United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property
   historic name Knight, Henry H. and Bettie S. Farm
   other names/site number

2. Location
   street & number N. side US 64 1 mile west of intersection with State Road 2233
   city, town Knightdale
   state North Carolina code NC
   county Wake code 183
   zip code 27611

3. Classification

   Ownership of Property
   X private
   [ ] public-local
   [ ] public-State
   [ ] public-Federal

   Category of Property
   X district
   [ ] site
   [ ] structure
   [ ] object

   Number of Resources within Property
   Contributing 6
   Noncontributing 9 buildings
   6 sites
   ___ structures
   ___ objects
   ___ Total

   Name of related multiple property listing: None
   Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [ ] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

   Signature of certifying official
   State Historic Preservation Officer
   Date

   In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

   Signature of commenting or other official
   Date

5. National Park Service Certification

   I, hereby, certify that this property is:
   [ ] entered in the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet.
   [ ] determined eligible for the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet.
   [ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
   [ ] removed from the National Register.
   [ ] other, (explain):

   Signature of the Keeper
   Date of Action
6. Function or Use

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Architectural Classification</th>
<th>Materials (enter categories from instructions)</th>
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<tr>
<td>(enter categories from instructions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queen Anne</td>
<td>walls: Weatherboard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roof: Asphalt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other: Plank</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Henry H. and Bettie S. Knight Farm consists of approximately 45 acres of gently-rolling piedmont land north of the Tarboro Road (US 64) in Knightdale, Wake County, North Carolina. Purchased by Henry H. Knight at auction in 1887, the home tract of the farm includes the Knight family residence, dated ca. 1890, together with a number of outbuildings dating from that period to the present. Surrounded by mature trees of a variety of species, the Knight House is a plain, one and a half-story, gable-roofed frame Queen Anne farmhouse. Although the house has been added to and altered several times, and is now covered with aluminum siding, it retains a significant integrity of location, design, materials and feeling.

The home tract of the Knight farm is rectangular, with one of its short sides abutting the Tarboro Road (US 64). A modern, Colonial Revival ranch house has been built on a one and a half acre parcel at the southeast corner of the tract and is not included in this nomination. Along the southwest side of the tract a another, twelve and a half-acre parcel of land has been converted into a mobile home village, and that parcel is also not included in the nomination.

Located about 100 feet north of the highway, the Knight House sits in a large, grassed yard filled with large pin oaks, pecans, chestnut and other trees. An unpaved drive leads behind the house to the east, while another drive runs through the trees along the west side to the house, leading to outbuildings and fields beyond. There are fields directly to the rear and the west of the house, and woods along the western side of the tract.

The Knight House has had a series of additions and alterations since it was constructed ca. 1890, most of which appear to have occurred early in its history. The front portion of the house is one and a half stories, with a cross-gable roof that has a central gable at the front. Ghost marks on the interior suggest that the front gable was an early addition. Behind this three-bay, single-pile section is a deep, full-width, hipped rear wing, at least parts of which may be a ca. 1900 addition. Ca. 1915, a semi-detached kitchen was moved from the northwest corner of the property.

[See continuation sheet]
the house and either this wing, or a new gable-roofed kitchen wing, attached to the northeast. An original rear porch was enclosed and a hipped-roofed sleeping porch built over it. On its second floor, the rear wing of the original house was finished as a bedroom, with a new shed dormer being added to the west slope of the roof.

As originally constructed, the hipped front porch with turned columns ran only across the front of the house. Later, however, it was extended to form a U around the front portion of the building. The front columns have small, scroll-sawn brackets and railings between them with square-section balusters.

At the west side of the house is an exterior chimney with a random-ashlar granite base and a brick stack. The stack has been stuccoed with modern cement. Rising from the west slope of the rear roof is a tall, corbelled-capped chimney, which has also been stuccoed. Another, interior chimney rises from the rear of the front wing and has had its stack rebuilt, ca. 1950. At the rear of the kitchen wing is a small chimney.

Windows on the house are a mixture of four over four and six over six sash. The front door has two horizontal panels with a glazed upper section.

On its interior, the Knight House has a narrow central hall with a single room on either side in the front portion. The two front rooms have a low, panelled wainscot, door and window surrounds with robust backband moldings, and four-panel doors with molded panels. Both have Classical Revival mantels with slender colonnettes and mirrored overmantels that are turn of the century additions.

