
PERSON COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

PHASES TWO AND THREE



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August 2025

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This material was produced with assistance from the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund, administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

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PROJECT HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

This report presents the architectural history of Person County, North Carolina from 1793 through the early 1970s. This history, spanning more than one hundred and eighty years, is illustrated by extant buildings and augmented by documentary photos and descriptions of buildings that are no longer standing. The architectural history is presented alongside general county history, which provides context for the building styles, patterns, and construction found in the county.

The report represents is culmination of a comprehensive architectural survey that took place from 2021 to 2023. It was commissioned and administered by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NCHPO) and funded by the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPF). The purpose of the survey was to identify and record properties throughout the county that were at least fifty years old, displayed historic or architectural merit, and were largely intact and thus contributed to the county's architectural heritage.

The report summarizes the properties surveyed and places them within their appropriate historic and architectural contexts. The result is a summary of the architectural heritage of Person County that can be used to increase awareness and understanding of the county's historic resources and thereby facilitate their consideration as planning decisions are made at the state, regional, and local levels.

METHODOLOGY

The Person County Comprehensive Architectural Survey was conducted in three phases. The project methodology followed the scope of work laid out by the NCHPO and in its architectural survey manual “Practical Advice for Recording Historic Structures – Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund for Hurricanes Florence and Michael – 2021-2023.”

Phase One took place from September to December 2021, when surveyors field-verified 263 previously surveyed resources and completed a windshield survey of all public roads in Person County to identify approximately 480 additional resources to survey in Phases Two and Three. A separate report was prepared for the Phase One survey.

Phase Two, undertaken primarily from March 2022 through December 2022, included the documentation of approximately 350 historic resources throughout rural Person County, predominantly houses and farmsteads, schools and churches, stores and community buildings, and resources associated with industry or infrastructure. Cemeteries were typically documented only if they were directly associated with churches or farmsteads. While many rural properties likely possess archaeological resources, the project did not entail evaluation of sites for their potential archaeological significance. Throughout the project, properties associated with populations that have been underrepresented in previous surveys and published histories—including the Sappony and other native tribes, African Americans throughout Roxboro and Person County, and rural tenant families—were prioritized for recordation.

Phase Three included the documentation of approximately 130 resources within the Roxboro municipal limits—including houses, churches, commercial buildings, schools, mills, and neighborhoods—and took place primarily from September 2022 through March 2023. Many of the oldest and most architecturally distinctive residences in Roxboro are located in three potential historic districts that were first identified and documented in 2020.¹ As a result, the survey of residential resources within Roxboro was focused on the mill villages, post-World War II neighborhoods, and on residences in southwestern Roxboro, an area largely settled by African Americans.

Buildings and sites in both phases were comprehensively surveyed by completing field survey forms and taking written notes and digital photographs. Each property was assigned a survey site number, which appears in this report alongside the property

¹ These include the North Roxboro Residential Historic District (PR0326), the South Roxboro Residential Historic District (PR0327), and the Reamstown Historic District (PR0328).

name. The resulting survey records include geographic data, primary and secondary building information, and written summaries of all buildings and site features to convey both architectural and historical information related to the property. Interviews with residents as well as archival sources such as deeds, plats, census records, family trees, and obituaries were utilized to help date the resources and to place them within the architectural, agricultural, industrial, and social contexts of Person County.

Annotated United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps prepared during Phase One were utilized throughout Phase Two while Phase Three fieldwork employed historic plats and current tax parcel data. All of the surveyed properties were mapped using tax parcel numbers, latitude/longitude coordinates, and the mobile application CRSurveyor, into which the survey site numbers were entered. For properties with extensive acreage, maps generated from Person County tax records were used to identify parcel boundaries, to convey spatial relationships between multiple buildings on a single property, or to demarcate the physical extent of neighborhoods documented as a single resource.

Properties surveyed in all three phases of the project were evaluated for potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In the fall of 2024, sixty-five individual properties and historic districts were presented to the National Register Advisory Committee and placed on the North Carolina Study List. These properties are listed in Appendix A.

Sources

The broad historic context for the county was obtained from published sources, most of which were written and published locally beginning in the 1980s and obtained from local repositories including the Person County Museum of History. Twentieth-century context, especially as it relates to agriculture—including farm life, tobacco production and sale, and changing technologies and crops—was largely derived from interviews with local residents. Most residents in rural Person County were quick to accept an unannounced visit from the surveyors and to invite them into their homes to share their family histories and, in some cases, the literal fruits of their family farm. As a result, the history of individual properties and families was often obtained from the descendants of the original owners who frequently were the occupants of the historic farmhouse or an adjoining twentieth-century house on a generational farm complex. As time permitted, the dates and names provided were verified using deeds, census records, birth and death records, and obituaries, but the narratives regarding farm production, rural life, and family structure were included within the files as narrated by the property owners.

The life of White tenant farmers, specifically women, in the North Carolina Piedmont (including Person County), Georgia, and Alabama was the subject of a social study conducted by researchers at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill in the 1930s. In 1937, Margaret Jarman Hagood embarked on a sixteen-month research project during which she visited 254 homes and families to listen, observe, and ask questions. Her work was published in 1939 as *Mothers of the South: Portraiture of the White Tenant Farm Woman*. Based on statistics and their analysis, her work does not specify where each family lived but nonetheless provides a vivid picture of tenant farm life as described by the women and mothers of the study area and observed by Hagood during the late 1930s. As such, Hagood's work provides an intimate look at the everyday life of the tenant farm wife.

During one week in July 1939, just as *Mothers of the South* was going to press, Farm Securities Administration (FSA) photographer Dorothea Lange joined Hagood on visits to farm families in Person County and twelve other counties in the Piedmont. Lange was employed by the FSA to, "document rural poverty and its causes and thus to justify and explain the agency's program."² She photographed "sharecroppers, houses and fields, churches, county courthouses, tobacco barns, tobacco auctions, eroded land, growing crops, and landlords, developing a visual image of the society and the economy of the region."³ Lange's photographs of rural farm families record the hard work, community focus, and abject poverty of rural Person County in the depths of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Many of her images are of everyday structures and farm life and cannot be assigned to a particular building or location in the county, her captions giving only family farm names and no geographic references. However, photos of the Wheeler's Primitive Baptist Church and Baynes Store, published in Lange's 1939 book, *An American Exodus*, are easily identified.

In addition to the structured research and documentation compiled by Hagood and Lange, Person County native and author, James Earl Hester, recorded his memories of growing up in the county in detailed journals and a series of essays and articles, most unpublished. In contrast to the New Deal-era documentation, Hester's work is both more personal and less focused. Born in 1927, Hester grew up on a tobacco farm in the western part of the county, worked as a reporter for the Durham *Herald-Sun* and a news editor for Roxboro's *Courier-Times*, but ultimately left to write a novel that never

² Jerrold Hirsch, "North Carolina, A Guide to the Old North State (1939): An Approach to the Vernacular Landscape," in *Carolina Dwelling: Toward Preservation of Place: In Celebration of the North Carolina Vernacular Landscape*, ed. Doug Swaim (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University, 1978), 244.

³ Margaret Jarman Hagood, *Mothers of the South: Portraiture of the White Tenant Farm Woman* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1939), viii.

came to fruition. From about 1954 to 1994, Hester wrote and revised copious numbers of essays and articles related to life in Person County. After his death in 2000, Randolph T. Hester compiled and published a selection of the more than 1300 entries (most of them undated) left by James Earl Hester as a single volume of work titled, *More Wisdom Than I Possess: Life at Hester's Store, North Carolina*.⁴ While the essays do not present empirical data but instead are recollections, many of them recorded years after the events occurred, they nonetheless provide an intimate snapshot of one family's experience raising tobacco in the mid-twentieth century.

⁴ James Earl Hester, *More Wisdom than I Possess: Life at Hester's Store, North Carolina*, ed. Randolph T. Hester (Roxboro, NC: Person County Museum of History, 2013), ix-xiii.

LOCATION, GEOGRAPHY, AND CLIMATE

Person County encompasses approximately 400 square miles in north-central North Carolina and is bordered by Orange and Durham Counties to the south, Granville County to the east, and Caswell County, from which Person County was formed in 1791, to the west. To the north is Halifax County, Virginia, and as the state line was determined without consideration of geographical or environmental elements, Person County differs little from Halifax County in geography, history, culture, and architecture. Roxboro, the Person County seat, is located near the center of the county, about thirty miles north of Durham and forty-five miles northwest of Raleigh, the state capital. Person County is far enough inland to have a relatively stable climate, usually unaffected by oceanic weather patterns. Throughout the historic period covered by this report, winters were relatively short and mild with little snowfall, summers were also generally mild, and there was ample rainfall year-round. Soils in the county are primarily well-drained sandy loam and silt loam types, which, together with the mild year-round climate, supported the cultivation of a variety of crops, including winter cover crops.⁵

Person County is located in North Carolina's Piedmont region, part of the piedmont plateau spanning the eastern United States from New Jersey to Alabama. The county's topography is primarily rolling hills, with some steep areas, ranging from 400 to 650 feet above sea level. The county's topography has been carved by a number of waterways that drain the land. Smaller creeks, including North Hyco, South Hyco, Mayo, Story's, and Marlowe's Creeks, wend their way eastward across the county. Most flow into the Hyco and Mayo Rivers, themselves tributaries of the Dan River, which winds along the border of North Carolina and Virginia, flowing generally southeastward to the Roanoke River and eventually to the Albemarle Sound. The headwaters of the Neuse and Tar Rivers are also located in Person County.⁶

In spite of the favorable climate and soils, the geology of the county has created some difficulty for farmers, while at the same time providing substantial building material. Person County lies within the Carolina Slate Belt, an area of shales, slates, and granites

⁵ R.C. Journey, et. al., *Soil Survey of Person County, North Carolina* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1928), DigitalNC, <https://lib.digitalnc.org/record/237920>, 3, 31-36; United States Department of Agriculture and North Carolina Department of Agriculture, "Soil Map, North Carolina, Person County Sheet," 1928, <https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/nemaps/id/365>.

⁶ Journey, *Soil Survey of Person County*, 31-36; Stuart Thurman Wright. *Historical Sketch of Person County* (Danville, VA: The Womack Press, 1974), xvii. Note: spelling and punctuation vary in the historical record, with the general convention appearing to be Story's Creek.

located on or near the surface and varying in size from a few inches wide to 250 feet wide. This bedrock is relatively close to the surface, ranging from a few feet to about twenty feet in depth. As a result, there are many large boulders and exposed rock veins visible on the landscape, especially in the southwestern part of the county. Large rock deposits were commonly unearthed when plowing agricultural fields and now may be found in piles on the edges of crop fields, often within a copse of trees or brush.⁷ The prevalence of local stone made it a remarkably common building material in the county, especially for chimneys and foundations.

⁷ Journey, Soil Survey of Person County, 31-35; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, xviii.

INDIGENOUS AMERICANS IN PERSON COUNTY

The Sappony are the primary tribe of Indigenous Americans living in Person County throughout its history.⁸ The first map known to reference the Sappony is Captain John Smith's 1612 map of Virginia, the oldest detailed map of the Chesapeake Bay area. This map shows numerous villages along the James River, including Monasusapanough, whose residents were later known as Sappony.⁹ The 1671 map chronicling the expeditions of John Lederer in Virginia and North Carolina also shows Sappony villages, by that time generally located on the North Carolina-Virginia border in present-day Person and Halifax (Virginia) Counties.¹⁰

Following the 1676 massacre of over two hundred Occaneechee at the hands of Virginian Nathaniel Bacon near Clarksville, Virginia, about twenty miles northeast of Roxboro, many Sappony moved westward to the foothills of Virginia's Blue Ridge mountains.¹¹ In 1714, wishing to protect both European settlers and the Indigenous tribes allied with them, Virginia Governor Alexander Spotswood ordered the construction of Fort Christanna in Brunswick County, Virginia, about sixty-five miles northeast of present-day Roxboro. The fort was home to both Sappony and Occaneechee peoples. An Indian School was opened there, providing the first European education to the Sappony. Funding was soon withdrawn, however, forcing closure of both the school and the fort by 1718.¹²

Ten years later, in 1728, Sappony Ned Bearskin guided surveyor William Byrd, who was tasked with drawing the North Carolina-Virginia line. In his memoir of the experience, Byrd commented, "The men had something venerable in their countenances, beyond the common men of savages; and indeed they ever had the

⁸ Note: Also sometimes spelled Saponi.

⁹ Sappony, "Sappony History Timeline," <https://www.sappony.org/sappony-timeline>; "John Smith's Map of Virginia," Library of Virginia, Digital Collections, https://rosetta.virginiamemory.com/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE709570; Phylliss Boatwright, *Person County Past: Tales from the Central Piedmont* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2006), 52-55.

¹⁰ "Sappony History Timeline"; William Talbot, ed., *The Discoveries of John Lederer, In three several Marches from Virginia to the West of Carolina, and other parts of the Continent* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell Co., 1891), 45; Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 52-55.

¹¹ Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 53.

¹² "Sappony History Timeline"; Brunswick County, Virginia, "Fort Cristanna Historical Site," https://www.brunswickco.com/visitors/recreational_opportunities/fort_christanna_historical_site; Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 52-55.

reputation of being the honestest, as well as the bravest Indians we have been acquainted with.”¹³

Throughout their history, the Sappony tribe has comprised seven families: Coleman, Epps, Johnson, Martin, Shepard, Stewart, and Talley.¹⁴ Sappony members William Epps and Thomas Stewart served in the Revolutionary War and were each granted pensions, which they used to purchase land in High Plains, where the Sappony have lived since at least 1755. By the nineteenth century, the Sappony and European settlers appear to have been living peaceably together; as early as 1801, the records of Bethel Hill Baptist Church include the baptisms of Sappony families alongside White and Black families.¹⁵

¹³ “Sappony History Timeline”; William Byrd, *The Westover Manuscripts: Containing the History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina* (Petersburg, VA: Edmund & Julian Ruffin, 1841), 88, Electronic Edition, Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina, <https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/byrd/byrd.html>; Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 52.

¹⁴ Personal Communication with Otis Martin (Sappony member and Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, March 13, 2022, in person (See PR0333); Madeline Hall Eaker, ed., *The Heritage of Person County [Volume I]* (Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Company and the Person County Historical Society, 1981), 5.

¹⁵ Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 66-67; “Sappony History Timeline.”

PERSON COUNTY IN THE LATE COLONIAL AND EARLY REPUBLIC ERAS (1730-1799)

Early European Settlement

Settlers of English, Highland Scotch, and Scotch-Irish descent relocated in the 1730s from Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania via the Shenandoah Valley to present-day Person, Orange, Granville, and Alamance Counties. The first settlements in Person County appeared around 1740 on the Hyco River in the northwestern part of the county and near James Paine's Tavern in the central part of the county. Paine's Tavern was situated on Hurdle Mills Road, the main thoroughfare between South Boston, Virginia, to the north and Hillsborough, the Orange County seat, to the south.¹⁶

These early European settlers were generally small landholders working their own subsistence farms. They grew wheat, corn, peas, beans, and other vegetables as staple crops; commonly raised beef cattle and hogs; and some also grew small amounts of tobacco. Due to the poor condition of the county's early roads and lack of navigable waterways that hindered export, Person County's farm products, including tobacco, beef, and pork, usually were taken to Petersburg, Clarksville, and other markets in southern Virginia. Early eighteenth-century farms were typically worked without enslaved laborers, however this system spread dramatically between the Revolutionary War and the turn of the nineteenth century. Enslavement of African and African American laborers in Person County mirrored statewide averages in 1790: 29% of property owners had 1 enslaved laborer, 36% had 2 to 5, 24% had 5 to 10, and 10% of property owners had 10 to 20 enslaved laborers.¹⁷

For much of the colonial period, the daily life of Person County residents centered on farming, as few schools, churches, and other institutions had been established. Most early church records have been lost to fire, but several churches are believed to have formed in the 1750s, including Flat River Primitive Baptist Church and Lea's Chapel Methodist Church.¹⁸ Additional Baptist and Methodist churches followed in the later decades of the eighteenth century. Bethel Hill Baptist Church formed from the Mayo

¹⁶ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 8-9; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 3; The Federal Writers' Project of the Federal Works Agency Works Progress Administration, *North Carolina: The WPA Guide to the Old North State* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1939), 361. Note: spelling and punctuation vary in the historical record, with the general convention appearing to be "Paine's Tavern" and "Paynes Tavern Road."

¹⁷ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 8-9, 15-21.

¹⁸ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 73-75, 79-80; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 54-57.

Baptist Church of Virginia in 1779. Originally known simply as Bethel Church, the congregation first met in a log building until it was destroyed by fire in 1803. Their second church, called Bethel Meeting House, was completed that year.¹⁹ Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, first known as Hargis Meeting House, formed by 1786 in Hurdle Mills and Wheeley's Meeting House, later known as Rural Baptist Church, was established in southwestern Person County in 1791.²⁰ None of these congregations' early church buildings survive, having been supplanted by a succession of buildings during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The events of the American Revolution from 1775 to 1783 had a more direct effect on the coastal areas of North Carolina, but Person County also was impacted. In 1781, American general Daniel Morgan and British commander Charles Cornwallis clashed at Cowpens, South Carolina (about 185 miles southwest of Roxboro). The Americans were victorious, capturing about six hundred British prisoners and then retreating northeastward across North Carolina into Virginia to prevent rescue of the captives by British forces. General Nathaniel Greene met and took over command of the American troops in North Carolina, and though pursued by Cornwallis, escaped into Virginia by crossing the Dan River near Milton in Caswell County. Meanwhile, Cornwallis camped February 17-18, 1781, at Semora in Person County, about five miles southeast of Milton, where his frustrated troops terrorized residents, ransacked homes, and damaged property at will. According to oral tradition, a foraging party attempted to pillage the John Bradsher Plantation (not extant) on the Hyco River in present-day Person County, but the clever landowner scrawled "beware smallpox" above one of the windows, effectively turning the British away without confrontation. Cornwallis moved into present-day Person County on February 19, 1781, traveling the Leasburg Road past Lea's Chapel United Methodist Church and camping at the Alexander Rose plantation (not extant) in Roseville (just west of present-day Roxboro), where British troops looted the property. The following day, the troops departed south toward Hillsborough.²¹

The Formation of Person County and Establishment of Roxborough

By 1755, there were over five thousand people living in Orange County, which at that time included present-day Orange, Caswell, and Person Counties. In 1777, Caswell County was formed from Orange County and included present-day Person County. As the population continued to swell over the following decade, the North Carolina

¹⁹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 67-68; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 54-57.

²⁰ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 86-87.

²¹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 8-14.

General Assembly authorized a further division that created present-day Person County from the eastern half of Caswell County in 1791. The county is named in honor of Thomas Person (1733-1800), a Revolutionary War hero and politician known for his support of middle- and lower-income citizens in the mid-eighteenth century. Person was born in Virginia and moved to Granville County (present-day Warren County) at a young age, spending his entire life there. He had a prestigious career in public service including participation in all provincial conventions and congresses and a thirty-year tenure in the North Carolina General Assembly.

County court proceedings initially took place at Paine's Tavern while prominent merchants and newly appointed county commissioners Stephen Moore, John Paine, and John Womack sought a suitable location for a courthouse. Dempsey Moore, Stephen Moore's son, donated six acres for this purpose near the center of the county at Moccasin Gap. A modest, functional courthouse was constructed of rough-hewn logs in 1793, followed by a jail in 1794.²²

Moccasin Gap was a desirable location for the county seat in part due to its central location, but also because of its position at an intersection of early trading paths with a good spring for public use. The origin of the name Moccasin Gap is unclear, and it was changed to Roxborough by 1794. The new name is believed to refer to either Roxburgh, Scotland, or the Duke of Roxburghe. As Roxborough in the 1790s was little more than a crossroads with a courthouse, Person County residents traveled to Yanceyville or Milton in Caswell County, Hillsborough in Orange County, or Oxford in Granville County – a range of fifteen to twenty-five miles from Roxboro – for banking, general stores, pharmacies, and other basic needs.²³

Eighteenth-Century Architecture

Only six buildings surveyed in Person County are believed to have been constructed prior to 1800.²⁴ Contemporary accounts indicate that most buildings constructed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century North Carolina were modest and architecturally insubstantial, and many were likely constructed as temporary housing.²⁵ As noted by

²² Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 8-9, 12-13, 23-25; Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 9; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, vi-vii, 1-4; David Corbitt, *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties, 1663-1943* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1987), 175-176, North Carolina Digital Collections, <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/the-formation-of-the-north-carolina-counties-1663-1943/3692099?item=4553439>.

²³ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 25-26; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 1.

²⁴ North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NCHPO), Files PR0040, PR0053, PR0062, PR0063, PR0101, PR0118, Raleigh, North Carolina.

²⁵ North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources (NC DCR), Division of Archives and History. "Historic and Architectural Resources of the Tar-Neuse River Basin: Appendix for Region K" (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1977), 8.

the Halifax County, Virginia, Historical Society, these buildings were “not meant to last and did not survive unless they were later incorporated into other buildings.”²⁶ With this in mind, it is not surprising that the eighteenth-century buildings that remain on the landscape today appear to have been built for well-off planters and landowners, who would have had the means to erect more substantial buildings. Consequently, these examples do not represent the typical architecture of the era.

Since their initial documentation in the 1970s, one of the six eighteenth-century buildings has been demolished; the five that remain have been remodeled and enlarged over time, and two of these have been heavily altered, hindering an analysis of their original design and construction. As a result, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the very early architecture of Person County except through an analysis of the building styles and construction methods of surrounding counties and by studying the later architecture of the county as a derivative of the region’s earlier buildings.²⁷ However, the fairly low survival of eighteenth-century buildings in adjacent counties makes even this comparison problematic.

Log Construction

According to historian Catherine Bishir, “for many decades after the mid-eighteenth-century settlement, [North Carolina] was the ‘backcountry,’ a place of mostly small farms, minor industries, and tiny towns separated from seaports by miles of rough land and long rivers full of impediments to navigation.”²⁸ The remoteness of the area left settlers without means to import building materials or finishes. The area did, however, have an abundance of fieldstone and lumber. As a result, eighteenth-century buildings were constructed of wood, typically felled and prepared on-site.²⁹

The expediency of frontier life in the North Carolina Piedmont and the vast availability of timber led to a tendency toward log construction; Bishir notes that, “with land to clear, labor in short supply, and manufactured building materials and tools hard to get, most people began with log buildings. . . [for] meetinghouses and courthouses, houses, and barns.”³⁰ As a result, log was the predominant construction method for small- to

²⁶ Halifax County Historical Society (HCHS) Architectural Committee, *An Architectural History of Halifax County, Virginia* (South Boston, VA: Halifax County Historical Society, 2016), 10.

²⁷ Ruth M. Little-Stokes, *An Inventory of Historic Architecture, Caswell County, North Carolina: The Built Environment of a Burley and Bright Leaf Tobacco Economy* (Yanceyville, NC: Caswell County Historical Association, 1979); Marvin Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County and Inventory of Buildings,” in *Heritage and Homesteads: The History and Architecture of Granville County, North Carolina*, Andrew Carlson, et. al. (Charlotte: The Delmar Company, 1988).

²⁸ Catherine W. Bishir, and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 4.

²⁹ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 16; HCHS, *Halifax County*, 19.

³⁰ Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 17-18

mid-sized dwellings and agricultural buildings in the county throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with single unit (known as pens) dwellings the most common.

While no eighteenth-century log buildings are known to be extant in Person County, the proportion of surviving log buildings in piedmont-region counties is an important indication of the prevalence of this construction method. Studies of Wake, Granville, and Caswell Counties in North Carolina and Halifax County, Virginia all found log houses to be abundant in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A late-1970s survey of Caswell County to the immediate west identified log construction as the method used for 20 percent of the surveyed historic buildings, concluding that “the large log proportion is typical of Piedmont North Carolina.”³¹ Person County reflects the commonality of log construction through the early to mid-nineteenth century with 10 percent of known buildings surviving from that period built of log with the true figure likely much higher, including unidentified log buildings now incorporated in larger homes or outbuildings. Since so few buildings remain extant from this era in Person County, the high proportion of surviving log buildings from that time demonstrates just how many once existed on the rural landscape.

In a region where timber was abundant, log construction prevailed for all but the most impressive houses because of the differential in cost and labor between free logs and hewn or processed lumber. A log house or barn could generally be constructed without specialized knowledge, pattern books, or tools. For the felling and notching of logs, “only an axe, or adze, and an augur were necessary,” and these tools were generally carried into the area by early settlers.³² Even with limited tools, a group of men could construct a log building utilizing trimmed and peeled round logs within a week or two to provide shelter for the establishment of the farmstead, with a larger, timber-frame house constructed after several years.³³ With notched corners and wooden hinges and pegs used to fasten doors, early log buildings could be constructed without the use of any metal nails or ironwork, though wood fasteners are less durable than metal and no examples of such wood fasteners remain in Person County.

Several studies have tried to trace the use of log construction in North Carolina to specific ethnic groups, referencing earlier Scandinavian and German precedents elsewhere in the United States; however, the trend was more likely fueled by the

³¹ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 4.

³² Frances Benjamin Johnston and Thomas Tileston Waterman, *The Early Architecture of North Carolina: A Pictorial Survey* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 3.

³³ Johnston and Waterman, *The Early Architecture of North Carolina*, 3.

necessity to construct buildings quickly and the availability of great quantities of virgin lumber in the North Carolina Piedmont.³⁴ Similarly, scholars have tried to tie different notches to distinct ethnic groups. Historian Doug Swaim attributes V-notch and half-dovetail notching to the influence of the Pennsylvania Dutch, noting that diamond notching was “invented by English settlers after contact with the more traditional German methods.”³⁵ Likewise, historian Henry Glassie, concluded that, “virtually every log house in the Maryland and Virginia mountains” utilized V-notching, “one of the most frequent methods of corner notching in eastern Pennsylvania log houses. . . associated in the early times with Germans.”³⁶ However, study of log construction in Halifax County, Virginia, “shows considerable variety of technique and quality,” indicating a wide range of building techniques were likely also present in Person County and were likely a reflection of individual preference over cultural association, though there are not enough extant buildings to make a proper and thorough analysis.³⁷

The stability of horizontal log construction lies in the execution of the corner joints. Saddle notches, where the top log was notched with a curved joint that fit over the curve of the log below, were sometimes used, though water tended to collect around the joints, leading to decaying of the joint and the adjacent wood.³⁸ V-notching and diamond-notching, both of which allowed water to run off away from the joint and require only a rough alignment, remained the most common forms of notching in Person County following the Civil War.

Just as a tight-fitting notch was necessary for the structural stability of a building, mud or mortar chinking was necessary to make it weathertight. Chinking was especially necessary for residences, curing barns, smokehouses, and packhouses, where the regulation of temperature and moisture was essential. In other buildings and structures, including livestock barns and corn cribs where air flow was desired, chinking was less common. The chinking, or mortar, could be any combination of mud, sand, and lime and was frequently reapplied many times over the life span of a building.

The use of log limited the form of log buildings to square or rectangular plans measuring sixteen to twenty feet on each side. For this reason, the most common forms were one or two room houses, usually with a sleeping loft in the gable. “Logs were piled up as high as it was desired to make the room, the loft poles were laid across to form the attic

³⁴ Frances Benjamin Johnston and Thomas Tileston Waterman, *The Early Architecture of North Carolina: A Pictorial Survey* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 3-9.

³⁵ Swaim, “North Carolina Folk Housing,” 31.

³⁶ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 15.

³⁷ HCHS, *Halifax County*, 18.

³⁸ Johnston and Waterman, *The Early Architecture of North Carolina*, 4.

floor system.”³⁹ In some instances, the walls of the attic space were extended upward by several feet to create additional living space. Roof rafters were then installed atop the walls, typically constructed of halved timbers pinned together at the ridge.⁴⁰ In his analysis of North Carolina folk housing, Doug Swaim indicates that these one-room cabins “served as the settler’s ‘first house’ in the beginning, sheltering all activities,” though they were eventually either replaced outright, converted to an outbuilding, or integrated into a larger structure.⁴¹

Timber Frame Construction

Heavy timber-frame, mortise-and-tenon construction, a method of building used throughout Europe and America for generations, characterized Person County’s more substantial eighteenth-century buildings, including the six documented houses in the county from the late-eighteenth century. Unlike horizontal log construction, in which trimmed and peeled logs served as the structure, insulation, and in some cases the wall finish, timber framing utilized logs that were typically hand-hewn to be square or rectangular in cross section, then installed vertically at regularly spaced intervals. Intersecting timbers were connected via mortise-and-tenon joints secured with wood pegs.⁴² Building loads were carried by the exterior walls and partially transferred to the building corners, which were reinforced by diagonal timbers.

Once framed, the buildings were typically covered with plain or beaded weatherboards on the exterior and topped by gabled roofs with flush eaves. An entrance was centered on the façade and flanked by windows that usually were small with small glass panes, “reflecting the limitations of technology and shipping.”⁴³ Interiors were finished with plaster-on-lath or flush-wood sheathing on the interior.

Timber-frame construction allowed more flexibility of scale and form than log construction and with an abundance of trees, even when sawmills were present, timber framing was more cost effective, though less adaptable to irregular plans than light framing. As a result, simple rectangular plans remained the norm, resulting in houses that were “rather vertical and boxy.”⁴⁴ In Halifax County, Virginia, to the immediate north, several basic floor plans had emerged by the end of the eighteenth century. Most included one or two rooms at the first floor with a loft, half story, or full second story

³⁹ Johnston and Waterman, *The Early Architecture of North Carolina*, 4.

⁴⁰ Johnston and Waterman, *The Early Architecture of North Carolina*, 4.

⁴¹ Swaim, “North Carolina Folk Housing,” 32.

⁴² Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 38.

⁴³ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 13.

⁴⁴ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 13.

under a steeply pitched roof and typically accessed by a corner stair in the largest of the first-floor rooms.⁴⁵ The earliest part of the 1791 Holloway-Walker-Dollarhite House (PR0040), on Jones Paylor Road in the northeast part of the county, exemplifies this with a one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled form with a single room on the main level and sleeping loft above.

After single-room houses, the hall-and-parlor house is the earliest documented floor plan in Person County.⁴⁶ The plan consists of two rooms side by side: a square “hall” and a smaller “parlor.” Facades often are asymmetrical as the main entrance to the house directly accesses the hall, which typically has a fireplace on one end and a corner stair leading to a sleeping loft. The hall served as the center of family life – a place for cooking, eating, and the performance of all indoor chores. The adjacent parlor also had a fireplace at one end and was used for sleeping and entertaining guests. In North Carolina, the hall-and-parlor house was often built “with shed rooms appended to the rear and a large porch either appended to or ‘engaged’ into the front of the structure.”⁴⁷ In Person County, the 1789 Holeman House (PR0063), on Dick Holeman Road in the far south of the county and the 1793 Stanfield House (PR0118) on Scott Road in northwest Person County illustrate the hall-and-parlor plan with sleeping attics under gable roofs and accessed by enclosed stairs.

While brick chimneys were common in Virginia and eastern North Carolina, the prevalence of field- and flint-stone throughout the Person County landscape led to a natural tendency to use stone for building foundations and chimneys, a trend that continued in the county well into the twentieth century. The stone foundations and chimneys that remain on the 1778 Colonel Stephen Moore House (PR0101) on Surl Mt. Tirzah Road in southeast Person County, and the 1791 portion of the Holloway-Walker-Dollarhite House are typical of those utilized on housing throughout the county. The two chimneys on the southeast elevation of the Holloway-Walker-Dollarhite House are the most visible representation of eighteenth-century stonework in the county. Each features a single-shoulder, mortise-stone chimney on a slightly wider stone base and topped by a slender stone stack. In the remaining instances where brick chimneys and/or building foundations or piers are extant on eighteenth-century

⁴⁵ HCHS, *Halifax County*, 10.

⁴⁶ Historian Doug Swaim notes the plan’s antecedents in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century houses of rural England and Ireland and brought to North Carolina by English and Scotch-Irish colonists. In Person County however, the plan more likely illustrates the logical and incremental expansion of a single-room log or timber-frame house.

⁴⁷ Swaim, “North Carolina Folk Housing,” 34.

buildings, they appear to be nineteenth- or twentieth-century replacements of original stone features.

Georgian Style

The Georgian style was based in Roman precedents, but named for the English Kings George I, II, and III, who ruled during the eighteenth century. In the purest expression of the style, classical elements were applied to a two-room-deep, center-hall-plan form that featured a strong central entrance around which other elements were balanced symmetrically.⁴⁸ Exterior design elements included double-hung, multi-light windows, and paneled doors, while interiors typically featured raised panel doors, raised- or flush-paneled wainscots, and paneled mantelpieces. In North Carolina, few residential buildings were constructed as fully articulated examples of the Georgian style, illustrating the gentility of merchant, planters, and political appointees in the coastal plain.⁴⁹

Given the late development of Person County, where the earliest documented resources date to the 1790s, and a rural character that prevailed into the nineteenth century, the lack of high-style examples of Georgian-style architecture in the county is no surprise. Instead, the county's stylish late-eighteenth century architecture is a local—vernacular—interpretation of the style, primarily expressed through interior woodwork applied within traditional one- or two-room side-gabled forms finished with plain weatherboards and flush eaves in the gable ends.

On interiors, the style is mostly evident in decorative mantelpieces, which normally featured “a heavy frame around the fire opening, with a richly molded shelf, sometimes above ranges of rectangular panels.”⁵⁰ In the case of the mantelpiece in the 1791 portion of the Holloway-Walker-Dollarhite House (PR0040), the mantelshelf is supported by fluted boards and features reeded molding above three inset panels. The Georgian-style mantelpiece on the main floor at a ca. 1790 House (PR0053) on Pixley Pritchard Road near Timberlake is less decorative, with flat pilasters supporting a molded shelf above two inset panels. In contrast, two mantelpieces in a ca. 1790 House (PR0062, no longer standing) near Hurdle Mills featured a wide band above the firebox with four inset, molded panels below a molded mantelshelf; one of these mantelpieces was supported by paneled pilasters framing the firebox. The classical details and delicate carvings of the mantelpiece in the 1793 Stanfield House (PR0118) are more typical of later,

⁴⁸ Michael Southern, “The I-House as a Carrier of Style in Three Counties of the Northeastern Piedmont,” in *Carolina Dwelling*, 73; Doug Swaim, “North Carolina Folk Housing,” in *Carolina Dwelling*, 38.

⁴⁹ Bisher, *North Carolina Architecture*, 49-50.

⁵⁰ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 14.

Federal-style mantelpieces, indicating it may have been a later alteration. Paneled doors and wainscot were typical, but more elaborate finishes in the county's late eighteenth-century houses, such as molded door and window surrounds and decorative porch elements, typically date to renovations undertaken when sawmills and manufactured building components became more prevalent.

PERSON COUNTY IN THE EARLY TO MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY (1800-1860)

Agriculture and the Enslaved Population of Person County

With only about 6,400 residents, Person County remained almost entirely rural at the turn of the nineteenth century. Agriculture was the primary occupation for about 94% of the population and many White landowners had begun to build wealth by this time. In general, wealth was not acquired by accumulating additional land holdings or cash, but rather by increasing the number of enslaved laborers. Enslaved African Americans made up about one-third of the county's population in 1800, swelling to about half by 1860. One cause of the increased need for enslaved labor was the popularity of tobacco, a particularly labor-intensive cash crop. It was estimated that one laborer could cultivate only two or three acres of tobacco, resulting in a county-wide trend of small farms with large, enslaved workforces.⁵¹

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, air-cured burley tobacco was the primary cash crop in the county. Larkin Brooks built a tobacco factory in Woodsdale around 1830, one of the first in the state.⁵² By layering leaves, adding a sweetener such as molasses, and then applying pressure to alter the flavors, a block-like shape, or plug, was produced for chewing. It was usually packed into wood boxes of forty, fifty, or one hundred pounds.⁵³ Brooks's grandson, Aubrey Lee Brooks, later recalled, "In the absence of railroad transportation, my grandfather used a fleet of horse-drawn wagons to haul manufactured plug tobacco to merchants in eastern North Carolina and South Carolina."⁵⁴

Notoriously poor roads may have been the greatest limiting factor in Person County agriculture in the early nineteenth century. Construction of roads was difficult due to the rocky soils and sometimes steep terrain, and road maintenance continued to fall well short of the county's needs. As a result, markets in Petersburg, New Boston,

⁵¹ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 58-59; Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 358.

⁵² Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 30; Branson's *North Carolina Business Directory for 1867-8* (Raleigh: Branson & Jones Publishers, 1867).

⁵³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 1-2, 30; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 80.

⁵⁴ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 30.

Clarksville, and other Virginia towns remained the most accessible markets for most Person County farmers and merchants.⁵⁵

The 1840s and 1850s saw a rapid decline in both tobacco production and market prices. Part of the decline was caused by poor farming practices that exhausted the soil and resulted in lower crop yields. Increased competition was another factor, as tobacco became a popular crop in newly settled Missouri and other western states as well as overseas in Cuba, Colombia, and the East Indies. Changes in the tobacco market also impacted farmers' willingness to engage in the labor-intensive practices required for tobacco cultivation; prices reached ten cents per pound in 1839, then plummeted to only four cents per pound in 1842.⁵⁶

As tobacco prices dropped and the crop fell out of favor, some Person County farmers experimented with cotton. The availability of cotton gins to process raw cotton in preparation for market likely contributed to the presence of the crop in the county. No Person County gins are known to remain, but some are documented, such as Duncan Rose's, which was operating as early as 1803. Perhaps the greatest influence was that of cotton agents in Petersburg, Virginia, who encouraged the cultivation of cotton in North Carolina and its sale in Virginia. Ultimately, the crop was relatively unprofitable for the small farms in Person County as it required large acreage and most county soil was ill-suited to its cultivation. As a result, cotton was never widely grown in Person County or the neighboring counties in the tobacco belt along the Virginia border.⁵⁷

Fueled by the development of bright leaf tobacco, cash crop agriculture in Person County shifted from cotton back to tobacco in the years leading up to the Civil War. The process of curing tobacco by utilizing wood fires and a series of flues to produce a sudden, immense, and smokeless heat that left the leaves a bright yellow color was discovered in 1839 on the farm of Abisha Slade in neighboring Caswell County. The flavor achieved by flue-curing was preferred for cigarettes, and soon bright leaf tobacco outpaced burley production in the Piedmont region, including Person County, which by 1850 produced over twelve percent of the state's tobacco.⁵⁸ By the 1860s, there were several tobacco factories processing both burley and bright leaf tobacco in the county, though the county still lacked a substantial tobacco market. Some factories were located in and around Roxboro, but several were located in the crossroads communities of rural Person County, including James I. Cothran's factory at Mt. Tirzah, Ike Allen's at

⁵⁵ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 51-53.

⁵⁶ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 60, 64.

⁵⁷ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 59-60.

⁵⁸ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 76-77.

Wheeler's Church, William Thomas's at Centre Grove (in eastern Person County), Haywood Williams's near Cunningham, and both Larkin Brooks's and Charles G. Mitchell's at Woodsdale.⁵⁹ None of these early tobacco facilities remain extant.

Like their White neighbors, many Sappony in Person County raised tobacco, and throughout their history, tobacco remained important within Sappony culture. It was used as an offering for a good hunt or the safe return of warriors from battle, as well as during tribal ceremonies. As tobacco became increasingly dominant within the local High Plains economy, the income from raising tobacco funded Sappony churches, schools, and benevolent activities. Dante Desiderio, the tribe's current executive director, summarized the importance of tobacco to the Sappony in the nineteenth century: "Staying together and keeping to themselves was a matter of survival, and the livelihood gained from farming tobacco allowed the Sappony to remain together and remain in their homelands."⁶⁰

Farmsteads

Few pre-Civil War agricultural resources remain extant in Person County, and those that do survive typically retain individual buildings rather than complete complexes. As historian Marvin Brown observed in nearby Granville County:

These survivors are not representative of the types and numbers of structures that once served the county's diverse agricultural production. . .First, outbuildings are by nature impermanent. As they age and decay they are readily replaced. Second, the development of flue-curing [tobacco] after the [Civil] War led to the growth of a new group of outbuildings and the consequent destruction or reconstruction of other, outmoded ones, such as tobacco barns not suited to the ready addition of a flue. Third, the ever-increasing attention paid to the raising and curing of bright leaf tobacco in the last third of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth reduced the need for outbuildings associated with livestock such as cribs and granaries. And finally, the outbuilding that was probably once among the most numerous, the slave house, was mercifully made obsolete by the outcome of the War.⁶¹

Though there are no intact farm complexes from this era, some inferences can be made from the remaining physical evidence. A small number of extant farmsteads of prominent landowners are believed to include enslaved worker housing, including

⁵⁹ Branson's Business Directory, 1867-8; Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 80; Eaker, Heritage of Person County, Volume I, 1-2.

⁶⁰ Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 57.

⁶¹ Brown, "The Architecture of Granville County," 190.

Waverly Plantation (PR0126; NR1974), Oakland Plantation (PR0063), and Burleigh Plantation (PR0011; NR1980). Only one barn from this era is known to remain standing, the Whitfield Tobacco Barn (PR0189), a hand-hewn log building with half-diamond notching estimated to have been built around 1840. However, the prevalence of log construction in the county though the early twentieth century makes dating log barns and other outbuildings difficult.

Industry and Industrial Architecture

Person County's primary industry in the early nineteenth century was the milling of grain by water-powered gristmill.⁶² While the power created by the flow of rivers is self-evident, streams and small waterways were also important to early Person County milling, as the construction of a dam facilitated the manipulation of water needed for even a small stream to generate the force needed to power a gristmill. The dam elevated the water level, creating or increasing waterfalls, which in turn powered a wheel or other machinery that turned the millstones. Paired millstones with a series of grooves or carvings, often in a curved, flower-petal-like design, were set on top of one another with space between for the grist to pass. As the wheels rotated, the grist was ground and broken up. Various methods were used to sift the ground components, sometimes with cloth that worked like a sieve, allowing finer grain through while sifting out larger chaff, or using gravity to separate the heavier chaff from the lighter meal or flour.⁶³ Later iterations of these interior mechanisms remain at Hurdle Mill (PR0089).

The millpond that formed by damming the stream offered a means of regulating the flow of the water and thereby controlling its power. Water flow could be further controlled by using a millrace, constructed to harness and channel the waterpower toward an overshot wheel. While milling sometimes lowered the millpond water level by several feet, the water level would rise again in the overnight hours when the mill was not in use. As a result, the construction of a dam could effectively double the waterpower, and thus the production, of the mill.⁶⁴

By the outbreak of the Civil War, Person County had at least four gristmills producing flour and meal valued at nearly \$67,000 annually, representing about one-third of manufacturing enterprises and almost half the total value of manufactured goods in the

⁶² Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 79-80.

⁶³ Brian Hayes, *Infrastructure: The Book of Everything for the Industrial Landscape* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 124-127; Hobbs, *Exploring the Old Mills*, 6-22.

⁶⁴ Natalie Popovic and Joey Powell, "Gristmills" NCpedia, State Library of North Carolina, <https://www.ncpedia.org/gristmills>; Grimsley T. Hobbs, *Exploring the Old Mills of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: The Provincial Press, 1985), 14; Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 7-8.

county. These figures attest to the highly rural nature of the county in the mid-nineteenth century; statewide, gristmilling made up only about seventeen percent of manufacturing establishments and accounted for only about one-quarter of total value of manufactured goods in the state.⁶⁵

One of the earliest known mills in Person County was constructed on the Hyco River between 1776 and 1815 by Mumford McGehee. Another early mill was built in Mt. Tirzah by W.A. Barton Sr., who purchased the site of a previous mill in 1853 and began construction of a new mill the following year. Neither mill survives. In the twentieth century, the McGehee Mill (PR330) was largely rebuilt and later moved to 333 S. Lamar Street in Roxboro where it was adapted as an office building. The Barton Mill was destroyed by fire in 1936, after which a new Barton's Mill (PR0468) was constructed in the Timberlake community.

While no pre-Civil War mills remain in the county, the foundations of two early-nineteenth-century gristmills, Barnett's Mill and Moore's Mill, have been identified. Their location and the arrangement of associated site features, as well as documentary photographs of Moore's Mill, provide information about their construction and operation.

Barnett's Mill (PR0537) was located northwest of Roxboro, on the north side of Story's Creek. An article in *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times* centennial edition indicates that the mill site and millpond, known as Barnett's Pond (later Loch Lily and now Chub Lake), were extant in 1818. The site includes the foundations of two mill structures situated fewer than a dozen yards apart, both standing north of a cut-stone dam and northeast of a stone-lined millrace. The earlier mill, likely present in 1818, featured a foundation of dry-stacked stone walls, the stone presumably gathered from the immediate area. The second mill was constructed as a "four-story mill with an eighteen-foot overshot wheel," erected about 1830.⁶⁶ The foundation of this mill is of mortared cut stone, the source of which is not known. The location of the mill's water wheel is still evident, and its foundation maintains a clear connection to the millrace, also built of mortared stone. The cut-stone dam spanning Story's Creek appears to have been laid without mortar, though was likely chinked on the upstream side with either clay or mortar of some kind. While nothing remains of the mill buildings above the foundations, they

⁶⁵ Bureau of the Census, *Manufactures of the United States in 1860*; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1865), 430, 437-438.

⁶⁶ "Long, Barnetts were Early Owners," *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times Centennial – 1881-1981*, December 1982, Section C, page 16, Person County Museum of History (PCMH), Roxboro, North Carolina.

were almost certainly of wood construction, and likely timber-framed, which was the most common construction method in pre-Civil War Person County.

Located in southeastern Person County, just north of the Durham County line, Moore's Mill (PR0102) was constructed in the mid-nineteenth century on the north side of the Flat River. Images of the mill building from the 1950s show a two-and-a-half-story, side-gabled structure with a stone foundation, plain weatherboards, batten shutters covering the window openings, and a standing-seam roof with flush eaves in the gable ends. The same series of photographs, published in the Durham *Morning Herald*, include an interior view that reveals heavy-timber framing and wood floors. By the 1970s, the wood portion of the mill had collapsed, leaving only a stone foundation, stone dam, and stone millrace on the site.⁶⁷

Three of the four stone foundation walls of Moore's Mill remain in place. The cut-stone mortared walls, measuring roughly two feet in thickness, are similar to those at Barnett's Mill. A five-foot-wide, steel undershot water wheel, adjacent to the south foundation wall, is flanked by a lower stone wall on its south side. The walls help channel the water and connect to the remnants of a roughly five-hundred-foot millrace, which is constructed of mortared stone and features an opening for a sluice (no longer in place) that could be raised or lowered to control the flow of water. At the far west end of the mill complex, a mortared stone wall makes up the south end of a dam that spans the Flat River. Wood boards that made up the north part of the dam are no longer extant.⁶⁸

Rural Crossroads Communities

By the 1850s, country stores were located across the county, usually at the intersections of well-traveled roads. Small crossroads communities commonly formed around these stores, after which the community was often named. Among those established in the first half of the nineteenth century were Bradsher's (formerly Norfleet's) Store in Bushy Fork, Robert Hester's store at the crossroads of the same name, William G. Winstead's store in Olive Hill, John Garner's Cunningham Store, John Rogers' Woodsdale Store, the Allen & Royster Store in Allensville, Day & Townshend Store at Centre Grove, the Noell Store at Mount Tirzah, Thomas Webb's store at Hurdle Mills, and the VanHook Store near Paine's Tavern.⁶⁹ None of these structures remains standing.

A surprising number of these crossroads communities included a post office, often operated within the general store. Many operated only briefly – some open just a single

⁶⁷ Personal Collection of Barry Allen.

⁶⁸ Hobbs, *Exploring the Old Mills*, 15.

⁶⁹ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 75-76.

year – before being discontinued, including Arcadia (1833-1854), Blue Wing (1845-1847), Cameron’s Mill/Point Pleasant (1832-1846), Daniel’s Mill (1846-1859), Five Forks (1850-1856), Harmony (1842), McMurray’s Store (1825), Tar River (1841), Van Hook’s Store (1826-1871), Webb’s Mill (1840), and Williamsville (1826-1871). Others were long-standing institutions within crossroads communities and these, for the most part, remain on the rural landscape today, including Allensville (1855-1907), Bethel Hill (1860-1914), Bushy Fork (1855-1910), Cunningham Store (1828-1908), Gordonton (1830-1907), Hester’s Store (1854-1900), Mt. Tirzah (1826-1906), and Olive Hill (1846-1904). Rural Free Delivery began in 1896, slowly expanding to cover the entire county in the early 1900s. As a result, many rural post offices began to close around the turn of the century, either discontinued or merged with other rural post offices. Notably, the Woodsdale post office was established in 1833 and operated continuously until 1975 when its mail was transferred to Roxboro for handling; the Hurdle Mills post office, established in 1859, continues in operation today.⁷⁰

Crossroads communities typically included at least one church; the Baptist faith was perhaps the most prevalent during the pre-Civil war years. Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church formed in the western part of the county, near Leasburg, by 1805 and may have formed as early as 1793. The early history of the church and its buildings is not clear, though it appears an early church was constructed around 1817 at the south end of John Pleasant Road.⁷¹ Mt. Harmony Baptist Church was organized in 1845 and met in a log building until a frame church was built in 1852.⁷² Antioch Baptist Church formed in 1853 in the Ai community, formerly known as Cross Roads, south of Roxboro. The congregation first met in a log school at the intersection of Antioch Church and Dink Ashley Roads and built a sanctuary on the site in 1858.⁷³ Northeast of Roxboro, Providence Baptist Church was established in a log building on Virgilina Road. Construction began on a frame church on the same site in 1862 but was not completed until 1898.⁷⁴ Other Baptist churches formed by breaking off from existing congregations. Olive Branch Baptist Church, Mill Creek Baptist Church, and Ephesus Baptist Church each separated from Bethel Hill Baptist Church, in the northernmost section of the county, to form new congregations in 1831, 1832, and 1850, respectively. As noted earlier, the Sappony worshipped at Bethel Hill Baptist Church in the late

⁷⁰ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 18-21. Note: The Woodsdale post office was housed in the Brooks Store by the early twentieth century and the current Hurdle Mills Post Office was built in 1943.

⁷¹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 72-73.

⁷² Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 84; “Mount Harmony Baptist Church,” File PR0376, NCHPO.

⁷³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 64-65.

⁷⁴ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 90.

eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They separated from the church in 1850 and then worshipped in each other's homes.⁷⁵ Clement Baptist Church was established in 1830 from a division of the Wheeler's Primitive Baptist Church congregation. Nathaniel Norfleet donated the land for the first church building on Burlington Road.⁷⁶ Meanwhile, Wheeler's Primitive Baptist Church (PR0640), established late in the previous century, constructed a new building on Wheelers Church Road in 1848, a plain gable-front building with two front entrances leading directly to the two interior aisles. All of these buildings eventually were destroyed and replaced except for Wheeler's Primitive Baptist Church, which appears to be the oldest extant religious building in the county.

A number of Methodist churches were established in the early nineteenth century. The first building for the Mt. Tirzah United Methodist Church was constructed in 1819, though it is believed the congregation may have formed in the late 1700s, initially served by circuit riders.⁷⁷ Concord United Methodist Church formed around 1815 and built a log church on land donated by William Trotter. This building was replaced with a frame sanctuary in 1857.⁷⁸ Oak Grove United Methodist Church was established around 1828 when land was sold to the church trustees by the Dillehays.⁷⁹ Allensville Methodist Church, first known as Bethlehem Methodist Church, was formed in 1834 and first gathered on Isaac Webb's farm. In the late 1850s, a church was built at 51 Dennys Store Road, west of Roxboro.⁸⁰ Like the early Baptist churches, all of the Methodists' early buildings eventually were replaced.

Most crossroads communities had a school, though there was no formal public education until after the Civil War. In the pre-Civil War years, most rural schools were neighborhood subscription schools taught by local women or preachers; few records survive from these relatively informal institutions. The earliest school in the county is believed to have been the Arcadia Academy, established near Mt. Tirzah by Ben Sumner by the early 1800s, though possibly dating to the 1780s. The private school required tuition, and the curriculum included English, Latin, Greek, Geography, Mathematics, Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Logic. No trace of it survives. Kindle Van Hook

⁷⁵ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 57-58; Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 67; Eaker, *Person County Heritage*, Volume I, 67-68, 82-83.

⁷⁶ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 70.

⁷⁷ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 85; "Mt. Tirzah United Methodist Church," File PR0797, NCHPO.

⁷⁸ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 70-71.

⁷⁹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 88-89; "Oak Grove United Methodist Church," File PR0104, NCHPO.

⁸⁰ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 57-58; Boatwright, *Person County Past*, 67; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 63-64.

joined with others in Olive Hill to build the Van Hook School, a one-room log structure completed in 1810. The school is believed to have remained open at least until the Civil War and currently stands on the grounds of the Person County Historical Museum (PR0257) in Roxboro. Girls in western Person County benefitted from the establishment of the Somerville Female Institute (not extant), a private school founded in Leasburg, Caswell County, in 1848. The school initially admitted only girls but began enrolling boys after the Civil War.⁸¹

Incorporation of Roxborough

With its designation as the county seat and the construction of the first courthouse, Roxborough emerged as a proper town in the early 1800s. The Roxborough Court House post office was established in 1806, and for much of the early nineteenth century, Roxborough remained a small village sustained by its role as the county seat. In his history of Person County, historian Stuart Wright noted that, “Certainly the greatest occasions for recreation for the average man were still court week, general muster, and election day.” In Person County, court week took place in November, and A.R. Foushee describes the scene in his *Reminiscences*: “The Superior Court attracted large crowds; it seemed as if everybody tried to come on Tuesday of November Court which was the biggest day of the year. It was also market day for home-made [goods]. It was also a great time for the sale of ginger cakes and locust and persimmon cider. . .made and sold chiefly by the old free colored people.” General muster usually took place twice a year and involved the assembly, training, and inspection of the local militia, while elections were typically held once a year.⁸²

The 1793 Person County courthouse required ongoing repairs between 1810 and 1812, including repairs to hinges, windowpanes, paneling, pillars, and the jailhouse, as well as the addition of jailer’s quarters. By 1824, the courthouse was again in disrepair, so the county commissioners hired John Fawcett & Company to build a new courthouse building, a modest frame building containing a courtroom and jury room completed in 1826.⁸³

By 1853 Roxborough had a population of about 250 people who were served by the town’s three general stores, hotel, saloons, large mercantile enterprise, tailor shop, blacksmith shops, and brickyard. However, Roxborough lacked a newspaper, hardware stores, furniture stores, barber shops, coffin shops, or wagon shops, and the nearest

⁸¹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 100-114.

⁸² Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 73.

⁸³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, vi-vii; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 62-64, 68.

banks and pharmacies were in Milton, about fifteen miles away in Caswell County.⁸⁴ By 1854, the population of Roxborough had grown sufficiently to warrant incorporation, which was granted by the General Assembly the following year, when the spelling changed to Roxboro. R.W. Reade was the first mayor and Chesley Hamlin, G.D. Satterfield, C.S. Winstead, James Wright, and E.G. Reade were appointed town commissioners.⁸⁵

In addition to laws regarding tax collection, public drunkenness, discharge of firearms, sale of goods, and proper hitching of horses, there were laws that restricted the actions of African Americans. Enslaved people were prohibited from “playing marbles or other games or making loud noise in the streets on the Sabbath,” and free people of color were prohibited from purchasing alcohol on the Sabbath and from ever giving alcohol to enslaved people. Among the first laws passed by the new town commission was a response to the hypervigilance of White enslavers to the possibility of insurrection following Nat Turner’s deadly 1831 rebellion in southern Virginia. Passed in 1856, the law imposed a 9:00 pm curfew on free people of color in the town, who would be fined if discovered on streets after that hour without the express permission of a White employer.⁸⁶

In spite of being the county seat and the only incorporated town in Person County, Roxboro had few churches or schools prior to the Civil War. Efforts to establish a Methodist church began in 1822 when property was purchased near present-day Main and Carver Streets to establish the Cool Spring Meeting House. By the 1850s, this building had deteriorated and a new church, no longer standing, was built on North Main Street.⁸⁷ Presbyterians organized in Roxboro in 1858, but the congregation dissolved after only sixteen years.⁸⁸ Education was similarly limited in Roxboro prior to the Civil War, when most schools were informal affairs taught in private homes. The Roxboro Male Academy (PR0258; NR1982) opened as early as 1840 on North Main Street, but little is known about the school, which had closed by 1854. The school building is a two-story frame house with Greek Revival-style detailing, a late-nineteenth-century addition, and an early-twentieth-century, Colonial Revival-style wrap-around porch with round fluted columns.

⁸⁴ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 68.

⁸⁵ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 70.

⁸⁶ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 70-72.

⁸⁷ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 80-81; Rosalie Price Gates, “History of Long Memorial United Methodist Church, Roxboro, North Carolina, 1822-2017,” 2018, <https://longmemorialumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Long-Memorial-History-1822-2017.pdf>.

⁸⁸ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 80-81.

Domestic Architecture

Like Halifax County, Virginia, to its north, Person County did not have direct access to markets in the early nineteenth century but was a productive agricultural region that relied on the somewhat limited sale of tobacco and grains. Like the adjoining counties of Halifax, Pittsylvania and Mecklenburg in Virginia and Caswell and Granville counties in North Carolina, Person County was squarely within the center of North Carolina and Virginia's tobacco region, where production soared after the discovery of bright leaf tobacco.⁸⁹ As a result, residences and farm complexes are by far the most prevalent extant resources from the pre-Civil War era. Of these, small-scale farms were the norm, seldom measuring more than several hundred acres in size due to in part to 1669 legislation that prohibited owning tracts greater than 660 acres without special permission from the Lords Proprietors.⁹⁰ The result was a landscape of mostly small to moderate-sized farms with modest houses in contrast to the sprawling plantations of Virginia and South Carolina.⁹¹

Since Person County was largely settled by Virginians, nineteenth-century building types, like those of the previous century, were primarily derived from Virginian precedents. The expression of these trends in Person County was typically characterized by smaller scale construction and a lower degree of architectural sophistication than in Virginia.⁹²

Documentation from the 1970s and 1980s showed roughly eighty-five houses in the county constructed between 1800 and 1860, though fewer than fifty-five are known to remain in Person County, the others lost to demolition and neglect. The vast majority of these buildings are of timber-frame construction and roughly two-thirds display decorative Georgian, Federal, or Greek Revival stylistic elements; often, features of more than one of these styles are present. Most of the surviving houses from the era express its prevailing styles, but they do not represent the totality of houses on the Person County landscape during that period. Rather, it is likely that their construction methods, larger size, and more distinctive detailing led to their survival, while their smaller-scale, less decorative, one-room or hall-and-parlor plan contemporaries were either replaced over time or incorporated into larger houses.

Early nineteenth-century buildings in rural Person County continued to use the methods and forms of the eighteenth century with log construction utilized well into

⁸⁹ HCHS, Halifax County, 21.

⁹⁰ NC DCR, "Tar-Neuse River Basin," 11.

⁹¹ NC DCR, "Tar-Neuse River Basin," 12.

⁹² NC DCR, "Tar-Neuse River Basin," 16.

the twentieth century. In many instances, nineteenth-century log buildings, like their eighteenth-century log predecessors, were often intended to be temporary and thus were naturally replaced over time, converted for other uses, or incorporated into larger structures. Consequently, it is likely that more log houses survive than the eight documented.

Most of the surviving log buildings from this period have been covered with weatherboards or rolled asphalt sheathing that obscures the construction detailing. The only known exception is the ca. 1860 Tom Chambers House (PR0015) off of Chambers Loop Road near Timberlake, which is typical of the era in its stone foundation, stone chimney and stack (obscured by later parging), square-notched log construction (with replacement cement-based chinking), and plain weatherboards in the gables. The interior, not accessible to the authors, appears to be a one-room plan, likely with a corner stair leading to the sleeping loft. Single-room log dwellings like the Tom Chambers House are the only log forms that survive as stand-alone log buildings from this period. Dogtrot and saddlebag forms consisting of matching square forms connected by an open breezeway or shared chimney, respectively, were also likely constructed during this period.

Whatever the original form, log buildings were often enlarged as needed by constructing log pens or frame wings, as exemplified by the ca. 1840 Cozart House (PR0018) on Moriah Road in the southeast corner of the county. The weatherboards-clad house features deep window and door openings on the south end that indicate log construction. Likely within a few decades of construction, the house was enlarged with a frame addition to one side, resulting in the four-bay facade. A gabled, frame ell on the rear of the original log pen further enlarged the house, probably in the early twentieth century.

Interior features of the average log house were minimal, consisting of wood floors, flush wood sheathing on walls and ceilings, a corner stair to the sleeping loft, and in some instances a basic post-and-lintel mantelpiece at the gable-end, stone fireplace. The continued use of the log buildings, especially those that remained extant into the late twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries, meant that many of the interiors were altered over time. As a result, a true analysis of early-nineteenth-century interiors of log houses is not possible.

Frame Construction

By the early nineteenth century, heavy timber-frame construction came into use for both modest and large-scale houses alike. Roughly fifty-five residences in Person County, or seventy percent of the buildings documented from this time period, were

identified as having been constructed with timber framing. These range in scale and detail from the ca. 1840 two-story, one-room, Bass House (PR0005) with plain weatherboards and flush eaves, to the ca. 1826 two-and-a-half-story, two-room-deep Burleigh (PR0011; NR1980), both in the northwest part of the county near Hyco Lake.

In the antebellum period (late 1830s to 1860), some houses may have been constructed utilizing light framing, which features wood boards cut down to be square or rectangular in profile then affixed to one another with nails. The regularly spaced vertical to horizontal members at the top and bottom of the walls with a similar “skeleton” used to frame the sloped roof plane. The absence of rail lines through the county and the continued rural, “backwoods” nature of Person County meant that some rural communities may have benefited from water-powered sawmills during this era, though for most, sawn lumber and molded trims remained expensive and difficult to obtain. As the type of framing is difficult to verify in buildings that retain interior finishes and exterior sheathing, the number of surviving antebellum, light-frame buildings cannot be confirmed.

Stone was abundant in the county, but stone masonry was not a skill universally possessed by early settlers, and stone construction was considerably more time consuming than log or frame construction. Consequently, during the nineteenth century stone was used only for chimneys, foundations, mills (where water was likely to come into contact with the walls), and eventually low garden walls.

Brick, “a sign of wealth and status in addition to being more durable and fireproof,” was used for prominent houses in neighboring Halifax County, Virginia, in the early 1800s, yet it was a relatively rare building material in Person County in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁹³ Sandy and silt loam soils, often a component of nineteenth-century brickmaking, were prevalent in the county but the necessary clays were not and would have to have been imported from other parts of the state – as expensive and difficult a process as obtaining sawn lumber. Further, even where clay was available, the lime needed to produce flexible, breathable mortar was not. “The scarcity of lime limited brick construction,” concludes Bishir and Southern in their guidebook to piedmont, North Carolina architecture, “[and] masonry buildings continued to reflect unusual cost and effort.”⁹⁴ Thus extant brick foundation piers or chimneys on nineteenth-century houses likely are twentieth-century replacements made when brick was more affordable and more easily obtained.

⁹³ HCHS, *Halifax County*, 29.

⁹⁴ Bishir and Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 29.

Residential Plans and Forms

Like building construction methods and materials, residential building forms and plans changed little from the eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries. Small-scale timber-frame or log houses remained the norm, most following basic one- or one-and-a-half-story forms. The retention of traditional forms and one-room and hall-and-parlor plans was not a stylistic choice but rather a functional and economic decision. Settlers focused their time and efforts on clearing land to produce both subsistence and cash crops. Early families “spent the majority of their time outdoors or working in or around domestic and agricultural dependencies.” As a base of operations, their houses did not need to be large.⁹⁵

As farmsteads became more firmly established, more time could be dedicated to residential improvements. Houses often were enlarged as families grew and, accordingly, floor plans tended to become more complex as a center passage with an open, central stair and an addition story were introduced. In many instances, rear or side wings were added, connected by a covered porch or breezeway.

Hall-and-Parlor Plan

The hall-and-parlor plan remained in use through the first half of the nineteenth century. Of the twenty-three hall-and-parlor-plan houses that have been identified in Person County, fourteen were constructed between 1800 and 1850, though only eight are extant and half of those are deteriorated or ruinous. Only two of the fourteen houses are known to have been log construction though both remain today), showing a significant shift toward timber framing in the early nineteenth century.

The majority of the hall-and-parlor plan houses, whether of log or timber-frame construction, were one-story, side-gabled houses with sleeping lofts lit only by windows in the gable ends. The oldest remaining example is the William Warren House (PR0482), a timber-frame dwelling constructed about 1800 and moved in 2015 to its current location on US 501 north of Roxboro. The house stands on a modern brick foundation and has reconstructed double-shoulder brick chimneys and a modern metal roof.⁹⁶ Other notable examples of early to mid-nineteenth-century hall-and-parlor dwellings include the timber-frame house on the Wagstaff Farm (PR0295; NR2006) on Semora Road in the northwest part of the county, which has the more typical exterior, gable-end stone chimneys. Windows on the façade flank a centered entrance to the hall that results in a nearly symmetrical façade typical of eighteenth-century Georgian

⁹⁵ HCHS, Halifax County, 19.

⁹⁶ The chimneys had already likely been reconstructed in brick prior to the relocation of the house, after which they were again constructed of brick.

architecture. A corner stair in the hall is located adjacent to the fireplace. A ca. 1830 hall-and-parlor house (PR0066; demolished) that was on Mackfield Road west of Roxboro had exterior entrances to both rooms from the porch.

Less common in Person County is the two-story hall-and-parlor-plan house. The rarity of this form, with only three examples identified, may indicate its infrequent construction. However, the paucity of examples may be due to the later insertion of a partition wall to create a center passage when center-hall houses became popular. Of the three known examples of this form, only two remain extant. The older of these is the ca. 1810 John Rogers House (PR0112) on Woodsdale Road, which features a one-story gabled rear ell connected by an enclosed breezeway. The ca. 1830 Holloway-Jones-Day House (PR0039; NR1988) on the west side of US 501 near Mayo Lake, has chimneys of handmade, oversized brick – an indication of the wealth of its builder.

Side-Passage Plan

The side-hall or side-passage plan was rare in Person County, likely because a hallway of any kind was wasted interior space for early-nineteenth-century settlers who were already combining multiple uses within the small interior spaces they had. Only three examples of the plan are known to have been built in the county, and one is in ruinous condition. The earliest of these is the Holloway-Walker-Dollarhite House (PR0040; NR1978) on Jones Paylor Road, constructed in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The most impressive example of the form is Waverly (PR0126; NR1974) on Cunningham Road in the far north of the county, built between 1825 and 1835 by Alexander Cunningham, a member of the wealthy planter class. The house features a two-room deep (or double-pile) plan with a side hall that extends the full depth of the house. Historian Marvin Brown noted that the side-hall plan was brought to the area from the north and east and indicates an “intimate connection with Virginia.”⁹⁷ Alexander Cunningham was a native of Halifax County, Virginia, and Waverly is located so close to the Virginia state line that a connection to the architectural heritage of Virginia cannot be denied.

Center-Hall Plan

The center-hall plan was relatively rare in the North Carolina Piedmont until after 1820 and did not become popular in rural Person County until the 1830s.⁹⁸ This can be seen in the four properties in the county that were documented as having been constructed in the early- to mid-1820s as one-story, one- or two-room houses, then enlarged in the mid-nineteenth century and adapted to center-hall plans at that time.

⁹⁷ Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 172.

⁹⁸ Southern, “The I-House,” 72.

The earliest houses to have been constructed with a center hall plan date to 1830. Of the thirty center-hall-plan houses known to have been constructed in Person County between 1830 and 1860, two were one-and-a-half stories and the remaining twenty-eight were two stories. Two of the houses (one one-and-a-half-story and one two-story house) were two rooms deep, or double-pile, while the remaining examples are all one room deep, or single-pile, and have a side-gabled or hipped roof and symmetrical fenestration on the facade.

Common in the northeastern United States as early as the colonial era, the two-story, one-room-deep dwelling became known as an “I-house” and remained the dominant residential form in rural Person County well into the twentieth century. While wealthy planters constructed two-room-deep houses such as Burleigh (PR0011; NR1980), the I-house was far more common in the county. Some sources identify the plan as a simplification of the earlier Georgian forms, though in rural Person County, it was more likely embraced as the natural successor to one- and two-room dwellings.⁹⁹

The orientation of the I-house on its site is as characteristic as the form itself. The building was almost universally oriented with its long elevation facing the road, regardless of solar orientation, resulting in a prominent and imposing façade, the largest possible for a four-room house.¹⁰⁰ The symmetrical fenestration was indicative of the interior plan, but also reflected a continued desire for formality. According to historian Michael Southern, the form emerged as a “symbol of economic achievement and social respectability in a democratic agrarian society.”¹⁰¹

More than a visual statement of prosperity, the form was “considered to be the climax of the adaptation of domestic architecture to the adverse heat and humidity of the Southern climate.”¹⁰² All four rooms had the benefit of exterior windows on at least two walls, allowing for strong cross breezes. The center hall also typically had entrances at both ends that could be opened to promote airflow through the house. The advantages of good ventilation made the form “especially suitable for a hot, humid Southern climate.”¹⁰³

Most I-houses also included a one- or two-story rear ell. In some instances, the ell was actually an earlier one- or one-and-a-half-story house onto which the I-house was

⁹⁹ Sources vary on the origin of the term I-house. Some historians note that the names derived from the long, narrow shape of the house while others credit its prevalence in the upper Midwestern states of Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa as the source.

¹⁰⁰ Swaim, “North Carolina Folk Housing,” 39.

¹⁰¹ Southern, “The I-House,” 71.

¹⁰² Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 4.

¹⁰³ Southern, “The I-House,” 71.

constructed. In other instances, the ell was constructed concurrently with, or shortly after, the I-house. A centered ell, resulting in a T-shaped plan, was accessed from the center hall and usually allowed both rear windows of the flanking rooms to remain, thereby increasing air flow through the first and second floors. In Person County, several I-houses were constructed with an ell that aligned with one of the side elevations, resulting in a true L-shaped plan. In these instances, the siding and exterior finishes are continuous between the front and rear sections, confirming their concurrent construction.

Characteristic of all nineteenth-century forms, shed- or hip-roofed porches were commonly constructed on the front and rear elevations of I-houses as a means of extending the living space and providing protection for outdoor chores and activities, a practice that extended into the early twentieth century. The porches captured breezes, sheltered their occupants from rain or sun, and provided “short-term shelter of foodstuffs and animals.”¹⁰⁴ The addition of a rear ell allowed for additional porches to be constructed. Often, rear ell porches eventually were enclosed in the twentieth century to create bathrooms. Whereas the front of an I-house was oriented toward the street, porches on a rear ell were often oriented to capture the eastern or southern sun. Whatever the orientation, I-houses in Person County, as throughout the piedmont, were typically plainly finished with any decorative, stylistic details concentrated on the front porch or in a front gable. It is these finishes that identify the vernacular style and construction period of this house type.

Federal Style

The Federal style was introduced in the early years of the republic, concurrent with the new federal government that gave it its name. It first appeared in coastal population centers and gradually became more popular across the new country as it supplanted the Georgian style by the turn of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁵ While distinctly American, the Federal style remained rooted in English precedents and was a lighter and more refined expression specifically influenced by the work of British architects, particularly Robert Adam. For this reason, the stylistic details are sometimes classified as “Adam Style” or “Adamesque.”¹⁰⁶

The Federal style is so similar in its classical detailing that it can be difficult to differentiate from the preceding Georgian style. Though the national popularity of the Georgian style was waning by the last decades of the eighteenth century, in rural areas

¹⁰⁴ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 14.

¹⁰⁵ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 68-69.

¹⁰⁶ McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses*, 222-232; NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 17.

like Person and Granville Counties, elements of the style were applied to new and extant buildings as late as the 1820s and 1830s, when the Federal style was becoming increasingly popular. Instead of exemplifying either one of these styles, most early nineteenth century buildings in Person County were a hybrid of the two styles. Further, both the Georgian and the Federal styles were utilized in rural areas well after they had been supplanted by the Greek Revival style in urban areas, their concurrent use well into the nineteenth century further complicating strict classification.

Building forms and their fenestration varied little between the Georgian and Federal styles. Both featured rectangular and symmetrical forms, established floor plans, and detailing derived from classical precedents, though Federal-style buildings generally featured shallower roof pitches with taller windows emphasizing the verticality of the form, especially in two-story examples. Both styles featured double-hung, multi-light windows, often in a six-over-nine, or nine-over-nine configuration. Brown notes that in Granville County, “double-hung windows with nine small panes of glass in each sash, a feature that might be considered primarily Georgian to the east and north, are found locally in almost all Georgian, Federal and even some early Greek Revival style structures.”¹⁰⁷ Other common features include denticulated cornices and paneled doors.

As sawn lumber and skilled craftsman became more readily available, Georgian and Federal-style detailing was applied to rural houses throughout Person County, especially the more prominent houses that survived into the late twentieth century.¹⁰⁸ As a result, while the exteriors displayed a slow, almost indistinguishable transition from the Georgian to the Federal style, the interior shift was more noticeable with heavy Georgian moldings giving way to lighter, more articulated Federal-style woodwork.¹⁰⁹

While both styles were based in classicism, Federal-style woodwork was “of a more delicate, sleek character” than the bold, heavily molded woodwork of the Georgian style, giving way to flatter panels and surfaces and thinner, more delicate moldings.¹¹⁰ Three-part door surrounds remained, though the quarter-round profile was flattened with more “flowing, gently sloping, sinuous lines” and applied moldings became more common.¹¹¹ Similarly, while six-panel doors and paneled wainscot remained the norm, the moldings were flattened and lightened. The overall result was a muting or

¹⁰⁷ Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 67.

