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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

__X__ New Submission ____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of Macon County, North Carolina, ca. AD 600-1945

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

I. Native American Occupation and Early White Settlement, pre-1838
II. A Period of Transition: White Settlement in the Early Nineteenth Century
III. The Birth, Division, and Growth of a Mountain County, 1829-1874
IV. The Richness of Macon's Resources Realized, 1875-1904
V. The Transportation Revolution in Macon County, 1905-1945

C. Form Prepared by

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper Date

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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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 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 120 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

INTRODUCTION

Mountains lush with hemlocks and hardwoods surround the fertile valleys of Macon County, North Carolina. The tallest peaks stand over five thousand feet creating an impressive horizon from the river basins near the county's center. This diversity in landscape and topography resonates so clearly that it creates a similar divergence among the county's people and their ways of life. While there remain families who continue to use outhouses and live in isolated hollows, others count their home in Macon County only one of among the many vacation dwellings they own. Old men in overalls gather on Main Street in Franklin to talk about politics or the weather as tourists pass by on their way to downtown boutiques. The result is a place of immeasurable beauty where age-old traditions persist amid rapid growth and change which shows no signs of slowing.

At the same time that population growth improves the lives and livelihoods of many, this expansion challenges the preservation of a rural or small town way of life. The annual explosion of the seasonal population and the strain it creates for local water and sewage systems currently threatens the scenic Cullasaja River, a river which for decades congregations have used for their baptisms. While environmental groups like *Save the Cullasaja* fight to preserve the river, other changes threaten the landscape as well as traditional ways. U.S. 441/23, the major road leading to the county from Georgia recently underwent widening. This latest project comes at the end of a long line of expansions of the "Georgia Road" as it is known. Once a narrow route curving through the rolling hills from Franklin south to the Georgia state line, it has now become a major highway along which tremendous growth will undoubtedly occur over the next decade.

Development has precipitated an even more conspicuous alteration of the architectural landscape. Companies seeking to attract vacationers have purchased large farmsteads only to subdivide the land and construct seasonal homes. Several developers have created golf courses which blanket what was once farmland. In an extreme case, a local power company in order to harness electrical energy dammed a lake in western Macon County in the 1940s which flooded an old community.

While such actions seem sufficient to doom Macon County's historic architecture, actions have been taken to safeguard important buildings and structures. Several owners of historic houses in Franklin converted their dwellings to hotels, while the county's historical society has for its headquarters an early twentieth-century National Register commercial building. A preservation ethic exists among county residents and programs such as Pickin' on the Square, a bluegrass show held in Franklin from the spring to fall, encourage the awareness of local culture. Smaller more personal activities such as the annual making of cane syrup by descendants of Jesse Rickman

on the farm he established in 1855 work to retain everyday regional practices within families. Former Civilian Conservation Corps members tell stories about their work building roads in the county; women in one community gather weekly to weave in a studio which traces its roots to the Great Depression; and a local newspaper writer chronicles events from the county's past in her weekly column. Although such activities may seem modest they are reflective of a larger attitude county residents have toward their pasts. Macon County's people continue to strive to maintain their heritage by restoring or maintaining old homeplaces and by simply talking about the past to those interested. Such endeavors from people in this developing county will help to assure the preservation of their heritage.

E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

Macon County lies in the Blue Ridge chain of the Southern Appalachians in southwestern North Carolina. The Cowee Mountains form its eastern border, the Nantahala Mountains mark the county's western line, and the Blue Ridge extends along its southeastern edge. Clay and Cherokee counties border to the west of Macon; Graham to the northwest; Swain to the north; Jackson to the east; and Rabun County, Georgia to the south.

When Macon County was formed from Haywood in the 1828-1829 session of the General Assembly, it embraced all of what is now Cherokee, Graham, Swain, and Clay Counties and portions of present Jackson County.[1] State officials named the county for Nathaniel Macon,"an old time American patriot and gentleman" from Warren County who served as the speaker of the House of Representatives, a United States senator, and later the president of the Constitutional Convention of 1835.[2] The county seat of Franklin lies nearly at the center of the county where the Little Tennessee and Cullasaja Rivers intersect. The only other incorporated town, Highlands, occupies a mountain plateau at 3,835 feet above sea level in the southeast corner of the county.[3] The current population is approximately 30,055, with the majority of residents living in the numerous unincorporated communities scattered throughout the county.[4]

Macon encompasses 517 square miles of primarily mountainous terrain mixed with rolling hills, expansive valleys, and river basins. Elevation ranges from 5,499 feet above sea level at Standing Indian Mountain to 1,900 feet above sea level in the Little Tennessee River.[5] Dominant trees include birch, maple, and hemlock which grow at higher elevations and oaks and yellow poplars which occupy smaller mountains, valleys, and river banks. A blight in the early twentieth century wiped out the chestnut

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1 *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina at the Session of 1828-1829* (Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1829), 29.

2 Rev. C.D. Smith, *A Brief History of Macon County, N.C.* (Franklin, N.C.: the author, 1891), 6.

3 Highlands Quadrangle, United State Geological Survey Map, 1946; revised 1980.

4 Mike Decker and Mickey Duvall, *Macon County Land Use Plan* (Franklin, N.C.: Macon County Planning Department, 1992), 4, 14.

5 Decker and Duvall, *Macon County Land Use Plan*, 14.

trees which had covered approximately half the county prior to pioneer settlement. Most of the original forests have been clear cut three or more times, but since 1935 the United States Forest Service has replanted the county's forests.[6]

Three major rivers-the Nantahala, Little Tennessee, and Cullasaja-flow through the county. The Nantahala River runs south to north through the Nantahala Gorge in the northwest corner of the county. This scenic river flows out of Macon into Swain County eventually emptying into Fontana Lake. The Little Tennessee River traverses Macon in a northerly direction and flows into Swain and, like the Nantahala, spills into Fontana Lake. The Cullasaja originates from Lake Sequoyah in Highlands and flows to the northwest through the Cullasaja Gorge where it merges with the Little Tennessee. A late-nineteenth century traveler noted the "Incesantly [sic] tumultuous waters, numerous falls, and restless swiftness" characterize the Cullasaja River.[7] Myriad small branches and creeks flow through the county. Dams on Lake Emory, Lake Nantahala, and Sequoyah Lake, supply energy for the county's hydroelectric plants.

The following discussion of Macon County's history from the time of Cherokee occupation to 1945 is divided into four periods which reflect distinct phases of historical development. David Moore, archaeologist with the Division of Archives and History, authored the first section of this report which deals with Cherokee residency and early white settlement and extends to 1838, the year of mass Cherokee removal from North Carolina to the west. The second period commences in 1829, the year the county government was organized, and extends to 1874, the eve of the boom of tourism. The third period begins in 1875, the year Highlands was founded, and ends in 1904, the year before the Tallulah Falls Railroad reached Macon County. The fourth period spans the era of a revolution in travel and technology beginning the year the rail line reaches Macon County in 1905 and concludes with the end of World War II. All references to sources are contained in the endnotes which follow the text. References to particular survey properties are noted by the individual survey site number, such as "MA 100."

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[6] *Macon County Soil Survey*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), 8.

[7] A. Davis Smith, *Western North Carolina Historical and Biographical* (Charlotte: A.D. Smith, 1890), 75.

I. NATIVE AMERICAN OCCUPATION AND EARLY WHITE SETTLEMENT, PRE-1838

Native American Cultural Traditions

The oldest structures present in Macon County today are not frame houses or even log cabins but earthen mounds built by ancestors of the Cherokee Indians. These mounds, the source of much folklore and speculation, represent a rich and complex Native American cultural tradition. Their presence on today's landscape is symbolic of the enduring but poorly understood history of Native Americans in western North Carolina. For, although Cherokee Indian history and traditions are closely associated with this area, few people understand that Native Americans inhabited what is now Macon County for at least 11,000 years before Euroamerican settlers arrived in the region. Nearly 450 archaeological sites are recorded in the Macon county site file in the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology. Many others are yet to be discovered. Archaeological investigations of some of these sites help to tell Macon County's earliest history.

The earliest archaeological evidence of Native Americans in the region dates to the Paleo-Indian Period (ca. 9500-8000 BC) when small groups of hunters and gatherers traveled throughout the southern mountains. Only a few spear points from this period have been recovered in Macon County. The succeeding Archaic Period (7000-1000 BC) is marked by a large increase in Native American populations who were still practicing a hunter and gatherer lifestyle; hundreds of small campsites from this period are located throughout the county.[8]

The Woodland Period (1000 B.C.-A.D. 1000) appears to have been a time of great change in the southern mountains. Indians began settling into more sedentary villages where limited gardening (gourds, sumpweed, and plant species such as chenopodium, for example) probably augmented the traditional diet of wild plant foods and animals. Few Woodland archaeological sites have been excavated in western North Carolina, but recent investigations at the Macon County Industrial Park site (31MA185), have revealed a large middle Woodland (ca. AD 600) village covering over three acres located in the Cartoogechaye valley a few miles west of Franklin. The site is particularly noteworthy for the presence of large quantities of mica. It is likely that this

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[8] Burton L. Purrington, "Ancient Mountaineers: an Overview of the Prehistoric Archaeology of North Carolina's Western Mountain Region" in *The Prehistory of North Carolina*, ed. Mark A. Mathis and Jeffrey J. Crow (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1983), 107-110.

area was a mica processing site where locally mined mica was cut into shapes and traded to Indians from as far away as the Ohio River Valley.[9]

By 1100 AD Indians in Macon County were settled in large (one to three acres) permanent villages, most of which consisted of twenty to fifty homes surrounded by a palisade; settlements were concentrated in the larger valleys including the Little Tennessee, the Iotla, Cartoogechaye, and Cullasaja. The Indians were agriculturists who grew corn, squash, tobacco and sunflowers. They are representatives of the Mississippian cultures in the southeastern United States and they were probably direct ancestors of the historic period Cherokee Indians.[10]

The social and political organizations of these Cherokee ancestors are not well understood. Many Mississippian cultures are thought to have been complex, highly organized societies, in which chiefs, priests, and elite relatives enjoyed a higher degree of social and political power than that of the common people. However, Dickens suggests that while there is some indication of status differences among these people, their societies were probably not complex chiefdoms.[11] Whether chiefdom level societies or not, by AD 1300, they were the first people to create permanent cultural structures, indeed monuments, on the landscape of Macon County. Earthen mounds, flat-topped platforms on which chiefs, priests, or council houses were placed, were built at the most powerful towns. Of the at least four mounds which were built along the Little Tennessee River, three are located in Macon County: one at Otto (located at the Coweeta Creek archaeological site); Nikwasi in the Town of Franklin; and one at Cowee. The fourth mound is located in Dillard, Georgia.

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[9] Ruth Y. Wetmore, David Moore, and Linda Hall, "Summary of Archaeological Investigations at the Macon County Industrial Park Site (31Ma185), Macon County, N.C., report prepared for Macon County Board of County Commissioners, 1996.

[10] Roy S. Dickens, Jr., *Cherokee Prehistory*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972).

[11] Roy S. Dickens,Jr., "The Origins and Development of Cherokee Culture," in *The Cherokee Indian Nation: A Troubled History*, ed. Duane H. King, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 3-32; Roy S. Dickens, Jr., "An Evolutionary-Ecological Interpretation of Cherokee Cultural Development," *The Conference on Cherokee Prehistory*, assembled by David G. Moore, Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, 1986), 81-94.

As a result of tremendous cultural upheaval in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, eighteenth-and nineteenth-century Cherokee were unaware that the origins of the mounds lay with their own ancestors. As a traveler to the county in 1848 commented, "the builders of these mounds are unknown, and all that even the wise of the present generation can do is to look upon them in silence and wonder."[12] As William Bartram observed in 1776,

> The Cherokees themselves are as ignorant as we are, by what people or for what purpose these artificial hills were raised; they have various stories concerning them, the best of which amount to no more than mere conjecture, and leave us entirely in the dark; but they have a tradition common with the other nations of Indians, that they found them in much the same condition as they now appear, when their forefathers arrived from the West and possessed themselves of the country...[13]

The loss of such important cultural heritage may have been due to some degree of cultural disruptions suffered by Cherokee ancestral populations between 1540, when De Soto's army crossed the mountains, and the early 1700's when contact with the English colonists begins. The Cherokee people of the eighteenth century were living a different lifestyle from their ancestors.

In the eighteenth century, Cherokee territory covered some 40,000 square miles in the Carolinas, Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Virginia, and West Virginia. Most of this area was used for hunting; settlements were concentrated in and around the southernmost Appalachian Mountain ranges. Four spatially (and linguistically) distinct groups of settlements were recognized. The Middle towns consisted of settlements along the Little Tennessee and Tuckasegee Rivers in present-day Macon County. Valley towns were located on the Hiwassee and Valley rivers in present day Clay and Cherokee Counties of North Carolina. Cherokee communities on the headwaters of the Tennessee River in Tennessee were known as Overhill towns, while Lower Towns were those at the headwaters of the Savannah River and in the foothills of South Carolina.[14]

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[12] Charles Lanman, *Letters from the Alleghany Mountains* (New York: George Putnam, 1849), 80.

[13] William Bartram, *Travels of William Bartram*, ed. Mary Van Doren (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1928), 297.

[14] James Mooney, Myths of the Cherokees and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees, (Washington, D.C.: 19th and 7th Annual Reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology; reprint, Nashville: Charles and Randy Elder, Booksellers, 1982), 14-15.

Ethnohistoric accounts, such as diaries and journals of explorers, naturalists, and soldiers who traveled in the area during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, represent one source of information about Cherokee who lived in what is now Macon County. Unfortunately, these accounts present only brief glimpses of Cherokee history and cultural activities at a time when their very existence was threatened first by the establishment of trading relationships with colonial representatives and later by warfare and continued conflict with the new American government. However, archaeology provides a second source of information with details of the Revolutionary era settlements.

Cherokee Middle Towns And Architecture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century

The Middle towns included numerous individual settlements and at times during the eighteenth century, Macon County was home to some of the tribes' most important settlements.[15] Maps and census records show forty one named Middle Towns from different times in the eighteenth century.[16] The Hunter map of 1730 lists the most (twenty one), fifteen of which may have been located in Macon County including Echoe, Nucossey, Cowe, Watoga, Jore, Cuttagochi, Connuea, and Tunanulte. The spelling of town names is erratic in the historic documents; some towns may appear with three or four different spellings, further confusing their temporal and geographic placement.[17] Among the other Cherokee towns in present day Macon County were *Kulsetsiyi*, which means "honey-locust place," located on the Cullasaja River; *Talikwa* near the mouth of Tellico Creek; *Gatu-getse-yi*, "the new settlement place," which stood near Cartoogechaye Creek; *Tommassee* on Burningtown Creek; and communities on Watauga Creek, Iotla Creek, and the Nantahala River.[18]

General Architectural Features - Houses and Mounds

Before European contact Cherokee lived in two types of houses. A circular dwelling built of a wooden frame and covered with wattle and daub typically served as the winter residence. One traveler described the winter house as "about thirty feet Diameter, and fifteen feet high, in [the] form of a Cone, with Poles and thatched, without any air-hole, except a small door about three feet high and eighteen Inches wide." To

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15 Ibid., 14.

16 Betty Anderson Smith, " Distribution of Eighteenth -Century Cherokee Settlements," in *The Cherokee Indian Nation*, ed. Duane H. King (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 46-60.

17 Ibid., 54-55.

18 *The Franklin Press*, June 19, 1925.

heat the structure, Cherokee burned "a fire of well seasoned drywood."[19] Hides or mats covered beds or benches located along the interior walls. During the summer months Cherokee lived in either an oval dwelling with a tensioned wall and roof system or a rectangular dwelling with numerous interior posts which may have supported a gabled roof. The summer house featured a smoke hole in the center of the roof. Many Cherokee in the southern Appalachians lived in these types of dwellings into the late eighteenth century.[20]

Once Europeans began to permeate Cherokee territory in the mid-eighteenth century, log buildings became a common house form for the tribe. On his visit to Cowee in 1775, William Bartram described "about one hundred dwellings, near the banks of the Tanase [sic], on both sides of the river." Bartram described a typical dwelling as an "oblong four square building, of one story high; the materials consisting of logs or trunks of trees, stripped of their bark, notched at their ends...plaistered well, both inside and out, with clay well tempered dry grass, and the whole covered or roofed with the bark of the chestnut tree or long broad shingles."[21]

Mounds

Perhaps the most important structure in the Middle Towns along the Tennessee River was the mound. Even today the mound remains a powerful symbol of the past and is the source of much folklore. James Mooney's well-known account of the stories associated with mounds is best understood as the folklore of mounds. According to Mooney, Cherokee recounted that earlier peoples had built the mounds: "Some say the mounds were built by another people. Others say they were built by the ancestors of the old Ani-Kituhwagi for townhouse foundations,..." Mooney also tells the story of how the mound was made by first arranging stones in a circle then building a fire near the body of a recently deceased chief or priest. Various objects such as beads and eagle feathers were placed near the fire and a priest performed a ceremony to pervade the objects with a disease to afflict any attacker who attempted to later destroy the village. Next women brought dirt in baskets where it was placed atop the stones, the objects, and the corpse. The mound was built around and enveloped a hollow cedar tree trunk

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[19] Louis De Vorsey, Jr. ed., *DeBrahm's Report of the General Survey in the Southern District of North America* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), 110.

[20] J. Ralph Randolph, *British Travelers Among the Southern Indians, 1660-1763*, 11-12; Charles H. Faulkner, "Origin and Evolution of the Cherokee Winter House," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 3 (Spring 1978): 89.

[21] Bartram, *Travels of William Bartram*, 296.

through which the smoke from a fire at the bottom billowed upward. The remaining earth was piled up eventually forming the mound. The builders constructed ramps leading to the summit which was flat and accommodated the council house. A fire keeper stayed in the house and fed the eternal sacred fire through the hollow log. Only the larger mounds, such as the one at Nikwasi, featured the everlasting fire and from this flame other settlements started their own fires for special ceremonies.[22]

The archaeological evidence for the process of mound building is somewhat different and makes clear that the mounds were built and used by Cherokee ancestors. Two major mound excavations were conducted in the 1960s by archaeologists at the Research Laboratories of Anthropology (RLA) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. These were the sites of Garden Creek in Haywood County and Coweeta Creek in Macon County.

The investigation of Garden Creek showed that one of the platform mounds at the site had been built over the earlier foundations of two earth lodges which were built and used sometime from the ninth or tenth century AD[23] Once the earth lodges were abandoned and filled in, layers of soil were added to build the platform mound. A building was placed at the mound summit to serve as a chief's or priest's house.[24] Although this summit structure had a central hearth on the floor, there was no evidence of a central fire in the middle of the mound, nor any burial around which the mound was built.

Much the same construction details were found at the Coweeta Creek site, located on the Little Tennessee River about eight miles south of Franklin in Macon County. The site was excavated by archaeologists from the RLA from 1965 through 1970. Although a few details of the site are mentioned in Dickens (1976) and Keel (1976), the major source of information on the mound construction is found in an unpublished Masters thesis by Keith Egloff (1971). The following is summarized from Egloff's work.

In 1965 the mound was heavily eroded from plowing; though only four feet high in 1965, originally it may have been as tall as ten feet. It was placed against a slight slope in a natural terrace along the river. Excavation revealed six superimposed town

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22 Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, 395-396.

23 Roy S. Dickens, Jr., *Cherokee Prehistory*, 99-101.

24 Ibid., 87.

house floors on the mound summit. Remnants of a ramp were present on the southeast (plaza) side.[25]

Each of the floors was of hard puddled clay and each featured an associated basin hearth. Structure size was somewhat variable: "Structure 1 appeared to be a rectangular town house with rounded corners that was oriented northwest by southeast and measured roughly 46 by 48 feet...", while Floor 2 [Structure 2?] was approximately 26 by 31 feet, and slightly depressed in the center.[26]

Few artifacts were recovered from floor surfaces. However, numerous potsherds were found concentrated along the inner edge of the structure, presumably swept off the floor and under the benches lining the interior wall. The potsherds were from Cherokee vessels. In addition, floors 1-5 (i.e.; all floors except 6, the earliest) contained European glass beads.[27]

It is likely that the Coweta Creek site dates to at least as early as the sixteenth century and perhaps as late as the eighteenth century. It is not certain if this site is referred to in any of the eighteenth-century written records.

William Bartram's description of town-houses and mounds at the Cherokee towns of Watoga and Cowe on the Little Tennessee River attests to the use of these public buildings in western North Carolina and his 1776 description of Cherokee council or town-houses provides an abundance of detail concerning their construction and interior and exterior appearance.

> The council or town-house is a large rotunda, capable of accommodating several hundred people: it stands on the top of an ancient artificial mount of earth, of about twenty feet perpendicular, and the rotunda on the top of it being above thirty feet more, gives the whole fabric an elevation of about sixty feet from the common surface of the ground.
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> The rotunda is constructed after the following manner: they first fix in the ground a circular range of posts or trunks of trees, about six feet high, at equal distances, which are notched at top, to receive into them, from one to another, a range of beams or wall plates; within this is another circular

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25 Keith Touton Egloff, "Methods and Problems of Mound Excavation in the Southern Applachian Area" (Master's Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1971), 52.

26 Ibid., 49-52.

27 Ibid., 61-62.

> order of very large and strong pillars, above twelve feet high, notched in like manner at top, to receive another range of wall plates; and within this is yet another or third range of stronger and higher pillars but fewer in number, and standing at a greater distance from each other; and lastly, in the centre stands a very strong pillar, which forms the pinnacle of the building, and to which the rafters centre at top; these rafters are strengthened and bound together by cross beams and laths, which sustain the roof or covering, which is a layer of bark neatly placed, and tight enough to exclude the rain, and sometimes they cast a thin superficies of earth over all. There is but one large door, which serves at the same time to admit light from without and the smoak to escape when a fire is kindled; but as there is but a small fire kept, sufficient to give light at night, and that fed with dry small sound wood divested of its bark, there is but little smoke. All around the inside of the building, betwist the second range of pillars and the wall, is a range of cabins or sophas, consisting of two or three steps, one above or behind the other, in theatrical order, where the assembly sit or lean down; these sophas are covered with mats or carpets, very curiously made of thin splints of Ash or Oak, woven or platted together; near the great pillar in the centre the fire is kindled for light, near which the musicians seat themselves, and round about this the performers exhibit their dances and other shows at public festivals, which happen almost every night throughout the year.[28]

This description occurs in the context of Bartram's visit to the town of Cowe and it is usually cited as a description of the Cowe town-house. However, it is possible that it represents not a specific description but instead is a more general description of Cherokee town-houses.[29]

The Nikwasi and Cowee mounds remain in Macon County today. Because of its importance to the Middle Cherokee, the Nikwasi Mound remains one of the most prominent and important earthen mounds in western North Carolina. Archaeologists have not excavated the mound, but a test pit at the base of the mound revealed pre-eighteenth century sherds and shell tempered ceramics. After a flood in 1886 or 1887 washed away earth from the mound area, a silver British gorget, a silver bracelet inscribed with the date 1775, a pair of scissors, a razor, glass beads, and a pair of

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[28] William Bartram, *Travels of William Bartram*, 297-298.

[29] David G. Moore, "Overview of Historic Aboriginal Public Architecture in Western North Carolina," Paper presented at 47th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference, Mobile, Alabama, 1990.

earrings were recovered.[30] In 1946 the newly formed Macon County Historical Society purchased the mound from Roy Carpenter, who planned to level the structure, and conveyed it to the town of Franklin.[31]

The Cowee Mound located near the village of West's Mill in the Cowee community stands on the Joshua Hall Farm (MA 257) adjacent to the Little Tennessee River. This mound, once the center of a large Cherokee village, now stands in a cattle pasture.

Fish Weirs

Another type of structure credited to the Cherokee is fish weirs. Located in the Little Tennessee and Nantahala Rivers of Macon County, these river stone, V-shaped structures stand twenty to thirty centimeters high. The bottom of the V is downstream so that fish pass through and into a basket or trap. According to archaeologist Anne Frazier Rogers, weirs are located in shallow portions of a river near a low river bank so that they are accessible. As is the case of the Little Tennessee River weir, a mound or other archaeological site associated with the Cherokee typically stands nearby. Determining the date of construction of weirs remains impossible: Early eighteenth century travelers to North Carolina described the weirs, and Macon County residents attest to the continued use of the weirs after Indian removal despite a 1881 law which outlawed the use of baskets "for the purpose of catching fish in the [Nantahali] River."[32] According to Pine Grove resident Bill Tippett, his grandfather used the weirs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[33]

The Little Tennessee River fish weir is situated in the middle of the river just south of the village of West's Mill in the Cowee community. Cherokee used this river stone, v-shaped structure to trap fish in a basket which they placed downstream at the

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30 Joffre L. Coe, *National Register Nomination for Nequasee*, (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1972).

31 *The Franklin Press*, October 10, 1946.

32 *Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at its Session of 1881* (Raleigh: Ashe and Gatling, 1881), 79-80.

33 Anne Frazier Rogers, "Fish Weirs as Part of the Cultural Landscape," in *Appalachian Cultural Resources Workshop Papers*, ed. Ruthanne Livaditis Mitchell (Atlanta: National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 1991), 48; Bill Tippett, interview with author, Piney Grove community, March 14, 1994.

bottom of weir. After Cherokee removal, whites maintained and rebuilt the weirs so that they could trap fish.

Less well preserved is the Nantahala River fish weir, located adjacent to the Standing Indian campground in the Nantahala National Forest in southwestern Macon County. While portions of this structure have been destroyed through flooding, one side remains completely intact.

Middle towns in the Ethnohistoric Literature

Nikwasi

Indians occupied Nikwasi from as early as 750-200 BC until 1776 when troops under the command of General Griffith Rutherford destroyed it. Nikwasi covered approximately one hundred acres in a floodplain along the Little Tennessee River and was home to several hundred Cherokee.[34] Nikwasi stood as the most important of the Middle towns and from here Cherokee colonized areas of upper South Carolina and northeast Georgia.[35] At the heart of this sacred town stood the Nikwasi mound, one of the best preserved of the mounds in western North Carolina.

Cowee

North of Nikwasi where Cowee creek flows into the Little Tennessee River stood another Cherokee town, *Kawiyi* (Cowee), which is believed to mean, "The Place of the Deer Clan."[36] In 1767, Thomas Griffiths, an agent for the English potter Josiah Wedgewood traveled to Cowee in order to secure white clay for making porcelain from a nearby pit. In November, Griffiths "set off for...Cowee Town on the Tenassee River which Runs into the Massisipy [sic]." After purchasing tools, blankets, and bear skins from a trading post at Cowee, for the next month and a half he proceeded to excavate the clay. In his journal Griffiths described the severe winter: "the River Tenassee tho Shallow at this place, and a Strong Current yet twice I saw it frozen over in the Morning. Upon encountering Indians Griffith described them "trublesom" and in order to pacify them "invited 'em Together and heated 'em with Rum and such Musick as I was

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34 Joffre L. Coe, *National Register Nomination for Nequasee.*

35 David H. Corkran, "Cherokee Pre-History," *North Carolina Historical Review* 34 (October 1957): 461.

36 *The Franklin Press*, June 19, 1925.

capable of, which made 'em dance with great agility, espetially when the Bottle had gon."[37]

In 1775, when naturalist William Bartram traveled throughout western North Carolina collecting and studying plant species, he described Cowee as:

> situated on the bases of the hills on both sides of the river, near to its bank, and here terminates the great vale of Cowe [sic]...ridges of hills rising grand and sublimely one above and beyond another, some boldly and majestically advancing into the verdant plain...whilst others far distant, veiled in blue mists, sublimely mount aloft, with yet greater majesty lift up their pompous crests and overlook vast regions.[38]

Bartram described the town as having one hundred houses surrounding the twenty foot high mound and the townhouse on top. The town-house Bartram described was spacious enough for most of Cowee's inhabitants.[39]

Watoga

Bartram describes his entry into Watoga as follows:

> "Riding through this large town, the road carried me winding about through their little plantations of Corn, Beans, &c. up to the council-house, which was a very large dome or rotunda, situated on the top of an ancient artificial mount, and here my road terminated."[40]

Thus, Watoga appears to be another town which held a mound and council house.

The Cherokee Middle Towns in Colonial Era History

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[37] William Anderson, ed. "Cherokee Clay, from Duche to Wedgewood: The Journal of Thomas Griffiths, 1767-1768," *North Carolina Historical Review* 63 (October 1986): 505-506.

[38] William Bartram, *Travels of William Bartram* (Philadelphia: James and Johnson, 1791; reprint, New York: Dover, 1955), 286.

[39] Ibid.

[40] William Bartram, *Travels of William Bartram*, 240.

The first historic period record of English contact in the Cherokee Middle Towns occurred in 1730, when Sir Alexander Cuming traveled to Nikwasi, the site of present day Franklin. The purpose of Cuming's trip was to negotiate a treaty to create an alliance between the tribe and the English in the latter's conflict with the French.[41]

The Cherokee in Conflict

Cherokee who had survived a smallpox epidemic that killed half the tribe in 1738 faced an even greater threat between 1760 and 1794 when whites settlers waged a series of violent campaigns on Indians in present day Macon County. The conflict between the English and Cherokee originated just prior to the French and Indian War when the Cherokee informally allied themselves with the French after the English attempted to build forts in Cherokee territory.[42] In order to foster Cherokee support, the French gave them gifts and promised improved trade. The Cherokee were inclined to support the French because, unlike the British, the French advocated national ownership of the land instead of individual ownership in the Mississippi watershed.[43]

English hostilities with Cherokee erupted in 1760 when a militia of 1,600 under Colonel Archibald Montgomery destroyed the Cherokee towns in South Carolina and then proceeded toward the Middle Towns in present day Macon County. Before the soldiers could reach Nikwasi, a substantial force of Cherokee warriors ambushed Montgomery's group killing almost one hundred of the English soldiers and pushing them back into South Carolina.[44]

A year after Montgomery's thwarted raid, Colonel James Grant and a garrison of 2,600 soldiers, including Chickasaw and Catawba allies, defeated the Cherokee and destroyed many of the Middle Towns. During the invasion the combined forces of soldiers and Indians burned Cherokee houses and outbuildings, killed livestock, and obliterated crops. Following this campaign the Cherokee endured a famine as well as a rash of diseases. The Cherokee made peace with the English in 1761, but continued to

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[41] Mooney, Myths of the Cherokee, 35; J. Ralph Randolph, *British Travelers Among the Southern Indians, 1660-1763* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 119-121.

[42] Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, 39-40.

[43] E. Lawrence Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina, 1663-1763* (Raleigh: Carolina Charter Tercentenary Commission, 1963; Raleigh: Department of Archives and History, 1968), 60-61.

[44] Theda Purdue, *Native Carolinians: The Indians of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1985), 33.

suffer through a series of treaties in which much of their hunting grounds in Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky went under British control.[45]

The British won the war with France, but not without concessions to the Cherokee whom the British crown saw as an important ally. In 1763, in order to mollify the Indians, the British king barred white settlement in Cherokee territory west of the Appalachians. This royal act incensed colonists who wanted to moved westward, but secured an alliance between the Cherokee and the British crown in the Revolutionary War.[46]

It was during the Revolution in 1776 that Nikwasi suffered final defeat at the hands of white colonists. During an attack led by General Griffith Rutherford, Nikwasi and about fifty other Cherokee towns were burned. At the town of *Kul-etseyi* on the Cullasaja a relatively small number of Indians died at the hands of Rutherford's troops. Those who survived hid out in the mountains foraging for whatever food was available. Despite retaliation against Rutherford's troops at Wayah Gap where "the Indians made a stand...and a hard fought engagement took place, with a loss to the Americans," Cherokee in present Macon never regained the position they had held in the mid-eighteenth century.[47] Following the 1776 campaigns, the Cherokee gave up their lands east of the Blue Ridge Mountains.[48]

The new American government set about to "civilize" the Cherokee and many of the Cherokee began living much like whites did, establishing farms, fencing livestock, and plowing. With their hunting grounds now in the hands of settlers and the deer skin trade diminished by competition from white traders, many Cherokee viewed market agriculture as their route to survival and a few of the wealthiest landowning Cherokee in Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee even owned slaves to work their land.[49] While many Cherokee adopted agricultural methods they learned from whites, Cherokee in what is

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45 Ibid., 34.

