United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form  

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

1. Name  

historic  Spray Industrial Historic District  

and or common  

2. Location  

street & number  ____ not for publication  

city, town  Eden  ____ vicinity of  

state  N. C.  code 037  county Rockingham  code 157  

3. Classification  

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4. Owner of Property  

name  See Continuation Sheet  

street & number  

city, town  ____ vicinity of  

state  

5. Location of Legal Description  

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  Rockingham County Courthouse  

street & number  

city, town  Wentworth  state  N. C.  

6. Representation in Existing Surveys  

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

city, town  Raleigh  state  N. C.
Property Owners

[If no address appears below the owner's name, the property is owner-occupied. Unless otherwise specified, all addresses are in Eden and the zip code is 27288.]

Owner
Spray Cotton Mills
P.O. Box 3207

Property
Canal
(former) Spray Mercantile Building
413 Church St.
Spray Cotton Mills, 423 Church St.
Houses: 414, 420, 432, 436 & 440
Riverside Dr.

John Dyer & James R. Walker
P.O. Box 2235

Morehead Cotton Mills

Edgar M. Rush, III
Rt. 2, Box 853

Circle Drive-In, 111 Boone Rd.

Eden Oil Co.
P.O. Box 1375
Reidsville, NC 27320

Service Station, 103 Boone Rd.
Commercial Building, 404 Church St.

John Dyer & B.W. Walker Sr. Heirs
c/o James Walker
Boulevard Branch Box 2244

"Superintendent's" House
118 Carroll St.

Rita H. & Larry C. Griffin

House, 116 Carroll St.

Linda & John Hylton, Jr.
Rt. 1, Box 35W

Commercial Buildings
408 & 410-12 Church St.

Louise & Phillip K. Price

(former) Imperial Trust & Savings Co.
414 Church St.

Leaksville Woolen Mills, Inc.
6216 Mt. Holly Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28214

Leaksville Cotton and Woolen Mills

Fieldcrest Mills, Inc.
Eden, NC 27288

Lily Mill
Nantucket Mills
American Warehouse Co.
(former) American Warehouse Co. Offices
Rhode Island Mill
Spray Woolen Mills
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<td>Alma Davis Kelly</td>
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<td>House, 512 Riverside Dr.</td>
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<td>Ruffin, NC 27326</td>
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<td>Andrew Dillon</td>
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<td>Mary S. Meeks</td>
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<td>328 Jackson St.</td>
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<td>Larry D. Smith</td>
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<td>916 Second St.</td>
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<td>Teresa &amp; Randy Keith Cole</td>
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<td>Bessie T. &amp; Belvie C. Hawkins</td>
<td>Houses, 625 &amp; 630 Riverside Dr.</td>
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<td>Virgie N. Landreth</td>
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<td>Marianne L. Aiken</td>
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<td>Warwick Aiken, Jr.</td>
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<td>Jesse G. &amp; Adrian O. Meeks</td>
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<td>Ronald F. Bailey</td>
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<td>Vivian A. Craddock</td>
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<td>723 Circle Dr.</td>
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<td>Mrs. Laura A. Nelson</td>
<td>House, 619 Riverside Dr.</td>
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<td>Edd Nelson</td>
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Spray Industrial
Historic District

Owner

Christine & Raymond Lee Cole
Calvin Maxwell Shorter
Rt. 2, Box 533
Pelham, NC 27311

Maxine Shorter

Penny & Arthur L. Holliman

Lorraine or Rosa Earles Campbell
222 The Boulevard

Property

House, 629 Riverside Dr.
House, 631 Riverside Dr.
House, 633 Riverside Dr.
House, 637 Riverside Dr.
House, 641 Riverside Dr.

The following addendum lists owners of undeveloped property in the district:

Laura & Emmet E. Church
P.O. Box 3051

Barbara & William C. Reagan, Jr.
Rt. 1, Box 38
Ruffin, NC 27326

Spray Water Power & Land Co.
P.O. Box 3297

Duke Power Co.
c/o B. T. Doggett
Real Estate Division
P.O. Box 33189
Charlotte, NC 28242
The Spray Industrial Historic District is perhaps the most visually dramatic area of Eden. Several of the major thoroughfares approaching the district offer striking vistas: slopes of gentle hills and crests of steep promontories covered by dense concentrations of large red brick mill complexes interspersed with modest houses. The most impressive industrial landscapes may be seen from Boone Rd. and Early Ave. at the south edge of the district. From these vantage points, the entire view to the north along the river is filled with masses of brick structures in a variety of blocky shapes and sizes arranged along terraces ascending to the west away from the water. These vistas embrace the heaviest concentration of mills and all of the commercial buildings, clustered close to the terminus of the Spray Power Canal at Tackett Branch. This south end of the district also is enlivened by the busy Spray Traffic Circle at the juncture of Boone Rd., Church St., and Meadow Rd., at the west end of the Smith River bridge. All of the commercial buildings and most of the mills are situated directly on the street or next to the railroad tracks or the canal where they are surrounded by small paved or gravel-covered parking lots and driveways. The district's streets are somewhat curvilinear, their patterns determined at least in part by the topography. In contrast to the lack of greenery that characterizes the group of four mills directly north of the Spray Traffic Circle (Spray Cotton Mills, Nantucket Mills, Lily Mills, and American Warehouse Company), to the south the hardwoods lining Tackett Branch contribute a swath of foliage between Morehead Cotton Mills and the Leaksville Cotton and Woolen Mills complex, which also is fronted by spacious lawns.

Heading north past the American Warehouse Company, the district takes on a distinctly rural quality in the 500 block of Riverside Dr. where small frame mill houses surrounded by large yards turn their backs to the street to look out over the Smith River far below. Most of the dwellings in the district are workers' housing concentrated in the narrow lots of the 600 block of Riverside Dr., close to the street. Four houses built for administrative personnel at the north end of the district are set far back from the road in large yards filled with mature hardwoods and shrubbery. All of the houses on the east side of Riverside Dr., as well as the Rhode Island Mill in the middle of the housing and Spray Woolen Mills at the district's north edge, have picturesque backdrops of tall trees at the crest of the promontory high above the Smith River.

The Spray Industrial Historic District consists of eighty-three buildings (seventy contributing, thirteen non-contributing), ten structures (nine contributing and one non-contributing) and one object (contributing) occupying about 150 acres in a fairly narrow strip along the west bank of the Smith River in the Spray section of Eden. Among the eighty-three buildings, approximately half are industrial, almost exclusively of brick construction; thirty-four are houses (all except one of frame construction) with two garages, and seven are commercial, of masonry construction. The structures include a dam, canal, tail race, two pump houses, two reservoirs, and two filter houses, as well as a water tank that is ranked non-contributing due to its rusted condition. The one object is a pair of stone piers for a bridge that was never completed across Tackett
Branch.

The eight textile mills in the district are complexes of buildings primarily of standard mill construction, with thick exterior brick walls, interior supports of heavy wooden posts, and thick floors of multiple layers of wood. Later variants of this type of construction substituted floors of concrete. Each complex consists of at least one large mill, commonly known as the "main mill," and a series of brick ancillary buildings such as picker and engine houses which are attached to the main mill or free-standing. A few ancillary buildings, such as the Nantucket Mills' lumber shed next to the railroad tracks, are of frame construction. With the exception of the original section of the Leaksville Woolen Mills' main mill erected in 1881, the primary mills in the district were constructed in the single decade of 1893, when the Leaksville Cotton Mill of 1839 burned and was rebuilt in brick on the original stone foundation, to 1903. The relatively small two-story weave house at the Leaksville Cotton and Woolen Mills complex is the district's only antebellum industrial building, believed to have been built in the 1840s for the use of the Leaksville Cotton Mills. All of the mill complexes were enlarged, usually within only a few years of their initial construction, with extensions to the main mills; the American Warehouse Company and Spray Woolen Mills also were expanded with additional mills attached to the original construction. The most recent major additions to the district's mills are the five- and three-story buildings of steel frame construction with brick curtain walls added to the American Warehouse Company's plant around 1930 and 1925, respectively.

In each of the district's mill complexes, the main mill is an oblong building two to three stories tall with a very shallow gable roof. They are characterized by dozens of very tall double- or triple-hung multi-paned sash windows, usually in segmental arches, lining the elevations and square-section towers rising two to three stories above the main mill. Constructed to accommodate staircases and, in their upper levels, water tanks for industrial and fire-fighting purposes, these towers usually are attached to the exterior elevations. As the towers deteriorated and the water tanks became obsolete, many of the upper levels were removed. Typical of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century industrial buildings, the towers frequently served as the primary field for architectural embellishment. The Nantucket Mills' five-story tower projecting from the interior of the main mill is the tallest and largest in section in the district and Eden's only remaining ornamented tower, featuring round-arch windows of varying heights and a flared pyramidal tin roof; as such it stands as an important focal point for the southern end of the district. Decoration also is found in many of the larger buildings' cornices in the form of simple corbelling. A notable exception is the parapet on the south elevation of the American Warehouse Company's 1899 mill which is distinguished by narrow corbelled pendants. In comparison to the main mills, the ancillary brick buildings are smaller and plainer, generally one to two stories with shallow gable, shed, or flat roofs with parapets, rectangular or segmental-arch windows, and simple corbelling at the cornices.
The Spray Industrial Historic District's houses, all associated with the area's industrial development, may be divided into three categories: a single antebellum building, late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century houses for laborers, and larger early twentieth-century houses for the mills' administrative personnel. The sole antebellum dwelling is the two-story "Superintendent's House" (118 Carroll St.) overlooking the Leakeville Cotton and Woolen Mills complex. Constructed in the 1810s for the family of James Barnett, the builder of the Spray Power Canal and grist mill (destroyed) that were the genesis of the industrial district, it is the district's only brick house and possibly the oldest structure in Eden. The hall and parlor plan building displays a somewhat irregular common bond with glazed headers, plastered interior walls, flush gable ends, molded box cornices with returns, and two exterior brick chimneys. With few exceptions, the remainder of the district's thirty-four houses were built by agents of the local textile firms for their employees. Most of these are the simple one-story, one- or two-room-deep frame houses with gabled or hipped roofs, rear one-story ells, and less than full-facade hip-roofed front porches that line much of Riverside Dr. Variations on this basic mill house theme include the one-story gable-front-and-wing type and a one-story type with a cubical hip-roofed core and short gabled wing on the main facade. The district's four larger and more stylish houses built for mill administrators are bungalows that range from the simple gable-front type with an attached porch at 642 Riverside Dr. to the more decorative Barnes House (652 Riverside Dr.) with a Palladian-style window in the front dormer and the spacious, handsomely appointed Stevenson House (700 Riverside Dr.) featuring large fluted box posts, intricate entrance surround, and a porte-cochere.

