's embankment into the adjacent hill, only the upper story of the addition is exposed on the east elevation, which is blind. It is faced with brick in irregularly coursed common bond (**Photo 10**).

Interior

The interior is primarily given over to production space, with a small section of office space on the upper floor at the south end of the building.

The offices occupy the southwest corner of the one-story section, where original partition walls create two offices along the west wall (**Photos 11–13**). These offices have tiled floors, wood-paneled walls, and smooth ceilings. The office area has been painted off-white, making it difficult to determine if the wood paneling is original. The door and window trim is simple, with flat boards and a narrow, slightly projecting, square-edged molding that frames the perimeter. On the east wall, each office has a door and a wide, fixed, one-light window that provides a view into the entryway. Another wide, fixed, one-light window is located in the wall between the two offices. The north wall of the north office has an original or historic door that accesses a storage room with no other point of entry. The finished products storage area at the southeast end of the one-story section was subdivided into offices after 1982 (**Photos 14–15**). The large, open space was framed out with walls of thin, late twentieth-century wood-grained paneling. The south wall, which has been painted off-white, is primarily exposed concrete block with some brick.

The interior of the two-story section, constructed primarily in 1946–1947, 1953, and 1955, has an open plan on both levels, with exposed brick and concrete block walls and visible steel framing. The location of the east wall of the two-story section of the 1946–1947 building is marked by brick-clad piers that flank full-height openings where the windows were removed when the October 1953 addition was constructed. At the north end of the 1946–1947 and 1953 sections is the south wall of the 1951 and 1955 additions. The north wall of the one-story section of the 1946–1947 building divides the administrative and storage area from the second-story production floor to the north. The floor throughout the lower level is poured concrete, and the ceiling is the exposed wood decking of the second story. The second floor is finished with tongue-and-groove wood boards. A utilitarian set of wood stairs rises from the lower level of the two-story section along its south wall to the second story, where they provide access to the offices in the one-story section of the building. The windows remain exposed at both levels. An inclined conveyor belt is roughly centered north–south in the April 1953 addition. It rises from the center of the addition to the east side of the October 1953 addition. Due to their condition, the interiors of the circa-1960 and circa-1982 additions were not fully accessed (**Photos 16–21**).

WAREHOUSE (1946, circa 1960), Contributing Building

The warehouse was originally constructed as an automobile showroom. Because the building is rotated slightly west of true north, its northwest corner is closer to North Main Avenue, and the southwest corner is closer to East 19th Street. In this nomination, the description will refer to the elevations as though they are oriented to the compass points. The warehouse is connected to the Prestige–Knitmode plant by way of a one-story hyphen that attaches to the south end of the warehouse's east elevation.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Exterior

The warehouse is a one-story building of concrete block construction. It faces north toward the deteriorating asphalt parking lot. The white-painted concrete block walls are smooth and exposed on the exterior with no veneer or other cladding. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation and has a bowstring-truss roof covered with a smooth, synthetic membrane. The north and south elevations rise above the arch of the roof to three-stage stepped parapets with a metal coping.

The façade (north elevation) has weathered, with some paint loss that exposes some of the mortar and concrete block. The façade displays an irregular arrangement of window and door openings that suggests a hierarchy of uses on the interior (**Photo 22**). At the west end of the elevation is a large window opening with a cast concrete sill that likely held a single-pane storefront window. The opening has been infilled with smooth concrete block. Roughly 2 feet east of this opening is a single-leaf pedestrian door of solid glass in a metal frame with a simple metal awning. A second single-leaf pedestrian door is located at the east end of the elevation. This door is metal with no lights. Between the two doors are four window openings that are roughly evenly spaced along the wall. Three of them are large, roughly square, and filled with 12-light steel windows that incorporate two three-light casements. The second window from the east is a smaller opening containing only two three-light steel casements in a shared surround.

The west elevation faces North Main Avenue (**Photos 23–24**). Like the north elevation, the configuration of openings on the west elevation suggests a hierarchy of use on the interior. Just north of center is a small, one-story room that projects from the main block. It is roughly 5 feet wide by 3 feet deep by 8 feet tall with a low-pitched shed roof covered with a synthetic membrane. A doorway on the west elevation is filled with a single-leaf plywood door that has been padlocked. There are no openings on the north or south elevations of the projection. To the north of this projection is a doorway that has been filled with concrete block. To the north of the doorway, at the northwest corner of the elevation, is a large storefront window with a cast concrete sill. Four large, vertically oriented panes of glass with metal frames fill the opening. Above the window is a steeply pitched pent roof covered in asphalt shingles that was likely added in the 1970s or 1980s. South of the small, one-bay-square projection are five window openings that are roughly evenly spaced across the wall. They are nearly square and hold 12-light steel sash windows that each incorporate two three-light casements. All of these windows have cast concrete sills. Projecting from the bowstring truss roof above these windows are two narrow dormers with shed roofs that pitch downward at the back, toward the main roof. These dormers appear to have plywood cladding on their side walls. The west side of each dormer is filled with a large louvered vent.

The south end of the building is banked into the slightly elevated grade along East 19th Street, which ascends a low hill as it continues east toward the railroad tracks (**Photo 25**). As a result of this change in grade from the southwest corner to the southeast corner, more of the bottom portion of the south elevation is obscured at the southeast end of the building. Five horizontally oriented window openings with cast concrete sills are evenly spaced across the elevation close to ground level. Each opening contains a six-light steel sash window.

The east elevation faces the Prestige Chair Company–Knitmode Mills plant (**Photo 26**). Only the upper portion of the south end of the elevation is visible above the hyphen that was constructed circa 1960 by Knitmode Mills. The wall above the hyphen is blind. To the north of the hyphen, there are four tall window openings with cast concrete sills that are roughly centered on the elevation. These openings hold 12-light steel sash. At the northeast corner of the elevation is a tall opening that appears to have originally been a vehicular entrance that has been infilled with concrete block.

The north elevation of the hyphen connecting the two buildings appears to be a hastily built series of three accretions constructed circa 1960 (**Photo 27**). All are one-story tall and shorter than the warehouse. All three sections have flat roofs. A 28-foot-wide section near the center of the hyphen is slightly taller than the flanking sections. It is constructed of concrete block and features two metal roll-up garage doors. To the west is a 28-foot-wide section that connects to the warehouse. This section of the hyphen is of concrete block construction with one metal roll-up garage door. To the east is

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

a 10-foot section that connects to the Prestige Chair Company—Knitmode Mills plant. This section is covered with wood siding and has a nine-light industrial steel sash window beside a single-leaf wood pedestrian door with five horizontal panels.

Interior

The interior of the warehouse is separated into two main areas. At the northwest corner of the building is the administrative area, while the majority of the interior south of this section features an open floor plan (**Photos 28–33**). The perimeter walls are exposed concrete block, and the floor is an unfinished poured concrete slab. The wood roof rafters and decking are visible above the exposed metal framing of the bowstring truss. Fluorescent lights hang from cables to illuminate the interior. The interior is utilitarian and devoid of applied finishes or architectural ornament. A close investigation of the interior surfaces indicates that its present configuration and appearance date to the Period of Significance.

In the northwest corner of the building, wood framing clad with horizontal wood planks divides a small area of the interior from the rest of the space. This partition wall is approximately 12 feet tall and wraps around a square brick flue that rises to the roof. A large room at the west end of the office area extends from the north wall south to the partition wall and features no ceiling. It has sheetrock-covered walls and gauze fabric hung from the ceiling which is draped across a suspended central wire and extends to the edges of the room to create the appearance of a tent interior. The rest of the administrative space has a ceiling and additional partition walls of sheetrock or a similar smooth-finish material that appears to have been added circa 1982 when the property was acquired by the Pinnacle Furniture Company. The interior of the administrative space has a tile floor throughout.

The interior of the hyphen is austere and utilitarian (**Photos 34–35**). The south wall, which is banked into the hillside below East 19th Street, is solid concrete block. The north wall is a combination of concrete block in the western 54 feet and light wood framing in the eastern 10 feet. The floor is poured concrete. A light-frame partition wall separates the central 28-foot-wide section from the western 28-foot-wide section. The wood roof decking is visible beyond the steel roof framing.

INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association as a manufacturing plant that was in continuous use in Newton from 1946 until 1971. It has a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship on the exterior, and substantial integrity of design, materials, and workmanship on the interior. Most of the additions and changes that took place after its initial construction fall within the property's Period of Significance.

Location and Setting

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills retains integrity of location and setting. It has occupied the same property since 1946, and the contributing buildings are situated on their original foundations. The setting within the parcel is largely unchanged. Outside the property boundary, the stark, industrial setting remains highly intact. To the east are the extant tracks within the railroad right-of-way. Farther east, and to the north and south, are industrial and commercial resources that are historically unrelated to the property but whose presence reinforces the industrial character of the immediate area.

Design, Materials, and Workmanship

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills retains strong integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Integrity of design is reinforced through the intact floor plan and identifiable construction phases in the original furniture plant. The design of the offices and storage area on the south end of the building remains distinct from the design of the production

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

space to the north. These two areas are distinguished from each other by their different exterior and interior design and finishes. The unaltered character of the former Twin City Pontiac Company building further reinforces the property's integrity of design and materials. The interior is mostly open, and the historic offices at the north end of the building remain divided from the rest of the interior space by a partial-height board wall with light framing. In addition to design and materials, both buildings retain integrity of workmanship. Significant, character-defining features of both buildings are their original exterior materials, original multi-light industrial steel sash windows, and open floor plans.

