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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

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This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of Granville County, North Carolina

B. Associated Historic Contexts

The Plantation Era in Granville County, 1746-1865.
Bright Leaf Tobacco and Rural Granville County, 1866-1937.
Bright Leaf Tobacco and the Ascendancy of Oxford, 1866-1937.

C. Geographical Data

Boundaries of Granville County, North Carolina

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

William S. Price, Jr. — 1-29-88

Signature of certifying official — Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Amy Schlagel — 4/20/88

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register — Date

OUTLINE OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

1. THE PLANTATION ERA IN GRANVILLE COUNTY, 1746-1865

2. BRIGHT LEAF TOBACCO AND RURAL GRANVILLE COUNTY, 1866-1937

3. BRIGHT LEAF TOBACCO AND THE ASCENDANCY OF OXFORD, 1866-1937

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1. THE PLANTATION ERA IN GRANVILLE COUNTY, 1746-1865

Gentle hills of sandy yellow loam and sticky red clay roll westward across the long rectangle of present day Granville County. Watered by placid streams well suited to agriculture, graced with a moderate climate and home to extensive forests, this land was a natural lure to settlers. With the conclusion of the Tuscarora War in 1714, and the taming of the frontier that was North Carolina's northern Piedmont in the next quarter century, its potential could be realized and it began to draw colonists like a magnet. [1]

By 1746 the land was settled extensively enough to merit its formation into a county. Named for the Lord Proprietor of the Granville District, of which it was a part, the new county initially stretched from Edgecombe County on the east to, in theory at least, the Mississippi River and beyond. Its population rapidly expanding, the county's western frontier was broken off in 1752 into Orange County. Twelve years later its eastern half was claimed for yet another county. By 1786, after a further small adjustment, the county's basic boundaries were set for the next 95 years. Not until 1881 was a major boundary change made again, with the division of its northeastern arm into Vance County.

Present day Granville County rests in North Carolina's northern Piedmont. It is situated almost halfway between the Blue Ridge mountains of western North Carolina and the coast approximately 200 miles to its east. Twenty miles south of its border sits Raleigh, the state capitol.

The location of Granville County made it particularly accessible to migration from Virginia. Ethnically, its early settlers were almost exclusively British, most of English origins. Some were wealthy before emigrating to the county, buying large tracts of land from the start. Many others, however, entered as and remained small planters and yeoman farmers. The appearance of these early settlers' houses and farms - the man-made structures and fields they cloaked themselves in on the edge of settlement - can only be guessed at, for little physical evidence of their presence has survived to the present.

Slavery, a defining feature of the plantation era, was present early in Granville County's history. It would increase in importance in the nineteenth century with the production of tobacco, the other major defining feature of the era. Of approximately 3,200 Granville County residents in 1754 (a rise of 1,200 from only five years before), 25 percent were slaves. Of 1,251 white male taxables of arms bearing age (18) in 1782, 505 - 40 percent of their numbers - were slaveholders, owning a total of 3,508 slaves. While this translated into an average of seven slaves per owner, 110 owners had only one slave and 294 had between 2 and 9 slaves. Only 59 men had between 10 and 19 slaves, and but 42 held over 20. Thus most of the white men in Granville County were not slaveholders, and those that were had, for the most part, relatively few slaves.

In 1782 most white men did, however, own land. A small number owned large estates, an indication of the early beginnings of a planter class. With an average holding of 596 acres in 1782, 819 (or 65 percent) of the 1,251 white male taxables were landowners. Average acreage did not represent the reality of a very uneven distribution of wealth, however, a trend that would continue in Granville County until after the Civil War. In 1782, 548 men owned between 100 and 499 acres, with 35 men owning less than 100 acres. In contrast, 149 individuals had between 500 and 999 acres and 87 over 1000 acres.

Virtually all of the county's residents were farmers during the plantation era, both in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, even if they supplemented farming with other activities. The impression of visitors in the 1780s was that the county had a remarkably diverse agriculture. Indeed, the primary goal of simple farmers and planters, even into the nineteenth

century, was to have farms meet basic subsistence needs first, then to provide additional income from cash crops. Plantation era county farmers could boast large crops of grains, vegetables, fruits and corn, along with substantial herds of livestock.

It is less clear how extensive cash crop production was during the eighteenth century. The record of Granville County's agricultural contributions in the Revolutionary War indicates that farmers could easily produce a surplus. In the Piedmont backcountry, the problem of producing products for market was largely one of transportation rather than fertility of the land. Early on county residents had kept large herds of cattle, horses, hogs and sheep, and these were easily transported to primary markets in Petersburg, Virginia and Halifax, North Carolina. The cash crop tobacco, however, was more difficult to transport until into the nineteenth century and therefore its production was limited.

The houses of Granville County's eighteenth century planters and yeoman farmers have almost all disappeared. The few survivors, neatly finished and relatively substantial Georgian style dwellings, suggest the growth of the plantation economy that would come into full bloom, along with the tobacco leaf, in the nineteenth century. The smaller houses of the more modest farmers are unfortunately gone but, as the statistics of slave and landownership suggest, they must have once dotted the rolling landscape in large numbers.

Although Granville County was not immune to the state's problems and post-Revolution, Rip Van Winkle image, particularly in the area of transportation, it continued into the early nineteenth century as it had during colonial times - a prosperous Virginia backcountry with an established planter class. Agriculture remained the cornerstone of its economy. But while during the Revolutionary years the county°s reputation was based on the capacity of its farmers to produce an abundant and broad array of crops, in the early nineteenth century the county's reputation increasingly came to be for the production of tobacco. Granville County became, with the other border counties to its east and west and to its north in Virginia, part of the "tobacco belt".

The focus on the "Sovereigne Herbe" as a staple crop had a

profound impact on the character of nineteenth century, plantation era, Granville County. First, its economic orientation was kept to the north, towards the major tobacco markets in Danville, Petersburg, Norfolk and Richmond, thus keeping the area within the orbit of Virginia culture. Second, Granville County and its neighbors in the tobacco belt relied much more than most other North Carolina counties on slave labor and a plantation economy. On the average, less than a third of the state's population was slave, but in Granville and the other tobacco belt counties slaves made up closer to half the total population.

Investment in the slave labor upon which the plantation economy depended seems, in fact, to have accelerated during the early national years. While in 1790 there were 4,163 slaves in the county, by 1810 there were 7,746. This represented a substantial increase - from 40 to almost 50 percent - in the proportion of slaves to whites in Granville, giving the county one of the three largest slave populations (in total numbers) in the state, a fact which would still be true in 1860.

There also continued to be a rapid growth in the white population during these years. Between 1790 and 1830 the number of white people increased from 6,504 to 9,430; then in the thirty years following it increased by less than two thousand to 11,187. After 1830, the population of the county as a whole remained relatively stable, declining from 19,355 to 18,817 in 1840 - reflecting a statewide drop - before rising again by the time of the 1850 census to 21,249 and then to 23,396 in 1860. Thus although the early national years may have been slow for economic development in the state, in Granville County these were years in which population increased substantially, particularly the black population.

Figures on tobacco production are more obscure than those of the slave and free population. It is difficult to say with much precision what the production of tobacco was until 1840, when the Federal census reported that Granville County produced 3,919,822 pounds of tobacco, more by far than any other county in the state. But it is safe to assume that cultivation of tobacco was on the rise between 1790 and 1840. As early as 1831 a legislative report noted that only 21 counties had staple crops, 15 in cotton and 6 in tobacco, Granville County being among the latter. The increase in the number of slaves suggests that

planters were reasonably assured of a return on their investment. Probably between 1800 and 1810 - if the proportionate increase in the number of slaves is any indication of expendable income - tobacco culture began to be quite a profitable enterprise.

The growth of tobacco production, and accompanying development of what was to be a wealthy planter class, is reflected in the fine transitional Georgian/Federal and Federal style dwellings that still stand in the county from the first third of the nineteenth century. The smaller numbers of modest dwellings are no less representative of plantation era life than their more ornate contemporaries, however, reflecting the fact that many of the county's farmers, even with the increase in tobacco production, remained individuals of modest means.

Granville County's increasing population and agricultural prosperity was reflected in the expansion of Oxford. Since 1764, when it was designated the seat of the county court, Oxford had remained more a place than a town, bustling with trade, conversation, and other itinerant business only during the weeks when the court was in session. Not until 1811 did the state assembly authorize the county to buy fifty acres around the courthouse to make way for a town. Then in 1812 the first lots were sold at public auction, and by 1816 Oxford had developed sufficiently to justify its incorporation. The Oxford Male and Female Academies, also chartered in 1811, were in full operation by 1830. And in 1830 the town could boast its first newspaper, the Oxford Examiner, as well as coach service from Oxford to Warrenton and beyond. Also present were several taverns, a dry goods store, a tailor, a saddle and carriage maker and a tin and sheet iron manufactory. An advertisement for the Union Tavern in the Oxford Examiner of May 29, 1832, aimed at gentlemen from eastern counties, described the town quite favorably: "The village of Oxford, in Granville County, presents inducements, whether of health, comfort or pleasure equal to any in the state. It is decidedly the most beautiful village in North Carolina." The bustle and beauty of the town is reflected in its handful of fine, extant, transitional Georgian/Federal and Federal style dwellings. [2]

While many older patterns of life persisted in Granville County between the last decade of the eighteenth century and the 1830s, subtle yet profound changes had occurred. The county's

population nearly doubled, from 10,982 in 1790 to 19,355 in 1830. During those years tobacco became established as the staple crop and the population of slaves soared from 4,200 to 9,166. Even greater changes were to come with the antebellum years. If Granville County had been relatively isolated as a Virginia backcountry before 1830, the three decades before the Civil War were to increase its contact with the rest of North Carolina and the nation.

Local newspapers brought to the area a steady stream of national, state and local news. They delivered advertisements from merchants as far away as New York and Baltimore; news of agricultural markets in Petersburg, Norfolk, Danville, and Richmond; stories and aphorisms; local news from around the county and surrounding areas; and state and national political news.

Of equal importance in connecting Granville County with the outside world was the Raleigh and Gaston railroad. Chartered by Raleigh businessmen in 1835, the 86 miles of rail connecting Raleigh with Gaston were completed in 1840, passing through Granville County with an official stop at Henderson, a town east of Oxford in present day Vance County. [3]

In addition to the railroads, in the 1850s the state embarked on a program of building plank roads, also known as "farmers' railroads." While these plank roads were abandoned after the 1850s, they were an improvement over the dirt roads. And, when used in conjunction with the railways, they reduced transport time. By around 1850 there was a plank road that passed from the west, through the center of the county into Oxford, before moving north towards Henderson and the railroad connection.

These new means of transportation were most important to the farmers and the planters in Granville County during the antebellum plantation era years in facilitating the marketing of their products. Between 1840 and 1860 the production of most of the county 's marketable crops rose dramatically. For example, while the 1840 census reported that 3,919,822 pounds of tobacco were grown in the county the previous year, the 1860 census reported a harvest of 6,025,574 pounds. There were equally dramatic increases in the production of potatoes and wheat, a fact which may have been due to increased access to markets.

Tobacco, however, was consistently referred to as "our staple." [4]

One result of the improved access to tobacco markets was the establishment of manufacturing businesses which processed the leaf. In the 1840 census, no such businesses were listed, although 39 people and $8,280 were engaged in the manufacture of tobacco. By 1860, though, there were 16 establishments listed, with $31,130 in capital and 136 employees. Few of these non-residential properties remain from the plantation era; the few survivors tend to date from the two decades preceeding the Civil War. Though not a representative group, they are indicative of the agricultural way of life of the time, particularly the immense surviving grist mills.

The influence of tobacco production on the general agricultural practices during the antebellum years seems to have been minimal. Farmers and planters alike had to meet basic home needs, since consumer markets were poorly developed. Thus in Granville County a great variety of fruits, grains and vegetables continued to be grown much as they had been in the 1780s. County farmers also continued to keep among the five or six most valuable livestock herds in the state.

But tobacco did tend to make farming an enterprise judged in terms of cash values and money crops. In 1850, for example, the cash value of all the farms in the county was $1,406,027. By 1860 it was $3,457,365. Expenditures for machine implements also increased in those 10 years, from $76,696 to $127,072. And while the number of unimproved acres remained steady at about 240,000, the number of improved acres increased from 173,332 to 197,489. In all these measures, Granville County compared very favorably with the major agricultural counties in North Carolina.

The most dramatic influence of tobacco in the economy continued to be what it had been in 1810 - that it required intensive labor. Just as Granville County remained the leading tobacco producer in North Carolina through most of the antebellum period, so too did the county lead the state in the number of slaves. In 1860, there were 1,006 slaveholders (second in the state) and 11,086 slaves (first in the state). Only three families had between 100 and 199 slaves, but 372 families had between 20 and 99. In contrast, their were 122 families with only one slave and another 729 with between 2 and 19 slaves. This

relatively high number of families with heavy investment in this peculiar and repugnant form of personal property made the average holding 11, well above the county's median holding of just under 7 slaves. The value of all personal property in 1860 was an astounding $11,400,710.

In contrast, the total value of all the real property (land) in 1860 was only $4,093,195, making Granville County the sixth in total aggregate wealth when compared to other North Carolina counties. The county did have 13 of only 98 farms across the state comprising more than 1,000 acres, but most of the total 1,348 farms were quite modest in size. Over half of these farms - 690 to be exact - had less than 100 acres and somewhat over 40 percent had between 100 and 500 acres. All told the average farm size in the county was 327.3 acres; but once again this is considerably more than the county's median of less than 100 acres.

In brief, it seems that with the coming of the nineteenth century there was some democratization of property ownership in the county, since both the number of farmers and the number of small farms increased while the number of extremely large holdings declined. But Granville County had, much like it did in 1790, many more farmers with less than 100 acres and few slaves than it did large planters with more than 500 acres and more than 20 slaves. The plantation economy had created in Granville County a significant if not numerically large class of people with substantial wealth in land and slaves.

The many well-preserved and ornately finished Greek Revival style residences that still stand in the county from the antebellum years of the plantation era are striking evidence of the substantial wealth of the planter class. Their smaller contemporaries, some also finely finished, suggest that the wealth from slaves and tobacco touched even the more modest farmers. Taken as a whole, the surviving dwellings of the period provide eloquent testimony to the wealth of Granville County and its white residents during the antebellum years.

If separated to some extent by wealth, Granville County farmers and planters were apparently united in spiritual affairs. During the Colonial period the county's congregations included Anglicans, Baptists and Presbyterians. By the time of the 1850 Federal census, however, the "dissenters" had become supreme.

Twenty-six churches were reported in the county in 1850 and 54 in 1860, few of them Anglican or Episcopal. Although Baptists remained, as they had been in the 1760s, very well represented, the Methodists had made major inroads by the end of the plantation era. In the 1850 census, 9 of the churches were reported to be Methodist, 7 Baptist, 4 Presbyterian, 4 Episcopal, and 2 Christian. By 1860 the number of Methodist churches nearly doubled, to 17. This increase in the number of religious communities outstripped the simple increase in the county's population, illustrating the growing influence of the Protestant denominations. The predominance of the Baptists and Methodist is reflected in the few surviving antebellum churches, all of which served one or the other denomination.

