United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. 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. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property
   historic name: Garner Farm
   other names/site number: ____________________________

2. Location
   street & number: W side NC 125 at overpass over I-95
   city, town: Days Crossroads

3. Classification
   Ownership of Property: □ private □ public-local □ public-State □ public-Federal
   Category of Property: □ building(s) □ district □ site □ structure □ object
   Number of Resources within Property
   Contributing: □ 3 buildings □ 1 sites □ 6 structures □ 4 objects
   Noncontributing: □ 4 buildings □ 1 sites □ 6 structures □ 10 Total
   Name of related multiple property listing: NONE
   Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. □ See continuation sheet.
   Signature of certifying official: ____________________________ Date: 4/19/90
   State or Federal agency and bureau: ____________________________
   In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. □ See continuation sheet.
   Signature of commenting or other official: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________
   State or Federal agency and bureau: ____________________________

5. National Park Service Certification
   I, hereby, certify that this property is: □ entered in the National Register.
   □ See continuation sheet.
   □ determined eligible for the National Register. □ See continuation sheet.
   □ determined not eligible for the National Register.
   □ removed from the National Register.
   □ other, (explain): ____________________________
   Signature of the Keeper: ____________________________ Date of Action: ____________________________
6. Function or Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
<th>Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic: single dwelling</td>
<td>Domestic: single dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic: secondary structure</td>
<td>Domestic: secondary structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agric/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding</td>
<td>Agric/Subsistence: agric. outbuilding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agric/Subsistence: processing</td>
<td>Agric/Subsistence: processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agric/Subsistence: agricultural field</td>
<td>Agric/Subsistence: agricultural field</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. Description

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)</th>
<th>Materials (enter categories from instructions)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>foundation brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: vernacular farm outbuildings</td>
<td>walls weatherboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roof asphalt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other metal</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Describe present and historic physical appearance.
Description

The view westward from the I-95 highway overpass near Day's Crossroads discloses a contrast: the attractiveness and integrity of the Garner Farm complex, and the intrusion of Interstate 95, which cuts through the property. The interstate separates a 40 acre tract containing a delapidated tenant house, a field, and woodland, from the core of the farm to the west, containing approximately 110 acres. (This 40-acre east tract is not included in this nomination.) The farm is in north Halifax County, about two miles south of Weldon, an important railroad town in earlier times.

The area being nominated contains 14 resources. Although 10 of these are noncontributing, the farm still retains its pre-1940 integrity because these post-1940 resources are set inconspicuously behind the house. All four of the noncontributing buildings are 1940s and 1950s outbuildings of traditional design. The six post-1940 structures are small-scale sheds and storage structures located, for the most part, at the end of the farm lane near the woods, and do not detract from the dominant features of farmhouse and farmland. In the mid-twentieth century, two small house lots were cut out of the farm along S.R. 1627, the north boundary, for the current owner's sons' residences.

The seat of the farm is a well-maintained frame I-house facing NC 125 about 250 feet off the road down a dirt lane. Immediately behind the house in a cluster are the domestic outbuildings: a frame smokehouse and a frame washhouse/cookhouse. This domestic cluster is sheltered by a group of shade trees. Just west is a cluster of farm outbuildings, located on either side of a dirt lane branching off the entrance lane. On the side of the lane toward the road is the original detached kitchen, moved here in 1942, and a 1920 frame pack barn. On the opposite side are a frame mule barn, frame cow barn, and a frame tractor shed. At the end of the entrance lane, located near the woods, is a cluster of farm structures: 1948 hog feed shed, 2 frame farrow houses, a metal feed bin and a peanut dryer. The entire 110 acres being nominated maintains the same pattern of flat sandy fields and woodland that was established by original owner L.T. Garner in the first decade of the twentieth century and has been maintained by subsequent generations. The farm's integrity is disrupted only by the passing of I-95 about 500 feet east of the house.

Associated Resources

Contributing Buildings:
C 1. Farmhouse. 1901-1902

The north-facing "triple-A" I-house, three bays wide, with original one-story rear ell, was built between 1900 and 1902. It has a gabled roof with interior end chimneys, pedimented gable ends, a molded box cornice, brick foundation piers with infill brick foundation, 2/2 sash at the second level, 6/6 sash at the first level, and wide plain surrounds. Over the center facade bay is a decorative gable containing a small square four-pane light. The 2/2 sash are said to be 1940s replacements. A small Craftsman window, like those in the kitchen, was added beside the chimney on the east first story wall at this time.

