

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Carrboro Commercial Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 100 Block of East Main Street not for publication

city, town Carrboro vicinity of

state N.C. code 037 county Orange code 135

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Owners

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Orange County Register of Deeds

street & number 208 South Cameron Street

city, town Hillsborough state North Carolina 27278

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Carrboro, N.C.: An Architectural and
title Historical Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records N.C. Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh, state North Carolina

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Continuation sheet OWNERS OF PROPERTY Item number 4 Page 1

<u>Inventory List Number</u>	<u>Property Owner</u>
1	James L. Hodgins Rt. 3 Box 198 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514
2 and 3	Mrs. L.D. Hearn Heirs c/o Mrs. Alan Brandon 124 Oak Street Carrboro, North Carolina 27510
4 and 5	Jay Scott Cole P. Rubish W.M. Ives Rt. 1 Box 210 A Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514
6	Senter Building P.O. Box 189 Carrboro, North Carolina 27510
7.	James C. Page, Jr. 110 East Main Street Carrboro, North Carolina 27510
8.	William F. Sherrill 707 Francis King Street Greensboro, North Carolina 27410
9	Berta Andrews Heirs c/o Patsy Rubish P.O. Box 2506 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514
10	H.D. Williams 235 Flemington Road Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514
11	Edwin Tenney, Jr. P.O. Drawer 1050 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514
12	Robert T. Madden 212 Vance Street Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514 and Edmond S. Menache P. O. Box 252 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Carrboro Commercial Historic District comprises fifteen brick, and one frame, commercial buildings, housing nineteen businesses located in the 100 block of East Main Street. Carrboro, population 8,110, is located in the southeast portion of Orange County. The town lies one mile west of Chapel Hill, the site of the main campus of the University of North Carolina.

With one exception, the buildings in the Commercial Historic District line the south side of the 100 Block of East Main Street bounded by Roberson Street at the east and South Greensboro Street at the west; the building at 111 East Main Street, commonly called the "Flatiron Building", conforms to its prominently located triangular lot formed by the intersection of Weaver and East Main streets. Weaver, Main and Greensboro streets are the town's major commercial thoroughfares.

The district's buildings date primarily from c. 1910 to the mid-1920's; two non-contributing buildings date from the 1940's to c. 1955. One of the buildings (116 East Main Street) has undergone major alterations to the main elevation, while most remain largely intact with minor alterations. With the exception of one frame (former) residence (106-C East Main Street) presently in commercial use, the district is commercial in character. The other buildings are one or two-story, modestly detailed brick structures; three of the buildings are two-stories (108, 110, and 118-120 East Main Street), with the remainder, one-story. In scale the buildings range from the diminutive 106-A East Main Street to the imposing 118-120 East Main Street, a trio of identical two-story buildings designed to house four businesses. Twelve buildings (75%) are pivotal or contributing, while four (25%) are non-contributing. The district's only intrusion is a small parking lot adjacent and to the west of the North Carolina National Bank at 106-B East Main Street. In scale and materials the non-contributing structures are compatible with the other more significant buildings and do not detract from the district as a whole.

This block of East Main Street has been the site of Carrboro's commercial district since the late 1910's. In 1924, a fire destroyed the frame buildings at the northern end of this block. The Miles Andrews House, c. 1910 (106-C East Main Street) is the sole extant frame building to survive the fire. Brick became the preferred building material after the fire, and the post-1924 structures represent good examples of modest, early twentieth-century brick commercial buildings. Primary decorative elements include recessed corbelled panels above the glass store fronts with panelled wooden aprons below, corbelled eaves along the flat roofs, molded metal box cornices and multi-paned transoms.

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Alterations for the most part, have been minimal, usually confined to replacement metal trimmed display windows or the addition of metal (102 and 108 East Main Street) or split shake canopies (120 East Main Street) which shelter the entrances. The appearance of 116 East Main Street has been radically altered by the application of a false front of pine clapboards with arched parapet, and replacement display windows ornamented by arches composed of applied wooden trim. Buildings which have survived virtually intact include the Miles Andrews House at 106-C East Main Street and 110, 111, and 112 East Main Street.

INVENTORY LIST--CARRBORO COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT, ORANGE COUNTY

The following inventory list includes all properties located within the Carrboro Commercial Historic District, keyed by number to the inventory map.