Although only four of the seven commercial buildings in the district are ranked "contributing," altogether they a good representation of the variety of commercial styles popular during the period of the area's most intensive development. Of standard mill construction, the Spray Mercantile Building is the original portion of a commercial block that eventually consisted of five three-story units (the later additions have been removed) and the oldest surviving commercial building in the Spray section of Eden. It was completed in 1890 and is distinguished by a corbelled pendant cornice and large round-arch windows across a five-bay main facade. Across the street at 414 Church St., the Neoclassical Revival style Imperial Trust and Savings Bank of 1912 is the most notable building in the commercial block developed in the 1910s and 1920s. Its heavy blocky form of solid brick construction and the two monumental Corinthian columns in antis dominating the main facade convey the appropriately imposing, vault-like quality that was popular for the architecture of financial institutions throughout the first decades of this century. The two adjoining one-story brick commercial buildings erected in the 1920s exemplify the standard design of their time in their storefronts of large plate glass windows topped by slightly recessed panels and simple decorative flat brickwork. (The fourth commercial building in this block, also built in the 1920s, has been unsympathetically altered with aluminum siding.)
Despite the passage of more than fifty years since the construction of its last major building, the Spray Industrial Historic District presents much the same appearance as it did in the 1930s. The most considerable alterations to the mill complexes are the bricking in of many of the windows of several of the larger factories and the construction of a very limited number of austere brick additions, as well as the truncation of numerous towers already mentioned. Although many of the mill houses have been remodelled with replacement siding and porch posts in efforts maintain and weatherize them, most of the houses retain their salient characteristics so that the district's residential blocks continue to exhude the same sort of rural, village like atmosphere of the early twentieth century. The four larger houses built for administrators have been well preserved and the 1810s "Superintendent's" House, after years of deterioration due to neglect, currently is undergoing rehabilitation by the Eden Preservation Society. A good indication of the lack of change in the district is the existence of only two infill structures: a modern service station and a 1950s drive-in fast food outlet. (The latter building, although not contributing to the character of the district, should be noted for its extensive and vivid display of decorative neon, which is fast disappearing from the American commercial landscape.)
Inventory List

Note: To avoid tedious repetition, the most prevalent house types in the Spray Industrial Historic District are identified in this inventory list as follows:

**Type A** — One-story, one-room-deep mill house of frame construction with weatherboarded exterior, three-bay main facade, gable roof, rear one-story ell, and less-than-full-facade hip-roofed front porch. Cornices are boxed with simple molding and returns and the main chimney is interior. The windows are four-over-four double-hung sashes. Construction date is approximately the turn of the 20th century; a few may date from the early 1910s.

**Type B** — One-story, two-room-deep mill house of frame construction with weatherboarded exterior, three-bay main facade and center hall plan, hipped roof, rear one-story gable-roofed ell, and less-than-full-facade hip-roofed front porch. Cornices are boxed with simple molding. An interior chimney projects from each of the side planes of the roof. The windows are four-over-four double-hung sashes. Construction is approximately the turn of the 20th century; a few may date from the early 1910s.

For properties containing more than one structure, each building is listed at the beginning of the entry. Primary structures are described in the body of the entry; descriptions for ancillary buildings appear with the list if they are not described in the entry.

CC 1A&B. Smith River Dam and Spray Power Canal. The genesis of the Spray industrial complex, one of North Carolina's foremost textile centers, rests with the construction of the Spray Power Canal early in the nineteenth century. It was built by James Barnett shortly after May, 1813, when he purchased almost 3,000 acres on the Dan and Smith rivers east of Leaksville. With the construction of the dam one-and-one-half miles above the confluence of the two rivers, and of the 4,200-foot-long canal ending in Tackett Branch at Island Ford where he built a grist mill, Barnett became the first person in the area to develop the power potential of the Smith River. After John Motley Morehead acquired Barnett's holdings in the 1830s, Morehead used the canal to its fuller potential as the power source for his Leaksville Cotton Mill, Eden's first textile factory. Eventually, the canal provided power for three additional textile mills established by Morehead's descendants at the end of the nineteenth century. At the turn of the 1890s, Spray Water Power and Land Company built a parallel eastern branch of the canal that begins at
the site later developed as the Lily Mill and makes a turn to the east to empty directly into the Smith River north of the Church St./Meadow Rd. bridge. In May, 1892, calcium carbide and acetylene gas were discovered near the canal when lime combustion waste, produced in an experiment to release aluminum from the oxide, was discarded at a dump; the waste gave off a small amount of gas when it became wet due to rain. The discovery shortly thereafter that the gas was acetylene eventually led to the evolution of the Union Carbide Corporation in New York.

Originally, the canal was sixteen feet wide at the top, four-and-a-half feet deep, and had a bottom grade of thirty-nine inches. According to a late nineteenth-century state geological survey, the canal was "estimated to be able to carry a quantity of water giving 600 horsepower with a head of thirty feet. The dam is seven feet high and 600 feet long, of triangular wooden frames bolted to the bed of the river and planked over. The bulkhead is of solid rubble masonry, laid in cement, and is twelve feet wide and thirteen feet high." In 1902, the Spray Water Power and Land Company acquired the entire canal and in the next year replaced the original wooden dam with a masonry structure of granite rock. Only the ruins of the original dam and bulkhead can be seen today. The canal still runs through the heart of the Spray industrial district, and ends on the north side of Church St. The remains of the canal walls can be seen on the south side of Church St. near the Leaskville Cotton and Woolen Mills. Spray Cotton Mills purchased the water rights to the canal from Spray Water Power and Land Company in the 1970s.

2. Morehead Cotton Mill. 125 Boone Rd.

C  A. Morehead Cotton Mill -- built 1902

N  B. Storage Building -- Large metal-clad one-story building of frame construction with gabled roof; brick piers; built early 20th c.

Built in 1902 by Spray Water Power and Land Company, this three-story building is of standard mill construction with thick exterior brick walls and interior supports of heavy timbers. Typical of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century textile mills, Morehead Cotton Mill is characterized by large segmental arched windows occupying most of the elevations and a low-pitched gable roof with exposed rafter ends. The plant, built to manufacture cotton yarn and warp, also includes one-story brick shops and engine rooms attached to the northwest corner of the main block. When the Morehead family's industries encountered financial difficulty around 1910, the Morehead Cotton Mill was one of the family's three plants not acquired by Marshall Field and Company. Instead,
this mill remained under the ownership of Spray Water Power and Land Company. A privately printed 1913 publication entitled "Leaksville-Spray, North Carolina. A sketch of Its Interest and Industries," lists B. Frank Mebane, husband of one of John Motley Morehead's granddaughters, as president; W. R. Walker, Morehead's grandson, as treasurer; S. H. Marshall, assistant treasurer; J. F. Lewis, superintendent; and R. H. Simpson, G. R. Newnam, and Buck Clark, overseers. Since then, the mill has been enlarged with austere one-story brick and cinderblock wings on the east and south elevations. The mill continued to produce unfinished yarn until 1973 when Spray Water Power and Land Company sold the plant to Carolina Research Corporation of Shelby. Carolina Research manufactured cotton yarn here for a few years. Local investors who purchased the complex in 1979 now rent out part of the plant.

N 3. Circle Drive-In. 111 Boone Rd. Small, plain one-story flat-roofed structure of frame construction. Flat metal canopy level with roofline extends across and beyond main and north elevations. The building's presence is accentuated at night by the bright blue neon in a zig-zag pattern that outlines the front edge of the canopy.

N 4. Service Station. 103 Boone Rd. One-story flat-roofed, brick-veneered structure erected in 1985 consisting of small retail unit and four-stall self-service car wash. Large flat metal canopy covers two banks of gas pumps in front.

C 5. "Superintendent's" House. 118 Carroll St. This diminutive two-story brick house with a one-story shed across the rear elevation is Eden's only dwelling directly associated with the genesis of the local textile industry. Local tradition associates the house with James Barnett who acquired this parcel as part of the 2,912 acres along the Smith River that he bought from the Byrd-Farley Estate in 1813. Shortly thereafter, Barnett built the Spray Canal and a grist mill less than one hundred yards southeast of the house, which also appears to have been constructed about that time. Having acquired an interest in the Barnett holdings by the late 1820s, John Motley Morehead in 1836 became the sole owner of over a thousand acres of the Barnett property west of the Smith River (including this property) and the following year began construction of the Leasville Cotton Mill immediately west of the grist mill.

Because this parcel has been part of large tracts of land since the early nineteenth century, its occupancy history is difficult to determine. The brick house may have served as the home of John Hall Bullard who came from Boston to set up the machinery for Morehead's mill and then acted as mill superintendent. It is generally believed that Bullard lived here or in another, larger brick house.
(destroyed) closer to the mill prior to the early 1840s, by which
time he had left the mill to become a merchant on Washington St. in
Leaksville. The next person associated with the small brick house
was James Ray who was in Spray by 1840 and is identified as "Factory
Manager" in the 1860 census. (Ray's son, James B. Ray, married
Bullard's daughter.) It is from Ray's connection with the structure
that it is known as the "Superintendent's" house. After the
Leaksville Woolen Mill was built between the house and the cotton
mill in the early 1880s, the dwelling was used to meet the most
current need of the mill management. For several years it served as
an office for the woolen mill, then as storage, and for a time it
served simultaneously as both. Eventually the need for employee
housing regained priority and for much of this century the dwelling
has been rental property until condemned by the city several years
ago.

A construction date in the 1810s is supported by the architec-
ture of the house. The hall and parlor plan building is of solid
brick construction in a somewhat irregular common bond with glazed
headers and interior walls that are plastered on the first story and
exposed brick on the second; it rests on a rubble stone foundation.
The fenestration, restricted on the main block to the front and rear
elevations, is symmetrical. On the main facade there are two-over-
two double-hung sash windows flanking the entrance and two six-over-
six sash windows above. The lower sashes of the six-over-six win-
dows on the second-story rear elevation have been covered by the
tall shed wing, obviously a later addition. Featuring two single-
shoulder exterior brick chimneys on the south elevation (one in the
gable end of the main block and one on the shed wing), the house
also displays flush gable ends and handsome molded box cornices with
returns. All of the doors are constructed of vertical boards
secured with heavy battens. The only surviving mantelpiece, in the
parlor, is in the Federal style. Now covered with raised seam tin,
the roof probably was built with split shake shingles. In the
course of a current stabilization project conducted under the aus-
pices of the Eden Preservation Society, the roof has been covered
with new tin, deteriorated masonry in the front wall has been
repaired, and a replacement shed-roofed porch, probably similar to
the original, has been removed and is scheduled to be replaced.

C 6. House. 116 Carroll St. Type A dwelling with several replacement
windows and replacement sheathing of asbestos shingles.

N 7. Commercial Building. 404 Church St. Tall one-story brick building
erected 1920s as a garage, now housing retail tire sales. Recently
remodelled facade consists of stucco and anodized aluminum windows
and door at the storefront and aluminum siding in a vertical texture
above.
C 8. **Commercial Building.** 408 Church St. Intact one-story brick structure erected 1920s as a garage. Storefront of plate glass windows franking entrance of double doors is topped by horizontal soldier courses sandwiching three smooth, slightly recessed panels.

C 9. **Commercial Building.** 410-12 Church St. One-story brick structure erected 1920s to accommodate two retail establishments. Each storefront has two plate glass windows flush with the entrance, all contained in a wooden unit. Above, a band of corbelling runs the full width of the building below a large recessed panel the width of each storefront. The brickwork of the main facade has been stuccoed.

C 10. **(former) Imperial Trust and Savings Bank.** 414 Church St. This Neoclassical Revival style building is the most notable structure in the commercial block developed in the 1910s and 1920s on the south side of the Spray Canal. The building's heavy, blocky form of solid brick construction and the two monumental Corinthian columns in antis that dominate the fairly narrow main facade convey an appropriately imposing, vault-like quality that was popular for the architecture of financial institutions throughout the first half of this century. Behind the columns, the three-bay facade is a wooden framework containing various window types in both stories and an entrance of double doors. On the west side elevation, rows of windows with splayed limestone lintels mark the two levels. The building was constructed in 1912 for Imperial Bank and Trust Company seven years after the institution was chartered and four years after it commenced business in the Spray Mercantile Building across the street. (James Barnett's 1810s grist mill, formerly located immediately behind the bank, was dismantled at the same time the new building was going up.) B. Frank Mebane served as the bank's first president. In the early 1920s, Imperial Bank and Trust merged with the Bank of Leakesville, Bank of Spray, and Boulevard Bank and Trust to form the Leakesville Bank and Trust Company. After Leakesville Bank and Trust merged with North Carolina National Bank in the 1950s, this branch closed. Since then a variety of businesses have been located here. In 1984 to 1985, the building's present owners refurbished the interior, converting the second story to their residence and retaining the first floor for commercial use.