The house has two notable construction features that give it a striking appearance from the highway: the absence of first story windows in the narrow gable ends, and pedimented gable ends. The typical Halifax County I-house has eave returns on the gable ends.

In the early 1940s the house was refurbished and modernized by moving away the original kitchen, connected by a breezeway to the rear ell, and adding a one-bay wide kitchen at the back of the ell. The original front porch, of unknown design, was replaced with a Bungaloid style hip-roofed porch with brick pier and frame pylon supports. The original plain weatherboard is visible only on the ell, beneath the west shed porch that extends the length of the ell. The rest of the house is covered with German siding that was added in 1966, according to the Garner family. The original entrance door was replaced at this time. Despite this updating, the house still maintains integrity as a typical turn-of-the-century I-house.

The original interior plan remains: a diminutive center hall flanked by chambers on each level of the main block, and two chambers with a central chimney in the ell. The house was quite simply finished originally, with post-and-lintel mantels, four and six-panel doors, wide plain surrounds, plastered chambers and tongue-and-groove sheathing in the center hall. A handsome original closed-string stair with turned newel and balusters and molded handrail rises in the hall. Modernization during the 1940s and 1950s resulted in the hall sheathing being sheetrocked, all but the north ell room mantel being removed or replaced, all but a few of the original doors being replaced, a narrow molding added to the plain surrounds, and the addition of a bathroom in the northern bay of the ell porch. The remaining original mantel is a plain but well-crafted post-and-lintel mantel. When the detached kitchen was replaced with an attached kitchen in 1942, the rear ell room, said to have been a bedroom, was converted to the dining room. It was paneled with knotty-pine in the 1950s. The 1942
kitchen is a small narrow room, one bay wide. The ell porch was recently glassed-in. The interior changes, though numerous, are modest and the I-house feeling has remained.

C 2. Kitchen. ca. 1900-1902, moved 1942.
This handsome building is hip-roofed, with a boxed cornice, plain weatherboard, 6/6 sash and four-panel doors. The interior had two tongue-and-groove sheathed rooms flanking a chimney, but the chimney and partition between rooms has been removed. It is in sound condition and is used for storage. Although built along with the house, its design is more reflective of mid-19th century detached kitchens in the area.

C 3. Packhouse. ca. 1920
Small, square, gabled frame barn used originally for storage of cured tobacco. There were two tobacco curing barns nearby that have been demolished.

Contributing Site

C 4. Farm landscape
Present field patterns have remained constant since the beginnings of the farm. The fields, which compose approximately 50% of the total acreage, stretch from NC 125 south to the woods along a branch. The wooded low-lying land along the branch composes approximately 40% of the acreage. All of the cleared acreage is now cultivated, although some of the low land near the woods was hog pasture from the 1930s to the 1960s. With the exception of some minor improvements, such as squaring up the fields along the edge of the woods and putting in open-ditch drainage, the fields are unchanged. The original crops grown on the farm were peanuts, cotton and corn. These are still the major crops. The soil is considered to be highly productive.

Noncontributing Buildings:

NC 5. Smokehouse. Rebuilt in 1950s.
This gable-front weatherboarded building, with a single batten door, rests on a cinderblock foundation. It was rebuilt on the site of the original smokehouse, which had deteriorated. It illustrates the tenacity of traditional outbuilding types into the mid-twentieth century.

NC 6. Washhouse/Cookhouse. 1940s
This small, gablefront weatherboarded building, with 6/6 sash windows and batten doors, was built to house the washing machine.
(the clothesline is nearby). In a small shed room on the east side is an iron wash pot/cooking pot built into a brick oven. Although this would have functioned primarily as a wash pot prior to the introduction of electric washing machines, this one has been used mostly for cooking hog meat and for rendering lard.

NC 7. Mule Barn. 1945
A gable-front two-story center section with flanking sheds, covered with weatherboard. Hay was stored in the center, mules stabled on the sides. The first tractor on this farm was purchased in 1941, but mules continued to be used until about 1950. Mules for this farm were bought in nearby Weldon, but Emporia, Virginia was favored for its particularly good mules.

NC 8. Cow Barn. ca. 1950
Same barn type as the mule barn.

Noncontributing Structures

NC 9. Tractor Shed. 1960
Multiple-bay frame shelter.

NC 10. Shed for hog feed. 1940s
Small frame structure for storage of feed for the large hog operation on the farm from 1935 to 1967. The hogs were fenced in the low pasture and woods along the branch at the back of the farm.

