

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

Peter B. Sandbeck, Administrator

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary
Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary

Office of Archives and History
Division of Historical Resources
David Brook, Director

August 24, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gregory Thorpe, Ph.D., Director
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Peter B. Sandbeck *PSZ for Peter Sandbeck*

SUBJECT: Architectural Survey Report for Replacement of Bridge No. 52 on NC 96
over Little Swamp, B-4164, Johnston County, ER03-0948

Thank you for your letter of July 15, 2004, transmitting the survey report by Marvin A. Brown of URS Corporation.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is on the State Study List and remains eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under the criterion cited:

Parker's Mill, west side of NC 96, 0.1 mile north of junction with SR 1116, Meadow Vicinity, is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C. The building is representative of the small non-textile mill industry in the early twentieth-century. In addition, the mill is an example of the small non-textile grist mill complexes—which included mills, spillways, and ponds. These complexes once dotted the county. We concur with the proposed National Register boundary for this property as described and delineated in the survey report.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

NC 96 Bridge over Little Swamp, west side of NC 96, 0.1 mile north of junction with SR 1116, Meadow vicinity, is not eligible for the National Register because it is a replacement bridge and does not have a historic association with the Parker Mill Complex. The bridge was constructed in 1950 and is a common steel stringer bridge.

	Location	Mailing Address	Telephone/Fax
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The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act 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, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

PBS:w

cc: Mary Pope Furr

bc: Southern/McBride
County



RECEIVED
JUL 15 2004

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

July 15, 2004

REF # ER03-0948
S due 8/11

Mr. David L. S. Brook
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
4617 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

Dear Mr. Brook:

RE: B-4164, Johnston County, Replace Bridge No. 52 on NC 96 over Little Swamp,
State Project # 8.1313301, Federal Aid #BRSTP-96(6), WBS # 33512.1.1

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is conducting planning studies for the above-referenced project. Please find attached two copies of the Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, which meets the guidelines for survey procedures for NCDOT and the National Park Service. This report concludes that there is one property, Parker's Mill, within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) that is eligible for the National Register.

Please review the survey report and provide us with your comments. If you have any questions concerning the accompanying information, please contact me at 715-1620.

Sincerely,

Mary Pope Furr
Historic Architecture Section

Attachment RECEIVED

Cc (w/attachment): Karen Capps, P.E., Project Engineer, PDEA
John Sullivan III, P.E., Federal Highway Administration

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DRAFT REPORT

**PHASE II
HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY
FOR REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE NO. 52
ON NC 96 OVER LITTLE SWAMP,
JOHNSTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

**TIP NO. B-4164
WORK ORDER NO. 8.1313301
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. BRSTP-96(6)
WBS NO. 33512.1.1**

Prepared For:

**Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation**

Prepared By:

**URS Corporation – North Carolina
1600 Perimeter Park Drive
Morrisville, NC 27560**

**Marvin A. Brown,
Principal Investigator**

July 2004

DRAFT REPORT

**PHASE II
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1600 Perimeter Park Drive
Morrisville, NC 27560**

**Marvin A. Brown,
Principal Investigator**


July 2004



**Marvin A. Brown, Principal Investigator
URS Corporation-North Carolina**

7-13-04

Date



**Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor
Historic Architectural Resources Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation**

7.15.04

Date

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes replacing Bridge No. 52 on NC 96 over Little Swamp in Johnston County (TIP No. B-4164, Work Order/State Project No. 8.1313301, Federal Aid Project No. BRSTP-96(6), WBS No. 33512.1.1). At the request of NCDOT, under the terms of an open-end contract with the Department for historic architectural services, URS Corporation-North Carolina (URS) investigated the potential National Register eligibility of the bridge and the adjacent Parker's Mill (JT-898). Both had been identified by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) as of potential historical or architectural importance and Parker's Mill is included on the HPO Study List of resources that may be eligible for National Register listing.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project encompassed the mill and bridge. During the week of May 31, 2004, URS conducted intensive-level fieldwork and local research for the project. URS subsequently evaluated the National Register eligibility of the two resources. Its survey methodology consisted of historical background research into primary and secondary sources, interviews with knowledgeable individuals, site-specific research, and an intensive-level field survey during which 100 percent of the APE was surveyed. This report records the results of the field survey, research, and evaluation.

URS recommends that Bridge No. 52 is not eligible for National Register listing. This recommendation conforms with the one made in 2003 by Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers, Inc. following its statewide inventory of historic North Carolina bridges. URS further recommends that Parker's Mill is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A, for its connection with the history of non-textile-related mills in Johnston County, and under Criterion C, as an intact representative of a late nineteenth/early twentieth-century Johnston County mill.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The North Carolina Department of Transportation proposes replacing Bridge No. 52 on NC 96 over Little Swamp in Johnston County (TIP No. B-4164, Work Order/State Project No. 8.1313301, Federal Aid Project No. BRSTP-96(6), WBS No. 33512.1.1) (Figure 1). The replacement is necessary due to the poor condition of the bridge's deck and superstructure. The proposed new bridge will be located in the same location and have the same low steel elevation as the existing bridge. During construction, traffic will be detoured. This report presents the results of a Phase II historic architectural survey of the project area by URS for the Federal Highway Administration and the Project Development and Analysis Branch of NCDOT.

At the request of NCDOT, under the terms of an open-end contract with the Department for historic architectural services, URS investigated the potential National Register eligibility of the bridge and the adjacent Parker's Mill (JT-898). Both had been identified by the North Carolina HPO as of potential historical or architectural importance. Additionally, in 1992 Parker's Mill was included on the HPO Study List of resources that may be eligible for National Register listing.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project encompassed the mill and bridge. During the week of May 31, 2004, URS conducted intensive-level fieldwork and local research for the project. URS subsequently evaluated the National Register eligibility of the two resources. Its survey methodology consisted of historical background research into primary and secondary sources, interviews with knowledgeable individuals, site-specific research, and an intensive-level field survey during which 100 percent of the APE was surveyed. This report records the results of the field survey, research, and evaluation.

An historic architectural survey within the APE associated with the proposed bridge replacement was necessary for compliance with the basic requirements of: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended; the Department of Transportation regulations and procedures (23 CFR 771 and Technical Advisory T 6640.8A); the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regulations on the "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR 800); and NCDOT's "Historic Architectural Resources, Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines." In order to meet the requirements of these laws and regulations, the work plan for the survey included the following items: (1) identification of all resources 50 years old or older within the APE; (2) intensive evaluation of the two designated resources; (3) general historical research in order to develop historic and architectural contexts for the two resources; and (4) the preparation of a report developed pursuant to the above-referenced laws, regulations, and guidelines.

The Area of Potential Effects or APE is the area or areas within which an undertaking may cause changes in the character or use of historic properties. The boundaries of the project's APE were provided by NCDOT. They are delineated in this report on a portion of the Peacocks Crossroads USGS topographical quadrangle map (Figure 2). Due to the nature of the improvements, the APE was found to encompass only two standing resources, the bridge and the mill.

URS recommends that Bridge No. 52 is not eligible for National Register listing. This recommendation conforms with the one made in 2003 by Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers, Inc. following its statewide inventory of historic North Carolina bridges. URS further recommends that Parker's Mill is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A, for its connection with the history of non-textile-related mills in Johnston County, and under Criterion C, as an intact representative of a late nineteenth/early twentieth-century Johnston County mill.

