

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR _____ THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District
AND/OR COMMON _____

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER _____
CITY, TOWN Durham VICINITY OF 2nd CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT _____
STATE North Carolina CODE 037 COUNTY Durham CODE 063

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME See continuation sheet
STREET & NUMBER _____
CITY, TOWN _____ VICINITY OF _____ STATE _____

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

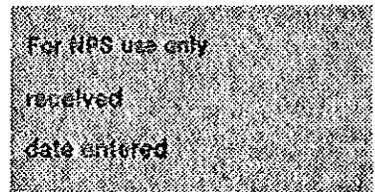
COURTHOUSE, Register of Deeds
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Durham County Judicial Building
STREET & NUMBER 201 E. Main St.
CITY, TOWN Durham STATE North Carolina

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Claudia Roberts Brown
Consultant to the City of Durham
ORGANIZATION _____ DATE June 1984
STREET & NUMBER 301 E. Poplar Ave. TELEPHONE 919/968-1181
CITY OR TOWN Carrboro STATE North Carolina

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Durham Cotton Mills Village
Continuation sheet Historic District

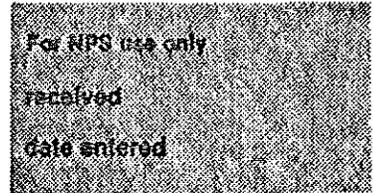
Item number 4

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<u>Property</u>	<u>Owner</u>
610 Middle St.	King-C H.O. Chesson P. O. Box 2746 Durham, NC 27705
612 Middle St.	King-C
614 Middle St.	Sedgefield Development Corp. H.O. Chesson 701 Morreene Rd. Durham, NC 27705
616 Middle St.	King-C
618 Middle St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.
620 Middle St.	King-C
607 Middle St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.
609 Middle St.	King-C
611 Middle St.	King-C
613 Middle St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.
615 Middle St.	King-C
617 Middle St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.
619 Middle St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.
600Z Reservoir St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.
610 Reservoir St.	King-C
612 Reservoir St.	Mickie Helms 612 Reservoir St.
614 Reservoir St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.

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Historic District

<u>Property</u>	<u>Owner</u>
616 Reservoir St.	King-C
618 Reservoir St.	Sedgefield Development Corp.
620 Reservoir St.	King-C
624 Reservoir St.	King-C
609 Reservoir St.	King-C
611 Reservoir St.	King-C
613 Reservoir St.	Alan B. Fearing Carrboro, NC 27510
615 Reservoir St.	King-C
617 Reservoir St.	Alan B. Fearing
619 Reservoir St.	Alan B. Fearing
621 Reservoir St.	Alan B. Fearing
623 Reservoir St.	King-C

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District covers 5.92 acres of level terrain occupied by twenty dwellings in the 600 blocks of Middle and Reservoir streets. The fifteen houses that lend the small district its distinctive character date from the mid 1880s when the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company (popularly known as Durham Cotton Mills) was established. Later additions to this textile firm, Durham's first, remain standing approximately one hundred yards north of the remnants of the Durham Cotton Mills Village included in this nomination. The district has been completely isolated from the mill and the rest of the East Durham neighborhood by the six-lane East-West Expressway which covers all of the land between E. Frontage Rd., the district's northern boundary, and the south property line of the mill, now the Southchem plant. (Ironically, the highway affords the best overall view of the district.) Due to the surrounding terrain, the district is also removed from most of the neighboring development south of the highway. Aside from a few houses built within the past twenty years at the south end of Middle St., all neighboring residential development, most of it also modern, is situated to the west beyond a deep ravine. To the south and east, dense underbrush and woods separate the district from the Durham Technical Institute campus, light industrial buildings, and warehouses, all built after World War II.