The roof has deteriorated in some areas, causing small sections of structural failure and water infiltration. These areas are primarily at the junction between the administrative area at the south end of the building and the 1953 additions. The roof failure does not substantially diminish the property's overall integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

Association and Feeling

Although it is no longer used for manufacturing, Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills retains sufficient integrity of association and feeling. The property's strong integrity of setting, particularly along the railroad line in an area of town that was heavily industrial, reinforces its historic industrial use as a furniture plant and, later, textile mill, which reinforces its integrity of association. Because it retains strong integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and some integrity of association, the property retains integrity of feeling.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills
Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations N/A
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Period of Significance

1946–1971

Significant Dates

1951, 1953, 1955, 1959, ca. 1960

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its significant association with the industrial development of Newton, in Catawba County, North Carolina. The property's Period of Significance begins in 1946 with the construction of the Prestige Chair Corporation by Newton native and World War II veteran Rome Jones. Post-war prosperity led to increased development in Newton and, especially, a significant rise in homebuilding. Adjacent industries such as furniture manufacturing and textile production exploded across the western Piedmont region, particularly in Catawba County. The furniture company prospered during its first nine years, expanding its plant twice—in 1951 and 1953—to nearly double its original square footage. In 1954, Rome Jones acquired the adjacent Twin City Pontiac Company building and converted it to a warehouse. Despite the plant's enlargement and acquisition of the second building, the Prestige Chair Corporation ultimately outgrew its original home, prompting Jones to build a new plant less than 1 mile to the east in 1956. Prestige retained ownership of the original factory. Founded in 1954, Knitmode Mills leased the building from Prestige during the period 1956–1959 before it ultimately purchased the property. With corporate headquarters in New York, Knitmode Mills was part of Charles Pindyck, Inc., a manufacturer of infants' and children's clothing. The post-World War II baby boom fueled demand for infants' and children's clothing into the 1960s. Shifting consumer demand, increased competition from overseas manufacturers, and federal economic policies of the mid- to late 1960s changed the company's course. In response to these external challenges, Charles Pindyck, Inc. diversified its holdings and product lines in the late 1960s. In 1971, the company closed its plant in Newton.

The period from 1971 to present is not historically significant because it is associated with a volatile period of corporate mergers and industrial diversification in response to international competition and decreasing market share. These high-level corporate exchanges and their impact on production are less than 50 years old, and their significance has yet to be determined. The plant has been vacant since 2015.

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

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND INDUSTRY CONTEXT

The Settlement of and Early Industrial Development in Newton and Catawba County to 1885

Located in the western Piedmont region of North Carolina, Catawba County was founded in 1842 from neighboring Lincoln County to the south. The Catawba River forms the county's northern and eastern boundaries as it winds a circuitous route into South Carolina from headwaters in the South Mountains in neighboring Burke County, to the west. Numerous small rivers and creeks originating in Catawba and neighboring counties feed the Catawba River. The abundant flow of water from the surrounding area generates substantial waterpower that fueled the county's industrial growth from the nineteenth century to the late twentieth century. In 1845, Newton was laid out at the center of the county to serve as the seat of government.⁵

The western Piedmont region was sparsely settled and its economy largely agricultural in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with diverse crops grown on farms that averaged roughly 150 acres. Cotton and tobacco comprised the main cash crops. The population consisted primarily of Scots, who had emigrated to America after their loss at the 1746 Battle of Culloden, and Protestant immigrants such as the German Moravians and English Quakers.⁶ The 1793 invention of the cotton gin and the wide availability of cotton in Piedmont and eastern North Carolina set the stage for development of the

⁵ Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 454; see also Brent D. Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina: A History* (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1992), 5.

⁶ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 5.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

textile industry in the early nineteenth century. In 1813, Michael Schenck and Absolom Warlick constructed the first cotton mill in North Carolina roughly 2 miles south of Lincolnton, Lincoln County, on the South Fork of the Catawba River. They rebuilt it three years later after the first building was destroyed in a flood. Although early industrialists established manufacturing facilities along the Catawba River during the first half of the nineteenth century, numerous factors limited industrial growth until the Reconstruction era. Chief among them were a heavy reliance on waterpower, inadequate transportation networks, high labor costs, insufficient capital, and a brief agricultural decline in the 1840s and 1850s.⁷

Chartered in 1855, the Western North Carolina Railroad (WNCRR) connected the city of Salisbury, in Rowan County, to the mountain region. Construction began in 1858 and, by 1860, the WNCRR had reached Catawba County. Industrial development in the region stalled during the Civil War. By 1867, the partnerships of Powell & Shuford and Powell & Tate had established two cotton factories at Catawba Station, near the WNCRR on the eastern edge of the county near the Catawba River.⁸ Within a couple years, H. F. Carpenter had established a cotton gin at Newton. In fact, Newton's economy was heavily industrial during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. By 1869, the town boasted an iron shop, two saddle and harness factories, three shoe manufacturers, four tanneries, one tinnery, two carriage factories, and a manufacturer of threshing machines. By comparison, Catawba Station had the established cotton mills and a lime factory, and the community of Jacob's Fork had only an iron shop and cabinet maker. At that time, Hickory's only industry was a single tannery.⁹

By the mid-1880s, at the dawn of North Carolina's "cotton mill campaign," 75 cotton mills operated throughout the state.¹⁰ Even after rail lines improved access to transportation and freight shipping across the state, most of these early textile mills relied on waterpower to generate electricity. For this reason, railroad sidings had to be constructed to provide freight access to ship raw materials in and products out. One of these early textile plants was the 1882 Newton Cotton Mills, near the heart of Catawba County's seat of government. Erected next to a railroad siding extending from the main line to downtown Newton, Newton Cotton Mills stood apart from most of its manufacturing contemporaries when it began operating in 1883 as the first textile factory in the town.¹¹

The Textile Trade and Furniture Factories in Newton, 1885–1945¹²

By the late 1880s, local mill and business owners expressed interest in establishing a furniture factory in Newton.¹³ In 1889, *The Newton Enterprise* reported that Rev. W. L. C. Killian, who at the time was the town treasurer and a mill owner, contemplated converting his mill property into a furniture factory. Killian had the necessary buildings and power, but he needed to secure a partner or company to purchase machinery for a factory.¹⁴ In 1891, Killian placed advertisements in local newspapers, promoting his millwork and "line of cheap Furniture—such as Bread Safes, Bedsteads, Bureaus, Writing Desks, Tables, Lounges, &c."¹⁵

⁷ Holland Thompson, *From the Cotton Field to the Cotton Mill: A Study of the Industrial Transition in North Carolina* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1906), 45–46; see also Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 7–8. Holland writes Warlick's first name as Abraham; see also Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 12–15.

⁸ Levi Branson, *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory for 1867–8* (Raleigh: Branson & Jones, Publishers, 1868), 27; see also Barbara M. Kooiman, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Catawba County, North Carolina," Multiple Property Document Form prepared for the National Park Service, 1990, <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/CT1299.pdf>, accessed June 2025, E19–E20. Although Catawba Station was later shortened to Catawba, in this nomination, the original place name will be used throughout the narrative to distinguish between the town and Catawba County.

⁹ Levi Branson, *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory for 1869* (Raleigh: J.A. Jones, Publisher, 1869), 34–35.

¹⁰ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 24–27.

¹¹ "Spirits Turpentine," *The Morning Star* (Wilmington, North Carolina), May 21, 1882, 4; see also "State Industrial Items," *The New South* (Wilmington, North Carolina), December 24, 1882, 1; see also "Proceedings of the Legislature," *Statesville Record and Landmark* (Statesville, North Carolina), January 12, 1883, 2.

¹² For more information see Kooiman, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Catawba County, North Carolina."

¹³ "Why Not Have a Furniture Factory," *The Newton Enterprise*, January 10, 1889, 3.

¹⁴ "Local News," *The Newton Enterprise*, February 15, 1889, 3.

¹⁵ "W. L. C. Killian, Newton, N. C.," *The Newton Enterprise*, May 1, 1891, 3.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

On September 21, 1892, the Newton Manufacturing Company was incorporated in Newton by W. L. C. Killian, W. H. Williams, R. P. Dakin, and George A. Warlick. The company's plant was located on the west side of South College Avenue between present-day East C and East D streets, and it manufactured millwork and furniture and did custom woodwork. The Newton Manufacturing Company, however, entered receivership in early 1895, and its buildings and machinery were offered for sale at auction. In June 1896, John P. Yount, a cotton mill owner, purchased the company's plant for \$700. The plant was demolished at an unknown date between 1896 and 1902.¹⁶

In the first quarter of the twentieth century, the furniture industry in Catawba County remained small compared to other counties. The 1923 edition of *The North Carolina Year Book* recorded 107 furniture factories in 25 counties. Catawba County had four furniture factories, ranking eighth in the state.¹⁷ All four of Catawba County's furniture factories were in Hickory: Hickory Chair Manufacturing Company, Hickory Furniture Company, Martin Furniture Company, and Southern Desk Company.¹⁸ Founded in 1901 to manufacture bedroom furniture, the Hickory Furniture Company is believed to be the "first true furniture factory" in the county.¹⁹

In 1926, a group of men led by John P. Yount organized the Newton Furniture Company to manufacture dining room furniture exclusively.²⁰ The founders were both locals and non-locals, and many had experience working for other furniture companies in the state. Yount established a furniture factory, built at a cost of \$150,000, along the Southern Railway in north Newton at present-day 2309 North College Avenue.²¹ The company, however, only operated for four years before entering receivership in 1930 due to Yount's declining health and death. Within a span of two years, the Newton Furniture Company was sold by an order of the court three different times at prices ranging from \$6,000 to \$10,000. During this volatile period for the company, the Conover Furniture Company leased the property. The Lenoir Chair Company acquired the property in 1932 but did not start operations there until 1935. The factory was subsequently named Lenoir Chair Company Plant No. 2.²²

In the second quarter of the twentieth century, Catawba County's role as a relatively minor contributor to the state's furniture industry shifted. Between 1923 and 1947, the number of furniture establishments in the county grew from 4 to 60 factories. Among these newly established firms was the Houser Chair Company formed by John Houser and Rome Jones—the latter a sales manager at the Conover Cotton Chair Company.²³ The Houser Chair Company was an upholstery business that occupied the basement of the C. M. Rowe Building on the north side of downtown Newton.²⁴ Jones took a

¹⁶ "Notice of Incorporation," *The Newton Enterprise*, September 23, 1892, 3; see also "Local News," *The Newton Enterprise*, January 27, 1893, 3; see also "Notice," *The Newton Enterprise*, March 29, 1895, 3; see also "Three Deaths—The Newton Manufacturers' Plant Sold—Other Catawba News," *The Morganton Herald*, June 11, 1896, 1; see also Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Map of Newton, Catawba County, North Carolina* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1896), 2; see also Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Map of Newton, Catawba County, North Carolina* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1902), 3.

¹⁷ The seven counties that had more furniture factories than Catawba County were Guilford (34), Davidson (12), Caldwell (7), Forsyth (6), Randolph (6), Iredell (5), and Surry (5) counties. McDowell County (4) tied with Catawba County.

¹⁸ The News and Observer, *The North Carolina Year Book, 1923* (Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, 1923), 70.