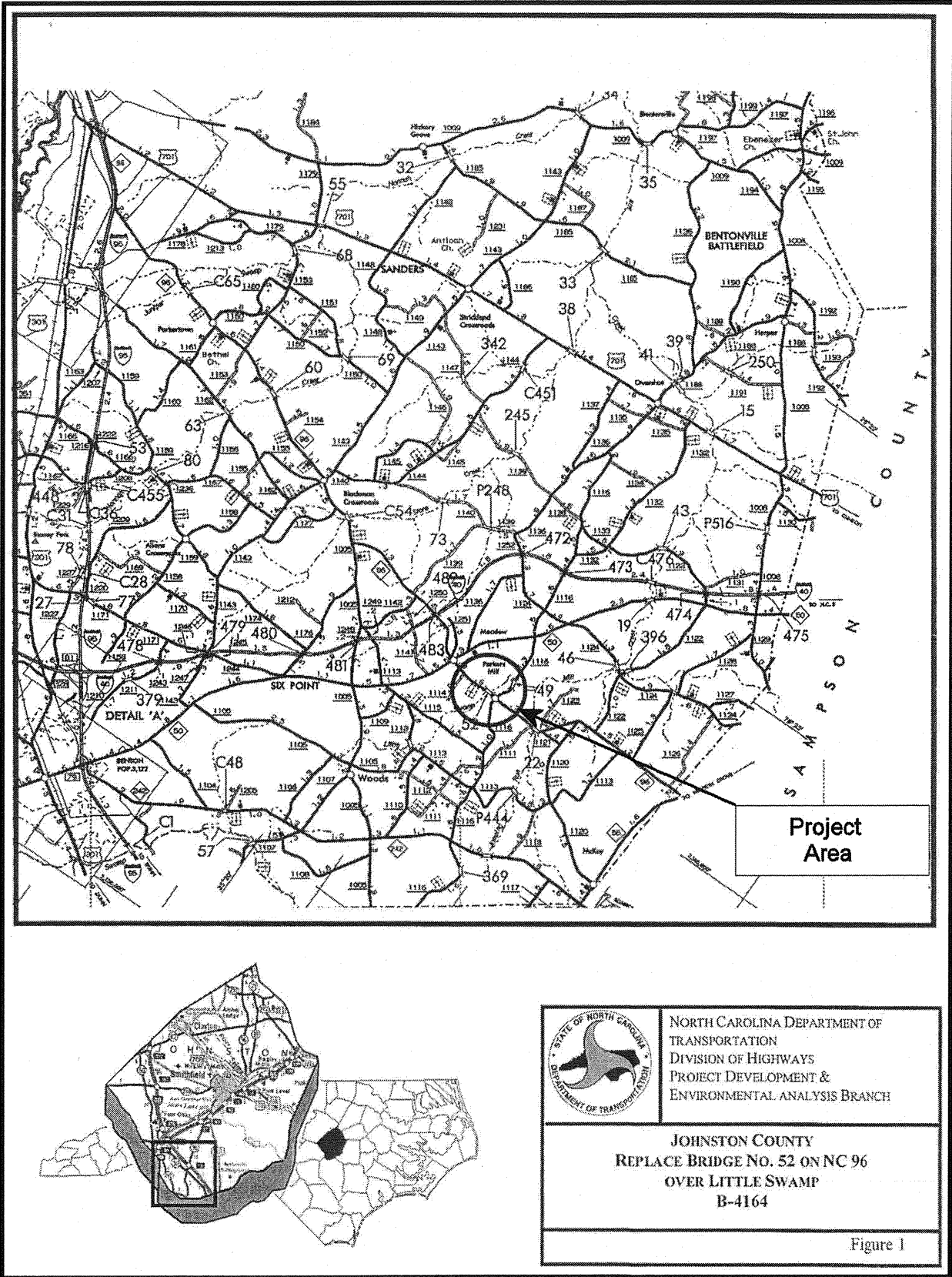


Figure 1. Project Locator Map

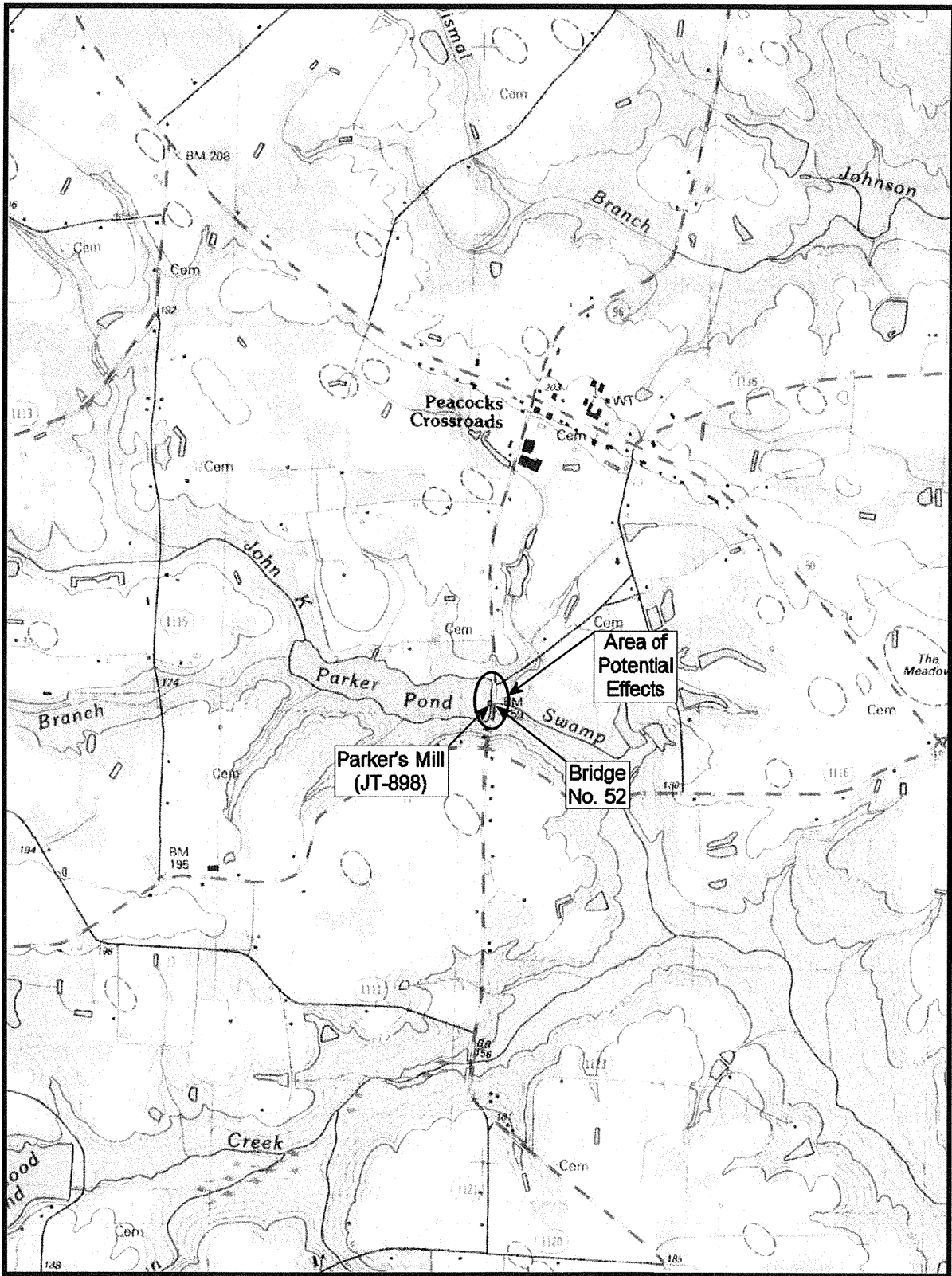


Figure 2. Area of Potential Effects and Property Inventory Map (Source: 1983 Peacocks Crossroads USGS Quadrangle Map)

II. METHODOLOGY

The survey methodology for this project consisted of historic background research, site-specific research, and field survey of the project's Area of Potential Effects. Senior Architectural Historian Marvin A. Brown of URS completed the fieldwork and research.

The main sources of information for the project were the deed, birth, and death records held at the Johnston County Courthouse in Smithfield and the collections located at the Johnston County Heritage Center, also in Smithfield. Records at the Heritage Center of particular utility were copies of federal censuses from 1830 through 1930, family genealogies, and the Johnston County Heritage publication. Ms. Rebecca Smith Owens of the Heritage Center also provided oral historical information about Parker's Mill, which was once associated with her grandfather according to family history. A survey form completed by Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers in 2003 provided detailed information about Bridge No. 52.

The purpose of the research and intensive-level field survey was to understand the historical and architectural contexts of the APE and the two intensively inventoried resources within it. Such knowledge was critical in determining whether the resources within the APE were believed to be eligible, or ineligible, for listing in the National Register. The final product of the work effort and evaluation is this report.

III. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The first identified use of the land within and around the project area was as farmland in the early nineteenth century. In 1813 Joshua Beasley of Wake County purchased 190 acres of land from Lewis Atkinson, also of Wake County, for 65 pounds. The land was located in Johnston County at Wolfpit Branch and Mingo Swamp (Johnston County Deed Book S-2/Page 146). According to a family genealogy, Beasley built a log house on the property and began to farm it (Beasley c1995). He acquired an additional 200 adjoining acres in 1828 from Robert McLam that was located near the Black Mingo (Johnston County Deed Book O-2/Page 120). (The Black Mingo and Mingo Swamp were early names for the branch, now most commonly known as Little Swamp, that Bridge No. 52 crosses.) Beasley reportedly added another 300 acres to his holdings in 1830 (Beasley c1995).

The family genealogy (Beasley c1995) reports Beasley's transformation of the land not only through farming, but also through the construction of a dam, pond, and mill:

Up stream from Wolfpit Creek and the dismals, where marshes covered acres of land, Josh decided to build a sod dam. He and his oldest son, Ben, started to haul dirt and rock there. They used primitive tools of wheelbarrows and shovels. They hauled many loads of dirt and rock. Sometimes the rain would wash some away and they would have to haul more in. They continued and after seven years had it so it would hold the waters which covers [sic] about 200 acres of land today, over 150 years later. The story was told that Josh paid Ben \$700.00 for his help.

Joshua Beasley enacted the first so-called industry in the Benson area around 1830. After he got the dam built he soon was operating a grist mill, corn mill and a saw mill. He operated them for decades.

With the pond, dam, and mill would likely have come the predecessor of NC 96 through the project area.

As discussed further below at the entry for Parker's Mill, the mill operation was changed, and different mills likely stood at the edge of the pond, over the years. Other farmers joined Beasley in cultivating the area throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century. About a mile to the north of the mill a crossroads community developed in the nineteenth century that became known as Peacocks Crossroads, a name it carries on the 1983 USGS map of the same name. The name of the crossroads community was subsequently changed to Meadow, which is the name of the township within which the project area is located.

With the exception of Meadow, the general area around the APE is characterized by fields, many planted in tobacco; scattered houses and trailers ranging from the late nineteenth through the late twentieth centuries; and woods following watercourses and punctuating wet swampy lands (Figure 3). To the east of the APE extends Parker's Pond. To the south of the APE stand a deteriorated former store building and a small one-story house, both of which appear to date from the 1920s or 1930s.



