

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Section 8
Pg. 3 missing

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 Williams Grove School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number N side East Depot St between Hickory & Willow Sts N/A not for publication

city or town Angier N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Harnett code 085 zip code 27501

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 forth 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.)

William S. Rain Jr. SHPO 4-18-95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Williams Grove School
Name of Property

Harnett North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
	1	structures
	1	objects
1	2	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

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Front gable one-room school

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls WOOD: weatherboard
roof WOOD: shingle
other BRICK

Narrative Description

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

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.)

- [x] 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.
[x] 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.
[x] 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

Architecture

Period of Significance

1892-1925

Significant Dates

1892

1925

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
[] Other State agency
[] Federal agency
[] Local government
[] University
[] Other

Name of repository:

Williams Grove School

Name of Property

Harnett

North Carolina

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 705420 3931500
Zone Easting Northing

3 Zone Easting Northing
4 Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Campbell

organization date 25 February 1995

street & number PO Box 5182 telephone (919) 933-0012

city or town Chapel Hill state NC zip code 27514

Additional Documentation

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)

Property Owner

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

name Town of Angier

street & number PO Box 278 telephone (919) 639-2071

city or town Angier state NC zip code 27501

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 listings. 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 20503.

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Harnett County, NC

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Williams Grove School is located on the east side of Angier, North Carolina, population 2,374. The unpainted one-room frame schoolhouse measures thirty feet four inches long by twenty two feet four inches wide. It stands in a one and one half acre town-owned park within the town limits. The park is bounded by the Angier Cemetery on the west, by Williams Street and Lake Angier on the north, by the property of D.W. Denning on the east and by East Depot St. on the south. The park is surrounded by residential development to the west and east. Another town park, within which are Lake Angier, a small baseball field and sanitary facilities, lies on the north side of Williams Street. The south side of East Depot Street is a blend of residential and light commercial development. There are no parking spaces or other facilities present at the Williams Grove School. Visitors to the school generally park along Williams Street and use the facilities available on the north side of the street.

There are several noncontributing structures located within the park. An early twentieth century school bell sits atop a twelve foot post just off the southwest corner of the schoolhouse. Five feet south of the bell is a nonfunctional well house. Approximately two hundred feet west of the schoolhouse, not within the boundaries of the nominated area, sit two other buildings. The first of these buildings is an eight by six foot smokehouse, estimated to date from the 1890s. The second, a tiny three by four foot milk house that reputedly dates from the 1830s. These two buildings were donated by local residents shortly after the school was moved to the park site. The Williams Grove School Restoration Committee has expressed a willingness to either move or remove both of these structures.

The school is situated in the northeast corner of the park, approximately five hundred feet from the cemetery, twenty feet from Williams Street, fifty feet from the Denning's home and four hundred feet from East Depot Street, which becomes NC 210 at the city limits. It faces west on its site. A small creek passes to the southeast of the school. The site is level and open. Although there are several large oaks, some pines, spruce and poplars on the park grounds, the school is plainly visible from all approaches.

The one story corner braced stick frame building is supported by a six by eight inch summer beam and six by eight inch timber sills. The summer beam and the north, east and south sills are original. The origin of the current west sill is not known, but it was probably replaced after the school was moved in 1975. The lap jointed support beams rest on rock foundation piers rebuilt from the original piers, a mix of fieldstone, granite and shale. Machine headed cut nails secure the frame and are used to attach the plain heart pine weatherboards. Most of the weatherboard on the west, north and east elevations is original. Approximately thirty percent of the weatherboards on the south elevation are replacements. Approximately two thirds of these replacements date from c1920, the remainder were replaced during the 1970s restoration. The origin of the c1920 replacement weatherboards is not known. The weatherboards which were added during the 1970s restoration came from a house built in the vicinity of the school in 1888.