46 Ibid., 35.

47 Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, 395. *The Franklin Press*, June 19, 1925.

48 *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1883-1884* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 150.

49 Theda Perdue, "Red and Black in the Southern Appalachians," in *Blacks in Appalachia*, ed. William H. Turner and Edward J. Cabbell (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1985), 27.

now Macon County proved to be less interested in gaining wealth and attempted to retain their cultural ways.[50]

Despite attempts by some Cherokee to live according to white society, some Cherokee living in western North Carolina migrated westward during the early nineteenth century. The Cherokee, most of whom migrated to the territory which is now Arkansas, sought to find their own economic opportunities and wished to escape control by white government.[51] The burning of Cowee in the 1780s no doubt contributed to their feelings of helplessness and may have acted as an additional motivation to Cherokee in Middle territory.[52] By the time of the 1809 Cherokee census, only 1,054 Indians remained in the Middle Towns of western North Carolina.[53]

A Final Tragic Exit

The 1802 the Meigs-Freeman line had established the boundary of the Cherokee Nation to the east of Macon County in what is now Jackson County. The Treaty of 1819 superseded the 1802 agreement and established a new eastern border which followed

> along the ridge which divides the waters of the Highwassee and Little Tellico, to the Tennessee river, at Tallassee, thence, along the main channel, to the junction of the Cowee and Nanteyalee; thence, along the ridge in the fork of said river, to the top of the Blue Ridge...[54]

This new treaty relinquished Cherokee land east of the Nantahala Mountains and opened up a large portion of the territory within present Macon County to legal white settlement. While the Cherokee lost control of most of their land in Macon County, the

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[50] George E. Frizzell, "The Cherokee Indians of Macon County," in *The Heritage of Macon County, North Carolina*, ed. Jessie Sutton (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company, 1987), 3.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, 61.

[53] Laura A.W. Phillips, "Draft Report, US 23/441, Macon County, North Carolina," December 1989, 17.

[54] Charles J. Kappler, ed., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. II (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1971), 177.

portion along the Nantahala River in what is now western Macon remained in Cherokee hands until 1838.[55]

The constant pushing westward of white settlers into former Cherokee territory proved to be the force which closed the final chapter on Indian occupation of western North Carolina. When the state created Macon County in 1828, the boundaries included all of the Cherokee Nation within North Carolina (present day Cherokee, Clay, and Graham Counties, as well as portions of Jackson and Swain Counties). With new settlers arriving in the county, there seemed little hope for the Cherokee to gain back their land and their fate was sealed in December 1835 with the drafting of the Treaty of New Echota. For five million dollars, a small group of Indians representing the Cherokee Nation ceded all of the tribe's land east of the Mississippi to the United States government. The treaty provided for removal of the Indians, who numbered 3,644 in North Carolina in 1835, to what is now Oklahoma at the expense of the federal government. But when the Senate ratified it in 1836, the agreement included a clause which stipulated that no Cherokee were to remain in their former territory.[56]

The idea of removal met with fierce resistance throughout the Cherokee Nation. So determined were the approximately ten thousand Indians living in the Southeast to remain that in 1838 President Jackson dispatched General Winfield Scott and 7,000 U.S. Army troops, militia, and volunteers to forcibly remove the Cherokee. While New Echota in Georgia functioned as the headquarters for the operation, Fort Scott at Aquone in Macon County served as an army outpost for rounding up Cherokee in the area.[57] By this time most Cherokee in present day Macon County lived in Nantahala, a community near Aquone.[58]

From posts located throughout the former Cherokee Nation, Indians were marched in groups westward during the next two years. By the end of removal thousands of Indians died along the "Trail of Tears." Those fortunate enough to escape fled into the mountains thereby evading forced removal from their homeland. Others

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55 Frizzell, "The Cherokee Indians of Macon County," 4.

56 George D. Harmon, "The North Carolina Cherokees and the New Echota Treaty of 1835," *North Carolina Historical Review* 6 (July 1929): 238.

57 Clarence W. Griffen, *Western North Carolina Sketches* (Forest City, N.C.: Forest City Courier, 1941), 4.

58 *The Franklin Press*, March 25, 1992.

left the trail and returned home, while still others made the trip back to western North Carolina once they reached Oklahoma. Of the almost one thousand Cherokee who avoided initial removal by federal troops, seventy-one were from Nantahala.[59]

Despite an attempt by the federal government to stage a second Cherokee removal in the 1841, whites in North Carolina sought no further action against the Indians. In fact, several whites within Macon County supported the Cherokee and their desire to remain in the area. William Siler, an early settler, provided the Cherokee land on Cartoogechaye Creek where several Indian families established the Sand Town community. The continued evidence of Cherokee occupation in Macon is found in an 1851 census which reported 121 Indians living in the county. The Sand Town Indians survived in Macon County for several decades and it was not until the late nineteenth century that the group dissolved. By 1900 the remaining Sand Town group had either died out or merged with the Cherokee at the Qualla Boundary in Jackson.[60]

II. A Period of Transition: White Settlement in the Early Nineteenth Century

When the treaty opening up present Macon County to settlement was ratified in 1819, several white families and traders already resided in the area. In 1775 William Bartram encountered a white man near Cowee "who kept here a trading house, being married to a Cherokee woman of family." According to Bartram, the family kept "a stock of cattle, and his helpmate being an excellent house-wife...treated us with cream and strawberries." The 1819 treaty made such settlement legal and encouraged others to pour into the area which at that time was still Haywood County. [61]

Soon after the ratification of the Treaty of 1819, Jacob Siler and William Britton of Asheville set out for present Macon County. According to local history they met Cherokee Chief Balltown George who sold Siler and Britton 640 acres in a valley where they built a trading post. Other members of the Siler family migrated to the area; eventually Jacob's brother, William, bought out Britton's interest in the trading post. In 1822, William Siler built a two-story log house known as "Hickory Grove."[62]

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[59] Ibid.; *The Franklin Press*, February 18, 1982.

[60] John R. Finger, "The Abortive Second Cherokee Removal, 1841-1844," *The Journal of Southern History* 67 (May 1981): 208-209; *The Franklin Press*, March 1, 1934; Frizzell, "The Cherokee Indians of Macon County," 4.

[61] William Bartram, *Travels of William Bartram*, 285-286.

[62] *The Franklin Press*, January 21, 1982.

Within the next ten years other settlers followed the Silers into the territory. Among the ethnic groups represented in this wave of new settlement were English, German, French, African, and Scotch-Irish. About one third of the 384 families in the 1810 census for Haywood County, from which Macon was carved in 1828, were Scotch-Irish. Most of those settling in present Macon County came down the Great Wagon Road before the American Revolution and settled initially in the piedmont and Watauga settlements of northwestern North Carolina and northeastern Tennessee before moving into the southern portions of western North Carolina in the early nineteenth century. Others ventured into southwestern North Carolina via the Buncombe Turnpike which was completed in 1827.[63] Once the period of initial settlement passed in western North Carolina and many of the original Scotch-Irish pioneers moved further westward, the area became more ethnically mixed.[64]

In 1820, the year after present day Macon County opened for white settlement, the General Assembly authorized a land survey of the territory. Captain Robert Love, a War of 1812 veteran, served as chief surveyor of the project. The survey teams set about to find an appropriate site for a courthouse and four hundred acres around it. The surveyors initially chose Watauga Plains, in what is now the Iotla community, for the site of the county seat and courthouse, but after much disagreement among the surveyors the present site of Franklin was chosen. Officials named the town for North Carolina governor Jesse Franklin. After the surveyors laid off a courthouse square, a land auction was held in Waynesville in September 1820. Settlement of Franklin proceeded rapidly after the sale, but it was not until 1829 that the county was formally organized.[65]

The Emergence of a Frontier Economy

In the period between the admission of whites in former Cherokee territory in 1819 and the formation of Macon County in 1829, settlers participated in an ever-changing and evolving economy. In this pre-industrial mixed agricultural society pioneers grew oats, barley, and potatoes in fertile fields and raised livestock in the area's hilly pasturage. In his travels through present day Macon County in 1828,

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[63] Ora Blackmun, *Western North Carolina: Its Mountains and Its People to 1880* (Boone: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1977), 262.

[64] H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood, "A Trader on the Western Carolina Frontier," in *Appalachian Frontiers: Settlement, Society, and Development in the Preindustrial Era*, ed. Robert D. Mitchell (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1991), 151.

[65] Rev. C.D. Smith, *A Brief History of Macon County, N.C.*, 4.

Theodore Washington Brevard noted, "Every part nearly that we saw which appeared to admit of cultivation has a crop upon it."[66] While both cattle and fowl shared an important role in agriculture, hogs dominated the livestock economy of the area. Hogs foraged for food in the woods and were nearly self-sufficient. Early farmers on the frontier herded cattle to grassy or bald mountains and allowed hogs to fend for themselves in the forests. Farmers in western North Carolina became involved in the droving of livestock to the large population centers along the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia. The livestock drives of the early nineteenth century proved a great boon to the region's agricultural economy.[67]

Although industrial production in the territory was limited, by the third decade of the century there were signs of diversification in the frontier economy. An 1820 enumeration of manufacturing in Haywood, of which present Macon was part, reported a variety of industries including two distillers, a cabinet maker, six blacksmiths, two gunsmiths, three wagonmakers, two tanners, and two hatters.[68]

Frontier Dwellings

The earliest houses built in Macon County were of log construction. In a 1891 history of the county, C.D. Smith described the first house built in Franklin in the 1820s as "a small round log cabin," and observed that, "the first house proper was one built of hewn logs" and "there were several log cabins built about that time."[69]

Late seventeenth century traders from Charleston first introduced log building practices to present day Macon County. The earliest traders were familiar with log construction which had been introduced to the colonies by Swedes and Finns who had settled on the Delaware River in 1638. Log was the material of choice in the construction of forts along the Carolina coast. By the mid eighteenth century lowcountry traders in western North Carolina had been exposed to log building as practiced by

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66 Entry for August 20, 1828, Diary of Travels Through Indian Country, Theodore Washington Brevard Papers, 1821-1830, Southern Historical Collection University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.

67 Blethen and Wood, "A Trader on the Western Carolina Frontier," 161-162.

68 Records of the 1820 Census of Manufactures: Haywood County, North Carolina. National Archives, Washington, D.C., Microfilm.

69 Smith, *A Brief History of Macon County, N.C.*, 5.

Swiss immigrants to the Carolinas and by settlers coming from the Valley of Virginia. Essentially, white traders who lived in Cherokee towns built log dwellings and storehouses for their goods and skins and Indians soon adopted this utilitarian building practice.[70]

When white settlers came to what is now Macon County, they too built in log. Because of the abundance of timber, as well as the lack of builders and sawmills, log dwellings and support structures seemed a logical choice. These log dwellings had one to two rooms and featured a stone gable end chimney. Because of neglect and the growth and development in the county, the earliest houses have undergone extensive alteration including the replacement of original chimneys and application of exterior siding.

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[70] Patricia Irvin Cooper, "Cabins and Deerskins: Log Building and the Charles Town Indian Trade," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 53 (Winter 1994): 276.

III. THE BIRTH, DIVISION, AND GROWTH OF A MOUNTAIN COUNTY: 1829-1874

Once established in 1829, Macon County underwent substantial growth not readily apparent in nineteenth-century census returns. For as the century progressed, population increased despite the cutting away of land in Macon County to form several neighboring counties. During the four decades after its formation, Macon evolved from a rough and tumble mountain hinterland to a community of schools and churches where large-scale farming replaced hunting and trapping as the principal means of survival. The middle decades of the nineteenth century proved to be a period of transition from a frontier to a prosperous society starting in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Franklin

Established in the 1820s, the town of Franklin was not formally incorporated until 1855. Perhaps incorporation seemed trivial in comparison to the larger task at hand--the formation of a center of government to serve this sprawling county which occupied the southwestern corner of North Carolina; thoughts of legal incorporation would have to wait.

Mid-nineteenth century travelers provided copious descriptions of the new county seat in the wilderness. In the early 1840s, English geologist George Featherstonaugh declared, "What a dreadful state of things! Here was a village, more beautifully situated...that might become an earthly Paradise, if education, religion, and manners prevailed."[71] But in 1848, Charles Lanman remarked, "The little village of Franklin is romantically situated on the Little Tennessee...surrounded with mountains, and as quiet and pretty a hamlet as I have seen."[72]

Despite its natural beauty, Franklin remained little more than a cluster of small dwellings and buildings throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. The first dwellings constructed were pole log cabins, followed by more substantial hewn log houses. In 1829, Macon's first county court awarded Colonel David Coleman the contract to build the first courthouse and hired Colonel Benjamin S. Brittain to construct a jail. According to one memoir, "The masons who undertook the brick work of the court house were Samuel Lyle and Dr. T.T. Young of Washington County, Tennessee....The brick they manufactured [were] of excellent quality and the house they built would have

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[71] George W. Featherstonaugh, *A Canoe Voyage up the Minnay Sotor*, vol. II (London: R. Bentley, 1847), 281.

[72] Charles Lanman, *Letters from the Alleghany Mountains*, 75.

stood for a half a century longer....But in style and capacity it was wholly inadequate to the needs of the present population."[73] In the 1850s, the town attempted to replace the courthouse, but because of financial and possibly political problems the project had to be delayed. Instead, the county paid J.M. Lyle a little over four hundred dollars to repair the original building.[74]

The Road Problem

The toughest obstacle facing Macon County in the mid- nineteenth century was the lack of good transportation routes. Soon after the county was organized, officials ruled that the county should build a road that led from Franklin to the Little Tennessee and thence to the mouth of the Tuckasegee River in order to connect with a turnpike whose eventual destination was Tennessee. The route was surveyed and laid off into equal lots which were then assigned to six militia companies who built each section. The road was likely completed around the middle of the century by the "respective companies--the hands forming themselves into masses, taking wagons to haul their provisions, tools, camp-fixtures."[75]

Even with the completion of this road, the remainder of the county still lacked sufficient roads. To alleviate the problem the state passed several bills for the construction of roads in the county. In 1848 and 1849, the legislature passed an act to build a turnpike from Salisbury to Tennessee with a western fork leading to Georgia. To pay for the road the state promised money due to the North Carolina government on lands for sale in the former Cherokee Nation in Cherokee, Macon, Jackson, and Haywood Counties. The road, which was later called the Great Western Turnpike, passed through the Wayah Valley of Macon County and into Clay County. The road and was completed in 1856 and tolls were collected along its route until 1881.[76] Throughout the county travel could prove hazardous and nearly impossible during winter months. So formidable was the problem that in 1863 the county court ordered all white men between fourteen and fifty-five and black men between fourteen and sixty to work on the public roads.[77] The problem of good roads continued to plague Macon County well into the twentieth century.

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73 Smith, *A Brief History of Macon County, N.C.*, 10.

74 Barbara McRae, "Macon County Courthouse," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 40.

75 Smith, *A Brief History of Macon County, N.C.*, 7-8.

76 *The Franklin Press*, May 29, 1985.

77 Barbara McRae, "A New County," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 34.

Population and Ethnicity

As Macon County emerged from a primarily Cherokee territory to a land under white authority, the population grew as families began to settle on farmland throughout the county. The first census was taken a year after formation of the county and the population included all people living on land west of Haywood County, which had been formed from Buncombe County in 1808. In 1830, 5,333 people lived in Macon County. By 1840, Cherokee County had been formed from the southwestern corner of Macon and the overall population of the mother county had decreased slightly to 4,869. Ten years later the population had grown to 6,389 followed in 1860 by a decrease in the total population to a little over six thousand people; this decrease owed to the creation in 1851 of Jackson County whose population in 1860 totaled 5,515. By 1870 Macon's population totaled 6,615. Thus from the period of creation in 1829 to 1870, the population remained quite steady despite the creation of two counties from land in Macon County.[78]

The Sand Town Indians

Despite the removal of thousands of Cherokee in 1838, many members of the tribe who avoided the exodus to the west continued to make their homes in Macon County. The Sand Town Indians of the Cartoogechaye community remained the best organized Macon County community of Cherokee until the end of the nineteenth century. In 1870 seven households of Cherokee lived in the Cartoogechaye community. Among those listed in the census was G.W. Bushy Head whose occupation was given as "Indian Chief." Bushy Head also farmed seven acres and owned ten additional acres of woodland. He had three cattle and raised corn, peas, and sweet potatoes. Although his wife, Sally's occupation was "keeping wigwam," it is likely the couple, like their neighbors, lived in a log house. Other Cherokee in the Sand Town settlement worked as laborers, preachers, and farmers.[79]

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[78] *Abstract of the Returns of the Fifth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Duff Green, 1832), 19; *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas Allen, 1841), 42; *Stastical View of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Beverly Tucker, 1854), 284; *Compendium of the Ninth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 78.

[79] Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Macon County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and

The Sand Town Indians and area whites shared a generally harmonious relationship throughout the nineteenth century. According to Laura Siler Slagle, who lived near Sand Town, the Cherokee attended the local white church and "they joined in the services with the utmost reverence and when the white people sang hymns they sang also, but in the Cherokee language, instead of English." Mrs. Slagle described Yona, a part-time preacher, as "a good farmer."[80]

Blacks in Macon County

As the population in the county remained steady despite the creation of new counties from Macon's original acreage, growth trends in the black population generally followed those in the white population. In 1830, 458 slaves and fifty-four free blacks resided in Macon County. In 1840, one year after Cherokee County was formed from Macon, the number of slaves nevertheless decreased to 368, while free blacks increased only slightly to fifty-five. By 1850, 549 slaves and 106 free blacks lived in Macon County. Ten years later, Jackson County had been carved from Macon and 519 slaves remained in the county. By 1870, nine years after Clay County was formed, 403 blacks lived in Macon.[81]

Blacks constituted a relatively small portion of the population in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Compared to North Carolina counties in the eastern and piedmont regions of the state which used enslaved blacks for large scale agriculture, most farmers in Macon County had little need for slave labor. However, of the mountain counties west of Buncombe, Macon's slave population was one of the largest the year before the Civil War.

History, Raleigh; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Macon County, North Carolina, Agriculture Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

[80] *The Franklin Press*, March 8, 1934.

[81] *Abstract of the Returns of the Fifth Census*, 19; *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States, 1840* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas Allen, 1841), 41-42; *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Beverly Tucker, 1854), 284; *Compendium of the Ninth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 79.

Although Macon County's economy never became dependent on slave labor, slavery was economically important to a few citizens. Historian John C. Inscoe points out that those who could support or profit from slaves typically did not make all of their money in agriculture. Instead, in addition to farming those in western North Carolina who profited the most from slavery were involved in other ventures such as land speculation, hotel management or in professional occupations like law or medicine. Because farming in the mountains did not center around cash crops, slaves typically engaged in a diversity of tasks including livestock management. Their owners often put them to work in service jobs, such as those found in local stores or hotels, or in manufacturing.[82] Dilliard Love, a judge in Franklin and large landholder, owned seventy-six slaves in 1850. Silas McDowell, who owned seven slaves that year, worked as a tailor, farmer, court clerk, and writer. He also sold apples, apple tree graftings, and rhododendrons to nurseries throughout North Carolina and Georgia and became well-known in the 1840s and 1850s for the new varieties of winter apples he developed.[83]

While slavery was not as extensive in Macon County as in most eastern counties in the state, the nature of the institution was the same. Slaves in Macon County longed for their freedom and sometimes acted on this desire for liberty. In 1860, a county newspaper appealed for the return of a "runaway from the residence of Mr. AD Mundy, about the first of April, a negro boy named Tom [who] is making his way toward Knoxville or Rockford, Tennessee."[84]

As in the majority of the counties throughout North Carolina, free blacks played a role in the social and economic structure of Macon County. Several free black families lived in Macon County by 1850. The Guys, an extended family of thirty-eight, lived in five separate households; natives of Virginia who originally settled in Orange County, the Guys settled in Macon in the early nineteenth century. Other families include the Gipsons, who came to Macon from Burke County; the Stuarts, originally of Halifax

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[82] John C. Inscoe, "Mountain Masters: Slaveholding in Western North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review* 61 (April 1984): 144-154.

[83] Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Macon County, North Carolina, Slave Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History; G.S. Dunbar, "Silas McDowell,"in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 352; idem, "Silas McDowell and the Early Botanical Exploration of Western North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review* 61 (October 1964): 426, 423.

[84] *Franklin Observer*, June 22, 1860.

County, North Carolina; the Waldroups, a South Carolina family who initially settled in Rutherford County; and the Revel family, originally of Sampson County. Like white settlers, these and other free blacks migrated westward into Macon County for the economic opportunity the frontier offered and to escape the social, political, and economic injustice of the plantation South. In the two decades before emancipation free blacks in Macon worked as farmers, laborers, blacksmiths, chairmakers, and wheelwrights.[85]

Early Agriculture

> The only picture which attracted my particular attention in passing up the fertile, but generally neglected bottom lands of Valley river, was a farm of twenty-five hundred acres, one thousand acres being as level as a floor and highly cultivated. The soil seemed exceedingly rich, and it was evident yielded a considerable income to its possessor.[86]
>
> -Charles Lanman
> Franklin, North Carolina
> May, 1848

Farms such as the one Lanman admired near Franklin were rare in Macon County during the early nineteenth century. Such profitable, large scale agriculture was restricted to a few of the wealthiest individuals. Most of the county's early farms were subsistence units which produced just enough to feed a family. And while the Little Tennessee, Nantahala, and Cullasaja provided fertile bottom lands, most of the county consisted of mountainous terrain suitable only to grazing and small scale cultivation.

During the middle decades of the nineteenth century the number of farms increased while the amount of improved farmland remained steady. In 1850 about six hundred farms encompassed approximately thirty-two thousand acres of improved land. By 1870, the number of farms jumped to a little over one thousand farms on thirty-four thousand acres. So while the number of farms increased by about four hundred, average farm size became smaller.[87]

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85 *The Franklin Press*, March 4, 1982.

86 Charles Lanman, *Letters from the Alleghany Mountains*, 4-5.

87 *Statistical View of the United States, 1850*, 286-287; *Statistics Wealth and Industry, 1870*, 212.

Corn, oats, potatoes, wheat, and rye prevailed as the principal farm crops during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Production of these crops remained steady overall from 1840 to 1870, except for wheat and rye. Wheat production rose rapidly between 1850 and 1860 with a slight decrease ten years later due to the formation in 1861 of Clay County, which produced a little over six thousand bushels in 1870. By contrast, the output of rye plummeted from almost seventy-five thousand bushels in 1850 to a little over six thousand ten years later. Only a small portion of this decrease may be attributed to the formation in 1851 of Jackson County which produced over five thousand bushels of rye in 1860. The main reason for the decline in rye production was that larger farms were broken into smaller units and cultivated with a more productive grain, such as wheat.[88]

Tobacco production rose dramatically from 1840 to 1870 with only 2,983 pounds produced at the beginning of the period and over 26,000 pounds produced by 1870. This increase was accompanied by an overall decrease in the land allotted to food crops such as hay, flax, buckwheat, peas, and oats. Jesse Satterfield produced two thousand pounds of tobacco on his farm in Cartoogechaye in 1860.[89] Tobacco became more profitable as improved transportation opened markets to Macon County farmers in the late nineteenth century. In an area with limited farmland such as Macon, tobacco as a cash crop replaced food crops in importance. By 1870 Macon produced more tobacco than any county west of Buncombe and its crop was third largest in western North Carolina.[90]

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[88] Daniel Haskel and J. Calvin Smith, *A Complete Descriptive and Statistical Gazetteer of the United States of America* (New York: Sherman and Smith, 1845), 368; *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States, 1840*, 180-181; *Statistical View of the United States, 1850*, 286-287; *Agriculture of the United States in 1860* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 108-111; *Statistics of Wealth and Industry, 1870* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 218-221.

[89] Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Macon County, North Carolina, Agriculture Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

[90] For the purposes of this study, western North Carolina encompasses those counties west of Ashe County on the northern border and west of the Catawba River on the southern border.

By far the most important element in the agricultural economy during the middle decades of the nineteenth century was livestock. Macon's vast unimproved acreage of pasturage and forests proved ideal for grazing and droving cattle, sheep, and especially swine, which dominated the livestock population. From 1840 to 1860 swine population rose dramatically and by the end of this period, Macon County possessed the largest swine population in western North Carolina. Families depended on livestock for the year's subsistence as Laura Siler Lyle indicated in an 1862 letter to her husband who was serving in the state legislature in Raleigh:

> Since I wrote to you before have had your hogs killed. Had them very thoroughly and nicely salted away. Have not yet had your beef killed. Did think I would have it done this week but the weather is so intensely cold.[91]

The trend in swine population did not last and by 1870 swine numbered only a little over ten thousand.[92]

Home manufactures, principally the work of women, played an important role in the county during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The value of such products as soap and textiles rose dramatically during the period from a little over

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Only Caldwell with 27,000 pounds and Buncombe with 30,689 topped Macon's 26,739 pounds. Haskel and Smith, *A Complete Descriptive and Statistical Gazetteer*, 368; *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States, 1840*, 180-181; *Statistical View of the United States, 1850*, 286-287; *Agriculture of the United States in 1860*, 108-111; *Statistics of Wealth and Industry, 1870*, 218-221.

[91] Laura Siler Lyle to Dr. John M. Lyle, December 7, 1862. Lyle-Siler Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.

[92] Haskel and Smith, *A Complete Descriptive and Statistical Gazetteer*, 368; *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States, 1840*, 180-181; *Statistical View of the United States, 1850*, 286-287; *Agriculture of the United States in 1860*, 108-111; *Statistics of Wealth and Industry, 1870*, 218-221.

$9,000 in 1840 to over $51,000 in 1860, the highest value of home manufactures in western North Carolina and the fourth highest in the state for that year. With dispersed settlements and continued self-sufficiency on farms, home manufactures afforded the family economic advantage and remained an important sector of the family's means of survival.[93]

A Growing Economy

The economy grew and diversified substantially during the middle decades of the nineteenth century and reflected the passing of the frontier in southwestern North Carolina. By 1840, no longer were moonshine distilleries and gun powder factories the only manufacturers in the county. In addition to farming, county residents practiced various trades and opened numerous businesses.

Although in 1840 most people worked in agriculture, ninety-one people were employed in brickmaking, leather tanning, liquor distilling, carriage making and, flour and grist milling. Macon's seven commercial businesses employed a total of seven men, while eighteen men worked in the learned professions such as law or medicine. In 1850 occupations included sawmillers, wood carvers, blacksmiths, tanners, and wagon makers. Joseph Dobson operated a goldmine where he employed three men and a woman.[94]

By 1860 the number of manufacturing jobs increased to forty-one, including shoe makers, meal and flour mill workers, tanners, liquor distillers, and sawmillers. Among the professionals in the county were dentists, printers, and physicians. J.R. Siler, the county's richest man in 1860, operated a store, a flour mill, tannery, and saddlery, and he made shoes. Francis Poindexter, Reuben Woods, and Robert K. Wallace worked as carpenters. Robert Cunningham worked as a daguerreotypist in Franklin.[95]

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[93] Haskel and Smith, *A Complete Descriptive and Statistical Gazeteer*, 368; *Agriculture of the United States in 1860*, 107, 111.

[94] *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States*, 43, 181-183; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Macon County, North Carolina, Manufactures Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

[95] Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Macon County, North Carolina, Manufactures Schedule, National Archives,

By 1867, two cabinet shops, six flour mills and "a large number of corn mills" operated in the county. Four lawyers and five doctors practiced in Franklin as well. Two years later, the number of doctors, lawyers, and merchants changed little, while the number of manufacturers increased. Grist mills continued to increase in number. The Franklin Hotel remained the only such establishment in the county in 1867.[96]

With the 1870s came an escalation in the number and types of businesses. In Franklin, still the center of the county's economy, Addington and McCoy produced tinware, M. Vanhook carded wool, J.K. Gray made hats, and H.B. Bryson produced harnesses and saddles. Merchants diversified and began selling horses and cattle. Saw, grist, and flour mills remained common types of businesses.[97]

The Birth of Mining

Small scale gold and silver mining had taken place throughout Macon County during the early nineteenth century. In 1864 Professor D. Christy noted, "the district embraced in Cherokee and Macon Counties...has long been famed as the seat of certain silver mines... But gold, also, is of general occurrence, in the section of the country under consideration."[98] J.R. Siler and his partners owned a commercial gold mine at Horse Cove; Arch Gregory mined the [Nantayalee] Quartz Gold; and J.L. Moore mined silver at Cowee.[99] In addition to gold and silver, copper was mined in the county. An 1869 survey conducted by a real estate company reported that the Little Tennessee

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Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh); Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Macon County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

[96] Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory for 1867-1868* (Raleigh: Branson and Jones, 1867), 68-69.

[97] Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory* (Raleigh: J.A. Jones, 1872), 141-142.

[98] Professor D. Christy, "Observations on Horseback," *Knickerbocker* (December 1864) 502, 505.

[99] Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory* (Raleigh: J.A. Jones, 1872), 142.

Copper Mine operated ten miles south of Franklin and the Nantahala Copper Mine stood four miles southwest of the county seat.[100]

In 1867 Hiram Crisp discovered corundum as he plowed his field in the Ellijay community. Corundum is an extremely hard mineral used for sharpening and polishing and also for making rubies. With this unearthing the county was poised for what would become a large and profitable business venture and one which would continue well into the twentieth century. In 1872 scientist Charles Sheppard reported, "the principal exposure of the corundum has been effected at what is known as the Culsagee [Cullasaja] mine, situated in the township of Elegee [Ellijay] (sometimes written Elijay) situate 8 miles S.E. from Franklin Court-house in Macon Co."[101]

Hiram Crisp sold the property upon which he found the rocks to the Ward-Jenks Corundum Mine Company who later sold the property to Dr. H. Stanley Lucus and his stepsons, George and Frank Bidwell. From the Corundum Hill Mine, as it became known, Lucus and the Bidwells furnished a large portion of the world's supply of corundum.[102]

The Shaping of Society in Macon County

> The only denominations who have preaching here are the Methodists and Baptists. Among the latter class, the Bible custom of washing feet is still kept up with rigor. The preachers of both denominations are itinerant...and I believe accomplish much good. The people attend the Sunday meetings from a distance of ten to fifteen miles; and, as the men and women all ride on horseback, and as they come in parties, their appearance on approaching the church is often exceedingly picturesque.[103]
>
> -Charles Lanman

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[100] *The Resources of North Carolina, Its Natural Wealth, Condition, and Advantages as Existing in 1869* (Wilmington: Bannister, Cowen, & Company, 1869), 51.

[101] Charles Upham Shepard, Sr., "On the Corundum Region of North Carolina and Georgia," (pamphlet, North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill), 2-3.

[102] *The Franklin Press*, June 30, 1982.

[103] Charles Lanman, *Letters from the Alleghany Mountains*, 81-82.

