

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**  
Office of Archives and History  
Department of Cultural Resources

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**Jarvisburg Colored School**

Jarvisburg, Currituck County, CK0055, Listed 12/11/2009

Nomination by Penne Sandbeck

Photographs by Penne Sandbeck, January 2008



Front and north elevation



Rear view

(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Jarvisburg Colored School  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 7302 Caratoke Highway (NC 158)  not for publication N/A  
city or town Jarvisburg  vicinity N/A  
state North Carolina code NC county Currituck code 053 zip code 27947

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
 entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jarvisburg Colored School  
Name of Property

Currituck County, NC  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	1	Structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education: School

Social: meeting hall

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant / Not in Use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Weatherboard

roof Shingle

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Jarvisburg Colored School  
Name of Property

Currituck County, North Carolina  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Ethnic Heritage: Black

### Period of Significance

1911-1950

### Significant Dates

1911

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Barrett and Thomson, Raleigh, NC (Architect)

Ferebee, James Brown, Camden, NC (Builder)

### Narrative Statement of Significance [Attached]

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References [Attached]

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Jarvisburg Colored School  
Name of Property

Currituck County, North Carolina  
County and State

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** .94

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 422230 4004760  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) Attached

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) Attached

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Penne Smith Sandbeck  
organization consultant date September 3, 2009  
street & number P. O. Box 218 telephone 919-497-0576  
city or town Louisburg state NC zip code 27549

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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### Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Historic Jarvisburg Colored School Association  
street & number P. O. Box 254 telephone 202-882-7169  
city or town Jarvisburg state NC zip code 27974

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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**Location and Architectural Description**

**Location**

Jarvisburg Colored School stands at 7302 Caratoke Highway in Poplar Point Township, Currituck County, just inland of Currituck Sound and south of the village of Jarvisburg, established in 1872. This former school, which operated from 1911 until 1951, is sited on the west side of US Highway 158. Traditionally known as the Caratoke (a variant spelling of “Currituck”) Road or Caratoke Highway, US 158 has been a historically busy thoroughfare between northeastern North Carolina’s Albemarle region and Norfolk and Virginia Beach; historically, the State of Virginia was more accessible to the Albemarle’s inhabitants than North Carolina’s own cities until nearby Elizabeth City’s late-nineteenth-century emergence as a regional mercantile center. Jarvisburg itself, less than a ten-minute walk west of the Currituck Sound, was a remote village well into the twentieth century with little transportation systems other than by sandy roads and waterways, excepting the Caratoke Road. Terrain in the immediate area, particularly around the school, is composed of Norfolk loamy fine sand, hailed as an important soil type for sweet potato and corn production, well drained, and found at “gently rolling” elevations of this maritime peninsula, whose average elevation is eight feet above sea level.<sup>1</sup>

The school, which occupies .94 acres, is sited immediately south of Corinth Baptist Church, an African American house of worship founded in the 1880s by freedmen who settled in Currituck County after the Civil War. The surrounding small community, known in the past as either Corinth or Olds Hill, is comprised of longtime African American residents, whose families extend at least three or four generations in this area; Lindsey, Wescott, Owens, Woodhouse, Aydlette, and Newbern are common surnames, and inscribed on many markers within the community cemetery located behind Corinth Baptist Church. These gravestones and vaults range in date from the early 1900s to the 1990s, sheltered by older plantings such as live oaks. The school property has one older tree, a live oak immediately west of the school, but no other period plantings have survived immediately around the building. Beside the live oak is a small freestanding metal carport, used as shelter for Corinth Baptist Church’s van; the carport, not a permanent structure, is to be moved closer to the church in the near future.

<sup>1</sup> Samuel O. Perkins, *Soil Survey of Camden and Currituck Counties, NC* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1926), pp. 46, 56.