Boxed eaves overhang the building on all sides. A pointed arch louvered ventilation window is centered on the uppermost section of the west elevation. Although the schoolhouse had a tin roof between

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c1925 and 1975, oral histories revealed that the original roof was wood shingled. In keeping with the Restoration Committee's goal of returning the schoolhouse to its original condition, the roof is currently covered with replacement wood shingles. The exterior end common bond brick chimney was rebuilt on the new location from the original hard-fired bricks. It is located on the east gable end of the building, and is flanked by one four over four double hung window. There are three four over four double hung windows on both the north and south elevations. The easternmost windows on both the north and south elevations are placed close to the east wall, where their light illuminates the blackboards within. The second and third windows to the west are more evenly spaced along the walls. The west elevation is symmetrical. Its central door is flanked by one four over four window. The windows on this elevation are larger than those on the north, east and south elevations. The tops of the windows on the west, north and east elevations have the original wood drip edges. The windows on the south elevation, and the door on the west elevation do not. Vertical wooden board shutters, not original to the building, were added on all windows in the early 1980s to prevent vandalism. Four unbalustrated wooden board steps lead up to the entry door. The original entryway was probably composed of either a pair of narrow windowed doors or a single, wider windowed panel door, but no verification of this has, as yet, been found. The replacement (1970s) door is constructed of old vertical wooden boards nailed to horizontal wooden braces. A fifteen by ten inch plexiglass window is cut into the door at eye level. Door fittings include triangular hinges (1970s) and a cast iron rim lock with plain case and metal knob (1860-1920). Lock keeper ghost marks indicate that this lock is probably first or second generation hardware.

The door opens into a one room plan schoolhouse, oriented so that the east wall is the front of the school. The bare wood tongue and groove floor boards range from three and one half inches to five inches wide. The flush hand planed wood tongue and groove wall boards, also bare, range from eight and one quarter to nine and five eighths inches wide. The window openings on the north, east and west walls measure twenty four inches wide by fifty four inches long. The four pane sashes in these windows range from twenty three and three quarter inches to twenty four inches wide and from twenty six and three quarter inches to twenty seven and one half inches long. Most of the window sashes are replacements, taken from other old buildings in the area. The upper sash on the easternmost window of the north wall could be original. The bubbled, wavy glass of this sash is encased in a pegged frame with a slim muntin profile. The window surrounds on the north, east and south walls are plain, flush mounted one by four inch wooden boards. The window openings in the west wall measure twenty eight inches wide by seventy four inches long. The four pane sashes in these windows are twenty eight inches wide by thirty eight inches long and the surrounds are raised one by five inch plain wooden boards. The clay whitewashed brick fireplace has a brick hearth and hand planed wooden board surround. The replacement shelf mantelpiece, mounted fifty six and one half inches from the floor, is an old board measuring two inches thick by eight inches wide by eighty three inches long. Cuts in the wood surround indicate that the current mantelpiece is mounted about two inches higher than the original mantelpiece. The original blackboards, two of which flank the fireplace, were made by painting the wall boards black. These were uncovered and repainted during the restoration process. The replacement teachers rostrum, based on the oral histories of

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students who attended the school, sits on a raised six foot by six foot by six inch platform in the southeast corner of the room. Another six foot by six foot by six inch platform, where students stood to write on the board and to recite lessons, is built in the northeast corner of the room. Both platforms were rebuilt during the 1970s restoration. The schoolroom is arranged around an east-west center aisle with two longitudinal rows of double student desks on either side. Descriptions of the original desks obtained from former students at the Williams Grove School matched the desks found in the restored one room schoolhouse at the Robeson County Educational center in Lumberton, NC. The Williams Grove desks are all hand built copies of the Lumberton desks. Also in accordance with the memories of those who went to the school, long, high benches, where children placed their lunch pails and other possessions, are rebuilt along the west wall of the room. Twelve wooden pegs are mounted on this wall, places where students hung their outer clothes. Though a hickory switch which was found in the attic has disappeared, other artifacts from the schools history remain. A dogwood pointer, also found in the attic, leans against the teachers rostrum. Slates are laid on top of some of the desks, and lunch pails sit on the long back benches. In an effort to keep the building as authentic as possible, power was not brought into the school and so books, primers and other more delicate pieces of the school's past are kept in storage and brought out only when groups visit the school.