Franklin, North Carolina
May 1848

The ritual of church attendance in Franklin typified the experiences of people throughout the county. During the middle decades of the nineteenth century, churches dotted the landscape and offered those in communities throughout Macon County spiritual and social opportunities. Although one writer categorized this period in the religious history of the county as "days of intense religious prejudice and denominational controversy," Sundays offered a day of relief from farming and the labor and isolation of housekeeping and a chance for distant neighbors to socialize.[104]

Both Methodist and Baptist were the popular denominations throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century. In 1867 seven ministers served the thirteen Methodist churches located in the eastern half of the county. Eleven Baptist preachers ministered to eight churches in the eastern half of the county. Reverend Mark May of the Nantahala community preached at the three Baptist churches located on the west side of the Nantahala Mountains in western Macon County. The only Presbyterian churches in the county were located in and around Franklin. The number of both Methodist and Baptist churches increased throughout the period and by 1872 at least twenty-eight churches served the county.[105]

The establishment of schools during the mid-nineteenth century signaled the growing stability of social and cultural life in the county. In 1840, 140 pupils attended the county's three schools.[106] Ulrich Keener, a Methodist minister who had worked as a

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[104] The quote originates from an incident which took place in 1832 between two ministers, Parson Brownlow and Reverend Posey. Brownlow was eventually fined for libel for accusing Posey of "questionable relations with certain of the...more fragile members of the flock. John Preston Arthur, *Western North Carolina: A History from 1730 to 1913* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Collection, 1914), 226; *The Franklin Press*, June 26, 1925.

[105] Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1867-1868*, 68; Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory* (1872), 141-142. Branson's directory does not report any Presbyterian churches in 1872, although at least one did serve the county that year.

[106] *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States* (1840), 43.

missionary to the Cherokee, operated one of these schools. Nathan Jenkins, who lived near the present Swain County line, ran another. And M.N. Russell, a farmer, operated the third school in the Holly Springs community near Franklin.[107] In 1849, a private boys academy was established in Franklin, followed in 1854 by a similar school for girls. Schools were scattered throughout the county and were usually simple log buildings. Schools in the Otto community, located south of Franklin, were typical of mid-nineteenth-century institutions. Three schools served Otto right in the late nineteenth century and people in the community built the schools and furnished wood to heat the buildings.[108]

Because portions of Macon County remained isolated during the mid-nineteenth century and most children could not travel to Franklin to attend school, the county was divided into forty school districts. The subscription schools formed during this period were financed by the students' parents who hired a teacher for their children. Classes typically lasted three months unless public tax money was available to extend the term. Following the Civil War, black children attended either a school at Cowee where many blacks lived or the Chapel School in Franklin.[109]

Architecture

> And what kind of a house does my reader imagine this wealthy man resided? In a miserable log hovel, a decayed and windowless one, which a respectable member of the swine family would hardly deign to occupy.[110]
>
> -Charles Lanman
> Franklin, North Carolina
> May 1848

The rudimentary house Lanman described typified the dwellings found in rural Macon County during the early nineteenth century. While many parts of North Carolina and the South built more and more elaborately in the boom period before the Civil War, Macon County had barely emerged from the frontier and dwellings served as shelter with little stylish embellishment.

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107 *The Franklin Press*, March 11, 1982.

108 *Moments in the History of Otto Community* (Otto: Otto School, 1991), n.p.

109 Katherine Perry, "Education in Macon County," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 62-63.

110 Charles Lanman, *Letters from the Alleghany Mountains*, 66.

Typical of those who settled in the first half of the nineteenth century were John (1807-1891) and Nancy McClure Corbin (1808-?) who arrived in the county in the late 1830s. Eager to make a start in the county, they became "centered on clearing land, planting, and tending crops throughout the summer," and during their first summer "lived in a crude lean-to shelter beside a large log." After the fall harvest, the couple built a "log hut" which served as home for four years. They then built another log house in which they lived until 1870. That year they built a more substantial house "with a wooden floor."[111] Early settlers typically followed this pattern of building impermanent dwellings while establishing themselves in the county.

As the century progressed, families began to build more ample and sufficient dwellings. In many cases, an addition was made to the original log cabin. Jesse Siler carried out such a project on 'an improved Indian cabin' in Franklin soon after he settled there in 1821. Between 1820 and 1830 Jesse Siler completed a major expansion to his original two-story log house in Franklin. Siler added a parlor to the west side of the house, as well as rear rooms, thus creating a central passage, double-pile house. As the wealthiest man in the county during the period, Siler was able to add paneled doors and stylish late Georgian-Federal mantels.[112]

When William Morrison, Sr. settled in the Cowee area of Macon County in 1832, he already knew the land. Prior to bringing his family to the county that year, Morrison explored the area and purchased huge tracts of land in not only Cowee, but also Iotla and Oak Grove. Not long after the family's arrival Morrison built a two-story log house in the a valley along the Little Tennessee River only a few miles north of the Cowee Mound. Built of virgin poplar hewn logs, the William Morrison, Sr. House (MA 74) remains the finest early dwelling in the Cowee area. While family members later sided the house with weatherboard and added a small front addition, the original interior logs were left exposed. Alterations do not diminish the austere quality of this proud dwelling and the vista it commands along the Little Tennessee River.[113]

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[111] Mildred Corbin Williamson and Wilford Corbin, "John and Nancy McClure Corbin Family," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 187-188.

[112] Michael Southern and Bruce S. Cheeseman, National Register nomination for the Jesse R. Siler House" (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1980.

[113] Mary Sue Potts Waldroop, "William Morrison, Sr.," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 365-366.

Jeremiah Page Harrison (1837-1887), whose parents had traveled down the Great Wagon Road and eventually settled in Georgia, married a Macon County woman, Mary L. Gillespie, in 1858. The couple built a home in the Wayah Valley of Macon County near the house her grandfather, John Gillespie, Sr., had built in 1826. The Harrison House (MA 229), a one-and-a-half story hewn log house chinked with clay, featured an interior divided by partitions. A stair led to the loft and the stone chimney stood on the east gable end. According to Mrs. Clara Harrison, whose husband is the grandson of Jeremiah and Mary Harrison, a "lean-to" on the rear housed the kitchen and dining room. In the 1920s, weatherboard siding was added the exterior. Later vinyl siding was added and the rear kitchen was rebuilt.[114]

The Henry House (MA 201) stands on a high grassy mountain in the Ellijay community. Bill Henry, grandfather of the current owner Canton Henry (b. 1907), built the log house around 1860. According to Canton Henry, the roof is of "rib pole" construction--built with horizontal round logs on four sides and without rafters. The logs are stepped on two opposing sides in order to form the gable. According to one area source, this type of construction was used during the early and mid-nineteenth century. Canton Henry's father, Jake, made improvements to the house in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by siding the house with weatherboard and adding a shed room to the rear and a room on the north. Jake Henry also built a cellar into the hillside opposite the house and the outbuildings on the property which include two barns, a shop, and a shed.[115]

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, weatherboarded frame houses began appearing on Macon County's landscape. While they did not supplant the log house dwellings of timber frame or balloon frame construction represented the emergence of Macon County from the frontier. By this time, twenty years after Cherokee removal, whites had established farms and a few businesses were reaping profits from both enterprises. While the majority of residents continued to build modest dwellings, some families erected more substantial, but still strikingly plain houses.

In 1861 James Bryson planted five small cedar trees in a row in front of the site where he planned to build his house in the Cowee community. This land in the Cowee community conferred upon farmers like Bryson, prosperity similar to that enjoyed by the Cherokee prior to the mid-eighteenth century. James Bryson owned large amounts of land and served as the Justice of the Peace in Cowee. In 1863 he built a two-story house and several outbuildings in a cove on a gently sloping hill along a fork of Cowee

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[114] Clara S. Harrison, "Joseph and Allie McGee Harrison Family," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 285-286.

[115] Canton Henry, interview with author, Ellijay community, March 4, 1994.

Creek. Three front doors lead to two parlors and a central passage. Mantels are extremely plain with no adornment. The Bryson family later added the rear ell which contains a kitchen and dining room. The James Bryson farm (MA 58) features an intact assortment of early twentieth-century outbuildings including a privy, can house, burley tobacco barn, and a large hay barn topped with a gambrel roof.[116]

Architecture in the middle decades of the nineteenth century symbolized Macon County's slow emergence from a frontier to a more economically diverse and socially stable society. While residents continued to build log houses, most of these were hewn logs with complex notching systems, rather than round pole log houses built by the first white settlers. Many of these dwellings were two stories in height. The appearance of weatherboard houses marked the dawn of another era in the county --a period when many would experience financial rewards from farming or commerce.

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[116] Frances Bryson, interview with author, Cowee community, January 5, 1994.

IV. THE RICHNESS OF MACON'S RESOURCES REALIZED, 1875-1904

The commencement of the last quarter of the nineteenth century inaugurated grand changes throughout Macon County. Two men from the America's heartland who ventured to a high plateau in southern Macon County planted a symbolic seed which would blossom into a tourism industry whose impact would be felt for more than a century. The founding of Highlands occurred during a period of general prosperity in the nation which allowed people more leisure time and freedom to travel. Promotional magazines and brochures helped to advertise the scenic beauty and restful atmosphere of western North Carolina and other tourist areas. While tourism became a more popular pursuit for many who came to Macon County, lumber companies were exploiting the vast timber stands and other natural resources. Both tourism and logging brought new prosperity to a county which had seen very little.

The Founding and Promotion of a Resort Town

In 1875 Samuel Truman Kelsey and Clinton Carter Hutchinson of Reno County, Kansas set out on a journey in the southern Appalachians looking for a site for a resort town. Several stories surround the men's motives for coming to what would become the town of Highlands. One story relates how the two drew two lines on a map connecting the east's major cities and that the lines intersected at the plateau where the town now stands. Others claim Kelsey read an article about the area written by Silas McDowell, a botanist and resident of Macon County.[117] In actuality the two men carried out "a careful investigation of the elevated table-lands and plateau formations of southern mountains." Far from making a whimsical decision, Kelsey and Hutchinson, who had settled and promoted towns in the West, chose the site quite deliberately.[118]

Once on the plateau, the two men purchased 839 acres and conducted a survey of the land from the top of Satulah Mountain. They fashioned a road running east to west through the middle of their purchase--this road eventually became Main Street--and they built homes for themselves and their families.[119]

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[117] *The Franklin Press*, June 30, 1932.

[118] S.T. Kelsey and C.C. Hutchinson, "The Blue Ridge Highlands of Western North Carolina," (pamphlet, Highlands: Kelsey and Hutchinson, 1878).

[119] *The Franklin Press*, June 30, 1032.

The task before Kelsey and Hutchinson was the promotion of Highlands as a place for others to settle. Drawing upon the town's scenic beauty and healthful climate, the duo published a pamphlet, "The Blue Ridge Highlands of Western North Carolina," to attract settlers and visitors. They described Highlands as occupying "a beautiful undulating plat, just at the foot of Stooly Mt [Satulah Mountain].... It is abundantly watered and a large number of choice building sites awaiting improvement." In the publication the pair praised the area's timber, climate, shrubbery, minerals, scarcity of insects, and proximity to the Blue Ridge Railroad in Walhalla, South Carolina thirty miles to the south. The greatest benefit Highlands offered, according to Kelsey and Hutchinson, was to the health of those who lived there. According to brochure contributor Dr. H.P. Gatchell, "Highlands is distinguished for giving tone to the digestive apparatus, and for the natural concomitant--a vigorous appetite." Appealing to both Northerners and Southerners, the publication declared that "while the intense cold of far northern winters tends to exhaust the heat-producing capacity of the consumptive, the hot humid summers of the lowlands of the South tend to hasten death by their debilitating influence." Finally the promoters warned, "nobody should come here without money."[120]

Among the earliest to arrive in Highlands was the T.B. White family who "arrived and moved into a house without doors and windows on July 10 [1875]." Several days later "a few staple groceries were placed on sale in this combination house, store, and Post-Office-for the Post Office was also under this same roof for the first 14 years of Highlands existence."[121] Dr. George Kibbee settled in Highlands in the spring of 1878 and "proceeded to the building of a home on the old Satulah road, and at once began the practice of his profession."[122] Other families flocked to the town for the next several decades--some as seasonal residents and others as full-time inhabitants.

Once settlement of the town began, glowing reports of the community appeared in brochures and newspapers throughout the eastern United States. In an 1880 article which appeared in a Franklin paper, the editor of the *New Orleans Times* commented, "Some of Southern people are finding out the good things at their door also.... And last summer a large number of New Orleans people found health and enjoyment in...this Abysian [vale]."[123] In 1902 Henry Stewart of the Blue Ridge Agency reported

> the equable, cool summer climate, the balmy
> exhilarating and invigorating air of the

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120 Kelsey and Hutchinson, "The Blue Ridge Highlands of Western North Carolina."

121 *The Franklin Press*, June 4, 1941.

122 Ibid.

123 *The Western Reporter*, April 2, 1880.

> mountains, freedom from malaria, mosquitoes, and other noxious and annoying pests; the great value of its climatic influences as remedial and curative agents in diseases of the throat and lungs...all tend to make Highlands one of the most desirable resorts of the United States.[124]

Such reporting on the part of Highlands' original founders and those who came after contributed the growth of the town as a health and vacation resort.

During its infancy as a town, the people of Highlands established schools, churches, and other institutions. In the 1870s, only two children attended the town's first school which was located on Billy Cabin Mountain. John Arnold, who had fought in the Civil War, taught at this school and allowed the students two weeks off at `fodder pulling' time. The next year a town school was established in the "Law House," a one-room log building which had been built in 1872 and which was also used for voting. By 1877, the law house had proven too small to hold the growing number of students and the town decided to build

> 'a school and church house...not less than 22 x 35 and 10 feet between joists. To be a good frame building. Weather boarding to be of good white pine plank. Cornice of white pine or polar, well dressed. Good roof. Panel door; at least six large windows....All to be built of good material and in a good workmanlike manner.'[125]

By March 1878 the new building was complete and the old law house eventually became a tool shed.

The law house also served as the site for early church services in the town, but as the population grew a need for churches of different denominations arose. In 1884, Mrs. S.P. Ravenel, a summer resident from Charleston, and her sister, Mrs. Burt of Philadelphia, gave $3,000 to build the Presbyterian Church. In 1890 a Methodist Church was erected, followed in 1894 by the Episcopal Church. Tudor Hall, a Charleston native who moved to Highlands around 1890, contributed land for the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation and he provided the original chandeliers, which

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[124] Henry Stewart, Jr., "Macon County, North Carolina," (pamphlet, Highlands: Blue Ridge Association Press, 1902).

[125] Ibid.

came from a black church in Columbia, South Carolina. In 1884, Rev. S.H. Harrington organized the Baptist church.[126]

By 1883 Highlands boasted a population of three hundred, and had six stores, forty-five houses, two saw mills, a grist mill, a sash and door company, and a furniture factory. Joseph Fritz opened the Highlands House, the town's first hotel in 1880. Lee's Inn was built in 1883, followed by the Phelp's House around 1885, and the Pierson Inn at the turn of the century.[127]

Over the next several decades, word of Highlands' health benefits, scenic beauty, and cool summer climate spread and the town became known as one of the South's finest resort towns. Families from Charleston, Atlanta, and New Orleans endured an often arduous journey by wagon from either Walhalla, South Carolina or Dillard, Georgia to summer in Highlands. In 1879 S.P. Ravenel of Charleston built the town's first substantial summer house on a ridge on the south side of town facing his home state. Others followed Ravenel's lead and Highlands gained a reputation as a leisure community for some of the South's wealthiest families.

While boosters touted Highlands as a tourist town, the rest of Macon County also began to attract visitors as well. The Franklin Hotel, the county's first inn, operated throughout the late nineteenth century. D.C. Cunningham established the Cunningham House in the late 1870s in Franklin, and Stanhope Hill opened Whiteside's Hotel in the Horse Cove community located just south of Highlands. In addition to the Highlands House and Edwards Inn which opened in Highlands, by the 1880s J.T. Bradley, L.H. Enloe, and Mrs. S.E. Burland were operating boarding houses in areas just outside of Franklin and N.G. Allman had established the Railroad House Hotel in Franklin.[128]

In 1889, a Franklin newspaper featured an article from a Georgia newspaper that proclaimed, "If [your] summer 'resorters' want to be rid of mosquitos...we commend

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[126] *The Franklin Press*, July 5, 1925; Gert McIntosh, "Highlands, North Carolina: A Walk into the Past (Highlands: privately printed, 1983), 87-89.

[127] Barbara McRae, "The Town of Highlands," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 53.

[128] Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1877 and 1878* (Raleigh: L. Branson, 1878), 182; idem, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1884* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1884), 428-429; idem, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1896* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1896), 392.

them to Franklin, N.C., where the little tormentor is next to unknown."[129] The next year a local paper urged, "It is within the reach of our people to furnish...accommodations in the way of good hotels and boarding houses." The author implored residents to "open up the way and provide suitable accommodations and invite weary denizens of malarial climes to spend the summer months in Macon County."[130] These comments proved prophetic, for during the next few decades the number of hotels and boarding houses grew substantially. Among these establishments was the Hotel Jarrett which opened on Main Street in Franklin in 1894.[131]

The County Moves Forward

While Highlands emerged as a renowned resort town during the period, the rest of the county's population grew, the economy diversified, social and cultural institutions multiplied and expanded, and most traces of the frontier died away. Overall, the last decades of the nineteenth century and first few years of the twentieth century marked a transitional period in the county's history which would yield still greater changes in the years to come.

The Growth in Population

The population continued to swell throughout the late nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. By 1880, slightly over eight thousand people lived in Macon County of whom about seven thousand were North Carolina natives. Others in the county were natives of surrounding states, while seventeen were born in England, Ireland, and Scotland. Most of the population remained centered around Franklin and Cowee, while the area around Highlands was the least populated. In 1890 the population had grown to over ten thousand people.[132]

Between 1890 and 1900, the last Cherokee Indian either left Macon County or died. With this passing, the Cherokee occupation of the county came to an end. The

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129 *The Franklin Press*, August 22, 1889.

130 *The Franklin Press*, June 19, 1890.

131 *The Franklin Press*, August 1, 1990.

132 *Compendium of the Tenth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1885), 523; *Abstract of the Eleventh Census: 1890* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896), 26.

Sand Town community dissolved, and white families took over their land in the Cartoogechaye community.[133]

Blacks Establish Their Own Communities

African-Americans who did not leave the county after emancipation settled into communities primarily in Franklin and Cowee. In 1880, 669 of the county's 8,064 citizens were black.[134] Because of the relatively small population of blacks in Macon County, communities were tight-knit and consisted of several extended families.

In the late nineteenth century, blacks established their own churches instead of attending white churches as they had before emancipation. In 1884, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church constructed a board and batten building on Harrison Avenue in Franklin; the congregation also laid out a cemetery adjacent to the church. Between 1885 and 1890 black members of the Franklin Methodist Church, a white church, established the New Hope Church on a hill two miles west of Franklin.[135]

In 1887 James Kennedy, a black Episcopal minister born of slave parents in South Carolina, came to Franklin to work as a missionary. He established a manual training class in which handicrafts, and later cooking and sewing, were taught and set up reading, writing, and math instruction. Kennedy helped to build St. Cyprians Episcopal Church and crafted several pieces of church furniture. In 1911 he transferred to St. Matthias in Asheville.[136]

The first school records show that in 1885 six black schools were located in the county and five years later there were 140 black students attending school.[137] By the end of the century blacks and whites most frequently went to separate schools, but in 1896 there was one black student among the seventy-two whites at the Ellijay school.

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133 *Indian Population in the United States and Alaska, 1910* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1915; Millwood, New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1973), 28.

134 *Report on the Cotton Production of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884), 69.

135 Helen Patton, "The Black Population," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 86.

136 Ibid., 87.

137 *The Franklin Press*, April 10, 1930; *Report on the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census, 1890* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1897), 83.

That same year there were 190 students at the county's four black schools which were located near Franklin and Cowee.[138] Among these institutions was the Cowee Colored School which was "a log cabin building located on a hill about one-fourth mile from where the colored church now stands...It was later moved on the ridge back of the colored church."[139]

Agriculture at the End of the Century

By 1880, 1,182 farms dotted the landscape of Macon County; tenants and share croppers operated almost 350 farms. The number of farms in 1880 almost tripled that of thirty years before. By 1890, the number of farms had increased by 269 from ten years before, while the total amount of farm acreage had increased by over thirty thousand acres.[140]

The self-sufficient farms typified life for rural Macon County residents during the late nineteenth century. In 1880 farms averaged 184 acres in size and continued to produce mixed crops and livestock for home consumption. They grew large amounts of grain including rye, wheat, and barley. Farms also produced honey, sorghum, hay, Irish, and sweet potatoes. To supplement the farm income, families often traded jams, honey, apple butter, and woven goods, as well as moonshine liquor. Because corn remained the dominant crop and transportation to market remained a problem during this period, farmers condensed the crop into a liquid form and filled jugs which proved not only profitable, but also easier to store and convey.[141]

As in earlier years, livestock constituted a large sector of the agricultural economy in 1880. There were more than 15,000 swine, 7,000 sheep, and 6,000 cattle.

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138 School Survey, 1896, Macon County School Records. Raleigh: State Archives, Division of Archives and History.

139 *The Franklin Press*, May 2, 1957.

140 *Report on the Productions of Agriculture as Returned at the Tenth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), 128; *Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895), 222.

141 *Report on the Productions of Agriculture as Returned at the Tenth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), 105, 200, 237, 300; *Report of the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895), 341.

Ten years later swine and sheep populations remained constant while the number of chickens topped sixty-eight thousand.[142]

Joseph Higdon typified farmers in the county in 1880. On his 138-acre farm south of Franklin, Higdon produced 300 bushels of corn on seventeen acres and 50 bushels of wheat on ten acres. On two acres he had about one hundred apple trees which produced fifty bushels. Higdon's livestock included a milk cow whose milk provided two hundred pounds of butter; eighteen sheep from which thirteen fleeces were shorn; twenty-two swine; and twenty-six fowl which laid one hundred eggs for market.[143]

Over the next two decades, agricultural production varied only slightly, though production of buckwheat and rye declined by 1890. The largest change over the ten year period was seen in the decrease in tobacco from 26,000 pounds in 1870 to 3,600 in 1890. This decline was likely attributed to the ever increasing preference for the bright-leaf variety for smoking and to the soaring rates of production in the piedmont and eastern portions of North Carolina which enjoyed access to the railroad. Conversely, by 1890 corn, oat, wheat, hay, and potato production had increased over ten years before.[144]

By 1890 orchards of trees suited to mountainous terrain began blanketing the county's hillsides. Apple and peach orchards in the county produced over 85,000 bushels of fruit with a market value of $1,500 in that year.[145] By 1900, the variety of orchard fruits had diversified to include cherries and plums, but the total number of bushels of all fruits had declined. Nonetheless, the market value of orchard products had risen to over twelve thousand dollars, an upsurge likely attributed to the increased demand for fruits in urban areas.[146] According to Radford Talley, whose ancestors grew apples and peaches on their farm near Highlands (MA 184), orchard owners in the late

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142 Ibid.

143 Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Macon County, North Carolina, Agriculture, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

144 *Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890*, 378, 413, 445, 484.

145 Ibid., 524.

146 Ibid; *Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900: Agriculture* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 668.

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries made the three day trip by wagon from Macon County to Walhalla, South Carolina to the Blue Ridge Railroad station to sell their fruit at markets located along the rail line.[147]

Natural Resources as an Economic Product

Logging

While the production of some farm crops decreased during the late nineteenth century, the amount of timber cut escalated. In 1880 almost 26,000 cords, or over three million cubic feet, of wood was cut in the county. The timber industry continued to grow so that by the turn of the century, the value of county's forest products reached over twenty thousand dollars.[148]

As elsewhere in the southern Appalachians, logging in Macon County took place in two distinct phases. In 1880 farmers and their families cut the most timber using seasonal logging to supplement farm income. Because of transportation difficulties, farmers typically moved the logs by ox or more commonly, down creeks to the river. In order to move the logs downstream, splash dams were built in rivers and streams. Logs were placed just below these earthen dikes and then water was released through the dam carrying the timber with great force to the main river. While more expedient than ox, this method often destroyed the creek banks because of the great force of the trees moving downstream. Also during this phase of lumbering, timber companies sent in agents who selectively cut the best trees from the forests. These selections were typically limited to accessible areas. Because so many trees located in hollows and on ridges remained untouched, these early operations exerted little widespread damage to most of the county's timber stands.[149]

The extension of the Western North Carolina Railroad to Murphy in 1890 opened up western Macon County for extensive logging by the late nineteenth century. Although the line only ran along the extreme northwest corner of the county, smaller

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147 Radford Talley, interview with author, Highlands vic., summer 1994.

148 *Report on the Productions of Agriculture as Returned at the Tenth Census*, 310; *Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900: Agriculture*, 669.

149 Ronald Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 87-92.

spurs could be established along the right of way. The railroad, which in 1894 became part of the Southern Railway Company, encouraged speculators and lumber companies to explore western North Carolina's timber resources. By the turn of the century, the timber industry permeated the western mountains and had become a major player in the southern Appalachian region's economy.[150]

One of the most impressive timber operations during the early twentieth century was centered in the Nantahala community in western Macon County. The Nantahala Railroad, Flume, and Transportation Company harvested timber in this area by floating logs from the mountains down flumes which were "races or long boxes containing running water, of which said section abounds, and inclined so that the water flows ten to fifteen miles per hour...said boxes being three to four feet wide, from one to two feet deep and containing running water about four to six inches deep, in which lumber, cord-wood, tan bark and all merchantable woods can be cheaply and successfully floated...to the side [tract]." The company extended a spur into the area from the main line of the Southern Railway Company which skirted the northwest corner of the county. This spur allowed the company to transport the logs to the right-of-way where they were then shipped to markets.[151]

Mining

From its humble beginnings on Hiram Crisp's farm in Ellijay in 1870, the mining industry grew and diversified during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Macon County became known as the world's center of corundum mining until 1902 when the Corundum Hill mine, as the one Crisp discovered became known, closed in 1902; the mine reopened briefly during World War I.

As the excavating of corundum diminished, other minerals and some gems were mined in the county. From the 1870s into the twentieth century numerous mica mines operated around Franklin, Cowee, and Burningtown.[152] Mica, which was mined in the Cowee community throughout the twentieth century, proved valuable for its industrial

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150 Ibid., 99-101.

151 Records of the Nantahala Railroad, Flume, and Transportation Company, Railroad Records, Macon County Railroad Records, 1855-1914, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

152 See Rev. L. Branson's *North Carolina Business Directory*, 1877-1897.

uses. Mica split into transparent sheets was used in stoves and lamps and in a ground form as an insulating material and for its use in making wallpaper.[153]

Gem mining was more short-lived than other types of mining in the county. In 1895 the American Prospecting and Mining Company began harvesting gems on the Caler Fork. Later the United States Ruby Mining Company attempted to mine gems in the Cowee Valley. The two companies abandoned their efforts when no significant amounts of gems were discovered.[154]

Manufacturing

By the late nineteenth century manufacturing in Macon County had developed from small scale producers--distilleries, shoe makers, and tanners of the antebellum era into an economy strengthened by logging and mining interests. With the abundant supply of fine timber, the number of industries which relied on wood for their production increased. By 1884, H. Jones and F. Poindexter built and sold furniture in Franklin; Trotter and Rogers made wagons and buggies, and at least four coopers were producing barrels. H.H. Ray combined cabinet making and undertaking. Blacksmithing and wheelwriting were the most common manufacturing trades, and were practiced throughout the county. By 1884, only two distillers produced spirits, and tanners and tinware makers worked in communities throughout Macon.[155]

Because the population was spread throughout the county in areas isolated from either Franklin or Highlands, grist mills were a common fixture on the landscape. Rural mills helped to sustain self-sufficient agriculture in these communities and were typically not market-oriented operations.[156] Almost every community, regardless of its size, had

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[153] John Preston Arthur, *Western North Carolina: A History, 1730-1913* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Collection, 1914; reprint, Spartanburg, South Carolina: the Reprint Company, 1973), 555; *Mineral Resources of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), 255.

[154] Barbara McRae, "Macon's Minerals Wealth," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 71.

[155] Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1884*, 427-428.

[156] Larry Hasse, "Watermills in the South: Rural Institutions Working Against Modernization," *Agricultural History* 58 (July 1984): 287.

its own mill where a farmer could take his grain for grinding. Mills were so important that many communities such as West's Mill adopted the name of the mill. In 1884 at least twelve grist mills operated in communities on both sides of the Nantahala Mountains. In order to process the county's timber resources, saw mills spread from Franklin to Burningtown to Roane's Mill.[157]

Commerce Expands

As the economy diversified under the new industries, Macon County businesses flourished. Franklin remained the center of commerce at the turn of the century. General merchandise stores, cattle and horse dealers, and druggists were the principal businesses in Franklin in the 1870s. By the mid-1880s, businesses were operating in communities throughout the county. Eight cattle dealers sold livestock in Otto, Roane's Mill, and Franklin. General merchandise stores conducted their businesses in Skeenah, Otto, Aquone, Cullasaja, Wikle's Store, Burningtown, and West's Mill. In the 1890s, over fifty stores selling everything from coffee to books to nursery plants spread throughout the county.[158] A liquor store opened in Franklin in 1899, but only four years later alcohol was legally banned.[159] The county's first financial institution, the Franklin Bank, opened in March 1903; prior to its establishment, county residents conducted their banking at Asheville and Waynesville.[160] Businesses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century offered people in communities throughout the county an opportunity to trade, and marked Macon's development as a market-oriented economy.

A distinct merchant class which profited greatly from the general economic expansion that emerged in the county during this period. Typical of this class was Jackson Johnston (1820-1902), one of Franklin's most prosperous citizens in the late nineteenth century. Born of Irish parents who immigrated to South Carolina in 1818, Johnston embodied the spirit of immigrants and strove to improve his family's economic and social standing. He first operated a mercantile store in Waynesville, but in 1850 he moved to Franklin where his "principal occupation was merchandising in which he was successful accumulating a good property."[161]

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[157] Ibid.

[158] Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1877 and 1878* (Raleigh: L. Branson, 1878), 182; idem, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1884* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1884), 428-429; idem, *North Carolina Business Directory, 1896* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1896), 392.

[159] *The Franklin Press*, August 1, 1990.

[160] *The Franklin Press*, April 10, 1930.

[161] *The Franklin Press*, April 16, 1902.

Improvements in Education

During the last few decades of the century, most schools in the county remained small, one-room facilities which served both primary and secondary students. Only a few schools offered high school diplomas. Districts containing several schools did not exist. Instead, each school constituted its own district and three committeemen built the school, hired and fired teachers, and reported enrollment information to the county's education board. Among the schools in Macon during the period was the Peabody School, established in 1875 by the Peabody Fund in the Cowee community. Although it was in session for only three months a year and combined all age levels, the Peabody School was considered one of the best in the area.[162]

By 1890 fifty-six teachers instructed the 2,600 students who attended school in the county.[163] Seven years later in an effort to consolidate schools, the fifty or more districts in the county were formed into eleven white and two black districts. There were over four thousand students attending the county's fifty-eight schools that year and each student was allocated one dollar. In 1899 the school board started the Teachers Association of Macon County in order to create some cohesion among the schools scattered throughout the county.[164] In 1903, the county passed the state's first compulsory attendance law which required children to attend school until age fourteen. As a result attendance increased by thirty-four percent.[165]

The Franklin Female Seminary was an important institution of learning in Macon County during the late nineteenth century. In 1888, the Methodist Episcopal Church South built the school on a lot near downtown Franklin. In 1902, the church closed the seminary and the building became part of the town's public school system. With a burgeoning pupil population, the building no longer sufficed and in 1910 it was sold to two sisters who operated the building as a hotel.[166]

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162 "A Brief History of Cowee School," (report, Cowee: Cowee Elementary School, 1993), 1.

