

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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

Salisbury Southern Railroad Passenger Depot

AND/OR COMMON

Same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

East side of Depot Street, block between Kerr and Council streets

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Salisbury

VICINITY OF

8th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

37

Rowan

159

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Southern Railway Company

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 1808

CITY, TOWN

Washington

VICINITY OF

STATE

D. C.

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Rowan County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Salisbury

STATE

North Carolina

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# DESCRIPTION

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

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Salisbury Southern Railroad Passenger Depot is an exceptionally fine instance of railroad architecture. Designed in the Spanish Mission style by Frank P. Milburn and built in 1907-1908, the depot reflects the early twentieth century's interest in structural functionalism as well as in abstract geometric design and the use of strong colors. The station, which runs the length of two city blocks, is a masonry structure built of mechanically bonded pressed brick pierced by a multitude of round and segmental-arched windows. A two-course water table stands out as the dividing line between the dark red brick base with its deeply raked joints and the tan brick of the body of the building, which is tightly laid with flush joints. The depot is divided into two blocks--a main block to the south, and a smaller block to the north. Each is covered by a roof sheathed with earthy red Spanish tiles characteristic of the style.

The main (southern) block houses the passenger waiting room as well as the ticket offices. It is E-shaped in plan, fifteen bays in length, and stands one-and-one-half stories high. A steeply pitched hip roof covers the main block. Gables intersect the hip roof at both north and south ends of the west elevation to create the upper and lower arms of the "E." Each end breaks out into a bold curvilinear shaped gable framed by small corner battlements. The focal point of the west elevation is, however, the center tower of the principal block. The square-in-plan tower is engaged at the lower one-and-one-half stories and then rises up two more levels into a monumental freestanding slab which dominates the site. The tower is lit on each face of its tall upper story by a cluster of three round-arched multi-paned windows slightly recessed within a round-arched panel. Above this grouping the tower walls rise up to form a parapet enclosing an observation-deck which rims the perimeter of the tower. Ornamenting the exterior wall of the parapet is a series of raised panels arranged in a stylized form reminiscent of crenellated battlements. A single grotesque gargoyle juts out from each corner of the parapet, adding a charmingly eccentric note to the tower's severe silhouette. In the center of the deck stands the yardmaster's signal room, a cubical form capped by a shallow pyramidal hipped roof with broadly overhanging eaves.

A round-arched arcade, protected by a pent roof, extends between the first story of the tower and the projecting gables--the three arms of the "E." The spandrels of the arcade are built of cream colored bricks which provide a striking accent beside the tan voussoirs of each arch and impost area and the red brick of the plinth below. The covered arcade provides sheltered access from the inner waiting room to the tower, to the wings, and to the street. Above each arcade the roof of the main block is pierced by a large hipped wall dormer with wide overhanging eaves.

The facade of each gabled projection contains loosely interpreted Palladian window motives. At the first level is a two-over-two sash with a two-light transom above, centered between two one-over-one sash with one-light transoms above. The window grouping is shaded by a hipped hood supported by boldly molded wooden brackets. Above the center is a flat-paneled round arch composed of six courses of radiating voussoirs arranged in graduated levels of relief. Piercing the face of the shaped gable end above is a second, more overt Palladian window motif, consisting of a round arched louvered

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vent flanked by shorter rectangular blind panels. Underlining the three forms is a molded sill braced by four thick cavetto-curved consoles.

The smaller, one-story northern block measures fourteen bays long and three deep, and is bisected by a covered concourse which connects the low passenger platform by the tracks on the east elevation to the street along the west. Railroad administrative offices and storage rooms are housed in this wing. The block is covered by a broadly splayed gable roof supported on the west elevation by chamfered wooden braces which spring from corbeled imposts. The northern gable end contains three louvered vents arranged as a Palladian window. A pent roof, contiguous with the gable eaves, is attached to the northern elevation; its bracing system is identical to that found on the west elevation.