Figure 3: 1999 USGS aerial view of APE and surrounding lands

IV. HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Johnston County History

Johnston County was created from Craven County in 1746. Its earliest settlers were primarily of English stock. They were joined after 1745 by Scottish Highlanders from the Cape Fear and, subsequently, by Scotch-Irish who migrated south from Pennsylvania. By 1790, when the first official county census was taken, Johnston's population was 5,634 (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:7-11, 180).

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Johnston County was characterized by a diffuse rural population, farms, and "productive forests". Most of the county's farms were small, interspersed with the occasional plantation. A local history (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:68) notes that, "In 1850 the farms and plantations of Johnston County produced much corn, some wheat and oats, a modicum of wool, 800 bales of cotton, but not enough tobacco for that crop to receive mention in the agricultural census at mid-century." An "abundance of pork" accompanied the production of these goods on most farms, large and small.

Johnston County was most noted prior to the Civil War for forests that supplied naval stores, local turpentine distilleries, and logs and lumber for export. The export of timber products and agricultural goods, however, was retarded during the antebellum period by a poor local transportation network (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:69-71).

Between 1790 and 1830 the county's population nearly doubled to just under 11,000. By the eve of the Civil War, it further jumped by nearly 50 percent, to 15,656. The war stanching heavy population growth, for in 1870 the county had approximately 16,900 inhabitants. Limited growth, however, did not keep the county from making use of new state laws that allowed for the creation of townships. In 1868 Johnston established twelve townships, including Meadows, in which the project area is located (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:71, 180).

The last quarter of the nineteenth century and, particularly, first quarter of the twentieth saw significant agricultural and population growth in Johnston. The population steadily climbed to 27,239 in 1890 and 57,621 in 1930. (After 1930 it changed little until the 1970s.) During this period the county remained primarily rural and reliant upon farms and timber products (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:180).

Rural prosperity was largely due to the development of two cash crops during the last third of the nineteenth century, cotton and tobacco. At the close of the century, cotton was the county's principal money crop, although tobacco cultivation was beginning to challenge it. Farms also continued to produce grains, potatoes, and hogs. The advent of rail lines, which opened up new northern markets, also allowed the county to continue exporting timber products. The State Board of Agriculture (1898:356) noted at the close of the century that, "Along the streams are large quantities of hard wood and furniture timbers, which are in great demand; much ash, oak, poplar, maple and gum is being shipped to furniture and veneer works." In 1898 the Bank of Smithfield, the county's first, was opened in the county seat. A year later, also in Smithfield, the Brooklyn Manufacturing Company opened the county's first cotton mill (Sharpe 1958:936). The new century promised prosperity.

Johnston County in the 1920s was indeed prosperous and, in some endeavors, progressive. In 1920 it had seven cotton mills, a dozen wood-planing mills, and 98 rough-lumber mills. These were supplemented by numerous grist mills. Agricultural statistics for the following year were impressive, with the county second in the state in cotton and corn production and fourth in tobacco. It was the 45th county in the nation in farm income. During the decade the county paved numerous roads and residents purchased numerous automobiles to drive on them; in 1920 Johnston ranked 12th per capita in the state in automobiles (Sharpe 1958:936). As happened statewide, Johnston also embraced school reform. In 1922 it erected numerous consolidated schools, including one in the crossroads community of Meadow, about a mile north of the project area (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:137-147).

Near the close of the twentieth century, Johnston County began to transform once more. Its 1970 population of 61,737—the smallest it had been since the 1930s—rose to 81,306 in 1990. More than half of this growth occurred in the four townships closest to Raleigh and the Research Triangle Park. The county became a bedroom community and also developed its own non-farm employment base. The number of farms dropped from over 8,000 in 1950 to about 1,400 in 1992. Cotton had almost disappeared by the mid-1970s, before experiencing a modest resurgence in the 1990s. Tobacco acreage fell by two-thirds from the late 1930s to the early 1990s. While some residents commuted, others found new employment in the county. Manufacturing jobs increased fourfold in Johnston—from about 2,200 to over 8,600—from 1950 to 1990. By that latter year there were also more than 5,200 retail and 3,300 service jobs in the county (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:180). The shift from rural employment to manufacturing, retailing, service, and out-of-county jobs has continued apace into the new century.

Johnston County Grist and Saw Mills

Saw and grist mills, and turpentine distilleries, comprised almost all of Johnston County's industrial activity from the late eighteenth century through the closing of the nineteenth (Lassiter and Lassiter 1996:69-71; United States Federal Census records). As noted above, the processing of timber products was important to Johnston County throughout the period and the raising of grains, particularly corn, remained important to the local farmers well into the twentieth century. The county had more than 100 rough-lumber and wood-planing mills in 1920, but how many grist mills it had at this date is not known. The surprisingly large number of surviving grist mills and mill sites identified in the early 1980s, however, indicates the important place small-scale milling historically held in Johnston County.

In 1982, as part of his inventory of Johnston County's historic architecture, Tom Butchko recorded eight extant non-textile-related mills and three non-textile-related mill sites. Two of the eleven reportedly had been home to a mill since the eighteenth century and three since the first part of the nineteenth. All eight of the standing mills were or appeared to have been grist rather than saw mills. Only one was in operation, the still functioning Atkinson's Mill, a large complex that continues to stone-grind corn and other grains for wholesale and retail sale.

MILLS AND MILL SITES IDENTIFIED BY BUTCHKO IN 1982

<u>Name</u> <u>(Survey #)</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Mill</u> <u>Extant</u>	<u>Appearance</u>	<u>Other</u>
Parkers Mill (JT898)	grist	early 20 th c	yes	small 1-sty gable-end frame	a mill here since c1830; spillway to side; at edge of large pond
Atkinsons Mills (JT238)	grist	1950-51	yes	large 2-sty gable-end frame	a mill here since 1757; in 1914 had corn, wheat & saw mills & cotton gin; 1930 concrete dam
Rains Mill Site (JT914)	grist	early 19 th c	no	not determined	burned 1978; dam in place
McGee Mill (JT868)	grist?	c1910	yes	small 1-sty gable-end frame	spillway to side; at edge of large pond
Massengill Mill (JT872)	grist?	1930s	yes	small 1-sty gable-end frame	was a pre-Civil War mill on site; at edge of large pond
Lowell Mill Site (JT867)	unk	unk	no	unknown	c1801 grist mill; post 1819 saw mill and cotton gin; c1870 cotton mill; grist mill until 1952, then burned; retains pond
Lees Mill (JT860)	grist?	early 20 th c	yes	small 1-sty gable-end frame	at edge of pond
Beasley-Shaw (JT673)	grist	1935	yes	small 1-sty gable-end frame	was a mill on site in 1840s; ceased operation in 1950s
Austin Mill Site (JT660)	unk	unk	no	unknown	dam and mill pond survive
Holts Mill (JT220)	grist?	early 20 th c	yes	small 2-sty gable-end frame	at edge of pond; said to have been mill site since 1749; in 1915 concrete dam replaced wooden one
Cattail Mill (JT205)	grist	1940	yes	small 1-sty gable-end frame	spillway to side; at edge of large pond

All eight of the standing mills were erected during the first half of the twentieth century. With the exception of the substantial Atkinson Mill, which was erected in 1950-1951, all are remarkably similar in size, form, materials, and appearance. All are small gable-end buildings built of modestly sized milled timbers joined by cut nails and covered with weatherboards. All but the two-story Holt's Mill rise only a single story. They are generally located at the edge of mill ponds. Three—Parker, Lee, and Holt—appear to date from an unspecified time in the early twentieth century. The other four are more precisely dated: McGee (c1910), Massengill (1930s), Beasley-Shaw (1935), and Cattail (1940). They appear to all have concrete dams, some with long spillways to the side. Mill wheels are no longer in place—after years of neglect and abandonment, they were likely washed away—and, as most of the buildings were sealed when inventoried, the amount of milling equipment in place is not known. The functioning Atkinson Mill of course retains mill stones and other equipment. Parker's Mill, discussed further below, retains stones and equipment and the Beasley-Shaw and Cattail mills in 1982 retained these as well.

All of the extant mills are historically significant Johnston County resources. They are a small remaining cohort of a once important local enterprise. The National Register eligibility of each would hinge on the question of retaining sufficient integrity to support their historic significance.

V. PROPERTY INVENTORY AND EVALUATIONS

Resources Listed on the Study List and Recommended Eligible for National Register Listing

PARKER'S MILL (JT-898)

**West side of NC 96, 0.1 mile north of junction with SR 1116,
Meadow vicinity, Johnston County**

History

The Property and its Millers

The immediate vicinity of the current Parker's Mill, as noted at Section III above, has held a mill since about 1830. The number of mills at the site, and even their owners and operators, remains clouded, however. The pond has probably borne three names—Beasley, Raynor, and Parker—and its mills have been operated by members of those families and perhaps the Hood and Smith families as well.

Joshua Beasley, who built the pond and its first mills—none of which still stand—was born in North Carolina in 1784 and died in Johnston County in 1879. He was married first to Judith Ferrell (1787-1860 or 1863) and then to Winifred Webb. Beasley built a gristmill at the pond dam and also operated a sawmill there (Beasley c1995; Anonymous n.d.; Heritage of Johnston County Book Committee 1985:144-145).

