

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name Liberty Historic District  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Location

street & number Roughly along the west side of the Norfolk & Southern Railroad between W. Butler Ave. on the north & W. Patterson Ave to the south; and including the 100 block of W. Swannanoa St. not for publication N/A  
city or town Liberty vicinity N/A  
state North Carolina code NC county Randolph code 151 zip code 27298

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey J. Crow SHPO 10/5/00  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property

Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

**5. Classification**

<p><b>Ownership of Property</b> (Check as many boxes as apply)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local  <input type="checkbox"/> public-State  <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal</p>	<p><b>Category of Property</b> (Check only one box)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> building(s)  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district  <input type="checkbox"/> site  <input type="checkbox"/> structure  <input type="checkbox"/> object</p>	<p><b>Number of Resources within Property</b> (Do not include previously listed resources)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Contributing</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Noncontributing</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>48</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>16</u></td> <td style="text-align: right;">buildings</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>2</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>1</u></td> <td style="text-align: right;">sites</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>50</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>17</u></td> <td style="text-align: right;">structures</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">objects</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">Total</td> </tr> </table>		Contributing	Noncontributing		<u>48</u>	<u>16</u>	buildings	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	sites	<u>50</u>	<u>17</u>	structures			objects			Total
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		objects																			
		Total																			
<p>Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) <u>N/A</u></p>		<p>Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>N/A</u></p>																			

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

<p>Category: <u>DOMESTIC</u>  <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>  <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>  <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>  <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>  <u>RECREATION AND CULTURE</u>  <u>TRANSPORTATION</u></p>	<p>Subcategory: <u>single dwelling</u>  <u>business</u>  <u>department store</u>  <u>specialty store</u>  <u>financial institution</u>  <u>theater</u>  <u>rail-related</u></p>
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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

<p>Category: <u>DOMESTIC</u>  <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>  <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>  <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>  <u>RECREATION AND CULTURE</u>  <u>TRANSPORTATION</u></p>	<p>Subcategory: <u>single dwelling</u>  <u>business</u>  <u>department store</u>  <u>specialty store</u>  <u>theater</u>  <u>rail-related</u></p>
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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne, Colonial Revival,  
Bungalow/Craftsman, Other:  
I-house, hall and parlor

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

<p>foundation walls  roof</p>	<p><u>BRICK</u>  <u>WOOD: weatherboard</u>  <u>BRICK</u>  <u>STUCCO</u>  <u>ASPHALT</u>  <u>METAL: tin</u></p>
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**Narrative Description**

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

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property

Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
COMMERCE  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMUNITY PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT

**Period of Significance**

Ca. 1880-1950

**Significant Dates**

1884  
1895  
1910

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Causey, H.C.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property

Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** approximately 90 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1)	17	628425	3969840	3)	17	629360	3967760
2)	17	628880	3969900	4)	17	628820	3967680

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

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Tom Shaw/ Senior Preservation Planner & Krista Hampton/Historian

organization Benchmark, Inc. date 01/07/2000

street & number P.O. Box 12267 telephone 803-376-6070

city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29211

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

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

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

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

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

**Property Owner**

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

name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). **Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including 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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

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**Description**

The Liberty Historic District is characterized by several types of historic resources. The dominant feature is its lineal nature resulting from the north south rail-line corridor introduced in 1884-1885 by the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway Company (which eventually became the Norfolk Southern), which forms the backbone of the district. Extending approximately 1.3 miles from the town's northern corporate limits where the rail corridor intersects West Butler Avenue, the district follows the rail corridor south (roughly parallel to Greensboro Street) and terminates approximately .15 miles south of South Fayetteville Street. The predominant feature of the rail corridor is its built-up rail bed and attendant open-space buffer, which combine to create the dominant physical feature and the linear character of the historic district. Numerous plantings of shrubs and trees decorate the rail line's right-of-way as it passes through town. Prominent well-established trees, primarily oaks, front the residences along the rail corridor and compliment the small-town atmosphere. Residential and commercial activity is aligned with this corridor and its principal cross-axial roads of West Swannanoa Avenue and South Fayetteville Street, along both of which the district extends to include commercial and residential resources.

There are a total of sixty-seven (67) resources in the district of which fifty (50), or almost seventy-five percent (75%), are contributing and seventeen (17), or about twenty-five percent (25%), are non-contributing. The resulting 3:1 ratio of contributing to non-contributing may appear somewhat high, however, closer examination of the nature of the district provides clarification. A spatial analysis of the district reveals that almost twenty (20) acres of the district's total of approximately ninety acres ( $\pm 90$ ), or about twenty-two percent ( $\pm 22\%$ ), of the district is attributed to a single contributing resource - the rail corridor and its attendant features. Since this resource is also the district's primary defining and unifying feature, it is clear the district maintains a high degree of integrity, which may not be as readily apparent solely on the basis of the contributing/non-contributing resource ratio.

Examining the distribution of the types of resources reveals that nineteen (19), or twenty-eight percent (28%) of the district's total number, are in the downtown commercial core and that fourteen (14) of them contribute to the district, thereby accounting for twenty-nine percent (29%) of the total number of contributing resources. Of the remaining resources, thirty-four (34) are (or were) residences, which represents slightly over fifty-percent (50%) of the total number of properties, and twenty-six (26) of these contribute to the district, or about thirty-eight percent (38%) of the contributing resources overall. Four (4) residences are less than fifty years old and, therefore, are considered non-historic. The remaining resources of the district are a mix of isolated commercial and institutional resources or are associated with the railroad.

The rail corridor itself averages approximately 150 feet in width for most of its length in the nominated area. It does, however, narrow to 75 feet at several segments. At the depot square though it increases to a plaza-like open space nearly 250 feet wide. Along its route through town are numerous examples of introduced decorative and exotic species of flora and silva placed there by the local garden club line in an effort to beautify the rail corridor. This practice was established by many garden clubs around the South some time between the two World Wars and still continues today. The rail corridor right-of-way (Site# 1) represents the most extensive single contributing resource in the district. It is made up of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Liberty Historic District

Name of Property

Randolph County, North Carolina

County and State

the elevated rail bed, open space, planting materials, the depot (Site# 1A), and a retired caboose (Site# 1B), which all contribute to its historic significance. There are, however, two (2) non-contributing resources associated with it: a modern pole-frame shed (Site# 1C) and a modern concrete block building (Site# 1D).

The downtown commercial area is a single, double-loaded block running along West Swannanoa Ave. from its intersection with North and South Fayetteville Streets and its junction with North Depot Street. The business district contains predominantly early twentieth century, two-story, brick commercial buildings. Notable buildings in the downtown include Reitzel Building (Site# 47) at 101-105 W. Swannanoa Ave., the Farmer's Union Mercantile Co. Building (Site# 54) at 129 W. Swannanoa Ave., and the Curtis Theater (Site# 39) at 101 S. Fayetteville St.

As is typical with most small Southern towns whose predominant growth factor was the railway, residential resources contained in the historic district also follow the linear pattern established by the railroad (with the exception of a segment along South Fayetteville Street, which is perpendicular to the rail line). The residential buildings in the district represent a range of types as may be expected based on the steady growth and economic development Liberty experienced following the coming of the railroad through the post-World War II era.

Prominent domestic architectural typologies in the district are late nineteenth-century, vernacular forms such as the Bob Patterson House, a two story, upright-and-wing at 312 S. Fayetteville St. (Site# 37), the two-story, center-hall, single-pile house at 303 N. Asheboro Ave. (Site# 21), and the A.J. Patterson House on S. Fayetteville St. (Site# 27), which is built in the hall-and-parlor form. Also present are early twentieth-century national styles. The Bascom M. and Alpha L. Brower House, 227 N. Asheboro St. (Site# 24), for example, displays the transitional characteristics of the massed-plan and compound roof form drawn from the Queen Anne style and combined with aspects of the Neoclassical influences which swept the nation at the turn of the century. There are also excellent examples of the Bungalow/Craftsman style as is seen in the Jim Deaton House at 305 S. Fayetteville Street (Site# 30). The design influence of the revival styles popular from the early-to-mid twentieth century is present in the district. Typical examples are the Colonial Revival, as in the J.C. Luther House at 248 S. Fayetteville St. (Site# 35), and Tudor Revival elements of the Clarence Kennedy House at 525 N. Asheboro St. (Site# 9). Hardin's Florist, 1940 (Site# 22) and are indicative of the continuity of a growing community prior to World War II. In the years immediately after World War II renewed development in Liberty is evidenced by simple frame residences like the one at 537 N. Asheboro St. built in 1947 (Site# 8) and the Art Deco inspired Curtis Theater, 1949 (Site# 39). A modern and relatively inexpensive siding material, the asbestos shingle, was employed on some of the residences (Sites #8 & #9) built just prior to and after the War Years.

The inventory of resources in the district is presented in tabular format and organized accordingly: the defining resource is the rail corridor and is assigned the first site number, its sub-resources are identified as A, B, C and D. The individual resources are then presented north to south beginning at the northernmost extent of the district on the west side of N. Asheboro St. following the rail line (two (2) sites on this segment are on the corner of N. Asheboro St. and cross streets but are listed within the N. Asheboro St. inventory since no other resources on these side streets are included in the district). The next group of properties presented is along the 200-300 block of S. Fayetteville St. and beginning at the east side of the 200 block and picking back up at the west side of the 200 block. The downtown commercial core is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   7   Page   3  

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

presented last. The order of arrangement begins with the two properties on the east side of the only north/south street (N. & S. Fayetteville St.). The inventory is then arranged east to west along the 100 block of W. Swannanoa Ave. beginning with the NE end of the north side of the block and resuming at the SE end of the south side of the 100 block.