On the east elevation the gable roof is connected to a shed roof which runs the entire length of the eastern elevation and serves to shelter the passenger platform below. Segmental-arched one-over-one and two-over-two sash windows alternating with raised paneled doors surmounted by fanlights pierce the entire eastern elevation in random fashion. The shed roof is supported by a Howe parallel chords metal frame truss system with lateral bracing to insure against wind pressure. Each steel purlin is supported on engaged brick posts with heavily corbeled caps along the inner wall and on braced metal posts sunk into the concrete slab platform along the outer edge of the shed. A simple truss extends longitudinally under the middle of the shed, reinforcing the principal truss system at right angles. The functionalism of the platform shed reveals the utilitarian purpose of the depot as well as Milburn's desire for structural clarity.

The interior of the principal block forms a huge open space lit by one-over-one sash windows with fanlights. It has had some slight alterations, including the removal of the partition between black and white passenger waiting rooms, the closing of the restaurant which occupied the northeastern section of the main block, and the removal of the ticket office from the first floor of the tower to the southern end of the waiting room. The waiting room features a two-course brick chair rail, a heavily molded wooden cornice, and, located at the center bay, a transverse round arch supported on large pilasters. A similar arch frames a huge oculus with four equilaterally positioned keystones at either end of the waiting room. The floor is dramatically decorated with polychromed tiles arranged in a diaper pattern of squares and diamonds.

The interior of the secondary block is divided into numerous office and storage cubicals and remains virtually unchanged.

# SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1907-1908

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frank P. Milburn

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Salisbury Southern Railroad Passenger Depot, designed by Frank P. Milburn and built in 1907-1908, is an impressive and well-preserved example of the Spanish Mission style popular in the early twentieth century. An important reminder of the vital role of the railroad in the development of the town of Salisbury, it is one of the few remaining examples of the eclectic Milburn's many public buildings in North Carolina, and one of the most ambitious railroad depots surviving in the state.

The Salisbury Southern Railroad Passenger Depot is one of the relatively few extant public buildings designed by Frank Pierce Milburn, a leading southern architect of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Milburn was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, on December 12, 1868. He was educated in the common schools in Kentucky, and later attended Arkansas University and the Arkansas Industrial University. He then returned to Kentucky, where he spent five years (1884-1889) studying architecture in Louisville. In 1889 he joined his father, Thomas Thurmond Milburn, and together they designed and built the Clay County Courthouse in Manchester, Kentucky.

In 1890 Milburn opened an office at Kenova, West Virginia, but by about 1893 he had moved to Winston, North Carolina, where he was architect for the Forsyth County Courthouse and the Wachovia Bank Building. About 1896 his design was chosen for the Mecklenburg County Courthouse at Charlotte; here he also became architect of the first steel frame building erected in North Carolina.

After an active period as a resident of Columbia, South Carolina, Milburn in 1902 moved to Washington, D. C., where he became architect for the Southern Railway Company. During the next fifteen years, he designed nineteen railroad stations, twenty-six county courthouses, fifteen residences, nine college buildings (including five for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), and many other public buildings throughout the South. He died at the age of fifty-eight in Asheville on September 21, 1926.

The railway station designed by Milburn for Salisbury was apparently a much-needed facility. Contemporary newspaper articles suggest a high degree of public interest in a new passenger station to replace the original, a dilapidated structure built before the Civil War. One newspaper characterized the need for the new facility as "a matter that has been uppermost in the public mind for the past two decades."

Salisbury had long been an important railroad town. The first locomotive arrived there on January 4, 1855, when the Charlotte-to-Salisbury portion of the North Carolina

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Railroad was completed. By 1860 the Western North Carolina Railroad was complete from Salisbury to within thirteen miles of Morganton. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Salisbury became a major terminal on the Southern Railway's Charlotte-to-Greensboro "main line." (Its neighboring town, Spencer, was selected in 1896 to be the site of Southern's railway shops and transfer shed, making it one of the busiest and most important rail points in the South.)