According to the Johnston County heritage publication (Heritage of Johnston County Book Committee 1985:144-145), the Beasley family operated the mills until 1874 when, at the age of 90, Joshua sold some of his land, including the mill and pond, to John Green Raynor. Census and deed records, however, indicate that Beasley actually sold the operation to James Green Raynor, the father of John Green Raynor. James was married to Elizabeth, a member of the Beasley family.

The 1875 deed from Joshua Beasley to James G. Raynor suggests that, by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the mill operation was of secondary importance to the farm (Johnston County Deed Book J-3/Page 201). The 23-acre parcel, which sold for \$115, presumably included a mill or mills, but does not specifically reference any within its bounds. Rather, its boundary description references one point "below the mill" and also refers to the "old mill dam". (Raynor had purchased a 182-acre parcel from Joshua and Winifred Beasley four years earlier, partially located in Harnett County, which also references a point "below the Beasley mill" as well as the Mingo watercourse (Johnston County Deed Book D-3/Page 583).) The lack of importance of the milling operation, when compared to farming, is also evidenced in census records. The 1850 and 1860 federal censuses list Joshua Beasley not as a miller, but as a farmer. This is carried almost uniformly through the subsequent censuses, which list all but one of the mills presumed owners or operators as farmers rather than millers. The exception is the listing in the 1880 census of James G. Raynor as a miller. (It is this listing, coupled with genealogical records, rather than the 1875 deed, that confirms that the 23-acres passed from Beasley to Raynor did indeed

include a mill or mills.) At that date Raynor was 75 and perhaps spent much of his time at the mill, rather than in the fields or at home with his 34-year-old wife, Martha, and their three young children, ages three, one, and five months.

When and how the Beasley-Raynor operation passed from the Raynor to the Parker family, its longtime and current owners, is not clear. In 1939 Nazro and Rebecca W. Parker and their children and spouses—Leon and Annie Parker, Ina W. and J. Monroe Parker, and Naomi and Rufus Hill—sold a 63-acre parcel in Meadow Township to Willie Parker for \$700 (Johnston County Deed Book 409/Page 75). The parcel references a saw frame, a mill pond, and a mill dam, but does not specify the inclusion within its bounds of a mill. There are no recorded transfers of property from the Beasley family to Nazro Parker (1871-1940) and Parker was identified as a farmer, not a miller, in the 1930 federal census and in his death certificate (Johnston County Death Certificate Book 27/Page 195). Nazro may have acquired the property from his parents, W.F.(Frank) and Sarah Parker, in 1895 (Johnston County Deed Book P-6/Page 463) or 1910 (Johnston County Deed Book W-10/Page 300). The deed records, however, do not indicate how they may have acquired the land from James G. Raynor.

An alternative history, provided in 1992 by owner Charlotte Parker Locapo, placed the mill in the hands not of Beasleys or Raynors, but only of those of Hoods and Parkers. She believed that the pond and mill were built by slaves. In 1867, according to her account, Frank Parker purchased the property from John C. Hood and in turn sold it to his son Nazro. While Nazro Parker did ultimately own the mill, the early part of this history does not conform with other sources and is likely inaccurate (Locapo 1992; Odom 1991).

In the 1920s both the Raynor and Parker families were associated with the pond and mill. A photograph (Plate 1) in a pictorial history of Johnston County (Johnson and Barbour 1997:28) depicts a young couple on "Parker Mill Pond". (Water, but no mill, fills the frame.) They are identified as Leon and Annie Parker and the image is dated at approximately 1921, the year of their marriage. (The citation, likely inaccurately, goes on to say that the Parker family had owned the mill since 1867.) A photograph (Plate 2) in the collection of the Johnston County Heritage Center, of the pond and a path alongside of it, is identified as being a scene in the vicinity of Raynors Mill near Benson. Titled "Down by the Old Mill Stream," it is dated 1925. According to Rebecca Smith Owens (2004) of the Heritage Center, Raynor's Mill and Parker's Mill were the same. Her father, Roy E. Smith, had told her that in the 1920s the operation carried the Raynor name. One of the women pictured on the path at the left of the photographs is Ms. Owen's mother.

Adding a further uncertainty to the history of the mill, Roy Smith also had indicated that his father, William Henry Smith, had owned and operated the mill prior to the Raynors. There are no deed records that indicate that William Smith owned the mill and the 1880 federal census lists William H. Smith as a farmer, not a miller. Family records at the Heritage Center indicate that Smith operated a store in the 1870s-1880s period. This store may have been near the mill and perhaps he did play a role in its operation (Owens 2004). (A deteriorated store building currently standing to the south of the mill appears to date from the early twentieth century, postdating William Smith.)

Willie Parker is a common Johnston County name. The man carrying this name who purchased the mill property in 1939 is believed to be Willie Elbert Parker (1918-1984), the son of Young B. and Mittie Dunn Parker (Parker 1982). The death certificate of Willie Elbert Parker, as does that

of other Willie Parkers of an age to own the mill, lists the decedent's occupation as farmer, not miller (Johnston County Death Certificate Book 79/290).

The Mill

A grist, corn, and saw mill were operated by Joshua Beasley, as noted at Section III above, starting about 1830. This building (or buildings) no longer stands. The clearest above-ground evidence of Beasley's milling operation is the pond he created (Figure 4). Who built the current mill building, and when he built it, is not clear.

Two concrete spillways exist at the dam, one that serves the current mill structure and one to its north unmarked by a building. The extant mill building is a modest structure of sawn members of modest dimensions and cut nails that appears to date from between about 1910 and 1940. It contains mill stones and modest grist mill equipment. It was in place, and in use as a grist mill, by 1950, when it was included on plans for the adjacent bridge. These plans do not show any structure standing at the second spillway.

The mill's apparent date of construction suggests that it may have been erected by Nazro Parker in the 1910s or 1920s. It looks much like the c1910 McGee Mill and the early twentieth-century Lee and Holt mills. However, it also looks much like the Massengill (1930s), Beasley-Shaw (1935) and, in particular, Cattail (1940) mills. Therefore, it is possible that it was raised by Willie Parker shortly after he acquired the property in 1939.

Description

Parker's Mill consists of three principal elements: the mill house, the spillway, and the pond (Plate 3). The pond extends to the west of the mill house and spillway (Plate 4). Its long and relatively narrow water-filled basin—plus two fingers of wetlands bisected by streams, which fork off its western end—occupies almost all of the 54.67-acre parcel associated with the mill. It is all or part of the pond that was created in the 1820s by Joshua and Ben Beasley. A still body of water, the pond is framed by earthen banks and, at the east, by earthen dams and the concrete spillway.

The mill site consists of two concrete spillways connected by a concrete retaining wall and an earthen dam. The northern spillway has two elements. Half of it has a slanted wall, the other half a sheer wall (Plate 5). It is not clear whether this spillway once served another mill house. There is no aboveground evidence of such a building and a number of the other surviving mills in the county have similar secondary spillways that do not directly serve buildings. It may have been built to allow high waters to drain from the pond and thereby protect the grist mill. The mill sits above the southern spillway, supported by heavy wooden piers (Plates 6 and 7). No wheel survives at this spillway, although it does retain, at its southern half, some shafts and pulleys that once helped turn the stone grinding wheels (Plate 8).

The mill house consists of two elements that appear to be separate attached structures, but which enclose a single long interior space. Both are one-story, gable-end structures of modestly sized milled lumber. Cut nails hold together their walls, which are covered with weatherboards and topped by standing-seam metal roofs. The northern structure has one off-center door at its gable end and two windows overlooking the road (Plates 9 and 10). The southern structure is a bit deeper than its mate, extending out closer to the road (Plates 11 and 12). It has two window openings facing the road. Its gable end, however, has a wide wagon entryway and a window.

Beyond the entryway, inside, the floor is laid with brick, suggesting that this was the working entrance of the mill.

All of the mill's windows are tightly shuttered or otherwise sealed. The only sash visible is the broken window—with a single remaining, crooked, four-pane sash—adjacent to the main entryway. The vertical-board doors are chained and padlocked shut. Views of the interior were had by hanging onto the west wall of the mill, which extends over the pond and which, due to the falling away of weatherboards, is open in spots (Plate 13).

The inside of the mill retains four corn grinders, as it did in 1992 when it was placed on the Study List. They are served by at least two in-place grinding stones. The brick floor occupies half of the southern structure (Plates 14 and 15). To its east, in the portion of the structure facing the road, are two corn grinders. The floor of the northern structure is all of wood (Plates 16 and 17). Near its center it has a narrow opening through which boards extend. This appears to mark the location of the water gates. At its eastern end are two additional corn grinders. A corn-cleaning stand that was in place in 199 may be lying on the floor behind these two grinders.

The water that passes over the spillways is channeled beneath NC 96 to the east of the mill and pond. Bridge No. 52 carries the road over it. A tiny portion of the legal boundaries of the mill property extends to the other side of the bridge, where the water quickly converges into a small stream.

Evaluation

Parker's Mill is believed to be eligible for National Register listing under Criteria A and C. It is believed to be eligible under Criterion A for its connection with the non-textile mill industry in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Johnston County. Small grist and saw mills were an important part of the county's industrial base during this period and the mill is one of a small group of early twentieth-century mills that is representative of such enterprises during the period. The mill is also believed to be National Register-eligible under Criterion C for its architecture. It is representative of the small non-textile mill complexes—which included mills, spillways, and ponds—that once dotted the county. The mill sits on its original site in association with its spillway and pond. Its exterior is intact, if somewhat deteriorated, and its interior retains a number of early or original features, most notably four corn grinders. It is therefore believed to possess sufficient integrity to support historical and architectural significance.