¹⁹ "Newcomers and Technology Helped Make Us Who We Are," *The Charlotte Observer*, December 26, 1999, 14V.

²⁰ This Newton Furniture Company organized by John P. Yount in 1926 is not to be confused with the Newton Manufacturing Company organized by W. L. C. Killian in 1892.

²¹ "Work Begun on New Furniture Factory," *News and Record*, February 13, 1926, 3; see also "Newton Furniture Co. Erects New Building," *The Charlotte Observer*, February 14, 1926, 13.

²² "Caroline News Briefs," *The High Point Enterprise*, November 28, 1930, 6; see also "Conover Firm Leases Plant," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 21, 1931, 1; see also "Broyhill Buys Newton Plant," *Hickory Daily Record*, December 2, 1932, 1; see also "\$50,000 Addition Being Built on Newton Plant," *Hickory Daily Record*, January 6, 1939, 1.

²³ "Miss Prue Houser Becomes Bride Of Rome E. Jones Of Newton Saturday," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 25, 1939, 7.

²⁴ "Construction Boom Is On In Newton Area," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 21, 1941, 2.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

brief respite from furniture manufacturing from 1941 to 1945, during which period he worked in war-related industry in Baltimore, Maryland, before volunteering for naval service until 1945.²⁵

Prestige Chair Corporation and Newton's Industrial Boom, 1945–1956

In June 1945, John H. P. Cilley Jr. and his wife, Kate Warlick Cilley, sold a roughly 2.5-acre parcel in North Newton, south of Ridgeview Hosiery Mill, to Rome Jones, Everett C. Bandy and his son, Wade M. Bandy, for \$100. Part of the large estate of industrialist George A. Warlick, the property was situated near the Bandys' eponymous service station.²⁶ The parcel extended north from East 19th Street to present-day East 20th Street. The Southern Railway bordered the east side of the parcel. To the west was a separate parcel of roughly 1.5 acres that extended to North Main Avenue between East 19th and East 20th streets. Along the boundary between these two parcels was a 20-foot north-south alleyway that was reserved for a street in 1927 but ultimately never built (**Figure 2**).²⁷

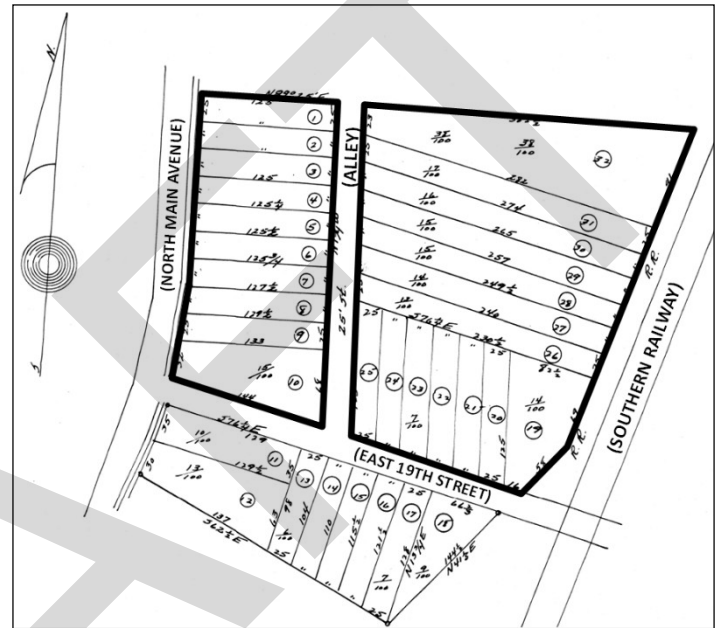


Figure 2: This plat, dated November 15, 1927, depicted the unbuilt north-south alley between the two parcels, which are highlighted with a heavy black outline.

At the same time, the Cilleys sold the adjoining 1.5-acre lot to the Twin City Pontiac Company for \$100.²⁸ Ernest B. Crouch and Ray Hager (34 years old and 25 years old, respectively) were partners in the company, which they established in 1940 for the purpose of automobile sales. The Twin City Pontiac Company was headquartered in the former Gulf Station on North Main Avenue in the early 1940s.²⁹ The *Hickory Daily Record* announced in August 1945 that the company intended to construct a new building on North Main Avenue.³⁰ In the summer of 1946, company owners Crouch and Hager dissolved their partnership. Crouch retained ownership of the Twin City Pontiac Company, while Hager kept the associated business called the Newton Sales Company.³¹

²⁵ "Newton News," *Hickory Daily Record*, October 8, 1942, 4; see also "Married Men, 20-Year-Olds Going To Army," *Hickory Daily Record*, November 12, 1942, 4; see also "Skilled Workers Offered Ratings," *News and Observer* (Raleigh, North Carolina), November 16, 1942, 12; see also "With Newton's Men In Service," *Hickory Daily Record*, December 24, 1942, 16.

²⁶ Kate Warlick Cilley was the daughter of George A. Warlick and one of the inheritors of his vast estate.

²⁷ Catawba County Register of Deeds, June 9, 1945, Deed Book 353, 527; see also Catawba County Register of Deeds, November 15, 1927, Plat Book 2, 71.

²⁸ Catawba County Register of Deeds, June 9, 1945, Deed Book 353, 528; see also Catawba County Register of Deeds, November 15, 1927, Plat Book 2, 71.

²⁹ "Newton Lists Moving, Some Repairs Work," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 28, 1942, 3; see also "Announces Plans For Developments At Newton-Conover," *Hickory Daily Record*, June 8, 1945, 10; see also "Rowe Renamed City Manager," *Hickory Daily Record*, July 8, 1959, 24. The two parties (Bandy/Jones and Crouch/Hager) each received a one-half undivided interest in a 20-foot alleyway between the parcels, which was reserved for a street in 1927 but never subsequently built.

³⁰ "Newton Post-War Plans Continue," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 30, 1945, 2.

³¹ "Auto Firm Plans Garage Building," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 31, 1946, 5. Crouch and Hager's split was less than amicable, and Hager later sued Crouch for breach of contract in December 1946. In the suit, Hager accused Crouch of reneging on an agreement in which Hager would receive two new Pontiac cars a year for five years. He further alleged that Crouch had promised Hager ownership of the company's twenty-first vehicle. When that vehicle arrived in early December 1946, Hager filed suit, demanding possession. Seemingly dissatisfied with the progress of the lawsuit, Hager accosted Crouch in downtown Newton. On December 26, Hager and his brother-in-law, Army Sergeant J. R. Jones, and their nephew, Junior Brotherton, attacked Crouch on company premises as he was closing the business. Hager beat Crouch so badly that the beleaguered man suffered from a fractured skull, broken rib, and "abrasions about the face, head and body, which left his entire face raw." "Restraining Order Signed, Preventing

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

In August 1946, after Crouch dissolved his partnership with Hager, he joined with John A. and C. Banks Whisnant, owners of the Whisnant Transfer Company in nearby Maiden, to form a new partnership under the name Twin City Pontiac Company. They reorganized the firm with \$100,000 authorized capital and \$3,000 stock subscribed by the three men.³² The company's new automotive sales and service building, situated at the corner of North Main Avenue and East 19th Street, opened in early March 1947.³³ The Twin City Pontiac Company's new home had a utilitarian appearance typical of light-industrial buildings constructed in the 1940s and 1950s. The one-story, concrete-block edifice featured a bowstring-truss roof, industrial steel sash windows on all four sides, and large showroom windows on the north and west elevations.

Concurrent with the establishment of the Twin City Pontiac Company, Rome Jones and the Bandys formed the Associate Chair Company shortly after the end of World War II.³⁴ In the spring of 1946, the company began business producing a "promotional line of upholstered furniture" in a small building in north Newton as they completed work on a new two-story furniture plant along the railroad between East 19th and East 20th streets. The company planned to employ around 60 people when the plant was finished and became fully operational. The building was nearly complete by August 1946.³⁵ In September 1946, the trio renamed the business the Bandy-Jones Chair Company.³⁶

The Bandy-Jones Chair Company was part of a growing furniture industry in Catawba County. As residential development soared and homeownership increased after World War II, the manufacture of home furnishings was one of the principal industries in North Carolina. The 1947 United States Census of Manufactures was the first census to record the number of "furniture and fixture" establishments in the county.³⁷ At the time, the county had 60 furniture and fixture establishments, which was more than any other county except Guilford County. It was also the second largest manufacturing industry—in terms of number of establishments—in Catawba County, behind textile products.³⁸

In 1949, Rome Jones and the Bandys dissolved their partnership, with the latter conveying their interest in the property to Jones for \$100.³⁹ Jones then renamed the company the Precedent Chair Corporation. After operating as Precent Chair for the next two to three years, Jones again renamed the company the Prestige Chair Corporation. The Precedent name was too easily confused with a line of furniture by the Drexel Furniture Corporation. The company continued to operate as the Prestige Chair Corporation through the late twentieth century.

Car's Disposition," *Hickory Daily Record*, December 16, 1946, 10; see also "3 Post Bonds In Car Affray," *Hickory Daily Record*, December 27, 1946, 10; see also "Young Man Fined In Assault Case," *Hickory Daily Record*, January 8, 1947, 9.

³² "Auto Firm Plans Garage Building," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 31, 1946, 5; see also "Hickory Firms Ask Charters," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 26, 1946, 6.

³³ "Newton Automobile Firm In New Home," *Hickory Daily Record*, March 7, 1947, 9.

³⁴ "Work Begins Soon on New Prestige Chair Co. Plant," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 13, 1955, 1.

³⁵ "New Building For Furniture Plant," *Hickory Daily Record*, May 17, 1946, 2; see also "Much Building At Newton," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 3, 1946, 7..

³⁶ "Bandy-Jones Chair New Name Of Firm," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 28, 1946, 5.

³⁷ The Census of Manufactures defines the term "establishment" as "a single plant or factory and is not necessarily identical with the business unit or company which may consist of one or more establishments." The census describes "furniture and fixtures" industry as an industry group that "includes establishments engaged in manufacturing household, office, public-building, professional, and restaurant furniture, office and store fixtures, and window and door screens and shades, and venetian blinds, regardless of the materials used." United States Bureau of the Census, *Census of Manufactures: 1947—Volume III: Statistics by States* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), 2, 695.

