

# HOKE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY, PHASE III: THE CITY OF RAEFORD

HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA



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# Hoke County Comprehensive Architectural Survey, Phase III: The City of Raeford

Hoke County, North Carolina

Report submitted to:

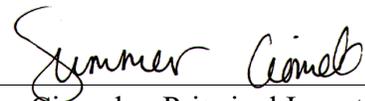
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All images in the report were produced by New South Associates, Inc. during the Phase III survey unless otherwise specified in the captions.

Cover Art: Historic postcard depicting Upchurch High School, circa 1965. Postcard owned by consultant, Brittany Hyder.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

On September 14, 2018, Hurricane Florence made landfall in North Carolina. Within the course of a few days, several inches of rain fell throughout the state—up to 30 inches in some locations—causing widespread flooding and substantial wind damage in some areas. Following the disaster, 61 of the state’s counties were granted emergency assistance for public recovery projects, while residents of 34 counties were granted eligibility for individual assistance provided to citizens.<sup>1</sup> Hoke County, which experienced rain- and wind-related damage throughout the county, was deemed eligible for both types of assistance.<sup>2</sup>

Because of these disaster-related designations, Hoke County was made eligible for funds provided through the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPF) program, which is authorized by Congress and funded from federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf. The grant program is designed to address disaster-related historic property needs unmet through other funding sources. In 2018, six states and one territory, including North Carolina, received grants from the ESHPF program after incurring significant damage from Hurricanes Florence and Michael, as well as Typhoon Yutu. The grant North Carolina received will support repair and recovery of properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Funding for these repair and recovery projects has been made available through subgrants to local governments and nonprofit organizations, such as Mill Prong Preservation, Inc., in Hoke County. The State of North Carolina also allocated some of this funding to support the countywide documentation of historic resources in six counties, including Hoke County. These surveys will help ensure North Carolina’s treasured cultural resources are included in future resiliency planning efforts.

Under contract with the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) as part of the ESHPF grant program, New South Associates, Inc. (NSA) has prepared this Phase III Architectural Survey Report as the final part of a three-part effort to complete a countywide intensive survey of the historic architectural resources of Hoke County. Phase III focused on the city of Raeford, which is the Hoke County seat and the only municipality in the county. In addition to intensive survey, the project recorded and assessed storm damage to historic resources in the county from Hurricane Florence.

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<sup>1</sup> North Carolina Department of Public Safety, “Emergency Declarations,” North Carolina Department of Public Safety, <https://www.ncdps.gov/our-organization/emergency-management/pastdisasters/hurricane-florence-2018/emergency-declarations> (accessed November 18, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Charles Jacob, Emergency Manager, Hoke County, Personal Communication, November 10, 2021.

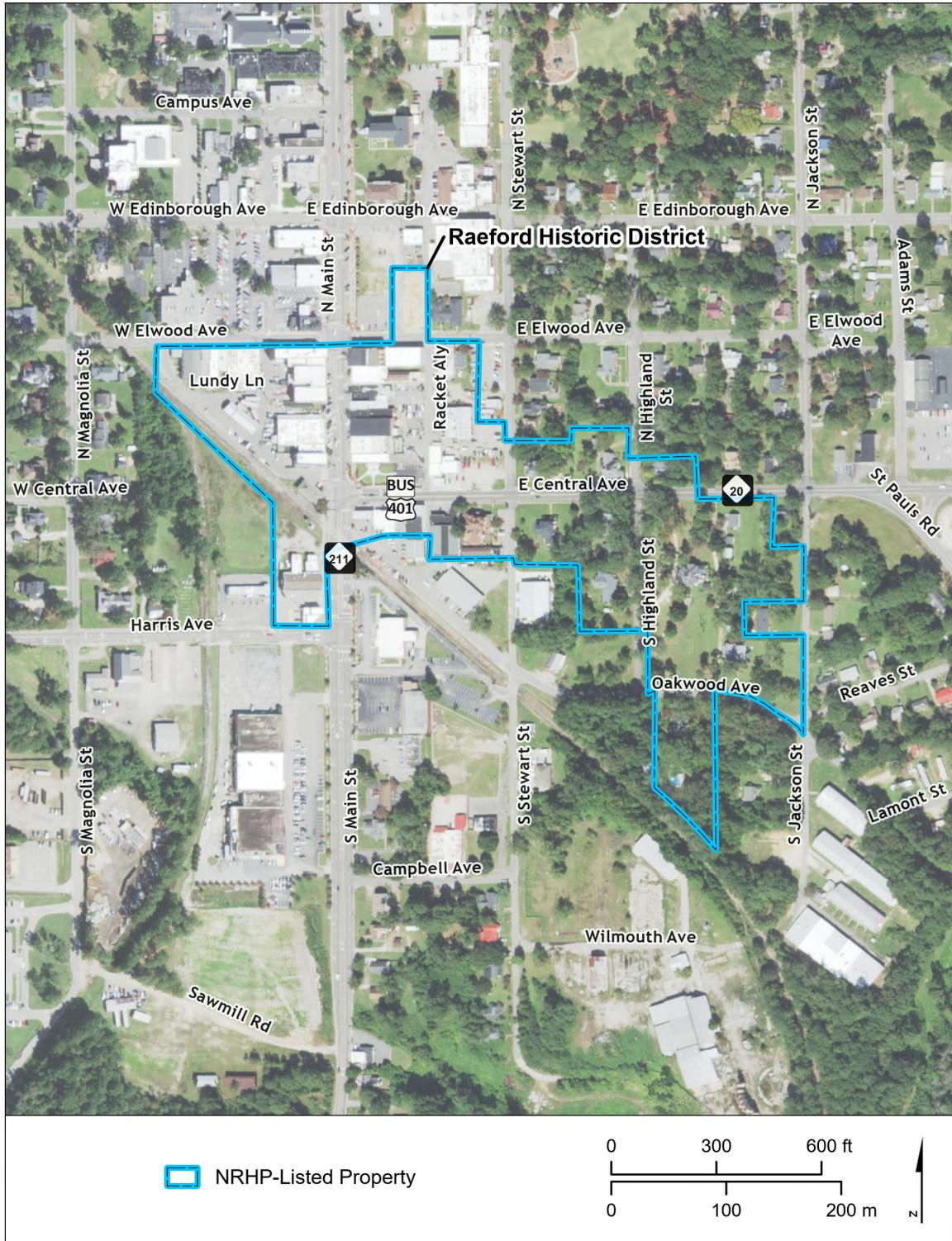
## METHODS

Prior to the comprehensive architectural survey, Hoke County had not been the subject of an intensive architectural survey or been included in regional reconnaissance surveys. The HPO had, over the years, assigned only 44 survey site numbers to historic properties in Hoke County—fewer than in any other county in North Carolina. Many were recorded in 1975 as part of fieldwork Ruth Little-Stokes conducted as an employee of the HPO. Of these previously documented properties, three fall within the Fort Bragg Military Reservation. One individual property in Raeford, the Hoke County Courthouse (HK0001, NR 1979) is listed in the NRHP, and the Raeford Historic District (HK0027, NR 2006; Figure 1), which centers around the city’s commercial core, is Hoke County’s only National Register Historic District. As of 2021, two historic properties in the Raeford city limits had been added to North Carolina’s National Register Study List: the Bluemont Hotel (HK0023, SL 1989) and the John W. McLauchlin House (HK0025, SL 2002). The Bluemont Hotel has since been demolished, and the McLauchlin House was listed in the NRHP as a contributing building within the Raeford Historic District.

The Hoke County Comprehensive Architectural Survey was conducted in three phases. Phase I, the scoping phase, began in August 2021 and included the resurvey of previously documented properties, identification of properties to be intensively surveyed in Phases II and III, and notes about visible storm damage. Research was conducted at the Raeford-Hoke Museum, the Hoke County Public Library, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Libraries, the HPO, North Carolina Maps at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, State Archives of North Carolina Digital Collections, the NC GenWeb Project, and the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center. During Phase II, NSA comprehensively surveyed the county’s rural buildings and structures and developed a historic context for rural Hoke County centered on the county’s agricultural history. Phase III involved survey of newly identified sites in the county seat of Raeford. All surveyed properties were documented with high-resolution digital photographs and recorded using the HPO’s Historic Property Data Entry Form and the CRSurveyor App. Research was ongoing, and reports were prepared after each phase of the project.

NSA conducted fieldwork for Phase III of the comprehensive survey in March 2023. NSA architectural historians Brittany Hyder and Renéé Donnell revisited the properties in the Raeford Historic District recorded in 2006 using the HPO’s blockface system. Blockface records document multiple buildings within a city block on one survey site form and assign the block a single survey site number. In consultation with the HPO, NSA updated forms for each of the 17 blocks with high-resolution digital photographs and noted significant alterations or demolitions.

Figure 1. Raeford Historic District (HK0027, NR 2006)



Basemap: USA NAIP Imagery (2020)

NSA also documented urban properties selected for intensive study during Phase I. Intensively surveyed properties were found to be architecturally distinctive, retaining most of their original historic materials, and/or representative of the city's development. During fieldwork, NSA architectural historians gathered all data necessary to complete the HPO's survey files, including high-resolution photographs, sketch site plans, and notes on materials, architectural features, and historic landscapes. Data was collected onsite using NSA's FileMaker database, which conforms to the HPO's Historic Property Data Entry Form (Access database) and provides the framework for the HPO survey files. All photographs for the Phase III survey were taken in March or July 2023 unless otherwise noted. Evidence of storm damage and changes to the properties were noted in the CRSurveyor Collector Application tailored to Hoke County.

Prior to fieldwork, NSA consulted with the Survey and National Register Branch of the HPO to establish a survey approach. Because Raeford's commercial core had been thoroughly surveyed when the 2006 Raeford Historic District nomination was being prepared, NSA focused their efforts beyond the commercial center to the residential and industrial areas that illustrate the city's twentieth-century development. Because the 2006 nomination discusses the founding of Raeford and the establishment and growth of its historic center between the 1890s and 1950s, historic contexts developed for the Phase III survey were limited to Raeford's industrial development, residential architecture, and local institutions history.

Eighty-two resources, including dwellings, schools, civic and fraternal buildings, churches, manufacturing buildings, and stores, were documented during Phase III. When appropriate, surveyors used the HPO's District/Neighborhood/Area (D/N/A) form to document residential areas with definable geographic boundaries or shared developmental histories. Of the 82 resources surveyed, four were recorded using the D/N/A form: Sunset Hills (HK0161), Westside Heights (HK0160), Robbins Heights (HK0162), and the Donaldson Avenue subdivision (HK0179). In addition to these areas, NSA architectural historians used the D/N/A form to document the Raeford Residential Historic District (HK0175, SL 2023).

Prior to field survey, NSA historians reviewed historic maps, plats, and census records to identify Raeford's historic residential core. NSA targeted a 147-acre residential area roughly bounded by Seventh Avenue, Harris Avenue, Donaldson Avenue, Stewart Street, Bethel Road, and Fulton Street. Surrounding Raeford's commercial core, this section of the city contains approximately 135 dwellings constructed between 1880 and 1965 by the city's middle-class professionals and wealthy industrialists. In consultation with the HPO, NSA determined that this section of Raeford would be documented as a potential historic district using the D/N/A form. With some exceptions, intensive survey in this section of Raeford was limited to the most intact representatives of popular

house types or properties that illustrated shifts in design and development. Thirty-three properties in the Raeford Residential Historic District were intensively surveyed and assigned a unique survey site number. NSA photographed primary streetscapes throughout the potential district.

## SURVEY SUMMARY

A full list of sites recorded during the Phase III survey is included in Appendix A. Sites recommended for the NC Study List are outlined in Chapter III.

Phase III by the numbers:

- Existing blockface records updated: 10
- Existing district record updated: 1
- New survey records created: 82, including 5 D/N/A forms

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## II. HISTORIC CONTEXTS

### RAEFORD BECOMES A CITY

Raeford is nestled almost centrally within Hoke County’s current boundary at the intersection of two distinct ecological regions. As explored in Phase I of the comprehensive architectural survey, Turnpike Road, which bisects the northwest corner of the city limits, forms the unofficial boundary between the Sandhills in northwest Hoke County and the outer Coastal Plain in the south and east.<sup>3</sup> Named the county seat upon Hoke County’s founding in 1911, Raeford was chartered in 1901 and comprises a rectangular grid centered on the intersection of Central Avenue (U.S. Highway 401 Business) and the city’s primary north-south thoroughfare, Main Street. Rockfish Creek, a tributary of the Cape Fear River, forms the city’s westernmost border. Raeford is positioned about equidistant from Fayetteville, the Cumberland County seat, and Laurinburg, the Scotland County seat. As of 2020, Raeford had a population of 4,943 residents.<sup>4</sup>

At the city’s commercial core, Raeford’s Main Street measures about 80 feet wide from curb to curb. The route begins at U.S. Highway 401 and travels south, becoming Red Springs Road (NC 211) south of the Raeford city limits.<sup>5</sup> At its initial charter, the city of Raeford encompassed three-quarters of a mile in each direction from the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue. Areas to the north and west of the city center were annexed in 1964 and 1972 to incorporate an extension of Prospect Avenue that provided access to the former Robbins Mill (HK0165).<sup>6</sup> Today, Raeford encompasses 4.3 square miles.<sup>7</sup> The Aberdeen and Rockfish (A&R) Railroad (1892) travels diagonally through the town, diverging at the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue, where it forms two spur lines. One spur line travels southeast toward Dundarrach before turning sharply toward Fayetteville in Cumberland County; the other travels southeast to Wagram in Scotland County.

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<sup>3</sup> E. S. Vanatta et al., *Soil Survey of Hoke County, North Carolina* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1921), 5, [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_MANUSCRIPTS/north\\_carolina/hokeNC1921/hokeNC1921.pdf](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/north_carolina/hokeNC1921/hokeNC1921.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> DataUSA, “Raeford, NC,” DataUSA, 2020, <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/raeford-nc#>.