While Granville County has remained overwhelmingly rural through most of its history, the increasing commercialization of the agricultural economy during the antebellum years began to encourage the growth of towns. Henderson in present day Vance County, because of its connection on the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, became an important local market for tobacco early in the 1840s. While less prominent as a marketing center, Oxford's significance rested not so much in its size as in what it came to be.

As Dr. Theodore B. Kingsbury recalled of Oxford in the 1840s and 1850s: "I do not think of its size it has any rival in North Carolina as to its general culture... I feel warranted in saying that there were more men of good education, literary reading and fair abilities than in any other community in the state not counting any more heads." Of course first and foremost , Oxford was the place of the county court. A historic event was the completion of an elegant courthouse in August, 1840. From the earliest days of Granville's history the presence of lawyers such as John Penn, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Leonard Henderson, who went on to become Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, gave the county a reputation for a strong bar. The new courthouse gave subsequent generations of local lawyers an appropriately dignified forum. [5]

Oxford was also the residence of other distinguished professionals. Dr. O.F. Manson, who was recognized as one of the most skillful physicians in the state, lived in Oxford from 1840 to 1860. Another physician, Dr. Herndon, established a county

medical society in 1850. Oxford's reputation among planters in the eastern counties for its particularly healthful climate, in addition to business generated by local schools and mineral springs, contributed to the medical practices of these physicians. [6]

Oxford also earned a reputation as a seat of learning. This began in 1811 with the chartering of the Oxford Male Academy and the Oxford Female Academy, both of which educated some of the state's most notable citizens. By 1840 there were 83 students at the two academies; by 1850 there were five academies, 6 teachers and 113 students. Then in 1851 Oxford Female College was incorporated, followed in 1855 by Horner Military School. Although its life would be a short one, in 1857 St. John's College was chartered, among the first such institutions sponsored by the Masons. The antebellum houses still standing in Oxford hint at the growing activity of the town. Little different in size or style than their rural plantation contemporaries, they also indicate the then still intimate connection between rural Granville County and its major, if tiny, community. [7]

In sum, on the eve of the Civil War Granville County was one of North Carolina°s most distinguished counties. On its plantations and farms it had some of the state's best agriculturalists, consistently growing large crops of tobacco with the help of a large slave population. And in Oxford the county had a remarkably sophisticated town with an eminent professional community and several excellent schools. It awaited the end of slavery, and the concomitant growth of tenant farming and bright leaf tobacco, however, for its complete entry into the complexities of the modern world.

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Since the 1780s a Great Awakening had been one source for a common culture between Granvillians and other Americans. Throught the 1830s, the Great Awakening transformed spiritual lives and created a whole new social life centered on the church community. Traveling ministers such as Deveraux Jarrat, Francis Asbury, and James McGready visited the county and helped to build church memberships. Among the Presbyterians, James McGready created great excitement for the Word in 1788 and 1789 as he made his way through the Piedmont border country in North Carolina and Virginia; crowds of people followed him from place to place, leaving behind concerns of the world for those of the spirit. The revival at the Grassy Creek Baptist Church, in 1786 and 1787, was the greatest "in extent, power, and influence" which the church had ever experienced. [Johnson, Ante-bellum North Carolina, pp. 334, 374,378,379,385,388.]

By the time of the 1850 Federal census, 26 churches were reported in the county and, in 1860, 54 churches. Although Baptists continued to be very well represented in the county, as they had been since the 1760s, the Methodists made the most impressive gains. In the 1850 census 9 of the county's 26 churches were reported to be Methodist, 7 Baptist, 4 Presbyterian, 4 Episcopal, and 2 Christian. By 1860 the number of Methodist churches nearly doubled, to 17. This increase in the number of religious communities outstripped the simple increase in the county's population, illustrating the growing influence of the churches in community life. [The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850, p. 326; Statistics of the United States, p. 437.]

These new associations of church people influenced the shaping of community values. In 1804 there were at least 17 taverns in the county--usually at major crossroads like Goshen, Abrams Plains, Oxford, Sassafras Fork--where the men could retire to socialize and gossip. Horse breeding and racing were also prime passions. In 1830, for example, John S. Eaton offered for private sale "a beautiful and highly finished Race Horse" named Van Tromp and the local newspaper informed its readers about the Oxford Spring Races, as well as those at Nottaway, Warrenton, and Lynchburg. [A note on the number of ordinaries in the county is found in the Hays Collection, Vol. 34, p. 71; Oxford Examiner, December 12, 1832 and May 17, 1832.]

But the churches did their best to curb some of these heathen practices. In 1830, for example, the Granville chapter of the American Bible Society (founded in New York in 1816) resolved to raise $2,000 to purchase Bibles for the poor. More important and emotional was the crusade for temperance. In 1830 the Oxford Examiner announced area "Temperance Conventions" while it published articles with titles such as "The Drunkard's Tree" and "The Influence of the Bottle." These articles tried to convince people that alcohol was "a murderer and a destroyer." The county's first newspaper also agreed with efforts by the Society for the Observation of the Sabbath that delivery of the mails on Sundays should be stopped. [Johnson, Ante-bellum North Carolina, pp. 416-417; Oxford Examiner, May 29, 1830 and December 4, 1830; Oxford Mercury and Citizen of Granville, Aug. 12, 1841.]

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Although people did not maintain a constant state of spiritual excitation, the revivals did have a profound effect on individuals and community life. For many people, men as well as women, black as well as white, the message of grace and salvation taught by evangelical preachers created a sense of individual worth which had powerful democratic implications in a deferential, aristocratic society. This message at times even cut across class and racial lines which often divided the black and white communities in the county.

2. BRIGHT LEAF TOBACCO AND RURAL GRANVILLE COUNTY, 1866-1937

Stripped of the slave labor system that was the foundation of its plantation way of life, Granville County was transformed after the Civil War by the growth of a single crop - bright leaf tobacco. The tobacco farmsteads and tenant houses built in the countryside during the years between the Civil War and World War II contrast sharply with the many stylish plantation era residences built in both town and country prior to the War. They stand as simple, largely functional reminders of an agriculture landscape and period that produced perhaps the finest bright leaf tobacco in the world. They also testify to the physical changes the bright leaf brought to the countryside.

As it did throughout the South, the ending of the Civil War began a period of great adjustment in Granville County. For the county's planters, it meant the loss of some $11,000,000 in "personal property" and uncertainty about the future of the agricultural economy. It was the economic disruptions brought about by the Civil War that had the most immediate effects on the day to day lives of farmers, planters and freedmen, for there was apparently little in the way of physical damage to the county as a result of the War. The death of a plantation economy based on slave labor and the increasing pressures to make a profit on land and labor caused major strains. As the Oxford Free Lance of May 3, 1878, explained, "The old fashioned plant bed must be abandoned as a relic of the backwoods, where labor was had for food and clothing, and when wood and timber were incumbrances and not objects of value." [8]

As in so many other counties, in Granville County the solution to these economic and political circumstances was more and smaller farms, increasingly worked by hired labor, renters and sharecroppers. In 1860 there were 1,348 farms in the county averaging 327.3 acres each, virtually all operated by owners. Within thirty years, despite the loss of considerable territory to Vance, Franklin, and Durham counties, there were 2,488 farms, each averaging only 119 acres.

In 1890 barely half of these 2,488 farms were cultivated by their owners; the rest were rented out. Only the largest farms in the county still tended to be operated by their owners. Of the 11 farms over 1,000 acres in 1890, 9 were cultivated by owners. Of the 994 farms between 100 and 500 acres, there was a

similar although less pronounced pattern of owner operation, with 709 operated by owners and the rest rented. In contrast, of the 2498 farms under 100 acres, 1765 were operated by renters. In sum, land and labor were used more intensely than ever before while much of the traditional disparity in wealth between the rich and the poor continued.

Driving this intensive use of land and labor was the great profitability of bright leaf tobacco as a staple crop. Evolving over a number of years, particularly those immediately following the Civil War, bright leaf tobacco cultivation was widely known in the old tobacco belt region around Granville County by 1877. At the North Carolina Exposition in 1884 it was declared that "Bright Tobacco Showers Gold and Silver Dollars Over Granville, The Banner County." From as far away as England, Dr. Augustus Voelker, the chief chemist for the Royal Agricultural Society in London, declared that "the fancy Bright Granville County Tobacco certainly is one of the finest flavoured, mild Tobaccos I ever smoked." And the 1880 U.S. Census, in a special report on the raising of tobacco in the nation, acclaimed Granville as "the best fine-tobacco county." Indeed, it was generally agreed by the 1880s that Granville County produced the finest bright leaf tobacco in the world. And because it was this bright leaf that was coming increasingly into demand for the burgeoning cigarette industry, the county had a most profitable staple crop. [9]

The process of producing this fancy yellow tobacco was a complicated one, the understanding of which had developed over many years through a chain of fortuitous discoveries. "In brief," as Granville County native Nannie May Tilley succinctly explained in her definitive history of the bright leaf, "the production of Bright Tobacco rests on the cultivation of a siliceous soil and the use of flues." Granville County had both. [10]

Although the discovery of bright leaf tobacco was a great boon to Granville County's commercial classes, it did not help the majority of people in the county who had relied on the bounty of the land, rather than its profitability, to make their livings. Even in the antebellum years, when considerable amounts of tobacco were being grown as a staple, farms still met subsistence needs. But after the Civil War, while it was easier to make money off the land, it was much more difficult to live off of it. As landowners attempted to satisfy their thirsts for

profits, commercial agriculture - focused on producing big money crops - depleted the soil, cut down the size of livestock herds and damaged the balance between farm, fields and woods which had for centuries produced abundant wildlife. The production of subsistence crops declined as farmers spent more and more of their time cultivating tobacco.

In the three census years of 1840, 1850, and 1860, Granville County produced 3,919,822 pounds, 3,420,884 pounds and 6,025,574 pounds of tobacco respectively, making it the most productive tobacco county in the state. In the post-Civil War years Granville County's preeminence continued, with 2,134,228 pounds produced in 1870 (a bad year for the entire state), 4,606,358 pounds in 1880 and 4,170,071 pounds in 1890. More important than the tonnage is the fact that the tobacco grown after the Civil War was the golden leaf, considerably more valuable than the coarse and coarsely cured brown variety that was produced by Granville farmers in the antebellum years.

The production of bright tobacco put more money in farmers' pockets, relieving them in the best of times from the burdens of subsistence farming. Indeed, the number of tradesmen and merchants offering services for cash crops or money increased not only in the town of Oxford but all over the county. Branson's Business Directory of 1896, for example, advertised numerous general and specialty stores, lawyers, physicians and manufactories in Oxford and communities throughout the county. While these businesses showed the availability of new services and goods, they also showed that people were becoming more dependent on a money economy. This dependence made them more vulnerable to changes in market conditions. [11]

It was in the 1890s that the darker side of the commercial economy threw the entire nation - and indeed most of the western world - into a serious economic and then political crisis. Depressed agricultural markets and high freight rates put many farmers and factories into debt or out of business. Granville County did not escape the troubles and its population actually declined from 24,463 in 1890 to 23,363 in 1900.

After this difficult decade, county residents returned to the business of growing and selling tobacco. Indeed, despite the hardships of the 1890s, farmers and merchants still had high hopes for more tobacco profits. Yet more challenges lay ahead.

In the highly competitive, world tobacco market of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries farmers were increasingly dependent on decreasingly dependable profits. As Nannie May Tilley described the situation, "Expansion constituted the only constant factor [in tobacco production]. Amid planting, harvesting, and selling came panics, pests, general agricultural depressions, inexperienced growers, seasonal and unseasonal weather, competition from other types of tobacco, changing demands of manufactures, and other variable factors." [12]

In the 1880s, while Granville County and the old belt enjoyed a virtual monopoly in bright tobacco production, businessmen and farmers were ecstatic at the profits gained from the golden leaf. But these great profits encouraged other farmers to try their hands at bright leaf cultivation too. In the 1890s, though bright leaf culture provided a very few Granville county natives jobs in Canada and elsewhere teaching the finer points of its cultivation, it created tremendous competition for the farmers who stayed at home. With the help of the Tobacco Research Station, built just outside Oxford in 1911, as well as the introduction of chemical fertilizers, tobacco production in the county more than doubled. But farmers could never regain the market advantage they enjoyed for a brief period when flue-curing first came into vogue in the late nineteenth century.

After the depression of the 1890s, for a time farmers were at least able to cope. In 1900, for example, there were still 8 farms of over 1,000 acres in the county and nearly 40 percent of all the farms were owner operated, some 60 percent remaining in the hands of tenants. A sign of some prosperity, the number of farmer-owners in the county had increased from 1,240 in 1900 to 1,373 in 1910. Then between 1911 and 1919 tobacco production and prices were unexpectedly good, allowing many farmers to buy automobiles and furnish their homes with electricity.

But by 1919 the good fortune of Granville County's tobacco farmers had run out. Through the 1920s, although productivity continued to increase, prices plummeted. By 1925 there were only 3 farms with over 1,000 acres remaining, and four years later there was only one. The total number of farmers in the county who owned their land declined - from over 42 percent in 1910 to 35.9 percent in 1930. Although since the 1880s most of the county's farmers had been tenants, their ranks swelled in the

1920s, prompting the Oxford Public Ledger of January 13, 1925, to write that "young men are deserting the farms" and families moving elsewhere to farm. [13]

A disproportionate number of these emigrants were probably blacks. While blacks had constituted a slight majority of Granville County's population since the beginning of the nineteenth century, after 1900 most of the county's residents were white. There were 348 black farmer-owners in 1925, but most blacks were either laborers or tenants, the two occupational groups hardest hit by the low ebbs of commercialized agriculture. The travails of tenancy may have proved incentive for some to leave the land for better opportunities.

The Great Depression of the 1930s accelerated the county's integration into an increasingly industrialized, bureaucratized and interdependent society. While tobacco continued to be cultivated on county farms and sold in the Oxford market on the eve of World War II, the Great Depression marked the beginning of its decline as the bedrock of the county's economy.

The contradictory picture of wealth and poverty is reflected in the properties built during the rule of the bright leaf. Those of the countryside, from the large farmhouses to the smaller and often sorrier tenant dwellings, are for the most part plain and traditional. The properties that survive from the period in Oxford, however - and to a much lesser extent in the few other small towns of the time - are mostly fine and handsome. This latter group of properties reflects where the wealth was going; their rural contemporaries, somewhat sadly, represent the distribution of poverty, even in the very midst of the fields of the bright and golden leaf.