³⁸ United States Bureau of the Census, *Census of Manufactures: 1947*, 454, 456; see also United States Bureau of the Census, *1977 Census of Manufactures*, Vol. 3: *Geographic Area Statistics, Part 2: General Summary, Nebraska—Wyoming* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1981), 34-23.

³⁹ Catawba County Register of Deeds, April 6, 1949 Deed Book 402, 133.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

The factory boasted a total area of roughly 20,000 square feet illuminated by 20-light industrial steel sash windows. The two-story main block of the furniture factory held the woodworking department on the first floor and the upholstery department on the second floor (Figure 3). At the south end of the two-story main block was a one-story section that extended to the east, level with the main block's second story due to the sloping grade. The company's office was situated in the west end of the one-story section, while a storage area for finished products filled the east end of this section. Below the offices and storage space was a basement that was likely used for additional storage. To the north of the finished product storage space was a separate, one-story warehouse for the storage of materials. It appears to have been connected to the main building by a platform. At the northwest corner of the two-story building was a detached, one-story boiler house with a concrete floor and an attached one-story waste house.

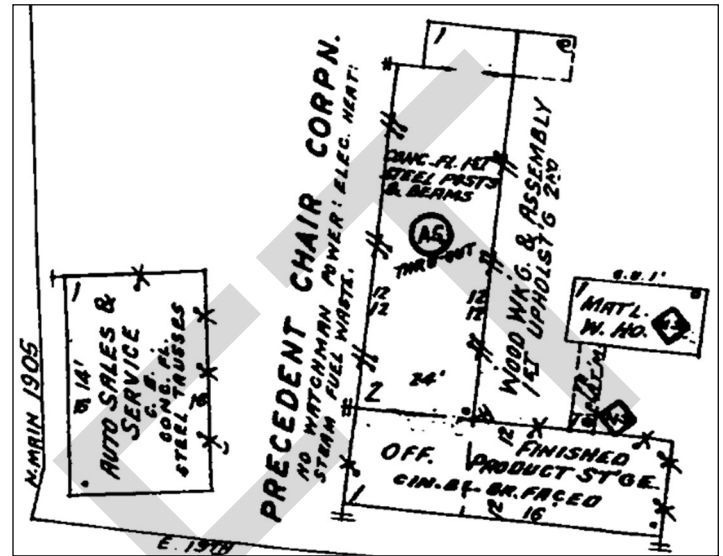


Figure 3. Detail of the 1950 Sanborn Map of Newton, showing the original building layout of the Prestige Chair Corporation (then called the Precedent Chair Corporation) and the Twin City Pontiac Company.

Although an electrical fire in March 1947 caused \$250 in damage to the boiler room, necessitating replacement of the roof and briefly halting production, the company was otherwise very successful in its first few years.⁴⁰ The company's success saw such demand for its upholstered products that the Jones was forced to enlarge the plant only five years after it was built. In 1951, the company constructed a two-story, 5,400-square-foot addition on the north end of the mill. In the spring of 1953, the firm completed a large, two-story addition and hired 30 new employees, bringing its plant workforce to 110, with an additional 12 drivers.⁴¹ The building was expanded again in October 1953, when the Yount Lumber Company applied for a permit to construct a \$10,000 addition.⁴² The 1953 additions necessitated demolition of the materials warehouse.

In May 1954, Ernest Crouch sold the Twin City Pontiac Company property to Prestige Chair Corporation for only \$100.⁴³ Given its recent demolition of its materials warehouse, it is reasonable to conclude that the Prestige Chair Corporation used the former automobile showroom for storage. By the end of 1954, Prestige employed 245 workers, and its business continued to grow. At a Christmas party held that December, the company recognized numerous employees for their long tenure.⁴⁴ Despite four additions constructed in 1951, 1953, and 1955—which totaled roughly 53,000 square feet—and the company's 1954 acquisition of the neighboring 7,000-square-foot auto dealership, Prestige announced plans in July 1955 to relocate to a site just outside the Newton city limits, where it would construct a plant that would be twice the size of the existing facility.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ "Boiler Room Fire At North Newton Furniture Plant," *Hickory Daily Record*, March 21, 1947, 4.

⁴¹ "Newton Firm Expands," *Hickory Daily Record*, March 13, 1953, 10.

⁴² "Building Permits Show Newton Gain," *Hickory Daily Record*, October 3, 1953, 7.

⁴³ Catawba County Register of Deeds, May 1, 1954 Deed Book 494, 275. The low price was likely due to an agreement between the two parties that Jones would help Crouch relocate his business. One year after the sale, Jones erected a new dealership for the Twin City Pontiac Company on the newly paved bypass west of downtown Newton. "Newton Firms Get Building Permits," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 16, 1955, 7. The historic address for the property is 1415 Westside Boulevard. The current address is 2012 Northwest Boulevard. The building is extant. Charles W. Miller, *Miller's Newton—Conover, N.C., City Directory [1959–1960]* (Asheville, North Carolina; Southern Directory Company, 1959), 335.

⁴⁴ "Prestige Chair Co. Fetes 245 Workers," *Hickory Daily Record*, December 24, 1954, 9.

⁴⁵ Catawba County Register of Deeds, May 1, 1954 Deed Book 494, 275; see also "Newton Firm Expands," *Hickory Daily Record*, March 15, 1953, 10; see also "Newton Firm Gets Building Permits," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 16, 1955, 7; see also "Newton Chair Firm Plans Expansion," *Greensboro Daily News*, July 10, 1955, 11.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

The mid-twentieth century was a period of growth for Newton's furniture industry. The Prestige Chair Corporation was one of five furniture manufacturers in the city in 1955. The others were Lenoir Chair Company, Haupt Manufacturing Company, Newton Manufacturing Company, and Sandra Chairs Company. The largest furniture manufacturers in Newton, such as the Lenoir Chair Company, operated multiple factories across the county. Established in 1926 in Lenoir, Caldwell County, the Lenoir Chair Company acquired the former Newton Furniture Company factory at present-day 2309 North College Avenue in Newton in 1932 and began operations there three years later. This factory became known as Lenoir Chair Company Plant No. 2, and it employed approximately 240 workers in 1951. The Lenoir Chair Company expanded in the mid-twentieth century through acquisitions of other furniture companies. By 1963, the Lenoir Chair Company had approximately 1,500 employees across its eight furniture plants, three veneer mills, and various auxiliary companies in Catawba, Caldwell, and Alexander counties. In 1978, a 125,000-square-foot addition was built to the south of Plant No. 2 in Newton.⁴⁶ The Prestige Chair Corporation did not operate multiple factories like the Lenoir Chair Company; however, its single factory had as many workers—245 workers in 1954—as the Lenoir Chair Company Plant No. 2.

The Prestige Chair Corporation was one of four furniture manufacturers operating a single factory in Newton in the 1950s. The others were Haupt Manufacturing Company, Newton Manufacturing Company, and Sandra Chairs. Exhaustive research has not revealed comparable employment information about the Haupt Manufacturing Company, Newton Manufacturing Company, or Sandra Chairs. The lack of newspaper coverage of events at these contemporaneous companies suggests that their impact on Newton's industrial economy was less than that of the Prestige Chair Corporation. Prestige was frequently featured in the news, and the company's rapid expansion and relocation in the 1950s suggests that it was a significant economic driver in the town. Haupt Manufacturing Company began operations in 1947 and had a plant at 1631 North Main Avenue, which manufactured upholstered furniture. The company changed its name to Bracewell-Haupt Furniture Company in 1961, then to Bracewell Furniture Company after 1964 when Phil Bracewell acquired the interests of the original founders, Edward Haupt and James D. Barnes. The company had 85 employees in 1965, and its products reached the West Coast, Texas, Alaska, and Europe. In 1980, the Bracewell Furniture Company became a subsidiary of the Southern Furniture Company, which had around 900 employees and three factories in Catawba County and two in Iredell County.⁴⁷ The Newton Manufacturing Company operated a factory at 1722 North College Avenue. In 1964, the company raised its prices due to increased manufacturing costs, raised the wages of its employees, and made plans to expand its manufacturing facilities. In 1976, the firm merged with Horizons Inc.⁴⁸ The factory at 1722 North College Avenue appears to have been converted into another use after 1980 when the property was sold to private individuals.⁴⁹ The Sandra Chairs Company, established in 1955, operated in a concrete building at 1360 West Circle Street until 1958 when it sold the property to Sandy Bolin.⁵⁰

Prestige's expansion in the mid-1950s exemplified the furniture industry's dramatic growth. The 1955–1956 and 1961–1962 city directories for Newton indicate that the number of furniture plants in the city gradually increased from five plants in 1955 to nine plants in 1961.⁵¹ Prestige's plans to build a new factory left its original plant vacant. Prestige then leased the property to Knitmode Mills, a manufacturer of infants' and children's clothing.

⁴⁶ "Notable Neighbors," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 11, 1963, 8; see also "Broyhill Furniture Offers Newton Land Trade Deal," *Hickory Daily Record*, March 4, 1977.

⁴⁷ "Neighboring Notables," *Hickory Daily Record*, May 30, 1957, 10; see also "Newton Firm," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 16, 1961, 16; see also "Newton Plant Constructing Big Showroom," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 27, 1961, 1; see also "Bracewell-Haupt Employs 85," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 11, 1965, 18-H; see also "Furniture Company with County Plants Changes Hand," *Hickory Daily Record*, October 1, 1980, 16.

⁴⁸ "Newton Mfg. Co. to Raise Wage Scale Week Sept. 14," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 18, 1964, 1; see also "Office Files Incorporation Article," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 4, 1976, 2.

⁴⁹ Catawba County Register of Deeds, January 9, 1980, Deed Book 1223, 852.

⁵⁰ Catawba County Register of Deeds, January 28, 1956, Deed Book 511, 315; see also Catawba County Register of Deeds, May 6, 1958, Deed Book 555, 284.

⁵¹ The 1955–1956 city directory is the earliest available directory for Newton, and 1961–1962 is the latest available directory. Charles W. Miller, *Miller's Newton—Conover, N.C., City Directory [1955–1956]* (Asheville, North Carolina: Southern Directory Company, 1955), 238. Charles W. Miller, *Miller's Newton—Conover, N.C., City Directory [1961–1962]* (Asheville, North Carolina: Southern Directory Company, 1961), 277.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Knitmode Mills and Catawba County' Late Twentieth Century Growth, 1956-1971

The 1950s saw extraordinary growth in Catawba County, as post-war wealth increased mobility, business development, and construction across the Piedmont region. In 1954 alone, Catawba County saw the incorporation of 33 companies, 8 of which were industrial firms. These were Knitmode Mills, Longview Yarns, Hickory Batting Company, Sandra Chairs, Southern Elastic Corporation, Hartscoe, John's Hosiery Mill, and Stevens Hosiery Mill.⁵² Most of these companies were part of the textile industry, indicating the strength of this sector after World War II.