DATING: Dates are based on information available from Sanborn Insurance Maps for Carrboro (1911, 1915, 1925, 1932 series); oral interviews with long-time Carrboro residents conducted by Friends of Old Carrboro, Inc. in 1982; Orange County tax records; documentary photographs; information contained in J.F. Sturdivant's, "Status of the Small Mill Village: A Concrete Study of Carrboro, North Carolina" (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of North Carolina, 1924); and from Claudia Roberts Brown, Burgess McSwain, and John Florin, Carrboro, N.C.: An Architectural and Historical Inventory (Carrboro: Carrboro Appearance Commission, 1983).

ASSESSMENT: All properties are coded by letter as to their relative level of significance within the district, and these assessments are, in turn, coded on the inventory map. The following as an assessment key:

- P - Pivotal Those properties which, because of their historical, architectural and/or cultural characteristics, play a primary, central or "pivotal" role in establishing the qualities for which the district is significant.

- C - Contributing Those properties which, while not pivotal, are supportive of, and contribute to, the historical, architectural and/or cultural characteristics for which the district is significant.

- N - Non-contributing Those properties which have neither an especially positive nor an especially negative impact on the general characteristics of the district.

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I - Intrusion

Those properties which have a definite negative impact on the historical, architectural and/or cultural characteristics for which the district is significant.

PL - Parking Lot

1. Commercial Building

Furniture Store
100 East Main Street
c. 1940
N

One-story brick commercial building. Flat roof with terra cotta tile coping; recessed corbelled brick panels above a molded metal cornice. Storefront has been reworked with large metal trimmed plate glass display windows and suspended metal canopy. Original brick laid in one to six bond; replacement brick laid in running bond. This site was originally occupied by a small frame grocery store which, along with the Miles Andrews House (106-C East Main Street), survived the 1924 fire which destroyed most of this end of the block. Hearn's Grocery was originally located here before moving next door into a newly constructed brick building in 1924. For many year M.W. Andrews and W.A. Riggsbee operated their "Jot 'Em Down" Store in the frame building, and later in this brick building which they had constructed c. 1940. (The frame building was razed at an undetermined date; it appears on the 1932 Sanborn Map, the last series available for the town.) Andrews and Riggsbee's store was a combination grocery, hardware and confectionary store. Currently, the brick building houses a furniture store.

OR 1292. Hearn's Grocery
102 East Main Street
1924
C

Carrboro's oldest business and only surviving independent grocery occupies this one-story brick building. The large transoms of small frosted glass panes topped with a simple molded metal box cornice and recessed corbelled panels above are characteristic of modest brick commercial buildings dating from the 1920's. Lueco Lloyd constructed the building in 1924 as rental property on the former site of the Pendergraph Boarding House where the 1924 fire originated. The present building was designed with two storefronts so that it could be subdivided if desired. Lloyd's first and only tenant was John Hearn who had been operating his grocery, J.E. Hearn & Son, in a frame building (later replaced with the present brick building on the site) next door at the corner of South Greensboro Street. Prior to moving to Carrboro after World War I, Hearn had operated a grocery in Chapel Hill. James Hearn recalled that in the early years of the family's Carrboro grocery many of the customers would arrive in their wagons at the hitching post to the rear of the store with meat and produce for barter. After John Hearn's death, his son Len continued to operate the business under the name of L.D. Hearn. In 1944, Hearn purchased the buiding, and over the years the new owner extended the rear of the building three times. Other

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alterations include the installation of the metal awning and metal framed plate glass windows. In the 1950's, Len Hearn's son, James, entered the business and the name was changed to L.D. Hearn and Son. After his father's death, James, who continues to operate the store today, changed the name to Hearn's Grocery.

3. Commercial Building
104 East Main Street
c. 1945-50
N

One-story, plain rectangular brick commercial building; renovated summer, 1984. Replacement large rectangular plate glass windows flank the main entrance of this three-bay deep structure. Brick laid in a running bond and currently painted white. About 1945, the post office was located here, but little else is known of the building's early history. A picture framing business is currently located here.