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### **Architectural Description**

Erected circa 1911, the Jarvisburg Colored School, a plain frame building with some Queen Anne-style decoration, stands on its original location approximately eighty feet west of US 158 (Caratoke Highway), the school's front elevation directly facing the highway. The approximately forty-by-twenty-five-foot frame building is of balloon frame construction, extending to a height of two stories (roughly twenty feet high, not counting the cupola); the 2005-2008 restoration of the school retained most of this framing. A side-gable building with a one-story, enclosed front shed extension with two prominent flanking corner porches, the school's basic form is unchanged from the restoration. Also, the building's overall plan is as the school appeared in the early twentieth century, including replacement wood shingle roofing; beyond the shed extension, which houses the school cloakroom, the approximately eighteen-by-forty-foot open space at each floor remains the same. The cloakroom's two four-over-four double-hung sash windows, enclosed some years ago and in ruinous condition, have been replaced. The first floor's original entrances—double doors to the classrooms, single doors to the cloakroom—have been restored.

Defining features of Jarvisburg Colored School begin with the four-bay, front shed extension, its pedimented and gabled porches at each end of the enclosed cloakroom; these porches, partially enclosed during the 1950s, are now restored to their original condition with simple replacement corner posts. There are no windows at the front elevation's second story; above the second story, a weatherboarded center gable, pierced by a four-over-four, double-hung sash window, projects from the side-gable roofline. Positioned at the center front gable's ridge is a rectangular, weatherboarded bell tower capped by a pyramidal roof. At the tower's apex, the original four-foot wooden spire is still in place. Both bell tower and roof have replacement cypress shingles. The second floor's original rear north corner entrance was reinstated during restoration, with a straight-run, outside wooden staircase. Nearly all of the school's original wooden, four-panel manufactured doors have survived; at least two were repaired during restoration. Two double-hung, six-over-six sash windows light the side elevations (north and south) at each floor; the rear elevation, less symmetrical in fenestration, is lit by four comparable sash windows at the first floor, and three at the second. Until 2005, the north elevation had replacement plywood and small lumber board-and-batten covering that was replaced during restoration by weatherboards approximating its original materials.

Inside, beyond the small centered cloakroom, the first floor is an open space, approximately forty feet wide and eighteen feet deep, originally configured as two classrooms separated by a central sliding partition. The partition is no longer in place; before restoration, a low soffit marked the

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spot where it was lodged. The now-open space is lit by two six-over-six, double-hung sash windows at each gable end as well as four such windows along the room's west wall. As was the case before restoration, walls and ceilings are sheathed with manufactured beaded board, much of it original; the restoration contractors took care to ensure that every room had some component of original beaded board in addition to the replacement beaded board. Overall, the rooms remain as plain as they would have appeared in 1911, and the narrow tongue-and-groove flooring is nearly identical to the original floor.

The cloakroom retains its original manufactured beaded board sheathing as well. Altered by the church into a small kitchenette during the 1960s, it nevertheless has kept its interior form and much of its integrity. Alterations to the cloakroom and the north porch from the 1960s creating the kitchenette have been undone by the recent restoration, and its appearance is now what the Jarvisburg Colored School's pupils would have remembered.

The upstairs room, now accessed by the outside stair as it was before the 1930s, was the former Sandy Ridge Masonic Lodge's assembly room. The interior floor plan and finish is identical to downstairs—windows, flooring, walls, and ceiling—with the exception of a sloped ceiling, tapering at each corner. Although Sandy Ridge Masonic Lodge was Jarvisburg Colored School's longtime tenant—they rented the space from 1911, off and on, into the 1980s—the school also used this upper room for two classrooms and its partitioned north end, somewhat encumbered by the later interior stair, contained a small library.