The information for each resource is presented in the following order:  
column one = site number (keyed to the district map)  
column two = historic name<sup>1</sup>/street address, and a thumbnail photograph  
column three = status code: C = contributing, NC = non-contributing, V = vacant parcel  
column four = physical description and historic information (if known)

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
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<sup>1</sup>Guidance for naming resources was obtained from the local historic commission, published local histories and newspaper articles.

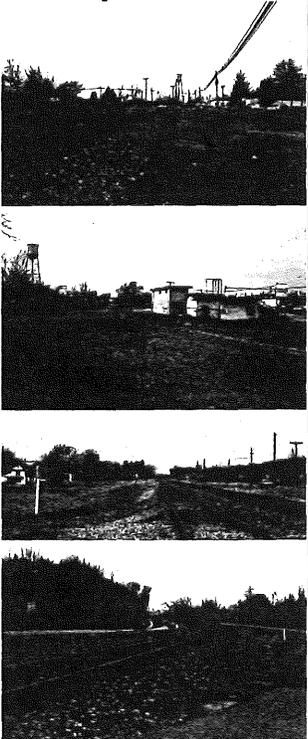
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
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1	<p><b>Norfolk Southern Railway Corridor right-of-way landscape/located parallel to Greensboro St. between W. Butler Avenue and .15 mi. south of S.Fayetteville Street</b></p> 	C	<p><b>ca. 1884-ca. 1949.</b> This resource extends north/south for approximately 1.3 mi. varying in width from approximately seventy-five to two-hundred and fifty feet within the right-of-way and exhibits such features as an <b>elevated rail-bed</b>, expanses of <b>buffering and green-spacing</b>, <b>berms</b>, and <b>planted decorative landscaping</b>.</p>
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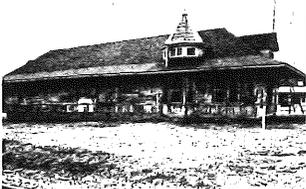
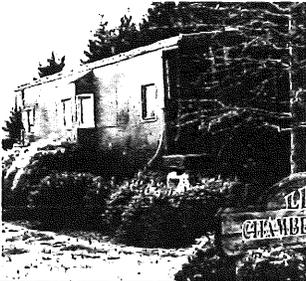
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
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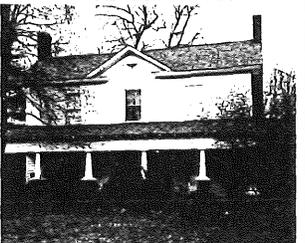
1A	<p>Liberty Depot/ SE corner of W. Swannanoa Avenue and S. Asheboro Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1885; ca. 1990. The depot, built by the Cape Fear &amp; Yadkin Valley RR, is a <b>one-story, wood-frame</b>, hipped roof <b>building</b> clad with novelty or dropped siding. An extended roof surrounding the perimeter of the exterior above the passenger/freight platform is supported by knee-braces. Pedimented attic vents are present at the north and south elevation and a polygonal turret accentuates the ticket-window bay. Other features typical of depots are sliding freight doors and a windowed passenger waiting area. The depot was moved approximately seventy-five yards from the NW corner of W. Swannanoa Ave. and N. Greensboro St. to this location in the 1990s. It remains adjacent to the rail tracks and within the original right-of-way.</p>
1B	<p>Norfolk Southern Caboose/112 S. Greensboro Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1935. This typical red <b>caboose</b> was in service on the Norfolk Southern rail line from the 1930s until the 1980s when it was retired as part of general program of discontinuing using cabooses. It is permanently located on a siding adjacent to main tracks near the SW corner of W. Swannanoa Ave. and S. Greensboro St. and is now used by Liberty's Chamber of Commerce as its office.</p>
1C	<p>Shed\located in RR right- of-way between W. Starmount Avenue and W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	NC	<p>ca. 1970. This is a modern pole-building used by the rail road company to manufacture cross-ties.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
1D	<p>Ice House/ W/in RR right-of-way on west side of S. Greensboro Rd. between E. Raleigh Ave. &amp; S. Fayetteville St.</p> 	NC	ca. 1960. Modern, one-story, concrete-block commercial building.
2	<p>W.T. Smith House/ 801 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	C	ca. 1895. The W.T. Smith house is a <b>two-story, frame residence</b> , with a <b>lateral gable roof</b> , and its exterior clad with <b>weatherboard siding</b> . It features a centered one-story, hipped-roof porch with turned and chamfered porch supports. A vented, front-facing gable is placed at the center of the facade elevation. The windows are six-over-six, double-hung wood sash and the chimneys are brick and placed at the exterior gable-ends.
3	<p>J.P. Perry House/ 735 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	C	ca. 1915. The J.P. Perry house is a <b>one-story, frame residence</b> with <b>Bungalow-Craftsman</b> influences. It has a <b>lateral gable roof</b> and a central, front-gable porch. The porch eaves are supported by knee brackets. The porch supports are battered and paneled and are resting on brick piers. The windows have three vertical panes over one. There are two interior brick, chimneys.
4	<p>A.M. Fogleman House/ 721 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	C	ca. 1895. The A.M. Fogleman house is a <b>two-story, frame residence</b> . Its form is a <b>center-hall plan I-house</b> and it is clad in <b>weatherboard</b> . It also features a <b>lateral gable roof</b> and a central front-facing gable dormer with partial returns that decorates the upper level of the façade. A full-width, one-story porch extends across the facade and may be an early twentieth-century alteration based on its use of exposed rafter tails and tapered porch supports on brick piers. Windows are six-over-six, double-hung wood sash.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
5	200 W. Brookwood Avenue	NC	ca. 1970; one-story, fame residence.
6	631 N. Asheboro Street 	NC	ca. 1960; one-story, brick veneer ranch style n b residence.
7	Smith-Wylie House/ 605 N. Asheboro Street 	C	ca. 1899. The Smith-Wylie house is a very imposing <b>two-story , frame, Queen Anne Style residence</b> built by Charles Phillip Smith and later occupied by his daughter, Margaret Smith Wylie. It features the <b>irregular massed plan</b> typical of this style. Particularly notable features are a flared, shingle-clad skirting-course separating the first and second stories; an elaborate sawn and pierced bargeboard with drop pendants; cresting and acreteria along the ridge line; and a <b>slate roof</b> . The one-story porch is highlighted with a polygonal, turreted pavilion at its south corner. It also has; turned-and-chamfered porch posts with sawn scroll-brackets supporting a spindle frieze. The siding is <b>weatherboard</b> and windows are one-over-one, double-hung-wood sash. A modern concrete block foundation has been installed as underpinning.
7A	Well house	C	ca. 1899. The frame well house has a gable-front roof and the exterior is sheathed with weatherboard siding.
7B	Outbuilding	C	ca. 1899. The frame one-story outbuilding, has a lateral gable roof, and the exterior is weatherboard clad. It was once used as a "Maid's Quarters."
7C	Outbuilding	C	ca. 1899. The frame one-story outbuilding has a lateral gable roof and is weatherboard clad.
8	537 N. Asheboro Street 	C	1947. This is a <b>frame, one-story residence</b> that is clad in asbestos-shingle siding. It has a lateral-gable roof with a front-gable wing at the north side of the façade. Its modest design and plan are typical of affordably-built, post-war single-family dwellings.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

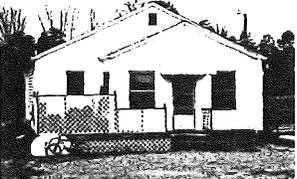
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
	Between 525 & 537 N. Asheboro Street	V	Vacant lot
9	Clarence Kennedy House/ 525 N. Asheboro Street 	C	1940. This one-story, frame residence exhibits stylized Tudor Revival influences with its asymmetrical façade featuring a radically raking roof over its entry bay and exposed chimney. It has a lateral gable roof and the exterior is sheathed in asbestos shingles, which are original to the house. The window fenestration is a combination single, paired, and grouped six-over-six wood sash;
10	Dr. W.J. Staley House/ 513 N. Asheboro Street 	C	1899. The house built by Dr. W.J. Staley is a two-story, frame residence. It has a lateral gable roof with a central dormer vent. Alterations include changing the pitch/form of the porch roof, replacing the porch deck with a concrete slab, replacement windows, and cladding the exterior walls and eaves with artificial siding. Dr. Staley's office was located in the Tom Trogdon Building (Site#53).
10A	Garage	NC	ca. 1950. Deteriorated frame garage.
11	505 N. Asheboro Street 	NC	ca. 1955. This non-historic property is a one-story, brick residence.
	SW corner of N. Asheboro Street & W. Luther Avenue	V	Vacant lot
12	437 N. Asheboro Street 	C	ca. 1905. This one-story, frame residence has a pyramidal roof and a one-story, full-width porch. The porch roof is also hipped and the porch posts and balustrade are non-historic replacements. A shed dormer is present above the porch and may be an enlarged version of an original feature The roof material is modern v-crimp metal and there are two, interior, brick chimneys.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