The mill is not believed to be National Register-eligible under Criterion B, for it has no known association with significant persons. It is not believed to be eligible under Criterion C as part of a historic district, for its immediate vicinity is marked by resources—including a small, deteriorated, store building—built throughout the twentieth century that do not comprise a distinguishable entity. On the basis of its standing components—archaeology is not addressed in this report—the mill is not likely to yield information not otherwise readily available. It is therefore not believed to be Register-eligible under Criteria D.

Boundaries

The proposed National Register-boundaries of Parker's Mill take in the mill house, the spillways, the mill pond, and the beginnings of the wetlands and streams that feed the pond. These components occupy almost all parcel currently associated with the mill. Excluded from the current parcel are two tiny extensions of land, one which extends past the NCDOT right-of-way to the other side of NC 96 and one which extends south toward the intersection of SR

1116 on the west side of NC 96. This latter extension contains a small deteriorated store that was shifted to its site in 1927 and which is not clearly associated with the operation of the mill. It also contains a tiny early twentieth-century that is likewise not clearly associated with the mill. Of the current 54.67 acres associated with the mill, approximately 53 are included within the recommended National Register boundary (Figure 5).

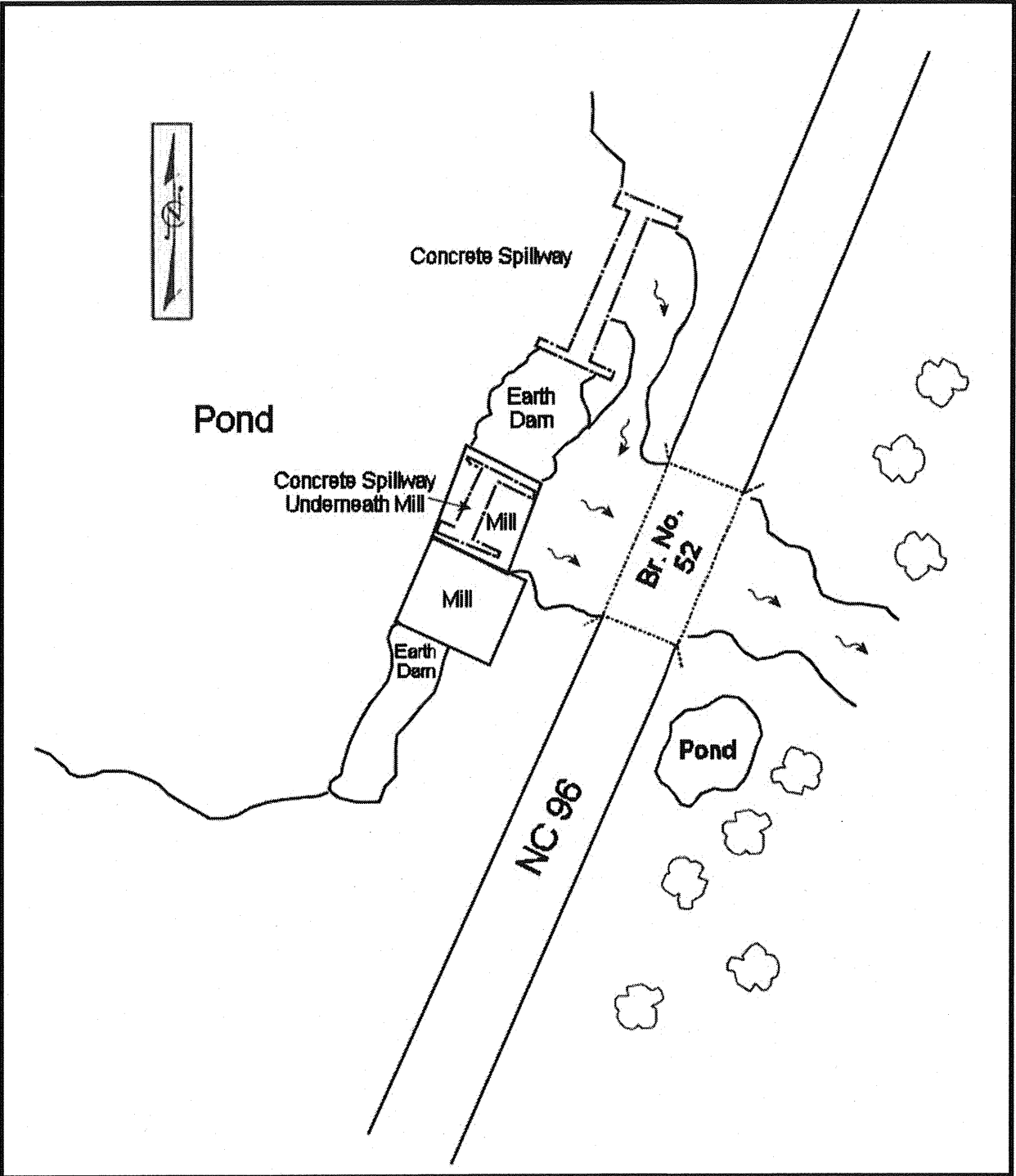


Figure 4: Sketch map of Parker's Mill (adapted from Lichtenstein historic bridge inventory form) (not to scale)

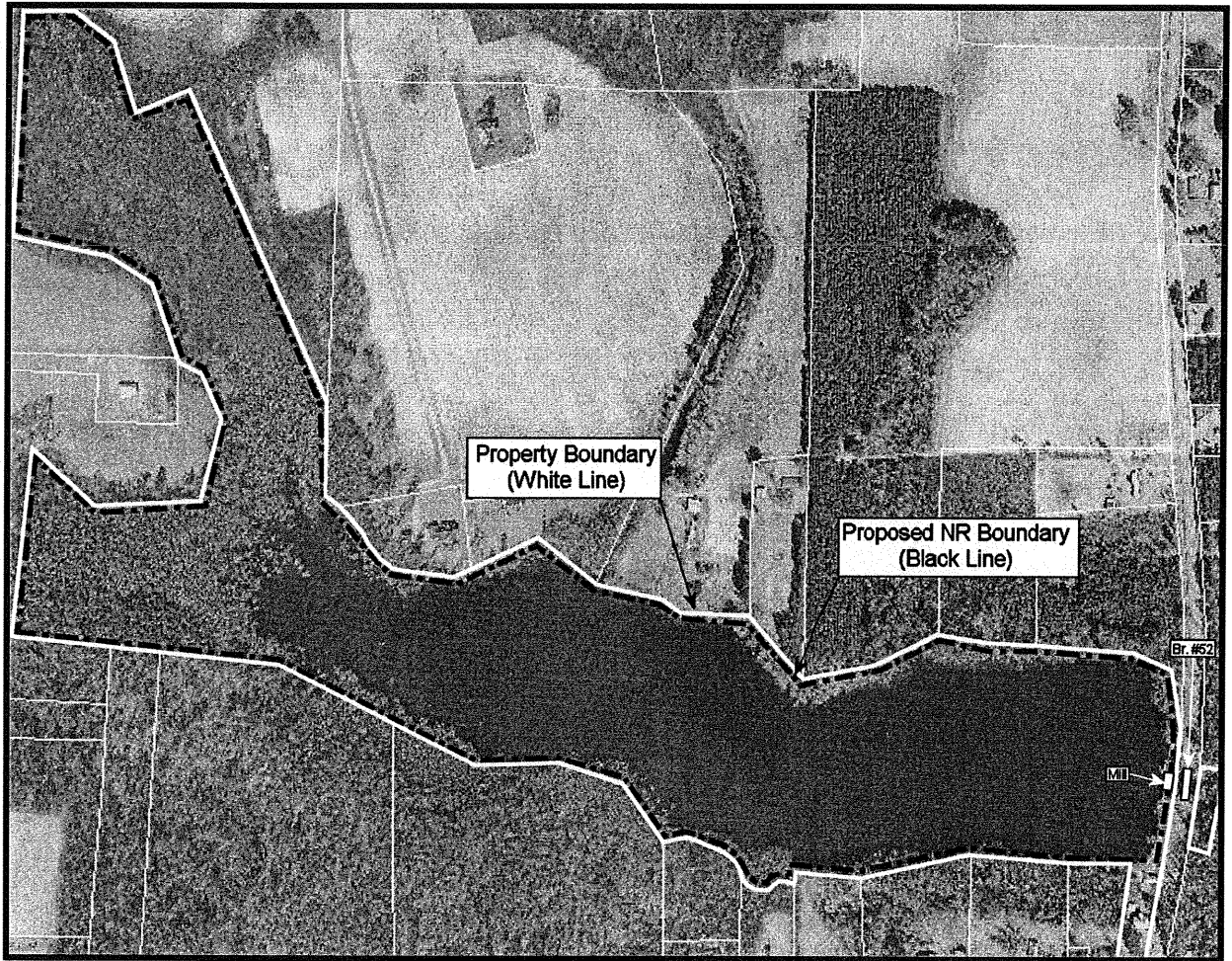


Figure 5: Parker's Mill Proposed National Register Boundary Map (Source: Johnston County orthographic tax map)