Before restoration, the building had been unoccupied for a few years, becoming too dilapidated for Corinth Baptist Church to use as an annex, as it had been doing since the school closed in the mid-1950s. By 2005, the 1930s interior stair placed at the school's north wall was too dangerous to use, and the ground floor was clearly bowing from disintegrating framing. The exterior most showed the years of neglect; above, the cupola was missing weatherboarding and both it and the spire were leaning, and below, the replacement asphalt shingle roof was patchy, occasionally revealing original cypress shingles. The porch/cloakroom had been semi-enclosed with modern T1-11 sheathing. The restoration project was awarded by the county to Rodriguez, Ripley, Maddux, Motley, Architects of Virginia Beach, VA, and overseen by two subcontractors, Joseph Freeman being the project principal.

Despite its ruinous appearance by 2005, the school's original structural elements consisted of either red cypress or juniper, both indigenous woods valued for their resistance to rot and termites. The actual structure of the school—its balloon nailed frame—was revealed intact in September 2005 when everything but the frame was completely dismantled. Siding, sheathing,

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and other elements were initially placed in a dumpster sited behind the school and later sorted; the materials that could still be used were re-appropriated in a jigsaw puzzle fashion throughout the building, the logic being that, behind a coat of white paint, all pieces would cohere. Replacing what could not be re-used was a challenge, due to the present paucity and relative expense of these woods. To resolve the problem, project architects salvaged at least one outbuilding located in nearby Tidewater Virginia to appropriate cypress and juniper lumber for the school.<sup>2</sup> Derived from historic resources, these replacement framing members, such as joists and studs, were labeled to distinguish them from original parts; however, it was not possible to label the replacement flooring, manufactured beaded board, and weatherboarding as well. Much of the school's original manufactured beaded board interior sheathing was dismantled and stored during initial restoration then re-applied during the final stages.

The building rests on brick piers replaced during restoration; the new piers, nearly a foot higher at the front façade, have raised the building slightly, the justification being to protect it from flooding in this low-lying area. Other foundation changes include replacement sills, some replacement joists, and remaining, extant joists being "sistered" by supporting, newer ones.

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<sup>2</sup> Peggy Birkemeier, Grandy, North Carolina, verbal communication to Penne Smith Sandbeck, January 2, 2008. Ms. Birkemeier, the Northeast Regional Associate for the North Carolina Cultural Foundation, has been an advocate for the school's restoration and actively involved in the process throughout; according to Ms. Birkemeier her knowledge came directly from Joseph Freeman, the restoration's architect, who located and salvaged the materials from a barn near Suffolk, Virginia.

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### Statement of Significance

Constructed in 1911 for Currituck County's rural African American citizens, Jarvisburg Colored School meets National Register Criterion A for Education and Black Ethnic Heritage. From 1911 until 1950, this school served Jarvisburg's African American students, after which time it became a Sunday school annex for neighboring Corinth Baptist Church. The extant Jarvisburg Colored School is an extremely rare example of a pre-Rosenwald Fund plan, African American school constructed in North Carolina. Furthermore, it is one of Currituck County's few pre-consolidation era educational buildings, being only one of three to survive the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

Jarvisburg Colored School is associated with events that have contributed significantly to the broad patterns of local history within Currituck County and northeastern North Carolina. It is a testament to the drive of African Americans who made the school possible, their self-sacrifice and determination of a better education—and future—for their children.<sup>4</sup> Jarvisburg Colored School's period of significance begins in 1911, the year of its construction, and ends in 1950, its last year as an operating school.

### Historical Background: Black Ethnic Heritage and Education Contexts

One of the outcomes of the Civil War was not just physical freedom for enslaved African Americans, but also education, a true "leading out" of bondage for generations of people who had craved knowledge for centuries, but were barred from obtaining it. During the war, northern societies such as the American Missionary Association, in tandem with the Freedmen's Bureau, set up a number of schools and settlements in the Union-occupied South; several were located on Roanoke Island, North Carolina, which the Confederate Army lost in February 1862 to Union General Ambrose Burnside's forces. Thousands of North Carolina's African Americans made

<sup>3</sup> The peers of Jarvisburg School no longer standing are Grandy and Crawford schools. Moyock and Coinjock schools were constructed between 1918 and 1922, around the time county schools were being consolidated throughout North Carolina; as of this nomination, Moyock (now a duplex) and Coinjock (now abandoned) schools still stand.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Hanchett, "The Rosenwald Schools and Black Education in North Carolina," in *The North Carolina Historical Review* LXV:4 (October 1988), p. 427.