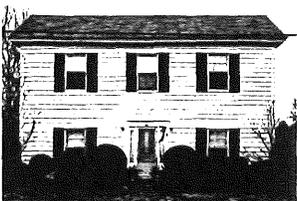
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
13	<b>John Burley Cole House/ 429 N. Asheboro Street</b> 	C	<b>ca. 1905.</b> The J.B. Cole house is a <b>one-story, frame, weatherboard clad residence</b> , with a <b>pyramidal roof</b> . A hipped-roof porch partially wraps the south elevation and is supported by square, boxed, wood porch piers. A centered, hipped dormer is located just above the eave-line of the roof. Roof sheathing is modern v-crimp metal and the porch rail is a recent addition.
14	<b>H.C. Causey House/ 415 N. Asheboro Street</b> 	C	<b>ca. 1895.</b> H.C. Causey, a house builder by trade, built this <b>two-story, frame, weatherboard-clad, residence</b> for himself. From its orientation it appears that the south elevation is the original primary facade perhaps indicating that a road once passed between this building and 409 N. Asheboro St. The south elevation features a 3/4 width, one-story, hipped-roof porch. Tapering, chamfered posts with a stylized astragal band and necking and scroll-sawn brackets support the porch roof. The lateral gable roof has boxed eaves with paired, sawn brackets with pendants over a frieze-board. A centered gable interrupts the eave line. Windows are single, four-over-four, double-hung wood sash in a symmetrical arrangement. The east elevation displays a two-tiered porch along the rear ell that faces N. Asheboro St. It has a shed-roof and three-bays defined by chamfered posts and sawn and pierced, slat balusters.
15	<b>409 N. Asheboro Street</b> 	C	<b>ca. 1890.</b> This <b>two-story, frame, weatherboard clad I-house</b> features a <b>lateral gable roof</b> , a central, pedimented dormer, and brick, exterior-end chimneys. A 3/4-width, one-story, hipped-roof porch has turned-and-chamfered porch posts. Windows are one-over-one, double-hung wood sash and the roofing material is modern v-crimp metal.
15A	<b>Garage</b>	C	<b>ca. 1930.</b> frame garage.
16	<b>201 E. Vance Street</b> 	NC	<b>ca. 1970.</b> Frame house.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

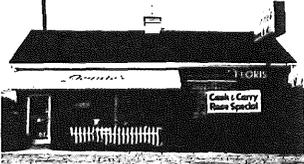
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
17	<p>335 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	NC	<p>ca. 1900. This <b>two-story, frame</b> house has been altered by the addition of artificial siding. Its porch has been replaced with a full-height version with a ceramic tile deck. Windows are modern replacements and a modern carport has been added to the south elevation.</p>
18	<p>325 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	NC	<p>ca. 1900. This <b>two-story, frame</b> residence has been altered by the complete removal of its porch and the addition of replacement windows and artificial exterior siding.</p>
19	<p>Parks Pickett House/ 317 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1915. This <b>one-story, frame residence</b> features <b>Bungalow/Craftsman stylistic influences</b>. The exterior is sheathed with dropped or novelty siding. It also has a <b>pyramidal-roof</b>. The hipped-roof porch with extended portecochere features roof supports that are battered and paneled set on brick piers. Windows are multi-pane, Craftsman style double-hung sash. It also has interior brick chimneys.</p>
20	<p>309 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1900. This <b>two-story, frame residence</b> is a <b>forward-gabled, L-plan</b>. Although it has artificial siding and replacement windows, its porch form is intact as is its wood-plank porchdeck..</p>
21	<p>W.F. Bowman House/ 303 N. Asheboro Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1890. The W.F. Bowman house is a <b>two-story, frame I-house, clad in weatherboard</b>. It has a <b>lateral-gable roof</b> and center gable with partial returns. Windows are single, four-over-four, double-hung wood sash except beneath the front gable where they are paired. The <math>\frac{3}{4}</math>-width porch is one-story with a hipped-roof that is supported by turned-and-chamfered porch posts with scroll-sawn brackets. The decorative vent in the front gable is a particularly nicely designed and executed detail. One exterior-end, brick chimney appears at the north elevation.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 11

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
22	Hardin's Florist Shop/ 251 N. Asheboro Street 	C	ca. 1940. Wade Hardin arrived in Liberty in 1900 and, with his wife Myrtle, opened a retail flower shop in 1928 and the wholesale arm of the business in 1947. This <b>one-story, masonry commercial building</b> was built in 1940 to accommodate expansion. Numerous greenhouses are located behind the retail shop, but because of the functional nature of these buildings, none posses design integrity to the 1940s.
	245 N. Asheboro Street	V	Vacant lot
23	John L. Hardin House/ 239 N. Asheboro Street 	C	ca. 1900. The John L. Hardin house is a <b>two-story, frame</b> residence with a compact <b>massed-plan</b> and a <b>hipped roof</b> with a <b>pedimented front gable</b> . It also has artificial siding and replacement windows.
23A	Garage	NC	Modern garage building
24	Bascom M. & Alpha Brower House/ 227 N. Asheboro Street 	C	ca. 1915. The Bascom M. & Alpha Bower house is a <b>two-story, frame, massed plan residence</b> typical of late-Victorian transitional designs that marry the irregular massing of the <b>Queen Anne</b> style with <b>neo-classical</b> elements such as <b>pedimented gables</b> and <b>Tuscan columns</b> . Windows are primarily one-over-one, double-hung wood sash, and are present in single, paired, and oversized form. The one-story porch extends across the entire faced and wraps portions of both the north and south elevations and features a porte-cochere at its north corner.
24A	Garage	C	ca. 1930. Frame garage.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 12

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

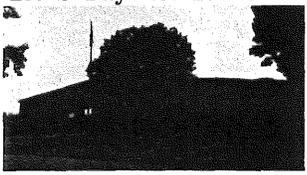
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
25	<p><b>Jim Brower House/ 221 N. Asheboro Street</b></p> 	C	<p>1943. This modest <b>one-story frame</b> building exhibits stylized <b>Tudor Revival influences</b> with its projecting, asymmetrical, gable-front porch featuring clustered porch supports. A second front-facing gable decorates the facade to the south of the porch. There is also an open porch at the north elevation.</p>
26	<p><b>Crutchfield House/ 213 N. Asheboro Street</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1900. The Crutchfield house is a <b>two-story, frame, weatherboard clad, upright-and-wing</b> featuring a polygonal-bay at the north side of the façade. It also has a lateral gable roof with partial returns, boxed eaves, and a pedimented, front-facing gable atop the projecting bay. Windows are one-over-one, double-hung sash. The one-story porch is hipped-roofed, and extends to surround the projecting bay. Porch posts are turned and chamfered with sawn-work brackets. There is one interior chimney.</p>
27	<p><b>A.J. Patterson House/ sw. side of 200 blk of S. Fayetteville at jct. w/ W. Brower Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1884; 1974. The Patterson house is a <b>one-and-one-half story, vernacular, hall-and-parlor dwelling</b> clad in weatherboarding and fenestrated with an off-center, single-leaf door flanked by single, four-over-four, wood sash windows. Records show that A.J Patterson built this building for his parents and they set up housekeeping there by 1884. The building was moved twice, it originally stood on the east side of the 100 block of S. Fayetteville St and was moved to the north side of the 200 block of E. Swannanoa and in 1974 to this location. The chimney and porch were rebuilt to their original form after the latter move. The roof has recently been sheathed with modern, v-crimp metal. Dr. Patterson was the first of three generations of Pattersons to supply medical care to the residents in and around Liberty. His grandson also served as the town's mayor.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 13

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
28	<p>Liberty Town Hall- Library/ 239 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	NC	<p>ca. 1970. This modern one-story masonry municipal building houses the Town Hall and Library. The Patterson house is located at the northwest corner of the campus.</p>
29	<p>Floyd Deaton House/ 301 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1925. The Floyd Deaton house is an imposing <b>two-story, masonry residence with Prairie Style influences</b>. It has a <b>low-pitched hipped roof</b> with broad, overhanging eaves supported by paired, shaped brackets. The central, one-story covered porch features columnar porch supports on elevated brick piers and ballustraded promenades that extend the full length of the façade. The north elevation features a porte-cochere and the south elevation has an enclosed sitting area. Windows are paired and single, nine-over-one, double-hung wood sash.</p>
29A	Garage	C	<p>ca. 1925, <b>one-story, masonry, multi-car, garage</b> building similar in design to the main dwelling.</p>
30	<p>Jim Deaton House/ 305 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1915. The Jim Deaton house is the best example of the <b>Bungalow-Craftsman style</b> present in the district. It is a <b>one-and-one-half story, frame, lateral gable dwelling</b> with an extended hipped roof porch that across the entire façade. It features battered, paneled wood porch supports mounted on raised, masonry piers and a porte-cochere at its south corner. The double-hung wood sash windows have asymmetrically divided lights (eight-over-one) and are grouped and paired. There is also a large, gable-front dormer.</p>
31	<p>Vance York House/ 212 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1880. The Vance-York house is the only property in the district to predate the introduction of the rail road . It is as <b>two-story, frame, I-house clad in dropped or novelty siding</b>. It also has a lateral gable roof and centered, front-facing gable with partial returns and boxed eaves. Windows are one-over-one, double-hung sash and there is a single-leaf, paneled entry door. A one-story, hipped-roof porch extends fully across the façade and partially wraps the north elevation. Turned porch supports with sawn brackets carry its roof. There are gable-end and interior masonry chimneys.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 14

