

Department of the Interior
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 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.

Name of Property
Historic name Pendergrass Building
Other names/site number _____

Location
Street & number 6 West Main Street N/A not for publication
City, town Franklin N/A vicinity
State North Carolina code NC county Macon code 113 zip code 28734

Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
private <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
public-local <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
public-State <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
public-Federal <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		_____	_____ Total

Number of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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.

William S. Fair 8-14-91
Signature of certifying official Date

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 _____

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.
Reason: (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls brick
roof asphalt
other iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Pendergrass Building stands in Franklin on the south side of Main Street, directly opposite the Macon County courthouse. To the east and west of the building are open lots, where residences once stood. The open lot to the east is laid out as a garden with brick paths, flower beds and benches. This was the site of the Pendergrass home when the store building was constructed. To the west is an asphalt parking lot for a new bank building, formerly the site of the Munday home. The Pendergrass Building is exhibited to advantage, maintaining a pristine isolation which sets it off from the rest of Main Street. The building directly abuts the sidewalk and behind it is a parking area. A large maple tree, one of the few remaining along Main Street, shades the front of the building.

Constructed in 1904, the Pendergrass Building is a handsome example of popular, modest early twentieth century commercial construction. The main three-bay facade of the rectangular, 27 feet by 70 feet, two-story, brick building contains on the first story a plate glass shop front. It has a large, plate glass window with tall transom of two panes on each side of a recessed central entrance featuring a tall single-pane transom above the original two-leaf wood and glass entrance door. On each side of the entrance door in the slanted walk of the recess is a large plate glass display window resting on a paneled, beadboard kickplate and surmounted by a single-pane transom. Two cast iron, chamfered piers flank the entrance and support an iron beam running across the top of the shop front. On each side of the facade are corner pilasters of pebbledash over brick. Above the iron cross beam, the second story is delineated into three bays by brick wall pilasters creating recessed panels that are corbelled at the top. Each of the three panels contains a window set in a rectangular frame under a segmental arched window head. The windows have stone sills.

On the east and west elevations, the walls rise to a gently stepped parapet shielding a flat roof. These walls contain a series of one-over-one rectangular windows in segmental arches on the second story. There are no first story windows on these elevations. Five corbelled brick chimneys rise above the west wall and two above the east. The east wall shows scars from a previous wood stairway leading from the second floor to the street.

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Pendergrass Building
Macon County, North Carolina

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The rear or south elevation is three-bay with a central, double-leaf door of wood and glass in a segmental arch with a lintel of three courses of headers at the first story. On each side of the door are tall, one-over-one windows, double hung, with large, single pane transoms in segmental arches above each. The foundation of the building is brick, and short, segmental-arched basement windows on the east elevation have been closed with concrete block.

The modest and dignified exterior of the Pendergrass Building sets the stage for a handsomely detailed interior with most of the original casework and store detail intact. The entrance door of the facade opens to a long, rectangular room designed for retail. Near the rear, a flight of stairs with walnut handrail rises from the center aisle to a mezzanine which continues as a balcony along the east and west walls, ending about ten feet short of the front wall. The balcony is supported by turned maple posts which run through wide counters. The counters have beadboard set in panels on the skirt and tongue-and-groove counter tops of heart-of-yellow pine. Shelving on each side of the room, behind the counters, is occasionally fronted by wood-framed glass doors resting on cabinets with tall drawers and cupboards. At the rear of the store, the mezzanine is supported by iron hooks hanging from the ceiling; recently added dry wall partitions at the ends of the counters provide added support. At the rear of the building, the mezzanine has been cut away in front of the tall rear windows. Between the windows, a closed stair leads to a second floor apartment. Balcony and cut-away section have railings of iron with turned oak posts. Wire mesh and a pine railing were added recently to the balcony for security. Floors of the building are random width pine, walls are plaster, and the ceiling of the first floor room is panels of tin cut to imitate wood tongue-and-groove paneling. The floor joists of the balcony are exposed. In 1990 a small bathroom and kitchen were added at the rear of the first floor under the mezzanine. There is evidence of a stove flue in a rear wall, but the building contains no heating system.

