

Jones County country stores

MEMORANDUM

March 9, 1992

TO: James A. McInnis, Jr.

FROM: Ed Davis

SUBJECT: US 258 from NC 24 near Richlands to US 70 at
Kinston. Lenoir, Jones and Onslow Counties.
TIP # R-2235, State Project No. 8.1200301

In June, 1991, the architectural historians at NCDOT received an architectural survey report submitted by a consultant for the above referenced project. Following an extensive review of the report, the architectural historians at NCDOT do not concur with the eligibility of one property -- the Hargett's Store, located at Hargetts Crossroads.

In an effort to judge the building more accurately, and in context, we have spent considerable time surveying stores in Jones County. In addition to our comparative survey work, we include a letter from the SHPO office stating that a store in neighboring Onslow County is not eligible for the National Register because of numerous character-altering changes to the interior. Because of the considerable architectural significance of this Onslow County building, (determined ineligible by the SHPO), the many character-altering changes to the Hargett Store and the existence of several other unaltered stores of similar age located in Jones County, we maintain that the Hargett Store is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Please include our opinions in your report to FHWA. Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

cc: V. Charles Bruton, PhD.
J. Wilson Stroud

OPINION ON ELIGIBILITY OF
HARGETT'S STORE
HARGETT'S CROSSROADS, JONES COUNTY

In an attempt to determine eligibility of Hargett's Store, (found on pages 43-48 of the subconsultants report and attached herein), the architectural historians at NCDOT have conducted a survey of Jones County in order to determine the appropriate context within which to judge the property.

As may be seen in the attached illustrations, two types of stores are prevalent in Jones County from the last decade of the nineteenth century through approximately 1940. The earlier stores are two-story frame buildings with access provided to the upstairs by a staircase located either outside or inside the building. The second level was used for storage and living quarters either for the owner or a clerk. Constructed circa 1900, these buildings originally had no provisions for automobiles. As may be seen both with the Hargett Store and the store located at the east side of NC 17, porte-cocheres were added to accommodate automobile traffic and often to shelter fuel pumps.

The second type of store found in Jones County was constructed later (generally in the 1920's). These are one-story frame buildings with large porte-cocheres constructed as original components. These stores were smaller, as automobile travel facilitated both frequent shopping and more trips by the suppliers to replenish inventories.

The Hargett Store falls into the first category. These (earlier) stores are considerably rarer than the later automobile-oriented buildings. Of these four surviving buildings, two remain relatively unaltered -- with much original fabric. Two of these stores (including the Hargett Store), have been significantly altered with little interior fabric remaining.

The store which is currently most intact is a two story building located on NC 17 near Pollocksville in Jones County. This store, (labeled "B" on the attached map) built circa 1900, was operated by a Mr. W. Parker. The central (original) building is a two story frame, gable-front structure with a one-story shed addition. There are two front doors, with large flanking single pane windows, a standing-seam metal roof and 6/6 windows. While access was not permitted to the interior, the wooden built-in shelving units were visible through the windows. Mr. W.H. Parker, the current owner, was contacted by telephone. He informed the architectural historians at NCDOT that the original bins in the storage (side) addition were intact and that the apartment located on the second level was still in place.

Mr. Parker stated that no one had occupied the apartment since about 1955. This is a rare and unaltered example of the two-story frame store. See Illustrations #1-#3.

A second frame two-story store (labeled "C" on the attached map) is located near Comfort. The original building has a gable-front, is three bays wide and has a central door located on both the first and the second level. The entrance elevation has a double-galleried porch. The building has a brick pier foundation. A one-story, gable-end addition has been added and a two-story, shallow-pitched shed roof added to one side. The roof of the building is standing-seam metal. The building appears to have been built circa 1900 with additions occurring some 10 years later. Access was not available to the interior at the time of the survey. A neighbor, however, (Mr. S. Mathew Philah) was available for consultation. Mr. Philah reported that the structure remains largely intact, including the original apartment located on the second level of the building. He stated that the store had remained unoccupied for approximately 15 years, and was currently used for storage by its owner. The owner, Mr. Charles Jones, does not live in the vicinity. See Illustrations #4-#7.

The third two-story store in Jones County is located outside of Pollocksville and is labeled "D" on the attached map. The building is a side-gable frame structure with a symmetrical front elevation consisting of two doors located at the center, flanking single pane windows, and two double-hung 6/6 windows located at each corner. The side elevations have 6/6 windows and a rear, two-story shed roof addition has one 4/4 window located on the side elevation and one 6/6 window located on the rear elevation. This addition contains an upstairs porch, with no evidence of exterior access. The interior was not accessible to the architectural surveyors at NCDOT, however the many exterior windows allowed limited interior visibility. No original shelving units existed on the first level. The stair to the second level (interior) was enclosed and appears to be original. While access was not available to the second level, the existence of the porch on the second level suggests that the owner or clerk may have lived here. The hip-roofed porte-cochere appears to have been added. The building was constructed circa 1900. See Illustrations #8-#11.

As previously stated, the second type of early twentieth century store found in Jones County is a frame, one-story building with original porte-cochere and provisions made for fuel pumps. Having surveyed the entire county, the architectural historians at NCDOT located 12 of these stores.

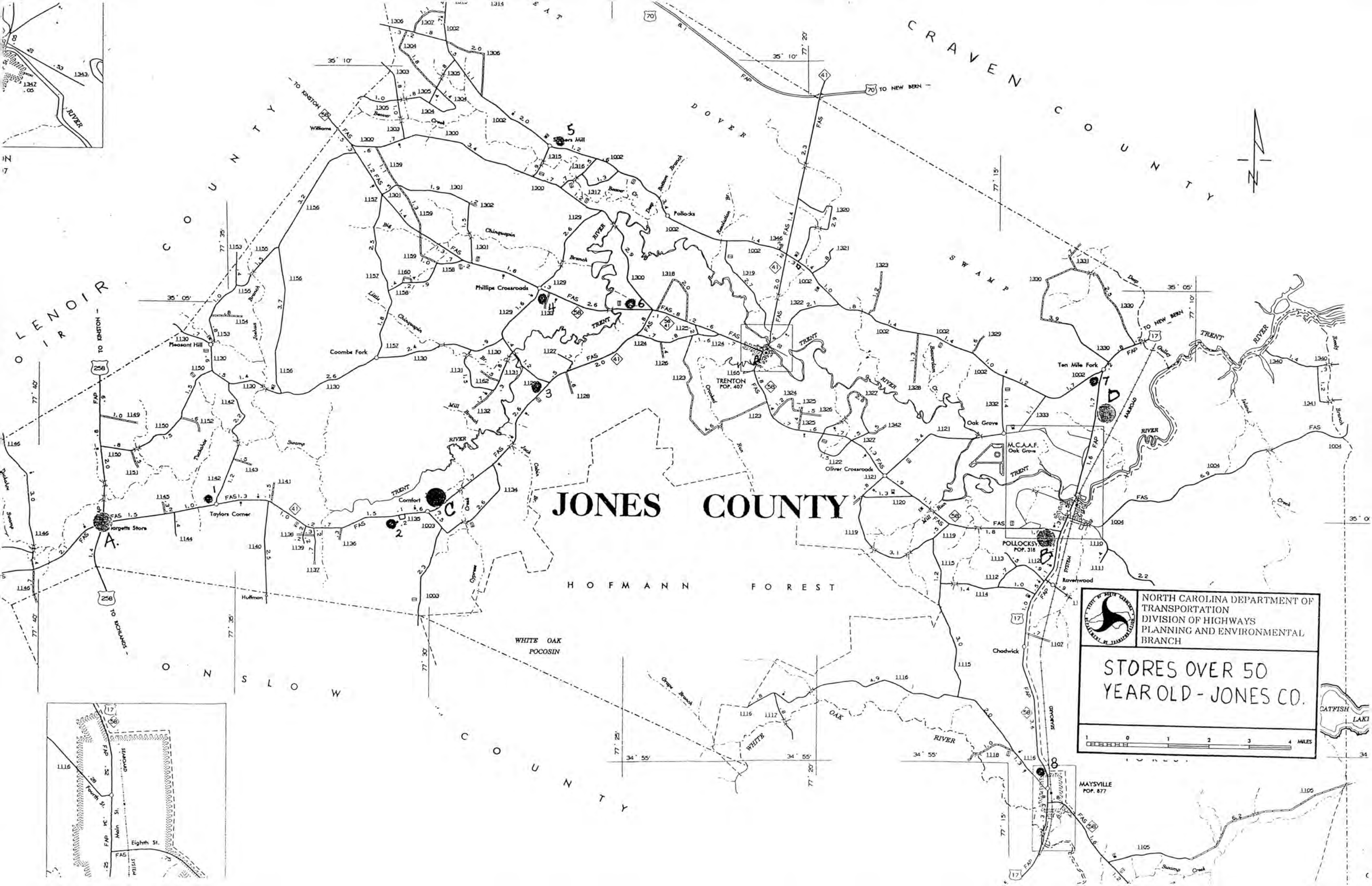
We have included 8 representative examples located throughout the county. See Illustrations #12-#27. These stores are keyed to the attached map. The store number, as designated by the architectural historians at NCDOT, coincides to the number on the map. As may be evidenced in these illustrations, these stores were constructed 15 to 40 years after the two-story (older) examples and are oriented to both automobile travel and automobile service.

As previously mentioned, the rarer buildings are, in fact, the two-story buildings, of which the Hargett store is one. As may be evidenced in the photographs, the Hargett store is the most heavily altered of the four early store-types located in Jones County. The interior retains no original shelving, and no evidence exists for a possible layout. The partition walls which organized the original upstairs apartment have all been removed (along with the plumbing). The original porch has been removed and the upstairs porch enclosed. The building retains very little original fabric and the entire building has undergone serious character-altering changes.

As may be seen in the attached report (page 43) a survey of Jones County had not been completed at the time of the subconsultants report. The architectural historians at NCDOT have undertaken this survey and have discovered that while the Hargett store is, in fact, a type relatively uncommon in this county, it is the most altered of the four remaining examples. As may also be seen on page 44, at the time of the subconsultants report, the Humphrey Store in neighboring Onslow County was also considered eligible for the National Register by the SHPO. As may be seen in the attached Illustrations, this very rare brick building is an exceptionally fine example of an early store type contemporary with the Hargett store (though of increased importance certainly due to its unusually rare building material). Since that time the SHPO has determined the Humphrey store ineligible due to numerous character-altering changes on the interior (see attached letter). The Hargett store has both character altering changes on the exterior and the interior. Further, the Humphreys store, despite interior modifications, certainly would have served as an educational resource simply by its unusual and fine exterior. This can not be said for the Hargett store, (though probably for several of the other remaining two-story stores located in Jones County).