<sup>5</sup> Carl Goerch, “Raeford Goes into High,” *The State: A Weekly Survey of North Carolina*, October 21, 1950, North Carolina Digital Collections, <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/state/831038?item=831106>.

<sup>6</sup> Sarah Woodard David and Jennifer F. Martin, “Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination,” 2006, 37, <https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/HK0027.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> World Population Review, “Raeford, North Carolina, Population 2023,” World Population Review, 2023, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/raeford-nc-population>.

Sarah Woodard David and Jennifer F. Martin of Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. explored Raeford's early settlement and commercial history in detail in the 2006 NRHP nomination form they prepared for the Raeford Historic District.<sup>8</sup> This document presented a thorough commercial and architectural context for Raeford's 20-acre commercial core, including the 100 block of Main Street, the 100 block of West Elwood Street, the area surrounding the 1910 Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad Depot (HK0024), and portions of three residential blocks between South Stewart and South Jackson Streets, including the 1905 John W. McLauchlin House (HK0025). This well-developed context addresses Raeford's history during the district's period of significance, extending from 1897 to 1956, including the city's earliest commercial and residential development. Because of this earlier study's coverage, the current Phase III historic context will focus on the physical and thematic elements beyond the city's commercial core and earliest residential development in order to contextualize resources and neighborhoods documented during the Phase III survey. The following section provides a summary of Raeford's founding, largely informed by the 2006 study.

Two almost concurrent events fueled Raeford's founding: the establishment of the Raeford Institute in 1895 and the organization of the A&R Railroad in 1892. The history of Raeford's formation and the Raeford Institute is discussed in detail in the 2006 NRHP nomination for the Raeford Historic District:

In the late 1800s Dr. Albert Picket Dickson and his wife Frances Wyatt joined with the McDiarmid family to establish a private school for their children. The school did not thrive, but around 1891, the Dicksons and other neighbors tried again. This second academy also failed, but Dr. and Mrs. Dickson, as the parents of thirteen children, remained committed to creating educational opportunities, so along with the McLauchlin and McRae families, they built a new school on five acres of land between present-day Main Street, Magnolia Street, Edinborough Avenue, and Donaldson Avenue. In September 1895, the non-sectarian, co-educational Raeford Institute opened in a substantial two-story building with two teachers. By 1898, the school's faculty included five college-educated teachers, and the catalogue portrayed the institute's location as "free from temptation to extravagance, from opportunities for misconduct and wrongdoing of every kind, and from distracting influences." By 1906, when the school's enrollment stood at 260 students representing twelve counties and three states, the catalogue depicted Raeford as a "Scotch and Scotch-Irish settlement . . . composed almost entirely of people who have gathered here for the purpose of educating their children."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination."

<sup>9</sup> David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 31.

In 1892, John Blue (1845–1922), of what was then Cumberland County, founded the A&R Railroad alongside his brother, Neill Smith Blue (1848–1929), to support their massive timber and turpentine interests. John Blue would later serve as a state senator for Cumberland and Harnett Counties. Sons of Neill McKeithan Blue and Eliza Smith, John and Neill Blue, along with their five brothers, moved to the area currently encompassed by the Fort Bragg Military Reservation in the 1850s. The family relied on subsistence farming until the years following the Civil War, when Neill Smith Blue entered the turpentine and naval store industries, hiring both white and Black workers to operate turpentine camps. The success of the Blues’ timber interest relied on connectivity to outer markets, and this influenced the brothers’ decision to develop the A&R Railroad.<sup>10</sup> A party comprising A&R Railroad surveyor Hector Smith, Dan McLaughlin, and John Blue selected a site for a depot and laid out Raeford’s Main Street in 1895.<sup>11</sup> By the turn of the twentieth century, the Blues held a large amount of land and negotiated the sale of about 11,000 acres to the U.S. government for the construction of Fort Bragg.<sup>12</sup> After selling his share of the A&R Railroad to his brother John, Neill Smith Blue moved to Raeford, purchasing tracts of land on the west side of the city along present-day Edinborough Avenue.<sup>13</sup>

Further south, in 1892, businessmen A. A. Williford and John McRae obtained a permit to add a post office to their turpentine operation and gristmill on Rockfish Creek, about one mile north of Raeford’s current commercial core.<sup>14</sup> In response to this budding development, North Carolina state legislators incorporated Raeford on February 22, 1901, ten years prior to the formation of Hoke County. At that time, Raeford, which took its name from the combined surnames of A. A. Williford and John McRae, comprised approximately 1,400 acres and 115 residents.<sup>15</sup>

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Raeford was on its way to being a modern city. The success of the A&R Railroad and the establishment of the Bank of Raeford in 1903 incited a wave of industrial and residential growth. In 1909 the city was electrified, and between 1897 and 1910 Raeford’s population grew from about 115 to 580 residents. With the exception of the brick Bank of Raeford, most commercial buildings fronting Main Street were wood frame, and the city boasted specialty operations including a drugstore, an optician, physicians, and multiple grocery stores.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Lorraine V. Aragon, *Sandhills’ Families: Early Reminiscences of the Fort Bragg Area, Cumberland, Harnett, Hoke, Moore, Richmond, and Scotland Counties, North Carolina* (Fort Bragg, North Carolina: Cultural Resources Program, Environmental and Natural Resources Division, Public Works Business Center, 2004), 39–40.

<sup>11</sup> David and Martin, “Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination,” 21.

<sup>12</sup> Joyce C. Monroe and Raeford-Hoke Museum, *Images of America: Hoke County* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 24–25.

<sup>13</sup> Hoke County, “Map Showing Lands of Mr. Neal S. Blue,” Hoke County, North Carolina, Plat Book 2: 3 (1916).

<sup>14</sup> David and Martin, “Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination,” 32.

<sup>15</sup> David and Martin, “Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination,” 32–33.

<sup>16</sup> David and Martin, “Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination,” 33–34.

The first decades of the twentieth century also ushered in a period of political restructuring. Before 1911, Raeford was part of western Cumberland County and adjacent to the northwestern corner of Robeson County. As these counties' populations increased, citizens in the western section of Cumberland County and the northern part of Robeson County lobbied for the creation of a new county that would better suit their needs. Some residents faced a minimum of two days' travel to reach their county seat. They feared their tax revenues were being funneled to the more densely populated areas, while rural areas were overlooked and left with subpar infrastructure.<sup>17</sup> In response to these lobbying efforts, led in part by Raeford businessmen J. W. McLauchlin, the North Carolina General Assembly formed Hoke County from a collection of rural townships in Robeson and Cumberland Counties (roughly McLauchlin, Quewhiffle, Raeford, Blue Springs, Lumber Bridge, and Seventy First Townships). By 1911, the new 268,000-acre county was home to 10,000 residents and was named for Confederate General Robert F. Hoke, a native of North Carolina.<sup>18</sup>

Its position as the state's newest county seat propelled Raeford into a new age of commerce and industry. Merchants opened shops along Main Street, and the Bank of Raeford moved into a new three-story brick building at the southeast corner of Main Street and East Elwood Avenue. In 1912,



*Figure 2. Hoke County Courthouse (HK0001), 304 North Main Street*

the county sponsored the design and construction of an impressive Neoclassical courthouse (HK0001) (Figure 2) at the northeast corner of Main Street and East Edinborough Avenue, and the A&R Railroad was extended to Fayetteville, further connecting Raeford to the wider region. In 1913, the Raeford Institute was incorporated into the Hoke County school system under the name Raeford Graded School and moved to a new building in 1918.<sup>19</sup>

Raeford's commercial core has experienced two significant material losses since its early development. In 1921, the addition of a second rail line, the Laurinburg and Southern Railroad, fueled expansion of the city's commercial core, but in 1925, fire destroyed much of the east side

<sup>17</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee: Raeford, North Carolina," 1961, 13, East Carolina University Digital Collections, <https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/16990>.

<sup>18</sup> David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 34; Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 24.

<sup>19</sup> David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 35.

of Main Street, including the city's first hotel, the Raeford Hotel. In 1927, Neill S. Blue constructed its replacement, the Classical Revival-style Bluemont Hotel (HK0023). The Bluemont Hotel opened its doors on March 24 at the corner of North Main Street and East Central Avenue. A three-story masonry building, the Bluemont marketed rooms and a restaurant to travelers passing through Raeford, many of whom were tourists



Source: Preservation North Carolina

Figure 3. Raeford (Bluemont) Hotel (HK0023), 2003

attracted to the area for hunting. Most passengers came to Raeford via buses traveling U.S. Highway 15, as the city's rail lines did not have a significant passenger service until the 1930s, when the A&R opened a motorized jitney that ran from Aberdeen to Fayetteville. The Bluemont Hotel was demolished in 2005, one of the city's most significant losses to demolition (Figure 3).<sup>20</sup>

### INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE (1880–1975)

As explored in Phase II of this survey, Hoke County's first industry, turpentine, relied on the abundant stands of longleaf and loblolly pines in the north and west sections of the county. The county's first industrialists operated sawmills and turpentine camps, including Williford and McRae's operation on Rockfish Creek and the Blues' operation in the present-day Fort Bragg Military Reservation. While most physical remnants of these early industries have been removed from the landscape, a few remnants of Raeford's early-twentieth-century industries remain extant.

A prominent pair of industrialists, brothers William J. Upchurch and Thomas Benton Upchurch Sr., came to Raeford from Holly Springs, North Carolina, around 1900 to expand their work in the lumber industry.<sup>21</sup> Their first business venture in Hoke County began in 1896, when they founded one of the county's first sawmills along a tram road of the A&R Railroad. In 1907, the Upchurches founded Raeford Cotton Mill (demolished 1960) near the site of the present-day Burlington

<sup>20</sup> Monroe and Raeford-Hoke Museum, *Images of America: Hoke County*, 84; David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 36; Preservation North Carolina, *View, Raeford (Bluemont) Hotel, Raeford, Hoke County, North Carolina*, 2003, Color Slide, 2x2, 2003, Preservation North Carolina Historic Architecture Slide Collection, 1965–2005, <https://sal-p2.lib.ncsu.edu/collections/catalog/bh1236pnc001>.

<sup>21</sup> Herbert O'Keef, "Tar Heel of the Week: T. B. Upchurch Jr.," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 8, 1955.

Industries (formerly, Robbins Mill) (HK0165). Initially, the mill shared a site with their other venture, Upchurch Milling Company, producers of flour, meal, and feed.<sup>22</sup> In 1916, the Upchurches moved their milling company to a budding industrial area on the east side of South Main Street alongside the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company (HK0218) and the A&R Railroad.<sup>23</sup> Founded in 1913 by a board of directors that included T. B. Upchurch Sr., J. W. Johnson, and a number of other men, the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company manufactured cottonseed and soybean products in addition to providing cotton ginning and seed cleaning for the county's farmers.<sup>24</sup> A small hydroelectric power plant about 15 miles southwest of Raeford on Rockfish Creek (burned January 1942) powered both Upchurch Milling and the oil and fertilizer plant.<sup>25</sup> The site occupies three tracts between South Stewart and South Jackson Streets, divided by the A&R Railroad. It adjoins the circa 1940 Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company (HK0221), near the site of a former cotton-loading platform.<sup>26</sup> According to the June 2, 1933, edition of *The News and Observer*, the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company was the only "concern" in Raeford that was able to continue payroll during the Depression.<sup>27</sup>

The site of the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company is currently unoccupied and many of the original industrial buildings have been demolished or moved. A review of aerial imagery reveals that most of the complex was demolished between 1956 and 1971; however, at least two concrete-block



Figure 4. Site of Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company (HK0218)

warehouses stand on the south end of the complex (Figure 4). In 1939, the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company added Hoke Concrete Works as a subsidiary, initially to give employees work during the slow spring and summer seasons, and the two divisions shared the site at 220 Wilmouth Avenue.<sup>28</sup> While the oil mill and cottonseed presses closed in 1970, Hoke Concrete Works

<sup>22</sup> Monroe and Raeford-Hoke Museum, *Images of America: Hoke County*, 79; Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 29.

<sup>23</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 29.

<sup>24</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 11, 29; *News-Journal*, "Hoke Prosperity Directly Related to Postwar Industrial Development," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), June 15, 1967.

<sup>25</sup> *Charlotte Observer*, "Blast Wrecks Raeford Plant," *The Charlotte Observer*, January 11, 1942.

<sup>26</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), 12, <https://www.thenews-journal.com/graphics/cent.pdf>; *News-Journal*, "Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company Advertisement," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), August 27, 1942.

<sup>27</sup> *News and Observer*, "Raeford Industry Is Threatened by Fire," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 2, 1933.

<sup>28</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 11; *News-Journal*, "Old Hoke Firm Changes Hands," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), May 12, 1983.

operated under the same name until at least 1983.<sup>29</sup> In the last decades of the twentieth century, the land and buildings were owned by Triad Masonry Materials, Inc. and, most recently, the Johnson Concrete Company.

Directly east of the remnants of the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company is the Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company (HK0221, SL 2023). While the Hoke County tax record dates most of the extant buildings to the 1960s, the complex and company likely has its origins in the 1940s, when Crawford Thomas and Harry Greene began advertising their services in the *Raeford News-Journal*.<sup>30</sup> Cotton warehousing and storage became a major concern in Hoke County in the early twentieth century, as the outbreak of World War I in Europe all but eliminated cotton export markets in 1914. As of July 1914, cotton was valued at 13 cents per pound, and by the end of that year, prices plummeted to about six or seven cents a pound.<sup>31</sup> As early as December 1909, North Carolina farmers had stressed the need for a centrally located and well-managed cotton warehouse where farmers could store crops until they were able to secure the highest market price.<sup>32</sup> By August 1914, southern farmers and cotton dealers called for federally bonded warehouses to protect yields on U.S. soil prior to their export. This would allow farmers to renew their loans using the stored cotton as collateral.<sup>33</sup> Hoke County's farmers followed suit, and a September 1914 newspaper article outlined the county's plan to construct three cotton warehouses, two of which were in Raeford, to house approximately 2,000 bales of cotton. As of 1914, Hoke County farmers produced about 15,000 bales of cotton. While some growers had storage onsite, county farmers met in Raeford to form the Hoke Warehouse Company in 1914 and outlined a plan for supplementary storage funded through stock subscriptions.<sup>34</sup> In 1916, the U.S. Congress passed the Warehouse Act to formalize the system and protect farmers' stored yields.<sup>35</sup>

Statewide, and in much of the Southern United States, cotton production entered a period of decline during the Great Depression and did not begin to recover until the 1980s. Among the many challenges cotton farmers faced in the early twentieth century, prices for cotton varied widely from year to year. The Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company first appeared in local newspapers in 1942, at a time when some industry experts predicted a resurgence in the demand for cotton because World War II interrupted wool imports, caused rayon to be rationed, and created new military supply demands. The ability to store cotton until market prices improved in farmers'

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<sup>29</sup> *News-Journal*, "Old Hoke Firm Changes Hands."