On the second story, reached from the enclosed stairway at the rear of the mezzanine, is a spacious, light, apartment. The stairway opens to a square foyer leading to a wide hall along the east side of the building. Rooms open from this hall and from each other. All rooms except the hall contain small fireplaces with grate openings; some have the original iron grates. Each fireplace has an identical oak mantel, stone firebox and concrete hearth. Window frames on this floor are elaborate and wide, and have been cut obliquely at the broad sill. In 1975 a fire caused severe damage to the rear rooms, used at that time as a kitchen and dining area.

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Pendergrass Building
Macon County, North Carolina

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second-story

A door once led to a flight of exterior stairs on the south wall. These stairs have been removed. On the first floor, the rear door of the Pendergrass Building opens to a small garden where a sheltered entrance leads down several rock steps to a basement door. The stone piers of the building are evident in the unexcavated crawl space.

The Pendergrass Building is little changed since its construction in 1904. A small kitchen and bath were added to the rear of the first floor under the mezzanine in 1990, and drywall partitions were placed at the end of each counter to help support the mezzanine. The interior and exterior of the building remain as a visual reminder of the retail store of the early twentieth century.

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)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1904-1941

Significant Dates

1904

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

The Pendergrass Building in Franklin, North Carolina, is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C because it contributed to the development of commerce and trade in Macon County and for its architecture. Built in 1904, the store served as one of the area's commercial centers, providing dry goods, foodstuffs and building materials as well as cash loans and other services to Macon County residents. Its architectural style exemplifies turn-of-the-century popular small-scale commercial design. The two-story, brick building remains virtually unaltered today, retaining its glass storefront, interior woodwork, balcony, mezzanine and apartment office space with seven fireplaces. It remained in operation as a retail store until 1975 and today serves as a local history museum for the Macon County Historical Society.

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Pendergrass Building
Macon County, North Carolina

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ARCHITECTURE CONTEXT:

The Pendergrass Building is an excellent and virtually unaltered example of early twentieth century retail store design. By the turn of the twentieth century, Main Street in Franklin was established as the commercial center of the town, and included a large brick courthouse, several stores, hotels and boarding houses. Commercial buildings tended to occupy the entirety of their lots and to front directly on the street, differentiating themselves from the residential property which remained on Main Street. The Pendergrass store, constructed in 1904, was the second tallest building in town, surpassed only by the tall courthouse, and its rectangular shape occupied the entire width of its lot and all but 20 feet of the depth. The plate glass storefront faced the main thoroughfare and a large apartment on the second floor was made more elegant by handsome arched window openings, broad window sills and seven fireplaces.

Today the Pendergrass Building remains as one of only a handful of commercial buildings dating from the first decade of the twentieth century. The West-Porter-Johnson Building, still standing at 25-27 West Main Street, was constructed in 1887. It and the Franklin Terrace Hotel building, on Church Street, are the only remaining commercial buildings dating before 1900. In the first block east of the courthouse on Main Street are buildings which appear from rear elevations to have been drastically altered. Unfortunately several commercial buildings on Main Street were destroyed in the 1970s and 1980s. The Pendergrass Building is still taller than most Main Street buildings, and its facade, designed in an age when commercial buildings were meant to be seen only from the front, is still handsome. The interior, little changed from its construction, features a variety of native woods.

COMMERCE CONTEXT:

In 1900, Franklin, the seat of Macon County in western North Carolina, had a population of approximately 1500 people, but no railroad connection or local banking facility. Banking for the town was carried on in Waynesville, 44 miles to the east, or in Asheville, 75 miles away. The closest railroad stop was at Dillsboro, some 20 hard, mountainous miles distant. Although the town boasted of two hotels, a telephone exchange, newspaper, livery service, eight general stores, two drug stores, a furniture store, public library, four churches and "two good schools, (1) commercial activity centered around retail stores.

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Pendergrass Building
Macon County, North Carolina

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The Pendergrass store, built in 1904 and no doubt the largest and most elaborate of the retail buildings, provided necessities from foodstuffs to school books to building materials for the town's residents and for farmers, lumberers and hunters from the surrounding mountain communities. The owner-merchant provided cash loans and conducted marriage ceremonies. The store also catered to the leisure activities of the townspeople, with a supply of books and a table for checker games.