The bright leaf era is brought to a halt for the purposes of National Register nominations at the fifty-years-past date of 1937, though it could easily extend past World War II. As Pete Daniel wrote of traditional tobacco cultivation and its way of life in 1985 in his definitive southern agricultural history, Breaking the Land, The Transformation of Cotton, Tobacco, and Rice Cultures since 1880, "The old culture still had two decades [after World War II] to linger before the modern invasion began in earnest, for it remained relatively stable until the mid-1950s and largely unmechanized through the 1960s." Changes in technology and government agricultural policy during these two

decades finally and belatedly transformed the old tobacco culture. "Prior to these changes tobacco had been handled very carefully," Daniel writes. "Nearly every operation fit into a person's hand, from priming in the fields, to handling, to stringing, to finally tying tobacco into hands for marketing." The advent of loose-leaf marketing in the 1960s ended much traditional field work and led to the replacement on many farms in Granville County and throughout the old belt of the tobacco barn, packhouse and striphouse by metal bulk barns that resemble house trailers. These changes finally led to the physical demise of the bright leaf era farmstead that was the predominant feature of Granville County's landscape from the Civil War through 1937 and into the 1960s. [14]

RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL LIFE IN THE BRIGHT TOBACCO ERA (exerpt from "A History of Granville County," Andrew Carlson, 1987, mss. in SHPO fi

Through the troubled times of the Depression, Granvillians still found solace in the traditional ways. On Sunday mornings people went to church services, much as they had since the eighteenth century. When Jesse Ormand surveyed church membership in the county in 1931, he reported five religious bodies (Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Christian, and Episcopal) and thirty-nine churches with a total membership of 6,049 people. As had been the pattern since the eighteenth century, most of these churches were Baptist. Whether they had been to church in the morning or not, often in the afternoons people swam at a place called "Hoover's Beach" on the Tar River. And of course there were Saturdays in Oxford and the yearly festivals like St. John's Day at the Oxford Orphanage.

[Jesse Marvin Ormand, The Country Church in North Carolina: A Study of the Country Churches in North Carolina in Relation to the Material Progress of of the State (Durham, NC, 1931), pp. 149-151. Ormand's estimate of church membership seems low, which may be the result of his possibly having excluded black churches in his study. The recollection of "Hoover's Beach" was relayed in an interview on December 17, 1987 with Mr. R. Reid Tunstall, Jr., whose father remembered that depression era recreation spot.]

EDUCATION IN THE BRIGHT TOBACCO ERA

Even before the race politics of the 1890s and the suffrage amendment of 1900, white and black Granvillians lived in largely separate worlds. Usually personal relationships between blacks and whites were friendly and warm. But since the Civil War two separate communities--formed around churches and schools and political parties--developed in the county. Partly as a result of this separation, misunderstandings grew about the talents and abilities of individuals, especially those of African descent. After 1900 the separation of the races was sanctioned by laws which segregated most public places, which deprived the black

community of political representation, and which also limited the opportunities blacks had to work in local businesses and factories.

The separate communities of blacks and whites are best illustrated in the field of education, long one of the prides of Granville County. Oxford was probably first called "The Athens of the South" sometime in the 1840s or 1850s. But it was in the sixty years following the Civil War that the phrase became most apposite. By 1890 there were as many as a hundred schools in the county. Whether the students and teachers came from the Horner Military Academy, Oxford College, the Mary Potter School, one of many new public and subscription schools, or the two orphanges, there was an air of excitement and learning in Oxford. Never before had there been so many students and teachers in the county. Never before had so many been able to fulfill aspirations to learn. [Biennial report of the Supt. of Public Instruction 1889/1890 (Raleigh, 1896), pp. 9-10; Wesley F. Veasey, "Interesting History of Education in Granville County," Oxford Public Ledger, Jan.23,1925]

For the children of tenants and small farmers, the most important development was the expansion of the public school system. Although public schools in the county remained in operation through most of the war, finally closing in 1865, when they reopened several years later, it was with a different mandate. In 1866 the State passed laws allowing local districts to levy taxes for the purposes of public education; then the

Constitution of 1868 called for education of both races. By the late 1870s, the new school system was educating 777 white children in 21 schools and another 1174 black children in 24 schools. Of course during this time public schools were small and primitive structures, usually with only one teacher and seldom well equipped with books or other learning materials. Few children attended school for more than three or four months a year and fewer still studied past the seventh grade. Yet the existence of public schools gave many children, white as well as black, an opportunity for at least some education. [Wesley F. Veasey, "Interesting History of Education in Granville County," Oxford Public Ledger, Jan. 23, 1925]

During the 1870s and 1880s two orphanages also became an important part of county life. For the Masons, the pressing question in the years following the war was "What shall be done with St.John's College?" By the early 1870s, the once beautiful college campus lay deserted and in desperate need of repair. Thus, after much discussion, it was decided that "St. John's College be made into an asylum for the protection, training, and education of indigent orphan children." On a cold, bleak day in February of 1873, with leadership from Mr. John Haynes Mills and assistance from Rev. A.D. Cohen and Mrs. A.S. Peace, the newly christened orphanage received its first three children: Robert and Nancy Parish, and Isabelle Robertson. Over the years, the Oxford Orphanage expanded, providing a home and school for

literally hundreds of white children, and a welcome addition to Oxford life. [The Oxford Orphanage Alumni Association, Oxford Orphanage A Pictorial History of the Oxford Orphanage (Oxford, NC, 1973)]

In 1882, not long after the opening of the Oxford Orphanage, the Colored Orphanage of North Carolina (later to be called the Central Orphanage) opened a mile and a half south of Oxford. Supported by the Negro Masons, local philanthropists, as well as black churches across the state, this orphanage grew steadily over the years, adding farm land, buildings, and, of course, children. By far the most important superintendent of the orphanage was the former Congressman from the second district, Dr. Henry Plummer Cheatham, who served there from 1907 until his death in 1935, in those three decades providing an example and a refuge to hundreds of orphaned children. [Kate Fleming Brummitt, The News and Observer, February 7, 1937]

In the years after the war the private academies once again established the special place they had enjoyed in Oxford before the war. Horner's Military School, which had closed during the early years of the war when James Hunter Horner organized a militia company and joined the Confederate Army, opened its doors again in 1863 on Horner's return. Under the direction of the old mentor, the school educated young men from around the state, until in 1874 Mr. Horner moved temporarily to Hillsboro. Then in the spring of 1876 the school reopened in better form than ever, in new buildings and with an expanded faculty that included Rev.

Thomas J. Horner, Rev. Robert H. Marsh, and Prof. John Martin. Several years later, under the leadership of Jerome C. Horner as the principal, the school adopted a program of military training for its nearly one hundred boarding students. And this program continued until 1913, when the school was destroyed by fire. In 1914 it moved to Charlotte, but closed for good six years later. [Francis B. Hays, "Horner School A Historical Sketch," Oxford Public Ledger, June 6 and 9, 1939]

Despite the difficulties of the war, the Oxford Female College remained in operation through the 1860s. In the twelve years between 1868 and 1880, Mrs. Lucy Powell and Mrs. Stradley directed the school, before Dr. Frank P. Hobgood became its president. Between 1850 and 1925, when it closed, the school educated an estimated 5,000 women. The young students all dressed in uniforms of black coat suits, "for the sake of economy and appearance and to prevent rivalry," and studied history, natural sciences, French, German, Latin, English, and mathematics. The Francis Hilliard School, opened by an Episcopalian minister, also won a reputation as a select institution for young ladies. And around the county in Dutchville, Berea, and Sassafras Fork other academies schooled students in the basics of classical education. [Annette Baker, Oxford Public Ledger, Special Issue, May 11, 1979, p. 30; for references to other private schools see Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1884, p. 334; Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1896, p. 300.]

Another of the private academies that opened in this era was the Mary Potter School. Much of this story centered on the remarkable life of Dr. George Clayton Shaw. Born to slave parents in Louisburg, North Carolina in 1863, Shaw's early education was from his mother, who had been taught to read and write by her mistress, Mrs. Ann Fuller. Then as a young boy of only six or seven, Shaw received instruction from Presbyterians who came into the area to teach the freedmen. As Owena Hunter Davis, the historian of Mary Potter School, wrote: "George C. Shaw was inspired to religious educational service and leadership by the combined confidence of the best of southern and northern whites, in the possibilities of the Negro in their midst." In 1886 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and then spent a year at Princeton Theological Seminary before completing a three year degree at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York in 1890. It was here at Auburn that Shaw conceived of the idea of his school. [Owena Hunter Davis, A History of Mary Potter School (Oxford, North Carolina, 1944, p. 1.]

Founded in 1888, the Mary Potter School was destined to become one of the finest private schools for black students in the state of North Carolina. Encouraged by the ladies of the New York Synodical Society of the Northern Presbyterian Church and a two thousand dollar contribution from Mrs. Mary Potter, a woman

from Pennsylvania, Shaw began building his school. In 1889 he opened the Timothy Darling Presbyterian Church and the following year the Mary Potter School. By the time of the school's first commencement exercises, in 1898, there were five teachers. Over the years, contributions from the alumni and the Presbyterian church made possible the addition of five buildings, a gymnasium, two cottages--enough to house over a hundred boarding students at a time. [Vincent Gilreath and Janet Moore, Oxford Public Ledger, Special Issue, May 11, 1979, p. 22.]

During its seventy-nine year history, the Mary Potter School had a tremendous influence in the county. Even though it was a semi-private school which drew about half of its students from outside the county, until the 1930s it was the only high school for blacks in Granville County. It also educated many students who would become the county's physicians and teachers and other professionals. Of 431 students who graduated from Mary Potter's high school by 1930, 165 were teachers and another 19 physicians or dentists. One study done in 1940 showed that 58 of the 126 black teachers in the county were Mary Potter graduates. Among the more influential of these graduates was Mr. G.C. Hawley, who in 1936 opened the first public high school for blacks, at Creedmoor. [Owena Hunter Davis, A History of Mary Potter School, pp. 46-47; interviews with Mr. G. C. Hawley on December 18, 1987 and with Mr. Hubert Gooch, Jr. on December 11, 1987.]

3. BRIGHT LEAF TOBACCO AND THE ASCENDANCY OF OXFORD, 1866-1937

The boom of bright leaf production in Granville County between the Civil War and World War II is reflected, not in the countryside where it was grown, but in the town of Oxford, where it was bought, sold and processed, and where the owners of many of its fields made their homes. The tenancy system of growing the leaf and the industries it supported created a new and wealthy group of people in the county. They included absentee landlords, who had left the family plantations to tenants and sharecroppers, and those who were quick to lend their professional services to a rapidly growing economy, such as warehousemen, processors, bankers, lawyers and a whole supporting cast of professionals. Once a place that planters and farmers passed through to gather supplies or exchange the news, Oxford became the center of the new wealth that revolved around the control of all aspects of the production and sale of flue-cured tobacco; a wealth clearly visible in the many fine dwellings and non-residential properties built within its bounds in the years between the Wars.

Between 1870 and 1890 the profits from tobacco built the most stylish of homes. The streets of Oxford, laden with Romantic and Victorian style homes, bear witness to the wealth and sophistication of the doctors, lawyers, businessmen and landowners that made up the burgeoning community. Following a brief lull prompted by the depression of the 1890s, Oxford's population again surged in the first three decades of the twentieth century. The Eclectic style dwellings and other properties built during these years - particularly the fine Colonial Revival, Neo-Classical Revival and bungalow style dwellings - rivaled Oxford's nineteenth century residences and were proof that the riches of tobacco were not yet depleted.

Oxford's charms had not been changed substantially by the Civil War and its aftermath. It continued to be the seat of the county court and government and the area shopping center. After the creation of Vance County in 1881, and the consequent loss of the larger town of Henderson, it was indisputably the county's center of town life. Its private academies continued to educate the children of some of North Carolina's most prosperous citizens. Horner's Military School, which had closed during the War, returned in better form than ever. The Francis Hilliard School, sponsored by the Episcopalians, won a reputation as a

select institution for young ladies, as did the famous Oxford Female Seminary. [15]

But there were also important changes under way. St. John's College reopened in 1872, but it became an orphanage for white children, perhaps deferring to other new colleges being built around the state. Then in the 1880s the Colored Orphan Asylum opened at Oxford, evidence not only of increased state social involvement, but also of black efforts to educate and care for their race. By 1890 there was also a High Classical School run by Rev. W. A. Patillo and three subscription schools for black children. [16]

There were also many new opportunities for business in Oxford in the years following the War. The development of bright tobacco provided North Carolina's businessmen with a product. While before the Civil War Granville County had thrived as a backcountry county servicing Virginia markets, following the War it found itself in the center of North Carolina's tobacco producing region. As the state's transportation network continued to develop, Henderson, Winston, Durham, Reidsville and Oxford became tobacco markets that would challenge Virginia's dominance in the tobacco industry. Ultimately, the development of the tobacco industry - and especially the manufacture of cigarettes and the flue-cured, bright tobacco to fill them - helped propel Oxford and the state into the industrial age.

For Oxford it was the final arrival of the trains that put its businessmen in a position to compete with other communities around and even outside of the state. By the 1870s, before it was excised from the county, Henderson's railroad allowed it to become a major inland tobacco market. Then on August 16, 1881, the first train on the Oxford and Henderson extension arrived; later in 1888 this rail was extended by the Southern Railway into Durham. And on April 18, 1888, the Seaboard Corporation put a rail through from Clarksville, Virginia to Oxford and then, by August 21 of that year, into Durham. Finally in 1903 another short extension from Dickerson was built, giving Oxford access to yet another branch. [17]

The effects of the railroads on Granville County's economy were profound. Prior to the coming of the railroad the county had numerous towns that exist now only in memory or as signs at empty crossroads. The relative importance of some of these

earlier communities is suggested by the names of streets in Oxford on an 1826 map which did, and in some cases still do, bear the names of the towns they lead to. Among the streets at the center of town that bore different names in 1826 are: Grassy Creek, now College; Harrisburg, now Gilliam; Goshen, now McClanahan; and Merrittsville, now Williamsboro. The railroads bypassed these towns and they suffered to the point of extinction. [18]

The major small towns to develop along the tracks in the late 1880s, towns that exist to this day, were Creedmoor and Stem in the south and Stovall (formerly the community of Sassafras Fork) in the north. Each of these towns retains a small number of simply finished, Queen Anne residences. Little evidence of the commercial activity in these towns from the 1880s and 1890s remains. However, a small number of two-story, brick buildings from the early twentieth century still stand.

Ultimately, the railroad was not a guarantee of continued prosperity for the county's small towns. Most of the towns raised along the tracks quickly sank to obscurity. A 1910 soil survey of the county reports that along with Oxford, Creedmoor, Stovall, and Bullock, the county boasted such "small but prosperous towns" as Hester, Providence, Tar River, Lyons, Clay and Bennehan Station. Located on the rail lines, they are all now sleepy crossroads but for Bennehan Station, all trace of which has disappeared. [19]

For Oxford tobacco merchants, of course, railways were like arteries through which the golden leaf was transported around the world in exchange for money. Between 1880 and 1900 at least five large warehouses were built in Oxford, as local and outside businessmen positioned themselves to take advantage of the new bright tobacco industry. The effects of these industries were felt throughout the entire economy, as a large service sector of lawyers, doctors and merchants developed to meet the demands of farmers and merchants with money. There was also work for carpenters and other tradesmen in building substantial residences for Oxford's affluent middle class.