The school building and landscape have seen changes over time. A door was cut into the south elevation, the two western windows on this elevation were boarded and a small room was added to this side sometime after 1901 and before 1905. This second room was removed before 1922. A minor fire in 1925 closed the school. Sometime shortly after 1925, the school became a tenant house, a function which it served periodically until 1963. During the time of tenancy a small porch was added on the south elevation where the second room had been. An interior partition, added after 1925 and removed before 1963, cut the school laterally into two rooms, one fourteen feet long by twenty two feet wide and one sixteen feet long by twenty two feet wide. Even before the school was moved, its setting had seen changes. None of the outhouses remain on the old site and the old well, located just off the northwest corner of the building, has been filled in. A baseball field sat to the west of the school and remained in use until about 1940. A Holiness church, c1915, sat about one hundred fifty feet north of the school. Local history reports that the church was gone by 1945.

Hughie and Frances Gardner took possession of the school and surrounding property in 1958. The school continued to serve as a tenant house until 1963. It stood vacant for the remainder of the 1960s, and was used several times in the early 1970s to store grain. In 1974, Mr. & Mrs. Gardner donated the school for the purpose of restoration but stipulated that it be moved from their property. At that time, it sat on the north side of SR 1500, approximately two tenths of one mile east of the Barclaysville Road. In 1975, Barbour and Sons House Movers of Angier, NC, moved the school to its current location on the north side of NC 210, (Depot St.) within the Angier City limits. Although the school is now within the city limits, it sits in a park, occupying an open and spacious lot quite similar to the field in which it was originally sited. NC 210 (new site) and SR 1500 (old site) are both two lane rural highways which run east out of Angier. The school is oriented to NC 210 in exactly the same way it was oriented to SR 1500. The school faces

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west on the new site, just as it did in the old. The visual impact of the school has been little affected by the move. It sits about the same distance from similar roads, four hundred feet north of the shoulder on the new site, three hundred fifty feet north of the shoulder on the old. Because of this careful attention to placement and orientation, even though its location has changed, its setting retains integrity. It presents itself to the viewer in the same way on NC 210 as it did on SR 1500.

The Williams Grove School was restored to its original condition during 1975 and 1976. It retains a great deal of historic material. With the exception of the west sill, the structure of the building is intact. Approximately eighty five percent of the weatherboards are original. The original fenestration pattern has been restored and seven of the eleven fenestrations retain the original exterior surrounds and drip edges. The chimney and the foundation piers are reconstructed from original materials. The replacement wood roofing shingles are an accurate depiction of the schools original roofing material. The inside of the schoolhouse also retains a great deal of historic material. The floor and ceiling boards are original. All of the wall boards on the west, north and east walls are original. The wallboards in the northwest corner of the school are charred, evidence of the 1925 fire that closed the school. Approximately seventy percent of the wallboards on the south wall are original. The Restoration Committee used old replacement wallboards to finish out the center of this wall when the original fenestrations were restored. The interior surrounds on the windows of the west, north and east walls are original. The original floor plan has been restored. With the exception of the front door, alterations to the interior of the building have come in the form of informed recreations of the original materials.

2. Schoolbell Early Twentieth Century Noncontributing object

Heavy cast metal bell on twelve foot round pole, donated from private collection of Ms. Addie Coats, former schoolteacher.

3. Well House 1976 Noncontributing structure

Square well box with gable roof on square posts, intended to duplicate well on original site, added as part of 1976 restoration.

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary Paragraph

The Williams Grove School, an increasingly rare example of its type, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the rural one-room school in North Carolina. This one-room, front gable rectangular plan schoolhouse typifies the rural, or country school. It is a significant reflection of early public education in this state. Rural one-room schools were entirely local enterprises, but in their regularity of occurrence and commonalities of form, they were standard throughout the state. The Williams Grove School embodies the kind of rural education which persisted in many areas until the great push for school consolidation which began in the late nineteen-teens and early nineteen-twenties. The school was built on the Williams Farm in 1892 and served the white children of Black River Township District 1, east of Angier, until 1925. Along with its historic importance as a reminder of the state's educational and cultural heritage, it is a tremendously important feature on the local landscape. The community's recognition of this importance is demonstrated by the care with which the school was rescued from obscurity, moved to a setting similar to that of its period of significance, and restored with careful attention to historical detail. Ordinary people studied at the Williams Grove School, and though few of the original Williams Grove students remain, their descendants point to the school with pride, using the symbol of the building as a means of anchoring themselves and their families to the community.