Plate 1: Leon and Annie Parker on Parker Mill Pond, c.1921 (Source: Johnson and Barbour, *Images of America: Johnston County*)



Plate 2: Parker's (Raynor's) Mill in 1920s (Source: Johnston County Heritage Center photograph collection)



Plate 3: Parker's Mill – looking southwest toward mill pond at right, spillways at center, and mill at left center



Plate 4: Parker's Mill – looking west toward spillway and pond



Plate 5: Parker's Mill – looking southwest toward spillway and pond, mill at far left

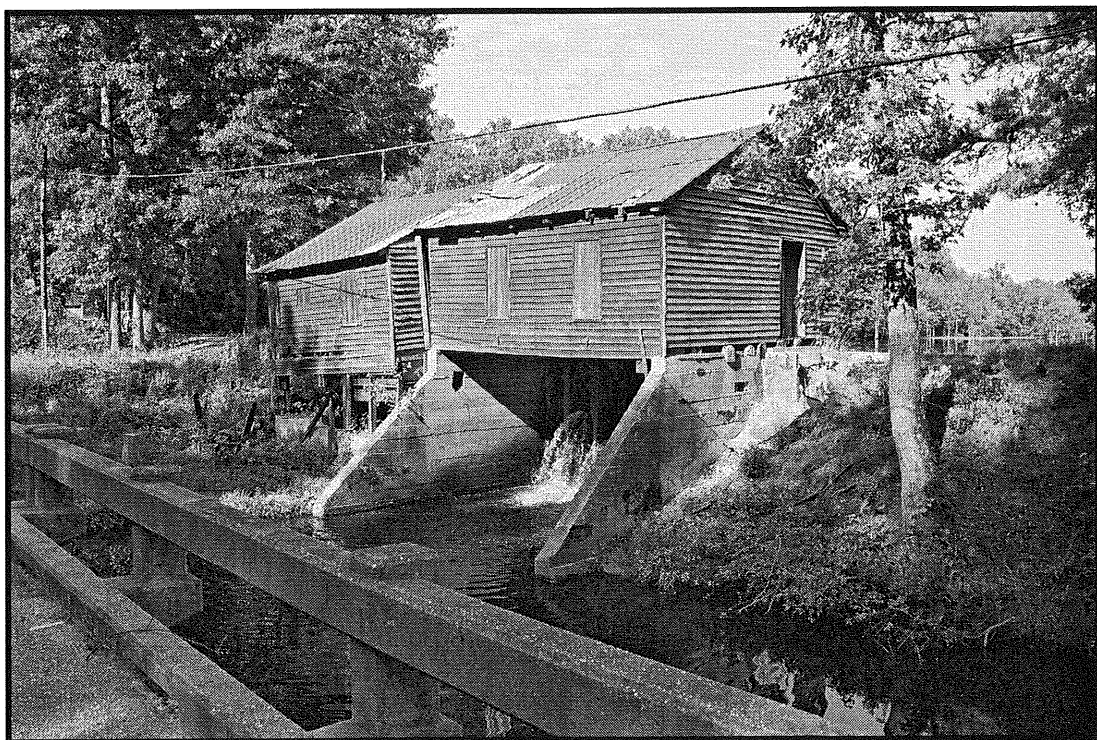


Plate 6: Parker's Mill – north and east elevations of mill from Bridge No. 52



Plate 7: Parker's Mill – spillway under northern block of mill



Plate 8: Parker's Mill – pulleys and shafts under and near southern block of mill