<sup>30</sup> *News-Journal*, Hoke Cotton Warehouse Advertisement.

<sup>31</sup> Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 480.

<sup>32</sup> *News and Observer*, "Best Way to Sell Cotton Is by Warehouse System," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 26, 1909.

<sup>33</sup> *Fayetteville Weekly Observer*, "Cotton Warehouses," *The Fayetteville Weekly Observer*, September 26, 1914.

<sup>34</sup> *News and Observer*, "Hoke Will Store," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 9, 1914.

<sup>35</sup> Warehouse Act of 1916, P.L. 66-22.

favor, alongside other strategic approaches to producing cotton, was critical to the economic success of many Hoke County farms and many of the related industries in Raeford.<sup>36</sup> In 1961, the Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company was advertised as government bonded and well equipped with fire suppression and a sprinkler system to protect investments.<sup>37</sup> Today, four linear warehouses and an office stand northeast of the intersection of South Jackson Street and a spur of the A&R Railroad line, in close proximity to the rail line and loading dock. This utilitarian complex was built to be fireproof, utilizing concrete and standing seam metal. All but one of the warehouses have low-pitched gable roofs (Figure 5). The southernmost warehouse is vented by gabled cupolas. A modern cast-concrete loading platform fronts the central warehouse.



Figure 5. Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company (HK0221, SL 2023)

Hoke County's economy diversified after World War II, although it was still based in agriculture. Poultry processing emerged as one of Hoke County's staple industries, along with textile production, further bolstering the county's agricultural economy. Three sizable manufacturing plants were built on the outskirts of Raeford in the late 1940s and early 1950s: American Wringer, Inc., also known as the Para-Thread Company (later TexElastic Corporation); Robbins Mills (later

<sup>36</sup> William A. Link, *North Carolina : Change and Tradition in a Southern State* (John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2018), 373, *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/statelibraryncdc-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5162094>; Robert B. Mullen, "Cotton on the Comeback," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), February 19, 1942; "Survey Pictures Heavy Demand for Cotton in Wartime," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), March 16, 1944; "Cotton Farmers . . . Don't Sell Your Cotton below Parity Prices," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), September 27, 1945; Lee Harris Potter, "Baling is the Business for Fall at Oakdale Gin," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), November 14, 1985.

<sup>37</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 16; *News-Journal*, Hoke Cotton Warehouse Advertisement.



Figure 6. Raeford Oil Company (HK0148), 609 West Prospect Avenue

Burlington Mills); and Colonial Frozen Foods, Inc. (which became Preibe Poultry in 1953 and House of Raeford in the 1960s).

While new entities emerged, the city's first industrialists modernized their operations. The Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company expanded its holdings, purchasing E. L. McNair's Raeford Cotton Gin (founded in 1925) on Harris Street in 1947.<sup>38</sup> Fire plagued the county's major industries well into the mid-twentieth century. In 1946, the Upchurch Milling and Storage Company was completely destroyed by fire, resulting in an estimated \$75,000 to \$100,000 of damage, but was completely rebuilt in 1947 and operated into the 1970s.<sup>39</sup> After receiving a war permit for new equipment in 1945, Hoke Concrete Works was able to produce 12,000 concrete blocks per day. By 1961, the concrete works produced Solite concrete products and precast lintels.<sup>40</sup>

A later addition to Raeford's industrial scene, the Raeford Oil Company (HK0148) constructed its nine-building complex on the west side of town at 609 West Prospect Avenue. The company was founded in 1936 but not incorporated until 1945. Until 1963, Crawford Thomas operated Raeford Oil Company from his office at the Hoke Cotton Warehouse.<sup>41</sup> According to historic aerials, by 1956 the company included what appear to be fuel tanks, a warehouse, maintenance shops, and multiple storage buildings on the north side of the A&R rail line (Figure 6).

As Raeford entered the mid-twentieth century, a group of business leaders organized to incentivize industrial and commercial development by pairing industries with large open tracts of land and

<sup>38</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 24. The gin operated until 1965 and was dismantled in 1971.

<sup>39</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 11; *News-Journal*, "Upchurch Milling Company One of Oldest Industries," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), May 18, 1961; *News-Journal*, "From the Archives," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), May 15, 2019.

<sup>40</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 11; *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 10.

<sup>41</sup> *News-Journal*, "Raeford Oil Company City's First Distributor," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), July 1, 1976; *News and Observer*, "New Corporations," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 20, 1945.



*Figure 7. American Wringer Company (HK0219), 315 North Bethel Road*

C. L. Thomas, R. B. Lewis, Ryan McBryde, Tom Cameron, Neill A. McDonald, W. M. Thomas, W. P. Baker, J. W. McPhaul, and M. C. Dew. The group's first act of business was to prepare a contract with the American Wringer Company.<sup>42</sup>

Originally of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, the American Wringer Company produced a textile called rubber thread, a combination of raw rubber and cotton yarn used in shapeware such as stockings and girdles. The Hoke County Development Corporation arranged for construction of a manufacturing facility at 315 North Bethel Road (HK0219).<sup>43</sup> Clad in running-bond brick, this one-story manufacturing building is typical of industrial buildings built in small and mid-size cities around North Carolina in the mid-twentieth century. By the second half of the twentieth century, industrial buildings were electrified and no longer relied on the large double-hung windows that provided light and ventilation in the large manufacturing complexes typical of the turn of century. Buildings like the American Wringer Building in Raeford were smaller, with less fenestration, and most if not all of the building's decorative elements were confined to the façade (Figure 7). In 1955, American Wringer, operating as the Para-Thread Company, vacated the building, and the U.S. Rubber Company (Uniroyal, Inc.) took over the plant. U.S. Rubber purchased the building from the Hoke County Development Corporation soon after arriving in Raeford. In July 1969, Uniroyal sold the plant to the Tex-Elastic Corporation, another textile producer.<sup>44</sup>

Almost concurrently, another major employer was in development in northwest Raeford. Around 1950, Robbins Cloth Mills acquired about 95 acres and the buildings that formerly housed Raeford

<sup>42</sup> *News and Observer*, "Raeford Group Plans Building for Industry," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), January 11, 1948; *News and Observer*, "New Corporations," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), January 21, 1948; *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 13.

<sup>43</sup> *News and Observer*, "Rubber Thread Plant to Open at Raeford," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), April 3, 1948.

<sup>44</sup> *News-Journal*, "Uniroyal Plant Purchased by Tex-Elastic Corporation," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), July 3, 1969; *News-Journal*, "U.S. Rubber to Buy Building," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), March 10, 1955.

providing housing for the budding workforce. On January 10, 1948, city leaders gathered at the Hoke County Courthouse to form the corporation. Chartered by the Secretary of State, the 10-person board of directors selected the name Hoke County Development Corporation and elected officers. At its foundation, the board included H. L. Gatlin Jr., J. L. McNeill,

Cotton Mill (later Edenborough Mill and White-Tex Mill). Founded by Karl Robbins, a philanthropist and textile industrialist who moved to New York from present-day Ukraine in 1905, Robbins Cloth Mills initially planned to employ 100 workers and produce rayon yarn. Robbins became a shareholder in textile giant Burlington Mills in the 1920s and expanded his holdings, purchasing facilities in Pinehurst, Red Springs, Rocky Mount, and Aberdeen.<sup>45</sup> By 1951, Robbins Mills had increased production, and employment rose to 300, with new hires expected.<sup>46</sup> While the company did not construct a mill village, it participated in community life, establishing a Little League baseball team in 1952. By 1954, the J. P. Stevens Company had acquired a large number of shares from Karl Robbins, and later that year Robbins Mills became part of a large textile conglomerate, Amerotron, a merger and portmanteau of American Woolen Company, Robbins Mills, and Textron.<sup>47</sup> In 1956, Pacific Mills, a member of Burlington Industries, took over operation of the plant.<sup>48</sup> By 1967, Burlington Industries was by far the largest taxpayer in Hoke County, as well as the largest employer, having more workers on its local payroll than all other industries in Hoke County combined.<sup>49</sup>

In 1953, a major player in Raeford's industrial landscape, Priebe Poultry, purchased the circa 1945 Colonial Frozen Foods plant at 520 East Central Avenue, which would eventually grow into the House of Raeford Processing Plant (HK0222). The company planned to employ about 100 workers and process 50,000 birds a week.<sup>50</sup> By 1956, the operation was known as Priebe-Pietrus Poultry Company, and in 1957, employees announced plans to be represented by the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butchers of America. On March 14, 1957, a majority vote was secured, and workers joined the union. Their first act was to negotiate for better pay, and company owners raised pay to \$1.09 for women and \$1.15 for men.<sup>51</sup>

Agriculture and manufacturing remained the primary industries in Raeford and Hoke County throughout the 1950s. In 1956, Hoke County ginned 5,928 bales of cotton, an increase from 5,892 the previous year, but in 1957, the county experienced disappointing crop yields. A particularly cool and wet spring and summer resulted in insufficient harvests, and 68 farmers were unable to repay their loans. While this was a major hit to county farmers, the effects rattled the city as well, and the losses were felt in the city's retail markets. In response, community leaders joined to develop an agricultural program. Similar undertakings had been successful in farming

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<sup>45</sup> Warren L. Bingham, "Robbins, Karl," in *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, ed. William S. Powell (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), republished in *NCpedia*, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/robbins-karl>; *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 15.

<sup>46</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 16.

<sup>47</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 17, 21.

<sup>48</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 23.

<sup>49</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke Prosperity."

<sup>50</sup> David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 38.

<sup>51</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 23–24.

communities in western North Carolina, and the Chamber of Commerce invited state officials and leaders of the preceding movements to Raeford. The group held farm improvement meetings (segregated by race) that presented soil testing and crop allotment recommendations. Techniques learned in the meetings were applied, and yields increased, netting an average profit of \$2,000 per farm and ensuring that all of the 1957 debts were paid. The county's agricultural income increased by \$2 million in a year.<sup>52</sup>

In 1959, seven manufacturing facilities in Hoke County employed 2,400 workers who produced woolen and synthetic textiles, rubber thread, poultry products, cotton seed oil and feed, lumber, and concrete building materials.<sup>53</sup> In 1960, the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce and town commissioners gathered to honor local industry in a ceremony recognizing Pacific Mills, Priebe Poultry Company, Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company, U.S. Rubber, and Upchurch Milling.<sup>54</sup>

The 1960s ushered in an era of economic uncertainty for one of the county's largest industries. Following a period of financial instability, Priebe Poultry shuttered its Raeford factory, leaving 125 workers without jobs and local turkey farmers unpaid for their birds. While this was a major hit to the city's economy, the panic was short-lived. Later that year, a group of agribusinesses purchased the plant and reopened the facility as Raeford Turkey Farms. The group introduced their first product under the label "House of Raeford" in October 1962.<sup>55</sup> At the end of its 52-year tenure, the company employed about 400 workers in its cook plant, which prepared and packaged turkeys, and 950 people in its slaughterhouse.<sup>56</sup> The company rose to the top of the city's industrial sector and was popular throughout the region, founding the North Carolina Turkey Festival in Raeford the mid-1980s.<sup>57</sup> The former House of Raeford Processing Plant (HK0222), modified with additions, stands at 520 East Central Avenue. The sprawling plant occupies a 16-acre parcel and is of brick and concrete-block construction for fire resistance.

In 1974, Summerfield Industries, which produced double-knit fabrics, opened its one-story industrial facility at 606 South Main Street, south of the commercial core. The company employed 600 workers and was Hoke County's second-largest employer by 1978. After closing briefly, the facility was purchased by Raeford Manufacturing Corporation in June 1978, which conveyed the property to textile manufacturer Faberge.<sup>58</sup> This industrial complex, which now houses Unilever,

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<sup>52</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 23; Clyde Osbourne, "Hoke Scores Major Farm Victory," *The Charlotte Observer*, December 15, 1958.

<sup>53</sup> Hill Directory Company, *Hill's Raeford (Hoke County, NC) City Directory* (Richmond, Virginia: Hill Directory Company, 1959), 11.

<sup>54</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 30.

<sup>55</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 32–33.

<sup>56</sup> David Ranii, "House of Raeford Shutting Plant, Exiting Turkey Business," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), October 10, 2014, online edition, <https://www.newsobserver.com/news/business/article10091381.html>.

<sup>57</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 52.

<sup>58</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 46.

was expanded in stages between 1981 and 2012 to encompass its current 54-acre parcel. The industrial facility was not included in Phase III of the comprehensive architectural survey because surveyors were not granted access to the property.

### COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE (1950–1975)

While most of Raeford’s commercial expansion was centered on industrial growth, a few key commercial buildings representative of the Modernist modes of the 1960s were constructed in Raeford. The 1963 Southern National Bank (HK0176) at 201 North Main Street incorporated restrained elements of Modernist architecture, including a prominent full-height bank of vertical windows with extruded aluminum frames and spandrel panels on the façade and a glass and metal-frame vestibule (Figure 8). Similarly, the 1968



*Figure 8. Southern National Bank (HK0176), 201 North Main Street*

Raeford Bank (HK0223), which now houses the Hoke County Register of Deeds, expresses the Modernist style; its flat concrete roof with deep overhanging eaves emphasizes the building’s linear presentation. Full-height banks of windows on the east side and a large windowless expanse of blonde brick veneer on the west side further express the style (Figure 9).