4. Commercial Building
Bank and Jewelry Store
106-A and 106-B East Main Street
c. 1920-1924
C

This trio of one-story brick buildings is typical of modest 1920's commercial buildings. The tallest, center, building is Carrboro's first brick commercial building and the only one of these three structures constructed prior to the 1924 fire. The example it set by surviving the fire may have prompted the town's businessmen to use the less combustible brick when they rebuilt. Its first and long-time occupant was R.H. Marks' dry goods store. The westernmost building is fondly remembered by long-time Carrboro residents as the site for many years of J.C. "Bulleye" Merritt's soda shop and hot dog stand. Merritt had this building constructed immediately after his small, one-story frame building in which he had established his business in the 1910's burned. In later years Lloyd Senter operated a drug store here. After occupying this building for several years, North Carolina National Bank in 1980 expanded its local branch office into the middle building and united both units in a creative renovation that preserves the architectural integrity of both facades. These two buildings, which share the address 106-B East Main Street, feature recessed corbelled brick panels. The taller, center building is further decorated with corbelling at the eave and brick quoins.

In contrast to the other two buildings, 106-A East Main Street is unusual for its diminutive scale. Presently housing a jewelry store, this smallest, easternmost, unit was constructed as Carrboro's post office in 1924. A replacement metal trimmed plate glass window flanks the replacement main entrance. All three of these buildings are unified by the brick being painted a cream color.

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- DRY??
??
5. Miles Andrews House
106-C East Main Street
c. 1910
C

As the only frame structure standing in the 100 block of East Main Street today, the Miles Andrews House serves as a reminder of the mixed residential and commercial uses that originally characterized this block. The house appears on the 1911 Sanborn Map and was constructed during the first decade of the twentieth century. The one-story, three-bay wide, two-room deep house features a moderately high hipped roof with center dormer lighted by paired two-over-two sash windows; the roof is pierced by two interior brick chimneys. The virtually intact house retains its nearly full-facade hip-roofed porch carried by turned posts, two-over-two sash windows and decorative screen door. On the interior, the center hall plan house retains the original mantelpieces with simple surrounds and sawn curved brackets supporting the shelves. Although the house is a standard type found throughout Carrboro, there is no evidence that this house was ever associated with either of the mills. The earliest known occupant of the house, and its probable builder, was Carrboro businessman and farmer, Miles Andrews, who lived here for many years. Today, the house is used as an antique shop.

6. Commercial Building
108 East Main Street
c. 1950-1955
N

Two-story brick veneer commercial building housing three businesses. Narrow black glass panels delineate the first story. Original wood and glass entrance doors remain on the eastern (right) two shops; a replacement aluminum and glass door gives entry to the westernmost (left) shop. Metal trimmed casement windows light the second story. A metal canopy supported by round metal poles extends the width of the sidewalk. Known locally as the Senter Block, this building was the site for many years of Lloyd Senter's drugstore. Senter operated his store first in a frame building on this site and later in this brick building which he had constructed c. 1950.

7. Commercial Building
Western Auto Store
110 East Main Street
c. 1924
C

Little altered two-story brick commercial building constructed c. 1924. Originally built to house two businesses, today the Western Auto Store occupies both storefronts. Transoms and sidelights surround the recessed entries. The plate glass store windows surmount recessed panelled aprons. Simple brick corbelling details the eave of the flat roof and a corbelled pilaster divides the storefronts. The Lloyd-Ray Hardware Store occupied this building for over forty years. The owners, Dwight Ray and Seaton Lloyd also operated a furniture store on the second floor. The store

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was a major anchor on Main Street and local historian Frances Head Tripp recalled that "almost everybody in Carrboro ran an account with Lloyd-Ray Hardware. The owners understood the state of folks' finances, and the bill would have to be a pretty old one before they sent any^{kind} of a reminder. When they went out of business, all the long-time residents of Carrboro felt that a very real part of Carrboro was gone." Dwight Ray was active in local politics and served as a county commissioner. The building was also the site for many years of Willard Mize's Carrboro Tire and Appliance Store. Western Auto has occupied the building since 1977.

8. Commercial Building
111 East Main Street
c. 1920
P

This one-story brick building, occasionally called the "Flatiron Building" for its irregular, almost triangular shape, marks one of the oldest commercial properties in Carrboro. Built in the early 1920's, the present building, with two storefronts of plate glass windows and multipaned transoms of frosted purple glass with floral patterned borders, replaced a one-story frame building that had served as a general store as early as 1911 and later as a drug store. The present brick building has served a variety of commercial functions, and in the early 1920's it was Carrboro's post office. The building is virtually intact and occupies a prominent triangular lot; the side elevations parallel Main and Weaver Streets.