¹⁰⁸ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 15; Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 167.

¹⁰⁹ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 18; Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 34.

¹¹⁰ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 18; Southern, “The I-House,” 76.

¹¹¹ Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 171.

lightening of Georgian-style elements, rather than an explicit stylistic statement.”¹¹² Stairs, when present in high-style examples, display “an almost fragile lightness with thin balusters carrying a slim handrail.”¹¹³ The Federal style also introduced new ornamentation and motifs including urns, festoons, and elliptical sunbursts that were based on the delicate classical decoration popularized by the Adam brothers in England and likely disseminated through North Carolina and Virginia by books published by Robert Adam, Asher Benjamin, and Owen Biddle.¹¹⁴

Motifs popularized by the pattern books and illustrative of the Federal style were most often displayed in the Federal-style mantelpiece. In the transition from the Georgian to the Federal style, “mantels change from a heavy frame around an opening to a form derived from classical temples.”¹¹⁵ Pilasters, either single or paired and sometimes reeded, suggest classical columns and support a horizontal frieze and shelf. The former is typically broken up into three projecting elements or panels, a design that came to be identified as the archetypal three-part Federal mantelpiece.¹¹⁶ In these instances, the center plate or panel may be adorned with Federal motifs, with an elliptical sunburst the most common motif found in Person County.

Several examples of Federal-style mantelpieces were documented in the 1970s. The mantelpiece at the ca. 1820 Wilkenson House (PR0190, demolished) in the western part of the county featured reeded pilasters with capitals adorned with reeded diamonds. The ca. 1820 house (PR0056) off of Thomas Humphries Road near Virgilina featured a highly ornate Federal-style mantelpiece with pilasters interrupted by elliptical reeded sunbursts and topped by molded capitals supporting the mantelshelf. A third pilaster, upon which is inscribed a third elliptical sunburst, separated two molded panels above the firebox.

Among the most intact and fullest expressions of the transitional Georgian-Federal style in Person County are the ca. 1800 one-story William Warren House (PR0482) and the c. 1810 two-story John Rogers House (PR0112), both of which have hall-and-parlor plans. The former is a more modest house with plain weatherboards and six-over-nine wood-sash windows set in three-part, molded surrounds and with molded sills, and no exterior decoration. The interior displays Georgian-style mantelpieces (perhaps installed later) with molded panels over the fireboxes, one of which features a dentil cornice under the molded mantelshelf. A flat-paneled wainscot is beneath horizontal

¹¹² Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 171.

¹¹³ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 18.

¹¹⁴ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 232; Little-Stokes, Caswell County, 27.

¹¹⁵ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 18.

¹¹⁶ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 18; HCHS, *Halifax County*, 29.

wood sheathing, with panels thinner than those on the mantelpiece, displaying the more delicate articulation of the Federal style. More decorative on the exterior, the John Rogers House has an asymmetrical three-bay façade, plain weatherboards, six-over-nine and nine-over-nine windows in three-part surrounds and with molded sills, and a Georgian-style modillion cornice at the roofline. A reconstructed, pedimented porch also features a modillion cornice. The interior retains molded six-panel doors and a Georgian-style mantelpiece in the parlor featuring a frieze of three flat panels. Interior wainscot is Federal-style with applied molding and reeding and the hall mantelpiece features a Federal-style reeded center panel.

Of the eight houses in Person County documented as constructed in the Federal style, only four remain extant. Consequently, a complete analysis of the style's manifestation in the county, like that of the Georgian style, is difficult. The four Federal-style buildings that are no longer standing were small-scale, one- or one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled houses, all three bays wide with gable-end stone chimneys, minimal exterior detailing, and center-hall or hall-and-parlor plans.¹¹⁷ Three of the four surviving houses constructed in the style were two stories: Waverly (PR0126; NR1974), built between 1825 and 1835; the ca. 1830 Holloway-Jones-Day House (PR0039; NR1988), and the ca. 1820 Allen House (PR0001).

Waverly and the Holloway-Jones-Day House are also the two most highly decorated and intact examples of the Federal style in Person County. The proximity of both buildings to the Virginia state line and the fact that Cunningham was a native of Virginia confirms the influence of Virginian Federal-style architecture on the early-nineteenth-century planter class in Person County. Waverly features a two-story, side-gabled core with a one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled wing extending from the west end. Above the molded weatherboards, delicately carved cornices feature zig-zag, dentil, mutules, and guilloche motifs. The motifs are repeated on the pedimented porch, which is supported by slender columns topped with elongated, narrow moldings and has railing composed of square balusters with a rounded handrail. The double-leaf, three-panel door has distinctive "double-raised" panels and a surround that features paneled cornerblocks with a radiating oak leaf motif. An open pediment supported by flat-paneled pilasters with naturalistic leaf motifs frames an elliptical fanlight above the door.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ See Files PR0051, PR0054, PR0056, PR00190, NCHPO.

¹¹⁸ NC Division of Archives and History (NC DAH), Survey and Planning Unit, "Waverly Plantation," Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1974, Section 7, page 2.

The interior of Waverly is equally impressive with “double-raised” panel wainscot below a molded chair rail in the side hall, the latter embellished with diagonal gouge-work and a guilloche band. The open-string stair features a molded handrail on slender square baluster and wave-pattern brackets at each step above the paneled spandrel. Fireplaces are flanked by rounded architraves and the mantelpiece in the southwest room features distinctly Federal-style detailing including a reeded architrave around the firebox and bands of gouged reeding on the shelf.

In contrast to Waverly, the ca. 1830 two-story, side-gabled Holloway-Jones-Day House displays little exterior ornament. While quarter-round gable windows often flanked exterior end chimneys, at the Holloway-Jones-Day House, four-light square windows were located in the gables, flanking the brick chimneys. A mid-nineteenth-century renovation converted the plan from hall-and-parlor to center-hall and included a replacement Greek Revival-style front porch, but the interior retains segmental-arch and squared brick fireboxes with original Federal-style mantelpieces, mostly with flat pilasters supporting a two-panel frieze below a molded shelf.

While slimmer chimneys are a broad characteristic of the Federal style, the continued use of stone in Person County usually limited the ability to reduce chimney sizes and visual delicacy, though the stone chimney on an 1818 house near Virgilina (PR0054, demolished) achieved this lightness through the use of a double-shoulder design terminating in a slender stone stack. A similar effect was achieved on a nearby ca. 1820 one-and-a-half-story house (PR0056), though with a brick stack on a single-shouldered stone chimney. However, when brick was utilized, as exemplified by the ca. 1820 Allen House (PR0001) off Gentry Ridge Road near Allensville, Waverly, and the Holloway-Jones-Day House, the result was a more streamlined and visually lighter appearance.

Greek Revival Style

Greek Revival was the most popular residential style in antebellum Person County and throughout the Tar-Neuse River basin. The timing of its nationwide popularity, beginning around 1825 and extending to the eve of the Civil war, aligns with a period of prosperity for the county’s planters and farmers. The increased demand for flue-cured bright leaf tobacco brought wealth to local landowners, and with it a desire for physical displays of their affluence and refinement. Historian Michael Southern asserts that the Greek Revival was the most widespread and enduring of all nineteenth century revival styles, noting that, “in North Carolina little was built after 1830 that was not at least touched by its influence, from the proud new State Capitol, completed in 1840, to

the privy at Burleigh Plantation in Person County, adorned with Ionic pilasters.”¹¹⁹ Roughly two-dozen Greek Revival-style houses were documented in Person County, constructed between 1835 and 1861, though more certainly existed but did not survive into the late twentieth century. Earlier houses were updated or enlarged in the style and others built in the early years of the style’s ascendancy exhibited a transitional blending of Federal and Greek Revival elements.

Like the preceding Georgian and Federal styles, which were based in Roman precedents, the Greek Revival style was formal in its symmetrical form and classical detailing. Woodwork tended to be more rectilinear and geometric than that of the preceding Georgian and Federal styles. American interest in Greek architecture began in the late eighteenth century with archaeological investigations led to the removal of Greek sculpture to England, a wave of books on Greek ruins published in England and the construction of copies of Greek temples.¹²⁰ To the emerging nation, Greek architecture was “an embodiment of the civic and political virtues of the ancient Greek republic,” and was thus viewed as an appropriate form for a democratic nation.¹²¹

While stylistic details varied from earlier styles, the continued use of heavy-timber frame construction limited the form of Greek Revival-style houses to one- or two-story rectangular buildings. In urban areas around the state, Greek Revival-style houses were often two rooms deep with rooms arranged around a center hall. However, in rural Person County, the style was most often applied to the I-house form, which dominated the Person County landscape for decades. Given the continued use of the vernacular form, stylistic classification is reliant on the finishes and decorative details applied to the interior and exterior.

Low-sloped hipped or side-gabled roofs characterize Greek Revival-style I-houses in the county, resulting in a broader, more horizontal form than preceding styles. Windows too are wider than those employed in Federal- and Georgian-style houses, with fewer, but larger panes of glass. Six-over-six windows are most common, but eight-over-eight and twelve-over-twelve were sometimes used. Wide molded surrounds, sometimes crossetted, frame doors and windows and both plain and molded weatherboards were used. Wide skirtboards, a wide, plain frieze at the roofline, and

¹¹⁹ Southern, “The I-House,” 78.

¹²⁰ Little-Stokes, Caswell County, 33; McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 252.

¹²¹ Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 182.

wide cornerboards, sometimes with thin capitals, reinforced the boxiness of the shape while suggested a Greek temple form.¹²²

The clearest references to Greek architecture are pedimented roofs and porches. One-story porches were the most common, though in high-style Greek Revival-style buildings, a single-bay, two-tiered porch replaced the full-façade one-story porch, as was the case with the 1837 house at 2646 John Brewer Road (PR0067; demolished). The columns and pilasters were usually square and tapered, the shape easier to construct than a round column, and often in a Doric or Tuscan order, sometimes with complementary corner pilasters on the main building. The form is exemplified by the ca. 1850 Bowes-Street House (PR0006), and the ca. 1850 Fontaine House (PR0028; demolished), each with a wide, single-bay portico supported by tapered square columns. The ca. 1855 Daniels House (PR0020; demolished) utilized octagonal columns to support the heavy porch pediment.

Among the simplest expressions of the Greek Revival porch was the ca. 1840 house on Thomas Store Road (PR0076; demolished) which featured a single-bay, hip-roofed porch supported by tapered square posts. The porch sheltered a double-leaf, one-panel door with three-light transom. The two-story porch on the ca. 1840 house on Rogers-Whitfield Road (PR0079; demolished) near Hurdle Mills was among the most fully articulated examples of a Greek Revival-style porch in the county. The porch featured a heavily molded gable with returns in lieu of a full pediment; a wide entablature at the first-story level, and paired posts with a sawn railing.

Architectural details became “much more standardized under the influence of pattern books, which were more generally accessible than during the Federal period.”¹²³ With details taken from popular architectural pattern books of the era, these porches are the most significant and conspicuous reference to the Greek Revival style in the Tar-Neuse River Basin.”¹²⁴

In the Greek Revival style, the front entrance most often featured a double-leaf door flanked by sidelights and a transom to light the center hall. In many cases, the entrance bay, sheltered by the porch, featured flush sheathing. The ca. 1850 Bowes-Street House (PR0006) on NC 49 north of Roxboro is typical with a double-leaf four-panel door under a fifteen-light transom; the flat-board surround is set within a bay of flush, horizontal sheathing. The paneled surround of the ca. 1850 Sanford House (PR0115)

¹²² Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 35; Southern, “The I-House,” 78; NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 20-21.

¹²³ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 34.

¹²⁴ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 20-21.

on NC 49 in the northeast corner of the county was a unique embellishment, the panels aligning with the lights and panels of the sidelights and transom; unfortunately, the surround was replaced after 1975.

On the interior, the Greek Revival I-house features a center-hall plan; a stair rising against one wall of the center hall; and spacious rooms with a fireplace in the gable end, sometimes flanked by niches or closets.¹²⁵ Two-panel doors are perhaps the most readily identifiable interior characteristic of the Greek Revival style, present in nearly every example of the style in Person County. Moldings, sometimes derived from pattern books, typically featured symmetrical molded bands and either square corner blocks with rondels or bulls-eye patterns, or crossettes projecting from the upper corners, the overall design a departure from the three-part, post-and-lintel forms of earlier styles.¹²⁶ The ca. 1850 Bowes-Street House (PR0006) and the ca. 1850 Fontaine House (PR0028) each featured molded interior surrounds with bulls-eye cornerblocks.

Wide baseboards, sometimes painted to resemble marble or wood grain, replaced paneled or flush wainscot, with paneled sections remaining only as window aprons in the formal rooms of the house.¹²⁷ The ca. 1850 portion of the Bailey House (PR0085/PR0805), moved in the late-nineteenth century to the rear of the Holloway-Walker-Dollarhite House, featured wide baseboards and at least one mantelpiece painted to resemble marble. The ca. 1855 Daniels House (PR0020; demolished) on Maurice Daniels Road displayed marbleized baseboards and fluted door and window surrounds with incised square cornerblocks.

While the post-and-lintel form was generally abandoned for door and window surrounds, it prevailed in the design of mantelpieces, a “simple mimicry of Greek construction.”¹²⁸ Mantelpieces were supported by classically derived columns or pilasters, often with plinths and/or capitals, supporting a wide lintel and a simple shelf.¹²⁹ Mantelpieces in the ca. 1850 Fontaine House featured flat pilasters set on plinths that aligned with the high baseboards; the frieze featured a projecting center section that read as a wide keystone.

A few Person County houses dating to the early years of the Greek Revival style’s popularity are best described as transitional for their blending of the waning Federal style’s characteristics with those of the newer style. A small-scale example of the

¹²⁵ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 34.

¹²⁶ Southern, “The I-House,” 78; Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 182.

¹²⁷ Southern, “The I-House,” 78; NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 21; Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 182.

¹²⁸ Southern, “The I-House,” 78; NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 21.

¹²⁹ Southern, “The I-House,” 78; NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 21.

transition, the ca. 1825 Annie Brooks house (PR0008; demolished) was a compact, one-and-a-half-story, hall-and-parlor form typical of the Federal style. Greek Revival-style embellishments included a deeply molded wainscot and a mantelpiece with incised lines in the frieze, replacing the traditional paneled frieze found in Federal-style mantelpieces. The ca. 1835 Noell Place (PR0103) on Moores Mill Road east of Timberlake was built with Federal-style mantelpieces and horizontal, flush wainscot and two-panel, Greek Revival-style doors.

In some instances, early nineteenth-century houses underwent remodeling that incorporated Greek Revival-style elements. The Hall House (PR0031) was constructed in the Bethel Hill community ca. 1800 as a one-and-a-half story hall-and-parlor plan house in the Georgian style and enlarged ca. 1840 with a hip-roofed, Greek Revival-style I-house. The addition exhibited Greek Revival-style detailing throughout the interior while the Georgian-style wing's interior retained some early six-panel doors and a mantelpiece with lattice and dentil carving as well as two two-panel Greek Revival doors and a Greek Revival post-and-lintel mantelpieces.

The most distinctive example in Person County of an early nineteenth-century remodeled in the Greek Revival style is the McGehee-Phifer House, known locally and historically as Burleigh (PR0011; NR 1980). It also is among the largest residential resources in Person County, its size and architectural distinction owing to the prosperity of its builder, Thomas McGhee, who by 1840 had amassed more than 2,000 acres of land and 124 enslaved workers. Constructed in northwest Person County about 1826, the house, which now stands near the banks of Hyco Lake, features a Georgian-style plan, two rooms deep and arranged around a center hall. The interior woodwork, with its "thin, flat, tall proportions" is associated with the late Federal style. However, mantelpieces installed in the 1840s are Greek Revival in style, built and installed by regional craftsman, Thomas Day. Further, the pedimented porticos on the east and west elevations, each with a wide entablature supported by paired Doric columns, are solidly Greek Revival in design.

The Work and Influence of Thomas Day

The cabinetry and woodwork of Thomas Day have been extensively studied in late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. A Virginia native and African American artisan, Day established a workshop in Milton (in adjacent Caswell County to the west) in the 1820s. As a free man working during the height of the plantation era, Day "initially earned his reputation by providing fine furniture for wealthy planters and middle-class merchants." In the 1840s and 1850s, Day "expanded his repertoire, designing and installing architectural woodwork for tobacco planters flush with new

wealth who decided to build big new homes or update and expand their existing ones.”¹³⁰ His work designing interior spaces for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the late 1840s boosted his reputation as a woodworker led to an “increasing number of orders for architectural elements: mantelpieces, newel posts, and interior trim and moldings,” most from tobacco planters in the Dan River region.¹³¹ By 1850, Day owned and operated by largest cabinetmaking shop in the state.

From 1834 until his death in 1861, Day designed, produced, and installed woodwork in as many as eighty houses in the region. While roughly half of those identified are, or were, located in Caswell County, preservation architect Jo Ramsey Leimenstoll, co-author of *Thomas Day: Master Craftsman and Free Man of Color*, credits thirteen Person County residences as having woodwork produced by Day.¹³² These include the Haywood Williams House (PR0128, demolished), the Bass House (PR0004), and Burleigh (PR0011), all in the northwest quadrant of the county. These and the other Person County houses exhibiting Day’s architectural woodwork are fairly close to his shop in Milton suggest that poor roads limited the reach of his work.

The broad body of Day’s woodwork illustrates the development of his designs and indicates that, in his early years, he was familiar with and influenced by widely available architectural pattern books, including those published by Asher Benjamin, Owen Biddle, and Minard Lafever. Historian Ruth Little asserts that published pattern books “made correct classical proportions a standard feature and tended to suppress the individuality of local designers.”¹³³ By the 1850s, however, Day’s work had developed into a distinctive style. Like his furniture, his architectural woodwork utilized undulating shapes and deep fluting to “take advantage of the shifting movement of light and shadow.” S-shaped newel posts, curved brackets at stairs, and mantelpieces with peaked backboards and “robust serpentine mantel friezes” characterize his later work, which celebrated fluidity and movement.¹³⁴

The Bass House, built ca. 1840, is noted by Leimenstoll to be one of four houses in the region to include fully articulated Thomas Day woodwork, which may have been installed ca. 1855.¹³⁵ The house has a pedimented one-story porch supported by Doric columns that is typical of the Greek Revival style. In contrast, the entrance surround

¹³⁰ Patricia Phillips Marshall and Jo Ramsay Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day: Master Craftsman and Free Man of Color* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 2.

¹³¹ Marshall and Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day*, 52.

¹³² Marshall and Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day*, 132, 133, and 140.

¹³³ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 34.

¹³⁴ Marshall and Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day*, 131; HCHS, *Halifax County*, 30.

¹³⁵ Marshall and Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day*, 143.

features heavily molded, undulating forms that are consistent with Day's interior woodwork. While most of Day's designs incorporated an entrance flanked by sidelights and topped by a wide transom, he sometimes varied this configuration. In the Haywood Williams House, the sidelights extend the full height of the opening, flanking the transom. At Burleigh, built ca. 1826 and remodeled in the 1840s, a double-leaf six-panel door on the east elevation is sheltered by a Greek Revival-style, pedimented portico, though the entrance itself was constructed without sidelights.

At the Bass House, the most distinctive feature of the interior stair is the S-shaped newel post, a deviation from the simple, turned newels that are characteristic of the Greek Revival style.¹³⁶ The fluid lines of the newel are reinforced by decorative tendril shapes that give the design an organic quality that stands in contrast to the formality of most Greek Revival-style detailing. The stair brackets mimic the curves and swirls of the newel post but are taken from a Minard Lafever design published in *The Modern Practice of Staircase and Handrail Construction*.¹³⁷ At Burleigh, a massive newel post repeats the S-form common in Day's staircases, though without the characteristic swirl and with rounded hand-planed edges that result in a softer appearance.

Day's mantelpiece and woodwork designs utilized deeply sawn moldings to add three dimensionality to standard Greek Revival-style motifs. Mantelpieces typically featured classical columns supporting a bold frieze with an undulating, serpentine or ribbon-like quality. Woodwork at Burleigh includes four nearly identical first-floor mantelpieces, all with Day's trademark serpentine frieze supported by classical pilasters. In the Bass House, the mantelpiece in the left room displays a three-part undulating frieze and Ionic columns typical of Day's work. Flanking the fireplace, Day created segmental-arch niches, each with deeply fluted casings that are present on both the inner and outer faces of each niche, further contributing to the three-dimensional quality of the trim.

The large number of Greek Revival-style houses in the county, especially those constructed in the decades leading up to the Civil War, and the prosperity experienced by tobacco farmers during this period suggest that there may be additional houses that contain Thomas Day woodwork, especially in the northern and western parts of the county. However, limited access to building interiors makes it difficult to confirm the possibility. In some instances, photographs taken in the 1970s of interiors that were inaccessible during the 2021-2023 survey reveal woodwork similar that Day's documented woodwork. For example, the 1837 house on John Brewer Road (PR0067;

¹³⁶ Marshall and Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day*, 145.

¹³⁷ Marshall and Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day*, 147-148.

demolished) was a traditional, side-gabled I-house with two-story, pedimented porch supported by paired columns. One of its mantelpieces, photographed in 1975, was undeniably a Thomas Day design. It featured a serpentine frieze with a mantelshelf and backshelf that followed the same profile as another mantelpiece documented by Leimenstoll.¹³⁸ The ca. 1855 Daniels House (PR0020; demolished) included stair brackets and a frieze at the stair landing that incorporated the curves and tendrils common in Day's work, though the newel is a traditional spiral. The mantelpiece in the right room was nearly identical to that at the Bass House, with a three-part undulating frieze above Ionic columns.

In other instances, woodwork similar to that produced by Day appears in houses in the county but cannot be directly attributed to him. The woodwork appears to reference Day's work, though without the bold curves and careful proportions, and may have been constructed by a craftsman who had previously worked with Day or at least had knowledge of his designs, clearly the case of houses built after his death. One of the mantelpieces in the ca. 1850 portion of the Bailey House (PR0085/PR0805) bears a strong resemblance to Day's work, with a serpentine frieze between tapered pilasters. Similarly, one of the mantelpieces in the ca. 1860 Robinson House (PR0113) has an undulating, ribbon-like frieze, similar to those created by Day. The 1870 Cass House (PR0013) has a newel post reminiscent of Day's simplest newels in its rounded extension of the rail that overhangs the tapered square support.

Housing for the Enslaved Population

Very few examples of housing constructed for Person County's enslaved population are known to be extant in the county. The lack of documented resources is likely due to deterioration and loss with the passage of time, the location of the buildings, and the nondescript nature of most housing for the enslaved, often adapted for later tenants, that makes it difficult to identify. Given that most housing constructed for enslaved workers was of poor quality and was sited in agricultural areas away from the main house, it should be no surprise that such buildings did not survive the 160 years since the end of the Civil War.

In the years immediately following the Civil War, as the agricultural economy transitioned from an enslaved workforce to a new system of indebtedness, tenants or sharecroppers likely occupied existing dwellings formerly occupied by enslaved people. In other instances, these houses may have been converted to packhouses, kitchens, washhouses, or for other agricultural, domestic, or storage functions, making it difficult

¹³⁸ Marshall and Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day*, plate 19.

to definitively identify them as enslaved people's quarters. Building forms and construction methods utilized for small-scale housing varied little throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries, with myriad one- or two-room buildings constructed of log or timber frame and crudely finished. As a result, it is difficult to date these secondary residences and, in turn, to identify buildings specifically constructed dwellings for the enslaved without a thorough understanding of the site history and ownership and/or a building analysis that includes dendrochronology or other physical methods of dating buildings.

One such building is the one-story building on Denny's Store Road that has been identified only as the Jack Shelton Chandler Tenant House (PR0488), owned by the Chandler family beginning in the 1930s. The two-roomed building likely dates to the 1880s or earlier and is of diamond-notch log construction with a stone foundation, vertical board-and-batten sheathing on the east half of the building, vertical flush wood sheathing on the west half, and an interior brick chimney stack. Each of the two bays has a batten wood door and a single window on the façade. Despite the fact that the building has been converted for use as storage with a stable at the rear, it was clearly constructed for human habitation, though a specific era of construction could not be confirmed.

The large plantation of Waverly (PR0126; NR 1974), in the far north of the county, is the only known site with a dwelling documented as built for the enslaved. The one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled building that stands just west of the main house comprises two rooms arranged end-to-end with a central chimney. The fine finishes of the building include plain weatherboards, six-over-nine wood-sash windows in the gable ends, and batten doors on the east elevation. Documentation for the 1974 National Register nomination describe the interior as "surprisingly well executed, exhibiting vernacular flat board mantels with crude end block ornamentation, and flat board chair rails, baseboards, and architraves" and plaster walls.¹³⁹ The level of finish and proximity to the main house suggests the dwelling was constructed for domestic workers rather than field hands.

The two buildings at Burleigh (PR0011; NR 1980), in northwestern Person County, said to have been enslaved people's quarters are similarly finished and located just east and down a hill from the house. Both have been restored, though interior access was not available to either. While the McGehee family, who constructed the house, was known to have been enslavers, it is not clear that these buildings were constructed to house

¹³⁹ NC DAH, "Waverly Plantation," Section 7, page 7B.

the enslaved workers. The smaller of the two is a one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled, one-room building with stone foundation and rebuilt stone chimney. The larger building is a timber-frame, two-room dwelling with gable-end chimneys, two entrances on the west elevation, and two interior stairs, each leading to a sleeping loft. The National Register nomination notes Federal-style mantelpieces, suggesting that the building may have been occupied by an overseer rather than the enslaved workers.¹⁴⁰ It is also possible that the mantelpieces were simply reused, relocated from the main house (constructed ca. 1826) when the Thomas Day-designed mantelpieces were installed there in the mid-nineteenth century and thus do not suggest the occupants' status.

Finally, while local residents pointed to a number of additional buildings that oral tradition suggested may have been housing constructed for enslaved workers, many are of light frame construction, which was very rare prior to the Civil War and is more consistent with later nineteenth- and twentieth-century building.

¹⁴⁰ Brown and Sumner, "Burleigh," Section 7, page 2.

PERSON COUNTY IN THE MID- TO LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY (1861-1900)

The Civil War

As Southern states seceded from the Union beginning in December 1860, the general sentiment in North Carolina was initially in opposition to such drastic measures. Following President Abraham Lincoln's call for 75,000 military volunteers and the bombardment of Fort Sumter, opinions began to shift toward joining the newly formed Confederacy. Person County shared this sentiment and sent a resolution to the General Assembly stating:

That the people of Person, feeling that their dearest rights & interests are at stake, we are ready to pledge their lives & fortunes to the cause now engaging the heart and energies of the Southern people. . . That our interest, our affections & our destiny are with the South & that we are ready to do our whole part, at home and abroad, in Council & in the field, in maintaining the honor & freedom of the State & in defending the independence of that Southern Confederacy. . .¹⁴¹

North Carolina seceded from the Union on May 20, 1861.

In support of secession, Person County levied taxes to fund organizing and equipping a company of volunteers to join the war effort. So many enlisted that several companies were formed from residents of the county: Company H of the Twenty-Fourth North Carolina Regiment formed in Weldon (in Halifax County, North Carolina) in July 1861, Company E of the Thirty-Fifth North Carolina Regiment formed that November at Camp Mangum (just west of Raleigh); and Company A of the Fiftieth North Carolina Regiment organized in April 1862, also at Camp Mangum.¹⁴² Person County soldiers were present during the Battle of New Bern, the Peninsular Campaign, the Seven Day's Battles, Fredericksburg, Petersburg, and Bentonville, finally surrendering with General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox or with General Joseph E. Johnston at the Bennett farm in Durham.¹⁴³

Though no major military action took place in the county, the homefront suffered many of the same challenges felt in other areas of the state, including labor shortages,

¹⁴¹ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 93-94.

¹⁴² Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 95-97; National Park Service, *Soldiers and Sailors Database: Battle Units*, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-battle-units.htm>.

¹⁴³ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 96-112, 115-121; National Park Service, *Soldiers and Sailors Database*.

supply shortages, and soaring prices for staple goods.¹⁴⁴ At Wright and Clay General Store in Roxboro, for example, sugar increased from 16 cents per pound in 1861 to 15 dollars per ten ounces in 1863. Over the same period, coffee increased from 30 cents per pound to 64 dollars per pound.¹⁴⁵ With prices increasing beyond the financial means of many customers, businesses struggled during the war years, including the bank in Roxboro, which closed.¹⁴⁶ The reduction of the labor force, through both the enlistment of White laborers and the wartime emancipation of Black laborers, also contributed to shortages at home. Historian Stuart Wright tells of a Person County farmer lamenting the impacts of the labor shortage in a letter to a friend: “I make only half my flour, 1/3rd of my corn, & as a consequence 1/3rd of my pork. Now how far will \$2000 Confederate money go towards buying the 2/3rds of the supplies of the family of 14?”¹⁴⁷

Post-Civil War Agriculture

Agriculture throughout the South was slow to recover from the devastation of the Civil War. The total population of Person County in 1860 was 11,221 people, including 5,708 White residents and 5,513 Black residents, only 318 being free people of color.¹⁴⁸ These figures remained relatively stable immediately following emancipation, with 11,170 people living in the county in 1870, including 6,066 White residents and 5,104 Black residents.¹⁴⁹ This suggests that most emancipated African Americans remained in Person County upon obtaining freedom, at least initially, and that the primary challenges in the agricultural economy were not caused by a shortage of laborers.

Instead, the economy was stunted by the increased costs to landowners of paying wages to laborers regardless of race, and the inability of newly freed people to acquire their own farmland. As a result, early forms of tenant farming began to emerge.¹⁵⁰ Usually, both the landowner, who was typically White, and the landless laborer, who was Black or White, lacked cash assets. Landowners used the proceeds of the harvest to purchase seeds, implements, and other necessary supplies on behalf of the laborer, who in turn cultivated the crop, often renting housing near the fields. At harvest time, the laborer

¹⁴⁴ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 93-134.

¹⁴⁵ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 112-113.

¹⁴⁶ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 113-114.

¹⁴⁷ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 113.

¹⁴⁸ Population of the United States in 1860, 348-349, 352-353, 354-355.

¹⁴⁹ Bureau of the Census, The Statistics of the Population of the United States from the Original Returns of the Ninth Census, June 1, 1870 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), 52-54.

¹⁵⁰ Bishir and Southern, Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina, 44.

repaid the landowner for rent and supplies with a share of either the crop itself or the profits at market.¹⁵¹

Historian Joe Mobley explains that since the laborer typically could not fully pay debts after the harvest, a mortgage was commonly placed on the next year's crop. In order to pay off this carryover debt in addition to the recurring annual debts, laborers attempted to produce even more cash crops, which in turn flooded the market and depressed prices. Mobley observed, "The unintended harvest of the plunge in commercial agriculture was an annual bonanza crop of debt and dependency."¹⁵² These challenges were further exacerbated by fluctuations in tobacco prices, with depressed markets leaving many landowners in the county unable to recoup their costs in the immediate post-war years. A Person County farmer writing to the *Southern Planter* in 1869 described the situation, saying, "A few men in specially favored circumstances may be doing well, but in the mass, we sell nothing with which to meet the aggregate of bought supplies. The result of all this is increasing indebtedness."¹⁵³ By 1880, about 31 percent of Person County farms were rented for a share of profits or products – more than the statewide average – and by 1890, one-quarter of White farmers and three-quarters of Black farmers were in a crop-lien arrangement with a landowner.¹⁵⁴

Immediately after the end of the Civil War, the farm landscape of Person County changed as large plantations were subdivided into smaller farms that typically grew one cash crop at a time.¹⁵⁵ The acres of land in cultivation in the county dropped by more than half in the post-war years, from 101,736 acres in 1860 to 49,763 in 1870, and the value of these farms plummeted from over \$1.9 million in 1860 to just \$442,203 in 1870.¹⁵⁶ The agricultural economy overall began to recover in the late nineteenth century, and by 1880, land in cultivation had increased to 76,707 acres with a total value of \$1.4 million.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵¹ Federal Writers' Project, *North Carolina*, 60.

¹⁵² Joe A. Mobley, ed., *The Way We Lived in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 370.

¹⁵³ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 137-138, 158.

¹⁵⁴ Bureau of the Census, *Report on the Productions of Agriculture as returned by the Tenth Census, June 1, 1880* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), xiii, 79; Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 370.

¹⁵⁵ Federal Writers' Project, *North Carolina*, 60.

¹⁵⁶ Bureau of the Census, *Agriculture of the United States in 1860* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), 108; Bureau of the Census, *The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States, from the Original Returns of the Ninth Census, June 1, 1870* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), 218.

¹⁵⁷ *Productions in Agriculture, 1880*, 163.

Bright Leaf Tobacco

The increased profitability of agriculture in the late nineteenth century was largely the result of the popularity of bright leaf tobacco, which dominated Person County agriculture for the next century. One of the primary benefits of flue curing tobacco was an accelerated timeline that shortened the process from the six weeks required to air-cure tobacco to only one week. This in turn allowed for a larger crop to be cured each year and increased profits substantially for bright leaf tobacco farmers. The sandy loam soils common throughout Person County were favorable for tobacco cultivation, and land previously perceived as infertile and unsuitable for farming was converted into highly profitable land when planted with tobacco.¹⁵⁸ In 1870, Person County produced 1.2 million pounds of tobacco, increasing to over 3 million pounds in 1880.¹⁵⁹ By that time, tobacco had fully supplanted cotton as the county's primary cash crop; Person County had 5,808 acres of land in tobacco cultivation and only two acres of cotton. Subsistence crops included a variety of grains, vegetables, and fruit, and most farms also raised cows, hogs, and chickens.¹⁶⁰

Planting and harvesting tobacco in the nineteenth century was tedious and labor intensive. Yet in Person County, hired farm hands were rarely employed; instead, this labor was performed by the family that occupied the land, whether owner or renter. Expenditures for farm labor were not well recorded prior to 1900, but in that year Person County's 1,971 farms spent only \$58,840 on farm labor – a mere \$3 annual average per farm and well below the statewide average of \$24 per farm.¹⁶¹

Early each year, seeds were started in a seedbed, or plant bed. Tobacco seeds are unusually fragile, storing no food and requiring all nutrients to come from soil and water. Therefore, seedbeds were typically placed near water sources in freshly cleared, virgin soils that had been burned to prevent weeds. Seedlings are also susceptible to pests, especially the flea beetle, which could decimate a crop before it even reached the fields. Therefore, seedbeds were initially covered with cloth, a precursor to the greenhouses used in the twentieth century.¹⁶² By the 1880s and 1890s, seedbed cloth

¹⁵⁸ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 137-138, 158; Nannie May Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry, 1860-1929* (New York: Arno Press, 1972), 37.

¹⁵⁹ Statistics of Wealth and Industry, 1870, 218; Productions in Agriculture, 1880, 336.

¹⁶⁰ Productions in Agriculture, 1880, 271, 604.

¹⁶¹ Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1900, Census Reports Volume V: Agriculture Part I: Farms, Live Stock, and Animal Products (Washington, DC: United States Census Office, 1902,) 142-143, 291.

¹⁶² Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 37-43.

could be purchased in Roxboro at J.A. Long's, Noell Shaw & Co., A.R. Foushee's, Pass Brothers, and other stores.¹⁶³

While the seedlings were starting to grow, the fields were selected and prepared for transplanting. The soil was thoroughly plowed under and arranged in rows about three feet apart. Soil was formed by hand into long, narrow mounds that spanned the length of the field. Holes were dug into each mound about every two feet, and a small amount of fertilizer was added to the bottom of each hole.¹⁶⁴ E.B. Whitman advertised in *The Person County News* that no other fertilizer “will give the farmers more actual value for the money paid than British Mixture,” which he produced and sold at J.R. Chamber's & Co., in Roxboro.¹⁶⁵ J.A. Long's store in Roxboro offered Plow Brand Raw Bone Superphosphate fertilizer, which “insures an abundant yield of product which for bright color, full flavor, fine curing properties, and general excellence cannot be surpassed.”¹⁶⁶ J.S. Cunningham offered Anchor Brand Tobacco Fertilizer at Cunningham's Store in rural Person County to “Growers of Fine Yellow Tobacco.”¹⁶⁷

In April and May, about six to ten weeks after germination, the seedlings were transplanted to the prepared fields. Seedbeds were sprinkled with water to loosen the soil and seedlings were individually removed by hand and transferred in shaded baskets to the field. There, field hands worked together to place a seedling into each prepared hill, one dropping in the plant and another setting it. It was common for a substantial number of seedlings to not survive transplanting, and replanting was required to maintain consistency and uniformity in harvesting.¹⁶⁸

After transplanting, the tobacco plants required continuous care until the harvest in the fall. Weeding, known as “cultivating,” took place over the following two months, until the flower cluster began to form on the plants. At that time, the plant was “laid by” and the plant was “topped,” meaning weeding stopped and the flower cluster was removed to ensure energy was focused on leaf development. Sometimes the seeds were allowed to develop and the seeds saved for planting the following year. At the same time, the plants were primed by removing some of the bottom leaves to prevent them resting on the surface of the soil where pests could hide in them and to refocus the plant's

¹⁶³ *The Roxboro Courier*, March 1, 1888, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, February 5, 1891, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, February 12, 1891, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, January 28, 1892, Newspapers.com.

¹⁶⁴ Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 43-49.

¹⁶⁵ *The Person County News*, May 30, 1883, Newspapers.com.

¹⁶⁶ *The Roxboro Courier*, March 22, 1888, Newspapers.com.

¹⁶⁷ *The Person County News*, May 30, 1883, Newspapers.com.

¹⁶⁸ Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 48-453; James Earl Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess: Life at Hester's Store, North Carolina* (Roxboro, NC: Person County Museum of History, 2014), 16-18.

energy on growing the higher leaves. Once these tasks were complete, the tobacco crop required ongoing removal of pests, especially hornworms, as well as the removal of suckers, which are small shoots that drain energy from the plant, both of which were done by hand.¹⁶⁹

Bright leaf tobacco turns from green to yellow when it matures, making assessment of ripeness relatively straightforward. Harvesting usually began in September or October. In the immediate post-war years, the entire plant was cut and hung in the barn to cure. This method resulted in leaves of unequal ripeness, with the greener leaves of a lower, less valuable grade. As a result, farmers began harvesting individual leaves as they ripened, starting at the bottom of the plant. Leaves were piled on a low, narrow, flat sled, called a slide, that could be pulled by men, mules, or horses through the fields and to the curing barns. Sometimes every sixth row was skipped during planting to leave room for the slide and prevent damage to the plants during harvesting. Some farmers walked their tobacco in using large baskets and some used tall wagons that passed over the plants.¹⁷⁰ James Earl Hester later recalled, "Picking tobacco is brutal, hot and nasty work, and it has to be done during the hottest part of the year."¹⁷¹

Harvested tobacco leaves were taken to the curing barn, where a deep shed roof protected both laborers and the tobacco while it was prepared for curing. Tobacco leaves were gathered and tied into groups of fifteen to thirty in a process known as handing. The hands were then looped or strung, tied onto long poles known as tobacco sticks.¹⁷² The urgency of the harvest "demands every hand from the youngest child who is able to hand leaves to the oldest grandparent who because of age might be relieved from other field duties."¹⁷³ The handing and stringing were often performed by children, women, and any men not needed to be in the fields.

When looped full of tobacco hands, the sticks were then "put up," or hung in rows from horizontal tier poles within the barn. Workers on the ground handed sticks up to those

¹⁶⁹ Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 48-54; Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 16-18; Linda Gordon, *Dorothea Lange: A Life Beyond Limits* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), 274; Anne Whiston Spirn, *Daring to Look: Dorothea Lange's Photographs and Reports from the Field* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 96.

¹⁷⁰ Tilly, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 56-72, 81; Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 16-18; Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 86.

¹⁷¹ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 18.

¹⁷² Gordon, *A Life Beyond Limits*, 274; Spirn, *Daring to Look*, 96; Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 43.

¹⁷³ Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 86.

standing on the tier poles, whom many residents recall were the smallest and lightest workers who were still tall enough and strong enough to hang the sticks.¹⁷⁴

Once the barn was filled and the tobacco had become fully wilted, curing would begin. To cure the leaves, high temperatures set the desired bright yellow color while air flow removed excess moisture to prevent mold or rot. Curing was initially achieved by using charcoal to set numerous small and smoky fires directly on the dirt floor of the curing barn. This smoke-curing method achieved the necessary heat to obtain the desired leaf color, but it was extremely labor intensive to prepare, not easily regulated, unpleasant to maintain, and had an inherently high risk of fire. Ideally, heat was held at ninety degrees until the tobacco wilted, then was increased slowly until the tobacco gradually dried and changed color from green to golden brown, a process that generally took several days. After the heat had reached a temperature of 170-200 degrees and the tobacco was fully cured, the fires were extinguished, known as “killing out” the barn. Careful regulation of the barn temperature was crucial to achieve the desired results, with accurate temperature fluctuations over several days necessary to obtain bright yellow leaves.¹⁷⁵

The flue-curing process developed in the late nineteenth century involved the use of external wood-burning furnaces with a series of flues that distributed heat more evenly and with better control than smoke-curing and therefore required much less fuel to operate. Flue-curing also had the added benefits of carrying smoke and fumes out of the barn, which reduced damage to leaves and discomfort to laborers, as well as easily controlling temperatures and reducing the overall risk of fire, which could quickly destroy a curing barn and all of the crop inside it. Flues were first used in North Carolina in the late 1860s but were not in widespread use until the 1870s.¹⁷⁶ Tobacco flues made by Farmers Friend, Poor Mans Flues, and other manufacturers could be purchased in Roxboro by the early 1880s at J.A. Long’s store or from tinsmiths T.J. Doyle, Charles E. Pugh, and others.¹⁷⁷

In her study of bright leaf tobacco agriculture, Nannie May Tilley reported that to produce 500 pounds of cured tobacco, a farmer needed to prepare 2.5 cords of wood; therefore, she concluded, a ten-acre crop of tobacco would therefore require 600 cords

¹⁷⁴ Spirn, *Daring to Look*, 98.

¹⁷⁵ Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 59-64; Gordon, *A Life Beyond Limits*, 274.

¹⁷⁶ Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 59-64; Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 16-18; HCHS, *Halifax County*, 27; Spirn, *Daring to Look*, 98; Laura Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns: History and Function,” in Swaim, *Carolina Dwelling*, 122.

¹⁷⁷ *The Person County News*, June 5, 1882, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, October 14, 1885, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, August 4, 1887, Newspapers.com.

of wood to cure.¹⁷⁸ The supply of wood necessary for curing was sometimes cut by neighbors who went from farm to farm for “cutting frolics,” a social event similar to a barn raising. “During a cutting frolic neighbors would exchange labor at individual farms and cut enough wood to last that farmer a year before heading to the next farm.”¹⁷⁹

As the tobacco dried out during the curing process, the leaves became brittle and difficult to handle without damage. Therefore, to prepare leaves for transport to market, they needed to be partially rehydrated through a process called ordering. In the nineteenth century, ordering took place in the curing barn and was achieved by simply leaving sticks in the curing barn and taking advantage of damp weather; placing hot stones in water to fill the curing barn with steam; or by hanging the tobacco at the top of the curing barn in tight groups, known as bulking. After the turn of the twentieth century, ordering typically took place in an ordering house or ordering pit, a partially subterranean room where sticks could be hung on tier poles to allow moisture from the ground to soften the leaves.¹⁸⁰

Once the leaves were ordered, they were removed from the sticks and sorted according to quality. In the immediate post-Civil War years, when full plants were cut and cured, this “assortment” meant first cutting the leaves from the stalk, known as stripping. The leaves were then organized by color and size, or assorted, with generally three types: long leaf, meaning the larger, tougher bottom leaves; short leaf, or the ripe middle leaves; and lugs, the smallest and most tender top leaves. Later, stripping involved untying hands from the sticks to sort the leaves, which became more complicated with the curing of individual leaves and the introduction of flues, as both resulted in a more uniform product.¹⁸¹ Tilley observed that, “Only those most skilled could assort. . . Proper assortment of Bright Tobacco is, in fact, an art acquired from close association with the soil and plant, often passed on from father to son but seldom attained by those without a tobacco heritage.”¹⁸² After assortment, the leaves were then retied into hands, packed into loose bundles, and transported by wagon to market.

Prior to the establishment of Person County’s first tobacco market in 1890, farmers took their tobacco to markets in Durham, Henderson, Oxford, or Milton, or to South

¹⁷⁸ Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 62. Note: a cord of wood is a tight stack of wood measuring 4 feet wide by 8 feet long by 4 feet tall.

¹⁷⁹ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 145.

¹⁸⁰ Tilly, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 82-84; Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 221; HCHS, *Halifax County*, 27.

¹⁸¹ Tilly, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 84-87; Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 221; Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 87.

¹⁸² Tilly, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 84-85.

Boston, Petersburg, or Danville, Virginia. Upon arrival at the market, tobacco was taken to a tobacco warehouse and sold by auction.¹⁸³

Late-Nineteenth Century Farmsteads

The extent to which tobacco dominated the Person County economy from the middle of the nineteenth through the middle of the twentieth is evident in the sheer number of tobacco farmsteads that remain on the landscape today. While many farmers diversified in the twentieth century by introducing cattle, chickens, and other field crops, the surviving nineteenth-century agricultural buildings are almost exclusively related to the production of bright leaf tobacco. As agricultural production changed little for nearly a century, so, too, the design and construction of agricultural buildings, especially those related to tobacco production, remained basically the same. As a result, it is very difficult to definitively date tobacco-related resources. For this reason, this analysis of late nineteenth-century farmsteads focuses on those structures related to tobacco production—log curing barns, packhouses, stick sheds—with livestock barns, cemeteries, and domestic outbuildings discussed in the next chapter on early twentieth-century Person County, despite the overlap in construction and agricultural production between the two periods.

Because tobacco is a labor-intensive crop centered on the farm field and the tobacco curing barn, the curing barns were typically located closer to the fields than to the farmhouse and domestic outbuildings. Throughout the Person County landscape, curing barns are arranged in rows or loose clusters. On the larger farms, each collection of curing barns usually is near a tenant house and its associated outbuildings. The Hester-Wagstaff Farm (PR0551) in the Concord community northwest of Roxboro illustrates this pattern. Here, the acreage devoted to the cultivation of tobacco necessitated roughly fifty curing barns and ten packhouses by the early twentieth century, though only three distinct groups of tobacco-related outbuildings, each with a nearby tenant house, remain on the landscape today.¹⁸⁴

While the curing barn is the most prevalent tobacco-related outbuilding in the county, the packhouse was equally important to the production process and the stick shed, while less common, further supported the curing process. Stick sheds were used for storing tobacco sticks when not in use and were most often located among the clustered tobacco buildings, as seen at the George Preston and Virginia J. Allen Farm (PR0629) on Snipes Road northwest of Hurdle Mills. As the packhouses contained the cured and

¹⁸³ Tilly, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 87-88; *The Roxboro Courier*, Newspapers.com.

¹⁸⁴ Personal Communication with Lindsay “Tommy” Wagstaff (Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, November 20, 2022, Wagstaff Farm (See PR0551).

sorted tobacco, a valuable commodity ready for market, they were more often located nearer the farmhouse, sometimes at the end of a row of tobacco barns and sometimes grouped among the domestic outbuildings.

A large number of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth farmsteads in Person County retain full complements of tobacco-related outbuildings. Even at small farms, tobacco curing barns usually are extant.

Curing Barns

Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the early twentieth century, log was the preferred material for tobacco curing barns, which in size and construction are very similar to the log homes constructed in the region.¹⁸⁵ For this reason, this discussion focuses on design elements specific to curing barns and a deeper analysis of log construction is in the chapter covering eighteenth-century log construction.

The flue-cured tobacco barn is usually a sixteen, twenty, or twenty-four-foot square building with a dirt floor and stone foundation.¹⁸⁶ Smaller-sized barns were preferable as they could be filled in a single day and permitted greater control of temperature and humidity during curing, resulting in a more uniform product.¹⁸⁷ Further, they could be constructed of smaller logs, relatively plentiful in the county through the early twentieth century, and each held a smaller portion of the overall crop, meaning less crop would be lost in the event of a fire. The number of “rooms,” the vertical space between the tier poles, determined the height of the barn. Most barns measured four or five rooms with the first tier placed six to nine feet from the ground, above which the poles were placed roughly four feet apart horizontally, resulting in a total height of fifteen to sixteen feet from ground to eaves.¹⁸⁸

The use of heat to cure tobacco required a relatively airtight structure to minimize heat loss and more carefully regulate the barn’s temperature. An architectural survey of Halifax County, Virginia, noted that “as late as 1947, one expert stated ‘from the standpoint of heat conservation [log barns] are distinctly superior to frame structures unless the latter are effectively insulated.’”¹⁸⁹ While the logs themselves were a good insulator, early barns utilized chinking to make the barn more airtight, aligning with early recommendations for tobacco cultivation that were later altered to allow for greater air flow when curing bright leaf tobacco.¹⁹⁰ The chinking material varied based

¹⁸⁵ Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns,” 121.

¹⁸⁶ Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns,” 119; Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 56.

¹⁸⁷ HCHS, Halifax County, 27.

¹⁸⁸ HCHS, Halifax County, 27.

¹⁸⁹ HCHS, Halifax County, 27.

¹⁹⁰ Tilley, *The Bright-Tobacco Industry*, 56.

on the composition of the soil onsite, but included some combination of clay, sand, and mud. However, the heat utilized in the curing process regularly dried out the chinking, requiring it to be regularly replaced over time. The warmth from the curing process also dried out the logs themselves, increasing their stability by reducing rot.

Many farmers found that regularly replacing chinking was not an efficient use of their time and instead applied permanent coverings over the logs. The most common covering in Person County is vertical wood board-and-batten. Stucco was occasionally used but was generally unsatisfactory “because it prevented moisture from escaping the barn and caused the collapse of many barns.” Similarly, vertical metal sheeting was not favored because it tended to retain heat.¹⁹¹ On the exterior, the addition of “bonnets” (shallow shed roofs also known as pents) on the sides of the barns protected the exterior surface of the log from being saturated by rain or rainwater running off of the roof.¹⁹²

A deep, open shed was typically included on at least one elevation, most often the elevation that contained the entrance to the barn. The shed served several purposes: provided a shady space for the stringing of the tobacco; protected the leaves from being scorched by the sun during the stringing process; sheltered the external furnaces from rain; and, in some cases, served as a “bed shed” for the use of the man who tended the fire at night.”¹⁹³ The majority of log and frame tobacco barns in Person County follow this pattern.

Hundreds of log tobacco curing barns remain in Person County, dotting nearly every road in the county. Their strict regularity makes them both easily identifiable and difficult to date. A group of curing barns located along Jones Road at the north end of the Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wright Jones Farm (PR0458) that may date to the 1880s was constructed with very large, hand-hewn logs fastened with half-dovetail notching and resting on stone foundations. While its farmhouse has been destroyed, the Nathan and Mary Jane Fox Farm (PR0633) on Thee Hester Road retains a group of late-nineteenth-century, diamond-notch log barns that have been carefully stabilized in recent years.

As noted above, the Hester-Wagstaff Farm retains many log curing barns located in several clusters throughout the farm acreage. Likely constructed around the turn of the twentieth century, most are V-notch buildings with stone foundations, weatherboards in the gables, metal roofs, and shallow bonnets. The barns at the ca. 1900 Osborne

¹⁹¹ Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns,” 124.

¹⁹² Personal Communication with Tommy Wagstaff.

¹⁹³ Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns,” 122; Spirn, *Daring to Look*, 96; Gordon, *A Life Beyond Limits*, 274.

Hanley and Mary Elizabeth Oakley Farm (PR0505) on Ruff Davis Road utilized the same construction. Collectively, these barns represent the most common notching and overall form of log curing barns in the county.

The ca. 1908 Charlie and Artelia Brown Norris Farm (PR0456) on Walnut Grove Church Road south of Hurdle Mills and the ca. 1905 Tom and Ella Briggs Bowes Farm (PR0466) on Bowes Road near the Caswell County line, contain clusters of V-notched and square-notched log curing barns. This combination seems to indicate that the notching used may have been more the personal preference of the builder than any functional reason or cultural tradition.

Packhouses and Ordering Pits

The packhouse in Person County typically served three main functions: the ordering and stripping of tobacco, the sorting and grading of the leaves, and the storage of the product until it could be taken to market. In some parts of the state, the ordering pit and striphouse were separate structures, with the packhouse serving only as a storage space. Perhaps given the relative small-scale of Person County tobacco farms, the ordering and stripping most often took place within the packhouse. No separate striphouses have been identified in the county and ordering pits were usually located below or adjacent to the packhouse.

The ordering of tobacco required a cool, damp space, usually with tier poles on which to hang the sticks of tobacco as they “come into order.” Ordering houses are rare in Person County, perhaps because their function as a building aimed at retaining moisture made them susceptible to rot and decay. Of those identified, the ca. 1880 ordering house at the Peed Farm (PR0384) on Mount Harmony Church Road resembles a curing barn in its footprint and log construction, though is very squat in form, barely tall enough to accommodate an adult standing upright inside. A ca. 1910 V-notched log building at the Charlie and Artelia Brown Norris Farm (PR0456) appears to have been an ordering house set partially below grade with a window on the north elevation. Of similar scale is the ca. 1900 shed-roofed log building at the Tom and Ella Briggs Bowes Farm (PR0466). Said to have been a packhouse, it has a dirt floor and low roof that indicate it was likely also used as an ordering pit. Located just west of this building, a one-and-a-half-story log packhouse retains a more traditional, gabled form with a shed-roofed log ordering pit along the west elevation.

While ordering pits were sometimes included as shed-roofed wings on one side of the packhouse, the most common location of ordering pits in Person County was in the space below the packhouse, where the earth was dug out to create a low basement-like space with a dirt floor and regularly spaced tier poles. The ca. 1900 packhouse at the

Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wrenn Jones Farm (PR0458) features V-notch log construction on a stone foundation and a low opening on the south side of the foundation that leads to an ordering pit below the building. The ca. 1900 packhouse on the Henry Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth Rice Farm (PR0586) on Hassell Horton Road north of Hurdle Mills is a two-story, side-gabled frame form with an ordering pit below and the traditional packhouse fenestration of a single door on the main elevation, facing the road, and two upper-level windows in the east gable end.

In many ways, the design of the Person County packhouse is as varied as that of the curing barn is regular. The storage function, which gives the packhouse its name, did not require specialized spaces or building features, only a wood floor to keep the leaves off the ground. As a result, the packhouse could, and did, take a wide variety of forms in Person County with the main difference over time being the shift from log to frame construction. The stripping of tobacco, which involves sorting and grading, requires indirect natural light because the leaves are graded by color. Direct light could make the color difficult to see and the heat from direct sunlight could damage the leaf. For this reason, packhouses that vary from the standard front- or side-gabled form can generally be identified by the small windows on the north elevation, often further screened by the shallow shed roofs known as bonnets.

One of the oldest extant log packhouses in the county is adjacent to a tenant house (PR0554) on the Hester-Wagstaff Farm. Constructed in the late nineteenth century, the log building is similar in form and scale to a curing barn, though with wide paired doors on the west elevation and flanking shed-roofed bays on the north and south elevations. A ca. 1890 two-story packhouse at the George Polk Huff Farm (PR0360) on Polk Huff Road features diamond-notch log construction, a batten door in the east gable end, and a frame wing on the north elevation. A late example of the log packhouse is the ca. 1910 packhouse at the Weldon Jasper and Elizabeth T. Whitefield House (PR0583) on Frank Whitfield Road. Constructed with V-notched corners, the building has an entrance on the west gable end, sheltered by a shed roof, and a window on the north elevation with a similar roof. A door on the east elevation may lead to an ordering pit below the building, which is built into the side of a slight hill.

The size of the county's packhouses varied greatly, indicating farmers were responding to the relative acreage of the farm rather than following a prescribed form or scale. Among the smallest examples in the county is the ca. 1882 packhouse at the Oakley Farm (PR0379) on Groundhog Drive in the southeast quadrant of the county. The exterior of the front-gabled building is covered with metal sheathing, obscuring the construction, but the presence of windows on the north elevation indicates its use for

stripping and the steps to a high door on the west elevation reveal that the building is split into two levels, likely with an ordering pit below. The ca. 1890 two-story packhouse at the Robert L. Hester Farm (PR0036) on Robert Hester Road is likely the largest extant log packhouse in the county. It was enlarged in the early twentieth century with a frame wing and a separate frame structure to the north, covered with a continuous metal roof that results in a wide, covered opening between the two bays.

Stick Sheds

The sticks on which the tobacco was tied typically measured about four feet in length and were pine. With a standard barn holding 400 to 600 sticks, a typical farm may have had thousands of sticks that were utilized for only a few months out of the year. In some cases, these were stored in a shed-roofed, frame building known as a stick shed that typically was located in close proximity to the curing barns. The stick shed was usually open on one end to allow good circulation of air that kept the sticks from rotting when not in use. Two stick sheds are nestled among the log curing barns at the George Preston and Virginia June Allen Farm (PR0629).

The same types of sheds were used to house wood for heating the home, as seen at the James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm (PR0626) off Skip Rogers Road, or for general farm storage, making proximity to the curing barns the defining feature of a stick shed. More common than freestanding stick sheds in Person County are shed-roofed lean-tos attached to one elevation of a curing barn. This is the case of the ca. 1900 log tobacco barns at the Thomas Henry and Larcena Adcock Farm (PR0369) on Carl Adcock Road east of Roxboro. At other farms the sticks may have been stored in the packhouse when not in use.

Domestic Architecture

In the years following the Civil War, rural Person County experienced modest growth as additional farmsteads were established by subdividing larger farms. As new houses were constructed, they largely followed the forms and plans utilized in the antebellum era, although light-frame construction gradually supplanted heavy timber-framing as sawmills became more prevalent. Only eight of the roughly one hundred buildings documented as having been constructed between 1865 and 1900 were noted as having framing of heavy timbers.

As small farms prospered with the flourishing tobacco industry, many landowners erected new houses that displayed their relative wealth. The I-house remained the most popular vernacular form, its broad façade standing tall at the center of the farmstead. A decorative gable added to the roof above the main entrance and two-story rear ells

resulting in L- or T-shaped plans became common. At the same time, the one- and two-story, gable-front-and-wing form emerged as a fashionable alternative to the I-house.

Regardless of form, the growing availability of sawn lumber and mass-produced woodwork “made possible faster, cheaper, and fancier construction” while providing the builder “an unprecedented variety of ornament with which to decorate a building and express his ambition.”¹⁹⁴ As a result, post-Civil War residential architecture became more eclectic and picturesque with elements of the nationally popular Italianate and Queen Anne styles added to new construction and renovated buildings alike. While few rural farmhouses rivaled the finish of high-style urban houses, the establishment of local sawmills allowed farmers to apply decorative elements to gables and porches. At the same time, the design and proportions of windows and entryways became more standardized with mass-produced sashes and doors resulting in more uniform buildings.¹⁹⁵

While wood and stone were plentiful in Person County throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the clay soil needed to make brick was not. As a result, brick was expensive and rarely used for foundations or chimneys until the last decades of the century, after which chimneys were “smaller and thinner” than they had been in previous decades, “with brick laid in common bond with single, stepped shoulders” for exterior chimneys.¹⁹⁶ Also during this period, interior chimneys became common. No brick residences were recorded as having been built in the nineteenth century, when brick was reserved for commercial and industrial buildings and those appeared only in the last decade of the century.

Log Construction

While sawn lumber cut to standardized sizes replaced heavy timber framing during this period, log remained a popular method of construction, especially for tenant housing and other small-scale residences. Its associations with economic status aside, log construction was simply the quickest and most cost-effective way to erect a house in the nineteenth century just as it was in the eighteenth.¹⁹⁷ The wide availability of timber and the efficiency of constructing buildings utilizing materials located on site contributed to the continued prevalence of log construction. Only eleven log primary resources have been documented, but the landscape is dotted with other log buildings, some of which may have been constructed as residences. The similarities between log

¹⁹⁴ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 27.

¹⁹⁵ Southern, “The I-House,” 81.

¹⁹⁶ Southern, “The I-House,” 81.

¹⁹⁷ Swaim, “North Carolina Folk Housing,” 33.

houses and log barns extend to their form, scale, notching, and chinking. As a result, window openings, porches, and stone chimneys are usually the only indicators that a building was erected for human habitation.

As in the years prior to the Civil War, the length of logs and the stability of log spans generally determined the size and scale of log buildings. As a result, most one-room-plan, or single-pen, houses and log curing barns measure roughly sixteen-feet square.¹⁹⁸ All have gabled roofs and an entrance that is nearly always centered to maintain the structural stability of the adjacent walls, as exemplified by the ca. 1870 one-and-a-half-story log house at 638 John Obie Road (PR0417) in the northeast quadrant of the county.¹⁹⁹ Here, a single window is on one side, a brick and stone chimney is on the other, and a one-story, two-room, gabled log ell is at the rear.

Free-standing, two-room houses, including “dogtrot” houses which consist of two log pens joined by an open breezeway, dotted much of the piedmont landscape but do not appear to have been common in Person County as no examples were found during the survey. A few indications of their likely former presence were documented, however. For example, the ca. 1870 Peed-Cash House (PR0386) on Peed Road in southeast Person County, a one-room dwelling with a single door on each of the long elevations and a window and chimney respectively on the gable ends, stands adjacent to a collapsed log structure that may have been connected via a breezeway, though the two structures did not share the common roof that was typical for dogtrot houses. Instead of being connected by a breezeway, two-room, or double-pen, log houses often were built side-by-side without any space in between, or a single-pen log house was enlarged by moving another log pen to one side. The ca. 1900 Tenant House (PR0557) on the Hester-Wagstaff Farm might be an example of this practice as it features two adjacent one-story gabled structures, at least one of which is log. They have slightly different heights, are spanned by a continuous shed-roofed porch, and do not appear to have had an interior connection.

The ca. 1875 one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled house (PR0058) on Bowmantown Road is one of the few remaining log houses in the county that have not been covered with siding or other materials. As a result, the diamond notching is visible, as is the heavy, hewn sill. Less frequent was the square notch, which required that the logs, round in cross-section, be cut to a square shape to enable their stacking alternately upon one another. The square-notch log construction of several curing barns on the Julius

¹⁹⁸ Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns,” 121.

¹⁹⁹ Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns,” 121.

Monroe and Elizabeth Wrenn Jones Farm (PR0458) and the Nathan and Mary Jane Fox Farm (PR0633) illustrates a preference for, or familiarity with, this type of notching.

Triple-A-Roofed I-House

Throughout the late-nineteenth century, the I-house remained the most common and easily recognizable house form in rural Person County, continuing the trend established in the antebellum era and described in the previous chapter. By the mid-nineteenth century, the I-house dominated the northern North Carolina Piedmont, standing proud on a landscape of tobacco barns and fields. Historian Doug Swaim describes the I-house as an evolution of North Carolina folk housing, noting that by 1900, “the central-hallway I-house would march up to the roadside. . . [and] all along the roadway the scene would be repeated.”²⁰⁰ Thirty-four examples of this house type were documented as having been constructed in Person County between 1865 and 1900.

As the I-house endured, the availability of sawn lumber promoted light-frame construction and, as a result, more flexibility in roof and wall form. At the same time, the increasing prosperity of regional tobacco farmers in the late nineteenth century led to greater embellishment of the I-house. One of the main differences between early-nineteenth century I-houses and those constructed in the latter half of the century and the early twentieth century, was the addition of a decorative gable on the façade.

So common was the construction of a centered gable on the façade that in North Carolina this type of roof form came to be known as a “triple-A,” a reference to the three gables found on the main part of the building. Gables have always been used to increase headroom in attic spaces, but for the I-house, which normally did not have a habitable attic, the façade gable did not serve a functional purpose but was instead entirely decorative. Some architectural historians have attributed the addition of a front gable to the influence of the Gothic Revival or other Victorian styles.²⁰¹ Within a very short period of time, “the center gable was accepted into the local building vocabulary, [and] it took a life of its own unrelated to the Gothic or Tuscan models.”²⁰² Roughly half of Person County I-houses constructed during this period could be classified as Greek Revival, Italianate, or Queen Anne in style. In many cases, however, the detailing of the center gable was not stylistically specific and was the only decorative element applied to the exterior. In other cases, decorative elements have been removed over time, resulting in a basic, unadorned form.

²⁰⁰ Swaim, “North Carolina Folk Housing,” 44.

²⁰¹ Brown, “The Architecture of Granville County,” 217.

²⁰² Southern, “The I-House,” 81.

As a vernacular adaptation, the front gable varied widely in width and overall proportion. The ca. 1870 Joe Younger House (PR0193) on Chub Lake Road displays the most basic integration of the front gable in its very shallow pitch and plain weatherboards (later covered in vinyl siding). In contrast, the ca. 1885 Thomas N. and Pattie J. Oakley House (PR0372) on Jim Poole Road, near the Granville County line, has a steeply pitched front gable adorned with a peaked vent. The most common front gable has a pitch identical to that of the end gables, as exhibited at the ca. 1890 Ruben Malcolm and Mary V. Allen House (PR0568) on NC 49 southwest of Roxboro.

As the nineteenth century wore on, all three gables often were adorned with decorative shingles and machine-made sawn and turned ornament. The ca. 1880 House (PR0065; demolished) on Flat River Church Road was quite decorative. Its broad front gable was embellished with slender rakeboards punched with small quatrefoils, a centered round vent with a multi-pronged pinwheel applique, and applied sawnwork in a variety of patterns. Across its wide front gable, the ca. 1887 Rimmer-Long House (PR0617) on Hurdle Mills Road features sawtooth boards cut to replicate wood shingles. In some cases, the front gable was added later. The George Polk Huff House (PR0360) was constructed in the late-nineteenth century as a hall-and-parlor plan house but was enlarged at one end in the early twentieth century to create an I-house with a center gable. In this instance, the gable is sheathed in plain weatherboards and unadorned except for a plain square, louvered vent.

Like its predecessors, the I-house built after the Civil War usually had a rear wing that expanded the living space of the main block's four rooms. Many pre-Civil War I-houses utilized earlier one- or one-and-a-half-story structures as the rear wing, either by moving the earlier building to the rear of the newly constructed I-house or adding the I-house to one end of the earlier dwelling. By the late nineteenth century, however, a one- or two-story rear wing was built contemporaneously with the I-house, giving it a T- or an L-shaped footprint. The ca. 1900 Caleb P. Gravitte House (PR0508) on NC 49 northeast of Roxboro illustrates the T-plan I-house with a centered rear ell finished in the same fashion as the main block with plain weatherboards, six-over-six wood-sash windows, and sawn wood shingles in the gables.

Regardless of the presence of a center gable or rear ell, the late-nineteenth century I-house was more standardized in proportion and finish than its early and mid-nineteenth century predecessors. The manufactured window sashes led to more standardization in window size, with most windows "treated with fewer and larger panes per sash, reflecting changes in the technology of glass making" leading to the

prevalence of two-over-two double-hung windows.²⁰³ Similarly, turned posts and ornamental sawn detailing at the porch also became more common, aligning with the popularity of the Queen Anne style. On the interior, doors, mantelpieces, stairs, and other decorative elements were manufactured by local mills or shipped by rail, rather than sawn or turned onsite.

Gable-front-and-wing

While the triple-A-roofed I-house dominated the Person County landscape throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, numerous landowners chose to utilize the more complex gable-front-and-wing form, which can be one or two stories and has a typical plan of three rooms arranged around a center hall. One room and the hall are located in a one-room-deep, side-gabled wing and the other two rooms are arranged one behind the other in a front-gabled wing adjacent to the center hall. The result is a T-shaped plan, often with an interior brick chimney at the intersection of the two wings.

Seven examples of the two-story, gable-front-and-wing form built in the rural parts of the county between 1870 and 1895 have been documented and three more examples constructed by 1915 were found. Yet, seven times that many I-houses remain from the same period. Most of these houses were adorned with brackets at the roofline, cut shingles in the gables, decorative porch supports, and other elements of the Italianate and Queen Anne styles noted below. An austere example is the ca. 1870 John Jasper and Bertha B. Warren House (PR0359) on Hazel Lawson Road with a distinctive single-bay, steeply pitched shed-roofed front porch that might be a later alteration. The shallow pitch of its main roofline might have been influenced by the continued popularity of the Greek Revival style immediately following the Civil War.

Late Examples of the Greek Revival Style

In the rural South, where little construction took place in the decades immediately following the Civil War, the Greek Revival style remained popular, and in Person County, Greek Revival-style houses were constructed as late as 1880. Historian Ruth Little's suggestion that the style remained popular in neighboring Caswell County "because of the imposing columned porches, so suitable as wide, cool verandas" and its general association with plantation culture likely applies to Person County as well.²⁰⁴

In the years immediately following the Civil War, two nearly identical houses were constructed in the growing community of Hurdle Mills. The W. R. and Mary James

²⁰³ Southern, "The I-House," 81.

²⁰⁴ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 33.

Cooper House (PR0108) and the D. W. R. and Henrietta James Richmond House (PR0107) were constructed about 1868 and 1869, respectively, by James W. James for his two daughters. Both dwellings were constructed utilizing the I-house form, its simple rectangular shape suitable for the application Greek Revival or Italianate details, and both feature low-sloped, hipped roofs with sawn brackets along the roofline and entrances comprising double-leaf two-panel surrounded by Greek Revival-style sidelights and transoms with alternating square and rectangular panes. Their most distinctive feature is a pedimented second-story porch above the entrance. Constructed roughly ten years later, the James Coleman and Annie T. Cates House (PR0625) on Satterfield Road features the same front doors and sidelights and the same second-story porch, but here the porch posts are slender and chamfered and embellished with turned and sawn brackets and connected by a turned balustrade that are typical of the later revival styles.

By the 1880s, elements of the succeeding Italianate style were sometimes applied alongside Greek Revival details. Little notes this trend toward the embellishment of Greek Revival-style buildings with decorative sawnwork, noting that, “eaves began to sprout brackets, and porches have posts constructed by lightweight wooden strips forming lattice patterns.”²⁰⁵ Built ca. 1880, the Benjamin Franklin Hester House (PR0461) on Gordonton Road is more distinctly Greek Revival in its low-pitched hipped roof and single-bay entrance porch while the sawn brackets on the porch posts reference the emerging Italianate style and signal its construction in the final quarter of the nineteenth century.

Italianate Style

As the I-house continued to dominate the rural landscape, the stylistic details applied to it gradually changed in the post-Civil War era with the displacement of the classical elements associated with the Greek Revival style by the decorative sawnwork that characterized the Romantic styles. These picturesque styles—which included Italianate, Queen Anne, and Gothic Revival—often utilized irregular forms and allowed for the free, and sometimes fanciful, use of applied ornamentation including brackets, bargeboards, decorative shingles, tracery, and sawn and turned porch posts and railings.

The Italianate style usually featured a low-sloped hipped roof (like that of the Greek Revival style), moderate to deep eaves with decorative brackets, and a double-leaf front door sheltered by a porch with carved, turned, or sawn detailing.²⁰⁶ In the country’s

²⁰⁵ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 34.

²⁰⁶ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 282-284.

major population centers the style was popular from about 1840 to ca. 1885 and often was identified by simple asymmetrical building forms and tall, narrow windows, sometimes extending all the way to the floor and often arranged in pairs. As early as the late 1840s, a number of houses in the Tar-Neuse River basin had Italianate-style brackets under the wide eaves of the Greek Revival-style hipped roof.²⁰⁷ In Person County, as throughout most of the state, the Italianate's heyday was after the Civil War, from ca. 1870 to the late 1890s.

The 1975 study of the Tar-Neuse River basin found, "a number of fairly ambitious Victorian era houses in rural areas of Person, more than are known in any other Virginia border county of the Tar-Neuse Basin study area," and noted a "particular type" present in the western part of the county, characterized as "a two-story, hip roof house, usually with a one-story porch extending across the front elevation and sometimes wrapping around the sides. At the central entrance the porch rises to two stories to shelter an entrance to the second-floor hall." The study also states that the "rise of the Italianate in the Tar-Neuse River Basin owed much to the machine-production and the relatively inexpensive nature of its ornament," its popularity as much a reflection of architecture production as it was a conscience preference for the specific characteristics of the style.

High-style Italianate houses were built throughout the nation's larger cities, but the style was less common in the South, where Reconstruction and the economic depression of the 1870s stifled new construction. By the time building resumed in earnest, the style had largely passed from fashion, likely accounting for the paucity of examples – only ten – documented in Person County and all are vernacular expressions of the style with identifying decorative elements applied to basic house forms and porches. In his analysis of I-houses in the region, Southern notes that the only real difference between the Greek Revival and Italianate is "the application of ornament. Cornices are bracketed, and porches and mantels receive curvilinear ornamental detail." The most distinctive features of the style as executed in Person County are the decorative brackets encircling the roof and the one-story porch sheltering all of the first-story bays and topped by a second-story porch at the entrance bay, which supports Southern's assertion that I-house with a multi-tiered, hip-roofed porch was consistent between the Greek Revival and Italianate styles and primarily differentiated by the applied sawnwork.