*Figure 9. Bank of Raeford (HK0223), 113 Campus Avenue*

## RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE (1900–1975)

The late nineteenth to early twentieth century was a period of prosperity in Raeford. Between 1910 and 1920, Raeford’s population increased from 580 to 1,235 residents.<sup>59</sup> Downtown Raeford’s prosperity was closely tied to not only the budding commercial and industrial sectors, but also the city’s educational opportunities. The success of the Raeford Institute and later Raeford Graded School provided an incentive for families to move to the area. In a 1975 interview, Raeford resident Kate Blue Covington described the town upon her family’s arrival around 1900 as “mainly a cotton patch and pine trees with the depot in the center of town.” Like many, Ms. Covington’s parents, James A. and Jennie Blue, were drawn to Raeford partly by the Raeford Institute.<sup>60</sup>

The first residential areas to develop in Raeford were clustered around the downtown core and along Main Street and Central Avenue. Stylistically, Raeford’s wealthiest residents embraced the Picturesque movement of the later nineteenth century. Informed by elements of late-medieval architecture, picturesque modes, such as the Italianate, the Gothic Revival, and later the Queen Anne style, were based in decorative excess and popularized by magazines and architectural pattern books.<sup>61</sup> While the widespread use of the Italianate and Gothic Revival styles predate the establishment of Raeford, the Queen Anne style was particularly popular. The J. W. Johnson House (HK0022) at 124 East Central Avenue is representative of a transitional expression of the style featuring elements of both the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. The two-story frame house has an asymmetrical form with a canted bay on the east elevation. Eclectic finishes, such as decorative shingles in the gable field, are typical of Queen Anne houses in Raeford, while the one-story square wood supports of the wrap-around porch are more typical of the Colonial Revival style (Figure 10).



*Figure 10. J. W. Johnson House (part of HK0022), 124 East Central Avenue*

<sup>59</sup> David and Martin, “Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination,” 35.

<sup>60</sup> Dick Brown, “Raeford, Nearing Birthday No. 75, Recalls Its Past,” *The Fayetteville Observer*, July 6, 1975, Newspaper Clippings Vertical File, Hoke County Library, Raeford, North Carolina.

<sup>61</sup> Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 296.

Raeford has experienced some loss of its historic Queen Anne architecture. Although no longer standing, the first dwellings constructed by industrialists William J. and Thomas B. Upchurch Sr. were a pair of almost identical Queen Anne-style houses on Main Street, just south of the Hoke County Courthouse. Constructed in 1905, these two-story frame houses showcased the work of the brothers' sawmill and lumber business through the use of elaborate millwork, including vergeboard below the eaves and turned porch posts, balusters, and spindle frieze.<sup>62</sup>

Alongside these elaborate examples, restrained instances of the Queen Anne style were more common in Raeford. Most houses constructed between 1880 and 1920 in Raeford were of frame construction and blended traditional house forms with decorative millwork applied to the porch, cornice, or eaves. The Currie House (HK0195) at 705 North Main Street is particularly representative of the trend. Constructed in 1902, this one-story frame house has a gable-front-and-



*Figure 11. Currie House (HK0195), 705 North Main*

wing form. Like most examples of the Queen Anne style in Raeford, the style is primarily communicated through the use of applied materials, including the decorative millwork below the fascia and pressed tin roof shingles (Figure 11). The house at 401 South Main Street (HK0191), although updated with modern finishes, is representative of the complex roof forms and massing typical of Queen Anne houses in Raeford, with its hipped-roof core and canted bay within the gable-front wing (Figure 12).

As Raeford's urban grid began to take shape in the 1890s, the city's wealthy industrialists and farmers constructed impressive houses north and west of the commercial center near the former site of the Raeford Institute (present-day Campus Avenue). Houses built in the 1880s occupied large tracts of land and reflected site arrangements more in keeping with rural properties, with a house anchoring the site, supported by a host of standalone outbuildings such as spring houses,

<sup>62</sup> Monroe and Raeford-Hoke Museum, *Images of America: Hoke County*, 69.

chicken coops, and stables. One of the few nineteenth-century houses documented in Phase III, the Blue-McNeill House (HK0192), was constructed in 1887 by W. M. Blue on North Fulton Street. One of the seven Blue brothers, W. M. Blue amassed significant wealth in the lumber business via his firm, W. M. Blue & Company, and as director of the A&R Railroad.<sup>63</sup>



Figure 12. 401 South Main Street (HK0191)

The Blue-McNeill House has a symmetrical single-pile core, typical of an I-House, sheltered by a side-gable roof. As with much of Raeford's nineteenth-century residential architecture, elements of the Queen Anne style have been applied to the Blue-McNeill House's exterior, including scalloped wood shingles and milled vergeboard on the façade's central eave gable. The house's most dominant feature is a classically inspired full-height portico supported by fluted Ionic columns, which shelters the three-bay façade and a second-story balcony, and which was likely added to the house circa 1910 (Figure 13). The house retains three of its historic outbuildings.

One block south, the William Thomas Covington House (HK0185, SL 2023) captures a shift in Raeford's domestic architecture. The concept of domestic architecture as a form of individual artistic expression gained popularity in North Carolina in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For the state's wealthiest residents, European-trained architects designed imposing dwellings that featured eclectic elements of European architecture.<sup>64</sup> Known as the Eclectic styles, these styles were popular in the U.S. between 1880 and 1940, gaining prominence at the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893. The earliest examples of the styles were scaled-down copies of the domestic architecture found in Europe, and later iterations were more modest expressions of traditional styles, including the Tudor, Colonial, and Classical revivals. Wealthy residents embraced the revival modes for their country houses, and popular publications like the *Architectural Record* fueled their construction in and around the nation's largest cities.<sup>65</sup> In

<sup>63</sup> *News and Observer*, "Busy Aberdeen: The Storm Center of the North Carolina Pine Lumber Trade," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), April 24, 1895.

<sup>64</sup> Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 416–25.

<sup>65</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, New York: Knopf, 2013), 407.

Raeford, these trends were primarily realized through Classical Revival- and Colonial Revival-style residences built between 1890 and 1930 by the city's wealthy industrialists.

One of the first elaborate examples of the Classical Revival style in Raeford occupies almost an entire city block between Donaldson Avenue and West Prospect Avenue. William Thomas Covington (1875–1934) constructed this elaborate Classical Revival dwelling at 216 West Donaldson Avenue circa 1915. A successful cotton and tobacco farmer, Covington was key to the establishment of Hoke



Figure 13. Blue-McNeill House (HK0192), 514 North Fulton Street

County. Prior to the election of county officials, Covington was one of two commissioners appointed to determine the boundaries of the new county alongside the neighboring Cumberland and Robeson County Commissioners.<sup>66</sup> W. T. Covington married Margaret Neal (1872–1916) of Marion, North Carolina, in 1904. The Covingtons had two children, and while in 1910 the family lived in Quewhiffle Township, by the 1920 census W. T. lived on Donaldson Avenue and had married his second wife, Katie McLean. In 1920, W. T. listed his occupation as a farmer; in 1930, he was recorded as the superintendent of a general farm.<sup>67</sup> W. T. was also a self-taught sculptor best known in Raeford for a pair of white deer that sat atop Graham's Service Station in downtown Raeford for decades. In 1930, W. T. took examples of his work to Chapel Hill to be assessed by noted sculptor Lorado Taft. After Taft praised his work, several major newspapers in North Carolina ran articles about W. T. and his sculptures.<sup>68</sup> According to the current property owner,

<sup>66</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 24.

<sup>67</sup> *Fayetteville Weekly Observer*, "Raeford News Notes," *The Fayetteville Weekly Observer*, May 27, 1904; *Marion Progress*, "W. T. Covington Dies in Raeford; Relatives Here Attend Funeral," *Marion Progress*, October 11, 1934; U.S. Census Bureau, "Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 Population, Hoke County, North Carolina, Generated by E. W. Fuller," 1910, accessed through Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/20434016:7884>; U.S. Census Bureau, "Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population, Hoke County, North Carolina, Generated by E. W. Fuller," 1920, accessed through Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/76165314:6061>; U.S. Census Bureau, "Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930 Population, Hoke County, North Carolina, Generated by Bennett L. Cox," 1930, accessed through Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/76518524:6224>.

<sup>68</sup> David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 26, 37; Ken MacDonald, "He Says He's a Farmer, the World Will Say He's an Artist: Hoke Self-Taught Sculptor Got Statewide Attention," *The News-Journal* (Raeford), May 1, 2019. Numerous newspapers across the state printed articles about W. T. Covington's encounter with Lorado Taft, including J. P. Huskins, "Hoke County's Farmer-Sculptor Tills Soil, Molds Marble and Likes Both Jobs," *The News and Record* (Greensboro), August 24, 1930; *Chapel Hill Weekly*, "Raeford Man is Clever

Cecil Lynch, the house was passed to W. T. Covington Jr., a successful attorney in Charlotte, North Carolina, and remained in the Covington family throughout most of the twentieth century.<sup>69</sup>



Figure 14. Covington House (HK0185, SL 2023), 216 West Donaldson Avenue

The two-story house is defined by a dominant, full-height portico centered on the façade. The house is representative of the Classical Revival style, which literature of the day also referred to as “Southern Colonial,” a popular style in the state’s cities and towns around the turn of the twentieth century. The house’s symmetrical form and massive U-shaped portico are defining elements of

Southern Colonial residences.<sup>70</sup> The portico’s flat roof has a stickwork cornice-line balustrade and is supported by smooth Tuscan columns with Ionic capitals (Figure 14). On the interior, the house retains many of the original finishes, including a quarter-turn walnut staircase with a square-based newel post, paneled wainscoting, and a walnut mantel with an original set grate and glazed tile surround. An intricate plaster medallion surrounds the room’s chandelier, and a pair of paneled pocket doors divides the stair hall from the front parlor. Several outbuildings, including a stable and chicken coop, support the house.

The Southern Colonial house gained popularity around the turn of the twentieth century in Raeford. A similar design is found one block south at 115 North Magnolia Street, at the J. W. and Christina McLaughlin House (HK0025) on South Highland Street, and at the 1901 Austin House (HK0184) on West Edinborough Avenue. The two-story Blue House (HK0205) on North Magnolia Street, built by James A. and Jennie McNeill Blue around 1910, also exhibits the defining Classical Revival portico sheltering a center bay with paired columns and ornate capitals (Figure 15).

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Sculptor: Work of W. T. Covington Wins Hearty Praise from Lorado Taft,” *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 1, 1930; *Daily Tar Heel*, “Taft Endorses Work in Rural Sculpture Done by N. C. Farmer,” *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill), May 27, 1930; *Charlotte News*, “Hoke Farmer is Sculptor: Work of W. T. Covington Wins Praise of Lorado Taft, Noted Sculptor,” *The Charlotte News*, June 4, 1930.

<sup>69</sup> Cecil Lynch, Personal Communication, Interview with Brittany Hyder, March 2023.

<sup>70</sup> Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 494–95.

According to the 1930 U.S. Census, Jennie Blue operated a boarding house at this location after she was widowed earlier that year.<sup>71</sup>



Figure 15. Blue House (HK0205), 115 North Magnolia Street

Residential development extended north along Main Street in the 1920s, and with it, the city's architecture evolved to display later iterations of the revival modes. In 1922, industrialist Thomas Benton Upchurch Sr. purchased a parcel on the west side of Main Street, about one-half mile north of the commercial core. A year later Upchurch began construction on an elaborate Colonial Revival house. Set back from North Main Street and fronted by a wide lawn, this two-story house is framed by a low brick wall that follows the southern parcel line. In keeping with

national trends, the city's grandest expressions of the Eclectic styles incorporated site features and landscaped parcels, including low masonry walls, semicircular driveways, and masonry gate posts.

The 1924 Upchurch House (HK0215) is defined by its symmetrical footprint formed by a rectangular core and flanking one-story wings on the north and south sides. The southernmost wing is formed by a hipped-roof porte-cochere, which is supported by square brick columns and connected to the house by a low brick wall. The north wing is created by a hipped-roof porch. Clad in brick veneer, the house features Colonial Revival detailing, including three gable-front dormers, each clad with wood shakes and containing four-over-one wood sash windows with arched lacework transoms and molded wood surrounds with wood pilasters. A heavy block modillion cornice wraps the building, extending below the roof's shallow eaves. The symmetrical three-bay façade is defined by a one-story flat-roof porch supported by large square brick columns on each end with paired sandstone Tuscan-style columns between (Figure 16). A particularly grand example and an Italian Renaissance expression of the Eclectic styles is found at 415 Fulton Street (HK0196). Constructed for Crawford Lentz Thomas, one of the founders of the Raeford Oil Company (HK0148), vice-president of the McLauchlin Hardware Company, part-owner of the Hoke Auto Company, and manager of the Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company (HK0221), and his wife Marguerite in 1923, this double-pile house would have communicated

<sup>71</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Fifteenth Census; *Charlotte Observer*, "James A. Blue Dies in Raeford," *The Charlotte Observer*, January 27, 1930.

wealth and status.<sup>72</sup> The brick-clad house has a hipped roof of copper tiles. Corinthian columns support the one-story front porch (Figure 17). The 1.13-acre parcel is particularly notable due to its site design. A semicircular brick driveway extends from West Fulton Street to the house. Brick pillars supporting carved stone lions frame each entrance, and boxwoods form the perimeter of the landscaped lawn.