Just between 1870 and 1890 the population of the town increased from 916 to 2,907; and because the boundaries of the town were narrowly defined the population might better be viewed in terms of the township of Oxford, which increased from 2,724 in

1870 to 5,793 in 1890. An article in the January 5, 1885, edition of the Oxford Torchlight, subtitled the "Growth and Development of the Future Metropolis of the Golden Tobacco Belt," captures the excitement and boom of these decades of growth, particularly the boom years of the 1880s:

> It is gratifying to note the progress and development of Oxford during the past year. It has been steady, continuous and of a most substantial character. Our little city has increased in population, wealth and commercial importance and is growing in attractiveness and expanding in size in every direction. Many new streets have been opened, lofty buildings loom up in places where it was thought houses would never be built, and the volume of business has reached such proportions that it gives employment to a constantly increasing number of people....
>
> Oxford has been noted far back for the excellence of its schools, healthfulness and its cultivated society. Now that there is added to the advantages a tobacco market that ranks among the most important in North Carolina...there is a continual influx of people...
>
> Since [1880] a large number of buildings have been erected, and there is not a residence or place of business unoccupied, and many families who are desirous of moving here are unable to do so because of the absence of houses to rent. Our hotels and boarding houses are crowded with permanent guests and we have tenements that are not unlike the swarming hives of a great city...
>
> Besides the above [list of new factories, tobacco prize and warehouses and dwellings], many old houses were thoroughly renovated and made to look like new, and others received additions. Our contractors repeatedly refused work because their hands were already full and more work men could not be procured. A force of masons and carpenters considerably larger than that now employed here is needed. [20]

Much of the boom town described in the Torchlight still stands. Commercial buildings raised during the 1880s still form the hub of the town's commercial district, near the intersections of Main, College, Williamsboro and Hillsboro streets. And large residences built during the 1880s rise on the first three named of those streets within a mile of the courthouse, and on the streets radiating on a grid off of them.

The depression of the 1890s affected Oxford, as well as the rest of Granville County and the nation. The population declined from 2,907 in 1890 to 2,058 in 1900. The population continued to climb, though, after 1900, with 3000 residents in the town in 1910 and 3600 by 1920.

Although the early twentieth century continued to be a prosperous time for Oxford, the difficult times ahead were foreshadowed in the closing of Oxford's private academies, which had long been a source of pride as well as business. Probably the major reason for the decline of public academies was the state's increasing commitment after 1900 to improving all levels of public education. But these general benefits were at Oxford's expense. After a fire in 1904, the Hobgood Female Seminary did not reopen, thus ending its long and distinguished history. Another fire, this one in 1914, prompted Horner's Military School, another distinguished institution, to move to Charlotte. [21]

More devastating to the community, though, was the decline of the tobacco industry. Since the 1880s, not surprisingly, most of the business investment in Granville County and Oxford had gone into the tobacco industry. While initially quite profitable, in the long run the tobacco industry had a stultifying effect on the development of a manufacturing economy. For one thing, relatively few people were actually employed in Oxford in the tobacco industry. In the 1930 census, only 119 men and 74 women are listed as employees of cigar and tobacco factories.

Perhaps more important, the promise of quick profits from tobacco discouraged investment in other industries. Since the late nineteenth century, several manufacturing and commercial enterprises had been established in the town. In 1879, for example, B. H. Cozart began a sash and blind factory. And in the 1880s, no doubt encouraged by the increased need for transportation of tobacco from farms to trains, several buggy factories opened in Oxford. But the invention and mass manufacturing of automobiles made animal powered transportation largely obsolete by the 1920s. And the businesses which then took their places tended to have limited prospects for expansion and employment. The Oxford Buggy Company for example, turned to manufacturing iron bound truck bodies. The Oxford Manufacturing

Company engaged in making automobile license plates. In addition to the transportation enterprises, there were also two or three cotton and knitting mills in town. Nevertheless the scale of these manufacturing enterprises was small. The 1920 census listed only 504 wage earners working in 66 establishments. Ten years later there were more people engaged in non-tobacco related manufacturing, but not many more. Only 57 workers were employed in cotton and knitting mills, 29 in automobile factories and repair shops and 333 in woodworking and the furniture industry. [22]

The end of Granville County's near monopoly on quality bright leaf, dropping tobacco prices and the lack of successful industrial development within Oxford - along with the crushing Great Depression - finally combined to end the prosperity enjoyed by Oxford during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But if Oxford 's population did not grow as rapidly as it once did, and if its new dwellings became smaller and fewer in number in the 1930s, it was still the center of the county's activity and wealth. As described in a city directory printed on the eve of the Depression, it remained "a busy little town in the heart of the old belt tobacco section." [23]

FOOTNOTES

1. General historical information, where not otherwise noted, is from: James R. Caldwell, "A History of Granville County, North Carolina: The Preliminary Phase, 1746-1800," (Ph.D. Thesis, University of North Carolina, 1950); Nannie May Tilley, "Studies in Colonial Granville County," (M.A. Thesis, Duke University, 1931); United State Censuses from 1840 to 1940; Marvin A. Brown, "The Architecture of Granville County," (Unpublished architectural historical essay drafted for the 1986 Granville County inventory project); and, most importantly, Andrew J. Carlson, "A Short History of Granville County, North Carolina," (Unpublished history drafted for the 1986 Granville County inventory project).

Carlson, and his succinct and insightful historical essay, contributed most of the statistics, analysis, and thoughtful language that these historical contexts contain. The authors of these contexts take full responsibility, however, for the ideas contained in the contexts and for any misinterpretation of Carlson's careful work.

2. Oxford Examiner, May 29, 1832; Guion Griffin Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina A Social History (Chapel Hill, 1937), p. 289.

3. Francis B. Hays, "Oxford's Railroads, Real and Imaginary," Oxford Public Ledger, September 22, 1939 (Hays Collection, Vol. 113, p. 7).

4. Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina, p. 484.

5. Francis B. Hays, "Oxford's Cultural Background," Oxford Public Ledger, July 4, 1944 (Hays Collection, Vol. 35).

6. Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina, p. 725; Granville Whig, April 27, 1850.

7. Hays, "Oxford's Cultural Background"; Francis B. Hays, "Horner School a Historical Sketch," Oxford Public Ledger, June 6 and 9, 1939 (Hays Collection, Vol. 34); The Leisure Hour, February 4, 1858.

8. Oxford Free Lance, May 3, 1878.

9. Nannie May Tilley, The Bright Tobacco Industry 1860-1929 (Chapel Hill, 1948), pgs. 113, 132, 133, 135; "Report on the Culture and Curing of Tobacco in the United States" by J. B. Killebrew in the Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, p. 705.

10. Tilley, The Bright Tobacco Industry 1860-1929, p. 4 and generally chapter 1.

11. Branson's Business Directory, 1896, (Raleigh, 1896), pgs. 294-300.

12. Tilley, The Bright Tobacco Industry 1860-1929, see chapter nine generally and especially p. 346.

13. Oxford Public Ledger, January 13, 1925.

14. Pete Daniel, Breaking The Land, The Transformation of Cotton, Tobacco, and Rice Cultures Since 1880 (Urbana, 1985), pp. 260, 264, and chapter 12.

15. Hays, "Horner School" Oxford Public Ledger, June 9, 1939; Branson's North Carolina Business Directory for 1884 (Raleigh, 1884), p. 334; Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1896, p. 300.

16. Branson's Business Directory for 1884, p. 334; Branson's Business Directory, 1896, p. 300.

17. Hays, "Oxford's Railroads, Real and Imaginary," and see generally Hays Collection, Vol. 113.

18. 1826 map of Oxford at Deed Book 54, Page 601, Granville County Deeds, Granville County Courthouse, Oxford, North Carolina.

19. R. B. Hardison and David D. Long, Soil Survey of Granville County, North Carolina, (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1910), p. 6.

20. "Growth and Development of the Future Metropolis of the Golden Tobacco Belt", Oxford Torchlight, January 5, 1885

21. For a brief history of education in the county see Francis B. Hays, "A History of Horner School" (n.p., n.d.) and Margaret

Knott, "A History of Granville County" (n.p., 1935) (Hays Collection, Vol. 35).

22. Durham Morning Herald, March 7, 1927.

23. Oxford City Directory, 1929-30, p. 7.

OUTLINE OF PROPERTY TYPES

1. GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL STYLE DWELLINGS
2. GREEK REVIVAL AND ROMANTIC STYLE DWELLINGS
3. BRIGHT LEAF ERA FARMHOUSES AND TENANT HOUSES
4. ROMANTIC, VICTORIAN AND ECLECTIC STYLE BUILDINGS IN OXFORD
5. COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS
   A. PLANTATION ERA
   B. BRIGHT LEAF ERA RURAL GRANVILLE COUNTY
   C. BRIGHT LEAF ERA OXFORD
6. OUTBUILDINGS

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1. GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL STYLE DWELLINGS

Description:

The earliest surviving properties in Granville County are a small group of dwellings that display a number of Georgian style decorative features. Raised late in the eighteenth and early in the nineteenth centuries, few are finished entirely in the style, for in Granville County the Georgian style rarely stands alone. Rather it merges with its successor style, the Federal, almost as seamlessly in the county as did the years between the Revolutionary War and approximately 1835 in which the two styles held sway.

The term Georgian, as applied to Granville County properties, refers to a style, to decorative features, rather than to a symmetrical method of organization. Symmetry cannot be used as the Georgian style's central, defining feature in categorizing the county's architecture. If it was, it would

define the uncompromisingly symmetrical, Greek Revival style properties raised in the 1840s and 1850s.

How early the Georgian style came to the county is not known, for no structures are known to survive intact from before the Revolutionary War. Reflecting the county's backcountry status, however, it did not exit with the eighteenth century as it may have in more sophisticated communities. Rather some of its decorative elements continued in use until the 1830s and occasionally beyond.

The most prominent decorative features of the style locally were the heavily modeled, three-part surround, and doors formed of six heavily raised panels. These two motifs were firmly embraced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They became more delicate in their articulation as the Georgian style merged with the Federal and even continued in common use until the Greek Revival style became popular.

The raised panel so commonly associated with the Georgian style is consistently found locally at doors. With a few exceptions, however, it is lacking from mantels and wainscoting. Wainscoting is usually flat-paneled or flush-sheathed, with heavily articulated moldings. Mantels are usually also heavily finished, with simple classical motifs. Although often painted over, some of these surrounds, doors, mantels and baseboards retain their original wood-graining or marbleizing. Some of the work is accurately rendered, some crudely if vibrantly crafted.

Early in the nineteenth century in the county, the transition from the Georgian to the Federal style began. Few clean breaks separate the styles, however, for the Federal decorative motifs were as much an attenuation and lightening of the classicism of the Georgian style as they were new forms. Many common Georgian forms were utilized in a Federal fashion and a few new motifs, most notably at doors and mantels, were also introduced. Rarely completely freed of Georgian forms in the county and therefore always in part transitional, the Federal style became the predominant decorative force of the 1820s and 1830s. Because of the similarities and overlapping of the styles, virtually all surviving properties in the county built prior to the late 1830s display both Georgian and Federal decorative motifs.

The Georgian style's three-part surround continued to hold sway, both at exteriors and interiors, during the first third of the nineteenth century. The quarter-round profiles of its moldings were not displaced by the Federal, but rather transformed into more flowing, gently sloping, sinuous lines. Though the three-part form remained popular until the rectilinear Greek Revival style came into vogue, a few surviving Federal style properties do utilize two-part, ogee moldings. Some also feature at exterior openings a surround formed of flanking pilasters topped by a simple entablature, in place of the three-part form. Not used until the late 1830s, and displaced by the mid 1840s, this surround provided one of the few, brief transition points between the Federal and Greek Revival styles.

Flush-sheathed and flat-paneled wainscoting were popular at surviving Federal style properties, as they had been at earlier Georgian style properties. The raised panel that defined the Georgian style door is rarely evident at early surviving wainscoting. While both the Georgian and Federal partook of the less heavy panels, the moldings that enframed the panels were considerably lightened as the Federal style took hold. Six-panel doors continued in use as well, their raised panels reduced in bulk and, in later Federal style properties, flattened altogether into recesses framed by slender moldings.

Mantels acquired a more pronounced, attenuated classical quality as the first third of the nineteenth century wore on and the Federal style became more popular. At finer dwellings they were adorned with pilasters, recessed panels, appliques and reeded motifs. An occasional almost high-style feature, such as an ornately finished fanlight, also adorned the gables of a few of these later and more refined Federal dwellings. As with the earlier Georgian style, local craftsmen continued to adorn their interior woodwork with marbleizing and wood-graining. Also as with the earlier style, the sophistication, but not the verve, of the decorative work varied from structure to structure.

Few if any Georgian or Federal style porches survive intact and conclusions cannot be drawn about their form, size or placement. The porch posts that appear to predate the Greek Revival style are slender, tapered, wooden columns topped by plain, boxy capitals.

The county's extant Georgian and Federal properties are

united by features and associations beyond their stylistic commonalities. All identified surviving properties in the county that exhibit decorative elements of these early styles are residential. Virtually all are topped by gable end roofs. The exceptions are a late eighteenth century, predominantly Georgian style dwelling with a gambrel roof and a few later, predominantly Federal style dwellings with their gables swung forward. Virtually all also share long, narrow, sash windows with either a nine-over-nine or nine-over-six configuration of lights.

Wood was the material of choice for all of the surviving properties. Almost all are built of heavy timbers, mortised, tenoned and pegged together, with flush gable ends often marked by boxed cornices. They are invariably sheathed in either plain or beaded weatherboards. A few of the most modest are built of log and some with heavy timber frames are supplemented with brick nogging. Stone and brick, though not used for the bodies of structures, were deftly laid at chimneys and foundations. The finest of these masonry elements were laid in Flemish bond, in the case of brick, or large cut blocks, where stone was chosen. The chimneys are of the exterior end type. Care went into the construction of the substantial frames and masonry foundations and chimneys, as it did into the finish of the dwellings' decorative motifs. The solid construction of the properties still supports them against the elements, but neglect threatens their survival, as it does much of the county's rural architecture.

Surviving Georgian and Federal dwellings are also united in their spatial diversity. While during the antebellum period strict symmetry had a firm grip on the county's properties, the earlier dwellings exhibit a variety of plans, both one and two rooms deep. Some can be classified under a single identifiable plan type - tripartite, side-hall, center-hall, hall-parlor, one-room - and some defy clear classification. While a few are symmetrical, usually those from later in the Federal period, most are not.

The surviving Federal and Georgian style properties are also united by their use. Foremost, they are all dwellings, dwellings that with the exception of a few properties in Oxford once stood at the center of farms or plantations. These farms and plantations were devoted to the raising of large quantities of a variety of staple goods and, more and more as the years rolled on

towards the Civil War, the production of tobacco. Oxford's surviving dwellings now stand with other, later structures. The rural dwellings, however, are still situated amidst rolling fields and woods, as they were when they were first raised. A tiny number even retain one or a few heavy timber frame outbuildings that may be contemporary with their construction. Owner-occupied Georgian and Federal style properties are with few exceptions well-maintained, particularly in Oxford. Those occupied by tenants or abandoned - as is unfortunately often the case with the county's older rural structures - are in deteriorated to, at best, fair condition.