163 *Report on the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890*, 83.

164 *The Franklin Press*, August 8, 1984.

165 Katherine Perry, "Education in Macon County," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 61.

166 Michael Southern, "National Register Nomination for Franklin Terrace Hotel" (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1981).

Religion and Revivals

With the population dispersed so widely in the county, churches were numerous and pastors often continued to ride circuits. Methodist and Baptist congregations dominated the county, although in Highlands there were Episcopal and Unitarian congregations by the end of the century.

Many Macon County churches held revivals which typically began the first Saturday in August. By that time, most of the farm work had been completed. People traveled from their homes to the camp meeting site where they would either camp out or sleep in tents. Services were held under a large tree and following a sermon the congregation began to sing. The minister called for 'seekers' who would drift to an area near the pulpit where they would sit in the 'misery seat.' Shouting and singing commenced and soon the seekers lay exhausted on a bed of straw where the spirit filled them and they had become Christian. Tent meetings often consisted of four to six one week sessions which culminated in a baptism in a nearby river.[167]

Architecture

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries marked a transitional period for most of Macon County. Although farming remained the dominant means of survival for families scattered in rural townships throughout the county, new opportunities in logging, commerce, and professional occupations allowed many to make a living in non-agricultural pursuits. More commonly, people combined jobs in order to remain on their farms. Another economic force at work was the influx of well-heeled tourists and summer residents into the most desirable portions of the county.

The character of the new economy permeated all parts of life in the county, most notably architecture. While log houses akin to those built in the early nineteenth century continued to be built, grander dwellings also made their appearance. The new buildings erected in the resort town of Highlands added a new character to the architectural landscape of Macon County, so that single pen log cabins in remote hollows co-existed with three-story Italianate manors perched on high ridges.

The simplest dwellings built during the period were hewn log cabins of one and two rooms; subsistence farmers in the most rural areas typically built such houses. Most log houses have been sided and enlarged with frame additions. Oscar and Lem Heaton, a father and son, built such a two-room log cabin (MA 117) in a hollow near the Cullasaja River around the turn of the century. They chinked the gaps between the logs with a combination of stone and mortar. The builders erected the house with both

[167] *The Franklin Press*, August 28, 1985.

half-dovetailed and square corner notches. They built a stout fieldstone chimney, which still stands on the west gable end.[168]

The best preserved example of a late nineteenth century log house is the Tippett House (MA 254) located in the Piney Grove community near Iotla. W.D., Bob, and Henry Tippett built this one-and-a-half story cabin with tightly fitted logs joined with half-dovetail notching at the corners and sitting on a stone foundation. The front of the Tippett House is windowless and the only visible window is adjacent to the stone gable end chimney.[169]

Log houses sided with horizontal weatherboard or vertical board and batten are more numerous. The Burrell-Talley House (MA 184) began as a single pen log cabin and was modified through subsequent ownerships. George Burrell constructed the original one-room, single pen, one-and-a-half story house in the last half of the nineteenth century. George Talley purchased the cabin around the turn of the century and made many changes including the addition of the board and batten siding.[170]

Families with cash to pay for sawed lumber and to hire a carpenter built more substantial and stylish dwellings. By the 1880s, lumber, weatherboards, and other items were available from sawmills that operated in Franklin and Highlands, as well as in smaller communities like Burningtown. The Donaldson brothers, Samuel Roper, Samuel McGuire, and W.L. Rhodes were only a few of the carpenters and builders who advertised to construct houses; George Hogshead, Charles Ray, and W.R. Stallcup; and H. Jones and F. Poindexter could outfit a dwelling with furniture made from the county's timber.[171]

Typically frame weatherboarded houses of the period were simply finished with little decoration. The Dr. Alexander Brabson House (NR 1990), built in 1884 near Otto, is representative of frame farm houses. The two-room plan I-house features a central

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168 Descendents of Oscar and Lem Heaton, interview with author, Ellijay community, January 24, 1994.

169 Paul Tippett, interview with author, Piney Grove community, March 14, 1994.

170 Radford Talley, interview with author, Highlands vic., summer 1994.

171 *Chataigne's North Carolina State Directory and Gazetteer, 1883-1884* (Raleigh: J.H. Chataigne, 1883), 423-424; Rev. L. Branson, *North Carolina Business Directory for 1884* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1884), 428.

chimney and an interior boxed stair and rear enclosed breezeway. Dr. Brabson worked as a physician and sometimes used the house for office visits; however, most of the time he traveled by horse to conduct his medical practice.[172]

Farms continued to dominate the landscape during the period as families continued the subsistence farm economy. Increasingly however, they supplemented their incomes with outside pursuits such as logging and commerce. Farms are typically situated on level or slightly hilly terrain which combines both woodland and pasturage. Typically some sort of water source, usually creeks, meanders through the property. Builders typically situated the farm house a short distance from the outbuildings. This arrangement removed farm odors from the house and gave the family a view of activities within the complex.

Farmers clustered their outbuildings together in a cohesive unit on relatively flat to moderately hilly expanses of land. Sometimes they arranged them in a linear fashion, but more typically built them to conform to the landscape or to allow ease of access among them. Outbuildings associated with the role of farm women and domestic chores stand close to the dwelling. Canning, or can, houses used for storing food preserved in jars are built of stone and wood and typically into a hill where the contents are kept cool. Wash houses, smokehouses, small chicken houses or coops, and often wells can be found close the back door of the house. Corn cribs and livestock barns usually stand together, while tobacco barns are often located close to the tobacco field. Very few outbuildings from the late nineteenth century survive; farm houses from that period and earlier are usually accompanied by outbuildings constructed in twentieth century. Indeed, most farms span several decades or longer.

The Slagle Farm (MA 226) in the Cartoogechaye community features buildings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and remains one of the county's most intact farm complexes. Charlie Slagle (1847-1931) built the house in 1875, and soon after began constructing outbuildings. The one-and-a-half story frame saddlebag dwelling rests on a stone foundation and features a double-leaf front door. The rear ell, a later addition, features a boxed stair to access the loft. Members of the Slagle family who did woodworking crafted the scrolled shelf mantels in the two front rooms.[173]

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[172] Carolyn Humphries, "National Register Nomination for the Dr. Alexander C. Brabson House" (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1990).

[173] Siler Slagle, interview with author, Cartoogechaye community, March 10, 1994.

Around 1900 Charlie built a large gable roof livestock barn into a gently sloping hillside in the valley just beneath the house. When Charlie's son Carl took over the farm in the early twentieth century, he added most of the outbuildings which remain. In the valley near the circa 1900 barn, Carl built milking parlors, a feed mill, a corn crib, and a shed. He also moved a warehouse which had been located at the Ritter Lumber Company camp onto his property to use as a shop. On a hill behind the dwelling are the outbuildings associated with the domestic farm chores: a chicken house, can house, and wood shed. Cartoogechaye Creek flows through the southwestern corner of the cleared meadow in which the largest outbuildings stand.[174]

At the center of the Bell-Bryson Farm (MA 123) located near the Cullasaja River south of Franklin is a two-story, double-pile frame house. It began when Samuel Bell built a one-room section in the late nineteenth century, but William Marion Bryson, Sr. built the majority of the house around 1900. The central-passage house features original mantels, tongue and groove sheathing, and a one-story front porch supported with turned posts which extends along the facade. Outbuildings in the complex include a gambrel roof barn, a small corn crib, a canery used for extracting syrup from sugar cane, a chicken house, and a saw mill. The narrow cove in which it is located determines the farmstead's layout, for the outbuildings are spread along both sides of a creek in front of the dwelling.[175]

In contrast to the Slagle and Bell-Bryson farms, homes of more prosperous families, the Arie and Ulysses Carpenter Farm (MA 309) represents a more modest farmstead that supported self-sufficient agriculture during the early twentieth century. Located in an isolated hollow in the Otto community, the Carpenter farm features numerous outbuildings centered around a hewn and round pole log house partially covered with weatherboard. The one-and-half-story, hall and parlor plan dwelling features tongue and groove interior sheathing and a stone gable end chimney on the main block. A similar chimney serves the board and batten kitchen at the northeast corner of the house; this kitchen originally stood independent of the house, but was attached to the dwelling around 1940. Attached by a breezeway to the rear of the kitchen is the well. The outbuildings, including a stone and round pole log root cellar/granary, a wood smokehouse, and the remnants of a round pole log barn rise along a gentle hill behind the dwelling.[176]

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174 Ibid.

175 Evelyn Bryson, interview with author, Cullasaja vic., March 25, 1994.

176 Stanley Holland, interview with author, Otto vic., April 4, 1994.

Dwellings of even the more prosperous residents remained strikingly plain during the period, but a hint of architectural fashion did emerge in the form of picturesque styles like the Queen Anne. While several dwellings and buildings exhibit the influence of these modes, their imprint was limited by Macon County's long isolation from the railroad which in other communities brought a wealth of stylish machine-milled woodwork. The only conduit through which new styles could arrive in Macon County was from the tide of outsiders who permeated the county or from builders' pattern books coming into the hands of local builders and carpenters.

The Albert Swain Bryson House (NR 1984) in Franklin is the finest example of the influence of the Italianate style on domestic architecture in the county. A hipped roof with wide gables on four elevations tops the double-pile, two-story common bond brick and frame house built in the 1870s. Paired sawnwork brackets grace the eaves. On the west elevation is a two-story, three-sided bay window topped with a tri-gable roof and graced with recessed octagonal panels embellishing the spandrels located on each level. The interior features original walnut woodwork exhibited in the center hall staircase which is decorated with brackets, turned balusters, and a square molded newel post. Mantels throughout the house are post and lintel with curvilinear Italianate trim.[177]

The Queen Anne Victorian became the most popular style in Macon during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as seen in several dwellings that display the style's irregular form and ornate decorative elements. Oak Hill (MA 233), which was built around 1890 and served originally as a dwelling and later as a hotel during the early twentieth century, remains one of the best local examples of the style. This frame irregular plan two-story house exhibits Queen Anne massing most conspicuous by its front facing gables. Chamfered posts, decorative sawn work, and a cutout balustrade grace the one-story wraparound porch. Tongue and groove sheathing, a center hall stair with a turned newel and balusters, and ten mantels are original interior features.[178]

A more restrained expression of the picturesque style appears in two dwellings. The Charles Edwards House (MA 374) and the Union United Methodist Church Parsonage (MA 305) are frame one-and-a-half story dwellings which feature a single facade gable and side gables accented with wood shingles. The Edwards House, built around 1888, retains its original wainscoting in the center hall and parlors, a three-sided

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[177] Janet Hutchinson, "National Register Nomination for the Albert Swain Bryson House" (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1984).

[178] *The Franklin Press*, November 13, 1995; Al Olson, interview with author, Franklin, spring 1994.

bay window on the west elevation, and five-paneled doors. The circa 1890 parsonage reveals a similar center hall plan. Mantels in the parsonage are simple post and lintel and the original wainscoting remains intact throughout.

The Donaldson brothers, carpenters in the late nineteenth century, built several dwellings which convey a unique local statement of the vernacular Victorian esthetic. The circa 1895 Dobson House (MA 205) in Patton Valley displays the most intact qualities found among the dwellings these craftsmen produced. The one-and-a-half story frame dwelling is L-shaped with the front door centered at the angle of the two intersecting wings; a rear ell extends directly back from the east wing. The Donaldson brothers emphasized the form with fanciful chamfered posts accented with sawn work on the front porch; a steeply pitched gable rests on the roof above the porch at the junction of the two wings.

The Althea and John Odell Harrison House (MA 40) presents the county's finest example of the transition from the Victorian to Colonial Revival style. The latter style, which enjoyed immense popularity during the first half of the twentieth century, employed colonial-inspired features such as classical columns and Palladian windows. Combining vernacular interpretations of both styles, this 1901 house features Doric columns along its one-story wraparound porch. Asymmetrical massing showcases a projecting front gable whose tympanum is punctuated with a decorative three-part window with a center fanlight. A wide frieze band beneath the eaves and hanging spindles at the bay window's cornice adorn this rambling dwelling and set it apart from the more restrained flavor of the town's architectural landscape. The interior repeats the influence of the two styles: pocket doors separate the first floor parlor and hallway; tongue and groove sheaths the walls; and a Victorian incised newel accents the staircase.

Architecture in rural communities differed from that found in Franklin or Highlands. While these two towns became the commercial centers of Macon County during this period, small dispersed settlements provided a sense of community to rural dwellers. Such communities were made up of extended members of one or several families and could include a few commercial buildings perhaps coupled with an industrial site. Regardless of the constitution, such settlements offered those isolated from the county seat or Highlands an opportunity to work, worship, and socialize together. Architecture within these villages typically varied little and thus reflected the sense of community felt among the residents.

West's Mill Historic District (MA 56) remains the county's best example of a cohesive community made up of both commercial and domestic buildings. Located on the site of Cowee, the old Cherokee town, the core buildings of West's Mill spread over approximately ten acres on the east side of the Little Tennessee River. The five

commercial buildings are frame of one and two-story with front facing gables. The community was established along Cowee Creek in the late nineteenth century and around 1890 the two-story, frame Bryson-Rickman Store was built. About the same time, the Clyde and Minnie West Store, also a two-story frame building, was constructed and a post office was established. Vonnie West and Will West built frame I-houses here in the early twentieth century. The mill from which the community obtained its name later burned.[179]

Seven dwellings make up the Tellico Valley Historic District (MA 91) located in an isolated portion of northern Macon County. After inheriting extensive acreage in this valley Samuel Taylor Ramsey (1847-1937) built a house here in the late nineteenth century. Sam's son, Robert, added to the original dwelling and this house became the center of this community which would develop during the first half of the twentieth century. Samuel Ramsey built several frame dwellings in the community for members of his family. The Laura Martha Ramsey House (MA 84), an I-house with a central chimney, rests on a stone foundation and features a truncated portico embellished with decorative wood shingles which rests atop the one-story porch. Samuel built the Harley Ramsey House (MA 89) for his sixth child. This I-house features a two-story porch graced with decorative sawn ornament and a milled balustrade with sunburst motifs. Robert and Sam Ramsey built the Florence Ramsey House (MA 90) for Sam's second child. This I-house with a central chimney retains it original fanciful sawn balustrade and chamfered posts on both the front two-tiered portico and the rear ell's second story porch. Also in the district is the Joseph and Sarah Smith Farm (MA 83), an early twentieth century agricultural complex made up of multiple outbuildings. The frame house, built in 1914, replaced the farm's original log cabin. An unpaved road lined with rock walls follows Tellico Creek which meanders through the district and helps to define its original setting.

Commercial buildings constructed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries housed a variety of businesses opened during the period and were typically plain with little decoration. Only two retail commercial buildings from this period survive. Two units comprise the Johnston-Porter building (MA 385), a two-story brick commercial block built in 1887 and 1888. A dry goods and drug store occupied the two first floor spaces, while the second level housed the original offices of the *Franklin Press*. The east and west side elevations feature a series of segmental windows beneath the stepped parapet walls shielding the flat roof. The front cornice features simple corbelled brickwork.

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[179] Mattie Pearl McGaha, interview with author, Cowee community, winter 1995.

Most of the commercial buildings constructed in Franklin in the late nineteenth century were of wood. In 1902, the local paper reported, "Franklin has suffered a great deal of loss from fire within the last twelve years. She is in a condition to suffer a great deal more. There are several old wooden structures liable to start a blaze at any time."[180] In response to such danger commercial buildings after 1900 tended to be brick. The Pendergrass Building (NR 1991) endures as the county's most intact retail commercial brick building. Constructed in 1904, the Pendergrass Building represents a popular style and form of commercial architecture of the period. The three-bay facade of this two-story rectangular brick building retains its original storefront including the display windows and cast iron chamfered posts which flank the entrance. Like the Johnston-Porter building, the parapeted side walls of this building shield a flat roof and are pierced with segmental arched windows. The interior retains the details of an early twentieth-century store; display cases, wide pine floors, tongue and groove counters of yellow pine, and turned maple posts which support a second floor balcony confer an integrity of material and workmanship rarely found in commercial buildings in western North Carolina.[181]

As the county relinquished its role as a frontier in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, institutions such as schools and churches established a firm position in Macon. Buildings to house these establishments were both monumental with high style influences and plain utilitarian structures. While most schools held class in simple log or frame buildings, the Franklin Female Seminary (NR 1981) met in the county's best example of Italianate styling as applied to an institutional building. The Seminary, constructed in 1888, is a two-story, stuccoed brick T-plan building; in 1915 the building was converted to serve as a hotel, a function it continues. Corner pilasters and corbelled belt courses outline the walls and mark the first, second, and attic levels. Segmental arched hood molds cap the tall, narrow windows on each elevation. The irregular interior plan features tongue and groove sheathed ceilings and a partially open stair with an incised newel.[182]

The second county courthouse was one of the most important buildings erected during the late nineteenth century. Until it was destroyed in 1972, this two-story edifice stood as a reminder to residents of the gains Macon County had made since its founding. In 1881, the county awarded J.B. and W.T. Davis a contract to build the courthouse of locally fired brick. The structure, completed in 1882, stood two stories

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180 *The Franklin Press*, January 29, 1902.

181 "National Register Nomination for the Pendergrass Building" (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1991).

182 Michael Southern, "National Register Nominations for the Franklin Terrace."

high with a two-story three bay projection on the facade which contained two spiral staircases. Constructed in a simplified Italianate style akin to the still intact Transylvania County courthouse, the courthouse featured a bracketed brick cornice, brick quoins, hooded segmental arch windows, and a dentil brick stringcourse between the first and second floors. In 1906 the county added a mansard roof wooden clock tower complete with a bell to the top of the courthouse.[183]

Few of the mills survive that were such a vital part of the nineteenth-century landscape. Once they fell out of service, they were rarely converted to an alternate use. The two-story gabled roof Jim Berry Mill (MA 94), built around the turn of the century, is the most intact mill in Macon. This wooden grist mill located on Watauga Creek northeast of Franklin operated until around 1940. Except for the waterwheel, much of the original interior millworks such as the drive belt and grinder is intact.

By the end of the nineteenth century Macon County was a vastly different place than it had been at the start of the century. The last of the Cherokee had disappeared from the Sand Town settlement in Cartoogechaye. Distilling no longer dominated the economy, but was replaced by the lumber and tourist industries. The frontier era had faded into memory. With newfound economic expansion, schools led to the development of a more prosperous county. And while modest log houses continued to appear in remote mountain hollows, fine architecture in the Italianate style found its way to Franklin. The influence of Victorian styling, most apparent in fanciful milled trim, even appeared on dwellings in more distant parts of Macon. Although many still built houses in a community effort, carpenters and contractors brought a new professionalism to building. Like its economy and society, Macon County's architecture developed and set the stage for the rapid growth awaiting this still rural mountain county in the twentieth century.

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[183] Barbara McCrae, "Macon County Courthouse," in *The Heritage of Macon County*," 40-42.

V. THE TRANSPORTATION REVOLUTION IN MACON COUNTY, 1905-1945

The continued inaccessibility caused by insurmountable terrain, poor roads, and numerous rivers remained the most tangible obstacle to Macon County's economic development before 1905. Although boosters had pushed for a railroad that would do more than just skirt the county as the Southern Railway did in 1884, no action to link Macon by rail was taken until the first decade of the twentieth century. While the line which pushed into Macon in 1905 did much to boost the economy, in many ways it came too late. Automobile travel was a not too distant reality and the natural resources which the line was designed to transport to market were being systematically depleted through over harvesting. But at the time, the Tallulah Falls Railroad seemed the salvation for which many Macon County citizens longed.

Trails to Rails to Roads

The campaign to bring rail travel to the county began in the first half of the nineteenth century when a line which was planned to extend from Port Royal, South Carolina to the Ohio River was to pass through Macon. Masonry piers had been laid in Clayton, Georgia, a few miles south of Macon County, when the Civil War broke out and the project was abandoned. In the last several decades of the nineteenth century, proposals to furnish rail service flourished. Business people extolled rail service and the opportunities it would provide:

> Now, gentlemen of Macon County, let us appropriate a hundred and fifty thousand dollars for a railroad...and the future of Franklin and Macon County is assured. Land will have a better market value, every farmer who has timber can get cash for it, visitors will add to the circulation of money, settlers will come in with their means and so add to the volume of business. It would bring a life and animation into our section, such as we have never seen before.[184]

By the first decade of the twentieth century, people throughout the county believed the railroad meant their economic salvation.

When its tracks were laid in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Tallulah Falls Railroad ran from Cornelia, Georgia north to Tallulah Falls, Georgia. Wealthy Atlantans took the line to the north Georgia resort town to enjoy the cool

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184 *The Franklin Press*, March 6, 1890.

weather and scenic beauty. Witnessing the success the line brought to north Georgia, it was not surprising that leaders in Macon County, which shared its southern border with Georgia, recognized the possibilities the extension of the Tallulah Falls Railroad would bring to them.

In 1902, an Atlanta newspaper assured that "the people in the counties which the road will pass have long clamored for this extension and have promised the road their hearty and enthusiastic support."[185] Three years later, the extension of the line began and the tracks reached the Macon County line in 1905; two years later the first train pulled into Franklin. The railroad entered Macon County just below the community of Orlando, then proceeded through Otto and on to Franklin. With the line, a trip from Otto to Franklin which formerly took an entire day by foot, now lasted less than an hour. Although originally plans included an extension of the line from Macon County to other railroad towns in western North Carolina, Franklin remained the termination point of the Tallulah Falls Railroad.

The Tallulah Falls Railroad operated the fifty-eight mile route from Cornelia to Franklin for fifty-four years. It offered passenger service and transportation for mail, livestock, farm crops, timber, mica, and corundum. In addition, the railroad employed many workers who boarded with and provided income to local families including Arnold Davis, a twenty-three year old ticket agent from Georgia, who boarded with the Charles Dowdle family near Prentiss.[186] Though it proved popular for those who traveled its rails, the line gained little financial success and in 1923 the railroad went into receivership. Passenger service ended after a major wreck in 1946 produced additional financial hardship, coupled with the competition from the automobile. In the 1950s, production companies used the Tallulah Falls Railroad in two films, *I'd Climb the Highest Mountain* and Walt Disney's *The Great Locomotive Chase*. But not even Hollywood could save the line; in 1954 mail service halted, followed by the closing of what had become known as the "Total Failure" Railroad in March 1961.[187]

Part of the problem the railroad encountered during the first half of the twentieth century was competition from automobile travel. After 1910 when the first car appeared in Franklin people living in all communities in the county, not just those with access to

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[185] *Atlanta Constitution*, March 11, 1902.

[186] Thirteenth Census of the United States, Macon County, North Carolina, Population, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

[187] Katherine Long Perry, "Tallulah Falls Railroad," in *The Heritage of Macon County*," 79-80.

the railroad, discovered mobility. With automobiles, parts of the county became more accessible than ever; many locals could drive to neighboring areas, and more important to others, people could drive to Macon County. Over the next several decades, the car did more to bolster tourism than any other factor which came before.

But even with the automobile revolution, traveling remained a problem in Macon County because of the lack of good roads. So poor were the conditions that when the first car came to Franklin in 1910, it had to be pulled by oxen because the roads were impassable.[188] And while many areas in rural North Carolina dealt with poor roadways, Macon and other mountain counties faced the challenge of road building and improvement in mountainous terrain. Laying a road was one matter, but building one over a five thousand foot mountain seemed daunting to even the most ambitious mountaineer.

The campaign for good roads was active in Macon County. In 1919 R.N. Moses of Ellijay wrote to the North Carolina Senate asking that a road be constructed between Franklin and Highlands. The same year the United States Forest Service studied the possibility of such a road and also a route between Franklin and Aquone in western Macon County. The next month representatives from Macon and surrounding counties met to "set forth their claims for funds from the state and federal government." In 1921, the state created the Highway Commission which issued fifty million dollars worth of highway bonds in order to connect North Carolina's one hundred county seats with paved, all-weather highways. With this legislation, road building in Macon County was underway.[189]

Several major road projects happened in the 1920s. Highway 286, now N.C. 28, which follows the Little Tennessee River, crosses the Cowee Range, and connects Franklin and Swain County was hard surfaced. In 1925, the county paved roads to the Georgia border and to Dillsboro in Jackson County. In November of that year, convicts began construction of N.C. 28 westward through the Nantahala Mountains to connect Franklin and Hayesville in Clay County, a route which a local newspaper said would "open up a country rich in natural resources--a country so far only lightly touched by the hand of man."[190]

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188 *The Franklin Press*, August 8, 1990.

189 *The Asheville Citizen*, April 17, 1919; *The Asheville Citizen*, April 19, 1919; *The Franklin Press*, May 3, 1919.

190 *The Franklin Press*, August 8, 1990; *The Franklin Press*, November 27, 1925.

The most ambitious road building project during this period was the construction of U.S. 64, from Gneiss to Highlands through the perilous Cullasaja Gorge. In 1923, Dave "Straight Line" Gibson, an engineer for the North Carolina Highway Commission, conducted a survey of a possible route between the two points. In 1924, staff at the Raleigh office of the Commission received the field notes from the survey and determined the road unbuildable because of the steep and treacherous terrain over which the road was to pass. After the Highway Commission was divided into districts, Jim Stikeleather, the commissioner in charge of projects in western North Carolina, decided to proceed with construction of the road. In 1925, with John Smith as engineer, air compressors, wagon drills, a steam shovel, farm wagons for hauling, fourteen mules, and two horses were put into place and the project began. Twenty black prisoners built the road and lived in temporary camps along the route. Timber from the mountain sides was used to build bridges and a quarry near Short Creek falls supplied stone for the road base. By 1929, despite a temporary suspension of work due to a lack of funds, the road was completed to Highlands with no accidents.[191]

While state funds provided for the improvement of major roads which ran from Franklin to other counties, many local routes remained fairly crude. As late as 1930 most farms were located on unimproved dirt roads, while only one farm in the county was situated on a asphalt road.[192] For Macon County residents traveling within their own communities, rock and mud slides and potholes made road travel difficult, at best, well into the twentieth century.

Population Grows

The population in Macon County continued to grow during the first half of the twentieth century. From a total of 12,191 in 1910, the population increased steadily over the next several decades. In 1920, it reached 12,887 and by 1930, 13,672 people lived in the county. In 1940, the population exceeded 15,800, an increase of over sixteen percent from ten years earlier. Most people resided in and around Franklin, while Flats Township located southwest of Highlands remained the most sparsely populated section of the county. Populations in the county, especially in Highlands, soared during the summer tourist months.[193]

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[191] *The Franklin Press*, May 7, 1985; *The Franklin Press*, May 14, 1985.

[192] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Volume II, Agriculture* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), 450.

[193] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Volume I, Population* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1931,

Although the population of whites increased, the number of blacks decreased during the twentieth century. The black population numbered 669 in 1880, but only 576 remained by 1910. From 1920 to 1940, the black population hovered around 465. Overall, the percentage of blacks fell from eight percent in 1880 to three percent in 1930.[194] As in other parts of the South, blacks in Macon County realized by the early twentieth century that they held little economic, social, or political power. Blacks continued to be relegated to manual labor or domestic jobs which offered little future. In Macon County the situation was exacerbated by the disproportion in the number of blacks compared to whites.

Life for blacks in the county proved difficult. Ham Penland, a black man who could neither read nor write, worked odd jobs to support his wife, Mary, and their four children who were all under ten years of age. And even though he could read and write, Charlie Love of Franklin also labored at odd jobs to pay his mortgage and support his wife and their seven children.[195] Instead of competing with white laborers during the first half of the century, large numbers of Macon County blacks joined in the region-wide migration to northern cities in search of better opportunities. Farmers fared little better: the number of black farmers decreased from sixty-six in 1910 to only thirty-three in 1920, eleven of whom worked the land as tenants.[196]

792; *Vital Statistics of the United States: 1940. Part I, Natality and Mortality* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 105.

[194] *Negro Population, 1790-1915* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918; reprint, New York: Kraus Reprint, Co., 1969),785, 823; *Negroes in the United States, 1920-1932* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935; reprint, New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1969), 784; *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920. Volume II, Population* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 1354; *Vital Statistics of the United States, 1940*, 105.

[195] Thirteenth Census of the United States, Population.

[196] *Thirteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1910: Agriculture* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 241; *Fourteenth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1920: Agriculture* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 237.

Education

Macon County schools underwent rapid improvement beginning in the fourth decade of the century. In 1933, a law was passed which transferred control of county schools to the state. In the 1940s school terms extended to nine months and consolidation began. In 1941, the local newspaper proclaimed,

> so swiftly have changes come, brought by paved roads, electricity, radio, rapid communication, and transportation, that the primitive school buildings remaining now look like the proverbial `horse and buggy,' or even ox cart...the promise and reality of better school buildings hold better opportunity for today's children.[197]

That year schools at Mulberry, Betty's Creek, Coweeta Academy, Hickory Knoll, Lower Tessentee and Otto were consolidated into the Otto School and students attended class in a new Works Progress Administration (WPA) building. With the WPA's construction of the Cowee School in 1943, facilities at Harmony, Liberty, Oak Grove, Rose Creek, Tellico, and Otto were consolidated.[198] By 1950 high schools were located at Franklin, Highlands, and Nantahala and eleven elementary schools were scattered around the county.[199]

There were no black high schools in the county until 1953 and until 1965, blacks in Macon County attended separate schools. Prior to 1953, the county offered a small allowance to students who wished to attend high schools in other counties and some went to Allen High School, a Methodist Episcopal missionary school in Asheville. In August 1964, two blacks applied for admission to Franklin High School and that year one of the applicants began attending the school. The next year, under federal law, the county assigned blacks to area white schools and the former black schools were closed.[200]

Religion

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197 *The Franklin Press*, June 5, 1941.

198 "Moments in the History of Otto Community," n.p.; "A Brief History of Cowee School," 2.

199 Katherine Perry, "Education in Macon County," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 66.

200 Helen Patton, "The Black Population," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 89.

The first half of the twentieth century in Macon County saw the establishment of new congregations. Typically, when several families moved to a place too far from their church, they founded a new one with the help of the mother church. Once this new congregation gathered enough members, they asked the parent church to dismiss so they could form the new body. Often the mother church sent its minister and others to help the new flock get started.[201] From 1900 to 1945, Baptists, who outnumbered other denominations, established fifteen new Baptist churches; all were located in small rural communities spread throughout the county.[202]

Revivals and camp meetings continued as an important part of religious life in the county. A revival held in November 1924 was typical of the meetings during the first half of the century. This "Inter-denominational Revival Campaign" was held on a Sunday at the courthouse and lasted from nine o'clock to seven-thirty. The promoters promised, "Salvation for the soul; Baptism of Holy Ghost; Divine Healing of Body; and the Second Coming of Christ."[203] Other meetings were held over several days. In 1932, Reverend J. Watson Shockley of the First Church of Christ of Asheville held a "two week series of revival services in the courthouse." The local paper described Shockley as "an able preacher, speaking clearly and to the point."[204]

Blacks in the county primarily worshipped at Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, Episcopal, and African Methodist Episcopal Zion Churches. While white congregations disseminated throughout the county and established new bodies, blacks were doing the same, but on a smaller scale. A group of blacks built a new church for the Pleasant Hill Methodist Episcopal Church in Cowee in 1929. Because a concentrated group of blacks lived in this community, it is likely that a congregation existed before the construction of this sanctuary. A few miles to the south a group built the Piney Grove Baptist Church in the early 1930s. During the mid-twentieth century this sanctuary held "May meetings" on Saturdays. Whites and blacks attended these services where music and singing were the focal points. Interestingly, during these celebrations whites sat in the back of the church and blacks in the front.[205]

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201 Ina W. Van Noppen and John J. Van Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War* (Boone: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973), 72.