²⁰⁷ NC DCR, "Tar-Neuse River Basin," 22.

Several of the county's Italianate-style, all hip-roofed I-houses built ca. 1870, support this observation. The Gass House (PR0013) on Newton Pleasant Loop Road was constructed with a two-story rear wing that gives the building an L-shaped form; it displays paired sawn eave brackets and is fronted by a full-façade hip-roofed porch with a hip-roofed second story above the entrance. Both tiers of the porch are supported by square columns with distinctive, foliate-like sawn brackets; an elaborate sawn balustrade survives at the upper tier of the porch. At the Cates House (PR0014), on NC 49 southwest of Roxboro, the hipped roof is more steeply pitched, the sawn brackets at the main roofline and upper tier of the porch are more fully articulated with drop pendants, and the first-story windows are elongated to nearly reach the porch floor. The Roberts House (PR0109), on Robert Hester Road features a decorative frieze of applied sawnwork panels between sawn brackets at the roofline. This treatment continues around the upper tier of the porch, which here is only a single bay and supported by chamfered posts on chamfered plinths linked by foliate sawn brackets and an intricate sawn railing. The Andrew Jackson Hester House (PR0037) on the Hester-Wagstaff Farm also features a decorative frieze, here consisting of solid raised panels, as well as drop pendant brackets at all the rooflines including those of both tiers of the porch, which wraps around one side of the house at the first story. Turned porch posts, a band of spoolwork connecting the tops of the posts, and a railing with turned balusters provide decoration across the porches. A late example of a vernacular Italianate I-house is the rather plain ca. 1890 Burley B. and Ollie Sue Wilkins House (PR0481) on US 501 north of Roxboro, which features narrow paired windows at the first-floor façade and heavy scrolled eave brackets.

As a more complex form than the I-house, the gable-front-and-wing house that gained popularity in the final quarter of the nineteenth century was particularly suited to the style in its asymmetry. The ca. 1890 two-story House and Store (PR0081) on Weldon Painter Road south of Timberlake retains the characteristic eave and features a hip-roofed polygonal bay on the front of the front-gabled wing that adds irregularity to the composition. The most robust and latest documented example of the Italianate style in Person County is the ca. 1896 John D. and Cornelia M. Winstead House (PR0524) on John D. Winstead Road. Here, the two-story gable-front-and-wing plan is modified with a hipped roof and expanded with a two-story rectangular hip-roofed bay on the façade of the front-projecting wing. Most of the windows are tall and narrow with one-over-one or two-over-two sash and scrolled eave brackets are partially concealed behind sawn fleur-de-lis trim that runs along the outer edge of the eaves. Tuscan columns support the two-tiered wraparound porch. The interior woodwork incorporates turned elements in the balusters and newel post of the main staircase and

in a mantel and overmantel; in contrast, molded panels decorate the pilasters and frieze of another mantelpiece.

Only one example of the Italianate style has been documented in Roxboro. The ca. 1890 Pixley House (PR0230) at 110 S. Gentry Street, an I-house, features a projecting two-story, gabled, rectangular bay centered on the façade, which appears to take the place of the two-story porch common on rural Italianate-style houses. Heavy sawn brackets adorn a paneled cornice; smaller versions of these brackets adorned cornices above the windows, but only the second-floor windows on the façade retain these elements. One-story canted bays project from the gable ends of the house. Other original stylistic details, including paired windows at the second-story façade and delicate posts and spandrels on the front-gabled porch, have been replaced.

Queen Anne Style

While the transition from the Greek Revival to the Italianate style was largely one of ornamentation, the Queen Anne style introduced irregular, often complex building forms adorned with an abundance of ornament. Contrary to the name's suggestion that the style was associated with architecture popular during the reign of Queen Anne (1702-1714), the style was a reinterpretation of the Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture of late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in England.²⁰⁸ Dramatic, steeply pitched rooflines; decorative gables and dormers; complex, irregular forms that often included two-story canted bays, towers, and projecting wings; characterize the Queen Anne style popular nationally from ca. 1880 to ca. 1910, and signal a departure from the rectilinear T- and L-plan forms and shallow hipped roofs of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles. Additionally, the single-bay porches of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles were supplanted by wide, often wrap-around porches while doors and windows became more decorative.²⁰⁹ An increase in the affordability of glass and the availability of manufactured sashes and doors led to the use of more and larger windows, including two-over-two sash windows, as well as doors and windows with decorative windows featuring irregular shaped panes of glass or smaller panes of colored glass at the perimeter.

In North Carolina and elsewhere, the popularity of the Queen Anne style corresponded with advances in technology as well as a rise in urban and industrial wealth.²¹⁰ Published pattern books and mass-produced sawn and turned sawnwork became more

²⁰⁹ Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990, Portable Edition, 2005), 402-403.

²⁰⁹ Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990, Portable Edition, 2005), 402-403.

²¹⁰ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 403, 406.

widely available in Person County as local sawmills became more common and the railroad was completed through the county in 1890. As a result, decorative shingles and other patterned and textured wall treatments became more common along with the turned posts and railings and sawn brackets that had come into vogue in the 1870s.

Twenty-five Queen Anne-style houses were documented in the county, though only nineteen survive and nearly three-quarters of those surveyed were within the Roxboro city limits. While some are fully articulated in form and detail, many others have basic I-house or gable-front-and-wing forms with Queen Anne details applied to gables and porches. All of the recorded Queen Anne-style houses were constructed between 1885 and 1911 and feature a one-story porch, a distinct departure from the two-story porches of the preceding styles.

The earliest and most ornate example of the Queen Anne style in rural Person County is the ca. 1885 Charles Edward Winstead House (PR0191) on Longs Store Road, an exaggerated two-story gable-front-and-wing form featuring a richly decorated front gable with sawn shingles in a variety of patterns, a sawn vent, rakeboards of delicate sawtoothing, and, at the peak of the gable, elaborate sawnwork. A similar treatment is found on a projecting bay near the center of the facade. Below the front gable, a two-story canted bay features sawn consoles at the roof eaves and wide cornerboards with molded capitals. Porches on both sides of the front-gabled wing are supported by turned posts and feature turned balustrades, sawn brackets, and turned spindle friezes.

More restrained examples of the style in the rural parts of the county include the ca. 1890 House (PR0057) on Jim Latta Road and the ca. 1895 Reuben Phillip and Alma Hall Brooks House (PR0489) on Dorothy Brooks Lane in Woodsdale. The former features a high, hipped roof, its pitch further emphasized by pedimented gables on the façade and a side elevation, each with decorative shingles and a solid bargeboard with incised starburst pattern. A projecting, front-gabled bay on the left end of the façade is canted, with sawn consoles supporting the roof and featuring a multi-light window in the gable. The porch features two-part square posts and a geometric frieze. The Brooks house is typical of the style in its gable-front-and-wing form, sawn brackets at the roofline, bargeboards in the gables, and an interior corbelled brick chimney. The canted bay on the right end of the façade features a spindle frieze just below the roofline. The wraparound porch has Craftsman-style supports, likely installed in the 1920s. On the interior, the Brooks House retains molded door and window surrounds with bulls-eye cornerblocks, a center stair with paneled newel and turned balustrade, and first-floor mantelpieces incorporating Ionic columns.

A number of houses in the county featured minimal Queen Anne-style detailing as owners applied selective elements without adopting the entire design aesthetic. Historian Sarah Woodard notes that a person of limited means could display his participation in the booming late nineteenth-century economy by applying limited sawn decoration to a simple, symmetrical, side-gable cottage.²¹¹ Examples in rural Person County include the ca. 1890 Thompson House (PR0520) on Concord-Ceffo Road, an I-house with a full-width porch supported by turned posts with sawn brackets, a turned spindle frieze, and sawn brackets at the porch roof. The porch shelters a decorative Queen Anne-style door consisting of small panes of colored glass surrounding a large clear pane in the upper half of the door and a molded wood panel below. In this house and the ca. 1898 James Arthur Whitfield House (PR0635) on Union Grove Church Road, the chimneys have been constructed on the rear elevation rather than the gable ends, as was common for preceding styles. Paired two-story canted bays that flank the central entrance on the façade further differentiate the Whitfield House.

More elaborate examples of the Queen Anne style were constructed in the growing town of Roxboro during this period, many along North and South Main streets. The ca. 1890 Critcher House (PR0277) at 412 South Main Street is an I-house enlarged with rear wings and fronted by a one-story wraparound porch supported by Ionic columns and a second-story porch with Tuscan columns at the entrance bay. The upper porch features a sawn railing and the first-story porch shelters two canted bays that flank the centered entrance. The ca. 1895 Thomas House (PR0232, demolished) on N. Lamar Street had a similar porch and canted bays flanking the entrance, both finished with sawn brackets. The ca. 1890 Wilborn House (PR0278) at 421 South Main Street is a two-story gable-front-and-wing form finished with brackets at the roofline, interior corbelled brick chimneys, and a two-story canted bay on the front wing. The canted bay is finished with diagonally laid boards in the gable, a king-post truss infilled with sawn ornament in the gable peak, and a frieze adorned with bulls-eyes. Sawn panels on the pendant brackets above each canted side of the bay mimic the sawnwork in the gable. The Tuscan columns supporting the wraparound porch exemplify the beginning of a shift back to Classical and Colonial detailing.

The Queen Anne style was more elaborately expressed in several other two-story Roxboro houses built around 1890. The Walker House (PR0260; demolished) on North Main Street dripped with sawn ornament including shingles in the gables, closely

²¹¹ Sarah A. Woodard, "Long, James A. and Laura Thompson, House," Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 2005, Section 8, page 9.

spaced scrolled brackets at the main roofline and porch roof, and a sawn porch railing between turned posts topped by sawn brackets. The double-leaf one-light-over-one-panel front door featured heavily molded trim including brackets supporting a sawn cornice over the lights. A wide, asymmetrical gable of the gable-front-and-wing W. R. Hamrick House (PR0274) at 402 South Main Street gives the building a more horizontal orientation that is further emphasized by the full-width porch that wraps around the left elevation. The house has a second, attic gable on the front of the side wing and sawn shingles and an arched and molded bargeboard at each gable. The same gable treatment appears on the front-gabled entrance to the porch, which is supported by turned posts.

Two houses in Roxboro may be described as high-style examples of the Queen Anne style. The two-story Winstead House (PR0275) at 408 South Main Street has a hip-roofed, two-room core expanded on the front and one side by rectangular two-story bays that lend the house the asymmetry typical of full expressions of the style. The gables are laden with sawnwork including decorative shingles and vents, king-post trusses infilled with sawn panels, and a frieze of diagonally laid boards interrupted by sawn brackets. The ca. 1896 J. A. and Laura Thompson Long House (PR0271; NR 2005) at 217 South Main Street is the most elaborate and fully articulated Queen Anne-style dwelling in Person County. The Roxboro Courier described it as “a modern design and strikingly beautiful” and “the most costly dwelling ever built in Person County.”²¹² The house stands as a testament to the wealth and prominence of J. A. Long, who founded the Roxboro Cotton Mill (PR0219) and is credited with bringing the railroad to Roxboro. The two-story, hip-roofed form is finished with plain weatherboards and a hipped slate roof with interior corbelled brick chimneys. The most distinctive features of the house are the two-story semi-circular towers with conical roofs flanking the main entrance. Each tower has curved windows and a cornice of applied floral garlands that resemble furniture appliques. Between the turrets, a two-story rectangular entrance bay has a Palladian window at the second story and a pedimented attic dormer fronted by railing spanning the towers. A one-story porch that spans the façade and wraps around the side elevations is supported by Tuscan columns connected by a turned balustrade. A pedimented gable at the porch’s slightly projecting entrance bay features an applied tympanum adorned with floral motifs. The symmetrical composition and incorporation of classical swags, Palladian window, and Tuscan columns tie this house to the transition from the Queen Anne style to the Colonial and Classical Revival styles that was occurring in the country’s metropolitan areas, strongly suggesting that the

²¹² Woodard, “Long House,” Section 7, page 1.

house was designed by an architect, yet to be identified, or was derived from an architectural plan book.

The Queen Anne style remained popular in Roxboro through the first decade of the twentieth century. The ca. 1910 Veazy House (PR0237) at 324 North Main Street and the ca. 1900 Esther Clay Johnson Trotter House (PR0695) at 102 Johnson Street are both one-story examples characterized by irregular forms with projecting gabled bays and wraparound porches supported by turned posts with sawn brackets. The two-story 1907 Clayton House (PR0306) at 29 Oak Street and the ca. 1910 Newell House (PR0303) at 501 North Main Street may be described as I-houses expanded with projecting bays and wings. The former retains decorative bargeboards and cottage windows.

As suggested by their irregular forms, Queen Anne-style interiors also became more complex with an increased number and diversity of rooms, often asymmetrically arranged around a center hall. In small-scale Queen Anne-style houses, rooms were organized around an off-center passage with those on one side of the passage shifted forward.²¹³ The interiors of larger houses tended to be elaborately appointed, as exemplified by the J. A. and Laura Thompson Long House which has paneled wainscots and a stair with paneled newel posts and slender, turned balusters. The house retains eleven fireplaces. Mantelpieces feature paneled pilasters supporting a wide frieze flanked by sawn brackets supporting the shelf. Two of the first-floor mantelpieces have overmantels supported by classical columns while the mantelpiece in the center hall has a swag motif in the frieze.

Post-Civil War Roxboro

For several decades after its 1855 incorporation, Roxboro's primary role was as the location of the county court and government.²¹⁴ Little is known of everyday activities in the town as few historical newspapers, directories, maps, gazetteers, or census records predating the late nineteenth century survive. Between 1850 and 1870, population growth across the county was minimal, rising from 10,781 people in 1850 to 11,170 twenty years later.²¹⁵

The 1872 Branson's North Carolina Business Directory includes listings for Roxboro Township, and although it does not specify which listings are within the town limits and which are in the rural areas of the township, these listings provide information

²¹³ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 403.

²¹⁴ Lee and Mobley, "Courthouses in North Carolina"; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 141-144.

²¹⁵ Bureau of the Census, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), 74.

regarding activity in and around Roxboro at that time. Religious and educational institutions included eight Methodist churches, among them the present-day Long Memorial Methodist Church on Main Street (PR0256); three Baptist churches; and the J.E. Maxey Male Academy. Businesses included E.G. Reade's Roxboro Bank, a post office, a hotel, and mercantile stores owned by Chambers & Barnett, A.R. Foushee, T.K. Glenn & Co., and J.A. Long. Three physicians were listed in Roxboro Township, including Dr. John H. Merritt, whose office was located on US 501 north of Roxboro (PR0292), as were seven lawyers, underscoring the importance of the court to the town's economy. Early industries in the township included the Gillis copper mine, located north of town; grist and sawmills owned by Barnett & Barnett, G.D. Satterfield, G.W. Norwood, J.B. Wagstaff, Clay Harris, and W.A. Barton; and tobacco factories owned by C. Hamlin, Satterfield & Jones, Winstead & Winstead, Wright & Barnett, though these factories precede the official opening of the tobacco market in 1890 and therefore the exact nature of their operation is unclear.²¹⁶

The most significant improvement during this era may have been the construction of a larger and more modern courthouse. Completed in 1883, this third building was of red brick with stucco detailing and contained offices for the register of deeds, clerk of superior court, county commissioners, sheriff, and superintendent of public instruction, as well as a grand jury room on the first floor and courtroom on the second floor.²¹⁷

Arrival of the Railroad

By the late nineteenth century, the agricultural economy of Person County was dependent on bright leaf tobacco, Roxboro's general stores offered tobacco products for sale, and there had been sporadic efforts to establish tobacco storage and processing facilities in the county; however, there was no substantial local market for the sale or processing of locally-grown tobacco, due in large part to the absence of an efficient means of shipping finished products. Consequently, farmers sent most of their raw agricultural goods out of Person County for processing and sale elsewhere. The lack of a local railroad that would make Roxboro a central market for shipping goods meant that farmers had to take their products to the nearest market town by wagon. Roxboro's newspapers advertised tobacco houses in Durham, Oxford, Henderson, and Milton, as well as Danville, Petersburg, and South Boston, Virginia.²¹⁸

²¹⁶ Rev. L. Branson, ed., *The North Carolina Business Directory* (Raleigh: J.A. Jones Publisher, 1872).

²¹⁷ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 144.

²¹⁸ *The Roxboro Courier*, Newspapers.com.

Local leaders recognized the importance of a railroad to the local economy. Efforts to obtain a railroad connection in Roxboro had begun before the Civil War but local opposition to the necessary taxes to fund such a venture resulted in decades of failure. These efforts were redoubled in the 1880s, led largely by local farmer and merchant J.A. Long and *Person County Times* owner John A. Noelle.²¹⁹ The Roxboro Railroad was chartered in 1881, followed by the Durham & Roxboro Railroad in 1885. Before construction on either line had begun, the two railroads merged as the Lynchburg & Durham Railroad in 1887, and surveyors immediately began work in Person County to identify the best route for the line. Construction began in Lynchburg and was completed as far as South Boston, Virginia, by 1889.²²⁰

In May 1890, the editors of *The Roxboro Courier* expounded on the general need for a railroad and tobacco market:

If it becomes a prosperous, live town, Roxboro must make the start as a tobacco market. Every natural requisite is here to make us one of the leading tobacco markets in the State. The new railroad will run through as fine a tobacco region as there is in the world. . . We venture the assertion that if Roxboro does become a tobacco market it will with the [railroad]. . . For the section it is to pass through nothing could be a greater bonanza. The section needs only a railroad to make it the riches, most prosperous part of the State.²²¹

Excitement for the imminent arrival of the railroad in Roxboro is evident in newspaper advertisements published in the months leading up to its completion. Advertisements listing land for sale boasted about proximity to the railroad and Roxboro: “Valuable Tobacco Land! . . . This is fine tobacco and grain land, and is near the Lynchburg & Durham Railroad, and is situated about two and a half miles from Roxboro.”²²² The editors of *The Roxboro Courier* commented that “Mr. J.A. Long informs us the farmers can rest easy about getting their fertilizers this spring. The Lynchburg & Durham Railroad will be completed to Roxboro in time to haul out their fertilizers.”²²³ The towns that would soon be connected to Roxboro also advertised in the Roxboro newspaper, courting new customers even before the railroad was completed.

²¹⁹ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 141-143.

²²⁰ *The Roxboro Courier*, January 20, 1887, Newspapers.com; J.D. Lewis, “North Carolina Railroads – Lynchburg & Durham Railroad,” https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_lynchburg_durham.html.

²²¹ “The Greensboro, Roxboro, & Eastern,” *The Roxboro Courier*, May 1, 1890, Newspapers.com.

²²² *The Roxboro Courier*, January 16, 1890, Newspapers.com.

²²³ *The Roxboro Courier*, March 20, 1890, Newspapers.com.

“Lynchburg, Va., sends greetings to Roxboro, N.C.,” says an advertisement placed in *The Roxboro Courier* by a Lynchburg furniture store. “Glad to have you for our next door neighbor. Hope you will be pleased, and we know that you will be profited by the arrangement if you will call in at J.L. Thompson & Son’s.”²²⁴

Most of the Lynchburg & Durham Railroad had been built by early 1890, with the exception of the final bridge over the Dan River, which was completed that April. The railroad immediately began test runs of the full line to mark times and prepare train schedules.²²⁵ The first train carrying passengers from Lynchburg to Roxboro arrived at the depot on May 18, 1890, witnessed by a large crowd who all “wore a happy smile, that seemed to say that the future of Roxboro was safe.”²²⁶

Roxboro Tobacco Market

The arrival of the railroad brought to fruition local leaders’ efforts to establish a tobacco market in Roxboro. The first warehouse known to have been built in Roxboro was the Pioneer Warehouse, completed in July 1890 at the corner of Reams Avenue and Main Street. Pioneer was managed by Buck Thomas, who had moved to Roxboro from Danville, Virginia, and rented the warehouse from J.A. Long. The Farmers’ Alliance Warehouse, completed in November 1890 and renamed Hyco Warehouse in 1891, stood on Depot Street. It was built by Pass Brothers and leased to the Alliance.²²⁷

When Roxboro’s tobacco market officially opened on December 10, 1890, the newspaper reported that “both warehouses were full,” and by the close of that day’s auctions, “Everybody agreed that it was the biggest day Roxboro ever had, and all were full of hope and encouragement for the future of our town.”²²⁸ At the end of the market’s first week, editors of *The Roxboro Courier* boasted “Every farmer in Person county should try Roxboro with a load of tobacco. . . Our warehouses are first-class and the managers clever, whole-souled men. Try them with a load of the weed.” The paper further encouraged farmers, “Don’t be afraid to bring your tobacco to Roxboro, for there are plenty of buyers, and money enough to pay for all that comes.”²²⁹ By that time, ten prize houses had also been built in Roxboro, including J.A. Long’s four-story

²²⁴ *The Roxboro Courier*, April 10, 1890, Newspapers.com.

²²⁵ *The Roxboro Courier*, January 9, 1890, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, April 17, 1890, Newspapers.com.

²²⁶ *The Roxboro Courier*, May 22, 1890, Newspapers.com; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 143.

²²⁷ *The Roxboro Courier*, October 30, 1890, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, November 27, 1890, Newspapers.com; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 143.

²²⁸ “Our Tobacco Market Opened,” *The Roxboro Courier*, December 11, 1890, Newspapers.com.

²²⁹ *The Roxboro Courier*, December 18, 1890, Newspapers.com.

prize house, which was praised by the local newspaper as “a commodious and well equipped building.”²³⁰

The Roxboro tobacco market was immediately successful and grew rapidly. In 1891, the Hyco Warehouse on Depot Street came under operation by Brooks, Yarboro, & Co., while the Farmers’ Alliance built a new warehouse bounded by Jail Street, Lamar Avenue, and Reams Avenue.²³¹ Two additional prize houses had been built that year, putting a total of twelve in operation for the 1891 harvest. The J.W. Hicks Tobacco Prize House and the Pass Brothers Prize House were constructed on Depot Street, the latter abutting their warehouse. Five were located on Lamar Avenue, west of the courthouse: J.M. Blalock’s Prize House, J.J. Brooks Prize House, A.R. Foushee Prize House, Alliance Tobacco Prize House, and Winstead & Barnett Tobacco Prize House. J.A. Long operated three prize houses: No. 1 located at the corner of Depot and Mill Streets, the Long & Yancey No. 2 Prize House on Foushee Street, and the J.A. Long Prize House on Lamar Avenue. Additional prize houses were operated by A.J. Hester and C.G. Nichols.²³² In 1897, Wood, Long, & Co. built a large prize house and stemmery at the corner of Reams and Lamar Avenues, and by 1900 the Foushee & Stevens Tobacco Prize House was built at the corner of Foushee and Depot Streets.²³³

In 1893, Virginian M.F. Willard wrote to the editors of the Roxboro Courier, “You may be pleased to publish the impressions of your stirring, active town” and then went on to describe the town compared to his visit in 1883:

The town, then, was very small, and largely unimportant. . . having as I remember, nothing more of importance in the way of public enterprises than the several mercantile establishments and the importance derived from the assembling of the Court there tri-annually. Now you have stridden forward at such a rate as almost to baffle the conceptions of one who had not been there for so long. . .

Willard then noted the “three splendidly arranged warehouses” and “some 12 or more splendidly arranged factories, prizeries, etc.,” serving the tobacco farmers of the

²³⁰ *The Roxboro Courier*, December 18, 1890, Newspapers.com; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 143; Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Limited, “Roxboro, Person County, N.C.,” March 1894.

²³¹ *The Roxboro Courier*, July 30, 1891, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, September 24, 1891, Newspapers.com; 1894 Sanborn Map.

²³² 1894 Sanborn Map.

²³³ Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Limited, “Roxboro, Person County, N.C.,” February 1900; *The Roxboro Courier*, October 27, 1897, Newspapers.com.

surrounding rural townships.²³⁴ None of Roxboro's earliest tobacco buildings remain standing.

Growth of Roxboro

Commerce in downtown Roxboro boomed with the arrival of the railroad and the establishment of the tobacco market. In anticipation of these events, several businesses opened in the late 1880s. Farmers' Bank of Roxboro was opened in 1889, followed by the Roxboro Land & Loan Company in 1890, the latter being reorganized as People's Bank in 1891.²³⁵ W.H. Williams relocated from Bethel Hill to Roxboro in 1889 and opened the Winstead House Hotel at the corner of Main and Depot Streets, catering particularly to traveling salesmen.²³⁶ The enterprises listed in Branson's 1890 directory would have been established in the prior year or earlier: grocery stores owned by J.I. Brooks and B. Walker; general stores owned by A.R. Foushee, J.A. Long, and the Yanceys; Josephus Younger's agricultural implements store; J.A. Carver's confectionary; and J.D. Morris & Co. Jewelers. Four lawyers maintained offices in Roxboro, reflecting the continued importance of the courthouse to the local economy. Other professionals included five physicians and A.R. Foushee's insurance agency. Skilled professions included four blacksmith and wheelwright shops, three builders, two painters, two tanneries, a foundry, a millwright, and a tinsmith. Six grist and sawmills operated in and around Roxboro at that time as well.²³⁷ The 1894 Sanborn Company fire insurance map also shows a drug store, clothing store, hardware store, Masonic Hall, barber shop, millinery, two cobblers, and three saloons, two of which included bowling alleys.²³⁸

Infrastructure improvements took place in Roxboro concurrently with the growth of business in the late nineteenth century. The editors of *The Roxboro Courier* criticized the poor condition of sidewalks and streets in 1887, writing, "Say, Messrs. Commissioners did it ever occur to you that if you would have some work done on the street – in making sidewalks and street crossings – that there would be less complaining about town taxes. . . As it is now the streets are a disgrace to any community."²³⁹ Similar criticism in 1889 advised, "There is nothing that improves the appearance of a town

²³⁴ M.F. Willard, "A Stranger Visiting Roxboro," *The Roxboro Courier*, April 27, 1893, Newspapers.com.

²³⁵ *The Roxboro Courier*, February 7, 1889, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, August 14, 1890, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, March 18, 1891, Newspapers.com; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 143; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 51.

²³⁶ *The Roxboro Courier*, January 3, 1889, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, January 17, 1889, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, February 21, 1889; Levi Branson, ed., *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1890* (Raleigh: Levi Branson Office Publisher, 1889); 1894 Sanborn Map.

²³⁷ Branson, *Business Directory*, 1890; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 139.

²³⁸ 1894 Sanborn Map.

²³⁹ *The Roxboro Courier*, December 22, 1887, Newspapers.com.

and that will attract the eye of a stranger quicker than good, wide sidewalks and plenty of shade trees.”²⁴⁰ In response, brick sidewalks were constructed throughout town by the following year.²⁴¹ In 1895, the newspaper again advocated for town-wide improvements, commenting that “in many places the mud has been fifteen inches deep, and depot street. . . has been almost impassable.”²⁴² Later that year, town officials purchased a rock crusher and began making improvements to the town’s streets.²⁴³ The first telephone in Roxboro appears to have been installed in 1895, connecting the railroad depot with J.E. Tucker’s store at the corner of Main and Depot Streets.²⁴⁴ The Roxboro Telephone Company began installing poles and wires in the fall of 1897 and the system was operational by the end of that year.²⁴⁵

Industry and Commerce

Post-Civil War Milling

Rural industry in Person County recovered relatively quickly after the Civil War, sustained by milling operations established prior to the Civil War. In 1860, there were seven grist and saw mills reported in the county, and by 1870, that number had increased to about twenty mills.²⁴⁶ Such mills were operated by Reade, Stanford, & Moore at Centre Grove, the Richmonds at Hurdle’s Mill (later Hurdle Mills), J.W. Cunningham and M. McGehee at Cunningham’s Store, Brooks & Merritt in Woodsdale, and the Moores in Mt. Tirzah. By 1890, the Centre Grove, Cunningham’s Store, and Woodsdale mills had closed, but several new ones had opened: W.A. Warner & Co. at Hester’s Store; C.S. Winstead at Woodburn; and Winstead and T.H. Street at Mill Creek; and W.A. Burton, Burton & Warren, and Nathaniel Brooch (grist mill only) at Bushy Fork.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁰ *The Roxboro Courier*, January 31, 1889, Newspapers.com.

²⁴¹ *The Roxboro Courier*, April 17, 1890, Newspapers.com.

²⁴² *The Roxboro Courier*, March 27, 1895, Newspapers.com.

²⁴³ *The Roxboro Courier*, July 24, 1895, Newspapers.com; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 147.

²⁴⁴ *The Roxboro Courier*, April 10, 1895, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, October 9, 1895, Newspapers.com.

²⁴⁵ *The Roxboro Courier*, August 11, 1897, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, September 8, 1897, Newspapers.com.

²⁴⁶ *Branson’s Business Directory, 1867-8; Branson’s North Carolina Business Directory for 1869* (Raleigh: J.A. Jones Publisher, 1869); Note: Though these directories list the owners of these mills, the locations are not included, and therefore it is unclear which are located in rural Person County and which in Roxboro.

²⁴⁷ Branson, *Business Directory*, 1890.

Hurdle's Mill and the Hurdle Mills Community

The oldest and only known intact gristmill in Person County is Hurdle Mill, which was established in 1846 by the Daniels family on the Flat River in the western region of the county and sold to the Hurdle family in 1859. The current mill structure (PR0089), built around 1890, is a two-and-a-half-story, side-gabled building oriented with its gable parallel to the adjacent Flat River. The mill race, dam, and waterwheel are no longer extant, but it appears that the water flowed along the east side of the mill building in a race that ran perpendicular to the Flat River. The mill is elevated above the river and associated floodplain, resting on mortared stone piers with later wood posts on concrete footings to reinforce the center of the structure. The mill above was constructed of heavy-timber, mortise-and-tenon framing. Original flush wood sheathing has been covered with corrugated metal, but two-over-two windows remain on the north and south elevations.

The interior of the mill retains wood floors, exposed wood columns and beams, and machinery that illustrates the patterns of production over time. The mill originally housed two millstones, one for corn and one for wheat, and the process of milling produced three qualities of grain: bran (rough fiber), middling (animal feed), and fine grain (for human consumption). On the first floor, the outer hulls of the grain were cracked open in a process called rolling, after which fourteen vertical conveyors lifted the rolled grain to the third story to be tumbled and cooled. A series of chutes utilized gravity to move the grain from the third floor back down through the building. On the second floor, it was sifted to separate the middling from the fine grain and stored in a small room finished with a double-wall of tongue-and-groove sheathing.²⁴⁸ The conveyors and chutes that moved the grain through the building were the earliest forms of automation in the milling process.²⁴⁹

Mills often attracted other businesses that would benefit from the mills' customer traffic and eventually form rural centers of economic and social activity. The best example of this trend in Person County is Hurdle Mills, originally named for the Daniels family who built the mill. After the Hurdles bought the mill in 1859 and the existing post office changed its name from Daniels to Hurdle's Mill accordingly, a commercial center formed just southwest of the mill, at the intersection of Hurdle Mills, Union Grove Church, and Guess Roads. Within a few years, the community of Hurdle's Mill included two general stores, a lumber dealer, a physician, and two blacksmiths and wheelwrights. By the 1870s, the grist mill was owned and operated by

²⁴⁸ Personal Communication with Mike Dixon (Hurdle Mill owner and Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, December 10, 2022, in person (See PR0089).

²⁴⁹ Hobbs, *Exploring the Old Mills*, 21.

the Richmonds and included sawmilling operations, but the name of the community remained Hurdle's Mill until 1892 when it became Hurdle Mills.²⁵⁰

Today Hurdle Mills (PR0605) is among the largest rural communities in the county. Hurdle Mills stands as an intact example of a rural community that formed in the mid-nineteenth century and grew throughout the early twentieth century. Present-day Hurdle Mills includes the 1923 Foushee's Garage, the 1964 D. L. Whitfield and Co. Store, a 1943 post office, and a late-twentieth-century fire department. Roughly halfway between the mill and the commercial buildings is the Brooks and White Funeral Home. Residences south and east of the commercial area along Hurdle Mills Road largely date from the 1860s through the 1940s. Intermixed with the houses are agricultural buildings, most associated with the Wilborn-Whitfield Farm that stood immediately south of the commercial area.

Copper and Gold Mining

Mining, though short-lived, was another important industry in nineteenth-century Person County. Substantial copper deposits were discovered in what became known as the Virgilina District that encompassed northeastern Person County, northwestern Granville County, and southern Halifax County, Virginia. One of the nation's first copper mines was on the land of William Gillis in northeastern Person County and operated for a few short years in the 1850s. The Copper World Mine opened in 1882, followed by the Durgy Mine and Tingen Mine in the 1890s. A 1976 North Carolina Geological Survey study identified additional copper and gold mines in northeastern Person County, including Copper King Mine, Durgy Gold Mine, Old Durgy Mine, Cross-Cut Mine, and Jeffers Mine. Little is known about these mines, which appear to have operated into the early twentieth century; all had closed by the 1930s.²⁵¹ No above-ground evidence of the county's early mining industry remains on the landscape, though present-day road names like Dirgie Mine, Tingen Mine, and Gillis serve as a reminder of this aspect of Person County's past.

Crossroads Commerce

Like the mills, the country store is an important part of the commercial and social heritage of rural Person County. Poor roads, long travel times, and a lack of large towns

²⁵⁰ Branson's Business Directory, 1867-8; Branson's Business Directory, 1869; Branson, Business Directory, 1872; Branson, Business Directory, 1890.

²⁵¹ P. Albert Carpenter, III, "Metallic Mineral Deposits of the Carolina State Belt, North Carolina," *North Carolina Geological Survey Bulletin* 84, 1976/1993, 27, 54-57; North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission, "Person County, North Carolina," Map, 1938, North Carolina Maps Collection, Digital Collections Repository, University of North Carolina Libraries; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 2.

all combined to make the country store the primary place to obtain grocery staples, hardware, agricultural implements, and nearly anything else needed for daily life that couldn't be made on the farm. It also served as the social center of the rural community. Prior to rural mail delivery, many country stores contained post offices, drawing customers who shopped while picking up or sending mail. The country store was also the place to gather news about neighbors, local politics, the agricultural outlook, and general gossip.²⁵² By the end of the Civil War, country stores were located at Allensville, Bethel Hill, Bushy Fork, Centre Grove, Cunningham's Store, Gordonton, Hester's Store, Mt. Tirzah, Van Hook's Store, and Woodsdale, soon followed by Ceppo, Olive Hill, Roseville, Timberlake, Winstead, Yancey's Store, and other small crossroads throughout the county.²⁵³

James Earl Hester recalled the importance of his great-grandfather's store, for which the Hester's Store community was named, as "the center of community life":

The store never did a lot of business, but it was the most important place in the community. Sitting around the store in the evening or on Saturday afternoons has been a favorite pastime for over two centuries. With the work caught up for the week, most of the men would be sitting under the overhang of the store porch, shooting the breeze and trying to keep cool from the heat of a hot summer's day. During winter they would gather in a circle around the potbellied stove in the middle of the store. Some would play cards.²⁵⁴

Since most farmers could not keep cash on hand, it was common for country stores to accept bartered goods as payment, including chickens, eggs, fruits, vegetables, and other farm products. Hester recalled, "Most every country store had one or more chicken coops to hold chickens taken in exchange for goods."²⁵⁵ Some store owners also offered lines of credit to their customers, operating on good faith that they these debts would be paid once the harvest could be taken to market. This system of neighbor helping neighbor further solidified the store and its owner as an integral part of the rural crossroads community.

Photographer Dorothea Lange observed that stores in Person County were sometimes segregated, displaying "Whites only" signage, while others were integrated by race, but

²⁵² HCHS, *An Architectural History*, 45; Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 2-4; Hirsch, "North Carolina, A Guide to the Old North State," 249.

²⁵³ Branson's Business Directory, 1867-8; Branson, Business Directory, 1872; Branson, Business Directory, 1890; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 1.

²⁵⁴ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 2.

²⁵⁵ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 57.

not by gender. “At lunchtime, there might be two dozen men, black and white,” she wrote of the store at Gordonton. “If you were there for an hour, two or three women might come in and buy something, but they would never sit down.”²⁵⁶

Rural Commercial Buildings

Rural stores usually stood at or very close to a major intersection and the merchant’s house normally would occupy the same property as the store; sometimes the store and residence were a single building. Among the oldest known commercial buildings in the county is the ca. 1875 two-story frame house and store (PR0042) at the southwest corner of Cates Mill and Frank Timberlake Roads, a prominent intersection. The front-gabled wing on one side of the building appears to have been constructed as a store and the side-gabled wing extending to one side is a traditional I-house. A continuous porch wraps around the opposite side of the store and spans both facades. The two-story, front-gabled store associated with the ca. 1870 Robertson House (PR0110) is similarly sited, adjacent to Woodsdale Road just north of the intersection with Edwin Roberston Road, but the house is a separate building set back from the road. The store has a cross-gable roof and a four-bay main façade spanned by a hip-roofed porch. Centered below the broad front gable, the main entrance of double-leaf, five-panel doors is flanked by two-over-two double-hung sash windows. The fourth bay, off to one side in a one-room-deep side-gabled wing, has an identical entrance, perhaps to a storeroom.

An anomaly in both siting and design is the ca. 1890 house and store at the end of Weldon-Painter Road (PR0081). The building, which contains a rear wing that appears to have been erected as a store or office, stands near the south side of Weldon Painter Road, though faces away from the road. The one-story wing extends across the entire rear of the two-story, gable-front-and-wing house, facing the road, and its low-sloped shed roof is concealed by a parapet on its side elevations. The use of a parapet to conceal a roofline was a typical device to make commercial buildings appear larger than traditional residential forms. The close connection between the house and store seems to have been more common during this era than in the twentieth century and may have indicated a concern for security.

By the last decade of the century, one-story, free-standing store buildings became more common, a trend that prevailed into the mid-twentieth century. Now located on the grounds of the Person County Museum of History in Roxboro, the 1893 Reuben Phillip Brooks Store (PR0828) is perhaps the best-preserved example of this trend. The store is a tall front-gabled, frame building with a shorter wing along a side elevation that has a

²⁵⁶ Spirm, *Daring to Look*, 275-278.

side-sloping shed roof concealed by a wood parapet on the main facade. A double-leaf one-light-over-three-panel door and flanking two-over-two windows occupy most of the façade; a matching door accesses the side wing. The interior of the store remains largely intact with wood floors, flush board ceilings, and wood shelving along the walls.

Religion and Education

Schools

Immediately following the end of the Civil War, education in much of the South was in a state of disarray. The Literary Fund, which had been established in 1825 to support public schools, was depleted by the war and abolished in 1865. The North Carolina Office of the Superintendent was also temporarily abolished and then reinstated in 1868. The complete restructuring of the labor system following emancipation of the enslaved, which reduced the expendable income within many farm communities, also resulted in the loss of local funding sources for community schools.²⁵⁷ Immediately after the war, the only Person County schools that appeared in the *North Carolina Business Directory* were the Bethel Hill Male Academy (not extant) and the Roxboro Male Academy (PR0258) at 309 North Main Street.²⁵⁸ By 1890, eighteen White public schools and twenty Black public schools operated in Person County.²⁵⁹ These schools typically taught basic subjects, including reading, arithmetic, and writing, to elementary age students, and most operated only four to six months of the year.²⁶⁰

Though little is known about these schools and none remain extant, oral histories have provided some information about late-nineteenth-century public education for White students in the county. The O'Briant School was built between Allensville and Surl in eastern Person County around 1880 and appears to have operated into the early twentieth century.²⁶¹ It was named for Solomon "Sol" O'Briant, a long-time teacher at the school in the late nineteenth century. The Charlie Hope School was built in the late nineteenth century, serving the Mill Creek community in the southeastern part of the county, though its exact dates of operation are not known.²⁶² Alliance Hall School was built in the Olive Hill community in the late nineteenth century, operating by at least 1896. It was a one-room school believed to have been established by the Farmer's Alliance, for which the school was named, and appears to have operated as a public

²⁵⁷ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 153-154.

²⁵⁸ Branson's *Business Directory*, 1867-8; Branson's *Business Directory*, 1869; Branson, *Business Directory*, 1872.

²⁵⁹ Branson, *Business Directory*, 1890.

²⁶⁰ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 105.

²⁶¹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 111-112.

²⁶² Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 105.

school. When the school closed, most students transferred to the Roxboro High School, which opened in 1925.²⁶³

The public school system was supplemented by private schools. In Roxboro, Julia Gibbon operated a private school 1877, and by 1884, A.E. Jordan and L.E. Stanfield had also opened private schools in town.²⁶⁴ By 1890, coeducational Roxboro academies were operated by Mrs. J.A. Carver, a Professor Thomas, and Mrs. S. Burnett.²⁶⁵ In rural Person County, the Bethel Hill Institute was built in 1888 by Reverend J.A. Beam; the original building was destroyed by fire in 1905.²⁶⁶ By 1890, female academies were operating in the communities of Winstead and Bethel Hill, a male academy had opened in Bushy Fork, and coeducational schools were located in the Centre Grove, Mt. Tirzah, and Allensville communities.²⁶⁷

Churches

Late nineteenth-century religion in North Carolina was predominantly evangelical Christianity, which emphasizes the ultimate authority of the Bible; requires a commitment to transformation by being “born again”; focuses on Jesus’s atonement on the cross for the sins of humanity; requires sharing the gospel, often through religious revivals; and generally rejects the formality of liturgical Christianity such as Catholicism.²⁶⁸ Regardless of the specific branch of Christianity, churches were still firmly divided along racial lines. Prior to the Civil War, most enslaved African Americans were forced to worship in White churches, and even independent Black churches were forced by law to have White ministers in an effort to prevent abolitionist ideas from spreading among the enslaved population through the churches. After the war, when these requirements were no longer enforced, churches became an especially important aspect of both rural and urban Black communities.²⁶⁹ As both White and Black Southerners sought explanation and purpose for the struggles they had experienced during the previous decades, and with restrictions on the formation and operation of Black churches lifted by emancipation, a boom in the formation of

²⁶³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 103.

²⁶⁴ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 156.

²⁶⁵ Branson, *Business Directory*, 1890.

²⁶⁶ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 103; Branson, *Business Directory*, 1890. Note: PR0443 is a later school of the same name.

²⁶⁷ Branson, *Business Directory*, 1890; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 156.

²⁶⁸ Donald G. Mathews, “Religion,” NCpedia, State Library of North Carolina, <https://www.ncpedia.org/religion-part-3-ascent-and-influenc>; Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

²⁶⁹ Federal Writers’ Project, *North Carolina*, 57; NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 25.

congregations and construction of church buildings in Person County took place in the last three decades of the nineteenth century.

As White Southern Protestants struggled with the defeat of the Confederacy and the end of racial slavery, they embraced the Bible as the ultimate authority in order to continue traditional power structures. Religion historian Donald Mathews observes that in their view, “neither the Bible nor the Holy Spirit that settled on revived communities demanded gender or racial democracy.” In addition to the continued oppression of African Americans and women, “Confederates could come to terms with their defeat in the Civil War through interpreting their suffering as similar to that of Christian martyrs and their Lord before them; their ‘Lost Cause’ could be sanctified.”²⁷⁰ As a result, evangelical Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians were by far the most common denominations in post-Civil War Person County.

Baptists were the most numerous of the new White congregations. These included Bethany Baptist Church, which formed in 1883 to serve the Moriah community in the southwestern corner of the county. The first several pastors were from Oxford and traveled about thirteen miles each way to preach at the church, which initially met in a log school building.²⁷¹ Lamberth Memorial Baptist Church was founded in the 1890s to serve the Olive Hill community in northwestern Person County. It formed from a Sunday School operating at Paylor’s Grove and was named for Reverend Joe H. Lamberth, pastor of the Roxboro and Ephesus Baptist Churches, who helped establish the congregation.²⁷² Roxboro Baptist Church (PR0269) formed in 1882 and built their first sanctuary on South Main Street soon after. Rapid growth followed, necessitating a larger sanctuary, which was completed in 1898 and included a baptismal pool to replace the practice of performing baptisms in a nearby pond.

Unlike Baptists, Primitive Baptists adhere to strict Calvinism and reject the missionary expectations of evangelical Christianity, believing instead that God will call those who are chosen to be saved. A small number of White Primitive Baptist churches were formed in rural Person County in the postbellum era. Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church (PR0472) appears to have originated in the 1860s as “an unorganized group of believers” and formally organized in 1875 to serve the Holloway’s Crossroads community just east of Woodsdale, with A.N. Hall as the first pastor. The current sanctuary was built around that time.²⁷³ Surl Primitive Baptist Church (PR0401) formed around 1881, though the

²⁷⁰ Mathews, “Religion”; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*.

²⁷¹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 65-67.

²⁷² Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 77-78.

²⁷³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 96-97.

congregation was not formally recognized until 1888. The church appears to have been built in the early 1880s to serve the Surl crossroads community southeast of Roxboro.²⁷⁴ On North Lamar Street in Roxboro, in 1891 the Roxboro Baptist Church erected a sanctuary, later replaced.²⁷⁵

Other denominations also formed new churches in Roxboro after the Civil War. Roxboro Presbyterian Church was established in 1892 by prominent families including the Brooks, Brittons, Bouldins, and others. Their first church was on South Lamar Street.²⁷⁶ Brooksdale United Methodist Church was established in 1893 on the south side of Roxboro and initially served by the Mt. Tirzah Circuit.²⁷⁷ All of these congregations remain active, but except for the churches erected by the Shiloh and Surl Primitive Baptist congregations, their buildings erected during the nineteenth century were replaced in the twentieth.

Black Southern Protestants, most of whom were formerly enslaved by their White counterparts, naturally rejected the White male supremacist interpretation of Christianity. Mathews notes, "African Americans, who saw their own suffering through the biblical Jubilee of emancipation, could celebrate their vindication by God's 'terrible swift sword' but be forced by suffering under White supremacy and segregation (supported by evangelical Whites) once again to 'wait upon the Lord.'"²⁷⁸ As a result, Black congregants who before the war had worshiped in White churches began to separate from them, and denominations common in the North became popular in the post-war South.

Missionary Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal (AME), and AME Zion were the most common post-Civil War denominations among Black congregations in Person County, where they typically built churches in rural areas. Shady Hill Missionary Baptist Church was formed in 1868 near the Somerset community south of Roxboro. Organized by Louis Coley, the members included emancipated Black families who had previously attended White churches but "had a desire for their own place of worship and were proud to be a part of such a plan." The members constructed a brush arbor and performed baptisms in the Flat River and nearby creeks. Soon a frame church was constructed.²⁷⁹ In the Woodsdale community, Allen Chapel AME Church was

²⁷⁴ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 97.

²⁷⁵ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 91-93.

²⁷⁶ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 81-82.

²⁷⁷ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 68-69.

²⁷⁸ Mathews, "Religion"; Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*.

²⁷⁹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 96; *Black Churches and Ministers* Binder, Person County Museum of History (PCMH), Roxboro, North Carolina.

established in 1872. The congregation constructed a log church building and Reverend Shedrick Jones became the first permanent pastor in 1876. The church is named for Richard Allen, who is credited with forming the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1816 and served as its first bishop.²⁸⁰ Hyco Zion Baptist Church began with a group of enslaved African Americans who gathered to worship in a log cabin in the Olive Hill area northwest of Roxboro, and in 1890 they constructed a church.²⁸¹ Quinn's Chapel AME Church formed in 1883 and built a frame church just south of Roxboro.²⁸² Allen Chapel, Quinn's Chapel, Bailey's Chapel were initially part of the same circuit; Allen's Chapel was the first Black church in Person County to hold weekly worship services while the others remained circuit churches.

Black Baptist congregations also became common in Person County. In Roxboro, Pleasant Grove Baptist Church was established in 1864 by prominent families including Blackwells, Cates, Harrises, Hesters, Norwoods, Satterfields, and others. They worshipped in each other's homes until they built a sanctuary about four miles northwest of Roxboro. This building was replaced with a brick building on South Main Street in 1872, and it was renamed First Baptist Church (PR0321) in 1898, by which time there were over two hundred members.²⁸³ Cedar Grove Baptist Church formed east of Roxboro in 1865. Members worshiped in a log building under the leadership of Reverend William Toler and eventually built a frame church on Cedar Grove Church Road.²⁸⁴ Northeast of Roxboro, Jones Chapel Baptist Church (PR0474) was established in 1881. In 1886, Eliza and Watkins Jones conveyed land to the trustees and a one-story, gable-front frame building was constructed around 1900.²⁸⁵ West of Hurdle Mills, near the turn of the twentieth century, the Reverend J. Wiley Bradsher gathered a congregation that became Union Grove Baptist Church, eventually one of the largest Black congregations in the county.²⁸⁶

Even as Black congregants were leaving White churches, a measure of White paternalism persisted. The formation of Lawson Chapel Baptist Church (PR0500) in northeast Person County demonstrates this relationship between White and Black churches in the post-Civil War era. According to oral tradition, Annis Lawson received

²⁸⁰ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 63.

²⁸¹ Madeline Hall Eaker, ed., *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II* (Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Company and the Person County Historical Society, 1983), 30-31.

²⁸² Black Churches and Ministers Binder, PCMH.

²⁸³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 73.

²⁸⁴ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 69-70.

²⁸⁵ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 76-77; In the 1950s, the church was rotated to face Barnette Tingen Road and a number of expansions and improvements were made, including the application of brick veneer and the addition of Sunday School rooms, restrooms, a baptismal pool, and an organ.

²⁸⁶ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 98; Black Churches and Ministers Binder, PCMH.

land from her former enslaver, Billy Henry Lawson, to establish a church in 1872. Black members of the nearby White Bethel Hill Baptist and Mill Creek Baptist churches, as well as members of the historically Black Cedar Grove Baptist Church, came together to organize and baptize the new members of Lawson Chapel. While the first pastor, Reverend Dr. L.C. Ragland, was White, the church was later led by African American clergy.²⁸⁷ Like the churches erected by White congregations in the late nineteenth century, the nineteenth-century building erected by Lawson Chapel Baptist Church, as well as all of the other churches built by Black congregations prior to 1900 have been replaced, except for those constructed by First Baptist church in Roxboro and Jones Chapel Baptist Church.

Sappony Schools and Churches

The earliest schools and churches attended by the Sappony in Person County were in Bethel Hill, although the first organized church in the Sappony community was a meetinghouse built just north of the Virginia line around 1850. It was known as Christ Church and later renamed Mayo Chapel. The land on which it stood was officially donated to the church in 1878 by Williams Epps with the stipulation that the property be used for community education and religious purposes only. A new church building known as Christ Church at Mayo Chapel was later constructed on the site and included an informal school.²⁸⁸

In the late nineteenth century, some Sappony attended the informal school at Mayo Chapel while others attended school in Bethel Hill. With assistance from the Bethel Hill community, the county agreed to establish a school for Sappony children in High Plains and offered to pay a teacher's salary if the community members constructed the building. Land and materials were donated by Green Martin, Person County officials provided the windows, and the High Plains School (PR0339; demolished) was completed in 1888 on the North Carolina side of the High Plains community. In the 1890s, the school was moved to land donated by Ditrion and Mary Epps that was closer to the center of the community.²⁸⁹

Religious Architecture

Nineteenth-century churches in Person County followed the same rectangular forms utilized for residential buildings, though typically with the gable end forming the façade, an arrangement that allowed entrances in the gable end to feed into an aisled nave interior plan. Seven of the nine documented nineteenth-century churches, all

²⁸⁷ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 78-79.

²⁸⁸ Woodard, et. al., "The High Plains Sappony," 35-37.

²⁸⁹ Woodard, et. al., "The High Plains Sappony," 37.

built after the Civil War, were constructed for Baptist or Primitive Baptist congregations, both of whom favored this simple front-gabled form. Primitive Baptists, who believed that the focus should not be on material possessions or iconography, utilized the unadorned, front-gabled form well into the twentieth century.²⁹⁰

Greek Revival Style

The pedimented front of the classical Greek temple inspired the design of many nineteenth-century churches. Person County's earliest front-gabled churches of the period were local, or vernacular, interpretations of the popular mid-nineteenth-century style, featuring front gables with either partial returns or full pediments, double-hung wood-sash windows that often were quite large, double-leaf entrances, plain weatherboards, and modest Greek Revival-style detailing. Many of these buildings were updated over time with vinyl siding, entrance vestibule additions, rear additions, and, in some cases, replacement windows.

In its simplicity, the ca. 1875 Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church (PR0472) just off US 501 north of Roxboro is typical of the county's nineteenth-century religious buildings. It retains large nine-over-nine windows and a delicate sawn rakeboard in the front gable. A gabled, late-twentieth-century addition on the main façade contains the original, relocated classical entrance surround of fluted piers rising to a segmental arch embracing a multi-paned transom. In its original square, hip-roofed form, the ca. 1865 Ephesus Baptist Church (PR0027) on Ephesus Church Road, was an anomaly. Despite its dramatic alterations that transformed it to a gable-front building with multiple additions, it retains large nine-over-nine wood-sash windows on the side elevations and simple carved, Greek Revival-style brackets along the roofline.

In some instances, the form of a church was altered with the addition of a side-gabled wing extending from the rear gable or two small, gabled wings projecting from the rear of the side elevations, resulting in a T-plan or cruciform shape that provided space for a storage room or a vestry. The former configuration is seen at the front-gabled ca. 1888 Surl Primitive Baptist Church (PR0401) on Oxford Road east of Roxboro, four bays deep with four-over-four windows and no ornament. Sometimes, remodeling retained the building's original form and applied new exterior materials. The 1888 Clement Baptist Church (PR0571) on NC 49 southwest of Roxboro was altered in the mid-twentieth century with the addition of brick veneer and Colonial Revival-style elements including a pedimented entrance portico. Wheeler's Primitive Baptist church

²⁹⁰ Caitlin Sylvester, et al., "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard (US 158-501) from South of US 158 to SR 1601 (North Main Street), Person County, North Carolina," North Carolina Department of Transportation Environmental Analysis Unit, April 2020, 157.

(PR0640) in southeast Person County, built ca. 1848, also was brick-veneered in the mid-twentieth century and enlarged slightly with the addition of a small vestibule. Dorothea Lange's 1939 photos of the church depict a simple, rectangular building with a weatherboard exterior and a symmetrical front-gabled façade with two entrances, each with a double-leaf, paneled door under a multi-light transom. The large six-over-six windows on the side elevations remain in place but original trim has been obscured by the veneer.²⁹¹

Interiors were equally restrained in their finishes, featuring wood floors; flush or paneled wainscot; wide, flush sheathing on the upper part of the walls; and molded, mitered window and door surrounds. The altar, located in the rear gable, was often set on a raised dais. Interiors were frequently modified in the twentieth century with the installation of carpet, replacement of pews, and other material alterations.

Gothic Revival Style

By 1870, the Gothic Revival style began supplanting the Greek Revival as the preferred style for religious architecture in the county. Popular nationwide beginning about 1840, the style is characterized by steeply pitched gabled roofs, pointed-arch windows, and decorative sawn rakeboards or bargeboards. Gothic Revival-style churches often included corner towers and pointed-arch transoms over the entrances. High-style Gothic Revival-style churches also included buttresses and castellated battlements, but these were stylized decorations "rather than the accurate interpretations of Gothic principles of construction."²⁹²

Like the Italianate and Queen Anne styles, the Gothic Revival style, also part of the Romantic movement, was a reaction to the strict symmetry and formality of the Greek Revival style. All three styles were popularized by pattern books and the ready availability of sawn details. Thanks to "newly-developed machine-powered tools such as scroll and jig saws, fancy gingerbread ornament became inexpensive enough that middle-class farmers were able to dress up their farmhouses."²⁹³

In contrast to the other Romantic movement styles, the Gothic Revival was rarely utilized for residential architecture in North Carolina (there are no known Gothic Revival-style houses in Person County), yet the style became so widely accepted as appropriate for religious architecture that, "even the simplest gable-front rural church

²⁹¹ *Dorothea Lange Digital Archive*, Oakland Museum of California, <https://dorothealange.museumca.org>; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 99-100; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 54-57.

²⁹² Federal Writers' Project, *North Carolina*, 130.

²⁹³ Little-Stokes, *Caswell County*, 35.

constructed from the mid-nineteenth century on was likely to have triangular heads over the windows in the faintest possible reflection of the cathedrals of medieval Europe.”²⁹⁴

Three late-nineteenth-century churches in the county display elements of the Gothic Revival style. The earliest is the 1888 Mt. Tirzah United Methodist Church (PR0797) on Surl Mt. Tirzah Road, a front-gabled church that was built with triple-hung, four-light sash windows within peaked surrounds. The original two entrances featuring paired six-panel doors beneath two-light, segmental-arch transoms were relocated to the later gabled entrance bay. The interior retains flush wood sheathing on the walls and louvered shutters at the windows.

The other two Gothic Revival-style churches were built for African American congregations, who tended to favor the symbolism of uplift provided by pointed gables and arches that were thought to draw the eye upward toward the heavens, in contrast to the Greek Revival and other traditional, formal styles that symbolized centuries of repression in the Black community. The 1889 Pine Hill Primitive Baptist Church (PR0298) on Charlie Monk Road illustrates the rural interpretation of the Gothic Revival style by a Black congregation. It features the same rectangular gable-front form utilized for most churches of the era, here distinguished by small triangular transoms at the doors and pointed-arch windows. In Roxboro, the former First Baptist Church (PR0321) at 603 South Main Street was constructed about 1890 with pointed-arch windows as well as square towers with steeply pitched hip roofs flanking the façade. Square towers emerged as a defining characteristic of the Gothic Revival style. When two towers were constructed to flank the front-gabled façade, there were often subtle differences in height or detail as seen here. Historian Catherine Bishir notes that, “combinations of two unequal towers were familiar throughout nineteenth-century Gothic Revival church architecture, but the form was especially strong among black congregations.”²⁹⁵

The Gothic Revival style remained popular for churches of all denominations in locations both rural and urban well into the mid-twentieth century, when the stylistic elements were often mixed with classical detailing. The style’s character-defining elements were used so universally that the elements themselves—“a pointed arch, a triangular headed door or window, a tower—became standard indicators of a church.”²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴ Southern, “The I-House,” 79.

²⁹⁵ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 375-376.

²⁹⁶ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 370-371.

RURAL PERSON COUNTY IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (1900 – CA. 1950)

Expansion of Transportation Networks

Perhaps the greatest influence on early twentieth-century development in Person County was the expansion of its transportation networks. Throughout the nineteenth century, growth in the county had been limited by a lack of good roads, railroads, and navigable waterways. The completion of the Lynchburg & Durham Railroad in 1890 resulted in the establishment of depots in crossroads communities throughout the county and improved access to markets, while the early twentieth-century Good Roads Movement led to improved road conditions and construction of highways. These factors, together with the greater availability of automobiles and farm technology, facilitated substantial growth and prosperity in agriculture, industry, and commerce in the county.

The Lynchburg & Durham Railroad was completed to Roxboro in 1890 and merged in 1896 with the Norfolk & Western Railroad under the new name of the Norfolk, Lynchburg, & Durham (NL&D) Railroad. In addition to the passenger and freight depots in Roxboro, depots were constructed in crossroads communities along the rail route. Some were built when the railroad first arrived, but most of the rural depots were built in the early twentieth century. By 1904, depots were located at Mt. Tirzah, Helena, and Pick (now Somerset), followed by Jalong before 1911; none remain standing.²⁹⁷ These depots facilitated the movement of both passengers and freight from even the most remote areas of the county into the commercial and industrial centers of Person, Durham, and Halifax (Virginia) Counties.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the need for good roads quickly outpaced the desire for expanded railroad networks. The construction of roads and highways was initially the responsibility of individual counties, but lack of funding and inter-county organization hindered their efforts. The North Carolina State Highway Commission was established in 1915, and the Federal Highway Act was passed by Congress the following year. In 1917, the State Highway Commission began receiving funds provided by the Federal Highway Act and supplemented by state automobile license fees to build roads and bridges. Improvements came slowly until the 1921 passage of the North Carolina Highway Act that initiated the state's Good Roads Movement under Governor Cameron Morrison. Overseen by Harriet Morehead Berry, the Secretary of

²⁹⁷ J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Lynchburg & Durham Railroad," https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_lynchburg_durham.html.

the North Carolina Good Roads Association who quickly became known as the Mother of Good Roads, this legislation enlarged the State Highway Commission, called for constructing paved roads to connect county seats throughout the state, and authorized \$50 million for highway construction statewide.²⁹⁸

By 1930, four highways had been completed in Person County, each passing through Roxboro: NC Highway 55 connecting Durham to South Boston, Virginia, via Roxboro; NC Highway 57 connecting Oxford to Milton via Roxboro; NC Highway 65 from Roxboro to Leasburg; and NC Highway 144 from Roxboro to Burlington.²⁹⁹ By 1936, this network had expanded and sections had been incorporated into federal highways: NC Highway 55 had become US Highway 501; NC Highways 57 east of Roxboro and NC Highway 65 west of Roxboro had become US Highway 158; and NC Highway 144 had been extended north from Roxboro to Virgilina, Virginia. A new section of NC Highway 57 had been constructed, connecting Roxboro to Durham via Hurdle Mills.³⁰⁰ These highways continue to form the primary road network in the county, with changes limited to the renumbering of NC Highway 144 to NC Highway 49, and NC Highway 57 to NC Highway 157.³⁰¹

The numerous small streams throughout Person County necessitated the construction of bridges and tunnels for both roads and railroads. One of the earliest bridge types was the arch bridge, which supported weight crossing the deck of the bridge by distributing the compression forces to either end. Stone and brick were the most common load-bearing building materials for this type of bridge, as they are strong under compression but not tension. The primary engineering challenge with arch bridges is supporting the ends of the bridge so it doesn't collapse under the horizontal thrust caused when weight is added to the deck. In cases where the bridge spans a canyon or similar geographical feature, the walls of the canyon itself support the bridge, this being the most common type among brick or stone bridges.³⁰² Early tunnels utilized the same engineering concepts, using an arched vault to distribute the weight above the tunnel. In the far north central part of the county, a railroad bridge (PR0441) on a brick tunnel was constructed about 1920 to support a line of the NL&D Railroad as it extended above a

²⁹⁸ Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1954, Revised 1963), 554, 565-566.

²⁹⁹ North Carolina State Highway Commission, "North Carolina County Road Survey of Person County," 1929, North Carolina Maps, Digital Collections Repository, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH).

³⁰⁰ North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission, "North Carolina Road Survey of Person County," 1936, North Carolina Maps, UNC-CH.

³⁰¹ North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission, "Person County," 1952, North Carolina Maps, UNC-CH.

³⁰² Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 403-405.

tributary of the Hyco River.³⁰³ The round-arch tunnel features a brick vault extending approximately fifteen feet from the creek below. The lower portion of the vault has been covered with concrete to waterproof the structure. The embankments appear to be stacked stone covered with concrete.

As bridge spans and load weights increased, the use of arch or beam bridges became impractical as they required increasingly massive support systems. Instead, truss bridges became common in the late nineteenth century because their metal triangular lacework systems support more weight over longer spans with less material.³⁰⁴ The arrangement of the side trusses and position of the bridge deck in relation to the trusses define the type of truss bridge. Historic truss bridges in Person County utilize Pratt trusses, which rely on interlacing vertical and diagonal chords that support weight on the deck by distributing compression and tension forces down into the foundations; and the pony truss, commonly used for short spans and having the side trusses, unconnected at the top, extending above the deck. The Pratt truss can be built in a full slope or half-hip, the latter lacking the last vertical chord on each end.³⁰⁵ The only extant truss bridge in the county is the ca. 1915 Truss Bridge No.35 (PR0290), which spans the South Flat River in the southwestern part of the county. Truss bridges were likely once common and replaced as bridge technology has advanced, though numbers and locations are not known. Documentation by the Historic American Engineering Record notes that the bridge was built by the Champion Bridge Company of Wilmington, Ohio, and is a pin-connected, half-hip Pratt pony truss bridge.³⁰⁶

Twentieth-Century Agriculture

As in the nineteenth century, the early twentieth-century economy of rural Person County remained centered on agriculture with bright leaf tobacco remaining the primary cash crop.³⁰⁷ North Carolina ranked second in the country behind Kentucky for tobacco production in 1900, producing over 127 million pounds of tobacco, just

³⁰³ "North Carolina Railroads - Lynchburg & Durham Railroad" https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_lynchburg_durham.html; Norwood Walker, "Tunnel Creek Vineyards Offers a Place for All," *Hyco Lake Magazine*, September 17, 2019, <https://hycolakemagazine.com/tunnel-creek-vineyards/>; Tunnel Creek Vineyards, "About Us," *Tunnel Creek Vineyards*, <https://tunnelcreekvineyards.com/our-story/>.

³⁰⁴ Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 396-399.

³⁰⁵ Don Friedman, "Whether You Want to or Not," *Old Structures Engineering*, September 16, 2022, <https://oldstructures.com/2022/09/16/whether-you-want-to-or-not/>; Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 396-399.

³⁰⁶ The Champion Bridge Company was established in 1875 as a specialized truss bridge builder that remains in operation today as Champion Steel Works. "Pin-connected" means the joints are connected by steel pins rather than bolts or welding.

³⁰⁷ Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1900, Census Reports Volume VI: Agriculture Part II: Crops and Irrigation, Section VI: Miscellaneous Crops (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), 48-49.

under fifteen percent of the nation's total that year.³⁰⁸ Eighty-six of the state's one hundred counties cultivated tobacco at that time, and Person County ranked tenth among them in production.³⁰⁹ Between 1900 and 1920, the number of tobacco farms in North Carolina nearly doubled, as did production, which grew from nearly 139 million pounds in 1900 to over 280 million pounds in 1920, of which Person County contributed over 6.8 million pounds.³¹⁰

As the number of tobacco farms increased at the turn of the twentieth century, they tended to be relatively small due to the labor-intensive nature of tobacco cultivation. Between 1890 and 1900, the number of farms in the state had increased by more than twenty-five percent while the acreage in farmland remained stable, indicating that existing farms were being subdivided rather than additional land being dedicated to farming.³¹¹ In 1900, the average farm in North Carolina was about one hundred acres, but dropped to seventy-four acres by 1920.³¹² Person County's statistics were slightly above the statewide trends, with an average farm size of about 116 acres in 1900, dropping to 82 acres by 1920.³¹³ In 1920, the rate of increase in the number of farms slowed to just about six percent and the total acreage of farmland in the state started to decrease, a trend that accelerated in the 1930s as a result of the Great Depression.³¹⁴

Substantial racial disparities in farm size are evident in the twentieth century. In the 1900 census reports, "farms of white farmers" averaged about 116 acres, with most between 50 and 100 acres, while "farms of Black farmers" averaged only about 53 acres, with most between 20 and 50 acres.³¹⁵ These trends remained steady through 1920.³¹⁶

Tenant Farming

Tenant farming, in all its various forms and types, characterized early twentieth-century farming, especially in the South. The 1920 census recognized the importance and specificity of Southern tenancy, recording two types of tenancy in the North and

³⁰⁸ Twelfth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 528.

³⁰⁹ Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States. Census Bulletin No. 178: Agriculture, North Carolina (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), 12.

³¹⁰ Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, Volume V: Agriculture, General Report and Analytical Tables (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1922), 833.

³¹¹ Fourteenth Census, Volume V, 41.

³¹² Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1900, Census Reports Volume V: Agriculture Part I: Farms, Live Stock, and Animal Products, Section V: General Tables, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), 2-3; Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 232.

³¹³ Twelfth Census, Volume V, Part I, Section V: General Tables, 110-111.; Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 238.

³¹⁴ Twelfth Census, Volume V, Part I, Section V: General Tables, 2-3.

³¹⁵ Twelfth Census, Volume V, Part I, Section V: General Tables, 2-3.

³¹⁶ Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 232.

West but five types in the South. Though there are local adaptations and the details of these arrangements varied from one farm to another, tenancy generally refers to any farmer who pays rent in cash, farm products, or both. According to the 1920 census, the five types of tenants in the South were share tenants, who were given supplies and land but provided their own work animals, then paid rent with a certain share of their annual product; sharecroppers, who had a similar arrangement but work animals were provided by the property owner; standing renters, who paid a fixed amount of farm product rather than a percentage of that year's yield; cash tenants, who paid rent in cash, either per acre or for the full farm; and share-cash tenants, who paid rent partly in cash and partly from the annual production of the land.³¹⁷

A more detailed examination of tenancy in the South ties the trend to ongoing racial discrimination and the legacy of slavery that kept tenants in a cycle of poverty and debt. Following emancipation, formerly enslaved Black Southerners lacked the financial means to purchase land, animals, seed, or other supplies to establish farms. As a result, most entered into some type of rental agreement through which the landowner provided the necessary materials at the start of the season and the renter planted and harvested the crops and/or raised the livestock and then paid the landowner for rent and supplies either through the sale of the farm products or with a share of the products themselves. Rarely was the production of the year sufficient to pay all the renter's debts, which then carried over to the next year, effectively forcing the renter to continue to work the land in the hope of one day paying off what was owed to the landowner."³¹⁸

An unintended consequence of farm tenancy was a shift from balanced farming – which included subsistence farming, cash crops, and cover crops – to a cash crop monoculture.³¹⁹ Historian Catherine Bishir explains that sharecroppers:

...were drawn into a spiral of debt and cash-crop production that increased dependence on a single money crop—most often cotton or tobacco—and reduced diversified, self-sufficient agriculture. Farm families found their livelihoods increasingly at the mercy of the erratic national and international markets and the costs of seed and fertilizer, railroad transportation, and credit.³²⁰

³¹⁷ Fourteenth Census, Volume V, 121-122; Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 85; Gordon, *A Life Beyond Limits*, 266.

³¹⁸ K. Todd Johnson, "Crop Lien System," NCpedia, State Library of North Carolina, 2006, revised 2025, <https://www.ncpedia.org/crop-lien-system>.

³¹⁹ Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 477.

³²⁰ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 325.

As tenants fell deeper into debt, they attempted to maximize profits by focusing on a single cash crop, producing less for their own use, failing to rotate or rest fields, and quickly exhausting soil.

Demographic differences in farm ownership show a clear pattern of Black poverty. In 1900, nearly 67 percent of White farmers in the state were owners or part owners of the land they farmed. It was the opposite among Black farmers, of whom only 32 percent owned their farm in whole or in part.³²¹ Person County illustrated these statewide trends in 1900 when about 51 percent of White farmers owned their farm in whole or in part compared to just 17 percent of Black farmers.³²² By 1920, figures had changed little in the state.³²³ In Person County, however, Black farm ownership increased significantly and in 1920 about 40 percent of Black farmers owned the land they worked.³²⁴

Tenancy across the state increased among both White and Black farmers in the years leading up to the Great Depression. The change was less dramatic among Black farms, which were already disproportionately tenant-operated, than White farms; about 10 percent of White farmers lost ownership of their farms and became tenants, while only about three percent of Black farmers were impacted the same way between 1920 and 1930.³²⁵ Person County farmers appear to have experience greater impacts of the Great Depression than much of the state; about 20 percent of both White and Black farmers lost ownership and became tenants between 1920 and 1930.³²⁶ Among farm tenants, poverty affected Blacks and Whites similarly, as over three-fourths of all tenants were in a sharecropping arrangement.³²⁷

Agricultural Extension Service

Established in 1914, the Agricultural Extension Service played an important role in farm recovery during and after the Great Depression. The Extension Service employed a farm agent who was assigned to Person County and taught farmers diversified farming along with new methods of marketing, fertilizing, harvesting, and soil conservation. Initially, many farmers doubted that the skills of the farm agent exceeded their own

³²¹ Twelfth Census, Volume V, Part 1, Section V: General Tables, 12.

³²² Twelfth Census, Volume V, Part 1, Section V: General Tables, 110-111.

³²³ Fourteenth Census, Volume V, 201; Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 232.

³²⁴ Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 238; Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Volume II: Agriculture, Part 2: The Southern States (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1932), 368.

³²⁵ Fourteenth Census, Volume V, 201; Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 232; Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 364.

³²⁶ Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 238; Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 368.

³²⁷ Fourteenth Census, Volume V, 201.

and some farmers even ironically “told some of the early agents that they had worn out two farms already, and hence had the necessary experience to justify the allegation that he knew more than the white-collared agent knew about farming.”³²⁸ “We wish every one [sic] would remember,” implored the editors of *The Roxboro Courier* to its readers, “that [the Agricultural Extension Service agent] knows, that he comes with practical knowledge and not theories, that he is here for the purpose of helping.”³²⁹

To build trust in the community, agents sought farmers willing to host “field meetings” and dedicate an acre of crops for the demonstration of new methods. A field meeting at the time of planting served to give instructions on the new method, while another field meeting at harvest time invited the same farmers to see the results of that method to compare with their own. As the program grew, numerous farms would be selected annually, each to demonstrate a different project such as corn, legume, or tobacco cultivation; dairy cattle or poultry husbandry; terracing or horticulture; or club work or marketing. By the mid-1930s, about thirty entire farms participated annually to demonstrate multiple projects.³³⁰

Person County’s first full-time farm agent, F.A. Brown, began work in 1915. He organized Farmers Clubs, held monthly meetings of farmers, published regular advice columns in the local newspaper, and held weekly business hours in Roxboro.³³¹ Because many Person County farmers grew only tobacco and purchased subsistence goods elsewhere, one of the farm agent’s first programs was diversification. He reported in 1917 that “North Carolina spent \$30,000,000 for meat and provisions last year and Person County spent her part.” The Agent noted the rising costs of staples like meat and flour, concluding “it looks like farmers had better change their method of farming.” He went on to acknowledge the difficulty of changing habits, but admonished, “A farmer ought to be ashamed to have to buy any of his home supplies when he can grow them so much cheaper than he can buy them.”³³² By the 1920s, Person County had diversified farm production, and most farms were growing grains and vegetables in addition to tobacco, as well as raising beef and dairy cattle, chickens, hogs, and sheep.³³³

In the late 1920s, farm agents began working to improve livestock production by encouraging farmers to invest in purebred cattle. In 1928 and 1929, breeders of Jersey cattle sponsored auctions of purebred bulls and heifers brought into North Carolina

³²⁸ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 33.