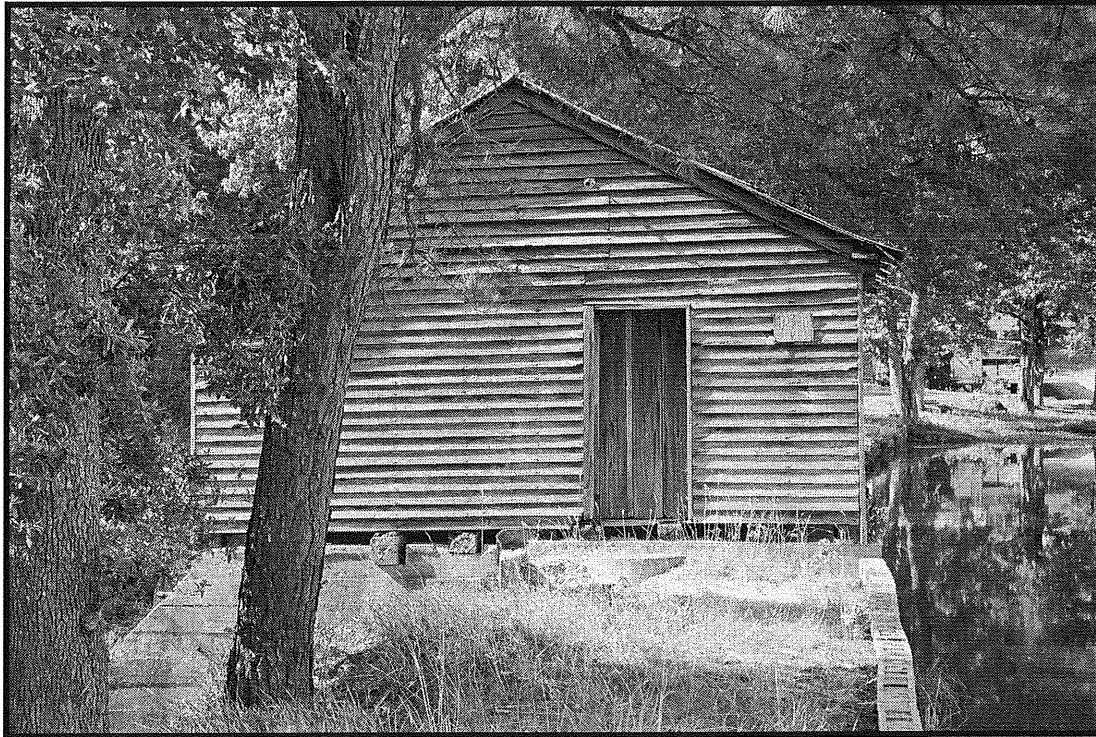


Plate 9: Parker's Mill – north elevation of northern block of mill

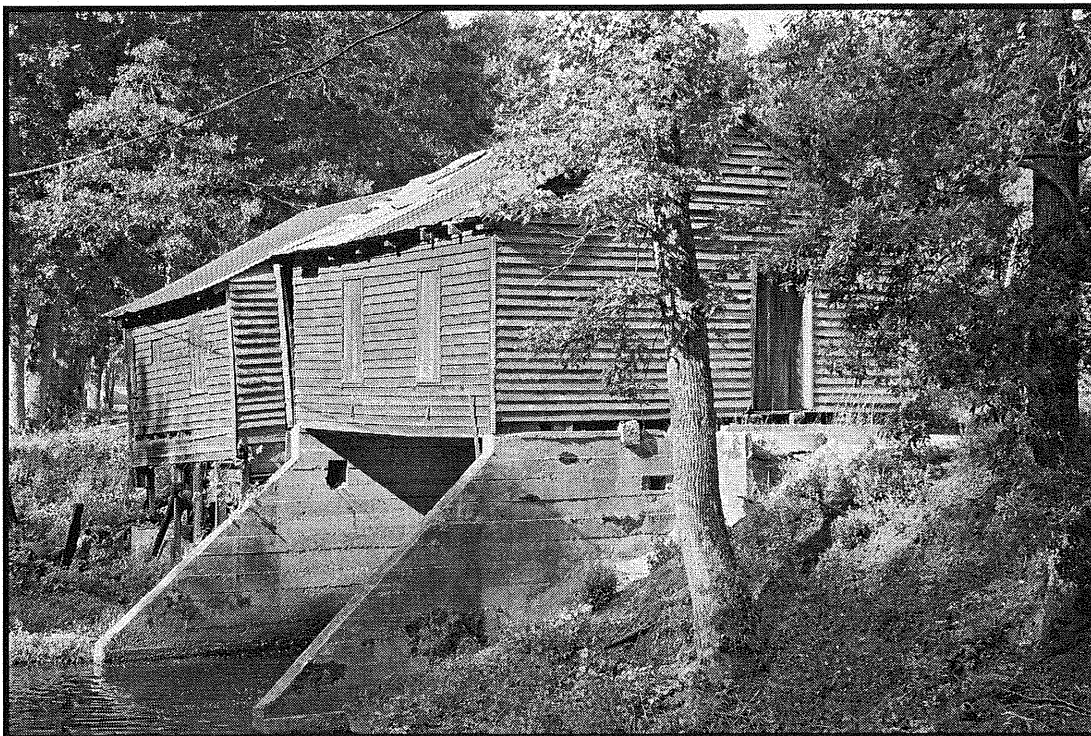


Plate 10: Parker's Mill – north and east elevations of northern block of mill



Plate 11: Parker's Mill – south and east elevations of south block of mill

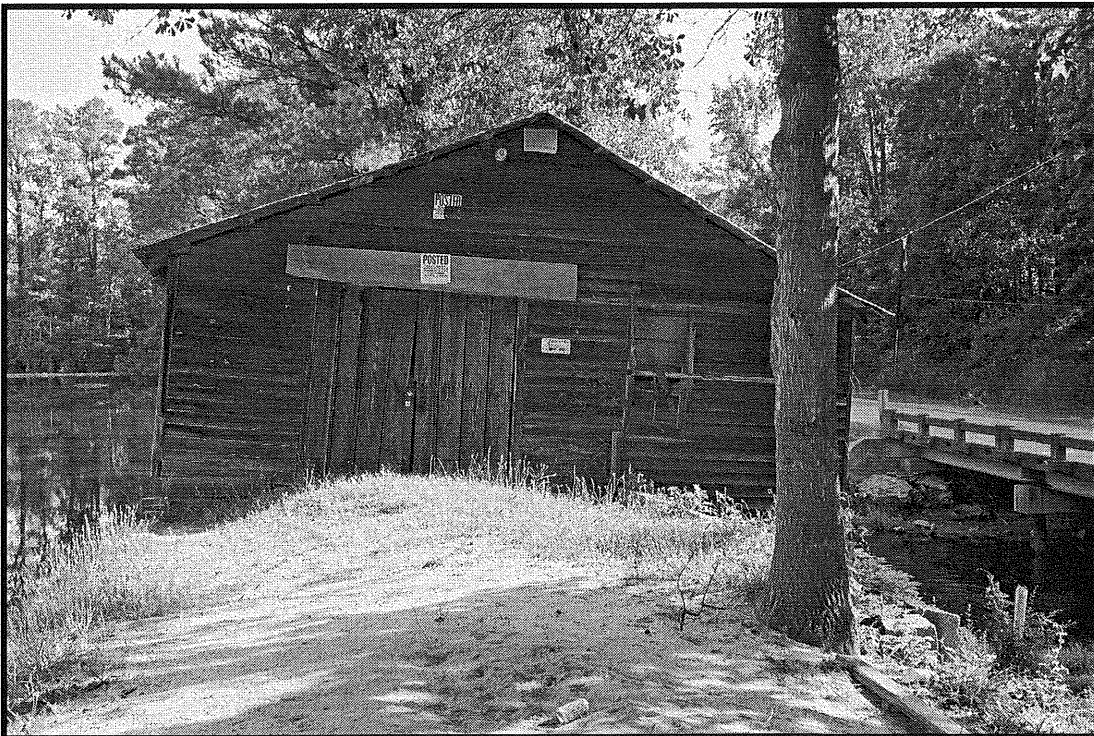


Plate 12: Parker's Mill – south elevation of south block of mill



Plate 13: Parker's Mill – looking south at west elevation of mill with pond at right

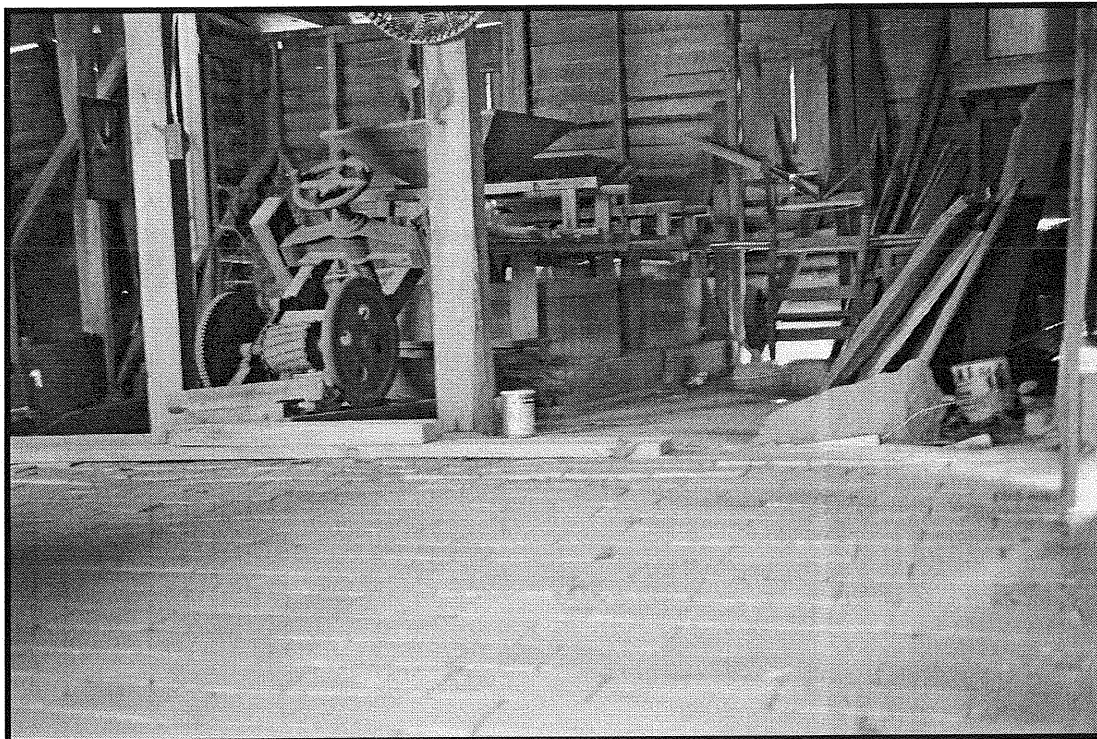


Plate 14: Parker's Mill – brick floor in south block of mill; two corn grinders visible in background

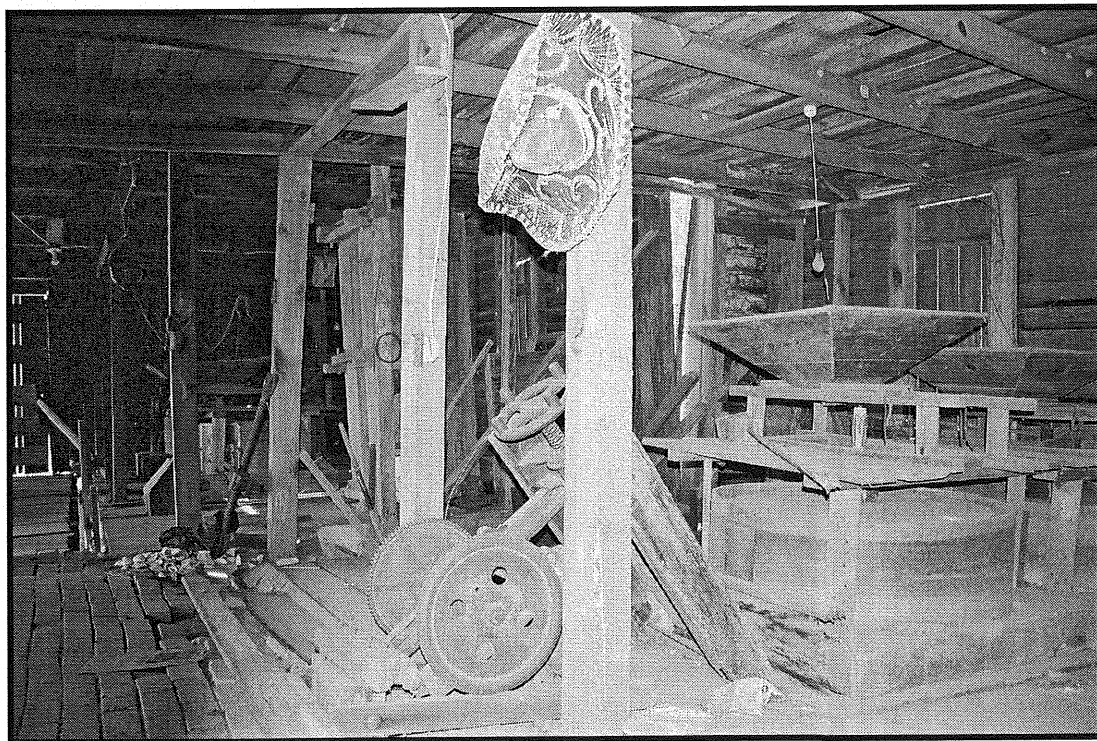


Plate 15: Parker's Mill – brick floor at left and corn grinders at right in south block of mill

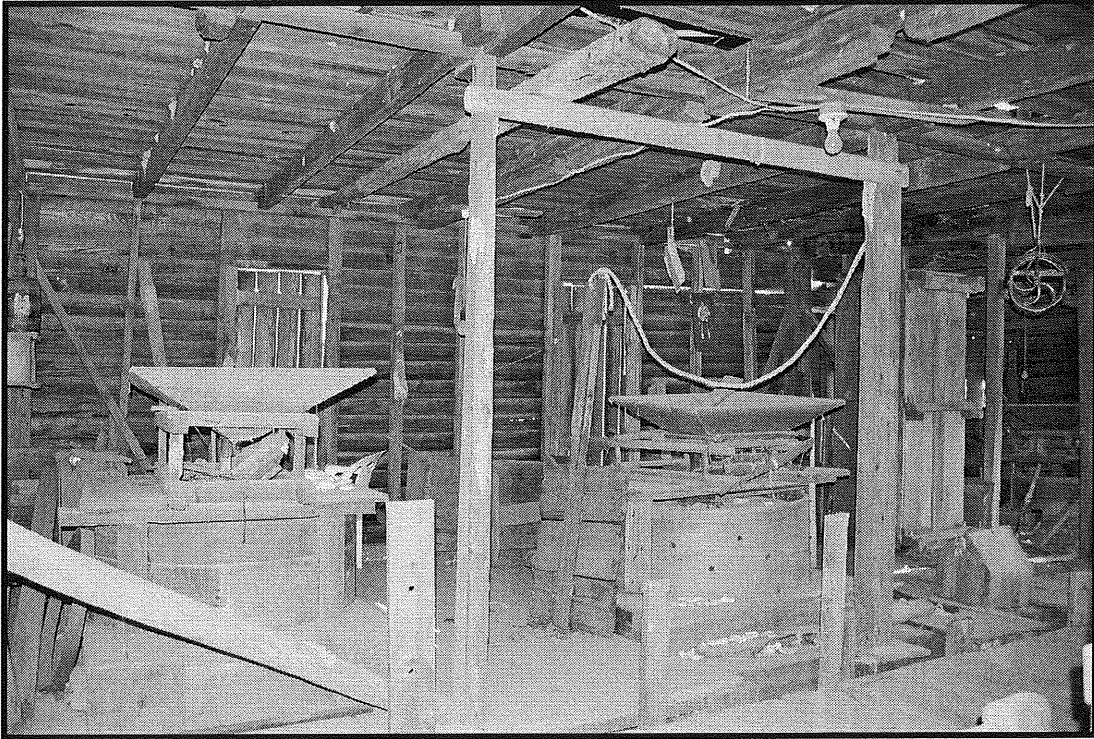


Plate 16: Parker's Mill – north block of mill with water gates in foreground and two corn grinders in background