Because of the additional survey work provided by the architectural historians at NCDOT which illustrates that other less altered examples exist in Jones County, and because the SHPO has determined that a similar building-type


located in neighboring Onslow County whose exterior is far less altered is not eligible for the National Register based on "numerous character-altering changes", it is the opinion of the architectural historians at NCDOT that the Hargett Store is not eligible for The National Register of Historic Places.



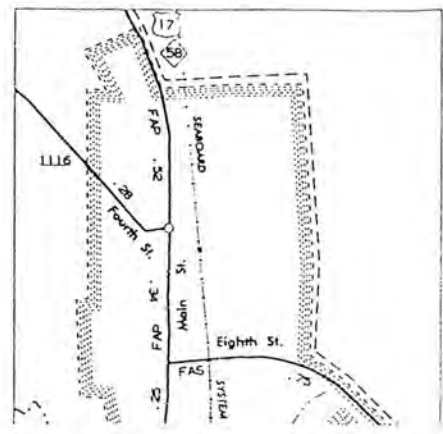
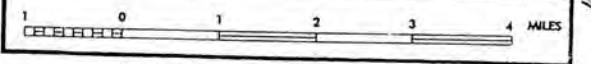
JONES COUNTY

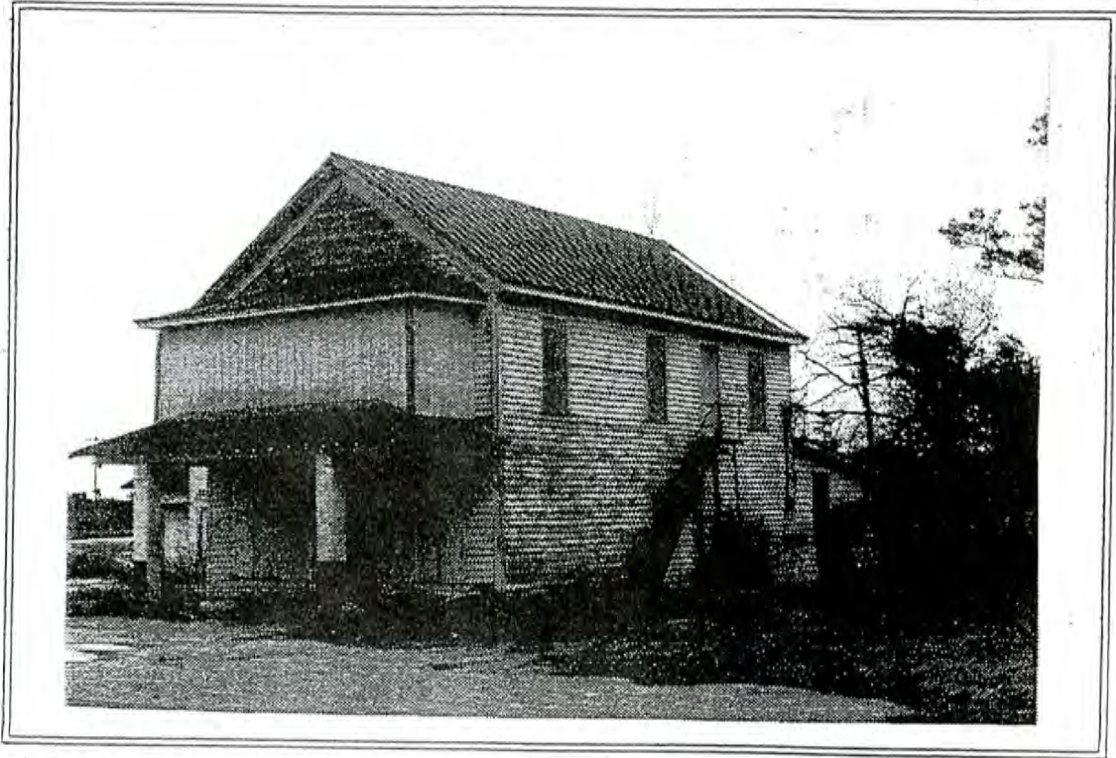
HOFMANN FOREST

WHITE OAK
POCOSIN

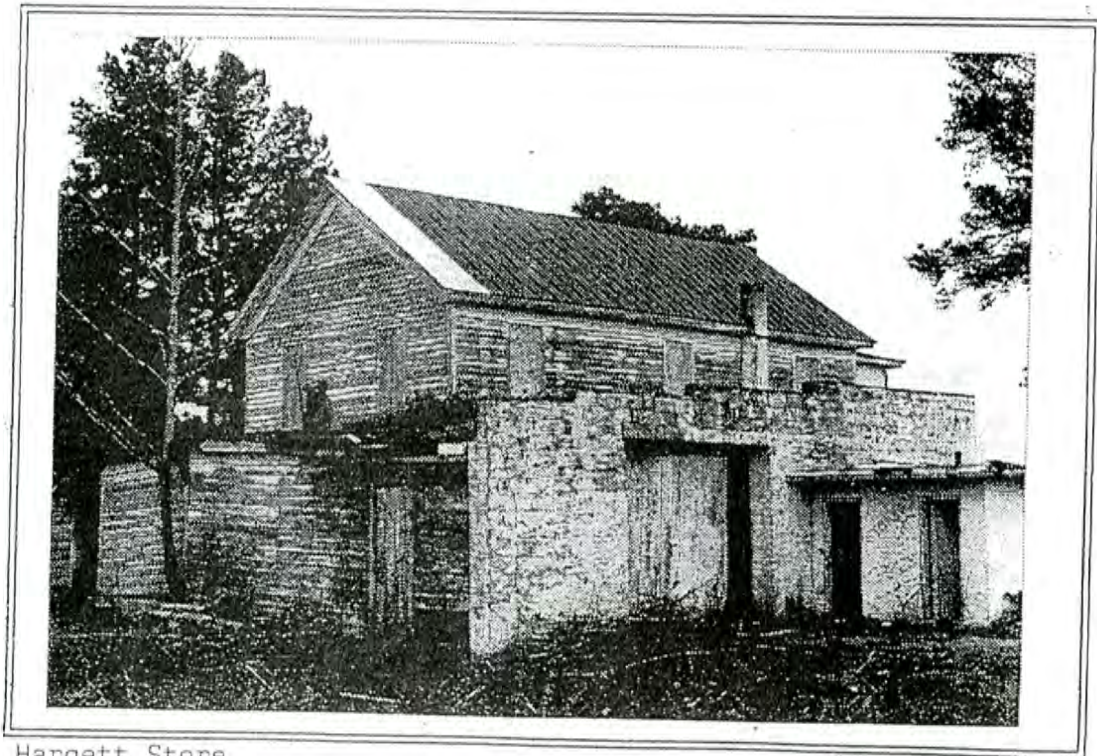
 NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL
BRANCH

STORES OVER 50 YEAR OLD - JONES CO.