HISTORIC CONTEXTS

CONTEXT: Architecture

The Williams Grove School is an extraordinarily rare and well preserved example of a late nineteenth century one-room schoolhouse. Rural, or country, schools were once a regular feature on rural landscapes throughout North Carolina. This form of architecture is typified by a front gable facade and by an often small rectangular one room plan. Two extant examples are very close in size. The Philadelphus Indian School in Robeson County, or the "Biddie" School as it was known locally, measures twenty two feet wide by thirty feet long. The Williams Grove School measures twenty two feet four inches wide by thirty feet four inches long. Country schools exhibited variation in directional orientation and in the placement, size and number of windows and doors. Some, like the Biddie School, have more windows on one long elevation than on the opposing elevation. In the case of the Rosenwald schools the long, heavily windowed elevations often faced west and east so that greatest advantage could be taken of both morning and afternoon sunlight. The practice of placing windows so that sunlight would shine directly on interior blackboards, an architectural feature exhibited by the Williams Grove School, was not unusual. Variation within the theme of the country school was also found in the tempered use of stylistic embellishment. Most of the country schools in Black River Township are reported to have been plain, community built structures. The stylistic simplicity of the Williams Grove School fits well within the range of schoolhouses described by members of the community and is comparable to the few one-room schoolhouses that remain standing in North Carolina.¹

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In 1900, there were 7,465 one teacher schools in North Carolina.² Fifty two frame schools were operating in Harnett County.³ As late as 1912, a one-room, one-teacher school was built in Black River Township District #3, west of Williams Grove. In that same year, there were five frame schoolhouses in the Township, one for each of the five districts. Four of the five structures were built as one-room schools. The Angier School, in Black River Township District #4, was a two-room, two-teacher school.⁴ Today, the Williams Grove School is the only late nineteenth century one-room, one-teacher frame schoolhouse remaining in Harnett County, and it is one of the very few still found in the state⁵.

The state sponsored architectural survey of Harnett County has not yet been undertaken, but extensive research and interviews unearthed only one other report of a late nineteenth century school in the county. The white painted frame building is located south of Erwin, just outside the town limits. It stands on Gary Hamilton's property on the east side of NC82. The c1885 twenty four foot wide by thirty six foot long frame building with hand hewn sills and summer beam was used for approximately ten years as a school, c1905-c1915, but it was originally built as a church⁶. Although the building retains some of its original features, like the eleven foot ceilings, wainscoted interior, dual entry doors on the south elevation, and molded interior window surrounds, it has been substantially altered and it retains very little structural integrity. It is currently used as a hay barn and general storage facility.

It is useful to compare the Williams Grove School to other extant examples of the one room school in North Carolina. In Robeson County, a one-room frame schoolhouse similar to the Williams Grove School is located at the Robeson County Educational Resource Center, which also features a planetarium, a media center, a demonstration classroom and a professional library. This schoolhouse was moved to its present location from western Robeson County and was restored to represent the general theme of rural education around 1900. Many of the school's original materials, like the desks, are present, and the Daughters of the American Revolution, like the Williams Grove School Restoration Committee, collaborated heavily with the community in restoring the school.

The Lizard Lick School at the Village of Yesteryear on the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, is another one-room frame schoolhouse in the state which compares to the Williams Grove School. Built c1887, and moved to the Fairgrounds from rural Wake County, the schoolhouse is interpretively restored. It serves as a museum and cultural resource center for visitors to the State Fair.

In Wayne County the Oak Plain School (NR), which was originally located in Nahunta, was moved to the Governor Charles B. Aycock Birthplace. This early twentieth century one-room frame school has also been restored and serves the functions of illustrating early educational practices in the state and of recognizing Governor Aycock's commitment to public education.