C 11. **Stone Piers.** In Tackett Branch behind 410 Church St. These two large piers of rough-cut stone blocks stand as reminders of B. Frank Mebane's role as Spray's promoter. They date from the early 1910s when Mebane was working to vitalize the small industrial community with additional trade. Although the exact circumstances of the piers' construction is not remembered, Mebane's belief in the neces-
The roots of Eden's nationally significant textile industry lie in this complex of brick structures at one of the oldest major manufacturing sites in North Carolina. It was on this property bordered on the south by the Spray Canal, that John Motley Morehead founded the Leaksville Cotton Mills in the late 1830s with the assistance of his first superintendent, John Hall Bullard of Massachusetts. The original mill, consisting of three stories with a wide gabled monitor roof on a tall foundation with a full base-
ment, was known as the "Old Stone Factory" for its solid rubble stone construction. In the west gable end there was a four-stage tower with an open belfry. By the end of 1839, cotton spinning operations were under way and, except for brief periods during the Civil War, the factory produced cotton cloth for the next several decades. As the mill prospered, one-, two-, and three-story frame and brick warehouses, dye houses, picker houses, and other industrial structures were added to the complex. The brick weave house (B) is believed to have been among this latter group and thus probably is Eden's oldest industrial structure. According to historian Lindley S. Butler, an 1857 article on the mill described it as using 350,000 pounds of cotton woven into 270,000 yards of cloth; the factory also produced a small amount of cotton yarn for sale.

Also in the 1850s, a wool carding, spinning, and weaving operation was begun in the loft of the cotton mill’s commissary. Local historian James E. Gardner, in his book Eden: Past and Present, writes that Morehead began the woolen factory for processing wool from sheep raised on his own farms and later operated it on a barter and exchange basis as a service for area farmers who wove the yarn on home looms. Most of the wool processing is believed to have been done in other small buildings that were part of the industrial complex. Eventually the operation evolved into the weaving of blankets and cloth for commercial sale. During the Civil War, Morehead’s mill manufactured cotton and woolen cloth for the Confederacy. In 1881, after Morehead’s son, J. Turner Morehead, had begun managing the family's business interests, the wool operation became a separate entity named the Leaksville Woolen Mill Company with its own three-story brick building of standard mill construction. This buttressed structure, featuring a very shallow gable roof, stepped parapet end facades, and tall segmental arched windows, was extended several bays to the north and south at the end of the nineteenth century. It remains standing at the north end of the complex and today its central portion ranks as one of Eden's two oldest industrial buildings (with the weave house). Noah Foard, husband of one of Turner Morehead's nieces, supervised the woolen operation, which won a gold medal at the State Exposition in Raleigh in 1884.

In 1893, one year after the two mills again merged as the Leaksville Cotton and Woolen Mill Company under the direction of B. Frank Mebane and W. R. Walker, Jr., the Old Stone Factory and most of its ancillary frame buildings were destroyed when lightning struck one of the buildings and started a fire. (Apparently the weave house survived.) Mebane immediately rebuilt the cotton mill with a new three-story brick structure, very similar to the woolen
mill, that incorporated the original stone foundation and basement. With the exception of a two-story frame warehouse at the north edge of the property and a one-story frame warehouse northwest of the woolen mill, the rest of the complex was reconstructed in brick and augmented in 1898 with brick and metal-clad frame buildings that doubled plant capacity. In addition to the main factory, the manufacturing part of the cotton mill ultimately included these additional buildings: two dye houses (only one, C, survives), two drying houses (no longer standing), a picker house (destroyed), machine shop (destroyed), and an engine and boiler house (the latter, D, remains).

Shortly after the main cotton mill was rebuilt, Mebane embarked upon a major expansion of textile mills in Spray. When Marshall Field and Company acquired several of the Spray mills in 1912 after Mebane overextended himself financially, the Leaksville Cotton and Woolen Mills were among his four ventures that remained independent of the Chicago-based conglomerate.

The two mills eventually were reorganized as two separate companies, Leaksville Cotton Mills owned by Spray Water Power and Land Company and Leaksville Woolen Mills under the control of John Lindsay Morehead, J. Turner Morehead's nephew. Leaksville Woolen Mills built another large factory in Charlotte in 1919 and in 1930 bought the idle Leaksville Cotton Mills from Spray Water Power and Land Company. The woolen company operated the entire complex until 1960 when it merged with the Chatham Manufacturing Company of Elkin and both the Eden and Charlotte plants came under Chatham control. Chatham produced blankets here until 1971 and in 1972 converted the old cotton mill building to the Dybak plant which manufactures dyeable backing for the carpet industry.

C 13. **(former) Spray Mercantile Building.** 413 Church St. Facing the Spray Power Canal, this two-story brick building is the oldest surviving commercial building in the Spray section of Eden and the original portion of a commercial block that eventually consisted of five three-story units. Like the neighboring textile mills, the building is of standard mill construction with thick exterior brick walls, interior supports of large timbers, and thick wooden floors. Distinguished by a corbelled pendant cornice and large round arched windows across its five-bay main facade, this original unit of the Spray Mercantile Building was completed in 1890 as the replacement for a frame building that had served as a factory store for the neighboring textile mills. Prior to 1900, a three-story Italianate Revival style brick building consisting of two units was built a few yards to the north. Large metal cornices surmounted each unit and the larger, north, unit was fronted by a four-stage tower with an
open belfry and pyramidal roof at the northwest corner. The tower contained a stairway to the upper floors and a large water tank for fire fighting. The new construction echoed the original building in its round-arched windows at the third story. In 1904, the first building was enlarged with a third story and the two structures were joined by a connecting unit very similar to the original construction. According to a 1983 newspaper article, when the construction was completed, the 50,000-square-foot building was the second largest of its kind in the state, surpassed only by the Belk Building in Charlotte.

The largest and best known of the many businesses that have occupied the Spray Mercantile Building was the one that lent the block its name. Established around 1880 as the Morehead Mills company store, the Spray Mercantile Company occupied the entire first floor of the brick building completed in 1890 and expanded into the connecting unit built in 1904. The store carried all kinds of merchandise, including groceries, clothing, household goods, hardware, yard goods, feed, and seeds. Rufus Patterson Ray, who began working for the business as a clerk in the late 1880s, became the store's general manager upon its incorporation early in this century. Later, he acquired all of the company's outstanding stock and took over its operation in 1934.

A variety of businesses, professional offices, and social and recreational facilities occupied the rest of the complex during its more than eighty-year history. The 1908 Sanborn insurance maps show that the north end of the building contained a post office, a bank (The Bank of Spray), and a barber shop. Also on the first floor of the two northern units were the Spray Drug and Chemical Company, run first by Herman Stone and later by Dan Taylor and other druggists, as well as Wall Furniture Company owned by C. P. Wall and his son, Philip Wall. In addition, a shoe repair shop and a doctor's office also occupied the first story. The doctor's office first belonged to Dr. John Sweeney who was joined in practice in 1898 by Dr. John B. Ray; after Sweeney moved to Durham, Ray continued here and was joined by his nephew, Dr. S. Phillip Ray, in the 1930s. Another physician's office on the second floor was used by Dr. A. F. Tuttle. Except for the bank, all of these tenants remained in the building until around 1950. The second floor contained a jewelry shop, the offices of dentists, attorneys, and other professionals, and the local court which was held here until the Rockingham County Building was constructed on Boone Rd. in the 1930s. Various organizations such as the Girls' Club and the Red Cross also used this floor, which could be reached by a footbridge spanning the canal to link the second-story walkway across most of the main and south facades with the more elevated terrain occupied by Nantucket Mills. The
third level accommodated a community center complete with a roller skating rink in the northern units and storage above the Spray Mercantile.

The Spray Mercantile Building remained the commercial and professional focal point for the Spray section of Eden until the 1950s when shopping patterns began to change with the proliferation of automobiles and the increasing popularity of modern shopping centers. Businesses began to decline and by 1978, when neighboring Spray Cotton Mills purchased the building, the complex was vacant and deteriorating. In 1983, Spray Cotton Mills demolished all of the post-1890 additions, leaving the original two-story unit which they renovated as mill offices.

14. **Spray Cotton Mills.** 423 Church St.

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<td>14.</td>
<td><strong>Spray Cotton Mills.</strong> 423 Church St.</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td><strong>A. Spray Cotton Mills, Main Mill -- 1896 and later additions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td><strong>B. Power House -- Almost cubical one-story brick building with flat roof; rests on tall poured concrete foundation and piers where the building extends over the tail race; houses 1920s General Electric turbine, still in operation; built circa 1920</strong></td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td><strong>C. Waste House -- one-story gable-roofed building of frame construction with tin roof, built 1920s</strong></td>
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Erected in 1896, Spray Cotton Mills heralded the beginning of the "Mebane era." It was built by Spray Water Power and Land Company, headed by Mebane who had determined to embark upon a swift campaign of mill building when the company assumed management of the Morehead family interests the previous year. Strategically located on the Spray Power Canal which was the plant's sole source of power for many years, the mill was administered initially by Dr. George A. Mebane (brother of B. Frank Mebane) and had the backing of W. R. Walker, S. J. Murdoch, and C. G. Wright. When it opened in 1897 it had 12,000 spindles producing cotton yarn. The mill prospered and was one of the four Morehead family mills not acquired by Marshall Field and Company when many of the family's ventures faced bankruptcy around 1910. Dr. Karl von Ruck, a German chest surgeon who ran a sanatorium in Asheville, became involved with Spray Cotton Mills during the Panic of 1897, eventually bought out the interests of the other shareholders, and assumed ownership of the plant in 1914. Shortly after acquiring the mill, von Ruck hired his nephew, Karl Bishopric, to manage it. Ownership of Spray Cotton Mills eventually passed to Bishopric and another von Ruck nephew. In 1958 Bishopric's son, Welsford Bishopric, succeeded his father as president and manager of the operation. The mill continues today to
produce a high-quality coarse cotton yarn under the management of the younger Bishopric.

The two-story mill is of standard mill construction with thick exterior brick walls and heavy timbers for the interior supports. Characteristic of late nineteenth-century textile mills, it has a very low-pitched gable roof with heavy rafters exposed in the eaves and a series of enclosed towers, built to accommodate stairs and water tanks, that project from the side elevations. Near the southwest corner of the mill, there is a three-story flat-roofed wing with a simple corbeled cornice which contains offices. The north and south ends of the building also are augmented by small one- and two-story brick wings. Tall and fairly narrow segmental arched windows, now bricked in, take up most of the facades.

The mill originally was approximately half its present size. In 1898, a sizable addition to the north end of the factory, which continued the original design, doubled the productive capacity of the plant. The addition was powered by a 350-horsepower steam engine and the south end continued for several years to be powered solely by water. The power for both sources was converted into mechanical drives extending the full length of the mill which transmitted the power to the production machines by belts. Reliance upon the canal gradually diminished and in 1930 Spray Cotton Mills built a new powerhouse with a turbine and a generator; use of the steam engine discontinued in the 1950s when the company began buying power from Duke Power Company. Spray Cotton Mills continued to contract for increasing amounts of the canal's flow, however, and in 1977 acquired the entire water rights from Spray Water Power and Land Company. Today, the mill generates approximately seventeen percent of its power from the canal.