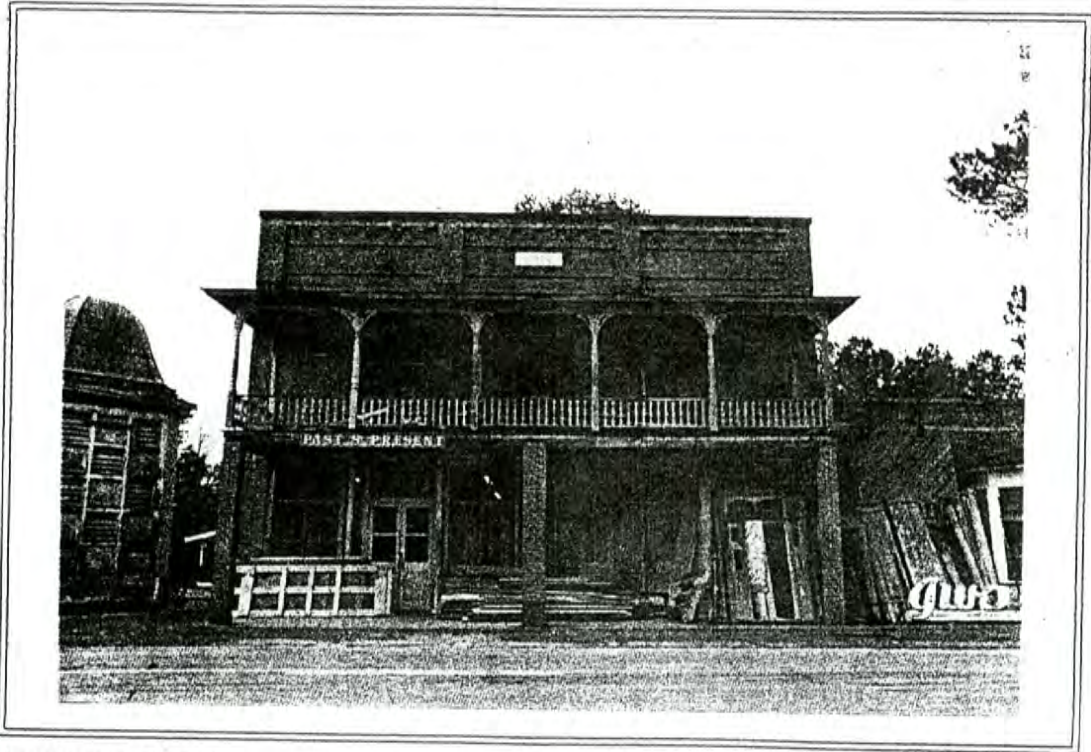




Hargett Store

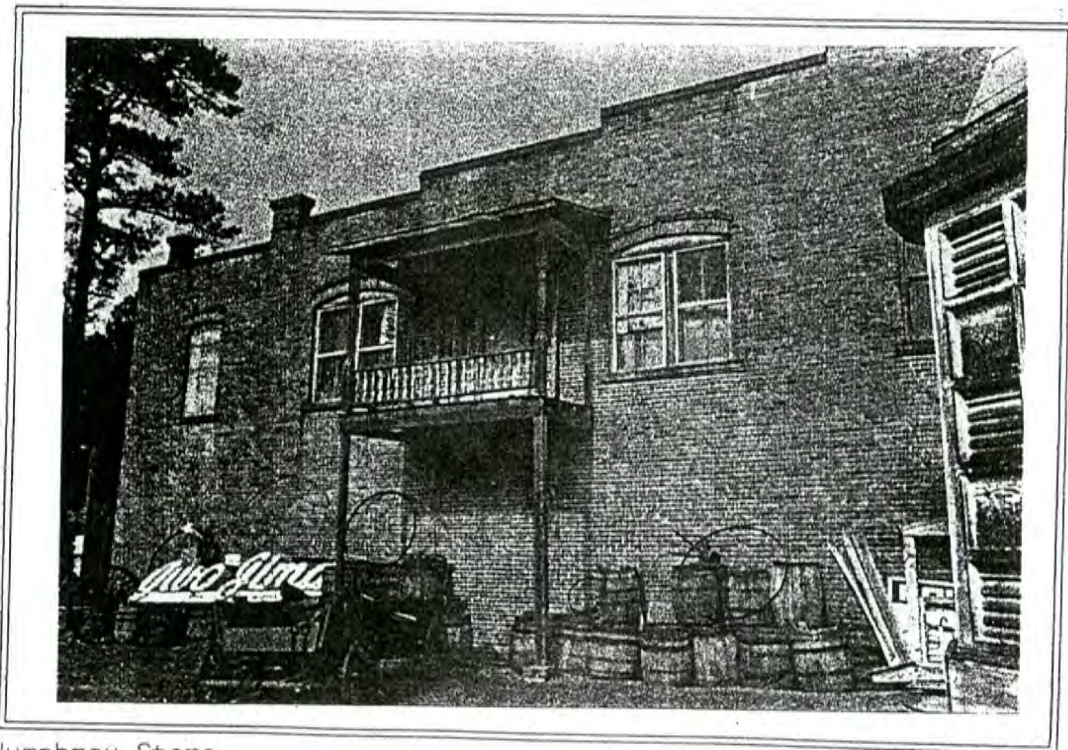


Hargett Store



Humphrey Store

Onslow County



Humphrey Store

Onslow County

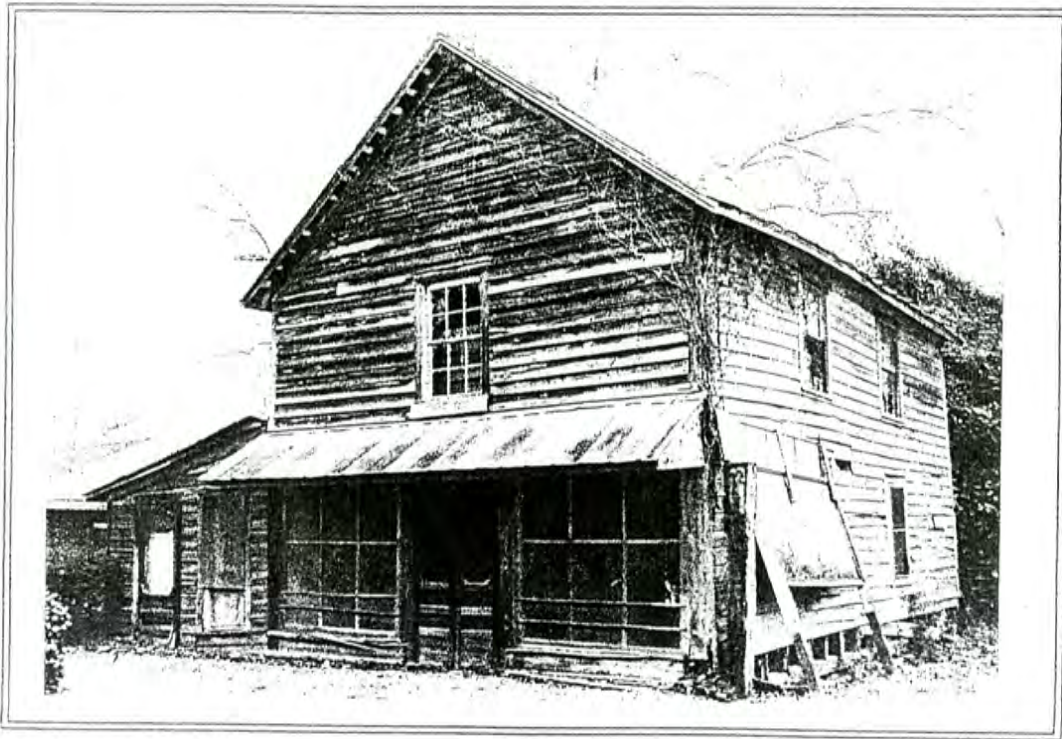


Illustration #1

Store "B"

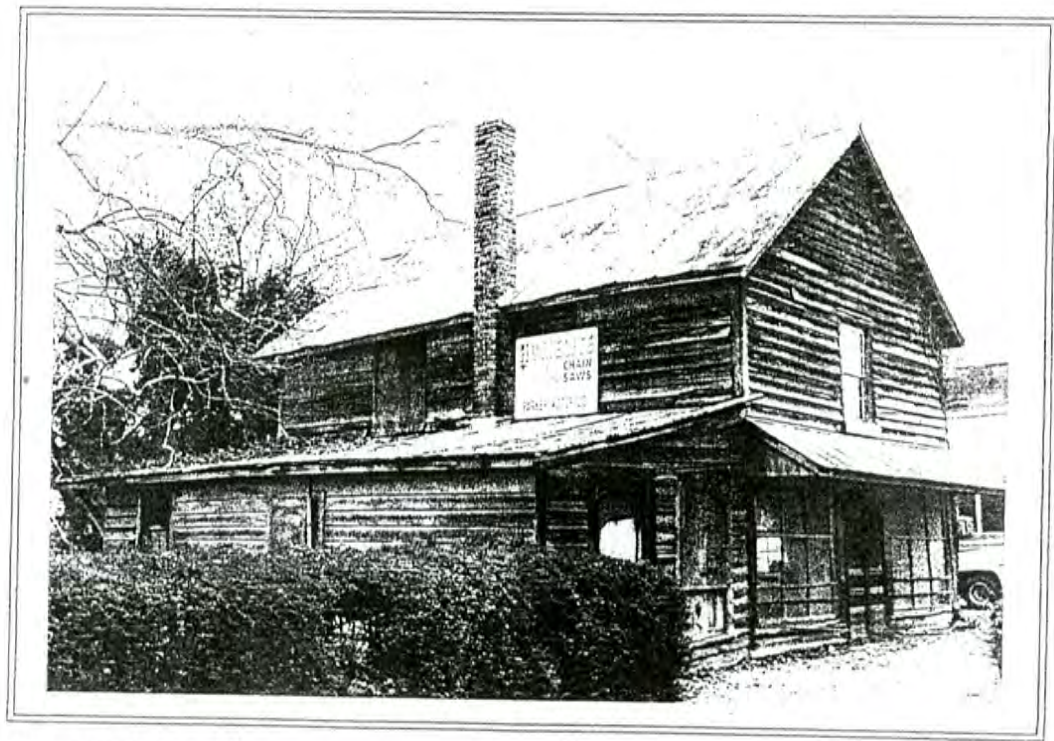


Illustration #2

Store "B"

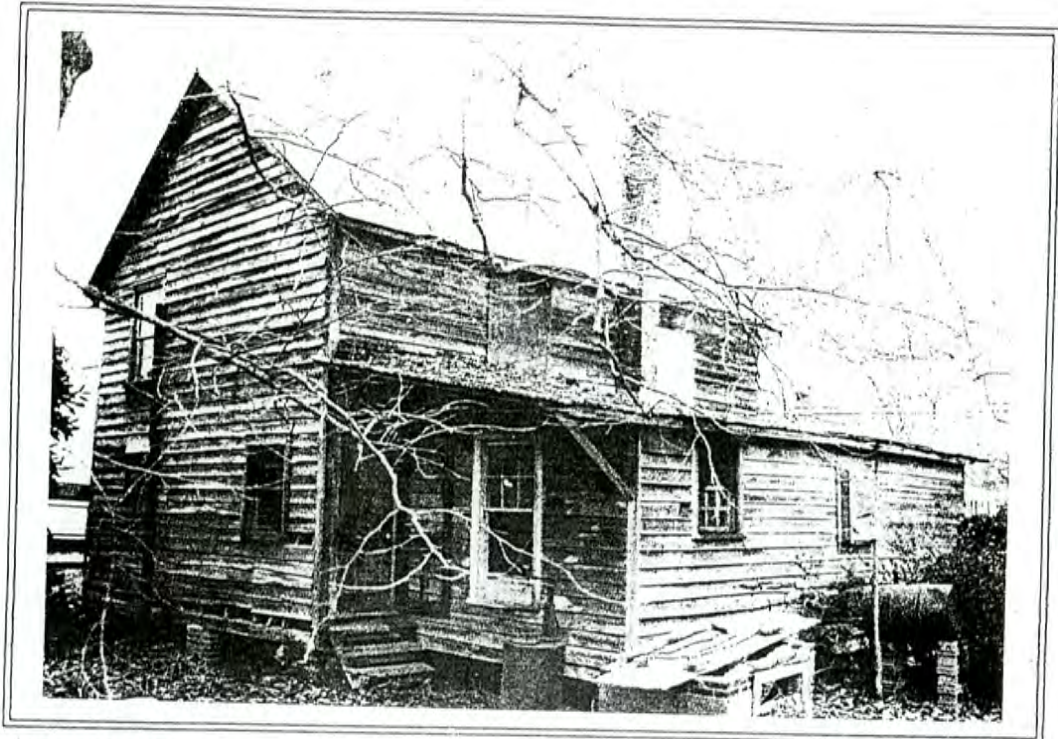


Illustration #3

Store "B"