The isolation of the district is heightened by the survival of the quasi-rural ambiance characteristic of late nineteenth and early twentieth century mill villages. The mill houses are arranged in straight rows with uniform set-backs along both sides of Middle and Reservoir streets, fairly narrow lanes paved and curbed for the first time around 1970. There are no tree canopies shading the streets. Like most mill villages, the houses were placed on their lots so that they have very shallow front yards and large back yards with plenty of room for vegetable gardens. Today there are sizable gardens in several of the rear yards during the warm months. The mill village atmosphere also remains apparent in the absence of foundation plantings at many of the houses. Only a few of the mill houses have an occasional shrub at their bases, but all of the yards are covered with grass and in most there are one or two mature hardwood or fruit trees, usually close to the property line. Most of the rear yards contain one or two crudely made wooden storage sheds, evidently constructed by tenants rather than the textile company. Cement driveway ramps were poured with the curbs, but none of the lots has a paved driveway.

All fifteen mill houses in the district are one-and-one-half-story gable-end structures that are one room deep with a central chimney. Twelve of these houses have rear one-story, gable-roofed ells and three on Reservoir St. have tall one-story sheds across most of the rear elevations. Lacking dormers, the low one-and-one-half-story form of the main block is known as a "story and a jump"; here the type is so short

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that the roof is only a few inches taller than the porch roof, leaving no room for upper story windows on the main facade. (A single second-story window appears in each gable end.) The five-room single-family houses resting on brick piers with cinder block underpinning range in area from 680 to 850 square feet, depending upon the sizes of later additions. All of these houses have symmetrical three-bay facades with a centered front door and less than full-facade shed-roofed porches. As originally constructed, the fenestration consisted of tall and fairly narrow four-over-four double-hung sashes throughout. In each house, the main entrance leads to a small foyer with access on either side to the two principal first floor rooms -- a parlor and a bedroom -- sheathed entirely in beaded pine ceiling board. There are two more bedrooms upstairs; the rear ell contains the kitchen. Bathrooms were installed in small rear shed additions or portions of the rear porches in the 1950s.

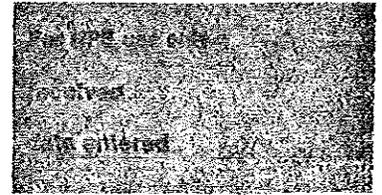
The most distinctive aspect of the mill houses in the Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District is the board and molded batten sheathing on their main facades and rear ells. As constructed, the other elevations were covered in plain weatherboards. Except for the molded battens, these houses have no ornamental elements. All of the cornices are simple, without any boxing or molding; the eaves of the front and rear facades of the main blocks contain exposed rafter ends. Originally, all of the porch supports were slightly chamfered; there is no indication that they ever were decorated with spandrels or railings. The chimneys are plain, capped only with two courses in a single tier of corbelling.

Although the basic configuration of a one-room-deep rectangular main block with a rear ell is typical for mill houses, these dwellings are unusual for their very low story-and-a-jump height and their board and batten sheathing. As the first mill houses built in Durham, they have no local prototype. Due to the loss of records concerning the construction of the Durham Cotton Mills factory and village, specific sources for the house designs remain unknown. Furthermore, inventories of several other textile communities across the North Carolina piedmont, including those in Cabarrus County owned by the Odells, founding principals in the Durham venture, have not revealed any other mill houses with the board and batten main facades and low story-and-a-jump form.

Despite alteration to all of the exteriors, the fifteen century-old mill houses have retained their essential integrity. Although shed additions of various sizes have been built on the rear elevations, some of the chimney stacks have been shortened, covered with cement or rebuilt, and several of the front porches have been partially enclosed with half-walls and screening, the basic configurations and distinctive board and batten sheathing on the main facades have survived. All replacement porch posts are four by fours, similar to the original, slightly chamfered supports. Most of the houses retain their raised seam tin roofs and their original windows on the main facades and rear ells. The replacement six-over-six double-hung sash windows

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that appear in all of the gable ends are compatible with the original fenestration.

The deteriorated condition of the fifteen mill houses reflects their ownership by absentee landlords, who own all of the property in the district. (It must be acknowledged, however, that the owners' benign neglect also is a primary reason that these rental houses are fairly intact.) Rather than making substantial repairs to the nineteenth-century dwellings, the owners have begun to replace them with identical one-story, brick-veneered duplexes. Since 1980, five of these intrusions have been constructed in the district; one is a replacement for a mill house that was razed and four stand * on lots (three on Middle Street and one on Reservoir Street) not previously developed. The continued neglect of the remaining mill houses suggests that they face destruction to make room for redevelopment of their lots.