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their way across enemy lines to get there, which, as the island was surrounded by the Croatan, Albemarle, Pamlico, and Roanoke Sounds, was not an easy destination.<sup>5</sup>

After the war ended, Roanoke Island's Freedmen's Colony gradually disbanded, and nearly all of its refugees returned to their original homes along the state's northeastern coast—including Currituck, Camden, and Pasquotank counties as well as counties further inland.<sup>6</sup> It is not known if the African Americans who lived along mainland Currituck County's peninsula were all former Freedmen's Colony residents, although several Roanoke Island refugees listed the county village of Coinjock as a final destination; others could just as easily have come south to Currituck from Fort Monroe, on Virginia's coast, where there was also a Freedmen's settlement.<sup>7</sup> Regardless of how they came or returned to Currituck, African American watermen and farmers along this narrow strip of land were aware of the opportunities "book learning" could give their children, and they quickly moved to make it happen. In January 1868, an African American farmer in Powell's Point Township, William Hunt, deeded one acre of his land to "The Trustees of Powells Point Free School of the Colored People," a group that included Jerry Thomas, Thomas Sanderson, Jesse Jones, and Jonas Bowser.<sup>8</sup> This instance, occurring just before North Carolina finalized its 1868 Reconstruction Constitution to establish a four-month school year for African American children, was ahead of its time.<sup>9</sup>

In March 1882 William Hunt, the Powell's Point Free School benefactor, deeded a parcel of land "in Corinth, in Poplar Brach Township" to Thomas E. Newbern, Andrew Forbes, and Willoughby Owens, who were representatives of the "Committee of the 19<sup>th</sup> School district...for the use of a school in said District for the benefit of the children of the Colored Race." The parcel, "Bounded by my lands N&W, Main Road on the S and the land upon which Corinth Church stands on the east", does not quite conform to the footprint of Jarvisburg Colored School, yet it should be noted that the original road did not conform to present-day highway, U. S. 158. According to Hunt's great-granddaughter, Alice Hunt Lindsey, this school was located east of

<sup>5</sup> James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), pp. 4-7. Patricia Click, *Time Full of Trial* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), pp. 36-56, and 105-113.

<sup>6</sup> Click, pp. 191-192.

<sup>7</sup> Click, pp. 217-218; Anderson, pp. 6-7.

<sup>8</sup> Currituck County Register of Deeds, Book 31, p. 358.

<sup>9</sup> Click, p. 267, n.3.

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the current Jarvisburg School.<sup>10</sup> Hunt remained active in the school movement until his 1890 death, serving as a member of the Currituck County Colored School Committee from 1885 with fellow residents Stephen Gordon, Nathan Gordon, Truxon Sykes, Joseph Case, and Alexander Owens.<sup>11</sup> Another local African American to serve on the Committee was Spence Bright, who owned land near Hunt and Gordon.<sup>12</sup> At that time, there were twenty-three frame school houses for white children and thirteen for African American children in Currituck County, a considerable achievement for such a remote place.<sup>13</sup>

In July 1894, committee member Stephen Gordon and his wife Elizabeth deeded a one-half acre parcel in fee simple, to Currituck County's Colored School District, No. 24. The tract, adjoining Gordon's land and the "Colored Babtist [sic.] Church," now known as Corinth Baptist Church, soon received the first of three schools to be built on that site.<sup>14</sup> According to Currituck County's minute books, Mattie C. Brown, Gertrude Capehart, and M. D. Spellman were teaching in Poplar Branch Township's African American schools, including the small school next to Corinth Baptist Church, by the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup>