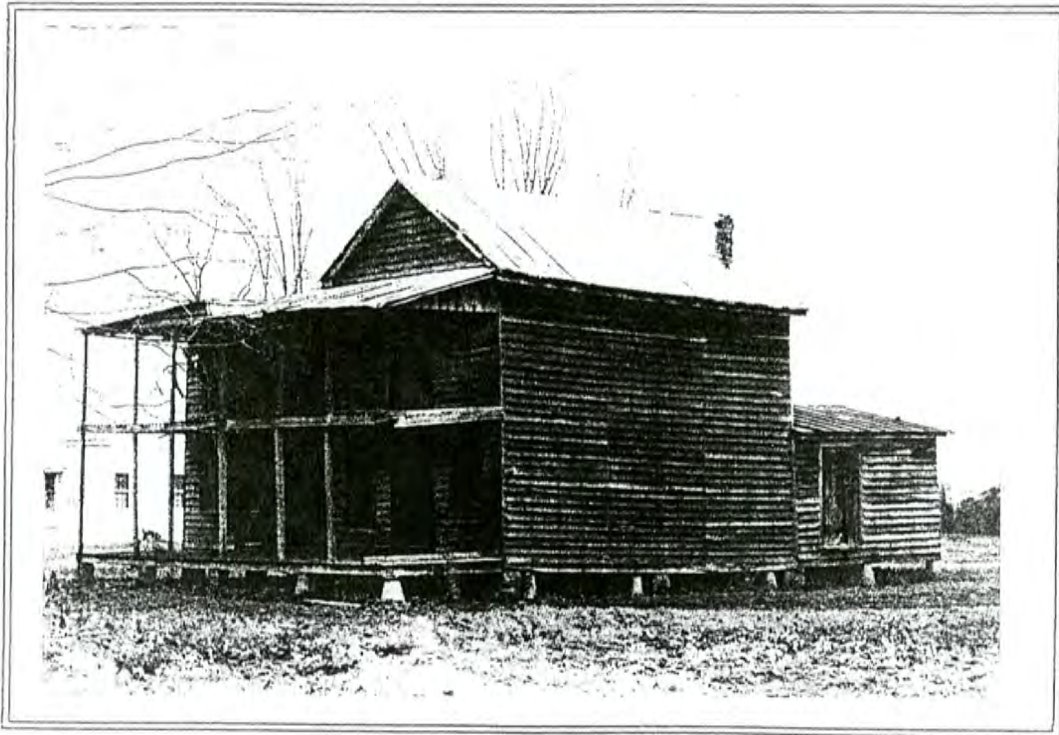


Illustration #4

Store "C"

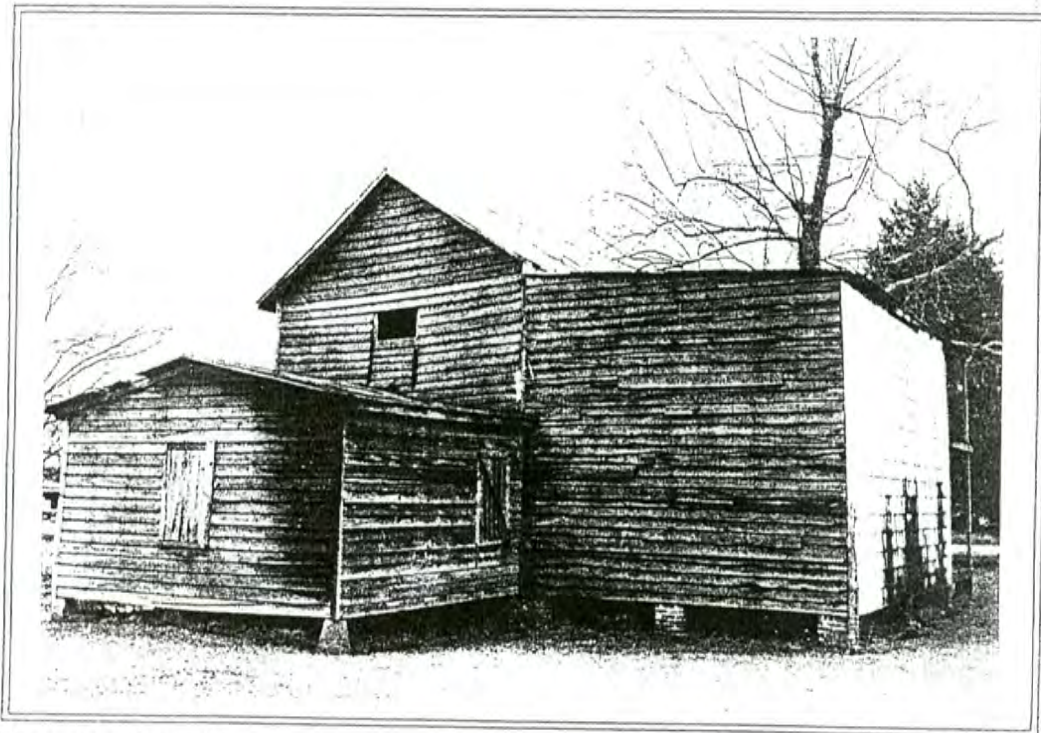


Illustration #5

Store "C"

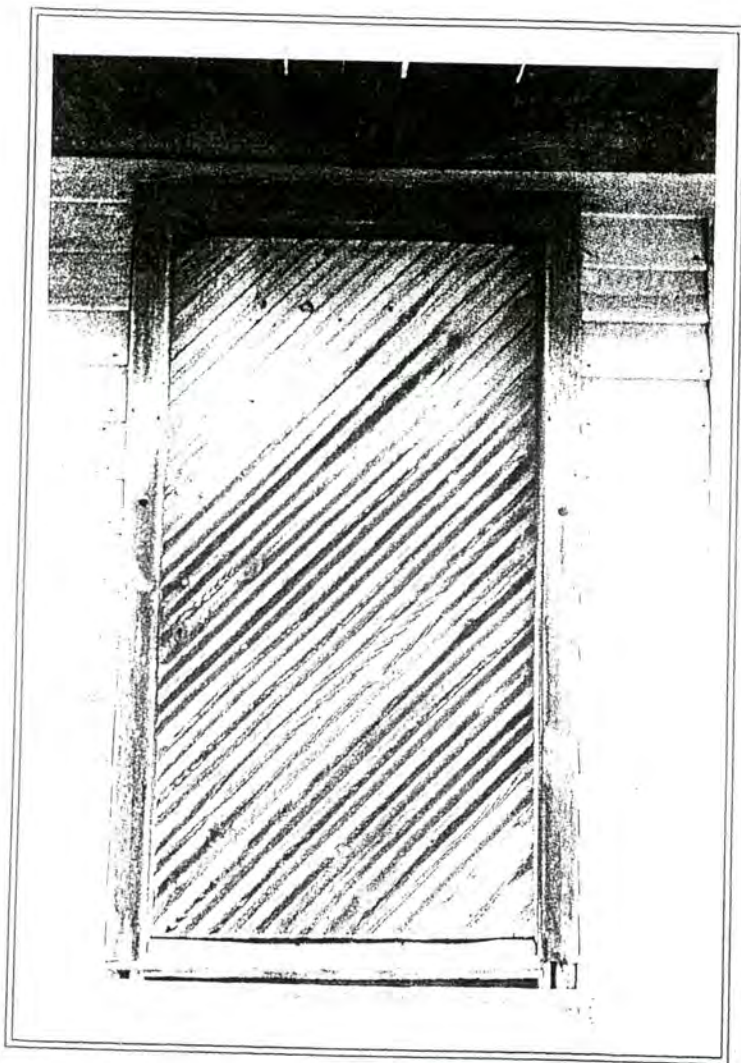


Illustration #6

Store "C"

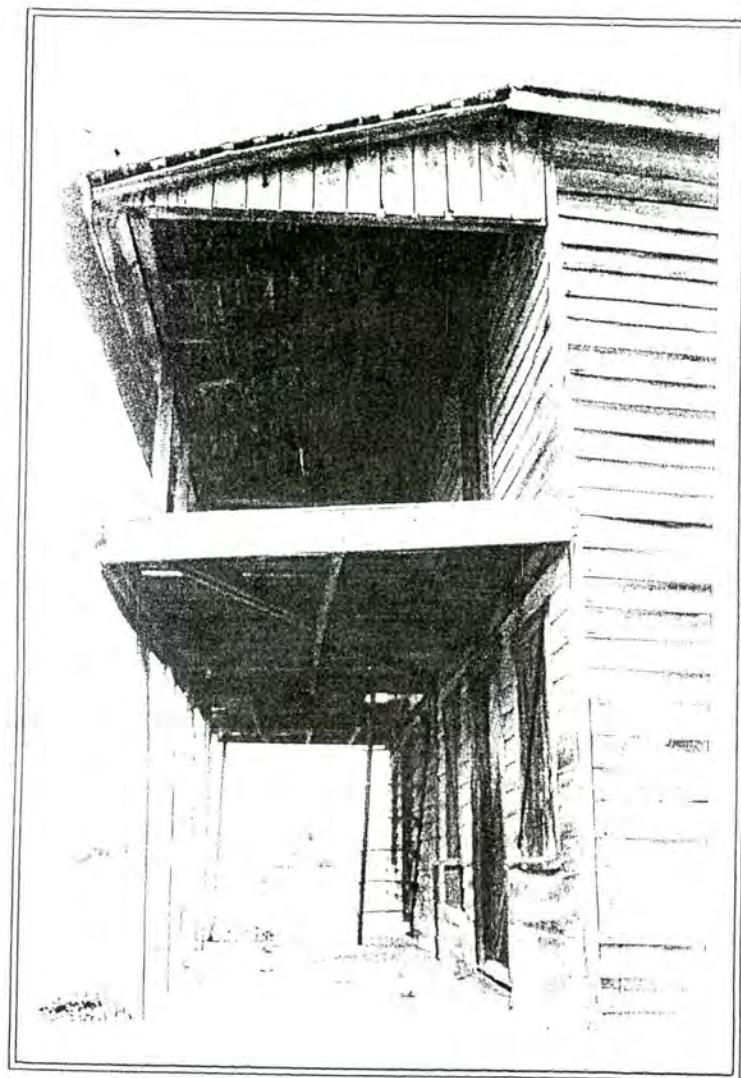


Illustration #7

Store "C"



Illustration #8

Store "D"