The structures, of course, are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often evident only in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structures. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probably that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

* The houses were laid out by the mill so that they has wide side yards. When the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company sold its real estate to private individuals in the late 1930s, the blocks were platted into narrow lots, resulting in several vacant lots scattered among the mill houses.

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INVENTORY LIST

Note: All of the story-and-a-jump houses date from the mid 1880s; unless otherwise noted, they were constructed with rear one-story ells. The duplexes date from the early 1980s. Durham city directories did not list residents of the Durham Cotton Mills Village by street address prior to the mid-1920s. Through the next decades, until the closing of the mill, many of the houses had a succession of occupants. Thus it has proven impossible to determine any long-term owners for whom these houses could be named.

Middle Street

- C 1. House. 612 Middle St. Story-and-a-jump house. Porch enclosed with plywood and screening; concrete covers chimney. House retains original raised seam tin roof throughout.
- C 2. House. 616 Middle St. Story-and-a-jump house. Front porch has been enclosed with plywood and screening.
- I 3. Duplex. 618 Middle St. Offset one-story, gable-front units, brick-veneered.
- C 4. House. 620 Middle St. Story-and-a-jump house. Front porch enclosed with plywood and screening. Roof of rear ell retains original raised seam tin.
- C 5. House. 609 Middle St. Story-and-a-jump house. Front porch has replacement piers, underpinning and steps and has been enclosed with plywood and screening. Original four-over-four windows on main facade; raised seam tin roof.
- C 6. House. 611 Middle St. Story-and-a-jump house. Porch has been enclosed with plywood and screening and rear ell has been widened and sheathed in German siding. Replacement piers and underpinning of cinder block throughout; chimney has been rebuilt. Original four-over-four windows on main facade; raised seam tin roof.
- I 7. Duplex 613 Middle St. Offset one-story, gable-front units, brick-veneered.
- C 8. House. 615 Middle St. Story-and-a-jump house. Front porch enclosed with plywood and screening, chimney covered with concrete. Raised seam tin roof.
- I 9. Duplex. 617 Middle St. Offset one-story, gable-front units, brick-veneered.

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- I 10. Duplex. 619 Middle St. Offset one-story, gable-front units, brick-veneered.

Reservoir Street

- C 11. House. 610 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house. Replacement 4-inch by 4-inch posts at front porch. Chimney has been rebuilt. Roof of rear ell retains raised seam tin.
- C 12. House. 612 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house. Chimney rebuilt and porch enclosed with plywood and screening. Raised seam tin remains on rear ell.
- I 13. Duplex. 614 Reservoir St. Offset one-story, gable-front units, brick-veneered.
- C 14. House. 616 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house with unaltered chimney and original tall shed across most of rear elevation. Also distinctive for molded porch railings with match stick balusters (placed on the vertical at the ends of the porch and on the diagonal at the front), believed to be an early addition; 4-inch by 4-inch porch posts are replacements.
- C 15. House. 620 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house with original tall shed across most of rear elevation and 4-inch by 4-inch replacement porch posts. Retains raised seam tin roof.
- C 16. House. 624 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house with 4-inch by 4-inch replacement porch posts; top half of chimney removed. Retains original tall four-over-four windows on main facade and raised seam tin roof.
- C 17. House. 609 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house with 4-inch by 4-inch replacement porch posts. Raised seam tin roof; original windows on main facade. Very shallow gabled wing covered in German siding added to rear of main block.
- C 18. House. 611 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house with chimney intact. Main facade retains original tall and narrow windows; raised seam tin roof on rear ell.
- C 19. House. 615 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-jump house with unaltered chimney. Raised seam tin roof on rear ell.

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- C 20. House, 623 Reservoir St. Story-and-a-half house with original engaged shed across most of rear elevation. Porch retains original chamfered post. Chimney has been stuccoed.