French doors divide the front hall from the rear hall. On the east side of the rear section is a large dining room with a simple Classical Revival mantel with pilasters. On the other side of the hall are two simply-finished bedrooms and a modern bath. At the northeast corner of the house is a modern kitchen, opening onto a screened porch.

A narrow stair with turned bottom newel post and simple square balusters rises from the rear of the front hall to the second floor. A small hall at the front of the house separates the two front bedrooms. Unlike the downstairs, which is plastered, the second floor rooms are all sheathed in horizontal tongue and groove boards. The upstairs rooms have plain board door surrounds and simpler four panel doors than the downstairs. Only the east room has a mantel, and it is a simple Italianate one with
a cusped frieze.

From the rear of the upstairs hall a step up leads into a large, tongue and groove board-sheathed room, at the far end of which is a door and window opening out onto the screened sleeping porch.

Outbuildings associated with the house include:

1. Dairy, ca. 1890 (Contributing)- Adjacent to the house on the east side is a gable-roofed frame building (now covered with aluminum siding) with a stone foundation. The side closest to the house is open, with a paved floor. A board and batten door opens into a small room with a dirt and cement floor that originally contained a sunken compartment flooded with water for the storage of milk.

2. Storage shed, ca. 1900 (Contributing)- Small, gable-roofed frame storage building located to the northwest of the house.

3. Storage shed, ca. 1900 (Contributing)- Small, shed-roofed frame storage building northwest of the house.

4. Garage, ca. 1955 (Non-contributing)- Gable-roofed frame double garage covered with aluminum siding located to the northeast of the house.

5. Storage building, ca. 1955 (Non-contributing)- Gable-roofed frame building with tin roof and tarpaper siding located behind garage.


7. Well house, ca. 1985 (Non-contributing)- Small, gable-roofed concrete block well house with recycled late-nineteenth century four-panel door.

8. Barn, ca. 1890 (Contributing)- Gable-roofed barn with sheds on either side. Central portion of barn is built of thick planks with full-dovetail corners.

9. Barn, ca. 1900 (Contributing)- Two-story, gable-roofed frame barn covered with aluminum siding, located about 100 yards northwest of house. This storage building has two stories with no interior stair, but with two board and batten doors on the front elevation, one over the other.
10. Tobacco barn, ca. 1955 (Non-contributing) - Gable-roofed, tarpaper covered frame tobacco barn located on dirt road northwest of house.

11. Tobacco barn, ca. 1955 (Non-contributing) - Gable-roofed, tarpaper-covered frame tobacco barn joined to adjacent barn by a gable-roofed equipment shed.

12. Tobacco barn, ca. 1955 (Non-contributing) - Gable-roofed, tarpaper-covered frame tobacco barn joined to adjacent barn by a gable-roofed equipment shed.

13. Tenant House, ca. 1920 (Non-contributing) - Hipped-roofed, one-story frame duplex with engaged porch at front. Vacant and boarded up.

14. Barn, ca. 1920 (Non-contributing) - Deteriorated, small, gable-roofed frame barn with sheds on either side.
8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

- [ ] nationally
- [ ] statewide
- [x] locally

Applicable National Register Criteria

- [x] A
- [ ] B
- [ ] C
- [ ] D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)

- [ ] A
- [ ] B
- [ ] C
- [ ] D
- [ ] E
- [ ] F
- [ ] G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Exploration/Settlement</th>
<th>Period of Significance</th>
<th>Significant Dates</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Affiliation</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Significant Person</th>
<th>Architect/Builder</th>
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</table>

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

The H. H. and Bettie S. Knight Farm is significant in the history of Wake County, North Carolina, through its association with the founding of the town of Knightdale in eastern Wake County and as the homeplace of the two people who bear principal responsibility for organizing the various efforts which led to the town’s establishment. The farm complex is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A through the association with the founding of Knightdale, a town created to serve the needs of a rural farming population and the last town to be incorporated in the county. H. H. Knight, and later his widow Bettie Knight, paved the way for the creation and development of the town by giving a right of way through their land to the Raleigh and Pamlico Sound Railroad, deeding to the same company a tract for a depot, subdividing a surrounding tract of farmland for the town, and deeding lots to the county board of education and a local church as building sites. They had already established the community’s first school and church at the turn of the century. The association of the Knights with the founding of Knightdale makes their farm complex eligible for the National Register under Criterion B. The one and one-half story frame farm house, which was built ca. 1890 and had several additions constructed prior to 1920, is a representative vernacular dwelling with insufficient architectural significance to make it eligible under Criterion C.