Frame shelter with concrete floor for sows and piglets. Owner says that this was an innovative design for this area because of heated crawl spaces provided for piglets to keep them from being crushed by sows.

Frame shelter with concrete floor for sows and piglets.

Long narrow wood and metal shelter for harvesting wagons, with fan system to keep peanuts and soybeans dry during the drying period.

NC 14. Metal Feed Bin. 1970
8. Statement of Significance
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally    ☐ statewide    ☑ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  ☑ A  ☐ B  ☑ C  ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  ☐ A  ☐ B  ☐ C  ☐ D  ☐ E  ☐ F  ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  Period of Significance  Significant Dates
Agriculture  1902-1940  1902
Architecture

Cultural Affiliation  N/A

Significant Person  Architect/Builder  N/A  Johnson, Jim (local carpenter)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

☑ ☑ See continuation sheet
Statement of Significance

The 110 acre Garner Farm in northeast Halifax is a well-preserved early twentieth century cotton and peanut farm complex representative of agriculture in the county during its 1902-1940 period of significance. Although built for L.T. Garner, the farm was rented and operated after 1911 by his brother A.W. Garner and his family, and therefore illustrates tenancy within the same family during this period. The 1902 I-house with its detached kitchen, the work of local black builder Jim Johnson, represents the prototypical middle-class turn-of-the-century farmstead, which is quickly disappearing from the landscape. The farm has local significance both in Halifax County agriculture and architecture, and has supported three generations of the Garner family.

Agricultural Context

The following brief discussion of agriculture in Halifax County during the period of significance of the Garner Farm, [1902-1940], is drawn from Henry V. Taves' report on his historic architecture survey, "The Rural Architectural Heritage of Halifax County, North Carolina," March 1989, and from the agriculture statistics in the United States Censuses from 1910-1940.

Halifax County, located in northeastern North Carolina close to the Virginia border, has level, productive lands that have been fertile farmland since settlement began in the colonial period. On the eve of the Civil War it was one of the six largest slave-holding counties in the state, and its plantations grew cotton, corn, and tobacco. In the late nineteenth century tobacco increased also, but it paled compared with other counties who more fully embraced tobacco culture, indicating that in Halifax, tobacco supplemented rather than replaced the traditional staple crops of cotton and corn. Beginning in 1880, peanut cultivation began to rise, and by 1910 Halifax County had the third highest acreage in peanuts in North Carolina. (Taves' report, p. 49). The average farm size in the county shrank from 132 acres in 1880 to 63.5 acres in 1925, then rose up to 93 acres in 1940, probably the result of farms being consolidated during the Depression and increasing efficiencies of mechanization. With its 172 acres, the L.T. Garner Farm was above-average in Halifax County.

The years from 1900 to the Depression were prosperous for Halifax County's farms. In 1920, one third of the county's improved farmland was planted in cotton, yielding enough cotton to rank eighth in the state. The Garner Farm had about 20 acres in cotton at
this time. Halifax farmers planted one fourth their acreage in corn, on average, and the Garner Farm had approximately 35 acres in corn. Halifax's peanut production ranked fourth in the state, and the Garner Farm had about 20 acres in peanuts. (1920 U.S. Census, Agricultural Schedules; interview with Raymond Garner, Feb. 9, 1990.) Tobacco was a lucrative source of income in eastern Halifax County in 1920, and A.W. Garner grew tobacco in the 1920s and early 1930s. Like many other North Carolina counties, Halifax County had a high percentage of tenant farmers during this period.

The Depression was hard on Halifax County, in part because of the high percentage of farm tenancy. (By 1920 66% of the county's farms were tenant-operated—the seventh highest percentage in the state.) Prices for cotton and other products plummeted in the 1930s. The foreclosure of the Garner Farm in 1935 by the Federal Land Bank is illustrative of this hard period—if tenants cannot pay rent, then landlords cannot pay the mortgage. The Garner Farm is representative of Halifax County not only in the types of crops being grown, but in its being sharecropped during most of its period of significance. Not until 1937 was the farm sold to L.T.'s brother's family, who had worked it since 1911.

In the 1940s farms began a period of resurgence in Halifax County. Farmers turned to soil conservation practices and to the security of cooperatives, such as the Carolina Cotton Growers Cooperative that the Garners have belonged to since the 1950s. They began to mechanize and abandon their traditional reliance on hand labor. Mechanization was slow to come to Halifax County farms, and even in 1940, several decades after the introduction of the tractor, mules were an important part of local farms. The 1940 census records some 3,000 Halifax County farms using mules, and only 181 farms using tractors.