B SIGNIFICANCE

_____ NATIONAL

_____ STATE

_____ **X** LOCAL

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES mid 1880s

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District is the largest and most intact surviving portion of Durham's first mill village, built in 1884 to 1885 by the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company (popularly known as Durham Cotton Mills). In partnership with members of the Odell family, who had established solid reputations as textile manufacturers with Cannon Mills and other mills in North Carolina's southern piedmont, Julian S. Carr founded the mill in 1884 with some of his profits from W.T. Blackwell & Co., then Durham's leading tobacco manufacturer. Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company heralded the successful diversification of Durham's economy by tapping a ready supply of labor and raw materials and manufacturing a product needed by the local tobacco industry. Initially producing a grade of cloth for tobacco pouches, the mill soon branched out to gingham and other cloths. For more than fifty years, the historic district housed workers in the Durham Cotton Manufacturing mill, which in 1899 came under the control of the Duke family, George W. Watts, and William A. Erwin, principal shareholders of Erwin Cotton Mills in West Durham. Although it has been privately owned rental property inhabited by laborers in a variety of businesses since the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company closed in 1938, the district retains its original quasi-rural ambiance. The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District also is important for its fifteen identical mill houses believed to be unique in the North Carolina piedmont today for their narrow and low story and a jump forms with board and batten main facades.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District is the largest and most intact surviving portion of Durham's first mill village, built in 1884 to 1885 by Julian S. Carr and members of the Odell family of Concord and Greensboro, North Carolina. This mill was the first of several that successfully diversified Durham's economy.
- B. The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District reflects the accomplishments of Julian S. Carr and members of the Odell family who built the mill complex, as well as those of the Duke family, George W. Watts, William A. Erwin and other shareholders of Erwin Cotton Mills who gained control of the East Durham mill in 1899.
- C. The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District also is important for its fifteen identical mill houses believed to be unique in the North Carolina piedmont today for their narrow and low story and a jump forms with board and batten main facades.

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In 1884, industrialist Julian S. Carr piloted Durham's entry into textile manufacturing by establishing the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company with some of his profits from W.T. Blackwell & Co., then Durham's leading tobacco manufacturer. In preparation for this new venture, Carr wisely had sought associates experienced in textile manufacturing. He found able partners in John M. Odell, a major organizer and president of Cannon Mills in Concord, N.C.; his brother, James A. Odell, who was vice president of Cannon Mills; and John M. Odell's son, William R. Odell, who was active in Cannon Mills and his father's other textile firms. Carr's fourth partner was William H. Branson, an experienced mill manager associated with the Odells. Durham's first cotton mill was incorporated on March 14, 1884 with a capitalization of \$130,000. Although Julian S. Carr was the company's largest shareholder, the more experienced John M. Odell was named president of Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company. Branson was the actual manager of the new venture, in addition to filling the offices of secretary and treasurer.

In July of 1884, a large crowd gathered for the laying of the cornerstone of the new factory, located on the railroad line approximately one mile east of Durham's town limits. The ceremony featured speeches by local dignitaries, a Methodist choir, and an address by a minister from Concord. According to the newspaper, the Durham Tobacco Plant, "it was a joyous day for all true Durhamites." Historian Durden describes the general attitude of Durham's citizens toward the new mill:

Unaware of the host of new problems that would come with the 'Mill Village' and its woefully underprivileged white population, Durham rejoiced in its new cotton factory and strove to prove to the rest of the world, and particularly to any Northerners who came through, that a Southern community could indeed keep up with the awe-inspiring progress of the modern world of steam and the factory whistle.

Construction of the new mill and its village, the nucleus of the East Durham neighborhood, continued through the latter part of 1884 and the early months of 1885. The mill complex fronted E. Pettigrew St. and the railroad. The company built most of the houses for its employees south of the mill, along Troy, Middle and Reservoir streets. When the mill opened in the spring of 1885, it employed more than 200 hands working 11.5 hour days six days a week. They operated 8,568 spindles, 200 looms and one finisher. Initially, the factory produced cloth used in the manufacture of tobacco bags sold to W.T. Blackwell and Co. The mill was a success from the beginning and soon it began to produce other grades of cloth -- first chambrays and then gingham and colored goods. In 1889, the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company increased its capitalization to \$150,000.