202 *Fifty Sixth Annual Session of the Macon County Baptist Association* (Franklin: Macon County Baptist Association, 1959).

203 *The Franklin Press*, November 7, 1924.

204 *The Franklin Press*, June 16, 1932.

205 Mattie Pearl McGaha, interview with author, Cowee community, February 6. 1995.

The church served as the center of black life in the county. Celebrations were held throughout the year to mark holidays and birthdays. In November 1904, a local newspaper reported that blacks held a "grand Japanese Supper at their new church...There were three tables well served by a complement of active waiters."[206]

Twentieth-Century Agriculture

The self-sufficient farmstead persisted as the archetypal agricultural unit in Macon County during the first half of the twentieth century. By 1930, census records reveal that the large majority of farms remained self-sufficient. Also during this period, the number of farms declined as did the size of farm complexes. From 1910 to 1930, farms decreased by one hundred. In 1928, a resident of West's Mill lamented that "the poor farmers are taxed until they can't live....All the young men are leaving the farms.[207] The amount of county land in farms shrank by more than ten percent just between 1910 and 1920 as the average size of farms fell to eighty-four acres. Also during the first half of the century, the rate of tenancy declined and hovered around twenty percent for most of the first half of the twentieth century.[208]

Several field crops showed an increase in returns during the first half of the century. Corn remained the most abundant crop with an average annual production of over two hundred thousand bushels. White potatoes topped over thirty-seven thousand bushels by 1930, while sweet potatoes averaged around sixteen thousand bushels from 1910 to 1930. Other crops fluctuated in production. Wheat, which had averaged around twenty thousand bushels annually since 1880, hit a high in 1920 when the county's farmers harvested over forty-two thousand bushels. Only ten years later, Macon yielded only a little over fourteen thousand bushels. The output of apples, peaches, and blackberries remained consistent during the first half of the century. Grape growers enjoyed large crops throughout the period with a high coming in 1920 when Macon County yielded over forty-six thousand pounds.[209]

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206 *The Franklin Press*, November , 1904.

207 *The Franklin Press*, November 29, 1928.

208 *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Agriculture*, 425; *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920: Agriculture*, 236; *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Agriculture*, 230, 444.

209 *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Agriculture*, 261; *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920: Agriculture*,

A new agricultural industry, canning, developed because of the increased demand for garden crops. In 1928 the Macon County cannery opened and employed around forty to fifty women. The operator, Jonathan Case, who had "the reputation of being a good cannery man" encouraged farmers to bring "raw products in sufficient quantities...to the cannery." According to Case, "the market for blackberries and snap beans is now open....Tomatoes, apples and peaches will be bought as soon as they ripen." Prospective employees were to "come from homes where the environment is good." Case assured county residents, "that all who are employed will work under conditions as moral and clean as will be found in church or Sunday school...no stragglers will be allowed in the building."[210]

As farms grew smaller, so did the amount of land available for foraging livestock and as a result this sector of the agricultural economy declined significantly during the period. Before the turn-of-the-century swine populations hovered around fifteen thousand, but by 1910 this number was cut nearly in half. Sheep declined gradually over the period, and by 1920 only fifteen hundred head remained on Macon County farms. Cattle reached an all time low in 1930 when only three thousand head remained on farms. Poultry, which could be raised in outbuildings instead of grazing as other livestock did, was the only farm animal to make gains during the first half of the century. By 1920, over fifty thousand head of poultry lived on farms in the county.[211]

Timbering as a Major Enterprise

By the early twentieth century, timbering had become more than just a supplement to farming. Large scale operations aimed at harvesting trees for use in all types of wood products spread throughout western North Carolina. Steam mills and band mills which could process over fifty thousand board feet a day operated in the southern Appalachians. Major timber companies whose interests lay in several states

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257; *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Agriculture*, 402, 426.

[210] *The Franklin Press*, July 5, 1928; *The Franklin Press*, July 12, 1928.

[211] *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Agriculture*, 240; *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920: Agriculture*, 240; *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Agriculture*, 364.

moved into the area employing hundreds of local men and logging extensive tracts of majestic timber.[212]

The Ritter Lumber Company grew to be biggest timbering operation in Macon County during the first half of the century. By purchasing land at extremely low prices from farmers who were not accustomed to dealing with big business, the company acquired a seventy thousand acre tract straddling Macon and neighboring Clay County in the 1920s. Organized in 1890 in West Virginia, Ritter became the largest timber company in the southern Appalachians. By 1913, the company had cut two billion board feet of timber in the Appalachians.[213]

Ritter began acquiring land in Macon County in 1926 and by the late 1920s the company's operation blanketed much of the western portion of the county. In many cases the company did not buy acreage, only the timber rights.[214] A local paper reported, "a single band plant has been erected, a logging railway has been extended into the forests, and a regular village has been built in the Rainbow Springs section."[215] Located near the Nantahala River on the east side of Milksick Knob, the Ritter camp included hundreds of buildings including cabins for workers, workshops, and support buildings. The company's railroad extended thirty-seven miles from the tracks of the Southern Railway in Andrews in Cherokee County into the Nantahalas of western Macon County. Ritter prevailed at Rainbow Springs until the mid-1930s citing "the depressed condition of general business" for the end of operations.[216]

Before the Depression, other timber and wood product companies in Macon included the Porter-Moody which harvested trees from the east side of the Nantahalas. Although smaller than Ritter, this company employed around forty men and cut approximately two million feet of virgin hardwood a year on a two thousand acre tract. C.L. Pendergrass and M.L. Dowdle, both local companies, conducted pole and cross tie businesses which brought in about $250,000 a year. Portable saw mills allowed lumber companies to transport their entire operations to the timber stands.[217]

Several factors interfered with the continued cutting of timber in Macon County. The Great Depression crippled large companies like Ritter. To make matters worse, the chestnut blight of the early 1930s infected eighty to ninety percent of the species in

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212 Ronald Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers*, 103-104.
213 Ibid., 104-105.
214 Macon County Grantee Land Records, 128.
215 *The Franklin Press*, January 29, 1928.
216 *The Franklin Press*, July 14, 1932.
217 *The Franklin Press*, January 26, 1928.

Macon. Chestnut trees were used for poles, posts, railroad ties, furniture, coffins, tannin wood, and pulpwood; these combined uses made it the most versatile tree species in the southern Appalachians. Chestnut trees were also the most rapidly growing species and the most abundant in the region.[218]

Destruction and the Action to Save Forests

Once the timber companies came into Macon County with their railroads, portable saw mills and band mills, and flourishing camps, the destruction of forests was assured. Clear cutting not only destroyed the aesthetics of the mountains, but because trees were not replanted undesirable species sprung up. Loggers burned these areas each spring and fall to convert the land to ranging fields for livestock. The result was a cycle in which burning killed any young trees remaining and destroyed minerals in the soil which held the promise of one day sprouting new hardwood; with no leaf cover, erosion allowed the soil to wash away during rainstorms, exposing rock upon which nothing would grow.[219]

Even before timber operations in Macon County began in earnest, the United States Congress in 1911 had passed the Weeks Law which formed the National Forest Reservation Commission. The government took this action after reviewing logging practices throughout the eastern United States. The government faced a serious obstacle to protecting the forests in the East. While in the West areas targeted for protection were simply designated public domain, the East had little public domain, a situation which forced the government to purchase outright land for protection. The Weeks Law allowed for the purchase of land situated on watersheds of navigable streams in order to protect it from deforestation, fire, and erosion and also to allow streams to flow unhindered. The Clarke-McNary Act of 1924 expanded the scope of land acquisition and allowed for purchases of timber lands regardless of their proximity to waterways.[220]

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218 E.H. Frothingham, "Timber Growing and Logging Practices in the Southern Appalachian Region" (bulletin, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1931), 49-51.

219 F.W. Wiese, "Nantahala National Forest" (bulletin, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1936), 4.

220 *National Forests of the East and South* (bulletin, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, n.d.), 2-3.

Once it began its purchasing, the government bought land from sellers who volunteered their tracts for sale or those who, once approached, agreed with offers from federal agents. Initially, most land in the Southern Appalachians came from large timber and landholding companies such as the Ritter Company. Hundreds of small landholders also transferred titles to their lands to the government, the result being a pattern of combined Federal and private land ownership. For a period following such acquisitions, the impact of the federal government remained negligible, but gradually the flurry of land buying resulted in changes in the agricultural patterns which had emerged in the late nineteenth century. As the National Forests took over former family farms, land open for private settlement diminished.[221] In Macon County, people left their mountain homes and relocated to areas bordering the federal land or to the denser settlements along the Cullasaja and Little Tennessee Rivers.

In 1911 the federal government established a National Forest in part of Macon County and upper portions of South Carolina and Georgia. In the late 1930s, the boundaries were changed and the portion of this reserved land located in several western North Carolina counties became known as the Nantahala National Forest.[222] One of the first goals of the Forest Service was the control of fires which had traditionally been the preferred method of land clearing. The government hired rangers and firefighters to patrol the local area for undesirable burning practices which in the long run damaged the natural chemical makeup of the soil. Rangers and foresters with local origins proved successful at convincing mountain people not to burn; forest service employees who had grown up in the area had a rapport with those whom they tried to dissuade from carrying out such practices. Among these local rangers were Henry Baty of Highlands, Gilmer Setser of Franklin, and N.C. Grant of Wesser.[223]

The control of timber operations prevailed as the Forest Service's other major role. The government allowed logging on its land, but these activities took place in a controlled setting. Although the government saw preservation as its primary goal, this did not hinder its ability to make money from the timber harvested in the Nantahala National Forest. The Forest Service favored small scale operators for taking timber.[224]

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221 Shelley Smith Mastran and Nan Lowerre, *Mountaineers and Rangers: A History of Federal Forest Management in the Southern Appalachians* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 19830, v-vi.

222 *The Franklin Press*, February 2, 1950.

223 Ibid., 36-37; *The Franklin Press*, February 2, 1950.

224 F.W. Wiese, "Nantahala National Forest," 6.

Mining

Mining continued into the twentieth century, although not at the feverish pace at which timbering occurred. In 1930, *The Franklin Press* reported, "Macon County's mineral resources have not been developed because of isolation....Had there been easier access to them they would have been much more highly developed."[225]

Mica mining continued at several locations including the Poll Meter Mine at Burningtown, the Moody Mine in Iotla, General Mica and Clay and Rickman, Wright, Reuss & Sisk, both at Franklin, as well as at several sites in Cowee. Companies mined Kaolin, used in ceramics, in Iotla and Cowee. The Corundum Hill mine reopened during World War I providing the world's only supply of the mineral during this period. Beryllium, which is harder than steel and lighter than aluminum, was also mined during the period. Cowee Creek produced rubies in the early part of the century and by the 1950s, most commercial mining ceased and gem mining took over. Ruby mines located in the Cowee community became a major tourist attraction in the last half of the twentieth century.[226]

The Great Depression Brings Government Relief

The years before the Depression were prosperous ones for most of the county. During the summer of 1928, the county reaped the benefits from "scores of motoring tourists passing through Franklin every day."[227] Timbering and mining proved financially beneficial to many. But after the market crash of 1929, these activities ground to a halt. Investors abandoned plans to build a large summer resort with a hotel and golf course along the shores of Lake Emory near Franklin and Ritter Lumber pulled out of the county.[228]

The Depression brought hardship to the county. Hundreds were left unemployed, and out-migration by those seeking jobs increased. For families who remained, the federal government established myriad relief programs designed to put people back to work. Programs like the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps not only provided assistance to locals hit hard by the Depression, but also through various building projects, changed the landscape of Macon County.

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225 *The Franklin Press*, April 10, 1930.

226 Ibid.; *The Franklin Press*, August 8, 1990; *Mineral Resources of the United States, 1926*, 256.

227 *The Franklin Press*, July 26, 1928.

228 *The Franklin Press*, September 20, 1928.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) proved one of the most productive work relief programs of the period. CCC camps employed young men and war veterans in public work projects related to the conservation and development of natural resources. Under Franklin Roosevelt's plan the United States Department of Labor was to initiate a nationwide recruiting program, while the Army trained and transported enrollees to the camps. The U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service operated and supervised work at the camps.[229]

In 1933, the first CCC camps opened in Macon County. Camps were located at Franklin, West's Mill, Coweeta, Aquone, and Highlands/Horse Cove, and Buck Creek. Workers came from all parts of the country, but many hailed from Macon County. In the first ten days of 1934, fifty-five Macon County men were recruited to local camps. Enrollees were required to be physically fit, unemployed, and unmarried. The camps provided lodging, food, clothing, and medical care, as well as education and vocational training. The camp residents engaged in boxing, swimming, tennis, and fishing and each camp formed sports teams which competed against one another.[230]

In May 1933, the CCC established Camp Winfield Scott in Macon County. Before reporting to the camp, enrollees gathered in Asheville for physical exams and were then transferred to Fort Bragg for training. After thirteen days, the group traveled to the site of Camp Scott at Aquone in western Macon County. Upon their arrival, the two hundred enrollees erected a saw mill and collected logs to be milled into frames for building shelters and a dining hall.[231]

Although its officers and staff were white, Camp Nathaniel Greene was the only CCC camp in the county employing only black workers. The camp's first company went to Fort Bragg for training in May 1933. In June, the men traveled by train to Murphy and then took a forty mile truck ride to Rainbow Springs. The members set up tents until permanent barracks could be constructed.[232]

Among the projects the CCC completed was the construction in 1937 of the Wayah Bald fire tower, a stone structure located in western Macon County. The CCC

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229 John C. Paige, *The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1985), 10.

230 *The Franklin Press*, January 11, 1934; Cecile Gibson, "Civilian Conservation Corps," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 68-69.

231 *The Franklin Press*, July 1, 1992.

232 *The Franklin Press*, June 24, 1992.

built other fire towers, worked in erosion control, improved timber stands, erected telephone lines, restocked trout streams, and built trails. In 1934, the CCC helped to establish the Coweeta Experimental Forest (now the Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory), a scientific lab which deals with land management practices and their effect on the environment. The most crucial activities of the CCC were road building and improvement in the National Forest. The group did much to further the National Forest's two main goals: fire prevention and timber improvement.[233]

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) functioned as the county's other main relief program during the Depression. With the establishment of the program, a local paper reported, "the dole is giving way to subsistence work in Macon County....the Works Progress Administration is beginning to function." The WPA built roads and bridges throughout the county. In October 1935, WPA workers quarried stone at Riverside to use on county roads. Twenty-five men were working on the Chapel Road; thirty men were improving the Ned Hill Road in Cowee; and thirty more were working on the Rose Creek Road in Cowee. The next month, WPA workers began improvements on the Wayah Road in the National Forest.[234]

The WPA also built two schools in the county. In 1941, the WPA built the Otto School out of native stone and wood. The building originally contained ten classrooms, two restrooms, an office, and a gym and auditorium. The WPA constructed the Cowee School in 1943 on the site of the old CCC camp. Also built of native stone, the building originally contained eight classrooms, an auditorium, an office, and restrooms. Each room contained a potbellied stove for heat and there were no electric lights.[235]

Unlike the CCC, the WPA employed women in the county. In November 1935, the program began operating sewing rooms around the county for women who were sole money earners in their families. Women learned basic sewing, handicrafts, home improvement, hygiene, gardening, and food preservation and, once trained, had to complete a required amount of work each day. The WPA also established a cross-indexing project at the courthouse which employed women in updating old records. A

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[233] Joan Brown, "The Nantahala National Forest: A Major Force in Macon County," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 68; Lloyd Swift, "Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 58.

[234] *The Franklin Press*, October 31, 1935.

[235] "Moments in the History of Otto Community" (Otto: privately printed, 1991), n.p.; "A Brief History of Cowee School," 1.

final project was an education program designed to teach women to read, write, and perform math.[236]

Tourism and Resorts

Tourism in Macon County had its roots in the post Civil War period, but by the early twentieth century, the advent of the automobile boosted the already growing tourist industry to a new prosperity. While the Tallulah Falls Railroad brought some travelers to Macon County in the first several decades of the century, the car offered the traveler even greater opportunities for leisure time. New and improved roads opened up even the most rural and picturesque places in Macon County to visitors. The Forest Service, with the help of the CCC and WPA, built roads throughout the Nantahala National Forest. Places like Cullasaja Falls, which early nineteenth-century travelers had described in their writings, were accessible via the Highlands to Gneiss road when it was completed in 1929.

The influx of tourists led to the growth in the service industry. Boarding houses, hotels, lodges, and restaurants opened to cater to the thousands of summer visitors. The Franklin Terrace on Harrison Avenue housed thirty rooms and was "one of the most attractive summer hotels in this section of the state." Rogers Hall, now the Summit Inn, located in Franklin offered a dining hall as well as guest rooms.[237] In 1928, Elizabeth and Lassie Kelly from Otto opened Kelly's Inn and Tearoom in their home on Main Street in Franklin.[238]

During the first half of the century, Highlands offered a wide range of guest accommodations. Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Trice operated the Highlands Inn and later the Tricemont Terrace, a facility "considered one of finest operated hotels in the world, being listed in European guides as a 'white star' hotel." The King's Inn, "with its setting amid large oak and balsam trees," continued to operate throughout the twentieth century becoming the "honeymoon center of Highlands". In the 1930s, owners Mr. and Mrs. R.R. King of Charleston built "seven guest cottages on the grounds to care for the ever-increasing guest list." Among the other hotels offering accommodations in Highlands were the Potts House, Pierson Inn, and Laurel Lodge. The Highlands Country Club featured guest cottages and an "eighteen hole golf course and bent grass tennis courts."[239]

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236 *The Franklin Press*, January 4, 1984.

237 *The Franklin Press*, July 26, 1928.

238 Barbara McRae, "Elizabeth and Lassie Kelly," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 304-305.

239 *The Franklin Press*, June 5, 1941.

For youngsters, Macon's numerous summer camps nestled within the mountainous terrain offered challenging outdoor activities. By the summer of 1928 four camps, all bearing Indian names, had opened in the county. Camp Nikwasi which offered instruction in "dramatics, arts and crafts, nature study, and athletics" operated near Franklin. Camp activities included visits to "the Cherokee Indian reservation in Swain County, Wayah Bald, Highlands, and Asheville...[where] camp members will attend the opera."[240] Camp Taukeetah provided "a fine spirit of sportsmanship...and each camper fell into the routine of camp life with the joy and purpose that bespeaks real accomplishment."[241] Camp Cowee, on "a beautifully located 250-acre tract among the sharper foothills of the Cowee Mountains, offered "dancing courses including interpretative, tap, toe, acrobatic, and ballroom." "A new swimming pool, tennis court, and volley ball court" provided recreational activities."[242]

The ultimate adventure for the hearty tourist was the Appalachian Trail, a recreational and scenic path which extends from Maine to Georgia and which stretches through the western side of the county. In 1921, Benton MacKaye published an article in the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* espousing a trail to extend along the eastern United States. MacKaye, who was an associate of planners and social philosophers Lewis Mumford and Clarence Stein, saw the trail as a way for individuals to get back to nature and away from the influence of materialistic America. MacKaye envisioned volunteer groups that would built shelters along the route and maintain the path.[243]

Largely through the efforts of regional volunteer groups, construction of the Appalachian Trail commenced in 1922 in New York and by 1937 the project was complete. At subsequent meetings of the newly formed Appalachian Trail Conference, plans were made for maintaining and preserving the trail. Through agreements with individuals states and the Forest and National Park Service--upon whose land seven hundred miles of the trail in the South was located--protective measures were established and groups were enlisted to maintain the trail.[244]

World War II Prosperity

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240 *The Franklin Press*, July 5, 1928.

241 *The Franklin Press*, July 12, 1928.

242 Ibid.

243 Charles H.W. Foster, *The Appalachian National Scenic Trail* (Needham, Massachusetts: Charles H.W. Foster, 1987), 11; George H. Dacy, "The Appalachian Trail," *The Mentor* 16 (August 1928): 3.

244 Ibid., 12-13.

The economic problems which plagued the county during the Depression subsided during World War II when Macon's resources were widely used for the war effort. With the war, relief programs ended and county residents went back to work. Although tourism suffered during the period, manufacturing proved increasingly profitable.

In 1942, the Nantahala Power and Light Company constructed a power plant in northwestern Macon County. The company built a 251 feet high dam on the Nantahala River to form Lake Nantahala, which in turn flooded the community of Aquone. By this time, the people of this village had moved out, but several buildings remained; according to many local residents, when the water level on the lake is low these buildings are visible. The dam generated power to the county and also provided electricity to the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) which was making aluminum in Tennessee for the war effort. According to many in the community, the Nantahala Dam and the power it produced proved so important to the war effort that German saboteurs targeted the structure.[245]

The increased demand for mica during the war also benefited county. The government used thin sheets of mica for building aircraft, tanks, submarines, and radios. In 1943, a local paper declared,

> Mica is so urgently needed that the Army and Navy have decided a man in a mica mine is more important to the war effort than in any other place that a man could be put, on land and sea and in the air or in the battle of production behind the lines...they are deferring our miners from the draft and even bringing some back from the Army into the mines.[246]

Colonial Mica Corporation of Asheville paid six times as much for mica during the war as during peace time, and mining was made more profitable through government subsidies. In addition to Colonial's operation, Franklin Mineral Products mined scrap ground mica for use in paint and rubber tires. From the beginning of the war until the summer of 1943, this facility operated twenty-four hours a day, six days a week, and

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245 Barbara McRae, "Electric Utilities," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 76; *The Franklin Press*, July 15, 1943.

246 *The Franklin Press*, July 15, 1943.

ten hours on Sunday.[247] The Snow Company of New York and Bradley Mica Company were among several other organizations mining the valuable material in the county for the war effort.[248]

Architecture

> The oldtime picturesque house of the mountaineer is bound to go. It cannot be modified to suit the demands of modern comfort. The ugly structure that, among the recently prosperous and ignorant classes, is so prone to succeed it, has already been anticipated by a style of architecture simple, pleasing, and in harmony with the scenery, showing every one that is as easy to build an attractive house as an ugly one.[249]
>
> -Margaret W. Morley
> *The Carolina Mountains*
> 1913

Morley portrayed a common sentiment among people in early twentieth-century western North Carolina--a desire to rid themselves of architectural vestiges of the past. According to folklorist Michael Ann Williams, "rural people in southwestern North Carolina have seldom treated their architectural history kindly."[250] Most people in first half of the twentieth century Macon County attached little sentimentality to old houses. Instead, they were a reminder of past struggles and hard times.

For those who prospered from the growth in commerce and manufacturing in the early part of the century, a frame house exhibited their newfound wealth. Many families, especially those in Franklin and Highlands, built impressive frame houses much like those constructed throughout the South. This desire for new dwellings resulted from the improvements in transportation which brought new ideas to the mountains and which allowed county residents to see towns containing such dwellings.

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247 Ibid.

248 *The Franklin Press*, July 15, 1943.

249 Margaret W. Morley, *The Carolina Mountains* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913), 159.

250 Michael Ann Williams, "Pride and Prejudice: The Appalachian Boxed House in Southwestern North Carolina," *Winterthur Portfolio* 25 (Winter 1990): 221.

Merchant Jim McDowell represented the type of county resident who could afford to built a substantial frame dwelling. In 1915 he hired two carpenters, Pearlman Cabe and Ed Conley, to build a two-story, central passage plan, frame house. One of the most impressive rural houses at the time of its construction, the Jim McDowell House (MA 290) features a one-story wrap around porch graced with turned posts. Interior walls are tongue and groove sheathing, and simple post and lintel mantels adorn the front parlors. More decorative elements include an incised newel post and a front door with Eastlake-inspired carved designs.

For the county's many less prosperous rural families, the construction of such a dwelling was unfeasible. They often remained in nineteenth-century log houses and updated them with weatherboard or board and batten exterior coverings. Few options remained for those who desired a new dwelling but could afford to hire a carpenter. By the early twentieth century, jobs in the lumber trades or mining which had replaced farm work took men out of the community most of the day. After the bottom fell out of the timber industry in Macon County, some traveled to Washington, Idaho, or Oregon to work in forestry. This left few men in the community to work in a cooperative arrangement to build a house as had been done in the nineteenth century. As a result, demand grew for a less expensive dwelling which required few hands. The boxed house, built widely in southwestern North Carolina during the first half of the century, met the need for housing for many families in Macon County.[251]

Boxed construction took advantage of the abundance of cheap sawn lumber produced by the burgeoning timber industry. In boxed construction, sills laid on the foundation, then wide planks were nailed at each corner. The builder nailed a two by four along the top of the planks and then covered the gaps between the planks with more narrow vertical boards. Boxed buildings required less finished and fewer pieces of milled lumber than weatherboarded balloon frame dwellings. They were built quickly and typically by the future occupant, often with the help of only a few men. Within some communities, a single builder erected boxed houses as a trade. Orpha Robert Roper, a resident of Burningtown, built boxed houses during the Depression in his own community as well as on the other side of Burningtown Gap in Nantahala. Roper charged four hundred dollars for building what he describes as a house of "double boxing," or "two rows of one-inch thick vertical boards with boards over the cracks."[252] This method is different than other types of boxed construction in which only a single layer of vertical boards formed the wall. The second layer of planks was likely used to keep the occupants warm.

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251 Ibid., 226.

252 Orpha Robert Roper, interview with author, Burningtown community, spring 1994.

Boxed houses are one-story, with a simple one or two-room plan. In Macon County, builders used the construction method for houses and outbuildings, and in one instance, a rural commercial building. Those which remain in the county date from the late 1910s up to around 1940; although earlier examples have been found in neighboring counties, no late nineteenth-century boxed buildings remain in Macon. Boxed construction was also used in building additions to log and, less frequently, frame houses. In order to update and stabilize these buildings, owners often covered them in horizontal weatherboard. Although no physical evidence remains, Ritter Lumber Company and other timber operations likely used boxed construction for its camps.

Boxed construction remains familiar among rural Macon County residents. During fieldwork, residents frequently offered that a house was boxed or when asked, readily knew the term and whether or not a house was built with the method. Unlike in other counties in southwestern North Carolina, locals did not use the term "plank construction" when talking about boxed houses or buildings. Generally, boxed construction is not viewed negatively and typically a sense of pride comes from those who continue to live in boxed houses.

Tom Carpenter resides in the boxed house his uncle Jes built on a farm near Otto in 1919. The Jes Carpenter House (MA 285) is a one-story, two-room plan house with a rear ell. The house rests on a field stone foundation. Like most boxed houses, the interior is sheathed in what locals call "paneling," a thin covering of paper. Several outbuildings stand on the farm including a log crib, or "shuck house," as Tom Carpenter calls it. A 12' x 14' brick tile can house stands behind the house, along with a chicken house and smokehouse.

The J.A. Clark Farm (MA 372) features a boxed house built by one of the two brothers who lives here and their late father. Several years after construction, the house was covered with weatherboard and the building technique became inconspicuous. The Clark House features a two-room plan with rear shed rooms and two front doors with a one-story porch extending along the facade. A boxed smokehouse, also built by J.A. Clark, stands close to the dwelling, while farther away stand a log crib and log barn.

Farms prevailed as an important element of the rural landscape in the first half of the century. While many men left home to work in the timber or mining industries, the rest of the family remained on the farm raising the food necessary for the survival of the household. Farms of the period typically featured a wide array of outbuildings reflecting a diversified pattern which combined both agricultural and domestic practices. In order

to support both crops and foraging livestock, agricultural complexes retained their makeup of wooded and cleared land. While Franklin and Highlands moved into the modern era, farms in rural Macon County remained traditional. As late as 1930, only fifty-five of the 1,847 farms in the county had electricity, while only 117 farm houses had running water.[253]

The Jesse Rickman Farm (MA 64) represents typical farms of the early twentieth century. Although the farm was established in 1855, most of its farm buildings date to the first half of the twentieth century. Located on an isolated hollow in the Cowee community, this two hundred acre farm comprises both a cleared valley and wooded mountain land which extends behind the central complex of outbuildings. The 1930s farmhouse replaced the original dwelling and stands on a rise overlooking the outbuildings. Such a plan allows for the flow of air to the dwelling while avoiding odors and noises associated with the agricultural buildings. The outbuildings flank Rickman Creek which flows through the cleared field below the dwelling. A late nineteenth-century hewn log crib is the oldest and most finely crafted auxiliary building. Behind and beside it are two combination log and wood barns dating from the first half of the twentieth century. An elongated rectangular circa 1930 chicken house stands on the southwest corner of the field. On the northern end of the complex is the early twentieth-century sugar cane mill where for 120 years family members have gathered yearly to make syrup.

Livestock remained important to the agricultural economy of Macon in the early twentieth century. From a humble beginning on his farm in the Wayah Valley, A.B. Slagle emerged as the county's most successful dairy farmer in the first half of the twentieth century. Slagle, who studied to be an engineer, established his farm early in the century and built the stone vernacular bungalow in 1916. Slagle collected stones for the house from the area, and he made molds which he filled with cement for the porch columns. The irregular plan house features mantels that Slagle crafted in his woodworking shop. A board and batten smokehouse is the only domestic outbuilding remaining. A dairy barn and stone milking parlor, which are associated with agricultural tasks, stand several hundred yards behind the house. It was from this small scale operation that Slagle established the Nantahala Creamery in the 1926. In 1928, it was the only such operation west of Asheville and was known as "one of the most active little industries in this end of the state."[254] Slagle eventually expanded to a large facility three miles from Franklin and became well-known for his fine herd which numbered 175 by 1941.[255]

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253 *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, 450.

254 *The Franklin Press*, August 23, 1928.

255 *The Franklin Press*, June 5, 1941.

In addition to frame and boxed dwellings, brick houses began to appear in the county during the early part of the century. Most brick dwellings were located in Franklin and they were typically the homes of the prosperous merchant class. Builders constructed the Jesse Siler Sloan House (MA 475) for the co-owner of the Sloan Brothers General Store, a business which served the county for over fifty years. One of the first brick dwellings built in the town in the twentieth century, its construction also marked the arrival of the domestic modern conveniences in the early twentieth century. When the house was erected in 1917, the Cozad Mill had been supplying electricity to Franklin for only a few years; it was one of the first in town to be equipped with a modern electric kitchen. The Sloan House shows the influence of the Craftsman movement, a style which generally made little impact in the county. The one-and-a-half story house features built-in cabinets and bookshelves as well as pocket doors. More traditional features of the house include a solid paneled balustrade and segmented arched windows. A bungaloid porch supported with pillars atop brick piers spans the facade.

Commercial development gradually reached beyond the towns of Highlands and Franklin into rural Macon County. Modest stores were often located in the small communities scattered throughout the county. The May Store (MA 190) remains a rare existing example of such businesses. Mr. and Mrs. Harley May built and operated this board and batten mercantile store in the first half of the century near Aquone in the Nantahala community. The front gable roofed building rests on stone and wood piers and retains two Royal Crown Cola signs on its facade.[256]

Increased automobile traffic in the early twentieth century led to construction of structures and buildings associated with the modern transportation. Motor lodges and service stations located along major thoroughfares attempted to attract the business of motoring tourists and locals. The Hightop Station (MA 278) is a survivor of the early automobile culture which transformed Macon County. The stone veneered commercial building was erected around 1940. It stands beside the old Georgia Road, the major route between Macon County and Georgia during the early twentieth century and the focus of intense commercial development before the road was rerouted later in the century. Although the building currently serves as a dwelling, the building retains its original character most notable in its high pitched gable roof and the smaller steep gable on the facade. Subsequent development in this area of the county during the second half of the century makes buildings such as the Hightop Station a rarity.