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

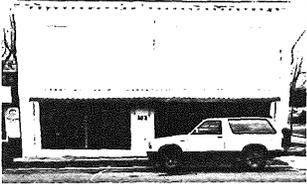
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
32	<p>W.T. &amp; Beulah Gilliam House/ 228 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1900. The W.T. and Beulah Gilliam house is an excellent example of an <b>upright-and-wing, two-story, frame residence</b>. It has a high-pitched hipped roof with a large pedimented dormer at the south corner. Its one-story irregularly shaped porch has a hipped-roof and wraps a portion of the upright bay at the south end of the façade and terminates in a porte-cochere at the north end. A polygonal bay window is present at the south elevation and block-glass inserts decorate the front and side-facing gables at the attic level. Elaborately corbeled, interior, masonry chimneys are also present. It is sheathed in weatherboard.</p>
33	<p>B.J. Gregson House/ S. Fayetteville Street between 228 &amp; 238</p> 	NC	<p>ca. 1900. This <b>massed-plan, gable front, hipped-roof residence</b> has had its porch removed, artificial siding applied and a sun room (ca. 1935) added, which, taken together, substantially alter its historic form and appearance.</p>
34	<p>238 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	NC	<p>ca. 1955. This is a modern brick-veneer, ranch-style residence</p>
35	<p>J.C. Luther House/ 248 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>1935. The J.C. Luther house is a <b>two-story, masonry residence</b> executed with heavy <b>neo-classical influences</b>. The principal roof is a <b>lateral-gable</b> and has three front-facing, gabled dormers with lights. The central one-story gable-front porch has partial returns and an interesting arched tympanum. The square porch supports are clustered. There is one enclosed and one open porch with balconied roofs at the north and south elevations. Windows are six-over-six. Mr. Luther was the president of Liberty Industries and owner of Liberty Broom Works.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 15

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

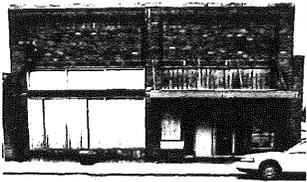
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
36	<p>304 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>1947. This <b>one and one-half story Cape Cod</b> features a lateral gable with three gabled dormers at the central section and one each at the north and south extensions. It combines masonry veneer and wood siding.</p>
37	<p>Bob Patterson House/ 312 S. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1895. The Bob Patterson house is an <b>upright and wing, two-story, frame, weatherboard clad residence</b>; featuring two-over-two, double hung, wood sash windows. It has boxed eaves with partial returns supported by paired, sawn brackets with hanging pendants. There is a one-story, hip roof porch with elaborately bracketed, chamfered porch supports on brick pedestals across the north portion of the façade. It has interior corbeled brick chimneys and a one-story rear ell.</p>
38	<p>J.G. Stockard Dry Goods Store/ 102 N. Fayetteville Street</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1910. This twin store-front, <b>masonry, one-story commercial building</b> features an asymmetrical paneled upper-facade divided and framed by slightly projecting, brick pilasters and surmounted by corbeled brick dentils at the parapet. The display windows and bulkhead at street level have been altered (possibly when the north bay was added in the 1940s) and a metal awning installed over the windows and entry.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 16

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
39	<p><b>Curtis Theater/ 101 S. Fayetteville Street</b></p> 	C	<p><b>1949.</b> The second Curtis Theater opened for business 9/12/49, replacing the original smaller one across N. Fayetteville St. This <b>two-story, masonry commercial building</b> presents minimal <b>Art Deco influence</b> in its decorative appointments and features a stuccoed facade on the upper portion with green carrara glass above a grey tiled watertable at street level; a curvilinear marquis awning with the original neon lighting tubing separates the facade into two distinct components. The southern portion of the facade features a vertical element that projects slightly from the main plane and contains a reeded, central panel with six-light metal casement windows at the mezzanine and second floor levels. The main lobby is accessed by paired, double-leaf doors with triangular panels and lights. A secondary, single door entrance located on Swannanoa Street allowed black moviegoers access to a section of the balcony. The ticket window and glazed, metal-framed display boxes for posters of coming attractions also remain present.</p>
40	<p><b>Jones Variety Store/ 100-104 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p><b>ca. 1941.</b> This is a plainly executed, <b>one-story, masonry commercial building</b> that has had twin inset panels at the upper level that are enframed by brick pilasters and highlighted by a soldier-course border with brick corbeling above. A simple cast concrete cornice adorns the parapet. Both street level store-fronts have extruded aluminum framing and the transoms are covered..</p>
41	<p><b>Roy Reitzel's Sandwich Shop/ 106-108 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	NC	<p><b>ca. 1941.</b> This <b>one-story, masonry commercial building</b> appears to have been <b>altered</b> in the 1960s with the introduction of extruded aluminum framed, plate glass storefronts and a wood-shingle awning.</p>

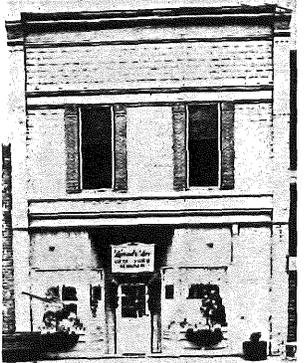
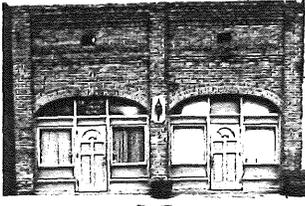
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 17

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
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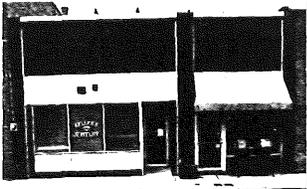
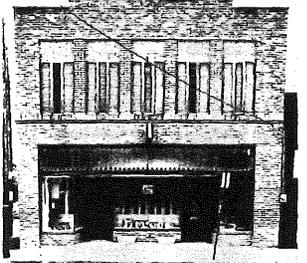
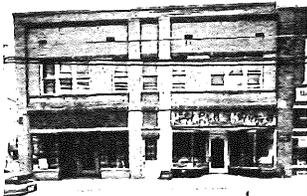
42	<p>112-118 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	NC	ca. 1958-1960. This building is a three-story masonry commercial building.
43	<p>O'Kelly Overman General Merchandise/ 120 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	C	ca. 1900. O'Kelly Overman ran a general merchandise business in this two-story, masonry commercial building. It features an interesting decorative pressed-metal facade, with the pilasters and cornice executed in the appearance of rusticated and carved stone. The bulkheads of the storefront are original, but modern wood paneling covers the transom and door surround. The entry to the upper floor to the east of the storefront has been altered. This is the only example of this building material in the downtown commercial core.
44	<p>122-124 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	C	ca. 1900. This very simple but elegant one-story masonry commercial building features double-storefronts with corbeled basket-arches. The upper portion of the façade features corbeled panel insets with rat-tooth coursing. Full-height pilasters distinguish and define the store-fronts, both of which have been infilled with modern wood framing for the windows, bulkheads and doors.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 18

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
45	<p><b>Butler Shoe Store- Florence Hat Shop/ 126-128 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	NC	<p>early 20th century. This one-story, masonry commercial building was covered by a modern, metal-panel, façade less than fifty years ago.</p>
46	<p><b>Liberty Machinery/ 130 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1925. This prominent corner one-story, masonry commercial building features a distinctive, multi-faceted transom with narrow vertical panes and diamond-shaped lozenges above and below the principal row of panes. The same treatment is repeated at the secondary storefront entry on N. Depot St. The window openings at the second story appear to have partial brick infill with louvered shutter panels obscuring the window sash. Both elevations are capped by a stepped parapet.</p>
47	<p><b>Reitzel Building/ 101-105 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1925. This prominent two-story, masonry, enframed-block, commercial building features two storefronts at the primary facade that flank a central doorway access for the offices on the upper floor. A secondary storefront is at the rear of the building on its N. Fayetteville elevation. This is a simply adorned building with brick pilasters that are connected by a corbeled brick entablature, which enframes and defines the bays at both the first and second story levels. A single narrow central bay resembling that of the storefronts defines the entry to the upper floor. A prismatic-glass transom is located above the display windows and upstairs entry. The windows at the second level are one-over-one, double-hung, wood-frames arranged singly or grouped in twos or threes.</p>

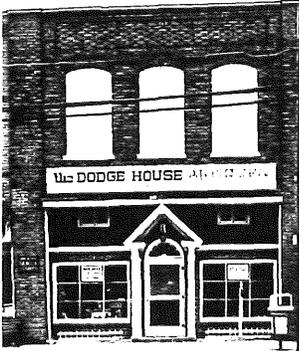
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 19

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
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<p>48</p>	<p>Curtis Funeral Home/ 107 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	<p>NC</p>	<p>ca. 1905. This <b>masonry two-story commercial building</b> has been altered with an extremely inset storefront that creates a mezzanine exposure where the transom was. This alteration is potentially reversible. Otherwise, the building is plainly executed with corner pilasters and panel inset. The windows at the second story are covered with plywood.</p>
<p>49</p>	<p>J.G. Reitzel Building/ 111 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	<p>C</p>	<p>ca. 1905. The J. G. Reitzel Building is a <b>masonry, two-story, commercial building</b> featuring three single, arched window openings with connected corbeled window heads at the second story surmounted by a horizontal inset panel and dog tooth frieze at the parapet. The store front level has been altered with replacement extruded-metal display windows, but retains the recessed bulkheads. The transom is, however, obscured by a plywood panel and signage.</p>

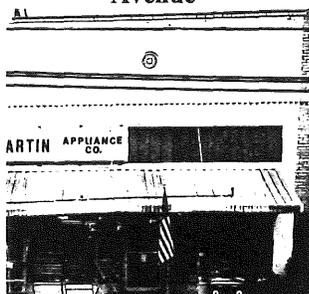
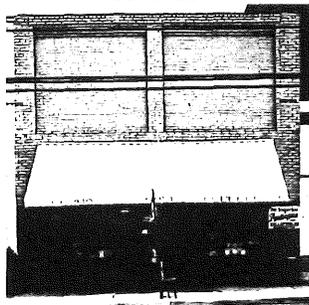
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 20

