



**North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office**

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March 18, 2002

Science Kilner
Lead Historic Preservation Specialist
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region IV
3003 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341-4130

Re: FEMA 1292-DR-NC Archival Documentation, Town of Speed, Edgecombe County ER 01-09000

Dear Mr. Kilner,

Thank you for your letter of January 31, 2002, transmitting the report by URS Corporation for the Town of Speed. We will add the documentation to our state survey files for use by researchers and the interested public.

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 this comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above tracking number.

Sincerely,

David Brook

bc: Brown/Allen ✓
County

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Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region IV
3003 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341-4130

January 31, 2002

Renee Gledhill-Early
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office
515 North Blount Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4618

Re: FEMA 1292-DR-NC Archival Documentation, Town of Speed, Edgecombe County
ER 01-09000

Renee
Dear Ms. Gledhill-Early:

Thank you for your November 29 letter responding to FEMA's recordation work in the Town of Speed. Your correspondence included several comments on the Photographic Recordation and History of Speed report that were prepared to satisfy stipulation IC of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) executed for this project. This letter is a follow up to the conversation we had in December and the following addresses some of your letter comments.

The photographic documentation has limited interior views because only one property contained extant significant interior spaces. The remaining structures were either gutted following the disaster or contained no architecturally significant interior features. The data sheets exclude building histories because the MOA stipulated the structures' physical description, but not their histories. Aside from the stipulated community history, these properties were recorded like all recent FEMA recordations on which the SHPO has concurred. Finally, no data sheet for the property at 204 Railroad Street was provided because this property was withdrawn from the FEMA buy-out early on, and therefore, was not a Section 106 undertaking. Fortunately, Mark Wolfe had taken some photographs of this property before the owner demolished the structure. These photographs were included in the report because this was one of the community's more architecturally notable buildings.

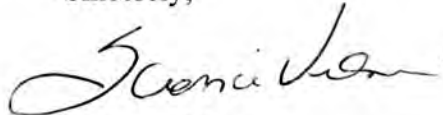
As for history report comments, we have addressed minor edits. While Ms. Brown's content comments are appreciated, they would require additional research and fieldwork that we do not feel is justified at this time. Although FEMA is sympathetic to the SHPO's staff shortages, had the review been received much earlier, we could have more easily enabled further report work. We did not extend the Task Order let to URS for the history report because we did not receive comments within the customary 30 day SHPO review period. Additionally, the MOA Renee

Gledhill-Early
Speed Archival Documentation
January 31, 2002
Page Two

specifically states FEMA assumes concurrence if SHPO does not respond within 30 days of report receipt. To date, FEMA has been flexible on this timeframe, but given the considerable additional public funds FEMA would have to expend to address these comments, we feel reauthorizing URS for additional work is not warranted in this case. However, for future history reports, we will work more closely with the SHPO's office to scope report content up front.

Please find enclosed a revised final history report and thank you for your understanding. If you have any questions, please contact me at (770) 220-5422.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Science Kilner", written in a cursive style.

Science Kilner
Lead Historic Preservation Specialist

Enclosure

FINAL REPORT

HISTORY OF SPEED, EDGECOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA



Prepared for
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IV
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30341

May 2001

URS

URS Corporation – Maryland
3109 Poplarwood Court, Suite 301
Raleigh, North Carolina 27604-1044
89-FEMA4038.00

**HISTORY OF
SPEED**

EDGECOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

**Task Order #038
EMW-2000-CO-0247
FEMA-1292-DR-NC**

Prepared For:

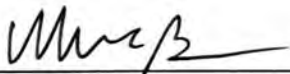
**Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IV
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road
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Prepared By:

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919-850-9511**

89-FEMA4038.00

May 2001



5-31-01

**Marvin A. Brown, Principal Investigator
URS Corporation - Maryland**

Date

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II. INTRODUCTION

Hurricane Floyd made landfall on September 16, 1999. The amount of rain from Floyd, combined with rains previously received from Hurricane Dennis, caused record flooding along most rivers and streams in central and eastern North Carolina. The flooding that occurred once Hurricane Floyd made landfall was unprecedented in scope and magnitude and demonstrated the vulnerability of flood hazard areas in communities in North Carolina. The floods had a particularly deleterious impact on the town of Speed, in northeastern Edgecombe County, which is participating in a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program acquisition/demolition project.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requested URS Corporation (URS)—under Task Order #038 of a contract for professional services between the two entities—to complete a community history of Speed. These services are necessary to assist FEMA in complying with its obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as implemented through 36 CFR Part 800. Many of the structures proposed for acquisition/demolition are contributing resources to the Speed National Register-eligible historic district. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between FEMA and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office stipulates the mitigation measures necessary to resolve the adverse affects to the historic district of demolishing the contributing structures. Stipulation 1.C. of the MOA requires completion of a comprehensive history of the town of Speed. This report addresses that stipulation.

III. METHODOLOGY

This report was prepared by URS Corporation Senior Architectural Historian Marvin A. Brown. Mr. Brown conducted historical research at the North Carolina State Archives and Library, the Hill Library of North Carolina State University, and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office in Raleigh; the North Carolina and Southern Historical Collections of the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill; and the local history collection of the Edgecombe County Public Library and the deed room, tax office, and planning department in the Edgecombe County Courthouse in Tarboro. On March 30, 2001, he spoke with longtime Speed-area resident Joe Dickens at the Edgecombe County Cooperative Extension Office and with Edgecombe County Planning Director Stuart Bass. Additionally, Mr. Brown conducted fieldwork in the town of Speed during the week of March 26-30, 2001. In Speed he photographed and studied the community's principal non-residential resources and a selection of its early residential resources. He also spoke with a few of the individuals who have re-occupied the community about its history. Mr. Brown took all of the contemporary photographs reproduced in the report, with the exception of the photograph of the dwelling/hotel that stood at 204 Railroad Street, which was taken in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd by Marc Wolfe.

IV. HISTORY OF SPEED

Edgecombe County

In the mid seventeenth century, enterprising Virginians began to migrate south to the Albemarle section of northeastern North Carolina, from which Edgecombe County was to be carved. With the opening of the eighteenth century, Albemarle inhabitants embarked in numbers from their towns at the mouths of the section's principal rivers to establish farms and plantations throughout the region. By 1732 Edgecombe County was sufficiently populous to merit its formation as a distinct entity (Turner and Bridgers 1920:13-27).

Tarboro, the county's seat and major town, was officially laid out on the banks of the Tar River in 1760. It quickly became the center of the agricultural trade that dominated Edgecombe County's economy well into the twentieth century. By the early nineteenth century, the county's farmers and planters raised a variety of crops, including corn, peas, wheat, oats, rye, and potatoes. The principal cash crops of the county in the first half of the century were turpentine, tobacco, and cotton. Turpentine was drawn from seemingly endless stretches of pine forest. Tobacco, which had become an important crop a century earlier, was often raised on large plantations. By 1860 cotton, also often raised on plantations, had become the county's principal cash crop. Indeed, at the onset of the Civil War, Edgecombe County led the state in cotton production (Turner and Bridgers 1920:33-35, 326-327; URS 2001:4-1).