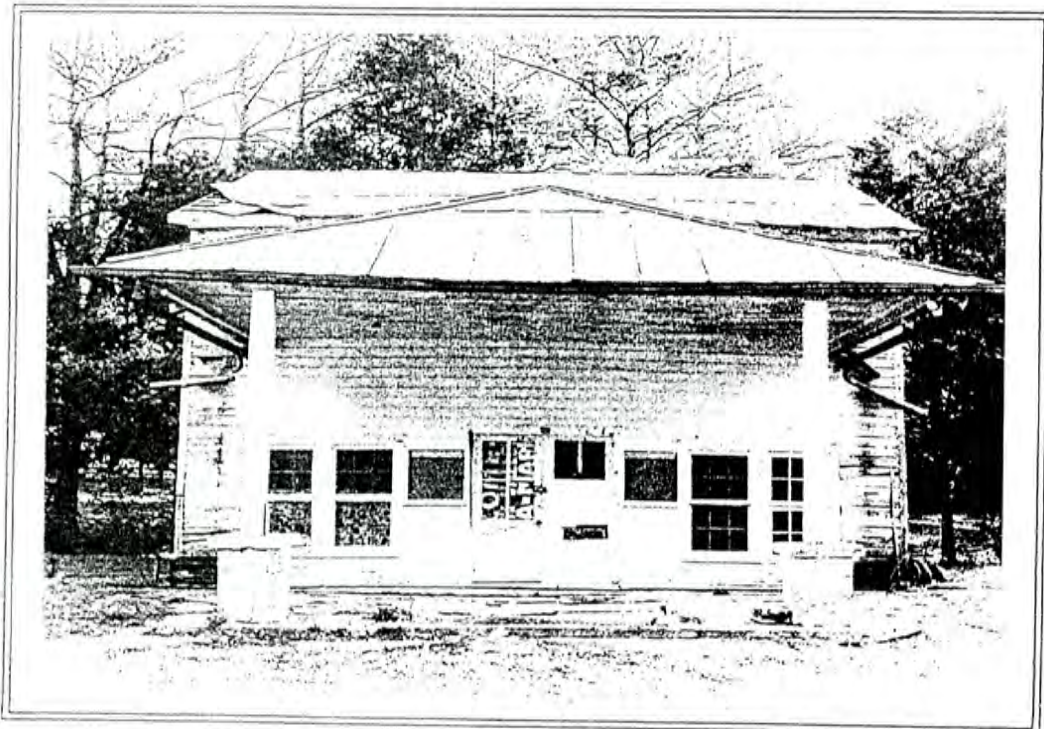


Illustration #9

Store "D"

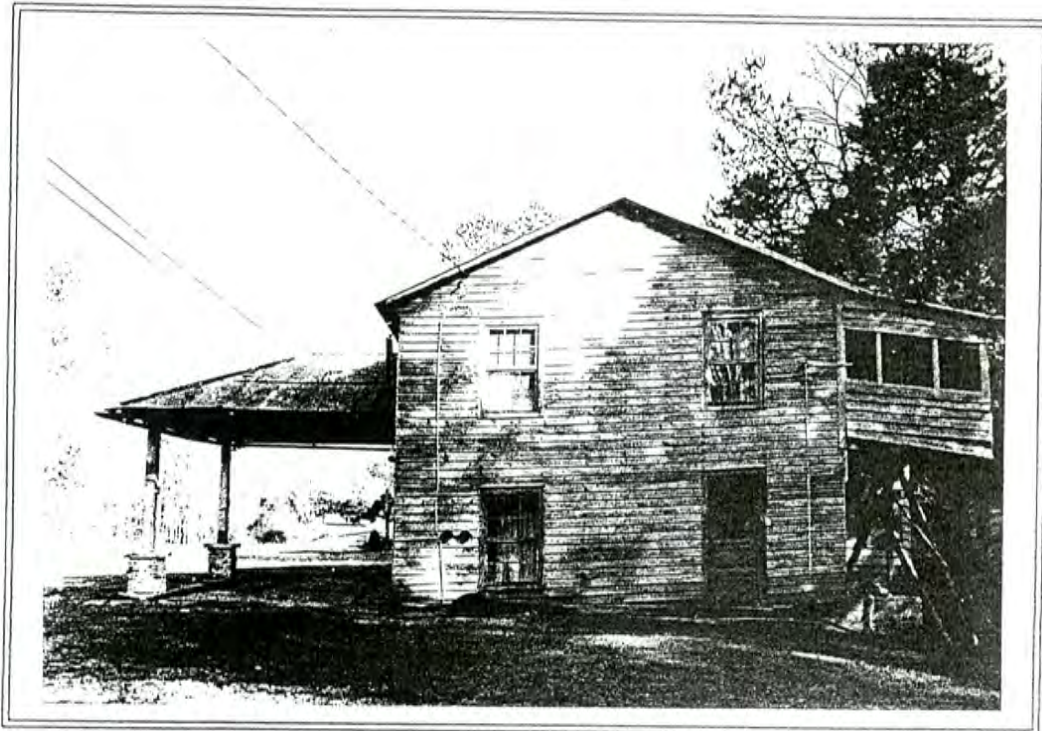


Illustration #10

Store "D"

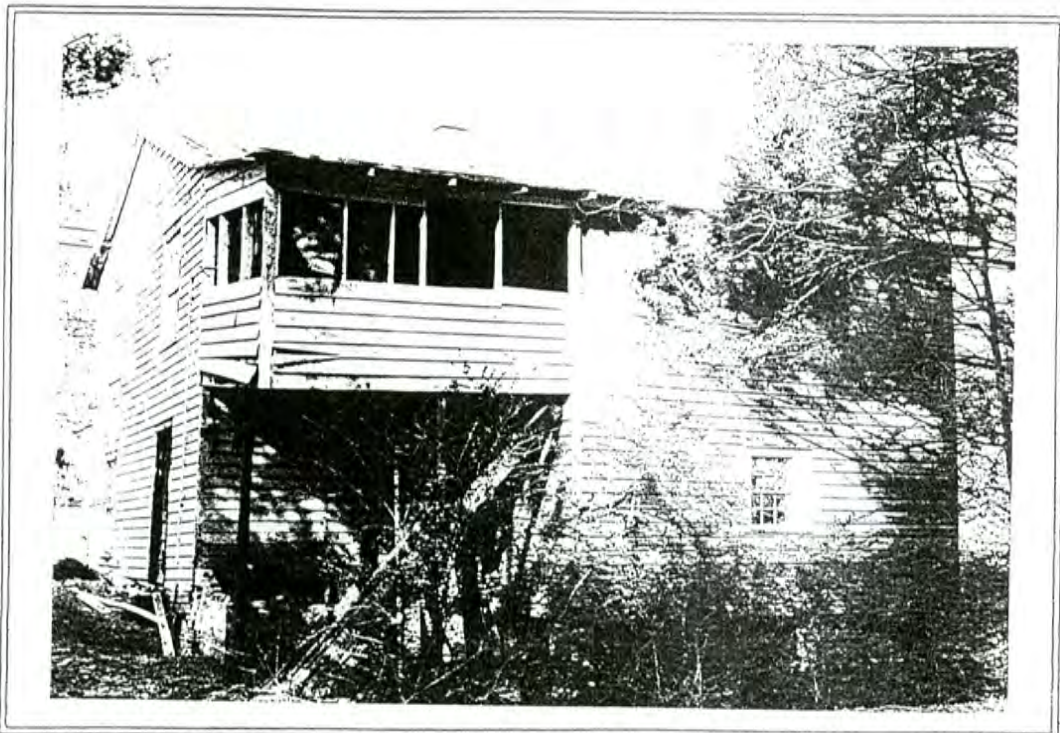


Illustration #11

Store "D"