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
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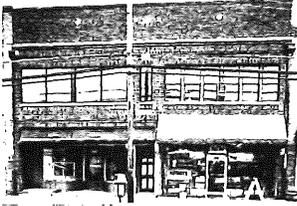
50	<p>Roy Reitzel's Soda Shop/ 113 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1900. Reitzel's Soda Shop is a simple, <b>masonry, one-story, commercial building</b>. The only decorative adornment is a single rat-tooth course and a small, round, perforated-metal vent. The storefront has been somewhat altered by the installation of an extruded-metal display window.</p>
51	<p>Buckner-Stroud Building/ 115 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	C	<p>ca. 1900. This <b>one-story, masonry commercial building</b> has divided inset-panels above the storefront capped by a corbeled parapet. The storefront bulkheads and display windows are intact.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 21

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

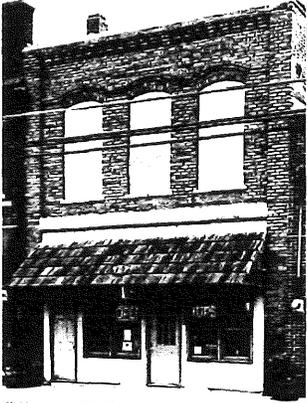
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
52	<p><b>Gilliam-Patterson Building/ 117-119 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1900. This very handsome <b>two-story, masonry commercial building</b> features five arched window-head openings with connected corbelling, at the second story. The parapet wall features vertical colonnaded and arched inset panels over a corbel course that is surmounted by a rat-tooth and corbeled brick cornice. The bulkheads and store-fronts are either original or an early alteration and feature marble panels and pilasters. The transom is obscured by a modern signage panel.</p>
53	<p><b>Tom Trogdon Building/ 121-125 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1930. This <b>two-story, masonry, commercial building</b> once housed the town's physician and dentist. Both storefronts have been altered, but the prismatic-glass transom is intact. A centered entry provides access to the upper floor office space. Ganged windows on the second story are defined by brick borders set in parquet and sailor-course designs and feature window sills and belt-courses of rusticated granite. There are quartz stones inset as lozenges in the parapet. The windows over no.125 are intact, one-over-one, double hung, wood sash while those over no.121 and the center entry are plate-glass replacements of unsympathetic design. This is one of the more prominent buildings in the downtown</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 22

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

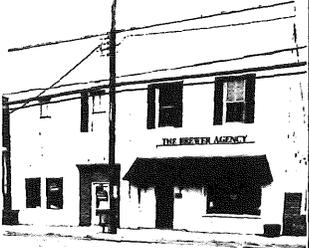
Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
54	<p><b>Farmer's Union Mercantile Co. Building/ 129 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1905. This <b>two-story, masonry, commercial building</b> was built by Dr. G. A. Foster and originally housed Farmer's Union Mercantile Co. Ernest Dark also once ran a grocery at this location. It features arched, connected window-heads with corbeled details at the second story and the parapet has corbeled brick dentils. Although, the store front is altered by modern infill and an awning, it reads well as part of the commercial streetscape.</p>
55	<p><b>131-133 W. Swannanoa Avenue</b></p> 	C	<p>ca. 1935. This simple, <b>one-story, masonry commercial building</b> has a double store front entry with an intact variegated-glass transom beneath a simple panel inset. The brick parapet has two-courses of corbel work.</p>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 23

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Site #	Name of Property/ Street Address	Status	Date/Description
56	<p>Patterson Building/ 135-139 W. Swannanoa Avenue</p> 	NC	<p>ca. 1895. This two-story, masonry commercial building once housed a drug store and bank. At one time the local phone company's switchboard was located here, too. It has been covered with a modern stucco façade that obscures the underlying historic materials and character.</p>
	141-143 W. Swannanoa Avenue	V	Vacant lot

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 24

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

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**Statement of Significance-Summary**

The Liberty Historic District is located entirely within the original incorporated limits of the Town of Liberty, which is in the northeast corner of Randolph County, North Carolina. With its impressive collection of turn-of-the-century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century brick commercial buildings, rail-related resources, and stylish residences, the Liberty Historic District illustrates the economic, social and cultural impact that the coming of the railroad had on towns throughout North Carolina in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The district contains two residential areas, the downtown commercial core and the rail road corridor along with its associated resources. It is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A: in the areas of Community Development and Planning, Transportation, and Commerce, as significant for exemplifying events and trends expressed locally that were occurring across the region, state and nation. And under Criterion C: Architecture, as a district retaining a high degree of integrity and that contains good examples of building types and styles typical of small, Southern towns of its era. The period of significance extends from ca.1880, the approximate date the Vance-York House (Site# 31) was constructed, to 1949, when the Art Deco influenced Curtis Theater (Site# 39) was completed.

Prior to the railroad's arrival, Liberty had been primarily an agricultural community. Its lack of available water power produced a dampening effect on attempts at attracting industrial development. However, evolving technology created the capacity to transmit electricity over distances in the early twentieth century and new methods of powering the turbines which produced it. Cost effective available power combined with the railroad's presence created a multiplier effect that stimulated opportunities for industrial growth. The advantage created by increased accessibility to outside markets and the ability to more easily and cheaply acquire raw materials and finished goods placed Liberty and other communities located on the new segment of the rail line, such as Siler City and Goldson in adjacent Chatham County, in a commanding position in comparison to other communities.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the construction in 1884 of the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway (later the Norfolk and Southern) through Liberty, coupled with the railway's decision to establish a station there, its growth and development was assured and the local economy invigorated. Now with the main ingredient in place for launching a diversified manufacturing base, Liberty rapidly evolved from a predominantly agricultural community into a railroad boom town. And on January 30, 1889, the North Carolina General Assembly granted a charter to the town of Liberty. In becoming an established regional base of commerce, Liberty was well prepared to enter into its new role as a small service settlement to the surrounding rural area as well as to nearby towns and crossroads settlements not directly served by a railway or near to a navigable waterway. Local farmers began enjoying easier access to markets. Passenger service allowed residents enhanced opportunities to travel for business or pleasure. And local merchants benefited by being able to increase the variety and quantity of their on-hand stock through reduced freight costs and increased access to more goods. To their

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<sup>2</sup>See Continuation Sheet number 34 for a more detailed discussion of supporting economic concepts.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 25

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

customers this meant expanded choices and lower prices. And by the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, was established as a prominent town in the area.

The Liberty Historic District displays the linear development typifying that occurring along the railroad in communities across the region and nation. It is very similar in nature to two nearby communities whose courses followed much the same evolution as Liberty's. Siler City and Goldson in neighboring Chatham County were opened to rail service on the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley system at the same time as was Liberty. All three share similar resource types and growth trends. In rank order, however, Siler City is the largest of the three and Goldson the smallest. One common feature is that the dominant presence of the elevated rail bed and activity along the rail line continues to remain a prominent feature in all three towns. The integrity of Liberty's nominated resources compares favorably with these other two communities.

In summary, the Norfolk Southern Railroad had a profound effect on the development of Liberty by shaping its physical growth and that of its economy from one of a small crossroads agricultural community into a bustling, turn-of-the-century center for education and light industry and by establishing it as a regional farm-to-market node.

**Statement of Significance-Historical Background and Context**

Although incorporated in 1889, Liberty owes its initial existence to the commercial and residential development that evolved by 1809 at a crossroads. The first mention of Liberty is in 1809 when a reference to the "new town of Liberty"<sup>3</sup> was inscribed in a Randolph County deed book. The community was laid out at the convergence of two overland trade routes. One of which ran from Cheraw, South Carolina, to Danville, Virginia, and the other connected the North Carolina communities of Greensboro and Fayetteville. As part of the town plan, a public square was established at the junction of these roads, which are presently called Fayetteville and Street Raleigh Avenue.<sup>4</sup> Liberty continued to exist as an unincorporated community of farmers and struggled through the Civil War along with the rest of the South.

At the war's end, though, the families remaining in Liberty endeavored to create a more promising future for their town by lobbying for an extension of the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway's line, which by 1860 terminated at Egypt (now Cumnock).<sup>5</sup> Records show a representative from Liberty being present at a route-planning meeting held in Pleasant Hill.

<sup>3</sup>Randolph County Historical Society. *Randolph County 1779-1979* (Winston-Salem: City of Asheboro, et. al., 1980), p.157.

<sup>4</sup>Anonymous. *The Bulletin and Randleman News* (Randolph Room, Asheboro County Library, Clipping File, Randolph Communities, Asheboro: Railroad).

<sup>5</sup>The first railroad in the vicinity of Liberty was the Western Railroad, which was chartered in 1852 and completed by 1860 to haul coal from the mines at Egypt on the Deep River in present-day Lee County to Fayetteville, a distance of 42 miles. At Fayetteville, the coal was transferred to barge and sent on the Cape Fear River to Wilmington. During the Civil War the railroad had an important role supplying coal from Egypt to steam-powered Confederate blockade runners at Wilmington. (Michael Southern, Raleigh, to Jennifer Martin, 15 December 1999, Memorandum)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 26

Liberty Historic District

Name of Property

Randolph County, North Carolina

County and State

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Local tradition has it that this attendee was J.W. Brower, who at that time was Liberty's major landholder. And, indeed, it was primarily through a section of land owned by Mr. Brower that tracks were eventually laid for what became the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad Company.<sup>6</sup>

The opportunity the railroad offered to securing a better future for Liberty was lost neither on the Browsers, nor other area residents. This impact is evident in a petition, filed by A.C. McAllister, who was acting as guardian of J.W. Brower's children, Swanna and Henry Lily. The petition requests permission to deed a portion of the orphaned children's land to the rail company. In it he wrote,

that in the opinion of the petitioner, the said lands are now worth for farming purposes no more than the sum of two dollars per acre...that in anticipation of the construction of such depot and other buildings, should the same be built, there have already been fifty to sixty applications as the petitioner is informed and believes, for building lots for dwellings and business houses...the same land in all probability would thereupon command from five to fifteen dollars an acre.<sup>7</sup>

The petition was granted, and the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad Company acquired a 100 foot right-of-way on either side of the tracks and an additional two acres upon which to construct a depot. This watershed event set Liberty on a new course.