Undaunted by the establishment of new mills in East Durham and West Durham, the area's first textile mill continued to prosper throughout the 1890s. Sizable one- and

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Two-story additions, most of them frame, were made to the factory throughout the remaining years of the century. By the middle of the decade, the mill accommodated 11,016 spindles and 244 looms turning out brown sheetings, domets and chambrays. Company expansion included the purchase in 1891 of a house close to the Durham town limits for W.H. Branson and his family, as well as construction at the west edge of the mill tract of a two-story house for the mill superintendent (no longer standing.)¹⁰ The mill also built several one-and-one-half- and two-story duplexes east and west of the factory. A block of one-story single-family houses on Barbee St. (most of them destroyed) were rented by mill workers but may have been constructed by private individuals for investment. The 1895 Hand-Book of Durham states, "On the premises are a large number of tenement houses for the employees and their families, 225 of the number being daily employed in this mill."¹¹

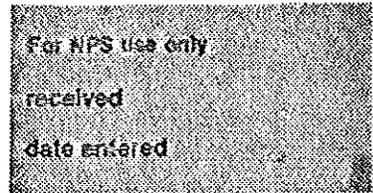
In the paternalistic tradition of textile mills, the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company attended to many of the needs of its employees. The Hand-Book states, "Not far from this factory and for the benefit of the employees, are two well constructed and roomy church buildings, one of Methodist denomination and the other of Baptist, each conducting Sunday Schools of large membership."¹² Although the textile company operated its own general store, many of the mill workers undoubtedly also patronized the wide range of shops on both sides of the railroad tracks near the mill. Owned by interests independent of the mill, these businesses reflected the rapid growth of East Durham that was generated by the textile firm's success.

In 1899, control of the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company passed from Julian S. Carr and the Odells to the principal shareholders of the Erwin Cotton Mills, the venture launched in West Durham in 1892 by the Duke family and their associates.¹³ Although the exact circumstances of the transfer of the ownership are not known, it may be surmised that the Dukes, George W. Watts, and William A. Erwin gained control of Durham Cotton Manufacturing through stock purchases.¹⁴ Upon the takeover, Jesse Harper Erwin, brother of William A. Erwin, became general manager, secretary and treasurer of Durham Cotton Manufacturing, replacing Branson who had been scalded to death in the East Durham mill when a steam pipe burst earlier¹⁵ in 1899. William S. Erwin was the new president and Benjamin N. Duke vice president.

Durham Cotton Manufacturing's considerable growth during the 1900s included substantial enlargement of the plant at the turn of the century,¹⁶ Although many additional mill hands were hired, it appears that the new employees rented houses from private individuals as there is no indication that Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company constructed any houses after 1900. The City of Durham Illustrated, published in 1910, states that the mill employed approximately 500 hands making gingham and cheviots (a sturdy¹⁷ soft-finished plain or twill cotton shirting) on 22,554 spindles and 820 looms.

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The relatively sparse information on the mill workers who lived in the Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District has been gathered from city directories. Like the great majority of textile manufacturers, Durham Cotton Manufacturing only hired whites to work in its mill, except for a few blacks (none of whom lived in the mill-built housing) for the most menial custodial tasks. The positions held by occupants of the historic district reflected the overall distribution of jobs among the mill's total work force, with most of the district's workers employed as mill hands and a few of the more skilled workers employed as machinists and weavers. Usually, two or more household members, including wives and teen-age children, worked in the mill. Many of the houses were occupied by large families and the repetition of names at various addresses suggests that extended families worked in the mill for successive generations. It was not unusual for households with several adults for one of its members to find employment outside of the mill. For example, during the 1920s, Fletcher Crawford worked as a salesman for City Dairy while his sons worked for Durham Cotton Manufacturing as mill hands.