Significance:

The dwellings included within this type are the oldest relatively numerous group of surviving properties in Granville County. They are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural way of life which characterized the county during the plantation era. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the styles, forms, methods of construction and high artistic values of the era.

The dwellings span a variety of housing types, from the small to the large and the simple to the grand, and are therefore representative of life in the county in the years from the Revolution to the 1830s. Still located amidst fields and stands of timber, close by rolling hills and placid streams, the dwellings are visible reminders of the agrarian way of life common to virtually all of Granville County's free and slave residents during the years of their construction.

The farmers and slaves who lived in and around the surviving Georgian and Federal style dwellings continued a way of life established prior to the Revolution. As did their predecessors, they raised livestock and a variety of crops, from staples to tobacco. As the nineteenth century progressed through its first four decades, the more wealthy farmers, the slave-owning planter class, raised ever increasing amounts of tobacco and continued to prosper and grow. And, in a symbiotic relationship with the increasing tonnage of tobacco, the slave population also grew. The fine surviving homes of these planters are mute but nonetheless articulate representatives of the ever-increasing wealth and prestige of the county and many of its white

inhabitants from the Revolution to the Civil War. The considerably smaller number of modest houses surviving in the county are also symbolic of a way of life, the life of the small planters and yeoman farmers who were as much a part of Granville County as the wealthier planters and the oppressed slaves.

The surviving Georgian and Federal properties in the county are significant beyond their evocative and symbolic powers. Their floor plans, materials and construction say much about the county's origins and contacts and about the attitudes of its citizens. The heavy timber frames of the surviving structures are indicative of the British origins of many of the county's early residents, most of whom had migrated from adjoining Virginia. Floor plans during the period also indicate British connections, as well as contacts with Virginia and North Carolina counties to the east. They vary greatly in size and configuration. The largest dwellings, once the homes of prosperous planters, are built with tripartite, center-hall, side-hall and enlarged hall-parlor plans, while the smaller dwellings follow reduced hall-parlor or one-room plans. The tripartite form was transplanted from Virginia and counties to the east, as was the side-hall plan. The smaller hall-parlor and one-room plans were also probably of British origins.

Although most or all of the floor plans of the dwellings built during the period have traditional antecedents, their sheer variety shows a refreshing acceptance by local residents and builders of numerous forms, particularly when compared with the rigid plans that became popular during the antebellum years. Indeed, if form alone is taken as the determinant, these individuals were less confined by strict conventions than the unwavering disciples of symmetry that followed them during the Greek Revival period.

The surviving Georgian and Federal style dwellings are also significant simply as fine examples of workmanship and architectural and decorative expression. Although vernacular rather than high style in their work, the county's builders and craftsmen showed an excellent command of their tools and an almost intuitive understanding of the spare decorative elements that defined the styles. The moldings of doors, windows, baseboards and mantels were laboriously shaped and planed and neatly set. Panels were carved for doors, wainscoting and mantels and tightly affixed within solid stiles. Many of these

decorative features, probably even more than the untouched survivors suggest, were deftly wood-grained and marbleized in realistic, abstract or fanciful patterns.

Registration Requirements:

Few properties survive in the county from the period between the Revolutionary War and approximately 1835 in which the Georgian and Federal styles held sway. Few have an identifiable Federal style finish and even fewer are marked with Georgian decorative elements. Usually the two styles are mixed and virtually all properties in the county built during the period in which the styles held sway are transitional and representative of both. As so few properties remain from the period, to qualify for registration they need not display all of the elements mentioned in the statement of significance above. Fewer modest properties survive than large ones and they display less of the decorative elements discussed above than their larger counterparts. They are also in less well-kept condition. In spite of these differences, and because of their very rarity, they are as deserving of registration as the larger, better maintained properties.

All of the properties are extremely significant in large part because of their very survival and most extant examples should qualify. As a general rule then, the dwellings should meet registration requirements if they retain sufficient stylistic and structural features to identify them as having been built during the plantation era period of their construction and to evoke that period.

2. GREEK REVIVAL AND ROMANTIC STYLE DWELLINGS

Description:

From the late 1830s until the end of the Civil War the Greek Revival style held sway in Granville County. The style was primarily used to adorn and shape surviving dwellings, though it is also represented at a small number of non-residential structures, including churches, stores and outbuildings. Romantic styles other than the Greek Revival also appear at surviving properties built during these years, though in very limited fashion. A few Gothic Revival influenced dwellings still stand and that style is also found to a limited extent at surviving early churches. No surviving examples of fully realized Italianate properties exist, though the style is utilized in company with the Greek Revival at a few residences and churches.

The many Greek Revival style properties that survive in the county display a much more complete and intact array of forms and decorative motifs than the earlier extant Georgian and Federal style dwellings. Rigorously utilizing the common forms and motifs that comprise the style, they are the largest and most significant of the county's plantation era properties. Their adherence to set forms also makes them the most clearly classifiable and distinct of all of the county's array of stylish structures.

The decorative and formal elements of the Greek Revival style in Granville County are marked by a rigid geometry and symmetry. Geometrically articulated post and lintel construction was used, both inside and outside, for surrounds, cornerposts and mantels. Most of these vertical posts and horizontal lintels are fluted or are finished with stepped, symmetrical planes. Cornerblocks, some plain, some incised with bull's-eyes or other patterns, often accent the upper corners of these surrounds and, occasionally, mantels as well.

Crossettes, projecting out from the upper corners of mantels and interior and exterior surrounds, were also commonly employed. Those outside are formed of simple, raised, rectilinear moldings. Those inside, built in the same fashion, are usually applied over a fluted surround or at a mantel finished with plain cornerblocks. Angled moldings, almost flat in profile - "flat-

angled" moldings - were also utilized, usually at the more simply finished properties or at upstairs rooms. Plain rectilinear surrounds, their raised profiles outlining windows and doorways, came into fashion with the Greek Revival as well. The more modest of these motifs - the flat-angled molding and particularly the raised rectilinear surround - continued in use into the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Columns and pilasters were chosen by owners and builders for numerous locations. Outside they mark porches and inside they inform a variety of decorative features. Simple post and lintel mantels were adorned with hints of plinths, pilasters and capitals. Applied plinth and capital motifs were occasionally used above or below door and window openings as well. Tall, molded baseboards, sometimes similar to plinths in their articulation, almost completely replaced the flush-sheathed and flat-paneled wainscoting that had been so universally popular earlier in the century.

Surviving intact porches usually span the entire front facade of the county's Greek Revival style dwellings. One-story tall, they are topped by low hipped roofs, reflecting the main roofs of the dwellings. Porch posts are usually squared, fluted and tapered columns. They are connected by octagonal handrails and the thin vertical stiles that are not surprisingly called "tobacco stick" railings in the old tobacco belt. A few notable residences have fully realized porticos, complete with proper round columns and entablatures, that shade only the central entrance bay of their dwellings.

Further architectural changes are apparent from a glance at the windows, doors and roofs of antebellum properties. Large sash windows with big panes of glass, usually six-over-six, but sometimes eight-over-eight or even twelve-over-twelve, brightly light the surviving houses. Doors in almost all instances have flat panels or geometrically raised ones. Their numbers of panels range from two to seven, with two long, parallel panels being the most common form. Roofs also changed form. Where once they had virtually all been of the gable variety, the low hip roof now came into fashion, particularly among the majority of the finer antebellum residences.

At least as striking as the change of style during the antebellum years was the change in floor plans. Replacing the

variety of plans utilized by the Georgian and Federal builder was a rigidly symmetrical internal organization found at almost all but the most modest of residences. One and two-room plans not surprisingly continued in use for these more modest dwellings, as they would throughout the remainder of the century and even a few decades beyond. But the side-hall, the tripartite and the asymmetrically planned two-room deep dwelling all disappeared. They were replaced almost entirely by a bilaterally symmetrical, center-hall plan. The surviving center-hall plan, Greek Revival style dwellings were usually two stories tall and one-room deep - the basic "I-house" form. This basic type was usually enlarged in one of three ways. Some dwellings were extended by the addition of a matching flank of rooms to the rear, removing them from the formal typology of the I-house. The size of some was increased through the means of a centered rear ell, giving them a T-shape. And some, in almost the only exception to bilateral symmetry, were given an L-shaped plan by the addition of an off-center rear ell.

Gothic Revival style features are only fully expressed at the exteriors of a few residences raised during the 1850s. The prominent features of the style include triangular or pointed-arched openings, numerous gables, delicate bargeboards, board-and-batten siding and intricately cut and scalloped wooden ornament. Interiors are largely Greek Revival in style. Used as a decorative flourish at essentially Greek Revival style properties, the style occasionally appears in the form of a pointed arch at the door or pew of a dwelling or church. The Italianate style appears exclusively in this decorative, additive fashion, usually as a bracket hung from a cornerpost or a roof eave.

Surviving Romantic style structures are united with their Georgian and Federal predecessors in their construction, for with the exception of a single surviving brick dwelling, they are all built of wood. Virtually all are mortised, tenoned and pegged together, though a few are built of log. They also have brick and rock, exterior end chimneys and foundations, some laid in Flemish bond or neatly cut stone.

The residences standing outside of Oxford, also like their predecessors, are planted amidst the county's rolling fields and stands of woods. Those in Oxford, while not in a rural setting, are no different in form, style or feeling than their country

mates. Whether in town or country, virtually all of the Romantic style properties are neatly finished, some still retaining fine wood-graining and marbleizing. In general, the properties in Oxford are noteworthy for their excellent condition. By contrast, of those in the countryside, only the larger, owner-occupied properties tend to be well-preserved. The smaller, more modest rural properties from the period, often rented, are usually found in only fair to deteriorated condition.

Significance:

Granville County had grown by almost every measure - in tobacco production and the raising of staples, in its numbers of residents, free and slave - in the years from the mid-1830s until the Civil War. The nature and quality of this growth, which had made it one of the most properous counties in the state, is reflected in its large body of surviving Greek Revival and other Romantic style properties. These properties are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural way of life that characterized the county during the plantation era. They are also significant under Criterion C for embodying the styles, forms, methods of construction and high artistic values of the era.

The Greek Revival style filtered into the county in the 1830s and quickly replaced the earlier decorative styles. Its timely appearance, compared to the more retarditaire uses of the Georgian and Federal styles, reflects the county's growing wealth and sophistication during the antebellum years. It also reflects an increasing connection with and consciousness of a world beyond the confines of southern Virginia, which had long provided many of its citizens and all of its major markets.

Displaying substantial integrity of design and craftsmanship, the Greek Revival is the most significant of the county's many styles. In form and conception it is complete, with little hint of what preceded it or what was to come. Local builders and craftsmen reached a high level of competence in designing and crafting its geometric forms. The large surviving array of these forms, from vernacular expressions to porticos almost academically correct in their elements, provides a catalog of the style in the middle third of the nineteenth century. The fine wood-graining and marbleizing of doors, mantels, stairs and baseboards, still present at many structures,

is evidence of the sometimes vibrant nature of a style generally severely articulated in the county. This decorative work and the finely crafted woodwork it adorns, coupled with the solidly constructed frames hidden at each structure's core, is further evidence of the skill of local builders and craftsmen.

The impact of the Greek Revival was not limited to decorative changes. To a large extent the rigid symmetry of the style, as adopted in the county at almost all of the larger surviving residences, led to a re-ordering of earlier floor plans. By imposing rigid symmetry upon their dwellings, the county's wealthier individuals, increasingly more sophisticated and closely connected with the outside world, rejected the rich variety of forms utilized by preceding generations. Their preference for strict symmetry suggests a willingness to move away from the past and accept newer, more immediately popular, national ideas. At the same time, however, it suggests a conservative desire for shelter inside a rigid, sharply and clearly defined form.

The Greek Revival style buildings comprise the largest intact group of pre-Civil War properties, thereby most completely representing plantation and slave era life in the county. The many large residences still standing in the countryside amidst their fields and woods - some still retaining a few original outbuildings - are representative of the booming plantation life of the time. Their size, scale and fine finish alone are testimony to Granville County's position in the mid-nineteenth century as North Carolina's premier tobacco producing county. The Greek Revival style dwellings remaining in Oxford, of the same finish and scale, are evocative of the active life of the community in the two decades preceding the War. The modest, rather than large, dwellings surviving in the countryside, though fewer in number and in poorer condition, are no less evocative of the life of the small planter or the yeoman farmer.

The impact of the Romantic styles in the county, most particularly the Greek Revival, is apparent through its use at non-residential as well as residential structures. It is found not only at churches, lodges, stores and dwellings, but even at a few surviving domestic outbuildings. The significance of many of the surviving Romantic style dwellings is bolstered by their contemporary outbuildings, some of which bear Greek Revival or Gothic Revival style decorative features.

Registration Requirements:

Many properties survive in the county from the late 1830s to the close of the Civil War. During these years the Greek Revival style and, to a much lesser extent, the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles, held sway. Although many distinctive elements of the Greek Revival, and to a far lesser extent the other Romantic styles, can be listed, not all properties that meet the requirements of the type will exhibit all or even most of these elements. In general, properties meeting registration requirements are likely to display sharp geometric forms laid down in symmetrical patterns and floor plans. The larger properties tend to display more of the elements and forms and are generally in better condition. The smaller properties, because of their very rarity and symbolic import, will qualify for registration, even though they might not display many of the characteristics outlined above. As a general rule, properties should meet registration requirements if they retain sufficient stylistic and structural features to identify them as having been built during the period of their construction and to evoke that period. An extra evocative measure is found at rural properties that retain some of their original outbuildings or that retain outbuildings similar to the originals in form or function, but from a later period.

3. BRIGHT LEAF ERA FARMHOUSES AND TENANT HOUSES

Description:

Housing types firmly established by the mid-nineteenth century in Granville County, primarily vernacular in form, persisted and predominated in its countryside until the years of the Great Depression. The post-Greek Revival formalistic and stylistic changes brought to Oxford, and to a lesser extent to the county's small towns during these years, were largely ignored in rural areas. Smaller dwellings, quite often homes to tenants, were built in plainly finished fashion in one and two-room plans. Of the many built of log, some were formed into extended plans such as the "dogtrot" and the "saddlebag." Center-hall plan I-houses, one-room deep and two stories tall, were utilized by more prosperous individuals. Usually also plainly finished, they were sometimes adorned with facade gables and porches finished with Italianate and Victorian decorative devices.

Some traditional, plainly finished, one and two-room plan houses, topped by lofts and gable end roofs, still stand in the county. Built primarily during the last half of the nineteenth century and into the early decades of the twentieth, they are usually abandoned and deteriorated. Unlike the vast majority of surviving pre-Civil War residences, many are built of log - though a number of frame examples also stand - a material reserved almost exclusively for modest dwellings and outbuildings in the county. Their construction is most often crude, consisting of slender logs roughly joined together with square or V-notches. A few log houses, however, are more solidly constructed with half-dovetail joints. As with frame properties, the log dwellings are almost always clad in weatherboards.