In June 1954, Knitmode Mills was incorporated in North Carolina as a subsidiary of New York City-based Charles Pindyck, Inc., with Pindyck as the company's president.⁵³ Pindyck continued to live in New York, leaving the daily operation of the Newton mill to vice president and general manager Jack Wysong.⁵⁴ Early in its history, Knitmode's principal method of operating was to lease existing plants rather than own property and manufacturing facilities.⁵⁵ After its incorporation, Knitmode Mills acquired the sewing operation—including the employees—of Carolina Mills Plant #4 in Newton, leasing the building. Originally known as the Catawba Cotton Mill, the building was situated along North Main Avenue between East 9th Street and East 10th Street. At its inception, Knitmode employed 125 people making knitted clothing for infants. Within a couple of years, Knitmode expanded its production space, leasing Clyde Fabrics Plant #2—formerly the Clyde Cotton Mills—between East 15th Street and East 16th Street. Spreading out its operation across two plants made coordination and communication across the company a challenge.⁵⁶

A niche segment of the textile industry, infants' and children's clothing manufacturing was a growing sector during the Baby Boom era after World War II. By the 1960s, this sector made up a significant percentage of the clothing industry nationwide. One of the largest manufacturers of baby clothes in the country, Pindyck manufactured clothing for children from birth to six years old. Among the many products that the company produced in Newton was the "Expand-a-Bag," an item for newborns and babies (Figure 4).

Two concurrent factors combined to enhance Knitmode's prospects. With its compounding success, the Prestige Chair Corporation had grown substantially in its first nine years. After constructing a third addition in April 1955, the company developed plans that summer to construct a larger furniture plant in Newton, leaving its existing facility vacant. In June 1955, company president Rome Jones paid \$75,000 for Clyde Fabrics Plant #2, which Knitmode was then leasing. Jones intended the acquisition to be an investment purchase, initially reporting that



Figure 4. Garment packaging for Pindyck's "Expand-a-Bag," which was manufactured by Knitmode Mills.

⁵² "33 Catawba Firms Issued State Charters Past Year," *Hickory Daily Record*, 19 January 1955, 19.

⁵³ The founder of Knitmode Mills, Charles Pindyck was born in Austria in 1907 as the seventh and youngest child of Emanuel and Helen Pindyck, Charles Pindyck was 16 years old when his family emigrated to the United States in 1923. Of Jewish heritage, his family lived in Queens, New York, where Charles worked in a grocery and dry goods store in the 1920s and 1930s. Upon enlistment in the Army in 1942, he documented his occupation as a purchasing agent and buyer. Pindyck was one of 33 immigrant servicemen stationed at Camp Gruber in Oklahoma who became naturalized U.S. citizens on March 12, 1943. In May 1944, he founded Charles Pindyck, Inc., manufacturers of infants' clothing. The company was headquartered at 366 Broadway in New York City. "32 Soldiers Become American Citizens," *Muskogee Daily Phoenix* (Muskogee, Oklahoma), March 13, 1943, 2.

⁵⁴ "Knitmode Mills Plan Yule Party," *Hickory Daily Record*, December 15, 1954, 20.

⁵⁵ "Newton Property Is Sold For \$75,000," *Hickory Daily Record*, June 9, 1959, 9; see also "Plant Is Bought," *The Charlotte News* (Charlotte, North Carolina), June 11, 1959, 27.

⁵⁶ "Newton Plant Has Acquired Sewing Room," *Hickory Daily Record*, July 11, 1954, 14. Both Catawba Cotton Mills and Clyde Cotton Mills have been demolished.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Knitmode would continue to occupy the building “for the time being.” In August 1955, the Prestige Chair Corporation began construction of its new 115,000-square-foot factory.⁵⁷ The new building was located 0.6 miles east of its existing plant, along East 19th Street near its intersection with Burris Road. That same month, Prestige executed a lease agreement that allowed Knitmode Mills to occupy the 1946 Prestige plant. Although it took effect on August 1, 1955, the lease stipulated that Knitmode would take possession of the property on July 1, 1956, giving Prestige time to complete its building campaign.⁵⁸ This arrangement allowed Knitmode to consolidate its operations into one building. The move gave Knitmode access to a facility that was larger and more up-to-date than the 1920s mills it had occupied for two years.

In 1959, Prestige sold its 1946 plant to Conover Realty Corporation—a holding company for Knitmode—for \$210,000.⁵⁹ The sale enabled Knitmode to consolidate its Newton operations in the former Prestige plant (**Figure 5**).⁶⁰ Charles Pindyck, Inc., Knitmode’s parent company, was headquartered at 112 West 34th Street in New York City. The company’s 1965–1966 wholesale catalogue advertised such items as baby buntings, an innovative sleeping bag that converted to a robe, and even mattress covers for bassinets and cribs, all of which were manufactured in Newton. The company sold these products by the dozen to various retailers and specialty stores.⁶¹



Figure 5: Knitmode Mills, as shown in a full-page advertisement in the *Hickory Daily Record*, September 11, 1965, page 149.

Although Knitmode experienced continued prosperity through the early 1960s, its fortunes were about to shift. Unaware of the impending financial impact of recent changes in federal monetary policy, Knitmode Mills gave its 300 employees a 5 percent wage increase in July 1965.⁶² But rising federal interest rates beginning in 1965 led to increased inflation nationwide. The cost of labor and materials rose substantially, and it was harder for retailers and manufacturers to obtain credit. Beginning in 1965, the “tight money era” had retail stores rethinking expansion plans and clothing manufacturers cutting back on production.⁶³

⁵⁷ “Work Begins Soon On New Prestige Chair Co. Plant,” *Hickory Daily Record*, 13 August 1955, 1.

⁵⁸ Catawba County Register of Deeds, August 1, 1955, Deed Book 521, 252.

⁵⁹ Catawba County Register of Deeds 1959, Deed Book 599, 98; see also “Plant Purchased,” *Greensboro Daily News*, August 6, 1959, 16; see also “Wysong, Others Buy Chair Plant,” *Hickory Daily Record*, August 1, 1959, 11.

⁶⁰ The Prestige Chair Corporation then demolished the Clyde Fabrics building 110 East 15th Street and built a new, one-story warehouse in its place.

⁶¹ Charles Pindyck, Inc. 1965–1966 *Charles Pindyck Catalogue* (New York: Charles Pindyck, Inc.), 1965; see also “Tight Money Hits Apparel Industry: Some Producers Stiffening Control on Accounts,” *New York Times* (New York, New York), October 2, 1966, 167.

⁶² “Newton Firm Reveals 5% Increase In Pay,” *Hickory Daily Record*, May 21, 1965, 1.

⁶³ “Tight Money Hits Apparel Industry: Some Producers Stiffening Control on Accounts,” *New York Times*, October 2, 1966, 167.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Illustrating this “tight money era” is the stagnated growth of the apparel and hosiery industry in the county. From 1958 to 1967, the number of “apparel and related products” establishments increased from 11 to 19 establishments. In 1967, around 1,900 people were employed in this industry.⁶⁴ By 1972, the number of “apparel, other textile products” establishments decreased to 18 establishments with a combined total of around 1,600 employees.⁶⁵ The late 1970s saw the hosiery industry evolve from primarily producing women’s pantyhose to the production of athletic socks.⁶⁶

Perhaps in an effort to diversify its product lines and better weather the “tight money era” of the mid-1960s, the company expanded into the manufacturing of children’s stuffed toys and bath accessories, all of which were advertised in its annual catalogue (**Figure 6**). Pindyck, Inc. operated three plants in Catawba County and neighboring Caldwell County at this time. The company had a 75,000 square-foot distribution center on Old Highway 70 east of Conover that held the company’s shipping facilities, customer service, and administrative offices.⁶⁷ Pindyck, Inc. had recently moved its main offices from New York City to Conover, leaving only a sales staff in New York. Pindyck’s subsidiary manufacturing plants were Knitmode Mills in Newton and the Hemlock Manufacturing Company at 10 Summit Avenue in nearby Granite Falls, Caldwell County. Of the company’s 710 employees, 650 worked at the three plants in Caldwell and Catawba Counties. By 1969, Knitmode Mills, Inc. had a staff of 360, most of whom were women who produced over 500 styles of baby clothes, including those branded as “Sno-Bunny” and “Kud-L-Nap.” The plant produced nearly 124,000 articles per week. The company’s clothes were sold at such retailers as Sears, Saks, and Macy’s. The Newton plant had 240 employees in January 1969 and increased its workforce by 30 percent to 360 by July of that year.⁶⁸



Figure 6. Cover of the 1965–1966 Pindyck catalogue.

In 1965, Charles Pindyck, Inc. became a publicly owned and traded company and developed a five-year plan to solidify its market share in infants’ and children’s clothing. In July 1966, Pindyck acquired the Perry Knitting Company and its subsidiary, the Glendale Knitting Corporation. The company employed approximately 500 workers across its three plants in Rochester, Morris, and Fillmore, New York. Founded in 1881, Perry Knitting was one of the nation’s oldest manufacturers of children’s sleepwear as well as underwear for children aged 1 to 14 years old.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ The Census of Manufactures describes “apparel and related products” industry as an industry group that “includes establishments producing clothing and related fabric products by cutting and sewing purchased woven or knit fabric.” The 1958 Census of Manufactures did not record the number and type of establishments in Newton. United States Bureau of the Census, *Census of Manufactures: 1947*, 689; see also United States Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Manufactures: 1958—Vol. 3: Area Statistics* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1961), 32-12; see also United States Bureau of the Census, *1967 Census of Manufactures*, 34-24.

⁶⁵ United States Bureau of the Census. *1972 Census of Manufactures*, Vol. 3: *Area Statistics, Part 2: Nebraska—Wyoming* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1976), 34-18.

⁶⁶ “Hosiery Industry Moves To Meet Fitness Boom,” *Durham Morning Herald*, September 22, 1978, 7.