After the arrival of the railroad in Franklin in 1907 and the coming of the automobile, the town's Main Street stores remained the center of retail trade. The Pendergrass Building was operated as a retail store by the Pendergrass heirs until 1975.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Jesse R. Pendergrass was born February 10, 1859 at Old Fort, North Carolina and graduated from Wake Forest College in 1888. After a two-year course at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, (2) he arrived in Franklin in 1890, and by July 1890 he was preaching at the Franklin Baptist Church, filling in after the resignation of the pastor. Church minutes for July 5, 1890 state that the officers of the church ". . . have made the following proposition to Rev. J. R. Pendergrass who is here with us, viz. For Preaching the first Saturday in each month and two Sundays (leaving off the night sermon) and to attend the prayer meeting as often as he can, we have offered him one hundred and fifty dollars." Pendergrass did not accept this offer, although he continued to serve the church in an interim capacity during the next twenty years, usually without payment. (3) Instead, he went into the dry goods business with R. L. Bryson of Franklin with a store on Franklin's Main Street. In 1898 he bought out Bryson and in 1899 he purchased city lots 6 and 7 on the south side of Main Street (4) and continued his retail business in a frame building on lot 7. About this time he served also as principal of Franklin High School and from 1897 to 1901 was the Superintendent of Macon County Schools. (5)

In June 1904 Pendergrass removed the old wood store building on the lot and began construction of a larger brick store building with offices (later an apartment) on the second floor. Brick laying for the new building began in July, using bricks fired in a kiln on Iotla Street. By early December he had moved his stock into the new building, considered by the Franklin Press as ". . . the best business building in town . . ." (6)

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Pendergrass married Florence Hill of Darlington, South Carolina in 1891 and the couple with their three children and children from Mrs. Pendergrass's previous marriage lived on West Main Street in a small cottage just east of the store building. (7) After the brick building was completed in 1904 the family lived for a short time in the apartment above the store, but soon Pendergrass built a larger home on Palmer Street almost directly south of his store. (8) In 1910 he was elected pastor of the Franklin Baptist Church for \$200 per year, ". . . preaching twice a month . . ."; he served as pastor until December 1912, and continued to serve thereafter as an interim pastor when needed. (9)

The Pendergrass store proved a good living for the Pendergrass family. In 1916 the store sold clothes, foodstuffs, tobacco, household goods, furniture, plumbing supplies, paint and wallpaper, china and farm and building equipment to Macon County residents. The Pendergrass store also served as the area North Carolina School Book Depository, where children could purchase books for county schools. Pendergrass sent his three children to college and continuously made generous financial contributions to the Franklin Baptist Church. He purchased War Savings Bonds and made small loans to local residents. He subscribed to the Charlotte Observer and purchased a pearl necklace for his daughter's college graduation from Carson, Pirie Scott of Chicago. (10) When he died at 75 on July 4, 1934, the Franklin Press observed, "He was an honest man with all that the word can imply . . . truly a good man has gone from among us." (11)

After the death of Mrs. Pendergrass in 1935, the store building was owned and operated by Pendergrass' son, J. Broadus Pendergrass and his wife, Dess. (12) Retail operation gradually became more specialized and by 1930 was devoted almost entirely to dry goods. The Pendergrasses moved out of the building after it was damaged by fire about 1975 and the building was purchased in 1976 by Charles Sill of Franklin and his son, John. They reopened the building as "The Art Gum Gallery", using the front of the store as an exhibit space and the rear for a studio and classroom. (13) In 1988 the building was purchased by the Macon County Historical Society, Inc., for use as a local history museum. (14)

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Pendergrass Building
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FOOTNOTES

1. Deal, Walter E., The County of Macon and the Town of Franklin, North Carolina
2. The Franklin Press and Highlands Maconian, July 5, 1934.
3. Franklin Baptist Church, Minutes, October 1874 to July 1905, for July 5, 1890.
4. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book II, page 161.
5. The Franklin Press and Highlands Maconian, July 5, 1934.
6. Macon County Historical Society, Macon County Echoes, Vol 1, No. 4, October, 1988, "When The Pendergrass Building Was Built," p. 1.
7. The Franklin Press and Highlands Maconian, July 5, 1934.
8. D'Onofrio, Mrs. Daisy Siler, interview, October 30, 1990, Franklin.
9. Franklin Baptist Church, Minutes, 1910 to 1929, April 1, 1910.
10. Pendergrass, J.R., Collection, Macon County Historical Society, Franklin
11. The Franklin Press and Highlands Maconian, July 5, 1934
12. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book A-5, page 10.
13. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book H-11, page 296.
14. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book B-11, page 310.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Deal, Walter E., The County of Macon and the Town of Franklin, North Carolina, The Franklin Press, Franklin, 1904.
D'Onofrio, Mrs. Daisy Siler, interview, October 30, 1990, Franklin.
Franklin Baptist Church, Minutes, October 1874 to July 1905, Franklin.
Franklin Baptist Church, Minutes, 1910 to 1929, Franklin.
The Franklin Press and The Highlands Maconian, July 5, 1934.
Macon County Historical Society, Macon County Echoes, Vol. 1, No. 4, October 1988.
Macon County Register of Deeds, Macon County Courthouse, Franklin.
Pendergrass, J.R., Collection, Macon County Historical Society, Franklin.