These surviving log houses are limited in their size by their material. They are built in two-room configurations or with abutting log or frame rooms to their rear. A number of means of expanding the log house were utilized by county builders. Some chose the dogtrot form, joining two separate log pens with an enclosed frame hallway. Others chose the saddlebag form, draping two log pens around a central chimney. Though built of logs, these structures look much like their frame contemporaries, capped by gable end roofs and clad in plain weatherboards.

Following the pattern established during the antebellum period, many of the surviving larger, frame farmhouses built in the countryside after the Civil War are two stories tall, one-room deep and laid out on a center-hall plan. These I-houses are usually quite plainly finished, their balloon frames hidden beneath plain weatherboards and gable end roofs. Usually they have gable end chimneys of brick, or occasionally stone, and rear kitchen ells. Often originally separated from the house by a roofed breezeway, most of these ells are now fully attached. Where decorative flourishes are present, they are modest. Some dwellings display a steeply pitched, front facade gable, a nod to the Gothic and Victorian styles. Some also have porches, full facade and occasionally wraparound, decorated with turned or chamfered posts and balusters, and elaborately cut brackets. An occasional late nineteenth or early twentieth century farmhouse in the countryside is finished with decorative features beyond the facade gable and porch. Italianate pendants are hung from the eaves of some and bayed Victorian windows and decorative bargeboards adorn a few others. Inside, surrounds and mantels are simple and of the post and lintel variety, reflective of the former Greek Revival style. Doors usually have five recessed panels.

Some surviving farmhouses built in the early twentieth century display decorative and formal features that set them off from their late nineteenth century peers. Some display the boxy form and round porch columns of the Colonial Revival style. Others exhibit the sloping, projecting roofs, exposed structural members and tapered porch piers of the bungalow style. But at their cores most are still simply finished I-houses or tiny, plain, frame tenant houses. With the growing acceptance of standardized housing types and the retreat of vernacular forms as the twentieth century progressed, the houses in the countryside finally presented a character little different from those built in Oxford and elsewhere in the state.

Significance:

The difference between life in the countryside and life in Oxford in the years of the dominance of the bright leaf - the years between the Civil War and World War II - is evident in the finish of the properties constructed in the two areas. Before the Civil War, there is little difference in size or style of the surviving residences built thoughout the countryside and in

Oxford. Afterwards, the shift of wealth from the countryside to Oxford is strikingly apparent, in both the size and the style of dwellings erected. The dwellings surviving from the bright leaf era in the countryside, distinct from most of their town contemporaries, are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural way of life that characterized the county's rural areas during that era. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the vernacular forms and methods of construction, and the occasional Italianate, Victorian, Colonial Revival and bungalow styles and high artistic values of the bright leaf era.

The bright leaf era rural dwellings are significant as the homes of those who raised the tobacco that fueled the life of Granville County. Coupled with the numerous outbuildings built to cure, store and process the tobacco, they are at the economic heart of the county during the period. They also are significant as traditional housing types. Few of these housing types, particularly the one-room and hall-parlor plans, survive from prior to the Civil War. Representing a continuous housing tradition, the smaller farmhouses provide an insight into farmlife throughout much of the county's history. In particular, the more modest houses memorialize the tenants who quickly assumed the bulk of farm production work after the Civil War.

The larger, two-story frame dwellings are representative of the life of the more substantial farmer. Their vernacular and simple expressions of the Italianate, Victorian, Colonial Revival and bungalow styles - often taking the form of a decorated I-house - show these styles at their most stripped and basic. Their simple expressions of the styles aside, they suggest that the Granville County farmer and rural dweller of the bright leaf era was not completely cut off from outside influences, even though his architectural surroundings were far less sophisticated than those of his Oxford contemporaries. Finally, the significance of all of the rural dwellings is increased when they retain traditional outbuildings.

Registration Requirements:

Basically traditional structures - the largest group of traditional structures in the county with the possible exception of outbuildings - the surviving bright leaf era rural dwellings will usually meet registration requirements because of their

traditional forms, floor plans and materials. Stylistic concerns are limited, though some larger farmhouses will meet registration requirements because they display a significant number of Italianate, Victorian, Colonial Revival or bungalow style features. In general, to qualify for registration the dwellings should retain a rural setting and the forms, floor plans or materials that evoke their period of construction and the rural life of the time. More numerous than their predecesors, they should also retain a significant degree of stylistic integrity, where a style is present. The integrity of their association and feeling is greatly bolstered by the presence of contemporary outbuildings or later outbuildings that display forms and functions similar to their predecessors, particularly outbuildings associated with the raising of bright leaf tobacco.

4. ROMANTIC, VICTORIAN AND ECLECTIC STYLE BUILDINGS IN OXFORD

Description:

Oxford became Granville County's economic and architectural center following the Civil War. Its ascendancy in the latter third of the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth was built upon the profits of bright leaf tobacco and is apparent in its many fine and stylish properties. These run the gamut from the Romantic styles - Gothic Revival and Italianate - to the Victorian styles - Second Empire, Eastlake, Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque - to the twentieth century Eclectic styles - Colonial Revival, Neo-Classical Revival, Period Revival and bungalow. (The definitions of Romantic, Victorian and Eclectic used here are taken from Virginian and Lee McAlester's A Field Guide to American Housing.) To a far lesser extent - largely limited to Victorian and Colonial Revival style properties - the few surviving smaller towns that grew up in the county at railroad crossings in the 1880s retain stylish properties, also built on the profits of the bright leaf.

The Gothic Revival style is predominantly found in bright leaf era Oxford at churches. Its presence is marked by pointed-arched windows and soaring towers toped by crenellations or steep pointed roofs. Brick is the most common material for these churches. At residences the style appears as an occasional decorative pointed-arch motif.

Residences and commercial properties are the prime exponents of the Italianate in the town. Italianate residences utilize crossetted surrounds, prominent brackets and stickwork, and ornate modillions. Their decoration is concentrated at porches, eaves and surrounds. Almost all are built of frame, though they do include two of the town's three surviving late nineteenth century brick residences. The commerical properties that display the style - store and office buildings and tobacco processing facilities - are all built of brick. The distinctive elements of the style at these commercial properties are concentrated at surrounds, which are occasionally raised and crossetted, and at cornices, which are often heavily corbeled.

The Victorian style is represented in Oxford primarily at many frame dwellings. An exception is found at a brick Second

Empire style dwelling. As with its frame Second Empire companions, this dwelling's most noteworthy and distinctive stylistic feature is its mansard roof. It is also marked by thin, square porch posts adorned with modillions and brackets.

The Queen Anne style - the most commonly used of the Victorian styles in the county - was also adopted at a number of both large and small frame dwellings. It was Oxford's most popular style, judging from the large number of survivors, during the last third of the nineteenth century. It is marked by stepped-back facades, varied rooflines, and wraparound porches adorned with brackets and turned posts and balusters. More ornate examples utilize domes and corner towers. Elements of the style, often worked in brick, are also found at a number of churches raised in Oxford late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth centuries.

The decorative Eastlake style that often accompanies the Queen Anne was utilized at a few of the town's surviving late nineteenth century residences. Its decorative features include shingles, tongue-and-groove boards, weatherboards and German siding laid in geometric patterns on stepped-back facades. They also include porches profusely decorated with spindles, medallions, brackets and turned balusters. Interiors are also lushly finished with a variety of ornately and richly modeled mantels - some of marble or marbleized slate - stairs and doorways.

The Richardsonian Romanesque style in Oxford was limited to non-residential structures. Surviving examples of the style include a church and a bank, both utilizing the rough-hewn stone and squat arches central to the style.

Many Colonial Revival and, to a lesser extent, Neo-Classical Revival style dwellings were raised in Oxford during the first third of the twentieth century, particularly between 1900 and 1920. The Colonial Revival was the most popular and used at both large and small dwellings. The Neo-Classical Revival style was limited to large residences. Both, as were all of their predecessors, were built almost exclusively of frame, with a few later brick Colonial Revival style representatives. Late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth century, some dwellings were in transition, possessing attributes of both the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. The stepped-back facade and varied

roofline of the Queen Anne is often combined in surviving transitional houses with the severe articulation, columned porches, and dormers of the Colonial Revival style in Oxford. By the 1910s, however, the style stood on its in the town. It is marked by the use of round or squared columns and pilasters, both at porches and, inside, at mantels and occasional transverse-hall arches. The residences are often two stories tall and boxy and topped by low hipped roofs. Additional ornamentation is provided by hip roofed or pedimented dormers.

Related to and coterminus with the Colonial Revival style, though less popular, perhaps because of its grander, more expensive nature, was the Neo-Classical Revival style. Its dominant feature, the colossal two-story tall column, adorns a number of Oxford's larger and finer early twentieth century residences. These residences stand two or two-and-a-half stories in height and are built of frame in box-like shapes. In addition to their two-story porticos, either fluted or smooth, they possess the features common to the Colonial Revival in the town - dormers, columned subsidiary porches and columned mantels and transverse-arches inside.

The Colonial and Neo-Classical styles were not entirely limited to residences. Many of Oxford's surviving twentieth century churches utilize the styles. Unlike the residences, a number of these churches are built of brick. Some utilize simple classical motifs and one even displays the full-blown, two-story columns of the Neo-Classical Revival.

The Beaux Arts style, an Eclectic style with its roots more firmly planted in a European than an American past, is also found at Oxford properties dating from around the turn of the century. Unlike the Colonial and Neo-Classical Revival styles, the Beaux Arts is limited to surviving masonry, non-residential properties, particularly banks. Worked in concrete and brick, the style utilizes proper and heavy classical motifs, a formal and sometimes almost ponderous scale, and ornate terra cotta or cast stone panels. All of these elements are worked in a much more reduced size and scale than those found at larger communities.

Just as the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival had merged during their overlapping periods of ascendancy - the close of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth - the Colonial Revival merged with the bungalow style in the teens and

twenties. A number of residences built in the 1910s, all of frame, feature the columns, classical mantels and dormers of the Colonial Revival in company with the wide overhanging, bracketed roofs and horizontal emphasis of the bungalow.

The bungalow style in its most pure form, and the nearly coterminus Period Revival styles, were the last to reach Oxford prior to World War II. The bungalow style is found at frame and occasional brick residences. The residences are marked by low pitched roofs, a horizontal emphasis, expansive porches and exposed roof rafters, purlins and braces. Finished in a structurally exposed fashion similar to the main roof, the porches also feature fieldstones, bricks and squat tapered columns.

The small Period Revival style houses built in the 1920s and 1930s drew from a number of past architectural forms and styles. They include a small Tudor dwelling with rough clinker bricks and a steeply pitched roofline and a Mediterranean dwelling with tan stuccoed bricks, rounded arches and squat Tuscan columns. Arriving late, they are few in number, for little was constructed in Oxford in the 1930s.

Significance:

One need only drive down the streets of central Oxford, and then drive the country lanes of Granville County, to experience the ascendancy of Oxford during the bright leaf era. Oxford and the county had escaped the Civil War unscathed. However, Oxford soon attained an eminence it had previously lacked. The third of the century after the War was marked by the growth of the town as the county's economic and architectural center and by its ascendancy over the countryside. Two major post-Civil War developments in the county - the end of slavery and the advent of flue-cured tobacco - changed Oxford from a small if active community of 878 in 1860 to a booming town of more than 2,900 in 1890. The destruction of the slave-labor plantation system had led to the development of the tenant farm system and, by extension, to the development of absentee landownership. Many of the absentee landowners, enriched by the tenancy system and the high value of the bright leaf tobacco crop, moved off the farm and into Oxford. Coupled with the individuals in Oxford who profited from trade in, and other business generated by, that overarchingly valuable crop, they built a booming community. The

Romantic, Victorian and Eclectic style properties that still grace Oxford are historically significant under National Register Criterion A for their association with the agricultural system that characterized the county, and led to the ascent of Oxford, during the bright leaf era. The non-residential properties are further significant (as discussed at Property Type 5.C. below) under Criterion A for their association with commerce and trade, industry, social community functions, government and education. Neatly finished properties, both residential and non-residential, are also significant under Criterion C for embodying the forms, methods of construction, high artistic values and styles of the era.

The dwellings and non-residential properties built in Oxford by the individuals who profited directly or indirectly from the growth of bright leaf and its trade were far more stylish and sophisticated, and more divorced from tradition, than those that continued to be built in the countryside. Surviving finely finished residences representing the major architectural styles of the last three decades of the century - Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne and Eastlake - are physical proof of the town's wealth and vibrancy during those years. Many were built in the 1880s, reflecting the boom of the decade.

The 1890s had been unkind to Oxford and the rest of the county and nation as well. In the ten years between the census of 1890 and that of 1900 the town's population dropped by almost a third to just over 2,000. It rebounded, however, in the next two decades, its population climbing to 3,000 in 1910 and 3,600 by 1920. Evidence of this growth is amply provided by its many large Colonial Revival and Neo-Classical Revival style dwellings, built primarily between 1900 and 1920, and the variety of smaller bungalows and Period Revival cottages erected from the 1910s into the Depression. As with the elaborate Romantic and Victorian style properties that preceded them, the Eclectic style properties are evidence of the wealth and ascendancy of the town during the bright leaf era. The large Neo-Classical Revival style dwellings are particularly striking as representatives of the wealth of the town, especially when compared with the plain dwellings, but a shadow of their plantation predecessors, that were built in the countryside after the Civil War. Their evocation of a lost plantation life, glorified and romanticized in their tall, pure white columns, is perhaps a reflection of the conservative nature of the times, when the white Democratic party

re-established dominance in the state.

Symbolic import aside, the properties built in Oxford during the bright leaf era are significant for their exceptional stylish finish. Central Oxford retains numerous fine examples of virtually all of the styles popular from the early nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth, particularly those popular during the bright leaf era. A drive down College Street, for example, is like passing through a living architectural history book, the prominent features of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture displayed in sparkling three-dimensional reality. The architectural quality and fine condition of Oxford's properties are not exceeded by any bright leaf tobacco belt community of comparable size in the state.

Registration Requirements:

Surviving properties from the bright leaf era in Oxford, both residential and non-residential, are in most instances individually noteworthy for stylistic reasons. As a group, however, they stand as a pageant of nineteenth and twentieth century American architecture. Therefore, though they can be classified individually under a single, or a few, stylistic umbrellas, they must also be viewed as a group in considering their eligibility for registration. (Accordingly, the majority of properties in Oxford are to be proposed for inclusion on the National Register as parts of a historic district or districts.) In general, to meet registration requirements, the properties should have been built during the bright leaf era; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during the period of their construction; they should retain sufficient physical features to evoke the period of their construction; they should be good examples of the style or styles they represent; and they should retain an association with the properties around them.

5. COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

A. PLANTATION ERA:

Description:

Surviving non-residential plantation era properties in Granville County are few. Their numbers include, along with the outbuildings that accompany some of the period's dwellings, churches, mills, stores, putative tobacco manufactories, a lodge and a jail. With the exception of a plainly finished, common bond, brick jail in Oxford, all are built of heavy timbers, mortised, tenoned and pegged together, sheathed in weatherboards. Also with the exception of the jail, all are located in rural areas. The mills and putative tobacco manufactories are plainly finished structures displaying no identifiable stylistic features. The two largest mills are substantial structures rising more than three stories high; one has a gable roof, the other is topped by a rare gambrel. The putative manufactories are also large and plain, gable front structures. A former store and Masonic lodge in the crossroads community of Mt. Energy, however, are stylish in their finish, sharing elements common to the Greek Revival style in the county. Both appear residential, the store displaying a gable front, the lodge standing two-stories tall and rectangular, like a typical mid-century dwelling of a prosperous local agriculturist.