With cash crops—in Edgecombe County, in North Carolina, and throughout the South—came slavery. By the advent of the Civil War, Edgecombe was notable for its large number of slaves concentrated on sizeable plantations. The breakdown of the county's economic system following the Civil War led to a generation of decline. The introduction of flue-cured bright-leaf tobacco to the county in the 1880s, however, revived the agricultural sector of the economy. Dramatic improvements in the transportation system, most notably the construction of four rail systems between 1860 and 1896, also breathed new life into Edgecombe's economy (URS 2001:4-1, 4-2). Agricultural production likely led to the development of the community of Knight's Station in northeastern Edgecombe County after the Civil War. Agricultural production, combined with a rail line, led to the displacement of Knight's Station by the budding town of Speed late in the nineteenth century.

Speed

Speed was preceded, by perhaps a generation, by the hamlet of Knight's Station. Little is known of this community, which disappeared once the Norfolk and Carolina Railroad crossed its territory (Strickland and Guy 1976:2; Watson 1979:98) (Figures 1 and 2). The only physical remnants of Knight's Station were a few of its buildings, or those of its rural environs, that were still extant in 1976. Depicted in a bicentennial history of the county (Jenkins 1976), they included the c.1850 two-story farmhouse of J.H. Howard, the c.1875 combination office/store/saloon of Dr. Eugene Travis

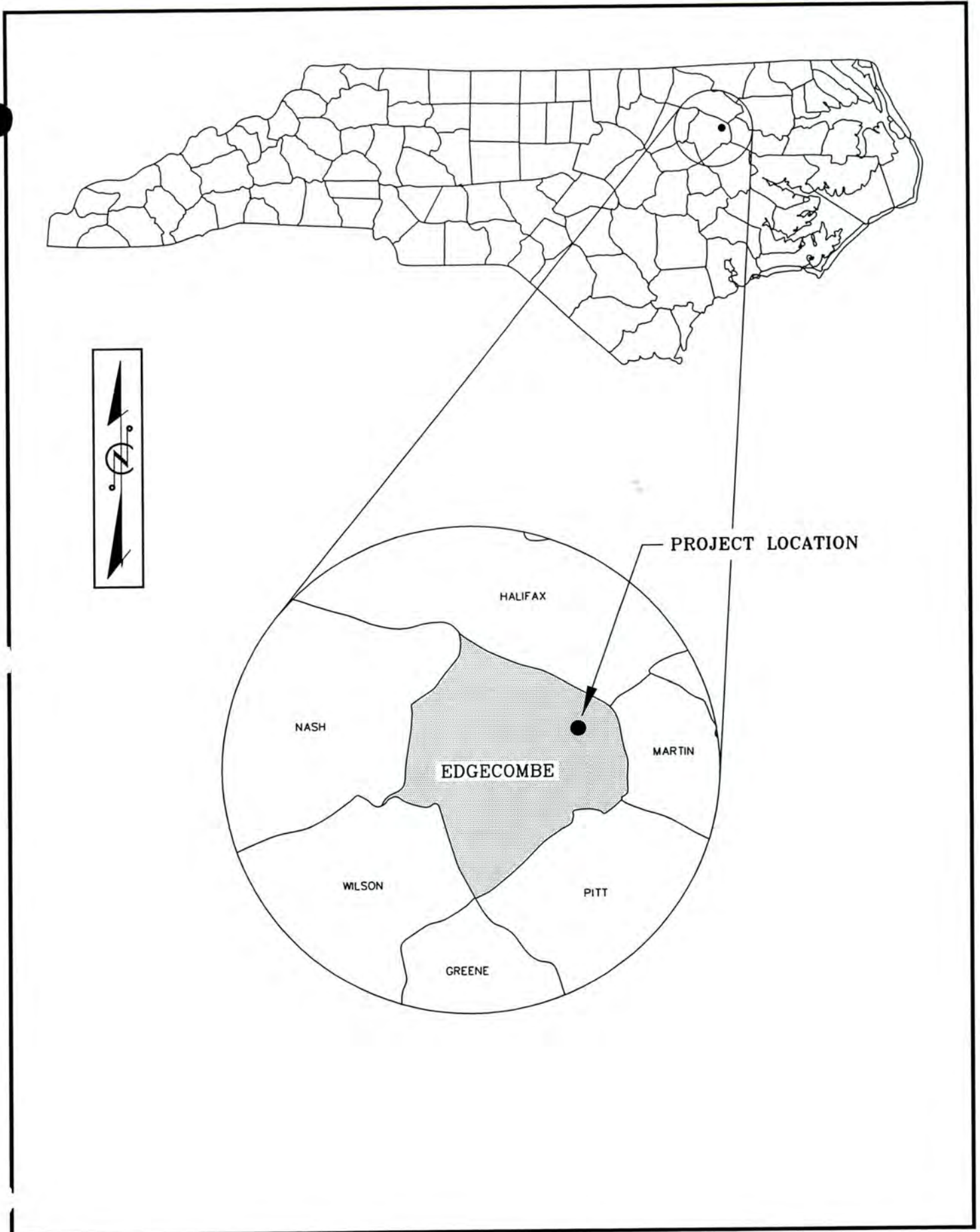


Figure 1 Project Locator Map

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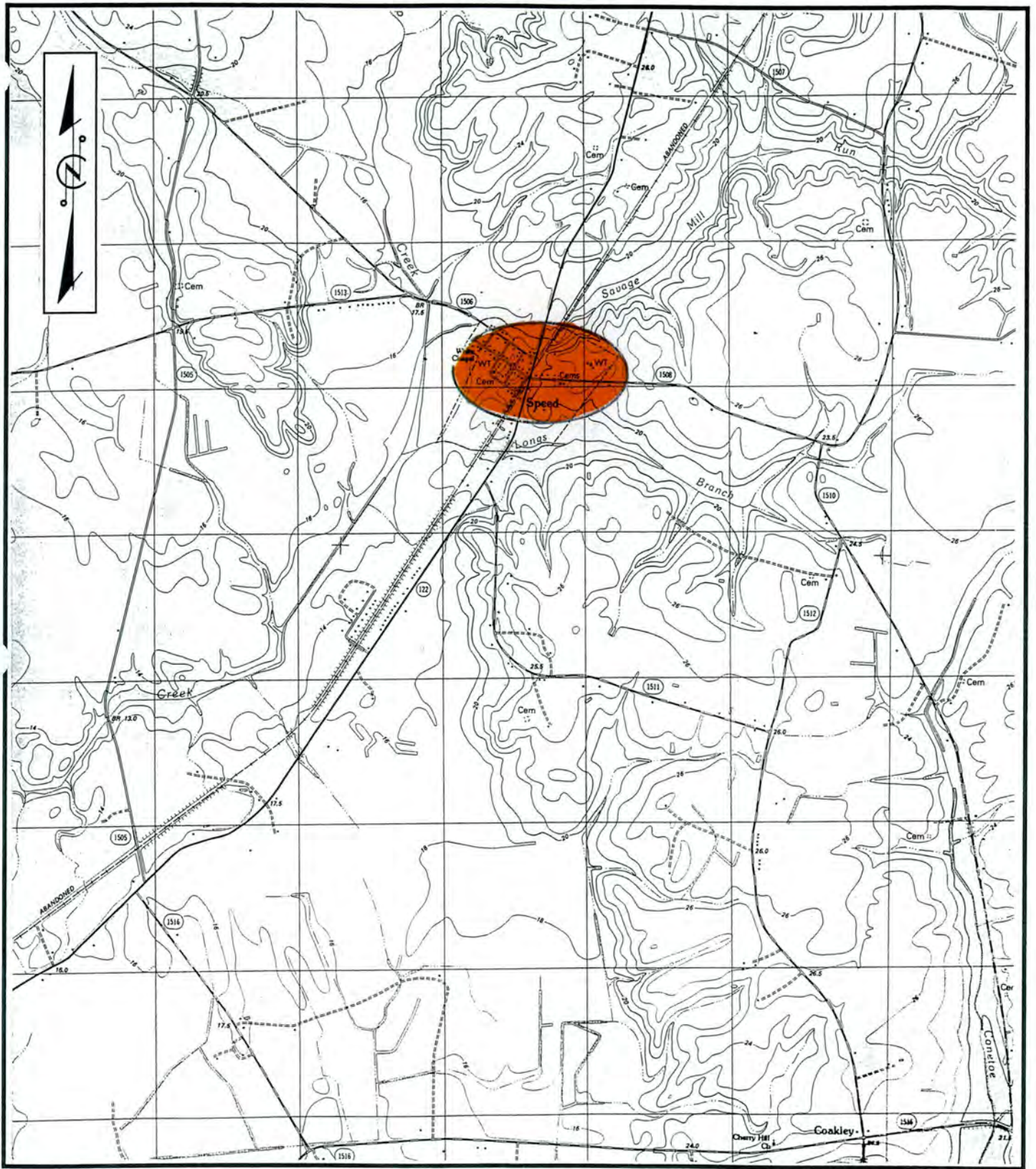