*Figure 16. T. B. Sr. and Mary Upchurch House (HK0215), 807 North Main Street*

Between the 1910s and 1930s, formerly agricultural areas surrounding Raeford's core continued to be subdivided. A review of census records reveals that by 1920, the city's residential core was unofficially racially segregated. The 1920 census indicates that 38 of the 41 families living on North Main Street were white, and the east-west streets that developed in the first decades of the twentieth century, including Donaldson Avenue, Prospect Avenue, Magnolia Street, and Fifth Avenue, were almost exclusively white. Clusters of Black families were documented on the



*Figure 17. Crawford L. and Marguerite Thomas House (HK0196), 415 North Fulton Street*

southeast side of the city, living adjacent to industrial nodes. These areas include the one-story frame houses along Oakwood Avenue and around South Main Street. The presence of a mill village at Raeford Cotton Mill is well documented in period newspapers and primary sources;

<sup>72</sup> Hill Directory Company, *Hill's Raeford*.

however, no evidence remains, as the area was redeveloped with the construction of Robbins Mill (HK0165) and of Fayetteville Road (U.S. Highway 401 Bypass) in the mid-1950s.<sup>73</sup>



Figure 18. 327 North Magnolia Street (HK0211)

Raeferd experienced a brief stall in development during the Depression. While the city experienced a small increase of 68 residents between 1920 and 1930, the county's population increased by about 20 percent, from 11,244 to 14,937 residents.<sup>74</sup> Residences

constructed during this period were more modest designs, built on well-ordered lots around the downtown core and filling in the space between larger estates. Three nationally popular styles were built concurrently in this period: the Craftsman style, Colonial Revival style, and the Period Revival Cottage style. Variations of the Colonial Revival style, such as Dutch Colonial, appeared to be particularly popular in Raeferd. A brick example stands at 416 North Main Street (HK0200), exhibiting the style's defining gambrel roof, and a frame example is found at 327 North Magnolia Street (HK0211; Figure 18). Modest examples of Period Revival Cottages were built well into the 1940s in Raeferd. Constructed circa 1940, the one-story house at 123 West Prospect Avenue (HK0199) is particularly representative of the style in Raeferd. The arched main entrance is nested within a gable-front bay with a stone surround, and an eyebrow eave frames the easternmost banks of windows (Figure 19).



Figure 19. 123 West Prospect Avenue (HK0199)

The Craftsman bungalow, or simply the bungalow, appeared in North Carolina in the early twentieth century and soared in popularity in both rural and urban areas. The house form is well suited to North Carolina's climate, featuring a deep porch and broad overhanging eaves

<sup>73</sup> North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission, *Hoke County State Highway and Public Works Commission*, Map, 1:164,736 (Winston-Salem, North Carolina: Winston Printing, 1953), North Carolina Maps, <https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/ncmaps/id/7996/rec/7>.

<sup>74</sup> World Population Review, "Hoke County, North Carolina Population," 2023, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/nc/hoke-county-population>; David and Martin, "Raeferd Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 36.

that shade windows and cool the building. Bungalows could be built quickly, and precut designs could be obtained by mail order.<sup>75</sup> In Raeford, Craftsman houses range in size and level of ornamentation. One of the more intricate examples, the Gordon House (HK0186), stands at the northeast corner of Donaldson Avenue and Fulton Street. It was built in 1917 and initially owned by Florence Melville Gordon. Born in Virginia in 1891, Gordon was a court stenographer in Hoke County.<sup>76</sup> This one-and-a-half-story frame house exemplifies the house form with a prominent gable-front porch with extended eaves and milled vergeboard that shelters the main entrance. Square wood columns resting on a knee wall clad in wood shakes support the gable-front porch. Curved knee brackets are situated below the porch roof's wide eaves and around two nine-pane fixed attic windows in the gable field (Figure 20).

A more modest example of the bungalow form is found at 411 North Magnolia Street (HK0198). Built around 1920, this one-story frame bungalow has a front-gable roof and simple rectangular footprint. Its style is defined by the asymmetrical hipped-roof porch with exposed rafter ends that shelters the façade and extends into a gable-roof carport on the south side (Figure 21).

In contrast to the extravagant Eclectic-style dwellings built by the city's elite, most early-twentieth-century housing for working-class residents is clustered on the east and northwest sides of town near the major industrial hubs, including the former site of the Raeford Cotton Mill in northwest Raeford and in southeast Raeford, near the site of the Upchurch Milling Company (no



*Figure 20. Gordon House (HK0186), 403 South Fulton Street*

<sup>75</sup> Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 501.

<sup>76</sup> Ancestry.com, *U.S. Death Certificates, North Carolina 1909–1976*, s.v. Florence Melville Gordon, February 28, 1958, <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1121/>.



*Figure 21. 411 North Magnolia Street (HK0198)*

longer extant) and the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company (HK0218). The house at 813 North Fulton Street (HK0188) depicts the straightforward design commonly observed in these areas. This one-story front-gable house has a rectangular footprint and a gable roof of standing-seam metal. An incised hipped-roof porch shelters the main entrance (Figure 22). The

demolition of the Raeford Cotton Mill in the 1960s for the construction of Robbins Mill, coupled with recent waves of residential construction, have apparently contributed to a lack of extant nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century worker housing in Raeford. A review of census records from 1910 to 1930 indicates that industries including the “oil mill”—presumably the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company—and the Raeford Cotton Mill were major employers in the city, suggesting that worker housing would have been prevalent. Although modified, a handful of examples stand near the site of the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company on Stewart Street. According to the Hoke County Tax Record, the one-story frame houses at 302 and 306 Stewart Street (HK0226 and HK0227) were built in 1907. Both exhibit modest Queen Anne features, including the arched attic vent at 306 Stewart Street and the turned supports at 302 Stewart Street (Figures 23–24).



*Figure 22. 813 North Fulton Street (HK0188)*



*Figure 23. 306 Stewart Street (HK0227)*



*Figure 24. 302 Stewart Street (HK0226)*

### *Postwar Residential Architecture*

Despite its industrial growth, Hoke County was considered a depressed area in the mid-twentieth century. In 1962, the county was eligible to participate in the federally sponsored Area Redevelopment Act, which directed \$394 million toward job creation in statistically depressed areas. The act charged the Hoke Town Planning Board to “promote, consider, evaluate, and

approve activities or undertakings designed for the improvement of Hoke County.”<sup>77</sup> As of 1959, the median income in Hoke County stood at \$2,733 per year, more than \$1,000 below the median income for families in North Carolina. In Hoke County, the median income of white families was significantly higher than that of non-white families, who represented a majority of the population. As of 1958, only 6,000 of the county’s 17,000 residents identified as white; they earned about \$4,645 a year, while non-white families earned \$1,264.<sup>78</sup> By 1960, 18 percent of the county’s population lived in urban Raeford, and about 63 percent of county residents lived in houses that were declared unsound or lacking adequate plumbing.<sup>79</sup>

In Raeford, city leaders recognized the need for improved infrastructure to house a working population. Operating under the same charter as the Hoke County Development Corporation of Raeford, city leaders organized Raeford Betterment, Inc. Made up of eight people, the group’s mission was to provide housing for the city’s growing workforce by pairing open tracts of land with housing developers. The group’s first target was Robbins Mill. In 1950, Robbins Mill (HK0165) acquired the former White-Tex Mill in Raeford and announced expansion of operations to include a rayon yarn plant that would employ 100 people.<sup>80</sup> In 1950, the Raeford Chamber of Commerce purchased a 50-acre tract from Neill McNeill at the northeast corner of Raeford and subsequently sold it to Raeford Betterment, Inc., for the construction of 130 single-family houses in a new development, which was eventually called Robbins Heights (HK0162).<sup>81</sup> Robbins Heights was one of four mid-twentieth-century subdivisions platted in Raeford between 1948 and 1968. A review of historic aerials reveals that it was fully constructed by 1956, with a park at the north end and a grocery and convenience store at the northwest corner. Lots in Robbins Heights were subject to covenants that restricted land use, limited development to single-family dwellings, set cost minimums for construction, set minimum setbacks from the street, and restricted temporary structures.<sup>82</sup> The neighborhood featured little to no landscaping or site design. Streets were gridded but had no sidewalk, curbs, or gutters.

Architecturally, all the houses in Robbins Heights are one-story, frame examples of the Minimal Traditional style. Minimal Traditional dwellings were rapidly constructed throughout the U.S. in the 1940s to house employees of World War II production plants and, later, returning servicemen

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<sup>77</sup> “Let’s Take a Look at Hoke County” (manuscript), 1964, in the Hoke County Growth Vertical File, Hoke County Library, Raeford, North Carolina.

<sup>78</sup> Osbourne, “Major Farm Victory”; “Let’s Take a Look.”

<sup>79</sup> “Let’s Take a Look.”

<sup>80</sup> *News-Journal*, “Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011,” 15.

<sup>81</sup> *News and Observer*, “Officers Selected by Raeford Chamber,” *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 16, 1950.

<sup>82</sup> Restrictive Covenants, Robbins Heights Subdivision, Hoke County, North Carolina, Deed Book 94: 55–56 (January 10, 1951).



Figure 25. 500 Block of Forest Street in Robbins Heights (HK0162)

and growing numbers of manufacturing employees. As seen in Robbins Heights, neighborhoods of Minimal Traditional houses are often found in clusters along a city's periphery, where large tracts of land were available and newly built highways provided improved access that offset the distance to city center. Minimal Traditional dwellings are characterized by the simplicity of their design and were usually clad with one material in an effort to make the dwelling appear larger. Their design eliminated all nonessential features, with few breaks in the façade or roofline.<sup>83</sup> The examples in Robbins Heights have side-gable roofs and aluminum, wood composite, or vinyl exteriors with minimal façade ornamentation or variation. A few examples have simulated masonry veneers, and most houses retain their original two-over-two horizontal wood sash windows, which are often paired. The houses throughout Robbins Heights exhibit common alterations, such as replacement siding, vinyl windows, and added carports (Figure 25).

Almost concurrently, two similar neighborhoods were developed in southwest Raeford. Situated just southwest of the city's historic residential core, Sunset Hills (HK0161) was the first to be platted. Developed in three phases between 1948 and 1950, the oldest sections of Sunset Hills are located on the east side of Dickson Street, both sides of Roberts Street, south of Edinborough Avenue, and north of Harris Avenue on land formerly owned by Jennings T. Maulsby. The initial subdivision comprised about 134 lots of just under a half-acre. By 1950, the neighborhood was fully platted, and houses were generally constructed from west to east. Based on historic aerial imagery, most lots contained a house by 1956.<sup>84</sup> Like Robbins Heights, Sunset Hills is characterized by one-story, single-family Minimal Traditional houses on rectangular parcels. The

<sup>83</sup> McAlester, *Field Guide*, 588.

<sup>84</sup> "Sunset Hills Subdivision," Hoke County, North Carolina, Plat Book 49: 315 (1948); "Sunset Hills Subdivision," Plat Book 55: 24 (1950); "Sunset Hills, Raeford, N.C., Subdivision No. 3," Plat Book 57: 32 (1950).

neighborhood has a simple street layout indicative of post-World War II residential subdivision design and lacks sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and formal landscape elements. The houses have a relatively uniform setback of approximately 60 feet from the street, and houses on the corner lots are sited at a diagonal facing the intersections. Most parcels have paved pathways and/or paved driveways leading from the street to the house. The dwellings are characteristic of a modest Minimal



*Figure 26. 216 North Dickson Street in Sunset Hills (HK0161)*

Traditional style: rectangular forms with side-gable roofs, sometimes with a front-facing gable or an incised or awning-style porch. The houses are usually clad in a single material, such as brick veneer, aluminum, asbestos shingles, wood composite, or replacement vinyl siding; however, several examples have brick skirt walls with a different type of siding above. Some dwellings, primarily on Dickson Street and to the east, are more complex designs featuring modest elements of earlier Period Revival Cottages, including arched fenestration and prominent or stepped wall chimneys (Figure 26). The houses in Sunset Hills display common alterations, such as enclosed or added carports and replacement materials, including new standing-seam metal roofs, fiberglass doors, and vinyl windows. When the subdivision was initially completed, residents in Sunset Hills were employed in a range of professions. Residents included at least two members of the clergy, a manager at Pacific Mills, an employee of Jackson’s Esso Station, and the plant manager of Raeford Oil Company. While otherwise similar to the restrictive covenants governing other postwar subdivisions in Raeford, the 1949 restrictive agreement for Sunset Hills specifies that lots in the neighborhood “shall not be conveyed to any other than white persons.”<sup>85</sup>

The Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company developed the 21-lot Westside Heights (HK0160) subdivision directly north of Sunset Hills between 1955 and 1961.<sup>86</sup> Standing about one mile northwest of the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company, the subdivision was outlined with protective covenants that described the company’s desire to develop a residential community that would provide a “desirable, attractive, and healthful place to live, and in which the investment of home

<sup>85</sup> Hill Directory Company, *Hill’s Raeford*; Restrictive Agreement, Sunset Hills Subdivision, Hoke County, North Carolina, Deed Book 90: 217 (March 11, 1949).

<sup>86</sup> “Westside Heights,” Hoke County, North Carolina, Plat Book 74: 96 (1955); “Westside Heights Revised,” Plat Book 96: 86 (1961).



*Figure 27. 400 Block of North Dickson Street in Westside Heights (HK0160)*

builders will be protected.” The protective covenant agreement outlined restrictions on land use, stating that the neighborhood would contain exclusively residential buildings and setting cost minimums for construction, minimum setbacks, height restrictions, and restrictions on temporary structures.<sup>87</sup> Although the houses were developed by the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company, a preliminary review of deeds indicates that most lots had been transferred to private owners by 1975–1980. Westside Heights captures a shift in residential architecture that occurred in Raeford in the 1960s and 1970s. A review of aerial imagery reveals that most lots in Westside Heights contained a house by 1971. A departure from the earlier subdivisions, most houses in Westside Heights were built in the Ranch style with linear, rectangular footprints and side-gable or low-pitched hipped roofs. Houses are of frame construction with varied exteriors, including wood composite, simulated masonry, and brick veneer, in addition to some replacement vinyl siding. Most houses feature an attached carport (many of which have been enclosed) and a recessed main entrance. Houses in Westside Heights display common alterations such as the replacement of original materials, including new standing-seam metal roofs, fiberglass doors, and vinyl windows (Figure 27).