Owing to a common pattern of progressive uses, one room schoolhouses have not survived the twentieth century well. The push for school consolidation combined with technological advancements and improvements in transportation so that by the late 1930s these structures had surrendered their original functions. Schoolhouses which were not immediately abandoned were often converted to tenant houses. As the practice of tenancy fell off during the 1940s and 1950s, these buildings slowly made the transition from residence to barn, a function which very often destroyed them. The difference between the Williams

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Harnett County, 1915-1917, sums up the opinions of the day, and foreshadows the demise of the one room, one teacher school;

The day has been when the small school could do much towards meeting the requirements of the times. That day has passed. Children trained in this type of school at the present time are put to a great disadvantage when competing with children trained in the larger school.⁸

Less than three miles away, in the growing town of Angier, was one of Harnett County's two accredited High Schools. The Angier High School was lauded upon its dedication in 1919 for its cleanliness and efficiency, and for its contribution to cultural modernization. It soon began to attract away the older students of Williams Grove. After the Williams Grove School caught fire in 1925, the students of Black River Township District #1 were incorporated into the Angier Schools. Even though the damage to the school was minimal, the day of the one room, one teacher school was fast passing. It was deemed more prudent by the citizens of Black River Township District #1 to send their children on to the Angier schools, than it was to repair the Williams Grove School. The closing of this school was representative of a greater trend; the movement away from rural, individualized schools and toward consolidated, standardized schools. In its construction, its use and its abandonment, the Williams Grove School significantly represents a specific time period in the educational history of the local community and of the state of North Carolina.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Oral histories and local tradition place the building of the Williams Grove School in 1892⁹. The school was built on the north side of SR 1500, approximately two tenths of one mile east of the Barclaysville Road, on land donated by Hughie Williams. The school was originally sited so that it faced west in a level and open field, approximately three hundred and fifty feet north of SR 1500. The original site was surrounded by farmland, woods, and scattered residential, agricultural and religious buildings. The Williams family home was located seven hundred and fifty feet east of the school and the Rambeaus lived directly across from the school on the south side of SR 1500. Youngs Pond is located approximately 1000 feet northwest of the original site.

As was often the case for early schoolhouses, the raising of the building was a community affair. The land was donated by Hughie Williams. Construction materials and the labor required for building the one room frame school were donated by those who lived nearby.¹⁰ The Williams Grove School served the white children of Black River Township District 1, an area which radiated out from the school roughly three miles to the north, west and south, and roughly one mile to the east. The Williams Grove School term ran through the winter months, and was approximately four months long. Like so many other rural schools, students of all ages and grade levels were taught by one teacher who usually boarded with a family

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living nearby. Ruby Ashley, who attended Williams Grove until the third grade remembers having teachers board with her family at the house they lived in across the road from the school.¹¹

The school was originally built as a one room structure. Another room was added on the south elevation at some point during Carlie Rambeaus years there (c1895- c1903, most likely 1901-1903)¹². This side of the building was substantially altered to accommodate the addition. A central door was cut into the center of the south elevation, and the two western windows on this wall were blocked in. This second room was apparently not long lived. Mrs. Ashley's accounts of her years there, along with Biennial Reports of the Superintendents of Public Instruction 1911/1912 - 1915/1917 on file at the North Carolina Collection, UNC CH, indicate that for at least the first five years and the last fifteen years of its history, the Williams Grove School was a one-room, one-teacher school.

Early in the school term of 1925, the Williams Grove School caught fire.¹³ The fire was quickly discovered and extinguished and little damage was done, but this event marked the turning point for the Williams Grove School. Classes were never again held in the building. Students from this district were sent to other schools, mostly to the newer consolidated Angier Schools. It is likely that the Williams Grove School would have been closed soon after 1925 even if there had been no fire. In 1924, the remainder of the older students still at Williams Grove were transferred to the accredited high school in Angier¹⁴. The trend toward consolidated schools, well under way in less rural parts of the state by the late nineteen teens, caught on in Angier during the 1920s. District #1 was quite close to the town of Angier, and its students were among the first to be incorporated into the town district. Students who lived in districts further from town than District #1, e.g. District #3, continued to attend one room schools, but by the late nineteen thirties, even those students had been drawn into the town schools.

From 1926 until the early 1960s, the Williams Grove School periodically served as a tenant house. During the time of tenancy, an interior partition was built widthwise across the center of the room, and a porch was added on the south elevation where the old addition had been¹⁵. According to Hughie and Frances Gardner, the building stood empty throughout the middle and late 1960s and was used several times during the early 1970s to store grain.