Figure 2 Reduced Portion of "Speed, N.C." USGS Topographical Map

Speed, and a one-room schoolhouse. The school building stills stands about two-and-a-half miles south of Speed, on the north side of Cherry Hill Church Road (SR 1516) just east of NC 122 (Plate 1). Where the school was originally located, and when it was built, is not known. It was moved from its original site prior to 1893 (Jenkins 1976).

The history of the current town of Speed begins in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In 1890 the Norfolk and Carolina Railroad opened a line from Pinners Point, near Norfolk, Virginia, south to Tarboro—Edgecombe’s county seat—and Rocky Mount. The line was to include a stop in Knight’s Station, soon to become Speed, about eight miles northeast of Tarboro. The Norfolk and Carolina quickly became an important link in the Atlantic Coast Line, which operated a network of rail and ship lines. It carried most of the Atlantic Coast Line’s bulk-through-freight traffic for ocean shipping, which moved from the Line’s dock and terminal facilities at Pinners Point (Huffman and Bussard 1998:77-78; Prince 1966:19).

From its new depot—the predecessor of the current structure—the new town of Speed contributed to the Atlantic Coast Line’s trade (Taves 1985b). Local farmers and loggers carried cotton, logs, and fertilizer to and from the line’s siding. Some of this trade, most likely the forest products, came to the railroad via a tram line that ran southeast of the tracks and divided into two lines terminating just short of the border of Martin County (Figure 3). This line, depicted on a 1905 (Pike and Brown) map of the county, had disappeared by 1938 (North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission). Passengers as well as goods passed through the depot on six or more Atlantic Coast Line trains that daily stopped there (Strickland and Guy 1976:2) (Plate 2).

In his history of the rural development of Edgecombe County’s architecture, Taves (1985c:31-33) concluded that Speed “owes much of its development to the railroad.” He also noted that the growth of railroad towns, in North Carolina and elsewhere, often came at the expense of older communities. In Speed’s case, the community of Knight’s Station was supplanted, rather than destroyed, by the arrival of the Atlantic Coast Line.

By 1894 Speed had acquired a post office and its new name. The first postmaster, John W. Satterthwaite, received his commission in July 1894 (Stroupe et al. 1996:2-8). Dr. Eugene Travis Speed (1855-1891), a local country doctor who had recently died, lent his name to the town (Jenkins 1976; Strickland and Guy 1976:2).

Speed was officially incorporated in 1901. (It does not, however, appear as a distinct entity in the federal census until 1930.) Due to the enterprise of Andrew Jackson Parker, Speed was soon to grow into an active, if always tiny, town. Parker, who served as Speed’s postmaster from 1898 to 1924, purchased much of the land adjacent to the railroad tracks in the former Knight’s Station. Between 1910 and 1916 he filed four plat maps for the town of Speed., which he envisioned containing 24 square blocks west of the tracks. This was a far cry from the town as it stood in 1905, when about five buildings were located to the east of the tracks and six to the west (Figure 3).



Plate 1:
Pre-1893
Knight's Station
School
looking
northwest

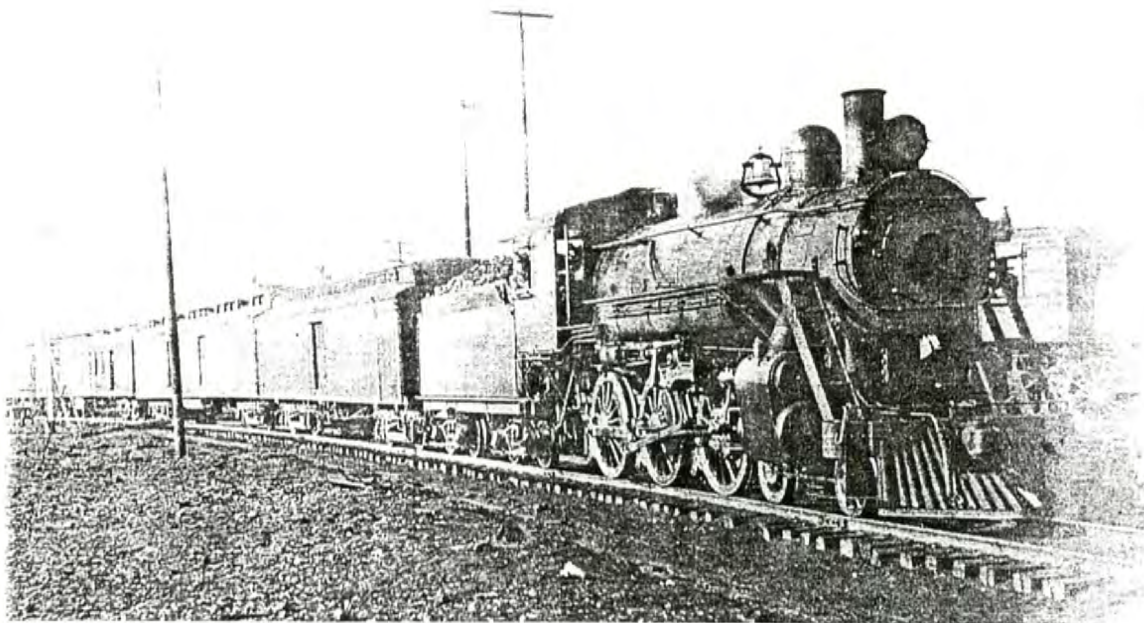


Plate 2:
Atlantic Coast
Line
Passenger
Train No. 90 ,
en route from
Rocky Mount
to Pinners
Point via
Tarboro and
Speed, c.1924
(source Prince,
*Atlantic Coast
Line Railroad*)