The transition from Minimal Traditional to Ranch style and form is also observed in the Donaldson Avenue subdivision (HK0179) west of Raeford’s commercial core. Developed by the Raeford Power and Manufacturing Company between 1952 and 1966, the Donaldson Avenue subdivision contains large Ranch and split-level designs.<sup>88</sup> Most are clad in brick veneer with plywood accents at the second level or in the gable fields. The houses and lots are larger than in contemporary subdivisions, and the subdivision includes modest representations of Rambling Ranch designs that

<sup>87</sup> Restrictive Covenants for Westside Heights, Hoke County, North Carolina, Deed Book 101: 408–409 (September 28, 1956).

<sup>88</sup> “Subdivision of Raeford Power & MFG Co.,” Hoke County, North Carolina, Plat Book 68: 76 (1952); “Niven’s Subdivision,” Plat Book 82: 29 (1957); “Raeford Power and MFG. Co. Donaldson Avenue Subdivision,” Plat Book 88: 51 (1959); “Property of McNeill Brothers, Prospect-Donaldson Ave. Subdivision,” Plat Book 113: 52 (1966).



*Figure 28. 700 Block of Niven Avenue in the Donaldson Avenue Subdivision (HK0179)*

were popular in custom-built neighborhoods in 1960s North Carolina, with L-shaped footprints and recessed entrances. The area is also defined by small groves of mature pine trees and includes more landscape elements than other subdivisions of this era in Raeford, although, like Westside Heights (HK0160), Robbins Heights (HK0162), and Sunset Hills (HK0161), the neighborhood was platted on gridded streets with no sidewalks, curbs, or gutters (Figure 28).

Houses constructed between 1945 and 1975 outside these subdivided areas also conform to these patterns. While the residential core of Raeford was predominantly developed in the first years of the twentieth century, some infill occurred in the postwar years. Houses such



*Figure 29. McNeill House (HK0189), 615 North Main Street*

as the 1967 McNeill House (HK0189) at 615 North Main Street are indicative of the Ranch houses constructed by the city's wealthier residents. A departure from the straightforward, archetypal Ranch designs in most subdivisions, Ranch houses observed in Raeford's historic residential core feature more elaborate decorative elements. While the McNeill House has a linear rectangular footprint and side-gable roof, typical of the Ranch form, the house features elements of the Colonial Revival style, including an elaborate door surround with fluted wood pilasters, a denticulated cornice, and paneled aprons below the windows (Figure 29). Conversely, the Ranch house at 215 West Prospect Avenue (HK0197) has a more complex L-shaped footprint with muted Modernist elements, including a pitched cross-gable roof with deep overhanging eaves and prominent structural beams that protrude from below the eaves (Figure 30).



*Figure 30. 215 West Prospect Avenue (HK0197)*

Another residential area containing many houses constructed post-World War II is located just north of the city center. Occupying approximately 200 acres, the Silver City Census Designated Place (CDP) is bounded to the southeast by Fayetteville Road (US 401) and wooded county-owned lands to the northwest. North Vass Road bisects the community, and Cockman Hill Road, Silver City Street, and St. James Street, named for the 1965 St. James United Church of God (HK0156), form the primary thoroughfares. “Silver City” appears in the Hoke County plat books as early as 1918, and the CDP contains the area platted as “The Cockman Farm” in 1925, as well as a number of historic Black neighborhoods in addition to Silver City, such as Jones Hill, Cameron Heights, and Queenmore.<sup>89</sup> As of 2000, 94 percent of the Silver City population identified as Black.<sup>90</sup> As of 2023, Silver City falls outside the municipal limits of Raeford but within its Extra Territorial Jurisdiction. The community includes some of the city’s prominent historically Black institutions, including the former Upchurch High School (HK0169), the Silver Grove Missionary Baptist Church and Cemetery (HK0180), and the East Freedom Masonic Lodge No. 328 (HK0157), as well as Black-owned businesses including the 1950 Doby Funeral



*Figure 31. 225 Stevens Street (HK0178)*

<sup>89</sup> “Silver City and a Portion of Lakeside Farm,” Hoke County, North Carolina, Plat Book 9: 20A (1918); “The Cockman Farm,” Plat Book 3: 4–4A (1925); *News-Journal*, “Community Assessment Continues,” *The News-Journal* (Raeford), March 22, 2006.

<sup>90</sup> Ben Marsh, Allan M. Parnell, and Ann Moss Joyner, “Institutionalization of Racial Inequality in Local Political Geographies,” *Urban Geography* 31 (July 1, 2010): 703.

Home (HK0158) and Buie’s Funeral Home (HK0123). Silver City’s mid-twentieth-century residences are similar in design to those in Westside and Robbins Heights. One unique element in this section of town is a consistency in building materials. Most one-story Ranch and Minimal Traditional houses in and around Silver City are of concrete-block construction, which may be an economic choice, as concrete is less expensive to build and maintain than brick and frame. The example at 225 Stevens Street (HK0178) is a compact Ranch house of concrete-block construction. The exterior concrete blocks are painted white and accented by brightly painted exterior wood trim around the fenestration (Figure 31).

## INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURE (1900–1975)

### *Religious Architecture*

Alongside construction of the Hoke County Courthouse in 1911–1912 and expansion of the city’s commercial core, Raeford’s religious congregations diversified the city’s built environment in the first decades of the twentieth century. In 1899, 27 members of Bethel Presbyterian Church in rural Hoke County presented letters at the spring session of the Fayetteville Presbytery, petitioning for a church in Raeford. As a result, seven of the petitioners were commissioned to organize Raeford Presbyterian Church (HK0168). The first commission meeting was held at the Raeford Institute, where the congregation met until a facility was constructed in 1901. As one of the first church buildings in town, the church welcomed congregants from all Protestant denominations. A Presbyterian minister preached twice a month, and Methodist and Baptist ministers alternated between the other Sundays. Construction of the current building at 128 West Edinborough Avenue began in July 1921 and was completed in time for the Easter Service on April 1, 1923 (Figure 32). On October 23, 1943, a fire badly damaged the sanctuary, including the dome that was part of the original design. Repairs to the church were not completed until December 23, 1945, partially due to the war effort. The dome was never rebuilt.<sup>91</sup> Raeford



*Source: Raeford Presbyterian Church*

*Figure 32. Historic Photograph of Raeford Presbyterian Church, circa 1935*

<sup>91</sup> Raeford Presbyterian Church, “Our History,” Raeford Presbyterian Church website, 2022, <https://raefordpres.org/who-we-are/>; *News and Observer*, “Here’s ‘News from Home’ to Tar Heels in Service,” *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), October 31, 1943; Rev. Dr. R. Shane Owens, Personal Communication, Interview with Brittany Hyder, July 2023.

Presbyterian Church's Beaux Arts sanctuary has a brick-veneer exterior, as well as a molded cornice, a stepped parapet, arched windows with prominent cast-concrete keystones, and pilasters with molded capitals, all of which communicate the building's style (Figure 33).



*Figure 33. Raeford Presbyterian Church (HK0168), 128 West Edinborough Avenue*

As explored in Phase II of this survey, burials in rural Hoke County primarily occurred at family plots on farms or in church graveyards outside the city limits; however, church graveyards were uncommon within Raeford. The city's only municipal cemetery stands at the west end of East Elwood Avenue and East Central Avenue. Raeford Cemetery

(HK0172), although it was not platted until 1914, contains burials dated as early as the 1860s.<sup>92</sup> The first marked burials belonged to the Livingston, Munroe, Lamont, and McLauchlin families. The cemetery is arranged in interconnecting grids, and aerial images indicate that the cemetery has exhibited its current footprint since at least 1956. Markers throughout the cemetery are representative of popular nineteenth- and twentieth-century designs, including flat headstones, upright headstones and footstones with round-top tablets, ledger stones, pillars, and obelisks. Some markers are associated with fraternal organizations, such as twentieth-century Woodmen of the World markers. The cemetery has few formal landscape elements or ornamental plantings but is characterized by small groves of mature pine trees and wisteria along the perimeter.

Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century burial traditions in Hoke County tended to follow racial lines. One of the city's oldest Black congregations and Black cemeteries stands just north of Raeford along Turnpike Road. Within the Silver City Census Designated Place, the area along Turnpike Road is home to several historic institutions constructed by Raeford's Black community. The congregation of present-day Silver Grove Missionary Baptist Church and Cemetery (HK0180) traces its history to the turn of the twentieth century, when parishioners met under a bush harbor about 300 feet northwest of the church's current site, in the yard of church founder Fardom Harrington. The congregation constructed a small frame church near the cemetery. Stylistically comparable to churches constructed in the county's rural areas, Silver Grove Missionary Baptist Church's current building has a cornerstone that includes the dates 1904 and 1944, and it has been

<sup>92</sup> "Map of Raeford Cemetery," Hoke County, North Carolina, Plat Book 4: 7 (1914).

continuously modified to the present.<sup>93</sup> This one-story church has a gable-front roof and is clad in variegated brick veneer. A multistage hipped-roof tower is centered on the church's façade and is topped with an aluminum spire and cross. Windows throughout the sanctuary are arched wood sash with brick sills and soldier course lintels (Figure 34).

To the south, Silver Grove Baptist Church Cemetery, now Community Cemetery, spans four parcels and contains at least 280 marked burials. The oldest observed grave dates to 1906, and markers exhibit vernacular gravestone forms, including arched tablets and full-length flat stones of cast concrete. Graves are commonly situated in family plots and edged with shells or short iron fencing. The oldest burials appear to be clustered near Turnpike Road. Existing depressions with no markers indicate that there are likely unmarked graves.



Figure 34. *Silver Grove Missionary Baptist Church (HK0180), 568 Turnpike Road*

In 1950, Raeford United Methodist Church constructed the two-story, gable-front sanctuary at 308 North Main Street (HK0173). The congregation traces its history to 1900, when it was founded by leading members of the Raeford community W. T. Covington, John McPhail, and T. B. Sr. and W. J. Upchurch. T. B. Upchurch Sr. secured a lot on Main Street for construction of a sanctuary around 1903, and the group funded construction of a Gothic-inspired frame church through donations. The original building that housed Raeford

United Methodist Church was destroyed by fire on December 26, 1948, and the present building was constructed by local contractor Marcus W. Dew in 1950.<sup>94</sup> As is typical in the state, Protestant

<sup>93</sup> A pastor named Fordham D. Harrington is recorded in the 1920 census at Turnpike Road. Born around 1868, Fordham was married to Lina Harrington and lived with his son Charley Harrington and daughter-in-law Lois Harrington. U.S. Census Bureau, Fourteenth Census; Silver Grove Immanuel Missionary Baptist Church, "Who We Are," Silver Grove Immanuel Missionary Baptist Church website, 2023, <https://www.silvergroveibc.com/whoweare/>.

<sup>94</sup> Raeford United Methodist Church, *Centennial History of the Raeford United Methodist Church (1900–2000)* (Raeford, North Carolina: Raeford United Methodist Church, 2000).

congregations in Raeford leaned toward classically inspired forms when selecting a design for their mid-twentieth-century buildings. Classical Revival and Colonial Revival preferences in Protestant church architecture began to emerge in the first decades of the nineteenth century. In 1923, the Southern Baptist Convention circulated the “Complete Guide to Church Building,” which offered design guidance for small to mid-sized churches. The pamphlet recommended “classic designs” be built with an auditorium space that supported preaching as the “central feature.”<sup>95</sup> The brick-clad Raeford United Methodist Church exhibits these principles with an imposing full-height portico on the façade that is supported by smooth columns with Ionic capitals. The main entrance is located centrally and has a wood surround featuring a swan’s neck pediment and finial, fluted pilasters, and dentiled entablature (Figure 35). Secondary spaces are housed in the rear or basement of the church behind the sanctuary, including a fellowship hall, nursery, classroom space, and offices. The sanctuary’s interior retains its original plaster walls, paneled wainscoting, and molded cornice. Across the street, the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Raeford (HK0182) constructed a sanctuary with a T-shaped footprint in 1947. This building also exhibits classically derived elements popular at the time, with a gable-front roof, Flemish-bond brick veneer with brick quoins along the north and south corners, pedimented entrance, and six-over-six wood windows.



*Figure 35. Raeford United Methodist Church (HK0173), 308 North Main Street*

### *Fraternal Architecture*

In Raeford, fraternal organizations were closely tied to religious congregations. Silver Grove Missionary Baptist Church shares a parcel with one of the oldest fraternal buildings documented in the Phase III study. The former Lodge No. 7 for the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (HK0212) stands northeast of the church off Turnpike Road. Separate from the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOF), the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows in America is a fraternal organization predominantly composed of Black members. In the nineteenth century, Black men were excluded from existing IOF lodges, and those interested in founding an Odd Fellows lodge sought incorporation through lodges in England. The first Grand United Order of Oddfellows, the Philomathean Lodge No. 646 in New York, was founded by a group of men who were members

<sup>95</sup> Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 459.

of Mother A.M.E. Zion Church. By 1852, membership totaled 1,470 people in 25 lodges across the Eastern Seaboard.<sup>96</sup> The Grand Lodge in Raeford succeeded the Green Spring Enterprise Lodge of Odd Fellows between 1959 and 1980. The Green Spring Lodge appears in the 1959 *Hill's Raeford City Directory* at this location.<sup>97</sup>

The two-story lodge building is in deteriorated condition due to lack of use. Dense vegetation and overgrowth surround it. Resting on a brick-pier foundation, the lodge displays a common meeting-hall form with a rectangular footprint and gable-front roof. The building is clad in asphalt siding that is deteriorated in sections, exposing the horizontal boards below. The gable-front roof is failing in sections, subjecting the interior to the elements. It appears to have been clad in standing-seam metal. The main entrance is centered on the façade (Figure 36).