By the early years of the twentieth century, Salisbury was being characterized as a "fine railroad center." "No city," boasted the Salisbury Evening Post in 1905, "is better located for traffic."

Twenty-two passenger trains pass by, arrive and depart from the city daily. An exclusive postal train also brings mail from New York City within fifteen hours from the time that the racer from the North leaves the metropolis. The Southern's passenger service is good, its patronage enormous. Within five years the revenues have been doubled and July past was the greatest record-maker within the history of the Salisbury station. There is no way to calculate its extensiveness. The wholesale and retail merchantry<sup>1</sup> never was so large, and these dealers keep the station crowded with their wares.

In March, 1907, the Southern announced that it had let a contract for the construction of a new passenger station on the same site as that occupied by the old terminal (which was to be razed). The Charlotte Daily Observer, in reporting on this announcement, reaffirmed the belief that the new facility would be "the handsomest main line /s/tructure between Washington and Atlanta" and suggested that it would be "an ornament to the city where adornments are most needed."

Construction of the new passenger station commenced April 9, 1907. Frank Milburn's design was carried out by the Central Carolina Construction Company of Greensboro, successful bidder on the project. The station was completed and officially opened to the public on September 1, 1908. The structure apparently won the immediate approval of the Charlotte Daily Obsever's Salisbury bureau chief, who wrote on August 31:

After years of rather impatient waiting the city's needs have at last been recognized by the Southern's officials, and, as if to make up for their tardiness, they have spent lavishly<sup>2</sup> to give the city a passenger depot to be proud of putting over \$120,000 into it.

The facility was designed primarily as a passenger station, with separate waiting rooms for white and black, rest rooms and parlors, a ticket office, mail room, telegraph office, and conductors' room. Apparently most of the freight was to be handled at a nearby Southern Express Company freight office (also designed by Frank Milburn), which stood "just to the north" of the new passenger station. The express office was razed in 1971, but the passenger station remains very nearly as it was when erected in 1907-1908.

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<sup>1</sup>"RAILWAY FACILITIES," Salisbury Evening Post, August, 1905.

<sup>2</sup>"SALISBURY'S NEW STATION," Charlotte Daily Observer, August 31, 1908.

### 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brawley, James S. The Rowan Story, 1753-1953. Salisbury: Rowan Printing Company, 1953.  
 Carolina Watchman (Salisbury). January 4, 1855; "RAIL ROAD CELEBRATION," January 11, 1855.  
 Charlotte Daily Observer. "SALISBURY STATION ASSURED," March 29, 1907; "NEW PASSENGER STATION," April 9, 1907; "SALISBURY'S NEW STATION," August 31, 1908.

### 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	5 4 8 3 2 0	3 9 4 6 9 8 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

### 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Research by Robert Topkins, survey specialist; architectural description by Mary Alice Hinson, survey consultant

ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>Division of Archives and History</u>	<u>13 June 1975</u>
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>109 East Jones Street</u>	<u>919/829-7862</u>
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Raleigh</u>	<u>North Carolina</u>