The first school quickly became too small to accommodate the influx of students. In October 1905, "The colored people at Jarvisburg, district #2 of Poplar Branch Township, petitioned for a school house, stating that they had already bought lumber enough for frames of house, etc. The Board decided to let them use lumber in building [the] school house, get enough to finish the house, and present an itemized bill for the same. Superintendent ordered to advertise old school house and sell and let go on new building."<sup>16</sup> However, it took two and a half years for this second school to be built. The new school was not completed until January 1908. The Currituck County Board of Education then paid N. W. Poyner \$77.42 for lumber, and D. R. Scott \$78.80 for providing brick, lime, and nails. Carpenter "F. Simmons" received \$16.00 for his work on the school. As for the cost of the second school, the board took \$192.39 from property taxes and

<sup>10</sup> Lindsey, p. 1. Also, Alice Hunt Lindsey, Jarvisburg, NC, and Washington, DC. Conversation with Penne Sandbeck, November 23, 2002. Jarvisburg had been founded in 1874, but older community names were still used.

<sup>11</sup> Lindsey, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Currituck County School Board Minutes, Volume 1, p. 9 (September 5, 1887).

<sup>13</sup> Currituck County School Board Minutes, Volume 1, p. 11 (December 1887).

<sup>14</sup> Currituck County Register of Deeds, Book 41, p. 451.

<sup>15</sup> Lindsey, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Currituck County School Board Minutes, Volume 1, p. 213.

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\$649.50 from poll taxes, leaving \$57.98 in the Colored School District #1's coffers. The old school was sold for \$6.00.<sup>17</sup>

Nearly four years later, the Currituck County Board of Education met on December, 4, 1911, to discuss a third school at the site. They reviewed James Ferebee Brown's specifications to remodel Jarvisburg School, which was already too small after three years and in need of expansion and repairs. The Board approved paying Brown, a contractor from nearby Grandy, \$843.00 for his work. Lumber and materials were re-utilized from the 1908 school, with the district committee providing additional framing materials.<sup>18</sup>

According to the Board, the one-story school house was to be expanded into a two-room building with an additional upstairs room:

The present building is to be turned side to the road, and twelve feet added to the length; also build a section in front of the building to contain coatrooms and porches with entrances to the school rooms, as shown in Plan No. 2, Book of Plans. Tear off old siding and replace same with re-sawed pine siding. Take out lower windows and use them in upper story, replacing same with pressed glass or frosted glass, in lower sash: the said windows to be hung on weights and cords. Finish the rooms, both upstairs and down, with same grade of flooring and ceiling as the present building contains. Use No. 2 heart [pine?] shingles on the roof and build a gable in front with tower in same. Place brick piers to support the building and put the flue so as to serve both rooms. Place a sliding partition between the school rooms below. Build substantial stairs on outside of building to get into upper room and encase same with strong railing. Give the building, both inside and out, two coats of paint, to be decided upon, and the roof surface one coat of creosote. Finish and place in position within the house 18 double school desks, the same to be varnished. All framing material to be furnished by the local committee and placed at the site by them. The hardware, to be furnished by the

<sup>17</sup> Lindsey, p. 4; Currituck County School Board Minutes, pp. 3-4. The calculation of \$649.50 was arrived at by taxing the county's 433 African American polls \$1.50 each for the school.

<sup>18</sup> Currituck County School Board Minutes, Volume 1, p. 379 (in Appendix V). Thomas R. Butchko's 1998 National Register nomination for the former Grandy School identifies "J. F. Brown" as John Ferebee Brown (1878-1940), a carpenter from Camden County, as the Jarvisburg School's 1911 contractor (p. 8-15).