About a half mile to the west, East Freedom Masonic Lodge No. 328 (HK0157) stands on the west side of Vass Road. East Freedom Lodge was chartered on December 14, 1910, and the current lodge building was constructed following the loss of an older building to fire in 1972. The lodge traces its origins to the congregation of Freedom East Presbyterian Church, also located in Raeford. Past-Master Tyrone Sadler noted that most of the area's lodges started within churches. East Freedom was chartered through the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina and comprised about 40 to 50 members. Regarded as the founder of African American freemasonry, Prince Hall was initiated into the order on March 6, 1775, and was one of 15 free Black men to join the Castle William Island Lodge No. 441.<sup>98</sup> East Freedom Lodge is representative of vernacular institutional architecture in Raeford. Standing at two-and-a-half stories, this utilitarian building has a gable-front roof of replacement



Figure 36. Lodge No. 7 Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (HK0212), near 568 Turnpike Road

<sup>96</sup> Michael Barga, "Grand United Order of Odd Fellows in America (1843–Present)," Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries Social Welfare History Project, 2016, <https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/eras/grand-united-order-of-odd-fellows-in-america/>; Grand Order of Odd Fellows of America, "History of the Order," Grand Order of Odd Fellows of America website, 2023, [https://guoofamerica.com/oddfellows\\_natl/History.html](https://guoofamerica.com/oddfellows_natl/History.html).

<sup>97</sup> Hill Directory Company, *Hill's Raeford*.

<sup>98</sup> Prince Hall Grand Lodge, "A Brief History of Prince Hall Freemasonry in Massachusetts," The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F. & A. M. of Massachusetts, 2023, <https://princehall.org/prince-hall-freemasonry/>.

standing-seam metal and an exterior-end concrete-block chimney on the south side. The concrete-block construction is exposed on the exterior, and the building is currently undergoing renovation. Double entrances are located centrally on the façade, within a recessed bay with a beadboard ceiling. One entrance leads to the north side of the building and the other to the south. Windows on the



*Figure 37. East Freedom Masonic Lodge No. 328 (HK0157), 116 Vass Road*

upper stories have vinyl lateral sliding panes, but six-pane metal casements, perhaps repurposed from an older building, are found on the south elevation's first floor (Figure 37). Lodge members constructed the building and have completed interior and exterior renovations since 1972.<sup>99</sup>

At the western edge of town, Raeford Masonic Lodge No. 306 is representative of the straightforward designs fraternal organizations often used in the late twentieth century (Figure 38). Originally chartered in December 1870 as Galatia Lodge at Hope Mills, the Raeford Masonic Lodge was moved to Raeford in 1898. The lodge initially gathered in Raeford's commercial core, and in 1972, built a one-story, rectangular brick-clad building at the western edge of town.<sup>100</sup> The



*Figure 38. Raeford Masonic Lodge No. 306 (HK0151), 720 East*

<sup>99</sup> Tyrone Sadler, Personal Communication, Interview with Brittany Hyder, April 18, 2023.

<sup>100</sup> Grand Lodge of North Carolina, "Historical Table of Lodges Which [*sic*] Founded the Grand Lodge of North Carolina," 2023, [https://cdn.lib.unc.edu/faids/mss/inv\\_images/masons.pdf](https://cdn.lib.unc.edu/faids/mss/inv_images/masons.pdf).

building features modest elements of the Colonial Revival style, including a wood door surround with a broken pediment and fluted pilasters.

### *Educational Architecture*

The Raeford Graded and High School District was established in 1913. For many years, younger students attended Raeford Graded School, and older students Hoke High School. In the 1930s, J. W. McLauchlin Elementary School was constructed in the 300 block of Main Street. Until the 1952–1953 school year, there were at least three schools (Raeford Graded, Hoke High, and McLauchlin Elementary) for white children in Raeford. In 1951, *The News-Journal* reported that Raeford Graded School was overcrowded; however, the State Department of Public Instruction refused to approve an addition to Raeford Graded, while simultaneously approving a new annex at McLauchlin Elementary. In September 1952, the school year opened with white students divided between McLauchlin Elementary and Hoke High School, and no mention was made of Raeford Graded School in subsequent years of media coverage. In September 1953, *The News and Observer* announced record enrollment at McLauchlin Elementary and the opening of the new annex, which contained nine classrooms, a cafeteria, and an auditorium.<sup>101</sup>

The first consolidated school for African American students in Raeford stands at 730 Turnpike Road (HK0169). Built in 1920 with donations from the community, the five-room schoolhouse served Black students in grades one through seven under the leadership of Reverend T. P. Johnson. Initially called the Raeford Grade School or Raeford Colored School, the institution brought students from rural schoolhouses around the county under one roof for the first time. In 1930, citizens raised funds to add classrooms for grades eight to 11, and the school was renamed Raeford High School. In 1936, the school was renamed a third time, this time as Upchurch High School, in recognition of the Upchurch family’s donation of construction materials for the building. The school was destroyed in a fire in 1945. While it was under repair, teachers held classes in local churches, including the Silver Grove Missionary Baptist Church (HK0180) directly to the east. In 1946, the school reopened in its current location as a 12-grade high school (Figure 39). Following integration of Hoke County Schools between 1967 and 1969, the building was converted to Upchurch Middle School and later to Upchurch Junior High. In 1988, the Hoke County School Board transferred the building to its present use, Upchurch Elementary School.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *Charlotte News*, “House, Saturday, Twenty-Ninth Day,” *The Charlotte News*, February 17, 1913; Jim Taylor, “Fire Destroys School in Town of Raeford,” *The News and Observer*, October 30, 1965; *News-Journal*, “Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011,” 16, 18, 36; *News and Observer*, “Record Enrollment,” *The News and Observer*, September 14, 1953.

<sup>102</sup> Devona McPhatter-Graham, Personal Communication, Interview with Brittany Hyder, March 2023; *News-Journal*, “Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011,” 57; Colorama, *Upchurch High School, Raeford, North Carolina. Postcard* (Columbus, Georgia: Colorama, ca. 1965).

The Upchurch campus has undergone multiple alterations since 1946. In 1989, the school's original auditorium burned.<sup>103</sup> Additions, including new classroom buildings and updates to the cafeteria, were completed between 1988 and 2011. The core of the historic campus continues to be the main classroom building. Standing at the southeast corner of the parcel, fronting Turnpike Road, this one-story building is in keeping with the



Source: Brittany Hyder, Personal Collection.

*Figure 39. Postcard Depicting Upchurch High School, circa 1965*

streamlined Modernist styles applied to institutional buildings in the post–World War II era. This masonry building has a rectangular footprint and a flat roof with metal coping along the roofline. Repeating bays of windows punctuate the façade (Figure 40). Historic photos indicate that the masonry units were visible on the school's recessed entrance bay. The school is now partially clad in stucco and newer brick.

Beginning around 1910, the State of North Carolina organized an effort to improve the state's public education system. Rural schools were consolidated, and significant amounts of money were invested in the construction of multi-use education complexes with classroom space, gymnasiums, and auditoriums.<sup>104</sup> Raeford followed suit, and in 1934 the city received a new WPA-constructed high school for the city's white students. Located within Raeford's middle-class neighborhood, northwest of the commercial core, the new Hoke High School occupied an entire city block on West Prospect Avenue. In 1936, the school was the second county high school in North Carolina to introduce a twelfth grade and the first high school to offer a course on North Carolina history.<sup>105</sup> By 1938, the vision of a multibuilding campus was achieved when the Hoke County School Board partnered with the WPA to build a second, 107-by-70-foot building at the northwest corner of the block to house a gymnasium, work rooms, baths, and additional classrooms.<sup>106</sup> In 1940, the school graduated 54 students, an almost 100 percent increase from 29 students in 1931.<sup>107</sup>

The former Hoke High School (HK0166) was designed in the Classical Revival style, which was commonly applied to public and institutional buildings in North Carolina's towns and small cities.

<sup>103</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 55.

<sup>104</sup> Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 464.

<sup>105</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 28.

<sup>106</sup> *News and Observer*, "Work to Begin Monday on Hoke School Annex," *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 8, 1938.

<sup>107</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 7–8.



*Figure 40. Former Upchurch High School (HK0169), 730 Turnpike Road*

On the exterior, the school's elaborate Classical Revival detailing, including a full-height sandstone portico with smooth columns, Corinthian capitals, and etched frieze, communicated the State's renewed commitment to formalizing public education (Figure 41). On the interior, the school's wide hallways and large multipane windows provided ample light and ventilation. The centerpiece of the school was a 750-seat auditorium.<sup>108</sup>

With the construction of the new Hoke County High School (HK0164) in 1960–1961, the West Prospect Avenue School was converted to Raeford Elementary and served white students in grades six through eight. In 1978, the school board renamed the building in honor of James W. Turlington, a 39-year employee of the Hoke school system. By 1983, the school board's Facilities Planning Committee brought forward concerns about overcrowding at the school and the building's deteriorating condition. In response, the district opted to relocate students from the J. W. Turlington School to East or West Hoke Middle Schools in 1991. The school's interior underwent a significant renovation in 2005, during which the 750-seat auditorium was updated with new seats, dry wall, carpet, and dropped ceilings. The original wood floor and stage remain. Most of the interior displays finishes dating to this 2005 renovation, including replacement wood doors and linoleum flooring.<sup>109</sup>

Raeford and Hoke County's schools remained segregated until 1967. Prior to integration, Hoke County operated three separate school systems, with one high school and three elementary schools for Black students, one high school and four elementary schools for white students, and a school for Lumbee students.<sup>110</sup> In 1967, the Hoke County School Board began the process of integrating their 4,650 students into one system. By 1969, all schools were integrated, and the effort was

<sup>108</sup> Gerald Puckett, Personal Communication, Interview with Brittany Hyder, March 2023.

<sup>109</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 28; *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 46, 50, 57; Gerald Puckett, Personal Communication, Interview with Brittany Hyder, March 2023.

<sup>110</sup> Hoke County, "Hoke County Golden Jubilee," 28.



Figure 41. Former Hoke High School (HK0166), 116 West Prospect Avenue

considered a success nationally. In 1970, Hoke County School Superintendent Robert Abernethy represented the county at a U.S. Senate hearing on quality education. Abernethy heralded the efforts of Hoke’s local officials who took initiative on desegregation and did not wait for it to be required by federal mandates or loss of funding. Abernethy called desegregation “the right thing to do,” and the effort was celebrated “as an example of a district which [*sic*] has successfully desegregated.” The county’s efforts were highlighted in a series of hearings led by Senator Walter Mondale on how to best use federal funding to desegregate schools throughout the country. Hoke County reported no racial disturbance, an improvement in student performance, and lower transportation costs. County residents appeared to regard the effort as a success, as all five school board members were reelected the year after integration.<sup>111</sup>

In 1960–1961, students from rural schools including the Ashemont School in Ashley Heights (HK0118) and the Mildouson School in Dundarrach (HK0140), both demolished prior to the architectural survey, were moved to J. W. McLauchlin Elementary School in Raeford, which served white students in grades one through five.<sup>112</sup> The portion of the school constructed in the 1930s was destroyed by fire in October of 1965; a new building was under construction in June 1966.<sup>113</sup> Aerial imagery indicates that the campus was constructed in phases between 1966 and 2006. The one-story school exhibits Modernist elements popular in institutional architecture of the era. The school is primarily clad in brick, and linear banks of fixed windows with extruded

<sup>111</sup> *News and Observer*, “Panel Hears Hoke Schools’ Success Story,” *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 18, 1970; *News and Observer*, “Hoke County’s Achievement,” *The News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 20, 1970.

<sup>112</sup> Hoke County, “Hoke County Golden Jubilee,” 28.

<sup>113</sup> Taylor, “Fire Destroys School”; *News-Journal*, “Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011,” 36.



*Figure 42. J. W. McLaughlin Elementary School (HK0167), 326 North Main Street*

aluminum frames light the school and are sheltered by the school's flat roof with deep eaves and metal structural beams (Figure 42).

Hoke County made one of its largest investments in public education in the late 1950s. Constructed between 1958 and 1960, Hoke County High

School (HK0164) is nestled in the southwest corner of Raeford, occupying two large parcels totaling about 50 acres. Designed by Southern Pines architect T. T. Haynes, the school served white students in grades nine through 12 until the integration of Hoke County Schools in 1967–1969.<sup>114</sup> Based on historic aerial imagery, the initial design consisted of four interlocking one-story buildings on the south side of South Bethel Road and two linear perpendicular wings, a gymnasium, and a standalone band room. The school's historic core incorporated all the modern features of a 1960s school, including defined spaces for extra-curricular activities, a central courtyard for students, and decorative elements such as breeze blocks and blond brick.

### *Civic Architecture*

In addition to the 1934 former Hoke High School (HK0166), a second WPA-funded project in Raeford stands southeast of the commercial core. Constructed between 1935 and 1937 (according to a plaque on its exterior), the Art Deco-inspired Hoke County Armory (HK0170) was funded by the city and county governments, with assistance from the WPA. The two-story Art Deco armory predates the first significant wave of armory construction in North Carolina, possibly due to Raeford's proximity to Fort Bragg. Before the outbreak of World War II, National Guard units leased space in North Carolina cities. In response to rising concerns about the lack of formal and secure spaces for federally issued property, the National Guard petitioned Congress for funds to construct purpose-built armories in 1935. Though not entirely federally subsidized, the federal government supported a portion of the effort via the WPA's construction program. Because the spaces would have a civic benefit, the federal government subsidized 75 percent of the total construction costs, and states covered the remaining 25 percent. By the end of 1941, North Carolina had used WPA funding to build 30 armories around the state. As seen in Hoke County, armories embraced the WPA's design methodology, which leaned toward simplified architectural styles and

<sup>114</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 26.

forms such as Art Deco and Streamline Moderne.<sup>115</sup> This is reflected in the Hoke County Armory's layered façade, featuring symmetrical corner towers, recessed full-height window bays, and a flat roof obscured by a crenellated parapet and corbeled brick cornice (Figure 43).