In 1973, a group of women from the Ambassadors Home Extension Club became concerned about the condition of the Williams Grove School. It sat deteriorating outside of town, amid tall grass and rumors that it was going to be torn down. They approached the owners of the property, Hughie and Frances Gardner, about donating the building for the purpose of restoration. The Gardners readily agreed, but stipulated that the building keep its historic name, the Williams Grove School, and that it be moved from their property. Mr. and Mrs. D.W. Denning donated the school's new site, a one and one half acre parcel within the town limits. Under the direction of State Restoration Specialist Ed Turburg, the Williams Grove Restoration Committee set about the task of moving and restoring the old school.

In 1975, the Williams Grove School was carefully moved from its original site by Barbour & Sons House Movers of Angier, NC. This move was made with the utmost sensitivity to similarities between the old and new sites in terms of physical landscape, and in terms of orientation to compass points and to the road. Turburg also advised the Williams Grove School Restoration Committee on all aspects of the

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restoration, hence both the move and the restoration were carried out thoughtfully, methodically and with integrity.

Before the building was moved it was carefully sketched, inside and out, by Designers of Homes, Inc., Angier NC. The restoration was based on this sketch, on Turburg's research, on general knowledge about early educational buildings and practices, and especially on oral histories taken from those who had attended or taught at the school. Carlie Rambeau, a former student who has since passed away, advised the Committee about placement of the pegs on the walls for hanging clothes, and about the lunch pails, the teachers rostrum and the whitewashed fireplace. His description of the desks formerly used at Williams Grove matched the appearance of the desks in use at the restored one room schoolhouse at the Robeson County Educational Resource Center in Lumberton. Volunteer carpenters made copies of the Lumberton desks for the Williams Grove School. Workers discovered the blackboards Mr. Rambeau described buried beneath layers of paint on either side of the fireplace and on the north wall of the school. The boards were restored with black oil paint.

The original fieldstone foundation piers were disassembled, moved with the school and rebuilt with the addition of Portland cement mortar on the new site. The bricks from the original chimney were used by Frank Hobson, a local mason, to rebuild the chimney in its new location. Though most of the weatherboard is original, some boards were replaced at the time of restoration. Replacement boards and windows were taken from a nearby house built in 1888.

The Williams Grove School is another example of an historic property which had to be moved in order to be saved. If it had not been moved it would have been either actively or passively destroyed. But because the move was made with great foresight, planning, research and care, it has had a minimal impact on the historic integrity of the school.

Since its dedication on July 4, 1976, the school has served as a museum, open by appointment to historic tours, the general public and to classes from the local schools. Several teachers from the Lafayette Elementary School in Angier have already brought their classes to Williams Grove. There are currently plans for some teachers to spend a full day with their classes at the school this spring. It is hoped that entire days spent at the Williams Grove School will enable students to gain an appreciation for what school would have been like for their grandparents and great grandparents.

¹ Hughie Gardner, interview by author, 03 January 1995, Angier, NC.

² The Durham Herald, "Our School Progress", 29 August 1925.

³ Bonnie David Bunn, "The Growth and Development of Education in Harnett County" (M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina, 1928).

⁴ Report of The Public Schools of Harnett County, 1912-1914. Harnett County, NC.

⁵ Please see working file item #19, on file at The State Historic Preservation Office. In a letter to Dr. Andrew Guilford of Middle Tennessee University, Michael Southern amends the list of known country schools in the state of North Carolina. Of the schools listed in the letter, the Lizard Lick School at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, The Oak Plain School at the Governor Charles B. Aycock State Historic Site

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Williams Grove School
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and the Morotoc Park One-Room School are the only other one-room frame schoolhouse in the state known to have been built prior to 1900. The Adams School in Onslow County is described as turn-of-the-century.

⁶ Gary Hamilton, interview by author, 22 February 1995, Erwin, NC. According to Mr Hamilton, the church was originally located two hundred yards north of its current location. His mother first visited the church in 1903, and remembers the buildings later function as a school.

⁷ The Durham Herald, "Our School Progress", 29 August 1925.

⁸ Biennial Report of the Public Schools of Harnett County, 1915-1917, p6.

⁹ Logue of tape recorded interview of Carlie Rambeau, former student at the school.