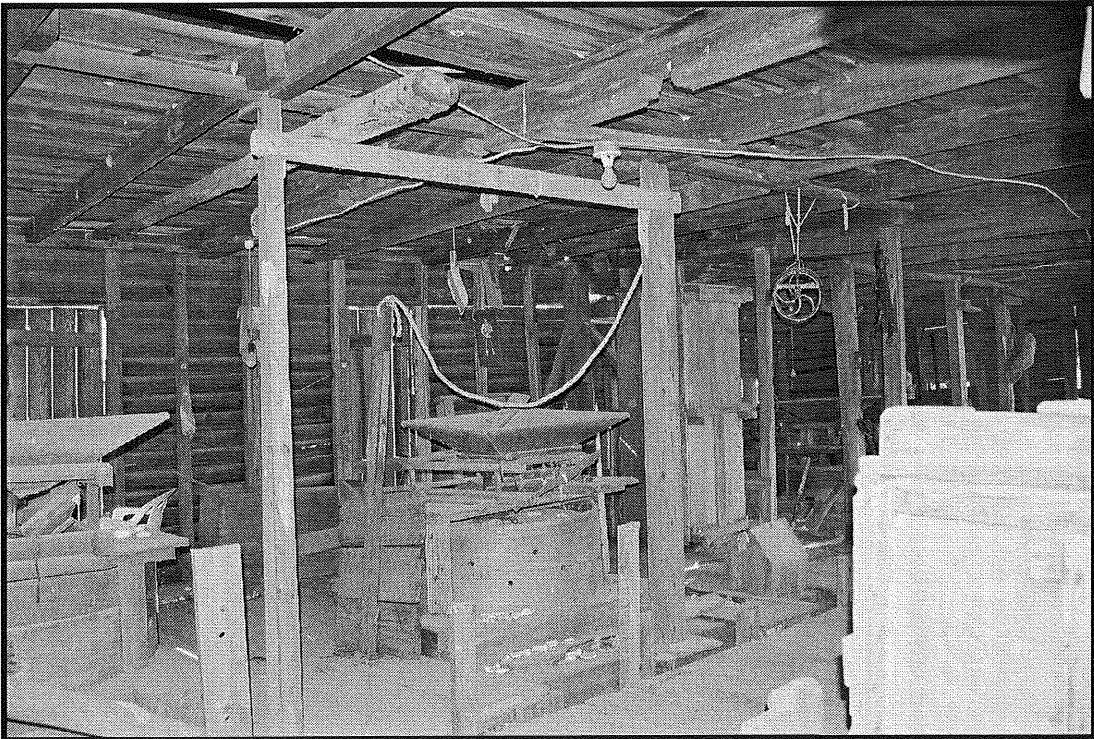


Plate 17: Parker's Mill – north block of mill with water gates in foreground, two corn grinders at left and center, and south block of mill at right

Resources Not Recommended Eligible for National Register Listing

NC 96 BRIDGE OVER LITTLE SWAMP (No. 52)

**West side of NC 96, 0.1 mile north of junction with SR 1116,
Meadow vicinity, Johnston County**

Johnston County Bridge No. 52, which carried NC 96 over Little Swamp, was recorded by Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers as part of its historic bridge inventory for the NCDOT. Its survey form, revised in January 2003, summarizes the location, appearance, history, and significance of the bridge.

It describes the bridge as follows:

The 3 span, 75- long and 23.5 wide, rolled steel stringer bridge with a concrete deck is supported on timber pile and concrete cap beam bents. A helper crutch has been added at the southern interior bent. The bridge is finished with standard 1 bar high concrete railings cantilevered from the brush curbs. The plaque reads, "Johnston County, State Project 4-154, Federal Aid, 1950." The bridge appears to be complete.

It summarizes the bridge's history and significance in part as follows:

The steel stringer bridge built in 1950 by the state highway commission has no innovative or distinctive details. It is a later example of the over 2,200 steel stringer bridges in the state built between the 1910s and 1961. Steel stringer bridges were favored for their economies of initial cost, construction and maintenance, and they dominated pre-1961 bridge construction in the state and nation

According to NCDOT plans, the bridge was built to replace a timber stringer bridge on the same alignment. Plans were for a "Standard I Beam Superstructure with Reinforced Concrete Floor & Rail" with 25'-long spans. . . .

The bridge was built as part of State Project 4-154, which included the grading, widening, and paving of roadway and replacement of bridges on NC 96 in Johnston County. This was a typical improvement project with no historically significant features.

The survey form recommends that the bridge is not eligible for National Register listing. It justifies this recommendation with the following summary paragraph:

The bridge is not historically significant for its setting/context. The 1950 replacement bridge does not have a significant historic association with the development of the earlier Parkers Mill property. It was built as part of a project to widen and improve a pre-existing state highway. The setting does not have the integrity of a potential historic district because of alterations and modern intrusions, although the mill itself to the west side of NC 96 requires further

research to assess its individual significance.

In the opinion of URS—after a site visit to the bridge (Plates 18, 19, and 20) and a review of the inventory form—the Lichtenstein assessment is accurate and the bridge does not merit National Register listing under any of the Register's Criteria.



Plate 18: looking southwest toward east elevation of NC 96 Bridge over Little Swamp (No. 52)



Plate 19: looking west toward west concrete railing of NC 96 Bridge over Little Swamp (No. 52) and Parker's Mill

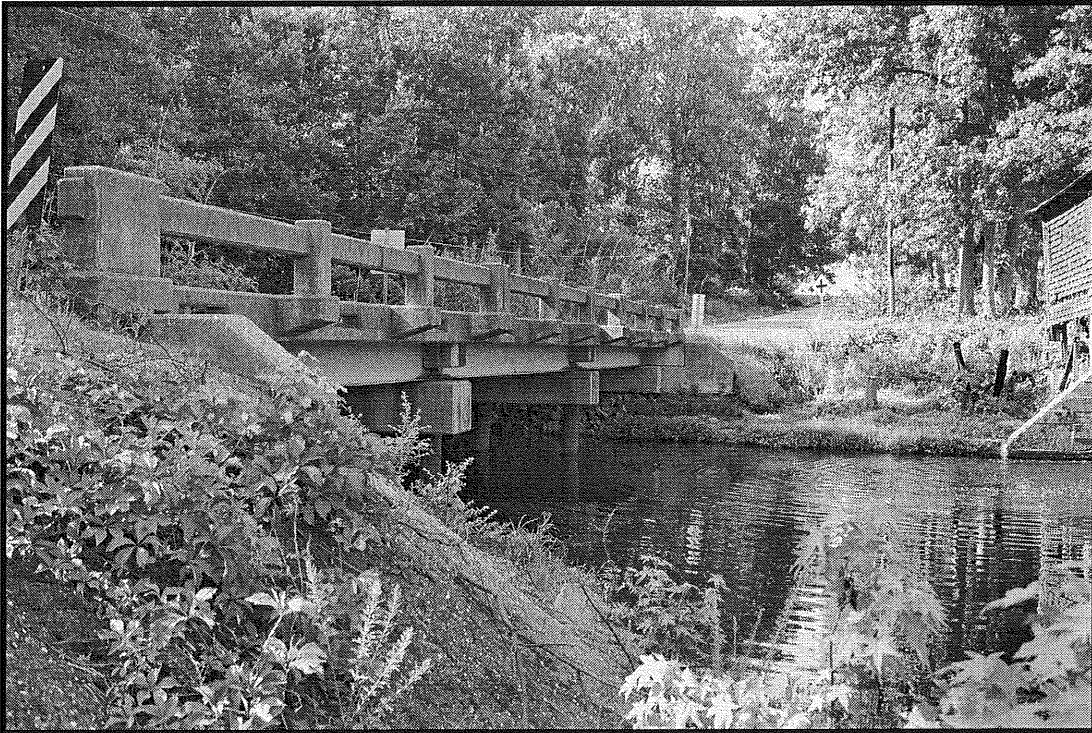


Plate 20: looking southeast toward east elevation of NC 96 Bridge over Little Swamp (No. 52); Parker's Mill at far right

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