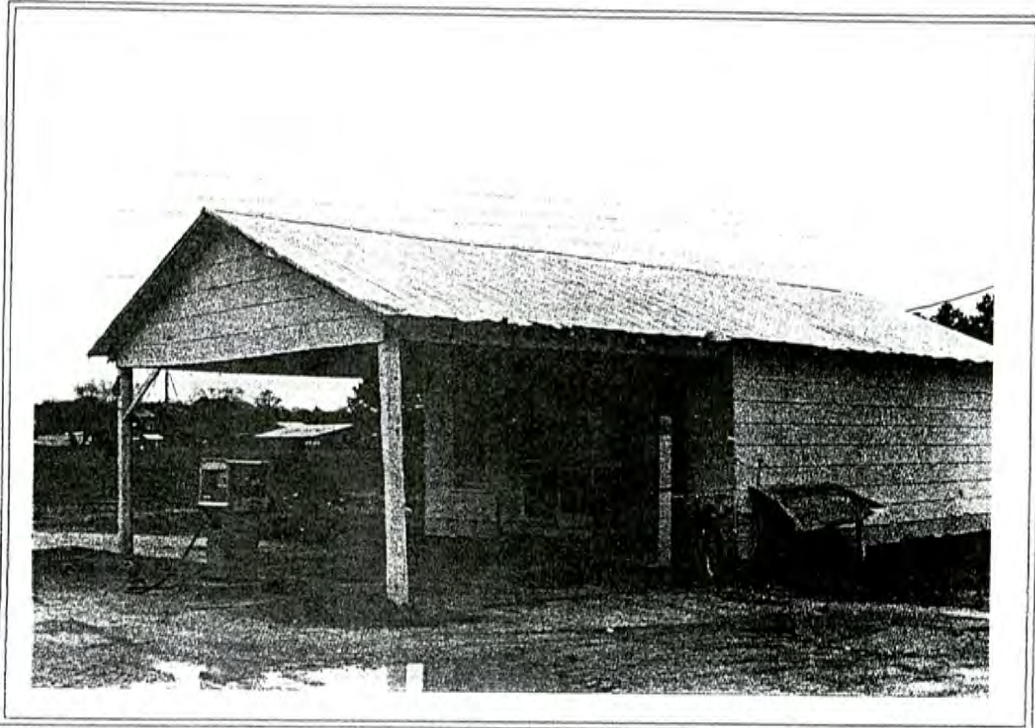


Illustration #12

Store #1

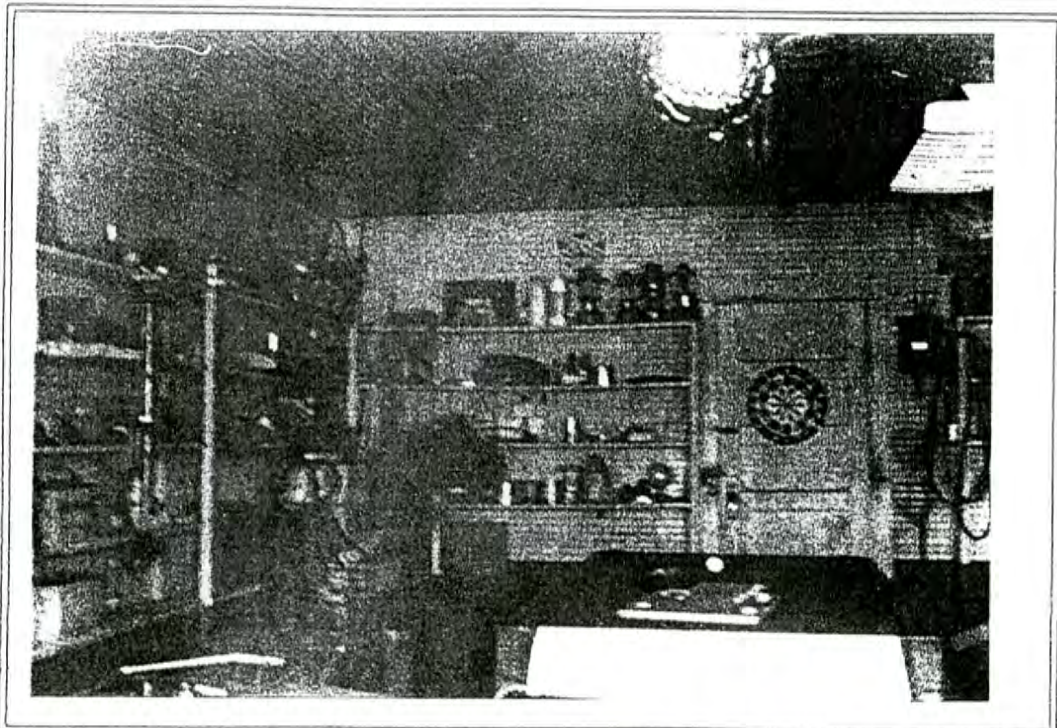


Illustration #13

Store #1

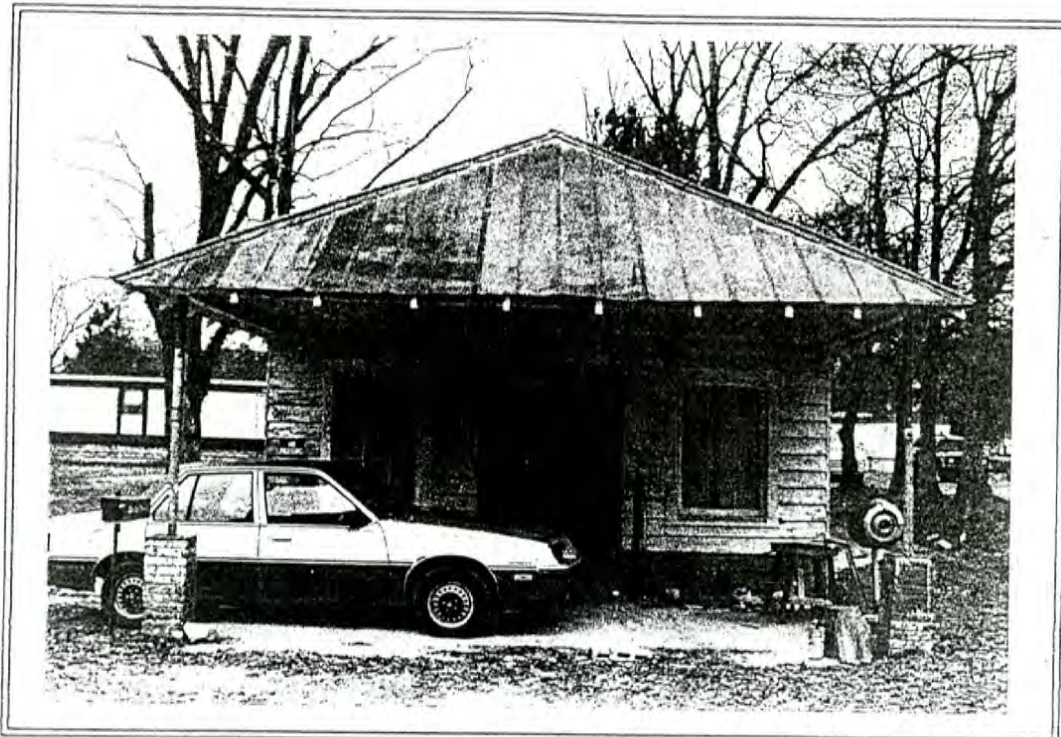


Illustration #14

Store #2



Illustration #15

Store #2



Illustration #16

Store #3

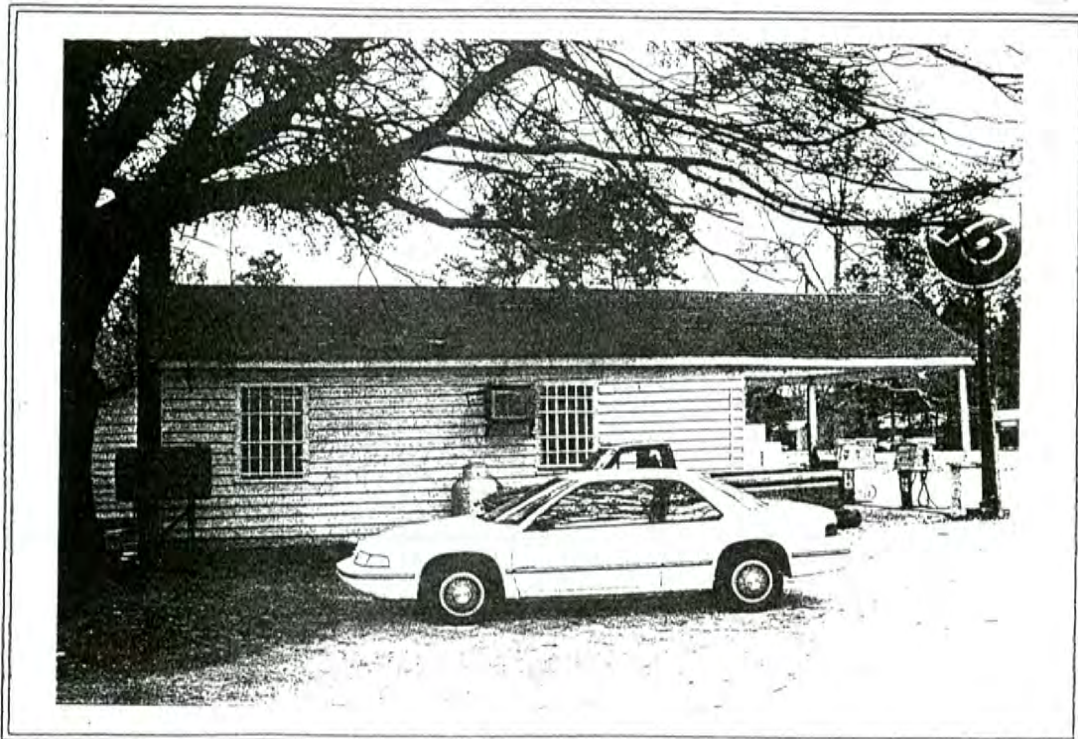


Illustration #17

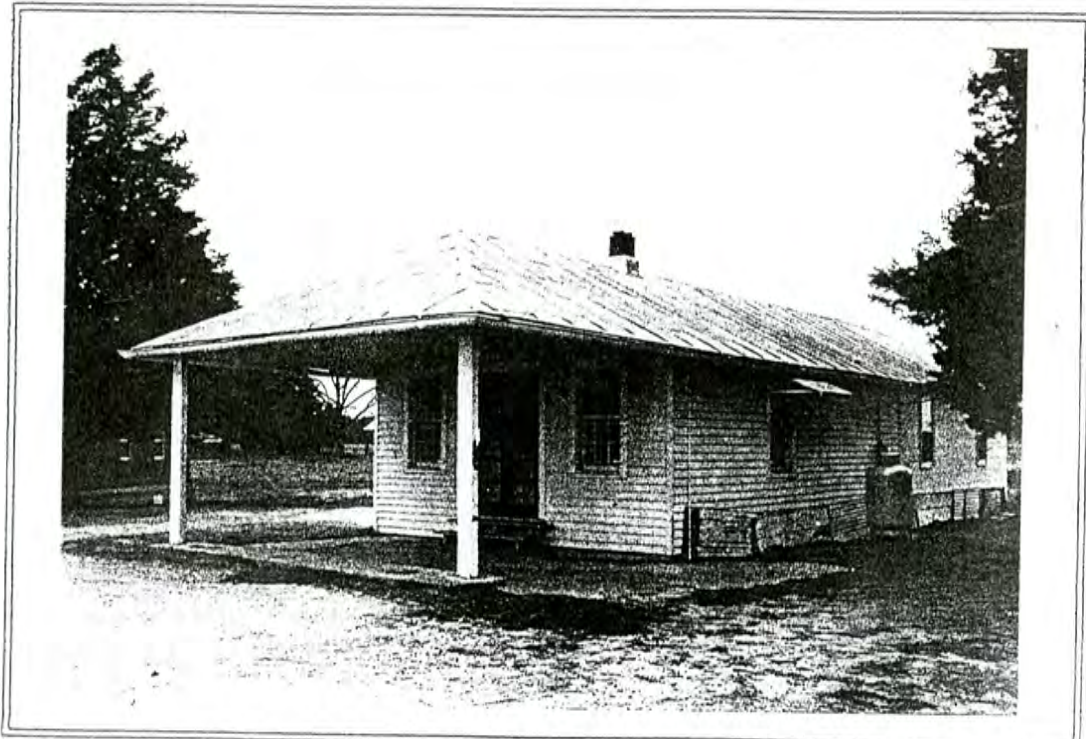


Illustration #18

Store #4



Illustration #19

Store #4

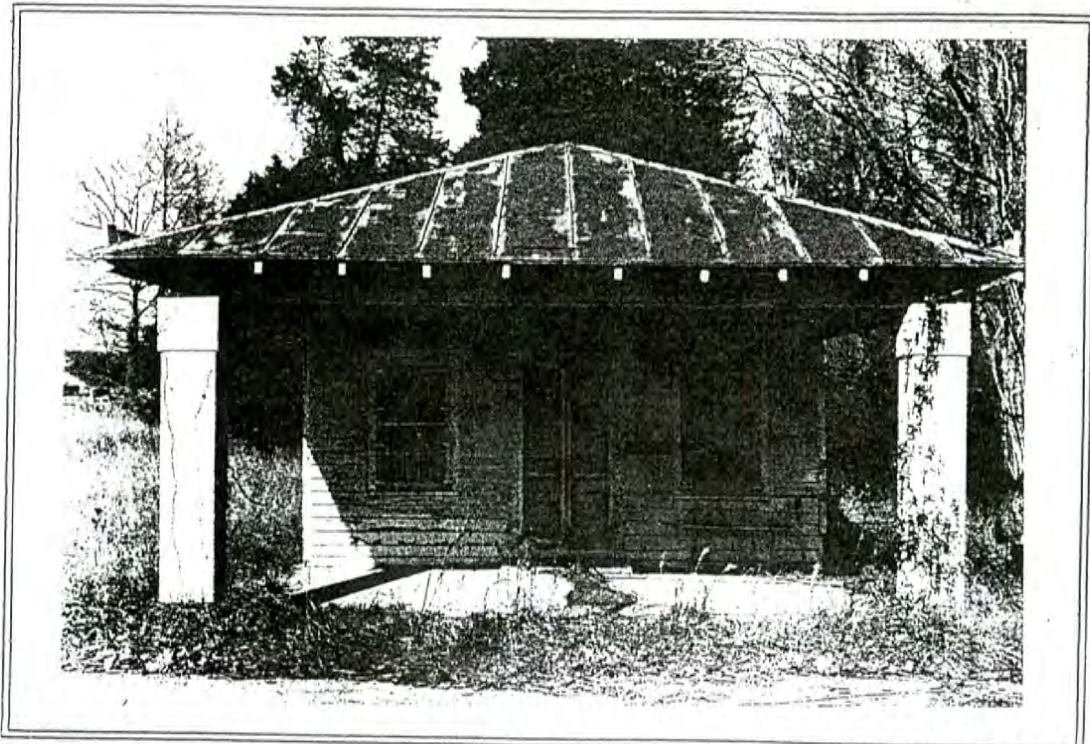


Illustration #20

Store #5



Illustration #21

Store #5

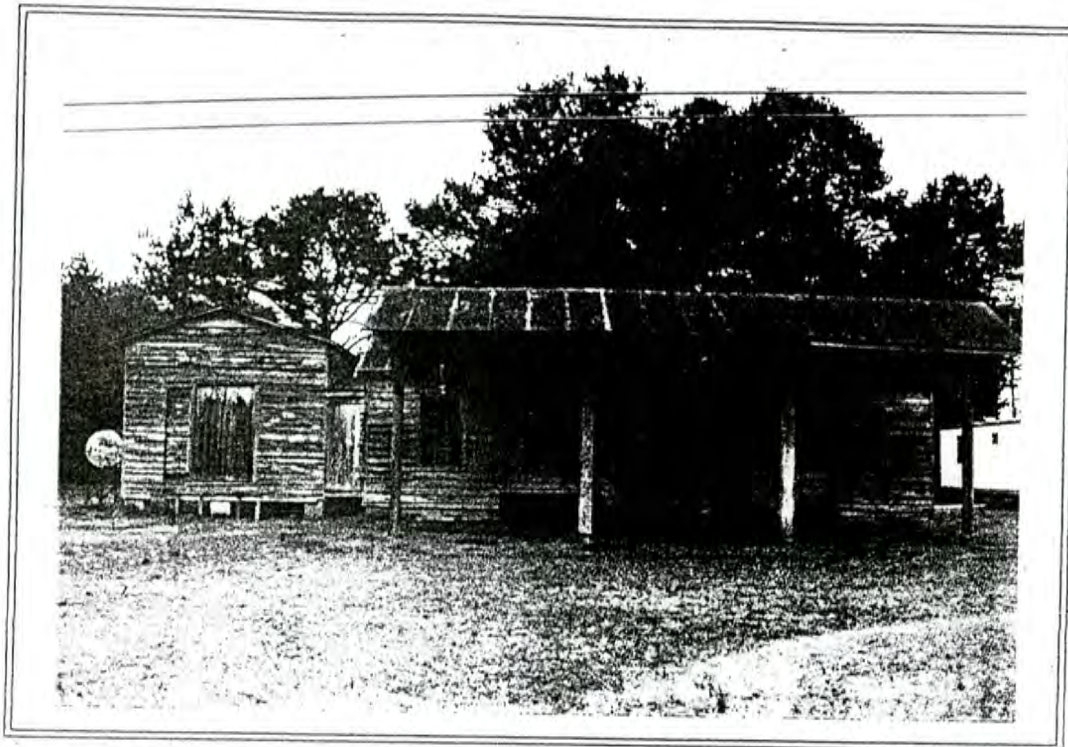


Illustration #22

Store #6

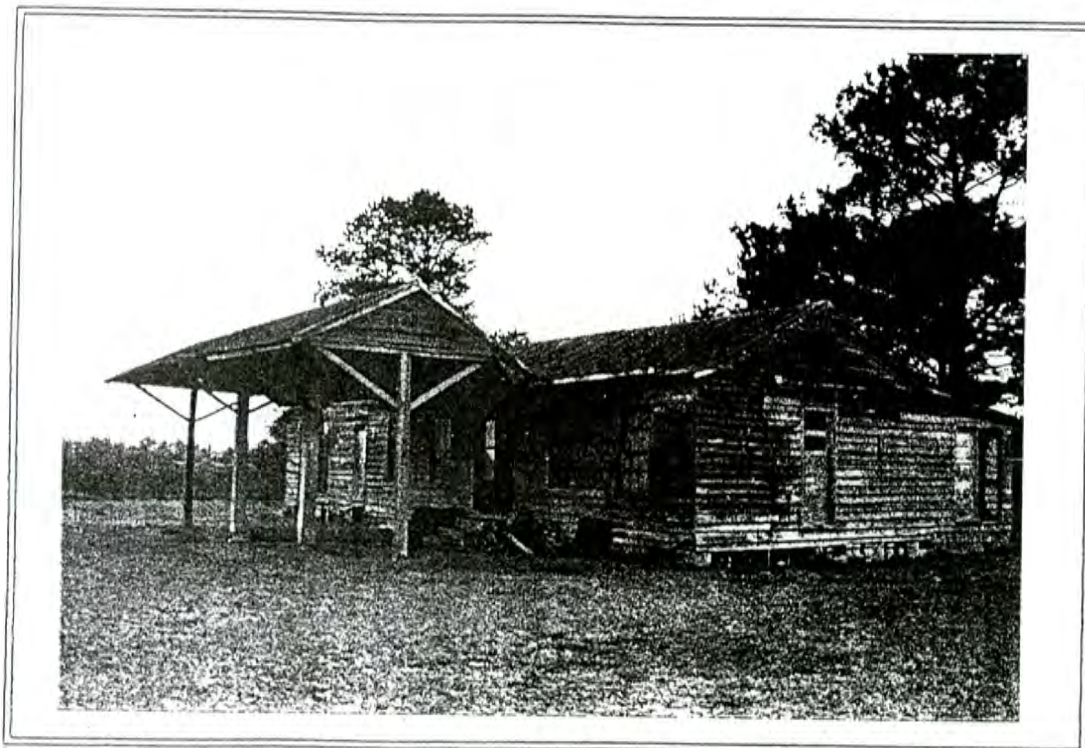


Illustration #23

Store #6

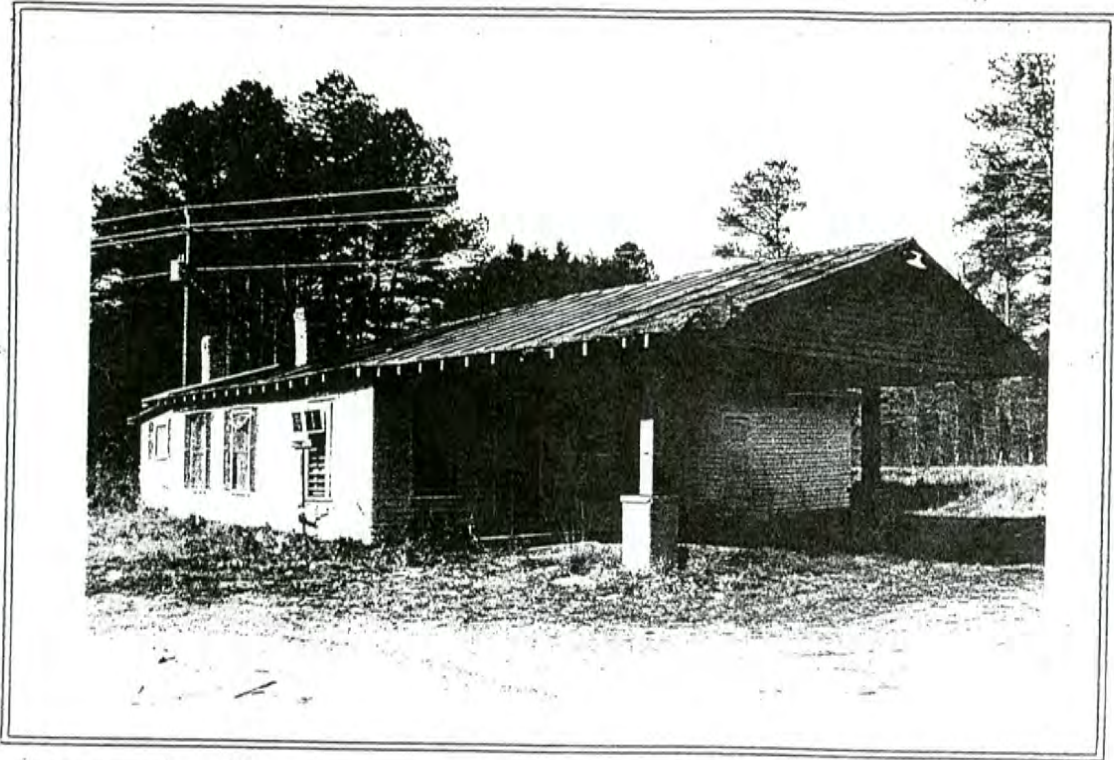


Illustration #24

Store #7

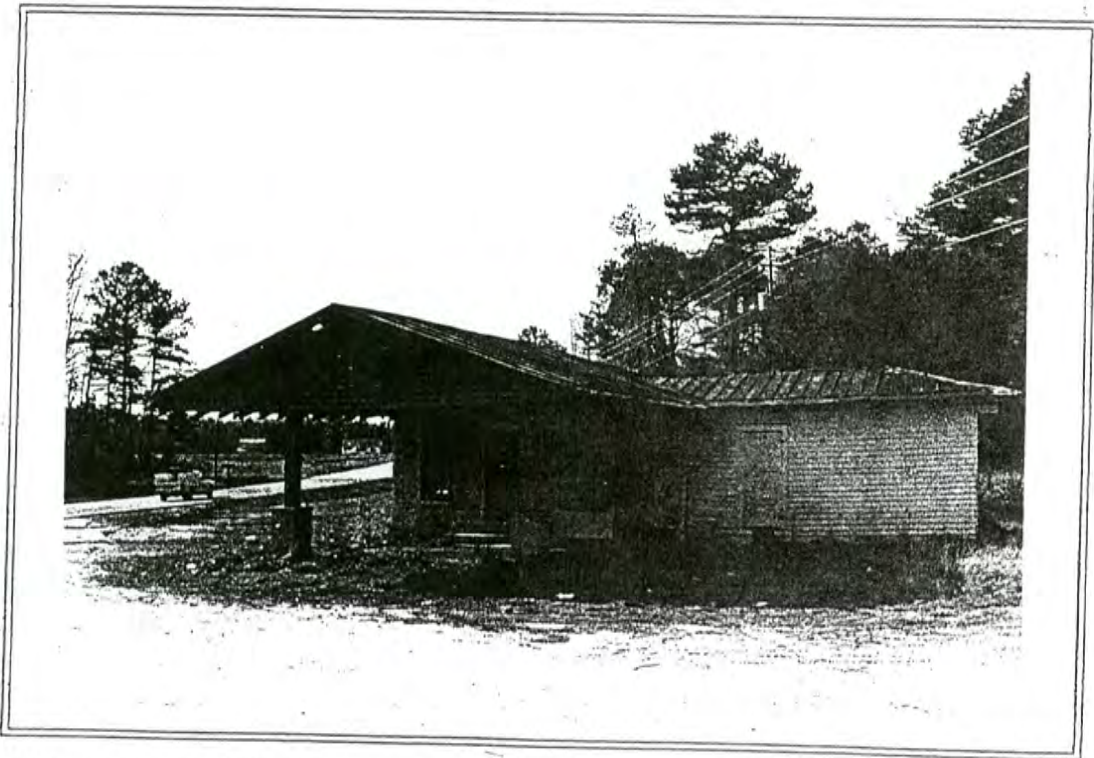


Illustration #25

Store #7



Illustration #26

Store #8



Illustration #27

Store #8



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

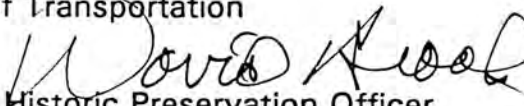
James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
Betty Ray McCain, Secretary

Division of Archives and History
William S. Price, Jr., Director

January 27, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: B. J. O'Quinn, P.E., Assistant Manager
Planning and Environmental Branch
Division of Highways
Department of Transportation

FROM: David Brook 
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

SUBJECT: US 17 improvements from NC 50 at Holly Ridge to
South of Jacksonville, Onslow County, R-2406,
6.269002, ER 93-7965

Thank you for your letter of December 22, 1992, which provided additional information about the Humphrey Retail and Wholesale Company Building. On January 25, 1993, we also received recent photographs of the exterior and interior of the building.

Based upon this new information, we believe the Humphrey Retail and Wholesale Company Building is no longer eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places since the building has undergone numerous character-altering changes and lost most of its original interior fabric.

We note that your letter requests our concurrence with your determination of No Effect. Since the building has been determined not eligible, the more appropriate finding is that there are no historic properties within the area of potential effect. A determination of effect is unnecessary when there are no properties in the area of potential effect.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106, codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763.

DB:slw

cc: Nicholas Graf
L. J. Ward
B. Church

ADDENDUM

An Architectural Resources Survey of U.S. 258 Widening
Lenoir, Jones and Onslow Counties, North Carolina
TIP No. R-2235
Project No. 8.1200301

ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

US 64/Porton Bypass

M. Ruth Little
Principal Investigator
with
Kathleen Smith, Field Assistant

June 1991
Revised January 1993

Longleaf Historic Resources
Raleigh, North Carolina

1993

**Hargett's Store, Hargett's Crossroads, Jones County
Ca. 1900**

Entry:

Hargett's Store is located at the northwest junction of US 258 and NC 41, Hargett's Crossroads, Jones County, opposite Marl Hill Farm (the Williams-Hargett Farm). Built ca. 1900, Hargett's Store is a well-preserved rural commercial building, two-stories tall, with a gable-front form. It retains its original plain weatherboard siding, double leaf front door with four flat panels in each leaf, and large two-over-two sash windows flanking the front door and four-over-four sash windows elsewhere. The present front canopy, with a hipped roof with exposed brackets supported by concrete block posts, appears to be a 1930s or 1940s replacement of the original porch. It supports a smaller second story porch that has recently been enclosed with plywood siding. This level has a hipped roof which is probably the original upper porch roof, since the upper porch is said to be original. The second floor provided lodging for John S. Hargett and his family until they built the house next door (**John S. Hargett House**).