⁶⁷ The distribution center is non-extant.

⁶⁸ “Babies Mean Business For Conover Garment Manufacturing Corporation,” *Hickory Daily Record*, July 4, 1969, 16.

⁶⁹ “Perry Knitting Firm Sold To Charles Pindyck, Co.,” *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, New York), July 19, 1966, 10.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

The Pindyck company's outlook appeared strong as late as July 1970, when the firm's executive team met with local managers in Catawba County in the first ever quarterly managers' meeting. The 48 people present represented the New York office, the Conover distribution center, Hemlock Manufacturing Company, and Knitmode Mills. Charles Pindyck asserted that the company's strong sales could be attributed to employee dedication and the company's high standards for quality.⁷⁰

Knitmode Mills was among the largest apparel-related employers in Newton. Other apparel and hosiery manufacturers in the city included Ridgeview Hosiery Mill, Bothwell Mills, Moretz Mills, Catawba Valley Finishing Company, Cilley Hosiery Mill, and Hutchens Hosiery Mills. Established in 1912, Ridgeview Hosiery Mills at 2101 North Main Avenue was a manufacturer of women's hosiery. It began operations in a brick cotton mill constructed in 1908 that was later adapted for use as a knitting mill. Over the course of the twentieth century, Ridgeview Hosiery Mills expanded its manufacturing facilities. Ridgeview Hosiery Mills exclusively produced women's pantyhose from the 1960s to the mid-1970s. At that time, the company employed 280 workers with a total annual payroll of \$1 million. Like other hosiery manufacturers across the state, Ridgeview Hosiery Mills introduced sports socks to its production line in the mid-1970s. Ridgeview Hosiery Mills later faced financial difficulties in the late 1990s, resulting in it declaring bankruptcy in 2000 and liquidating its assets in 2001.⁷¹

Established in 1946, Bothwell Mills occupied a plant at 403-413 North Ashe Avenue, which was formerly occupied by the Adrian Knitting Mill. At that time, Bothwell Mills anticipated employing from 125 to 150 workers. The firm was originally a manufacturer of men's half hose and anklets. By the late 1950s, Bothwell Mills introduced women's and children's hose to its production line. In 1958, Moretz Hosiery Mills acquired Bothwell Mills.⁷² Four years prior to the acquisition, Moretz Hosiery Mills purchased the property at 2017 North Stewart Avenue and established its finishing operations there. Moretz Hosiery Mills' output doubled as a result of the acquisition of Bothwell Mills. In 1960, Moretz Mill employed around 65 workers at its North Stewart Avenue plant and anticipated having 50 workers at its recently acquired North Ashe Avenue plant.⁷³ The manufacturing plant at North Ashe Avenue was demolished by 1998, and Moretz Mills sold its North Stewart Avenue property in 1984.⁷⁴ A glove manufacturer now occupies the North Stewart Avenue property.

The Catawba Valley Finishing Company was established in 1941 for the production of infants', children's and men's fine hosiery. The firm originally occupied the Yount Cotton Mill in Conover until 1942 when it moved to the C. M. Row Building in Newton. In 1952, Catawba Valley Finishing Company relocated to a brick, 60-by-140-foot factory built at a cost of \$25,000 at 1609 Northwest Boulevard. At that time, the firm employed around 100 workers in the manufacturing of children's anklets. The firm also did custom work for other plants, finishing their greige goods. In 1981, an \$18,400 addition was added to the plant.⁷⁵ Catawba Valley Finishing Company sold the property in 2017, and the property now functions as a welding facility.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ "Pindyck Firm Management, Execs Meet," *Hickory Daily Record*, July 9, 1970, 14.

⁷¹ "Newton Mill in 53rd Year of Service," *Hickory Daily Record*, September 9, 1965, 29; see also "Rise and fall of Ridgeview tied to life in Newton," *The Charlotte Observer*, January 28, 2001, 210.

⁷² "R. L. Bothwell Mill to Start," *Hickory Daily Record*, February 1, 1946, 9; see also "Mill Sale at Newton Announced," *The Charlotte Observer*, February 28, 1959, 9.

⁷³ "Newton Mill Set to Expand," *Hickory Daily Record*, May 24, 1960, 8; see also "Award Honors Hosiery Leader," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 16, 1988, 3.

⁷⁴ Catawba County Register of Deeds, July 17, 1984, Deed Book 1365, 737.

⁷⁵ "New Hosiery Plant Open at Newton," *The Charlotte News*, January 16, 1941, 3; see also "Newton Notes Much Moving, Some Building," *Hickory Daily Record*, February 19, 1942, 8; see also "Catawba Valley Finishing Company," *The Charlotte Observer*, February 28, 1950, 17-l; see also, "Hosiery Plant is Expected to be Completed by June," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 3, 1952, 24; see also "County Inspector OKs 15 Building Permits," *Hickory Daily Record*, October 17, 1981, 2.

⁷⁶ Catawba County Register of Deeds, February 22, 2017, Deed Book 3386, 1492.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Coming Apart at the Seams: Diversification and Dissolution, 1971–1982

Historian Gary R. Freeze characterized the last decades of the twentieth century as an “endlessly changing chain of ownership.”⁷⁷ The second half of the twentieth century saw scores of corporate mergers within the manufacturing sector as companies braced themselves against international competition fueled in part by cheaper labor costs overseas, particularly in Asia and Southeast Asia. Demand for new products drove a company’s success, and those that could not keep up with competition fell behind. Charles Pindyck, Inc. appears to have kept up with consumer demands for infants’ and children’s clothing and related products. But it is likely that increasing international competition, heavily driven by lower overseas labor costs, affected the company’s ability to sell its products in domestic markets. Perhaps a bellweather of changing fortunes, Knitmode Mills held a four-day sale of infants’ clothing in Newton on March 10–14, 1971.⁷⁸

In less than a month, Charles Pindyck, Inc. and its subsidiaries were in dire financial straits. On March 31, the Conover Realty Company executed a deed selling the “old Prestige Plant” and “old Pontiac Building” sites to the J. I. C. Corporation for \$250,000.⁷⁹ Charles Pindyck, Inc. ceased operations at its North Carolina plants on April 12, 1971.⁸⁰ Pindyck then laid off all the employees in its three southern locations.⁸¹ By late April, 1971, it was clear that the company would not pay its employees for the two weeks they worked leading up to the plant’s closure.⁸² Pindyck, Inc. also defaulted on other payments. In May 1971, a technology company called Data Forms and Systems sued Pindyck, Inc., stating that the manufacturer had failed to pay \$4,896.⁸³ Pindyck also owed \$11,000 in back taxes to Catawba County.⁸⁴ Illustrative of the parent company’s financial breakdown, shareholders of the Conover Realty Company, Inc., the holding company that owned the Knitmode Mills property, voted unanimously to dissolve the company and liquidate its holdings, including all property and leases.⁸⁵

Adding to Knitmode’s troubles, the U.S. Department of Labor filed suit against Pindyck, Inc., alleging violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Pindyck owed \$119,058 in back pay to 445 employees of the company’s three plants in North Carolina.⁸⁶ The court in Asheville continued an injunction against the company that forbade interstate shipping of goods produced by employees who made less than minimum wage and overtime. The *Hickory Daily Record* announced on June 30, 1971, that the firm’s employees in Newton, Conover, and Granite Falls would finally receive their back wages. The Hanes Corporation’s acquisition of the inventory and manufacturing equipment of Pindyck’s Hemlock Plant included paying the employees of the Granite Falls plant and Conover distribution center. Employees at the Knitmode plant in Newton would be paid by checks from the Department of Labor, which set up an account funded by Knitmode Mills.⁸⁷ Having

⁷⁷ Gary R. Freeze, *The Catawbans*, Vol. 3: *Boomers & Bypasses* (Newton, North Carolina: Catawba County, 2016), 411.

⁷⁸ Untitled advertisement for Knitmode Mills, *Hickory Daily Record*, March 9, 1971, 11.

⁷⁹ Catawba County Register of Deeds, March 31, 1971, Deed Book 969, 431; see also “\$250,000 Involved In Transaction,” *Hickory Daily Record*, April 15, 1971, 41. Although the deed wasn’t filed until April 14, 1971, it is apparent that Charles Pindyck, Inc., intended to close the plant before it ceased operations. This suggests that the company may have intentionally withheld pay from its employees for the final pay period. The J. I. C. Corporation was named for its shareholders: Prue H. Jones (wife of furniture manufacturer Rome Jones), James P. Isenhower, and Stanley J. Corne.

⁸⁰ “Hanes Plans To Operate Area Plant,” *Hickory Daily Record*, June 15, 1971, 1.

⁸¹ “600 Laid Off At Pindyck,” *New York Times*, April 23, 1971, 50.

⁸² “Pindyck Firms Face Federal Court Action,” *Hickory Daily Record*, April 28, 1971, 1.

⁸³ “Data Forms Company Sues Pindyck Firm,” *Hickory Daily Record*, May 21, 1971, 18.

⁸⁴ “Explains Request,” *Hickory Daily Record*, May 11, 1972, 8. In 1972, the company’s settlement with the county permitted Pindyck to pay 35 percent of what it owed.

⁸⁵ “Conover Realty Company Files Dissolution Papers,” *Hickory Daily Record*, May 29, 1971, 20.

⁸⁶ The third plant was in Granite Falls, Caldwell County.

⁸⁷ “Judge Grants Shipment Bar Against Firm,” *Hickory Daily Record*, May 14, 1971, 1.; see also “Pindyck Case Hearing Set In Asheville,” *Hickory Daily Record*, June 9, 1971, 26; see also “Week’s Delay Granted For Pindyck To Report,” *Hickory Daily Record*, June 22, 1971, 1; see also “Back Wages of Pindyck Being Paid,” *Hickory Daily Record*, June 30, 1971, 1; see also “Hanes Negotiates For Company,” *Goldsboro News-Argus* (Goldsboro, North Carolina), August 1, 1971, 7; see also “Hanes Plans To Operate Area Plant,” *Hickory Daily Record*, June 15, 1971, 1; see also “Cases Against Pindyck Firms Now Dismissed,” *Hickory Daily Record*, August 4, 1971, 44.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

dissolved, Conover Realty closed the Knitmode Mills plant and sold the Hemlock plant in Granite Falls to the Hanes Corporation. Pindyck ended its business dealings in the southern U.S.⁸⁸

The J. I. C. Corporation, which purchased the Knitmode Mills property, was organized in early April 1971. The company's purpose was to "deal in improved and unimproved real properties, to build houses and buildings and to act as a real estate agency, brokerage business, attorney and to manufacture and sell furniture at retail or wholesale prices." Headed by Stanley J. Corne of Newton, the company issued 100,000 shares. The other two incorporators were Corne's brother-in-law, Larry W. Pitts of Newton, and Billie E. Rink of the nearby community of Sherrills Ford.⁸⁹ Corne and Pitts were both attorneys in Newton and were related.