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contractor, is to be of good material and suitable to support the doors and windows. The work to be considered a turnkey job.<sup>19</sup>

This third school, quickly constructed and ready after the New Year, was successful enough to acquire a tenant. Sandy Ridge Lodge, a local African-American fraternal order, worked out an agreement with the school and the County Board of Education whereby they rented the upstairs room for their meetings at \$15.00 per month, plus contributed additional insurance on the building, since, by meeting at night, the lodge was increasing the risk of fire in that pre-electricity period.<sup>20</sup>

Jarvisburg Colored School progressed quietly during the following ten years, as North Carolina and the rest of the South became part of a major African American educational movement. The Julius Rosenwald Fund, its eponymous benefactor a president of Sears, Roebuck, and Company, was established in 1917, five years after Rosenwald and educator Booker T. Washington first collaborated upon funding rural black schools in Alabama.<sup>21</sup> Rosenwald's goal was to create efficient, well-lighted and well-ventilated schools for African American children, as well as to endow these schools with libraries and industrial shops for vocational skills. These were very plain buildings, consciously created under current educational theories to provide ideal learning conditions for pupils, their design nonetheless "modern" for the time. Jarvisburg Colored School's parents and teachers, looking at the two-room 1920 Rosenwald school in Coinjock or hearing of the four-room Rosenwald school being built on Tulls Creek Road near Moyock in 1921, must have suddenly seen their own school building as behind the times.<sup>22</sup> In August 1921, a group of Jarvisburg Colored School parents and teachers went to the Currituck County Board

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, p. 380 (J. F. Brown's specifications, cited in full). From the specifications, it is known that the interior was originally sheathed with manufactured beaded board and that the first school building was one-room, with no double-hung sash windows, possibly no sash windows at all. "Plan No. 2" is referring to Charles Barrett and Frank K. Thomson's *Plans For Public Schoolhouses*, published in North Carolina between 1903 and 1915, although which year Brown is referring to is not clear; the now-demolished Aydlett School, once north of Jarvisburg near Coinjock, was a textbook example of that particular plan from the 1908 edition of Barrett and Thomson, and would appear to be what Jarvisburg School was based upon..

<sup>20</sup> Currituck County School Board Minutes, Volume 1, p. 389 (April 1, 1912). Sandy Lodge had also advanced the school money for lumber (\$40.00), which the district agreed to repay in annual installments of \$15.00.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Hanchett, "The Rosenwald Schools and Black Education in North Carolina," in *The North Carolina Historical Review*, LXV: 4 (October 1988), pp. 395-398.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Hanchett, "Rosenwald Schools: NC Schools by County."

<<http://www.rosenwaldplans.org/NCschools.html>>

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of Education, asking for an addition to their old school building and, eventually, to have a Rosenwald School on the site. The Board approved the request, and applied for loans from the state and the Rosenwald Fund.<sup>23</sup>

Two years later, no action had been taken; the Jarvisburg School Committee, apparently because the building could not accommodate a growing student body, met again with the County Board of Education to discuss enlarging/ the building or building a new school. The Board and Committee moved to ascertain if Sandy Ridge Lodge's adjacent two-acre tract could be bought to expand the school; the Masonic lodge had apparently moved from its upper room rental at the school and built a freestanding lodge.<sup>24</sup> To make full use of the now-vacant upper room, the Committee requested nails and lumber to enclose the stair at the building's north end and to partition the open space into two classrooms. At that meeting, "The Secretary was authorized to give the committeemen an order to Kramer Brothers for 1600 feet of No. 4 ceiling and 15 pounds of nails."<sup>25</sup>

Jarvisburg School received some additional space when a two-acre tract, "the old lodge property", was deeded to the Currituck County Board of Education in December 1935 by the Wescott family. This parcel was immediately to the south, bordering the school and part of Corinth Church's land alike, as well as former District Committee member Spence Bright's property.<sup>26</sup> According to the deed, Jarvisburg Colored School then had an annex in the "Negro Lodge hall now being used as a school room," an arrangement that continued into the 1940s. The lodge hall was loaned to the school by the county and contained "two classrooms with windows on three sides, a kitchen, and a book room. The first floor room of the lodge hall has six windows on one side and is more suitable for classroom purposes."<sup>27</sup> Former students do not remember the lodge hall as the most optimal space; Ruth Owens Dillard, who attended Jarvisburg School from 1936 until 1944, recalled it as "a long building with two doors, one for going upstairs and

<sup>23</sup> Lindsey, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Lindsey, p. 8. Kramer Brothers, based in Elizabeth City, was the preeminent building supply company in northeastern North Carolina, supplying the Outer Banks and Albemarle coastal communities well into the mid-twentieth century.