³²⁹ *The Roxboro Courier*, July 28, 1915, Newspapers.com.

³³⁰ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 33-34.

³³¹ *The Roxboro Courier*, 1915-1917, Newspapers.com.

³³² “County Demonstrator’s Letter,” *The Roxboro Courier*, February 28, 1917, Newspapers.com.

³³³ Fourteenth Census, Volume IV; Fourteenth Census, Volume V.

from other states. Over the following decade, these cattle produced hundreds of registered purebred offspring on Person County farms. Better stock along with improvements to pastures resulted in greater production of milk and butter. Similar efforts were made to improve the quality of poultry, including hosting poultry shows, utilizing culling methods, and encouraging the construction of better poultry houses by utilizing standard designs provided by the Extension office in Raleigh. Farm agents also advocated the use of self-feeders for hogs, which decreased the costs of raising hogs and in turn increased profits.

Home demonstration agents were the counterpart to the farm agents. The Department of Agriculture and the Person County Board of Education funded the first full-time home demonstration agent for the county in 1916. "Her work will be to organize our girls into canning clubs who will learn to can some vegetables and fruits of the farm," the *Roxboro Courier* reported, "and to organize our women into Home Demonstration Clubs."³³⁴ Agents taught women canning techniques that prevented waste of farm products, improved the family's diet in the winter months, and provided another source of income through the sale of canned goods. The use of modern conveniences was also demonstrated, including the fireless cooker, the iceless refrigerator, the furniture mop, and the roller tray. Girls learned about growing vegetables for home use, canning, and sewing aprons.³³⁵

The home demonstration agent initially was met with the same skepticism as the farm agent had, and the newspaper again encouraged communities to be open minded to the agent's advice. "Don't go out prejudiced," the editors warned, "believing that you have been cooking longer than she and consequently know more about these things than she does. Remember, she has made the subject a study."³³⁶ The first clubs formed at Hurdle Mills and Bethel Hill, each with a Canning Club for girls and a Home Demonstration Club for women.³³⁷ By the end of 1916, the newspaper praised the work of both the home and farm agents, saying "we consider these two workers the most valuable assets which has been made in the County in many years."³³⁸

³³⁴ "A New Interest," *The Roxboro Courier*, November 8, 1916, Newspapers.com.

³³⁵ Mary E. Spurgeon, "Home Demonstration Work in Person County," *The Roxboro Courier*, January 31, 1917, Newspapers.com; Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries*, 488-489. Note: The roller tray was a deep crate or wooden box mounted on casters to reduce physical labor by reducing trips between appliances or rooms. For example, dishes could be loaded into a roller tray and taken from the dining room to the kitchen in one trip, rather than several trips carrying dishes by hand.

³³⁶ "Home Demonstration Work," *The Roxboro Courier*, December 13, 1916, Newspapers.com.

³³⁷ Mary E. Spurgeon, "Home Demonstration Work in Person County," *The Roxboro Courier*, January 31, 1917, Newspapers.com.

³³⁸ "Home Demonstration Work."

Though Black farm agents were appointed in some areas of North Carolina as early as 1910, even predating the formation of the state's extension service, Person County's farm and home agents initially served both White and Black farm families in the county. In the mid-1930s, Charles J. Ford was appointed Person County's first Negro farm agent, followed by the first Negro home agent, Annie M. Tuck, around 1941. Their programs were similar to their White counterparts, including meetings and demonstrations focused on diversified agriculture, terracing to prevent soil erosion, the use of fertilizers, home canning, formation of curb markets, and youth 4-H clubs. In 1941, Ford and Tuck estimated that 950 of the 1,045 Black farm families in the county had been directly impacted by their programs.³³⁹ White and Black extension agents remained segregated in the county well into the 1960s.

The Great Depression and the New Deal

Farm families, both White and Black, were impacted by the Great Depression, with many going deeply into debt or losing their farms entirely. As photographer Dorothea Lange traveled throughout North Carolina in the 1930s, one farmer told her that he “‘did pretty well last year’—that is, he came out just about even.”³⁴⁰ As a result, farm tenancy increased dramatically during the Depression years. In 1900, there were 93,008 tenant farms in the state, but by 1930 that number had grown to 137,615. Conversely, the number of owner-operated farms peaked at over 154,000 in 1925, then dropped to 141,445 in 1930.³⁴¹ The federal Works Progress Administration reported in 1939, “One of the most serious economic and social problems with which North Carolina has to deal is farm tenancy. Almost half of the farms in the State are operated by tenants who have little chance for farm ownership.”³⁴²

During the Depression, many farmers took jobs away from the farm because they were no longer able to make a living through agriculture alone. The high costs of supplies and labor, low market prices, and acreage reduction programs resulted in acreage being taken out of production. Statewide, farms dropped from an average 74 acres in 1920 to 65 acres in 1930, and in Person County, average farm size dropped from 82 acres in 1920 to 65 acres in 1930.³⁴³ According to social scientist Margaret Jarmon Hagood, farmers supplemented farm income by working for “the WPA [federal Works Progress

³³⁹ Annie M. Tuck and Charles J. Ford, “Combined Annual Report of County Extension Workers,” Person County, 1942, North Carolina State University Libraries Rare & Unique Digital Collections, <https://d.lib.ncsu.edu/collections>.

³⁴⁰ Spirn, *Daring to Look*, 93.

³⁴¹ Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 354.

³⁴² WPA, *Guide to the Old North State*, 62.

³⁴³ Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 356; Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 238; Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 360.

Administration], or by working in a filling station on Saturdays, or running a grain mill during the winter, going to Canada to cure tobacco after his own crop was housed, hauling tobacco to market, driving a meat truck, doing farm work for a neighbor, or hunting and trapping in the winter.”³⁴⁴ Sometimes children contributed to the family income by taking jobs at mills, other local businesses, or doing seasonal tasks.³⁴⁵ One woman on a North Carolina farm told Lange, “If we come out even with all debts paid, we don’t complain, and if we have enough money to last till about March, we say we done well.”³⁴⁶

One of the causes of Depression-era poverty among farm families in North Carolina was depressed prices on tobacco. The value of tobacco in North Carolina had increased dramatically in the early decades of the twentieth century, bringing about \$62 per acre in 1900 and peaking at about \$330 per acre in 1920.³⁴⁷ Tobacco production continued to increase, with over 454 million pounds reported statewide in 1930, of which over nine million pounds were produced in Person County.³⁴⁸ In many markets, increased production can push down prices, but this was not the case for tobacco due to the increasing demand for it. Nevertheless, demand decreased during the Depression, leading to a surplus of supply and plummeting prices for the raw product. Person County native James Earl Hester recalls that during the Depression years, “some tobacco was being passed on the warehouse floor without a bid, and some other piles were bringing seventy-five cents for a hundred pounds.”³⁴⁹

In an effort to curb overproduction and improve prices, the federal government passed the Agricultural Adjustment Act in 1933, “To relieve the existing national economic emergency by increasing agricultural purchasing power, to raise revenue for extraordinary expenses incurred by reason of such emergency, to provide emergency relief with respect to the agricultural indebtedness. . . and for other purposes.”³⁵⁰ The Act gave the Secretary of Agriculture authority to enter into agreements with farmers to reduce acreage and production of a crop, to work with purchasers and processors of raw products with regard to prices, and to levy processing taxes equal to the difference between the current market price and the fair market value of agricultural products. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) was established, funded by the

³⁴⁴ Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 82.

³⁴⁵ Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 84.

³⁴⁶ Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 83.

³⁴⁷ Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part II, 230.

³⁴⁸ Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 354, 399; Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 354, 399.; Fifteenth Census, Volume II, Part 2, 402.

³⁴⁹ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 163.

³⁵⁰ Seventy-Third Congress, “Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933: Pub. L. No. 73-10, 48 Stat. 31,” First Session, May 12, 1933.

processing taxes, to oversee the payment of subsidies to farmers who reduced production.³⁵¹ Corn, cotton, tobacco, rice, wheat, hogs, and dairy products were covered by the Act, which succeeded in decreasing production by about one-quarter between 1932 and 1933.

By 1935, the Act had succeeded and farm prices had increased 52 percent from the 1932 average.³⁵² The following year, however, the Act was declared unconstitutional after the legality of taxing processors to pay farmers was challenged by Hoosac Mills Corporation, a cotton processing company in New Bedford, Massachusetts, in *United States v. Butler*.³⁵³ The 1933 act was then replaced by the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, also known as the Agriculture Conservation Program (ACP), which served to “provide for the conservation of national soil resources and to provide an adequate and balanced flow of agricultural commodities in interstate and foreign commerce.”³⁵⁴ The new act was essentially the same as that of 1933 except that it provided for subsidies to farmers through direct federal funding rather than processing taxes.

Another important New Deal program was the Farm Credit Act of 1933, which established the Farm Credit Administration, now a unit of the present-day Department of Agriculture, to oversee a federal production-credit system. This system permitted the formation of cooperative district banks in identified federal land bank districts to provide short-term loans for farm production. Funded through the sale of short-term bonds, these banks offered loans specifically to cover the cost of a season’s production, rather than long-term capital costs such as mortgages. It operated as a “pay-as-you-go plan for agriculture”; loan terms were typically less than twelve months and meant to be paid off at the end of the production season for which the loan was made.³⁵⁵

In December 1933, the Hillsboro Production Credit Association (PCA) was incorporated in Orange County by county farm agents and representatives from Orange, Person, Alamance, Durham, Chatham, and Caswell Counties. From Person

³⁵¹ “Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933”; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 34; William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 493.

³⁵² Staci L. Gates, “Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933,” *Center for the Study of Federalism*, 2006, <https://federalism.org/encyclopedia/no-topic/agricultural-adjustment-act-of-1933/>.

³⁵³ *United States v. Butler et. al., Receivers of Hoosac Mills Corp.*, 297 U.S. 1, 56 S. Ct. 312, 80 L. Ed. 477 (1936).

³⁵⁴ Seventy-Fifth Congress, “Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938: Pub. L. No. 75-430, 52 Stat. 31,” Third Session, February 16, 1938; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 34.

³⁵⁵ Seventy-Third Congress, “Farm Credit Act of 1933: Pub. L. No. 73-75, 48 Stat. 257 (1933), First Session, June 16, 1933; Farm Credit Administration, “History of FCA,” <https://www.fca.gov/about/history-of-fca>; “Farm Credit Concern Formed at Hillsboro,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, December 22, 1933, Newspapers.com; “Loans to Farmers May Now Be Had,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, February 19, 1934, Newspapers.com.

County, Hubert Laws of Hurdle Mills was one of the three official incorporators.³⁵⁶ By February 1934, the bank began accepting loan applications, “making credit available for farmers by discounting their notes with Federal intermediate credit bank. . . . Loans are made for general agricultural purposes, including the producing and harvesting of crops; breeding, raising, and fattening of livestock; production of poultry and livestock products.”³⁵⁷ That year, the PCA made 433 loans in its six-county territory totaling \$73,000.³⁵⁸ Of these, forty loans totaling about \$9,000 were made to Person County farmers.³⁵⁹ The Hillsboro PCA was later consolidated with the Graham Production Credit Association, which now operates as AgSouth Farm Credit.

One of the key figures in the early years of the Hillsboro PCA was Person County native Claude T. Hall, who served as its first president. A tobacco farmer from the Bethel Hill area (PR0446), Hall had a long career in agricultural policy, holding many high-level positions from 1922 until his death in 1972. These included serving as a member of the NC Board of Agriculture from 1939 until his death in 1972; vice-chairman and director of Tobacco Associates from 1947 until 1972; and a member of the State Grange Tobacco Committee, the organization having named him “Man of the Year in Service to Agriculture” in 1968; among other appointments.³⁶⁰ Hall was inducted into the North Carolina Agriculture Hall of Fame posthumously in 1977. “There is no segment of agriculture that has not felt the touch of Claude Hall’s influence in some way,” notes the Hall of Fame’s biography of Hall. “He is particularly remembered for his efforts on behalf of the farm credit system and the flue-cured tobacco program. Both stand as monuments to his more than fifty years of service.”³⁶¹ Hall was also active in the Bethel Hill community and Person County politics, active in the Roxboro Rotary Club, Person County Memorial Hospital, Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church, and Person County Board of Education.³⁶²

With the support of and training by farm and home demonstration agents in the 1930s, many farms in Person County increased productivity while lowering expenses, which, combined with the diversification that took place in the 1910s and 1920s, contributed

³⁵⁶ “Farm Credit Concern Formed at Hillsboro,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, December 22, 1933, Newspapers.com. Hillsboro was renamed *Hillsborough* in the late 1960s.

³⁵⁷ “Loan Bank for Farmers is Set Up for Businesses,” *The [Burlington] Daily Times-News*, January 31, 1934, Newspapers.com.

³⁵⁸ “Production Credit Outlook is Bright,” *Greensboro News and Record*, September 21, 1934, Newspapers.com.

³⁵⁹ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 34.

³⁶⁰ “N.C. Agriculturist Claude T. Hall Dies,” *[Raleigh] News & Observer*, October 3, 1972.

³⁶¹ North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, “Agricultural Hall of Fame – Claude Tipp Hall,” <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/public-affairs/ag-hall-fame/north-carolina-agricultural-hall-fame-inductees/agricultural-hall-fame-claude-tipp-hall>.

³⁶² “N.C. Agriculturist Claude T. Hall Dies”; “Agricultural Hall of Fame – Claude Tipp Hall.”

to the relatively rapid recovery of agriculture in the county as the Depression waned in the late 1930s.³⁶³ The Works Progress Administration reported in 1939, "Farming is more diversified in the Piedmont, where a large urban population in the industrial centers provides a good market."³⁶⁴ Person County's farmers were able to access local markets, not only in Roxboro, but also Oxford, Yanceyville, Durham, and South Boston, Virginia.

Census records show that by 1940, the number of farms, total acreage in farmland, and average farm size in Person County had recovered to pre-Depression figures, as well as demonstrating greater crop diversity.³⁶⁵ As average farm size grew, crop production increased substantially due to advances in farm technology and improved farming practices. Corn production increased from 314,000 bushels in 1920 to 414,000 bushels in 1940, Irish potatoes increased from 10,000 to 26,000 bushels, and sweet potatoes increased from 16,000 bushels to 30,000 bushels. Person County farmers also grew oats, wheat, sorghum, lespedeza hay, and other grains and grasses.³⁶⁶

Similarly, improved animal husbandry methods resulted in increased animal products. The 4,969 dairy cows reported in the county in 1920 produced 803,696 gallons of milk and 352,518 pounds of butter. In 1940, only 3,383 dairy cows were reported but production had increased to 1,439,974 gallons of milk and 461,109 pounds of butter. In 1920, 63,243 chickens produced 205,997 dozen eggs; the same number of chickens produced 286,955 dozen in 1940. The 219 sheep reported in 1920 produced 650 pounds of wool; just 162 sheep produced 826 pounds of wool in 1940.³⁶⁷

The importance of the farm and home demonstration agents continued after the end of the Great Depression. The farm agent introduced improved practices in tobacco cultivation, including the use of higher quality fertilizers, priming rather than cutting the whole stalk to harvest, and using terracing to prevent soil erosion.³⁶⁸ In 1938, twelve 4-H clubs for girls and eight home demonstration clubs for women were formed. There was also a curb market established in Roxboro, where farm women sold surplus vegetables, animal products, canned goods, and handmade items. Also in the late 1930s, the farm agent established a Farmers Exchange through which farmers could buy and

³⁶³ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 183-188.

³⁶⁴ WPA, *Guide to the Old North State*, 62.

³⁶⁵ Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture Volume I, Part 3: Statistics of Counties* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1942), 308, 317.

³⁶⁶ Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part 2, 248, 258; Sixteenth Census, *Agriculture Volume I, Part 3*, 351, 357, 365.

³⁶⁷ Fourteenth Census, Volume VI, Part 2, 248, 258; Sixteenth Census, *Agriculture Volume I, Part 3*, 351, 357, 365.

³⁶⁸ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 35.

sell surplus products, seeds, fertilizers, and animal feeds. All of these organizations endured for many years.

Forestry

Forestry has been an important aspect of North Carolina's economy and landscape since the late nineteenth century. The North Carolina Geological Survey (NCGS), later the Geological and Economic Survey, was established in 1891 to oversee geological survey, forestry, and other related agencies. With the appointment of a forestry specialist to the state's Agricultural Extension Service in 1918, farm agents throughout the state began to advocate for the management of forestry resources on farms, turning a largely ignored resource into another source of profits.³⁶⁹ By 1940, Person County farmers had over 128,500 acres of woodland maintained for the production of forest products, including "wood, lumber, railroad ties, etc., which the farmers cut in connection with their ordinary farming operations."³⁷⁰

Though the General Assembly authorized appointment of the first fire wardens for the state in 1915 and brought wooded farmland under the jurisdiction of the Department of Forestry in 1918, the legislature did not appropriate funds to protect forested public lands and farmland until 1921. The NCGS was expanded in 1925 and renamed the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, which included the Department of Forestry.³⁷¹ To protect valuable lumber resources, as well as private homes and property, the Department of Forestry focused its efforts on detection and prevention of wildfires by building forest fire lookout towers across the state starting in 1926, assisted in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Fire lookout towers were typically needed in mountainous or hilly areas of western and central North Carolina, where they were positioned on high ground to maximize visibility. Towers were situated far enough apart to cover large acreage of forest yet close enough to communicate with one another via radios. The towers were manned continuously until the late twentieth century. Today, only twenty-five of the more than two hundred towers built in North Carolina remain standing.³⁷² The ca. 1940 Tirzah Fire Tower (PR0395) in the southeastern part of the county is the only known

³⁶⁹ North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, "N.C. Forest Service – History of the N.C. Forest Service," <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/nc-forest-service/about/history>.

³⁷⁰ Twelfth Census, Volume VI, Part II, Section VII: Fruits, Nuts, and Forest Products, 616, 669; Sixteenth Census, Agriculture Volume I, Part 3, 308.

³⁷¹ Note: Since it was formed in 1925, the NC DCD was expanded and reorganized several times, now operating as the Department of Environmental Quality while the Department of Forestry has moved to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

³⁷² "North Carolina Officials Discuss Legacy of Fire Lookout Towers," Fox8 WGHP, May 1, 2023, <https://youtu.be/ccB6i6dz248?si=Ysfqd0uUzb3rtbGq>.

fire tower in Person County. The steel frame supporting a small lookout room with a hipped roof was a common form for its era.

Sappony Life in High Plains

Farms

The High Plains community, which straddles the North Carolina-Virginia line, included about 350 Sappony people and 75 families throughout much of the early twentieth century; about 250 Sappony lived on the North Carolina side.³⁷³ In both Person and Halifax (Virginia) Counties, the Sappony primarily farmed tobacco. As only about one-third of Sappony families owned their farms, most were engaged in some form of tenancy, usually sharecropping, and their “economic condition differed little from their poor White and Black counterparts.”³⁷⁴ Sappony member Lois Epps Jones recalled her childhood in the High Plains community in the early twentieth century: “I used to love sitting outside when my dad was curing tobacco. Naturally when we were working the tobacco we didn’t have all the modern things. My dad never had a tractor, never had a chainsaw. We were what you called the dirt farmers. We had two little mules.”³⁷⁵ Most families planted vegetable gardens, grew fruit orchards, and canned the excess produce; kept chickens, hogs, and cows; and grew corn and wheat to grind into meal for their own use.³⁷⁶

Religious Life

In 1945, the Sappony congregation of Christ Church at Mayo Chapel relocated to Person County and constructed Calvary Baptist Church (PR0338), which still serves as the center of the Sappony community in northeast Person County today. The building is a T-shaped, front-gabled church with a recently added portico and brick veneer, and it retains double-hung, round-arch, stained-glass windows and paneled wood doors with a fanlight transom.³⁷⁷

Racial Discrimination

For much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Sappony endured a unique brand of racial discrimination. “We Indians lived separate and apart,” recalled Lois Epps Jones. “We were set aside because of the color of our skin. We could not go

³⁷³ Buck Woodard, Danielle Moretti-Langholtz, and Stephanie Hasselbacher, “The High Plains Sappony of Person County, North Carolina and Halifax County, Virginia,” *The Commonwealth of Virginia and College of William and Mary*, July 2017, 39-40.

³⁷⁴ Woodard, et. al., “The High Plains Sappony,” 42.

³⁷⁵ David Cecelski, “Listening to History: Zan Epps’ Daughter,” *The News & Observer*, April 11, 1999, PCMH.

³⁷⁶ Woodard, et. al., “The High Plains Sappony,” 42-46.

³⁷⁷ Woodard, et. al., “The High Plains Sappony,” 35-37.

out and eat a meal in public. We could not go in the restaurants because they only had white and colored sections,” she explains. “We weren’t colored. We weren’t white. We were neither.”³⁷⁸ Even the Bureau of the Census failed to acknowledge the distinct heritage of Native American peoples. In the 1910 federal census, zero Native Americans were recorded in Person or Halifax (Virginia) Counties.

With the assistance of White allies in their community, especially the Mayo Chapel’s minister Reverend J.L. Beam and his colleague Reverend Dr. P.H. Fontaine, in 1911 the Sappony sought tribal recognition by the State of North Carolina, which would “solidify their separate Indian school system, including state funding. Moreover, the status would afford separate facilities for hospital care, mental health, incarceration, and any state-sponsored program.”³⁷⁹ The tribe was officially recognized as the Indians of Person County by the State of North Carolina in 1911, followed by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1913. In 1920, nearly two hundred Sappony were recorded in Person County by the U. S. Census, but the Sappony name was not formally recognized by the state until 2003.³⁸⁰

Farmsteads

Twentieth-century farmsteads constitute one of the largest categories of resources documented by the survey. The sheer number of intact farm complexes illustrates the dominance of agriculture, especially bright leaf tobacco, in the twentieth-century Person County economy. In contrast to extant nineteenth-century outbuildings that are almost exclusively related to tobacco production, those of the twentieth century also illustrate the increased agricultural diversification in Person County as farmers raised beef cattle, dairy cows, hogs, and chickens and planted a variety of field crops for subsistence and sale. The 1977 report on the survey of the Tar-Neuse River Basin by staff of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History notes the range of buildings necessary for a self-sustaining farm, including kitchens, smokehouses, dairies, chicken coops, granaries, corncribs, tobacco barns, packhouses, stables, and barns and state that the varied “farm complexes [are] representative of the agrarian economy that was the backbone of the Tar-Neuse region.”³⁸¹

Structures related to tobacco production were thoroughly analyzed in the chapter on Person County in the late nineteenth century. For this reason, they will receive only a cursory review here. Conversely, as the majority of extant domestic outbuildings and

³⁷⁸ Cecelski, “Zan Epps’ Daughter.”

³⁷⁹ Woodard, et. al., “The High Plains Sappony,” 39.

³⁸⁰ Woodard, et. al., “The High Plains Sappony,” 39-40; “Sappony History Timeline.”

³⁸¹ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 24-25.

livestock-related resources date to the twentieth century, those building types are described below. With the continued evolution of active farmsteads and minimal variation in building materials and construction methods throughout the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, definitive dating of most outbuildings is not possible. Most are assumed to have been erected in the early twentieth century, while others may date to the nineteenth century establishment of the farmstead.

Like those of the previous century, domestic outbuildings on twentieth-century farmsteads, including the smokehouse and washhouse; well and privy; gardens, flower houses, and arbors; and those related to domestic chicken and egg production were often loosely arranged in the rear yard of the house, while outbuildings related to the cultivation of crops and the raising of livestock were located closer to the farm fields. Social scientist Margaret Jarman Hagood noted in the 1930s that “functionally, the back yard is the juncture of field and home, the place where teams are hitched, plows and implements left, the dinner bell rang, chicken fed, cotton unloaded.”³⁸² She goes on to describe the back door as the main point of entry for both residents and visitors, a practice that is still common today. Linda Gordon, in her analysis of Dorothea Lange’s 1930s photos and field notes, expands on this use of the rear yard, commenting that “adding to the absence of a boundary between people and nature was the fact that so much of life’s work took place outside, not only the farming but also cooking, washing, mending, braiding hair, building, conversing, resting.”³⁸³ All of this took place in the rear and side yards of the house.

A notable number of highly intact Person County farmsteads illustrate both the breadth of building types and the typical arrangement of outbuildings, with outbuildings constructed from the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries. Among these is the George Preston and Virginia June Allen Farm (PR0629) on Snipes Road north of Hurdle Mills where a ca. 1895 I-house stands near the center of the complex. Behind the house, domestic outbuildings including a wellhouse, smokehouse, and two garages are arranged in a row and a chicken coop, egg house, and livestock barn are to their rear. A corn crib, shed, and livestock barn stand adjacent to the domestic outbuildings, at the edge of a field, and tobacco-related resources stand across from the house on the opposite side of the road. The outbuildings at the James Arthur Whitfield Farm (PR0635) on Union Grove Church Road west of Hurdle Mills are similarly arranged: the flower house, smokehouse, chicken house, grape arbor, and wellhouse/washhouse are close to the ca. 1898 two-story farmhouse; tobacco barns and

³⁸² Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, 95.

³⁸³ Gordon, *A Life Beyond Limits*, 262.

packhouses are farther away behind the house; and animal-related resources including two livestock barns, a granary, corn crib, wellhouse, and trough are located off to one side. The sprawling Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wright Jones Farm (PR0458) on Jones Road in the southwest corner of the county features a combined smokehouse/washhouse, a well, and a flower house in the rear yard of the ca. 1914 one-story, triple-A-roofed farmhouse. A dirt driveway continues past one side of the house to a tightly grouped machine shed, corn crib, livestock barn, milk house, and a packhouse. Nearby, a more diffuse collection includes tobacco curing barns and a second packhouse. Additional tobacco-related resources stand farther away from the house on a separate parcel. Collectively these farmsteads illustrate the practice of concentrating domestic outbuildings to the immediate rear of the house and arranging farm buildings related to tobacco or livestock in clusters closer to the farm fields.

The production of tobacco was highly labor intensive and required the labor of both the landowners and tenant farmers and their extended families, many of whom lived on-site. Tenant housing was constructed in a wide variety of forms but was universally simple in its design, without architectural embellishments of any kind. It was most often located to the rear of main house, set closer to the tobacco curing barns than the road. Domestic outbuildings including a wellhouse at a minimum and sometimes a smokehouse, small chicken house, and open shed or garage were clustered around the tenant house.

Conversely, multi-generation family housing was arranged close to the road, utilized popular building styles of the early and mid-twentieth century, and, depending on the size of the farm, each house may have included a full complement of outbuildings. The editor of local resident James Earl Hester's memoir described the family homeplace in the introduction as typical of the western part of the county: "a tiny farm carved from his grandparents' land—with three generations of immediate lineage living within walking distance."³⁸⁴ The presence of multi-generation farmsteads, common in most rural areas, is ubiquitous in Person County.

By the turn of the twentieth century, the patriarch of the farm had typically erected an I-house or other type of dwelling large enough to house his large family. By the 1920s, bungalows had been constructed on many farms, either adjacent to, or in some cases replacing, the earlier structure. In turn, the 1940s saw the addition of Minimal Traditional and Period Revival housing, succeeded by the Ranch house for subsequent generations from the 1950s through the 1980s. The Pearce-Foushee Farm Rural

³⁸⁴ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 15.

Historic District (PR0803) along Satterfield Road three miles east of Hurdle Mills illustrates this trend with four houses arranged in an arc around the ca. 1901 Thomas Anderson and Emma Moore Pearce House (PR0437). A ca. 1940 Period Revival cottage and the 1953 Ranch house were built, respectively, for the Pearces' daughters Helen Pearce and her husband Caviness Banks Foushee (PR0439) and Eloise Pearce (PR0435), and two 1970s Ranch houses (PR0436 and PR0438) were constructed for the children of Helen and Caviness Foushee. Such extensive family farms are not common, although many farmsteads in the county include at least one additional house for a family member of tenant.

Wood fences are rarely seen in Person County, where field crops were the primary agricultural product. As some farm families transitioned to beef or dairy cattle, wire fences were regularly constructed. Stones, prevalent in the county and routinely gathered from agricultural fields, often were arranged along driveways or planting beds, usually as loose-stacked stone walls but occasionally incorporating mortar. Rows of cedar or other tree species line many dirt and gravel driveways and in rare instances hedges were used to define portions of the front yard, though these were more common as decorative plantings in urban areas.

Tobacco Curing Barns

While light-frame construction was preferred for most residential buildings in Person County during the twentieth century, log construction remained the norm for tobacco curing barns well into the 1940s. The sustained preference for log construction was due in large part to the continued availability of raw timber in the county, making log both more convenient and more cost effective than sawn lumber. As in the nineteenth century, logs were typically harvested from the farmer's own land, "trees which would eventually be destroyed anyway to make room for a new tobacco field or home or barn."³⁸⁵ Log is a better insulator than frame construction and even as heating methods evolved, the need for a curing barn to maintain a consistent temperature was imperative.

Wood remained the primary fuel for heating log curing barns for several decades, but by the close of World War II, oil and gas had become more affordable. Additionally, the temperature was easier to regulate with oil and gas furnaces, which could be located outside of the barn, reducing the risk of fire. As before, heat loss was minimized through physical alterations to log curing barns that included infilling foundation-level openings with stone, brick, cement, or concrete block to reduce air infiltration and

³⁸⁵ Scism, "Carolina Tobacco Barns," 125.

improve efficiency. Exterior oil or gas burners installed at the base of the wall, were connected to interior metal flues piercing the roof. As a result, the presence of the metal flues has become as much an indicator of the building's use as the building form itself.³⁸⁶

By the 1940s, light frame became common for curing barn construction. Frame barns varied in their material construction, but not in their overall form or function. They were usually constructed on concrete-block foundations, often utilized "double wall construction" to provide sufficient insulation, and were sheathed with wood (plain vertical boards or board-and-batten) or rolled asphalt over flush boards.³⁸⁷ Occasionally metal sheathing was used, but as metal transmits heat, it is not a good insulator and was thus used sparingly. The Samuel Curry and Beulah Hamlin Farm (PR0517) on Morton Pulliam Road features both log and frame tobacco barns, the latter constructed on a concrete-block foundation and sheathed with vertical 5V metal siding.

In many instances, vertical wood or metal sheathing was applied to log curing barns, partly to reduce the need for continued re-chinking. Rarely,  stucco was applied as an insulator and to protect the logs from weathering. The log tobacco barns on the Errol DeWitt and Mamie Bradsher Morton Farm (PR0540), also on Morton Pulliam Road, display the variety of exterior coatings used in the county, including vertical wood and stucco. These twentieth-century coverings sometimes make it difficult to discern a building's construction at first glance.

Packhouses

While log construction remained common for curing barns well into the mid-twentieth century, most twentieth century packhouses were of frame construction. The most common and easily recognizable form of packhouse in the county is a tall, front- or side-gabled building. Some frame packhouses retained the overall the proportions of a log curing barn as exhibited by the packhouse near the Wagstaff Tenant House (PR0557) on Semora Road, which has a stone foundation, frame walls covered with weatherboard, low windows on the north elevation, and an ordering pit in the space below. In this case, the ordering and stripping took place in the one-story north part of the building with the main, south part used for storage. A frame packhouse on the west side of Semora Road, also associated with the Wagstaff Farm (PR0554) is larger in scale, featuring a two-story, front-gabled core flanked by one-story, shed-roofed wings. A batten door accesses each bay and the interior features wood floors and flush sheathing on some walls. Stacked doors and weatherboard siding on the south elevation of the

³⁸⁶ Scism, "Carolina Tobacco Barns," 123.

³⁸⁷ Scism, "Carolina Tobacco Barns," 123.

two-story part of the building, opening into the one-story shed wing, indicate the shed wing, with an ordering pit below, was added later.

Of a similar scale is the two-story, frame packhouse on the Samuel Washington and Mary L. Melton Farm (PR0351) on Olive Branch Road in the northeast part of the county, which may date to the first decade of the twentieth century. Located at the end of a row of curing barns, it has a side-gabled form covered with weatherboards and features a batten door on the façade with a second door above the first to aid in loading and unloading the building. A shed-roofed wing on the left side of the building is likely an ordering pit. The ca. 1910 frame packhouse at the Carl Egbert Hester Sr. Farm (PR0462) on Gordonton Road features windows in the north gable end and a batten door sheltered by deep shed roof on the east elevation. Its location at the head of a farm road that leads to the curing barns further confirms its use.

While many packhouses had shed roofs over the entrances to shelter those loading and unloading the crop, some incorporated covered space for tractors or trucks to drive up to the building. The two-story, front-gabled, frame packhouse at the Long-Hovatter Farm (PR0576) at Bushy Fork was likely constructed in the early twentieth century and features a distinctive projecting “room” above a vehicular channel on the façade. A similar packhouse is located just eleven hundred feet to the northeast in the Bushy Fork community (PR0619).

Variations in scale and form are not chronological, and thus do not represent an evolution of form, but rather are dependent on the size of the building needed, the limitations of the site, the preference of the individual farmer, or the availability of materials, including existing buildings. The early twentieth century packhouse at the James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm (PR0626) off of Snipes Road features a full two-story form with stone foundation and walls covered with metal sheathing, obscuring their construction. The building has a band of windows at the first-floor level of the north elevation, upper-level windows in the east gable, and open shed-roofed bays on the west and south elevations, the former sheltering the main entrance to the building. The ca. 1935 frame garage at the Carl Egbert Hester Sr. Farm may have been converted from a packhouse as it features stacked doors on the south gable end. On the Daniel and Malissa Allen Farm (PR0567) on NC 49 southwest of Roxboro, the packhouse has an unusual, side-gabled form with deep shed roofs on the long elevations. The building was moved from Camp Butner, in nearby Granville County, to this site after the close of World War II, and was converted for use as a packhouse.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁸ Personal Communication with Terry Allen (Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Kelly Malloy, November 2022, in person (see PR0567).

The building does include the stacked batten doors and a window on the north elevation, both common features of twentieth-century packhouses in the county.

The front-gabled form remained popular for packhouses well into the twentieth century. The ca. 1920 packhouse at the Nathaniel T. and Harriett Huff Farm (PR0361) on JD Denny Road near the Granville County line features a wide form, two stories at the center and tapering to one-story wing on the outer bays. The 1930s packhouse at the Ida Clayton Bailey Farm (PR0495) on Haywood Bailey Road near the Woodsdale community and the 1940s packhouse at the Sidney Warren and Maggie Long Ashley Farm (PR0425) on Flat Woods Road are typical of early twentieth century frame packhouses. Each has a two-story, front-gabled form with a batten door in gable end, below a second door in the gable itself. The packhouse on the Ashley Farm has been covered with rolled asphalt and the windows on the north elevation have been enlarged. The packhouse on the Bailey Farm retains plain weatherboards and flanking shed-roofed bays.

In the 1950s, the Bailey family constructed a second packhouse, following the same front-gabled form as the packhouse they built in the 1930s, though with diagonally sheathing covered with rolled asphalt. A large, concrete-block packhouse constructed in the 1950s on the James Obediah and Ida Timberlake Pearce farm (PR0434) on Roy Pierce Road near Timberlake is the only known masonry packhouse in the county. While the scale is more representative of a livestock barn, windows are only on the north elevation, and the property owner reports the presence of an ordering pit below the building.

Smokehouses

Among the most ubiquitous outbuildings on the Person County farm is the smokehouse.³⁸⁹ Even where animal pens and/or hog barns are not found, Person County's subsistence farms routinely had a smokehouse located very near the residence where the contents of the building could remain under the watchful eye of the family.

"Hog-killing day" occurred as the weather turned cold for the season, generally after the first heavy frost in December or January.³⁹⁰ After the hog(s) were killed and "while there is still body heat in the meat," the individual pieces were covered with a heavy layer of salt to preserve them. "If not enough salt is used, or the weather is too warm,

³⁸⁹ The name *smokehouse* can be misleading as meat within the building was almost always cured with salt to preserve it, but not necessarily smoked, a practice that required a dirt floor for a smoldering fire and largely undertaken to impart flavor. All of the documented smokehouses have wood floors, although some might originally have had a dirt floor. Regardless, *smokehouse* is used universally by residents and historians alike for buildings used for the curing of meat.

³⁹⁰ Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 476.

the meat will be in danger of going bad.”³⁹¹ Once salted, it was hung up in the smokehouse for a period of time. Hams, shoulders, and side meat were cleaned of salt after several months and rehung in the smokehouse.³⁹² In some instances, smoldering fires were set in the smokehouse to impart a smoky flavor into the meat. In this manner, the meat could be preserved for multiple years though was normally used over the course a single year, before the next year’s hog-killing day.

Many smokehouses remain on the landscape today. Typically small, front-gabled buildings, they were constructed of logs or wood framing in various configurations. Among the earliest and most intact examples is the ca. 1870 square-notch log smokehouse on the Gustavus B. and Mollie Poole Thomas Farm (PR0350) on Neals Store Road. The building, which stands to the side of the main house, has plain weatherboards in the gables and a modern metal roof; the four-panel door on the gable end likely replaced a batten door like that on the ca. 1880 smokehouse on the Oakley Farm (PR0379) on Groundhog Drive. This V-notch log building rests on stone piers and is nearly identical in form and proportion to the smokehouse on the Thomas farm. Frame smokehouses are far more common, perhaps illustrating a trend of reconstructing earlier smokehouses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The ca. 1891 smokehouse on the Bowling-Oakley Farm (PR0383) on Medford Oakley Road is similar in form and proportion to its log predecessors but is of frame construction with sheathing of plain weatherboards on the exterior and flush boards on the interior to create an insulated cavity. An open shed-roofed bay on one side elevation likely held firewood or farm supplies.

The use of wood framing allowed for more variation in form and scale than log. The ca. 1900 smokehouse on the Osborne Hanley and Mary Elizabeth Oakley Farm (PR0505) on Ruff Davis Road is a slightly larger and modified example of the type with storage accessed by a hatch in the front gable and provided by an engaged shed wing along one side. Similarly, the ca. 1901 gable-front smokehouse on the James Obediah and Ida Timberlake Pearce Farm features engaged sheds on each side, one open and the other enclosed. The ca. 1900 smokehouse at the George Collins and Ella Thompson Hester Farm (PR0459) on Gordonton Road has a similar configuration but with the sides of the roof splayed to embrace the side bays. In other instances, the smokehouse was combined with other functions, most often a washhouse, as described below.

³⁹¹ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 33.

³⁹² Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 476; Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 34.

Washhouses

The washhouse is both less common and more difficult to identify than the smokehouse. Many farm families did the laundry out of doors in large tubs, without a specialized building for the task. The typical form of a washhouse, a side-gabled frame building with a chimney in one gable end, was the same form used for detached kitchens and, in some cases, farm offices, which typically were relegated to buildings adjacent to the main house. As a result, the identification of washhouses is largely reliant on oral histories.

The ca. 1932 washhouse on the James Arthur and Ruth Long Farm (PR0642) on Whitmore Road is one such example, identified by the current owner. The two-bay building features plain weatherboards, a metal roof, six-over-six wood-sash windows, and a parged brick chimney in the left gable end. A similarly detailed building on the Robert L. Hester Farm (PR0036) on Robert Hester Road was identified as a smokehouse in the 1970s survey but was more likely a washhouse or detached kitchen given the presence of a window and chimney. A more typical example, though smaller in scale, is the ca. 1940 washhouse at the Sherman Farm (PR0388) on Thomas Store Road, which is a single bay wide with the entrance sheltered by a full-width, shed-roofed porch. A slender brick chimney is located in the left gable end.

Combined Smoke- and Washhouses

A number of farm complexes in Person County have a building that combines the functions of a smokehouse and washhouse. Again, identification of this building type is often reliant on oral tradition as the building type is relatively rare. The two-room ca. 1914 building to the immediate rear of the farmhouse at the Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wrenn Jones Farm (PR0458) appears to meet this classification. The one-story, side-gabled, frame building has two entrances on the façade, both sheltered by a shed-roofed porch and suggestive of a two-room interior. One end of the building has a stone chimney with a brick stack and a single window on one side of the chimney. The other gable end has only a small window that appears to have been added at a later date and the room that it illuminates, originally windowless, is the approximate size of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century freestanding smokehouses. Similar in form is the side-gabled frame building that stands to the right side of the Thomas N. and Pattie J. Oakley House (PR0372) on Jim Poole Road. The two batten doors on the facade indicate a two-room building with the room on one side containing a single window and a wide, parged chimney in the gable end. The current owner of the ca. 1936 Houston Glance and Ora Mooney Blalock House (PR0426) on Houston Blalock Road indicated that a front-gabled building to the rear of the house was constructed as a combined smokehouse and washhouse. One half of the two-bay building has a

window on the side elevation and a brick chimney on the rear gable end. The other half is windowless, and both rooms are accessed by batten doors in the front gable.

Wellhouses and Pumphouses

Fresh water was essential to any farm and farm family. The county's earliest European settlers typically located near natural springs or creeks as it was easier to build a springhouse than dig a well. Few springhouses—small structures built over a spring to keep animals and debris out of the water—are known to survive in the county. One springhouse that has been identified is on the ca. 1902 James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm (PR0626). The small, stone, shed-roofed stone building measures only about thirty inches square and is located at the lowest point in the rear yard of the house. A batten door on one side accesses the interior.

Most farms required a well as their water source. Early farmsteads had hand-dug wells, often lined with stone. Few of these remain visible as they were regularly enclosed by small buildings; others were protected by open shelters. A stone-lined well at the Bernia D. and Lillie B. Huff Farm (PR0364) on Bunnie Huff Road near the Granville County line extends above ground level. The stone is partially parged, and the well is framed by wood posts and a cross beam supporting a pulley. A partial stone wall south and west of the well indicates that it may have been enclosed at some point.

Early twentieth-century wells were typically located very close to the house to make water easily accessible for cooking and washing. The well was typically covered with a simple gabled or hipped roof on square posts, but the sides remained open. The well at the Charlie and Artelia Brown Norris Farm (PR0456) on Walnut Grove Church Road near the Orange County line was dug adjacent to the rear of the ca. 1908 farmhouse (no longer standing) and remains sheltered by a shed roof that originally extended directly from the rear porch of the house. The well at the Thomas N. and Pattie J. Oakley Farm rests on a concrete base, is encircled by a later concrete block wall, and is sheltered by a gabled roof on square posts.

In some instances, a wellhouse was constructed to shelter the well, but also to provide adjacent food and water storage. The most typical wellhouse is a small gabled building with the gable extending from one end to shelter the well. The frame wellhouse at the William and Ara Brooks Wilkerson Farm (PR0624) on Rolling Hills Road north of Bushy Fork exhibits this form, with the extension of the side gable sheltering the well supported by trimmed and peeled logs. A similar wellhouse stands at the George Preston and Virginia J. Allen Farm (PR0629), with plain weatherboards, a batten door, and a metal 5V-covered roof supported by square posts at its extension beyond the door.

Here, the well is either located within the building or was under the stone-floored gable extension and has been filled in.

In rare instances, the well was integrated into a fully enclosed wellhouse or attached to a larger structure, most often a milk house or washhouse which benefited from the close proximity of fresh water. The one-story, gabled building that stands just west of the house on the James Arthur Whitfield Farm (PR0635) appears to be a wellhouse combined with a washhouse. The rectangular frame building is sheathed with board-and-batten and has a batten door facing the house. The southeast corner of the building has been cut away to create an inset bay within which is the well itself, which was enclosed in a square concrete-block structure in the mid- to late twentieth century. The location of this well adjacent to the livestock barns and a concrete trough indicates that it provided water for livestock.

In the post-World War II era, many wellhouses were replaced by very short gable-, hip- or shed-roofed concrete block pumphouses. Located adjacent to the well, they often have a single batten hatch on one elevation that allowed access to the pump equipment inside. The wellhouse on the Hawkins-Rimmer Farm (PR0587) on Hawkins Loop is a typical Person County example, a low, square, concrete-block building with a hipped roof. By the late-twentieth century, drilled wells encased in concrete pipe were more common and today dot the rural landscape. A low, shed-roofed structure at the William Boyd and Zelia Whitfield Horton Farm (PR0603) on NC 157 between Roxboro and Hurdle Mills is a rare example of a stone pumphouse in the county.

Privies

Most farm outbuildings that remain on the landscape are large enough to be converted to new uses as their original purposes became obsolete. In contrast, privies are so small that when they became functionally obsolete by the mid-twentieth century, when most farms had indoor plumbing and a septic system for waste, that they usually were demolished. These small frame buildings were typically constructed with a shed roof and batten door and situated downhill from the farmhouse and often hidden by trees. The ca. 1900 Osborne Hanley and Mary Elizabeth Oakley Farm (PR0505) retains a rare example of an early twentieth-century privy. Located northwest of the house, at the edge of a grove of trees, the small, frame building has plain weatherboards, a shed roof, and a batten door on the façade. Similar in form, though covered with vertical metal sheathing, is the privy at the ca. 1913 Hawkins-Rimmer Farm.

Gardens and Grape Arbors

Local farmer James Earl Hester, who grew up in the western part of Person County, recalled in his memoir that “most everything we ate was either grown or produced on the farm where we lived. This included chickens, hogs, grain, fruits, vegetables, and milk.”³⁹³ As a result, most farm families, tenants and landowners alike, planted large gardens. Without physical structures to demarcate the location of the gardens, it can only be assumed that most were located close to the house where they could be easily managed and accessed by the residents.

While the location of vegetable gardens cannot always be determined, many twentieth-century grape arbors remain and are easily identified. Typical arbors in the county were constructed of sawn or trimmed and peeled logs (some later replaced by square posts) arranged in parallel rows and connected at the top with horizontal members. The arbor at the Henry Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth Rice Farm (PR0586) on Hassell Horton Road has the posts arranged roughly in a square and topped by parallel horizontal members. The arbor at the Rail Calvin and Mary Jane Brooks Carver Farm (PR0638) on Wesleyan Road, illustrates a different form, a single row of posts and two tiers of horizontal members that resembles a fence.

Flower Houses

The flower house was in some ways a precursor to the mid- to late twentieth-century greenhouse. The fact that few have been documented in Person County indicates that they were likely not widely constructed. Several remain within the collection of domestic outbuildings on larger farm complexes. These small buildings were typically partially subterranean, always lit with windows on the south elevation to catch the low winter sun, and generally topped by shed roofs. The form allowed for a relatively warm and dry place to keep plants and seedlings through the winter months.

The James Arthur Whitfield Farm (PR0635) retains a frame flower house southeast of the farmhouse. It is covered with plain weatherboards and has three six-over-six wood-sash windows on the south elevation. The slope of the roof is so steep that it nearly reaches the ground on the north elevation. On the Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Warren Jones Farm (PR0458), a small building immediately southwest of the house has been covered with vinyl siding but retains two-over-two wood sash windows on the south elevation, indicating its use as a flower house. A rare example of a stone flower house is on the Algin Thomas and Emily Thompson Allison Farm (PR0581) on Flat River Church Road. Utilizing the same basic form as earlier flower houses, it was constructed

³⁹³ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 35.

with local stone and features an entrance flanked by double-hung windows on the south elevation, all sheltered by the deep overhang of the roof.

Family Cemeteries

The most common cemeteries in rural Person County are family cemeteries. Nearly every farmstead established in the nineteenth-century has a small family cemetery of two to twenty graves, usually located within view of the main farmhouse. The largest markers tend to be those of the patriarch and matriarch, surrounded by the graves of relatives. The Rogers-Stephens Cemetery, adjacent to the Thomas Jefferson and Mary F. Stephens House (PR0527) on NC 158, exemplifies this pattern in its tall obelisks marking the graves of Thomas (d.1900) and Mary (d.1931), while smaller markers dating from 1855 to 2022 are arranged around them in neat rows. In some instances, the farmstead associated with the cemetery is no longer extant. One example is the Baird Family Cemetery (PR0341) begun ca. 1830 in the northeastern part of the county, where Mayo Lake later flooded large swaths of farmland.

Several large farm families in the county established large, multi-generation cemeteries in lieu of smaller cemeteries for each branch of the family. The largest and oldest of these is the Hester Family Cemetery, adjacent to the Hester House (PR0038) in the western part of the county. The cemetery occupies just over two acres and contains 152 marked burials dating from 1767 to 2021, including a few interments within a stone wall along the west side of the cemetery. The Whitfield Cemetery, adjacent to the Weldon Jasper and Elizabeth T. Whitefield House (PR0583), contains seventy-seven marked graves dating from 1829 to 2023, making it another of the largest family cemeteries in the county. Located approximately one mile to the west, the James E. Whitfield Cemetery (PR0626) was established in 1868, contains fifty-six members of the Whitfield family, and is still in use today.³⁹⁴

While many cemeteries associated with White families and begun prior to the Civil War have both fieldstones and engraved markers, it should not be assumed that the fieldstones mark the graves of enslaved laborers. Rather, they likely mark graves of young children or served as “placeholders,” marking the location of burials with the intention of later installing an engraved marker.

At least one cemetery for enslaved laborers exists in the county. The large burial ground, located about 850 feet west of American Road, between Ned Moore and Dick Holeman Roads, may contain as many as 1000 graves. About two-hundred burials are marked

³⁹⁴ The Whitfield name is an evolution of the Whitefield name. Both appear in the county, and the families are descended of the same lineage, though Whitfield has become the most common spelling.

by fieldstones, though many more appear only as depressions in the landscape. Descendants of the enslaved continued to be buried at the site into the 1930s.³⁹⁵ However, in the postbellum era, when few African Americans owned land in the county on which to bury their dead, family cemeteries for Black families were rare, their locations further obscured by the general lack of engraved stones. The same is true for White tenant families. There are three small graveyards near the Person County Home (PR0518) on Chub Lake Road north of Roxboro with graves likely predating the 1923 building. Because the graves are marked only with fieldstones, it is impossible to discern the extent of the burials or the ethnicities of those buried there.

The 1837 Woods-Brooks Cemetery (PR0565) is a rare example of an integrated cemetery, the result not of an intention to integrate, but rather the eventual transfer of the surrounding land in the Woodsdale area from the White Woods family, whose burials date from the mid-nineteenth century, to the African American Brooks family, who buried members adjacent to the Woods family graves in the early and mid-twentieth century.

Garages

By the 1920s, as ownership of automobiles and mechanical farm implements became more widespread, frame garages were erected on Person County farmsteads, typically to the rear of the house among the other domestic outbuildings. The most common type was a one-story, single-bay, front-gabled frame building with plain weatherboards and a wide opening in the front gable, sometimes fit with paired batten doors, but more often left open. The interior may have a poured concrete floor, though dirt floors are also common. One typical example is the front-gabled frame garage at the George Collins and Elizabeth Thompson Hester Farm (PR0459). Very similar in form and detail is the garage at the Henry Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth Rice Farm (PR0586), which features a metal tile roof and paired plywood doors at the opening.

Two-bay garages are also common and include the front-gabled garage at the Henry McNeal and Martha Ann Rimmer Farm (PR0618) off of Hurdle Mills Road, which rests on a concrete-block foundation and has vertical metal sheathing covering the walls and roof. The one-and-a-half-story garage at the Hulda Doris Hester Farm (PR0592) on Hesters Store Road is two bays wide with storage at the upper level and an open, shed-

³⁹⁵ “Cameron Person County Slave Cemetery,” Find A Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2310254/cameron-person-county-slave-cemetery>; The site, known as the Cameron Person County Slave Cemetery or the Cameron Quarter Cemetery, is the second of two burial grounds associated with the Cameron family’s Stagville Plantation in Durham County.

roofed bay on the rear gable end. In this instance, the vehicular openings have paired batten doors.

Larger examples were constructed to house farm implements in addition to automobiles, though by the mid-twentieth century, these enclosed, gabled structures were largely replaced by open shed-roofed machine sheds. One example of the large-scale garage is the four-bay, front-gabled building on the James Arthur Whitfield Farm (PR0635). The building features the plain weatherboards, batten doors, and metal roof common on smaller garages, though with a storage loft accessed by both an interior stair and a door in the front gable. The three-bay, front-gabled garage at the George Preston and Virginia J. Allen Farm (PR0629) is similarly detailed with a batten door in the front gable and an open, shed-roofed bay on the left elevation.

Garages in a wide variety of other configurations also exist in rural Person County, often incorporated as shed-roofed wings affixed to farm buildings with other primary uses. Many of these are generally considered to be machine sheds, constructed for farm machinery as opposed to garages erected for passenger automobiles.

Livestock Barns and Silos

Livestock has been part of the Person County landscape for centuries, with horses and mules used for farm labor well into the twentieth century and small numbers of cows or chickens held by farmers as a means of providing eggs and dairy products for the farm family. Local resident James Earl Hester notes in his memoir that “back then, virtually everybody in our section kept milk cows for the milk and butter that they produced.”³⁹⁶ These animals were generally held in small barns or enclosures though few remain recognizable as such. In the twentieth century some farmers began to raise cattle, hogs, and chickens for sale, constructing larger and sometimes specialized barns to house their growing herds.

The earliest extant livestock barns in the county are of log construction and differentiated from other log buildings by their large scale and the presence of interior stalls and/or feed troughs. Two such barns stand side-by-side at the James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm (PR0626). Each has a center, gable-front log section flanked by frame sheds. One of the sheds on one of the barns contains individual stalls and the other is a single open pen. At the other barn, the shed on one side shelters feed troughs lining the barn wall and the other shed comprises open equipment bays.

³⁹⁶ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 21.

While log remained a common building material well into the twentieth century, it did not allow for the scale needed to shift from raising livestock for subsistence to keeping herds for income. As a result, most twentieth-century barns were of frame construction with either a front-gable or front-gambrel roof, the latter of which provided more upper-level space. While the gambrel-roofed barn, perhaps the most “barn-like” of all types of barns, emerged as a common form in the United States after the Civil War, it was not as widely used in the South as it was in the Northeast and Midwest. At the ground level, stalls were arranged on either side of a central passage. A ventilated hayloft was standard as “damp or wet feed had been known to heat and set a feed barn afire.”³⁹⁷ Hay could be loaded from the interior of the barn or through an opening in the gable or gambrel. That opening was sometimes sheltered by a hay hood, an extension of the main roofline, as exhibited by the livestock barns on the Betty Lou Hester Wagstaff Farm (PR0548) on Semora Road and the George Preston and Virginia J. Allen Farm.³⁹⁸ In addition to providing shelter for cattle, the livestock barn regularly included “storage space for feed, tools, and machinery. Here cows were milked, horses shod, equipment repaired, sick animals treated.”³⁹⁹

The broad gabled barn at the Bowes-Briggs Farm (PR0466) on Bowes Road exemplifies the large-scale, frame livestock barn constructed in Person County in the early twentieth century. It features batten doors at both levels and a wide center passage from which farm hands can fill feed troughs that open to the flanking cattle stalls. The stalls are accessed via doors on the side of the barn and sheltered by deep, open sheds. The ca. 1913 Walter Redman Hawkins Barn (PR0589) on Hawkins Loop Road is the quintessential livestock barn with a flared gambrel roof, plain weatherboards, a large hayloft accessed by openings at both ends, and a central aisle big enough to drive a tractor through and flanked by stalls lit by small windows. The two-and-a-half-story livestock barn on the James Arthur and Ruth Long Whitfield Farm (PR0642) is unusual in its multiple stories and the placement of the entrances on the long side elevations rather than in the gable ends, which are flanked by sheds (one open on three sides, the other open on the two ends).

Unlike the one-and-a-half-, two-, or two-and-a-half-story gable- or gambrel-roofed buildings used to house livestock, long, low buildings usually held hogs. Hog barns were only partially sheathed, with the upper portion of the walls open to encourage circulation of air through the building, and the interior was divided into pens. While large-scale hog production was not common in Person County, several farms retain

³⁹⁷ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 356; Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 20.

³⁹⁸ Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 114.

³⁹⁹ Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 476.

mid-sized buildings that appear to have held hogs. The shed-roofed hog barn on the James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm features horizontal boards enclosing only the lower half of the structure and square posts supporting the low roof. A wide, gable-roofed building on the George Preston and Virginia J. Allen Farm currently holds tractors and other farm machinery but flush sheathing on the lower end of one side suggests that it was constructed to house livestock, most likely hogs.

Other livestock barns are more ambiguous in their form, making it difficult to discern what type of animals they contained. The James Arthur Whitfield Farm contains a one-story, shed-roofed barn that is identifiable as a livestock barn by the exterior feed bins on the west elevation and the small windows on the opposite wall.

While horses and mules are primarily fed dried hay that was stored in the upper hayloft of the livestock barn, cattle regularly graze on grasses or silage, the grasses, corn, and hay packed into the airtight silo where they are essentially fermented.⁴⁰⁰ The presence of a silo, a tall cylindrical structure located immediately adjacent to the barn, universally indicates the presence of dairy or beef cattle. Silos came into general use in the late nineteenth century, though the earliest documented silo in the county is located on the ca. 1908 William Haywood and Mary Elizabeth McCullough Farm (PR0621) on McCulloch Loop Road. Set back from the driveway, among the tobacco barns, the square tower is of stone construction that has been parged. Openings at regular intervals exist along the east elevation. Most silos in Person County date to the early- to mid-twentieth century, are associated with dairy farming, and are constructed of interlocking staves of cast concrete, held together by steel bands.⁴⁰¹ One example is the concrete silo that stands immediately northeast of the barn on the David Samuel and Phoebe Rimmer Hawkins Farm (PR0588) on Hawkins Loop Road.

Dairy Barns and Milk Houses

The dairy barn is most often identified by a gambrel roof and usually features a long center aisle parallel to the roof ridge and flanked by stalls. Wide doors on the ends of the building provide for livestock and pedestrian access and, in some cases, access to stored tractors and other equipment. Upper-level openings and interior ladders access the hayloft. The gambrel-roofed barn, with its double-sloped roof, allowed for more headroom at the upper level of the barn, and thus more storage. The shape could not be constructed with logs but instead required light-framed trusses built with nominal lumber, the availability of which increased with the greater prevalence of sawmills after the Civil War. In the 1920s, variations to the gambrel-roofed barn included a

⁴⁰⁰ Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 117.

⁴⁰¹ Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 116.

curved roof, sometimes with flared eaves. One such example is the large barn on the ca. 1901 James Obediah and Ida Timberlake Pearce Farm (PR0434) that has a rounded roof, projecting hay hood, and flanking one-story, shed-roofed bays. A two-story, shed-roofed wing at the rear likely housed the milking parlor and milk house.

Dairy farming was not widely common in Person County, though there are several large-scale farms in the Hurdle Mills area that incorporated dairying in their operations. The ca. 1901 Ernest Edgar and Sara Lora Long Moore Farm (PR0630) off Union Grove Church Road west of Hurdle Mills retains turn-of-the-twentieth-century tobacco buildings but by the mid-twentieth century it was primarily a dairy. It was among the last dairies to operate in Person County and retains the most complete complex of dairy-related resources. A gambrel-roofed frame barn connects to a smaller, gambrel-roofed building constructed of concrete block that appears to have been a milking parlor and in turn is connected to a shed-roofed, concrete block milk house where the refrigerated milk tanks and the associated pipes, vacuum pumps, and controls were kept. The use of concrete-block allowed for a sanitary milking system by which walls and floors could be easily hosed down. Concrete blocks also provided more consistent interior temperatures, making the building better for milk storage than a frame building.

Because gambrel-roofed barns were not limited to dairy farms, the presence of an adjacent milking parlor, a milk house for milk storage, and/or silo is often an indicator of the barn's function. At the Fitzhugh Lee and Bera Mae B. Moore Farm (PR0634) just north of the Ernest Edgar and Sara Lora Long Moore Farm, the dairy barns have been destroyed, leaving only the milking parlor, milk house, and silos. Here, the milking parlor is more stylish than most, with one end parapeted and bands of three courses of red brick above each door and window that indicate its mid-twentieth century date. The combined milk house and milking parlor at the William and Ara Brooks Wilkerson Farm (PR0624) utilize the same concrete-block construction as the adjacent dairy barn, now obscured by trees and foliage.

Not all dairies follow the convention of a free-standing concrete-block milking parlor and milk house. At the Walter Knox and Zelma Cornelia Moore Farm (PR0623) on Robert Whitfield Road, the milking parlor and milk house were integrated into a ca. 1930 gambrel-roofed barn, set within a corner of the barn and accessed via a pedestrian door. A gabled, frame building at the Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wright Jones Farm (PR0458) has an inset bay adjacent to the very short, shed-roofed pumphouse. Its presence among the livestock buildings suggests it may have been used as a milk house.

Chicken Coops and Egg Houses

Chickens were present on nearly every farmstead in the county. Most families owned just enough chickens to provide eggs and meat for themselves or for local sale. The chickens were usually housed among the domestic buildings in the rear yard, most often in small, shed-roofed, frame buildings with screening on the south elevation to contain the flock while allowing for the circulation of air and the introduction of warm southern light. The chicken coop at the Hulda Doris Hester Farm (PR0592) exemplifies this type of outbuilding; the rectangular, shed-roofed building has plain weatherboards, a metal roof that overhangs the screened openings on the south elevation, and a batten door on the west end to access the interior. The chicken coop at the James Arthur Whitfield Farm features a shallow pent roof on the south elevation to divert water from the screened openings, which flank a centered batten door. Two adjacent coops on the James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm repeat these forms, one with the entrance on the side elevation and one with an entrance adjacent to the screened (now boarded) opening.

The Sidney Warren and Maggie Long Ashley Farm (PR0425) includes a wide variety of coop sizes and styles. A ca. 1915 shed-roofed structure is among the very few log chicken coops remaining in the county. It was later enlarged with a frame wing with screening on three sides. Three other coops, two built in 1920 and one in 1940, are frame construction with gable roofs. Partially screened, shed-roofed wings added to two sides of a 1915 smokehouse and a two-story 1920 garage likely housed chickens or other small animals like rabbits. A tiny shed-roofed hut on the Charlie and Artelia Brown Norris Farm (PR0456), noted by the owner as a chicken house, is less than two feet tall with south-facing openings sheltered by a shed roof.

While chicken coops are ubiquitous on the Person County landscape, large-scale chicken production was not common and egg houses, where eggs bound for market were sorted and cleaned, are rare and difficult to identify, requiring identification by property owners. Such is the case with the shed-roofed, frame building at the George Preston and Virginia June Allen Farm, identified by June Rogers, who grew up on the farm.⁴⁰² The building stands behind the domestic outbuildings and adjacent to a chicken coop and hog barn. It rests on concrete-block piers and features plain weatherboards, six-over-six wood-sash windows and a batten door sheltered by a full-width pent roof on the south elevation.

⁴⁰² Personal Communication with June Rogers.

Corn Cribs

Like the smokehouse, the corn crib is one of the most common outbuildings remaining in Person County. Any farm that had livestock, even in small numbers, required a corn crib for the necessary animal feed. The small, front-gabled buildings were constructed of either log or frame and are identifiable by their narrow form and either unchinked or open-slatted walls that permitted ventilation for the storing and drying of feed corn. Because the presence of feed corn attracted mice, rats, squirrels, and other wild animals, the crib was usually raised from ground level, supported by stone or brick piers, and floored with wood to seal the bottom of the crib.

Early corn cribs, like that on the Whitfield-Poole Farm (PR0045) on Lonnie Gentry Road, were of log construction. This late-nineteenth-century crib features diamond-notching, a raised floor resting on stone piers, and plain weatherboards in the gables. A square-notch log corn crib stands behind the Paul and Gail Bailey House (PR0494) near Woodsdale, a remnant of the first Bailey farm established here in the late nineteenth century. A small log building on the James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm also appears to be a turn-of-the-twentieth-century corn crib. The building, constructed of wide hewn logs, is raised on stone piers and has a wood floor. A deep overhang of the gabled roof shelters a batten door on one gable end. As the farm grew, a second crib was erected near the log livestock barns northwest of the house. This frame building is more typical of those found throughout the county, featuring narrow horizontal slats covering the exterior and a batten door in the gable end that is sheltered by a shallow shed roof. The corn crib at the Peed Farm (PR0384) on Mount Harmony Church Road is similar in size, scale, and finish.

Numerous corn cribs in the county are quite large, sometimes due to additions. The corn crib at the Ida Clayton Bailey Farm (PR0495) was enlarged with a shed-roofed bay on the west elevation, also enclosed with horizontal slats. North of the Weldon Jasper and Elizabeth T. Whitefield House (PR0583) off Frank Whitfield Road stands a rare, two-story crib with stacked batten doors on the east elevation. A shed-roofed bay on the right side was constructed to house farm implements. The large scale of the front-gabled corn crib on the David Samuel and Phoebe Rimmer Hawkins Farm (PR0588), at least twice the size of the average crib in the county, was necessary to feed the large number of livestock kept in the adjacent frame and log livestock barns.

Many corn cribs incorporated open shed-roofed bays for the storage of farm implements. The front-gabled corn crib on the Faulker-Gilmore Farm (PR0450) on Cunningham Road in the far north of the county has flanking shed-roofed bays on square posts. The two-story crib at the Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wright Jones Farm

was constructed with flanking vehicular bays sheltered by an extension of the gabled roof. In a reversal of the common form, a front-gabled building on the John Elmer Whitfield Farm (PR0647) on Robert Whitfield Road west of Hurdle Mills features a vehicular bay flanked by cribs, a type referred to as a crib barn. Each crib is supported by a concrete foundation, enclosed with horizontal boards, and features batten doors on the façade. A hay loft above the vehicular bay provided additional feed storage.

Granaries

Granaries are less common in the county than corn cribs, in part because by the mid-to late-twentieth century, granaries were functionally replaced by cylindrical steel bins with conical roofs. Whereas corn required minimal processing before storage in a crib, wheat needed to be milled before being stored for feed, though in some cases corn was similarly milled before storage. Local farmer James Earl Hester notes in his memoir that wheat was “carried to the mill to be ground into flour, or mixed with corn and ground into cow feed. The small grains were also convenient to feed the chickens in handfuls from a bucket.”⁴⁰³ In rare instances, the feed could be milled onsite. The James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm had its own small-scale mill that dates to about 1902. Milling equipment remains within the building, which is otherwise indistinguishable from other diamond-notch log barns on the farm.⁴⁰⁴

Once ground, dried grain was stored in a granary, a weather-tight building with an elevated floor to keep out rodents. Typically located adjacent to the livestock barns and corn cribs, extant granaries are usually front-gabled, frame buildings with plain weatherboards or later metal sheathing to ensure the grain remained dry and provide added protection from birds. Northeast of the mill and adjacent to the frame corn crib on the James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm is a two-story, front-gabled, frame granary with metal-covered doors at both levels. The interior retains wood floors and a wood chute from which grains are dropped from the upper floor to the first floor. On the Peed Farm (PR0384) on Mount Harmony Church Road, a ca. 1900 front-gabled, frame granary with a batten door stands just south of the corn crib.

Rural Domestic Architecture

In rural Person County, log construction and simple, basic house types persisted well into the twentieth century as residents overwhelmingly built what they were familiar with and continued to utilize materials available onsite. While mass-produced building materials had become ubiquitous everywhere, they were still more expensive than logs. A small-scale farmer or tenant farmer, operating with limited means, could “could fell

⁴⁰³ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 22.

⁴⁰⁴ Larger-scale regional mills are discussed in this chapter’s section on industry and infrastructure.

and hew the logs himself and raise the house with the aid of family, neighbors, or a hired workman,” constructing a house for himself and his family without going into debt.⁴⁰⁵ Over time, many of these buildings have been overbuilt with later additions or their construction obscured by the application of siding. In other cases, the buildings have been supplanted by frame dwellings and the log structures either demolished or converted for use as outbuildings. Thus, while only a handful of early-twentieth-century log dwellings were documented, many more likely remain yet to be discovered.

Among the log buildings erected in this era is the largely intact ca. 1920 one-and-a-half-story, one-room Collie Allen House (PR0348) on Lawson Chapel Church Road that was sheathed in wood novelty siding and expanded on the rear with an engaged, weatherboarded shed wing. This house also exemplifies the continued trend of enlarging log houses with wings added as necessary to accommodate growing families. Another example is the ca. 1920 Lennie Thomas and Daisy Day Pulliam House (PR0403) on Pulliam Tingen Mine Road, constructed as a one-and-a-half-story, diamond-notched log building and enlarged in the 1930s with a frame wing on a gable end. At the same time, the entire building was sheathed with weatherboards. The ca. 1920 James S. and Nettie Coleman House (PR0332) on Coleman Road in the northeast corner of the county was similarly constructed as a one-and-a-half-story log building and was enlarged about 1945 with frame wings and sheathed with asbestos shingles.

Traditional House Types

Log construction persisted, especially for barns and outbuildings, but by the turn of the twentieth century, light frame construction was preferred by rural landowners for their own houses. The mass production of lumber and nails allowed for larger and more complex forms and faster construction. Yet rural landowners clung to traditional house types and spare application of ornament, prioritizing function over fashion, even as examples of the Italianate, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival styles abounded in Roxboro.⁴⁰⁶ The I-house and the one-story, one-room-deep, three-bay house remained popular throughout the county; “staunchly rectangular and symmetrical dwelling[s], one or two stories tall, with a porch and a rear ell or shed containing a kitchen, [they] remained the classic choice...into the 1910s and 1920s.”⁴⁰⁷ The ca. 1900 William McKinley and Etta Whitt Royster House (PR0345) on Dirgie Mine Road is typical of

⁴⁰⁵ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 352.

⁴⁰⁶ Colonial Revival-style houses were constructed in rural Person County in the early twentieth century and other houses were remodeled with the addition of brick veneers and/or Colonial Revival-style porticos. As fewer than a dozen extant rural residences constructed from 1910 to the 1970s are classified as Colonial Revival in style, they are discussed within the context of those built in Roxboro.

⁴⁰⁷ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 343.

the early-twentieth-century I-house, with plain weatherboards, six-over-six wood-sash windows, a 5V roof with exposed rafter tails, and one-story, gabled rear ell. The ca. 1930 Faulkner-Gilmore House (PR0450) is similarly detailed though it is a one-and-a-half-story form with a one-story rear ell flanked by shed-roofed wings. The ca. 1920 Luther D. and Annie Knott House (PR0362) on Knott Road exemplifies the L-plan I-house with the roof ridges of both sections at the same height, the ell flush with left elevation, and the siding and exterior finishes continuous between the front and rear sections, confirming their concurrent construction. In this instance, the two-story rear ell roughly doubles the size of the house.

One-story, side-gabled dwellings remained common for small-scale farmhouses, constructed with or without the centered front gable. The ca. 1900 James R. Robertson House (PR0448) on Woodsdale Road is a highly intact example with plain weatherboards, two-over-two wood-sash windows, a 5V triple-A roof, molded cornices with returns, and slender chamfered posts at the front porch. The ca. 1900 farmhouse at the John Robert and Emily Blackard Moore Farm (PR0598) on NC 157 southwest of Roxboro echoes the same one-story form, though with simple gables without returns and a wraparound porch supported by tapered box posts. Less common during this era was the two-story, gable-front-and-wing form, though a number of examples were constructed in the Hurdle Mills area. The ca. 1913 Hawkins-Rimmer House (PR0587) and the ca. 1905 Franklin Jackson Sr. and Foy B. Hester House (PR0627) on Snipes Road each feature the T-plan gable-front-and-wing form with the entrance located on the side-gabled wing and sheltered by a porch that extends around the front-gabled wing.

Historian Catherine Bishir notes that by the early twentieth century, “steam-powered factories churned out millions of turned balusters, paneled doors, and sawn brackets. . .produc[ing] millwork in any shape, size, or finish, fast and cheap and in endless supply.”⁴⁰⁸ The decoration was applied to porches, dormers, and windows, as well as to building interiors. In its chamfered wood posts and decorative brackets supporting the porch; scalloped weatherboards and sawn bargeboards in the front gable; and mantelpieces with pilasters or columns, brackets, and mirrored overmantels, the ca. 1905 Bowes-Briggs House (PR0466) illustrates the adherence to the I-house and its adornment with mass-produced millwork. Among the most elaborate of the county’s I-houses is the ca. 1907 Carl Egbert Hester Sr. House (PR0462) displaying Italianate-style drop-pendant brackets at the roofline and a front gable adorned with sawtooth shingles and an intricately sawn gable vent. The ca. 1900 Charlie and Roxie Long Farm (PR0616) on Hurdle Mills Road and the ca. 1910 Lawrence and Eloise White House

⁴⁰⁸ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 328.

(PR0578) on CC White Road in Hurdle Mills similarly employed patterned wood shingles in the front gable while the ca. 1901 Ernest Edgar and Sarah Lora L. Moore House (PR0630) applied notched weatherboards in a sawtooth pattern and sawn bargeboards to the gable.

According to Bishir, by World War I, the I-house form had largely “died out as a viable building type, replaced by a variety of popular house forms that brought a permanent break with a long-lived building tradition.”⁴⁰⁹ Though examples continued to be constructed in rural Person County, many with Craftsman-style details. Among the latest examples of I-house construction in Person County is the ca. 1929 Walter Augustus and Sallie E. Wiley House (PR0336) on High Plains Road with its characteristic triple-A roofline and a nod to the newly popular Craftsman style in its three-vertical-panes-over-one windows.