The people in Macon County recognized the importance of good roads and escalated their campaign for highway improvements. One of the most important road

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[256] Mrs. Harley May, interview with author, Aquone vic., February 12, 1994.

projects in the county's history was the construction of U.S. 64 from Gneiss to Highlands from 1925 to 1929. The treacherous Cullasaja Gorge through which the highway had to pass remained the major impediment in the building of a road to connect the county's only two incorporated towns. Upon completion, the road became crucial not only for practical reasons, but also for the symbolic link it created between the county seat and the more wealthy resort village.

U.S. 64 (MA 474), known as the Highlands Road or the Franklin Road, depending on one's location, winds through the picturesque Cullasaja Gorge, passing such local landmarks as the Cullasaja Falls, Dry Falls, and Bridal Falls. Because the road travels through primarily U.S. Forest Service land, very few roadside buildings intrude upon the natural landscape.

Because of the county's many rivers and waterways, portions of Macon have been isolated. While road improvements in the first half of the century made mountain gaps passable, bridges constructed in the county allowed access across the Little Tennessee, Nantahala, Cullasaja, and smaller rivers. Automobile and pedestrian bridges were practical solutions to the old problem of isolation. In the early twentieth century, these structures solidified the connection between rural Maconians and those living in the towns and created greater cohesion in this mountain community.

The state highway commission erected hundreds of metal truss bridges in North Carolina in the first half of the century. A statewide survey conducted by the State Historic Preservation Office in 1978 documented six metal truss bridges in Macon County. Currently, only three of those documented remain intact.[257] Truss bridges in the county carry only one lane of traffic and are built of metal with some wooden components, such as guard rails. The Pratt Through Truss was and is the most common model built in the county. The bridges connect communities isolated by rivers and creeks to major highways and although they are found in rural settings, two of the three remaining bridges remain heavily used.

The Whiteoak Creek Truss Bridge (MA 351), located near the Kyle community in northwestern Macon County, is a Warren Pony truss which connects SR 1310, western Macon County's main highway, with a small cluster of houses on the east side of

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[257] George Fore, *North Carolina Metal Truss Bridges: An Inventory and Evaluation* (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1979), 9-10; Robin Stancil, "North Carolina'a Historic Bridges: HAER Today, Gone Tomorrow?" *North Carolina Historic Preservation Office Newsletter* (summer 1993): 2-3.

Whiteoak Creek. The Cullasaja River Bridge (MA 319), a Pratt Through truss bridge, connects U.S. 64 with a large community on the west side of the river. Cambria, the bridge's manufacturer, built the structure of metal with wooden side guard rails. The Little Tennessee River Truss Bridge (MA 478), also a Pratt Through truss, stands in the Etna community and acts as the major connection between N.C. 28 and the Ruby Mine community.

Pedestrian suspension bridges remain a unique feature of the county's mountainous terrain. Like the truss bridges which were built to decrease isolationism among rural residents, pedestrian suspension bridges allowed quick access across major rivers. These structures are built of wood, metal, and thick wire cords which allow for flexibility and give the bridge a seemingly unstable feeling.

Three early twentieth-century pedestrian suspension bridges survive in Macon County. The Cullasaja River suspension bridge (MA 473), located at the Gneiss community south of Franklin, connects one house with U.S. 64. This structure features a wooden deck and handrails and two wire cables suspended between metal end posts located near the river bank on each end of the bridge; the two major wire cables are secured to the ground for added stability. These two cables sustain a web of smaller cables which function as the guards along each side of the bridge.

Two suspension bridges are located on the Little Tennessee River; one stands near the Etna community (MA 479), while the other is close to West's Mill (MA 480). These bridges too have wooden decks and two major cables supporting smaller wires along each side of the long walkway. The Etna bridge connects one house to U.S. 28, while the West's Mill structure allows access from the Hall farm to U.S. 28.

During the first half of the twentieth century, small public and private rural schools functioned throughout the county. Church missions were especially active in western North Carolina in establishing schools for local children. The Asheville Presbytery operated the Morrison Industrial School (MA 275) near Union from 1910 to 1921. This public facility, designed to teach trades to boys and girls, opened with an enrollment of sixty students who paid sixty dollars a year to attend. This one-story, three-room, cross-plan school is built of oak and chestnut harvested from the Jones Creek area of the Cartoogechaye community. The frame building rests on a stone foundation and contains internal chimneys and tongue and groove sheathed interior walls. Hipped porch roofs top two of the building's entrances.[258]

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[258] Edna and Edward Goulet, interview with author, Union vic., March 16, 1994.

The Holly Springs School (MA 101), built in 1915, represents the typical school buildings of the period. Local carpenter B.J. Hurst built this frame, one-story T-plan building at Wolf Pen Gap for $745. Located in the Holly Springs community northeast of Franklin, the building features a gable roof, twelve-over-twelve sash windows on each elevation, and transoms atop the two front doors. The school functioned until 1952 when Holly Springs began using it as a community center and polling place.[259]

During the Depression relief programs of the New Deal brought many improvements to the county including improved school buildings. In 1941, a local newspaper reported that, "the Otto School that has just been completed is built from native stone and has all modern features including basketball, tennis courts, and athletic field cost $47,575.00."[260] A project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Otto School (MA 295) is a one-story corridor plan school containing an original gymnasium/auditorium and classrooms and offices which flank each side of the hall. In 1943 the WPA built the Cowee School (MA 133) at West's Mill in a similar design. Also a corridor plan school built of native stone, the Cowee School features an Art Deco carved stone mural over the northern doorway.

As congregations expanded or groups splintered from more central bodies, new churches were constructed throughout the county. The Pleasant Hill Church (MA 67), constructed in 1929, served black Methodists in the Cowee community for several decades. This simple frame, rectangular, front gable roofed church rests on a stone foundation and features double leaf front doors, while a bell tower rests on the roof's ridge. The one-room interior features a semi-circular pulpit and simple wooden pews. Gravestones in the cemetery, which is still in use, spread over the cleared church yard behind the sanctuary. Markers range from simple wood posts to more elaborate stone monuments for war veterans buried here. A privy stands in a wooded area near the church yard. The Pleasant Hill Church remains the only intact black religious building in Macon County; the Piney Grove Church (MA 256), a black Baptist church, is considerably deteriorated.

The Church in the Wildwood (MA 171) in Horse Cove was constructed in 1938 from building material from an abandoned CCC camp. The church originally served as a non-denominational gathering place for residents to assemble in the summer for singing and fellowship. The front gable building rests on a stone foundation and features exposed rafter tails and large six-over-six sash windows. Log posts support the gable roofed front porch. A privy stands behind the church, as does the nineteenth-century Horse Cove cemetery.

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[259] Joann and Jack Cabe, "Macon County Historical Society Historic Property Description," 1993.

[260] *The Franklin Press*, June 5, 1941.

St. John's Episcopal Church (MA 211), the only rural Episcopal church in the county, exhibits the influence of the Rustic style on ecclesiastic architecture. This is the second church to occupy this site in the Cartoogechaye community. The original building, constructed in 1880, functioned until the early twentieth century when the congregation moved to St. Agnes Episcopal Church in Franklin. The Diocese allowed the church to deteriorate and it finally collapsed leaving only a cemetery. In 1940 Reverend Rufus Morgan, a Macon County native who had been baptized at St. John's, heard the Diocese planned to sell the land and took action. He convinced the trustees not to sell and upon his retirement in 1940 he returned to the county to devote the rest of his life to St. John's. He spent much of his time maintaining the cemetery which contained the graves of Chief Chuttahsotee and his wife Cunstagih, Cherokee who resided in the Sand Town settlement after Cherokee removal. With wood donated by the Forest Service, Morgan began rebuilding the church in the early 1940s. He used white pine for the interior and accepted donations of stained glass windows from friends in South Carolina. He located the original church's baptismal font, part of the lectern, and Bishop's chair from area churches and installed them in the new St. John's Church. He employed several unused tombstones as cornerstones for the foundation. In 1945, services were being held in the church. The board and batten sided building features double-leaf front doors and decorative truss work on the front porch. The interior remains original and contains several pews as well the original building's fixtures which Morgan retrieved during construction. A rustic style bell tower built of round logs stands directly in front of the church.[261]

Tourism as it expanded in the first decades of the twentieth century created a unique imprint on the architectural landscape of the county in the form of the Rustic style. The style was part of a larger back to nature movement that encouraged Americans return to a simple existence with nature as its focal point. These ideas permeated all aspects of life, from dress to architecture. Architects and builders picked up on this theme and stressed that the house should be part of the well ordered natural system. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, devices to merge the outside world and the house began to appear. Exterior surfaces used wood, stone, and shingles to give the house a textured appearance imitative of nature's diversity. The natural world was also brought into the house with the use of native wood such as rhododendron for balustrades on stairs and foyers with double doors which created a link between the outside of the house and its interior.

The Rustic style proved well suited to this mountain county so rich in natural resources. The Glen Choga Lodge (MA 338), located on the west shore of Lake

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[261] A. Rufus Morgan, "History of St. John's Episcopal Church," (Cartoogechaye: privately printed, 1974), 4-6.

Nantahala, stands out as one of western North Carolina's premier examples of the ideals of the Rustic style. The wealthy Steuart family constructed the lodge as a residence in 1934-35. In the 1940s, *Smoky Mountain Lyrics and Legend*, a tourist brochure featured the lodge, then called Journey's End, in an advertisement for accommodations. According to the brochure, the lodge served "discriminating people seeking a summer retreat 'far from the maddening crowd.'"[262] At that time, the road running in front of Glen Choga was the principal route between Franklin and Andrews. During World War II, workmen building the Nantahala Dam lived in the lodge, after which time it remained unoccupied for several years. It has never been electrified.[263]

The two-story round pole log building stands in a grassy clearing a few hundred yards from Lake Nantahala. The building exhibits a U-shaped plan with two large wings projecting from the central block; a courtyard divides the two wings. The lodge is made of eleven types of wood including wormy chestnut, apple, cherry, and poplar. The facade features a one-story porch with wood shakes in its front gable and supported with round log posts and embellished with decorative mountain Rhododendron branches. The use of natural materials continues on the interior where a round log handrail and Rhododendron balusters ornament the foyer's stair case. The lodge's main downstairs room which is located in the middle of the central block features double-front and rear doors, which when open allow for the merging of the inside and outside environments. The interior includes twenty-one guest rooms, a kitchen, dining room, and servants quarters.

Joe Webb, a contractor in Highlands, did more to propagate the Rustic style in Macon County than any other builder. He translated the principles of the style into a building form which proved immensely popular and livable. The houses Webb built in Highlands attracted the favor of summer and full-time residents and his work remained in high demand from the 1920s into the 1940s. Born into a family of four children to Nancy and William Webb in Highlands in 1882, Webb spent his childhood working on his father's farm.[264] About 1922 Webb, often with the help of his older brother George, began building houses in and around Highlands. According to Carol Perrin's 1980 survey of Highlands, Joe Webb's first job was the Watson-Coker House (#47 in the

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[262] From *Smoky Mountain Lyrics and Legends* (brochure). In the collection of Don Ezzelle, owner of the Glen Choga Lodge.

[263] Don Ezzelle, interview with author, Aquone vic., April 8, 1994.

[264] Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Macon County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh).

Highlands inventory) built around 1922; David Watson, an architect at Clemson College, designed the house and hired Webb to build it. Watson taught Webb methods for building log houses and it was this instruction which Webb used throughout his career.[265] This one-story with a loft round pole log house features a stone gable end chimney and saddle notched corners. Log brackets accented with rhododendron adornment support the front porch, a characteristic which would persist in Webb's work throughout his career.

Joe Webb's work grew in popularity during the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s. By 1932 Webb's business had flourished enough that he placed an advertisement in the *Franklin Press*, offering his building services for "frame or log houses." From his office in "W.M. Cleaveland's former office," Webb was "ready to do all kinds of mill work."[266] Throughout the first half of the century, Webb busied himself creating a unique style of architecture which influenced other builders in the area.

Examples of Joe Webb's work appear throughout Highlands and the surrounding area. From 1929 to 1932, Webb constructed the H.D. Randall House (MA 163), also called the "Big Billy Cabin," because of its location on Billy Cabin Ridge overlooking Highlands. Randall hailed from Cincinnati where he served as president of the Randall Company, which made harnesses; he lived for a time in Anderson, South Carolina where his company had a textile plant and after a vacation trip to Highlands, Randall decided to build a vacation house there. One of Webb's larger dwellings, the house consists of a one-story central block flanked on each end with one and a half story wings. The round log house features dormer windows and slim stone fireplace flues.[267]

Frances Dewey remembers when her parents, Greta and William Dear, hired Joe Webb to construct an addition to the small log house the family purchased near Highlands. In 1938, Joe, with the help of his brother George, began to expand the dwelling. The Dears admired a house Joe had built for Fred Gould (#148 in the Highlands inventory) at the Highlands Country Club and asked him to model the addition after Gould's house. The Dear-Dewey house (MA 472) is a two-story, L-shaped, dwelling with ornate, yet purely natural Rhododendron branches on the west end porch. The facade features a massive stone chimney and a front door with a three

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265 Carol Perrin (Cobb), "Watson-Coker House," from the Highlands survey files (Asheville: Division of Archives and History files, 1980); Janet Young, interview with author, Highlands, summer 1994.

266 *The Franklin Press*, September 23, 1932.

267 Jeremy Wilcox, interview with author, Highlands, February 3, 1994.

light transom graced with baroque iron hinges. Log rafter tails adorn the front and rear eaves. Round logs cover both the interior walls and function as exposed ceiling trusses; split peeled logs frame interior doors and windows.[268]

The most impressive of Webb's achievements was the development of Webbmont (MA 174), a rural neighborhood consisting of houses which he built on 135 acres his family had received as a land grant in the 1850s. In 1923, Webb began selling lots in Webbmont to mostly tourist families. Henry P. Hunter of Manchester, New Hampshire, was the first to purchase land and his was Webbmont's maiden dwelling. Built of chestnut, the two-story frame H.P. Hunter House (MA 182) features a wood shake exterior--a departure from the log houses for which Webb became locally famous.[269]

After the Hunter house, Webb built primarily log houses in Webbmont. From around 1926 into the 1930s, he constructed mainly one and two-story round pole log houses with saddle notched corners. In 1926, he built a one-story rectangular log house for Dr. O.F. Schiffli (MA 175). Around the same time, he built the E.C. Turner House (MA 179), a large rectangular log dwelling with imposing log posts supporting a single story porch on the west elevation and half round logs used for exterior steps. When the Depression hit, the client had Webb stop construction of the house and the interior has never been completed. The circa 1930 Lewis House (MA 176), a one story and a loft round pole log dwelling stands behind the Schiffli house and features bark sided split logs in the gables. Around 1931, Webb built the V.D. Stone house (MA 178), a one story with loft dwelling whose porch is adorned with some of Webb's most engaging Rhododendron embellishment. Webb saved some of his most articulate work for the D.O. and John P. Feaster house (MA 180) which he built around 1934. The interior of this two-story dwelling revolves around a large central room which features an open stair highlighted with Webb's signature natural mountain laurel balustrade. More subtle yet striking attributes include built in book cases and thick roughly L-shaped tree parts which act as brackets for wall shelves. Behind thick brush a few hundred yards north of the Hunter house, Webb built the log David Watson House (MA 508) around 1934. The contractor built the "House of David," as locals called it, into the hillside which overlooks U.S. 64 below. It features log columns along the north and

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[268] Frances Dear Dewey, telephone conversation with author, October 1994.

[269] Macon County Deed Book, L-4, 525 (Franklin: Macon County Deed Office).

east elevation porches, Rhododendron branches as porch balustrades, and bark siding on some of the exterior surfaces. Webb's stepson, Furman Vinson, built a stone spring fountain near the Watson House.[270]

Public Buildings and Structures

Buildings and structures intended for governmental or public use are found throughout the county. The Forest Service, with the help of CCC in the 1930s, built roads, fire towers, shelters, and recreational facilities. The Wilson Lick Ranger Station (MA 323/NR) at Wayah Gap is the oldest National Forest ranger station in North Carolina. Wood shingles cover the exterior of this one-story frame building which was built in 1913 and reconstructed in 1932. The ranger station rests on wood piers and features a rear external stone chimney.[271]

The Macon County section of the Appalachian Trail (MA 477), one of the nation's most enduring recreational structures, is located entirely on Forest Service land. A great portion of the Appalachian Trail in the county was originally a local trail known as the Nantahala Trail. In the early to mid-1930s the CCC, with help from volunteer groups, dovetailed this existing trail into the Appalachian Trail network.[272] The Macon County portion of the trail enters the county from Towns County, Georgia and proceeds in a northerly direction to Standing Indian Mountain, the county's highest point. The route proceeds through lush green forests crossing Hemp Patch Creek, Bearpen Creek, and Moore Creek before reaching Wayah Crest. From this midpoint in the county, the trail advances to Copper Ridge Bald, over Tellico Gap to the Wesser Bald tower. The trail moves into Swain County just above the Wesser tower.

Electricity was a welcomed although limited service to Macon County in the early twentieth century. Henry Cozad provided power as early as 1908 when he generated electricity from a roller mill in Cartoogechaye Creek. With partners J.S. Conley and M.E. Cozad, Henry Cozad incorporated his operation in 1909 as the Franklin Light and Power Company. The company provided power sporadically for the county seat for many years. However, by 1925 the *Franklin Press* commented that "there is no power

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270 Macon County Deed Books: P-4, 265; O-4, 363; S-4, 421; F-4, 149; X-4, 86 (Franklin: Macon County Deed Office); Peggy Watkins, interview with author, Highlands vic., February 8, 1994; John Schiffli, interview with author, Highlands, February 7, 1994.

271 Rodney Snedecker, U.S. Forest Service, phone conversation with author, April 1994.

272 *The Franklin Press*, April 16, 1930.

worthy of mention."[273] With the completion of a new dam on Lake Emory in November of 1925, Franklin received "an abundance of hydro-electric energy for lighting and power purposes." When the mayor switched on the power in a ceremony on December 4, 1925, the paper called it "undoubtedly the most significant day in the history of Franklin."[274]

The Franklin Power Company dam and power house (MA 95) provided needed electricity faithfully until the Depression when Northwest Carolina Utilities, which had purchased the facility, experienced financial problems. As a result, the reliability of the power source declined amid complaints by town residents. In May 1933, the town gained control of the company and then sold it to Nantahala Power and Light Company. This larger company took over the Lake Emory facility and service improved greatly. In addition to providing higher more reliable voltage, the company extended lines to rural portions of the county in the late 1930s.[275]

The 1925 Franklin Power Company facility is located at Lake Emory on the northeast side of Franklin. The dam extends along the north side of the lake adjacent to the rectangular brick power house. The Renaissance Revival building features large multi-light segmental arch windows with semi-elliptical fanlights; keystones grace the center of each brick arch. A stone stringcourse extends along each elevation just below the cornice.

Once it purchased the Lake Emory facility from the town of Franklin, Nantahala Power and Light Company extended their operations in Macon County. In 1942, the organization constructed a massive dam on Lake Nantahala and built an extensive power plant complex on the Nantahala River at Beechertown in northwest Macon County to supply power to local households and to the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) in east Tennessee. In turn, Alcoa produced aluminum for use in military equipment during World War II. In 1947, the company constructed an additional dam on Queen's Creek in order to feed more water to the Beechertown complex.[276]

The Nantahala Power and Light Company complex (MA 353) consists of a powerhouse, worker cottages, and a storage shed. The massive stone powerhouse contains equipment and offices. The two-story building features large multi-light windows on each elevation and a flat roof. Four worker cottages, which stand in a row

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273 *The Franklin Press*, August 7, 1925.

274 *The Franklin Press*, December 4, 1925.

275 Barbara McRae, "Electric Utilities," in *The Heritage of Macon County*, 75-76.

276 *The Franklin Press*, December 26, 1946.

northwest of the powerhouse, sheltered those who constructed the facility in the early 1940s. These multi-family front gable frame houses feature front and rear porches. Each house has interior stone flues and is covered with asbestos shingle siding. The one-story storage shed, which appears to have been a community building, rests on a stone slab foundation and features five-paneled doors, small square windows, and rafter tails along its side eaves.

Architecture of the first half of the century reflected the monumental changes brought by the railroad, but more importantly the automobile. With improved roads, families who had lived in isolated coves and hollows could venture to town more often. For the more adventurous county resident, especially those looking for better jobs, new highways acted as a gateway to the outside world. The car also brought outsiders into the county, thereby changing the landscape forever. Tourism led to the establishment of hotels, lodges, and restaurants. For outsiders who wished to solidify their connection to this mountain county, builders and contractors could be hired to build vacation retreats. The host of improvements the county experienced created a new landscape, but at the same time much of the population continued living lives centered around an agricultural economy mixed with some outside employment.

VI. MACON COUNTY SINCE WORLD WAR II

Both positive and negative trends characterized Macon County's economy in the years following World War II. In 1947, Van Raalte, a textile company employing sewing machine operators and manual sewers, opened in east Franklin giving jobs to hundreds of locals. Agriculture, especially dairy operations, saw an increase in profits and home demonstration clubs flourished.[277] This prosperity was somewhat uneven, for in 1946 only one of eight county dwellings had running water and less than one-third had electricity. Fewer than one out of one hundred houses had central heat.[278]

Over the next several decades certain parts of the economy grew. By 1964, there were 985 farms in the county and agriculture experienced limited growth and only in specific areas. The dairy industry remained productive with over thirteen million pounds of milk sold in 1964. Orchard products continued to yield large amounts with over eight hundred thousand pounds of apples produced and ten thousand pounds of peaches harvested in 1964. By that year, burley tobacco had become a major crop with over ninety-three thousand pounds harvested.[279] But for those not profiting from agriculture, Macon County offered little economic promise and families began leaving in search of better jobs. By 1970, the population of the county was less than it had been in 1940.[280]

Since 1970, the county has experienced phenomenal growth derived mostly from the tourist industry. More people moved into the county and by 1980, the population had grown to over twenty thousand. In 1990, 23,499 people lived in Macon. These figures do not reflect the tremendous population explosion during the yearly tourist season. The county has become a popular retirement area and one of every five people in the county is sixty-five or older. With the National Forest Service holding title to over forty-six percent of the county's land, residents tend to live in rather dense settlements in rural Macon County. According to the county planner, the population density is 84.5 people per square mile.[281]

Macon County seemed unprepared for the population explosion of the last twenty-five years. Zoning laws are lax and houses and developments have been built

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277 *The Franklin Press*, January 23, 1947.

278 *The Franklin Press*, September 19, 1946.

279 *United States Census of Agriculture: 1964* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967), 329, 389, 435, 447.

280 *Population Abstract of the United States* (McLean, Virginia: Androit Associates, 1983), 582.

281 Decker and Duvall, *Macon County Land Use Plan*, 4-5.

hastily. The county is now dealing with these actions by initiating more stringent planning laws. Although opinions vary over land use laws and development, the majority of residents find Macon County a peaceful and welcoming place to live. Year after year residents embrace summer visitors and welcome newcomers. There is widespread participation in civic clubs and volunteer organizations and a general sense of community exists.

F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Property Type 1: Farm Complexes
Property Type 2: Houses
- A. Houses Built in the Nineteenth Century
- B. Houses Built in the Twentieth Century

Property Type 3: Resort/Vacation Houses
Property Type 4: Institutional Buildings
- A. Churches
- B. Schools
- C. United States Forest Service Buildings

Property Type 5: Commercial Buildings
Property Type 6: Industrial Buildings and Structures
Property Type 7: Transportation-Related Structures
Property Type 8: Native American Structures and Sites

National Register and National Register Study List properties are listed after the description of each property type. Several study list properties located in Highlands were originally documented in the 1982 survey of the town. These properties have not been assigned survey site numbers and therefore only the address of the property is listed.

PROPERTY TYPE 1: FARM COMPLEXES

Introduction

Large-scale agriculture has never been a large portion of Macon County's economy. Instead, farms have traditionally served as self-sufficient units which supported the family with needed meat from livestock and food from various crops. Farm women canned food and weaved and sewed cloth for various purposes. Farmers in the nineteenth century bartered for things they could not produce themselves; by the late nineteenth century, many farmers engaged in logging on their land in order to supplement their incomes.

With the tremendous growth and development the county experienced throughout the twentieth century, extensive farm complexes featuring numerous outbuildings are a rarity in Macon County. Throughout the century, farming remained

almost entirely a means to support the family, and not an market-oriented venture. When the United States Forest Service established the Nantahala National Forest in the 1920s, farms were dismantled and their occupants settled in more densely populated areas of the county. As the county turned to logging, mining, and later service industries, even fewer families engaged in farming. As a result, even twentieth-century farmsteads remain uncommon in the county.

Dividing farm complexes into time periods proves difficult because of the disparity between the dates of construction of the principal dwellings, and because of the small number of total intact farms. A farm may feature an early nineteenth-century house, but outbuildings which date to the twentieth century. Therefore, the date of some farm complexes may extend from the nineteenth into the twentieth century.

Description

A farm complex is made up of a number of components. In Macon County, there is almost always a dwelling as the focal point of the farmstead. Dependencies, including domestic and agricultural outbuildings, are the second major components of the complex. Domestic outbuildings may be defined as those structures associated with the operation of the household such as can houses, privies, and smokehouses. These buildings are both frame and box construction and date primarily to the twentieth century.

Agricultural buildings include those structures directly associated with the production of crops and care of livestock, and include cribs and barns. Such outbuildings are typically frame or log and most date to the first half of the twentieth century; only a few nineteenth century outbuildings remain intact. Because agriculture tended to be diverse in Macon County, outbuildings often served multiple uses or their functions could change over time.

An example of a farmstead which exhibits a division between domestic and agricultural outbuildings is the Slagle Farm (MA 226) in the Cartoogechaye community. The farm dwelling, constructed in 1875, stands on a hill overlooking a valley which contains twentieth century barns, milking parlors, and sheds. On a sloping hill behind the dwelling are outbuildings associated with the domestic farm chores: a small chicken house; a can house; and wood shed.

Macon County farmsteads are generally informal in their layout. In general, builders situated the farm house on an elevated hill a small distance from the outbuildings which were usually grouped together. Farm support buildings and structures stand together in a cohesive unit on even expanses of land. They sometimes are arranged in a liner fashion, but more typically are built to conform to the landscape. The exception to this layout occurs when tobacco barns were built away from the central farm complex and closer to the field where the crop was grown. This allowed farmers to hang the leaves in the sheltering building without having to transport them a great distance.

In addition to the dwelling and outbuildings, landscape features make up an important element of the farmstead in this mountain county. Fences, cultivated fields, pasturage, wooded forests, creeks, and larger waterways are among the landscape components common on farms. Modern rail, wire, and electrical fencing is used for securing livestock and to delineate property lines. Cultivated fields often contain garden crops, like tomatoes, peppers, and corn and are sited near the house to allow easy access. Larger fields, although quite rare, usually hold corn and sometimes burley tobacco are located away from the house. Open pasturage for grazing cattle typically surrounds or blankets an area near the farm house and outbuildings, while wooded acreage often makes up a large portion of the property. Historically, swine and cattle foraged in the forests, but as the size of farms decreased and the number of livestock declined during this century, this pattern has become rare. Instead, farmers often engage in logging on their wooded acreage or simply retain the land for its value. Almost all farms feature some sort of water source, which is not surprising considering the abundant springs located within the county. These springs and the creeks they feed typically originate in the mountains and flow down through the farmsteads. The siting of the farm with a stream as a focal point was a deliberate intention on the part of the farmer; water was crucial to the sustaining of the household, as well as to the operation of the farm.

While many farms remaining in Macon County were established in the nineteenth century, almost all feature twentieth century outbuildings; earlier outbuildings were either demolished or abandoned and allowed to fall into disrepair. However, a few individual outbuildings predating the turn-of-the-century remain intact. The Jesse Rickman farm (MA 64) represents typical farms of the twentieth century. The farm, established in 1855, features a hewn log corn crib built in the late nineteenth century, while the remaining outbuildings on the property date to the first half of the twentieth

century. Located in an isolated hollow in the Cowee community, this two-hundred-acre farm contains both a cleared valley and wooded mountain land which extends behind the central complex of outbuildings. The 1930s farmhouse replaced the original dwelling and stands on a rise overlooking the outbuildings; this plan allows for the flow of the air to the dwelling, while avoiding odors and noises associated with the agricultural buildings. The outbuildings straddle Rickman Creek which flows through the cleared field below the dwelling.

Farm houses from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are generally plain traditional log or frame dwellings. The earliest houses are two-room log houses which have been updated with modern siding. The Gillespie-Harrison Farms, a complex of two farmsteads established by related families, feature nineteenth-century log houses with modern siding. The house at the center of John Gillespie, Sr. Farm (MA 228), established in 1826, is a one-and-a-half story, two-room log house with a late nineteenth-century rear ell. The Gillespies applied weatherboard siding to the exterior in the early twentieth century. This farm includes a late nineteenth-century hewn log smokehouse, as well as several twentieth-century outbuildings including a round pole log barn and springhouse, and a weatherboard gear house used for storing equipment. In 1858, John Gillespie's granddaughter married Jeremiah Page Harrison and the couple established their own farm nearby. Jeremiah and Mary Gillespie Harrison built a one-and-a-half story, two-room hewn log house and chinked it with native clay. A stair led to an upper loft and the stone chimney stood on the east gable end. According to Mrs. Clara Harrison, whose husband is the grandson of Jeremiah and Mary Harrison, a "lean-to" on the rear housed the kitchen and dining room. In the 1920s, weatherboard siding was added to the exterior. The rear kitchen was rebuilt later in the century.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, weatherboard houses began appearing on Macon County farms. While they did not supplant log houses, weatherboard-sided dwellings of timber frame or balloon frame construction represented the emergence of the county out of the frontier. By this time, Cherokees had been removed twenty years prior and whites had established farms and a few businesses and were reaping profits from both enterprises.

In 1861, James Bryson planted five small cedar trees in a row in front of the site where he planned to build his house in the Cowee community. Bryson owned large amounts of land and served as the Justice of the Peace in Cowee. In 1863 he built an I-house and several outbuildings in a cove on a gently sloping hill along a fork of Cowee

Creek. Three doors on the facade of the dwelling lead to two parlors and a central passage. The mantels are extremely plain with no adornment. The Bryson family later added the rear ell which contains a kitchen and dining room. The James Bryson Farm (MA 58) features an intact assortment of early twentieth-century outbuildings including a privy, can house, burley tobacco barn, and a large hay barn topped with a gambrel roof.

While more prosperous farmers built substantial frame dwellings by the late nineteenth century, log houses remained a common fixture on Macon County farms. The Burell-Talley Farm (MA 184) features a one-and-a-half story, single pen log house constructed in the late nineteenth century. George Burrell constructed the house, but sold it to George Talley around the turn-of-the-century. Talley and his family grew various crops, but concentrated their efforts on their fruit orchard which blanketed the mountain behind the house. Outbuildings on this property include a boxed construction can house, a barn, and stable.