9. Commercial Building
112 East Main Street
c. 1920
C

Little altered one-story brick double commercial building. Offset, recessed entrances: western (right) entrance retains original door and display windows with panelled apron below; eastern (left) entrance is flanked by a replacement storefront with a plain apron below. Twenty-light transoms, molded metal cornice, recessed brick panels, and corbelled eaves enliven the main elevation. Marvin Ivery operated a cafe here from 1935--c. 1950. In the 1960's, a Mr. McBain also operated a cafe here. The building currently houses an office and a bar.

0216910. Commercial Building
114 East Main Street
c. 1925?
C

Small, one-story brick commercial building with corbelled eave. Molded metal cornice above entrance which is flanked by six-light display windows. The date of this building is uncertain. A small building on this site appears on the 1925 Sanborn Map, however old time Carrboro residents and tax maps from the 1950's agree this was an alleyway at one time. Stylistically, it would appear to date from the early 1920's. It may have been an addition to the neighboring building. Little is known of its early history. Today it houses a beauty shop.

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11. Commercial Building
116 East Main Street
c. 1920
N

Altered one-story brick commercial building. A false front of pine weatherboards with an arched parapet has been applied over the brick main elevation in recent years. Replacement display windows are set in applied wood arched trim. Metal mansard roof canopy shelters double-leaf main entrance of glass and wood topped by round arched glass transom. On the 1925 and 1932 Sanborn Maps the building is recorded as housing a bank. After the Depression, Luther Sturdivant operated a grocery here. Currently the building houses an auction hall.

12. Commercial Building
118-120 East Main Street
c. 1917-1920
C

Constructed in the early 1920's, this trio of two-story adjoining buildings comprised Carrboro's first true commercial block. Except for minor variations all of the units are identical. The easternmost building was constructed first, c. 1917. The identical building next door (to the west) was constructed next. Finally, the third building featuring a double storefront, was constructed last. The exact date of construction of the later two buildings is not known, however all three buildings appear on the 1921 Sanborn Map. Below slightly recessed window walls at the second story, the storefronts consist of large plate glass windows in wooden frames with recessed panelled aprons below, double doors, and multi-paned transoms and molded cornices extending the full width of the display windows. The easternmost unit, at the corner of Roberson and East Main streets, has undergone the greatest alteration with the renovation of its entrance facade and the addition of a shedroofed shake canopy. Today occupied by a bar, this unit originally was E. Samply Merritt's Drug Store. (As early as c. 1900, this corner lot had been occupied by a one-story frame building housing a hardware and building materials store; the fate of this earlier building is unknown.) For many years the unit next door (to the west) of Merritt's Drug Store was the site of the Melba Movie Theatre, named for the daughter of proprietor, Gurnie H. Ray. Some of the piano players in this silent movie theater with cane bottom kitchen chairs for seats were Brack Riggsbee, Mrs. Flossie Campbell and Mrs. Mack White. Tenants of the other building to the west of the movie theatre have included the Ward & Squires Furniture Store and Frank Durham's dry good store.

8. Significance

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1910 - 1924 **Builder/Architect** various and unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The 100 block of East Main Street is the oldest surviving portion of Carrboro's early commercial district. The district developed to serve textile workers employed by the Alberta Cotton Mill established in 1899. The majority of the buildings were constructed between 1910 and c. 1924, a period of great prosperity at the mill. The modestly detailed one and two-story brick structures are good representative examples of early twentieth-century commercial buildings. Visually, architecturally and historically, this block is an extension of, and a compliment to, the adjacent Alberta Mill Complex, composed of the mill, turn-of-the-century railroad station and c. 1883 grist mill. The Alberta Mill Complex was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

Criteria Assessment

- A. Associated with the development of Carrboro as a community which grew up around a late 19th century railroad spur line terminus and prospered with the establishment of the Alberta Cotton Mill Complex and other early 20th century local textile mills.
- B. The buildings within the Carrboro Commercial Historic District are good representative examples of modestly detailed, largely unaltered, early 20th century one and two-story brick commercial buildings.

Prior to the early 1880's, the area that was to become the town of Carrboro was composed of small farms, fields, streams and woods much like the rest of rural North Carolina. The residences were too scattered to constitute a community. One mile to the east lay the village of Chapel Hill, site of the University of North Carolina since 1792. After 1882, Carrboro was the site of the railroad depot which served the nearby university. A combination of the construction of this spur line and the growth of various industries located near the depot were responsible for the emergence of Carrboro as a town. The development of the commercial district between c. 1890 and c. 1924 was a response to the successful textile mills which located near the depot at Carrboro.