The Cape Fear and Yakdin Valley Railway published a promotional brochure in 1889 that offers the following account of Liberty:

Liberty is beautifully situated, and presents a very pleasing appearance to the incoming railway passenger. The extension of its limits and the growth of its population have been very marked in the past two or three years, and the citizens claim a total of between five hundred and six hundred inhabitants. An act of incorporation has recently been passed by the legislature, and many contemplated and actually [sic] improvements evince the spirit of progress and enterprise. A fine school is established here, which, for discipline, efficiency and curriculum of study, has already taken high rank among the educational institutions of that section. A large area of country surrounding Liberty is admirably adapted to sheep husbandry. The land is well-drained, and high and dry, offering fine ranges for flocks. The mutton raised is not very large but of excellent quality and the wool clip is good.<sup>8</sup>

The Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway was chartered in 1879 to construct a 245-mile line from Wilmington up the

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<sup>6</sup> Francine Swaim. *Our Town - Liberty, NC 1809-1989* Unpublished manuscript, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Francine Swaim. "The Railroad Comes to Liberty," *The Liberty News*, (Randolph Room Clipping File) June 30, 1976.

<sup>8</sup> *Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway (From Mt. Airy, at the Base of the Blue Ridge, to Wilmington, N.C.): Its Origin, Construction, Connections and Extensions* (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane and Scott, Printers).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

Cape Fear River to Fayetteville, thence to Greensboro and on to Mt. Airy (in the Yadkin River valley) at the foot of the Blue Ridge. The charter authorized consolidation of the existing Western Railroad with the Mount Airy Railroad, a line that was chartered but not yet constructed, and included branch lines from Fayetteville to Bennettsville, S.C., from Factory Junction (later Climax) in Guilford County to Ramseur in Rockingham County, and from Stokesdale in Guilford County to Madison in Rockingham County. Construction commenced at various points along the line at various times. The rails were laid through Liberty in 1884, and completed to Mt. Airy in 1888, but the final section between Fayetteville and Wilmington did not open until 1889 or 1890.

The Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway was the fourth of the five major lines that ultimately radiated out from Wilmington, North Carolina's major port and at the time the largest city. Leadership and finance for the line were homegrown, with the majority of board members in 1889 residents of Wilmington, Fayetteville, and Greensboro, the towns benefiting most from new trade connections established by the line. Greensboro businesses in particular hoped to profit from the direct route to the port at Wilmington. The president of the line was Julius Gray of Greensboro. The route had major connections at Fayetteville (the Wilmington and Weldon RR), Sanford (the Raleigh and Augusta RR, later Seaboard Air Line), and Greensboro (the North Carolina RR and the Richmond and Danville RR). Liberty was advantageously situated on the main line, about mid-way between Mt. Airy and Fayetteville, and the railroad and its connections opened potential markets for the town to all points of the compass.

In spite of high hopes for the new line, the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railway existed as an independent entity for only a few years. The economic depression of the early 1890s and competition from alternate routes forced the line into receivership in 1894. It was sold at foreclosure in 1898 and reorganized as the Atlantic and Yadkin Railway in February 1899. Three months later almost half the line, the section between Sanford and Wilmington, was sold to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad and became part of the Atlantic Coast Line system in 1900. At the same time the Southern Railway acquired the line between Sanford and Mt. Airy. The section between Sanford and Greensboro, including the tracks through Liberty, still operates as part of the Southern's successor, the Norfolk Southern. The old Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley tracks between Wilmington and Sanford and between Greensboro and Rural Hall were abandoned and removed by the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>9</sup>

The opportunities that the railroad presented extended beyond a more accessible market for its agricultural goods and increased access to importing and exporting manufactured goods (sometimes called a nodal region<sup>10</sup>). The location of the railroad was key in establishing the Liberty Academy in 1885, it later became Liberty Normal College. In addition to offering a sound general education, the school trained teachers and established Liberty as the region's educational center. Social and cultural opportunities were also enhanced by significantly reducing travel time to larger cities in

<sup>9</sup>Michael Southern, Raleigh, to Jennifer Martin, 15 December 1999, Memorandum.

<sup>10</sup>A nodal region comprises a central point or focus with which a surrounding area is linked on the basis of a given kind of spatial interaction, e.g. a town and its trade area. (Garner and Yeates, 1976)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 28

Liberty Historic District

Name of Property

Randolph County, North Carolina

County and State

state and region. It also opened opportunities to bring in visiting artists for concerts and educational events. The first of these programs began in 1920 with the Lyceum Series and continued in later years with the Chautauqua movement.<sup>11</sup> These popular events brought luminaries and cultural experiences to the hinterlands as never before practical, for instance William Jennings Bryan came to Liberty in 1914 and spoke to an enthralled audience.

In addition to the market and social opportunities the railroad presented, the location of the railroad also affected the physical layout and appearance of the town. This is evident in the spatial patterns in which its streets developed and that subsequent building activity corresponds to the lineal character of the railroad and cross-axial streets as is typical of turn-of-the-century rail road boom towns of the period, such as Goldson and Siler City to the southeast. Indeed, much of the residential development following the introduction of the railroad in 1885 was reoriented to the rail line's north-south linear arrangement. One of the main residential boulevards, Asheboro Street (formally Railroad Street), parallels the elevated rail bed as it curves through town. Along this street were built many fine Victorian era residences that housed the town's new merchants and professionals.

Conforming to the vogue of the era and spurred by the national Garden City and City Beautiful movements and by the growth of local garden clubs, decorative landscape features along the rail corridor were introduced. The railroad right-of-way created a public open-space ripe for being lined with flowering trees and shrubs. Its intended effect was to improve the appearance of the transportation corridor and signal to passengers that they had entered a town. Many of the original plantings remain along the rail line through Liberty and the local garden club has continued maintaining the historic landscape's appearance by replacing lost trees with those of the same species.<sup>12</sup>

Most of the original frame buildings in the downtown experienced a fate typical of many communities of the era – destruction by fire. Liberty suffered two devastating fires - one in 1888 and another in 1895. In its subsequent rebuilding campaign the town originally oriented to the crossroads and the public square, was reoriented to the railroad. The new “main street” of Liberty, Swannanoa Avenue, now led directly to the depot square, which had usurped the former square at the original crossroads as the center of activity.

According to local tradition, few buildings survived the fire of 1895 in Liberty's downtown. The only one that remains is a small frame house built by Dr. Armstead Jackson Patterson for his elderly parents, George and Sophia Coble Patterson. Dr. A.J. Patterson (1841-1906) was the first of three generations of prominent Liberty physicians (Dr. R.D. Patterson, Sr., 1872-1924, and Dr. R.D. Patterson, Jr., 1904-1960, who also mayor for three terms). The house (Site# 21)<sup>13</sup> was

<sup>11</sup>The Chautauqua movement began in 1874 at Lake Chautauqua, New York. It was initiated by Methodist laymen as a camp meeting for training Sunday-school teachers. Both it and the Lyceum series were expressions of the popular faith in education and the craving for its benefits. This idea spread over the country as a sort of informal adult-education movement and included lectures on scholarly topics and musical performances. John M. Blum, ed., *The National Experience: a history of the United States*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., 1968), 476.

<sup>12</sup>Francine Swaim, Interview, June 6, 1998.

<sup>13</sup> The A.J. Patterson House is a remarkably intact example of a vernacular building type common to central North Carolina in the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 29

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

crossroads. Local tradition holds that a neighbor saved it from burning by continuously dousing the roof with water as the fires raged.<sup>14</sup>

Liberty's first industry, Liberty Picker Stick and Novelty Company opened in 1910. In 1916, the company purchased a dynamo and began providing electricity to the town. It was later renamed the Liberty Chair Company, and the original building burned in 1926 but was replaced by a new one in the same year. Other industries followed soon after and brought with them new patterns of employment and steady wage. Among these companies were the Liberty Broom Works and the Dependable Hosiery Company<sup>15</sup>. Many of these industrial buildings have either burned, demolished or have been drastically altered and are not included in this nomination. The legacy of these companies to the growth of the town, and particularly to the development of the bulk of the resources contained in the Liberty Historic District remains evident, however.

The growth of Liberty's population from 1900-1950 is dramatic. In 1900, the census summary states its population was 304, which is likely a bit more realistic than the optimistic estimates of the railway's promotional brochure. By 1950, however, it had blossomed to 1342 for a net gain of 1,038, which translates to an impressive 340% increase. Looking at the population figures decade by decade provides a clearer picture emerges of how that growth took place.

From 1900 to 1910, the population went from 304 to 474, or a gain of 170 residents and a 55% increase. The rate of growth slowed some over the next two decades, but was still high. For relative perspective, this is about half the size of nearby Siler City (also on the Norfolk Southern rail line) which was undergoing a similar experience Liberty was about twice the size of Goldson in neighboring Chatham County at the turn of the century

The following decade from 1910 to 1920, 162 residents were added totaling 636 for a 34% increase. This period correlates with the first the industrialization of Liberty's economic base and when electric power was brought to town. As additional employment opportunities arose between the First World War and the first years of the Great Depression the rate of increase rose slightly to 37% and added 237 residents for a population total in 1930 of 873.