Through the 1910s and 1920s, Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company continued to prosper, its capitalization increased to \$1 million in 1922.¹⁸ During the 1930s, however, the company, like scores of other textile mills throughout the South, became a casualty of the Depression. The mill gradually decreased employment from 500 to under 300 workers in 1938, and in November of that year the company filed dissolution papers with the North Carolina Secretary of State.¹⁹ In February, 1939, Jesse Harper Erwin and Y.E. Smith, the company's surviving directors, deeded all of the Durham Cotton Manufacturing real estate to Durham Realty and Insurance Company for disposal.²⁰

Throughout 1939 and into 1940, all of the mill houses were purchased by private individuals for investment rental houses. City directories indicate that within one year of the mill's closing, all of the occupants of Middle St. were blacks who worked as maids, tobacco workers and in other unskilled positions. In contrast, through the 1950s Reservoir St. was occupied exclusively by whites. The 1940 city directory indicates that some of the former Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company employees found work in other textile mills and continued for a few years to rent their houses on Reservoir St. By the early 1950s, however, Reservoir St.'s only living association with the mill that produced it was the widow of a former Durham Cotton Manufacturing mill hand, Alex F. Poole. Very few residents of the district worked for the Durham Container Corp. and Mead Containers Inc., which occupied the former textile plant. In 1951, two heads of households on Reservoir St. worked for Durham Container Corp. and the rest worked for a variety of businesses, all of them non-industrial.

For a many reasons including neglect and vandalism, elective redevelopment, and highway construction, most of the more than seven dozen houses built by the mill have been destroyed during the past twenty years. The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District is the only surviving portion of the Durham Cotton Manufacturing

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Company's houses that remains relatively intact. Although there are several other mill houses scattered among nearby blocks, each of them has lost the integrity of either its setting or the structure itself. Today, the district is part of a small, exclusively black residential neighborhood, most of it deteriorated. Many of the occupants are unemployed or elderly retirees. Except for one owner-occupied house, all of the dwellings are rental houses owned by only two individuals. Isolated from the former Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company mill and the rest of East Durham by the East-West Expressway built in the early 1970s, the district faces continued erosion as its century-old mill houses are allowed to deteriorate until they must be destroyed.

NOTES

- ¹ Robert F. Durden, The Dukes of Durham, 1865-1929 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975), p. 123.
- ² William K. Boyd, The Story of Durham (Durham: Duke University Press, 1925), p. 120.
- ³ Biographical History of North Carolina, ed. by Samuel A. Ashe, Vol. II (Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1905), pp. 317-26; and Durden, p. 124.
- ⁴ Durham County Register of Deeds (DCRD), Book of Incorporations A, page 7.
- ⁵ Durham Tobacco Plant (as reprinted in The Truth, July 1884), in Durden, p. 124.
- ⁶ Durden, p. 124.
- ⁷ Hand-Book of Durham, 1895, pp. 41-42; and Sanborn Map Co., "Durham, N.C.," 1884 series. The 1891 "Bird's-Eye Map of Durham" depicts 47 houses identical to those in the district on Troy, Middle and Reservoir streets, extending from the south side of the mill. In all likelihood, all of these houses were built when the mill opened in order to accommodate most of the 200 hands.
- ⁸ Boyd, p. 121.
- ⁹ Hand-Book of Durham, p. 41.
- ¹⁰ DCRD, Deed Book 22, page 13.
- ¹¹ Hand-Book of Durham, p. 42.

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12 Ibid.

13 Boyd, p. 121.

14 There is no recorded sale of the East Durham mill, which remained an independent company under its original name. There also is no indication that the takeover was unfriendly. Carr was devoting most of his attention to expansion of his Durham Hosiery Mills, created in 1898, and Golden Belt Manufacturing Company. It is highly probable that he sold his interest in his first mill in order to raise the capital for construction of new plants for his two other textile firms. (These factories were begun in 1900.) In 1898 he had sold his W.T. Blackwell & Co. to Union Tobacco Co., acquired by The American Tobacco Company trust in 1899. Another factor in Carr's decision to divest himself of the East Durham mill may have been the loss in March 1899 of his partner and general manager, W.H. Branson, killed in a plant accident.

15 Durden, p. 133; Boyd, p. 121; and The City of Durham Illustrated (Durham: The Merchants Association, 1910), inside front cover.