Rural Craftsman-Style Residences

The influence of the Craftsman style was broad and sweeping in the United States. The style emerged in California around 1905 as an extension of the Arts and Crafts movement, which had originated in England and was rapidly disseminated across the country by popular magazines and architectural pattern books, becoming popular in North Carolina by the 1910s. Identifying features of the style include triangular knee brackets in the gables, exposed rafter tails in deep eaves, and tapered box porch posts or columns, usually on masonry piers. Double-hung windows with the upper sash divided into vertical panes were common, with windows grouped on larger houses. These features were most often applied to the bungalow form, a one- or one-and-a-half-story, gable or hip-roofed building with a low-sloped roof and an engaged or partially inset porch.⁴¹⁰

High-style examples of the Craftsman style were rare in rural Person County as, like the reaction to other mainstream styles, the rural population rarely adopted them in their entirety. However, more than thirty rural houses were documented to have Craftsman forms or details. By the 1920s, a number of larger farmhouses, generally boxy two-story, two- or three-room-deep forms, were being finished with Craftsman-style tapered-post-on-pier porches. The ca. 1926 Jacob and Audrey Thompson House (PR0521) on Daisy Thompson Road exemplifies this trend. It has a high hipped roof, paired windows at the first story, and a hip-roofed wraparound porch supported by tapered box posts on stone piers. The 1921 Huldah Doris Hester House (PR0592) is

⁴⁰⁹ Southern, “The I-House,” 82.

⁴¹⁰ A more thorough explanation of the Craftsman style can be found in the chapter Roxboro in the First Half of the Twentieth Century.

similar in scale but with a lower pitch to the hipped roof, a low-pitched gable on the facade and a projecting gabled wing on a side elevation, and flat modillions in deep eaves. The 1923 Walter Knox and Zelma Cornelia Moore House (PR0623), which has a broader form accommodating a center-hall plan and large rooms, again exhibits a wrap-around porch supported by tapered wood columns. Similar in form and composition, the ca. 1930 Claude T. and Addie Jones Hall House (PR0446) on Claude Hall Road is a rare example of brick construction in rural Person County, featuring curved triangular brackets in the deep eaves of the roof and tapered classical box posts on brick piers supporting segmental-arched spandrels.

The one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled, two-room-deep bungalow with a full-width porch and dormer centered on the façade became the most common interpretation of the Craftsman style in rural Person County without nearly twenty examples documented. Among the earliest examples of this basic design is the ca. 1920 Stephen Beasley and Annie Howard Moore House (PR0427) on Lacy Wilkerson Road, with an engaged front porch. Here, the style is identified only by the form, with the roof splayed at front at back to engage the porch and rear shed wing. The ca. 1925 John Rainey and Bertha Pleasants Terry House (PR00457) on Wheelers Church Road is notable for its high degree of material integrity, having retained its plain weatherboards, four-over-one Craftsman-style windows, exposed rafter tails, and post-on-pier porch supports. The ca. 1926 Maurice Jackson and Annie W. Daniel House (PR0529) on Maurice Daniels Road retains the added feature of knee brackets and instead of Craftsman-style windows has nine-over-one windows and paneled porch columns more common on Colonial Revival-style dwellings. The ca. 1925 primary house on the Betty Lou Hester Wagstaff Farm (PR0548) encompasses an earlier ca. 1912 house and with its flanking porches represents one of the largest rural examples of the one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled form. The house features a wide center-hall and a highly intact exterior with weatherboards, six-over-one Craftsman-style windows, and a six-panel door with Craftsman-style sidelights.

Variations in the shed-, gable-, and hip-roofed dormers appear throughout the county. For example, at the ca. 1913 Errol DeWitt and Mamie Bradsher Morton House (PR0540), which features an asymmetrical façade, the three-window shed dormer is above the off-center main entrance and partially inset to create a shallow balcony. The Morton House is further distinguished by its shingled exterior and the flare of the front slope of its side-gabled roof, which continues beyond the side of the house to flare at front and back where it shelters the one-story extension of the porch as it wraps around a corner of the house. Another gable variation is the wide, two-bay shed-roofed dormer on the ca. 1924 Thomas H. and Myrtle Clay House (PR0408) in Timberlake. Like the

Daniel House, the Clay House incorporates grouped nine-over-one windows, though the knee brackets and post-on-pier supports make it distinctly Craftsman in style. A series of houses on McGhees Mill Road, including the ca. 1936 Joe Edward and Mildred Seamster House (PR0530), are distinctive for their dormers consisting of paired, closely-spaced gables connected by a shed roof. The appearance of this type of dormer in this discrete part of the county suggests construction by a single builder.

In contrast to the vast majority of Person County's Craftsman-style houses, two examples of the style feature stone exteriors. The ca. 1927 one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled Reams and Pauline Clayton House (PR0519) on City Lake Road is of load-bearing stone construction with stone chimneys, porch piers, and stone on the shed-roofed dormer. The windows feature diamond- and lozenge-shaped panes in the upper sash, a type more commonly associated with the Queen Anne style. The three-bay, two-room-deep ca. 1936 Houston Glance and Ora Mooney Blalock House (PR0426) features a clipped side-gabled roof and a faux stone veneer with the three-over-one windows, exposed rafter tails, and knee brackets typical of the Craftsman style.

Variations on the standard one-and-a-half-story bungalow may be found throughout rural Person County. The ca. 1920 Flem Oscar and Nannie Johnson Whitt House (PR0643) on Whitt Town Road and the ca. 1933 Ella Thomas Jones House (PR0343) on Dirgie Mine Road are both one-story houses, the compact form typical of urban bungalows. The hip-roofed Whitt House has a hip-roofed dormer, two-over-two wood-sash windows, and a full-façade recessed porch while the Jones House has a clipped-gable-front roof, attached clipped-gable-front porch, and exposed rafter tails. Both houses feature two-part porch supports: classical columns (albeit replacements) on brick piers at the Whitt House and tapered box posts on brick piers at the Jones House. Larger in scale are the ca. 1931 two-story, side-gabled Judith and Jack Taylor House (PR0410) in Timberlake and the ca. 1935 Rosa Mae and Earl Thomas House (PR0394) on Dink Ashley Road, a one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled house with three-over-one Craftsman-style windows that has lost its porch. The Taylor House, located in Timberlake, is a fuller expression of the Craftsman style in its knee brackets in the side gables, four-over-one Craftsman-style windows, and molded wood siding.

Irregularities in the form of some rural Craftsman-style houses indicate that they may have been constructed as smaller vernacular structures and later enlarged as bungalows. Among these is the ca. 1932 Raymond and Mamie Whitfield House (PR0636) on Union Grove Church Road which features a front-gabled roof over the front three rooms of the house, suggesting the building originated as a three-bay house that stood a single room deep and was modified to resemble a bungalow with a broad gable-front facade.

Three-over-one windows, a three-light-over-three-panel door, and a porch on post-on-pier supports are all typical of the Craftsman style. Except for a jog in a side elevation of the ca. 1931 Frank William and Mary Lou Rogers House (PR0416) on Bessie Daniels Road south of Roxboro that might suggest its origin as a two-story basic house type, in all other respects the house is a classic one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled bungalow.

Rustic Revival Style

Person County residents constructed log buildings for both residential and agricultural use well into the 1920s and 1930s. However, in the 1930s, the Rustic Revival style emerged nationwide, spurred in part by public buildings in the style constructed by various New Deal programs in state and federal parks. The style is generally characterized by log construction or veneers, stone chimneys, moderate or steeply pitched roofs with deep overhangs and exposed rafters, and porches with decorative stickwork.⁴¹¹ While popular in mountainous and forested areas, few fully articulated examples were constructed in Person County, the character of which is complicated by the broad continued use of log construction throughout this period.

Only one mid-twentieth-century example of the style was documented in the county. The 1942 John Thomas and Nannie Paylor Obie House (PR0418) near Mayo Lake in the northeastern part of the county, utilized the round logs and saddle notches typical of the style. The house features a four-bay façade sheltered by a frame porch on concrete-block foundation. Exposed round logs with concrete chinking remain on the main block and rear ell, while weatherboards cover the gables.

Tenant Houses

Until well into the mid-twentieth century, tobacco remained Person County's primary cash crop, requiring intensive labor until mechanization became prevalent in the post-World War II era. As a result, tenant farms, particularly tenant houses, remained common and continued to be built throughout the county. Tenant houses are not characterized by a particular style or method of construction but instead are usually identified by their proximity to tobacco curing barns and information provided by property owners.

These small-scale residential buildings express trends in log and frame construction that utilized local materials and easily erected simple, rectangular forms, and the endurance of these trends (e.g., log houses were erected in rural parts of the county well into the 1930s) can make tenant housing difficult to date. Identification of tenant houses also can be a challenge because often they are an earlier house that was built for the property

⁴¹¹ Harris, *American Architecture*, 284.

owner and converted for use by a tenant after the owner built a new house for himself. In rare instances, tenant houses may have been constructed as housing for enslaved workers, though this is nearly impossible to verify.

Examples of log tenant houses include the ca. 1900 tenant house on the James Hassell and Nannie Long Horton Farm (PR0585) on Hassell Horton Road. The one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled house is of V-notch log construction with a stone foundation, a shed-roofed porch sheltering a five-panel front door, six-over-six wood-sash windows, and a stone chimney with brick stack. A full-width, shed-roofed wing at the rear is of frame construction and sheathed with board-and-batten. While some log tenant houses were enlarged with frame wings, others were extended by the construction of additional log pens. This was the case with the ca. 1900 Wagstaff Tenant House (PR0557) on Semora Road, a two-part log house with the pens very closely spaced side-by-side and connected internally only via a one-story, shed-roofed frame wing that spans the rear elevation. The logs have been covered with parging and vertically-grooved metal sheeting that make the chronology of the building difficult to determine. As late as ca. 1930, a log tenant house was constructed on the Gustavus B. and Mollie Poole Thomas Farm (PR0350). The side-gabled, V-notch log building has a stone foundation, a batten door, and an exterior stone chimney in the east gable end. The gable ends were covered with board-and-batten (now mostly gone) and have weatherboards in the gables. A large shed wing was attached to the rear of the house when it was converted for storage.

While some families continued to utilize log construction, others erected small tenant houses of light-frame construction, sometimes with the exposed rafter tails and knee brackets typical of Craftsman-style houses. Among the earliest of the documented frame tenant houses is the ca. 1900 tenant house on the Peed Farm (PR0384). The one-story, side-gabled building has a stone pier foundation, plain weatherboards, and a 5V metal roof with exposed rafter tails. The batten door and six-over-six wood-sash windows indicate its use for human habitation, rather than farm storage, and damage to the roof at the south gable end may indicate the former presence of a chimney. Frame tenant houses were the norm by the 1930s, by which time they usually had hall-and-parlor plans and were one-and-a-half or two stories in height. The ca. 1938 tenant house on the William Boyd and Zelia Whitfield Horton Farm (PR0603) has a two-story, side-gabled form, concrete foundation, asbestos siding, and a 5V metal roof with exposed rafter tails. A front-gabled porch supported by square posts shelters a six-light-over-three-panel door near the center of the façade. The stone chimney in the right gable has a tall stack, indicating the house may have originally been constructed as a single story and later enlarged. Similar in form and detailing is the ca. 1945 tenant house on the Carl Egbert Hester Sr. House (PR0462). The one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled,

frame tenant house has a concrete-block pier foundation, asbestos siding over plain weatherboards, six-over-six wood-sash windows, and a 5V metal roof. A shed-roofed porch on square posts shelters most of the lower main façade and an engaged shed-roofed wing spans the rear elevation.

Beginning in the 1930s and extending into the post-World War II era, newly constructed tenant housing tended to be one-story, hip-roofed buildings of frame or concrete block construction and were still placed away from the main house and among tobacco-related buildings. The ca. 1930 Davis Tenant House (PR0374) off of Lonnie Gentry Road exemplifies the hip-roofed, two-room-deep form with plain weatherboards and a metal tile roof. The ca. 1955 tenant house at the William and Ara Brooks Wilkerson Farm (PR0624) is a one-story, hip-roofed frame building, also two rooms deep, with vinyl siding, paired two-over-two horizontal-pane wood-sash windows, and a centered entrance sheltered by a hip-roofed porch on square posts. A ca. 1964 tenant house for the Wagstaff Farm (PR0558) is a front-gabled, concrete-block house with T-111 plywood in the gables and a shed-roofed front porch on square posts. The ca. 1965 tenant house for the Wagstaff Farm (PR0552) was moved to its current location from a site near Hyco Lake, part of a long trend in the county of relocating buildings for continued use. The one-story, hip-roofed, concrete-block house has a projecting, three-bay wing with a three-light-over-one-panel door sheltered by a hip-roofed porch.

Industry, Recreation, and Commerce

Rural Industry

Early twentieth-century rural industry remained focused on the processing of agricultural products, primarily flour and corn in local grist mills, which accounted for about one-quarter of the state's rural economy. Person County reported fifty-nine manufacturing entities in 1900, comprising less than one percent of the state's total manufacturing and employing about 180 people, around one percent of the county's total population.⁴¹² The number of grist mills in the county had decreased to twenty by 1920 because new automated milling processes resulted in more consistent and higher volume production.⁴¹³

⁴¹² Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1900, Census Reports Volume VIII, Manufactures Part II: States and Territories (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), 664, 666.

⁴¹³ Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1920, Volume IX, Manufactures (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1923), 1103.

New technologies, specifically gasoline-powered engines, led to the gradual replacement of nineteenth-century water-powered mills.⁴¹⁴ Without reliance on water power, twentieth-century mills could be constructed independent of natural waterways and closer to established communities. With the transition to gasoline-powered mills, many of the old mills were abandoned, leaving natural waterways to breach dams and return to their original courses. Constructed about 1916, the heavy-timber-framed mill at Woodsdale (PR0099) stood adjacent to the railroad right-of-way, its location chosen not as a power source, but for its access to markets.⁴¹⁵ During the same period, a number of prominent farmers in the Hurdle Mills/Bushy Fork area built mills or seed cleaners within their farmsteads. The ca. 1902 James Elijah & Ora O. Whitfield Farm (PR0626) featured a “home mill” with equipment located within a log building near the granary and livestock barns.

In 1920, the wood and stone dam that spanned the Flat River at Hurdle Mills burst, after which point Hurdle Mill (PR0089) transitioned to a “hit-and-miss” engine, so called for its pattern of firing, or hitting, when speeds were slow but skipping when speeds were high in order to maximize fuel efficiency.⁴¹⁶ By mid-century, the same type of engine was utilized at the mill at Woodsdale. In addition to milling grains, Hurdle Mill also operated a seed cleaner in a shed-roofed wing. Millhands would set aside some portion of the grain that was brought in so it could be cleaned by removing hulls, sticks, and any non-organic materials. According to Mike Dixon, who operates Hurdle Mill, the seed cleaning process reduced contaminants, prolonged the life of the seed by ensuring dry seed for storage, and reduced the spread of diseased seed.⁴¹⁷ The seed cleaners at Hurdle Mill and other local mills were open to farmers who brought their crops for milling, so a portion of the product to be milled would be reserved and cleaned for the next year’s crop. Cleaned seed may be certified by the North Carolina Crop Improvement Association, indicating that the seed is genetically pure, has a high germination rate, and is free of noxious weeds. Many but not all of the mills of this era incorporated a seed cleaner.

Rural Grist Mills and Seed Cleaners

About 1921, John Elmer Whitfield established a mill and seed cleaner (PR0647) on Robert Whitfield Road. The two-and-a-half-story, front-gabled, frame building is sheathed with vertical metal sheets, its scale differentiating it from the myriad farm

⁴¹⁴ Hobbs, *Exploring the Old Mills*, 2.

⁴¹⁵ While the original survey file dated the mill to 1890, the survey for Hurdle Mill noted the Woodsdale Mill was constructed in 1916.

⁴¹⁶ Personal Communication with Mike Dixon.

⁴¹⁷ Personal Communication with Mike Dixon.

outbuildings in the Hurdle Mills area. As Whitfield's business expanded, he constructed a new building in the Bushy Fork community to the north. The 1966 Bushy Fork Milling Company (PR0582) comprised a front-gabled, frame mill building, a separate two-story seed cleaner, a livestock barn, grain bins, scale house, and garage. This complex stood in direct competition with Hurdle Mill (PR0089) to the south.

About 1936, Walter L. Barton established a mill (PR0468) in the Timberlake community. The two-story mill, which operated into the 1980s, is of frame construction covered with metal sheeting and pierced by six-over-six wood-sash windows. On the interior, much of the heavy timber-framing is exposed. A raised platform on the south end of the building held the millstones. Frame channels running between the first and second floors carried the milled and ground materials. The presence of a seed cleaner on this site has not been determined.

By the mid-twentieth century, milling in the county became more centralized in part due to the construction of the Central Carolina Farmers Exchange (PR0301). Erected in 1956 on the north side of Roxboro and with easy access to the N&W Railway, its "location was prime for running the business of agricultural good transportation and resale."⁴¹⁸ The building served as an agricultural distribution and informational center to support the thriving agricultural economy of the county. In addition to milling and seed cleaning, the one-story, multi-bay building stored and distributed agricultural supplies to farmers in the region.

Recreation

With the increased prosperity brought by the 1890 arrival of the railroad, success of the tobacco market, and growth of downtown businesses, many residents had more time to seek recreational opportunities.⁴¹⁹ As natural gathering places, grist mills became some of the most popular recreation spots for rural communities. Local farmer James Earl Hester recalled in his memoir, "in some places, areas near the individual mills served as sort of a picnic area, and a place used for other recreational purposes."⁴²⁰ One example is Moore's Mill (PR0102), where a holding area adjacent to the sluice doubled as a swimming hole. A 1940 newspaper article noted that the mill had just been "overhauled" to include "electric lights, phone service, picnic grounds, and spring water," encouraging people to bring their fishing poles and "Fish While We Grind."⁴²¹ Yet another well-known spot for recreation was Barton's Millpond, which was utilized

⁴¹⁸ Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 60.

⁴¹⁹ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 152-153

⁴²⁰ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 30.

⁴²¹ "Pure Burr Ground Flour," *Person County Times*, 18 July 1940. (From Barry's research)

as a resort as early as the 1890s. Located about four miles north of downtown Roxboro and later known as Loch Lily for its bloom of white water lilies each summer, the lake was a popular place for swimming, fishing, boating, picnics, camping, and dances.⁴²² “Hardly a day passes that there is not a party spending the day at this delightful place,” reported *The Roxboro Courier* in 1895.⁴²³

In 1903, a private club was built on the northeast shore of Loch Lily (now known as Chub Lake) by Dr. E.J. Tucker, J.A. Long, M.R. Long, Charlie W. Long, and John B. Harvie. In 1937 it was incorporated as the Roxboro Country Club (PR0486), solidifying the lake’s position as the center of recreation in that part of the county.⁴²⁴ The country club occupied a wood and stone lodge completed in 1940 and offered “a modern and up to date club house, tennis courts, golf course, swimming, boating, and fishing.”⁴²⁵ The federal Works Projects Administration made improvements to the existing golf course and expanded it with an additional nine holes later that year, and in 1941, a watering system that pumped water from the lake to water the greens was installed.⁴²⁶ The club hosted golf tournaments, weddings and private parties, summer dances, steak supper fundraisers, and other events for members and their guests.⁴²⁷

Rural Commerce and Commercial Buildings

Many of the nineteenth-century country stores in the county continued to operate well into the twentieth century even as new stores were established. The prevalence of country stores can be attributed to the distance to large markets and poor road conditions, especially in the early years of the century. These local stores provided immediate neighbors with grocery staples and dry goods and in some cases also sold agricultural goods produced in the surrounding community.⁴²⁸ Small-scale stores dotted the Person County landscape, generally located at every major rural intersection as well as on farms, where landowners hoped to supplement their farming income with commerce. Country stores remain extant in the communities of Olive Hill,

⁴²² “Chub Lake was Person’s Crown Jewel for Many Years,” *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times Centennial*, Section C, page 16, PCMH.

⁴²³ *The Roxboro Courier*, June 26, 1895, Newspapers.com.

⁴²⁴ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 152-153.

⁴²⁵ “Three Concerns Given Charters,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, June 6, 1937, Newspapers.com; “Plans Completed for Roxboro Country Club,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, July 17, 1936, Newspapers.com.

⁴²⁶ “WPA Work Advances on Roxboro’s Links,” *[Greensboro] News and Record*, January 9, 1940, Newspapers.com; “Golf Watering System Approved at Roxboro,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, May 12, 1941, Newspapers.com.

⁴²⁷ “Roxboro Country Club to Have Dance Tonight,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, June 8, 1940, Newspapers.com; “Roxboro Country Club Arranges Two Meets,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, May 25, 1941, Newspapers.com.

⁴²⁸ Wright, Historical Sketch of Person County, 75-76.

Cunningham, Hurdle Mills, Woodsdale, Hesters Store, and at other crossroads in the county.

Stores typically formed not only the physical center of rural communities, but the social center as well. Person County resident Mrs. R. L. Wilburn recalled:

The Country Store was a gathering place for the community. Around the big old pot bellied red hot stove on winter nights, when the cold moaned, around the store would gather the men talking politics and wondering just as they do now what the country was coming to, swapping yarns, jokes, gossiping over a wee bit of scandal, chewing tobacco and hitting whatever aimed at; coming in for the mail, discussing the latest news about the gathering clouds and ominous thunder of European Wars.⁴²⁹

Often, the community nature of the store was embedded in its business practices, with farmers trading farm products for store goods or purchasing staples on credit to be paid after the harvest. Country stores regularly served as the post office, voting precinct, or rural health clinic.⁴³⁰

The archetypal rural store was constructed as a single story with a front-gable roof concealed on the façade by a parapet. The ca. 1900 Long's Store (PR0094) on Longs Store Road west of Roxboro illustrates this with paired replacement doors flanked by double-hung windows and sheltered by a later, pent roof below the parapet. In Hurdle Mills, the ca. 1900 Wilborn-Whitfield Store (PR0610, demolished) features an elongated form, a wide, three-bay, front-gabled, frame building flanked by shed-roofed wings and featuring an inset entrance. A stepped parapet lent height to the façade, which was sheltered by a deep, hip-roofed porch. Larger still was the store built ca. 1900 at the intersection of Ralph Winstead and John Brewer Roads (PR0119; demolished). The two-story, front-gabled building had a centered entrance flanked by display windows and sheltered by a later, gabled canopy. The parapeted façade identified the building's commercial use.

Among the most iconic of Person County's rural stores is the ca. 1900 Baynes Store (PR0467) on Gordonton Road, which was memorialized by photographer Dorothea Lange in the 1930s. The building has the same, front-gabled, two-story form as several late-nineteenth-century rural stores, complete with a double-leaf entrance centered on

⁴²⁹ Clippings, PCMH.

⁴³⁰ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 42; Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 43; Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 479.

the façade and flanked by windows and here expanded with one-story, shed-roofed wings, only one of which remains intact.

While crossroads stores were operated by full-time proprietors, stores established on farmsteads were operated by members of farm families as a means of supplementing their agricultural income. About 1925, Charlie Long established a store on his farm (PR0616) on Hurdle Mills and Lee Bradsher Roads. The front-gabled, frame building is typical of early-twentieth-century stores in its three-bay, parapeted façade sheltered by a hip-roofed canopy on trimmed and peeled logs that may have been installed in the mid-twentieth century to shelter gas pumps. In 1928, Joseph Coates opened a store on his farm (PR0452) on Cunningham Road in the far northern part of the county. The one-story, front-gabled building features a five-panel door centered on the gable end and flanked by six-over-six wood-sash windows. Here, too, a canopy sheltered gas pumps in the mid-twentieth century, but here it is a gabled extension of the primary roof and supported by square posts.

Many one-story rural stores were built well into the 1920s and 1930s and most were front gabled without a parapet. Person County examples include the ca. 1920 Young Store & House (PR0355) on NC 49 north of Roxboro, which has a hip-roofed porch on mid-twentieth-century metal posts sheltering the broad facade. An entrance flanked by twelve-light display windows identifies the commercial side of the building. The ca. 1920 Five Forks General Store (PR0541) on Morton Pulliam Road is more typical of the one-story, front-gabled store in its siting very close to the road and three-bay façade sheltered by an engaged porch. The ca. 1937 J. B. Holeman Store (PR0599) on NC 157 south of Roxboro differs from the other plain, gable-front examples in its one-and-a-half-story height and large front canopy that probably sheltered gas pumps.

In contrast to the prevalent frame rural commercial buildings, there are several examples of stores built with other materials. The ca. 1925 Cash Store (PR0677) on Mount Harmony Church Road is the county's earliest extant store with a brick exterior. It is otherwise typical in its front-gabled, three-bay form. In Timberlake, the oldest extant commercial building is the ca. 1936 Chambers Tobacco Warehouse & Store (PR0409), a one-story, front-gabled brick building. The scale and finish of the building, which includes a cast-concrete sign panel in the parapet, is more consistent with turn-of-the-twentieth-century commercial buildings in downtown Roxboro than with rural commercial buildings in the county. The two-story Horton's Store of ca. 1930 (PR0622) off of Poindexter Road is a rare example of a log store, its construction suggesting that it may have been built as a barn or packhouse and later modified for commercial use. The main level is log with an entrance centered on the façade, though without the

typical flanking windows. The frame upper story with windows on the façade is within a tall gambrel roof. The form is so atypical for a store that only the signage identifies its commercial use.

Religion and Education

Churches

Most of Person County's traditionally Black congregations organized in the post-Civil War era, though several churches formed or erected their first buildings in the early twentieth century. Bailey's Chapel AME Church (PR0449) formed in 1902 to serve the Woodsdale community. The congregation purchased an unused church building from a Methodist congregation and moved it to its current location in Woodsdale, where it was dedicated in 1913.⁴³¹ Located between Surl and Mt. Tirzah, southeast of Roxboro, Clegg's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church (PR0405) formed in the 1890s but erected their first church building in 1918.⁴³² North of Roxboro, High View Missionary Baptist Church formed in 1933, first meeting in the High View School. The congregation built a church with Sunday School classrooms off Virgilina Road in 1940; it was demolished in 2015 to build the current church.⁴³³

A number of White congregations were established in the first half of the twentieth century. New Baptist congregations included Rock Grove Baptist Church, in 1906, and Theresa Baptist Church in 1934.⁴³⁴ Helena Primitive Baptist Church, which organized just after the turn of the twentieth century, first met in the former Mt. Tirzah Methodist Church building, which they moved to Helena Moriah Road near Timberlake, and then erected a new sanctuary (PR0407) on that site in 1926.⁴³⁵

Around the turn of the century, a group of Methodists began meeting at the Warren's Grove one-room schoolhouse just southwest of Roxboro, where they were joined by Presbyterians, Baptists, and Primitive Baptists. Over time, members of these other denominations split off to form or join other churches. The Methodists continued to meet at the schoolhouse and formally established the Warren's Grove United Methodist Church in 1915.⁴³⁶ Woodsdale Methodist Church (not extant) formed around 1903 but dissolved in 1958.⁴³⁷ Methodist congregants in the Timberlake

⁴³¹ Black Churches and Ministers Binder, PCMH.

⁴³² Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume II, 29-30.

⁴³³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 76; NetOnline, "Historic Aerials Viewer," <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer/>.

⁴³⁴ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 97-98.

⁴³⁵ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume II, 30.

⁴³⁶ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 98-99; Historic Aerials Viewer.

⁴³⁷ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume II, 33.

(formerly Helena) community began meeting in homes, stores, and outdoor locations around the turn of the century and formed Helena Methodist Church in 1903.⁴³⁸

Rural Religious Architecture & Cemeteries

Congregations throughout the county erected new sanctuaries in the first half of the twentieth century, while others updated their earlier buildings with a brick veneer or added portico. For the most part, the new buildings followed the forms and styles utilized in the late nineteenth century, most notably the front-gabled form that was common for vernacular Greek Revival-, Gothic Revival-, and Colonial Revival-style buildings alike. This form was widely adopted by rural congregations, regardless of denomination. Materials and architectural details sometimes indicated the prosperity or priorities of the congregation.

Early-twentieth-century African American congregations regularly erected frame, front-gabled buildings, sometimes in seemingly remote locations. Most of these buildings exhibited no specific stylistic references in their detailing. The ca. 1912 Hester's Grove Baptist Church (PR0464) is among the oldest and most intact examples of this type. Constructed on Gordonton Road in western Person County, the small building retains original weatherboards, six-over-six wood-sash windows, and a metal roof. The ca. 1920 Union Grove Baptist Church (PR0637) on Union Grove Church Road is similar in form and fenestration but with the added features of a frame bell tower, a hip-roofed porch sheltering the lower façade, and a small apse on the rear elevation. The ca. 1921 Oby's Grove Church (PR0433) north of Satterfield Road is identical to Hester's Grove Baptist Church except that it has a side-gabled wing across the rear of the building.

The minimal, front-gabled form remained common for Primitive Baptist congregations well into the twentieth century. Stories Creek Primitive Baptist Church (PR0560) on Stories Creek Road is a turn-of-the-century example. Despite its updating about 1960 with the application of a brick veneer and the later addition of a side-gabled fellowship hall wing at the rear, the original ca. 1900 sanctuary retains its original front-gabled form, wide central entrance of double doors on the main façade, six bays of rectangular double-hung sash windows on the side elevations, and an unadorned interior marked by original pews. As late as 1948, the congregation of Flat River Primitive Baptist Church (PR0421) erected a simple rectangular frame building on Flat River Church Road with a broad gabled façade, flush eaves in the gable ends. The roof of the one-

⁴³⁸ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 75-76; Historic Aerials Viewer.

bay-deep entrance wing is slightly lower than that of the sanctuary; the columned portico sheltering the entrance may have been added later.

Gothic Revival Style

While many rural churches erected simple buildings lacking stylistic references, others chose to incorporate stylistic elements in their buildings, particularly features of the Gothic Revival style, which five of the surveyed churches from this period featured. Even denominations that favored plain buildings in basic forms sometimes display Gothic elements, as exhibited by the ca. 1926 Helena Primitive Baptist Church (PR0407) in Timberlake distinguished by pointed-arch windows. The late-nineteenth-century style remained popular well into the twentieth century as the use of stained glass became more common, and today this period of the style is known as Late Gothic Revival. This later iteration of the style is generally distinguished from the Gothic Revival by a more scholarly and literal application of Gothic elements, although this distinction is not so evident in rural churches.⁴³⁹

The square tower is a defining feature of the later iteration of the Gothic Revival style and their appearance in pairs, usually in different heights, is frequently associated with African American churches. The introduction to the county of paired towers occurred ca. 1890 with construction of the (former) First Baptist Church in Roxboro (PR0321). Two additional African American Baptist churches built in the early twentieth century also have square entrance towers with hip roofs. Like the (former) First Baptist Church, Lawson Chapel Baptist Church (PR0500, built in 1937 and brick-veneered in 1952) on Lawson Chapel Church Road has square towers flanking the front-gabled façade, but here the difference in height between the towers is subtle and an entrance is at the base of each tower. Designed by Reverend William H. Fuller and built by church member Hughie Jeffers with help from others among the congregation, the building features pointed-arch windows on the façade and side elevations. In contrast, Mount Bethel Baptist Church (PR0566, now ruinous) was built ca. 1920 with a single entrance tower projecting near a front corner of the small gable-front building with rectangular windows. Located on Broad Road just outside the Roxboro city limits, Mount Bethel Baptist is a rare example in the county of a frame church that was updated with a veneer of concrete block, applied in 1947. The material became popular in the mid-twentieth century because it could roughly replicate stone at a far lower cost.

While the square tower was regularly incorporated into African American churches, the use was not confined to them. Both the ca. 1906 Lea's Chapel United Methodist

⁴³⁹ Despite this distinction between the Gothic Revival and Late-Gothic Revival styles, the phrase *Gothic Revival* is used universally throughout the remainder of this report.

Church (PR0528) on US 158 west of Roxboro and the ca. 1910 Concord United Methodist Church (PR0017) on Concord Church Road, built by congregations that originally were exclusively White, feature broad front-gabled forms, the former with a single square entrance tower, the later flanked by square towers of different heights. Doors, windows, and vents on the Concord United Methodist Church are all set within the hallmark Gothic, or pointed, arch.

Colonial Revival Style

By the 1920s and 1930s, the Colonial Revival style had largely usurped the Gothic Revival style as the preferred mode for new and renovated rural churches with four examples of the style documented in the county. Characterized by front-gabled forms with brick veneers, rectangular multi-light windows, double-leaf entrances with classical surrounds, and pedimented porticos on square or round columns, the style was a reference to Colonial-era buildings, though with classical detail not often found on its predecessors. Salem United Methodist Church (PR0465), built ca. 1920 on Salem Church Road and brick-veneered in the 1950s, is typical in its front-gabled sanctuary simply adorned with gable returns. The projecting entrance bay is appropriate to the style in its central placement and pedimented façade. Later flanking wings repeat the front-gabled form, resulting in an overall symmetrical complex.

A number of early-twentieth-century churches incorporated elements of both the Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival styles, thereby illustrating both the gradual transition between the styles and the fluidity with which congregations utilized stylistic elements to suit their individual tastes and preferences. As built ca. 1932, Antioch Baptist Church (PR0391) on Antioch Church Road was a frame front-gabled building with a side-gabled rear wing that gave the church a T-shaped footprint. The gables were pedimented and the windows were pointed-arched, elements that were retained when all sections of the building were expanded and brick-veneered in the 1960s. The 1933 Allensville United Methodist Church (PR0487) on Dennys Store Road is a particularly distinctive example of the amalgamation of the Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival styles and the only church in rural Person County with a stone exterior. The building also is the only early twentieth-century church in rural Person County documented as designed by an architect. Howard N. Haines, an architect based in Durham and a Duke University religion professor known as an authority on church architecture, designed the church and oversaw its construction by the congregation using the area's flint stone that they gathered by hand.⁴⁴⁰ Multi-paned pointed-arch

⁴⁴⁰ "Marshall-Dixon House," Open Durham, <https://www.opendurham.org/buildings/marshall-dickson-house>, accessed July 1, 2026; A History of Allensville United Methodist Church, 1855-2010.

windows, stone buttresses, and a three-part belfry and steeple also distinguish the building. Constructed only a few years later, when the Gothic Revival style was waning in rural Person County, the 1938 Mount Harmony Baptist Church (PR0376) on Mount Harmony Church Road represents a textbook example of the Colonial Revival style in its rectangular stained-glass windows, a molded surround with broken pediment over the entrance, and a front-gabled portico.

Church Cemeteries

While family cemeteries remained in use throughout the twentieth century, a more common option for county residents, especially those who didn't own land, was the rural church cemetery. By the late nineteenth century, rural churches throughout the county had associated graveyards, their scale dependent on the size, prosperity, and longevity of the congregation. Surl Primitive Baptist Church (PR0401) on US 158 east of Roxboro contains at least 669 burials dating from 1888 to the present on nearly six acres of land. Conversely, Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church (PR0472) on Shiloh Church Road contains only ninety burials dating from 1880 to 2019. Most church cemeteries were located to the side or rear of the church, with stones arranged in neat rows, sometimes organized into family plots and usually facing east. If the congregation had more available land, the cemetery was sometimes located across the street or on several adjacent parcels indicating the expansion of the cemetery tract over time.

In some instances, the cemeteries predate the congregations, indicating they may have been established as family cemeteries on land later acquired by the church. A cemetery to the southwest of the ca. 1920 Mount Bethel Baptist Church (PR0566) may have been initiated as a family cemetery. Marked as the Perry Cemetery, it is currently owned (along with the church) by members of the Perry family and approximately one-third of the sixty-three marked graves bear the Perry name. However, the wide variety of family names and the proximity to the church indicate it was likely used for the broader African American community associated with the church.

Early-Twentieth Century Rural Schools

In the early twentieth century, much of the funding for public schools in Person County came from the NL&D Railroad, the county's highest taxpayer, but taxes were insufficient to cover the expense to operate the schools. Families were responsible for purchasing books, resulting in some students going without books, at least until the tobacco crop was sold. Most rural schools operated only six months out of the year, with school schedules heavily impacted by the planting and harvesting seasons.⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴¹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume II, 38-40.

Rural Schools for White Children

Dr. John C. Terrell recognized the challenges in education in the post-Civil War South and acted in his will to provide for public education for White students throughout Person County. Upon his death in 1897, Terrell bequeathed his estate to the school districts of the county “to build school houses for the white children thereof” and to the county for the benefit of public schools. Settlement of the Terrell estate in 1900 created the Terrell Fund, which provided appropriations to build 27 schools for White children in rural Person County and \$55,000 to be used as an endowment with the interest supporting the operations of public schools.⁴⁴²

One of the first schools to be constructed with the Fund’s proceeds was the Allen School near Bushy Fork, which replaced an earlier school of the same name in 1900. The school continued to operate until it was consolidated with the Bushy Fork School and is no longer extant.⁴⁴³ The largest school built using the Terrell Fund was the Terrell School (PR0117; demolished) in the far north of the county, near Dr. Terrell’s homeplace. Stylistically, the side-gabled frame building displayed the symmetry of the Colonial Revival style in its form and fenestration, though with modest detailing. It featured grouped nine-over-nine wood-sash windows to light the classrooms and a projecting, front-gabled entrance bay centered on the façade; the bay contained paired six-light-over-one-panel doors flanked by four-light sidelights and sheltered by a shallow roof on brackets. An auditorium extended from the rear of the building and no doubt also accommodated social functions in the rural community. The only extant Terrell Fund school is the ca. 1920 Sol O’Briant School (PR0399) on Mollie Mooney Road, which replaced an earlier O’Briant School and was named for its long-time teacher. The building is a one-story, L-plan school with plain weatherboards, six-over-six wood-sash windows, and a metal roof. The interior, like that of the Terrell School, was sheathed with beadboard. The earnings from the investment of the proceeds from the sale of John C. Terrell’s farm continued to support the Terrell Fund to the present day.⁴⁴⁴

A number of large school campuses were established for White children in the early to mid-twentieth century. The Bushy Fork community worked together to cut logs, haul sawn wood to a site donated by a local resident, and fund the labor to construct a one-room school building in 1907. The school was located between Roseville and Hester’s Store, about three miles from Bushy Fork, and served both elementary and high school

⁴⁴² *The Roxboro Courier*, January 10, 1900, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁴³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume II, 38.

⁴⁴⁴ Person County Board of Education, “Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024,” 28, https://files-backend.assets.thrillshare.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/3827/Pcsd/2de72f14-65f0-4e6b-9b4d-dc28b1466c6c/Year_End_June_30_2024.pdf.

students. With seventy students in attendance during the first year and enrollment increasing annually, the building was expanded several times. By 1916, the school had added another classroom and an auditorium. In 1923 a high school annex was built adjacent to the original building. With federal assistance from the Work Progress Administration, a new school building was constructed closer to the Bushy Fork community in 1936 (no longer standing; the site is now Bushy Fork Park (PR0570)). The newest portion of the earlier school was renovated for use as a dwelling and most of the rest of the building was demolished.⁴⁴⁵

Helena High School, which began as a two-story graded school with four classrooms and an auditorium, opened in Timberlake in 1918. The school was expanded in 1922 with three high school classrooms, a laboratory, and a library. By 1930, physical education had been added to the curriculum and the first athletic teams had formed; the first gymnasium was constructed in 1932. Federal Public Works Administration funds provided 55 percent of the construction cost of a replacement school building (PR0300) in 1936-1937, around the time business and agriculture were added to the curriculum. In 1939, the 1932 gymnasium was demolished and replaced with the current building. Student organizations formed around 1940 included a debate club, glee club, Future Farmers of America, 4-H, Boy Scouts, and others. Soon after, the Parent-Teacher Association began operating a cafeteria.⁴⁴⁶

The 1936-1937 Helena High School and 1936 Bushy Fork School were architecturally very similar in appearance. Both schools were one-story brick buildings with Colonial Revival-style detailing. The Colonial Revival style was especially popular for schools and public buildings erected in the 1930s with federal funding made available by New Deal programs.⁴⁴⁷ Many of these buildings were designed in classical revival styles intended to emphasize "an orderly American past."⁴⁴⁸ Colonial Revival-style features of the Helena and Bushy Fork schools included symmetrical facades with evenly spaced windows, brick quoins at the corners, louvered cupolas, and central projecting entrance bays with the inset doors surrounded by a classical surround with broken pediments.

In 1939, possibly with federal funding, a new one-story, side-gabled, brick building was constructed at Allensville Elementary School (no longer extant) to house both a

⁴⁴⁵ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 104; "Bushy Fork School Opened Its Doors in 1908," *The Roxboro Courier: Sesquicentennial Edition*, August 5, 1911, DigitalNC.

⁴⁴⁶ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 110-111; Rickey Walker, "Helena School Has Respectable History," Unidentified Newspaper Clipping, June 9, 1969, "Schools" Vertical File, Person County Library, Roxboro.

⁴⁴⁷ HCHS, Halifax County, 51.

⁴⁴⁸ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 526.

cafeteria and a community house. Alumnus James Earl Hester attended the school after the new cafeteria had been built, recalling “the children in our family couldn’t afford to pay for our meals there, but Mabel, the lunchroom director, allowed my mother to send tomato juice, canned vegetables, and things of that nature to the school in payment for our meals.” The side-gabled building with regularly spaced windows was Colonial Revival-style in its form and symmetrical façade, though devoid of any applied architectural ornamentation. This side-gabled form remained common for cafeterias, agricultural buildings, and canneries constructed on school campuses into the 1960s, as indicated by the agricultural building erected at Bethel Hill School in 1960.

One of largest campuses and longest operating schools in rural Person County is Bethel Hill School (PR0443, today Bethel Hill Charter School), which was preceded by the Bethel Hill Academy and the Bethel Hill Institute, both private schools. Bethel Hill School was completed in 1920 to serve both elementary and high school students. Moses Jones, a resident of the community and a member of the school board, donated the land and materials for the school.⁴⁴⁹ It is an imposing and well-preserved two-story, hip-roofed brick building with Spanish Revival-style influences including deep eaves marked with triangular braces, a round-arch opening marking the inset central entrance, and a stepped and gabled parapet above the entrance bay. On the interior, hallways retain original wood floors and beadboard wainscots; a segmental arch with paneled pilasters at the corners marks the intersection of the entrance hall with the double-loaded corridor.

Initially the school lacked running water, indoor toilets, and a telephone and the Delco plant providing electricity was unreliable. The 1920 elementary building was remodeled in 1940 with indoor restrooms, water fountains, five new classrooms, and a music room. Agriculture was added to the curriculum, and by the late 1920s, Bethel Hill School was the only school in the county to have a dedicated agriculture teacher. When enrollment, which included a number of students from Halifax County, Virginia, outgrew the 1920 building, a high school was built on the campus in 1947, and the original building was dedicated to the elementary grades. Over time, a cafeteria, gymnasium, classroom buildings, and the agricultural building noted above were erected on the campus, and by 2013 it comprised ten buildings.

Rural Schools for Black Children

Education for rural Black children was much improved in the 1920s thanks to the Rosenwald Fund. Established by Julius Rosenwald, a Jewish philanthropist from

⁴⁴⁹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 103-104; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County*, Volume II, 38.

Chicago, the fund provided matching grants to build public schools for Black children throughout the South. Rosenwald believed that education was necessary for social and economic uplift and that the quality of the school building directly impacted the quality of education. In partnership with Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee Institute, the Rosenwald Fund provided standardized construction plans for schools varying in size from one to twelve (or more) teachers. Standard grants were awarded based on the size of the school, and investment by both the Black community and the local school board was required. The Rosenwald Fund also developed plans for shop buildings, teacher homes, and even privies.⁴⁵⁰ By the end of the Fund's school-building program in 1932, more than 5,300 schools had been built for Black children across the South. With approximately 820 projects, North Carolina had more Rosenwald schools than any other state.

In Person County, seven school buildings were built with assistance from the Rosenwald Fund. The first was the Mill Creek School, a two-teacher type built during the 1919-1920 funding year and destroyed by fire in 1923. It was replaced by a three-teacher school in 1923-1924, known as the Lee Jeffers School, also supported by the Rosenwald Fund. The two-teacher Lee-Clay School was built near Roxboro in 1921-1922, and the six-teacher Olive Hill School was built in 1922-1923, followed by the three-teacher Bethel Hill School in 1923-1924. The sixteen-teacher Roxboro School was built in 1929-1930, and a six-room, two-teacher shop building was added the following year.⁴⁵¹

Of the seven Rosenwald-funded school buildings built in Person County, only the ca. 1922 Lee Clay School (PR0679) remains extant in a wooded area on the east side of US 501 north of Roxboro.⁴⁵² The school followed Rosenwald Floor Plan No. 20 for a Two-Teacher Community School.⁴⁵³ The plans required large windows and specified how the building should be oriented to maximize natural light on the interior. School buildings included cloak rooms to ensure clutter-free learning spaces; two-teacher schools were built with a small "industrial room" wing and a removable partition between the classroom to facilitate collaboration and accommodate community events; and most of the schools with more than three teachers had auditoriums. Now ruinous,

⁴⁵⁰ Julius Rosenwald Fund, *Community School Plans* (Nashville, TN: Julius Rosenwald Fund, 1931).

⁴⁵¹ Rosenwald Fund Collection, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015070326486&seq=5>.

⁴⁵² North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, "Reports: Rosenwald School Building in North Carolina from the Beginning until July 1, 1930," *North Carolina Digital Collections*, <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/reports-rosenwald-school-building-in-north-carolina-from-the-beginning-until-july-1-1930/973907?item=973934>.

⁴⁵³ Julius Rosenwald Fund, *Community School Plans*.

the Lee-Clay School retains the typical side-gabled form with a projecting, front-gabled industrial room centered on the façade.

Black schools were built in other communities with funding obtained through local philanthropic efforts. Just north of Roxboro, in the small community of Woodsdale, local African American educator Ellis Walter Brooks constructed a two-story, six-room, frame school for the education of Black students. The ca. 1925 Woodsdale School (PR0512, ruinous) on Woodsdale Road featured plain weatherboards, two-over-two wood-sash windows, and a 5V metal roof. The school building also served as a Masonic Lodge. The school closed in 1950 when the students were reassigned to the newly completed Woodland Elementary School (PR0549) on Semora Road.

North Carolina's 1907 Rural High School Law appropriated funding to establish at least one public high school in each county in the state, yet by the 1920s, Person County still lacked a public high school for Black students. A committee of three African Americans from the local Black teachers' association, with assistance from Person County Schools superintendent J.A. Beam, made regular visits to the school board over a three-year period to request a high school for Black students, which was finally granted in 1925.

It was decided that the Olive Hill Institute, funded with a Rosenwald grant in 1922, would serve as the new high school. It opened in the fall of 1925, serving grades 1 through 11. The school lacked many of the amenities of White schools. Hilda Satterfield, the first African American elected to the county board of education, recalled: "There was no library, no laboratory or equipment for science, no room or equipment for vocational courses, and neither were there necessary classroom supplies including supplementary reading materials, chalk erasers, carboard, paper, etc."⁴⁵⁴ In 1929, the high school program was moved to Roxboro where it initially operated in the former Cedar Grove Academy, a private Black high school that operated for a few years in the 1920s, before the Person County Training School was completed in 1930. Olive Hill Institute continued to serve as an elementary school.⁴⁵⁵ None of these buildings remain standing.

Several school reforms affecting both White and Black students were enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1937. A State School Commission was formed to oversee appropriations supporting an extension of the school term from six to eight months in all districts and funding for salaries of all school employees, purchase of

⁴⁵⁴ Hilda Fountain Satterfield, "The History of the First Public High School for Negroes in Person County," reprinted in Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 105-110.

⁴⁵⁵ Satterfield, "First Public High School for Negroes"; "Negroes Carry Fine Project to Success," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, September 18, 1929, Newspapers.com.

school supplies, and school-related transportation. School district committees were formalized and given the responsibilities of electing principals, appointing teachers, managing employment contracts, and overseeing care of the school property. Public schools were required to provide transportation for students, with buses operated by trained drivers and bus routes to include all students residing more than one-and-a-half miles from the school and extending outward such that no student had to travel more than one mile to reach a bus stop. New construction and repairs to school buildings were to be overseen by the County Board of Education and require a bidding process and contracting with the county, rather than directly with the district. A Textbook Commission was formed to select required books for major subjects – including arithmetic, language and grammar, history and geography – and approve books for electives and minor subjects, while a Textbook Purchase and Rental Commission was appointed to purchase and distribute selected textbooks, establish a standard rental fee for books, and provide books free of charge as needed. The legislation also set the enrollment age at six years old, authorized school districts to levy taxes as needed, permitted the establishment of cafeterias to sell lunches, and appropriated funding for adult education.⁴⁵⁶

In spite of these efforts to improve the quality of education for North Carolina's children, the inherent inequality of racially segregated facilities persisted. The 1937 reforms did include the appointment of a commission to "make a thorough study of the State's program for colored schools, including elementary, secondary, vocational, and high education; and make such recommendations as to it may seem right and proper to the Governor of the State of North Carolina, and the next General Assembly." However, the legislation also specified that, "Books shall not be interchangeable between the white and colored schools, but shall continue to be used by the race first using same."⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁶ Publication No. 196: School Legislation Enacted by the General Assembly of North Carolina, Session 1937 and Prior Sessions (Raleigh: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, no date).

⁴⁵⁷ Publication No. 196: School Legislation, 1937.

ROXBORO IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (CA. 1900 – CA. 1950)

Roxboro grew rapidly in the early twentieth century. Fueled by the arrival of the railroad, the population increased from 421 residents in 1890 to 1,021 by 1900. By 1930, the population had reached 3,657, due in large part to the establishment and dramatic growth of the textile industry, especially during World War I. To support the growing population, infrastructure was expanded, new neighborhoods and schools were built, and new businesses and churches were established.

Public Works

The editors of *The Roxboro Courier* frequently published musings about improvements they felt would benefit Roxboro and bring more business and industry to the city. Support for electrification began relatively early, with the editors noting the need for a street lighting system in 1891. “Roxboro is getting most too big to depend altogether on the moon for street lights,” they quipped.⁴⁵⁸ Progress was slow, however, and in 1908, the newspaper bemoaned the absence of a power plant, writing, “Did you ever think what a great step forward it would be if we had a good electric light plant?”⁴⁵⁹ A year later, the newspaper reported that the Town Commissioners had approved the incorporation of Roxboro Light & Power Company by prominent Roxboro residents Judge J.C. Pass, businessmen J.A. Long, Jr., and M.R. Long, and Dr. R.J. Teague.⁴⁶⁰ “This is one of the most interesting items that we have had to publish in a long time,” said the editors.⁴⁶¹ The Carolina Light & Power Company plant opened in April 1910 and after just two months had “furnished 1100 lights to private users.”⁴⁶² In 1914, the company built power lines in the city, and in 1925 they purchased the Roxboro Light and Power Company.⁴⁶³

A reliable water supply was also needed to serve the growing twentieth-century population of Roxboro. Criticisms about the lack of a city-wide water system began as

⁴⁵⁸ *The Roxboro Courier*, October 22, 1891, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁵⁹ *The Roxboro Courier*, February 5, 1908, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁶⁰ “Four Charters Yesterday,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, December 7, 1909, Newspapers.com; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 54-55.

⁴⁶¹ “This is Good News,” *The Roxboro Courier*, November 10, 1909, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁶² *The Roxboro Courier*, July 13, 1910, Newspapers.com; “The Roxboro Light and Power Co’s Magnificent Plant,” *The Roxboro Courier*, June 15, 1910, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁶³ “Better Light System for Town of Roxboro,” *[Greensboro] News and Record*, May 6, 1914, Newspapers.com; *[Greensboro] News and Record*, January 4, 1925, Newspapers.com.

early as 1886. In reporting on the construction of waterworks in other North Carolina towns, *The Roxboro Courier* observed, “Roxboro continues to wait for the inevitable, without anything to fight a fire with. It will be too late after a fire has come.”⁴⁶⁴ The waterworks facility opened December of the following year.⁴⁶⁵ The water supply was improved in 1924 with the construction of the Roxboro Filter Plant (PR0735) at 701 Franklin Street in Roxboro and the City Lake Dam and Pumphouse (PR0542), just northwest of town. The latter featured a concrete and earthen dam, the resulting reservoir created by the dam and known as Roxboro Lake, and a small brick pumphouse on the east side of the reservoir. The site was altered in 1955 when a second dam was constructed to the north to enlarge the reservoir from 165 million gallons to 800 million gallons, the water then pumped to the 1953 Roxboro Water Works (PR0485), located on Chub Lake Road between the reservoir and Roxboro.⁴⁶⁶

Industry

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Roxboro leaders invested in the state’s burgeoning textile industry. With the introduction of steam engines following the Civil War, industries could locate away from power-providing waterways and instead occupy sites near established transportation networks in urban areas.⁴⁶⁷ Only about 16 percent of North Carolina textile mills utilized steam power in 1880, increasing to 64 percent by the turn of the century. As the textile industry grew, facilitated by the expansion of railroads and widespread use of steam power, the number of textile workers in North Carolina increased from 32,000 in 1900 to 125,000 in 1930, and this rapid expansion of the industry resulted in the corresponding expansion of urban areas, including Roxboro.⁴⁶⁸

Another factor in the early twentieth-century growth of the textile industry in North Carolina was the advocacy of influential businessmen like James Buchanan Duke of Durham, founder of the American Tobacco Company and president of Southern Power Company (now Duke Energy). Historian Mildred Gwen Andrews explains:

There was enormous traffic and expense in shipping greige goods north
(at one freight rate) to be finished and then back south (at a higher

⁴⁶⁴ *The Roxboro Courier*, March 25, 1896, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁶⁵ *The Roxboro Courier*, December 15, 1897, Newspapers.com; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 147.

⁴⁶⁶ “1954 – A year of progress,” *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times Centennial*, Section G, page 2, PCMH; “School facilities get attention; hurricane aids water supply in 1955,” *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times Centennial*, Section G, page 3, PCMH.

⁴⁶⁷ Brent Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina: A History* (Raleigh, NC: Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1992), 11, 14.

⁴⁶⁸ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 435; Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 29, 32.

freight rate) or to the west to be sold. This shuffling of millions of yards of cloth and two-way freight costs didn't make sense to Duke. He was actively supporting Southern mill expansion and lending financial assistance. The more mills operating, the more transmission power that could be sold. The less costly the retail market, the more goods that could be sold. He figured that these round-trip freight costs added a big percentage to the final retail price and could be eliminated to a considerable degree.⁴⁶⁹

In Roxboro, Duke and his business partners invested in Roxboro Cotton Mills (PR0219) and is believed to have invested in Longhurst Mills (PR0774) as well.

World War I fueled the textile industry, not only in North Carolina but across the country. Prior to the United States entering the war, American companies were providing war-related textiles to European allies. In 1914, the Raleigh *News and Observer* reported that the "outlook is good for cotton mills. . . numbers of cotton mills in South are running full time on materials for blankets and sheetings for English Army with work ahead for several months."⁴⁷⁰ Another North Carolina newspaper featured the headline, "Europe's Struggling Armies Look To The United States For Food and Clothing – Larger Demand To Come – Orders For Underwear, Cotton Sheets, Sweater Coats, Blankets, Shoes, Harness, Auto Frames, and Trucks Are Showered Onto United States Manufacturers." The newspaper editors went on to describe orders for textiles to be sent to the English and French governments.⁴⁷¹ After the United States entered the war in 1917, trade with Europe came to a standstill, leaving United States companies to fill production gaps by providing the U.S. military with blankets, clothing, backpacks, and other textile products during the war.⁴⁷² Statewide, textile production more than doubled from 1914 to 1921, and by 1923, North Carolina was the leading textile producer in the nation.⁴⁷³

⁴⁶⁹ Mildred Gwin Andrews, *The Men and the Mills: A History of the Southern Textile Industry* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 64.

⁴⁷⁰ "Outlook is Good for Cotton Mills," *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, October 10, 1914, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁷¹ "Forcing Business Jams American Mills," *Lincoln [County, NC] Times-News*, October 20, 1914, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁷² Twelfth Census, Volume V, Part I, lxxi-lxxii.

⁴⁷³ Jane Shaw Stroup, "The Textile Industry in North Carolina," *North Carolina History Project*, <https://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/the-textile-industry-in-north-carolina/>; Brent Glass, et. al., "Textiles," NCpedia, State Library of North Carolina, 2006, <https://www.ncpedia.org/textiles-part-2-rise-north-carolina>; Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 398, 492, 496.

The steady employment, and steady paychecks offered by Roxboro's textile mills attracted many farm families, especially during the peak of war production.⁴⁷⁴ Historian Brent Glass explains that many began to leave the farms in favor of factory work because they "sought security and stability in what they referred to as 'public work' – work away from the farm that paid a wage, however meager that wage may be."⁴⁷⁵ For many, this was the first time they, or anyone in their family, had taken jobs for wages.⁴⁷⁶ In 1900, about 90 percent of the state's population lived in rural areas and about one-quarter was employed in agriculture, while less than four percent were employed in manufacturing.⁴⁷⁷ By 1920, 80 percent of the state's population lived in rural areas and by 1940 the percentage had dropped to 70.⁴⁷⁸ At the same time, eleven percent of North Carolinians were employed in agriculture and nine percent in manufacturing.⁴⁷⁹ Person County figures were similar in 1940, with seventeen percent of residents employed in agriculture and about seven percent in manufacturing, nearly all of whom worked in the textile industry.⁴⁸⁰

Textile Mills

Roxboro Cotton Mills (PR0219) was incorporated in 1899 by Colonel John S. Cunningham.⁴⁸¹ J.A. Long was elected the company's first president and Cunningham served on the board of directors.⁴⁸² The first of Roxboro's textile mills, it was enthusiastically anticipated by the community. "It is an acknowledged fact that the new enterprise means much for this place, and marks an era of progress that our hustling town has never yet attained," praised one local newspaper.⁴⁸³ The mill was completed in October 1899 and the machinery installed in early 1900. The mill opened for business by July, employing 60 to 75 people at 5,000 spindles making high grade cotton yarn for weaving fabric.⁴⁸⁴ In 1902, the mill began operating multiple shifts to keep operations running day and night, and the mill was expanded in 1904 to increase

⁴⁷⁴ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 19; Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 388.

⁴⁷⁵ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 19.

⁴⁷⁶ Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 388.

⁴⁷⁷ Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census, Population Volume II, Part 5: New York-Oregon* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1943), 265.

⁴⁷⁸ Sixteenth Census, Volume II, Part 5, 265.

⁴⁷⁹ Sixteenth Census, Volume II, Part 5, 289.

⁴⁸⁰ Sixteenth Census, Volume II, Part 5, 331.

⁴⁸¹ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 157-158, 184; "Bills Passed," March 5, 1899, *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, March 9, 1899, Newspapers.com; "Roxboro Cotton Mill," *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, March 9, 1899, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁸² "Person Pencilings," *The Durham Sun*, May 4, 1899, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁸³ "Roxboro Ripplings: The New Cotton Mill – Other Notes of Interest," *The Durham Sun*, March 16, 1899, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁸⁴ *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, October 5, 1899, Newspapers.com; "Cotton Mill Machinery Being Placed," *The [Raleigh] Morning Post*, April 27, 1900, Newspapers.com; "The Roxboro Cotton Mill," *The Roxboro Courier*, July 24, 1900, Newspapers.com.

production by about 60 percent.⁴⁸⁵ The initial 5,000 spindles were increased to 23,200 spindles by 1917. A mill village (PR0682) extending east from the mill provided housing for employees and included a church and school by the 1920s.⁴⁸⁶

In 1907, Roxboro Cotton Mills constructed a second plant, known first as Roxboro Cotton Mills #2, then as Jalong, and finally as Longhurst Mills (PR0774).⁴⁸⁷ Plans for the new mill began in 1906, when the company purchased land about two miles north of the Person County Courthouse from J.C. Pass.⁴⁸⁸ The mill was expected to employ 200 to 300 workers operating 10,000 spindles in the production of yarns. Plans for the mill also included an engine and boiler house, a warehouse, and a village (PR0658) housing 50 workers.⁴⁸⁹ By 1917, the village included a church (PR0664), an elementary school (not extant) for the benefit of employees and their families, and by 1925 included forty-five houses.⁴⁹⁰

By 1930, four textile mills were operating in Roxboro, and textile production was the primary industry and largest employer in the city. In 1923, the A.T. Baker Company based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, established a textile mill about one-half mile north of the Longhurst Mills.⁴⁹¹ At the same time, Longhurst Mills was doubled in size, likely to provide yarn to the A. T. Baker Mill to make cloth.⁴⁹² After the Baker Company was acquired by Philadelphia-based textile company Collins and Aikman Manufacturing in 1927, the Baker Mill began producing velour for furniture, draperies, and vehicle upholstery and became known as Ca-Vel Mills (PR0801), a merging of "Collins," "Aikman," and "velour."⁴⁹³ Like the Roxboro and Longhurst cotton mills, Ca-Vel constructed a village of worker housing adjacent to its mill.

The smallest of Roxboro's four textile mills, Somerset Mill (PR0794), was also the last to be constructed. Somerset Mills, Inc., was incorporated in 1925 by W.H. Harris, J.C. Pass, C.H. Hunter, E.E. Bradsher, and D.S. Brooks. The mill was completed south of

⁴⁸⁵ *The Roxboro Courier*, January 8, 1902, Newspapers.com; "Enlarging Roxboro Mills," *The Charlotte Observer*, August 10, 1904, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁸⁶ "Roxboro and Longhurst Cotton Mills," *The Roxboro Courier*, January 31, 1917, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁸⁷ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 157-158, 184.

⁴⁸⁸ "The New Cotton Mill," *The Roxboro Courier*, April 18, 1906, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁸⁹ "The New Cotton Mill," *The Roxboro Courier*, April 18, 1906, Newspapers.com; "Banquet at Roxboro," *The Charlotte Observer*, March 28, 1907, Newspapers.com; "Progress on Roxboro Cotton Mill," *Boston [Massachusetts] Evening Transcript*, April 9, 1907, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁹⁰ "The Roxboro and Longhurst Cotton Mills."

⁴⁹¹ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 157-158, 184; "New Manufacturing Plant for Roxboro," *[Greensboro] News and Record*, June 23, 1923, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁹² "Roxboro Mill Complete Big Addition, Is a Model Plant," *[Greensboro] News and Record*, September 2, 1923, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁹³ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 157-158, 184; "Piedmont Textile Section," *The Charlotte Observer*, May 31, 1927, Newspapers.com.

Roxboro in 1926 and a single row of mill housing (PR0676) was built east of the mill at the same time. The mill produced towels, and by 1931 an addition that doubled its size and manufacturing capacity was completed. In 1939, towels produced at Somerset Mills were ordered as a Christmas present for the First Family and monogrammed with the initials “F.D.R.”⁴⁹⁴ In addition to textile production, the mill served as a center of the Somerset community, and in the 1940s it was used by the Person County Health Department vaccination clinic as a location where inoculations against typhoid fever, smallpox, diphtheria, and whooping cough were given to local residents.⁴⁹⁵

During World War II, production at Roxboro Cotton Mills, Longhurst Mills, and CaVel Mills increased dramatically. Roxboro’s textile plants, along with those in nearby Durham and Hillsborough, manufactured uniforms, underwear, barracks bags, sleeping bags, tents, tarps, money belts, mosquito netting, sheets, and bandages for the United States military.⁴⁹⁶ Under orders from the War Manpower Commission, a federal agency established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to address labor shortages during the war, the three textile mills shifted to a forty-eight-hour workweek. According to the commission, the extended workweek was put in place for the textile, steel, lumber, mining, aircraft, and shipbuilding industries to achieve “fuller utilization of our manpower to meet requirements of our armed forces.”⁴⁹⁷

Workers also contributed to the war effort through payroll reduction programs that redirected wages into war bonds. In 1942, CaVel Mills was awarded a Minute Man banner, given by the United States Treasury in recognition of meeting or exceeding bond sales goals. Ninety percent of the employees at the plant subscribed to war bonds through the company’s payroll reduction plan. The award was presented by Lieutenant Colonel Francis H. Kuhn of Camp Butner, a Granville County World War II training facility that extended into southeastern Person County. The public ceremony was attended by employees, company officials, and residents of Roxboro.⁴⁹⁸

Industrial Architecture

The expansion of the textile industry in North Carolina, and especially the introduction of steam-powered mills, corresponds with the emerging popularity of the Italianate style. Historian Catherine Bishir notes that, “trends in factory architecture and

⁴⁹⁴ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 157-158, 184; “Somerset Mill,” File PR0794, NCHPO.

⁴⁹⁵ “Vaccination Schedule is Listed in Person,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, May 21, 1943, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁹⁶ “Textile Plants Go On 48-Hour Week,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, April 28, 1944, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁹⁷ “Textile Plants Go On 48-Hour Week.”

⁴⁹⁸ “War Bond Flag Given to Plant at Roxboro,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, December 21, 1942, Newspapers.com.

industrial housing that had begun in the 1870s and 1880s and continued through the 1920s reached their fullest development during the period from about 1890 to 1910.”⁴⁹⁹ Most of the industrial buildings erected in the North Carolina Piedmont from 1880 to 1920 were constructed with exterior walls of brick due to its fire-resistance properties and displayed Romanesque or Italianate detailing that included round- and segmental-arched door and window openings, corbelled beltcourses and cornices, and a low-sloped hipped roof on the towers. The 1899 Roxboro Cotton Mill (PR0219) at 115 Lake Drive exemplifies this building type in its display of Italianate-style influences including segmental-arched window and door openings and a low-sloped gable roof with brackets at the eaves. Mills of this era usually incorporated at least one tower, which housed stairs in multi-storied buildings that could be closed off from the main structure in the event of a fire and also supported a water tank for a sprinkler system. “Such measures were crucial in a factory that processed highly combustible cotton and where workers and machinery operated in lint-filled air.” The decorative towers and brick construction were for more than just fire-suppression; towered brick buildings had a sense of permanence and symbolized the financial strength of the company, its prominence within the community, and the forward-thinking sensibilities of the mill owners.

Roxboro Cotton Mill also illustrates the slow-burning heavy timber frame construction common for turn-of-the-century mills. The flammability of fibers that were constantly in the air made cotton mills especially susceptible to fire, yet in the late 1800s, fully fireproof buildings, entirely constructed with noncombustible materials, were very expensive to build. Instead, New England fire insurance companies developed slow-burn technology that utilized traditional building materials in a way that would slow the spread of fire and protect the structural integrity of the building in the case of fire.⁵⁰⁰ Components of slow-burn construction incorporated thick plank floors and heavy timber columns and beams that would “char but retain their structural strength instead of collapsing as iron did in heat.”⁵⁰¹ Roxboro Cotton Mill utilizes 1:5 common bond brick wall construction over heavy timber framing, wood roof and floor decking, and interior chamfered wood columns; one of its towers is decorated with crenellation.⁵⁰²

The 1907 Longhurst Mill (PR0774) at 50 Providence Road is similarly constructed of post-and-beam construction with thick exterior brick walls and a low-sloped gabled

⁴⁹⁹ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 431.

⁵⁰⁰ Sara E. Wermiel, “Heavy Timber Framing in Late-Nineteenth-Century Commercial and Industrial Buildings,” *APT Bulletin: Journal of Preservation Technology*, 35, no. 1 (2004): 56.

⁵⁰¹ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 431.

⁵⁰² Carrie Ehrfurth, “Roxboro Cotton Mill,” Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 2009, Section 7, page 1.

roof with curved brackets at the roofline. Rectangular window openings at the first and second stories have been infilled with brick and exterior decoration is concentrated on a three-story tower on the north elevation, facing the Longhurst Mill Village (PR0658). The tower features a decorative parapet with concrete coping, concrete belt-courses between the floors, and a centered entrance bay that appears to have originally contained paired doors with a tall transom.

In addition to fire resistance, the operations of the textile mill further required its buildings to be of sturdy construction and have ample natural lighting. Looms and other machinery necessary for textile production were heavy and vibrated when in operation, and successful factories had many looms and spindles going at any given time. For this reason, heavy-timbers, and later steel beams, were necessary to support upper floors. The 1899 Roxboro Cotton Mill was built with rows of heavy-timber, octagonal columns extending the length of the interior. The 1907 Longhurst Mill is post-and-beam construction with exposed brick walls, rows of metal posts, and concrete floors that could carry heavy loads and vibrating machinery.

Initially constructed without electricity, cotton mills required large operable windows for essential lighting, but also to cool the buildings and provide fresh air for the workers. The 1907 Longhurst Mill and the 1926 Somerset Mill (PR0794) were built with roof monitors to further increase natural light and air flow. At the 1923 Ca-Vel Mill (PR0801), a portion of the building was constructed with a “saw-tooth” roof, resulting in a series of north-facing windows that provided additional interior light.⁵⁰³ When air conditioning became commonplace in the 1960s, most textile mills, including Roxboro Cotton Mill and Longhurst Mill, bricked in the window openings to make the buildings more airtight and better able to maintain specific temperatures and humidity levels. The 1926 Somerset Mill is a rare example of a Piedmont cotton mill that did not have all of its windows fully bricked-in but instead covered with vertical sheathing on the exterior and drywall on the interior.

By the 1920s, the design of industrial buildings became more streamlined, stripping away the Italianate- and Romanesque Revival-style brick detailing in favor of simplified forms that more directly expressed their function and materials and emphasized efficiency.⁵⁰⁴ While the 1923 Ca-Vel Mill at 1803 North Main Street has been largely overbuilt, its original form and detailing now obscured, the 1926 Somerset Mill at 140 Somerset Church Road remains largely intact. The building features a steel structure with full-length monitor, brick walls below wide banks of steel-sash

⁵⁰³ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 39-40.

⁵⁰⁴ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 430, 438.

windows, and an interior of broad open spaces with concrete floors and exposed brick walls and wood roof framing.

In larger mill complexes, like the 1907 Longhurst Mill, the individual manufacturing processes were compartmentalized into different buildings. Picker rooms and boiler rooms, which were especially susceptible to fire, were separated from the main mill, often in their own buildings, and storage warehouses and dye houses also usually were separate buildings. Longhurst Mill includes a ca. 1907 brick picker room at the northeast corner of the mill complex, connected to the main mill by a hyphen. For additional fire protection, the picker room has its own water tank in a tower. The ca. 1907 boiler room stands southeast of the main Longhurst Mill, adjacent to a railroad spur from which coal could be unloaded. A dye house, demolished in the 1930s, was south of the mill. A ca. 1935 opening room south of the mill is next to the three-part raw cotton storage warehouse. All of these are of solid brick construction except for the frame warehouse.

Information related to the designers and builders of Roxboro's textile mills is limited. One exception is the work of George W. Kane, a native of Bangor, Maine, who was sent to Roxboro by the John W. Ferguson Company to oversee the construction of the 1924 addition to the Roxboro Cotton Mill. Kane remained in Roxboro permanently, constructing the 1931 addition to the Somerset Cotton Mill, as well as a myriad of residential, governmental, and educational projects in the area.⁵⁰⁵

Commerce and Government

Roxboro remained Person County's center of commerce and government and its only incorporated municipality throughout the twentieth century. The city grew rapidly in the early decades of the century, fueled by the railroad depots, textile mills, and tobacco warehouses. Historian Catherine Bishir notes that North Carolina's small towns experienced a boom period from 1900 to 1930 as they "depended on sales and manufacturing of local staples, cotton and tobacco, and forest products. Their buildings and their businesses provided the link between the still agrarian society and the national marketplace."⁵⁰⁶

The Person County Courthouse (PR0235), bounded by South Main, Court, South Lamar, and Abbitt Streets, was the center of activity in Roxboro, and the central business district coalesced around the intersection of Main Street with Court, Abbitt, and Depot streets. As new businesses were established and new buildings constructed,

⁵⁰⁵ "Somerset Mills Practically Doubling Its Capacity," *Roxboro Courier*, July 8, 1931.

⁵⁰⁶ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 470.

the downtown expanded outward from this core. In 1900, businesses radiating from the courthouse included general stores, grocery stores, saloons, hardware stores, hotels, restaurants, cobblers, and furniture stores; law offices and the jail; transportation-related businesses such as carriage shops and liveryes; and buildings related to the city's burgeoning tobacco market, including warehouses and prize houses.⁵⁰⁷ Roxboro served as the primary shopping area for not only its own residents, but those in the surrounding rural areas as well. James Earl Hester recalled regular visits to purchase groceries and other basic items in Roxboro, saying "Daddy usually parked near the courthouse during our weekly trips to town. Stores back then had canvas awnings across the front to keep out the sun and rain, while the smell of apples, celery, freshly ground coffee, and other things, assailed one's nostrils as he stepped inside."