The store is unused at the present time, and the windows are boarded with plywood. On the north side, a metal fire escape leads to a door to the upstairs. On the rear is a one-story shed addition. A one-story concrete block addition which housed a garage was built on the south side, probably in the 1950s, but this was removed in the spring of 1991 by the current owner, Bryan Hargett.

The store interior is well-preserved as well. Both the first and second floor have narrow tongue-and-groove sheathing. The first floor is a large open storeroom, with a row of chamfered posts extending the length of the room. No original built-in store shelving remains. The second floor was originally partitioned into an apartment, but all partition walls have been removed. This level retains some four panel doors and decorative narrow molded surrounds and pointed lintels around doors and windows.

Hargett's Store was built for John S. Hargett, the brother of William Bryan Hargett who had married Deborah Williams and taken over Marl Hill Farm located here at Hargett's Crossroads. According to family tradition, William Bryan Hargett wanted a store located at the crossroads, and invited his brother to open one.²⁷ William and Deborah Hargett must have deeded a small lot for the store to John S. Hargett, but efforts to find such a deed failed because Jones County deeds are not indexed until 1925. William Bryan is said to have helped John build the store. John S. Hargett operated Hargett's Store throughout his lifetime. A few years after the store was built, he obtained a small lot on the north side of the store from William and Deborah Hargett and built a large frame house for his family. This house is still standing, but has been moved a short distance to the northwest and substantially remodelled. In addition, a small

²⁷ Telephone interview with Mrs. Ridie Ward Atkins, March 21, 1991, Marl Hill Farm.

frame house was built between Hargett's Store and the John S. Hargett House in the 1940s or 1950s. For these reasons, the store and John S. Hargett House are not eligible for the Register as a district. John S. Hargett became politically prominent in Jones County, for he became sheriff of Jones County in his later years. He moved to the county seat of Trenton, but continued to manage and visit the store. The store was operated by a storekeeper who lived upstairs. In the 1930s Hargett served in the North Carolina State Senate, and he died in the late 1930s or 1940s.²⁸

Evaluation:

Hargett's Store belongs to a property type, rural commercial buildings, that is becoming rare in rural North Carolina as the frame crossroads stores built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century become increasingly obsolete. Most of the properties in this property type are one-story box-and-canopy stores built in the 1910s to 1930s, thus this two-story store built ca. 1900 is an unusually large and early example of the type. Jones County has not received a historic architecture survey, and there is no way of determining at the present time how many other turn-of-the-century country stores are standing in the county.