16 The new owners increased the company's capitalization to \$225,000 in 1899, followed by increases in 1900 and 1907 to a total of \$450,000. Boyd, p. 121.

17 The City of Durham Illustrated, inside front cover.

18 DCRD, Book of Incorporations 3, page 292. In the list of major stockholders included in this amendment to the company's incorporation, J.B. Duke is the largest, with 149 shares. Owners of thirty to seventy shares (the next highest numbers held after Duke's 149) are the Treasurer of Trinity College, Benjamin N. Duke, J.S. Hill, William A. Erwin, and Jesse Harper Erwin. After the deaths of J.B. and Benjamin N. Duke in the 1920s, new articles of incorporation were devised increasing the number of shares to 10,000 at \$100 each in July 1929; the two principal shareholders at this time were J.S. Hill with 595 shares and William Erwin with 525, followed by Jesse Harper Erwin and John F. Wily, each owning 125 shares.

19 Industrial Directory and Reference Book of the State of North Carolina (State of North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, 1938), p. 354; and DCRD, Book of Incorporations 5, page 137.

20 DCRD, Deed Book 131, page 134. Durham Public Warehouses, which bought the mill tract in 1940, occupied the buildings in the northern portion of the property and leased the large one-story brick building to the rear to the Durham Container Company. In the mid-1950s, the entire plant was purchased by Mead Containers Inc., which demolished the original four-story mill built in 1884. In 1979, the plant was bought by Southchem, which rehabilitated the remaining buildings.

For more than five decades The Durham Cotton Mills Village Historic District was part of a neighborhood of mill workers employed by the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company (popularly known as Durham Cotton Mills). Its historical background naturally includes the histories both of the company that built the village and of the workers who lived in it. The district is typical in that the history of the company is readily accessible through incorporation papers and deeds on file in county offices, but the history of the operatives is more elusive, gleaned from city directories and oral histories. As Durham's first textile mill, the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company also is documented in several secondary sources. The history of the district's mill worker occupants, however, is particularly difficult to determine as there has not been any related oral history compiled. Although the district retains the atmosphere of a mill village, very few mill workers have lived there since 1939 when the company dissolved and sold all of its real estate. Thus, the focus of this essay is a corporate history with analyses of physical development and population based upon study of insurance maps and city directories, respectively.

After the tremendous growth of Durham's tobacco industry in the 1870s, it was natural that the 1880s should witness a diversification of the town's economic base. According to historian Robert F. Durden, "Tobacco had indeed been the making of Durham...but...Durhamites were too canny to pin all of their hopes on one product."¹ The textile industry was flourishing elsewhere across the North Carolina piedmont, and for several years Durham's citizens had been eager for their own mill. Durham historian W.K. Boyd writes,

The pioneers of industry were not satisfied merely with the manufacture of tobacco. Like the leaders of all economic communities, they desired a diversification of enterprises, and the first successful effort towards diversification was an industry that would find a market for its product in the needs of the tobacco factories; viz. the manufacture of cotton goods.²

Durham seemed to be a logical site for a textile mill. In addition to the local tobacco industry's need for cloth with which to package its chewing and smoking tobacco, there was a ready plentiful supply of raw materials and labor, as well as a railroad for easy shipment of goods.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Boyd, William K. The Story of Durham. Durham, Duke University Press, 1925.
 Durden, Robert F. The Dukes of Durham, 1865-1929. Durham: Duke University Press, 1975.
 Durham County Register of Deeds. Durham County Judicial Building. Durham, N.C.
Hand-Book of Durham, 1895. There is a copy of this book in the North Carolina Room of The Durham Public Library.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5.92 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	6,9,0	8,5,0	3,9	8,3	3,0,0	B	1,7	6,9,1	0,7,0	B	2	3	2,5,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,7	6,9,1	0,2,0	3,9	8,3	1,8,0	D	1,7	6,9,0	8,2,0	B	2	3	2,0,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Durham County Tax Map 200: Block 5, lots 4 - 10
 Block 6, lots 1 - 7 & 14 - 20
 Block 7, lot 2
 Block 8, lots 18 - 25