The early twentieth century saw the widespread continuation of the self-sufficient farm as the most common economic unit of production in Macon County. These farms produced a wide range of products for consumption by the family. At the center of the Bell-Bryson Farm (MA 123) located near the Cullasaja River south of Franklin is a two-story, double-pile frame house. While Samuel Bell built a one-room section of the house in the late-nineteenth century, William Marion Bryson, Sr. built the majority of the house around 1900. The central-passage house features original mantels, tongue-and-groove sheathing, and a one-story front porch supported with turned posts. Outbuildings in this agricultural complex include a gambrel roofed barn, a small corn crib, a canery used for extracting syrup from sugar cane, a chicken house, and a saw mill. The narrow cove in which it is located determines the layout of this farmstead for the outbuildings are spread along both sides of a creek in front of, instead of away from or even behind the house.

The Arie and Ulysees Carpenter Farm (Ma 309) represents a more modest farmstead upon which a truly self-sufficient agricultural arrangement existed during the early twentieth century. Located in an isolated hollow in the Otto community, the Carpenter Farm features a wide distribution of outbuildings centered around a hewn and round pole log house only partially covered with weatherboard. The one-and-a-half story, two-room plan dwelling features tongue-and-groove interior sheathing and a stone gable end chimney on the main block and a similar chimney on the board-and-batten kitchen which is located on the northeast corner of the house; this kitchen

originally stood independent of the house, but was moved up to and attached to the house around 1940. The outbuildings, including a stone and round pole log root cellar/granery, a wood smokehouse, and the remnants of a round pole log barn, are built on a slight hill behind the dwelling. A well is attached by a breezeway to the rear of the kitchen.

By the early twentieth century, many farmers were engaging in specialized agriculture. Although most continued to operate self-sufficient farms, others earned a good living by concentrating on one crop or product. One of the county's most successful farmers was A.B. Slagle who operated a dairy farm, and later a prosperous creamery business. Slagle, who studied to be an engineer, established his farm in the early twentieth century and built a stone vernacular bungalow in 1916. Slagle amassed stone for the house from the area and he made molds which he filled with cement for the porch columns. The irregular-plan house features mantels that Slagle hand-crafted in his woodworking shop. A board-and-batten smokehouse is the only domestic outbuilding remaining. A dairy barn and stone milking parlor stand several hundred yards behind the house. It was from this small-scale operation that Slagle established the Nantahala Creamery in 1926. In 1928, it was the only such operation west of Asheville.

While many farm families remained in log houses or built substantial frame dwellings in the twentieth century, the burgeoning timber industry of the period made possible the popularity of boxed construction among less wealthy residents. Because this building method required less lumber and fewer carpenters or builders, it proved popular among many rural Maconians. In boxed construction, sills rest on the foundation, then wide planks are nailed to each corner. A two-by-four is nailed along the top of the planks and then more narrow vertical boards are used to cover the gaps between the planks. Boxed buildings required less finished and fewer pieces of milled lumber than balloon frame dwellings. They were built quickly and typically by a local carpenter or the future occupant, often with the help of only a few men. Within some communities, a single builder erected boxed houses as a trade. Orpha Robert Roper, a resident of Burningtown, built boxed houses during the Depression in his own community as well as on the other side of Burningtown Gap in Nantahala. Roper charged four hundred dollars for building what he describes as a house of "double boxing," or "two rows of one-inch-thick vertical boards with boards over the cracks." This method is different from other types of boxed construction in which only a single layer of vertical boards formed the wall. The second layer of planks was likely used for

insulation.

Boxed houses are one-story, with a simple one- or two-room plan. In Macon County, builders use the construction method for houses and outbuildings, and in one instance, a rural commercial building. Those which remain in the county date from the late 1910s up to around 1940; although earlier examples have been found in neighboring counties, no late nineteenth-century boxed buildings remain in Macon. Boxed construction is also used in the building of additions to log, and less frequently, frame houses. In order to update and stabilize these buildings, owners often covered them in horizontal weatherboard.

Two of the best preserved examples of boxed houses in Macon County stand on farms. Tom Carpenter resides in the boxed house his uncle Jes built on a farm near Otto in 1919. The Jes Carpenter Farm (MA 285) features a one-story, two-room plan house with a rear ell. The house lacks underpinning and rests on a field stone foundation. Like most boxed houses, the interior is sheathed in what locals call "paneling," a thin covering of paper or wood. Several outbuildings stand on the farm including a log crib, or "shuck house," as Tom Carpenter calls it. A 12' x 14' brick tile can house stands behind the house, as do a chicken house and smokehouse.

The J.A. Clark Farm (MA 372) features a boxed house built by one of the two brothers who lives here and their late father, J.A. Clark. Several years after construction, the house was covered with weatherboard which covered up the evidence of the boxed construction. The Clark house has a two-room plan with rear shed rooms and two front doors with a one-story porch extending along the facade. A boxed smokehouse, also built by J.A. Clark, stands close to the dwelling, while several hundred yards to the northwest is the log crib and log barn.

Intact historic farmsteads are a rarity in Macon County. Farms from the nineteenth century do not survive intact, although some individual buildings from the period remain. Twentieth-century farms are numerous and reflect the diversified nature of agriculture in the county. Most of these farms functioned as self-sufficient units which provided for the farmer and his family. Typical Macon County farms rarely produced market crops.

-Gillespie-Harrison Farms (MA 228 and MA 229) SR 1310, Cartoogechaye vic. (SL)
-James Bryson Farm (MA 58) SR 1341, Cowee vic. (SL)
-Burrell-Talley Farm (MA 184) NC 28, Highlands vic. (SL)
-Slagle Farm (MA 226) SR 1309, Cartoogechaye vic. (SL)
-A.B. Slagle Farm (MA 210) SR 1310, Franklin vic. (SL)
-Arie and Ulysees Carpenter Farm (MA 309) SR 1121, Otto vic. (SL)
-Jesse Rickman Farm (MA 64) SR 1363, Cowee vic. (SL)
-Bell-Bryson Farm (MA 123) SR 1674, Cullasaja vic. (SL)
-Jes Carpenter Farm (MA 285) SR 1111, Otto vic. (SL)
-J.A. Clark Farm (MA 372) SR 1357, Etna vic. (SL)
-Newton Rogers Place (MA 192), SR 1535, Buck Creek vic. (SL)

Significance

The historic farm complexes of Macon County are potentially eligible for National Register designation under criterion A for significance in the history of agriculture and criterion C for architectural significance and the quality of craftsmanship of buildings, or as representative examples of early or rare techniques. The county's historic farms chronicle the role agriculture, especially self-sufficient farming, played in the development of the county. Farmsteads further chronicle the diversified nature of agriculture which has not depended solely on one crop. Instead these farms illustrate the role that livestock, corn, poultry, and orchard products have had in the county's agricultural history. Farms typically feature barns and other buildings related to livestock raising, as well as structures used for crop production, such as corn cribs and apple houses. Farms whose outbuildings are divided into domestic and agricultural spheres help to distinguish the differing roles of men and women on the farm.

Registration Requirements

In order for a farm complex or individual component of a farmstead in Macon County to be eligible for listing in the National Register, it must meet certain registration requirements. The basic requirement is that the property, or the majority of buildings, structures, and field patterns on the farm, should be fifty years old or older. The farm and its components should illustrate a theme or periods in the county's agricultural development and retain integrity in form, material, and workmanship. Farm complexes should retain an integrity of location and setting, as well as in the arrangement of

buildings, structures, and landscape features such as streams, ponds, fields, and fences. For an entire farm complex, integrity is determined by that of the numerous components which make up the entire farmstead. These components include dwellings, outbuildings, landscape features, and other contributing elements. Individual buildings and structures may have been altered or moved within the complex without affecting the integrity of the entire complex. In fact, such alterations or moves often reflect changes in agricultural methods and are important for understanding the evolution of farming techniques.

PROPERTY TYPE 2: HOUSES

Introduction

This property type has been divided into two time periods: houses built in the nineteenth century and houses built in the twentieth century. While some houses built in the nineteenth century have twentieth-century additions and alterations, they are categorized as constructed in the nineteenth century.

Description

A. Houses Built in the Nineteenth Century

Surviving nineteenth-century houses in Macon County range from simple hewn log cabins to Victorian-inspired frame houses. Dwellings from the first half of the century are few because of natural deterioration, outright neglect, or intentional destruction. Those properties from the first half of the century that do survive are constructed of superior materials like heavy hewn timbers, and represent the most highly crafted dwellings built during the period. Buildings constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century are of frame construction and have survived the extensive development and growth of the twentieth century.

Nineteenth-century dwellings, especially those built before the Civil War, exude an unpretentiousness in form and style. Because of the abundance of timber in the mountains, early buildings were simple, log houses of one or two rooms. The best surviving log houses remain intact because they have remained in possession of the original families or are located in areas not subject to development and intrusion by new housing. The house located on the John Gillespie Farm (MA 228) is the earliest log

house in the county. Built in 1826, this one-and-a-half story log house features a two-room plan with a gable end chimney. In the late nineteenth century, a rear ell was added and the exterior was covered with weatherboard siding. The dwelling on the Jeremiah Page Harrison Farm (MA 229), built by descendants of John Gillespie in 1858, is also a one-and-a-half story log house. This two-room dwelling has a rear ell which was a later addition and is covered with weatherboard siding.

Most log dwellings in the county have undergone extensive alterations since their construction. In the early nineteenth century Jesse Siler carried out such a project on a former Cherokee log house he purchased. Between 1820 and 1830, Siler built a large addition onto the two-story log house (NR 1982) located in Franklin. Siler added a parlor to the west side of the house, as well as rear rooms, thus creating a central passage, double-pile house. As the wealthiest man in the county during this period, Siler was able to add six-panel doors and stylish late Georgian-Federal mantels embellished with molded ornament and flat pilasters.

The William Morrison, Sr. house (MA 74) is the county's best surviving two-story log dwelling. When Morrison settled in the Cowee area of Macon County in 1832, he already knew the land. Prior to bringing his family to the county that year, Morrison explored the area and purchased huge tracts of land in Cowee, Iotla, and Oak Grove. Not long after the family's arrival Morrison built a two-story log house in a valley along the Little Tennessee River. Built of virgin poplar hewn logs, the William Morrison, Sr. house features exposed logs on the interior and a massive east gable-end stone chimney. The house has been covered with weatherboard and a small front addition was constructed in the early twentieth century. Alterations do not diminish the austere quality of this dwelling and the vista it commands along the Little Tennessee River.

The Henry House (MA 201) stands on a high grassy mountain in the Ellijay community. Bill Henry, grandfather of the current owner Canton Henry (b. 1907), built this log house around 1860. According to Canton Henry, the roof is of "rib pole" construction, or built with horizontal round logs on four sides and without rafters. The form of the roof construction is similar to the configuration of a log house, however the logs in the roof are stepped on two opposing sides in order to form the gable. According to one local source, this type of construction was used during the early and mid-nineteenth century. Canton Henry's father, Jake, made improvements to the house in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by siding the house with weatherboard and adding a shed room to the rear and a room on the north elevation. Jake Henry also

built a cellar into the hillside opposite the house. Other outbuildings on the property include two barns, a shop, and a shed.

Log houses continued to be built in the county during the late nineteenth century. One of the best examples of a log house of this period is the W.D., Bob, and Henry Tippett House (MA 254) located in the Piney Grove community. The three men built this one-and-a-half story cabin with tightly chinked walls with half-dovetail notching at its corners. The house rests on a stone foundation. The facade is windowless and the only visible window is found next to the stone gable-end chimney. The rear ell appears to be of boxed construction and was likely built during the first half of the twentieth century. Another outstanding and intact representative of the form is the Wilson Log House (MA 159), a single-pen structure built in the late nineteenth century just southwest of Highlands.

For those who could afford the expense, a frame house was the mark of economic advantage in late nineteenth-century Macon County. The Sheldon-Wade House in Highlands remains one of the county's most grand frame dwellings. Built in 1886 for Frank Sheldon, an early Highlands settler, this two-story, single-pile house features two-story bay windows on each gable end and a one-story front porch with a flat roof and enhanced with Doric pillars. This central-passage plan house includes late Italianate front doors, a restrained Victorian-inspired newel post, and beaded chestnut ceiling joists. Typically more frame weatherboard houses of the period were modest with little decorative adornment. The Dr. Alexander Brabsom House (NR 1990), built in 1884, is well representative of such rural frame houses of the period. Located near the Otto community, this hall-parlor plan I-house features a central chimney and an interior boxed stair and rear enclosed breezeway. Dr. Brabsom worked as a physician and sometimes used the house for office visits.

During the late nineteenth century, a hint of architectural fashion emerged in the form of the Italianate and to a greater extent, the Victorian. While several dwellings and buildings exhibit the influence of these styles, their imprint remained limited in scope because of Macon County's isolation from the railroad, which in other communities brought fashionable building statements in the form of machine-milled woodwork, trim, gingerbread, and vergeboard. The only route along which these styles filtered into the county was from the tide of outsiders who permeated the county or from builder's pattern books to which many builders and carpenters undoubtedly enjoyed access.

The Albert Swain Bryson House (NR 1984) built in the 1870s in Franklin is the finest example of the influence of the Italianate style on domestic architecture in the county. A hipped roof with wide gables on four elevations tops this two-story, double-pile common bond brick and frame house. Brick pilasters on the dwelling's corners sustain the broad frieze which rests on molded capitals. On the west elevation is a two-story, three-sided bay window topped with a tri-gable roof and graced with recessed octagonal panels embellishing the spandrels located on each level. The interior features original walnut woodwork exhibited in the center hall staircase which is decorated with brackets, turned balusters, and a square molded newel post. Mantels throughout the house are post-and-lintel with curvilinear Italianate trim.

The John Z. Gottwals House in Highlands, built in 1885, is a rare example of a transitional Italianate-Victorian dwelling. This unusual two-story dwelling features a complex roofline of gable, hip, jerkinhead, and eyelid forms. A one-story porch decorated with simple spindlework flanks two elevations of a projecting three-story tower which is centered on the front facade. Wood shingles partially cover the exterior.

The Victorian proved the most influential architectural style in Macon County during the late nineteenth and very early twentieth century. Several dwellings manifest the inspiration of the style's form and decorative elements. The Frank Harrison Hill House (MA 170) located in Horse Cove exhibits a T-plan with a central two-story projecting block on the facade. Built in 1893, this frame house features exterior oval and rectangular shingles and Victorian sawn work gracing the front porch pillars. The interior features tongue and groove wainscotting and an incised newel post and turned balusters on the staircase. Oak Hill (MA 233), which was built around 1890 and served originally as a dwelling and later as a hotel, remains one of the best intact examples of a local interpretation of the Victorian style. This frame irregular plan, two-story house exhibits Queen Anne massing most conspicuous in its front facing gables. Chamfered posts, decorative sawn work, and a cutout balustrade grace the one-story wraparound porch which spans the facade. Tongue and groove sheathing, a center hall stair with a turned newel and balusters, and ten mantels are original interior features of the house.

A more restrained expression of the Victorian style evidences itself in several dwellings. The Charles Edwards House (MA 374) and the Union United Methodist Church Parsonage (MA 305) are from one-and-a-half story dwellings which feature a single facade gable and side gables accented with wood shingles. The Edwards House, built around 1888, retains its original wainscoting in the center hall and parlors, a three-

sided bay window on the west elevation, and five-paneled doors. The circa 1890 parsonage reveals a similar center-hall-plan. Mantels in the parsonage are simple post-and-lintel and the original wainscoting remains intact throughout. The 1878 Frost House, a one-and-a-half story frame house in Highlands, features restrained Victorian details and a wraparound porch. The one-and-a-half story frame William Cleaveland House in Highlands was constructed around 1890 and features a wraparound porch with jigsawn brackets applied to the porch posts.

The Donaldson brothers, carpenters in the late-nineteenth century, built several dwellings which convey a unique statement of the vernacular Victorian style in Macon County. The circa 1895 Dobson House (MA 205) located in Patton Valley exudes the most intact qualities found among the dwellings these craftsmen produced. The one-and-a-half story frame dwelling is literally L-shaped with the front double-leaf door centered at an angle where the two wings intersect; a rear ell extends directly back from one of the wings. The brothers put to use fanciful chamfered posts accented with sawn work on the front porch which extends along most of the facade. A small steeply pitched gable rests on the roof above the porch at the junction of the two wings. Other adornment relates a more subtle tone and includes a heavily molded cornice, wide friezeboards on the gable ends, and plain flat moldings around the bays.

Another interesting expression of the influence of the Victorian style is found in the Hill-Staub House located in Horse Cove. A two-tiered recessed porch embellished with a jigsawn balustrade and topped with a gabled roof is centered on the facade of this circa 1878 one-and-a-half story frame house. The dwelling also possesses more traditional features such as a stone gable end chimney and six-over-six sash windows.

National Register and Study List Properties

-Jesse Siler House, W. Main Street, Franklin (NR)
-William Morrison, Sr. House, (MA 74) SR 1358, Etna vic. (SL)
-Bill, Jake, and Canton Henry House (MA 201) SR 1530, Ellijay (SL)
-W.D., Bob, and Henry Tippett House (MA 254) SR 1427, Piney Grove (SL)
-Sheldon-Wade House, Hickory Street, Highlands (SL)
-Alexander and Cora Rush Brabsom House (MA 289) SR 1117, Otto vic. (NR)
-Albert Swain Bryson House, E. Main Street, Franklin (NR)
-John Z. Gottwals House, U.S. 64, Highlands (NR)
-Frank Harrison Hill House, (MA 170) SR 1603, Horse Cove (SL)

-Oak-Hill (MA 233) SR 1442, Franklin vic. (SL)
-Charles Edwards House (MA 374) Fourth Street, Highlands (SL)
-Union Methodist Church Parsonage (MA 305) US 441/23, Union (SL)
-Frost House, SR 1603, Highlands (SL)
-William B. Cleaveland House, W. Main Street, Highlands (SL)
-Dobson House (MA 205) SR 1149, Patton Valley (SL)
-Hill-Staub House, SR 1603, Highlands (SL)

B. Houses Built in the Twentieth Century

The first half of the twentieth century was a time of growth in Macon County resulting from among other factors the increase in timber harvesting and mining. Improvements in transportation, including the extension of the Tallullah Falls Railroad into the county in 1905 and more importantly the good roads movement of the period, helped to open Macon up to tourism. The resort and tourist industry exercised a positive influence on the county and its economy. With improved accessibility, most sectors of Macon County's economy prospered and its architecture reflected this growth. The traditional log houses disappeared in the first few decades of the century to be replaced by more substantial dwellings.

For those who prospered from the growth in commerce and manufacturing in the early part of the century, a frame house exhibited the family's newfound wealth and was the mark of affluence in Macon County. Many families, especially those in Franklin and Highlands, built impressive frame houses much like those constructed throughout the South during the period. Certainly, this desire for new dwellings resulted from the improvements in transportation which brought new ideas to the mountains and which allowed Macon County residents to visit other areas.

The Althea and John Odell Harrison House (MA 430) in Franklin stands as one of the county's most intact early twentieth-century dwellings and the finest example of the transition from the Victorian to the Colonial Revival style. Combining vernacular interpretations of both styles, this 1901 House features Doric columns along its one-story wraparound porch. Asymmetrical massing showcases a projecting front gable whose tympanum is punctuated with a decorative three-part window with a center fanlight. A wide friezeband beneath the eaves and hanging spindles at the bay window's cornice adorn this rambling dwelling and set it apart from the more restrained flavor of the town's architectural landscape. The interior mirrors the influence of the two

styles which is articulated on the exterior. Pocket doors separate the first floor parlor and hallway; tongue and groove sheaths the walls; and a Victorian incised newel accents the staircase.

Merchant Jim McDowell represents the type of county resident who could afford to build a substantial frame dwelling. In 1915, he hired two carpenters, Pearlman Cabe and Ed Conley, to build a two-story, central-passage plan, frame house. One of the most impressive rural houses at the time of its construction, the Jim McDowell House (MA 290) features a one-story wraparound porch graced with turned posts. Tongue and groove sheathed walls fill the interior and simple post-and-lintel mantels are found in the front parlors. More decorative elements include an incised newel post and a front door with Eastlake-inspired carved designs.

In the rural areas of this mountain county where kinship ties kept people living close together, groups of dwellings owned by members of an extended family is a common occurrence. Even today, it is not unusual to find grandsons living next to grandparents. The most intact example of such settlement patterns is found in the Tellico Valley Historic District (MA 91) located in an isolated portion of northern Macon County. After inheriting extensive acreage in this valley, Samuel Taylor Ramsey (1847-1937) built a house here in the late-nineteenth century. Sam's son, Robert, later added to the original dwelling and this house became the center of a residential community in the early twentieth century. The Sam and Robert Ramsey House (MA 88) is a two-and-a-half story frame central-passage plan house topped with a gable on hip roof. A pair of fanciful heart-shaped openings with spindled surrounds grace the front porch and shingles embellish the front and side gables.

Samuel Ramsey built several frame dwellings in the community for members of his family. The Laura Martha Ramsey House (MA 84), an I-house with a central chimney, rests on a stone foundation and features a truncated portico atop a one-story porch which is embellished with decorative wood shingles. Samuel built the Harley Ramsey House (MA 89) for his sixth child. This I-house features a two-story porch graced with decorative sawn ornament and a milled balustrade with sunburst motifs. Samuel and his son, Robert, built the Florence Ramsey House (MA 90) for Sam's second child. This I-house with a central chimney retains its original fanciful sawn balustrade and chamfered posts on both the front two-tiered portico and the rear ell's second story porch. Also in the district is the Joseph and Sarah Smith Farm (MA 83), an early twentieth-century agricultural complex. The I-house, built in 1914, replaced the

farm's original log cabin. Outbuildings on this farm include a round pole log barn, a gear house, a can house, and privy. An unpaved road lined with rock walls follows Tellico Creek which meanders through the middle of the district. The undeveloped rural surroundings and along with the intact integrity of the district's resources helps to retain its setting.

Along with frame dwellings, brick houses began to appear in small numbers in the early twentieth century. Most brick dwellings were located in Franklin and they were typically the homes of the prosperous merchant class. Carpenters built the Jesse Siler Sloan House (MA 475) for the co-owner of the Sloan Brothers General Store, a business which served the county for over fifty years. One of the first brick dwellings built in the town in the twentieth century, its construction marked the arrival of the domestic modern conveniences of the period. By the time of its construction in 1917, the Cozad Mill had been supplying electricity to Franklin for only a few years and the builders of the Sloan house took advantage of this technology by equipping the house with a modern kitchen. The house exhibits the influence of the Craftsman movement, a style which made little impact in the county. The house features built-in cabinets and bookshelves, as well as pocket doors. More traditional features of the house include a solid panelled balustrade and segmented arched windows. A bungaloid porch supported with pillars atop brick piers spans the facade.

A bolder expression of the Craftsman style is evidenced in the William Monroe Cleaveland House located in Highlands. Built in 1925, this frame two-story foursquare features a wooden shingled second story and an exterior side elevation stone chimney. A one-story porch with smooth Doric columns extends along the facade of this hip roofed dwelling.

In addition to having one of the county's only Craftsman foursquare houses, Highlands possesses several unique dwellings. The Dr. Thomas Grant Harbison House is a two-story, front gabled dwelling whose exterior is sheathed in wood shingles. Built in 1920, the Harbison house boasts a two-tiered porch on its front facade and a one-story porch on the rear elevation. An imposing cut stone chimney is located in this massive dwelling's interior. The Tearly Benson Picklesimer House, also located in Highlands, was built in 1935 and is one of county's finest rock houses. This 1935 one-and-a-half story, multi-gabled roof dwelling features casement windows and a one-story stone porch with massive rounded arches located on the front facade.

National Register and Study List Properties

-Althea and John Odell Harrison House (MA 430) Harrison Avenue, Franklin (SL)
-Jim McDowell House (MA 290) SR 1118, Otto vic. (SL)
-Tellico Valley Historic District (MA 91) SR 1365, Tellico (SL)
-Jesse Siler Sloan (MA 475) Sloan Street, Franklin (SL)
-William Monroe Cleaveland House, SR 1553, Highlands (SL)
-Dr. Thomas Grant Harbison House, NC 28, Highlands vic. (SL)
-Tearly Benson Picklesimer House, NC 28, Highlands (SL)

Significance

Houses are significant as reflections of the architectural trends which take place over time. In addition, they exhibit local building traditions as well as unique adaptations of national and popular styles by local carpenters and builders. Early houses, those dating from the first half of the nineteenth century, reveal traditional log building techniques, a form well-suited to the frontier environment of the period. Late nineteenth-century dwellings are more numerous and exhibit a wider range of building forms and styles although the log building tradition persisted throughout this period. Twentieth-century weatherboard houses, which remain quite plain, are similar to the dwellings built in the late-nineteenth century. More national styles such as the bungalow have little impact on the county's built environment. Those that were built in the first half of the century are typically located in Franklin and are overwhelmingly plain interpretations of the bungalow style.

Registration Requirements

National Register eligibility requirements are much more stringent for individual houses compared to those which are part of a farmstead. For those eligible under criterion C, for architecture, there must be a high degree of integrity from the period of significance. However, because of their rarity, early houses, especially those built of hewn logs, may have undergone more alteration and remain eligible for the National Register. Alterations of houses built during the first half of the nineteenth century may add to the property's significance by contributing to the understanding of the progression of stylistic influences and building techniques. Houses significant under criterion A, for their association with events, or under criterion B, for their association with important persons, must not necessarily be the best examples of their type, but

rather should largely retain their historic character from the period of significance.

Typically, a high degree of integrity is essential to the eligibility of individual dwellings if the primary area of significance is architectural. For early houses, the affixing of vinyl, asbestos, or aluminum siding does not necessarily rule out eligibility. However, houses with replacement siding must retain the majority of their original attributes, such as form and detail, and the siding must emulate the original exterior material. To be eligible for the National Register, houses must be located on their original sites. A dwelling with outstanding architectural of historical merit which has been moved might remain eligible if architectural integrity is intact and the new site is similar to the original setting.

Several dwellings in Macon County do not represent a single style or type of architecture, but rather display a progression of stylistic influences and construction techniques and illustrate the methods by which local residents updated their dwellings over time. Therefore, alterations made at least fifty years ago are considered as part of the historic fabric of the house is they retain integrity of design, materials, and craftsmanship and have not been adversely affected by later additions or alterations.

PROPERTY TYPE 3: RESORT/VACATION HOUSES

Although the railroad did not reach Macon County until the first decade of the twentieth century, tourists ventured to this remote mountain county beginning in the nineteenth century. In the 1870s, Carter Hutchinson and Samuel Kelsey of Kansas surveyed a high plateau in southern Macon County where they purchased large tracts of land. The two men surveyed the area, built homes for themselves, and set about to promote the town they established as a healthful and picturesque resort. Hutchinson and Kelsey saw Highlands, as the town became known, as a place where Northerners could seek relief from harsh winters and where Southerners could escape the hot humid weather. The influx of summer and permanent residents from outside the county to Highlands marked the beginning of a tourist industry which spread to other areas of the county. However, Highlands was unique, for it was in and around the town that wealthy families built retreats that they occupied exclusively in the summer months.

Playmore, or the Ravenel-Monroe House, was the first, and remains the finest summer house built in Highlands. Constructed in 1879, this two-story frame house stands proudly on a high grassy hilltop facing south and overlooking Horse Cove. S.

Prioleau Ravenel, a wealthy businessman from Charleston, South Carolina, hired local builder F. Poindexter to build the house. The hip roofed dwelling features bracketed eaves, a pair of interior brick chimneys, and a raised one-story front porch reminiscent of those found on houses in the low country of South Carolina. Playmore, which in 1914 was sold to the Monroe family of New Orleans, retains its original mantels and all of the interior woodwork including the downstairs floors of alternating boards of white ash and black walnut. The owners have also retained the tongue and groove clear chestnut panelling which sheathes the interior walls.

Summer residents built dwellings in a wide range of styles in Highlands. The Samuel Nesbitt Evins House, built in 1922, is a two-story frame dwelling with exterior end chimneys and clear chestnut interior sheathing. The 1932 Margaret Cannon Howell House, designed by architect Linton Young, remains one of the town's finest examples of the chalet style. Young also designed the circa 1930 Bobby Jones House for the famous early twentieth-century golfer. Jones, a full-time resident of Atlanta, stayed in this one-and-a-half story frame house when he practiced at the Highlands County Club golf course.

Satulah Mountain, a residential district located southwest of Highlands' Main Street, is an intact neighborhood of resort houses. Developed between 1890 and 1940, the neighborhood boasts some of the county's finest houses and most beautiful natural landscapes. Among the properties in this district are the Henry Bascom House, a two-story frame Craftsman-influenced dwelling built in 1907; the L.M. Brown House, a one-and-a-half story log house constructed around 1935 by local carpenter Joe Webb; and the Robert Brockbank Eskrigge House ("World's End"); a two-and-a-half-story native stone house designed by New Orleans architect, Sam Laboisse. The Satulah Mountain Historic District (NR 1995) contains a total of forty-six potentially contributing resources and twenty-nine noncontributing resources.

The most popular vacation dwelling style in Highlands during the first half of the twentieth century was the rustic revival and no other builder executed it as well as local carpenter and contractor Joe Webb. In his designs, Webb attempted to merge the outside world with the dwelling by building with natural materials such as log and stone and using Rhododendron branches for interior and exterior balusters. Webb translated the principles of the style into a building form which proved immensely popular and livable.

Webb's first log dwelling was the Watson-Webb House. David Watson, an architect at Clemson College, designed the house and hired Webb to build it. According to local sources, Watson taught Webb methods for building log houses and it was this knowledge that Webb used throughout his career. This one-story with a loft round pole log house features a stone gable-end chimney and saddle-notched corners. Log brackets accented with Rhododendron adornment grace the eaves of the front porch, a characteristic which would persist in Webb's later work.

Joe Webb's houses grew in popularity during the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, and examples of his work remain throughout Highlands and the surrounding area. From 1929 to 1932, Webb constructed the H.D. Randall House (MA 163), also called the "Big Billy Cabin," because of its location on Billy Cabin Ridge. Randall hailed from Cincinnati where he served as president of the Randall Company, a manufacturing business which produced harnesses. He lived temporarily in Anderson, South Carolina where his company had a plant and after a vacation trip to Highlands, Randall decided to build a vacation house in the picturesque town. One of Webb's larger dwellings, the house consists of a one-story central block flanked on each end with one-and-a-half story wings. The house, which overlooks Highlands from this high ridge, features dormer windows and slim stone fireplace flues.

Once he completed the Dear-Dewey house, Webb built the Godfrey-England-Doggett House, a one-and-a-half story round pole log house with shed dormers and an exterior rock chimney. Decorative log trusses grace the gable ends of this roughly T-shape house. In 1938, Joe, with the help of his brother George, began construction of an addition to a small log house the Dear family had purchased east of Highlands. The Dears admired a house Webb had built for Fred Gould at the Highlands Country Club and asked him to model the addition after that property. The Dear-Dewey house (MA 472) is a two-story, L-shaped dwelling with ornate, yet purely natural Rhododendron branches on the west end porch. The facade features a massive stone chimney and a front door with a three-light transom and baroque iron hinges. Log rafter tails adorn the front and rear eaves. Round logs function as ceiling trusses on the home's interior and split peeled logs frame interior doors and windows.