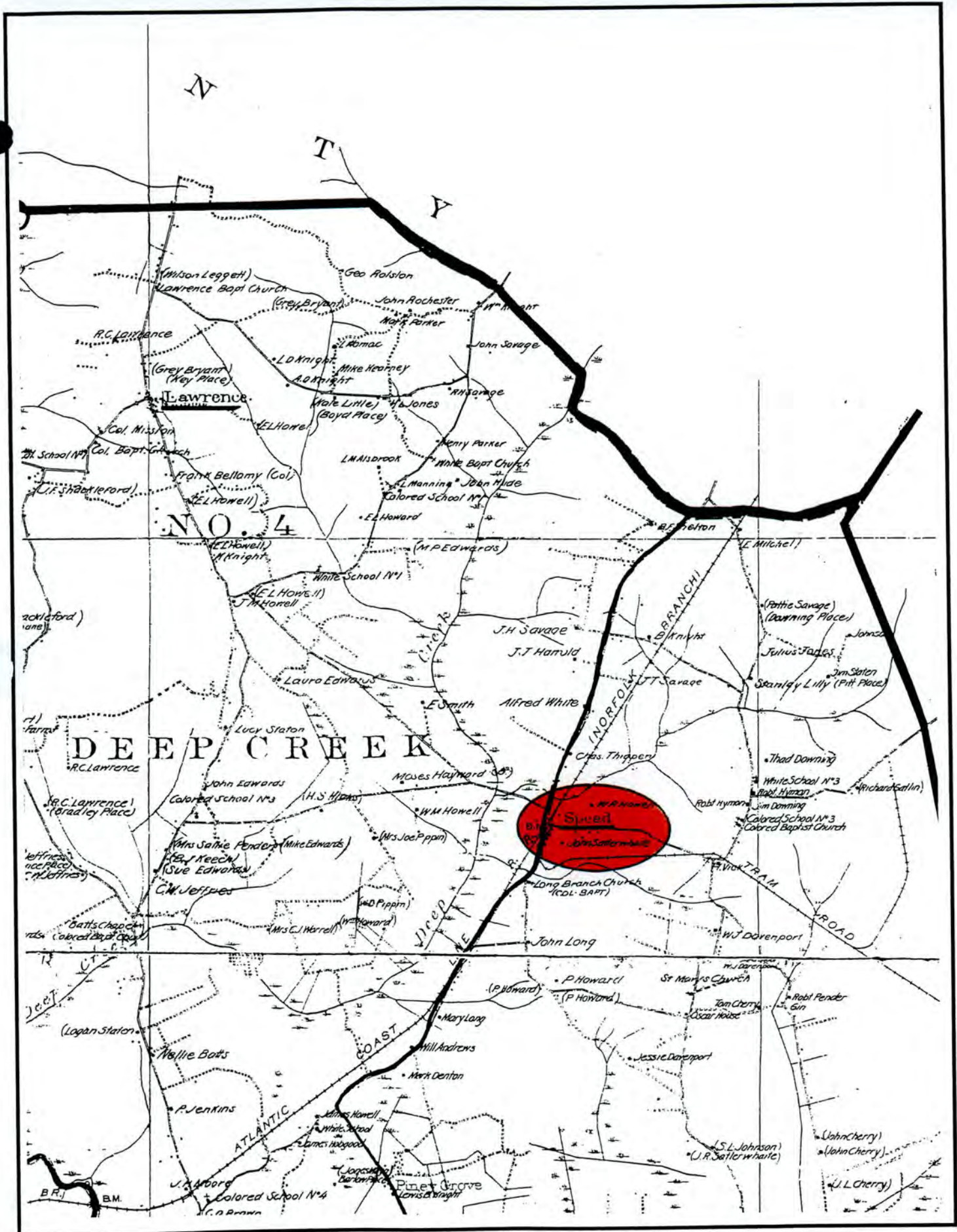


Figure 3 Pike and Brown's "Map of Edgecombe County" of 1905

Parker's first plat of 1910 (Figure 4) pictured 167 lots on 14 of the blocks; the other ten blocks were left undivided (Edgecombe County Plat Maps, Book 3, Page 74). His next plat map in 1913 (Edgecombe County Plat Maps, Book 3, Page 193) displayed a more scaled-back scheme, with fewer subdivided blocks (Figure 5). It also depicted only three standing buildings, all of which may have predated Parker's planned development. A brick store stood on the north side of Main Street, just west of the tracks. A residence occupied the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and Margaret streets. And a Baptist Church took up most of Block 2 at the northeast corner of Church and Lee streets. Of the three, only the Speed Baptist Church, which bears a sign stating it was established in October 1904, still stands. Two subsequent plat maps of 1916 showed more focused plans. One (Edgecombe County Plat Maps, Book 1, Page 50) pictured lots for the first time on blocks 15 and 18 (Figure 6). The other pictured (Edgecombe County Plat Maps, Book 1, Page 52), with minor variations, the subdivision of Blocks 9, 10, and 14 as originally planned six years earlier (Figure 7).

Parker's ultimate vision—a town with hundreds of closely spaced dwellings on 24 square blocks—never transpired. His more conservative or at least initial plans, suggested by the blocks he first chose to subdivide, did largely come to fruition, however. In the 1910s and early 1920s, judging from the physical appearance of Speed's earliest buildings, numerous dwellings and other structures arose on Catherine, Main, and Church streets, and on Margaret, Lee, Jackson, and Railroad streets as well (Figure 8).

The earliest buildings within Speed's city limits, both of which predate Parker's plats, are likely churches. At the corner of Church and Lee streets is the 1904 Speed Baptist Church, a traditional, frame, gable-front structure crowned by a cross-topped steeple (Plate 3). To its east is a small cemetery that includes the grave of Andrew J. Parker (1886-1924) and the deftly carved, tree-and-vine Woodmen of the World memorial marker of William Wilson Lucas (Plate 4).

On the opposite side of the tracks and the town proper, on the south side of Mill Pond Road (SR 1508) near the town's eastern city limit, is St. Mary's Episcopal Church (Plate 5). The origins of this congregation extend back to 1881, when it was known as St. Mary's Mission. Where the original mission was located is unclear. According to a history of St. Mary's parish, "The Chapel building of St. Mary's was moved to the town of Speed in 1907" (Nash 1960:36-39). The neatly trimmed, board-and-batten, Gothic-Revival-style building is flanked by a tiny cemetery at its west (Plate 6). Another early twentieth-century church in Speed—the frame, gable-front, African-American Little Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church—stands vacant and ruinous near the southwest corner of Catherine and Margaret streets.

A small number of other early non-residential buildings formed the institutional and commercial core of Speed. On the west side of NC 122, just south of Church Street, are an active feed mill that has served the town for much of its history and an abandoned store that probably dates from the 1920s (Plate 7). Last home to Johnnies Grocery, the one-story frame store has an engaged gable-front portico that shielded its former gas pumps and the drivers who utilized them.