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As early as 1869, the university had sought to extend the railroad closer to Chapel Hill, beyond the terminus at University Station ten miles to the north. After an unsuccessful petition that year for a spur line, finally in 1873, a charter for its construction was obtained from the North Carolina General Assembly.¹ The hard economic times that prevailed during the Reconstruction era left no public funds available for railroad construction. However, a group of private businessmen in Chapel Hill, led by Robert F. Hoke, sought a method of shipping locally mined iron ore to furnaces in Pennsylvania. This group formed Hoke's Iron Mountain Company and bought subscriptions for the necessary materials and labor to build the line. Among the prominent subscribers was Julian S. Carr for whom Carrboro would later be named.²

It appears that the University of North Carolina trustees' belief that their students should maintain some distance from "city temptations"--which many years earlier had determined the depot location ten miles away at University Station--prevailed. In accordance with a state statute, evidently enacted with the trustees' support, the end of the new railroad spur was located one mile from the school, the minimum distance allowed. In the spring of 1882, the spur of the Richmond and Danville Railroad (later Southern Railway) was opened from University Station to the spot one mile west of the post office in Chapel Hill. That terminus soon became known as West End, later Venable, and finally, Carrboro. Shortly after, the price of iron ore fell sharply making the mining venture unprofitable. The mine soon closed and the name of the railroad corporation was changed from Hoke's Iron Mountain Company to the State University Railroad Company.³

For almost two decades, the new railroad station was simply a boxcar, and well into the twentieth century the depot at West End had a sign saying "Chapel Hill Station". The passenger train that served the depot, "the Whooper", made twice daily round trips from Chapel Hill Station to University Station. At Chapel Hill Station, passengers could hire a wagon for fifty cents to take them into Chapel Hill and the University.

West End, a tiny industrial complex, grew slowly but steadily beginning about 1883 with the establishment of Thomas F. Lloyd's steam-powered grist mill and cotton gin housed in two-story frame buildings directly north of the station.⁴ Lloyd's complex gradually expanded, first with a flour mill added around 1886. The impact of the new depot was far greater than its provision of easy access to the University. Passenger

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traffic was ancillary to the Richmond and Danville Railroad's main service of transporting goods. With the establishment of this station, area farmers had a new and convenient means of sending their goods to markets. Similar to the great majority of depots across the state and county, the new station quickly became an easily accessible and profitable center to which farmers brought their grain and cotton for processing prior to shipping. Other commercial enterprises located along East Main Street a short distance east of Lloyd's mill complex and the present commercial district. (The streets were probably laid out as needed, rather than growing out of a plan.) Jack Brim, a black blacksmith opened a shop on East Main Street, followed by Bennie F. Ray's smithy; Ruffin Cheek and then Hiram Stone established grocery and general merchandise stores.⁵ With the construction of a few scattered dwellings, West End was acquiring the appearance of a genuine community.

Thomas Lloyd's enterprises prospered and the astute businessman invested his profits in the promising textile industry. In 1899 he established the Alberta Cotton Mill located across the railroad tracks about 150 yards northwest of the depot and his grist mill and cotton gin complex. (For a full discussion of the Alberta Mill Complex and its impact on the commercial growth of Carrboro see the National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1975.) In March, 1909, Lloyd sold the mill to Julian S. Carr, Durham financier and industrialist and founder of the enormously successful Durham Hosiery Mill Company. The Alberta Mill was renamed Durham Hosiery Mill No. 4. That same year Lloyd established another textile mill in town, the Thomas F. Lloyd Manufacturing Company located southeast of the railroad depot, one block from his original mill. Lloyd died in 1911 and Durham Hosiery Mills acquired this factory and renamed it Mill No. 7 in the steadily expanding chain that would grow to include sixteen mills from Goldsboro to High Point.⁶

Beginning with the establishment of its first textile mill, the community first known as West End grew slowly but steadily. In 1911 the settlement was incorporated as Venable, named to honor Francis P. Venable, president of the University of North Carolina from 1900 to 1914. Two years later, the name was changed again; to honor Julian S. Carr, the town was named Carrboro on the condition that Durham Hosiery Mills would supply electricity to the small industrial town.⁷ The village that developed around the Lloyd and Carr mills was in many ways typical of other mill villages and

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company towns in North Carolina. These characteristics included suburban location, dependence on immigrants from surrounding farms for labor, initial local ownership of the mills, and the construction of mill-owned housing for workers.