From 1930 to 1940, the years that saw the greatest impact from the Depression, there was virtually no growth. The

<sup>13</sup>The A.J. Patterson House is a remarkably intact example of a vernacular building type common to central North Carolina in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (hall-and-parlor), and through the benefit of local preservation efforts, now houses a museum. It is sited adjacent to the present Town Hall on South Fayetteville Street, just several blocks from its original location.

<sup>14</sup>Anonymous. Untitled clipping from *The Liberty News*, (Clipping file of Bennie Brower) March 13, 1974.

<sup>15</sup>Historical Society. *Randolph County*, p. 157.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 30

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

---

1950, was a very different story, however. As the economy geared up as the result of the effort preparing for entry into the war in Europe, Liberty experienced its second highest rate of growth. The population grew by 420 residents and by 1950 Liberty had 1342 residents representing a 45% increase during those years.

Growth slowed once again the next decade though and saw an increase of only 96 residents or a 7% growth rate. By 1970, however, the population of Liberty shot up by 729 residents to total 2167, or an increase of 50%. The next two decades saw that growth rate curtailed. From 1970 to 1980 there was a decrease in population of 170 or a net loss of -7.8%. Liberty recovered somewhat between 1980 and 1990 and reached a population of 2047.

Most of the pre-War industries have shut down, been sold, or bought-out. Liberty Chair, Stout Chair, Quality Veneer, and Liberty Hosiery have been lost. And All Sheer Hosiery and Gregson Furniture have changed owners. New industry such as Kellwood, Worcester Controls, and Collier-Kenworth have come to the town since the 1970s.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 31

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 32

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

**Geographic Information (cont'd)**

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The boundaries of the Liberty Historic District are indicated on the accompanying base map (scale: 1" = 200'), however it generally follows:

- on the west, the rear and/or side property lines of the residential resources or the rail corridor right of way;
- on the east, the rail corridor right of way along North Greensboro St. or rear/side property lines in the commercial downtown along the 100 block of West Swannanoa Ave. and the properties at the intersection of North Fayetteville St. and E/W Swannanoa Ave.;
- on the north, West Butler Ave. along the south segment of the state road right of way where it crosses the rail corridor;
- on the south, it extends along a portion of W. Dameron Ave., along the rear/side property lines of the residences midway in the 300 block N. Fayetteville St. and along a portion of the southern property line of City Hall to the east side of the rail road right of way.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries of the Liberty Historic District reflect the patterns of development of the community as a result of the introduction of the railroad in the 1880s. The district extends to encompass those resources retaining architectural and historic integrity from the district's period and areas of significance (ca. 1880-1950).

Since the major contributing resource type is the railroad and its related properties, the elevated rail bed was selected as the appropriate physical feature for determining the north/south linear extent of the district. The commercial downtown area is included because its development was directly related to the influence of the railroad on the local economy and the physical realignment of the town's major artery to reflect the placement of the depot and because of its adjacency to the rail corridor. The residential portion of North Fayetteville St. is included because of its immediate proximity to the rail corridor and as a reflection of the economic well being brought to Liberty as a result of opportunities created following introduction of the railroad and the community's subsequent development. The residential properties along N. Asheboro Street are included because they are adjacent to the rail corridor and were intentionally oriented to pay homage to the railroad's presence. The boundary is drawn to minimize the number of non-contributing resources included within its bounds.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photographs Page 33 Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property: Liberty Historic District  
Location of Property: Liberty, North Carolina (Randolph County)  
Name of Photographer: Tom Shaw  
Date of Photographs: June/July 1998; February/October 1999  
Location of Original Negatives: NC Division of Archives and History (SHPO Files)

1. Norfolk Southern Railway right-of-way, camera pointing south from W. Butler Ave.
  2. Norfolk Southern Railway right-of-way, camera pointing north from W. Bowman Ave.
  3. Norfolk Southern Railway right-of-way, camera pointing north from W. Raleigh Ave.
  4. Norfolk Southern Railway right-of-way, camera pointing north from W. Brower Ave.
  5. Norfolk Southern Railway right-of-way, camera pointing north from W. Dameron Ave.
  6. Norfolk Southern Railway depot, SE corner of W. Swannanoa Ave. & S. Asheboro St. oblique view, camera pointing southeast
  7. 605 N. Asheboro St., façade view, camera pointing west
  8. 505. N. Asheboro St., façade view, camera pointing west (non-contributing)
  9. Streetscape, 300 block of N. Asheboro St. camera pointing southwest
  10. 303 N. Asheboro St., façade view, camera pointing west
  11. Streetscape, 200 block of N. Asheboro St. camera pointing northwest
  12. Northwest part of parcel 239 S. Fayetteville St., façade, camera pointing east
  13. 301 S. Fayetteville St., façade, camera pointing east
  14. between 228 & 238 S. Fayetteville St., façade, camera pointing west (non-contributing)
  15. 228 S. Fayetteville St., façade, camera pointing west
  16. 101 S. Fayetteville St., façade, camera pointing east
  17. 101-105 W. Swannanoa Ave., oblique, camera pointing southwest
  18. 112-118 W. Swannanoa Ave., façade, camera pointing north (non-contributing)
  19. 130 W. Swannanoa Ave., oblique, camera pointing northeast
  20. Streetscape, north side of 100 block of W. Swannanoa Ave., camera pointing northeast
  21. Streetscape, south side of 100 block of W. Swannanoa Ave., camera pointing southeast
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 34

Liberty Historic District  
Name of Property  
Randolph County, North Carolina  
County and State

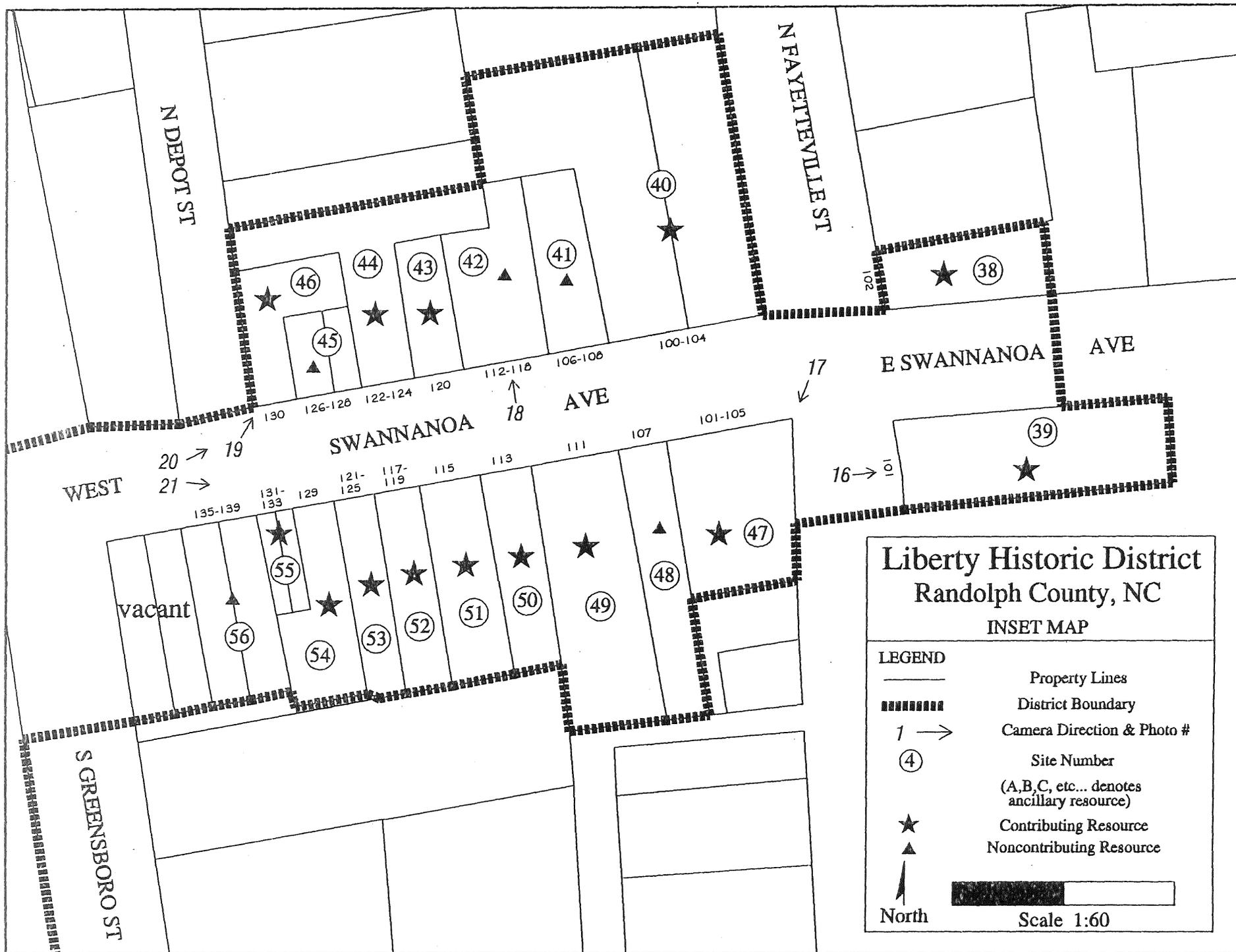
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In order to place Liberty's evolution in a larger context of community development and the growth of commerce, a better understanding is offered of how growth trends of Liberty exemplifies regional and national trends in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