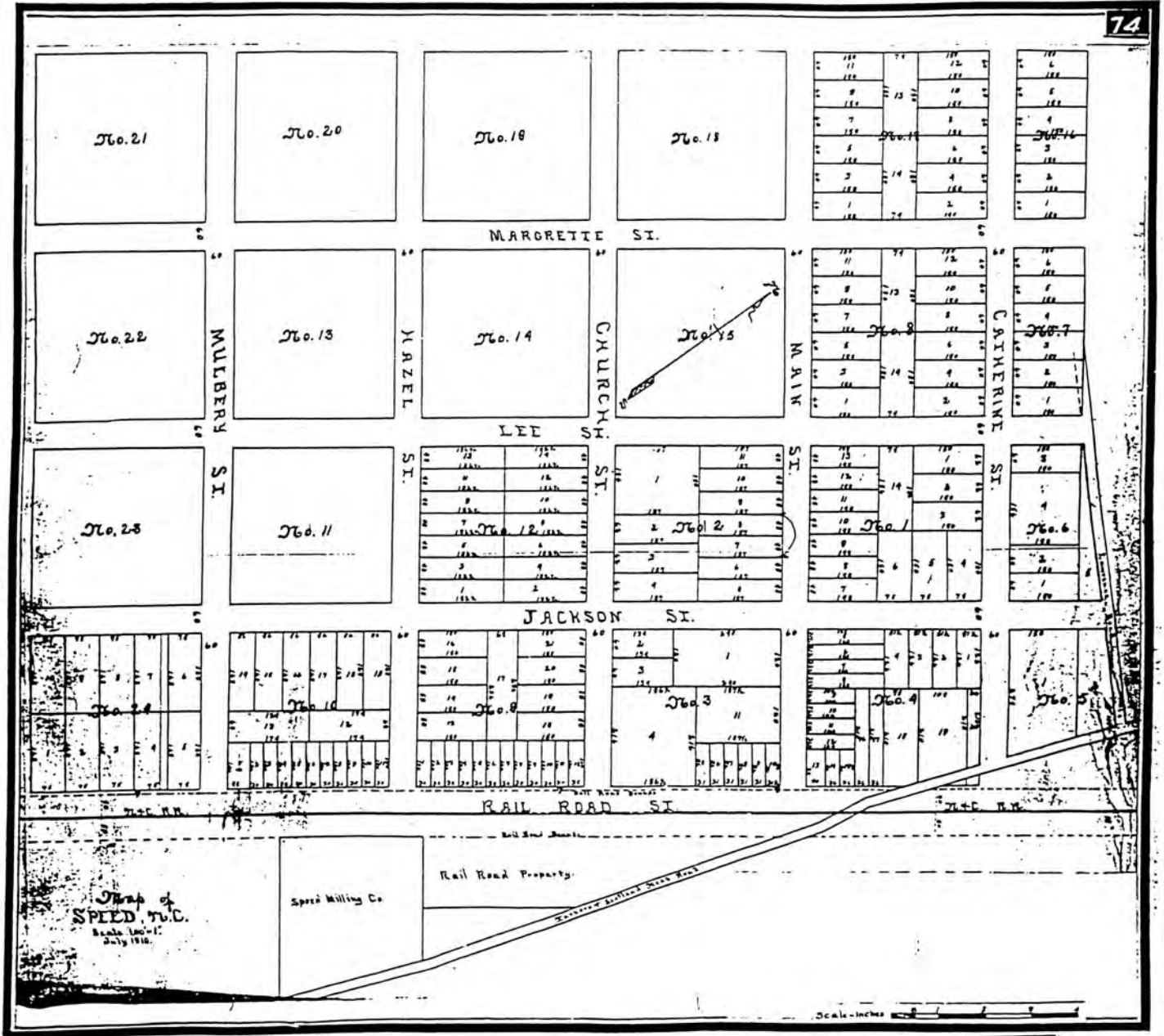


Figure 4 Plat Map of Speed, North Carolina, July 1910 (source: Edgecombe County Plat Book 3, Page 74)

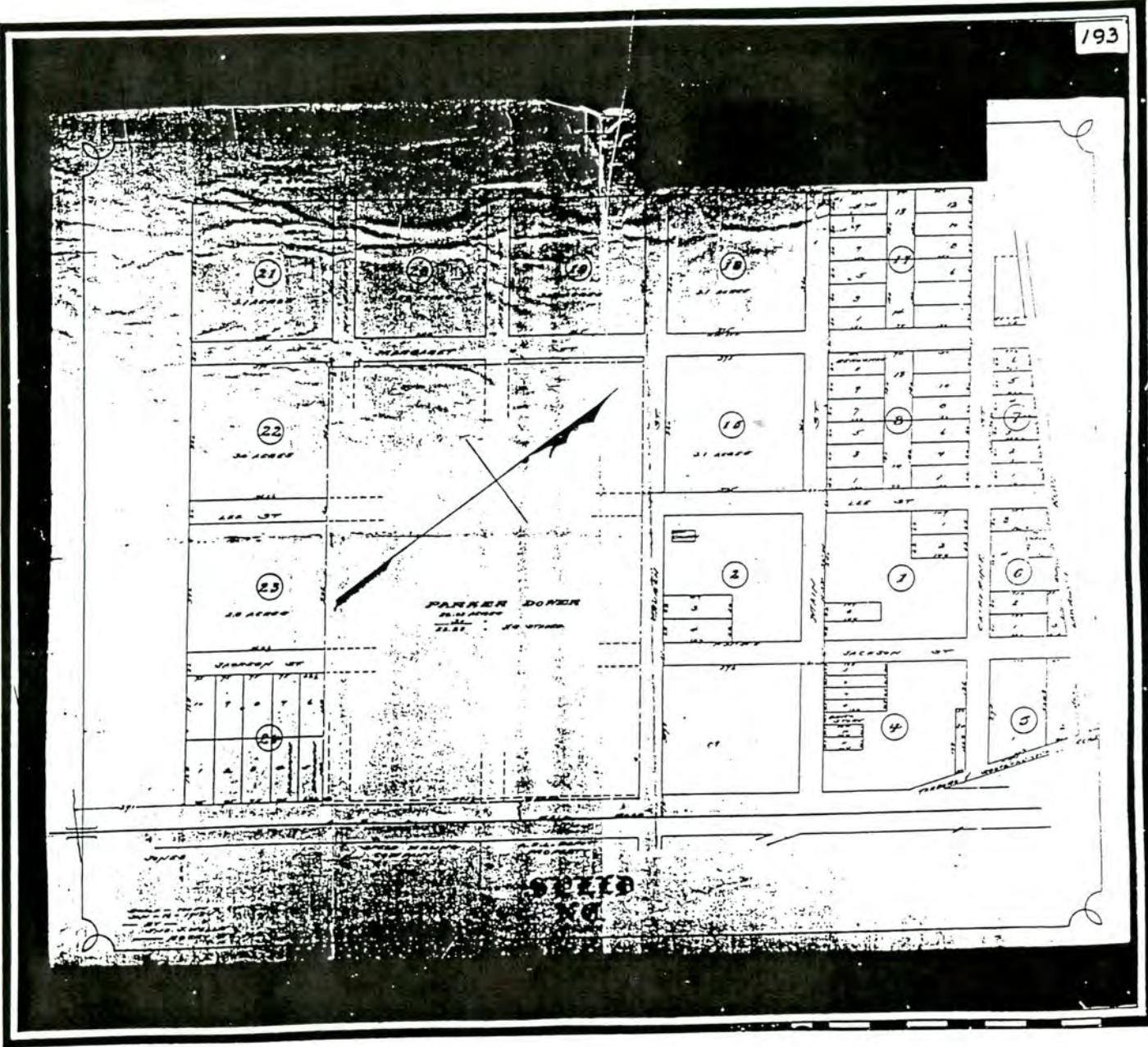


Figure 5 Plat Map of Speed, North Carolina, January 16, 1913
(source: Edgecombe County Plat Book 3, Page 193)