Furniture Redux, 1982–Present

It is not clear who occupied the Prestige Chair Corporation-Knitmode Mills buildings immediately following the property's sale to the J. I. C. Corporation in 1971. In 1982, the Claremont-based manufacturer Pinnacle Furniture Company, Inc. sold its plant and moved to the former Knitmode Mills plant.⁹⁰ Founded in 1966, Pinnacle had occupied a metal building on U.S. 70 in Claremont since it was established. Pinnacle manufactured upholstered furniture, including sofas, love seats, and chairs. Although Pinnacle owned its former plant in Claremont, the company initially leased the former Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant from the J. I. C. Corporation. In September 1984, J. I. C. Corporation sold the property to Stanley J. Corne, James P. Isenhower, and Prue H. Jones, who were operating as J. I. C. Partnership.⁹¹ Two years later, the Pinnacle Furniture Company purchased the tract, including both the "old Prestige plant site" and the "old Pontiac building site" from the J. I. C. Partnership.⁹² Pinnacle continued to manufacture furniture into the early 2000s. The company was foreclosed upon in 2015.⁹³ The buildings sat vacant for approximately 10 years. The current owner is 20 E 19th Street, LLC.

Postscript: The State of Newton's Industrial Plants in 2026

Once heavily industrial, most of Newton's manufacturing facilities had closed by 2010, and some of the buildings were demolished. The Sandra Chairs Company was among the first to be lost when it was demolished in 1984. The original portion of the Lenoir Chair Company Plant No. 2—originally the Newton Furniture Company—was demolished around 2008, and only the 1978 addition is extant.⁹⁴ Brookford Mills was demolished between April 2014 and December 2015. Catawba Cotton Mill Yarn Mill was demolished between 2014 and 2016. The two-story Clyde Cotton Mills, at the intersection of North Main Avenue and East 15th Street, was typical of many cotton mills constructed across North Carolina in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was demolished and rebuilt circa 1960.⁹⁵

⁸⁸ In the early 1970s, the company diversified its holdings by expanding into other industries. It acquired the J. L. Thompson Rivet Corporation of Waltham, Massachusetts; the Allen Shoe Manufacturing Company of Norwich, Connecticut; the Sonotone Corporation of Elmsford, New York; the Burgess Batter Company's plants in the U.S. and Canada; and Tri-R Chemicals of Freeport, Illinois. In 1975, Pindyck acquired the Kono Division of Beatrice Foods, which made eyeglass frames and lenses, and then moved the company's operations from Charleston, South Carolina, to Freeport, Illinois. "Charles Pindyck, Inc.," *The Standard-Star* (New Rochelle, New York), October 18, 1974, 4; see also "Norwich Firm Acquisition Is Announced," *The Day* (New London, Connecticut), June 19, 1972, 9; see also "Burgess parent firm sold; Falls plant sale pending," *Niagra Falls Review* (Ontario, Canada), October 22, 1974, 9; see also "Pindyck adds two subsidiaries," *The Standard-Star*, April 9, 1975, 32. "Eyeglass Making Firm Moving Operation To Freeport Plant," *Freeport Journal-Standard* (Freeport, Illinois), April 1, 1975, 8.

⁸⁹ "2 Firms File Articles With Register Of Deeds," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 17, 1971, 10.

⁹⁰ "Box Company Plans Plant In Claremont," *Hickory Daily Record*, 12 November 1981, 1.

⁹¹ Catawba County Register of Deeds, September 10, 1984, Deed Book 1382, 694.

⁹² Catawba County Register of Deeds, January 23, 1986, Deed Book 1429, 934.

⁹³ "Legal Notices," *Hickory Daily Record*, May 18, 2015, 17.

⁹⁴ "Notable Neighbors," *Hickory Daily Record*, April 11, 1963, 8; see also "Broyhill Furniture Offers Newton Land Trade Deal," *Hickory Daily Record*, March 4, 1977.

⁹⁵ "Clyde Mill, One Of Newton's Most Substantial Enterprises," *The Charlotte News*, February 21, 1917, 30.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

In addition to Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills, six industrial plants dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century are extant in Newton. The earliest of Newton’s extant mills is Newton Cotton Mills, on East 11th Street between North College Avenue and North Caldwell Avenue. Established in 1882, Newton Cotton Mills began production the following year and enlarged its facility in 1886, 1887, and 1888. The company operated nearly 5,000 spindles by the end of 1888.⁹⁶ The company enlarged the building again in the late spring and early summer of 1893.⁹⁷ Likely owing to the Panic of 1893, the company went into receivership in August of that year. The Heath Brothers of Charlotte acquired the property in April 1894, upgrading the machinery and constructed a 1,200-square-foot addition.⁹⁸ Mecklenburg Mills, a company based in Charlotte, acquired the property in the early twentieth century and substantially enlarged the building to the south. Chattanooga-based Dixie Yarns owned the property in the late twentieth century before its 1995 sale to the Pillowtex Corporation, which shuttered the plant in the early 2000s.⁹⁹ The property is now owned by Schwarz & Schwarz, LLC, a subsidiary of the Asheboro, North Carolina-based real estate company Schwarz Properties. The Newton Cotton Mills building appears to be largely intact. The original 1883 mill remains and has numerous additions and alterations constructed through the mid-twentieth century. Nearly all of the windows have been infilled with brick. Because of the extensive alterations over a 70-year period, the form of the original mill is not discernable from the outside.

The Warlick Manufacturing Company was established in 1925 for the production of rayon cloth. The company constructed its textile mill on North College Avenue between East 4th Street and East 5th Street and built an addition in 1930 to house additional looms.¹⁰⁰ The Warlick Manufacturing Company went into receivership in the summer of 1932.¹⁰¹ John Cilley Jr., who had been receiver of the Warlick Manufacturing Company’s defunct rayon plant, was the President of Mid-State Cloth Mills. In 1933, Mid-State Cloth Mills constructed a large, two-story, brick addition to house the winding division. The plant was enlarged again in 1939 with the construction of a two-story, 25,000-square-foot addition.¹⁰² In January 1940, Greensboro-based Burlington Mills acquired the Mid-State Cloth Mills plant in Newton.¹⁰³ It appears as though textile manufacturing on the property ceased in the mid-1980s. Today, the building is a self-storage facility with the interior partitioned by an extensive network of metal storage units.

Established in 1912, Ridgeview Hosiery Mills is an extant knitting mill to the north of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills. The company first produced knitted cotton stockings in its 1907–1908 factory whose size was doubled in 1925. In 1928, Ridgeview expanded into the production of full-fashioned rayon hosiery with the construction of a second mill that was later enlarged in 1935 and 1968. Ridgeview Hosiery Mills was a significant industrial enterprise in Newton and operated continuously until the turn of the twenty-first century. The property retains its original 1907 – 1908 knitting mill as well as the 1928 full-fashioned hosiery mill, with additions to both buildings that illustrate the company’s evolution. The property also retains a circa-1920 warehouse, circa-1930 laboratory, and circa-1960 boiler house.

⁹⁶ “State News,” *The Charlotte Observer*, February 13, 1883, 4; see also “Newton Cotton Mills are Booming,” *The Charlotte Observer*, June 18, 1887, 1; see also “North Carolina’s Cotton Mills,” *The Charlotte Observer*, February 8, 1888, 2; see also “State News,” *The Charlotte Observer*, March 7, 1888, 2; see also “Newton Cotton Mills,” *The Press and Carolinian* (Hickory, North Carolina), March 8, 1888, 1.

⁹⁷ “Local News,” *The Newton Enterprise*, February 17, 1893, 3.

⁹⁸ “State News,” *The Statesville Record and Landmark*, August 24, 1893, 1; see also “Notice! Public Sale of Newton Cotton Mills!” *The Charlotte Observer*, February 27, 1894, 1; see also “Pithy News Items,” *The Marion Record* (Marion, North Carolina), May 18, 1894, 2; see also “The Newton Cotton Mill,” *The Charlotte Observer*, September 7, 1894, 4.

⁹⁹ “City’s got the power to prosper,” *Hickory Daily Record*, January 25, 2004, 7.

¹⁰⁰ “Charters Issued By The Secretary,” *The Asheville Citizen*, January 1, 1926, 11; see also “More Looms,” *The Charlotte Observer*, August 3, 1930, 31.

¹⁰¹ “Jno. Cilley, Jr. Made Receiver For Silk Mill,” *Hickory Daily Record*, July 18, 1932, 6.

¹⁰² “Cilley Heads Company,” *Hickory Daily Record*, November 21, 1932, 1; see also “N.Y. Men Purchase Newton Concern,” *The Charlotte News*, November 21, 1932, 1; see also “Newton Mill Raises Wages, Adds To Plant,” *Hickory Daily Record*, May 21, 1933, 3; see also “Mid-State Mill To Be Doubled,” *Hickory Daily Record*, February 21, 1939, 8.

¹⁰³ “Unit At Newton Sold To Burlington Mills,” *Greensboro Daily News*, January 9, 1940, 16.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Established in 1916, the Newton Glove Manufacturing Company manufactured cotton and leather work gloves.¹⁰⁴ The company moved into a new plant in 1926.¹⁰⁵ During World War II, the company manufactured poison gas-resistant gloves for the Army. During the 1940s, the company expanded its footprint by the construction of an office building and a large addition to its manufacturing space.¹⁰⁶ In 1950, the Newton Glove Manufacturing Company announced plans to construct a new factory at North Ashe Avenue between West 10th Street and West 11th Street.¹⁰⁷ The following year, the company more than doubled the building's size by constructing a large addition that extended south toward West 9th Street.¹⁰⁸ Newton Glove continued to operate as an independent company until 1973, when it was acquired by the Massachusetts-based Norton Company.¹⁰⁹ The property is now home to Newton Coley, a manufacturer of upholstered furniture. The property retains the overall size and form that it had in the 1950s but has been substantially altered since the 1970s. Most of the windows have been infilled with brick, and a loading dock has been added to the west elevation along Ashe Street. On the north end of the building, it retains five large window openings that are filled with glass block that appears to date to the early 1950s construction.