### 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE *Bruce Lee Dwyer*

TITLE Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 13 June 1975

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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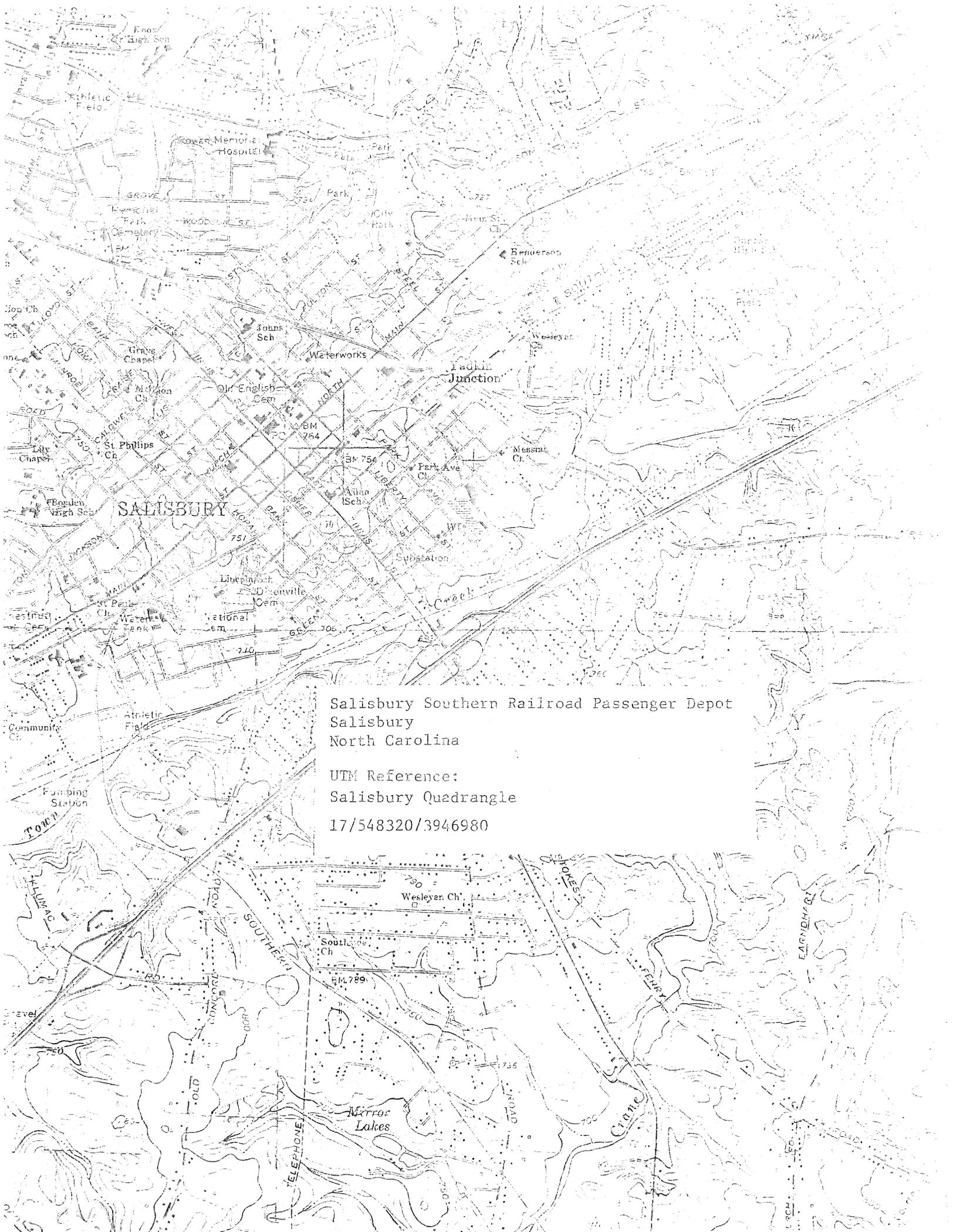
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Wodehouse, Lawrence. "Architecture in North Carolina, 1700-1900." North Carolina Architect, Vol. 16, Nos. 11 and 12 (November-December, 1969), and Vol. 17, Nos. 1 and 2 (January-February, 1970).

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SALISBURY

Yadkin Junction

Salisbury Southern Railroad Passenger Depot  
Salisbury  
North Carolina

UTM Reference:  
Salisbury Quadrangle  
17/548320/3946980

Southern  
Ch

Wesleyan Ch

Mirror  
Lakes

TELEPHONE

SOUTHERN

JOHNS

CRANE

EARLY

TOWN

Level

one