X See continuation sheet

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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 0.09 acre

UTM References

A 17 28131510 3189151810
Zone Easting Northing
C

B Zone Easting Northing
D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Pendergrass Building comprises all of parcel 0894 of Macon County tax parcels, shown on the orthophoto map of Macon County as distributed by the Macon County Department of Planning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property comprises all the property historically associated with the Pendergrass Building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

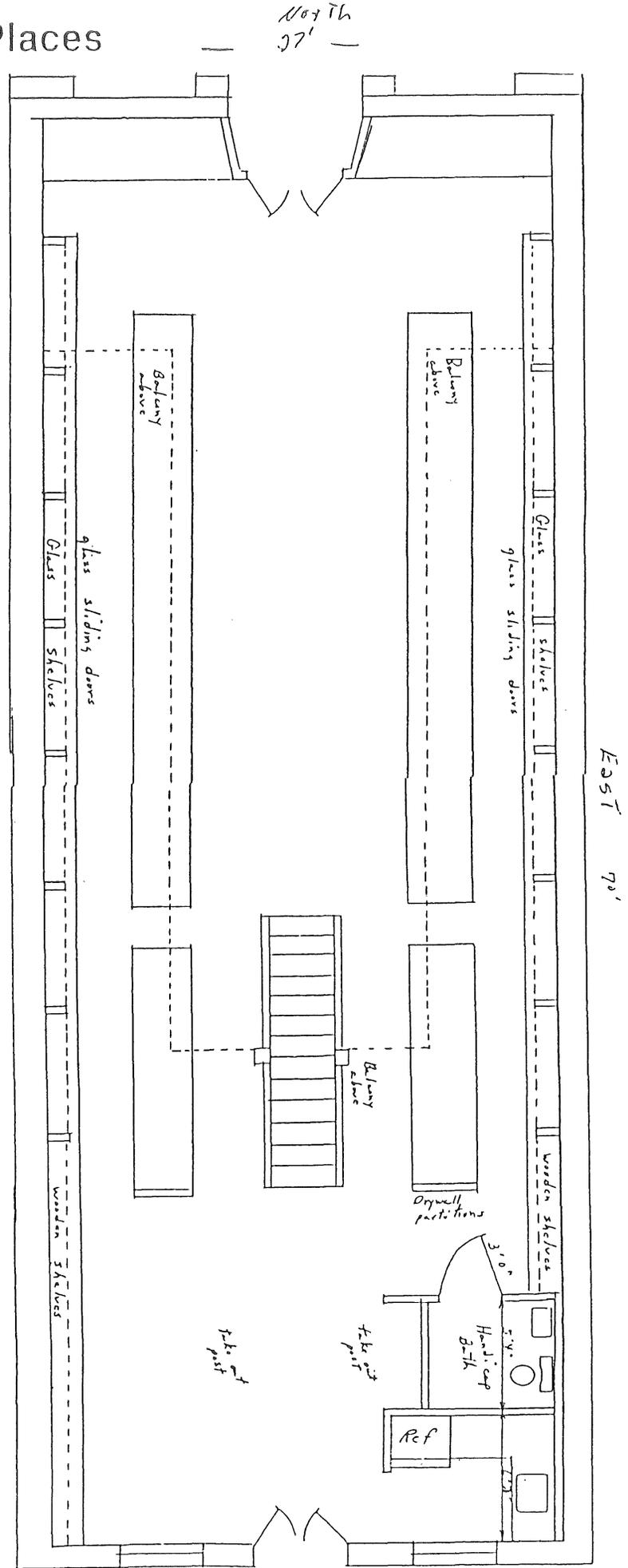
name/title Carolyn A. Humphries
organization Consultant date November 10, 1990
street & number Route 2, Box 175 telephone 704: 526-4462
city or town Highlands state NC zip code 28741