Stylistically, the surviving churches from the era are the most notable. Some feature a number of common Greek Revival style motifs, including crossettes, two-panel doors and gable front orientations. And some include the pendants of the decorative Italianate style, and the pointed arches, at doors and pews, of the Gothic Revival. Some outbuildings also display simple Greek or Gothic Revival style motifs.

Significance:

The small numbers of surviving non-residential properties in Granville County suggest the breadth of life, fueled by the agricultural economy, that existed beyond the fields and fences of the farm. They are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with commerce and trade, social community functions, religion, government, education and, overall, with the agricultural way of life and economy that

characterized the county during the plantation era. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the forms, methods of construction, high artistic values and occasional Greek Revival, Gothic Revival and Italianate styles of the era.

Putative tobacco manufactories are physical evidence of the county's supreme plantation era cash crop. Stores, some finished with Greek Revival motifs - most notably the gable front Mt. Energy store raised in the 1850s - indicate where some of this cash was being spent in the antebellum years. A large Greek Revival style Masonic lodge - also built in Mt. Energy in the early 1850s - is further proof of a settled and monied society.

Churches, outfitted with stylish Greek Revival, Gothic Revival and Italianate motifs, are also evidence of the county's character in the years from the late 1830s through the Civil War. (Photographs and illustrations of two brick, plantation era, Oxford churches, no longer standing, suggest that the Gothic Revival style may have been even more popular than surviving structures indicate. They also suggest the growing position of Oxford during the quarter century preceding the Civil War.) In 1860 the county had six denominations occupying 48 churches, of which 19 were Baptist and 17 Methodist. The dominance of the two named denominations is born out by the surviving plantation era churches, all of which were built by one or the other.

The mills are perhaps the most evocative of the surviving plantation era, non-residential properties. They are evidence of the county's mixed agricultural economy during the era, an economy near the top in the state not only in tobacco production, but in the raising of corn and grains. Two are among the largest in the northern Piedmont, rising over three stories. They are significant for this sheer size and rarity, and for their suggestion of the prosperity and breadth of the county's agriculture. The presence of the mills, and virtually all other non-residential structures from the plantation era, in rural areas is a further reminder of the diffuse location of activities in the county during the plantation era, a county overwhelmingly agrarian in nature.

Registration Requirements:

The vast majority of surviving plantation era properties in

Granville County are residential. The few remaining non-residential properties include outbuildings, stores, churches, mills, putative tobacco manufactories, a lodge and a jail. Taken together, along with the surviving dwellings, they complete the picture of life in the county during the plantation era. They are primarily important, therefore, because of their functions, their associations and the feelings they convey. To meet registration requirements, they should have been built prior to the Civil War; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during the period of their construction; they should retain sufficient physical features to evoke the period of their construction; and they should retain their integrity of setting. In general, because only a small number of these extremely significant properties survive, most extant examples should qualify for registration.

B. BRIGHT LEAF ERA RURAL GRANVILLE COUNTY

Description:

Surviving bright leaf era rural churches display limited late Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Victorian and Colonial Revival style features. Other non-residential properties - including stores, lodges and schools - are most often plain, frame structures almost residential in character. Log and frame outbuildings, unlike some of their Greek Revival style predecessors, are plain and functional.

For a short period after the Civil War, churches in the countryside retained elements of the Greek Revival style. Simply finished, frame structures, they have temple front orientations and raised rectilinear surrounds. As the century progressed to a close, however, the Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival styles, worked in frame, became dominant. During the first four decades of the twentieth century, they were virtually without exception the styles of choice, erected in both frame and brick. The Gothic Revival is most commonly expressed in the countryside at churches during the bright leaf era through the use of pointed-arched windows and steeply pitched roofs. Pointed-arched motifs are also occasionally utilized inside. Corner towers, usually modest in size, also reflect the influence of the style. A less flamboyant approach, marked by symmetry and simple classical elements, is displayed at surviving Colonial Revival style

churches.

Surviving stores, lodges and schools from the period are plainly finished structures. Built of frame and sheathed in weatherboards, they resemble the simple farmhouses of the countryside that they served. Many look like I-houses with gable ends. Some of the lodges look particularly domestic - long, rectangular, two-story, one-room deep buildings with gable ends. The stores, however, and a few lodges, are deep, two-story, rectangular buildings with gable front orientations, unlike their domestic contemporaries.

Significance:

Even with the growth in the 1880s of small towns along railroad lines, and the late nineteenth and early twentieth century ascendancy of Oxford, numerous non-residential properties were erected in rural Granville County during the bright leaf era. In the countryside, tobacco growers attended lodge meetings and, with their wives and children, patronized small rural general stores and worshipped at rural churches. Prior to the 1920s and the centralization of schools, children attended classes at small schools scattered throughout the countryside. Only the churches and a few lodges remain active, the stores and schools replaced by those of larger communities. The properties that do remain are symbolic of the life off the farm led by the county's bright leaf tobacco growers, whether owners or tenants, and their families. They are significant more for their functions and evocative powers than their architectural finish, although some properties, particularly churches, are finished in Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Victorian and Colonial Revival style motifs. In sum, the properties are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with commerce and trade, social community functions, education, religion and, overall, with the agricultural way of life and economy that characterized the county during the bright leaf era. Further, they are architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the forms, methods of construction, high artistic values and, in particular at the churches, the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Victorian and Colonial Revival styles popular during the era.

Registration Requirements:

The vast majority of properties surviving in rural Granville County from the bright leaf era are residential. The few surviving non-residential properties, with the exception of outbuildings, include churches, stores, schools and lodges. The churches are adorned with simple Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Victorian or Colonial Revival motifs and the other properties are largely plainly finished and almost residential in character. Taken together with surviving farm dwellings, these properties are evocative of life, both on and off the farm, during the bright leaf era. They are primarily important, therefore, because of their functions and associations and the feelings they convey. To meet registration requirements, they should have been built between the Civil War and World War II; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify them as having been built during the period of their construction; they should retain sufficient physical features to evoke the way of life of the time of their construction; and they should retain their integrity of setting.

C. BRIGHT LEAF ERA OXFORD

Description:

A varied array of non-residential properties stand in Oxford, built largely out of the monies generated directly and indirectly by the growth of bright leaf tobacco. Spanning numerous types, their numbers include commercial and industrial properties - stores, banks, tobacco processors and prizeries, theaters, offices - and a variety of institutions, including schools, churches, jails, orphanages and tobacco research facilities. (A pale reflection of this variety is found at the few surviving smaller towns in the county that grew up along the railroad in the late 1880s.)

Oxford's central commercial district, at the confluence of Williamsboro, Hillsboro, College and Main streets, retains numerous two-story tall brick commerical buildings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The stores and offices from the late nineteenth century most commonly display Italianate features, particularly crossetted surrounds and corbeled cornices. Later commercial properties exhibit Colonial Revival

and occasional Art Deco decorative motifs. Amidst these offices and stores are the county's antebellum courthouse and jail; a former opera and market house, truncated and much altered, from the late nineteenth century; three Beaux Arts and Richardsonian Romanesque style bank buildings from the turn of the century; and a Moderne movie theater from the early 1940s.

At the commercial edges of College and Main streets are three large churches from the early twentieth century displaying Richardsonian Romanesque, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival and Neo-Classical style motifs. Dispersed throughout the town, not quite at its commercial core, are the remnants of its once potent tobacco warehousing and processing industry, the most obvious of the town's structures derived from the bright leaf. These brick prizeries and processing facilities, dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, are primarily simply finished, the more ornately finished early warehouses all having been destroyed.

Schools and orphanages that grew and thrived during the ascendance of Oxford also still stand in the town. Their buildings display elements of the Gothic Revival, Victorian, Colonial Revival and Neo-Classical styles. Also finished in the Colonial Revival style is the tobacco research facility at Oxford's edge, another building the presence of which is directly tied to the production of bright leaf tobacco.

Significance:

Oxford's bright leaf era, non-residential properties, substantial and stylish for a community of its size, embody the vibrancy of the town when the bright leaf was king. Some structures are significant because of their direct connection to the product that defines the period. These include surviving, and empty or under-utilized, tobacco processing facilities and prizeries. They also include a tobacco research facility, established early in the twentieth century, standing at the edge of town. Other structures that basked in the reflected wealth of the golden leaf include ornately finished turn of the century banks and blocks of late nineteenth and early twentieth century stores and offices. The money the bright leaf brought into the community is also reflected in the theaters, large schools and stylishly finished churches that dot the central part of town. These properties are historically significant under National

Register Criterion A as associated with commerce and trade, industry, social community functions, government, religion, education and, overall, with the agricultural way of life and economy that characterized the county during the bright leaf tobacco era.

Taken together, and especially when viewed with the residences they are dispersed among, these non-residential properties are significant as a group. They stand together as representative of the crop that powered the growth of the ascendant community.

The bright leaf era, non-residential properties are significant not only because they evoke the life of Oxford beyond its residences, or because they are visual reminders of the influence of the county's cash crop. They are architecturally significant under Criterion C (as discussed above at Property Type 4) for embodying the forms, methods of construction, high artistic values and styles of the era. The properties that stand from the late nineteenth century are fine examples of the commerical use of the Italianate style. And the fine and substantial banks and churches can stand on their own - even outside their exceptional context in central Oxford - as excellent examples of the Gothic Revival, Richardsonian Romanesque, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles.

Registration Requirements:

Oxford's surviving, non-residential, bright leaf era properties are significant because of their individual stylistic features and, perhaps more importantly, because of their symbolic value as a group. Accordingly, the majority of the properties that are eligible for inclusion on the Register will be proposed as part of a historic district or districts, along with residences, to be established in Oxford. Individually and as a group they are evocative of life in bright leaf era Oxford. In general, to meet registration requirements, they should have been built between the Civil War and World War II; they should retain sufficient physical characteristics to identify them as having been built during the period of their construction; they should retain sufficient physical characteristics to evoke the life of Oxford between the Wars; they should be good examples of the style or styles, where present, they represent; and they should retain an association with the properties around them.

ADDENDUM SHEET: RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

Twenty-eight church buildings were recorded in the Granville County Comprehensive Inventory, representing some four antebellum buildings and 24 late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings. Six of the 28, the best examples of the property type, are on the Granville County Study List for nomination to the National Register. These are the two best-preserved antebellum church buildings: Brassfield Baptist Church and Salem Methodist Church, and four late nineteenth century rural churches: Knotts Grove Baptist Church, a Greek Revival-Italianate building similar to Salem Methodist Church but built just after the Civil War, ca. 1867; Enon Baptist Church, an 1875 Gothic Revival style building; Grove Hill Methodist Church, an 1890 Gothic Revival building; and Bullock Methodist Church, a fine turn-of-the-century vernacular gable-front building. Although some of the property group have lost architectural integrity, a number of the group not included on the initial study list retain integrity and are potentially eligible for the Register.

The religious buildings in Oxford which belong to this property type tend to be large masonry buildings which are academic examples of the Gothic Revival or Classical Revival, and the most historic examples of the type are included in the Oxford Historic District as contributing properties.

EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS

Thirteen historic school and orphanage buildings were recorded in the Granville County Comprehensive Inventory. Six of these are in Oxford, the other seven are in rural settings. Aside from their common function, each building is unique in design and form, and as a property type they are linked only by their function. As with the other non-residential property types, the largest and most distinguished examples are in Oxford. Two of these, the Oxford Orphanage on College Street and the Central Orphanage in south Oxford, are old, distinguished orphanages. The Oxford Orphanage, established in 1873 by the state Masonic Order, is the first orphanage in North Carolina (Fink, "Changing Philosophies and Practices in North Carolina Orphanages," North Carolina Historical Review, October 1971, 336) . The second Oxford orphanage, Central Orphanage (originally the Colored Orphanage Asylum of North Carolina), was established by the black Baptists in 1883. By 1899 there were ten orphanages in the state, and the fact that two of these were in Oxford is extraordinary. (Fink, 337). Although the Oxford Orphanage had several historic landmark building on its campus, all but one of the present major buildings are of recent construction. The entrance gate and superintendent's house, dating from 1931 and 1918, are contributing properties in the Oxford Historic District.

Four of the other five school buildings in Oxford are eligible for the Register. The oldest building of Central Orphanage, the Cheatham Building of 1915, is individually eligible. The only remnant of the Oxford Female Seminary, a

ADDENDUM SHEET CONTINUED

nineteenth century girls' boarding school, has been remodelled as a house and is a contributing building in the Oxford Historic District. The Credle Public Elementary School, a distinguished brick Colonial Revival style building of 1915, is a contributing building in the Oxford Historic District. The Mary Potter School Shop, the only building remaining of the Mary Potter School, which operated from 1892 into the twentieth century as the most prestigious black school in Granville County, is individually eligible for the Register. The last example of the property type in Oxford, the former Oxford High School, a simple brick Collegiate Gothic building dating from 1921, is now located in the center of the present high school campus and may have lost its architectural integrity.

The seven rural school buildings in this property type include representatives of the evolution of education in the county from the mid-19th century to the 1940s. Belmont Academy, the only antebellum schoolhouse, is a small frame building of domestic form which is part of a plantation complex eligible for the Register. A small frame one-room school built by Mt. Zion Baptist Church in 1888 survives as a packhouse. Two rural Masonic Lodge buildings, both two-story frame I-house forms, contained schools on the first floor in the late nineteenth century and are eligible for the Register, in part, for their educational significance. Two early 20th century frame schools, the Royster School for white children, and the Buchanan School for black children, survive. Both are modest one-story frame gable-front buildings. One large rural public high school, the Oak Hill School, survives. This red brick Colonial Revival style building, built in 1925 for white children, presumably served all of northern Granville County. It is now in adaptive reuse. Statistics indicating that Granville County had 58 public schools in 1941 indicate the strong potential for eligibility of any surviving schools. In 1941 Oxford had 3 white schoolhouses with an average value of $44,000 and an average size of ten classrooms and 11 black schoolhouses with an average value of $5,832 and an average size of three classrooms. In 1941 rural Granville had six white schoolhouses with an average value of $79,457 and an average size of sixteen classrooms, and 38 black schoolhouses with an average value of $955 and an average size of 1.8 classrooms. The rate of survival of black schoolhouses in this separate and very unequal system could be expected to be much lower than that of white schoolhouses. (1940-1941 Biennial Report of the North Carolina Superintendent of Public Instruction, 69).