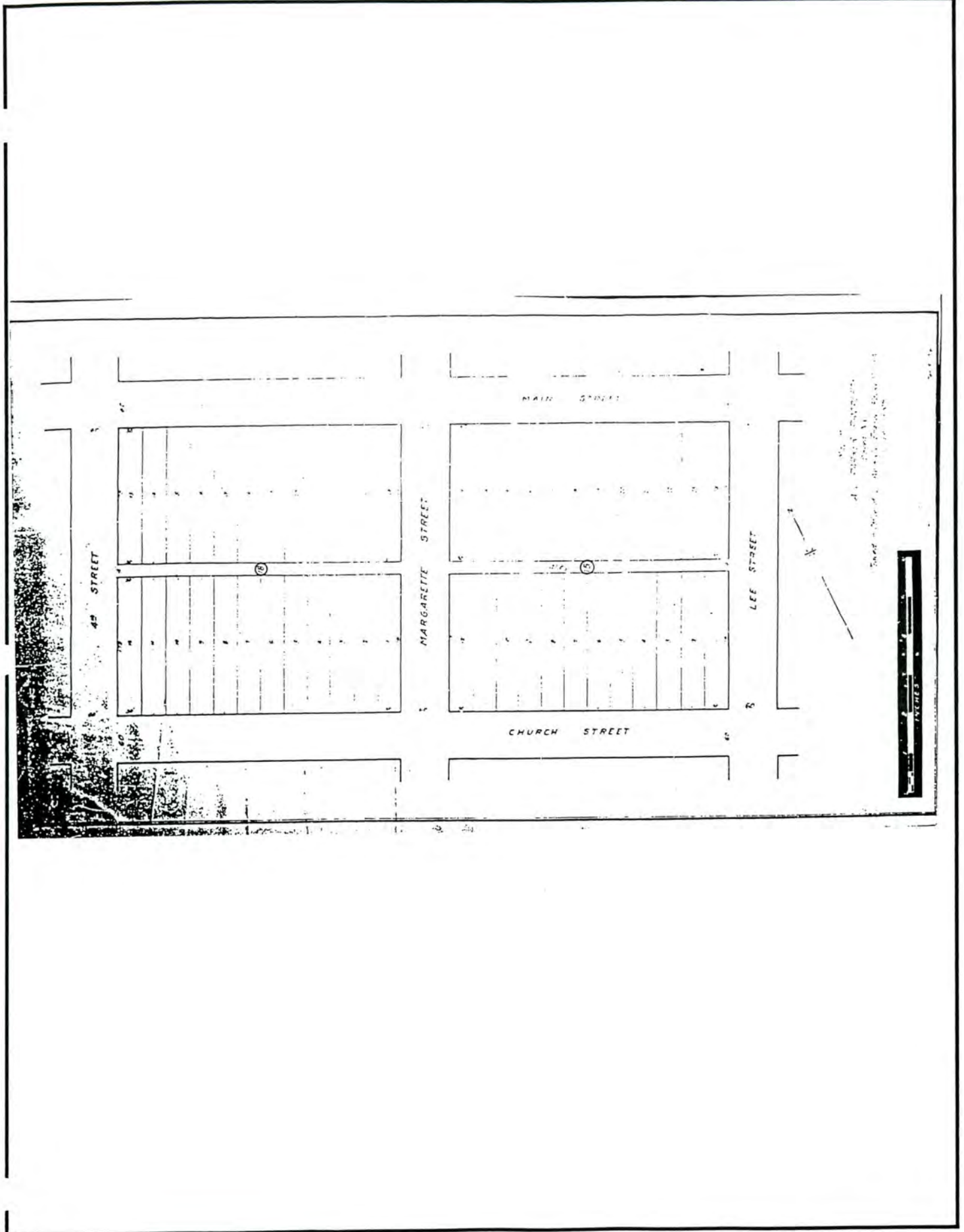


Figure 6 Plat Map of A.J. Parker Property, Speed, North Carolina, December 8, 1916 (source: Edgecombe County Plat Book 1, Page 50)

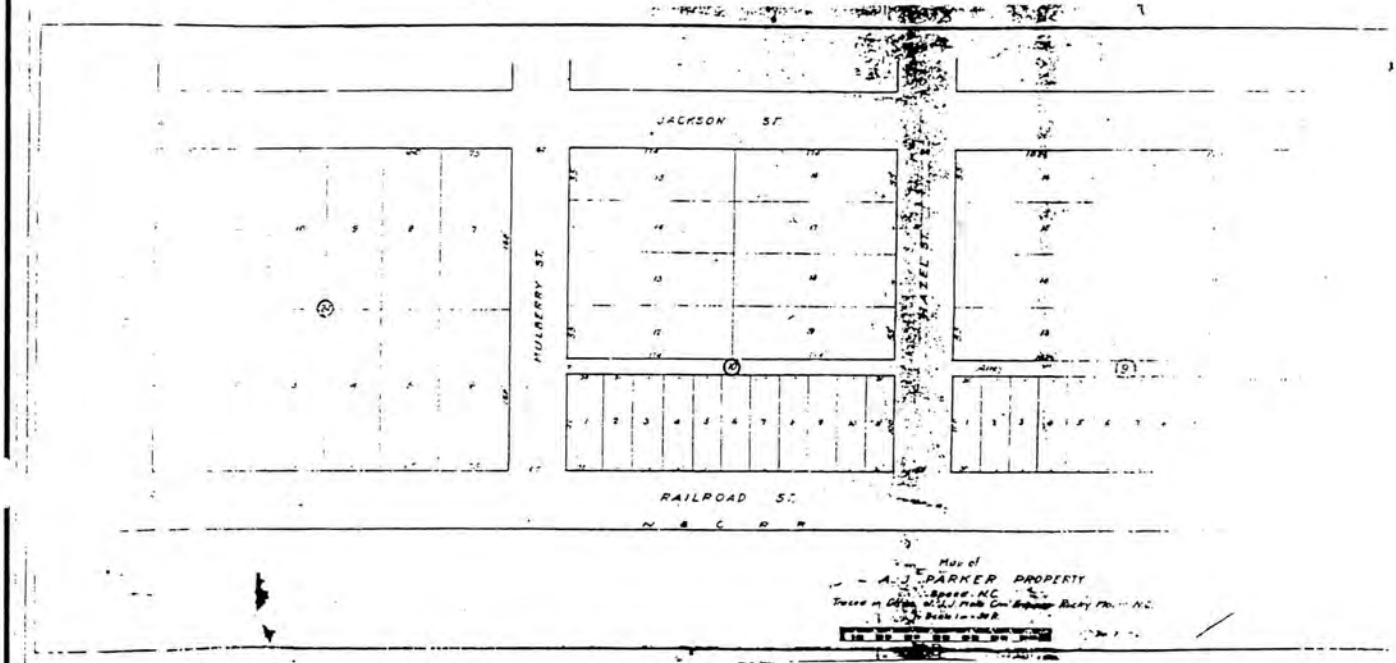


Figure 7 Plat Map of A.J. Parker Property, Speed, North Carolina, December 8, 1916 (source: Edgecombe County Plat Book 1, Page 52)