15. Lily Mill. Between Spray Power Canal and Danville and Western RR, approximately 250 yd. N of Church St.

**C** A. **Lily Mill, Main Mill** — built 1900

**C** B. **Dye House and Bleachery** — Dye house built 1900 and enlarged with bleachery 1910s; one-story brick building of standard mill construction with tall segmental-arched windows; bleachery addition at south end is narrower than dye house portion; monitor roof running length of entire structure unifies two sections

**C** C. **Warehouses** — built circa 1910, consisting of two units: a two-story structure with full basement that serves as an additional full story due to slope of site and, attached to its east side,
a very plain one-story building; larger structure is of solid brick construction on three elevations, with north wall tin on frame; small segmental-arch windows appear on its brick west wall and small rectangular fixed sash windows are on the north elevation; smaller warehouse is of frame construction with brick fire wall that partitions rooms at south end;

C  D. Waste House -- circa 1920; plain one-story building of frame construction with full basement that serves as an additional full story due to slope of site, attached to west wall of Warehouse No. 1; south wall of is solid brick with a simple corbelled cornice

C  E. Pump House -- very small one-story brick building of fireproof construction with flat roof and small segmental-arch windows; built late 1910s

The Lily Mill is the smallest and most obscure of the six textile mills that Spray Water Power and Land Company built in the Spray section of Eden between 1896 and 1903. Sandwiched between the American Warehouse Company mill and the Spray Power Canal, the mill originally was seventy-seven feet wide and approximately 150 feet long, with a separate dye house (B) at the north end and an engine house to the south. During the two decades after it was erected in 1900, the plant was more than doubled in size, first with additional operations facilities and warehouses (C) to the north and, in the late 1910s, extensions to both ends of the main mill that rendered it 350 feet long. These additions incorporated the pre-existing dye house (which was enlarged with a one-story extension for a bleachery at its south end) and necessitated construction of a new pump house (E) to the south. Like all of its neighbors, the Lily Mill is of standard mill construction with thick exterior brick walls and interior supports of heavy timbers and characterized by a long rectangular shape with a low-pitched gabled roof and scores of large segmental arched windows across the elevations. Except for the application of paint to the window panes, the exterior of the Lily Mill is little altered from its circa 1920 appearance. Until around 1910, the plant manufactured flannel outings. When Marshall Field and Company acquired the Lily Mill and five other Eden mills established by Spray Water Power and Land Company in 1912, the Lily Mill was remodelled to make fine dress gingham. The privately printed 1913 publication "Leaksville-Spray, North Carolina. A Sketch of Its Interests and Industries" lists C. P. Wall as manager and G. M. Lamar as superintendent; the mill employed about 150 hands, producing more than 2,250,000 yards of fabric on 4,655 spindles and 212 looms annually. Today the mill contains no machinery and is used solely for warehousing purposes.
16. **Nantucket Mills.** 100 Morgan Rd.

C A. **Nantucket Mill, Main Mill** — built 1898, enlarged 1900

C B. **Carpenter Shop, Boiler House, and Machine Shop** — flat-roofed structure with units in varying heights separated by fire walls; double-hung sash windows in segmental arches; built circa 1900

C C. **Warehouse** — solid brick construction with very shallow gable roof and no windows, built circa 1900; circa 1920 addition to north elevation connected the warehouse to the carpenter shop, boiler house, and machine shop building

N D. **Warehouse** — one-story brick warehouse of uncertain date, yet considerably after original construction

Considerable size and a large five-story tower render the Nantucket Mills the most visually striking of Eden's eleven textile mills. It also is the only mill in Eden for which a designer has been identified. Spray Water Power and Land Company had Nantucket Mills constructed in 1898 (A) according to a design by R. C. Biberstein, one of the most prolific mill designers in the piedmont region. Duke family members and their associates who had established the American Tobacco Company in Durham were the majority stockholders in the new mill until 1905 when the American Warehouse Company, owned by Spray Water Power and Land Company, acquired control. Just two years after it was built, the three-story mill was expanded with a machine shop (later the slasher room) at its south end and a sizable addition terminating in a picker room to the north, identified by the monitor running along the crest of the very low-pitched gable roof. The building's long and narrow configuration and dozens of large segmental arched windows taking up most of the elevations are typical of turn-of-the-century textile mill architecture. Near the south end of the mill, the tower featuring round-arch windows of varying heights and a flared pyramidal tin roof marks the division between the main mill and the two-story dye and weave house that was part of the original construction. Four other plain three-story towers project from the long elevations of the main mill. A brick block (B) consisting of a three-story carpenter shop, one-story boiler house, and two-story machine shop is detached from the main mill, immediately west of the dye house at the south end of the complex. Very austere one-story brick warehouses (C) also are located at the south end of the property, near Church St. Constructed for the manufacture of colored cotton cloth (gingham among other fabrics), Nantucket Mills originally was powered exclusively by the Spray Power Canal which runs close by its
east elevation.

All of the mills' capital stock was purchased by Marshall Field and Company in 1912, about the same time Marshall Field acquired five other financially troubled Eden mills that had been established by the Morehead family. According to the publication "Leaksville-Spray, North Carolina. A Sketch of Its Interests and Industries," 1913 Nantucket Mills employed about 475 hands operating 14,736 spindles and 742 looms that turned out over 9,000,000 yards of gingham and outings annually. The directory listed C. P. Wall as manager and G. M. Lamar as superintendent; overseers of the several departments were J. A. Ward, R. A. Walker, J. A. Glasgow, J. D. Wallace, R. L. Lovell, J. J. Shumate, and W. H. Owens. Today part of Fieldcrest Mills, the plant remains remarkably intact on the exterior, altered only by the painting of the window panes. It contains no machinery and is used solely for warehousing purposes.

17. **American Warehouse Company.** E side Warehouse St., approximately 250 yd. N of Church St.

C  
A. **American Warehouse Company, Main Mill -- 1899**

C  
B. **First Addition to Main Mill -- late 1910s**

C  
C. **Stock Storage Building -- 1910s**

C  
D. **Finishing Building -- late 1910s**

C  
E. **Gingham Finishing Building -- mid 1910s**

C  
F. **Bleachery -- mid 1910s**

C  
G. **Warehouses -- seven units, mid 1910s**

C  
H. **Three-Story Mill -- circa 1930**

C  
I. **Five-Story Mill -- circa 1925**

C  
J. **Boiler and Engine House -- 1899; one-story solid brick structure on full raised basement with tall and narrow segmental-arch windows, shorter round-arch windows, and partial corbelled cornice**

C  
K. **Lumber Shed -- circa 1925; long and narrow metal-clad gable-roofed building of frame construction**

C  
L. **Reservoir -- circa 1920; concrete lined, holds 1 million gallons**
C  M. Filter House -- circa 1920; low one-story hip-roofed and windowless masonry structure built into the embankment of the north side of the reservoir.

Constructed in phases spanning several decades, the American Warehouse Company plant is the largest of the textile mills built in the Spray section of Eden by Spray Water Power and Land Company. Begun in 1899 as part of the rapid industrial expansion engineered by the descendants of textile pioneer John Motley Morehead, the mill initially consisted of the three-story brick (A) building oriented east-west at the south end of the complex. Distinguished by flat parapets ornamented with very narrow corbelled pendants above the end elevations, the building is otherwise typical of mill construction of the day in its standard mill construction, tall segmental arched windows, and very low-pitched gable roof with exposed rafter ends in the eaves above the long facades. Like the neighboring Nantucket Mill, the first American Warehouse Company building originally had a five-story tower; it was truncated to two stories and, with the rest of the west end of the building, absorbed in a wing built in the late 1910s. This addition (B) to the main mill is connected to a stock storage building (C) and a finishing building (D) erected at different times in the 1910s. All three additions, connected end to end and oriented north-south along Warehouse St., are three stories tall and identical to the original mill except for the absence of the corbelled parapets. Also in the mid 1910s, a two-story brick gingham finishing building (E) and a one-story brick bleachery (G) were constructed immediately north of the main mill and a row of several frame one-story warehouses along the railroad tracks were replaced with a row of eleven austere two-story metal-clad storage units on full raised basements linked end to end by common fire walls (only seven units remain) (G). The most recent additions to the plant are the three- and five-story buildings of steel frame construction with brick curtain walls built on Warehouse St. (H) around 1930 and in place of the four northern warehouse units around 1925 (I), respectively.

The American Warehouse Company was established to "finish" the piece goods and blankets manufactured in the other Spray Water Power and Land Company mills. For the cotton blankets, received by the Warehouse in rolls of eighteen or more pairs, finishing entailed napping, felting and ironing in order to produce a wool-like finish, and then cutting, binding, folding, and ticketing, and wrapping them in packing cases. Gingham were put through processes to remove lint and produce a satiny finish and outings (a flannelette sometimes having an admixture of wool) were napped, ironed, and rolled.
onto boards into fifty-yard bolts. The plant also handled large quantities of tickings and export fabrics.

Established as the "parent" mill of the Spray Water Power and Land Company chain, the American Warehouse Company held the majority interest in the stock of the other mills after 1905. Controlling shares in the American Warehouse Company were owned by Spray Water Power and Land Company and associates of its president, B. Frank Mebane. Other prominent shareholders prior to American Warehouse's bankruptcy in 1911 were B. N. Duke, J. B. Duke, Seth Low, J. Pierpont Morgan, and J. M. Studebaker. The American Warehouse Company and four other Spray Water Power and Land Company mills were acquired in 1912 by Marshall Field and Company, which constructed all except one of the additions to the mill. Shortly after the plant was taken over by Marshall Field, a privately printed 1913 booklet entitled "Leaksville-Spray, North Carolina. A Sketch of Its Interests and Industries" reported that American Warehouse shipped 1,115,000 pairs of blankets and more than 22,500,000 yards of piece goods in 1912. At that time, the mill employed over two hundred hands under the administration of manager E. D. Pitcher. Other officials were superintendent J. W. Krantz and overseers Z. V. Nance, R. D. Shumate, F. C. Cowan, G. W. Patterson, Rufus Nelson, and J. V. Orrell. Today the mill, still largely intact, continues in use as Fieldcrest Mills' blanket finishing mill.

C 18. **House.** 414 Riverside Dr. Type A house with plain 4" x 4" porch posts and interior chimney at juncture of front block and one-room rear ell.

C 19. **House.** 420 Riverside Dr. Type A house with two-room-long rear ell and interior chimney in center of main block.

C 20. **House.** 432 Riverside Dr. Type A house with two-room-long rear ell and interior chimney at center of main block; replacement slat porch railing.

C 21. **House.** 436 Riverside Dr. Type A house with two-room-long rear ell and interior chimney at center of main block. Porch has 4" x 4" posts and match stick railing.

C 22. **House.** 440 Riverside Dr. Type A house with two-room-long rear ell and interior chimney at center of main block; replacement slat porch railing.

N 23. **Mobile Home.** 444 Riverside Dr. Mobile home on piers with underpinning and attached porch.
N 24. House. 444 Riverside Dr. One-story, one-room-deep frame house with low-pitched gable roof, one-story rear ell with shed along north side, and one-bay extension on south end of main block. House appears to have been built prior to World War II but is of later vintage that the mill-constructed houses. The builder is unknown.

C 25. House. 510 Riverside Dr. Type A house on raised basement (due to slope of lot), with one-room rear ell and chimney at center of main block.

C 26. House. 512 Riverside Dr. One-story one-room-deep frame house with low-pitched gable roof, one-room rear ell, shed porch, and exterior flue on gable end. Replacement exterior sheathing of asphalt shingles. Construction date is uncertain; roof pitch suggests that house was not built at same time as identified mill housing.