Carrboro's commercial district, which began in the 1880's with Ruffin Cheek and Hiram Stone's stores, expanded steadily in the twentieth century as the local textile industry thrived. Similar to the town's first light industrial operations, Carrboro's stores initially were located east of the railroad spur along East Main Street. The first commercial buildings west of the spur were erected early in the century on Thomas F. Lloyd's Weaver Street property facing his Alberta Cotton Mill. They included a grocery owned by Henry Lloyd and a general store. Although there is no record of there ever having been a company store in Carrboro, some Carrboro residents recall that one was operated in this block for a brief period until the early 1910's.⁸ Carrboro commercial businesses which served the mill workers were almost exclusively private enterprises. The 1911 series of the Sanborn Insurance Maps for Chapel Hill/Venable indicates a large building materials and hardware store, a general store, and a very small drug store on the south side of East Main Street just west of the railroad tracks, as well as a general store, another drug store and the post office east of the tracks. By 1914, the commercial block on Weaver Street was more heavily developed with a drug store, barber shop, and the Colonial Movie Theatre, which closed around 1917. All of these early businesses occupied one- or one-and-one-half-story frame buildings situated directly on the street.⁹

In the late 1910's, Carrboro's commercial district expanded from Weaver Street to include East Main Street. Some buildings were moved to East Main Street from Weaver Street, while others were newly constructed on East Main Street.¹⁰ This business area grew so rapidly that by the early 1920's J.F. Sturdivant recorded fifteen stores here--ten grocery, two dry goods, one drug, one hardware, and one wholesale grocery--as well as two auto repair shops, one shoe shop, three meat markets, a laundry, a barber shop and a bank.¹¹ In addition, there were a pool parlor, a candy kitchen, and Mrs. Tilly Parker's hat shop in the district.¹² Other main street businesses included T.D. Hardee's grocery at the corner of North Greensboro Street, and Miss Annie Ray's grocery, later run by T.C. Lindsay.¹³ A small number of businesses, including a grocery and lumber yard, were located outside the East Main Street business district.

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A c. 1920 photograph reveals that the district's frame buildings were simple designs, several of them sporting rounded or stepped false parapets surmounting the main facades and porches supported by turned posts. Built around 1920, R.H. Marks's Dry Goods Store, now the larger unit in the North Carolina National Bank Building at 106-B East Main Street, was Carrboro's first brick commercial building. J.C. "Bulleye" Merritt's soda shop and hot dog stand occupied the frame building on the west side of Marks' store.¹⁴

The character of Carrboro's central business district began to change in 1924 after the fire that started in the Pendergraph's boarding house at 102 East Main Street, fanned by a southwest wind, spread up the block and destroyed the north end. Of the commercial buildings here, the only ones to survive the fire were R.H. Marks' brick building and the small frame structure formerly on the corner of South Greensboro Street occupied by Hearn's Grocery. The other property owners in the block followed Marks' example and replaced their ruined frame buildings with structures of brick, less readily destroyed by fire. J.C. Merritt replaced his store with a one-story brick building attached to Marks' store; a later occupant was Senter Drug Store. On the site of the boarding house, Lueco Lloyd built a two-unit wide brick structure. Hearn's Grocery moved into the entire building and continues in operation there to this day. The frame building next door became Andrews and Riggsbee's "Jot 'Em Down" store.¹⁵

Beginning in the mid-1920's, brick buildings gradually replaced the frame stores at the other end of the block. Sampil Merritt's drug store occupied the unit at the east end of the two-story block of stores built in stages at 118-120 East Main Street. For many years the Melba Movie Theatre operated by Gurnie H. Ray was located in this group of buildings. Lloyd-Ray Hardware occupied the building at 110 East Main Street for over forty years.¹⁶ The "Flatiron Building", c. 1920, at 111 East Main Street served as the post office in the early 1930's.