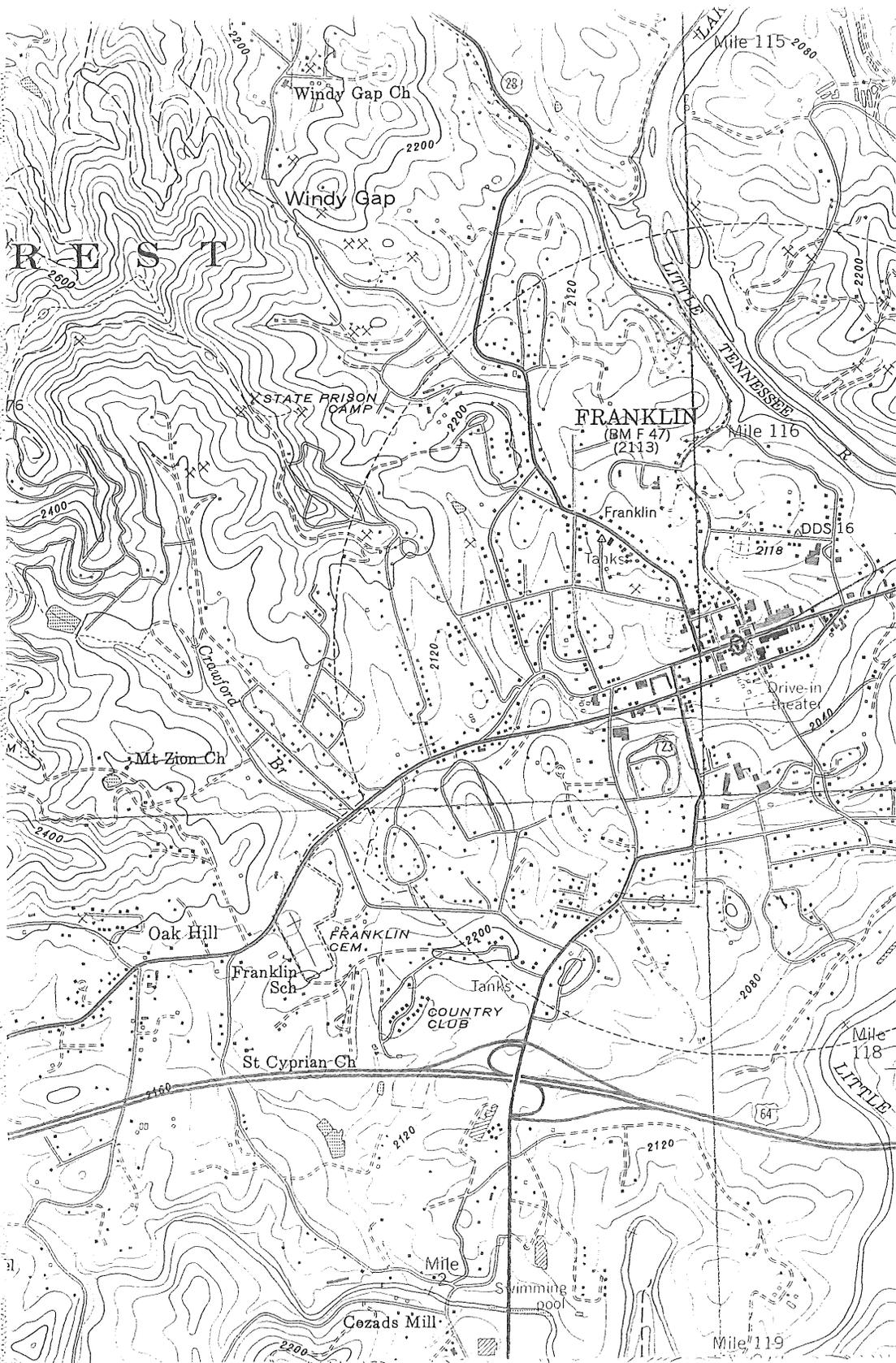
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Exhibit Page A

Pendergrass Building
Franklin, North Carolina
First floor

Macon County Museum
Changes for Main Floor
Scale - 1/4" = 1 foot





3898
 (CORBIN KNDB 167-NE)
 4354 III NE
 1.1 MI. TO U.S. 23 AND U.S. 441
 3895
 3894
 10'
 20 MI. TO U.S. 194 AND U.S. 23
 3893