Architectural Context

The Garner farm house and kitchen are typical of a moderate-sized Halifax County turn-of-the-century farm, and are significant because they belong to a dwindling group of such buildings in the county. The I-house was such an enduring house type in the county from around 1880 to about 1930 that Henry Taves states that it "practically defined what a good farm house should look like." (p. 53, Taves). The type reached its pinnacle of popularity in the county near the turn-of-the-century when L.T. Garner, about thirty years old, with a wife and three children, had his house built. The I-house represented a solid middle-class image. Most of the farmhouses in the Weldon vicinity that have survived from this period are one-story in size, and this two-story house, though with
rather diminutive room sizes, reflects the above-average size of the farm itself. The incidence of the two notable construction details, the pedimented gable ends and the lack of gable end windows, in Halifax County is not known, but none of the other houses surveyed in the Weldon vicinity possess these features.

Even though the kitchen has been moved a short distance away from the house, it is significant because so few detached kitchens have survived in the county. Kitchens were among the most important domestic outbuilding types in the county. The hip roof, two-room form, with tongue-and-groove interior sheathing in the kitchen and dining room, represents a nineteenth century kitchen type. Although all of the outbuildings except for the kitchen and pack house are less than fifty years old, their arrangement follows earlier traditional farmyard plans, with domestic outbuildings arranged in a linear fashion to the rear to define a yard and the farm outbuildings set a greater distance away from the house and more dispersed.

**Historical Background**

In late 1900, Lonnie Thomas Garner (1866-1930) purchased from T.L. Emry and others a parcel of land described as "lying on the Public road leading from Day's Cross Roads along by the lands of the late J. H. Garner, decd. and adjoining the land formerly belonging to Mrs. Ida Allsbrook, C.B. Green, Mrs. Mary P. Moore, and Mrs. Emma J. Emry and containing 142 acres (Halifax County D.B. 134,291). Sometime prior to 1922 L.T. acquired an additional thirty acres on the east side of the existing farm, bringing the total acreage to 172 acres. He acquired these acres from the county after paying the taxes for many years. (This 30 acres is east of Interstate 95). Since 1922, the only change in farm boundaries has been the sale of 13 acres for the right-of-way of Interstate 95 in 1954 (Halifax County D.B. 671,357), and two house lots deeded to the Garner sons along SR 1627.

L. T. Garner had a house built for himself and his family in 1901-1902 by Jim Johnson, a local black carpenter. L. T. Garner's real interest was in the commercial end of agriculture, and in 1906 he moved to the nearest town, Weldon, a thriving railroad market, and opened up a cotton gin and mercantile business which he ran until his death in 1930. From 1906-1911 various sharecroppers lived on the farm. In 1911, L.T. Garner's brother, A.W. Garner, moved his family to the farm and sharecropped until his death in 1935. L. T. mortgaged the farm with the Federal Land Bank of Columbia, South Carolina in 1922 (Halifax County D.B. 336, 247). A.W.'s family continued to rent from L.T.'s widow until 1936, when the Federal Land Bank foreclosed the farm. Raymond Garner (son of A.W.) bought
the farm from the Federal Land Bank in 1937 and still owns it (Halifax Co. D.B. 466, 313). His two sons, Raymond and Carlton, operate the farm now, and two grandsons have received college ag-ricultural degrees and plan to continue the farm.

The real story of this farm revolves around the continuity of crops and the evolution of agricultural methods for raising and harvesting these crops. The flat, sandy soil has been very suitable for two money crops—cotton and peanuts. The major money crop during the first two decades was cotton, with about 20 acres in cotton. At the apex of its production in the 1940s and 1950s, the farm had 25 to 30 acres in cotton. In the late 1950s when cotton allotments were imposed by the federal government, the acreage in cotton went down, and is presently 14 acres. For the past forty years the Garners have belonged to the Carolina Cotton Growers Cooperative in Weldon and market their cotton there. Although cotton has been an important crop since the beginning, cultivation methods have changed greatly since the 1950s. In the old days, in the late fall, 12 to 15 cotton pickers were brought in from Weldon to pick cotton. It was tied up in burlap "sheets" and carried to be ginned and bailed in Weldon. Then it was sold at market. Since the 1960s the farm has had a mechanical cotton harvester.