Logue on file at the State Historic Preservation Office, recording in possession of Ruby Rambeaut Ashley.

¹⁰ According to Faye Price, Newburn Gardner cut and milled the lumber. Hughie Gardner recalls that when his father Talmadge, who attended the school, was asked who had built it, his reply was always, "The neighbors" (tape recorded interview of 1/3/95, tape in possession of author).

¹¹ Ruby Ashley, interview by author, 04 January 1995, Angier, NC.

¹² See Mr. Rambeau's sketch of the building as he remembers it, working file item # 1, on file at the State Historic Preservation Office.

¹³ The charred boards which serve as evidence of the fire are still visible on the northwest interior corner of the building.

¹⁴ Harnett County School News, 5 March 1924. Vol 11, #3, p2.

¹⁵ Different accounts of the school alternately refer to it as having one or two rooms. Mr Rambeaus account of the c1902 addition account for early discrepancies, while this interior partition, added later in the history of the building accounts for later descriptions which refer to the schoolhouse as having two rooms.

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Williams Grove School
Harnett County, NC

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Unpublished Interviews:

Partin, Peggy and Faye Price, principal members, Williams Grove School Restoration Committee.
Interview by author, 22 October 1994, Angier NC. Tape in possession of author.

Partin, Peggy and Faye Price, principal members Williams Grove School Restoration Committee.
Interviews by author, 11 December 1994, Angier NC. Tape in possession of author

Gardner, Hughie and Frances, former owners of Williams Grove School. Interview by author, 03 January
1995, Angier NC. Tape in possession of author

Ashley, Ruby Rambeau, former student at Williams Grove School. Interview by author, 04 January 1995,
Angier NC. Tape in possession of author.

Public Documents

Harnett County, NC. Report of the Public Schools of Harnett County. 1911-1912

Harnett County, NC. Biennial Report of the Public Schools of Harnett County. 1912-1914

Harnett County, NC. Biennial Report of the Public Schools of Harnett County. 1915-1917

Bunn, Bonnie David. "The Growth and Development of Education in Harnett County"
MA Thesis. University of North Carolina, 1928.

Private Documents

Williams Grove School Restoration Committee, files. In possession of Peggy Partin.

Mr. Hughie and Mrs. Frances Gardner, newspaper clippings. In possession of Mr. & Mrs. Gardner.

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Williams Grove School
Harnett County, NC

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The rectangular parcel included as part of the Williams Grove School nomination to the National Register of Historic Places extends north to follow the southern edge of Williams Street and east to follow the western property line of parcel #9656 on Harnett County property tax map #0673-08. The parcel is bounded on the south by a line drawn parallel to and extending out two hundred feet from the south elevation of the schoolhouse. The parcel is bounded on the west by a line drawn parallel to and extending out two hundred feet from its west elevation.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

In order to preserve the open feeling associated with rural schoolhouses, part of the park on which the school stands is nominated along with the structure. The entire park is not nominated because two unrelated structures, a milkhouse and a smokehouse, are located just outside of the proposed western boundary.

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Additional Documentation
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Williams Grove School
Harnett County, NC

Additional Documentation: Photographs

1. Williams Grove School. (All photographs)
2. Harnett County, North Carolina. (All photographs)
3. Elizabeth Campbell. (All photographs)
5. North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. (All photographs)

4,6 & 7.

Photograph #1

West elevation, camera facing east, northeast.
11 December 1994.

Photograph #2

West and south elevations, camera facing northeast.
03 January 1995.

Photograph #3

South and east elevations, camera facing northwest.
03 January 1995.