Historical Background

Henry Haywood Knight (1842-1904), often called the father of Knightdale and for whom the town was named, was born in Wake County, the eldest son of a prosperous farmer, Peter H. Knight and his wife Mary Ann (Horton) Knight. H. H. Knight engaged in farming with his father until the beginning of the Civil War, enlisting in the Forty-Seventh Regiment of North Carolina Troops in May 1862. He was wounded and captured at the...
Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863 and held as a prisoner of war at Fort Delaware until the end of the war. (2) Returning to North Carolina after being paroled, Knight again worked with his father on the family plantation, where he is listed in the 1880 U.S. Census with his parents, five younger brothers, and a sister. (3) In the mid-1880s, Knight began acquiring property in his own right, principally in St. Matthews Township, east of Raleigh, along both sides of the Tarboro Road (now U.S. 64). (4)

Knight was married in 1894 to Elizabeth "Bettie" R. Smith (1871-1953), who bore him four daughters and one son between 1895 and 1903. (5) They occupied a house on the north side of the Tarboro road that Knight built on land he had acquired in 1887 at auction from the estate of J.J. Nowell. This is the house being nominated, which, with its associated outbuildings, is situated on the 58.5-acre lot number 2 of the Nowell property; Knight also acquired lot number 5 at the auction, a 79-acre tract adjoining lot number 2 at its northwest corner. Lot number 2 served as the home tract of the Knight property, which at his death in 1904 totaled more than 2500 acres. A plat map of the Nowell property shows no buildings on lot 2, and family tradition states that Knight built the house prior to his marriage. (6)

The Knight family prospered throughout the remainder of the 1890s and into the beginning of the 20th century. In his business life, Knight used his entrepreneurial skills to become a central figure in the community which was growing up in the area which was to become Knightdale. By the turn of the century, he had expanded his activities to include operation of a general store, a cotton gin, a saw mill and a grist mill (these buildings no longer exist), thereby providing essential services for the farmers in the surrounding area. (7) The store was located adjacent to his house, with the saw mill and cotton gin across the road. The availability of these services on Knight’s farm also attracted more people to the area. Knight’s endeavors were not restricted to farming and operating these businesses. He served as a county magistrate for a number of years and, in 1894, was elected on the Republican-Populist ticket as Wake County treasurer, a post in which he served two terms. (8)

The 1900 United States Census records the occupants of the H. H. Knight home place as the following: Knight, his wife Bettie, four children (the fifth child was born two years later), two servants, and two of Knight’s brothers and his sister Mary. (9) The brothers, William T. and Columbus T., had been entrusted to their brother’s care by their father who stated in his will that they were "believed not of sound mind." (10)
To insure that his children received an education, Knight called together some of the neighboring farmers to discuss the possibility of starting a school in the area, as well as a church. As a result of the meeting, a building (no longer standing) was erected on Knight’s home tract to the west of the house; it was used on weekdays as a school and on Sundays by a Baptist congregation, known as Knight’s Chapel. Teachers at the school boarded at the Knight farm.(11)

Knight had other plans for the community which he foresaw developing around his farm in eastern Wake County. He encouraged the Raleigh and Pamlico Sound Railroad Company (which merged with the Norfolk and Southern Railway in 1907) to come through his property in linking Raleigh with the Norfolk and Southern Railroad at Washington, North Carolina.(12) Unfortunately, he did not live to see these plans come to fruition, as he died in May 1904.(13) Later that year, Mrs. Knight applied to the courts for dower rights to her late husband’s property during the minority of her five children, all of whom were ten years or under at the time. She was appointed their guardian with an allowance for their support to be derived from the estate.(14)

One year after her husband’s death, Mrs. Knight petitioned the court as guardian of her children to be allowed to sell off a portion of the more than 1700 acres of farm land which they inherited in order to obtain money for the support of her children. She proposed that land be given to the Raleigh and Pamlico Sound Railroad Company (which was then building a line through a Knight tract of land) so that it could build a depot and necessary freight warehouses south of the Tarboro Road. In addition, a portion of land around the depot tract would be laid off in streets and lots "suitable for a town."(16) The petition stated that,

H. H. Knight was very anxious that said Railroad should be constructed through his said lands and a Depot located thereon, as evidenced by the fact that in his life time he deeded to said Railroad Company free of cost to them a right of way through all of his lands, extending a distance of some miles, but with the expectation that a Depot would be located on his said lands, and thus, enable him to more readily sell portions thereof . . . .(16)