The mid-1920's commercial building boom in Carrboro ended as the prosperity of Durham Hosiery Mills began to decline toward the end of the decade. The demand for cotton hosiery waned and the mill operations began to be curtailed in 1928. The advent of the Great Depression dealt a severe blow to the mill and in 1930 the company closed Mill No. 4. In 1938 the company ceased operation.¹⁸ During World War II, Mill No. 7 was the site of a munitions factory and after the war, Pacific Mills bought both Mills No. 4 and 7 and operated Carrboro Woolen Mills there. By the time the woolen

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mill closed in the mid-1950's, Carrboro was no longer dependent upon industry to sustain itself. The University of North Carolina and a variety of businesses in the surrounding area were experiencing a period of rapid growth that provided work for Carrboro's residents in a wide range of occupations and locations. Today the 100 block of East Main Street is the site of a diverse group of businesses and includes offices, two bars, general merchandise and furniture stores, a grocery, and an auction house.

In June, 1984 the Town of Carrboro published the "Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Downtown Revitalization Task Force". The town is committed to revitalization of the Commercial Historic District and to its historic resources and intends, according to the Report, that "development (be focused) around a theme or themes consistent with the Carr Mill, The Station, historic or old Carrboro." Similar redevelopment and preservation goals also extend to the fringe commercial and residential areas immediately surrounding the Commercial Historic District.

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FOOTNOTES

¹Kemp P. Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, Vol. 2 (Raleigh, N.C.: Edwards and Broughton, 1907-1912), p. 247.

²Battle, pp. 246-47.

³Battle, pp. 248-49.

⁴Brent Glass and Kathleen Pepi, National Register of Historic Places nomination for The Alberta Mill Complex, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, June, 1975, Item 8, p. 1.

⁵J.F. Sturdivant, "Status of the Small Mill Village: A Concrete Study of Carrboro, North Carolina" (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina, 1924), Ch. I, p. 2.

⁶Orange County Register of Deeds, Book of Incorporations 1, p. 397.

⁷Glass and Pepi, Item 8, p. 1.

⁸Mr. and Mrs. Ben Williams, interview conducted by Jay Bryan in Carrboro, N.C., May, 1982. Tapes located in files of Friends of Old Carrboro, Inc.

⁹Sanborn Map Co., 1911 and 1915 series.

¹⁰Williams interview.

¹¹Sturdivant, Ch. III, p. 4.

¹²Wilbur F. Partin, letter to Claudia P. Roberts, February 10, 1982, located in files of Friends of Old Carrboro, Inc.

¹³Frances Head Tripp, Carrboro Sketches (Chapel Hill, N.C.: privately printed, 1981 and 1982) p. 17.

¹⁴Partin letter; Williams interview and Wilbur F. Partin, interview conducted by Claudia P. Roberts in Carrboro, N.C., May, 1982.

¹⁵Partin interview; James Hearn, interview conducted by Claudia P. Roberts in Carrboro, N.C., January 1983; and telephone interview with Mrs. Vinnie Partin, August, 1983.

¹⁶Telephone interview with Ben Williams, October 15, 1984.

¹⁷Sanborn Map Co., 1932 series.

¹⁸Wilbur Partin interview.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Roberts, Claudia P., Burgess McSwain and John Florin. Carrboro, N.C.: An Architectural and Historical Inventory. Carrboro: Carrboro Appearance Commission. 1983

Oral interviews conducted by Friends of Old Carrboro, Inc., 1982.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approximately 2.8 acres

Quadrangle name Chapel Hill Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UTM References

A

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

District is bounded roughly by Robeson, Main and Greensboro Streets. See map with district outlined in red.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state		code	county		code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patricia S. Dickinson, (Significance excerpted from Claudia Roberts, Carrboro, N.C.: An Architectural and Historical Inventory)

organization Consultant Town of Carrboro date October 15, 1984

street & number 301 W. Main St., P.O. Box 337 telephone (919) 942-8541

city or town Carrboro state North Carolina 27510

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William J. Price, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 11, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The boundaries of the Carrboro Commercial Historic District have been drawn to include all those properties which would contribute historically and/or architecturally to the district. With the exception of 111 East Main Street, the buildings line the south side of the 100 block of East Main Street and are bounded at the east by Roberson Street, at the west by South Greensboro Street, at the south by the rear property lines and at the north by East Main Street; 111 East Main Street is located on a triangular lot formed by the intersection of East Main Street and Weaver Street and the boundary has been drawn to include this property.