The second biggest cash crop in the early decades was peanuts, and the early farm had about 20 acres in this crop. Until 1964 the peanuts were harvested by the "shaking and stacking method" using day labor from Weldon. The vines were undercut with a plow, then the "shakers" came through and pulled up each plant and shook the dirt from it. Then each plant was stacked, nuts to the inside, around slender, five-foot high wooden poles spaced five steps apart in the field. Vines were stacked in circular piles up to the top of the poles and left here until they were completely dried. The final step was to separate the nuts from the vines with a mechanical peanut threshing machine. Peanut buyers came to the farm and bought the entire crop, but now they are hauled to market at nearby Day's Crossroads. In 1964 the gas-powered peanut drying shed was installed, and the entire harvesting operation thus became mechanized.

Tobacco was big in eastern Halifax County in the 1910s and 1920s, and A. W. Garner planted a tobacco field west of the house in 1919. About 1920, beside the field, he built several tobacco barns, now demolished, and the pack house that still stands. In the mid-1930s when Raymond Garner took over the farm, he got out of tobacco because he considered it too much work for the result. Tobacco was the most labor-intensive of the local money crops. Other crops and products raised on the farm but now phased out
were peaches and hogs. The field along the road west of the house had a peach orchard in the 1920s. At the end of the farm lane was a large hog operation from 1935-1967, with hogs ranging in large fenced pastures and woods down by the branch.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the Garners, who themselves were sharecroppers (paying a percentage of their profits to the landlord), had tenants of their own to help them run the farm. There were two tenant houses on the Garner Farm. The tenants were "cash" tenants, paid in cash wages. Each tenant household also had some acreage to cultivate themselves. One tenant house still stands in the eastern side of the farm separated by I-95, and the other house was demolished in the 1940s.

The Garners bought their first tractor in 1941 but continued to use mules as well until about 1950. The mule barn on the Garner Farm was built about 1945. The cow barn was also built in the 1940s. The 1930s and 1940s saw diversification into soybeans as well as hogs. By the 1960s the Garner Farm no longer relied on day labor for harvests, but had mechanical harvesting equipment.

Both historically and today, the Garner Farm is representative of the local agricultural economy. In Halifax County farms are still the largest sector of the county economy and a dominant feature of the landscape. The Garnér Farm, with its heavy investment in mechanical equipment, dependence on fertilizers and pesticides, and an almost total abandonment of hand labor, is now a modern family farm being operated harmoniously on a historic farmstead. The farm is run by the two Garner brothers, with occasional help from their sons.
Previous documentation on file (NPS):
☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # ________________________________
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # ________________________________

10. Geographical Data
Acreage of property ______ 110 (approx.)

UTM References
A [18] [3|63|00|0] [40|3|7|80|0]  B [18] [2|62|6|2|0] [40|3|7|5|0]
Zone    Easting   Northing        Zone    Easting   Northing
C [18] [262|0|9|0] [4|0|3|0|9|9|0]  D [18] [262|1|5|0] [4|0|3|1|6|1|0]

Verbal Boundary Description

Being that portion of Halifax County Tax Maps 157 and 175, Parcel # 70, located west of Interstate 95.

Boundary Justification

This approximately 110 acres constitutes the heart of the farm, being all of the original, and current farm acreage with the exception of the approximately 40 acres cut off by Interstate 95 in the 1960s, and two small house lots on SR 1627 given to the two sons in the mid-20th century.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title M. Ruth Little
organization Longleaf Historic Resources
date March 1990
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state NC
city or town Raleigh
zip code 27609
Bibliography


Garner Farm
W side NC 125 at I-95 Overpass, Days Crossroads vic.
Halifax Co., NC

All negatives are on file at the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office

1. View of farmhouse and washhouse, from north
   M. Ruth Little, February 1990

2. 3/4 view of farmhouse, from rear (southwest)
   Henry Taves, March 1987

3. Rear view of farmhouse, smokehouse and washhouse, from southeast
   M. Ruth Little, February 1990

4. Stair hall
   Henry Taves, February 1987

5. Kitchen, from southeast
   Henry Taves, February 1987

6. View of shed, farrow house, dryer and feed bin (10, 11, 13, 14 on sketch map) from south
   M. Ruth Little, February 1990

7. Cow barn, mule barn and shed (7, 8, 9 on sketch map) from east
   M. Ruth Little, February 1990
MILE

"1977

INTERIOR-GEOLoGICAL SURVEY, RESTON VIRGINIA

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route  U.S. Route  State Route