Photograph #4

East elevation, camera facing northwest.
03 January 1995

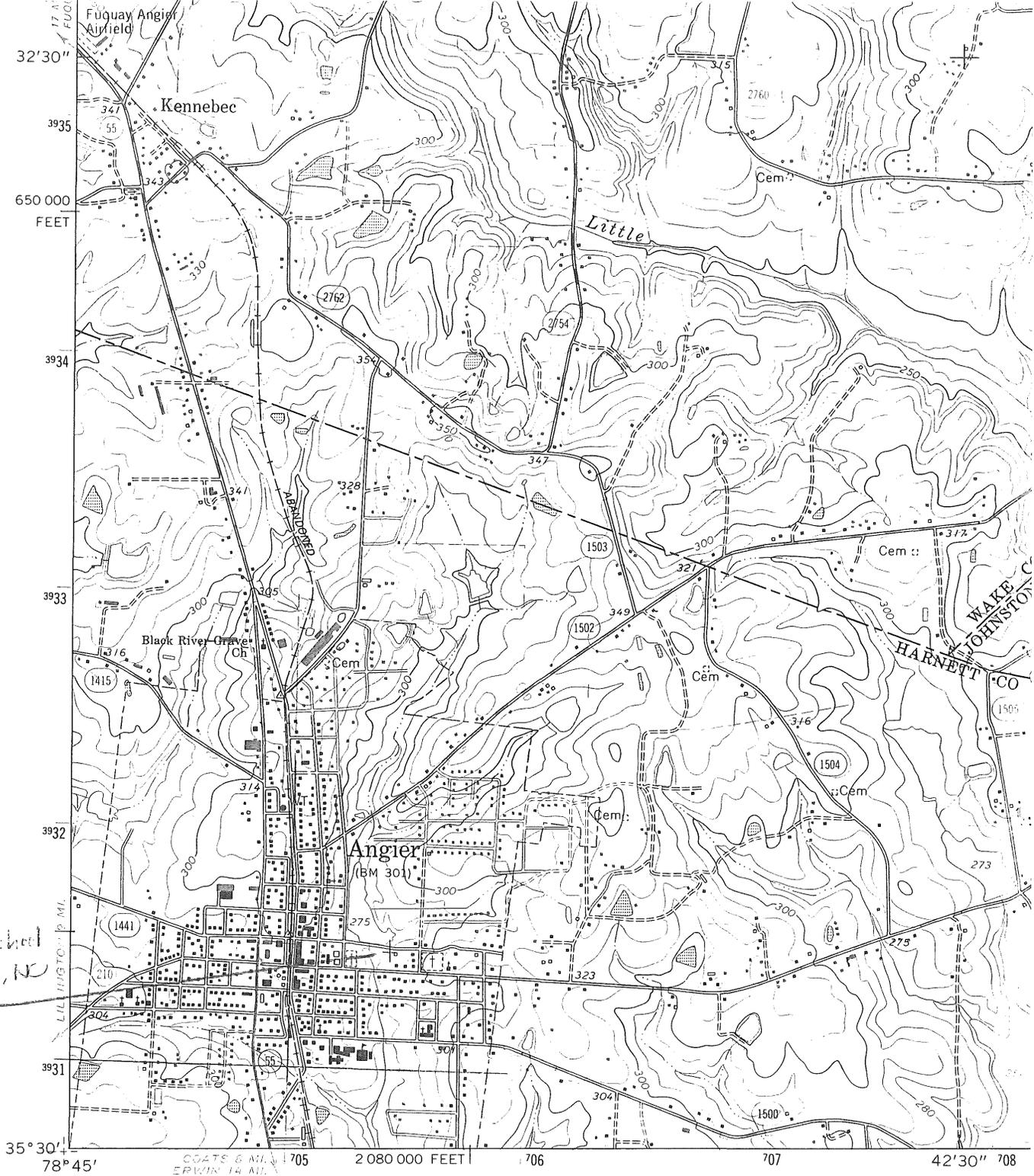
Photograph #5

Northeast interior corner, camera facing northeast.
03 January 1995

Photograph #6

Fireplace, camera facing east.
11 December 1994.

William Grave School
 Angier, Harnett Co., NC
 Angier Quad
 N/17/3931500
 E/17/705420



(LILLINGTON)
 5234 IV NE

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

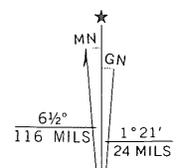
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1962. Field checked 1964

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on North Carolina coordinate system. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum. To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 12 meters south and 23 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with State of North Carolina agencies from aerial photographs taken 1980 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1981



UTM GRID AND 1981 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



WILLIAMS GROVE SCHOOL

CIRCA 1890

Donated by Mr. & Mrs. Hughes

Repaired & Painted by Mr. & Mrs. D. W. Gilling Jr.