The 1920s in particular was a period of substantial growth for downtown Roxboro, fueled by the success of the textile mills and tobacco market. Many of the existing frame buildings were replaced with fire-proof brick ones, while new buildings were built on vacant lots or replaced dwellings near downtown.⁵⁰⁸ In 1930, the present courthouse was constructed, replacing the 1824 building.⁵⁰⁹

Commercial Architecture

As Roxboro grew from a small hamlet to an industrial city and agricultural center, small frame commercial buildings were replaced with brick edifices that were sturdier and more fire resistant and reflected local officials' and business owners' desire for a "respectable and stable image" that would serve as "an enduring source of civic pride."⁵¹⁰ While brick had become readily available, thanks in large part to the railroad, the creation of ornamental brickwork was limited by the skills of local builders and the finances of building owners. As a result, commercial buildings in Roxboro tended to have minimal brick detailing, conveying "the workaday simplicity of the plain brick box or the direct expression of functional engineering."⁵¹¹

Standard Commercial Buildings

In Roxboro, most commercial buildings are one or two stories in height and have parapet roofs, modest cornices of bands of corbelled brick that sometimes incorporate corbelled pendants, contrasting header- and sill-courses, and occasionally panels of decorative brickwork between floors and inset sign panels on the upper façade. This

⁵⁰⁷ 1900 Sanborn Map.

⁵⁰⁸ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 47; Sanborn Map Company, "Roxboro, Person County, North Carolina," May 1925.

⁵⁰⁹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, vii.

⁵¹⁰ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 387-388.

⁵¹¹ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 471.

sort of commercial building lacking an overt stylistic reference was erected all across the United States in the early to mid-twentieth century and is identified simply as “standard commercial.”

The ca. 1890 Commercial Building (PR0207) at 28 Court Street, facing the courthouse, is among the earliest extant commercial buildings in Roxboro. It features second-story segmental-arch windows connected by a continuous dripcourse in contrasting ochre-colored brick that extends the width of the façade. The use of segmental-arch window openings at the upper story is a common element of Italianate-style commercial buildings, but the arches also appeared in otherwise astylistic commercial buildings erected in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the Brooksdale community near Roxboro’s southern limits, the ca. 1901 Fox and Company Building (PR0009) is another representative of the early twentieth-century vernacular with segmental-arch openings at both stories, a stuccoed sign panel, and corbelling at the parapet roof. The two-unit ca. 1900 Commercial Building (PR0217) at 109-111 North Main Street exhibits a typical facade in its brick corbelling at the cornice. The building is further embellished by quoins that flank the two storefronts and rise as pilasters through the second story.

Decorative treatments vary widely. The ca. 1890 one-story brick commercial building (PR0214, demolished) at 104 Court Street was unique in Roxboro for its elaborate detailing. The building’s upper facade featured rows of decorative brickwork including inset brick squares, mousetoothing, and corbelling and was topped by a parapet with a projecting half-round panel at its center. Meanwhile, at the ca. 1915 one-story building (PR0210) at 34 Court Street the upper portion of the façade is embellished with a stepped and curved parapet, inset sign panel, and applied modillion cornice over the storefront, which retains its original inset entrance with paired doors. The 1910 two-story W. H. B. Newell Building (PR0252) at 221 North Main Street has decorative cast metal cornices at the roofline and above the storefront, which is notable for its high degree of preservation. The wood-framed storefront features paired one-light doors flanked by large display windows on wood-paneled bulkheads and panels that separate the entrance and windows from the transom above.

By the 1920s, segmental-arch openings and corbelled brick parapets were largely absent from new commercial construction in Roxboro. In their place were squared-off window openings, sometimes with contrasting blocks at the upper corners, and smooth brick parapets with applied wood or metal cornices and, in some cases, inset concrete elements in a variety of shapes and patterns and panels of flush patterned brickwork. The ca. 1891 Commercial Building (PR0202) at 113-117 North Main Street was

remodeled in the mid-1920s to incorporate these elements. The two-story building's façade was reworked with a tapestry brick veneer, grouped second-story windows with cast-concrete sills, soldier-course headers with cast-concrete corner blocks, and, immediately above, a molded cornice. The same concrete blocks, turned on the diagonal, are centered in panels of patterned brickwork above each of the original prism-glass transoms topping the storefronts and, in between, the pedestrian entrance to the second floor. The ca. 1914 Commercial Building (PR0223) at 111-117 Depot Street and the ca. 1905 Commercial Building (PR0209) at 32 Court Street are similarly detailed with second-story windows framed by soldier-course brick with cast-concrete corner blocks. On the Depot Street building, a parapet rising above a molded metal cornice peaks above each of the four storefronts and displays an inlaid diamond-shaped concrete panel flanked by narrow concrete rectangles. At the Court Street building, the concrete corner blocks project as a four-sided boss at all corners of each upper window and the parapet recalls earlier buildings in its paired corbelled brick pendants.

This same basic formula was applied to the 1925 Wilburn and Satterfield Building (PR0287) at 100-102 South Main Street, one of a small number of commercial buildings in Roxboro that bear the name and construction date of the building on the parapet. Together with the Thomas and Carver Building (PR0239) at 100-102 North Main Street, constructed in 1928, and the ca. 1920 Commercial Building (PR0266) at 117-119 South Main Street, the three buildings are similar in form and fenestration with broad facades punctuated by rectangular double-hung windows at the second story with varying levels of detail in the surrounds. All three retain cornices: the cornices on two South Main Street buildings are metal and boldly molded; the North Main Street building cornice is a band of lightly corbelled bricks.

While earlier buildings may have incorporated Italianate-style cornice detailing or window corner blocks vaguely referencing the Colonial Revival style, those built after 1930 tended toward more streamlined, Modernist facades. The ca. 1930 Commercial Building (PR0265) at 114 South Main Street is typical of Depression-era construction in its flat brick façade punctuated by paired windows without embellishment at the second story. The two-story, ca. 1930 R. H. Gates Building (PR0723) at 218 Depot Street is a rare example of a stone commercial building in Roxboro. Despite the plethora of local stone that was used for foundations, chimneys, and retaining walls, it was rarely used for building walls. Just as unusual was solid stone construction at that time. In this case, the entire first story and one side elevation of the second story are of stone construction while the upper façade is constructed of rusticated concrete block and the upper elevation of the other side of the building is plain concrete block. The main façade storefront has the usual recessed entrance flanked by plate-glass display

windows and a multi-paned transom and the upper façade features an inset sign panel and stepped parapet. The ca. 1940 Commercial Building (PR0196) at 25-29 Abbitt Street is a one-story example of the pared-down commercial building. It has a flat brick façade featuring inset entrances flanked by multi-light windows but no decorative brick or stonework.

In the post-World War II era, construction in the central business district yielded new buildings and renovations of existing buildings with new storefronts or even complete facades. These buildings continued the precedent set in the 1930s and 1940s of streamlined brick facades devoid of stylistic detailing. The ca. 1950 one-story, two-part commercial building (PR0254 and PR0255) at 223-225 North Main Street illustrates this trend in its detailing limited to a band of soldier-course brick encircling a flat parapet and plate-glass display windows on brick bulkheads flanking the inset entrance. The ca. 1950 Commercial Building (PR0224) at 112 Depot Street refers to the Moderne style in tall glass-block transom, inset bands of brick at the corners that mimic elongated quoins, and a flat concrete-capped parapet. The ca. 1950 Commercial Building (PR0665) in the Brooksdale community typifies the small-scale, free-standing commercial building of the mid-twentieth century. The concrete-block building has a brick façade, now painted, with a corbelled parapet that obscures the front-gabled roof. Steel-sash windows flank the entrance framed by a simple classical surround in wood.

Railroad Architecture

The railroad played an instrumental role in the development of Roxboro and the growth of Person County in the early twentieth century, yet little railroad infrastructure remains aside from the tracks that traverse the county from north to south. The earliest extant resource is the 1894 depot that originally stood on the west side of the railroad right-of-way in the Woodsdale community north of Roxboro. It was moved from its original location in the mid-1970s to 4100 Durham Road, just south of Roxboro, where, together with a depot from Clarksville, Virginia, it currently serves as a restaurant. Despite the move, the Woodsdale Depot (PR0129/PR0825) remains a highly intact example of turn-of-the-century depot construction and design. The gabled frame building is sheathed in board-and-batten on the walls and decorative shingles in the gables. A sawn bargeboard inscribed with the letters “L&D” remains in the gable, indicating the depot’s original location on the Lynchburg and Durham rail line. Two-over-two wood-sash windows, paneled doors, and brackets in deep, flared eaves are also typical of the era’s railroad architecture.

A brick combination passenger and freight depot, constructed in Roxboro about 1930 just east of downtown on Depot Street (PR0218/PR0331), was moved away from the

tracks before being demolished in the 2010s. It featured a brick watertable, one-over-one wood-sash windows, paired one-light-over-one-panel doors, and a flared hipped roof with deep eaves supported by paired modillions. A projecting, gabled bay was located on the passenger end of the depot, separated from the freight depot by a brick wall with a stepped parapet.

A 1936 railroad bridge (PR0323) constructed by the Norfolk & Western Railway, provides grade separation as the tracks cross Old Durham Road on the south side of Roxboro. The concrete bridge displays a stark simplicity reflective of the Depression era. Fully covered with a skimcoat of concrete, the bridge features square openings with clipped corners at each end of the road and sidewalk openings and round arches separating the pedestrian path from the road. The words “Norfolk & Western Railway” are inscribed on the north and south faces of the bridge.

Classical Revival Styles

Several of Roxboro’s standard commercial buildings express minimal references to the Neoclassical Revival style in their detailing, as exhibited by cast stone quoins flanking the storefront of the 1905 Newell Building (PR0220) at 107 Depot Street. In contrast, a handful of buildings are true articulations of the Classical revival styles, particularly the Beaux Arts-style, a reference to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in France which emphasized the study of Greek and Roman buildings, composition, and symmetry.⁵¹² In the United States, the style is most often associated with large-scale governmental buildings, including post offices and courthouses, and with early twentieth-century banks.

At the corner of North Main Street and Depot Street, the Beaux-Arts-style First National Bank (PR0234) built in 1913 is one of Roxboro’s most architecturally distinctive buildings despite its modest scale. The building displays the base-shaft-capital composition of a classical column in its foundation (the base) faced in smooth-cut granite blocks, two stories clad in buff-colored brick and delineated by full-height Tuscan pilasters (the shaft), and Doric entablature (the capital) incorporating a frieze of triglyphs and metopes and a molded cornice with mutules at its base. Above, a stone balustrade encircles the parapet roof. The arched windows with keystones at the first story are reminiscent of a classical colonnade. Panels of glazed olive green and yellow tiles between first- and second-story windows provide a contrast to the other elements of the design. One of the most notable elements of this building is its curved corner

⁵¹² John C. Poppeliers and S. Allen Chambers, *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture*, Revised Edition, (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2003), 93.

entrance bay in which the entrance to the first floor and a stone staircase to the second story are recessed.

The centerpiece of downtown Roxboro, the 1930 Person County Courthouse (PR0235) is a fully articulated example of the Neoclassical Revival style, a simpler interpretation of classical Greek and Roman architecture than the Beaux Arts style. The sheer scale of courthouses and other civic buildings made them “particularly suitable structures to be designed in the various classically inspired styles,” which lent a notion of strength, stability, and democracy in their references to their ancient predecessors.⁵¹³ Designed by Greensboro architect Charles C. Hartman, the courthouse has the same classical composition and buff-colored brick as the First National Bank building, but here the overall impression is monumental and austere. The first floor serves as the base with horizontal bands of brick interrupted by entrances set in stylized classical surrounds with inscribed floral motifs. On the main façade, pairs of cast stone pilasters with vaguely Ionic capitals rise from a tall band of geometric motifs through the second and third stories to an entablature with a plain frieze bearing the name of the building and a dentil and molded cornice. Above, a tall parapet has simpler paired pilasters and vents in a rectilinear pattern topped by a decorative cornice of carved shells and foliate motifs.

Constructed in 1936, the United States Post Office (PR0270) at 208 South Main Street was designed in the Colonial Revival style, a style common for governmental buildings erected during the Depression era, especially those erected by the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA). The style was popular in part because it incorporated less ornament and thus was less expensive to build than buildings in the Beaux Arts and Neoclassical Revival styles of the 1920s and 1930s, but also because it emphasized an orderly American past.⁵¹⁴ The one-story post office features a symmetrical red brick exterior with tripartite windows flanking the centered entrance. The inset doors are set within a classical surround of fluted pilasters supporting an entablature with a frieze of triglyphs and plain metopes. The windows on the main façade are framed by pilasters rising to an entablature with a dentil frieze. In contrast to the courthouse, here all of the classical detailing is executed in wood except for the simple cast stone cornice and the coping of the flat brick parapet.

More typical interpretations of the classical revival styles were achieved through the application of classical elements to traditional brick commercial buildings, specifically the use of brick or stone pilasters to separate the bays and visually support a corbelled

⁵¹³ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 30.

⁵¹⁴ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 526.

brick or applied wood or metal cornice. The 1900 Commercial Building (PR0240) at 101 North Main Street exemplifies this pared-down version of the Neoclassical Revival style in its brick pilasters on granite plinths bisecting the bays. At the two bays on North Main Street and the two adjoining bays around the corner, a robustly molded cornice separates the pilasters between the stories; at the remaining bays on the long side elevation, the pilasters rise uninterrupted through both stories.

Spanish Colonial Revival Style

Popular in the 1920s and 1930s, the Spanish Colonial Revival style is an eclectic amalgam of several periods of Spanish Colonial architecture characterized by smooth, often stuccoed wall surfaces, pan-tiled roofs (usually in red or green), and parapets that occasionally are curved. Across North Carolina, the style enjoyed limited popularity for houses, commercial buildings, gas stations, and assorted other building types. Although no Spanish Colonial Revival-style houses have been documented in Person County, other types of buildings exhibit the style.⁵¹⁵ In Roxboro, the earliest extant example is the 1924 Roxboro Filter Plant (PR0735), constructed by the City in southwest Roxboro to house functions associated with the purification of city water. The tall rectangular, single-story building veneered in ochre brick is topped by a distinctive, red-tiled, hipped roof above a modillion cornice. Steel-sash window bays are separated by full-height pilasters.

Several American companies adopted the style as a means of branding their twentieth-century buildings. Among these was Coca-Cola, for which the Spanish Colonial Revival style became a trademark in the Southeast during the early decades of the twentieth century, as exemplified by the 1935 Coca-Cola Bottling Company (PR0787) at 230 South Morgan Street. The building recalls the Roxboro Filter Plant in its red-tiled hipped roof above a modillion cornice but otherwise differs in its two-story form veneered in dark red brick and steel-sash windows on a continuous sillcourse. At one end of the three-bay façade, a streamlined classical surround in cast stone with a prominent keystone frames the main entrance. Above the other two bays there is a cast-stone panel bearing the Coca-Cola logo flanked by the brand's soda bottles on a foliate motif, all in relief.

Oil and gas companies including Esso and Standard Oil adopted the Spanish Colonial Revival style for their early twentieth-century filling stations in order to boost brand recognition.⁵¹⁶ At least three such stations were constructed in Roxboro, including the

⁵¹⁵ Cyril M. Harris, *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (New York, NY: WW Norton & Company, 1998), 309.

⁵¹⁶ Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 172.

stuccoed ca. 1928 building at the corner of North Morgan Street and Reams Avenue, which applied a pan-tiled roof to the house-and-canopy form utilized for service stations throughout the early twentieth century. The ca. 1930 Filling Station (PR0231; demolished) that stood at 101 North Lamar Street more explicitly recalls Spanish Mission architecture of the Southwest in its arched openings and stepped and gabled parapet roof with tile coping. This station utilized the three-bay oblong box that became the standard form from ca. 1930 to ca. 1960 for service stations, with an office bay in one end and service bays in the other two openings.⁵¹⁷ The largely intact ca. 1935 building at 203 North Lamar Street is the archetypal Esso Service Station (PR0308) of the 1930s in its three-bay form and molded and stuccoed pilasters rising above a tiled pent roof at each corner of the building and separating the office from the service bays.

Religion and Education

Churches

Several Roxboro churches formed in the early to mid-twentieth century as a result of an influx of new residents seeking jobs in the growing textile industry. When the Longhurst Cotton Mill opened north of town in 1907, workers established a Baptist church in the mill's village. They initially met in a nearby log grist mill, then moved into the mill's general store in 1916, and built North Roxboro Baptist Church around 1920 on the east side of North Main Street. By 1945, the church had nearly four hundred members, with over 250 attending Sunday School. It was known as the Longhurst Baptist Church from the late 1940s until 1976, indicative of its close association with the mill and its workers. The church and a 1946 education building were demolished and new buildings constructed on the site on the west side of North Main Street around 1980.⁵¹⁸ In the 1961, the Beulah Baptist Association, which serves Person County, determined a need for a mission congregation in the Somerset community roughly two-and-a-half miles south of downtown. Congregants met in each other's homes for several months before the owner of the Somerset Mill offered them space in a warehouse on Old Durham Road. They completed their first sanctuary in 1962.⁵¹⁹

Daniel A. Tompkins, author of the 1899 book, *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features*, encouraged mill owners to build schools and churches for their workers, noting, "it should never be forgotten that the moral shortcomings of working people, and of employers alike, are more properly reached by the preacher and the teacher than by

⁵¹⁷ Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 174.

⁵¹⁹ "Somerset Baptist Church," *Courier-Times Centennial 1881-1981*, 1982, B5.

⁵¹⁹ "Somerset Baptist Church," *Courier-Times Centennial 1881-1981*, 1982, B5.

law.”⁵²⁰ Industrialist J. A. Long, a Methodist, constructed churches for his employees including the Grace United Methodist Church (PR0681) in the Roxboro Cotton Mill Village and Longhurst United Methodist Church (PR0664) in the Longhurst Mill Village. While churches of other denominations were eventually constructed within walking distance, the presence of the Methodist churches within the villages speaks to Long’s influence on even the spiritual practices of his employees. Coincidentally, the only church constructed within the Ca-Vel Mill Village, developed in the 1920s by the A. T. Baker Company which Long recruited to Roxboro, was the 1941 Ca-Vel Methodist Church (PR0649, now Grace Cavel Church).

The A. T. Baker Company also was instrumental in the formation of Roxboro’s first Catholic congregation as the mill drew a large number of Catholic laborers to Roxboro from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where the company originated. For about ten years, the pastor of St. Paul’s Catholic Church in Henderson traveled to Roxboro to offer Mass in congregants’ homes. After St. Paul’s purchased land in Roxboro for a Catholic church, Saints Mary & Edward Catholic Church (PR0758) at 611 North Main Street was built in 1935 by local contractor and church member George W. Kane.⁵²¹

Other downtown churches formed out of existing congregations. The Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Woodsdale became so large it split into two churches in 1907, with a daughter church known as the New Mt. Zion Baptist Church (PR0311) established in Roxboro. The new congregation built the current church at 135 South Madison Boulevard around 1920, with additions in the mid- and late twentieth century and other modifications including the application of brick veneer.⁵²²

New denominations appeared in Roxboro in the early twentieth century as well. The first Episcopal congregation formed in Person County in 1920 when a small group in Roxboro established St. Mark’s Episcopal Church (PR0690). The congregation first met in the Presbyterian Church, then the Masonic Hall, before the present building was completed in 1923.⁵²³

Urban Religious Architecture & Cemeteries

Churches in Roxboro, like those in rural Person County, served as social centers for their respective communities as well as physical anchors of residential development. The earliest extant urban churches were constructed near the commercial core for both

⁵²⁰ Tompkins, Cotton Mill, Commercial Features, 112.

⁵²¹ Eaker, The Heritage of Person County, Volume II, 95-96; “Roxboro man donated labor for Catholics,” *Courier-Times Centennial 1881-1981*, 1982, C5.

⁵²² Eaker, The Heritage of Person County, Volume II, 89-90.

⁵²³ Eaker, The Heritage of Person County, Volume II, 93-95.

historically White and African American congregations who lived in close proximity to one another in the first decades of the twentieth century. These churches followed the same stylistic trends as rural churches in the county—generally Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival in style but typically with more elaborate or refined detailing. Like rural churches, the styles employed for churches within Roxboro usually were based on congregation preference rather than any denominational precedent. One exception is the ca. 1930 Roxboro Primitive Baptist Church (PR0307) at 307 North Lamar Street, which represents the denomination’s denouncing of material belongings in its lack of any stylistic reference. The only deviation from the austerity of the brick-veneered gable-front building is the very shallow segmental arch of most of its large nine-over-nine double-hung wood windows.

Gothic Revival Style

The Gothic Revival style, popular nationwide as early as 1840, had been abandoned for residential architecture by the late 1800s but it remained popular for religious buildings well into the twentieth century when it became known as the Late Gothic Revival style. This later rendition, of which six examples were recorded in Roxboro, retained the Gothic Revival’s characteristic pointed-arch windows, square towers, and buttressed walls that had become synonymous with ecclesiastical architecture. While rural examples always included pointed-arch windows, few were fully articulated examples of the style. By contrast the 1920 Long Memorial Methodist Church (PR0256) at 226 North Main Street features the overtly Gothic elements of symmetrically-placed square towers of different heights; parapeted gables and brick buttresses, both with limestone coping; and limestone watertable and beltcourses. The entrances, located on the sides of the square towers, are sheltered by a colonnade with pointed-arch openings that spans the façade of the gable-front sanctuary. Similar in its gable-front form flanked by towers but smaller in scale and more restrained in its detailing, the ca. 1930 Brooksdale Methodist Church (PR0010) at 265 Old Durham Road has pointed-arch stained-glass transoms above paired entrance doors; stepped, curved, and gabled parapets on both towers; a deep molded and bracketed cornice on the taller tower; and false half-timbering in the gables that alludes to the medieval Tudor style.

Three of Roxboro’s African American congregations erected Gothic Revival-style sanctuaries in the early twentieth century, perhaps influenced by the ca. 1890 First Baptist Church (PR0321) on the south side of town. The ca. 1920 New Mount Zion Baptist Church (PR0311), which stands just west of downtown at 135 South Madison Street, has a single corner tower that contains one of the two entrances flanking the gable-front sanctuary. Its most prominent feature is the wide pointed-arch window with intersecting tracery centered on the facade. The tower on the 1932 Quinn’s Chapel

AME Church (PR0322) at 824 Durham Road is not traditionally located on the corner but rather just left of center in the front gable and flanked by pointed-arch windows. Like rural examples, the hipped roofs of these towers are shallower than those constructed on the towers of churches of the era erected for traditionally White congregations.

On the north side of Roxboro, Saint Marks Episcopal Church (PR0690) stands at 420 North Main Street. Built in 1923, it is a rare local example of the Gothic Revival style executed in stone with pointed-arch, leaded-glass windows and double batten doors in a pointed-arch entrance bay. The gable-front building has lower gabled wings with tripartite pointed-arch windows marking the transept that creates the sanctuary's cross-shaped plan. A couple of blocks further north and also modest in scale, the 1935 Saints Mary & Edward Catholic Church (PR0758) at 611 North Main Street is a pared-down rendition of medieval churches in its rectangular one-bay-wide and five-bay-deep form, slender, gabled bell tower near the far end of one side, and shallow buttresses. Narrow, leaded three-part windows in round arches on the side elevations and a rose window above the front entrance further distinguish the brick building in their allusions to both the Romanesque and Gothic styles. Like all of the carefully-appointed church buildings in Roxboro, both of these buildings were likely architect-designed.

Colonial Revival Style

The Gothic Revival style remained the preference for urban church architecture in the county through the 1930s though was superseded by the Colonial Revival style from 1940 to 1955, aligning with a nationwide trend in a wide variety of building types. The largest and most ornate of the five examples of the style recorded in Roxboro is the 1940 Roxboro Baptist Church (PR0269) at 202 South Main Street, which stands immediately south of the central business district and serves as a counter-anchor to Long Memorial Methodist Church on North Main Street. Roxboro Baptist Church features a grand two-story, pedimented façade and a monumental pedimented entrance portico with stylized Corinthian columns that shelters three entrances topped by deep molded cornices. Very tall, round-arched windows line the side elevations, and a three-part frame belfry and steeple rise from a square brick base above the main façade.

In the Ca-Vel mill village, two churches were constructed in the Colonial Revival style, their traditional form and classical detailing reinforcing a sense of order for village residents. In its scale and detailing, the 1940 Ca-Vel Baptist Church (PR0793) at 1885 North Main Street resembles rural churches of the era. The one-story, front-gabled, four-bay-deep brick sanctuary has round-arch stained-glass windows and is fronted by

a one-bay-deep entrance bay sheltered by an engaged, pedimented portico with Doric columns. Constructed the following year, Ca-Vel United Methodist Church (PR0649) at 1701 North Main Street features a flush gabled façade; a flush-gabled entrance bay with paired doors framed by fluted pilasters and a multi-paned transom; a short, pyramidal-roofed frame belfry; and tripartite, multi-paned, steel-sash casement windows in rectangular openings. In the Longhurst village, Longhurst United Methodist Church (PR0664) at 265 Providence Road, built in 1953, is similar in form and scale to Ca-Vel United Methodist Church though the front entrance is embellished with a broken pediment with a cross in its center.

The Colonial Revival style remained the preferred style for religious buildings throughout the mid- to late twentieth century, even as larger municipalities to the south were erecting Modernist-style sanctuaries. The most impressive of these is the 1950 Roxboro Presbyterian Church (PR0305) at 319 North Lamar Street, which employed the same pedimented gables, columned portico, classical entrance surround, double-hung windows, and multi-part steeple that characterize earlier Colonial Revival-style churches. Other mid-century examples were more similar to rural churches in their minimal detailing, with the pedimented portico the only distinctly Colonial Revival feature.

Municipal Cemeteries

In contrast to family and church cemeteries in rural Person County that were used throughout the twentieth century and remain in use today, cemeteries in Roxboro were established to consolidate burials. The municipal cemeteries interred residents of all denominations and initially were racially segregated: White residents were buried at Burchwood Cemetery (PR0324) and Black residents were interred in the adjacent Peace Memorial Gardens Cemetery (PR0325).

As the population of Roxboro increased in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Burchwood Cemetery was established on the south side of Roxboro adjacent to Old Durham Road. Regular burials did not begin until the mid-1870s, although the earliest marked grave dates to 1841, suggesting that pre-1870s graves might have been relocated from other places after the establishment of the cemetery.

In her 2021 analysis of the cemetery, historian Caitlin Sylvester notes that Burchwood Cemetery illustrates the transition from the nineteenth-century rural cemetery movement to the lawn-park cemetery.⁵²⁴ The rural cemetery movement aligned with the emergence of the Romantic styles of architecture in their response to increasing

⁵²⁴ Sylvester, “Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard,” 470.

industrialization. “Public” cemeteries without connection to specific families or religions were created, though their family plots expressed the importance of family. The focus of these cemeteries was the creation of beautiful and memorable spaces for the living by emphasizing the natural elements of the site in their design. (No rural public cemeteries were established in Person County, presumably because the burial needs of residents were being filled by family and church cemeteries.) By the turn of the twentieth century, public lawn-park cemeteries were becoming more common in municipalities, incorporating park-like amenities including gazebos or pavilions, fountains, and walking paths “to encourage people to not only go to cemeteries to commemorate the dead, but to also enjoy the outdoors.”⁵²⁵ Burchwood Cemetery includes elements of both traditions: the rolling hills, mature trees, and grassy lawns provide a natural backdrop for the monuments, while the family plots continue the rural cemetery tradition of family cemeteries.”⁵²⁶ The low concrete and granite curbs encircling family plots gives the setting a patchwork quilt appearance. Stone piers line the entrance from Old Durham Road and markers range from small granite headstones, to soaring obelisks, to above-ground vaults.

Labeled as the “annex to Burchwood Cemetery” on a 1942 plat, Peace Memorial Garden Cemetery is much smaller in scale, containing only 885 memorials compared with the more than 3,800 found next door. Its existence speaks to the segregation, even in death, of Black and White residents in the Jim Crow South. Established about 1900, the Peace Memorial Garden Cemetery employs the same aesthetic as Burchwood Cemetery, with mature trees and grassy lawns. Many of the family names overlap in the two cemeteries as the lineages of Black and White residents intersected through time and the cemeteries became integrated in the late twentieth century. Without a physical barrier to separate the two tracts, any visual delineation is relegated to the overall differences in the scale of the monuments—those in Peace Memorial Garden Cemetery tend to be smaller—and the types of plantings. Traditionally, African American cemeteries displayed a more natural landscape when compared with the carefully mown lawns of White burial grounds and regularly incorporated symbolic plantings including cedar trees and yucca.

By the mid-twentieth century, Person Memorial Cemetery (PR0724) had been established one-and-a-half miles south of Burchwood Cemetery and Peace Memorial Gardens. Unlike the other cemeteries, Person Memorial Cemetery is a “memorial park,” a type of cemetery that emerged in the early to mid-twentieth century and is

⁵²⁵ Sylvester, “Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard,” 469.

⁵²⁶ Sylvester, “Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard,” 470.

characterized by a cleared site devoid of trees and grave markers that are flat and low to the ground and generally consistent in size, without the individuality expressed in cemeteries with more varied monuments.⁵²⁷

Early Roxboro Schools and School Buildings

Like Person County's rural schools, Roxboro's early to mid-twentieth-century schools were firmly segregated. Roxboro Graded School exemplifies the disparities between White and Black education during this period. Efforts to establish a graded school system for Roxboro's children began in 1900, and a bond issue was voted on and passed two years later, celebrated by the newspaper as "the best day's work Roxboro ever performed."⁵²⁸ The Roxboro Graded School District was established for the education of both White and Black children under Superintendent Nathan Carter Newbold. The district included separate buildings for White and Black students.⁵²⁹ By 1903, the White school enrolled over 200 students, the Black school enrolled over 100 students, and the school term was eight months.⁵³⁰ The Superintendent's report for the 1903-1904 school year indicated the White school served nine grades and included a course of study suitable for continuing to college, though the school was not yet authorized to grant diplomas. The Black school, on the other hand, served only seven grades and did not include as extensive or advanced coursework. "The purpose in the colored school," Newbold explained, "is to give the pupils a fair and practical understanding of the rudiments of an English education." Donations of a set of encyclopedias, 200 library books, an organ, framed pictures, and monetary donations were all allocated to the White school.⁵³¹

A new building was constructed in 1908 at the corner of Lamar and Gordon Streets to serve as the White graded school, known as Central School. The two-story brick, Neoclassical Revival-style building had a pedimented projecting, three-bay entrance wing with the door recessed in a round arch. The building appeared to have at least four classrooms on each floor. As one of the county's few schools teaching all grades, it drew students from the rural areas surrounding the city and quickly outgrew this building. After Roxboro High School was constructed in 1925, the 1908 Central School

⁵²⁷ Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 473-474.

⁵²⁸ *The Roxboro Courier*, January 24, 1900, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, May 28, 1902, Newspapers.com.

⁵²⁹ *The Roxboro Courier*, June 25, 1902, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, September 3, 1902, Newspapers.com. Note: Nathan Carter Newbold later served as the State Superintendent of Negro Education.

⁵³⁰ *The Roxboro Courier*, January 21, 1903, Newspapers.com; *The Roxboro Courier*, March 18, 1903, Newspapers.com.

⁵³¹ N.C. Newbold, "Superintendent's Annual Report for Session 1903-1904," *The Roxboro Courier*, June 22, 1904, Newspapers.com.

building continued to serve the elementary grades until it was closed in the 1960s and later demolished.⁵³²

Built on South Morgan Street in 1925, Roxboro High School (PR0747) was a two-story, flat-roofed brick building with an imposing 17-bay Neoclassical Revival-style façade. The center five bays projected slightly and featured a stepped parapet and cast-stone pilasters rising through both stories to a wide cornice upon which the name of the school was emblazoned. The entrance, centered on the projecting wing, had a classical surround. Over time, the building was enlarged and the campus expanded. One-story wings were added to each end of the building, and a gymnasium, agriculture building, cafeteria, and other smaller buildings were added in the 1950s. The 1925 building was demolished in 1981, but the later buildings remain as part of the Huck-Sansbury Recreation Complex.

Person County Training School, for Black students, originated in rural Olive Hill as part of Olive Hill Institute before moving into a new building in Roxboro in 1930. The two-story, flat-roofed brick building was nine bays wide and had sixteen classrooms likely arranged along a double-loaded, transverse corridor. Minimal classical detailing was concentrated on the center five bays of the façade, which projected slightly and had two-story pilasters separating the bays. The school served both elementary and high school students, with enrollment growing to nearly eight hundred students by 1940. To accommodate the growing student body, the curriculum was expanded to include music, health, economics, and sociology; three additional classrooms were constructed in 1939, and a vocational shop building was built the following year. All three phases of construction utilized a Rosenwald Fund grant.⁵³³ The main classroom building was demolished in the 1970s when the school was consolidated with Person High School.

The success of the textile industry and the resultant development of mill villages led to the construction by the mill owners of schools for their workers' children. The earliest of these is the East Roxboro Graded School (PR0685), built in 1920 in the Roxboro Cotton Mill Village by J. A. Long. Typical of small-scale schools erected in the 1920s, the brick hip-roofed building with is a single story on a raised basement with two classrooms on each level. Concrete steps between brick knee walls lead to a hip-roofed porch with Tuscan box posts sheltering two centered entrances. Detailing is minimal, consisting of rectangular panels created by raised bricks and cast-stone corner blocks

⁵³² Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 104-105; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume II, 53.

⁵³³ Satterfield, "First Public High School for Negroes"; "Negro Education Had Beginning in Fall of '25," *Black Schools and Educators* Binder, PCMH; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 73, 105-110.

that flank the porch and a cast-concrete water table separating the two levels. A bank of large double-hung windows (later replaced with infill and small windows) was on each side elevation; the façade features large brick panels flanking two centered entrances, each of which directly accessed a classroom in the absence of a central hallway. The school was eventually taken over by the Person County Board of Education before it was closed and the building converted to housing.

Long also erected a school for the Longhurst Mill Village. That school was formed through the consolidation of the Providence School and County Home School around 1910. The Longhurst school first met in a church that was relocated to the mill village and later in the Woodman Hall above the company store before a school building was completed in 1920.⁵³⁴ Some of the students transferred to the Ca-Vel School (not extant) when it opened in 1931 to serve children whose families worked at the Collins and Aikman plant. The mill owners not only built the schools, they also provided free textbooks and supplemental materials, as well as health and dental clinics.⁵³⁵ In 1970, Longhurst School and Ca-Vel School were consolidated into the newly completed North Elementary School. Both of the earlier buildings have been demolished.⁵³⁶

Community Planning and Development

When Roxboro was designated the Person County seat in 1793, the town was little more than a courthouse. The city's origin as a "small rural crossroads community with periods of incremental growth" is evident in the street pattern, which includes roads that "intersect at odd angles and vary in width, disrupting any uniformity in the grid."⁵³⁷ This type of organic development is typical of nineteenth-century towns and cities, where commercial enterprises were "clustered around the courthouse or railroad station, and the idea of a "walking city" prevailed."⁵³⁸ Commercial, industrial, and residential resources were in close proximity to one another.

The small section of grid-plan streets surrounding the courthouse likely came about shortly after the town was incorporated in 1855, though the dense collection of brick commercial buildings surrounding the half-block courthouse square dates to the early twentieth century when significant growth was fueled by the arrival of the railroad and the construction of textile mills. Frame buildings were replaced with one- and two-story brick commercial buildings and tobacco warehouses and other buildings related

⁵³⁴ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 111.

⁵³⁵ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 104.

⁵³⁶ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, Volume I, 111.

⁵³⁷ Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 35-36.

⁵³⁸ Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 65.

to Person County's agricultural heritage were relegated to the periphery of downtown.⁵³⁹

Beginning in the mid-1800s, fashionable residences were erected north and south of the business district, their location largely dictated by the relatively narrow ridge along which Main Street runs and the early transportation routes that extended to the north, south, and west.⁵⁴⁰ As building construction proceeded through the next century, these residential areas developed organically. Building lots are consistent in their orientation to Main Street, but they are diverse in their size, shape, and street-frontage. While Lamar Street is roughly parallel to Main Street, with building lots generally mimicking the organic nature of those on Main Street, cross streets are highly irregular outside of the commercial core. Some intersect Main Street from only one side and others, like Reams Avenue and Depot Street, follow the curvature of the land and early wagon routes rather than a formally established grid.

The first planned residential development in Roxboro was Reamstown (PR0328), laid out just west of downtown in 1890, the same year that the railroad arrived. Unlike the organic development north and south of downtown, this roughly sixty-acre development northwest of downtown was laid out with 105 rectilinear lots arranged in a grid pattern defined by Reams Avenue and Morehead Street running parallel to one another and extending to Main Street at the southwest end.⁵⁴¹ Cross streets were laid out at regular intervals, the only variations occurring at the fringes of the development where the plan followed existing streets and property boundaries. The neighborhood was "marketed by businessmen-turned-real estate developers with broad economic interests in the region," advertising "the ideals of suburban living."⁵⁴²

The street plan is consistent with a typical turn-of-the-twentieth-century residential subdivision, but certain features were introduced over time, particularly the garages relegated to the rear of the lots and the driveways leading to them that were added as automobiles proliferated. Sidewalks are limited to Reams Avenue and portions of Morgan Street, which led to Roxboro High School and Earl Bradsher Elementary School. Housing styles vary greatly, illustrating a lengthy period of development that extended from 1890 to 1967. As a result, while the street grid and building lots, when viewed in map form, appear very regular, the visual effect on the ground is less cohesive.

⁵³⁹ Patricia S. Dickinson, "Roxboro Commercial Historic District," Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1983, Section 7, page 0.

⁵⁴⁰ Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 36.

⁵⁴¹ Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 28.

⁵⁴² Sylvester, "Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard," 41.

By the 1930s, west Roxboro had emerged as the preeminent area for middle- and upper-class White residential development, spurred in part by the 1925 construction of Roxboro High School at Morgan Street and Long Avenue. During the same period, residential development nationwide transitioned from gridded developments that were extensions of the commercial core into planned neighborhoods designed with the automobile in mind and featuring broader streets, often with gentle curves, and driveways at regular intervals. Principles developed by Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903), the “father of landscape architecture,” were often applied to residential subdivisions in the organization of streets to preserve natural vistas, the incorporation of topography and natural features as design elements, and the placement of buildings so they do not dominate the landscape. Public sidewalks were rare in these developments and the approach to the house was moved from the street to the driveway.⁵⁴³

In 1937, Sunset Hills (PR0730) was platted adjacent to the southwest boundary of Reamstown. While West Gordon Street and Crestwood Drive, at the northeast side of the neighborhood, continue the street grid established in Reamstown, Sievers and Charles circles utilize U-shaped roads allowing for interesting views and vistas as one moves through the neighborhood. The practice of incorporating curvilinear streets—in response to the gentle rolling terrain, to slow traffic, and to provide varied views as one moves through the area—align with the Olmstedian principles of early twentieth-century suburban development. However, the curving streets of the Sunset Hills development appear to be a response to the irregularly-shaped parcel of land, not wide enough to include two parallel streets, rather than a direct attempt at a variation in street patterns. Large lots with deep setbacks, mature trees throughout the development, and the retention of a planned green space in the center of Sievers Circle all contribute to the park-like atmosphere of the neighborhood. Despite its proximity to downtown, the neighborhood developed slowly, with houses constructed from 1937 through 1970.

In Roxboro, as throughout North Carolina, residential areas were largely segregated in the early twentieth century. Documentation confirming that Reamstown and Sunset Hills were open only to White residents has not been found, but it is unlikely that the neighborhoods were truly integrated. Historian Caitlin Sylvester found that in Reamstown, the federal census recorded a small number of Black households in the 1910s and 1920s, but that by the 1930s, African American families were living only on the periphery, including on Jones and Lamberth streets. In the late 1950s and early

⁵⁴³ Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 79.

1960s, “the neighborhood was occupied by both black and white residents, although they appear to have been fairly segregated by street.”⁵⁴⁴

While Black residents may not have been legally restricted from living in certain areas, de facto segregation remained the norm, with Black residents generally relegated to small suburban communities at the outskirts of Roxboro, many of them centered around a church, school, or community building.⁵⁴⁵ These historically Black residential settlements were located northeast, southeast, and southwest of downtown, where the topography drops from the ridge along which Main Street is oriented, and largely separated from White developments by the railroad corridor and US-501. The largest collection of residential resources associated with Roxboro’s African American population extends south of downtown, bounded by South Madison Boulevard (US-501) on the east and extending from Barden Street south to the site of Person County High School. The 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the Church of Holiness and the Roxboro Graded (colored) School in the area immediately south of Hill Street.

Development in southwestern Roxboro was piecemeal, with linear developments laid out along the major thoroughfares. In the early to mid-twentieth century, African Americans settled an area documented as Southwest Roxboro (PR0706), located west of South Madison Boulevard (US-501). The 1930 federal census lists the Trotter, Harris, and Johnson families all living in this area, presumably lending their names to the streets here. Land along Johnson Street, near the south end of the neighborhood, was owned by Frank Thompson, an African American blacksmith and farmer, whose land appears to have been subdivided after his death in 1911.⁵⁴⁶ Land to the north of the Thompson land appears to have been held by the Trotter family through much of the mid-twentieth century, though may have originally been owned by the Winstead family, who subdivided land along Cody and Winhaven Streets (PR0711) and Wesleyan Heights (PR0710). The area appears to have generally developed from east to west, with bungalows and other types of early-twentieth-century houses near the center of the neighborhood and Ranch and Minimal Traditional-style houses toward the west end of the neighborhood. Throughout Southwest Roxboro are narrow streets without sidewalks, the irregularity of which illustrates a utilitarian nature of development rather than a comprehensive plan.

⁵⁴⁴ Sylvester, “Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard,” 43.

⁵⁴⁵ Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 65.

⁵⁴⁶ “Map Frank Thompson Place,” Plat Book 1, Page 118, 1913, Person County Register of Deeds, Roxboro, North Carolina (hereafter PCRD).

Mill Villages

Constructed at the periphery of the burgeoning city of Roxboro, mill villages were laid out and constructed by mill owners to house their growing early-twentieth-century workforce. Mill owners built housing both to attract a constant supply of “good laborers who can afford to and will work for much lower pay than where houses are scarce and rents high,” to “provide a transition for the worker coming off the farm into ‘public work,’” and to “maintain a measure of social and economic control that extended beyond the factory walls.”⁵⁴⁷ Mill managers and operatives usually lived apart from their laborers, while upper-level employees were sometimes accommodated within the village.

In his 1899 book, *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features*, Daniel A. Tompkins advised mill owners to construct factories and villages up to four miles away from a city in order to “escape city taxation and other disadvantages.”⁵⁴⁸ In 1899, Long constructed the Roxboro Cotton Mill (PR0219) only one-quarter of a mile from the Person County Courthouse in the heart of Roxboro with a small village (PR0682) extending just beyond the mill. However, by 1907, when he erected his Longhurst Cotton Mill (PR0774) and the associated mill village (PR0658), he selected a site nearly two miles to the north of downtown Roxboro. In 1923, the owners of the Baker Mill—later Cavel Mill (PR0801)—and the associated village (PR0650) selected a site nearly three miles north of downtown Roxboro, while the 1926 Somerset Mill and Mill Village (PR0794) were constructed almost three miles south of Roxboro. Despite their initially rural locations, historian Mildred Gwen Andrews notes that early twentieth-century mills were ultimately “engulfed by expanding towns and cities and soon were taken within their limits, with all the benefits of water and sewage, streets and taxes.”⁵⁴⁹

With the exception of Somerset Mill Village, which contained only a single row of about a dozen houses, Roxboro’s mill villages were all very similar in their design and bore more resemblance to rural communities than urban neighborhoods. Narrow streets were arranged in loose grids that followed the natural topography of the site. Sidewalks are rare in the mill villages, and the streets, paved only in later years, are generally without curb and gutter. Paved streets were not necessary for a community where car ownership was non-existent until the mid-twentieth century and where employment, stores, churches, schools, and recreation facilities were all within walking

⁵⁴⁷ Brent Glass, “Southern Mill Hills: Design in a ‘Public’ Place,” in *Carolina Dwelling*, 143, 147; Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 42.

⁵⁴⁸ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 42; Daniel A. Tompkins, *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features* (Charlotte, NC: 1899), 32.

⁵⁴⁹ Andrews, *The Men and the Mills*, 195.

distance and provided by the mill. “It was a walking place. Its scale was such that all goods and services, and all social interaction could be reached without public or private transportation.”⁵⁵⁰ Stone walls in the Ca-Vel Mill Village are necessary to accommodate changes in terrain as the village slopes downward toward Marlowe Creek at its west side. Open spaces between and behind the houses allowed for gardens and, in some cases, chickens. The mill provided upkeep of the community, including garbage collection and the payment of local taxes.

In addition to providing churches and schools, many mill owners organized “sewing clubs, garden clubs, flower and fashion shows, cooking schools, and baseball teams,” all to foster a sense of community and camaraderie within the village and a sense of loyalty to the mill.⁵⁵¹ Constructing recreational facilities for mill workers and their families was a common practice of mill owners and leaders in the early twentieth century. Competitions, baseball games in particular, were organized between teams from different mills throughout the area. The Roxboro and Longhurst mills fielded teams against the East Durham Mills, Durham Colts, Bullocks Bulls, and other Durham mill teams from the 1920s until the 1940s.⁵⁵² Given its location adjacent to the Longhurst Mill Village and the references to a Jalong Field—a shortening of the name J. A. Long—in early twentieth-century newspapers, it appears the ca. 1930 Longhurst Park (PR0771) at 214 Park Street was constructed by the mill and its management later taken over by the County, likely in 1961 when the mill sold the housing. The park includes a baseball field encircled by a chain-link fence and backstop, a sand volleyball court, playground, and picnic shelter, all probably constructed or improved by the County in the late twentieth century.

By providing social and cultural activities for those in the mill villages, the mill owners “hoped to discourage worker unrest and collective action.”⁵⁵³ However, mill villages fostered a sense of community that went beyond allegiance to the mill, with some villages developing tightly knit familial groups of neighbors related by blood or marriage. Even in the small group of mill houses associated with the Somerset Mill, sisters and mill employees Jenny Craven and Sabra Stuart lived together, with their

⁵⁵⁰ Glass, “Southern Mill Hills,” 147.

⁵⁵¹ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 54-55.

⁵⁵² “East Durham Wins and Interesting Contest,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 1, 1920, Newspapers.com; “Teasley Hurls Win For Durham Colts,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, May 26, 1940, Newspapers.com; “Bullocks Bulls Win,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, June 21, 1942, Newspapers.com.

⁵⁵³ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 54-55.

husbands, at 1885 Old Durham Road (PR0835), while their third sister, Mary Copley, and her family occupied the adjacent house at 1901 Old Durham Road (PR0836).⁵⁵⁴

The one-story houses constructed in all four of Roxboro's mill villages were conducive to housing family units, including extended families, and their similarity in form and detailing to certain traditional house types found throughout rural Person County eased the families' transition from farm to village. Early-twentieth-century mill houses could be constructed for as little as \$350 for a three-room house, which was then "rented to the mill worker, before electricity, at an average of twenty-five cents a room a week," with the rent increasing when electric power was run to the village.⁵⁵⁵ While the specific practices of Roxboro's mill owners is not known, the practice of renting houses by the room was common in many villages where mill owners "required that a house rented by a mill family must provide one worker per room or two workers for three rooms," the practice ultimately encouraging occupancy by larger and extended families.⁵⁵⁶

Housing for mill workers varied little in Roxboro and aligned with statewide trends for worker housing. A summary of the common architectural forms and finishes is in this report's section on Urban Domestic Architecture.

Mill overseers and managers were not typically housed in the same small-scale buildings as the workers. Mill owner J. A. Long constructed a grand house at 217 South Main Street (PR0271) and many of the high-level managers likely also resided in the upper-middle class neighborhoods adjacent to downtown Roxboro. The exception to this trend is the ca. 1934 Ca-Vel Executive Mill Village (PR0291), located just north of the mill and constructed to house its executives. Unlike Roxboro's mill worker housing, the Ca-Vel Executive Mill Village consists of two-story houses with Colonial Revival-style details. Houses are arranged along the west side of the street and an undeveloped crescent of land on the east side of the street, between Executive Lane and US 501, is now designated a park. The small village is without the social amenities of the other mill villages, though the implication that occupants owned automobiles means that they were not limited to the confines of the mill village for their schooling, shopping, and worshipping.

⁵⁵⁴ "Somerset Mills, Incorporated to Grady and Sabra B. Stuart," Book 80, Page 360, 1958, PCRD; Bureau of the Census, *1940 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2442/?usePUBJs=true>; "Somerset Mills Incorporated to Mary B. Copley, Book 80, Page 363, 1958, PCRD.

⁵⁵⁵ Andrews, *The Men and the Mills*, 195.

⁵⁵⁶ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 18.

Domestic Architecture

Roxboro, like communities throughout the Piedmont, experienced significant growth in the early twentieth century. The authors of the 1977 Tar-Neuse Survey noted that, “in the small farm market communities which grew into towns as a result of the arrival of the railroad, there were avenues of [modest but richly decorated houses] built on the residential streets”⁵⁵⁷ This was certainly true for Roxboro, where fashionable houses in nationally popular styles were constructed on North and South Main Street, adjacent to the commercial core.

In addition to providing transportation for agricultural products and manufactured goods in and out of the county, the railroad transmitted ideas and building materials. Millwork, including sawnwork shingles, bargeboards, cornices and friezes, brackets and sawn rafter tails, as well as doors and windows, produced locally and brought by rail, “provided the builder an unprecedented variety of ornament with which to decorate a building and express his ambition.”⁵⁵⁸ Pattern books were also available to the local builder, allowing them to experiment with new styles and themes.

Few residential structures in the county can be attributed to specific builders or architects. However, George W. Kane rose to regional prominence in the early twentieth century after overseeing the construction of the 1924 addition to the Roxboro Cotton Mill. Kane started his own contracting business based in Roxboro and later opened additional offices in Greensboro, Durham, Henderson, and Winston-Salem.⁵⁵⁹ Among his best known residential commissions in the county is the 1922 Walter R. and Annie-Laurie House (PR0689) at 245 North Main Street, a two-story, Craftsman-style house with distinctive tiled and bracketed roof. At least three additional early-twentieth-century residences in rural Person County are attributed to Kane, though the connection cannot be confirmed and a comprehensive study of his work has not been completed. Other local contractors included Ruffin Woody, Graham Duncan, the Carver Agency, and E.M. Wilkerson & Son, many of whom advertised in the Roxboro city directories in the 1950s and 1960s.”⁵⁶⁰

Traditional House Types

Despite the rise of local and regional contractors, the majority of early-twentieth-century residential construction in rural as well as urban Person County utilized

⁵⁵⁷ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 27-28.

⁵⁵⁸ NC DCR, “Tar-Neuse River Basin,” 27.

⁵⁵⁹ “George Kane Final Rites Held Today,” *The Durham Sun*, April 25, 1966, Newspapers.com; “A Yankee Who Came to Roxboro and Remained for a Lifetime,” *We the People of North Carolina*, December 1970.

⁵⁶⁰ Sylvester, “Historic Structures Survey Report: Madison Boulevard,” 39.

traditional forms and finishes. The one- and two-story rectilinear forms that had been constructed in the rural county for decades continued to be built in Roxboro to house middle- and working-class residents alike.

Among the earliest surveyed examples are the ca. 1900 Lee Roy and Lora Lee Jones House (PR0754) at 824 North Main Street and the ca. 1910 Carver-Oakley House (PR0764) at 205 South Morgan Street, both one-story, single-room-deep, three-bay frame houses, a regionally common form in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Jones House is distinctive for its hipped roof covered in patterned pressed metal and its porch supported by turned posts with sawn brackets. The Carver-Oakley House has a triple-A roofline and mid-twentieth-century metal porch posts. The same three-bay form was utilized in White and Black working class neighborhoods, where an off-centered door indicated a two-room plan without a center hall as exhibited by the ca. 1920 houses at 322 High Street (PR0734) and 413 Ivey Street (PR0738). The High Street house appears to be largely intact on the exterior, having retained its original weatherboard siding and hip-roofed porch with chamfered posts and simple sawn spandrels. Vinyl siding on the Ivey Street house makes it impossible to determine whether it originally had paired front doors, each leading to one of the two rooms, as was sometimes seen on mill housing.

Two-story traditional house types were also constructed in Roxboro, with many examples from the last decade of the nineteenth century present along South Main Street. Later examples of the triple-A-roofed, I-house and the two-story gable-front-and-wing form, all of which were widely utilized in rural Person County, include the ca. 1900 Daniel and Lillian Featherston House (PR0777) at 609 Reams Avenue and the adjacent ca. 1910 John Henry and Annie Lou Moore House (PR0775) at 603 Reams Avenue. These two examples at the north end of Reams Avenue were built with two-over-two double-hung sash windows and Tuscan porch columns. A ca. 2020 remodeling added vinyl siding and replaced the columns of the Moore House with simple four-by-four posts, but the Featherston House remains notably intact and displays additional embellishments of decorative shingles in the pediment of the projecting entrance bay of the porch and in the front attic gable.

The shotgun house is a narrow, one-story, one-room-wide, hip-roofed or front-gabled house with rooms arranged single-file from front to back. (The floor plan lends the house type its name because presumably a bullet could be fired from the front door and exit uninterrupted at the rear.) This house type is believed to have been brought by Haitians and other Caribbean immigrants to New Orleans and then spread throughout

the American South where it was most often built in African American communities.⁵⁶¹ The small house was well suited to narrow urban lots and usually was constructed in groups arranged close together. Only one shotgun house was identified in Roxboro, although there were very likely more. Located in the predominantly African American neighborhood of Southwest Roxboro, the ca. 1920 William “Buck” Jones Rental House (PR0693) at 119 Harris Street is typical of the form. It is two bays wide with the entrance and a single six-over-six window sheltered by an inset porch supported by square posts. The house is two rooms deep; a third room occupies a gabled rear ell and a shed-roofed bay on a side elevation likely is a bathroom addition.

Mill Housing

In the early-twentieth century, the owners of each of Roxboro’s four textile mills constructed worker housing, typically one-story, gable- or hip-roofed frame houses arranged in neat rows adjacent to the mill property. Tompkins published several plans for worker housing in his 1899 book, *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features*, including examples of two-, three-, four-, and five-room one-story dwellings for workers that could be built for \$250 to \$450 each.⁵⁶² While these designs were not followed precisely, their principles and in some cases floor plans, were adopted for housing within the Roxboro Cotton Mill Village (ca. 1901-1925) and the Longhurst Cotton Mill (ca. 1906-1925). Further, the owners of Ca-Vel and Somerset mills erected villages in the 1920s, replicating the housing constructed at the earlier mill villages or utilizing similar plans published in plan books of the time. As a result, variations in mill housing are generally limited to four basic forms.

One type of dwelling constructed for the Roxboro Cotton Mill and Longhurst Cotton Mill workers is the one-story, three-bay, side-gabled house, including the ca. 1916 house at 406 Edgar Street (PR0687). A rear wing resulted in a three-room T-plan house that resembles the “Three-Room Gable House” proposed by Tompkins and is very similar in its overall form to small-scale farmhouses in the county.⁵⁶³ The six-light-over-three-panel wood door, six-over-six wood-sash windows, plain weatherboards, and metal roof are all original materials still seen in the Roxboro Cotton Mill Village. The form appears to have been used in the west part of the Longhurst Mill Village as well, though few unaltered examples remain.

⁵⁶¹ John Michael Vlach, “The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy,” in *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), 63.

⁵⁶² Glass, “Southern Mill Hills,” 18.

⁵⁶³ Tompkins, *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features*, Figure 33.

The most common form in the villages is a one-story, hip-roofed house with an inset porch at the front corner. Two examples in the Ca-Vel Mill Village are the ca. 1928 house at 1708 Forest Street (PR0651) and the ca. 1925 house at 1720 Wall Street (PR0656). Both retain plain weatherboards, two-over-two wood-sash windows, and interior corbelled brick chimneys. Turned porch posts and one-light-over-three-panel doors appear to have been common. The compact form of this house necessitated the conspicuous addition of small, shed-roofed wings at the side or rear to house bathrooms.

The one-story, hip-roofed houses at 146 Maple Street (PR0661) and 326 Providence Street (PR0662), built in 1906 in the Longhurst Mill Village, may be adaptations of Tompkins's "Four-Room Gable House," constructed instead with a hipped roof.⁵⁶⁴ The house features a three-bay, two-room-deep form with a partially engaged, hip-roofed porch across the façade. The five-bay, two-room-deep house was also utilized throughout Roxboro's mill villages. Examples include the ca. 1916 house 221 Lake Drive (PR0688) in the Roxboro Cotton Mill Village and the ca. 1930 house at 1819 Hicks Road (PR0652) in the Ca-Vel Mill Village. Both feature centered entrances flanked by windows, indicating a three-room-wide plan. A shed-roofed porch shelters the center three bays of the façade. Like all mill housing, weatherboards, wood windows, and interior chimneys were typical.

While the vast majority of housing in Roxboro's mill villages was intended for single families, a number of duplexes were also constructed, their scale, details, and materials mimicking those of the single-family mill houses. Among these are the ca. 1928 hip-roofed duplexes at 1823 Hicks Circle (PR0653) and 1733 Wall Street (PR0657) in the Ca-Vel Mill Village. The duplexes are four bays deep and feature two front entrances, each with an adjacent window, which are sheltered by a full-width, shed-roofed porch. A similar duplex at 121-123 Allgood Street (PR0683) in the Roxboro Cotton Mill Village was constructed with an inset porch. It was built in 1945 to replace a single-family house built in the 1920s, indicating that the mill operators continued to use plans adopted decades earlier.

Accommodations for senior employees, when provided, were regularly separate from the worker housing, but sometimes were integrated in the village, as suggested by certain houses in the Longhurst Mill Village that are larger in scale and do not fit within the overall typologies of mill housing. The ca. 1906 houses at 308 and 344 Providence Street (PR0633) follow the basic footprint of the hip-roofed, three-bay house, but

⁵⁶⁴ Tompkins, Cotton Mill, Commercial Features, Figure 37.

incorporate wide, hip-roofed dormers on the façade and rear elevation, creating a partial second floor for extended living. Similarly, the ca. 1906 houses at 1425 Longhurst Street (PR0660) and 1431 Longhurst Street provided additional space through the inclusion of front and rear shed-dormers and upper-story windows in the side-gables. Only in the Ca-Vel Executive Mill Village (discussed later with the Colonial Revival Style), a separate development constructed specifically for mill executives, were two-story forms the norm.

*Transitional Queen Anne Style/Colonial Revival Style*⁵⁶⁵

Concurrent with the continued popularity of the Queen Anne style in Roxboro and Person County throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, a resurgence of classicism was well under way in the country's metropolitan areas, as described by historian Sarah Woodard:

“. . . builders and architects began erecting Queen Anne houses with more symmetrical facades and floor plans during the 1890s. Clean classical columns appeared on porches. Decoration featuring swags and urns rather than the shingles, starbursts, or sawnwork of earlier designs slowly became part of Queen Anne buildings. The resulting dwellings mixed turned porch posts with Palladian windows or fluted pilasters with decorative shingles.”⁵⁶⁶

As noted earlier, Roxboro's earliest example of this amalgam of styles is the 1896 J. A. and Laura T. Long House (PR0271), the town's fullest expression of the Queen Anne style as well as the first to blend in classical elements. Clearly, it was either designed by an architect well-versed in national trends or derived from a nationally-popular architectural plan book. It was not until the 1910s, however, that the transition in styles became more widely apparent in Roxboro, where newly constructed houses that were essentially Queen Anne-style in their complex forms and rooflines incorporated elements of the Colonial Revival style and are often classified as Transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival or a “Free Classic” subset of the Queen Anne style.⁵⁶⁷

In Roxboro, the ca. 1910 Joseph W. Noell House (PR0201) at 208 Academy Street is the only example other than the Long House of a full expression of the Queen Anne style

⁵⁶⁵ Examples of the Transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman styles were constructed throughout early-twentieth-century Roxboro, specifically along North and South Main Streets, the adjoining streets near downtown, and in the Reamstown area. However, few of these were prioritized for recordation as part of the survey, thus the numbers present on the landscape are higher than what the summaries would seem.

⁵⁶⁶ Woodard, “Long House”, Section 8, page 10.

⁵⁶⁷ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 346.

integrating classical elements. It is also the only other Roxboro house to have a tower, here placed asymmetrically in accordance with Queen Anne-style principles. Additional Queen Anne-style characteristics of the house include irregular massing, projecting canted bays, decorative shingled gables, and a wraparound porch; the Ionic porch columns, Palladian gable windows, and dentil molding beneath the cornices of the porch and tower are typical of the Colonial Revival style.

Most of Roxboro's other examples of this stylistic transition are more restrained in their detailing. The 1911 Strayhorn-Peters House (PR0313) at 213 South Lamar Street and 1914 Early and Lena Brooks House (PR0669) at 505 Old Durham Road both feature two-story irregular forms and complex hipped and gabled rooflines. Instead of the turned porch posts typical of Victorian-era houses, the Strayhorn-Peters House has Tuscan columns, and the Brooks House has Craftsman-style tapered box posts on brick plinths that might be a later alteration. The roof of the ca. 1910 Watkins House (PR0281) at 200 Peachtree Street is hipped and gabled and the gables are shingled, but the overall composition is more overtly classical in its symmetry, entrance with sidelights and transom, and broad porch supported by Ionic columns on brick piers.

Colonial Revival Style

By the turn of the twentieth century, leading national architectural trends had moved away from the asymmetrical forms and elaborate ornamentation of the late-nineteenth-century Romantic and Victorian styles, shifting to simpler forms and symmetrical facades with classical detailing. Especially for residential architecture, the Colonial Revival style had become popular, inspired first by the Centennial Exposition of 1876 held in Philadelphia and later by Chicago's World Columbian Exposition of 1893, both of which fueled a renewed interest in the Georgian and Federal styles of colonial America.⁵⁶⁸ The preference for the Colonial Revival style also was "part of a large concern for stabilizing the identity of American culture in the face of massive immigration, class turbulence, and ever expanding industrialization" in its representation of "an Americanness, of patriotism and longevity."⁵⁶⁹

Buildings with simple rectangular footprints; gabled and hipped roofs, often with dormers; symmetrical fenestration; double-hung wood sash windows, frequently in pairs or larger groupings; and a decorative front entrance incorporating classical elements characterize the Colonial Revival style.⁵⁷⁰ These types of houses appeared in

⁵⁶⁸ NC DCR, "Tar-Neuse River Basin," 29.

⁵⁶⁹ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 490.

⁵⁷⁰ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 409-432.

Roxboro's neighborhoods extending north and south from the central business district from the 1920s through the 1940s.

Colonial Revival-style houses of the 1920s and 1930s tended toward more literal interpretations of Georgian and Federal themes and details, a trend fueled in part by the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the 1920s and 1930s.⁵⁷¹ The 1922 house at 400 North Main Street represents this trend in its large and boxy brick form with contrasting concrete quoins at the corners, a modillion cornice, grouped double-hung windows, and an elaborate entrance surround of Ionic columns and piers supporting a dentilled and modillioned entablature and segmental pediment on a stepped base. The Henry D. and Annie Byrd Long House (PR0707), built in 1927 at 229 Wesleyan Heights Road with a weatherboarded exterior, and the John T. and Bessie Long Bradsher House (PR0763), erected ca. 1938 at 204 South Morgan Street with a brick exterior, represent variations on the two-story, gable-roofed Colonial Revival box. Both have symmetrically-arranged three-bay facades. The Long House incorporates fanlights above the first-story windows and has a centered flat-roofed portico sheltering the main entrance with multi-paned sidelights flanking a French door. In contrast, the Bradsher House has flanking one-story wings, common in the Federal era, and its entrance is in an end bay, which sometimes indicates a side-hall-plan; the porch is narrow and pedimented with slender box posts and a railing.

About 1934, a row of Colonial Revival-style houses was erected just north of the Ca-Vel Mill to house the company's executives. Unlike the nearby worker housing, the Ca-Vel Executive Mill Village (PR0291) consists of two-story houses with Colonial Revival-style details. Builders of the village utilized two basic house plans for the ten houses that were constructed; one plan for the six two-car garages; and one design for its four metal street lampposts. The boxy rectangular and L-shaped forms were finished with wood weatherboards and embellished with louvered shutters flanking the double-hung windows and six-panel doors fit with classical door surrounds, many with fanlights or pediments. The lack of front porches is partly stylistic, with only small stoops common on Colonial Revival-style buildings, but it also speaks to the nature of the village.

As the Colonial Revival style remained popular through the 1940s, one- and one-and-a-half-story houses became more prevalent, partially in response to the limited resources of the depression era and the need for quick construction after World War II. A mid-twentieth-century example of the Colonial Revival style is the one-and-a-

⁵⁷¹ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 489.

half-story, side-gabled Pointer-Davis House (PR0778) built ca. 1950 at 119 Ridge Road. Here, the rectangular form is broken by a two-story, front-gabled wing projecting from the middle of the façade, flanked by a recessed two-bay entrance porch and a two-car garage. The one-and-a-half-story house with gabled dormers was relatively uncommon in the county, where Colonial Revival-style details were more likely to be applied to traditional two-story house types and Ranch houses, especially in the Sunset Hills neighborhood (PR0730).

Similar to the transition from the Queen Anne to the Colonial Revival style, the introduction of the Craftsman style in the 1920s led to a blending of Colonial Revival- and Craftsman-style elements within a single building, usually a two-story, three-bay by two- or three-room-deep (square-plan) house with a hipped roof. This boxy form emphasized “the virtues of simplicity, unpretentiousness, and efficiency.”⁵⁷² A dormer on the façade and a full-width or wrap-around porch supported by Craftsman-style post-on-pier supports or full-height brick piers typically accented the house. The frame, square-plan Hester House (PR0318) at 309 South Main Street is a good example of this transition in its combination of a classically symmetrical two-story, hip-roofed form with symmetrical fenestration and modillioned cornices fronted by a brick porch with heavy piers, pierced brick railing, and concrete or cast stone caps. A one-story sunroom on one side of the house balances the porte-cochere on the other side.

Craftsman Style

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Craftsman style emerged throughout Person County as the most popular architectural mode for residential construction and was commonly expressed as a one- or one-and-a-half-story hipped or gabled bungalow. The bungalow derived from the deep-roofed, informal cottage or *bangla* in India and was widely adapted in the United States, its form promoting “modern, natural, healthful living.”⁵⁷³ A “true bungalow,” as defined by contemporary literature, was “one story tall and usually had one or more wide, front-facing gables that integrated the porch and house.”⁵⁷⁴ However, the label came to be applied to any house with a low-slung silhouette dominated by a broad, low-sloped roof, often with a shed, hipped, or gabled dormer, and a deep, engaged porch that extended the living space and captured breezes. The form is most often accentuated by Craftsman-style features including deep eaves with knee braces and exposed rafters and purlins; and heavy, tapered box posts, usually

⁵⁷² Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 499.

⁵⁷³ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 499.

⁵⁷⁴ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 501.

on brick piers, supporting the porch roof.⁵⁷⁵ A wide variety of materials including wood weatherboards and shingles, brick, stucco, and stone sheathed the exterior walls. Double-hung windows with multiple vertical lights in the upper sash are also distinctly Craftsman in style.

Craftsman-style houses varied greatly in size and style, depending on the owners' needs and what they could afford.⁵⁷⁶ Some of Roxboro's earliest Craftsman houses are not strictly bungalows but single-story traditional types embellished with Craftsman-style detailing. The ca. 1925 Burke-Harris House (PR0752) at 758 North Main Street is a hip-roofed, three-bay, three-room-deep form with a near-full-width, engaged shed-roofed porch. The distinctly Craftsman-style post-on-pier porch supports and four-over-one windows, plus the hip-roofed attic dormer, lend the traditional house type the appearance of a bungalow. The same is true of the ca. 1926 Harris-Milam House (PR0742) at 207 Leasburg Road with its broad, side-gabled form and full-width engaged, shed-roofed porch, though here there is a gable on the porch rather than an attic dormer.

As Roxboro continued to grow in the 1920s and 1930s, bungalows were constructed on North and South Main Street, as well as in the Reamstown area west of downtown. A small version of the bungalow with a front-gable roof and a shed or gabled porch became especially popular due to its compact one- or one-and-a-half-story form that was well-suited to narrow, early twentieth-century urban lots.⁵⁷⁷ The front-gabled form in particular became the standard for Craftsman-style houses constructed in working-class neighborhoods throughout the state.⁵⁷⁸ The clipped-front-gabled roof and narrow façade of the ca. 1937 one-story Helen Wagstaff House (PR0699) at 125 Johnson Street recalls tenant and worker housing in the rural county. The restrained detailing is limited to the Craftsman-style windows and post-on-pier porch supports. Many small-scale examples of the bungalow exist throughout Roxboro's traditionally White and African American working-class neighborhoods.

The Craftsman style was adaptable to larger forms with a variety of roof types, providing versatility in design. As on many of Person County's farms, the broad three-bay, side-gabled bungalow with a full-width engaged porch and a gabled or shed-roofed

⁵⁷⁵ Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 535; McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 567-578; Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 498-505.

⁵⁷⁶ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 500.

⁵⁷⁷ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 501.

⁵⁷⁸ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 501.

dormer on the façade was common in Roxboro's White middle-class neighborhoods.⁵⁷⁹ Two examples of this type of bungalow are the ca. 1928 Robert A. and Jessie Whitfield House (PR0744) at 212 Leasburg Road and the ca. 1929 Ruth June and Otto Young Clayton Sr. House (PR0776) at 608 Reams Avenue, each with a shed-roofed dormer and a sweeping roof that extends to the engaged porch. Both feature Craftsman-style windows and post-on-pier supports as well as a French door centered on the façade. This broad form typically allows for a center stair hall to access second-floor rooms tucked within the gables and dormers.

While most of Roxboro's Craftsman-style houses are one- or one-and-a-half-story bungalows, the style was not limited to this house type. A number of houses constructed by prominent residents are two or more stories and exhibit more fully articulated elements of the style. As noted in the discussion of Craftsman-style houses in rural Person County, the style emerged in the United States as an expression of England's nineteenth-century Arts and Crafts movement, which placed an emphasis on craftsmanship in architectural details, exposed beams and joinery, and simple asymmetrical forms. The ca. 1915 house at 219 South Lamar Street (PR0314) exemplifies these characteristics in its somewhat irregular form and the detailing of its porch. The frame two-story-with-attic dwelling has an L-plan with a cross-gable roof porch supports of two or three box posts connected by smaller framing in geometric patterns. The Craftsman-style door centered on the facade is flanked by six-light Craftsman-style sidelights and topped by a matching eight-light transom; the upper window sashes have a horizontal muntin that intersects the typical vertical muntins near their upper end.

The most exuberant and fully articulated example of the Craftsman style in Roxboro is the 1922 Walter R. and Annie-Laurie Woody House (PR0689), built by contractor George W. Kane at 245 North Main Street and either designed by an as-yet-unidentified architect or derived from an architectural plan book. The hip-roofed house is distinctive for its blonde-brick veneer, green terra cotta tile roof, and deep eaves with large, paired brackets and exposed rafter ends. It has a combination of nine-over-one and twelve-over-one wood-sash windows, all with granite sills. A hipped and gabled porch has supports of tall brick plinths on which squat tapered wood posts rise to a segmental-arch entablature. A matching gabled porch extends from the north elevation. The highly intact interior retains its original floor plan, wood floors, moldings and trim, mantelpieces, and French doors.

⁵⁷⁹ Bishir and Southern, *Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 535; McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 567-578; Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 498-505.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the bungalow remained popular, often exhibiting Colonial Revival detailing, especially during the World War II era. The ca. 1937 Clarence and Mabel Phelps House (PR0698) at 120 Johnson Street illustrates the continued preference for the front-gabled form, here with the typical wide porch moved to a side elevation. The ca. 1941 George Kenneth and Bernice Walker House (PR0755) at 1011 North Main Street features a side-gabled form with symmetrical façade arranged around an entrance sheltered by a shallow gabled hood. The house retains Craftsman-style windows, though the eaves are much shallower than those of traditional bungalows.

Period Cottages

A number of early- to mid-twentieth century homes in Roxboro, especially in the Sunset Hills neighborhood (PR0730), which was developed from 1937 through about 1970, included elements of multiple revival styles in a single building. The combination of elements from multiple revival styles applied to one- or one-and-a-half story forms, led to the categorization of these buildings as Period Cottages. In Roxboro, most Period Cottages incorporated Colonial Revival detailing and Tudor Revival-style elements, including steeply pitched roofs, asymmetrical entrance wings, round-arch doors, and prominent brick chimneys on the facades. Roughly ten Period Cottages were documented, the earliest of which is the ca. 1927 Kendall and Pearl Street House (PR0708) at 233 Wesleyan Heights Road. The one-and-a-half-story stone house features a prominent stone chimney on the façade and a steeply pitched front gable with the entrance inset within a round arch. A detailed brick chimney with inset basketweave panels stands beside two steep front gables on the ca. 1932 B. B. and Ethel Knight House (PR0765) at 209 South Morgan Street. Round-arch, multi-light windows light both gables and an arched six-light-over-two-panel door is inset within an arched brick surround.

Among the largest Period Cottage in Roxboro is the one-and-a-half-story, ca. 1935 Claude Lea Pointer House (PR0779) at 203 Ridge Road. Tudor Revival style detailing includes stone around the batten front door, a stone chimney with brick stack, and curved braces at the square porch supports. Constructed about 1951, the Tillman House (PR0720), at 101 North Charles Street in the Reamstown development, illustrates the continued use of period revival details in the post-World War II era. The house displays a steeply pitched front gable, round-arch door, and a small latticed window next to a façade chimney.