A useful method to explain the economy of a specific location is the economic base theory. This concept argues that there are two ways to divide the economy of a community – *basic* and *non-basic*. Communities such as Liberty prior to the railroad's impact, are typically exporting minimal goods (usually consisting of raw materials) and importing manufactured goods, while consuming the goods and services produced within its own borders to generate what is referred to as non-basic sector economic activity (or city-serving). Conversely, communities which are producing goods and services sold beyond their borders are generating basic sector economic activity (or city-forming), such as Liberty was doing by the turn of the century. Further exploring theoretical factors affecting the growth of communities provides additional context and a useful concept referred to by economic geographers as the *differential growth of cities*. *Differential growth* is used to explain the phenomenon of one community enjoying some advantage (or catalyst), therefore allowing it to grow at a faster rate than another otherwise similarly situated community. In Liberty's case, and that of literally hundreds of others nationally, a railroad station drastically altered the pattern of accessibility by drawing commerce away from inland communities relying predominantly on riverine-based transportation systems or ones having neither rail nor water-borne transportation to offer. This pattern was a common scenario across the United States from 1850-1920 as railroads expanded nationally and was coincident with Liberty's greatest period of growth.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Yeates and Garner , 1976



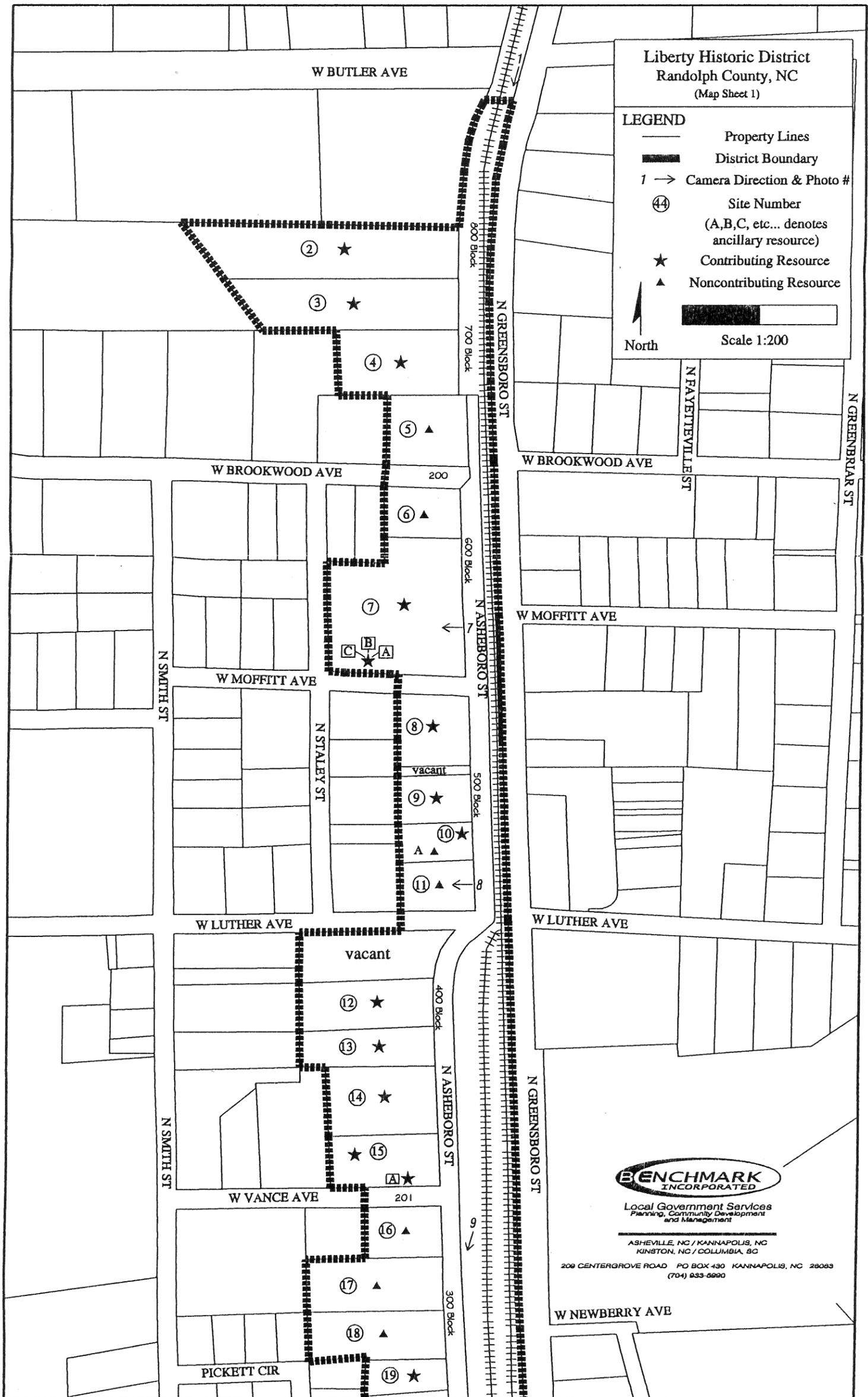
### Liberty Historic District Randolph County, NC INSET MAP

**LEGEND**

- Property Lines
- - - - - District Boundary
- 1 → Camera Direction & Photo #
- ④ Site Number  
(A,B,C, etc... denotes ancillary resource)
- ★ Contributing Resource
- ▲ Noncontributing Resource

North

Scale 1:60



Liberty Historic District  
Randolph County, NC  
(Map Sheet 1)

LEGEND

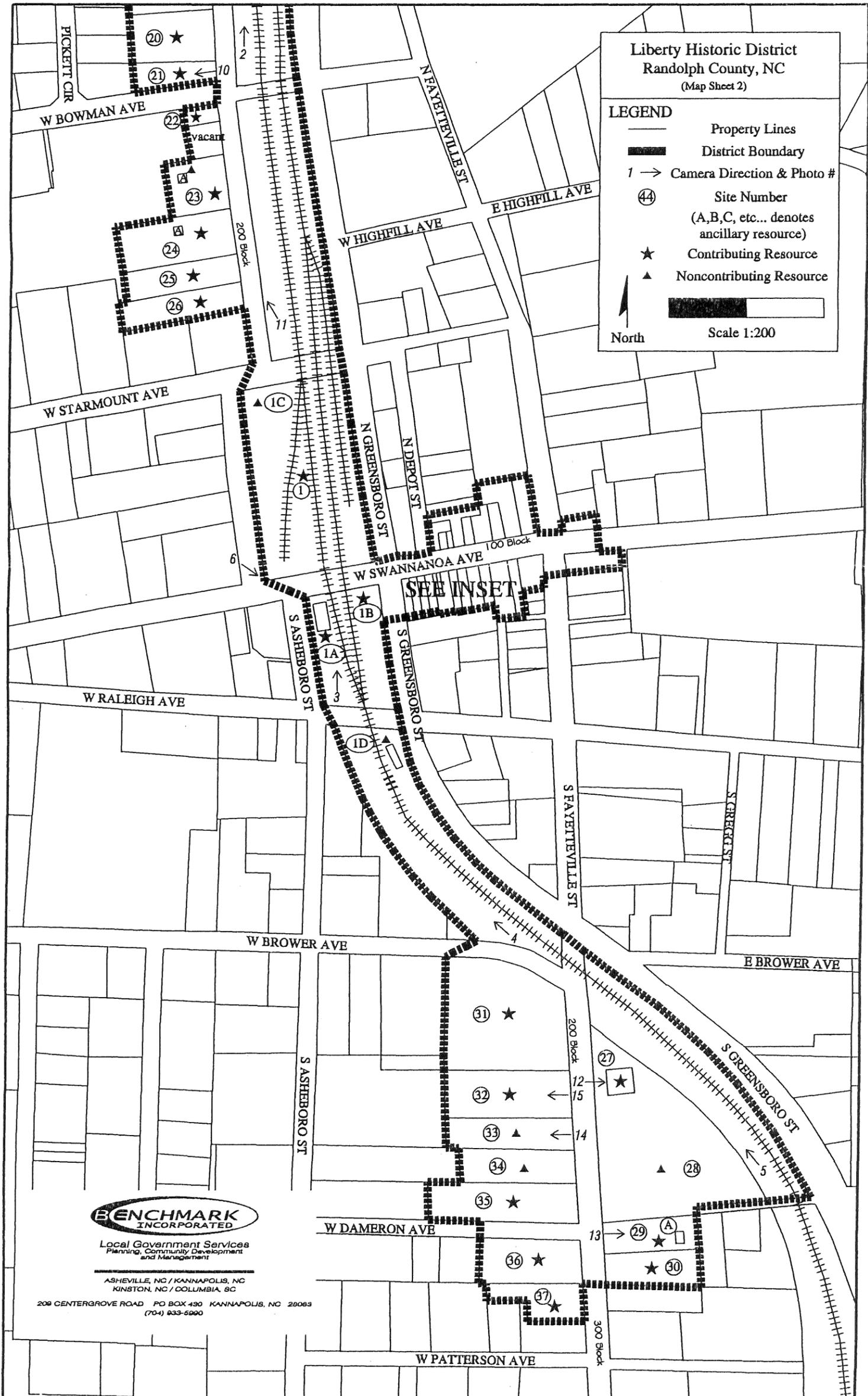
- Property Lines
  - ▬ District Boundary
  - 1 → Camera Direction & Photo #
  - ④ Site Number  
(A,B,C, etc... denotes ancillary resource)
  - ★ Contributing Resource
  - ▲ Noncontributing Resource
- North
- Scale 1:200



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**Liberty Historic District**  
 Randolph County, NC  
 (Map Sheet 2)

**LEGEND**

- Property Lines
- ▬ District Boundary
- 1 → Camera Direction & Photo #
- ④ Site Number  
(A,B,C, etc... denotes ancillary resource)
- ★ Contributing Resource
- ▲ Noncontributing Resource

North

Scale 1:200



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