Perhaps the most impressive of Webb's achievements was the development of Webbmont (MA 174), a rural neighborhood consisting of houses which he built on 135 acres that his family received as a land grant in the 1850s. In 1923, Webb began selling lots in Webbmont to mostly tourist families. Henry P. Hunter of Manchester, New

Hampshire, was the first to purchase land and his was Webbmont's maiden dwelling. Built of chestnut, the two-story frame H.P. Hunter House (MA 182) features a wood shake exterior and presented a departure from the log houses for which Webb became locally known.

After he completed the Hunter House, Webb commenced to building mostly log houses in Webbmont. From around 1926 into the 1930s, he constructed primarily one- and two-story round pole log houses with saddle-notched corners. In 1926, he built a one-story rectangular-shaped log house for Dr. O.F. Schiffli (MA 175). Around the same time, he built the E.C. Turner House (MA 179), a large rectangular-shaped log dwelling with imposing log posts supporting a single-story porch on the west elevation and half-round logs used for exterior steps. When the Depression hit, the client had Webb stop construction of the house and the interior was never completed. The circa 1930 Lewis house (MA 176), a one-story with a loft round pole log dwelling stands behind the Schiffli house and features bark-sided split logs in the gables. Other log houses in Webbmont include the V.D. Stone House (MA 178), the D.O. and John P. Feaster House (MA 180), and the David Watson House (MA 508).

The Glen Choga Lodge (MA 338, NR 1996) stands as one of western North Carolina's finest examples of rustic architecture. Located on the west shore of Lake Nantahala, the lodge was constructed by the Stewart family as a residence in the second or third decade of the twentieth century. In the 1930s, *Smoky Mountain Lyrics and Legend*, a tourist brochure featured the lodge, then called Journey's End, in an advertisement for accommodations. According to the brochure, the lodge served "discriminating people seeking a summer retreat 'far from the maddening crowd.'" At that time, the road running in front of Glen Choga was the principal route between Franklin and Andrews. During World War II, workmen building the Nantahala Dam lived in the lodge, after which time it remained unoccupied for several years.

The two-story round pole log building stands in a grassy clearing a few hundred yards from Lake Nantahala. The building exhibits a U-shape with two large wings radiating from the central block; a courtyard divides the two wings. The building, which had never been wired for electricity, is built of eleven types of wood including wormy chestnut, apple, cherry, and polar. The facade features a one-story porch with wood shakes in the front gable and supported with round log posts and embellished with decorative Rhododendron branches. The use of natural materials continues on the interior where a round log handrail and Rhododendron balusters ornament the foyer's

staircase. The lodge's main downstairs room which is located in the middle of the central block features double front and rear doors when opened allow for the merging of the outside and inside environments. Twenty-one guest rooms, a kitchen, dining room, and servants quarters occupy the interior.

National Register and Study List Properties

-Playmore (Ravenel-Monroe House) (MA 169) SR 1603, Highlands (SL)
-Samuel Nesbitt Evins House, SR 1604, Highlands (SL)
-Margaret Cannon Howell House, SR 1619, Highlands (SL)
-Bobby Jones House, Bobby Jones Road, Highlands (SL)
-Satulah Mountain Historic District, Highlands (NR)
-Watson-Webb House, Lower Lake Road, Highlands (SL)
-H.D. Randall House (MA 163) SR 1546, Highlands vic. (SL)
-Dear-Dewey House (MA 472) U.S. 64, Highlands vic. (SL)
-Fred Gould House, Country Club Road, Highlands (SL)
-Godfrey-England-Doggett House, Cullasaja Road, Highlands (SL)
-Cable House, Cullasaja Road, Highlands (SL)
-Webbmont Historic District (MA 174) SR 1547, Highlands vic. (SL)
-Glen Choga Lodge (MA 338) SR 1402, Aquone vic. (NR)

Significance

The tourism industry has proved an important part of Macon County's economic and social structure for more than one hundred years. Numerous historic resort and vacation houses remain in the county, especially around the town of Highlands. From the late nineteenth-century dwellings whose architectural style did little to blend into the their surrounds, to log designs of the early twentieth century which embodied the ideals of nostalgia and the desire to fit into the natural environment, the appearance and form of resort homes changed significantly over time. The simplicity and ruggedness of early twentieth-century log dwellings built by local craftsmen appealed to outsiders who sought to escape the hectic life of the city.

Registration Requirements

Resort and vacation dwellings must be fifty years old and must retain a high degree of integrity to be considered eligible for the National Register. Original location should be maintained, and, for larger complexes, the overall layout of buildings, structures, and sites should be largely intact. The original forms, designs, and the majority of the original material should remain as well. The rural or rustic setting should be largely intact because it is an integral part of resort areas in Macon County and the basis for integrity of feeling and association.

PROPERTY TYPE 4: INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS

Churches and schools and other institutional buildings were historically important to the everyday life of Macon County citizens. Whether they were rural or located in towns, churches and schools served an important social and cultural role in a county where people were typically dispersed and social contact could be infrequent. Other important institutional buildings include those associated with the United States Forest Service. These buildings and structures served an important role in the conservation of the county's forests.

A. Churches

The county's earliest surviving church is the Franklin Presbyterian Church (MA 446) which was built around 1854. This brick front-gabled building features oversized sixteen-over-sixteen sash windows along its east and west elevations and interior molded paneling. Located next to the Presbyterian Church is St. Agnes Episcopal Church (MA 449), the only historic brick church in the county. Constructed in 1888, the vernacular Gothic Revival building has arched windows with segmental brick hoods along each facade and a conical-shaped roof on its west end.

Highlands retains two of the county's most stylish houses of worship in the First Presbyterian Church (NR 1996) and the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation (NR 1996). The Presbyterian sanctuary, built in 1885, is a one-story Victorian-inspired frame building with a jerkinhead gable roof topped with an imposing steeple with flared eaves. The Episcopal Church, constructed in 1896, is a one-story frame vernacular Gothic building embellished with a hint of Victorian detail most notable in its exterior shinglework. Slender arched windows pierce each elevation and a bell tower stands at the southeast corner.

The county's rural historic churches are overwhelmingly plain, rectangular frame buildings embellished with little decorative elements. Gillespie Chapel (MA 299) located in the Upper Cartoogechaye community was built in the 1880s and remains one of the county's best-preserved rural frame churches. Zeb Connelly built the one-room church and in 1886 the bell tower which rests on the roof's ridge was added to the building. The Church in the Wildwood (MA 171) located in Horse Cove was built in the 1930s as a non-denominational gathering place for the people of that community. The Craftsman-influenced rectangular frame building features exposed rafter tails along its eaves and large six-over-six sash windows along its east and west elevations. The building rests on a stone foundation and is fronted with a gabled porch supported by log posts. St. John's Episcopal Church (MA 211), which was completed in 1945, is a small board-and-batten church built of white pine and located in Cartoogechaye. Rufus Morgan, a retired minister who grew up in this community, built the front gabled church with wood donated by the U.S. Forest Service. A rustic bell tower built of log stands in front of the church.

At least two historically African-American churches remain in Macon County. St. Cyprian's Episcopal (MA 232), a frame, vernacular Gothic Revival building constructed in 1887, was established as a missionary church for blacks in Franklin. Pleasant Hill Church and Cemetery (MA 67), a rectangular-shaped, frame building, was constructed in 1929 as a Methodist Church. Although somewhat deteriorated, the building retains its bell tower, pews, and pulpit. A cemetery which is still in use remains intact behind the church.

National Register and Study List Properties

-Franklin Presbyterian Church (MA 446), Church Street, Franklin (NR)
-St. Agnes Episcopal Church (MA 447), Church Street, Franklin (NR)
-First Presbyterian Church, Main Street, Highlands (NR)
-Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, Main Street, Highlands (NR)
-Gillespie Chapel (MA 229), SR 1128, Teresita (SL)
-Church in the Wildwood (MA 171), SR 1603, Horse Cove (SL)
-St. John's Episcopal Church (MA 211), SR 1308, Cartoogechaye vic. (SL)
-St. Cyprian's Church (MA 232), SR 1156, Franklin vic. (SL)
-Pleasant Hill Church (MA 67), SR 1350, Cowee vic. (SL)

B. Schools

The Franklin Female Seminary functioned as the most significant private school in Macon County, and possibly southwestern North Carolina during the late nineteenth century. In 1888, the Methodist Episcopal Church South built the schools on a lot near downtown Franklin. In 1902, the church closed the seminary and the building became part of the town's public school system. In 1910, it was converted to a hotel. This two-story building remains as the county's finest nondomestic Italianate building. The stuccoed brick T-plan building features pilasters and corbelled horizontal courses which outline the walls and distinguish among the first, second, and attic levels. Segmental arched hood molds cap the tall, narrow windows on each elevation. The irregular interior plan features tongue and groove sheathed ceilings and a partially open stair with an incised newel post.

Because of dispersed settlement patterns and the isolated nature of the population as dictated by the mountainous topography, small schools were scattered throughout Macon County in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Church missions were especially active in western North Carolina and established schools for local children during the period. The Asheville Presbytery operated the Morrison Industrial School (MA 275) near Union from 1910 to 1921. This public facility, designed to teach trades to both boys and girls, opened with an enrollment of sixty students who paid sixty dollars a year to attend. This one-story, three-room, cross-plan school is built of oak and chestnut harvested from the Jones Creek area of the Cartoogechaye community. The frame building rests on a stone foundation and contains interior chimneys and tongue and groove sheathed interior walls. Hipped porch roofs top two of the building's entrances.

The Holly Springs School (MA 101), built in 1915, represents the typical school buildings of the early twentieth century. Local carpenter B.J. Hurst built this frame, one-story, T-plan building at Wolf Pen Gap for $745. Located in the Holly Springs community, the building features a gable roof, twelve-over-twelve sash windows on each elevation, and transoms atop the paired front doors. The school functioned until 1952 when Holly Springs converted it to a community center and polling place.

During the Depression, relief programs of the New Deal brought many improvements to the county including improved school buildings. In 1941, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) built the Otto School (MA 295) from native stone. This

one-story, corridor plan building contains an original gymnasium/auditorium and classrooms and offices which flank each side of the hall. In 1943, the WPA built the Cowee School (MA 133) at West's Mill in a similar design. Also a corridor plan school built of native stone, the Cowee School is adorned with a stone Art Deco motif located over the northern doorway. In Highlands, the WPA constructed an auditorium for the Highlands School in 1932. This large wood shingled frame building now houses the Highlands Playhouse, a theater which is active throughout the summer.

National Register and Study List Properties

-Franklin Female Seminary (Franklin Terrace), Harrison Avenue, Franklin (NR)
-Morrison School (MA 275), SR 1124, Union vic. (SL)
-Holly Springs School (MA 101), SR 1513, Holly Springs (SL)
-Otto School (MA 295), NC 441/23, Otto (SL)
-Cowee School II (MA 133), SR 1340, Cowee (SL)
-Highlands School Auditorium, Oak Street, Highlands (SL)

C. United States Forest Service Buildings

The presence of the Forest Service has exerted an indelible imprint on the county's landscape since it began purchasing land in 1913. The government agency under the umbrella of the Department of Agriculture has carried out programs to fight forest fires and reforest land nearly destroyed during the early twentieth century timber boom. The Forest Service, with of the help of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s, built roads, fire towers, shelters, and recreational facilities. The Wilson Lick Ranger Station (MA 323) at Wayah Gap is the oldest National Forest Ranger Station in North Carolina. Built in 1913 and reconstructed in 1932 by the Macon County Methodist Men, this one-story frame building is covered with wood shingles. The building rests on wood piers and features a rear external stone chimney.

National Register Properties

-Wilson Lick Ranger Station (MA 323), Forest Service Road, Wayah Gap (NR)

Significance

Institutional buildings are historically significant as centers of community development, for the role they play in social and educational history of the county, or for their function in the conservation of county forests. Some of these buildings are architecturally significant as well, as either notable examples of institutional architecture in Macon County or as representative examples of the most popular plans and style of buildings constructed throughout the country.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for architecture, a church must be at least fifty years old, retain its location, setting, and overall architectural integrity of design and workmanship from the period of significance, and be good representative examples of church architecture as a whole in Macon County. Alterations to the exterior appearance of an individually eligible structure should be minimal and a majority of the original interior finish should be present. Although not desirable, replacement siding should not render an architecturally significant church ineligible if it is of at least locally exceptional architectural importance, all other features are substantially intact, the replacement siding has been carefully applied, and the original sheathing underneath appears to be intact.

Schools are important representatives of community development and everyday life in the county. Such buildings should retain their integrity, but because they are quite rare in the county, this threshold is lower than for churches. For these buildings, original location, form, and materials should be maintained. However, replacement siding should not render the building ineligible for inclusion in the National Register.

Existing U.S. Forest Service buildings represent the important role the agency has had in Macon County for most of the twentieth century. Such buildings should retain their integrity, but because they are rare in the county and in the region, the degree of integrity may be lowered. Forest Service buildings should remain in their original location and retain their original form and materials.

PROPERTY TYPE 5: COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Description

One- and two-story commercial buildings in Macon County are numerous and found in Franklin and Highlands, and to a lesser extent, in the rural areas. The majority of these buildings are rectangular in shape and constructed of brick, stone, or wood. Commercial buildings in the county date to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Rural commercial buildings are much more rare than those located in the county's two towns. Only a few were documented, and fewer still retain their integrity of location, materials, feeling, and association. The May's Store (MA 190) located near Aquone in the Nantahala community of northwest Macon County remains a rare existing example of such a building. Mr. and Mrs. Harley May built and operated this board-and-batten mercantile store in the first half of the twentieth century. The front gable-roofed building rests on a stone and wood pier foundation and has two Royal Crown Cola signs attached to its facade.

Increased automobile traffic in the first several decades of the twentieth century exercised a tremendous impact on this mountain county. With improved roads, motorists from throughout the region began flocking to Macon County. Unfortunately, very few physical remnants of the early automobile culture remain intact. One notable exception is the Hightop Station (MA 278), a stone veneered circa 1940 gas station which members of the Sanders family originally operated. The station stands on the road which formerly served as the main link from Georgia to Franklin. Although the building currently serves as a dwelling, it retains its original character most notable in its high pitched gable roof and the smaller steep gable on the facade.

Mercantile stores flourished in the early twentieth century in Highlands and Franklin. The J.R. Pendergrass Building (MA 381), constructed in 1904 in Franklin, is the county's best preserved brick commercial building. This two-story former mercantile store represents a popular style and form of commercial architecture of the period. The three-bay facade retains its original storefront including the display windows and cast iron chamfered posts which flank the entrance. The parapeted side walls shield a flat roof and are pierced with segmental arched windows. The interior retains the details of an early twentieth-century store. Display cases, wide pine plank floors, tongue and

groove counters of yellow pine, and turned maple posts which support a second floor balcony confer an integrity of material and workmanship rarely found in commercial buildings in western North Carolina.

Two areas of the county contain a concentration of historic commercial buildings. West's Mill Historic District (MA 56) is the county's best example of a cohesive collection of commercial buildings. Located on the site of Cowee, the old Cherokee town, the core buildings of West's Mill spread over approximately ten acres on the east side of the Little Tennessee River. Commercial buildings are frame of one- and two-stories with front-facing gables. The community was established in the mid-nineteenth century. Around 1890, the district's oldest building, the two-story, frame Bryson-Rickman Store was built. Soon after, the Clyde and Minnie West Store, also a two-story frame building, was constructed and a post office was established. Vonnie West and Will West built frame I-houses in this community. The Highlands Historic District which is located along the town's Main Street consists of one- and two-story commercial buildings and frame dwellings. While the district has undergone significant alterations, several individual resources appear eligible for the National Register.

The tourist industry of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exerted a tremendous impact on the architectural landscape of the county in the form of hotels and inns. Several guest inns remain in the county, but the largest concentration is found in Highlands. The Highlands Inn, a three-story frame hotel built in 1879, was the first building in Highlands constructed solely for use as a hotel. The building features a two-story porch which spans across the front facade and two stuccoed interior end chimneys. The Central House/Edwards Hotel in Highlands is a circa 1880 two-and-a-half story frame hotel with a gable roof and shed dormer. A two-story porch is located on the facade. In 1934-35, the Edwards Hotel, a three-story brick and stone building, was added to the Central House. Architect Linton Young designed this addition for the client, James Grover Edwards. The Pierson Inn is a complex of three frame buildings with simple Victorian adornment built around 1899.

Guests to Franklin in the early twentieth century had a choice of fine hotels. Summit Inn (S.L. Rogers House) (MA 466) was built in 1889-99 as a home, but was converted in 1922 to a hotel, a function which it still retains. This two-story frame building features twelve-over-one sash windows and a front facade porch supported with square posts. Massive interior chimneys pierce the roof and stone chimneys are located on the exterior gable ends. The largely intact interior includes original mantels,

paneled doors, and a stair with original newel posts and balustrades. The Scott Griffin Hotel (see MA 379) was built in 1926-27 and is a four story brick building located along Franklin's Main Street. The hotel originally housed thirty-six guest rooms. Hotel offices and shops occupied the first floor and the guest rooms filled the second and third floors. A roof garden which was used for dances and banquets was located on the top floor. The hotel no longer operates, but stores remain on the street level.

National Register and Study List Properties

-May Store (MA 190), SR 1365, Aquone vic. (SL)
-Hightop Station (MA 278) SR 1122, Union vic. (SL)
-J.R. Pendergrass Building (MA 381) Main Street, Franklin (NR)
-West's Mill (MA 56), NC 28, Cowee (SL)
-Highlands Historic District, Main Street, Highlands (SL)
-Central House/Edwards Hotel, Main Street, Highlands (NR)
-Highlands Inn, Main Street, Highlands (NR)
-Pierson Inn, Satulah Road, Highlands (SL)
-Summit Inn (MA 466), Rogers Street, Franklin (SL)
-Scott Griffin Hotel (MA 379), Main Street, Franklin (SL)

Significance

Commercial buildings are a reflection of the prosperity experienced in Macon County during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rural stores provided residents of isolated areas an opportunity to socialize with neighbors and to purchase items they could not produce themselves. Tourism during this period brought increased trade to county businesses and led to the growth of commercial areas of Macon. Tourism led to the establishment of numerous hotels and inns in the county.

Commercial buildings eligible for listing on the National Register are typically significant under Criterion A, as representatives of community, commercial, and transportation development in Macon County. Several properties may be eligible under Criterion C as exceptional or representative examples of Macon County's commercial architecture.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible, an individual commercial building should retain its original setting and the majority of its interior and exterior features. The storefronts and interiors of buildings in districts may exhibit alterations and still be considered contributing resources if the original shape of the individual buildings have been retained. Individual resources within historic districts do not have to retain the high degree of integrity of individual commercial buildings, but must contribute to the overall setting, feeling, and association of the district.

PROPERTY TYPE 6: INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Description

Industrial buildings and structures are numerous in Macon County and range from traditional grist and saw mills to more technically advanced buildings and structures related to the production of electrical power. The Jim Berry Mill (MA 94) is the county's earliest intact grist mill in Macon County. Likely built around the turn-of-the-century, the two-story Berry Mill is located on Watauga Creek and contains most of its original interior millworks.

Electricity proved a welcome service to Macon County in the early twentieth century. With the completion of a new dam on Lake Emory in November of 1925, Franklin received a reliable source of electrical power. The Franklin Power Company Hydroelectric Power Plant (MA 95) consists of a dam and a rectangular-shaped Renaissance Revival-inspired brick building with large multi-light, segmental-arch windows topped with semi-elliptical fanlights; keystones grace the center of each brick arch. A stone stringcourse extends along each elevation just below the cornice. A similar power plant was constructed on the Cullasaja River to supply Highlands with power in 1927. The Highlands Hydroelectric Power Plant is a one-story rock building with a gable roof. The dam, also built in 1927, is a bow-shaped concrete structure located on the northern edge of Lake Sequoyah at the origin point of Cullasaja River.

In the 1930s, Nantahala Power and Light Company purchased the Lake Emory facility from the town of Franklin. In 1942, the company constructed a massive dam on Lake Nantahala and built an extensive power plan complex on the Nantahala River at Beechertown in northwest Macon County to supply power to local households and to

the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) in east Tennessee. In turn, Alcoa produced aluminum for the use in military equipment during World War II.

The Nantahala Power and Light Company Hydroelectric Power Plant Complex (MA 353) consists of a power house, worker cottages, and a storage building. The massive stone building features large multi-light windows on each elevation and a flat roof. Four worker cottages, which stand in a row northwest of the power house, sheltered those who constructed the facility in the early 1940s. These multi-family front-gable frame houses feature front and rear porches. Each house has interior stone flues and is covered with asbestos shingle siding. The one-story storage building, which appears to have originally served as a community building, rests on a stone slab foundation and features five-paneled doors, small square windows, and rafter tails along its side eaves.

Study List Properties

-Jim Berry Mill (MA 94), SR 1328, Brendletown vic. (SL)
-Franklin Power Company Hydroelectric Power Plant and Dam (MA 95), Lake Emory, Franklin vic. (SL)
-Highlands Hydroelectric Power Plant and Dam, U.S. 64, Highlands (SL)
-Nantahala Power and Light Hydroelectric Power Plant Complex, (SL 353), SR 1310, Beechertown (SL)

Significance

Industrial buildings represent an important sector of Macon County's economic history. The mills and hydroelectric power facilities which remain in the county are eligible under criterion A as representatives of the industrial development of Macon County, and under C as examples of an important regional building type.

Registration Requirements

Mills in Macon County are rare and might sustain a higher degree of alteration than other types of structures and still remain eligible. An industrial building must retain its original location and overall original form. In addition, most of the original construction material should be present.

PROPERTY TYPE 7: TRANSPORTATION-RELATED STRUCTURES

Description

Increased automobile traffic in the early twentieth century gave rise to structures associated with the transportation revolution of the period. The people of Macon County recognized the importance of good roads during this period and campaigning for improvements escalated during the first half of the century. One of the most important road projects in the county's history was the construction of U.S. 64 from Gneiss to Highlands (MA 474) from 1925 to 1929. The road winds through the picturesque Cullasaja Gorge, passing such local landmarks as the Cullasaja Falls, Dry Falls, and Bridal Veil Falls. Because the road winds through primarily U.S. Forest Service land, very few buildings stand on the roadside. Instead, the motoring public enjoys a mostly intact natural landscape.

With its many rivers and waterways, portions of Macon County have been isolated from Franklin and Highlands. While road improvements in the first half of the century made mountain gaps passable, bridges constructed in the county allowed access across the Little Tennessee, Nantahala, Cullasaja, and smaller rivers. Automobile and pedestrian bridges were practical solutions to the ever-present problem of isolation. In the early twentieth century, these structures solidified the connection between rural Maconians and those living in the towns and created further cohesion in this mountain community.

The state highway commission erected hundreds of metal truss bridges in the first half of this century. Truss bridges in the county hold only one lane of traffic and are built of metal with some wooden components, such as guard rails. Truss bridges are categorized according to form and the Pratt Through Truss is the most common model remaining in the county. Both the Cullasaja River Bridge (MA 319) and the Little Tennessee River Bridge (MA 478) are Pratt Through Truss bridges, while the Whiteoak Creek Truss Bridge (MA 351) is a Warren Pony Truss.

Pedestrian suspension bridges remain a unique feature of this mountain county. These structures are built of wood, metal, and thick wire cords which allow for flexibility. Three early-twentieth century pedestrian suspension bridges remain in the county. The Cullasaja River bridge (MA 473) spans the river and stands adjacent to U.S. 64 in Gneiss. Two such structures span the Little Tennessee River, one at Etna (MA 479)

and the other near West's Mill (MA 480).

The Macon County section of the Appalachian Trail (MA 477), one of the nation's most enduring recreational structures, is located on Forest Service land in western Macon County. A great portion of the Appalachian Trail in the county was originally a local trail known as the Nantahala Trail. In the early to mid-1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), with help from volunteer groups, dovetailed this existing trail into the Appalachian Trail network. The Macon County portion of the trail enters the county from Towns County, Georgia and proceeds in a northerly direction to Standing Indian Mountain, the county's highest point. The route proceeds through lush green forests crossing Hemp Patch Creek, Bearpen Creek, and Moore Creek before reaching Wayah Crest. From this mid-point in the county, the trail advances to Copper Ridge Bald, over Tellico Gap to the Wesser Bald tower. The trail moves into Swain County just above Wesser tower.

Study List Properties

-U.S. 64 from Highlands to Gneiss (MA 474) (SL)
-Cullasaja River Metal Truss Bridge (MA 319), SR 1672, Cullasaja vic. (SL)
-Little Tennessee River Metal Truss Bridge (MA 478), SR 1465, Etna vic. (SL)
-Whiteoak Creek Metal Truss Bridge (MA 351), SR 1423, Kyle vic. (SL)
-Cullasaja River Pedestrian Suspension Bridge (MA 473), U.S. 64, Gneiss (SL)
-Little Tennessee River Pedestrian Suspension Bridge I (MA 479), N.C. 28, Etna vic. (SL)
-Little Tennessee River Pedestrian Suspension Bridge II (MA 480), N.C. 28, West's Mill vic. (SL)
-Appalachian Trail (MA 477) (SL)

Significance

Transportation-related structures reflect the growth and prosperity of the county during the early twentieth centuries as the automobile made isolated areas more accessible and as tourism and recreation became popular pastimes that provided an important economic boost in the county. Transportation-related structures are eligible for listing under criterion A, as representatives of transportation development in Macon County or as representatives of the growth and importance of recreational activity in the county. These structures may be eligible under criterion C as representative examples

of construction techniques of transportation-related structures.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible for the National Register transportation-related structures should retain their overall original form, design, and location. Trails should retain their rural setting and their original routes.

PROPERTY TYPE 8: NATIVE AMERICAN STRUCTURES AND SITES

Description

Travelers to western North Carolina during the eighteenth century described Cherokee Indians as a dynamic group with a complex political and social structure. Cherokees operated a highly organized society and built specialized buildings and structures for sacred ceremonies and ample dwellings for everyday living.

Perhaps the most important structure in the Cherokee towns in what is now Macon County was the mound. Although the original builders of these earthen mounds is unknown, Cherokee used the mounds at Cowee and Nequasee (Franklin) to support the town-house or council house, a building which served as the site of ceremonies and social gatherings. The town-house was built of beams topped with a bark or thatch roof and rows of cane seats surrounded an altar inside the building. Typically, the tribe's sacred objects such as crystals or eagle feather wands were stored in the town-house. The Nequasee mound is located in Franklin and is owned by the town. The Cowee mound stands on a farm near the town of West's Mill.

Another type of structure associated with the Cherokee is the fish weir. Located in the Little Tennessee and Nantahala Rivers of Macon County, these river stone, V-shaped structures stand twenty to thirty centimeters high. The bottom of the V is downstream so that fish pass through and into a basket or trap. As is the case with the earthen mounds, determining the date of construction of weirs remains impossible, but early eighteenth-century travelers to North Carolina described the weirs. Macon County residents attest to the continued use of the weirs by whites into the early twentieth century. Two fish weirs remain intact in Macon County. The Little Tennessee River fish weir (MA 373) is situated in the middle of the river just south of the village of West's Mill in the Cowee community. Less well-preserved is the Nantahala fish weir (MA 386),

located adjacent to the Standing Indian campground in the Nantahala National Forest in southwest Macon County.

National Register and Study List Properties

-Nequasee Mound, Palmer Street, Frankin (NR)
-Cowee Mound and Village Site, N.C. 28, West's Mill vic. (NR)
-Little Tennessee River Fish Weir, N.C. 28, West's Mill vic. (SL)
-Nantahala River Fish Weir, Forest Service Road 424, Rainbow Springs vic. (SL)

Significance

Structures and sites associated with Native American occupation in Macon County are important reminders of the region's earliest history. These structures and sites are eligible for the National Register under criterion A, as representatives of social, cultural, and political life of Cherokee Indians and those who came before. They are also eligible under criterion D, for archaeological information which they may yield.

Registration Requirements

Native American structures and sites are rarities in North Carolina and therefore are extremely valuable to archaeologists and historians. To be eligible for the National Register, these structures must be mostly intact and they must have the potential to yield important archaeological information.

G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Macon County, North Carolina

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

Threats to historic resources and the realization of the fragility of those properties which remain have acted as incentives for local residents to organize to preserve the rich architectural legacy of the county. In 1993, the Macon County Historical Society applied for a grant from the North Carolina Division of Archives and History to fund a county-wide architectural survey. The Division awarded Macon County a grant to support the 14-month project, while local sources provided the necessary matching funds. Mike Decker, the Macon County planner, acted as local coordinator, while the Macon County Historical Society provided additional support and assistance. Catherine W. Bishir, survey coordinator for the Division of Archives and History, oversaw the work of the survey.

Macon County officials, with the approval of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History Survey and Planning Branch, chose Jennifer F. Martin as the project's principal investigator. Martin, who conducted the Duplin County architectural survey in 1992-1993, holds a Master's degree in History with emphasis in Historic Preservation from Middle Tennessee State University.

The survey began with a planning phase that included a reconnaissance survey of the county and the preparation of a preliminary report on the county's history and architectural resources. Fieldwork began in January 1994 and concluded in December 1994; during the study, approximately 586 properties were documented on 461 survey forms. The consultant traveled every public and accessible private road in the county. Hundreds of properties, including dwellings, farm outbuildings, churches, schools, commercial buildings, and structures were documented with photographs, written descriptions, and site plans; additional properties were map-coded on United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographical maps. Information on these historic resources is contained in individual files located at the Western Office of the Division of Archives and History in Asheville. The consultant conducted the survey and documentation process according to North Carolina Division of Archives and History standards and guidelines.

As a result of the survey, a total of over five hundred individual resources and districts were listed on the Division of Archives and History's "Study List." Properties on this list are those resources which appear to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Study List is a critical component of the project and properties on the list are given special consideration in preservation planning. The survey of Macon County also produced USGS topographical maps with properties coded; color slides of the resources; presentations to county organizations; and this Multiple Property Documentation Form.

Although the survey was the work of a single consultant, many individuals offered invaluable assistance. Mike Decker acted as the project's local coordinator, while Barbara McRae, who originally pursued the grant, provided historical information about many properties. Her expertise in local history and her many newspaper columns were a crucial source for the consultant. Hundreds of individuals provided historical information and personal stories about specific properties and helped the consultant understand the unwritten history of the county. Among the individuals who contributed greatly to the consultant's knowledge include Siler Slagle, Hattie Slagle Shope, Margaret and Albert Ramsey, Katherine and Vic Perry, Thelma Swanson, Dr. Helen Patton, Myra Waldroop, Lawrence Wood, Don Ezzelle, Janet and King Young, Orpha Robert Roper, Gloria Owenby, and Canton Henry. David Moore, archaeologist with the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, authored the first chapter of this report which deals with Cherokee occupation of Macon County. Claudia R. Brown and Linda Harris Edmisten of the Division of Archives and History assisted in the preparation of the study list. Across many miles Catherine Bishir coordinated the survey while retaining her faith in the principal investigator. Nick Lanier of the Western Office of the Division of Archives of History converted documentary photographs to color slides for the study list presentation.

This survey and the inventory it produced are designed to encourage Macon County residents to preserve the architecture that survives. The widespread support for the survey community members expressed not only facilitated the gathering of information, but also provided a catalyst for preservation. Since the completion of the project, a large historic district on Satulah Mountain in Highlands has been placed on the National Register and plans are underway to carry out addition nominations. After their active participation in the survey, residents in one rural Macon County community succeeded in postponing the Department of Transportation's plan to improve an unpaved road. This project had the potential to jeopardize the county setting and prove detrimental to the historic character of the landscape of this idyllic neighborhood. Continued awareness of the survey and subsequent preservation activities will only encourage more active participation in the protection of Macon County's historical architectural fabric.

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