J. R. Pendergrass
 Building
 Franklin QUAD
 Easting
 283150
 Northing
 3895580
 Zone 17
 FRANKLIN, NC
 MACON COUNTY

Pendergrass Building, Franklin
parcel 0894

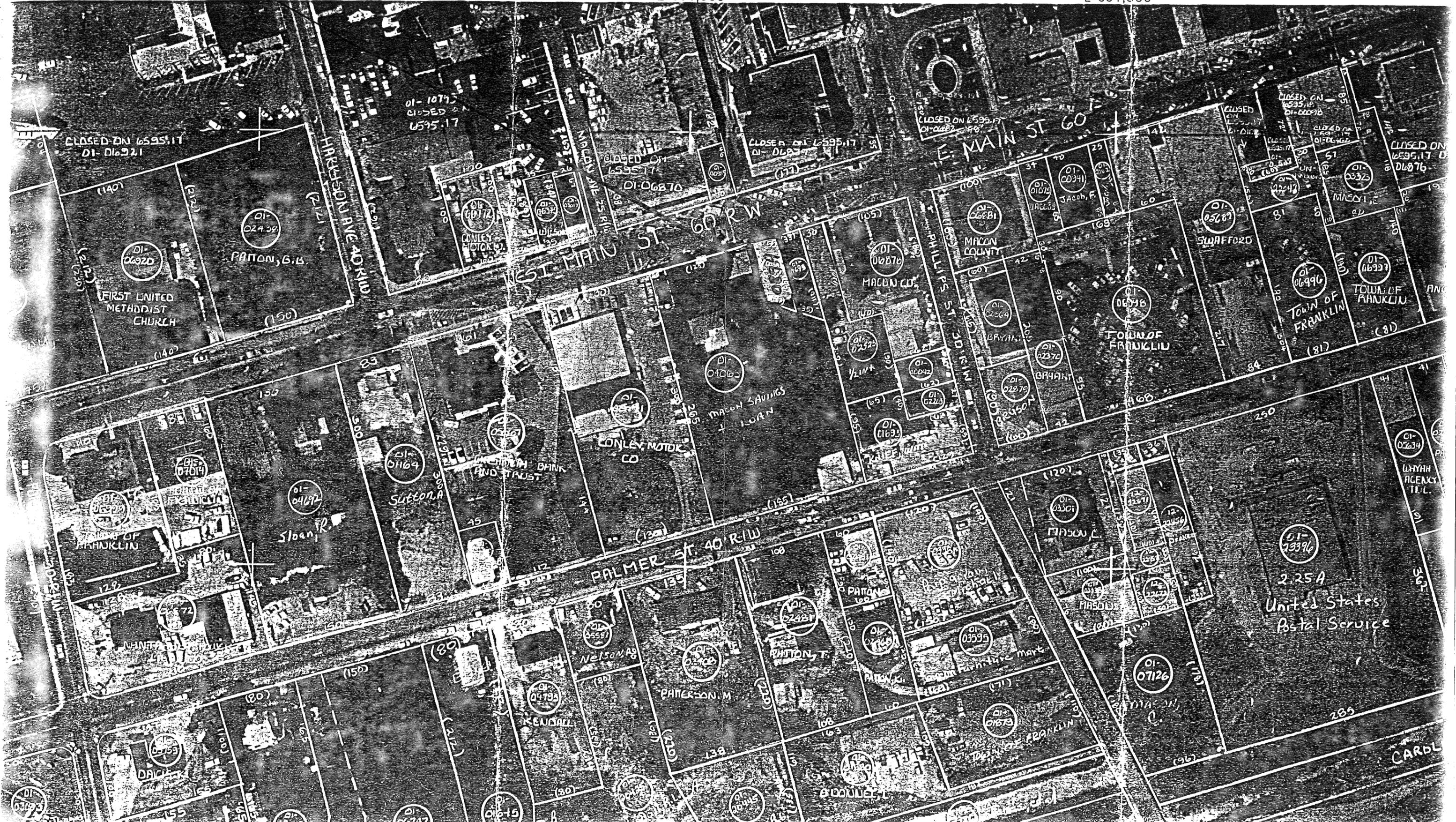
ORTHOPHOTO MAP, SECTION OF MACON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

E 690,500

E 691,000

MATCH MAP 6595.17

E 691,500



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