The new town was platted on farmland southeast of the Knight house and east of the Smithfield Road. It included the present Maple, Main, Oakwood and Pine streets extending from First to Fifth Avenues. The grid plan contained residential lots, most of which measured either 50 by 138 feet or 75 by 150 feet. Somewhat smaller lots for commercial
development faced the railroad tracks. A 1911 addition by Knight's widow extended the town's limits north to the Tarboro Road. (17)

In 1907 a combination passenger and freight depot (now abandoned) was built along the railroad tracks on land given by Mrs. Knight to the railroad company, and in the following year Knightdale's post office opened. (18) Also in 1907 Mrs. Knight sold, at a nominal price, two lots to Knight's Chapel Baptist Church (now Knightdale Baptist Church) as the site for a new church building. She sold a three-acre tract, again at a small price, to the Wake County Board of Education for a school in Knightdale. (19)

During the next twenty years, the village grew slowly; but by 1927, the population was great enough to encourage the town leaders to apply to the state legislature for incorporation. (20) The newly incorporated town had a population in 1930 of 243. Ten years later the population had increased to 352, and a small business district had developed which was surrounded by residential areas. (21) Unfortunately, in January 1940, much of the business district (many of whose buildings were still of wooden construction) was destroyed by a fire, which also threatened an adjacent residential block. (22)

Since the fire, Knightdale has continued to grow, although never at a great rate—generally thirty to thirty-five percent per decade. Its 1980 population was recorded as 985; by that time, Knightdale was no longer the "self contained community" serving a predominantly rural, farming population. (23) As the state's capital city, Raleigh, grew at an ever-accelerating rate, Knightdale, like many small towns in Wake County, became essentially a bedroom community for the larger metropolis.

Knightdale is one of several Wake County towns created in the late 19th and early 20th centuries which owed the impetus for their development to the state's expanding rail network. (24) In this period, the county, like the state remained largely rural and agrarian in character, notwithstanding ever-increasing urbanization and industrialization. In general, the farming economy continued to be based on small farms, a trend which was even more striking after 1900, as many larger farms were broken up. In addition, cash crops such as tobacco, cotton and corn dominated agriculture in the state, with fewer and fewer farmers producing the basic necessities for life. (25)

This state of affairs created a climate in which men such as H. H. Knight could come to the fore, providing many of the services needed by the small farmers of the surrounding area. At his store, they could buy
staples and other items not produced on the farm. At his mills, they could have lumber dressed and corn ground, and he also ginned their cotton. But this farsighted man also recognized that a rail link to markets for farm products would be of even greater benefit and set about obtaining one. He also united the settlement to supply the educational and religious needs of the community and made plans for the development of a village where even greater goods and services could be made available. Knight died before all of his plans could be brought to fruition, but his wife was scrupulous in carrying out his wishes, so that the town of Knightdale came into being.

Numerous other towns in Wake County owe much of their late 19th and early 20th century development to the state’s railroad expansion. Knightdale was the last town incorporated in Wake County. Prior to the Civil War, Wake County had only two incorporated towns—Raleigh and Rolesville—although there were numerous settlements scattered around the county. Among the latter, Forestville (incorporated in 1879, but settled in the late 18th century) profited from its location on the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad line as a shipping point for the forestry and manufactured products of the surrounding area. It was later eclipsed by neighboring Wake Forest College (later renamed Wake Forest), which was also served by the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad and incorporated in 1880.

Several communities, such as Cary and Apex, were platted and incorporated in the decade after the Civil War, with development stimulated by the arrival of the Chatham Railway. Present-day Garner (incorporated in 1883) originated as the community of Garner’s Station on the North Carolina Railroad; it already had a post office by the end of the 1870s.

Towns incorporated in the early 20th century include Wendell (1903), Zebulon (1907), and Fuquay Springs (now Fuquay-Varina, incorporated 1909). A village existed in the Wendell area for some years prior to its incorporation, but the railroad did not reach the town until some years later. In Zebulon, the arrival of the railroad, the opening of a post office and incorporation all occurred in the same year. Fuquay Springs had its roots in an antebellum community known as Old Shop, whose post office was re-established in 1874; the village’s early prosperity was centered around a nearby chalybeate spring.(26) Nearly all of these towns have surpassed Knightdale in population, with such towns as Garner and Cary being suburbs of Raleigh and others serving to a greater or lesser degree as bedroom communities for the capital.