KEY	
①	FORMER JOHNNIES GROCERY
②	PRE-1893 SPEED SCHOOL
③	FEED MILL
④	FORMER SPEED DEPOT
⑤	CEMETERY
⑥	ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
⑦	SPEED FIRE DEPARTMENT
⑧	FORMER SPEED SCHOOL
⑨	FEED MILL
⑩	FORMER SPEED FIRE DEPARTMENT
⑪	FORMER FARMERS BANKING & TRUST CO.
⑫	CEMETERY
⑬	SPEED BAPTIST CHURCH



Figure 8 Map of Principal Early Non-Residential Resources, Speed, North Carolina, March 2001 (base map: Plat Map of Speed, North Carolina, July 1910)



Plate 3: Speed Baptist Church, looking north



Plate 4: Speed Baptist Church Cemetery, looking east



Plate 5:
St. Mary's
Episcopal
Church,
looking
southeast



Plate 6:
St. Mary's
Episcopal
Church
Cemetery,
looking
northeast

At the southeast corner of NC 122 and Church Street—adjacent to the now track-less former right-of-way of the Atlantic Coast Line—is the building that was once the heart of the community, the former Speed Depot (Plate 8). The wide overhanging eaves of the board-and-batten structure, supported by sweeping curved brackets, once protected the passengers and freight that daily passed through the building. Speed's first depot was erected by the Norfolk and Carolina Railroad about 1890. The current building was erected in its stead by the Atlantic Coast Line in 1923. Now sealed and vacant, the depot reportedly contains a freight room with eight-foot sliding doors, an agent's office and, on either side of the office, two small waiting rooms. One of the rooms was for white passengers, the other for African-Americans (Taves 1985c:31; Taves 1985 b). In 1985 the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office placed the depot on the state's Study List of resources believed to be potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Just to the depot's north, on the west side of Railroad Street, are two additional former pillars of the town. A plain, brick, parapet-edged building that opens a full-height garage door to the street was once the Speed Fire Department (Plate 9). Probably dating about 1920, it is still owned by Speed and used as a repair facility and garage. (The town's modern cinder block fire station stands to the east, opposite St. Mary's.) For a brief period prior to 1973, the rear of the building held Speed's post office (Tarboro *Daily Southerner* 1975).

The boxy one-story brick building on the lot to the former fire station's north has, for a town the size of Speed, an exceptionally fine front facade (Plate 10). Initially the home of Farmers Bank & Trust Company, it was built as a branch of that Tarboro financial institution in 1920. The bank's Neoclassical Revival-style facade is formed of cut limestone blocks that display a broad range of classical devices, from fluted Ionic columns to dentils punctuated with acorns to a triangular pediment. As Taves (1985a) noted when he inventoried Edgecombe County in 1985, the bank is the "showiest" of the commercial buildings that once lined Railroad Street. It was placed on North Carolina's Study List of potentially National Register-eligible resources in 1985.

The branch bank in Speed and the main Tarboro office were shuttered when Farmers Bank and Trust collapsed, with many other financial institutions, in 1930. It then had a number of uses, including serving as an apartment, until 1972, when it was converted to Speed's post office and, subsequently, its Town Hall. In December 1999, in the wake of the flooding of the building by Hurricane Floyd, the Speed post office was relocated to a new building a half block to the north. The former bank building now stands vacant (Taves 1985a; Tarboro *Daily Southerner* 1975; Tarboro *Daily Southerner* 1999a; Flanary 1991:6).

Within a fenced enclosure behind the current fire department, on the north side of Mill Pond Road, is the former Speed School (Plate 11). It is a long, gable-end, one-story structure that appears to date from the 1920s. It once served first-through-eighth-grade white children from the community, some of whom were taught in combined classes by the same teacher. It has stood vacant since 1969 and the community, as is the case with most other comparably sized eastern North Carolina communities, no longer has its own school (Flanary 1991:9).



Plate 7:
Johnnies
Grocery Store
and Speed
Feed Mills,
looking
northwest



Plate 8:
Speed Depot,
looking
southeast



Plate 9:
Former Speed
Fire
Department, at
center, and
Farmers
Banking &
Trust
Company, at
center right,
looking
northwest