Some context for the significance of Hargett's Store can be provided by comparing it to country stores in adjoining Craven and Onslow counties, which have been surveyed. There is a good discussion of the country store in Craven County, which adjoins Jones County to the north and east, in Peter Sandbeck's historic survey book, The Historic Architecture of New Bern and Craven County. Craven County has two country stores which predate 1900, and a small group dating from the early 20th century. One of these, the Tom Haywood Store, Croatoan vicinity, was built ca. 1880-1890 and is a two-story frame, front gable store of the same form as Hargett's Store.²⁹ The Haywood Store has been placed on the Study List for nomination to the National Register because of its architectural and historical significance as one of the oldest country stores in Craven County.

The Onslow County historic architecture survey report evaluates country stores as being significant under Criterion A as evidence of the formation and function of collection and distribution centers outside the principal towns. In addition, some of them have architectural significance under Criterion C. Onslow County has thirty-five commercial buildings located outside of the three major towns. These consist largely of one-story frame, front-gable stores largely dating from ca. 1900 to ca. 1940 and rural service stations dating from the 1920s to the 1930s. Only three of this property type are two-story stores: the Humphrey Retail and Wholesale Company Building, built of brick ca. 1900; a store in the vicinity of Catherine Lake, built in the early twentieth century but considerably altered; and the Parker-Sewell Store in Verona, built in the 1920s and quite

²⁸ Telephone interview with Mrs. Ridie Ward Atkins, March 21, 1991, Marl Hill Farm.

²⁹ Peter B. Sandbeck, The Historic Architecture of New Bern and Craven County. New Bern: The Tryon Palace Commission, 1988, 490-491.

deteriorated.³⁰ Thus there is not a single country store of the size and in the good state of preservation in Onslow County that compares to Hargett's Store. As a result of the Onslow County survey, the Humphrey Building and a brick service station in Richlands were determined to be eligible for the National Register.

*not
eligible
2/93*

Hargett's Store is potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an important representative of the turn-of-the-century rural store. Western Jones County is very sparsely populated and it is particularly unusual to find a store of this size built during this period. The building, like most commercial structures, has undergone considerable alteration as it was adapted to changing commercial functions. Like almost all country stores of its period, its original front porch was replaced in the 1930s to 1940s by a concrete block porte-cochere. It has lost its original interior shelving. The partition walls have been removed from the second floor living quarters. But the main block is intact, and retains its original materials, including its front doors and window sashes. On the interior, both floors retain their original wall materials and trim. The concrete block garage added on the south side, which also compromised the exterior integrity, has been removed since these photographs were taken. If an architectural survey had been conducted in the county, it might be possible to evaluate the store's significance under Criterion A, for it is likely that it played a significant role in the socio-economic life of the farmers who lived in isolated western Jones County.

Boundaries:

The potentially eligible boundaries of Hargett's Store are the one-quarter acre parcel on which it currently sits. The original store lot may have been somewhat larger, but a frame house was built just north of the store within the past fifty years. This house does not contribute to the store's significance.

Photographs: (see Figures VII.A-16-17)

Site Plan: (see Figure VII.A-18)

Tax Map with Boundaries: (see Figure VII.A-19)

³⁰ Pezzoni, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Onslow County."