27. Rhode Island Mill. 540 Riverside Dr.

C A. Rhode Island Mill, Main Mill -- 1903; substantial addition circa 1908

C B. Machine Shop and Boiler House -- 1903; one-story solid brick building with shed roof and tall segmental-arch windows and doors, many of which are now bricked in.

C C. Warehouses and Bleachery -- circa 1920; austere building of brick and frame construction; one-story with full basement, very shallow gable roof, and solid brick fire walls separating the units.

Built in 1903, the Rhode Island Mill is the last of the textile mills built in the Spray section of Eden by the Morehead family interests under the auspices of Spray Water Power and Land Company. As originally constructed, it consisted of the two-story main mill which incorporated the two-story picker house at its the north end (A), and the one-story machine shop and boiler room (B) attached to the front of the picker house. Prior to 1908, the main mill was expanded with much larger two-story unit with a basement that becomes a full third story at the south end due to the slope of the site overlooking the Smith River. The entire factory is of standard mill construction incorporating thick exterior walls of brick and interior supports of large timbers. Like most other textile mills of the period, the gable roof of the main mill and its circa 1908 addition has a very shallow pitch with heavy curved rafter ends exposed in the eaves and the elevations are lined with large segmental-arch windows. The Rhode Island Mill was one of the six Spray Water Power and Land Company mills acquired by Marshall Field and
Company in 1912. According to a 1913 directory for Leaksville-Spray, the mill was built for the manufacture of yarn and "high-class" cotton blankets. The directory lists G. W. Fraker as manager; Luther Knowles, superintendent; T. J. Hobson, carding overseer; B. W. Koontz, spinning overseer; F. D. DeHart, weaving overseer; and Charlie Phillips, second-hand weaving overseer. The plant was producing about 550,000 pairs of blankets and 700,000 pounds of yarn annually. In the late 1910s, Marshall Field added the one-story brick bleach house and warehouse at the north end of the plant. Now part of Fieldcrest Mills, the complex has been used exclusively as a warehouse for several years.

N 28. **House.** 606 Riverside Dr. Type A house considerably enlarged with one-and-one-half-story gable-front rear wing positioned so that gable rises above crest of main block roof.

C 29. **House.** 620 Riverside Dr. Late 19th/early 20th-century one-story frame mill house with cubical hip-roofed core, short gabled wing on the main facade, and engaged wraparound gable-end porch; two interior brick chimneys; weatherboarded exterior with split shake shingles in the gables.

C 30. **House.** 626 Riverside Dr. Type B house with front attic gable and turned posts with sawn spandrels at the front porch; replacement aluminum siding.

C 31. **House.** 630 Riverside Dr. Type B house with box porch posts on brick piers; replacement aluminum siding.

C 32. **House.** 632 Riverside Dr. Type B house with front attic gable and box porch posts on brick piers; replacement aluminum siding.

C 33. **House.** 636 Riverside Dr. Type B house.

C 34. **House.** 642 Riverside Dr. Gable-front one-story frame bungalow with attached front porch. Built by Marshall Field and Company late 1910s, probably for personnel at rank above laborer.

C 35. **Phillips-Chatham House.** 648 Riverside Dr. Built in the early to mid 1910s, this tall one-story frame house is the oldest of four in a row overlooking the Smith River that were built by mill management for their high-ranking factory personnel. The house is believed to have been built by Spray Water Power and Land Company. The irregular configuration and roofline suggest that the dwelling originally had a plain L- or T-shaped form, similar to those that formerly occupied the lots immediately north, and was later remodelled in the present design reflecting the influence of the bungalow mode popular
during the 1910s and 1920s. The deep recessed porch with box posts on brick piers and the shingles in the gables are typical bungalow features. The house was built for Charles W. Phillips who rose from second-hand weaving overseer to superintendent of the nearby Rhode Island Mill. Later, long-time occupants were the George Chatham family. Chatham was Marshall Field and Company's overseer of all outbuildings and the company's sanitary district, as well as a Spray policeman.

36. **Barnes House.** 652 Riverside Dr.

C  
A. Barnes House — 1918

N  
B. Garage — one-story gable-front frame structure; date uncertain

Long-time area residents report that Marshall Field and Company built this fashionable bungalow for a Mr. Barnes, one of the local mill superintendents, in 1918. The one-and-one-half-story frame dwelling with an engaged wraparound porch is notable architecturally for the large multi-paned Palladian style window that dominates the gable-roofed front dormer. The present owner, Mrs. Ruth Caston, has lived here since 1936.

N 37. **Water Tank.** Between rear yards of 652 and 700 Riverside Dr. 80-foot-tall cylindrical metal-clad tank with 150,000-gallon capacity; erected late 1910s, still in use.

38. **Stevenson House.** 700 Riverside Dr.

C  
A. Stevenson House — 1918

N  
B. Garage — one-story gable-front frame structure, date uncertain

The Stevenson House is the most distinctive of the four dwellings overlooking the Smith River that were built by the local textile companies for their factory administrators. Of the three houses built in 1918 by Marshall Field and Company, the Stevenson House is the largest and most stylishly appointed. The spacious one-and-one-half-story frame structure is fronted by a deep full-facade engaged porch with pairs of large fluted box posts on brick piers. Sidelights and a three-part transom containing decoratively patterned muntins surround the wide front door. On the south side elevation, there is a large porte-cochere, also supported by fluted posts. Large rooms, high ceilings, and a wide center hall decorated with fluted pilasters characterize the interior. The house was built for William Stevenson, superintendent of the neighboring Spray Woolen Mill. W. J. Slayton, Jack Baker, and Jim Lamar, all high-
ranking personnel in the Spray mills, were among the subsequent occupants. The house was the Rectory of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church from around 1930, when the Rev. William Jones Gordon and his family moved into it, until the 1970s when it was purchased by the Rev. and Mrs. Warwick Aiken, its current occupants.

39. **Spray Woolen Mill.** 724 Riverside Dr.

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>A. Spray Woolen Mill, Main Mill</strong> -- 1902</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>B. Picker House</strong> -- 1902</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>C. Dye Houses</strong> -- 1902</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td><strong>D. Boiler and Engine Rooms</strong> -- 1902; tall brick smokestack added to engine room after 1930</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td><strong>E. Carbonizing Plant</strong> -- 1913</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td><strong>F. Addition Containing Blanket Mill and Warehouse</strong> -- circa 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>G. Warehouse</strong> -- circa 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>H. Reservoir</strong> -- late 1910s; concrete-lined</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td><strong>I. Filter House</strong> -- late 1910s; small one-story masonry structure</td>
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In 1902, near the end of a decade of rapid expansion, Spray Water Power and Land Company constructed this mill for the manufacture of wool blankets. Overlooking the Smith River, the sizable and fairly intact complex evolved to its present form in two stages. It originated with the northern portion perpendicular to Aiken Rd. consisting of the two-story main mill (A), attached picker house (B), dye house (C), and boiler and engine rooms (D), all of standard mill construction with thick exterior brick walls and interior supports of heavy timbers. The factory's design, featuring a very low-pitched gable roof and large segmental-arch windows taking up most of the elevations, is characteristic of early twentieth-century textile mill architecture. After Spray Water Power and Land Company encountered financial difficulties around 1910, Marshall Field and Company in 1912 acquired Spray Woolen Mill and five other area mills (four in the Spray Industrial Historic District and one in Draper) that had been established by descendants of textile pioneer John Motley Morehead. In 1913, Marshall Field built a two-story brick carbonizing plant (E) at the north end of the complex for the removal of foreign matter from wool. Between 1915 and 1921, the new owners more than doubled the mill's size by extending the main mill.
to the south and adding a two-story ell containing another blanket mill and warehouse (P). The addition differs from the original construction in its narrower windows separated by pilasters running the full heights of the facades. Also prior to 1921, Marshall Field built the warehouse directly adjacent to Riverside Dr. that is of brick construction on the first story and frame on the second (G). The privately printed 1913 publication, "Leaksville–Spray, North Carolina. A Sketch of Its Interest and Industries," lists George W. Praker as the mill manager, William Stevenson as superintendent; C. R. Clark, overseer of dyeing and carbonizing; William Knott, overseer of carding and spinning; and W. J. Slayton, overseer of weaving. The mill then employed about 125 hands and produced 125,000 to 130,000 pairs of blankets annually. Today the complex is part of Fieldcrest Mills and produces nonwoven and flocked blankets. The only significant exterior alteration is the filling in with brick of all the windows.

C 40. **House.** 605 Riverside Dr. Type A house with interior chimney at juncture of main block and rear ell; replacement one-over-one double-hung sash windows and turned railing balusters.

C 41. **House.** 607 Riverside Dr. Type A house with L-shaped rear wing, box porch posts, and replacement double-hung sash windows.

C 42. **House.** 611 Riverside Dr. Type A house with two-room-deep rear ell and interior chimney at juncture of main block and rear ell; replacement metal porch supports.

N 43. **House.** 613 Riverside Dr. One-story, two-room-deep frame house with gabled entrance porch and asbestos shingle siding, built 1950s.

C 44. **House.** 619 Riverside Dr. Type A house with interior chimney at juncture of main block and rear ell and tapered box porch posts on brick piers; replacement front picture window and asphalt "brick" siding.

C 45. **House.** 621 Riverside Dr. Type A house with interior chimney at juncture of main block and rear ell. Front porch recently enclosed and sheathed with "T-111" plywood.

C 46. **House.** 625 Riverside Dr. Type A house with interior chimney at juncture of main block and rear ell; replacement aluminum siding and metal porch posts.

C 47. **House.** 629 Riverside Dr. Type A house with interior chimney at juncture of main block and rear ell; replacement front picture
window, asphalt siding, and metal porch supports. Metal carport is attached to south gable end.

N 48. **House.** 631 Riverside Dr. Type A house extensively altered: main chimney has been removed; replacement front porch is shed type with metal posts, at entrance bay only; replacement front picture window and asphalt siding.

C 49. **House.** 633 Riverside Dr. One-story gable-front-and-wing type mill house with small rear ell, interior chimney, and wraparound porch with turned posts and sawn spandrels; replacement aluminum siding.

C 50. **House.** 637 Riverside Dr. Type B house with front attic gable and turned porch supports with sawn spandrels. Replacement siding of asphalt "brick" on sides and rear and permastone on main facade. Small hip-roofed wing on north elevation.