<sup>26</sup> Currituck County Register of Deeds, Book 68, p. 277.

<sup>27</sup> Almeta Davis Hare, "Factors Influencing the Attendance of Jarvisburg School as Revealed in Case Studies of Grades Four, Five, and Six (unpublished manuscript, Master's Thesis, Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA, August 1944)," p. 5.

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the other downstairs. The halls were dark and long.”<sup>28</sup> The lodge hall was destroyed during a storm between 1944 and 1945, and was not rebuilt.<sup>29</sup>

Jarvisburg Colored School taught children from the first through sixth grades during the 1930s and 1940s, expanding to the eighth grade later in the 1940s.<sup>30</sup> One instructor, Almeta Hare, pursued a Master’s degree at Hampton Institute (now Hampton University), and her thesis, based upon her teaching experience at Jarvisburg School, sheds much light upon the school, its resources, and its pupils in the early-to-mid-1940s. In 1943-1944, ninety pupils attended the school, a three-teacher school.<sup>31</sup> For these students, there were two enclosed outside privies, one for boys and the other for girls, with stone pits, 200 and 150 feet respectively from the building. At that time the coal stoves were still employed to heat the school, with students and teachers minding the fires, and a well, equipped with a “pitcher pump,” stood near the building. Blackboard space was “meager”, as only plasterboard painted black was available instead of slate.<sup>32</sup> Hare described the primary classrooms as being “equipped with individual chairs—the seat and the desk combined” with an additional fifteen desk-chairs in the older students’ classrooms.<sup>33</sup> In addition to books donated by the State, Jarvisburg’s teachers worked with the County Board of Education and the community to create a school library of 500 books; some students recalled that teachers often shared their own books as well.<sup>34</sup> Hare describes the school playing field as “large...equipped for playing basket ball [sic.], volley ball, and baseball,” adding that while money had been raised for swings and seesaws, restrictions on metal due to the war effort meant they were some years from arriving.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Historic Jarvisburg Colored School Website, “Stories: My Story, Jarvisburg School 1936 (Ruth Owens Dillard).” <http://www.historicjarvisburgcoloredschool.com/index.shtml>. Theorizing from the descriptions, it is probable the lodge hall was a two-story, front-gable, frame building, either two or three bays wide at the front, with a staircase in the front vestibule and classroom space above and below. No documentary photographs of the lodge are known to exist.

<sup>29</sup> Alice Hunt Lindsey, Washington, D. C. Electronic mail communication to Penne Sandbeck, 3 September 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Lindsey interview, November 2002.

<sup>31</sup> Hare, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> Hare, pp. 5-6.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* Hare mentions the upperclassmen also had ten double-seat desks.

<sup>34</sup> “Alumni try to save old Jarvisburg School.” *The Daily Advance* (Elizabeth City, NC), October 17, 2002, p. 7A;

Hare, p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Hare, p. 6.

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With the exception of occasional mischief, as when one student decided to jump out of the upper story window in the 1940s, Jarvisburg School was remembered at that time as an orderly place focused upon learning.<sup>36</sup> Its major challenge appeared to be keeping students engaged upon the path of finishing their basic education; Hare's 1944 thesis focused upon Jarvisburg School's low attendance rates by comparison to overall attendance rates in other African American schools across the state between 1939 and 1942.<sup>37</sup> A major culprit was economic necessity; the second-largest group of absentees for the 1942-1943 Jarvisburg school year was listed as "farm work." Most of the students from a very young age worked on their family's farms or had jobs; at least one student left school every day at three to pick cotton at a nearby farm, in season, to pay her school expenses.<sup>38</sup> Selected case studies from the 1943-1944 Jarvisburg school year indicate that, of the twenty-three families Hare interviewed, most of the parents had some prior education and were concerned that their children finish school; of these parents, only one had a college degree. One parent, who worked in the Norfolk (VA) Navy Yard, left his son with his wife's parents in Jarvisburg specifically to attend school there. Another child was sent from New York City, where his parents had obtained full-time jobs, to live with his grandmother expressly in order to attend school at Jarvisburg.<sup>39</sup>