PERSON COUNTY IN THE MID- TO LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY (CA. 1950-1975)

Agriculture

The most notable changes to agriculture and rural life in Person County, and throughout North Carolina, in the mid-twentieth century came as a result of technological advances in the post-World War II years. Between 1945 and 1950, tractor ownership more than doubled in the county and the use of farm trucks increased by about fifty percent. Farm labor was made easier by new equipment, though many farmers were slow to adopt mechanized farm equipment, likely because of the high initial investment and costs associated with the maintenance of such machinery. While the use of grain combines tripled and the use of milking machines increased six hundred percent statewide, in Person County by 1950, only about three percent of farmers owned a grain combine, two percent owned a milking machine, one percent owned a hay baler, and corn pickers were essentially absent.⁵⁸⁰ These statistics were due in large part to the continued dominance of tobacco as the county's primary cash crop. Rather than investing in the machinery, nearly half of Person County farmers opted instead to invest in custom farming by hiring a contractor (usually a neighboring farmer) to perform machinery operations on their farms.⁵⁸¹

With the slow adoption of labor-saving machinery and the continued predominance of tobacco, farm tenancy changed little until the late twentieth century. All forms of tenant farming peaked during the Great Depression, but by 1950 nearly 30 percent of White farmers and nearly 70 percent of Black farmers statewide were still engaged in a tenant farming agreement. In Person County, tenancy figures were even higher, with 47 percent of White farmers and 75 percent of Black farmers involved in tenancy arrangements. Among tenants, share tenancy and sharecropping were by far the most common arrangements, involving nearly 30 percent of White farmers and 50 percent of Black farmers in Person County.⁵⁸²

Farms in Person County remained relatively diversified and, in addition to tobacco, continued to produce a variety of grains and vegetables and raise livestock. Mid-twentieth-century technological advances noted above increased farm production in

⁵⁸⁰ Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I: Counties and State Economic Areas, Part 16: North Carolina and South Carolina* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1952), 6.

⁵⁸¹ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 84.

⁵⁸² *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 4*, 16, 77.

some of these areas. About the same number of farms reported growing corn in 1950 as had in 1945, and though farmers in 1950 consistently planted corn on about half the acreage of those in 1945, the number of bushels harvested increased by about one-quarter.⁵⁸³ Similarly, the acreage planted with Lespedeza hay increased by only about one-quarter during the same period, while production nearly doubled.⁵⁸⁴ Meanwhile, overall cultivation of tobacco and most grasses remained stable, while acreage devoted to most small grains, vegetables, and fruits decreased.⁵⁸⁵

Livestock, including beef cattle, dairy cows, hogs, sheep, and chickens, have been commonly raised in the county since the 1920s. While the number of dairy farms in the county remain constant from 1945 to 1950, dairy production nearly doubled during that period with the introduction of milking machines. Similarly, improvements to fertilizer and seed for pastures improved livestock production. Cattle sales increased by about one-quarter, hog sales doubled, and data for raising rabbits was recorded in the census for the first time. At the same time, the sale of chickens, sheep, and their associated products decreased somewhat; the cause of this change is unclear.⁵⁸⁶

Getting farm products to market remained a challenge for Person County farmers, about a third of whom had to travel more than ten miles to the nearest market.⁵⁸⁷ Governor W. Kerr Scott (1949-1953) discovered soon after taking office in 1949 that “the people, and especially the farmers, were in favor of improved county roads, which would ‘get them out of the mud’ and enable them to take their produce to market with more ease.”⁵⁸⁸ Similar to the Good Roads Movement of the early twentieth century, a second burst of road construction came under Governor Scott’s “Go Forward” plan after World War II. Enacted by the General Assembly in 1949, the legislation allocated \$200 million for secondary road construction in the state and included an increase in the state tax rates on gasoline, which also contributed to funding road improvements.⁵⁸⁹ Between 1945 and 1950, the number of North Carolina farms located on a hard-surfaced road more than doubled, while those located on dirt roads dropped by about one-quarter.⁵⁹⁰ In Person County during that time, only one-quarter of farms were located on a hard-surfaced road, while the others were located on dirt or gravel roads.⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸³ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 107.

⁵⁸⁴ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 121.

⁵⁸⁵ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 107, 121, 127, 135, 142, 168.

⁵⁸⁶ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 91, 99.

⁵⁸⁷ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 84.

⁵⁸⁸ Lefler and Newsome, *North Carolina*, 592-593.

⁵⁸⁹ Lefler and Newsome, *North Carolina*, 592-593.

⁵⁹⁰ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 6.

⁵⁹¹ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 84.

By the mid-twentieth century progressed, North Carolina produced more tobacco than any other state, accounting for about two-thirds of the nation's flue-cured tobacco.⁵⁹² Person County produced over twelve million pounds of tobacco in 1950, nine million pounds in 1956, and over twelve million pounds again in 1962.⁵⁹³ During this period, emerging technologies related to tobacco cultivation changed the agricultural landscape of North Carolina and may have accounted for some of the fluctuations in production. Researchers at North Carolina State University (NCSU) sought to mechanize the tobacco farming process to achieve higher yields with less labor. One of the most impactful innovations made in the 1960s by the faculty of the Department of Agricultural Engineering at NCSU was the mechanical tobacco harvester, which picked tobacco leaves one-by-one and alleviated the need for laborers to work the fields. However, the machines could not detect mature leaves, instead collecting all of the leaves at the same time, and the mechanisms routinely damaged the leaves. As a result, while the harvester was in widespread use by the late 1960s, some farmers preferred to hand pick tobacco, which they believed resulted in a better final product and a higher price at market.⁵⁹⁴ Though this practice is rare in the early twenty-first century, migrant workers harvesting tobacco within the Pearce-Foushee Farm Rural Historic District (PR0803) continue to hand pick the tobacco.

Evolving Twentieth-Century Farmsteads

As production shifted on Person County farms, new building types emerged in response to increased mechanization and ongoing efforts toward diversification in farming.⁵⁹⁵ New buildings or additions to existing buildings were necessary to house the growing number of tractors and other farm equipment. Mechanization also made it easier to clear and grade land and to construct farm ponds for watering cattle. Meanwhile, the construction of new barns was no longer a community affair. Local resident James Earl Hester noted that, "with a chain saw, one man could cut as much wood as many men, and the cutting could be done in areas that were more selective...The chain saw was

⁵⁹² Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 488, 503.

⁵⁹³ "Roxboro Leaf Market is Off 4 Million Pounds from 1956," *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times*, December 2, 1957, DigitalNC; "Local Mart Passes 12 Million Pounds," *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times*, November 19, 1962, DigitalNC.

⁵⁹⁴ "Mechanization of Agriculture," *Agricultural Empowerment: The Industry of Agriculture*, North Carolina State University, <https://soh.omeka.chass.ncsu.edu/exhibits/show/industry-of-agriculture/postwwii-ag/ag-mechanization>.

⁵⁹⁵ Note: Though many sources say farms became more diverse in the mid-twentieth century, the data for Person County – particularly data collected by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and the U.S. Department of Agriculture – indicates diversification started before the Great Depression. While specific crops, types of livestock, or other farm products change frequently over time, farms in the county have produced corn, small grains, Irish & sweet potatoes, market vegetables, hay, clover, and tobacco, as well as raising beef cattle, dairy cows, hogs, chickens, and sheep, since the 1920s.

regarded as a big advancement, despite playing an important role in eliminating community gatherings.”⁵⁹⁶

While farm communities may have become slightly fragmented with the introduction of new technologies, farming itself remained a family business, with multiple generations of farm families constructing houses adjacent to one another and sharing the responsibility of farm and family. The construction of bungalows and small traditional house types was already taking place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the post-World War II era, however, generational housing increased significantly when nearly every active farmstead had at least one newer house in addition to the earlier farmhouse.

Despite the loss of its original, turn-of-the-century farmhouse, the Bailey Farm (PR0494) near the Woodsdale community is among the best examples of this trend. The complex includes the 1938 Haywood and Cleo Bailey House (PR0496), a brick Period Cottage; the 1943 Ida Clayton Bailey House (PR0495), a one-story, Minimal Traditional house; and a 1977 brick Ranch house. Similarly, the Pearce-Foushee Farm Rural Historic District (PR0803) along Satterfield Road includes the original ca. 1901 Thomas Anderson and Emma Moore Pearce House (PR0437), a vernacular side-gabled house; the ca. 1940 Colonial Revival-style Caviness Banks and Helen Pearce Foushee House (PR0439); the 1953 Eloise Pearce House (PR0435), a one-story brick Ranch; and two brick ranch houses constructed in the 1970s.

It also was common for farmland to be subdivided by sacrificing strips of farmland abutting major county roads for the construction of houses, in part because the value of the acreage was less than the value of the houses. In these instances, construction might have been a speculative venture rather than for family members. For example, between 1936 and 1947, Daniel L. Whitfield constructed a row of houses (PR0580) just south of the Hurdle Mills Community, perhaps initially to produce extra Depression-era income. The houses, simple, front- and side-gabled buildings with minimal Craftsman-style detailing, were all sold by 1947.

(More specific context for the architectural styles mentioned herein is in the following chapter on Roxboro.)

Machine Sheds and Carports

As the mechanization of farming increased in the post-World War II era, it became necessary to erect structures to shelter the tractors, harvesters, and other farm

⁵⁹⁶ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 149.

equipment. While these buildings were constructed as early as the 1920s, many more were built in the 1950s and later. Most often, these shelters were open, shed-roofed buildings supported by trimmed and peeled logs or square posts and topped by metal roofing. The side and rear elevations were sometimes enclosed with wood or metal sheathing, but the buildings never had doors as the priority was protection from the sun and rain rather than security.

Many scores of these shelters are found all across the county, most with a shed roof supported by trimmed and peeled logs reinforced with diagonal braces. The three-bay, shed-roofed machine shed adjacent to the Crenshaw and Otelia Green Lawson House (PR0373) on Lawson Adcock Road is typical in form and construction, with two sides enclosed with metal sheathing. Another example is the four-bay, shed-roofed machine shed at the Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wright Jones Farm (PR0458) on Jones Road, which features plain weatherboards on the side and rear elevations and exposed rafter tails supporting a pent roof over the open bays. The four-bay, shed-roofed machine shed on the William Boyd and Zelia Whitfield Horton Farm (PR0603) on Hurdle Mills Road features a much higher roof to accommodate the height of modern tractors and wagons. Several side-gabled, machine sheds on the Thomas Anderson and Emma Moore Pearce Farm (PR0437) feature sheathing only on the gable ends, allowing tractors to pull through the building. An attached building to the rear of the large machine shed on the James Arthur Whitfield Farm (PR0635) on Union Grove Church Road west of Hurdle Mills appears to be a repair shop.

In some instances, shed-roofed vehicular bays were affixed to curing barns, packhouses, livestock barns, corn cribs, or other existing buildings. This was the case on the Sidney Warren and Maggie Long Ashley Farm (PR0425) on Flat Woods Road where a shed-roofed corn crib built ca. 1920 was adapted with the addition of an open shed-roofed bay on the north elevation and a deep, four-bay, shed-roofed wing supported by square posts on the south elevation.

Some machine sheds were more thoroughly enclosed, like that on the Nathaniel T. and Harriett Huff Farm (PR0361) on JD Denny Road, which has vertical sheathing throughout except on the two vehicular bays. By the late twentieth century, prefabricated machine sheds and metal pole barns had become more common as they were cheaper and easier to erect than large-scale enclosed frame barns, easier to clean, and had ample interior space for housing larger equipment as well as farm products.⁵⁹⁷ One such building on the Thomas Anderson and Emma Moore Pearce Farm features

⁵⁹⁷ Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 115.

wide sliding doors and a poured concrete floor, making it weather-tight and suitable for the storage of both machinery and baled tobacco ready for market.

Smaller in scale and located immediately adjacent to the house, the carport served a similar function. Garages and carports had been constructed on farm properties as early as the 1920s and became far more common in the middle of the century. The ca. 1952 Joseph Thomas and Dorothy Lee Coates Farm (PR0451) on Cunningham Road features a wide, gabled, frame carport supported by square posts with diagonal braces. Other mid-twentieth-century carports featured low-sloped shed roofs supported by metal posts. By the late twentieth century, prefabricated metal carports had been erected throughout the county.

Farm ponds

In Person County, where well drained soils supported tobacco cultivation, farm ponds were not necessary for irrigation or soil conservation. However, in the mid-twentieth century, as some farmers in Person County began acquiring herds of beef and dairy cattle to supplement their tobacco production, farm ponds became more common. The practice of digging ponds, either for the watering of livestock or for recreational purposes, was furthered by the availability of bulldozers and other mechanized earth moving equipment after World War II. Thus, the peak of farm pond construction in much of the country was between 1940 and 1970.⁵⁹⁸

Most farm ponds nationwide were under five acres in surface area and Person County ponds were typically even smaller. Water was captured “offline,” utilizing gravity to corral rainwater or groundwater; “online,” using pumps or dams to capture or divert moving water; or a combination of the two methods.⁵⁹⁹ When utilized to water livestock, the ponds were necessarily located in the pasture where the animals roamed. This is the case in most Person County farms.

Recreation was often a secondary use of the farm pond. Local resident James Earl Hester notes that the farm pond “provided water for irrigation, good fishing areas, and good places for trappers to catch coon and muskrats.”⁶⁰⁰ Especially in the post-War period, “recreation acquired far greater legitimacy as a use of the farm pond. A 1959 nationwide survey of one thousand farm ponds stocked by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife found that over 90 percent of pond owners reported fishing.”⁶⁰¹ This was the

⁵⁹⁸ Sally McMurry, “The American Farm Pond,” *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, 27, no. 2 (Fall 2020): 46.

⁵⁹⁹ McMurry, “The American Farm Pond,” 40.

⁶⁰⁰ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 149.

⁶⁰¹ McMurry, “The American Farm Pond,” 49.

case at the James Obediah and Ida Timberlake Pearce Farm (PR0434) on Roy Pierce Road, where the pond was regularly fished by using a large net, or sein. By the late twentieth century, as public pools were constructed throughout the county, the recreational value of the pond, at least for swimming, waned.

Orchards

In addition to grapes, which were common on most late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century farms, a number of landowners planted small orchards of apple and pear trees arranged in loose rows. The ca. 1952 Joseph Thomas and Dorothy Lee Coates Farm has a small orchard of five fruit trees. A small orchard at the ca. 1900 George Collins and Ella Thompson Hester Farm (PR0459) on Gordonton Road is immediately behind the domestic outbuildings. Even non-farmers planted fruit trees, as was the case at the ca. 1972 William and Sadie Long House (PR0504) on Mountain Road east of Roxboro where a small orchard is east of a modernist Ranch house. These orchards were not necessarily intended to produce fruit for market, though the Coates family may have sold some of the produce at the Joseph Dabner Coates Store (PR0452) across the street. Instead, they usually were meant to provide fruit for the residents, neighbors, and local wildlife.

Poultry Barns

While most farms kept a small number of chickens for personal consumption, some farmers raised chickens for income, constructing large buildings to accommodate the flocks necessary for commercial production of “layers” and “fryers.” Mid-twentieth-century poultry barns are typically long, sometimes windowless, structures identifiable by the large fans (chickens are susceptible to heat stress) and associated grain bins.⁶⁰² Because the concrete-block construction helped to regulate the temperature within the building, south-facing openings were not always deemed necessary as they had been in earlier frame houses. The ca. 1945 Thomas A. Melton House (PR0352) on Olive Branch Road has a small-scale, frame chicken coop, typical of those constructed in the early twentieth century, to the rear of the house and east of the house is a long concrete-block building with a low-sloped gabled roof and evenly-spaced window openings along the east and west elevations. A similar poultry barn stands on the Denny Farm (PR0363) on JD Denny Road, but here the long elevations lined with windows face north and south.

The sprawling William Boyd and Zelia Whitfield Horton Farm (PR0603) represents the two eras of chicken houses. A ca. 1920 chicken coop was constructed in the

⁶⁰² Hayes, *Infrastructure*, 139.

traditional, shed-roofed form but was tall enough to stand in and featured two rooms separated by an interior partition. Across the road, beyond the farm's tobacco-related resources, a long, frame poultry barn identified by its low-sloped gable roof was constructed in the late 1960s. While much of the exterior material has been removed from the rear of the building, the front retains an enclosed room sheathed with vertical metal that served as an egg house.

Improvements to Rural Infrastructure

Rural Electrification

Rural electrification programs were born of the New Deal and began to impact rural Person County by the late 1930s. The North Carolina Rural Electrification Authority (NCREA) was established by the General Assembly in 1935 but was limited in its reach and authority until the creation of the federal Rural Electrification Authority (REA) later that year. The New Deal program funneled money to the states for the construction of electrical lines and facilities, largely achieved through the formation of cooperatives known as electrical membership corporations.⁶⁰³ In the fall of 1935, representatives from Person County and seven other Piedmont counties requested assistance from the NCREA in constructing power lines to rural areas.⁶⁰⁴ The Person County farm agent also advocated locally for rural electrification, holding at least three field meetings in the mid-1930s on the topic of wiring homes and how to care for electrical appliances.⁶⁰⁵ James Earl Hester recalled in his memoir, "People in town had electric lights years before we received electric power out at Hester's Store. Later, I would become ashamed that we had no electric lights or running water, and my town friends did, for we had to cook on a wood-burning stove, study by kerosene lamp, and go outside when we needed to use the toilet."⁶⁰⁶

In 1935, the NCREA reported the completion or authorization of over five hundred miles of rural power lines that brought power to about 3,740 North Carolinians for the first time. "The authority's report put North Carolina well to the front in the national rural electrification picture," according to the editors of the *Roxboro Courier-Times*.⁶⁰⁷ In Person County, Carolina Power and Light Company built seventy-five miles of

⁶⁰³ James L. Hunt, "Rural Electrification," NCpedia, State Library of North Carolina, 2006, <https://www.ncpedia.org/rural-electrification>.

⁶⁰⁴ "Eight Groups Ask for Power Lines," *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, September 4, 1935, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁰⁵ *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times*, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁰⁶ James Earl Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 137.

⁶⁰⁷ "Power Lines Being Built for 3,740 Farm Families," *The Roxboro Courier*, November 25, 1935, DigitalNC.

power lines between 1935 and 1941, serving about 375 farm families.⁶⁰⁸ The Hesters were among those to receive electricity for the first time during that period.⁶⁰⁹

By the mid-1960s, electrification had reached most of rural North Carolina, which by then was served primarily by electric membership cooperatives. The number of farm families with electricity increased statewide from about 11,558 in 1935 to 224,700 rural households in 1964. In Person County, rural electrification nearly tripled between 1945 and 1950, facilitated by the 43,449 miles of power lines run across the state between 1935 and 1964. Private companies also contributed substantially to rural electrification in the mid-twentieth century. Carolina Power and Light contributed an additional 18,885 miles of power lines for 211,866 families and Duke Power ran 18,477 miles of power lines for 228,408 customers statewide; both companies served rural Person County by the mid-twentieth century.⁶¹⁰

Telephone service also increased in the mid-twentieth century. Statewide, the number of telephones on farms nearly doubled between 1945 and 1950. In Person County, telephones remained relatively uncommon on farms through the mid-twentieth century, but domestic technologies that did not require public infrastructure were widely adopted. Interior plumbing and clothes washing machines became commonplace conveniences; more than one-third of Person County farmers owned a washing machine by 1950.⁶¹¹

Hyco Lake Reservoir

By 1960, Carolina Power and Light Company (CP&L) was exploring options for the construction of a steam powered electrical plant in the northern Piedmont region, either on Hyco Creek in northwestern Person County or Mayo Creek in northeastern Person County. Between 1962 and 1965, the company acquired around ten thousand acres of land around Hyco Creek. In 1962, plans for the construction of a 1,600-foot-long, 70-foot-high dam across Hyco Creek and a survey of the anticipated reservoir boundaries began, and by the end of 1965, CP&L had acquired around ten thousand acres adjoining the creek. According to a November 1962 article in Durham's *Herald-Sun*, the plans included "a \$325 million plant to be built in stages over a 14-year period. . . . The huge plant ultimately would generate twice as much power as currently

⁶⁰⁸ "Electric Power Now Available to Farm People," *The Roxboro Courier*, August 5, 1941, DigitalNC.

⁶⁰⁹ James Earl Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 137.

⁶¹⁰ "Rural Power Service Growth in NC Cited," *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, December 11, 1964, Newspapers.com.

⁶¹¹ *Census of Agriculture: 1950, Volume I, Part 16*, 84.

required by the entire CP&L system.”⁶¹² Greensboro’s *News and Record* observed, “To the people of this area, [the dam] and power plant. . . rank in importance with the coming of the railroad, textiles, and tobacco.”⁶¹³

Construction of the earthen and concrete dam, plans to relocate roads and bridges that would be flooded by the reservoir, and construction of the power plant began in 1963.⁶¹⁴ The dam was completed in September 1964, the 3,750-acre reservoir was filled by March of 1965, and the power plant began producing electricity in May 1966.⁶¹⁵ About 350 people were employed in the construction of the plant and about fifty people were employed in its operation. To produce the necessary steam, the plant required over two million tons of coal annually, which was delivered on a spur line of the Norfolk & Western Railroad from Woodsdale. When the plant began operation, the newspapers explained, “Steam produced in the boiler will be released against blades of the turbine to drive the generator at 3,600 revolutions per minute, and power will be directed to a switchyard and transmitted from there to points of delivery.”⁶¹⁶ The newspaper went on to describe a boiler with “an output of 2,500,000 pounds of steam per hour. Its walls are lined with more than 100 miles of tubing through which water passes. The smokestack rises 400 feet, twice as tall as the boiler.”⁶¹⁷

Rural Industry and Commerce

With the availability of mass-produced flour and cornmeal, no new mills were constructed in the mid-twentieth century and most of the local mills that remained in operation were utilized only for the production of animal feed. Beginning in the 1960s, Hurdle Mill ceased the fine-grinding of flour for human consumption to focus on the storage and processing of corn and wheat for animal feed. Owner Mike Dixon also owned and operated the Woodsdale Mill (PR0099) in the 1960s, though sold the mill (no longer in operation) in the late 1970s. The largest local competitor of Hurdle Mill was Whitfield's Bushy Fork Milling Company (PR0582), which closed in the early

⁶¹² “CP&L Recording Options on Land for Person Plant,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, November 15, 1962, Newspapers.com.

⁶¹³ “Hyc0 Dam in Person County: Earthmovers Reshape Economy,” *[Greensboro] News and Record*, May 24, 1964, Newspapers.com.

⁶¹⁴ “Modernization is Set for Relocated Roads,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, March 8, 1963, Newspapers.com.

⁶¹⁵ Jack Slaughter, “Rains Filling 3,750-Acre Person Lake,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, October 8, 1964, Newspapers.com; Jack Slaughter, “Person CP&L Plant Dedication Set,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, May 19, 1966, Newspapers.com.

⁶¹⁶ Slaughter, “Person CP&L Plant Dedication Set.”

⁶¹⁷ “Lynn Wilson, “CP&L Turns Turbines in Person,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, September 18, 1966, Newspapers.com.

1990s.⁶¹⁸ Constructed about 1956, the Roxboro facility of the Central Carolina Farmers Exchange (PR0301) provided similar services and supplies.

Rural Commercial Buildings

Despite innovations in building construction and a shifting commercial landscape in the mid-twentieth century, the one-story front-gabled form remained popular for rural stores in Person County. The ca. 1960 Kitten Hill Grocery (PR0484), on Cavel Chub Lake Road just north of Roxboro, illustrates the endurance of the form, albeit executed in concrete block, with an inset entrance flanked by display windows and sheltered by a Craftsman-style porch on tapered wood piers. The ca. 1950 frame, hip-roofed Rupert Jones Store (PR0600) on Hurdle Mills Road features the same centered-entrance configuration; originally located near the intersection of Jones Store Road, the building was moved in the 1970s after the closed; its deep canopy, an extension of the hipped roof, now shelters lawn equipment rather than fuel pumps.

By the mid-twentieth century, the prevalence of automobiles began to affect both the design and purpose of rural stores. The general store that stocked everything from plow points to pickles was gradually replaced by the convenience store with gas pumps out front, limited foodstuffs, and little in the way of agricultural supplies. The transition was gradual as gas pumps began to be installed in front of rural stores in the 1940s, providing fuel for the mechanized farming equipment as much as for pedestrian vehicles.

The ca. 1945 T. A. Melton Store on the Samuel Washington and Mary L. Melton Farm (PR0351) on Olive Branch Road illustrates this transition. The frame building is typical of country stores built early in the century except that here the front-gabled canopy on two-part brick piers shelters two gas pumps. The ca. 1941 Roseville Grocery (PR0572) on NC 49 Southwest of Roxboro is an example of the rural gas station executed in brick. The one-story, side-gabled building features flush eaves and wall gables on the façade, both elements characteristic of the Minimal Traditional style in mid-twentieth-century residential construction.

As commercial enterprises consolidated in the 1960s and 1970s and vehicular access to Roxboro and other markets became easier, most of the county's early rural stores closed and the remainder were replaced by modern buildings. In Hurdle Mills, the one-story brick D. L. Whitfield and Co. Store (PR0608) was built in 1964 to replace the ca. 1900 Wilburn-Whitfield Store (PR0610) across the street. The primary Whitfield business moved into the new store and the earlier building operated as a furniture store until

⁶¹⁸ Personal Communication with Mike Dixon.

the late 1980s. Topped by a stepped parapet and sheltered by a flat metal awning, the very wide façade of the newer one-story brick-veneered building consists mostly of the storefront's aluminum-framed display windows and centered doors that convey its modernity.

Just east of the Bushy Fork community, in the southwestern part of the county, C. W. Chambers constructed a one-story, concrete block commercial building (PR0575) about 1950. Veneered in tan Roman brick, the façade has a tall parapet and a flat-roofed awning above large display windows flanking the entrance. In the early 1960s, the building was enlarged on one side with four additional bays veneered in the same brick and sheltered by an extension of its flat roof. In contrast to the Modernist aesthetic of both sections of the façade, a large frame machine shed at the rear speaks to the rural nature of the community served by the store.

Construction of modern commercial buildings continued in rural Person County during the 1970s but at a slower pace. The ca. 1970 Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation Building (PR0400) at the intersection of Oxford and Surl Mount Tirzah roads is a Modernist brick-veneered masonry and steel-framed structure distinguished on three sides by a continuous band of aluminum-framed clerestory windows and the deep overhang of its flat roof. A projecting entrance bay centered on the façade consists of aluminum-framed glass windows and doors on the front and one side and a brick-veneered masonry wall on the other side. Even the very small Clay's Flowers Building (PR0476) erected in 1978 on Boston Road north of Roxboro exhibits a Modernist aesthetic in its flat roof, deep overhangs, and an intersecting brick wall that bisects the façade and projects above the roofline as a counterbalance to the building's otherwise horizontal orientation. The walls are interlocking concrete blocks striated vertically to give the impression of narrow soldier-coursed Roman brick.

Religion and Education

Rural Religious Buildings

As commerce became centralized in Roxboro and schools throughout the county were consolidated, the church remained the social center of Person County's rural communities. The continued importance of the church in rural life is evidenced by the remodeling of early twentieth-century frame churches that usually entailed the installation of brick veneers, the construction of additions to accommodate the social and educational functions of the church, and the expansion of church campuses. Nearly all of the county's existing rural churches were enlarged or remodeled during this period and several congregations erected new buildings.

Gothic Revival Style

Well into the middle of the twentieth century, the allusion to medieval Gothic cathedrals inherent in the composition of a gable-front sanctuary flanked by square towers continued to distinguish new African American churches. The embrace of the Gothic form may have been a conscious rejection of the Colonial Revival style which, as the name implies, sought to romanticize America's colonial era. The congregations of Prospect Hill Baptist Church (PR0442) in the Bethel Hill community and Elijah Grove Baptist Church (PR0342) in northeast Person County selected the towered design for their new buildings, which are the county's only mid-century examples of the style. Constructed in 1948 and 1950, respectively, both churches were erected as frame buildings and later brick-veneered -- Elijah Grove Baptist Church in 1963 and Prospect Hill Baptist Church in 1970.

As they did earlier in the century, many rural congregations continued to mix elements of Gothic and classical styles in their new churches. The 1948 Allen Chapel AME Church (PR0471) on Allens Chapel Church Road displays pointed-arch stained-glass windows and transoms, an entrance sheltered by a classical portico, and a square bell tower on the roof ridge. Similarly, the 1954 Mount Zion Methodist Church (PR0579) on Clay Long Road, constructed by a White congregation, employed pointed-arch windows, a two-part bell tower, and a gabled entrance bay. As late as 1963, Bethel Hill Baptist Church (PR0447) on Old US 501 was constructed with a soaring portico sheltering paired doors below a broken pediment and a multi-stage steeple, features entirely consistent with the Colonial Revival style, while incorporating Gothic Revival-style pointed-arch windows on the side elevations.

Colonial Revival Style

By the middle of the twentieth century, the Colonial Revival style dominated church design in Person County and elsewhere throughout the state with ten examples documented in the county. As congregations updated, expanded, or otherwise constructed new sanctuaries, the brick veneer and classical portico became the norm, regardless of denomination. The 1946 Mill Creek Baptist Church (PR0503) on Mill Creek Road typifies the style in its front-gabled sanctuary, brick veneer, round-arch stained-glass windows, a gabled portico with Doric columns, and a multi-part steeple. Constructed the same year, Calvary Baptist Church (PR0338) on High Plains Road is nearly identical in form but smaller in scale. Both churches are typical of the period in their incorporation of a cross gabled or hipped rear wing comprising Sunday School rooms, offices, and fellowship hall.

By the 1950s and 1960s, rural churches tended to have wider facades and correspondingly lower-sloped gabled roofs. Gothic elements were completely absent, and the steeple was the most prominent vertical element, as exhibited by Olive Branch Baptist Church (PR0344) on Dirgie Mine Road, completed in 1962. Here, a wide three-bay façade is sheltered by a nearly full-width portico with Doric columns. The rectangular windows on the front and side elevations reinforce the horizontality of the building while the three-stage steeple provides a vertical counterpoint. The 1967 Providence Baptist Church (PR0509) on NC 49 northeast of Roxboro also features a three-bay façade, but its full-height pedimented portico shelters only the center entrance bay, thereby lending a sense of verticality to the façade.⁶¹⁹ A classical surround incorporating Tuscan pilasters and a denticulated entablature frames the double-door entrance and stained-glass transom.

Three African American congregations erected new sanctuaries between 1963 and 1972, all similar in their scale, three-bay facades, and minimal detailing. The 1963 Obie's Chapel United Holiness Church (PR0515) on Jack Chavis Road and the 1972 Clegg's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church (PR0405) on Surl Mt. Tirzah Road both utilize horizontal-pane windows with clear or colored glass in lieu of the stained glass more typical of the era, a choice that may have been driven by finances more than a preferred aesthetic. Colonial Revival-style details include a broad pedimented portico at Clegg's Chapel. The 1965 Young's Chapel Church (PR0645) on Youngs Chapel Church Road is more typical of the era with the entrance set within a classical surround and sheltered by an entrance portico. Rectangular stained-glass windows flank the entrance and line the side elevations.

Secondary Structures and Site Features

Often forming the centerpiece of rural communities, the church served not only as a place of worship but also a gathering place for socializing, educating, and ultimately burying the congregants. As a result, church campuses regularly included fellowship halls, schools, and cemeteries. Local resident James Earl Hester noted in his memoir, "‘Dinner-on-the-ground’ was held outside, with ladies in the church setting a variety of foods on a long table, beneath several towering pines. Fried chicken was a favorite dish, as was country ham, sausage, chicken salad sandwiches, rolls, coconut pies, and chocolate cakes, among others."⁶²⁰ The hosting of outdoor dinners seems to have been especially prevalent among the Baptist churches. The yard of the 1949 Paschall

⁶¹⁹ Providence Baptist Church and a number of other mid-twentieth century churches were updated in the late-twentieth century with aluminum or fiberglass steeples that furthered their visual verticality.

⁶²⁰ Hester, *More Wisdom Than I Possess*, 170.

Memorial Baptist Church (PR0597) on Hurdle Mills Road retains a trestle table that would have been used for such dinners. Congregants of the ca. 1888 Surl Primitive Baptist Church (PR0401) on US 158 east of Roxboro constructed a picnic shelter west of the sanctuary about 1950. Its shallow-pitched gable roof extends across a frame building at one end of the long shelter.

Many twentieth-century churches were constructed with basement-level fellowship halls while others added wings or separate buildings, usually brick-veneered, for social gatherings, Sunday School classrooms, and sometimes preschools or parochial schools. The ca. 1906 Lea's Chapel United Methodist Church (PR0528) on US 158 west of Roxboro illustrates this sequence, enlarged in 1954 and 1960 with classrooms and a fellowship hall, respectively. In some instances, sanctuaries were converted for fellowship or Sunday School use when new, larger sanctuaries were constructed to accommodate growing congregations. For example, Mount Harmony Baptist Church (PR0376) on Mount Harmony Church Road consists of a 1962 two-story-with-basement education building, a 2003 front-gabled sanctuary, and the original 1938 sanctuary that was converted to church offices.

As church membership grew in the mid-twentieth century, many congregations erected Ranch or Minimal Traditional-style residences adjacent to the church to house their clergy. Like the parsonage adjacent to the 1933 Allensville United Methodist Church (PR0487) on Dennys Store Road, these houses were constructed in typical styles and materials of the era, differentiated as clergy housing by their location on the church property rather than any stylistic distinction.

Rural Schools

Consolidation

Efforts to consolidate rural schools in North Carolina started in the 1920s but were slow to gain traction in Person County. The goal of consolidation was to improve the quality of rural schools by combining smaller districts into larger ones that could leverage the combined funding to provide improved libraries, laboratories, vocational training, athletics programs, high school coursework, and other amenities. Local communities typically resisted consolidation and the loss of control and potential for higher taxes that came with it.⁶²¹

Person County began consolidating its rural schools in earnest following World War II. The Person County Board of Education published a consolidation plan for White

⁶²¹ K. Todd Johnson, "School Consolidation," NCpedia, State Library of North Carolina, 2006, <https://www.ncpedia.org/school-consolidation>.

high schools in February 1952, stating, “The opinion seems to prevail in the minds of many people in Person County that it is time to consolidate the small high schools... The reasons are obvious to people who are familiar with the improved training which may be given in a larger high school.”⁶²² As a result, the Board consolidated all rural high school grades into the Bethel Hill School in the north and Helena High School in the south, both of which had previously operated as union schools with grades one through twelve.⁶²³

Schools for African American Students

Between 1945 and 1969, the Board improved school facilities for African American students, consolidating smaller schools into larger ones and constructing new, modern schools for Black students in the rural areas of the county. The earliest of these is Woodland Elementary School (PR0549), constructed on Semora Road in 1950 and enlarged in 1956 to consolidate African American schools in the northwest part of the county.⁶²⁴ The earliest classroom wings were built using a “Florida Style” plan that featured classrooms that open to covered walkways rather than to enclosed hallways. Each of these wings has stacked steel-sash windows and south-facing clerestory windows. A combined cafeteria/gymnasium/auditorium was constructed at the northwest corner of the complex about 1960. At the opposite corner of the school, an addition containing a library, teachers’ lounge, and offices was built around 1964. Both additions mimicked the flat-roofed, Modernist style of the original building.

Oak Lane Elementary School (PR0620) followed in 1956, constructed on Jim Morton Road, consolidating four smaller schools in the southwestern section of the county. The school initially included ten classrooms on a double-loaded corridor connected to a cafetorium (combined cafeteria and auditorium) and administration building. A second classroom wing was added in 1964.⁶²⁵ In its single story, flat roof, masonry-veneered construction, and upper walls of tall banks of windows, Oak Lane Elementary is typical of mid-twentieth-century elementary school construction. The wall configuration remains despite the replacement of the original steel-sash windows.

A group of African American parents attended the August 1952 Board of Education meeting with their attorney, Hugh Thompson of Durham, to address inequalities between White and Black schools throughout the county. Thompson presented data

⁶²² Person County Board of Education Minutes, Microfilm, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh (hereafter PCBE Minutes), February 4, 1952.

⁶²³ PCBE Minutes, February 4, 1952. Note: twelfth grade was added to schools statewide in 1945.

⁶²⁴ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42.

⁶²⁵ “Person County School Nears Completion,” *[Greensboro] News and Record*, August 11, 1956, Newspapers.com; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42.

from the State Board of Education “in support of the claim that inequality exists in the educational opportunities between the white and the negro race” and informing the Board that the matter would be taken to the federal courts if “some reasonable plan for the improvement of the Negro schools could not be offered by the Board of Education.”⁶²⁶ As a result, the Board agreed to enlarge the recently completed, eleven-classroom Olive Hill Negro School with the addition of an administrative building, cafeteria, and auditorium.⁶²⁷

The Board also agreed to construct a new elementary school in the northeastern part of the county to consolidate the Bethel Hill, Lee Jeffers, and Woodsdale schools. North End Elementary School (PR0502) on Mill Creek Road opened for classes in January 1957 with an enrollment of about 400 students.⁶²⁸ This school is similar to Oak Lane School in form and detail, with a flat-roofed, L-shaped classroom wing in a double-loaded-corridor plan that was constructed in phases between 1957 and 1964 and steps down to follow the slope of the site. Like the other mid-twentieth-century rural schools in the county, it features banks of large windows and a combined gymnasium, cafeteria, and auditorium at one end.

The 1925 High Plains School that served Sappony children in northern Person County and southern Halifax County, Virginia, also was improved in the mid-twentieth century. The school had been controlled and funded by Person County until the early 1950s. Concerned about conditions at the school, the Halifax County Board of Education requested a legal share in the school, which was granted in 1952.⁶²⁹ High Plains School closed in 1962 when it was consolidated with Bethel Hill School.⁶³⁰ No longer used, the High Plains School building deteriorated and eventually disappeared from the landscape.

Rural Schools for White Students

As new schools were being constructed for rural African American students, the early twentieth-century White schools were being enlarged and improved. At Hurdle Mills School (not extant), additional classrooms and a cafeteria were constructed in 1948. The school was closed in 1963 and consolidated with Bushy Fork, Helena, and Roxboro

⁶²⁶ PCBE Minutes, August 4, 1952.

⁶²⁷ PCBE Minutes, October 2, 1950; PCBE Minutes, February 28, 1951; PCBE Minutes, January 7, 1952; PCBE Minutes, August 4, 1952.

⁶²⁸ “Person School Nears Completion,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, November 25, 1956, Newspapers.com; “At Dedication,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, January 20, 1957, Newspapers.com; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42; PCBE Minutes, August 4, 1952.

⁶²⁹ PCBE Minutes, June 2, 1952.

⁶³⁰ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 103-104; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 38, 42.

schools. A classroom and library addition was completed at Olive Hill School in 1950, with George W. Kane again serving as general contractor. Another addition followed in 1964.⁶³¹ Nearly all of the mid-twentieth-century buildings in the county feature the flat roofs and wide facades with large banks of windows, all typical of the era.

In the 1950s and 1960s, large gymnasium buildings were erected on the campuses of White schools throughout the county. The earliest of these were built at Bushy Fork School (PR0570) and Hurdle Mills School (no longer extant) in 1951.⁶³² The side-gabled frame building at Bushy Fork, the last to utilize frame construction, has been altered with the application of vertically grooved metal sheeting that completely covers the elevations, including window openings, though the location of the bands of windows remains evident. By the 1960s, the flat-roofed masonry gymnasium was the norm. The ca. 1965 gymnasium at Olive Hill School (PR0546) is typical of the era, a large, brick box with a flat roof and clerestory windows along two opposite elevations. A one-story wing on the south elevation contained locker rooms. Nearly identical in form and detail is the 1970 gymnasium at Bethel Hill School (PR0443).

Bethel Hill School (PR0443) and Helena High School (PR0300) best illustrate the trend of expanding school complexes as they were the only post-World War II rural schools constructed for White students to remain open through the 1970s and 1980s and thus retain full building complexes. At Bethel Hill School, a 1947 High School Classroom building was constructed with a Spanish Colonial Revival-style stepped parapet that references the parapet in the 1920 classroom building; in contrast, however, the High School Classroom building features stacked steel-sash windows typical of mid-century classroom buildings. The one-story, flat-roofed auditorium, also completed in 1947, features tall, narrow windows on the side elevations, an austere façade with a centered entrance wing, and a complete lack of decoration. The 1960 one-story, flat-roofed cafeteria building features the expansive window openings typical of mid-century classrooms, though smaller windows have since been installed. In 1955, the agriculture building was converted for use as seventh- and eighth-grade classrooms and a new shop building was constructed by Kane to house vocational agriculture and home economics classes. In 1960, the home economics classes moved to a community cannery, a one-story side-gabled concrete-block building to the rear of the school and opposite the agriculture building. By 1963, enrollment reached over five hundred students.⁶³³

⁶³¹ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42; Russell Clay, "Hurdle Mills Critics Hit School Bonds," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, July 9, 1963, Newspapers.com.

⁶³² Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42.

⁶³³ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 103-104; Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 38, 42.

The Helena High School campus (PR0300) was enlarged numerous times in the 1950s and 1960s. A concrete-block Grange Building was completed in 1950 to serve not only the home economics students, but also to provide equipment for the community to preserve food. In 1953, the Hurdle Mills and Mt. Tirzah schools were consolidated into Helena High School, and a cafeteria was constructed by Kane, in part to accommodate the increase in the student body.⁶³⁴ The gable-roofed grange and cafeteria buildings are the most traditional in form and detail of the mid-twentieth-century buildings on the school campus, each with eight-over-eight wood- or metal-sash windows. The school expanded its athletics program throughout the 1950s, adding baseball and softball teams and constructing athletic fields. The gymnasium was destroyed by fire in 1955, and the following year a new building was constructed to replace it.⁶³⁵ The brick building features a barrel roof supported on the interior by steel girders and rafters. On the east and west elevations, clerestory windows (now covered with vertical vinyl sheathing) lit the primary space and square windows provided light to basement-level spaces. One-story, flat-roofed wings at the north and south elevations housed support spaces. The 1956 Agriculture Building retains the side-gabled form employed by the grange and cafeteria, though its original steel-sash windows have been replaced. The ca. 1969 Education Building is the campus's most complete expression of the Modernist style. The two-story building has a flat roof; the east, south, and west elevations are almost entirely brick-veneered; and the north elevation consists primarily of metal-framed windows separated between the stories by opaque spandrel panels.

Georges Watts Carr and George W. Kane

During the mid-twentieth century, the Person County Board of Education regularly employed the Durham architecture firm of George Watts Carr. He was one of the most prestigious regional architects of the period despite lacking formal training in architecture. Carr had been a merchant before taking a correspondence course to gain his architecture license in 1926 and establishing his own firm in Durham in 1929. As noted in *North Carolina Architects & Builders*, "Carr was at home with all of the popular styles and most building types," and he designed homes, schools, office buildings, military facilities, athletic facilities, churches, and more before his retirement in 1974. His sons, George Jr. and Robert Carr, and his grandson, Edgar Carr, also became involved in the firm.⁶³⁶

⁶³⁴ Walker, "Helena School"; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42.

⁶³⁵ Walker, "Helena School."

⁶³⁶ Catherine W. Bishir, et. al., "Carr, George Watts, Sr. (1893-1975)," *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary*, NC State University Libraries, <https://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000415>.

Carr frequently worked with Roxboro contractor George W. Kane, whose firm was one of the state's largest contractors throughout the mid-twentieth century. George W. Kane Construction Company focused primarily on school construction, including the relocation of Wake Forest University from Wake Forest to Winston-Salem in 1956, as well as successful bids on numerous Person County school projects. After Kane died in 1966, his only child, George Kane, Jr., took over the construction company, which continued to build Person County schools.⁶³⁷ Both Carr and the Kanes were regularly employed in the construction of new schools and the expansion of existing schools to accommodate school consolidation, especially in rural Person County.

Integration of Person County Schools

The 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision to end legal segregation in public schools did not immediately impact Person County schools. Most of the White population of North Carolina strongly opposed the idea of integration, and the Supreme Court did not include a mandate for implementation in its decision. Therefore, for many years, North Carolina's governors carefully navigated between the opposing sides. In August 1954, Governor Thomas Umstead established the Governor's Special Advisory Committee on Education, known as the Pearsall Committee after Thomas Pearsall, its chairman and a former member of the North Carolina House of Representatives.⁶³⁸ In 1954, the committee reported that "the mixing of the races in the public schools cannot be accomplished and should not be attempted."⁶³⁹ In response, the Pupil Assignment Act allowed local school boards the authority to assign pupils to specific schools, which effectively ensured a lengthy integration process without outright defiance of the *Brown* decision.⁶⁴⁰

The following year, the United States Supreme Court passed its implementation decree, and North Carolina complied by continuing its voluntary integration processes.⁶⁴¹ As a result of similar activity statewide, the Pearsall Committee recommended repeal of state-mandated public schools and compulsory attendance requirements, and the establishment of state grants for private school tuition assistance and a legal assistance fund to support school boards engaged in integration lawsuits. The Pearsall Plan, as it

⁶³⁷ "Power 100 2020: John Kane," *Business North Carolina*, February 1, 20202, <https://businessnc.com/power-100-2020-john-kane>.

⁶³⁸ John E. Batchelor, *Race and Education in North Carolina: From Segregation to Desegregation* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2015), 30-39; Jeffrey J. Crow, Paul D. Escott, and Flora J. Hatley Wadlington, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2011, Second Edition), 169-170.

⁶³⁹ Batchelor, *Race and Education*, 39.

⁶⁴⁰ Batchelor, *Race and Education*, 41-42; Crow, *African Americans*, 170.

⁶⁴¹ Batchelor, *Race and Education*, 43-44; Crow, *African Americans*, 172.

came to be known, was an overt effort to maintain voluntary integration by providing White students an opportunity to avoid attending school with African American students.⁶⁴²

Governor Luther Hodges (1954-1961), like his predecessor, walked the middle ground, saying that if voluntary integration didn't work, the state would have to decide between forced integration or the elimination of public schools altogether.⁶⁴³ He made no secret of his preference for continued segregation, and in 1957 when Charlotte, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem became the first cities to integrate their schools, he simply warned that violence would not be tolerated "in connection with this problem."⁶⁴⁴ Throughout the latter half of the 1950s, NAACP activity, Ku Klux Klan violence, and litigation increased across the state. Although no schools were closed to avoid integration under the authority of the Pearsall Plan, state authorities considered both the NAACP and the Klan as extremists.⁶⁴⁵ Cursory integration during this period did not result in widespread opposition by the general public; however, as segregation continued, public opposition grew. It wasn't until the 1960s that Civil Rights demonstrations began in earnest, forcing real change in North Carolina's public schools.

Cursory integration took place in Roxboro in the early 1960s as Black families fought to have their children assigned to White schools near their homes. In 1963, the Person County Board of Education approved the first application for a Black student to attend a White school. First-grader Jacqueline Blackwell became the first Black student to attend Central School in Roxboro.⁶⁴⁶ However, by the start of the 1964 school year, there had been no other cross-racial applications approved and there was still no clear plan for the full integration of Person County schools. A number of Black residents presented a petition to the county school board in September 1964, and though the Board prepared a response, it was never sent, as the parents had filed a suit on the issue in federal court.⁶⁴⁷ In November, the Board's attorney, Richard Long, met with the complainants' attorneys and the judge assigned to the case, and reported to the Board that "the Board of Education will agree to integrate the children listed on the complaint

⁶⁴² Batchelor, *Race and Education*, 44-45, 51-54; Crow, *African Americans*, 172-173.

⁶⁴³ Batchelor, *Race and Education*, 51-53.

⁶⁴⁴ Batchelor, *Race and Education*, 60; Crow, *African Americans*, 174-175.

⁶⁴⁵ Batchelor, *Race and Education*, 63-72; Sarah Caroline Thuesen, *Greater than Equal: African American Struggles for Schools and Citizenship in North Carolina, 1919-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 224; Crow, *African Americans*, 175.

⁶⁴⁶ "First Negro Accepted in First Grade," Unidentified Newspaper Clipping, August 5, 1963, "Person County Black History" Binder, PCL; Person County Board of Education (PCBE) Minutes, July 29, 1963, State Archives of North Carolina, Microfilm; PCBE Minutes, August 5, 1963.

⁶⁴⁷ PCBE Minutes, September 8, 1964; PCBE Minutes, October 5, 1964.

if ordered to do so by the Federal Judge.”⁶⁴⁸ At the Board’s January 1965 meeting, the five students named in the lawsuit were reassigned to Earl Bradsher School and Roxboro High School, the White schools of their choice, under the court order.⁶⁴⁹

While the Person County Board of Education was navigating these cross-racial reassignment applications, a meeting of local school boards from across the state was held in Raleigh in January 1965. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss methods of compliance with the federal requirement to integrate schools necessary to retain their federal funding, while at the same time avoiding total integration. The result of the meeting was a general agreement that freedom-of-choice plans were the best, and perhaps only, method of compliance that would be approved by all parties. “Elected school board members must answer to their constituents,” the Raleigh *News and Observer* pointed out, “and in some areas constituents were bitter about the requirement to desegregate.”⁶⁵⁰

Person County representatives attended the meeting and reported that a freedom-of-choice plan was already under consideration there.⁶⁵¹ Though put into effect, the plan did little to integrate Person County schools. By the 1964-1965 school year, the Board reported that of the seventeen schools operating in the county, nine maintained an entirely White enrollment and five were entirely Black. The three remaining schools had perfunctory integration: Central School had an enrollment of 338 White students and 2 Black students, Earl Bradsher School served 611 White students and 2 Black students, and Roxboro High School enrolled 789 White students and 3 Black students.⁶⁵² The 1965-1966 school year showed some improvement, with all 118 requests for Black students to attend White schools approved. Of the 118 approved reassignments, 75 students actually switched schools, resulting in small numbers of Black students attending the Olive Hill, Bethel Hill, Allensville, Mt. Tirzah, and Bushy Fork schools.⁶⁵³ It was not surprising that there were no requests made for White students to attend Black schools.

In 1967, the Person County School Board was ordered to submit a plan to achieve total integration by 1970. The following year, the Board submitted a plan to the U.S. Department of Education that offered freedom-of-choice for the 1968-1969 school

⁶⁴⁸ PCBE Minutes, November 9, 1964; PCBE Minutes, November 16, 1964.

⁶⁴⁹ PCBE Minutes, January 4, 1965.

⁶⁵⁰ William C. King, “Most Units Favor ‘Freedom of Choice’ Plan,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, January 17, 1965, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁵¹ King, “Most Units Favor ‘Freedom of Choice’ Plan”; PCBE Minutes, February 1, 1965.

⁶⁵² PCBE Minutes, April 22, 1965.

⁶⁵³ PCBE Minutes, May 25, 1965; PCBE Minutes, November 1, 1965.

year, integration of grades 8 to 12 for the 1969-1970 school year, and integration of grades 1 to 7 for the 1970-1971 school year. After the plan was filed and approved, a group of Black residents filed a lawsuit demanding that school enrollment be determined by “nonracial geographical attendance zones. . . such that no school in the school system is racially identifiable.” The motion aimed to desegregate teachers and other staff members and to eliminate racial discrimination in extracurricular activities for the 1968-1969 school year.⁶⁵⁴ The Board denied the motion, claiming that since this new motion had come in July, freedom-of-choice forms had already been submitted and approved, and chosen schools had been assigned to all students in the school system.⁶⁵⁵ In late August, District Court Judge Edwin Stanley issued a ruling allowing freedom-of-choice to continue for the 1968-1969 school year, scheduled to begin on September 3, but requiring full integration of all grade levels in all schools for the 1969-1970 school year.⁶⁵⁶

Many rural schools were significantly impacted by integration. While most remained in operation as integrated elementary schools serving grades 1 through 6, older students from across the county were bussed to Roxboro. Students in grades 7-9 were reassigned to two new middle schools in Roxboro, while Person High School served all high school students after integration.⁶⁵⁷ Bethel Hill School and Helena High School were converted to integrated elementary schools. Olive Hill, Bushy Fork, Allensville, and Mt. Tirzah schools – notably the first schools in the county to allow cross-racial student assignments – were closed as a result of integration. Elementary students at these schools were reassigned to the Woodland, Oak Lane, North End, and Helena schools, respectively; only Helena remains in operation today.⁶⁵⁸

⁶⁵⁴ Jack Slaughter, “New Person County Schools Plan Asked in Court Action,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, June 29, 1968, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁵⁵ Lynn Wilson, “Classroom Crisis: Pupil Assignment Plans in Some Area Counties Must Pass HEW ‘Exams’ Before Schools Open,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 18, 1968, Newspapers.com; Jack Slaughter, “Person Education Board Asks Court to Approve School Integration Plan,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 20, 1968, Newspapers.com; Jack Slaughter, “Plaintiffs Seek Immediate Person County Integration,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 27, 1968, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁵⁶ “Freedom of Choice Proposal Allowed for Person Schools,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 29, 1968, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁵⁷ Jack Slaughter, “Change Made in Person Schools Operation Plan,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, January 7, 1969, Newspapers.com; Jack Slaughter, “Person Schools Plan Given Final Approval from Board,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, February 14, 1969, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁵⁸ Jack Slaughter, “Change Made in Person Schools Operation Plan,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, January 7, 1969, Newspapers.com; Jack Slaughter, “Person Schools Plan Given Final Approval from Board,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, February 14, 1969, Newspapers.com.

Recreation and Fraternization

The mid-twentieth century was a period of expanded recreational opportunities in Person County as the growing middle class sought activities to fill leisure time. By 1969, the Roxboro Country Club had outgrown its 1930s lodge on the east side of Chub Lake and erected a new clubhouse about one mile east, on the east side of Country Club Road. The lodge, now heavily altered, was converted to a restaurant. In contrast to the earlier building that utilized log and stone to create a Rustic Revival-style building, in line with Depression-era construction by New Deal agencies, the 1969 Roxboro Country Club (PR0486) off of Country Club Road adopted the Colonial Revival-style, popular in the mid-twentieth century for everything from public buildings and churches to private residences. The broad, two-story, pedimented portico on the west elevation of the building faces a deep, manicured lawn and pond, around which the golf course extended. Other Colonial Revival features include the symmetrical fenestration of the east and west elevations, double-hung windows, and cornice returns on two one-story, gable-front bays that project from the east elevation and flank the main entrance, sheltered by a flat-roofed portico. After the club closed in 2018, the swimming pool was infilled, and portions of the golf course were subdivided for residential development. The building and grounds are currently used as an event venue.

Other recreation opportunities established in the mid-twentieth century include programs provided by the county's Parks and Recreation Department. Created in the 1940s, the department is the state's oldest county recreation department, but it was not fully funded by the county government until 1961.⁶⁵⁹ In 1959, the Person County Drag Strip (PR0390) opened on Thomas Store Road on the east side of the county, just one mile west of the Granville County line. Constructed by John Henry Garrett on land originally farmed by the Garrett family, the original track had a dirt surface that was paved in 1961. Barely wide enough to accommodate two vehicles, the quarter-mile track was widened in 1970.⁶⁶⁰ Garrett operated the drag strip until 1981 when former racer Richard "Sonny" Shipmon took over the management of the track. In 2006, the pit area was expanded, and the track was resurfaced with concrete. Full renovation of the venue in 2018 included updates to the concession stands, gate offices, tower, and track.

⁶⁵⁹ Person County, NC, "Recreation, Arts, & Parks," <https://www.personcountync.gov/government/departments-i-z/recreation-arts-parks>.

⁶⁶⁰ PCRD; Ben Elliman, *Drag Strip List*, 2016, <https://dragstriplist.com/north-carolina>.

Swimming Pools

In the 1960s, likely in reaction to integration orders by the federal government, a number of communities in the county constructed private swimming pools, requiring membership to access. The first semi-public swimming pool in the county was Family Swimming Pool (PR0739), constructed in Roxboro near the county hospital in 1962. The site includes an in-ground, L-shaped pool, a small, figure-eight-shaped wading pool, a one-story concrete-block pool house and volleyball courts and horseshoe pits in an adjacent grassy area.

According to local resident June Allen Rogers, in the early 1960s Family Swimming Pool was the only pool in the county and it was hard to get a membership. As a result, communities began to band together to raise money and identify land for additional pools. In many cases, land was donated by, or leased from, local families. In the mid-1960s, neighbors in the Bushy Fork/Hurdle Mills area sold stock to build a pool, which was constructed by Joe Parr on the land of Franklin Jackson Hester under the condition that the land reverts to the Hester family if the pool closes. The resulting ca. 1967 Whispering Pines Swimming Pool (PR0628) on Snipes Road includes the pool and related facilities, tennis courts, picnic shelter, and playground. The side-gabled, concrete-block pool house is nearly identical in form and detail to those found at the ca. 1965 Meadowbrook Swimming Pool (PR0455) on Meadowbrook Road near Timberlake and the ca. 1966 Olive Hill Swimming Pool (PR0646) on Semora Road, indicating a clear trend in design and construction if not direct copies. The Whispering Pines Swimming Pool is unique in that it is configured with round projections on the north and south sides of a rectangular core, a variation on the rectangular or L-shaped pool utilized throughout most of the county. A small, kidney-shaped “kiddie” pool is located to the north of the main pool. In total, at least six pools were constructed in the county in the mid- to late-twentieth century. While the Triple Springs Pool and Hilltop Pool in the eastern part of the county are no longer extant, the other four pools remain open.

Fraternal Lodges

Fraternal organizations in the county, for both White and Black populations, existed as early as the late nineteenth century, and in the 1960s and 1970s three of them erected new buildings. The county’s earliest extant lodge building is the 1962 Battle Axe Lodge #120 (PR0501) on Lawson Chapel Church Road in the northeastern part of the county. Adjacent to the African American Lawson Chapel Baptist Church (PR0500), the lodge served African American members of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina, Free and Accepted Masons. The two-story, concrete-block building is identifiable as a lodge by the small windows at the second story, placed high on the wall, just below the

deep overhang of the hipped roof. Stacked windows light the first floor, which was utilized by the Eastern Star, a women's fraternal organization. The second-floor interior features a wood floor, raised platforms at each end of the room, and a tray ceiling with the inner portion raised by roughly two feet.

The 1963 Masonic Temple (PR0745) at 219 Leasburg Road, just west of downtown Roxboro, was constructed to house the Person Lodge No. 113, A.F. and A. M., chartered for White membership in 1847. The paucity of windows is typical of fraternal lodges: small aluminum-framed windows light only portions of the sides of the brick building. Its classical detailing, more typical of White lodges, consists of a pedimented portico sheltering the front entrance. The interior retains its original layout and finishes with a lobby, offices, and meeting hall at the upper level, the latter featuring a black-and-white checkerboard linoleum floor, and a kitchen and dining room at the lower level.

The Roxboro Elks Lodge (PR0746), also on Leasburg Road and constructed in 1971, is less imposing as a one-story building. The side-gabled, brick building is without windows, and, like the Masonic Temple, the entrance is sheltered by a gabled portico and has a classical surround. A frame wing on the left gable end, partially below grade, houses the kitchen and dining space.

ROXBORO IN THE MID- TO LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY (CA. 1950 - 1975)

Industry

Textiles remained the primary industry in Roxboro throughout the mid-twentieth century. By the mid-1950s, Collins and Aikman employed 1,100 workers making velour, imitation fur, and other fabrics; Roxboro Cotton Mills employed 700 workers making yarns; Longhurst Mill employed 400 workers making parachutes; and Somerset Mills produced towels – collectively accounting for approximately half of the city’s population.⁶⁶¹ In 1952, Person Mills opened on North Main Street and employed about 50 women specializing in cloth inspection and repair. Other industries located in Roxboro at that time included two broom manufacturers, a fertilizer mixing plant, a freezer-locker and processing facility, a poultry processing plant, a mattress factory, two bottling plants, a garment hanger manufacturer, a lumber company, a tobacco re-drying plant, and dairy pasteurizing and ice cream plants, as well as small machine shops and ornamental iron assembly shops.⁶⁶²

One of the biggest changes to the textile industry in Roxboro was the sale of the mill villages’ individual parcels. This trend began statewide during the Depression when mill owners needed to cut costs to keep the businesses afloat, and selling mill housing eliminated the costs of maintenance while also providing a source of income. Road improvements in the early and mid-twentieth century meant that mill companies no longer needed to offer company housing but instead could recruit workers from outside their immediate vicinity. Another factor was the establishment of federal minimum wage requirements, after which companies shifted funds from subsidized worker housing to increased wages. Finally, the rise of unions and mill owners’ desire to prevent mobilization of the workforce against the company contributed to the decision to sell off company housing. Historian Brent Glass explains that “many owners believed that home ownership for mill workers would weaken interest in labor unions...The dispersal of the work force. . . reduced the opportunities for communication and collective action.”⁶⁶³

⁶⁶¹ “Open Arms Invite Industry,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, July 21, 1957, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁶² *Miller’s Roxboro, NC, City Directory, 1957* (Asheville, NC: Southern Directory Co., 1956), 9-10; Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 188; “Person Mills Plan Expansion,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, December 9, 1953, Newspapers.com. Note: Person Mills was a division of Pacific Mills operating on an “experimental basis” in Roxboro. Little is known of the history of this factory beyond its apparent operation until at least 1959 in an existing building in downtown Roxboro.

⁶⁶³ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 84-85.

In 1951, the executives of the Ca-Vel Mill platted the Ca-Vel Mill Village (PR0650) for sale, selling the house to the mill workers in the following years. A 1953 deed from the Collins and Aikmen Corporation outlines easements for utilities, restrictions against fences and farm animals in the district, and gave the corporation the first right of refusal should the owner wish to sell the property. Deeds from the Roxboro Cotton Mills, which sold the houses in both the Roxboro Cotton Mill Village (PR0682) and the Longhurst Mill Village (PR0658) in the early 1960s, show similar language, requiring that the buyers maintain ownership of the property for five years and limiting the construction of garages or other accessory buildings. The covenants for both companies extended to the 1980s.⁶⁶⁴

The Roxboro Development Corporation (RDC) was formed in 1953 to bring additional industry to the city and to retain industries already located there, aided by the Chamber of Commerce.⁶⁶⁵ The RDC sold stock to raise funds for building industrial facilities, extending necessary utilities, and other investments to entice new industries to Roxboro.⁶⁶⁶ Their efforts proved successful, and in 1954, the RDC announced the acquisition of a laundry bag manufacturer. The following year, the RDC convinced Steinthal Company, a parachute manufacturer employing about five hundred workers, to remain in Roxboro rather than relocating to Indiana.⁶⁶⁷ In 1959, Crown Aluminum Manufacturing Company, which produced aluminum clapboard, and Roxboro Metals Company, which made stainless steel and aluminum doors and windows, built new plants in Roxboro, the latter employing about 130 workers.⁶⁶⁸ By 1960, the RDC had a membership of over one hundred local businessmen and industrialists and had made plans and begun fundraising for a Roxboro Industrial Park with support from the Chamber.⁶⁶⁹ The park was built in the early 1960s on U.S. Highway 501 about two miles

⁶⁶⁴ “Collins and Aikman Corporation to Ralph C. Adams and wife, Eva M. Adams,” Deed Book 66 Page 342, 1953, PCRD; “Roxboro Cotton Mills to Clyde Walker and wife, Barbara A. Walker,” Deed Book 91 Page 423, 1961, PCRD; “Roxboro Cotton Mills to Carl L. Wrenn and wife, Mary P. Wrenn,” Deed Book 91 Page 689, 1961, PCRD; “Covenant between Roxboro Cotton Mill and its successors in title,” Deed Book 91 Page 437, 1961, PCRD.

⁶⁶⁵ “Open Arms Invite Industry”; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, 38; “Roxboro Group Plans Drive for Industry,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, July 29, 1953, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁶⁶ “Roxboro Group Plans Drive for Industry.”

⁶⁶⁷ “Roxboro Gains New Industry,” *[Greensboro] News and Record*, June 19, 1954, Newspapers.com; “Plan to Move is Abandoned,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, July 1, 1955, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁶⁸ Bill Frue, “In Roxboro, New Look at Progress,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, June 7, 1959, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁶⁹ “Membership Grows on Roxboro Group Promoting Industry,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, May 3, 1960, Newspapers.com; Delaine Bradsher, “Industrial Park Mapped in Person,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, April 23, 1960, Newspapers.com.

south of Roxboro and Eaton Manufacturing opened an automotive parts manufacturing plant there around 1965.⁶⁷⁰

To show their support, the city began hosting an annual Industry Appreciation Week with booths “prepared by business firms and manufacturing concerns displaying products made in Person County.” The event offered free admission and nightly entertainment.⁶⁷¹ The 1959 week concluded with the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Crown Aluminum Manufacturing Company, and the Durham *Herald-Sun* praised the event and the work of the RDC, saying the week was “calculated to advertise the town’s industrial availability and do a little pillow talking to local industry to boot. . . .The town rose to the million-dollar payroll like a bass for a grasshopper and has been trolling for industry ever since.”⁶⁷² In 1964, the Person County Board of Commissioners sent letters of appreciation to all the industries in the county during Industry Appreciation Week, “expressing thanks for their contributions to the community.”⁶⁷³

Modern Commercial and Civic Architecture

During the mid-twentieth century, the downtown commercial core was updated as older buildings were renovated or replaced and new buildings were constructed at the fringes of downtown, expanding the commercial core to the west. The majority of commercial buildings erected in the post-World War II era echoed the forms and detailing of earlier twentieth-century commercial buildings. Most are one or two stories with brick exteriors, parapet roofs, minimal detailing, and storefronts with large, rectangular display windows flanking a centered, inset entrance.

However, late nineteenth century technological advances in building construction and materials (including the use of steel and reinforced concrete) coupled with a desire to break with traditional forms and revival styles, particularly after World War II, led to an emergence of several styles—collectively known as Modernism—that began in Europe and spread to the United States in the early twentieth century. Modernism in Person County was far less common, for both commercial and residential buildings, than in the larger cities throughout the North Carolina Piedmont, where the North Carolina State College’s School of Design introduced innovative architectural forms and details to the general public. As historian Catherine Bishir has noted, “by and large,

⁶⁷⁰ Bradsher, “Industrial Park Mapped in Person”; Jack Slaughter, “Roxboro Industrial Park Road Completed,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, October 20, 1963, Newspapers.com; Jack Slaughter, “Eaton Manufacturing Plans Roxboro Plant,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, January 30, 1964, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁷¹ “Industry Week Launched,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, June 4, 1959, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁷² Frue, “In Roxboro, New Look at Progress.”

⁶⁷³ Jack Slaughter, “Person County to Observe Industry Appreciation Week,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, April 7, 1964, Newspapers.com.

North Carolinians, like many Americans, preferred an architecture that couched modernity in terms of continuity.” As a result, Art Deco, Art Moderne, International, and other distinctly Modernist designs appeared infrequently in the county, usually expressed by civic buildings and banks.

Art Deco and Art Moderne Styles

Several commercial buildings constructed in Roxboro during the first decade after World War II may be described as Art Deco or Art Moderne in style, both of which feature streamlined forms and industrial materials, but offer more variety of color and decoration than later Modernist styles. Both styles enjoyed popularity in larger cities from the 1920s to the 1940s but they were relatively rare in smaller communities.

The Art Deco movement in decorative arts and architecture derived its name from the 1925 Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris, which helped to popularize the style first in Europe and almost immediately thereafter in the United States. Art Deco is characterized by simple vertical and angular shapes, geometric or stylized ornament based on representational forms, and varied natural and manufactured materials; it was particularly suited to skyscrapers (e.g., New York City’s Chrysler and Empire State buildings).

The 1949 commercial building at 217 North Main Street that includes the Kirby Movie Theatre (PR0238) is Person County’s earliest and best example of the Art Deco style, which most often was applied to theatres, gas stations, and utility company buildings. The building has a broad façade divided at the upper stories into five sections by shallow concrete pilasters with fluting that emphasizes their verticality. The two sections at the north were built as retail spaces and the taller three sections were built for the theatre. Here, the middle section, highlighted by the marquee above the recessed ticket booth and theatre entrance, is higher than the others and divided by recessed bands of angled brick laid in vertical rows that rise from the windows above the marquee to a flat cast concrete cornice.

Another example of the Art Deco style is the 1953 Roxboro Water Works (PR0485) on Chub Lake Road at Roxboro’s western outskirts. The concrete building features a smooth concrete exterior, stepped parapet, panels of incised rectangles between the first- and second-story windows, and slightly projecting and taller bays containing the entrances. Each entrance bay has a stylized geometric surround framing the door and, between the second-story window and the parapet, five incised vertical lines ascending from the outer-most lines to the tallest, middle line to add emphasis to the verticality of the bay. The clean lines of this building represent a gradual shift toward the more streamlined aesthetic and horizontal focus of the Art Moderne and International styles.

Art Moderne is a somewhat later version of Art Deco that may be seen as a bridge between the Art Deco and International styles. Art Moderne buildings usually have a horizontal orientation, asymmetrical facades and massing, and ribbon windows, sometimes consisting of glass brick; curved edges and corner windows often are additional features. The ca. 1950 commercial building (PR0289) at 118 South Main Street is best described as Art Moderne in its smooth, flat façade of large cut-stone tiles applied as a veneer, and its asymmetrical fenestration. An asymmetrical composition is achieved through the adjacent storefront and bay containing the entrance to the second story. At the left side of the façade, the single-door entrance to the stairs leading to the second story is topped by a narrow vertical band of glass blocks lighting the stairwell. The storefront, with a horizontal orientation emphasized by a transom of glass block, also is asymmetrically arranged, with the recessed entrance between display windows of different widths.

International Style

The removal of all architectural ornamentation is a hallmark of the International Style, which was developed by European architects, many of whom were associated with the Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany, and fled in the 1930s from the Nazis to the United States. The International Style was introduced to the United States by a 1932 exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York that showcased modern architecture by 37 architects from fifteen countries. The style emphasizes the horizontal elements of a building and expresses multi-story buildings as stacked units. Other characteristics of the style include flat roofs; windows set flush with the exterior façade to create a single plane; smooth, unadorned wall surfaces; and linear windows alternating with expanses of windowless walls. The International Style rarely appeared in the country's smaller cities.

The only example of the International Style in Person County is the 1949 Roxboro Building (PR0245), prominently located at the corner of North Main Street and Reams Avenue. Built by contractor George W. Kane for Roxboro Cotton Mills, the six-story building (downtown Roxboro's tallest) exhibits an austere design highlighted by rich materials incorporating veneers of large black marble tiles at the ground level and large tan limestone tiles above. Alternating horizontal bands of limestone and banks of three or five two-over-two steel-sash windows separated by gray stone tile define the three upper stories. A flat metal awning shelters a slightly recessed entrance facing North Main Street and, at the corner, a recessed storefront that is angled to address the intersection and features fluted metal column positioned at the corner so it seems to support the weight of the upper stories. A two-story wing at 205 North Main Street expresses its association with the taller building through the uninterrupted sheathing

of black marble at its entrance bay and limestone elsewhere. The wing's entrance consists of ten-light doors flanking a multi-paned sidelight and topped by a multi-paned transom, all framed in metal. Above the entrance, there is a clock consisting of applied hands and symbols to indicate the hours, and to the right there is a pair of six tall and narrow recesses cut into the façade.

Modernist Commercial Buildings

While some of Person County's post-WWII architecture can be further classified as Art Deco, Art Moderne, or International Style, most architecture is defined more broadly as Modernist in style. Modernist designs feature flat and shed roofs with deep overhangs, exposed roof beams and purlins, large banks of windows, recessed entries, and natural materials. The 1960 Roxboro Savings and Loan (PR0800) at 214 South Main Street illustrates a departure from the standard brick commercial building with centered, recessed entrance. In this instance, both ends of the façade of the one-story building angle inward to a centered entrance sheltered by a deep, flat-roofed canopy that follows the façade's contour and wraps around one side of the building. The canopy lends a horizontal emphasis to the design while a wall at the front of the left elevation rises above the roof to provide a vertical counterbalance. The 1964 Home Savings and Loan Association (PR0312) at 123 South Lamar Street is a more fully articulated example of commercial Modernism in Roxboro. The building has a steel structure with brick and glass curtain walls and a flat roof that projects significantly from each elevation and is supported by metal posts placed beyond the building walls. The resulting effect, coupled with the flared eaves of the roof is a perceived lightness to the roof. Similarly, a ca. 1960 Service Station (PR0268, demolished) that stood at 136 South Main Street featured nearly full height windows wrapping the west corner of the façade and a flat roof extended forward to create a deep canopy supported by slender posts.

This lightness is absent from most of the Modernist commercial buildings in Roxboro. The design of the ca. 1970 Central Carolina Bank (PR0769) at 804 North Madison Boulevard features a hipped roof supported by a heavy concrete structure with purlins extended under the east and west overhangs. A full-height window wall on the main facade provides the only significant break in the brick veneer. The brick veneer and strongly projecting brick pilasters supporting the flat roof of the 1965 Flav-O-Rich Building (PR0302) at 1016 North Main Street result in a similarly heavy visual effect.

Modernist Governmental and Medical Buildings

While businesses erected new commercial buildings throughout Roxboro's downtown area, Person County constructed new governmental buildings as City and County departments diversified and expanded to serve the mid-twentieth-century population.