FRATERNAL LODGES

Although a very small property type, the five Masonic lodges recorded in the Granville County Comprehensive Inventory are quite important because of

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ADDENDUM SHEET CONTINUED

the social significance of the Masonic order in Granville County life during the second half of the nineteenth century into the present. Of the historic lodge buildings which survive, Mt. Energy and Adoniram were chartered in the early 1850s. Granville County Masons obviously had statewide prominence during this period, for in 1858 the North Carolina Masons began the long process of establishing the Oxford Orphanage, which became the largest and most important institution in Granville County. Mt. Energy Lodge is the only antebellum lodge building which has survived. It is a two-story frame building constructed ca. 1851 i I-house form, as is Adoniram Lodge, built in 1917. The standard Masonic lodge in North Carolina is a two-story frame gable-front building, and these two I-house type lodges in Granville County are an unusual deviation from the norm. Woodland Lodge, built in 1884, is the gable-front form typical of Masonic lodges. The fourth historic lodge building is the Stem Lodge, built at the new railroad stop of Stem in 1885. This is a substantial two-story brick store building with two stores downstairs and lodge rooms upstairs. The fifth example, the Oxford Lodge building, is an International Style building built in 1957. The earlier lodge building was probably located in the historic commercial district, but it is apparently gone.

Mt. Energy, Adoniram and Woodland lodge buildings are in the Granville County Study List for nomination to the Register. Stem Lodge and any other historic examples which may be identified in the future, and which retain integrity, would be eligible for listing because of their significance in Granville County social history.

6. OUTBUILDINGS

Description:

Agriculture provided both spark and fire to Granville County's physical development between 1746 and 1937, reshaping its landscape and leading directly and indirectly to the construction of its dwellings and its commercial, industrial and institutional properties. Perhaps most obviously, it also led during the plantation and bright leaf eras to the construction of a varied array of outbuildings.

Most of the surviving outbuildings from that almost two centuries of its history date from the bright leaf era and are connected with tobacco cultivation. A small, telling number, however, were raised prior to the Civil War. Almost all of these pre-War outbuildings are mortised, tenoned and pegged together. Usually marked by flush gable ends, they often retain boxed cornices. Weatherboards, plain or beaded, cover their solid frames.

The most common early survivor is the smokehouse. Typically, it is a tall, narrow, frame structure tightly built with closely set studs. A number of detached kitchens constructed in the same fashion, set 50 to 100 feet to the side or rear of the dwelling, also survive. Unlike other surviving plantation era outbuildings, a few are built of log. One pre-Civil War exception to the rule of log and frame still stands in the county, an exceptional, full-dovetailed, plank outbuilding to the rear of the early nineteenth century plantation seat Oak Lawn. Probably originally a smokehouse, though larger than most of its known contemporaries, this small rectangular building is weatherboarded and marked by flush gable ends and boxed cornices.

Other early outbuildings, also almost exclusively built of heavy timbers pegged together, include ice houses, well houses, dairies and privies. Further early outbuildings, the original functions of which are not known for certain, include putative air-cure tobacco barns, slave houses, offices and a putative overseer's house. Virtually all are plain, gable end, weatherboarded buildings located to the rear or side of the dwelling or former dwelling site. A few of the dairies retain an insulating infill of earth or sawdust, indicating their use as cooling structures. The putative overseer's house on the former

Lewis Wimbish plantation has transitional Georgian/Federal style details that suggest that it stood before the main Greek Revival style plantation house was built. Originally a one-room pegged dwelling with a large, gable end, cut stone chimney, it may well have first been a yeoman farmer's home, transformed into an overseer's house by the Wimbish family in the decade or two preceeding the Civil War.

The putative slave houses and air-cure tobacco barns are the most telling of the surviving plantation era outbuildings. Almost half of the county's pre-Civil War, nineteenth century residents lived in slave houses, yet only a few buildings said to have once served this function survive. Small, rectangular, log or pegged buildings, these buildings have a single room and loft and one chimney attached to a gable end. In form and appearance they are much like the county's early detached kitchens and many were used as such after the War. They are similar to verified slave quarters standing elsewhere in North Carolina, however - including those of Caswell County, an old tobacco belt county to the west - and it is likely that at least some once did serve as slave houses. Tobacco was king in the county decades before the advent of flue curing and bright leaf tobacco, but the numerous air-cure barns that must have held its thousands of pounds of burley tobacco have been reduced to a few large, tall, two-story buildings, gable ended and pegged together, thought to have been used to cure tobacco in the earlier fashion.

While most of the plantation era outbuildings are designed in a straightforward fashion that reflects their functional nature, a small number are adorned with simple stylistic features. A few are topped with the low hipped roof and finished with the raised rectilinear surrounds and two-panels doors of the Greek Revival style in the county. And a few other have board and batten siding reflecting a Gothic Revival style sensibility.

Numerous individual outbuildings and a few relatively complete farm complexes survive in Granville County from the bright leaf era, companions inseparable from the farmhouses and tenant houses of the time. Without exception, the farms of this period are dominated by outbuildings devoted to the production of bright leaf tobacco. The story of virtually every surviving farm complex is indeed the story of the bright leaf.

Until the years after World War II, the production of bright leaf tobacco required numerous and varied outbuildings. The most numerous of the surviving outbuildings are the tobacco curing barns, followed by packhouses and by striphouses that are abutted by steamhouses or ordering pits. The tobacco barn was the first of the outbuildings to which tobacco was carried after harvest. Tightly sealed, it was heated by wood, and later gas and oil powered flues, that dried the tobacco, giving the leaf the bright yellow color that lent it its name. The surviving tobacco barns are virtually without exception built of log. (A striking exception is a single surviving and ruinous brick tobacco barn.) Often the logs are left exposed, though sometimes they are covered with weatherboards, vertical siding and even a rare coat of plaster or stucco. They are all similarly scaled, standing tall and square, with gable end roofs and a single entrance at their front.

Nannie Mae Tilley, in her authoritative history of the bright tobacco industry, outlined the general dimensions of flue curing tobacco barns:

> With the exception of the Snow barn . . . construction of barns varied little. During the early years, a small building sixteen feet square was the standard recommendation, although twenty feet was sometimes a favored dimension. In later years, dimensions became more or less standardized at seventeen, twenty-one, or twenty-five feet in order to permit four, five, or six sets of tier poles on the inside for hanging tobaco. In any case, standard requirements always called for a close barn with ample provision for complete ventilation . . . . Barns were conveniently located in groups near the fields. [Nannie Mae Tilley, The Bright Tobacco Industry, 1860-1929 (Chapel Hill, 1948), p. 56.]

While her assessment of the proportions of barns appears to be applicable to Granville County, her statement that groups of barns were conveniently located near the fields should be amended for the county to stay that they were also located near the packhouse, the striphouse and, not the least, the farmhouse.

Following its curing, the tobacco was stored in the packhouse. These structures are usually similar in scale to the square tobacco barn, with the exception of a few long rectangular

ones, though their two-story frames are slightly taller and larger. Some are built of log, but they are more often built of frame. Like the barns, they are most often covered by weatherboards and gabled roofs. Two doors, one over the other, mark their front facades.

The tobacco was finally brought from the packhouse to the striphouse to be prepared for shipment to market. Usually a long low building, of log or frame, the striphouse stood next to the packhouse. The tobacco had to soften in order to be handled. This was accomplished by hanging it in a damp basement beneath the striphouse or in an ordering pit, or by placing it into a room adjoining the striphouse into which steam was introduced.

The county's single-minded emphasis on the production of tobacco is reflected in the relative dearth of livestock barns, cribs and other outbuildings devoted to the production of staples. These few remaining buildings are usually frame structures with weatherboard siding and gabled roofs. Outbuildings directly devoted to the domestic needs of the farmhouse stand in greater numbers, also built of frame with weatherboard siding and gabled roofs. They include smokehouses, washhouses, detached kitchens - the breezeways that separated them from the dwellings now usually enclosed - and privies, all located in close proximity to the rear or side of the dwelling.

A few small, altered, pegged outbuildings - probably originally smokehouses - still stand in Oxford, survivors of the town's more bucolic life during the plantation era. Almost all of the few other remaining outbuildings, however, are non-traditional buildings dating from the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Frame garages, some with dwelling space above, predominate, joined by an occasional detached kitchen.

Significance:

Agriculture was central to the development of Granville County during the plantation and bright leaf eras. The outbuildings that served the production needs of the farm, along with those that served the more personal needs of the farm families and small town residents, are the closest architectural link to the county's rich agricultural past. The surviving plantation era outbuildings follow traditional forms and are solidly built of mortised, tenoned and pegged timbers or hand-

hewn logs. Some are fitted out with simple Greek Revival, Gothic Revival or late nineteenth and early twentieth century decorative motifs. Bright leaf era outbuildings also follow traditional forms and many are fashioned of hand-hewn logs. The outbuildings of both the plantation and bright leaf eras are therefore historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural way of life that characterized the county during those eras. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the forms, methods of construction and, occasionally, the styles and high artistic values of the plantation and bright leaf eras.

The significance of many of the county's surviving plantation and bright leaf era farm dwellings is bolstered by their outbuildings. The outbuildings provide an added insight into the texture of the farm life led by virtually every individual in the county prior to the Civil War, and by most individuals up to World War II. The surviving outbuildings place the county's families - farmers and planters, tenants and town dwellers, free blacks and slaves - at work, drawing water from the well and setting aside ice for the sweltering months, storing milk and smoking meat and cooking meals.

The few surviving structures thought to have been slave houses speak in muted tones through their cramped frames of the lives of almost half of the county's residents throughout the plantation era. Their small one-room-and-loft size suggest the hard physical life of slavery. The few surviving putative air-cure tobacco barns are the last link to the way of curing tobacco - the county's premier plantation era cash crop - that was common in the old tobacco belt prior to the Civil War.

The county's transition from a mixed farm economy to one dominated by the production of tobacco was slow but steady in the years following the Civil War. In 1880 county farms were still growing a variety of crops, but by 1920 the total victory of the bright leaf was unquestioned, as reflected by the volume of tobacco produced versus staple crops. The presence of numerous tobacco outbuildings, and the scarcity of other outbuildings, with the exception of those devoted to the domestic needs of the farm, is a physical reflection of this statistical fact. The surviving outbuildings, coupled with the farmhouses they stand so close to, provide a detailed picture of farm life during the years between the Civil War and World War II. The labor

intensive nature of bright leaf farming is evident in the tobacco outbuildings. Tobacco was hung in the barns and packhouses and processed in the abandoned striphouses, work done almost exclusively by hand throughout the bright leaf era.

Registration Requirements:

The county's surviving plantation and bright leaf era outbuildings provide an extra measure of meaning to the dwellings they accompany. They stand as part of the house site, rather than individually significant properties. They are primarily important because of their traditional forms and functions and because of the feelings and associations, in company with each other and dwellings, that they convey. To meet registration requirements, they should have been built between 1746 and 1937; they should retain sufficient physical features to identify their traidtional construction or form; they should retain sufficient physical features to evoke the way of life of the time of their construction; and they should stand in association with a dwelling or dwelling site.

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

[x] See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

[x] See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- [x] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: Survey and Planning Branch, North Carolina Division of Archives & History

I. Form Prepared By

name/title Marvin A. Brown/Architectural Historian & Patricia Esperon/Historian
organization Granville County-Oxford Historic Survey date 8/17/87
street & number P.O. Box 1556 (State Historic Pres. Office) telephone 919-693-1491
city or town Oxford state N.C. zip code 27565

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number G Page 1 SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The multiple property listing of historic and architectural resources of Granville County, North Carolina, is based upon a 1986 architectural resources inventory of the county, and a 1987 National Register nomination project, conducted by Marvin A. Brown and Patricia A. Esperon under the auspices of the Survey and Planning Branch of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. The inventory identified more than 525 properties and groups of properties. Every passable road, public and private, leading to a known or suspected property was driven during the inventory and every building marked on the USGS topographical maps for the county was viewed. Properties from vernacular to high style were recorded, with emphasis given to age and rarity, and representativeness of types and styles. Every pre-Civil War property was recorded, as were the vast majority of properties predating the turn of the century. Those not recorded were passed over because of alterations that substantially damaged their integrity. Properties erected between 1900 and World War II were more selectively recorded, with emphasis given to the more unaltered, unusual or particularly representative ones. For each recorded property: locations were noted on USGS topographical maps; photographs were taken; computerized inventory forms were completed; research, including the checking of deeds and secondary sources and the taking of oral histories, was conducted; and narrative architectural and historical descriptions were written. This work was conducted on a full-time basis by Marvin Brown during 1986 and on a full-time basis for the last half of the year by Patricia Esperon. In 1987 both Brown and Esperon also worked full-time in the county, further researching the inventoried properties and drafting National Register nominations. Brown has a B.A. and M.A. in American Civilization from the University of Pennsylvania and a J.D. from Stanford University. Esperon has a B.A. in History from Duke University. Because no scholarly history of the county existed, a short history of Granville County was commisssioned for this project from Andrew J. Carlson, upon which much of the content of the historic context statements was based. Carlson has a B.A. in History from Johns Hopkins University and is writing his dissertation in late nineteenth century North Carolina history for Brown University. The property type statements were based upon the individual survey files and a short architectural history of the county written by Brown. The repository for all of the inventory materials is the Survey and Planning Branch of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The properties are grouped under three historic contexts that conform with the three major themes that best define the county and its properties: (1) the plantation era between the founding of the county and the Civil War; (2) the influence of the raising of bright leaf tobacco on the development of rural Granville County between the Civil War and World War II; (3) and the influence of the bright leaf during those years on the development of the county seat of Oxford. The property types are organized chronologically by style and by function.

The inventory identified a wide range of resources in the county spanning the years from the Revolutionary War to World War II. Integrity requirements were based upon a knowledge of existing properties. The architectural and physical features of the county's finer surviving properties, derived from the inventory, were considered in developing the outlines of potential registration requirements. The general statements about the lack of comprehensive integrity of many properties - also included within the statements of registration requirements - are based upon knowledge of the deteriorated condition and tenuous position of many of the county's rarest and most historically evocative and important properties. The total number of Granville County properties placed on the Study List for nomination to the National Register at the January 8, 1987, North Carolina Professional Review Committee meeting was 120 individual rural properties, five rural districts, one large Oxford historic district and five individual Oxford properties. Approximately 90 percent of these study list properties are dwellings and farms, with several grist mills, masonic lodges, churches, tobacco manufactories and fraternal and commercial buildings making up the rest. The few nominated properties included with this multiple property nomination are the first phase of nominations. They were chosen because they are exceptional examples of important styles and types in the county and exceptionally evocative of historical ways of life in the county. The nominated properties were limited to a small selection of inventoried properties because of budgetary and time limitations imposed by the National Register project under which this work has been performed. Also because of budgetary and time constraints, the Historic District in Oxford was limited to the discrete core of the town's oldest, finest and most significant properties. This Multiple Property Documentation Form has been drafted to cover all identified property types in the county,

however, to facilitate the addition of individual properties and districts to the Register in the future.

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Calvin Hart, Frances Puckett, Mamie Puckett, Alma Husketh, Robinette Husketh, Lillian Munn, E. V. Strother, Charlie Winston, Mrs. J. R. Williams, Fred Blackwell and Kathryn Royster, provided information about individual properties. Royster Washington, Kathryn Royster, Una Johnson, and Tom Ragland were particularly helpful in providing information concerning general county history.

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