Postwar consolidation and new educational reforms closed Jarvisburg Colored School. In 1950 Union Colored School (Central Elementary School) opened, and students previously attending Jarvisburg and nearby African American elementary schools were sent to the new school.<sup>40</sup> The Board of Education sold the one-half acre tract deeded by Stephen Gordon in 1894, along with the Wescott two-acre tract, to Corinth Baptist Church, using money from the sale of the surplus schools to buy equipment for Union Colored School.<sup>41</sup> Jarvisburg Colored School became a Sunday School building for Corinth Baptist Church, and, when the church burned in the 1960s,

<sup>36</sup> "Alumni hope to save school." *The Virginian-Pilot* (Norfolk, VA), October 22, 2000, p. Y1.

<sup>37</sup> Hare, pp. 1-7. Attendance tables show that enrollment at Jarvisburg School dropped from 104 students in 1939 to 90 students in 1941-1942, with an average daily attendance of 79% for the 1939-1940 school year, 76% in 1940-1941, and 84% in 1941-1942. This was at odds with an overall attendance of 90% attendance in North Carolina's African American elementary and high schools between 1939 and 1941, and 91% between 1941-1942. However, as with most schools, the largest number of absentees was due to illness.

<sup>38</sup> *The Daily Advance*, October 17, 2002; Hare, pp. 27 and 39.

<sup>39</sup> Hare, pp. 40, 44, 45, 51, 56.

<sup>40</sup> In a conversation with Mrs. Lindsey on 3 September 2009, she mentioned that Mrs. Hare continued to teach in Currituck County after receiving her degree from Hampton Institute, ending her career at Union Colored School in the 1960s.

<sup>41</sup> Currituck County Register of Deeds, Book 80, p. 173 (January 1951).

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services were held there until the new brick church was built. The former school became a community hub and the Masonic lodge continued to meet upstairs into the 1980s.

By the 1990s, the former school had deteriorated so much that the church vacated the building. A group of former Jarvisburg Colored School students organized to save the building, and established bylaws in 2002. Corinth Baptist Church deeded the Historic Jarvisburg Colored School Foundation a one-acre lot containing the school in 2005, and the group is raising money with Currituck County's assistance to restore the building, which they hope to use as a community center and small museum.

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**Section 10: Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is identified by the enclosed Jarvisburg Colored School Plat I-97. The survey map scale is 1:50, constituting the Jarvisburg Colored School lot deeded by Corinth Baptist Church to Historic Jarvisburg Colored School Association, Inc. on August 18, 2005. The lot, which is .94 acres, is bordered by Dardens Lane to its south, Caratoke Highway to its east, and Corinth Baptist Church property to the north and west. The Parcel Identification Number is 0109-000-114B-0000.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property represents the entire lot historically associated with the Jarvisburg Colored School.

**Photographs**

The following information pertains to all the photographs:

Jarvisburg Colored School

Jarvisburg, Currituck County, North Carolina

Digital originals: North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, North Carolina

Photographer: Penne Sandbeck, exteriors Peggy Birkemeier, interiors

Date: Exteriors: January 3, 2008 Interiors: September 28, 2009

1. Front view, facing west
2. Front and north side view, facing southwest
3. South side view, facing north
4. Rear view, facing east
5. Setting view, facing south
6. First floor, facing north
7. First floor, facing south
8. Second floor, facing north
9. Second floor, facing south