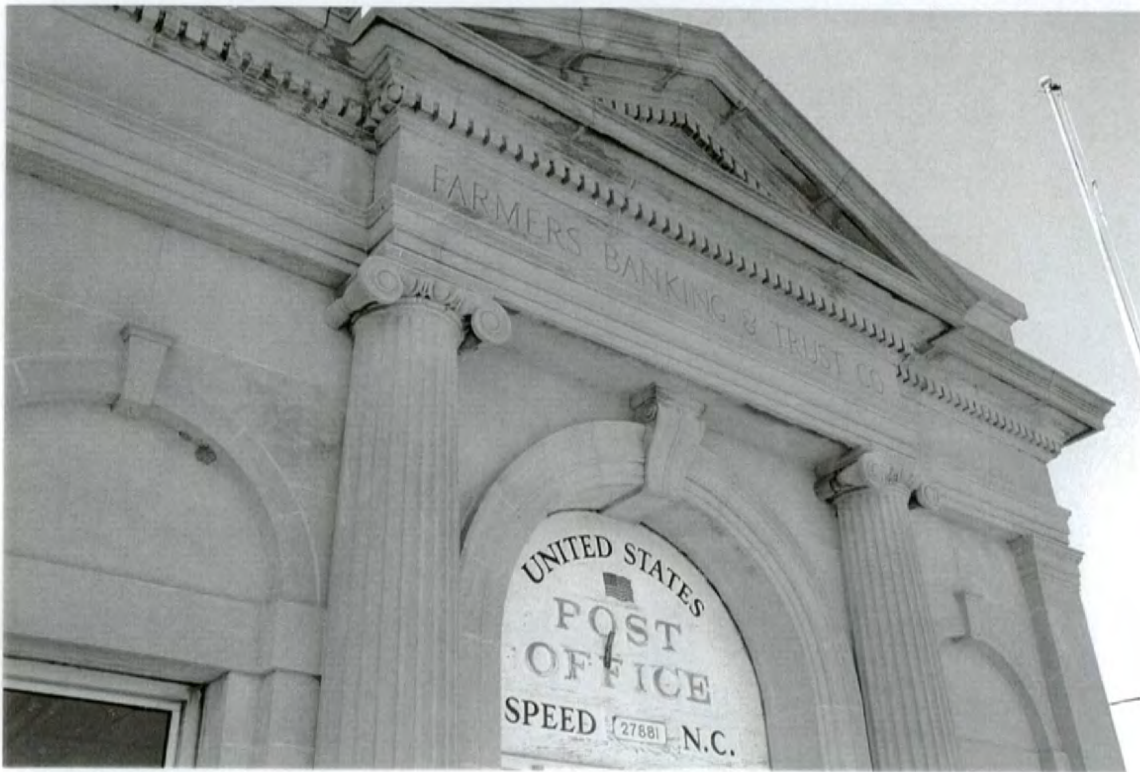


Plate 10:
Principal
facade of
Farmers
Banking &
Trust
Company

The rapid growth of Speed in the 1910s and early 1920s, and the prospects it held to grow past the size of a hamlet, is recalled not just by its principal non-residential buildings, but by the many closely spaced houses from the period that line its streets. These houses are conservatively fashioned and plainly articulated. A few are two stories tall, such as the relatively spacious L-shaped dwelling at 103 Main Street (Plate 12) and the gable-end “I-house” at 402 Catherine Street. More common are the one-story houses, such as the L-plan dwelling at 104 Main Street (Plate 13) and the gable-end houses at 206 and 210 Main (Plate 14), all of which have front façade gables; the gable front dwelling at 305 Catherine Street (Place 15); and the hip roofed “workingman’s foursquare” at 300 Catherine Street (Place 16).

According to the bicentennial history of the county (Jenkins 1976), “In the early portion of the twentieth century, Speed had a very active community life.” Much of this activity was attributed to J.K. Turner, who served as mayor. While Turner was mayor, Speed also, had a constable and “an active law enforcement program.” In spite of this early promise - reflected physically by the town’s tightly packed early houses, multi-room schoolhouse, and classical stone-faced bank – Speed never grew beyond its 1920s footprint. In 1930, according to the federal census, it had 95 residents. The census assigned it a population of 127 ten years later. By 1950, 103 individuals resided within city limits. The population jumped in 1960, probably due to new construction beyond the town’s center, to 142, a plateau at which it remained a decade later. Speed had apparently been revived to some extent in the 1950s, for in 1957 its charter, which had lapsed was reactivated (Strickland and Guy 1976:2, 16; North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission). However it always remained a small place and – with the town of Conetoe, which also developed with the railroad – is Edgecombe County’s smallest incorporated community (Watson 1979:98).

Speed’s 1970 population was racially mixed. Eighty-eight of its residents, about 60 percent, were black. The other 54 were white. A racially mixed population was not necessarily followed by racial mixing, at least in housing. The town’s African-American residents were concentrated on Catherine and Margaret Streets and nearby lots, its white population on Jackson Street and adjacent lots (Strickland 1978; Dickens 2001).

By the mid-1970s Speed was an aging community. Only half of its 50 structures were owner occupied and 28 of those 50 lacked complete plumbing facilities. In 1969 North Carolina’s per capita yearly income was \$2,492 and Edgecombe County’s was \$1,899. In Speed it was just \$1,626. While most houses were identified by the county planning department in the mid-1970’s as being in good condition, and as “standard” rather than deteriorating or dilapidated, the town had clearly retreated from its heights of a half-century earlier (Strickland 1978; Strickland and Guy 1976).

In the 1990s, the Speed community took pride in two of its native sons. Voneree Deloatch, an African-American from Speed’s rural environs, had attained the rank of brigadier general in the U.S. Army. Lieutenant General Henry Hugh Shelton, a white rural resident of the community, was named Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in July 1997 (Fleming 1997:126-127; Tarboro Daily Southerner 1999c).



Plate 11:
1920s-era
Speed School,
looking north



Plate 12:
103 Main
Street, looking
southwest



Plate 13:
104 Main
Street, at right,
and 200 Main
Street, at left,
looking
northwest



Plate 14:
210 Main
Street, at left,
and 206 Main
Street, at right
center, looking
northeast



Plate 15:
305 Catherine
Street, looking
southeast



Plate 16:
300 Catherine
Street, looking
northwest

In September 1999 Speed was ravaged by the floods that came upon the heels of Hurricane Floyd and its predecessor Hurricane Dennis. The destructiveness of Floyd in eastern North Carolina came not from wind, but from water. The storm made landfall on September 16, but a week later Speed was still largely under water. While the waters had retreated from the businesses near Railroad Street, most of the housing to the west was still flooded. A week after the hurricane, Highway 122 heading south remained impassible and the town was only accessible from Halifax County to the north (Tarboro *Daily Southerner* and Rocky Mount *Telegram* 1999). Flood relief efforts could not reverse the damage done by the floodwaters, which rendered almost all of Speed's dwellings uninhabitable. By late October, the town's two active businesses – Treasured Memories, an antiques store, and Manning's Grocery, which stand opposite each other on either side of NC 122 near Catherine Street – were back in operation. Most of the town remained uninhabitable, however (Tarboro *Daily Southerner* 1999b).

The flooding had a deleterious impact on Speed's early buildings. Many were seriously damaged by flooding that had risen halfway up their first stories. The depot became unfit for use, even as a storage building. The post office was abandoned. A two-and-a-half-story house that stood on the northwest corner of Main and Railroad streets – a striking structure complete with a wraparound two-tier porch that had served as the town's hotel – was taken down by its owner following the flood. Near its site, the current post office stands (Dickens 2001) (Plate 17).

In early 2000, Edgecombe County applied for FEMA funding to buy out flood damaged properties located in its floodplains. Most of Speed's homeowners participated in this voluntary project. Approximately 30 homes were included in the project, of these about 12 were more than 50 years old and made up Speed's National Register-eligible historic district. Since the project would effectively eliminate Speed's historic district, all of the properties participating in the buy-out, that contributed to the district, were photographically recorded. Of the few non-participating homeowners, some have rebuilt or repaired while others have demolished their homes.

Perhaps because of its minimal growth, Speed has remained a rural town with rural ways. Mary Ann Flanery, who wrote a history of the town for an English course based in part on the memories of her mother, Linda Flanery, and grandmother, Mary Manning, unintentionally described a traditional rural community. Of Manning's Grocery Store, She wrote (1991:4):

Before it moved [to its new location in 1986], it was a little wood store where mostly farmers would go to get a drink and a nab. Now, many people go there and purchase other household items besides a drink and a nab.

Of the post office, a "big asset to the town," she related (1991:6):

There are about 93 rented boxes and about 245 customers. A lot of business goes on in the post office. People come to get their mail, mail letters, and buy stamps and money orders. People also go there to gossip.

Speed fell short of Andrew Jackson Parker's vision. This may ultimately have worked to the benefit of its citizens, however, or at least those citizens who, like the Flannery's and Mary Manning, prize a rural way of life.



Plate 17:
Post-Hurricane
Floyd image of
former dwelling/
hotel at 204
Railroad Street,
damaged by and
demolished after
hurricane (Marc
Wolfe)

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VI. APPENDIX

Resume of Principal Investigator