Unlike those constructed in the pre-World War II era, which referenced classical styles, post-War construction tended toward the clean lines and streamlined facades of the Modernist style. Among the earliest of these to be constructed is the 1960 Roxboro National Guard Armory (PR0297) at 605 Burlington Road. It is typical of mid-twentieth-century armories throughout the state, constructed after the passage of the Armories Construction Bill in 1950, and featuring a standardized plan (the B-Coffey & Olsen plan) developed by the Army Corp of Engineers to facilitate the rapid construction of armories during the Cold War era.⁶⁷⁴

The building contains a two-story drill hall with clerestory windows just below the flat roof, a form similar to mid-twentieth-century gymnasiums in the county. It is wrapped by one-story, administrative wings featuring ribbon and awning windows. Constructed the same year at 204 West Barden Street, the Person County Health Center (PR0315) is a one-story, flat-roofed, brick building. Its most distinctive feature is a window wall on the east elevation facing South Madison Boulevard.

Three buildings erected by local governments are distinctly modern in their designs. The 1964 Roxboro Municipal Building at 305 South Lamar Street (PR0310) was designed by the architectural firm M. A. Ham Associates, Inc. of Durham and built by local contractor E. M. Wilkerson & Son. This locally unique example of mid-century Modernism expresses its steel structural system in the vertical divisions of the exterior brick walls and the framing of the long stretches of windows that wrap around the corners of the building and comprise most of its elevations. The deep overhang of the flat roof and the projection of the first floor over the ground level windows emphasize the building's horizontality. The two-story, L-shaped Person County Office Building (PR0788) at 304 South Morgan Street, was designed by Durham architect George Watts Carr and built in 1964 by local contractor George W. Kane. The exterior expresses the building's steel structural system in the framing of the long elevations of stacked pairs of windows, separated by opaque spandrel panels between the floors, that are the same width as the brick curtain walls in between them. A flat metal canopy shelters the main entrance flanked and fronted by brick planters. Built the same year as the County's office building, the Roxboro Waste Treatment Plant's one-story buildings (PR0483) on Cavel Chub Lake Road are smaller in scale but also are distinctly Modernist in the exterior expression of their structural system, which in this case is reinforced concrete.

⁶⁷⁴ Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc., "Evaluations of Eligibility Report: US 301 Improvement, Installation of Leftovers and Pavement Removal to Limit Access, Cumberland County, Cumberland County," North Carolina Department of Transportation Human Environment Section, January 2015, 86.

The roofs are flat, the exterior walls between the exposed concrete are brick, and the windows are the steel-sash awning type.

County officials were not alone in their preference for streamlined Modernism in the 1960s. The 1970 United States Post Office (PR0832) at 223 South Main Street, constructed utilizing plans published in the United States Post Office Department's "Building Designs" manuals, illustrates a nationwide proclivity toward Modernism. The building's clean lines may be an intentional expression of an efficient government focused on function.

The construction of Person Memorial Hospital in 1950 coupled with the opening of Person High School (PR0784) in 1966 led to significant growth in the northwest part of Roxboro. In addition to the residential development in this area, several additional medical office buildings were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s in close proximity to the hospital. Like governmental buildings, the Modernist style of these office buildings conveyed a sense of order and a forward-thinking image. Among these is the ca. 1965 Melero Medical Office Building (PR0781) at 415 Ridge Road, with a low-sloped gabled roof and wide purlins typical of Modernist residential construction. A drive-up window on the west elevation, presumably to dispense prescriptions, speaks to the efficiency of a drive-thru automobile culture. Across the street to the north, the ca. 1965 Ridge Road Medical Group Building (PR0782) at 503 Ridge Road features a hip-roofed rectangular, brick form punctuated by stacked steel-sash windows. Vehicular bays on the north and west elevations are screened by pierced concrete-block walls.

Civil Rights in Roxboro

During the 1950s and most of the 1960s, Roxboro was spared the heightened unrest of the Civil Rights era experienced by other, usually larger communities across the South. In 1963, the Person County Committee on Negro Affairs (CNA) worked to integrate employment at downtown businesses. When retail stores rejected initial requests by the group to hire Black salesclerks, the CNA scheduled a boycott to force the issue. In response, four stores hired Black clerks, two others began working with the CNA to integrate their workforces, and, as a result, the boycott was canceled.⁶⁷⁵ The Kirby Movie Theater was also targeted by the Committee on Negro Affairs, but the result of the group's pressure on the theater to desegregate and allow Black patrons to sit on the main floor are not clear. The theater closed in 1974, after showing *Gone With The*

⁶⁷⁵ Alan K. Whiteleather, "Negro Sales Clerks Employed in Roxboro," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 31, 1963, Newspapers.com.

Wind as its last show. The building was purchased by Person County and remains in use as a civic center.⁶⁷⁶

It was not until 1969 that civil rights unrest erupted in violence. On June 13, groups of White and Black residents, primarily teenagers, gathered in the streets of a Black neighborhood in Southwest Roxboro.⁶⁷⁷ Rioters firebombed several stores, destroying at least one; a Black resident was shot and wounded by White rioters; and two police officers sustained minor injuries when their car was fired upon by a shotgun. Sixty-seven Black participants and six White participants in the rioting were arrested and charged with disturbing the peace and carrying concealed weapons; most were later released on bond.⁶⁷⁸

Media reports vary, but it appears the conflict, which took place on a Friday night, was the culmination of a week of sporadic disturbances, including gunfire and false reports of fires. In response to the unrest, a 9:00 pm to 5:00 am curfew was put in place and Governor Bob Scott sent fifty State Highway Patrol officers to assist local police in enforcing the curfew and setting up checkpoints around the city.⁶⁷⁹ There were eight arrests for curfew violations that Saturday evening, June 14, and another three or four the evening of June 15. After no further disturbances, the curfew was lifted on June 16.⁶⁸⁰ All evidence to the contrary, Roxboro Mayor J.W. Green asserted the unrest was “not a race riot. It was just a bunch of kids who felt like they wanted something to do,” and he met with White and Black community leaders seeking “more constructive activities for the kids.”⁶⁸¹

Following the arrests, complaints were filed by Black detainees who said that they “were physically manhandled, hit with rifle butts, and black jacked, pushed, kicked and shoved around.”⁶⁸² Some of those arrested said they were simply on their way home when they were rounded up by police without explanation.⁶⁸³ On June 22, a meeting

⁶⁷⁶ “Negro Sales Clerks Employed in Roxboro”; Jack Aulis, “Where the Old ‘Bijou’ is Not Forgotten,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁷⁷ Some sources refer to the area as Gallows Hill, though the origin of that name could not be confirmed.

⁶⁷⁸ “Scott Orders 50 Patrolmen Into Roxboro,” *[Greensboro] News and Record*, June 15, 1969, Newspapers.com; “Patrolmen Join Police in Roxboro,” *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 15, 1969, Newspapers.com. Note: Contemporary accounts of these events are unclear about which stores were affected or where the stores were located.

⁶⁷⁹ “Scott Orders 50 Patrolmen Into Roxboro”; “Patrolmen Join Police in Roxboro.”

⁶⁸⁰ “Roxboro Quiet in Curfew,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, June 16, 1969, Newspapers.com; “Roxboro curfew ending today,” *The Sanford Herald*, June 16, 1969, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁸¹ “Roxboro curfew ending today.”

⁶⁸² Chuck Lewis, “Roxboro’s Racial Calm Held ‘Uneasy,’” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, July 12, 1969.

⁶⁸³ “Brutality Charges in Roxboro Get Little Official Reaction,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, July 21, 1969, Newspapers.com.

was held between the detainees, Mayor Green, the city attorney, and the newly reinstated Roxboro Bi-Racial Human Relations Council, which Mayor Green had dissolved in 1963. During the meeting, “Negroes pulled up their shirts and showed raw flesh which they said had been beaten and burned by gas during their arrests June 13-14.”⁶⁸⁴ The complaints were submitted in writing to the mayor, who responded saying, “I don’t know anything about police brutality. We have never had any complaints about brutality,” while the police chief, Page Brooks, declined to comment on the claims.⁶⁸⁵

With assistance from the Roxboro United Front, a group of church and civic leaders, the Person County NAACP chapter, and other local organizations that formed in response to the events of the preceding month, sixteen complaints were filed with the North Carolina Department of Corrections on July 18.⁶⁸⁶ The complaints described the “wanton, brutal, and barbaric treatment” that implicated prison officials and state police or highway patrol officers and stated that “no civil servant has cause, whatever the provocation, to brutalize a fellow human being in the discharge of his official duties.”⁶⁸⁷ Mayor Green, Chief Brooks, and Colonel Charles Speed of the State Highway Patrol either declined to comment or denied any use of excessive force.⁶⁸⁸ The complaints were forwarded to the United States Justice Department on July 24 but went largely unresolved.⁶⁸⁹ Due to the lack of financial means, the complainants ceased further action. Thereafter, the reactivated Roxboro Bi-Racial Human Relations Committee met regularly and focused on open communication between the races, establishing funding for recreation facilities for Black residents, and addressing other issues of inequality in Roxboro.⁶⁹⁰

Consolidation of Roxboro Schools

Schools within Roxboro, like those in rural parts of the county, were consolidated and expanded in the post-World War II era. In 1950, Earl Bradsher Elementary School (PR0789) was constructed at 404 South Morgan Street on the south side of Roxboro, close to the Roxboro High School (PR0747) campus. Southern States Construction

⁶⁸⁴ “Roxboro Violence Prompts Investigation. ‘...A Long Time For Anybody Not To Care...’” *The [Greensboro] News and Record*, July 28, 1969, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁸⁵ Chuck Lewis, “Roxboro’s Racial Calm Held ‘Uneasy,’” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, July 12, 1969.

⁶⁸⁶ “Roxboro Violence Prompts Investigation.”

⁶⁸⁷ “Brutality Charges in Roxboro Get Little Official Reaction”; “Complaints Registered in Roxboro Disorders,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, July 19, 1969, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁸⁸ “Brutality Charges in Roxboro Get Little Official Reaction.”

⁶⁸⁹ “Roxboro Violence Prompts Investigation.”

⁶⁹⁰ Nancy Bentson, “Community Action Delayed Following Roxboro Clash,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, July 28, 1969, Newspapers.com.

Company was selected as the general contractor.⁶⁹¹ By 1955, an addition was already needed for school, for which George W. Kane Construction Company served as the general contractor.⁶⁹² The building is typical of mid-twentieth-century school construction with a flat-roof sheltering one-story classroom wings, the rooms arranged along double-loaded corridors; grouped steel-sash windows lighting the classrooms; and architectural detailing limited to the entrance wings, in this case pierced brick walls supporting flat roofs over the entrances. The building features a separate cafeteria wing and an auditorium that likely also served as a gymnasium.

During the same period, several buildings were added to the campus of the 1925 Roxboro High School (PR0747) at 425 Long Avenue. School officials began advocating for improved athletic facilities as early as 1945. In a speech about recreation in Person County public schools, Fred Bishop, one of the teachers at the school, pointed out the need for a new gymnasium and “for the facilities for recreation in more departments than just basketball and football.”⁶⁹³ The gymnasium was destroyed by fire in December 1947 and the need “to make all possible funds available for the erection of a new gym at the earliest possible date” was discussed at the March 1948 meeting of the Board of Education.⁶⁹⁴ Funding finally was secured in 1949 and that November, George W. Kane was selected as the general contractor for the project.⁶⁹⁵ The gymnasium was completed the following August, before the start of the 1950-1951 school year.⁶⁹⁶ On the side elevations of the large hip-roofed, rectangular building, brick pilasters separate banks of multi-pane steel-sash windows just below the roofline. Like most gymnasiums of the era, the building features a one-story entrance wing on the main facade and another wing on the opposite elevation that appears to have housed locker rooms and other support spaces.

Two more additions to the high school campus were built in the mid-1950s. Early in 1955, the Board of Education authorized funding for an agriculture building at Roxboro High School, designed by George Watts Carr and built by George W. Kane.⁶⁹⁷ Located at the southwestern part of the campus, the overall form and fenestration of the gable-

⁶⁹¹ PCBE Minutes, January 12, 1950.

⁶⁹² Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42; PCBE Minutes, September 9, 1955.

⁶⁹³ “Roxboro Teacher Talks at Person Social Meet,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, November 30, 1945, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁹⁴ PCBE Minutes, March 1, 1948; “Roxboro School Seeks Funds for Gymnasium,” *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, March 9, 1948, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁹⁵ PCBE Minutes, November 4, 1949; “Contracts are Let for New Roxboro High School Gym,” *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, November 9, 1949, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁹⁶ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42; “Roxboro High Points to Big Year in Sports,” *Greensboro News and Record*, June 18, 1950, Newspapers.com.

⁶⁹⁷ PCBE Minutes, February 7, 1955; PCBE Minutes, April 4, 1955; PCBE Minutes, May 2, 1955; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42.

roofed building are nearly identical to the mid-century classroom building at the Bethel Hill School (PR0443), indicating they were likely constructed utilizing the same plan. Each features two entrances on the façade, between which are eight or ten tall single windows. Later alterations include the infilling of the windows with small windows and vinyl siding above. In 1957, Kane was hired to construct a cafeteria.⁶⁹⁸ The one-story, flat-roofed building adjacent to the original classroom building was typical of the era with a wide bank of steel-sash windows (later infilled) on one long elevation. A parallel wing to the rear, connected by a hyphen, appears to have contained classroom spaces.

Also built by Kane, Person County High School (PR0791, now Southern Middle School) opened in October 1950 on what is now 209 Southern Middle School Road in southwestern Roxboro, where it served Black students in grades nine through twelve.⁶⁹⁹ The main classroom building has been demolished, but a one-story classroom wing at the northeast end of the current complex is consistent with mid-century classroom buildings throughout the county in its banks of large windows that rise from a brick knee wall to the eaves of the flat roof. North of this wing is a cafeteria and to the west a vocational wing that are consistent with the 1960s design of Person High School (PR0784). The cafeteria lacks the broad windows wall found on most 1950s cafeterias in the county and instead has single or paired full-height, fixed windows at regular intervals, their placement indicating a steel structure behind the brick veneer. A barrel-roofed gymnasium, similar in form to the 1956 gymnasium constructed at Helena High School (PR0300), is located at the southwest end of the complex where it has been fully wrapped in later additions that completely obscure the exterior walls. Similarly, a rectangular volume near the center of the complex that likely contained an auditorium has been fully enveloped with later classroom wings, constructed when the campus was converted to Southern Middle School in 1969.

As the school system grew, so too did the need for support buildings. In 1943, the county relocated its school bus garage from Depot Street to a new facility near Earl Bradsher Elementary School, Roxboro High School, and Person County High School in the southwestern part of the city. The earliest portion of the new Person County Bus Garage (PR0786) at 424 Winhaven Street, has a rectangular form, gabled roof, and segmental-arch window openings with double-hung wood-sash windows consistent with institutional architecture of the 1920s and 1930s. A maintenance building was

⁶⁹⁸ PCBE Minutes, September 17, 1957.

⁶⁹⁹ Satterfield, "First Public High School for Negroes"; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 105-110; PCBE Minutes, November 22, 1949; PCBE Minutes, October 2, 1950.

added to the complex in 1955.⁷⁰⁰ Located east of the bus garage, it is a gable-roofed building with the stacked steel-sash windows typical of mid-twentieth-century schools throughout the county. The two buildings were joined in the mid-1960s by an addition containing the same stacked steel windows found in the 1955 maintenance building.

Having outgrown the additions and school improvements made in the 1950s, members of the Roxboro School District Board attended the Person County Board of Education meeting in January 1964 to discuss inadequacies of Roxboro High School (PR0747), including overcrowding, lack of covered sidewalks, poor lighting, inadequate storage space, and other concerns that would prevent the school from achieving accreditation. The County Board agreed to build a new school and hired George Watts Carr and Vernon Harrison, a member of Carr's staff who specialized in schools, to prepare the designs, which were presented to the Board that November. The Board approved the designs the following February and in April 1965 Kane was hired to build the new high school.⁷⁰¹ The first part of Consolidated Roxboro High School, later named Person High School (PR0784), opened at the corner of Ridge Road and Carver Drive in 1966 and was enlarged in 1969 in the same architectural style, materials, and detailing. The sprawling complex in northwestern Roxboro includes a row of two two-story buildings and one one-story building on the northwest, facing Ridge Road. They are similar to the Person County Office Building (PR0784), completed two years earlier and also designed by Carr, in their flat roof and exterior expression of the steel structural system and brick walls alternating with tall, almost full-height steel-sash windows; the two-story buildings have spandrels of opaque panels between the upper and lower windows. One-story hyphens containing entrances with matching window walls connect the three buildings in this row. The same materials and design elements are utilized throughout the complex, including the gymnasium at the northeast end and a second row of classroom and vocational buildings that parallel the first three buildings, to which they are connected by covered walkways.

Plans for a new Roxboro elementary school began in 1965. South Elementary School (PR0736) at 1333 Hurdle Mills Road, built by general contractor E. M. Wilkerson and Son of Roxboro, opened in November 1966 and included ten classrooms, a library, cafeteria, and administrative offices.⁷⁰² In 1968, Kane was hired to erect a fourteen-

⁷⁰⁰ Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County, Volume II*, 42.

⁷⁰¹ PCBE Minutes, January 6, 1964; PCBE Minutes, November 9, 1964; PCBE Minutes, February 1, 1965; PCBE Minutes, April 5, 1965.

⁷⁰² "Final Inspection of Person School Units Set Today," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 26, 1965, Newspapers.com; "Contracts Awarded for New \$364,174 School at Roxboro," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, October 19, 1965, Newspapers.com; "Person Schools Set Harvesting Holidays," *The [Durham] Herald-*

classroom addition.⁷⁰³ The school continued the standard Modernist design of the county's 1950s school buildings: a series of one-story, flat-roofed classroom wings intersecting at right angles and featuring banks of windows and double-loaded corridors. Many of the classrooms also may be accessed directly from the outside. A combined cafeteria and gymnasium on the south end of the building was built with large, grouped windows that rose to the eaves; in recent years, they have been replaced with infill above small windows.

A second elementary school on the north side of Roxboro was funded through a bond approved in 1968. The school was planned to contain eighteen classrooms, multipurpose rooms, administrative offices, library, gymnasium, and cafeteria, and Abrams Construction Company was selected as the general contractor in May 1969. North Elementary School at 260 Henderson Road (PR0678), which opened for the 1970-1971 school year, replaced the schools in the Longhurst and Ca-Vel mill villages.⁷⁰⁴ North Elementary illustrates the shift away from the clean, streamlined elevations of the long, low, flat-roofed schools of the mid-twentieth century and toward a heavier aesthetic with masses arranged in an additive manner, rather than with continuous elevations. Along the U-shaped classroom wings, stretches of brick-veneered walls are interrupted by sections containing an exterior door with a transom and two or three grouped windows between opaque panels below and a flat, masonry cornice above. The heavy cornices of these bays and the tall gymnasium wing are similar to those found on Brutalist buildings of the 1960s and 1970s.

Community Planning and Development

Like most cities in North Carolina, Roxboro experienced significant growth in the post-World War II era, when industry flourished and residential construction, which had all but ceased entirely during the war, resumed. In the 1950s and 1960s, new developments were platted throughout the city and the pent-up demand for housing spurred a construction boom. Unlike larger urban areas in the state, where residential developers converted large swaths of farmland to subdivisions, most of the new subdivisions planned for Roxboro and its environs were small- to mid-sized, consisting

Sun, August 18, 1966, Newspapers.com; "Group Asks Board to Fire 2 Person School Officials," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, November 8, 1966, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁰³ "Roxboro Elementary School Addition Contracts Awarded," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, September 11, 1968, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁰⁴ Jack Slaughter, "Person Authorizes School Bond Vote," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, May 21, 1968, Newspapers.com; Jack Slaughter, "Change Made in Person Schools Operation Plan," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, January 7, 1969, Newspapers.com; Person Elementary School Contracts Total \$750,000," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, May 8, 1969, Newspapers.com; "School Opening Eyes by Board in Person," *The [Durham] Herald-Sun*, August 4, 1970, Newspapers.com.

of ten to thirty building lots platted by the landowners and developed by local contractors.

Many of the developments platted from the 1930s through the 1960s were not fully built out until the late twentieth century or early twenty-first century, if at all. This situation may have been due to slower than expected population growth in the 1950s and 1960s, a lack of residential amenities like parks and schools, a lack of advertising or promotion by the landowner, or a combination of these factors. Consequently, maps show residential subdivisions throughout Roxboro and its extraterritorial jurisdiction, but only a handful have been fully developed. Only the developments that contain a cohesive concentration of buildings constructed before 1975 were thus documented in the survey.

Most of Roxboro's mid-twentieth-century residential suburbs have linear or gridded plans. Linear neighborhoods were common in the rural areas, where farmers wanted to retain large farm fields while splitting off strips of land with road frontage for residential development. Similarly, every major road in and out of Roxboro visually extended the city into the surrounding countryside by sprouting linear residential developments. One such example is along Semora Road (PR0785), where fifteen houses straddling Roxboro's southwestern city limits occupy land platted by F. O. Carver, Sr. (1877-1951) in 1937. The subdivision contains Minimal Traditional and Ranch-style houses that are regularly spaced and set well back from the road which is rural in character in the absence of curb, gutter, or sidewalk and instead is flanked by drainage ditches.

Straddling the western city limit, the linear Harrington Lane development (PR0732) is a small collection of Ranch-style houses. The land belonged to H. W. Newell, who subdivided it into sixteen lots in 1962. The development was likely platted in response to the growth of the 1950 Person County Memorial Hospital, which stands approximately one-tenth of a mile to the northeast and attracted related businesses and staff in need of housing.⁷⁰⁵ The easternmost lots, adjacent to Ridge Road and within the city limits were developed with commercial buildings. The west end of the development consists of seven Ranch houses that date to 1964.

Another linear development, Sunrise Park (PR0721), was platted in 1950 as thirty-eight lots arranged along a single curved street, which recalls the curvilinear subdivisions of

⁷⁰⁵ "H. W. Newell Property," Plat Book 6, Page 193, 1962, PRCD.

the 1920s.⁷⁰⁶ Located in northwest Roxboro, well within the city limits, the development includes wide lots that typically measured 75' wide by 150' to 200' deep, varying in size based on their placement along the curve. Oriented to the automobile, the development retains a wide, paved street with concrete curb and gutter but does not contain sidewalks. Covenants placed on the lots in 1951 dictated the setback and orientation of structures, a minimum building cost of \$7000, and restricted "nuisances" and temporary structures, resulting in custom-built Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split-Level houses, most with brick veneers.⁷⁰⁷

In its repetition of a basic form and lack of any architecturally stylistic detailing, the collection of one-story houses on Iris Lane (PR0737) recalls the mill villages of the early twentieth century. Located southwest of downtown Roxboro, the property was subdivided in 1955 by S. W. Glenn, perhaps as a speculative venture as he may have constructed the matching houses before selling the lots.⁷⁰⁸ The nine hip-roofed houses are three bays wide and two rooms deep with a centered entrance on the façade that is accessed by an uncovered concrete stoop. The development has no garages, sidewalks, or formal landscaping; instead, the houses have shallow, grassy front lawns and, in some cases, gravel driveways.

Semi-Rural Residential Developments

While most of the mid-twentieth-century residential development took place within or adjacent to Roxboro's city limits, several developments were located slightly farther away where there were large swaths of available farmland that could be platted as neighborhoods with wide lots and curvilinear streets, sometimes circling a pond or other natural feature.

The Anderbrock Subdivision (PR0680) is located northwest of Roxboro and just beyond the Semora Road houses. The land, originally part of the F. O. Carver Estate, was initially subdivided in 1952 with a rectilinear grid, and in 1963, the north half of the development, along Anderbrock Drive, was re-platted with a curvilinear street. The subdivision was developed in the 1950s and early 1960s with twenty-nine houses. Most of the dwellings are one-story, brick ranch houses, some of which retain original two-over-two horizontal-pane wood-sash windows or engaged carports and garages.

⁷⁰⁶ "Sunrise Park," Plat Book 5 Page 66A, 1950, PCRD; Personal Communication with Esther Yarborough (Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, February 2023, in person (see PR0721).

⁷⁰⁷ "Covenant by Otto Y. and Ruth Jones Clayton," Deed Book 63 Page 447, 1951, PCRD.

⁷⁰⁸ "Property of S. W. Glenn," Plat Book 7, page 63, 1955, PCRD; "Property of Lacy W. Winstead & F. Jack McKee," Plat Cabinet 1, Page 488, 1983, PCRD.

Architectural similarities among the houses at the north end of the development suggest that they were speculatively built.

Located southwest of Roxboro, the Lake Shore Development (PR0526) is one of the most intact and cohesive mid-twentieth-century developments in the Roxboro area. Platted in 1956, it features curvilinear streets that provide views of the three ponds that give the development its name. The development includes approximately thirty houses, some constructed on wide double lots and many tucked under a canopy of mature trees. The ranch and split-level houses, constructed from 1956 to 1972, display characteristics typical of mid-twentieth-century residential construction including brick veneers, integrated brick planters, two-over-two horizontal-pane wood-sash windows, grouped or picture windows lighting the main living space of the house, and engaged carports.

West of Roxboro and just north of the Semora Road houses, Lakeview (PR0479) was platted in 1957 with forty-eight lots arranged along the parallel Younger Road and White Oak Drive. The streets are paved but are not typical of mid-century automobile-oriented subdivisions in their lack curbs, gutters and sidewalks. Despite the name, there is no lake visible from the neighborhood. Most of the houses are Ranches built between 1958 and 1975 and most retain open carports. Several early-twentieth-century outbuildings located in side and rear yards recall the previous agricultural use of the land.

Domestic Architecture throughout the County

The post-World War II era saw a divergence in popular housing styles as many traditionalists resumed the construction of Colonial Revival-style houses while others adopted the forward-looking Modernist style, signaling a break with the pre-war era.⁷⁰⁹ The latter was especially true in African American communities, where residents facing continuing discrimination were reaching toward a new future rather than referencing their colonial history. While individual tastes varied, contractors and homebuilders rapidly erected rows of Minimal Traditional and Ranch houses, the latter of which could be embellished with either Colonial or Modernist-style detailing. Regardless of architectural style, the family home included a garage or carport, signaling the importance of the automobile in the post-World War II era.

⁷⁰⁹ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 532.

*Late Colonial Revival*⁷¹⁰

The Colonial Revival style remained popular throughout the mid-twentieth century, especially for churches and small-scale, post-war, speculative-built housing, and numerous houses, both in Roxboro and in the surrounding county, were constructed or remodeled in the style during this period. Among the five documented is the ca. 1950 Pointer-Davis House (PR0778) at 119 Ridge Road, just north of the Reamstown development. The one-and-a-half-story house features double-hung, multi-light windows and gabled dormers across the façade, all with the flush eaves common in the 1940s and 1950. A two-story, gable-front bay is prominently positioned between the main entrance and the attached two-car garage that elongates the façade to a width commonly associated with Ranch houses of the era.

In rural Person County, the ca. 1940 Caviness Banks and Helen Pearce Foushee House (PR0439) on Satterfield Road and the ca. 1943 Nat Williams House (PR0602) on Hurdle Mills Road, both in the southwestern part of the county, feature compact three-bay, symmetrical facades, a gabled porch or entrance bay, gabled dormers on the façade, and a side porch. The ca. 1957 house (PR0493) on Halifax Road is one of a small number of residences in the county that were constructed of local stone. Its side-gabled, symmetrical form and paired front gables match the Foushee and Williams houses. The ca. 1940 William C. and Mayotorina B. Winstead House (PR0525) on John D. Winstead Road displays more overt classical detailing, a rarity in the rural part of the county. The tall one-and-a-half-story, five-bay, gable-roofed house is symmetrically composed and features a two-story, flat-roofed portico supported by paneled piers and topped by a latticed railing. Flanking one-story wings extend the main form of the house.

Other rural houses were updated with classical details during this period. The ca. 1901 Stephens-Burke House (PR0538) on Morton Pulliam Road was renovated about 1950 with the installation of a brick veneer, dentil cornice, classical door surround, and two-story, pedimented portico supported by slender columns. Less ornate in its detailing, the ca. 1915 Merritt-Winstead House (PR0294) on NC 501 north of Roxboro was updated in 1934 and again in 1950. The result is a two-story, three-bay, symmetrical façade with pedimented front gable, brick veneer, and projecting entrance bay with pedimented gable and brick quoins.

⁷¹⁰ As with early-twentieth-century styles in Roxboro, the full breadth of the mid-twentieth-century styles throughout Person County cannot be gleaned by the limited number of resources surveyed. Colonial Revival-style houses continued to be erected throughout Roxboro, Ranch houses are prolific throughout the county, and small-scale developments of Minimal Traditional-style and Ranch houses were constructed throughout the mid-twentieth century in both rural and urban areas.

Minimal Traditional

Popular nationwide from the late 1940s through about 1960, the Minimal Traditional-style house was a response to the limited resources of the depression and World War II, followed by rapid home building after the war. A very simple rectangular, side- or front-gabled form, flush eaves, and a lack of architectural detail or ornamentation characterize the style. The small size and compact footprints of these houses were both well suited to urban lots and inexpensive to build.⁷¹¹ As a result, a number of Minimal Traditional-style houses were erected as infill on urban lots among late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century housing. Examples include the ca. 1948 Dorothy and P. T. Whitt, Jr. House (PR0666) at 195 Old Durham Road and the ca. 1949 house at 105 Johnson Street (PR0696). Both are three-bays wide and two bays deep with wood windows and an entrance sheltered by a gabled hood. A gabled side porch on the Johnson Street house has been enclosed to increase the interior living area.

The ca. 1946 John R. and Josephine Pettiford Hunt House (PR0740) at 508 Jones Street stands out for its solid stone construction. African American house painter and mason John Hunt built the three-bay, side-gabled Minimal Traditional house for himself and his family. The random-course stone exterior features brick door and window surrounds and a stone stoop supporting the front-gabled porch, which is accessed by a half-round stone stair. The ca. 1949 Whitt-Clayton House (PR0667) at 207 Old Durham Road was executed with a brick veneer featuring a basketweave water table and a header course above each window. A brick terrace on the right side of the façade is sheltered by a later aluminum awning. Both houses retain the compact form and flush eaves that characterize the style.

The Minimal Traditional style was popular with homebuilders taking advantage of post-World War II demand for housing to construct entire streetscapes of Minimal Traditional-style housing. One example of this is the Teague Subdivision (PR0716), built along Barnett Avenue in northeastern Roxboro between 1940 and 1960. There the speculatively built one- and one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled houses have asbestos siding, brick veneer, or later vinyl or aluminum siding. Many retain original multi-light wood-sash windows and flush eaves characteristic of the style. Entrances are sheltered by a one-bay gabled or shed porch or a two-bay shed-roofed porch. Many porches retain decorative metal posts, though some posts have been replaced with square wood or round metal posts. Other subdivisions in Roxboro also utilized the form, though few were fully built out and as a result, were not surveyed.

⁷¹¹ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 586-589.

Ranch

By the mid-1950s, the boxy forms and traditional detailing of the Minimal Traditional and Colonial Revival styles had begun to fall out of favor, even for small-scale housing. In their place emerged the Ranch form, a wide, low, one-story house, generally constructed with brick veneers that were attractive to middle-class families for both their low-maintenance alternative to wood siding, which required regular repainting, and their expression of upward economic status as a more expensive material. While some Ranch houses expressed a streamlined, modern aesthetic, others adopted the broad one-story form but applied Colonial Revival-style detailing.

In the 2009 report, *Post-World War II and Modern Architecture in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1945-1965*, historian M. Ruth Little defines two forms and three styles of Ranch Houses in Raleigh, North Carolina. The “minimal” or “rambler” form is denoted by the overall width of the building, with the latter generally featuring telescoping wings on one or both ends of the building. To this form are applied archetypal, contemporary, or colonial stylistic details. Archetypal ranches feature little applied ornament, defined rather by the window configuration, which generally features grouped or picture windows in the main living spaces and small horizontal windows placed high on the wall in bedroom spaces. The contemporary Ranch house may feature detailing common in Modernist architecture of the era, including wide eaves with exposed rafters, clerestory windows, and integrated site features. (Those houses with overt Modernist detailing are covered in the following section.) Finally, Colonial Ranch houses may include multi-light double-hung windows, paneled doors with classical surrounds, dentil or modillion cornices at the roofline, and occasionally a gabled porch stoop.⁷¹² Regardless of its detailing, the Ranch house often included an attached garage or carport, supporting an increased trend in automobile ownership nationwide in the decades after World War II.

Roxboro experienced significant growth in the mid-twentieth century and, as a result, Ranch houses are numerous, especially at the fringes of the early-twentieth-century residential areas, but also in distinct subdivisions planned and developed in the 1950s and 1960s and discussed in the Community Planning and Development section. The earliest surveyed Ranch house is the ca. 1942 W. Reade and Catherine Gentry House (PR0780), a five-bay-wide, side-gabled brick house that may be classified as a colonial Ranch house. Colonial Revival-style details include the double-hung windows, corbelled brick chimneys, gabled dormer vent, and segmental-arch spandrels at the

⁷¹² M. Ruth Little, “Post-World War II and Modern Architecture in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1945-1965,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2009, Section F Page 32.

inset porch. The ca. 1957 Linwood Marvin and May Alice Long House (PR0759) at 110 South Morgan Street features a wide multi-light picture window flanked by six-over-nine wood-sash windows and a classical six-panel door with four-light-over-one-panel sidelights. The vertical plywood sheathing in the front gables provides the visual effect of a pedimented gable.

Other Ranch houses feature the minimal form and archetypal detailing that Little notes were common in the immediate post-World War II era. The ca. 1950 Lawrence and Esther William House (PR0712) at 519 Cody Street features a three-bay, two-room-deep form with the engaged carport and two-over-two, horizontal-pane wood-sash windows common on mid-century Ranch houses. Similarly scaled is the four-bay, side-gabled, Kenneth and Fadine Porterfield House (PR0719) at 325 Broad Street. Constructed about 1955, the house can be considered an archetypal Ranch, characterized by large-pane picture windows in the public living spaces and expanses of brick veneer or wood siding below high bedroom windows, sometimes set with vertical wood siding between them.⁷¹³ In this case a group of nine windows is adjacent to the entrance. The ca. 1964 Quincy A. and Arenthia Dickens House (PR0703) at 144 Johnson Street repeats these archetypal elements though applied to a rambler form; small two-over-two windows light the private spaces and a garage attached by a hyphen elongates the facade.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the rambler Ranch form dominated, with large lots at the periphery of Roxboro the perfect place to erect these sprawling dwellings. An early example of this is the ca. 1951 C. C. Winstead Jr. House at 254 Winhaven Street (PR0714), constructed by Winstead himself, perhaps as an example of his construction skills which he utilized to build a number of homes in Southwest Roxboro.⁷¹⁴ The four-bay, hip-roofed house is further elongated by a projecting hip-roofed wing on the right elevation and extended to the rear by two wings. The two-over-two horizontal-pane wood-sash windows and the central picture window further reinforce the horizontality of the façade. Two similar examples of the rambler Ranch house were documented on Johnson Street in southwest Roxboro. The ca. 1960 Herman W. Jr. and Gwendolyn Smith House (PR0700) at 129 Johnson Street and the adjacent ca. 1960 John William Jr. and Marjorie Fields Albright House (PR0701) at 701 Johnson Street both feature a

⁷¹³ Margaret Ruth Little, "Getting the American Dream for Themselves: Postwar Modern Subdivisions for African Americans in Raleigh, North Carolina," *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Spring 2012), 82.

⁷¹⁴ Personal Communication with Lela Currier (Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, February 22, 2023, in person (see PR0714 and PR0706); Obituary of Clifton C. "Bubba" Winstead, Jr., *The [Durham] Herald Sun*, April 7, 1997, Newspapers.com.

four-bay core flanked by hip-roofed wings and picture windows set in projecting hip-roofed bays.

The rectangular Ranch form with minimal architectural detailing was easily adapted to multi-family housing. The ca. 1950 Esther Owens Duplex (PR0713) at 522-524 Cody Street is perhaps better described as a Minimal Traditional-style duplex with double-hung windows and shallow eaves; however, the double width creates an elongated façade that reads as a Ranch house. The ca. 1955 Gentry Duplex (PR0761) at 118 South Morgan Street may have been constructed to house the growing populations adjacent to the Earl Bradsher Elementary School (PR0789) and Person High School (PR0784), both within several blocks of the duplex. The building has a symmetrical façade with a gable-on-hipped roof, grouped two-over-two horizontal-pane wood-sash windows, and engaged porches on each end of the façade, each supported by a decorative metal post. The ca. 1965 duplex (PR0704) at 127-129 Trotter Street is similar in form, though with a projecting gable sheltering the façade's center bays, which have fixed sashes above operable hopper windows in lieu of the two-over-two windows found throughout the rest of the house.

Neighborhoods of custom-built Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split-Level houses include the Sunrise Park (PR0721) development. Most houses in this development were constructed with brick veneers and two-over-two horizontal-pane wood-sash windows. Colonial Revival-style detailing, including six-panel doors, decorative (inoperable) window shutters, and modillion cornices, are common. Porches, when they exist, are generally shallow and are sheltered by extensions of the main roof supported by wood columns or decorative metal posts.

Residential Modernism

Modernism was introduced to North Carolinians in the late 1940s, most notably by architects either teaching at or graduated from the School of Design, established in 1948 at North Carolina State College (now North Carolina State University) in Raleigh. In most small towns and rural areas, Modernist houses were rarely built. In Person County they were rarely seen until the 1960s and even then were few and far between. In residential construction, the Modernist style is characterized by flat, shed, and low-sloped gabled roofs with deep overhangs, exposed roof beams and purlins, large banks of windows, recessed entries, natural materials, and grouped windows that blur the distinction between interior and exterior spaces.

Given that a horizontal orientation and large or grouped windows were also characteristic of the Ranch style, it should perhaps be no surprise that in rural parts of the county, the only examples of residential Modernism are Ranch-plan houses that

have been topped with wide front gables in lieu of side-gabled or hipped roofs, the similarities between the houses and the fact that they are generally confined to the southeastern part of the county indicating that they may have been the work of a single builder. The earliest of these is the ca. 1960 John D. and Gertrude James Clay House (PR0432) at 701 Patterson Drive south of Roxboro with deep purlins supporting the asymmetrical low-sloped, front-gabled roof that extends beyond the right elevation to form a two-bay carport. The ca. 1966 Harry Lee and Barbara L. Oakley House (PR0415) on US 158 east of Roxboro is identical in form and detail, though with a one-bay carport on the left end of the façade and a recessed sunroom on the right elevation, both sheltered by extensions of the front-gabled roof that result in a very wide profile.

The ca. 1972 William and Sadie Long House (PR0504) on Mountain Road east of Roxboro is a late example of the front-gabled Modernist Ranch and is more carefully articulated with a wide window wall to the right of the entrance that extends all the way up to the front-gabled roof. Windows on the side and rear elevations are the stacked awning type and the carport, sheltered by an extension of the gabled roof, is accessed from the side and obscured behind a brick wall that extends the façade. In northwest Roxboro, the ca. 1964 Duncan-Olds House (PR0727) on Forrestwood Drive in north Roxboro also utilized a window wall in lieu of picture window. In this instance, the inward focus of Modernist design, which subordinates the composition of the façade to the celebration of communal space, is so complete that the entrance is located within the carport instead of on the main façade.

A number of Person County residents elected to construct more innovative Modernist-style houses, some relying on their own design and construction abilities. An irregular form and Modernist detailing lend distinction to the 1958 Ben and Marion T. Tillett House (PR0648). Located on Chub Lake Road immediately north of the Roxboro city limit, the house was reportedly built to match a house constructed in Durham's Hope Valley neighborhood that the owners had seen and wished to copy.⁷¹⁵ The house features a two-story flat-roofed wing with an upper level that overhangs the lower story. An angled, gabled wing at the opposite end includes the entrance and a large, fixed window on the façade and grouped windows that rise to the roofline on the rear elevation. Deep overhangs throughout and a wide, central chimney are also characteristic of the Modernist style.

The most remarkable Modernist-style residence in the county is the 1960 Henry and Jean Newell House (PR0573) on Old Salem Road west of Roxboro, which was patterned

⁷¹⁵ Personal Communication with J.B. and Lynn Bowes (Person County residents) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, February 2023, in person (see PR0648).

after *House Beautiful* magazine's 1958 "Pace Setter House." That house, designed by Vladimir Ossipoff, was constructed in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he practiced. Henry Newell, a draftsman for Bell Aircraft, utilized the plans published in the magazine, scaled them up, and drafted the plans himself, copying the Liljestrand House exactly including the placement of furniture within the main rooms of the house. Newell's plans were executed by local contractor, Graham Duncan, with continuous input from the Newells throughout the construction process.⁷¹⁶ The house features intersecting, low-sloped, gabled and hipped roofs intended to make it blend with the surrounding landscape. Modernist elements include an entrance partially obscured by a projecting kitchen wing and porte-cochere, deep overhangs throughout, and large, wood-framed picture windows in the living room that extend the full height of the walls. The north wall of the main wing is a continuous window wall that lights the main hallway that accesses the bedrooms. Bedrooms located along the south side of the main wing have paired one-light sliding doors that open to a shallow, exterior deck that spans the full width of the south elevation and sheltered a basement-level "pavilion playroom" that was constructed as an open-air space but was enclosed with full-height glass wall in 1991. An angled, steel-frame deck extends from the southeast corner of the living room wing, supported by steel posts and sheltered by an overhang of the main roof that is supported by diagonal steel braces. The interior features vertical wood paneling, exposed ceiling beams in the main living spaces, and exposed brick at the fireplace, which features a floating wood hearth and a copper hood.

The ca. 1971 Donovan O. M. and Mary Harper House (PR0728), located at 816 Franklin Street in the historically African American part of southwestern Roxboro, is perhaps the most overtly Modernist house within the Roxboro city limits. Donovan Harper, an educator by profession, designed and constructed the house. The house has an L-shaped footprint with a one-story, flat-roofed wing that contains the public spaces and a shed-roofed wing on the other end that contains the bedrooms. Both sections are veneered in a white, Roman brick and feature deep eaves. The entrance consists of paired eight-panel doors, full-height sidelights, and a three-part transom and is lit by three pendant lights. The interior retains not only its original split-foyer plan, but nearly all of the original finishes, including carpet, wallpaper, and colored trim, bathroom fixtures, and switchplates. A planter in the entrance took advantage of the light provided by the sidelights. White-brick fireplaces are located in the main living room as well as in a basement-level family room.

⁷¹⁶ Personal Communication with Jean Newell (Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, March 2023, in person (see PR0573); "A House That is Very Much More Than a House," *House Beautiful* 100, July 1958, 39-85.

Public Housing

When the Roxboro Housing Authority was established in 1969, it utilized a \$2.25 million grant from the federal government to erect public housing on three separate sites—Green Gardens (PR0792), Lee Gardens (PR0790), and Harris Gardens (PR0768), the latter two constructed near the city limits in predominantly African American sections of Roxboro. In each of the three developments, buildings containing three or four units are sited parallel to the street. Remnants of foundation plantings are present and, in a few areas, mature trees provide shade; a large grassy area surrounded by some or all of the buildings provided recreational space.

The designs of the one- and two-story buildings, generally uniform within each development and Modernist in their lack of decoration, are similar in their basic gable-roofed forms and detailing. All have tan or light red brick veneers, sections of facades that are weatherboarded, recessed entrances or balconies, and one-over-one windows. Some of the buildings have offset units that create stepped facades. Harris Gardens, the largest of the three developments, includes recreational fields adjacent to a one-story community building that has offices, meeting spaces, and a gymnasium. The building displays the same tan brick as the adjoining residential buildings, but it is more distinctly Modernist in its parapet walls forming strong angles on the façade.

A Public Housing Architectural Context Survey, prepared in 2024, notes that several pieces of legislation in the 1960s, including the Senior Citizens Housing Act of 1962, led to the construction of more buildings focused on providing housing for low-income elderly residents.⁷¹⁷ Within Lee Gardens (PR0790), the construction of one-story houses with ramps or at-grade entrances appears to have been Roxboro's response to the 1962 legislation.

The design and construction of public housing appears to have influenced private development in Roxboro. The ca. 1971 Heritage Circle Apartments (PR0772) stands less than a half mile southwest of Lee Gardens. The one-story, side-gabled buildings have units that are offset with stepped rooflines or, in some cases, attached at an angle to create L-shaped buildings. The buildings have brick veneer on the lower half of the walls and on the gable ends and vertical wood sheathing in the gables and between paired vinyl slider windows. Sparse landscaping includes grass surrounding the buildings and bushes along building foundations, though no other trees or plantings are present in the development.

⁷¹⁷ Heather L. Carpini and Kimberly Nagle, "Durham HUD – Oldham Towers and Liberty Street Apartments – Durham, North Carolina," Historic Structure Survey Report, 2020, 5.

Adjacent to the Heritage Circle Apartments is Weatherly Heights (PR0722), Roxboro's final public housing complex, completed about 1981. The buildings do not match any of those in the 1969 complexes constructed by the Roxboro Housing Authority beyond their mixture of one- and two-story attached units with brick and vinyl exteriors. The buildings are arranged along a single, curved lane and sited at angles to provide visual interest to the streetscape. Like the earlier complexes, it includes a large, grassy area in the center of the "loop" road.

PERSON COUNTY AFTER 1970

Person County Agriculture

Throughout the late twentieth century, agriculture in Person County moved away from small, family owned and operated farms using traditional methods toward large-scale commercial agriculture utilizing new technologies. In 1940, most Person County farms ranged from 70 to 180 acres, and by 2022 averaged over 240 acres each.⁷¹⁸ These statistics align with national trends noted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, which found that the number of large farms nationwide increased sixfold between 1969 and 1992. Additionally, it noted that, "While total farm count has dwindled from 2.7 million in 1969 to 1.9 million in 1992, the number of large farms has jumped from 51,995 in 1969 to 222,865 in 1992."⁷¹⁹ The census data also showed that large farms were more likely to be owned by a business entity and operated by full-time employees, while small farms were still typically owned and operated by individuals or families, most with full-time wage or salaried jobs off the farm. Large farms also produced more crops and livestock than small farms, except for tobacco, likely because it remained a labor-intensive crop.⁷²⁰ The U.S. government's 2022 Census of Agriculture listed Person County's top five crops as soybeans, hay, wheat, corn, and tobacco, respectively, with tobacco bringing the highest sales.⁷²¹

Two feed mills remain in operation in the county, the larger being the 1956 Central Carolina Farmers Exchange (PR0301), centrally located in north Roxboro. Hurdle Mill in Hurdle Mills also remains operational, though no longer water powered. The mill currently offers custom mixed feeds for sale, mostly locally, its grain bins west of the mill holding 55,000 bushels of grain each. According to the owner, Mike Dixon, a specially formulated chicken feed known as "Laying Mash" is the mill's largest output, with roughly one thousand bags of the feed sold every three months.⁷²²

Bulk Barns and Greenhouses

The continued success of tobacco, even as farm characteristics shifted, is likely due in part to new technology. The introduction of bulk barns in the 1970s resulted in further

⁷¹⁸ *Sixteenth Census, Agriculture Volume I, Part 3*, 290, 335; Bureau of the Census, *2022 Census of Agriculture, County Profile: Person County, North Carolina*, www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/North_Carolina/cp37145.pdf; Mobley, *The Way We Lived*, 490.

⁷¹⁹ Bureau of the Census, *Agricultural Brief: Large Farms Are Thriving in the United States*, 1996, www2.census.gov/library/publications/1996/agriculture/ab_96-1.pdf.

⁷²⁰ Bureau of the Census, *Large Farms Are Thriving*.

⁷²¹ Bureau of the Census, *2022 Census of Agriculture, County Profile: Person County*.

⁷²² Personal Communication with Mike Dixon.

labor saving methods and mechanization of curing tobacco; instead of tying leaves to stringers to hang in curing barns that had to be carefully watched during the curing process, leaves were instead packed into metal racks and then tightly loaded into standardized bulk curing barns, which use forced air and controlled ventilation to control temperatures more precisely than the flue-curing process.⁷²³

Historian Laura Scism observed in the late 1970s, “Times are changing in the flue-curing regions of North Carolina’s tobacco country. . . . While the old log tobacco barn will not disappear from the landscape any time soon, it may be obsolete in a few years. Already, rows of bulk barns dot the highways. Bulk curing requires less labor and results in a better, more desirable cure. For those who can afford them (\$8,000 each), they are the wave of the future.”⁷²⁴ Her predictions proved accurate; by the 1970s, the log and frame barns for the curing of bright leaf tobacco were largely obsolete, replaced by bulk metal curing barns that could be ordered from a local dealer and placed on a concrete pad.

Bulk curing is still used by the few tobacco farms that remain in the county, including the Thomas Anderson and Emma Moore Pearce Farm (PR0437). On this property, dozens of bulk curing barns are arranged in rows, each set on a concrete pad. The openings to the barns are sheltered by shed roofed structures with cross-bracing at support posts. A larger, gable-roofed shed on the Pearce Farm shelters the openings of a row of bulk curing barns and is wide enough to drive a tractor through it. Many similar shed-roofed structures remain throughout the county, very similar to those utilized to shelter farm machinery, but with concrete-pads to one side, indicating their use as shelters for the bulk barns that have since been removed.

Just as technology impacted the harvesting and curing of tobacco, so too did it change the germination and cultivation of tobacco plants. Farmers in Person County had long started tobacco plants in small plots located close to the farmhouse, carefully watched to ensure the plants were protected from frost. However, by the late twentieth century, this process was consolidated by farmers who erected large greenhouses and produced tobacco seedlings for sale.⁷²⁵ One such example of this development is the William Boyd and Zelia Whitfield Horton Farm (PR0603), where, in the 1990s, the family

⁷²³ Personal Communication with Farm Laborers at Pearce-Foushee Farm by Cheri Szcodronski and Heather Slane, September 24, 2022, in person (see PR0803).

⁷²⁴ Scism, “Carolina Tobacco Barns,” 126.

⁷²⁵ Personal Communication with Russell Horton (Person County resident) by Cheri Szcodronski and Heather Slane, December 2022, in person (see PR0603).

constructed five metal-framed greenhouses dedicated to the cultivation of tobacco seedlings.

Farm labor changed dramatically in the late twentieth century as well. Tenant farming and sharecropping decreased significantly starting during World War I, as farmers left the fields to seek more stable and better paying jobs in Roxboro's industries, especially the textile mills. Migration from farm to city was further fueled by World War II production needs, and the introduction and widespread use of new agricultural technologies continued to reduce the human labor needed through the mid-twentieth century.⁷²⁶ By 1970, few tenant farmers or sharecroppers remained in Person County. "They were so hard to find," observed social scientist and researcher Margaret Jarman Hagood, "that the census takers had to develop new categories."⁷²⁷

Within Roxboro, tobacco warehouses in the downtown core were destroyed in the late 1940s and early 1950s to clear the way for new commercial development, and new warehouses were constructed at the periphery of the city. Dozens of warehouses constructed in the last three decades of the century, mostly south of Roxboro, illustrate the decentralization of the tobacco market in Roxboro. These include the 1970 Growers Warehouse (PR0725) and 1973 Fo-Acres Tobacco Warehouse (PR0514), both south of town, are typical of the late twentieth-century tobacco warehouse in their broad forms and low-sloped front-gabled roofs. Each has a vehicular bay on one end of the façade and loading bays on a side elevation. Some of the earlier warehouses, such as the Growers Warehouse, are constructed of concrete block and are brick-veneered on the façade while others, like the Fo-Acres warehouse, are entirely brick-veneered. Many of the late twentieth-century warehouses are prefabricated metal buildings and some were built as speculative ventures not necessarily intended specifically for storage of tobacco.

Roxboro Industry

The greatest challenge to Person County industry after 1970 was the dramatic increase in competition from foreign markets. It was relatively inexpensive to establish textile mills in third-world countries, specifically in the Far East and South America, where workers could be paid very low wages. As a result, many new textile companies were

⁷²⁶ Personal Communications with Tommy Wagstaff, Darryl Duncan, Kent Williams, and Randy Hester (Person County residents) by Cheri Szcodronski and Heather Slane, September-November 2022, in person; Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, vii.

⁷²⁷ Hagood, *Mothers of the South*, vii.

established overseas and textile imports to the United States tripled between 1974 and 1984.⁷²⁸

To remain competitive, some textile manufacturers shifted from relatively standard products to more specialized materials. Historian Brent Glass observes, “The Collins & Aikman Company, for example, remained healthy throughout the turbulent 1980s by turning to automotive carpeting, furniture upholstery, and commercial carpeting, all of which proved to be import-proof.”⁷²⁹ By 1974, Ca-Vel was the county’s largest employer with 1,800 employees, while Roxboro Yarns (which included both the Roxboro Cotton Mill and Longhurst Mill) employed 600 people.⁷³⁰ The challenges of foreign competition, however, could not be wholly overcome. Nationwide, more than eight hundred textile mills closed between 1975 and 1985 and in North Carolina, employment in textile mills dropped twenty-eight percent between 1973 and 1986.⁷³¹

The four primary textile mills in Roxboro were deeply impacted by the changes to the industry in the late twentieth century. In 1973, Roxboro Cotton Mills (PR0219) and Longhurst Mills (PR0774) were purchased by the Tully Corporation (later Tultex Yarns), which shifted production in Roxboro to the yarn needed to produce Tultex fleece. The two mills collectively continued to employ around six hundred workers through the late twentieth century. Roxboro Cotton Mills closed in 1999 and in 2005, the building was renovated for use as the Roxboro Community School. Longhurst Mills closed around 2001 and now houses Newell & Sons (formerly the Roxboro Broom Factory), which manufactures janitorial supplies.⁷³² Ca-Vel Mills (PR0801) was sold to Wickes Companies, a diversified manufacturing and retail conglomerate, in 1987. The mill closed after its owner filed for bankruptcy and was dissolved in 2007. The building now houses METech Recycling, specializing in the recycling of electronics and solar panels, including data destruction services, with five locations nationwide.⁷³³ Somerset Mill (PR0794) closed by 1978 and in 1984 the property was purchased by Crown Crafts, Inc., a Georgia-based producer of jacquard-woven textiles, flocked velvets, and tufted bedspreads.⁷³⁴ Bedspreads and packaged comforters sets were produced in the mill until about 2001, when Crown Crafts closed its cut-and-sew operation at this location and

⁷²⁸ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 96.

⁷²⁹ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 97.

⁷³⁰ Wright, *Historical Sketch of Person County*, 190-191.

⁷³¹ Glass, *The Textile Industry in North Carolina*, 100.

⁷³² Ehrfurth, “Roxboro Cotton Mill,” Section 8, page 7, 11; Personal Communication with staff of Newell & Sons by Cheri Szkodronski and Heather Slane, October 2022, in person (see PR0774).

⁷³³ Andrews, *The Men and the Mills*, 291; METech Recycling, <https://www.metechrecycling.com/>.

⁷³⁴ “Crown Crafts, Inc.,” Encyclopedia.com, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/books/politics-and-business-magazines/crown-crafts-inc> Accessed July 1, 2025.

sold the property to Catalog Products, Inc.⁷³⁵ The building was underutilized in the twenty-first century until it was purchased by Stokes Holdings LLC in 2020.⁷³⁶

Recreation

Public Parks

By 1970, schools across the county were consolidated and rural elementary schools in Allensville, Hurdle Mills, Bushy Fork, Olive Hill, and Mt. Tirzah were closed. From the 1980s to the early 2000s, burdened with the upkeep of the schools that had been sitting vacant, the county demolished the remaining classroom buildings, and in some cases the ancillary buildings, and converted the rural school campuses to public parks. In nearly every instance, the site of the school building can be identified by the presence of a circular driveway, beyond which a gravel parking lot occupies the land on which the building stood.

Two of the elementary school campuses converted to parks retain their gymnasiums. At Olive Hill School (PR0546) in 1970, the county removed the existing playground and constructed a softball field. To expand the park in 1974, the main building, community house, and cafeteria were torn down, but the mid-twentieth-century gymnasium remains and now provides restrooms for Olive Hill Park. Since that time a picnic pavilion and modern playground have been added.⁷³⁷ By 1981, the main building at Bushy Fork School (PR0570) housed the Person County Vocational Sheltered Workshop and the gymnasium and athletic fields were used by the Person County Recreational Department. The two baseball fields behind the gymnasium were updated around 1980 with new concession and restroom buildings, a paved walking trail was created at the southwest corner of the park, and a picnic shelter and playground were added around 1995. The frame gymnasium is now sheathed with metal and the one-story, brick cafeteria now serves as a community building.⁷³⁸

The Mt. Tirzah School complex is now the site of the Mt. Tirzah Ball Park (PR0385), where only a wellhouse and the vocational building remain, the latter having been converted for use by the volunteer fire department. A baseball field, encircled by a

⁷³⁵ “Crown Crafts, Inc. to Catalog Products, Inc.” Deed Book 335 Page 408, 2001, PCRD.

⁷³⁶ Personal Communication with Bryce Williamson (owner of Stokes Manufacturing) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, February 2023, in person (see PR0794).

⁷³⁷ Eaker, *Heritage of Person County, Volume I*, 112-113; Newspaper clippings located at the Person County Museum of History.

⁷³⁸ “Schools” Exhibit, PCMH; *Schools* Binder, PCMH; *Schools*, PCMH; Personal Communication with June and Lu Rogers (Person County residents) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, December 2022, in person (see PR0628); Aerial Photographs, 1993, 2003, 2010, and 2017, via NC SHPO HPO WEB; Eaker, *The Heritage of Person County*, 104).

fence and paved walking trail make up the centerpiece of the park, which also includes a playground and small picnic shelter. As no historic buildings remain at Hurdle Mills Park and Allensville Park, they were not surveyed.

The county's only conversion of a closed school to a park that kept the classroom building is that of Helena High School (PR0300) in Timberlake. The retention of the classroom building, utilized by a number of community groups, may be due to its continued use as a school, and thus its maintenance, until 1999 and the fact that the surrounding community is larger than that of the other schools. The site also retains a separate cafeteria, gymnasium, cannery, and agriculture building, though the most heavily used part of the campus is the walking path that encircles a baseball field at the rear of the school complex.

The utilization of publicly owned land to create recreational centers was not limited to rural areas. After high school students were moved to Person High School in 1966, Roxboro High School (PR0747) became an elementary and middle school before closing in 1980 and being converted to the Huck Sansbury Recreational Complex. In 1981, the main classroom building was demolished but the 1950 gymnasium and a baseball field near the rear of the complex remain in use for recreation and the 1955 agriculture building and 1957 cafeteria were renovated as offices for various county departments. New tennis courts, picnic shelter, playground, and parking have been installed on the site of the 1925 classroom building.

Additional parks were built in Person County by the Roxboro Optimist Club, which constructed a baseball stadium just west of downtown Roxboro in 1972, and the Rotary Club of Roxboro, whose Centennial Park, a 281-acre site in southeastern Person County overlooking the Flat River, opened in 2026.⁷³⁹

Mayo Lake Reservoir

One of the most dramatic changes to the Person County landscape in the late twentieth century was the construction of Mayo Lake Reservoir. In 1973, Carolina Power & Light began exploring areas along Mayo Creek in northeastern Person County for the location of a coal-burning hydroelectric power plant, along with an associated earthen dam and reservoir. After public hearings were held in 1977, the site for the dam and power plant was selected. The Person County government supported the project in anticipation of the substantial increase it would provide to the county's tax base. (The Hyco Lake Power Plant, put into operation in 1966, comprised forty-seven percent of

⁷³⁹ George Willoughby, "Naming Rights Granted for New Park," *The [Roxboro] Courier-Times*, April 11, 2025, https://www.personcountylife.com/news/naming-rights-granted-for-new-park/article_2eff6de8-fd8d-11ee-914a-bf6e2ff19b35.html.

the county's tax base by the late 1970s.)⁷⁴⁰ The plans also received the endorsement of the North Carolina Utilities Commission, which agreed the plant was needed to meet growing energy demands in the region and felt that there were "no economically important areas" that would be impacted by the proposed site."⁷⁴¹ This analysis was made despite the fact that the facility was estimated to displace twenty-three families and flood seven hundred acres of active agricultural land, displace a variety of wildlife, and alter the ecosystem of about five thousand acres.⁷⁴²

The Sappony of High Plains vocally opposed the plant location, which would result in the geographic fracturing of the Sappony community.⁷⁴³ The Durham *Herald-Sun* reported that "the only opposition from Person County residents has been a pocket of Indians who object to the manmade lake separating them from the church many of them attend. Once the reservoir is completed, the distance to and from the church would be 32 miles."⁷⁴⁴ Much like the objections of African Americans to the destruction of their neighborhoods by urban renewal and highway construction in mid- to late twentieth-century America, the concerns of the High Plains Sappony were largely ignored, and construction proceeded as planned, without concessions.

As the project progressed and additional Person County residents began to feel the effects of the construction, opposition extended beyond the Sappony community. Throughout 1977, Carolina Power & Light had been acquiring the necessary land to complete the plant and construct the necessary cooling reservoir, anticipated to be 2,800 acres. "Opposition to the project had been voiced because some property owners don't want to sell their land to CP&L, while others claim that offers to purchase have been too low. CP&L have been accused by some of the landowners of using threats or intimidation during land purchase negotiations," reported *The Durham Sun*. "Condemnation proceedings have been started for the company to acquire some of the remaining property [needed for the project]."⁷⁴⁵

Following complaints from landowners, the US Army Corps of Engineers (US ACE) directed Carolina Power & Light (CP&L) to complete the required environmental

⁷⁴⁰ "Person Sees Tax Base Rise," *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, March 4, 1977, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁴¹ Paul Horvitz, "NC Utilities Staff Backs CP&L Plant," *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, February 18, 1977, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁴² Carol S. Smith, "CP&L Plant Fight Ends in Person," *The Durham Sun*, September 28, 1978, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁴³ John Coit, "Person Plant Site Spawn Protest," *The [Raleigh] News and Observer*, September 12, 1973, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁴⁴ "Power Firm Said Cause of Boom," *The Durham Sun*, March 4, 1977, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁴⁵ "Of Proposed Reservoir, Landowners Get Project Review," *The Durham Sun*, December 24, 1977, Newspapers.com.

impact studies. CP&L officials warned “the technical reviews will not upset construction plans or delay the completion target date as some landowners had hoped.”⁷⁴⁶ However, the US ACE found deficiencies in compliance with discharge that would impact groundwater safety, stream water quality, and aquatic wildlife safety, as well as significant impacts on other wildlife that would be displaced by the construction of the reservoir. The company was required to set aside 2,800 acres for wildlife management areas and to provide improved treatment of discharge water, after which the permit for the plant, dam, and reservoir were granted in September 1978.⁷⁴⁷ The reservoir was filled and the plant began operations in 1983.

Since the conditions of the permit required that the shoreline be maintained in a natural and undisturbed state, there is far less waterfront development on Mayo Lake than on Hyco Lake in the northwest part of the county. One of the primary facilities managed by Person County Parks and Recreation (now Recreation, Arts & Parks), is Mayo Lake Reservoir. In 2000, Mayo Park (PR0349) was constructed on a 120-acre tract of land at the west end of Neals Store Road, within the flood plain of the lake. The park, on land now owned by Duke Power but operated by Recreation, Arts & Parks, includes walking trails, a boat launch, playgrounds, concrete-block bathroom buildings, frame picnic shelters, camper and tent camping sites, log-veneered cabins and ranger stations, an amphitheater, and an Environmental Education Center, much of which is visible on 2003 aerial photographs of the property. In keeping with the regulations set by the US ACE, the shoreline is maintained in a natural and undisturbed state with mature trees throughout and paved areas are only at the main road, boat launch, and as parking for the Education Center.⁷⁴⁸

Late Twentieth-Century Residential Revivals and Local Builders

Notable late twentieth-century residences include Rustic Revival-style houses in the northern and northwestern parts of the county, especially near Hyco Lake, and a number of stone houses constructed by local stone masons. Collectively, these buildings illustrate a continued preference for traditional forms and materials that celebrate the heritage and geology of the county. Modular homes were also frequently installed, particularly in the eastern part of the county.

Even as traditional log construction remained in use well into the twentieth century, the Rustic Revival style emerged in the 1930s as a stylistic choice, rather than a

⁷⁴⁶ “Of Proposed Reservoir, Landowners Get Project Review.”

⁷⁴⁷ Carol S. Smith, “CP&L Hearing is June 6,” *The Durham Sun*, May 11, 1978, Newspapers.com; Smith, “CP&L Plant Fight Ends in Person.”

⁷⁴⁸ Person County, North Carolina, “Recreation, Arts, & Parks”; Aerial Photographs, 2003, via NC SHPO HPO WEB.

limitation of available materials and finances. Common for Depression-era construction in the Nation's parks, the style came to connote recreation and conservation. In the 1980s a series of log houses were constructed along Ole Cabin Road (PR0543), extending along the east bank of one of the south forks of Hyco Lake, capitalizing on the 1960s creation of the Hyco Lake, which made the area attractive to seasonal and year-round residents. After purchasing a tract of former farmland, Albert Broach moved one log house to the area, then constructed at least seven additional log houses. The houses vary greatly in form and include both one- and two-story buildings that incorporate log for at least part of the structure and light frame construction for the remainder. Most feature exposed logs and stone chimneys constructed of salvaged wood and stone.⁷⁴⁹ Similar log houses were erected throughout the northwest part of the county in the 1980s and 1990s, some adapted from earlier log buildings while others were constructed with salvaged logs.

Some mid- to late twentieth-century homebuilders worked in stone. The one-story, side-gabled Willie Nathan and Margaret Seamster House (PR0544) on Seamster Road northwest of Roxboro was built ca. 1963 of solid stone construction, presumably executed by Seamster himself, who was a stonemason.⁷⁵⁰ Of special note are the stone table and chairs located northwest of the house. Seamster's son, Willie Joe Seamster, was a brick mason and about 1961, he constructed a Modernist-style Ranch house (PR0545) southwest of his father's house.⁷⁵¹ The brick building is similar to other mid-twentieth-century Ranch houses in the county with a low-sloped, front-gabled roof, deep overhangs supported by purlins, and an engaged carport. The Seamsters likely constructed additional houses throughout the county, though others were not identified during the survey project.

Another local stonemason was Cleve Wagstaff, interest in stone masonry was fueled by an appreciation for stone structures his father had built. Wagstaff constructed his own house, the 1972 Cleve and Nancy Wagstaff House (PR0562) on Wagstaff Carver Road, utilizing stone from his family farm. It is a traditional one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled house with Colonial Revival-style details including multi-light double-hung windows and paired gables on the façade. One-story, side-gabled wings (one frame and one stone) flank the center block. In 2004, Wagstaff constructed a two-story, side-gabled, stone house for his daughter, located just 800 feet west of his own home. The

⁷⁴⁹ Personal Communication with Pamela Copeland (Person County resident) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, November 2022, in person (see PR0543).

⁷⁵⁰ Obituary of Willie Nathan Seamster, *The Durham Sun*, September 26, 1989, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁵¹ Obituary of Willie Joe Seamster, September 11, 2022, Brooks and White Funeral Home, <https://www.brooksandwhite.com/obituaries/Willie-Joe-Seamster?obId=25868039>.

symmetrical house features a cut-stone exterior and stone keystones above the windows. In total Wagstaff has erected hundreds of buildings throughout the region and has done much of the stonework for Duke University including the outdoor tennis stadium and a stair tower addition to Cameron Indoor Stadium.⁷⁵² With the exceptions of his daughter's house and another house on Wagstaff Carver Road, his additional work in Person County, like Willie Joe Seamster's, has not been verified.

In contrast to local craftsmen who used modern methods in their work with local materials, carpenter John Michael Wesley instead chose to adopt nineteenth-century construction methods. The design and construction of the one-and-a-half-story frame house he built for himself on Henderson Farm Road in 1979 (PR0497) are similar to Georgian/Federal-style homes constructed in the northern Piedmont about 1800, including the Holeman House (PR0063) and John Rogers House (PR0120) in Person County; the Wright-Sutherland House (VN0036) in Vance County; and several houses documented in Warren County.⁷⁵³ Typical of early nineteenth-century buildings, Wesley's house has a steeply-pitched side-gabled roof; narrow gabled dormers on the façade, each with a six-over-six window; flush eaves in the gable ends; modillioned cornices; a full-width, shed-roofed porch and flush-board sheathing at the entrance bay; and nine-over-nine wood-sash windows that are set higher on the façade to accommodate interior wainscots.

⁷⁵² "Roxboro Man Makes Career of Chipping Stone"; "Duke Stone: From Quarry to Campus," *Duke Today*, June 18, 2018, <https://today.duke.edu/2018/06/duke-stone-quarry-campus>.

⁷⁵³ Personal Communication with Ray Paul and James Pentecost (Person County residents) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, December 2022, in person at Person County Museum of History.

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APPENDIX A: STUDY LIST PROPERTIES

The following list includes all properties presented to and approved by the National Register Advisory Committee for placement on the North Carolina Study List. The table includes identification numbers as well as the criterion under which the property appears eligible for the national Register of Historic Places.

SS#	Name	Areas of Significance
PR0006	Bowes-Street House	Architecture
PR0036	Robert L. Hester Farm	Agriculture
PR0102	Moore's Mill Site	Archaeology
PR0290	Truss Bridge No. 35	Engineering/Transportation
PR0291	Ca-Vel Executive Mill Village Historic District	Community Planning/Industry/Social History
PR0297	Roxboro National Guard Armory	Architecture/Military History
PR0301	Central Carolina Farmers Exchange	Agriculture
PR0310	Roxboro Municipal Building	Architecture/Government
PR0312	Home Savings and Loan Association	Architecture
PR0326	North Roxboro Residential Historic District	Architecture/Community Planning
PR0327	South Roxboro Residential Historic District	Architecture/Community Planning
PR0328	Reamstown Historic District	Architecture/Community Planning
PR0364	Bernia D. and Lillie B. Huff Farm	Agriculture
PR0379	Oakley House and Farm	Architecture/Agriculture
PR0395	Tirzah Fire Tower	Conservation/Engineering
PR0399	Sol O'Briant School	Education/African American Heritage
PR0433	Oby's Grove Church	Architecture/African American Heritage
PR0433	Bethel Hill School	Architecture/Education
PR0446	Claude T. and Addie Jones Hall House and Farm	Architecture/Agriculture/Association with Claude Hall
PR0456	Charlie and Artelia Brown Norris Farm	Agriculture
PR0458	Julius Monroe and Elizabeth Wright Jones Farm	Agriculture

PR0464	Hesters Grove Baptist Church	Architecture/African American Heritage
PR0467	Baynes Store	Commerce/Social History
PR0472	Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church	Architecture
PR0483	Roxboro Sewage Treatment Plant	Architecture/Engineering
PR0485	Roxboro Water Works	Architecture/Engineering
PR0487	Allensville United Methodist Church	Architecture
PR0501	Battle Axe Lodge #120	Social History/African American Heritage
PR0502	North End Elementary School	Architecture/Education/African American Heritage
PR0518	Person County Home	Social History
PR0524	John D. and Cornelia M. Winstead House	Architecture
PR0537	Barnett's Mill Site	Archaeology
PR0549	Woodland Elementary School	Architecture/Education/African American Heritage
PR0551	Hester-Wagstaff Farm Rural Historic District	Architecture/Agriculture
PR0573	Henry and Jean Newell House	Architecture
PR0582	Bushy Fork Milling Company	Industry
PR0599	J. B. Holeman Store	Architecture/Commerce
PR0605	Hurdle Mills Historic District	Architecture/Commerce/Settlement
PR0620	Oak Lane Elementary School	Architecture/Education/African American Heritage
PR0626	James Elijah and Ora O. Whitfield Farm	Agriculture
PR0628	Whispering Pines Swimming Pool	Recreation/Social History
PR0629	George Preston and Virginia Jones Allen Farm	Agriculture
PR0630	Ernest Edgar and Sarah Lora Long Moore Farm	Agriculture
PR0635	James Arthur Whitfield Farm	Agriculture
PR0637	Union Grove Baptist School	Architecture/Education/Social History/African American Heritage
PR0650	Ca-Vel Mill Village Historic District	Community Planning/Industry/Social History

PR0658	Longhurst Mill Village Historic District	Community Planning/Industry/Social History
PR0677	D. M. Cash Store	Architecture/Commerce
PR0682	Roxboro Cotton Mill Village Historic District	Architecture/Community Planning/Industry/Social History
PR0689	Walter R. and Annie-Laurie Woody House	Architecture
PR0690	St. Mark's Episcopal Church	Architecture
PR0728	Donovan O. M. and Mary J. Harper House	Architecture
PR0730	Sunset Hills Historic District	Architecture/Community Planning
PR0745	Masonic Temple	Architecture/Social History
PR0768	Harris Gardens	Community Planning/Social History
PR0774	Longhurst Mill	Architecture/Industry
PR0787	Coca Cola Bottling Company	Architecture/Industry
PR0788	Person County Office Building	Architecture/Government
PR0790	Lee Gardens	Community Planning/Social History
PR0792	Green Gardens	Community Planning/Social History
PR0794	Somerset Mill and Mill Village	Architecture/Industry
PR0802	Huff Farm Rural Historic District	Architecture/Agriculture
PR0803	Pearce-Foushee Farm Rural Historic District	Agriculture
PR0827	Bowes-Hester Farm Historic District	Agriculture/Social History
PR0832	United States Post Office	Architecture/Community Planning