C 51. **House.** 641 Riverside Dr. Late 19th/early 20th-century one-story frame mill house with cubical hip-roofed core, short gabled wing on main facade, and engaged wraparound porch with turned posts, sawn spandrels, and match stick railing. Replacement asbestos shingle siding and horizontal two-over-two double-hung sash windows.
8. Significance

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<th>Period</th>
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Specific dates | 1810s - 1930s | Builder/Architect | Various; see inventory list

The ninety-four buildings, structures, and objects (80 contributing; 14 non-contributing) comprising the Spray Industrial Historic District constitute one of the greatest concentrations of intact and continuously operating late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century textile mill complexes in the North Carolina piedmont and the entire Southeast. The district also represents a primary theme of Eden's heritage in its association with early nineteenth-century founding fathers of Leaksville and Spray (merged with the town of Draper to form Eden in 1967) and later with the numerous textile industry pioneers who helped transform Spray from a small settlement to an industrial hub. Shortly after his 1813 purchase of 2,912 acres of the vast Byrd-Farley lands in which the district lies, James Barnett constructed a dam and the 4,600-foot-long Spray Power Canal, the genesis of Eden's textile industry, in order to power his new grist mill. Although the grist mill and most of the numerous other buildings Barnett and his family constructed no longer stand, the canal became the key to an industrial revolution in the 1830s and survives to this day to provide power to one of the mills. In 1839, John Motley Morehead rode the crest of textile development in piedmont North Carolina when he bought most of Barnett's property and constructed the mill now known as the Leaksville Cotton Mill at the end of the canal. The endeavor proved successful, and after Morehead's death in 1866 his descendants, principally his son James Turner Morehead and his grandson-in-law, B. Frank Mebane, continued to expand the industrial venture with additional mills, housing and services for their employees, and related commercial undertakings such as the Spray Mercantile Company. Mebane erected eight new mills in the district between 1893 and 1903, including the 1898 Nantucket Mill which is a striking example of turn-of-the-century mill architecture with its corbelled five-story tower. During this period the district also was the site of an experiment that resulted in the discovery of acetylene gas, a discovery that led directly to the formation of Union Carbide Corporation in New York in 1908. Mebane's rapid pursuit of goals led to financial difficulties that culminated in the acquisition of five of the mills by Marshall Field and Company in 1912. Under Marshall Field's direction, the industrial complex was further expanded with additions to the existing mills and new housing for laborers and administrators. Although the houses are no longer company-owned, most of the mills remain under the ownership of Morehead descendants or Fieldcrest Mills, which was created in 1947 from Marshall Field's manufacturing division and continues to be a major economic force in the region.
Criteria Assessment

A. The Spray Industrial Historic District contains one of the greatest concentrations of intact and continuously operating textile mill complexes in the North Carolina Piedmont and the Southeast. These industries have remained a vital force in the local economy and the region's textile industry for more than 140 years.

B. The Spray Industrial Historic District reflects the accomplishments of James Barnett, one of the founding fathers of Eden, and of textile pioneers John Motley Morehead, James Turner Morehead, B. Frank Mebane, and others who played pivotal roles in the economic development of Eden and North Carolina.

C. In their construction techniques and design, the scores of industrial structures throughout the Spray Industrial Historic District, particularly the large factories such as Nantucket Mills with its corbelled five-story tower, exemplify late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century industrial architecture.
Occupying a considerable portion of the town of Eden (formed in 1967 by the consolidation of the towns of Leaksville, Spray, and Draper), the Spray Industrial Historic District constitutes a primary theme not only in the development of the community but in the evolution of North Carolina's textile industry as well.

Although this district at the heart of Spray began to emerge in the early nineteenth century, its origins really rest with the rise of Leaksville in the late eighteenth century. As the need for a market center rose with the multiplication of area farms and as interest grew in improving the Dan River for navigation, a belief in the feasibility of an economically viable town became stronger among the Dan River Valley's ambitious citizens. In 1795, John Leak, one of the valley's most enterprising residents, selected a 204-acre parcel which he had received as a grant from the state as the site on which to establish Rockingham County's first town. Located a short distance west of the junction with the Smith River, the parcel on a high bluff overlooking the Dan River consisted of rolling terrain bordered on the north by the Petersburg-Salem Road. The new town was platted into forty-two lots and in 1797 the North Carolina General Assembly chartered it as Leaksville.

Development proceeded slowly, and by 1810 Leaksville was little more than several frame and log buildings despite the slow but steady pace of lot sales.

As Leaksville was going through its infancy, the adjoining 26,000-acre tract known as the Farley Lands began to be divided. William Byrd II had purchased this property from the English Crown shortly after surveying the boundary between the North Carolina and Virginia colonies in the late 1720s; his son sold the 26,000 acres to Francis and Simon Farley of Antigua prior to 1775. The land soon passed to James Parke Farley in whose family it remained until settlement of his estate in the 1790s. Legal questions about title to the land delayed disposition of the property and resulted in an 1803 survey dividing the Farley Lands into seventeen shares assigned to various heirs and share owners.

Tract number twelve, the largest share, was to prove crucial to the development of Eden and more particularly the Spray Industrial Historic District. In May, 1813, for $8,600, James Barnett purchased this irregularly shaped parcel of 2,912 acres bordering the east edge of Leaksville and extending north on both sides of the Smith River from its juncture with the Dan.

Barnett assumed a major role in Eden's history with his successful endeavor to harness the power of the Smith River, the first of a series of undertakings by Barnett that were to help shape the community's future. Shortly after purchasing the Farley land, Barnett constructed a wooden dam and the 4,600-foot-long Spray Power canal running from the dam southward to his new five-story frame grist mill (no longer standing). Situated on Island Creek near its meeting point with the Smith River, the grist mill constituted the first phase of an industrial hub that eventually would evolve under the direction of Barnett.
and his relatives, and later by the Morehead family and their successors, into one of the foremost manufacturing centers of the southeast.

With a strong post-War of 1812 economy and the development of bateau navigation on the Dan, there was a surge of business throughout the Dan River Valley. In Leakesville, real estate prices soared as rumors spread that the town would be designated navigational head of the Dan River. Of their two remaining structures, believed to be Eden's oldest identified dwellings, the small two-story brick house at 118 Carroll St. is remarkably intact in spite of deterioration due to a lengthy period of abandonment. (The other house, of frame construction, lies outside of the district and has been radically altered.)

As commodities prices began to fall with the waning of war-induced European demand for American agricultural products, the Panic of 1819 hit much of the country. Real estate prices plummeted in the Dan River Valley, bringing the Leakesville area's rapid growth to a halt. Although Leakesville endured as a small market town, many local businessmen sought new fortunes in Tennessee, Kentucky, and other points west. James Barnett, who already had sold most of his land to John Barnett, his father, left his local interests to the management of his cousin, William Barnett, and joined these pioneers.

A long awaited resurgence in Leakesville's growth began in the early 1830s when John Motley Morehead incited an industrial revolution. Best known for his service as governor of North Carolina from 1841 to 1845 and his sponsorship of the North Carolina Railroad, Morehead established an industrial empire that eventually stretched across every section of Eden and today is considered one of his greatest accomplishments. Born nearby in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, in 1796, Morehead was reared in Rockingham County and educated in Guilford County and at the University of North Carolina. Although he made Greensboro his home, he maintained strong business ties with the Leakesville area where his family had considerable investments. Having become co-owner of a store in Leakesville in the late 1820s, Morehead formed a partnership with William Barnett, Jr., in 1831. Soon after, Morehead and Barnett were operating a small industrial complex on Island Creek that included a sawmill, oil mill, carding mill, cotton gin, blacksmith shop, and general store in addition to the grist mill that James Barnett had built. When he purchased William Barnett's remaining interest in the property in 1836, Morehead became sole owner of 1,065 acres on the Smith River.

Recognizing the tremendous untapped power potential of the canal, Morehead joined the ranks of North Carolina's pioneering textile manufacturers when he decided to open a cotton mill next to the grist mill. In 1839, he hired textile mechanic John Hall Bullard of Massachusetts, the vanguard of the American textile industry, to build and manage the new mill. Bullard oversaw construction
of the three-story, solid rubble stone building, a one-story brick dye house and other frame and brick ancillary industrial buildings, a two-story frame tenement overlooking the mill from present-day Carroll St. for six operatives and their families, and brick cottages for managers on the hillside closer to the mill. Bullard also may have adapted the tripartite brick house known as "the white house" for his residence and enlarged the brick house on the south side of Island Creek for Morehead's use as a retreat when he visited his factories. The one-story brick building next to the present Leaksville Cotton Mill is believed to be the original weave house and thus the only antebellum industrial structure remaining in Eden; all of the Spray houses associated with Bullard have been destroyed and all of the other early industrial buildings have been removed in a variety of circumstances.

Known variously as Leaksville Factory and Morehead's Mill, the plant began operation in 1840 as Rockingham's County's only textile factory. Experiencing an industrial boom in response to the agricultural depression following the Panic of 1837, North Carolina at this time had twenty-five textile mills in North Carolina, primarily in the Piedmont. Like most of the state's small factories, Morehead's Mill was a supplementary activity for Morehead, who continued to operate Barnett's grist mill, businesses in Leaksville, and had other ventures in Rockingham and other North Carolina counties. For many years its primary output was cotton cloth; a limited amount of cotton yarn was traded in the factory store for produce. The mill prospered and gradually expanded so that by 1857 it was using 350,000 pounds of cotton to weave 270,000 yards of cloth. When Morehead started a wool carding, spinning, and weaving operation in the loft of the store in the 1850s, wool from sheep raised on his own farms was processed. Later, the operation was run on a barter and exchange basis as a service for area farmers who wove the yarn on home looms. Eventually the wool operation evolved into the weaving of blankets for commercial sale.

The Leaksville Factory remained the only mill in the county in 1860. The census taken that year listed the mill's capitalization at $70,000 and its employees at twenty-five men and eighty women, considerably higher than the statewide average forty-five workers per cotton mill. Although the number of North Carolina mills had risen to thirty-nine, there were only seven small woolen mills. The operation of the plant throughout most of the Civil War for the manufacture of cotton and woolen cloth for the Confederacy contributed greatly to the Leaksville area's relatively swift recovery from wartime deprivations. John Motley Morehead had continued to oversee his industrial complex from his home in Greensboro and with periodic visits to his plant as long as his health permitted.

After Morehead's death in 1866, his heirs made decisions during settlement of the estate that were to be critical to the transformation of the Leaksville area as one of North Carolina's leading industrial centers. Four of Morehead's children -- James Turner Morehead, John Lindsay Morehead, Letitia Harper Morehead Walker, and Ann Eliza Morehead Evans -- withdrew from the estate as
their partial share "the business of cotton milling, grist and saw milling and merchandising." In addition, the agreement filed in the county probate court in 1876 noted that the four siblings acquired "the farm attached to a part of said Factory Property, consisting off about 1100 acres" and other valuable property in Leaksville and listed the shares of the Leaksville Factory that each assumed.\textsuperscript{18} The agreement directed James Turner Morehead to manage the Leaksville interests as majority shareholder of a company formed expressly for that purpose and appropriately named J. Turner Morehead and Company. A former Confederate cavalry officer who achieved the rank of major, Morehead has been described as "an apostle of industrial development" in the forefront of post-war economic recovery who expanded his family's mills, improved river navigation, built railroads, established power plants, and promoted industrial research.\textsuperscript{19}

When Maj. Morehead moved to Leaksville Factory, the settlement of approximately 300 people consisted of the cotton and woolen mills, the company store, and company housing for workers and managers. Throughout the rest of the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s, considered the true beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in North Carolina, Morehead's devotion to expanding his family's industrial ventures placed him among the small group of mill owners who took the lead in postwar textile development.\textsuperscript{20} He converted the brick house that his father had used as a business retreat to his permanent home so that he could best manage every facet of the local enterprises and appointed several of his relatives to manage various aspects of the complex. Under the supervision of his brother-in-law, Noah Foard, the woolen mill grew into a separate entity in 1881 with its own three-story buttressed brick building, which survives as one of Eden's two oldest industrial structures.\textsuperscript{21} Well aware that rapid and efficient transportation was essential to continued industrial growth, Morehead also lobbied vigorously for a rail line through Leaksville. The line was completed in 1883 and the first locomotive to arrive in Leaksville was named the "Lily C. Morehead" after Maj. Morehead's daughter.\textsuperscript{22} In 1889, Morehead founded Spray Water Power and Land Company to manage his family's property; it was not until July 25, 1895, however, that J. Turner Morehead and Company was dissolved and interest-holding family members made further arrangements about property disposal and sharing.\textsuperscript{23}

The name of the new company signalled the emergence of Leaksville's neighboring industrial settlement as a bona fide, independent community. With the development of the Leaksville Woolen Mill, expanded production at the cotton mill, and the concomitant slow but steady rise in the number of mill employees and their family members, the area popularly known as Leaksville Factory required its own post office by the end of the 1880s. In response to Maj. Morehead's application for a post office in 1889, the government requested a name. Morehead first submitted "Splashy," under which a post office actually operated for a few months. When residents protested because they thought "Splashy" suggested a mud hole, Morehead submitted the alternate name of Spray in reference to the water tossed by the cotton mill's water wheel.\textsuperscript{24}
For much of the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, Spray Water Power and Land Company remained synonymous with tremendous development in Spray and the surrounding area. Upon its establishment in 1889, "assets under the company's control included the Leaksville Cotton Mills, real estate holdings, the canal, and indeed a section of the Smith River bottom." Although the company initially was devoted primarily to the management of existing resources and industries, it undertook at least one important new project shortly after its founding, a project directly related to J. Turner Morehead's interest in water power. At the turn of the 1890s, Spray Water Power and Land Company dug a new canal, parallel to the canal dug in the 1810s, that increased the available water power for the company's industries.