Most of these properties have been altered to a greater degree than Prestige Furniture Corporation–Knitmode Mills, which retains strong integrity to its Period of Significance. Newton Cotton Mills was built in 1883 and expanded over several construction phases in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The 1907–1908 Ridgeview Hosiery Mills was similarly enlarged over several building campaigns through the mid-1900s as the company's production evolved to meet changing market demands and accommodate more and newer machinery. The Warlick Manufacturing Company–Mid-State Cloth Mills–Burlington Mills building was built in 1925 and expanded in 1930 before new additions were built by its subsequent owners. These mills experienced more additions because they were constructed much earlier than the nominated property and continued to operate through successive periods of ownership and changing production. Although the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant was converted from furniture manufacturing to textile production, its mid-twentieth century construction consisted of large, open spaces that easily accommodated Knitmode's sewing operations. The Newton Glove Manufacturing Company stands out as a contemporaneous mill constructed in the 1950s, as the glove maker increased its production space by building an entirely new plant rather than adding onto its original building. Each of these properties highlights the constant physical change in response to economic forces within industrial settings. Like Prestige Furniture Corporation–Knitmode Mills, the Newton Cotton Mills and Ridgeview Hosiery Mills buildings are currently vacant. The Newton Glove Manufacturing Company was adapted for use as a furniture factory in the late twentieth century. The Warlick Manufacturing Company–Mid-State Cloth Mills–Burlington Mills building has been substantially altered by its conversion to a self-storage facility.

In 1946, the Haupt Manufacturing Company built a two-story brick factory on North Main Street between East 16th and East 17th streets and began operations the following year. The factory was enlarged with rear and side additions in the mid-twentieth century. The facility retains most of its historic massing, with the exception of the loss of a relatively small circa-1960s addition at the rear. Most of the fenestration and metal sashes in the windows appear to be intact. The Haupt Manufacturing Company is identifiable as a mid-twentieth-century manufacturing facility and has comparable integrity to the Prestige Furniture Corporation–Knitmode Mills Plant.

The Newton Manufacturing Company factory is located on North College Avenue between East 17th and East 18th streets. It retains its historic massing, but the roof appears to be in poor condition based on aerial photographs. The Prestige

¹⁰⁴ "Newton Glove Factory In Full Operation," *The Charlotte Observer*, June 2, 1916, 2.

¹⁰⁵ "Newton In 1926 Had Good Steady Growth," *Greensboro Daily News*, February 13, 1927, 55. The location of this plant is not presently known.

¹⁰⁶ "Newton Notes Much Moving, Some Building," *Hickory Daily Record*, February 19, 1942, 8; see also "Executives Plan To Invest Greater Sum In Carolina's Mills," *Durham Morning Herald*, September 29, 1945, 3; see also "Newton Glove Maps Addition," *Hickory Daily Record*, August 2, 1946, 5.

¹⁰⁷ "Newton Glove Company Is Planning Expansion," *Hickory Daily Record*, October 13, 1950, 12.

¹⁰⁸ "New Plant Newton Glove Company," *Hickory Daily Record*, February 15, 1952, 5.

¹⁰⁹ "Norton Co., Massachusetts, Acquires Newton Glove Inc." *Hickory Daily Record*, June 1, 1973, 1.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Furniture Corporation–Knitmode Mills Plant appears to have higher integrity than the Newton Manufacturing Company factory.

All of these facilities illustrate the universality of industrial building design that allowed industry to thrive in Newton, even when a particular company closed or moved to a new site. The Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant’s large size and generally open floor plan made it uniquely suitable for two different manufacturing firms to use the property for production of very different product lines.

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significant association with manufacturing in Newton, Catawba County, from 1946 to 1971. In comparison to the extant mills that operated after World War II in Newton, Prestige Furniture Corporation–Knitmode Mills is an outstanding and highly intact example of an industrial building from a period when Newton’s explosive industrial growth was fueled by post-war economic expansion. The mill was vacant from 1971 to 1982, when it returned to furniture manufacturing under the ownership of the Pinnacle Furniture Company. Particularly in comparison to the Warlick Manufacturing Company–Mid-State Cloth Mills–Burlington Mills building, which is now used as a self-storage facility, Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills retains stronger integrity of design, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling. Its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship is favorably comparable to that of Newton Cotton Mills and the Newton Glove Manufacturing Company.

Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

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Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Catawba County, North Carolina

Name of Property

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Catawba County, North Carolina

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Prestige Chair Corporation—Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

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Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Catawba County, North Carolina

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)

____ previously listed in the National Register

____ previously determined eligible by the National Register

____ designated a National Historic Landmark

____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

____ Other State agency

____ Federal agency

____ Local government

____ University

____ Other

Name of repository: **Office of Archives & History;**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

CT1837

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills
Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.89 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum, if other than WGS

A 35.681446 -81.217527
Latitude Longitude

B _____
Latitude Longitude

C _____
Latitude Longitude

D _____
Latitude Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The National Register boundary of Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills is as follows:

Beginning at a concrete monument at the Southeast corner of the intersection of the 100.00 feet right of way for East 20th Street with the right of way of North Main Avenue and running with the Southern margin of the right of way for East 20th Street South 74° 30' East 492.03 feet to an iron pin in the Southern Railroad main line; thence South 17° 15' West 5.2 feet to an iron pin in Southern Railroad's main line; thence South 88° 58' West crossing a sidetrack 20.3 feet to an iron pin; thence South 16° 15' West 297.00 feet to an iron pin; thence South 25° 06' 07" West 64.47 feet to an iron pin in the Northern margin of the right of way for East 19th Street; thence with the Northern margin of the right of way of East 19th Street North 75° 18' 24" West 359.5 feet to an iron pin at the Northeast corner of the intersection of the right of way for East 19th Street with the right of way for North Main Avenue; thence with the Eastern margin of the right of way for North Main Avenue, North 6° 44' 07" East 34.43 feet to an iron pin; thence North 4° 15' 42" East 30.23 feet to an iron pin; thence 1° 33' 02" East 35.70 feet to an iron pin; thence North 1° 15' 46" West 56.3 feet to an iron pin; thence North 3° 13' East 87.8 feet to an iron pin; thence North 1° 59' West 145.27 feet to the beginning.¹¹⁰

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries of the nominated property encompass 2.89 acres and include the two buildings historically associated with Prestige Furniture Corporation–Knitmode Mills during the Period of Significance of 1946–1971. There are no other buildings in the vicinity historically associated with the Prestige Furniture Corporation or Knitmode Mills. All other resources in the vicinity are unrelated to the nominated property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Annie McDonald, Debbie Bevin, and Pofue Yang, Architectural Historians
organization Richard Grubb & Associates date May 4, 2026
street & number 525 Wait Avenue telephone 540.454.3163
city or town Wake Forest state NC zip code 27587
e-mail amcdonald@rgaincorporated.com

¹¹⁰ Catawba County Register of Deeds, May 15, 2025, Deed Book 3952, 95–96.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

City or Vicinity: Newton

County: Catawba County

State: North Carolina

Photographer: Debbie Bevin, Richard Grubb & Associates

Date Photographed: April 8, 2025

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Photo 1 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0001

View northeast of the south elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant, showing the administrative offices in the foreground.

Photo 2 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0002

View north of the main entrance on the south elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.

Photo 3 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0003

View northwest of the south elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant, showing the finished products storage area.

Photo 4 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0004

View northeast of the south elevation of the circa-1960 addition to the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.

Photo 5 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0005

View northeast of the west elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills Plant, showing the circa-1982 addition in the background.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Photo 6 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0006

View southeast of the west elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant, showing the circa 1982 addition to the left.

Photo 7 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0007

View east of the circa 1982 addition to the west elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.

Photo 8 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0008

View east of the west elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant north of the circa-1982 addition.

Photo 9 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0009

View south of the north elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.

Photo 10 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0010

View southwest of the east elevation of the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.

Photo 11 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0011

View south of the south elevation entrances to the offices from 19th Street.

Photo 12 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0012

View southwest of the southwest corner office.

Photo 13 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0013

View east of an office, showing windows into the southwest corner office (right) and entranceway (left).

Photo 14 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0014

View southwest of the finished products storage area, showing the circa-1982 offices.

Photo 15 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0015

View southwest of a circa-1982 office in the finished products storage area, showing the original window to the left.

Photo 16 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0016

View northwest of the lower level of the original woodworking department in the 1946–1947 building.

Photo 17 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0017

View northeast of the lower level of the original woodworking department in the 1946–1947 building, looking toward the October 1953 addition.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Photo 18 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0018

View north of the lower level of the 1953 addition.

Photo 19 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0019

View southeast of the stairs leading from the woodworking department to the original upholstery department and offices in the 1946–1947 building.

Photo 20 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0020

View northwest of the second floor of the 1953 additions.

Photo 21 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0021

View east of the 1955 addition.

Photo 22 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0022

View south of the north elevation of the warehouse.

Photo 23 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0023

View southeast of the west elevation of the warehouse, showing a display window in the north end of the elevation.

Photo 24 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0024

View northeast of the west elevation of the warehouse.

Photo 25 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0025

View north of the south elevation of the warehouse.

Photo 26 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0026

View northwest of the east elevation of the warehouse.

Photo 27 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0027

View south of the north elevation of the circa-1960 hyphen connecting the warehouse to the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.

Photo 28 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0028

View north of the main entrance to the warehouse.

Photo 29 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0029

View east, showing the late twentieth-century office subdivision at the north end of the warehouse.

Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills

Name of Property

Catawba County, North Carolina

County and State

Photo 30 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0030

View north of the large room at the northwest corner of the warehouse.

Photo 31 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0031

View northwest of the interior of the warehouse, showing the original partition wall between the administrative space and the showroom.

Photo 32 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0032

View east of the interior of the warehouse.

Photo 33 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0033

View southwest of the west wall in the warehouse.

Photo 34 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0034

View northeast of the east end of the hyphen connecting the warehouse to the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.

Photo 35 of 35.

NC_Catawba_PrestigeChairCorporationKnitmodeMills_0035

View east of the hyphen connecting the warehouse to the Prestige Chair Corporation–Knitmode Mills plant.