The boundary lines have been drawn to exclude a parking lot and two c. 1950 buildings located on the north side of East Main Street and recent commercial structures west of South Greensboro and east of Roberson Streets. The Carrboro Commercial District is comprised of the oldest surviving portion of the commercial district. (see attached map.)

The following is a list of the Tax Map, Block, and Lot numbers of the included properties: (maps attached)

Orange County Tax Map, Chapel Hill Township

Map No. 93 Block B Lot No. 6

Map No. 99 Block C Lot Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8A, 9, 10, 11

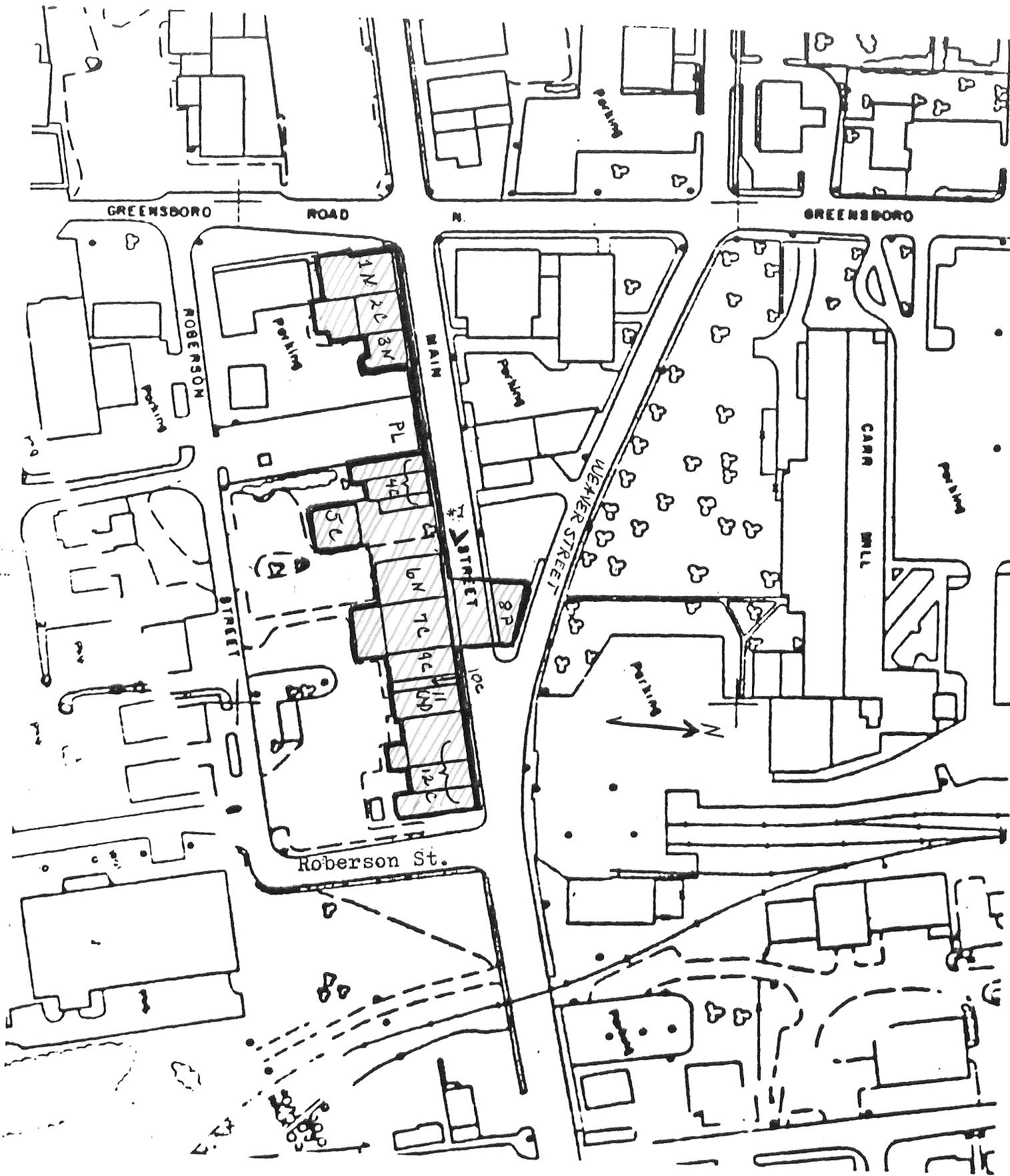




PHOTO: JANE HAMBORSKY