As Spray Water Power and Land Company developed, the dynasty spearheading the area's industrial achievement perpetuated itself with yet another generation taking the management helm as J. Turner Morehead turned to new enterprises outside of his family's traditional interests. By 1892, Spray Water Power and Land Company officers included B. Frank Mebane, husband of Morehead's daughter Lily, as president and W. R. Walker, son of Morehead's sister Letitia, as secretary-treasurer. Also by 1892, it became apparent that a single partnership was insufficient for effective control and management of the Morehead family's varied interests in Rockingham County. As a result, their vast holdings were organized into two principal companies, Leaksville Cotton and Woolen Mills Company and Spray Water Power and Land Company, both led by Mebane and Walker in their original official capacities. In addition, the Leaksville Mercantile Company was established to handle merchandising and the grain milling department.

In 1893, Spray's industry suffered a setback when the old rock mill, the original Leaksville Cotton Mills factory, was struck by lightning and burned. This seeming catastrophe, however, proved to be a catalyst for a vigorous twelve-year expansion campaign that yielded the balance of the mill complexes in the Spray Industrial Historic District. Almost immediately, B. Frank Mebane had the mill reconstructed in brick on the original stone foundation and not long after embarked upon a program of erecting new mills, sometimes at a pace of one a year. His first new mill building venture was the Spray Cotton Mill of 1896, a yarn operation presided over by his brother Dr. George A. Mebane. In relatively short order, construction of several additional new mills occurred: the Nantucket Mill in 1898 for production of gingham and outings; the American Warehouse in 1899 for finishing, packing, and shipping all cotton piece goods and blankets made by the other mills; the Lily Mill in 1900 for the manufacture of fine dress gingham; in 1902, the Spray Woolen Mill for production of "North State" woolen blankets and Morehead Cotton Mill for warps and skein yarn; and the Rhode Island Mill for making yarn and cotton blankets in Draper. (Mebane's building campaign culminated in 1905 with the German-American Mill for production of warp and hosiery yarns and the "Indo-Chi-Am" wool-finished cotton blankets in Draper.)
Unique in Rockingham County, this impressive growth was paralleled in other Piedmont textile centers. Throughout the 1890s and into the new century, reinvestment of profits and an influx of northern capital into the state's textile industry, often attracted by the South's mild climate, cheaper raw materials, fuel, and labor, and longer working hours, resulted in enlarged plants and ever-growing income. In the Spray district, that increased northern influence remains evident in the names of the Rhode Island and Nantucket mills. In addition, American Warehouse Company counted northerners Seth Low, J. Pierpont Morgan, and J. M. Studebaker among its original principal investors.

In his account of this building campaign in *Eden: Past and Present*, historian James E. Gardner explains that all of the construction and resulting mill operations in Spray were under the aegis of Spray Water Power and Land Company which set up the American Warehouse Company as the "parent" mill of the chain. Spray Water Power and Land Company and Mebane associates held the controlling shares in the American Warehouse Company, which in turn maintained the controlling interest in the outstanding and voting stock of all of the new mills except for Spray Cotton Mill. According to a state geological survey of 1899, two of the new mills, Spray Cotton Mill and Nantucket Mill, as well as the Leaksville Cotton Mill, Leaksville Woolen Mill, and the flour and grist mills operated by the Leaksville Mercantile Company, were powered by the Spray Canal, which carried enough water to give 600 horsepower. Simultaneous with the new mill construction, Mebane also supervised development of the Spray Mercantile Building, erected in several stages between 1890 and 1904 to provide accommodations for the mills' company store and a variety of businesses, professional offices, and recreational uses that constituted Spray's principal commercial and social center for many years.

All of these new mills resembled the 1883 Leaksville Woolen Mill in their basic design and standard "slow burn" mill construction. With their thick outer brick walls, three- to four-inch-thick hardwood floors, and interior supports of massive wooden timbers, the new factories fulfilled the requirements imposed by fire insurance companies. Large, multi-paned segmental-arched windows lined the facades to allow necessary light and ventilation, and short towers containing staircases and water tanks at the top for emergency sprinkler systems provided periodic accents along the elevations. Mill designers often used the towers as fields for ornament and other identifying features of specific architectural styles, but many of these towers have been removed from mills throughout the state when they fell into disrepair following obsolescence due to the installation of modern sprinkler systems. A striking example of an unaltered tower is presented by the five-story edifice rising above the Nantucket Mill featuring a bellcast pyramidal roof, lunette windows, and corbelling vaguely reminiscent of Romanesque buildings. The Nantucket Mill was designed by R. C. Biberstein of Charlotte, one of the most prolific mill architects of the piedmont.
Local historian James Gardner points out that the physical construction of the mill buildings and accompanying workers' housing often receive little attention in the history of textile plants. Although the volume and magnitude of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century building concentrated in the small settlements of Spray and Draper was remarkable, the history of this building boom in terms of architects, contractors, and laborers remains obscure. Except for the name of the designer of the Nantucket Mill, virtually nothing is known about the origins of those mills that rank among Eden's most imposing structures. The little else that could be gleaned is presented succinctly by Gardner:

The obvious conclusion, with no needed support from records, is that workers were used in large numbers in the construction projects. Mill construction was done by out-of-town contractors who apparently brought in a cadre of skilled workers but recruited laborers from the area. Since the work was temporary, it could have had a special attraction for farm workers who wished to maintain their attachment to the farm. ... Local businesses and local craftsmen and laborers employed by [outside contractors] were involved to an appreciable extent in the construction of mill village houses.

As early as 1896 the Spray Water Power and Land Company entered into an agreement with the Spray Cotton Mills for the erection by the former of 10 three-room, 10 four-room and 10 six-room "framingle roof habitable dwelling houses" and as many additional such houses as the Spray Cotton Mills "may desire" (under stipulated conditions). In agreements made in 1902, 1903, and 1907, Spray Water Power and Land Company granted J. Sanford Patterson the privilege of erecting a number of "tenement houses," in or near the town of Spray. A similar privilege was granted to D. F. King by an agreement in 1903. The name of J. M. Hopper has been associated with the construction of mill houses in the area.

With the great influx of people to work in the mills, there was a serious need in the manufacturing districts for services such as police protection and sanitation that normally are provided by a municipal government. Like most mill administrators, Mebane wanted complete control over his factories and villages; thus, a municipal corporation, which he pronounced "impracticable on account of the large area embraced" by his manufacturing districts, was out of the question. Instead, the Spray Civic Association, a corporation without capital stock or the power of holding elections, was created in 1906

"to promote and encourage civic virtue among the people of the village of Spray; to aid in the development of the industrial, educational, religious, charitable, literary, and social interest of that community; ... to look after the streets, sidewalks, and sanitation of the village of Spray and provide ways and means for their improvement;
Perhaps the most important function of the Civic Association was its assumption of the public health work that had been conducted on a volunteer basis by Leaksville churches and mill administrators and their families.

One other important industrial development that occurred during the "Mebane era" gave birth to one of the world's largest conglomerates which has had a definite effect on modern-day life through its discoveries and products. Having become interested in the manufacture of aluminum, J. Turner Morehead formed the Willson Aluminum Company in 1891 with Canadian chemist Thomas L. Willson. In the course of an 1892 experiment to develop an economical process for making aluminum, material from the company's electric arc furnace at the edge of the Spray Canal gave off an unidentified gas when deposited into a cooling vat; tests identified the gas as acetylene. In spite of personal bankruptcy suffered in the Panic of 1893, the elder Morehead moved to New York City to find investment capital and in 1894 founded the Electro-Gas Company in order to manufacture and sell carbide and acetylene. Subsequent experiments yielded ferrochromium and ferrosilicon alloys used in processing steel for armorplate, which returned Morehead to the ranks of the tremendously wealthy when the U. S. Navy expanded its fleet with armorplated vessels. Historian Butler writes, "his patents on chemical processes and metal alloys and his industrial developments in Virginia and West Virginia led after his death [in 1908] to the formation of Union Carbide Corporation..."37

B. Frank Mebane's tremendous expansion of the Spray and Draper textile industries brought prosperity to the area, but the intensity with which he pursued his goals also contributed to serious financial difficulties. Gardner points out:

Operational success on a continuing basis proved difficult to achieve in a number of the plants after the momentous beginning, and mounting financial problems (including large indebtedness) and poor business conditions [including a business recession in 1911] brought five of the mills into receivership in 1911 and 1912.

Inadequacy of financing appeared to be largely instrumental in bringing the enterprise down; the sale or trading of mill stock did not produce enough cash, and the terms of loans from eastern sources were in some cases disadvantageous.38

For many years, Marshall Field and Company had invested heavily in Mebane's enterprises. As Mebane's principal creditor, having made large advances on merchandise and loans, the Chicago-based merchandising firm took control of the several mills when they became bankrupt. In the name of the Thread Mills
Company, Marshall Field bought the five bankrupt mills -- American Warehouse, Lily, Rhode Island, Spray Woolen, and German-American -- and purchased all of the outstanding stock of the Nantucket Mill, which remained financially sound. The Carolina Cotton and Woolen Mills Company, set up by Marshall Field in 1909 to supervise the distribution of advances to the mill and the securing of title to manufactured goods, continued after purchase of the mills to disburse funds for mill operations and to take possession of finished goods. The Thread Mills Company retained the physical property and mill operations until 1917 when those aspects passed to Carolina Cotton and Woolen, which maintained sales responsibilities as well.

The future of Spray and the surrounding area might have been bleak if Marshall Field had not been competent and dedicated to prolonging mill operations. In 1912, the six Marshall Field mills had more than 1,500 employees, representing a tremendous increase in the area's jobs and people over the previous fifteen years. During the next few years, Marshall Field added still more jobs and expanded its Spray facilities with the Bleachery, attached to the American Warehouse finishing building in 1915 to 1916, and smaller additions to other mills. In combination with the company's emphasis on quality, the capability of producing a variety of products due to the large number of mills gave Marshall Field a significant advantage in merchandising. The profitable operation of the Marshall Field mills "provided an economic stability to Spray, Leakesville, and Draper that expansion alone (in terms of the construction of mills and hiring of employees) could not ensure." Due in large part to the business acumen of such firms as Marshall Field, textile manufacturing became North Carolina's most important industry in the first quarter of this century, leading the nation in the manufacture of cotton goods and the South in the production of all knit goods.

Four of the Spray mills remained independent of Marshall Field. Mebane retained control of Morehead Cotton Mill (under the ownership of the Morehead family's Spray Water Power and Land Company), Leakesville Cotton Mill and Leakesville Woolen Mill. In 1914, Spray Cotton Mills, which had remained solvent, was acquired by Dr. Karl von Ruck, who had provided needed capital during the Panic of 1897. Von Ruck bought out the interests of the other shareholders and installed his nephew, Karl Bishopric of Canada, as manager of Spray Cotton Mills.