Figure 43. Hoke County Armory (HK0170), 423 East Central Avenue

Civic and commercial life in Raeford was significantly impacted by World War II. Beyond a pause in construction, major employers, including the Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company and Raeford Cotton Mill (then known as Edenborough Cotton Mill), were classified as defense industries and shifted their production toward materials that would support the war effort.<sup>116</sup> The county's farmers were encouraged to donate scrap metal for defense use. In December 1941, the city's holiday celebration was combined with "scrap iron collection day."<sup>117</sup> Residents limited their use of electricity in 1942, and the city, with some funding from the WPA, remodeled the A&R Railroad Depot to serve as the Raeford Soldiers Center. The Soldiers Center provided meals and hosted events, including dances and send-off ceremonies for soldiers.<sup>118</sup> During World War II, the Hoke County Armory building was leased to the United Service Organizations (USO) to house a recreation center for servicemen. Servicemen were housed in a dormitory on site and in volunteers' homes.<sup>119</sup>

Beyond the direct efforts of Raeford's citizens, the city was further impacted by the surge in development at Fort Bragg. Passage of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 ignited a wave of growth at Fort Bragg. Between 1940 and 1941, the base population increased from 5,400 to 67,000 soldiers.<sup>120</sup> As a result, the city experienced a new wave of industrial, residential, and civic expansion, which required improvements to its municipal services. Constructed in phases between 1952 and 1983, the Raeford Water Works (HK0159, SL 2023) occupies a 1.5-acre parcel

<sup>115</sup> Camilla Deiber, Eric Griffiths, and Philip E. Pendleton, *Historic Building Survey of North Carolina Army National Guard Armories, Motor Vehicle Storage, and Organizational Maintenance Shops* (Richmond, Virginia: Louis Berger Group, March 2004), 6.

<sup>116</sup> *Charlotte Observer*, "Blast Wrecks Raeford Plant."

<sup>117</sup> *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 8.

<sup>118</sup> David and Martin, "Raeford Historic District: NRHP Nomination," 37.

<sup>119</sup> *Charlotte Observer*, "Catholic-Operated USO Club, Fayetteville Serves Fort Bragg Soldiers," *The Charlotte Observer*, February 15, 1943; *News-Journal*, "Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011," 8.

<sup>120</sup> Fort Bragg, "Fort Bragg History," U.S. Army Fort Bragg website, 2019, <https://home.army.mil/bragg/index.php/about/fort-bragg-history>.

at the southeast corner of North Dickson Street and West Donaldson Street. In 1951, Raeford residents voted in favor of a \$180,000 bond for street, water, and sewer improvements, including an additional \$30,000 for extending and enlarging the waterworks service in town.<sup>121</sup> The complex is anchored by an office and chemical storage building and includes an elevated water tower, concrete clean water storage tank, a concrete well, and an aerator/filtration system used to oxidize iron (Figure 44).<sup>122</sup>



Figure 44. Raeford Water Works (HK0159), 410 North Dickson Street

The City of Raeford likely improved and expanded the complex in the mid-1970s as a result of statewide training. A July 1971 edition of *The News-Journal* reported that Chester B. Beasley Jr. of Raeford attended the Annual Water Works Operator’s School held at North Carolina State University. The school was a joint effort conducted by North Carolina State’s Department of Civil Engineering, the North Carolina Section of the American Water Works Association, and the State Board of Health for the purpose of improving the general level of water plant operation. At the session, operators were taught the latest developments and techniques.<sup>123</sup> Raeford operators likely utilized tools and methods learned at this conference when adding structures to the facility. In 1972, the city held a second vote to provide funds for extending and improving the water works and sent a second representative from Raeford to the state operator school in July of that year.<sup>124</sup>

In 1964, the General Services Administration (GSA) constructed the Raeford Post Office (HK0177) at 122 West Elwood Avenue (Figure 45). In keeping with federal design standards, this brick-clad post office exhibits elements of the International Style. The building’s streamlined form and glass-and-aluminum bays framed by concrete panels are indicative of the style. The façade’s flat-roof awning with metal coping shelters the main entrance and echoes the streamlined feel of the building’s flat main roof with metal coping. In an effort to standardize the aesthetics of federally constructed buildings, the GSA produced a set of “Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture.” The three-point guidelines were drafted by an ad hoc Committee for Federal Office

<sup>121</sup> *News-Journal*, “Hoke County Centennial: 1911–2011,” 16.

<sup>122</sup> Travis Sutherland, Personal Communication, Interview with Rebecca Spanbauer (HPO staff), October 3, 2023.

<sup>123</sup> *News-Journal*, “Beasley Is at School,” *The News-Journal* (Raeford), July 29, 1971.

<sup>124</sup> *News-Journal*, “A Vote for the Water Bonds Will;,” *The News-Journal* (Raeford), July 6, 1972; *News-Journal*, “Attends School,” *The News-Journal* (Raeford), July 27, 1972.

Space created by the Kennedy administration and were rooted in a desire to reflect “the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American National Government.” While the guidelines did not determine an official style for government



Figure 45. Raeford Post Office (HK0177), 122 West Elwood Avenue

buildings, the guidelines encouraged designs to be reflective of contemporary “architectural thought,”<sup>125</sup> which is evident at the Raeford Post Office. Almost concurrently in 1959, the Post Office Department issued a design manual titled *Building Designs*. The document depicted “acceptable” designs for leased post offices constructed throughout the U.S. Coined the “Thousand Series,” as they were applied to post offices of 1,000 to 12,000 square feet, the guidelines emphasized efficiency and clean lines. The International Style was the primary mode recommended in *Building Designs*, and Thousand-Series post offices incorporated flat roofs; aluminum- or steel-framed walls of windows along the façade with stone, brick, or precast-concrete; aluminum or stainless steel doors; and cement plaster soffit canopies above loading bays.<sup>126</sup> While the Raeford Post Office is on the larger end of post offices constructed as part of the Thousand Series, containing about 13,000 square feet, it displays most of the design elements recommended in the manual, including large banks of aluminum-frame windows across the façade framed by precast concrete panels.

## MODERN RAEFORD

Hoke County has experienced significant population growth since 1970. The largest increase was between 1990 and 2010, when the population grew from 22,864 to 47,468 residents, partly due to the expansion of Fort Bragg. In 2011, two major commands, the U.S. Army Forces Command and the U.S. Army Reserve Command, relocated to the base, inciting waves of residential and economic development near the Hoke and Cumberland County line, particularly in the Rockfish community.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>125</sup> United States Executive Office of the President, Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space, “Report to the President by the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space” (Washington, D.C.: General Services Administration, 1963), 11, quoted in URS Group, “USPS Nationwide Historic Context Study: Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied between 1940 and 1971” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Postal Service, 2012), 2–88.

<sup>126</sup> URS Group, “USPS Nationwide Historic Context” 2-84-87.

<sup>127</sup> Fort Bragg, “Fort Bragg History.”

As of 2020, Hoke County is home to 56,312 residents. The healthcare and educational services industries are the largest employers in the county, closely followed by the manufacturing sector.<sup>128</sup> Although agriculture is no longer the leading industry, Hoke County is still partially supported by agricultural production. As of 2019, approximately 21 percent of Hoke County’s total acreage, or one-third of the total acreage falling outside of Fort Bragg, was farmed to produce cotton, soybeans, hay, corn, and tobacco.<sup>129</sup> Hoke County farmers also raise livestock, including poultry and hogs. The county ranks as one of the nation’s leading producers of turkey, which it celebrates annually with a turkey cooking contest at the North Carolina Fall Festival.<sup>130</sup> Butterball, a major poultry producer, is a leading employer in the county. As of the mid-2010s, about 67 percent of the county was forested, with about half of the forested area lying within the Fort Bragg Military Reservation. Locally grown loblolly pines are processed to make paper, poles, and woodchips, while longleaf pines are used for wood products and pine straw.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> DataUSA, “Hoke County, NC,” DataUSA, 2019, <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/hoke-county-nc>.

<sup>129</sup> Kris Krueger, “North Carolina Agricultural Statistics” (Raleigh, North Carolina: North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2020), [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/North\\_Carolina/Publications/Annual\\_Statistical\\_Bulletin/AgStat/NCAgStatBook.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/North_Carolina/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/AgStat/NCAgStatBook.pdf).

<sup>130</sup> Hoke County, “Economic Development,” Hoke County, North Carolina website, 2022, <http://www.hokecounty.org/591/Economic-Development>.

<sup>131</sup> Bruce Sorrie, “An Inventory of the Significant Natural Areas of Hoke County, North Carolina” (Raleigh, North Carolina: Department of Environment and Natural Resources, 2004), 9, <https://denix.osd.mil/nr/legacy-documents/reports3/an-inventory-of-the-significant-natural-areas-of-hoke-county-north-carolina-september-2004/>.

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### III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ninety-three survey files in the city of Raeford were updated or created in Phase III of the Hoke County Comprehensive Architectural Survey, both through individual survey, preparation of D/N/A forms, and updates to existing blockface records. Of these, new survey records were created for 82 properties, and four resources, including one potential historic district, were proposed for the North Carolina Study List, a required preliminary step before potentially listing a property from North Carolina in the NRHP. These properties include the Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage Company (HK0221), the Raeford Water Works (HK0159), the William Thomas Covington House (HK0185), and the roughly 147-acre Raeford Residential Historic District (HK0175). These resources appear to retain the necessary historic and architectural significance required for NRHP listing and the integrity needed to convey their significance.

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# APPENDIX A: NEWLY SURVEYED SITES

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Survey Site Number	Name	Address
HK0145	House	143 Cockman Hill Road
HK0146	House	1702 Silver City Street
HK0147	House	509 N. Main Street
HK0148	Raeford Oil Company	609 W. Prospect Avenue
HK0149	The People's Methodist Church	504 W. Sixth Avenue
HK0150	Church of God	603 Green Street
HK0151	Raeford Masonic Lodge No. 306	720 E. Palmer Street
HK0152	Williamson Farm	682 E. Palmer Avenue
HK0153	House	1502 Fayetteville Road
HK0154	McCall House	126 Cockman Hill Road
HK0155	Duplex	132 Cockman Hill Road
HK0156	St. James United Church of God	303 Clay Street
HK0157	East Freedom Masonic Lodge No. 328	116 Vass Road
HK0158	Doby Funeral Home	1382 N. Main Street
HK0159	Raeford Water Works	410 N. Dickson Street
HK0160	Westside Heights	
HK0161	Sunset Hills	
HK0162	Robbins Heights	
HK0163	House	603 Fulton Street
HK0164	(former) Hoke County High School	505 S. Bethel Road
HK0165	Robbins Mill	1001 Turnpike Road
HK0166	(former) Hoke High School	116 W. Prospect Avenue
HK0167	J. W. McLauchlin Elementary School	326 N. Main Street
HK0168	Raeford Presbyterian Church	128 W. Edinborough Avenue
HK0169	(former) Upchurch High School	730 Turnpike Road

Survey Site Number	Name	Address
HK0170	Hoke County Armory	423 E. Central Avenue
HK0171	Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church	798 Old Maxton Road
HK0172	Raeford Cemetery	E. Central Avenue
HK0173	Raeford United Methodist Church	308 N. Main Street
HK0174	Crumpler Funeral Home	131 Harris Avenue
HK0175	Raeford Residential Historic District	
HK0176	Southern National Bank	201 N. Main Street
HK0177	Raeford Post Office	122 W. Elwood Avenue
HK0178	House	225 Stevens Street
HK0179	Donaldson Avenue Subdivision	
HK0180	Silver Grove Missionary Baptist Church and Cemetery	568 Turnpike Road
HK0181	A. V. Sanders Grocery and Machine Shop	796 Turnpike Road
HK0182	First Baptist Church of Raeford	333 N. Main Street
HK0183	House	208 W. Prospect Street
HK0184	Austin House	131 W. Edinborough Avenue
HK0185	William Thomas Covington House	216 W. Donaldson Avenue
HK0186	Gordon House	403 S. Fulton Street
HK0187	House	126 W. Donaldson Avenue
HK0188	House	813 N. Fulton Street
HK0189	McNeill House	615 N. Main Street
HK0190	House	516 N. Main Street
HK0191	House	401 S. Main Street
HK0192	Blue-McNeill House	514 N. Fulton Street
HK0193	House	404 N. Main Street
HK0194	House	413 N. Main Street
HK0195	Currie House	705 N. Main Street

Survey Site Number	Name	Address
HK0196	Crawford L. and Marguerite Thomas House	415 N. Fulton Street
HK0197	House	215 W. Prospect Avenue
HK0198	House	411 N. Magnolia Street
HK0199	House	123 W. Prospect Avenue
HK0200	House	416 N. Main Street
HK0201	House	417 N. Main Street
HK0202	House	218 W. Sixth Avenue
HK0203	House	1209 N. Main Street
HK0204	House	107 S. Magnolia Street
HK0205	Blue House	115 N. Magnolia Street
HK0206	Townsend House	313 W. Elwood Avenue
HK0207	House	609 N. Fulton Street
HK0208	Neill B. and Mayme Blue House	217 W. Edinborough Avenue
HK0209	McKeithan House	213 W. Donaldson Avenue
HK0210	House	110 N. Fulton Street
HK0211	House	327 N. Magnolia Street
HK0212	Lodge No. 7 Grand United Order of Odd Fellows	Turnpike Road
HK0213	H. C. McLauchlin House	711 N. Main Street
HK0214	John and Annie B. Cameron House	1102 N. Main Street
HK0215	T. B. Sr. and Mary Upchurch House	807 N. Main Street
HK0216	Pratt Building	227 N. Main Street
HK0217	Roland and Elizabeth Covington House	109 W. Prospect Avenue
HK0218	Hoke Oil and Fertilizer Company	220 Wilmouth Avenue
HK0219	American Wringer Company	315 N. Bethel Road
HK0220	Campbell's Grocery	201 S. Stewart Street
HK0221	Hoke Cotton Warehouse and Storage	217 S. Jackson Street

Survey Site Number	Name	Address
HK0222	House of Raeford Processing Plant	520 E. Central Avenue
HK0223	Bank of Raeford	113 Campus Avenue
HK0224	Virgil's Drive-In	2402 Fayetteville Road
HK0226	House	302 Stewart Street
HK0227	House	306 Stewart Street