In December 1905, H. H. Knight’s widow remarried; her second husband was
Rev. J. M. Hilliard (1850-1939), a prominent Baptist minister who was then serving the Knightdale Baptist Church. The Hilliards had one daughter, Ruth, who was born in 1907. (27) The Knight Farms estate was divided among Knight's children in 1930, with Rachel, the third daughter receiving the home tract lot 1B, containing 59 acres. She also received lot 1A, a 55-acre tract connected to the home tract at the northwest corner. (28) Rachel Knight was married in 1933 to David Loomis Horton, who lives in the Knight house today. (29) Mrs. Hilliard lived with her daughter and son-in-law until her death in 1953. (30) Mrs. Horton died in 1981, and the home tract passed to the Hortons' only child, Nancy Horton Hargrove. Mrs. Hargrove and her husband, Norwood, built a house for themselves to the east of the earlier house and have used an area on the western side of the tract for a trailer park. (31) These portions of the home tract are not included in this nomination.

The period of significance associated with the property is ca. 1890 to 1911, the latter date being the year in which Bettie Knight Hilliard subdivided additional land which extended the Knightdale limits to the Tarboro Road. This was the final act by the Knight family to assist the development of Knightdale.

The house as it stands today is a typical late nineteenth/early twentieth century Wake County vernacular farm house, one and one-half stories in height and of frame construction. The main block of the house is one room deep with a side gable roof and an added gable centered on the facade. A number of original and early wings and additions extend to the rear of the main block, none of which were built after 1920. The house is representative of many relatively modest Wake County and North Carolina farm houses of the period whose additive quality reflects their continued use and evolution. More recent alterations have included the installation of aluminum siding and the stuccoing of chimneys. However, the property includes a number of contributing early outbuildings, and as a whole, the complex retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, conveying an understanding of its nature during the period of significance.

FOOTNOTES

(2) John W. Moore, *Roster of North Carolina Troops in the War Between the States*, vol. 3 (Raleigh: Edwards, Broughton & Co., 1882), p. 348; and Mrs. Jane Suggs (granddaughter of H. H. and Bettie S. Knight), Raleigh, N. C., manuscript history of Henry Haywood Knight, April 1987, Survey Files, Survey and Planning Branch, N. C. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N. C.

(3) Suggs manuscript; and Tenth Census of the United States, 1880 Population Schedule, St. Matthews Township, Wake County, North Carolina.


(5) WCRD, Marriage Register; and Twelfth and Thirteenth Censuses of the United States, 1900 and 1910 Population Schedules, St. Matthews Township, Wake County, North Carolina.

(6) WCRD, deed book 97, p. 656; Wake County Superior Court, Special Proceeding No. 395, pp. 296 and 298; and Wake County Superior Court, Estate Papers of Henry Haywood Knight, Petition for Dower and Petition of Guardian to Sell Land of Wards.


(8) "H. H. Knight Dead: Ex-Treasurer of the County and a Useful Citizen," (Raleigh) *Morning Post*, 8 May 1904, p. 7.

(9) Eleventh U. S. Census.

(10) Wake County Clerk of Superior Court, Will Book C, pp. 365-366.


(13) "H. H. Knight Dead."

(14) Wake County Superior Court, Estate Papers of Henry Haywood Knight, Petition for Dower.
Knight Farm

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(15) Wake County Superior Court, Estate Papers of Henry Haywood Knight, Petition of Guardian to Sell Land of Wards.

(16) Ibid.


(22) Belvin & Riggs, Heritage of Wake County, pp. 47-48.

(23) Ibid., p. 49.


(27) WCRD, Marriage Register; and Thirteenth U. S. Census.

(28) WCRD, deed book 589, p. 488.

(29) WCRD, Marriage Register.


MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


"H. H. Knight Dead: Ex-Treasurer of the County and a Useful Citizen. (Raleigh) Morning Post, 8 May 1904, p. 7.

Hargrove, Mr. and Mrs. Norwood, Route 12, Box 40, Raleigh, N. C. David and Allison Black interview, 22 June 1987.


United States Census.

Wake County Register of Deeds. Deeds, Maps and Marriage Register.

Wake County Superior Court. Special Proceedings and Estate Records.
HENRY H. & BETTIE S. KNIGHT FARM
KNOXVILLE VICINITY, WAKE CO., NORTH CAROLINA
KNOXVILLE QUAD 1:24,000 ZONE 17
A - EASTING 726400  NORTING 3965000  B - EASTING 726810  NORTING 3964920
C - EASTING 726740  NORTING 3964220  D - EASTING 726300  NORTING 3964300