Marshall Field and Company's expansion recalled the Mebane era's prosperity during the 1890s and first years of the twentieth century. As the work force of the mills increased, new commercial enterprises arose as well. Spray's primary shopping center was the Spray Mercantile Building. Having evolved from the Moreheads' original company store, the Spray Mercantile Company occupied much of the first floor. The complex also housed the post office, a barber shop, a variety of specialty shops, doctors' and dentists' offices, civic club offices, and a community center complete with a roller rink. With the increase in commercial and investment activities, financial local institutions, among them
the Imperial Trust and Savings Company which first opened its doors in 1908 in the Spray Mercantile Building and moved into its own impressive Neoclassical Revival structure at 414 Church St. four years later. Throughout the next two decades, a series of one-story brick buildings created another commercial block extending from the south side of the bank.

The growing work force required to operate the improved mills also necessitated hundreds of additional houses. Throughout the established mill neighborhoods of Spray, Marshall Field built numerous houses for laborers and administrative personnel, such as the stylish bungalows for high-ranking personnel on Riverside Dr. at the north end of the Flint Hill neighborhood.

In his account of Marshall Field's building campaign, Gardner notes that the continuation of construction and mill operations during World War I, when so much manpower was diverted to military service, was remarkable. In the mills, a severe labor shortage led to increased hiring of women, but even female labor was in short supply. As under Mebane, mill construction was by out-of-town contractors who usually imported skilled workers and hired area laborers. While the temporary nature of the work continued to attract farmers who wanted to maintain their attachments to their farms, the large construction projects also enticed regional craftsmen to settle here. Many moved from the Virginia counties immediately to the north. These newcomers, as well as established local artisans and laborers, played active roles in the construction of the mill villages.

Between the World Wars, Marshall Field established several departments, systems, and procedures that gave technical and professional services to the mills. After an industrial engineering program was begun in 1936, a policy of wage incentives based upon piece work, contingent upon specific methods-improvement work and instituted cost controls, was recommended for all of the mills. Associated with this program, a cost accounting system and quality control program were established in the late 1930s. Marshall Field made one of its earliest organized industrial relations efforts in 1932 when it took the employment of mill workers out of the hands of the mill foremen and made it the responsibility of a personnel department, thus curbing nepotism. Training programs were started, safety functions increased, a medical department with first-aid stations was set up, and a group medical insurance program was established. Despite strong opposition by the company, in 1939 and 1941 the Textile Workers Union of America organized in the Eden mills. The union afforded the mill workers representation in matters of working conditions, wages, and layoff. Major issues of union-company disputes included seniority, discipline, and workloads.

Two changes wrought by Marshall Field and Company had widespread effects among entire families as well as the individual members employed in the mills. In the 1920s, after the work week had been reduced to fifty-five hours, a second shift was begun, followed by a third shift when the work week was further
reduced to forty hours. Mill workers employed on night shifts had to change their sleeping and eating habits and many, especially those who had children and whose spouses also worked in the mills, found the transition difficult. The second policy change that had a profound effect on Marshall Field's work force was the company's decision in 1941 to sell their houses to the employees. The lots in each village were surveyed and Field's approximately 1,250 Tri-City mill houses were sold through the Fielddale Insurance Agency, which also assisted with financing arrangements. If an employee occupying a house exercised his right of first refusal, another employee who preferred that house to his own was given an opportunity to purchase it; if the house was not sold to the second employee, a non-employee could buy it. The sale prices of most of the houses were between $600 and $800.

While operations at Marshall Field's mills evolved, Spray's other textile mills continued to contribute to the Tri-Cities' economic growth. Not long after Marshall Field acquired five of the Morehead family's mills in Spray, the family's pioneering textile enterprise, the Leakesville Cotton and Woolen Mills Company, reorganized its two mills as separate companies: Leakesville Cotton Mills owned by Spray Water Power and Land Company, and Leakesville Woolen Mills under the control of John Lindsay Morehead, J. Turner Morehead's nephew. Leakesville Woolen Mills built another large factory in Charlotte in 1919 and in 1930 bought the idle Leakesville Cotton Mills from Spray Water Power and Land Company. In 1960, the woolen company merged with the Chatham Manufacturing Company, which produced blankets at the Eden plant until 1971. Morehead Cotton Mill remained a manufacturer of unfinished yarn under the control of Spray Water Power and Land Company until 1973 when it was sold to Carolina Research Corporation of Shelby. Today local investors own and rent out portions of the plant, none of which serves as a mill.

In contrast, Spray Cotton Mills and Spray Water Power and Land Company are still in business. Spray Cotton Mills continues to produce a high-quality coarse cotton yarn under the management of the son of Karl Bishopric, who acquired ownership of the company from his uncle, Dr. Karl von Ruck. Perhaps the most interesting feature of Spray Cotton's continued operation is that the mill in 1977 acquired the entire water rights to the Spray Canal which now generates approximately seventeen percent of the mill's power. Spray Water Power and Land Company, under which the area's original mill expansion began, continued to function after Marshall Field's arrival although its manufacturing interest diminished to only the Leakesville Cotton Mill and Morehead Cotton Mill and then to only the Morehead Cotton Mill after 1930. Nevertheless, Spray Water Power and Land Company, which remains in the control of J. Turner Morehead's descendants, has continued to exert considerable influence on Tri-City development through management of its real estate.

Throughout the decades since World War I, Marshall Field and Company's mills have remained at the heart of Eden's economy. For many years after establishing themselves in the Tri-Cities, Marshall Field operated its mills as
the Carolina Cotton and Woolen Mills, part of the company's Wholesale Division. After a 1935 reorganization in which Marshall Field sold many of its mills elsewhere and discontinued the Wholesale Division, the Eden mills and mills in Fieldale, Virginia and Zion, Illinois, the most viable mills of the chain, were retained for concentrated development as the Manufacturing Division of Marshall Field and Company. In 1947, the Manufacturing Division became Fieldcrest Mills in accordance with a plan to promote and advertise the various mill products under the Fieldcrest brand. In order to return to a concentration on retailing and raise capital for merchandising expansion into suburban shopping centers, Marshall Field sold Fieldcrest Mills to Amoskeag Company, a Boston, Massachusetts, investment firm, in 1953. By the time of the sale, Marshall Field was taking less than five percent of the mills' total production whereas in the mid 1930s Field has taken virtually all of the output in certain products and about forty-six percent in blankets and towels. Today, Fieldcrest Mills is on the Fortune 500 list of the country's largest manufacturers and in the early 1980s posted annual sales of more than $500 million.
Notes


3 Rodenbough, p. 7.

4 Butler, p. 31.


8 RCRD, Deed Book Q, page 70; and Butler, *Rockingham County*, p. 33.


12 Mrs. R. P. Ray, "Leaksville History," typescript (in Eden Public Library), 1947, pp. 7, 20. In the 1840s, Bullard left the mill to open a general merchandise store on Washington St. in Leaksville where he also built the Bullard-Ray House, listed on the National Register.

13 Rodenbough, p. 75.


15 Field, footnote 19 on p. 12.
16Rodenbaugh, p. 20.

17Lefler and Newsome, p. 399.


19Butler, Rockingham County, p. 61; and Rodenbaugh, p. 20.

20Lefler and Newsome, p. 505. According to Lefler and Newsome, "In 1880 forty-nine larger cotton mills, chiefly in the prewar textile counties in the Piedmont and owned largely by the same families (Schenck, Fries, Holt, Morehead, Odell, Leak, Lineberger, Battle, and others) were producing goods worth almost $2,500,000 — nearly double that of 1870 and more than twice the 1860 product."


22Butler, Our Proud Heritage, p. 69; and Butler, Rockingham County, p. 61.

23Gardner, p. 6.

24Ray, p. 2.

25Gardner, p. 6.

26Butler, Rockingham County, p. 63.

27Butler, Our Proud Heritage, p. 70.


29Lefler and Newsome, p. 509.

30Gardner, p. 7.


32Memo from Tom Hanchett to principal investigators for projects funded with matching grants from the N. C. Division of Archives and
History, 10 September 1984.

33Gardner, pp. 11 and 13.

34Ibid., p. 13.


37Gardner, p. 7.

38Ibid.

39Ibid., p. 8.

40Ibid.

41Ibid., pp. 8-10, 14.

42Lefler and Newsome, p. 581.

43Butler, Rockingham County, p. 78.

44Sanborn Map Company, "Rockingham County, North Carolina," 1908 series, in the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.

45Rodenbough, p. 130.

46Gardner, pp. 12-13; and interview with J. Hoyte Stultz, a resident of Draper since 1906, in Eden, November 1984.

47Gardner, pp. 69-80.

48Ibid., pp. 99-103.

49Ibid., pp. 69, 85-86, and 89.
Major Bibliographical References


Rockingham County Register of Deeds. Wentworth, Rockingham County, North Carolina.


Sanborn Map Company. "Rockingham County, North Carolina." In the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.
Beginning at the junction of the east bank of the Smith River and the south edge of the Aiken Rd. bridge, follow the east bank of the Smith River south to the dam crossing the river; then follow the south edge of the dam west to the west bank of the Smith River and continue along the west bank of the river south to the junction of the Smith River and the south edge of the Church St./Meadow Rd. bridge; from that point continue in a straight line to the east edge of lot 1b, block 2, tax map 223; continue south along the east edge of block 2, map 223, to the northeast corner of lot 4, block 2 and proceed along the north and west lines of lot 4 to the north side of Early Ave.; continue west along the north side of Early Ave. to the line separating block 2, tax map 223, and the Danville and Western Railroad right-of-way and follow that line north to the southwest corner of lot 1, block 2, map 223; then proceed west across the Danville and Western Railroad tracks and follow the northern line of lot 2, block 1, tax map 223 to the northwest corner of the lot; then follow the west edge of lot 2, block 1 south to the southeast corner of lot 13, block 1, tax map 223; follow the south line of lot 13 west to the southeast corner of lot 12 and then follow the east edge of lot 12 north to the east side of Carroll St.; proceed along the east side of Carroll St. north to Church St. and then follow the south side of Church St. east to a point opposite the northeast corner of Church St. and Morgan Rd.; cross Church St. to the northeast corner of Church St. and Morgan Rd. and follow the east side of Morgan Rd. north to Warehouse St. and then continue along the east side of Warehouse St. north to Riverside Dr.; then follow the south and west sides of Riverside Dr. in a northern direction to the south corner of lot 8, block 1, tax map 252; cross Riverside Dr. in a straight line to the east corner of lot 9, block 2, tax map 252 and from there proceed in a northern direction along the line separating the Danville and Western Railroad spur track right-of-way and block 2, tax map 252 and block 1, tax map 253 to the northwest corner of lot 13, block 1, tax map 253; then follow the north line of lot 13, block 1 to the east, continuing in a straight line to the east side of Riverside Dr.; from there proceed to the north along the east side of Riverside Dr. to Aiken Rd. and then along the south side of Aiken Rd. east across the Smith River to the point of beginning.

The foregoing boundary encompasses all of the factories, their contiguous intact associated structures, and the primary power sources (the portion of the Smith River leading to the dam and canal), that comprise the heart of the industrial community of Spray, NC.
9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property **approximately 151 acres**

Quadrange name **Northwest Eden, NC-VA**

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

see continuation sheet

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

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11. Form Prepared By

**name/title**: Claudia R. Brown, Consultant

organization

date August 1986

street & number 830 Tremont Ave.

telephone 606/268-0058

city or town Lexington

state Kentucky 40502

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

X state

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

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