

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name** Kesler Manufacturing Co. - Cannon Mills Co. Plant No. 7 Historic District

historic

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Park Avenue and Boundary Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Salisbury \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state North Carolina code \_\_\_\_\_ county Rowan code \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Owners - See list

street &amp; number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rowan County Courthouse

street & number S. Main Street

city, town Salisbury \_\_\_\_\_ state North Carolina

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title The Architecture of Rowan County has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

date 1983 \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records N.C. Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh \_\_\_\_\_ state North Carolina

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Continuation sheet	Owners' List	Item number	6	Page	1
No. 1 - 3	Cannon Mills Co. P O Box 107 Kannapolis, N. C. 28081	No. 106 - 107		W. G. Cline 605 N. Boundary St. Salisbury, N. C. 28144	
No. 4	A. L. Collins 313 N. Boundary Street Salisbury, N. C. 28144	No. 108		Toy Faggert & Hazel Lassiter 607 N. Boundary St. Salisbury, N. C. 28144	
No. 5 - 76	Cannon Mills Co. P O Box 107 Kannapolis, N. C. 28081				
No. 77	Harold Webb 422 N. Boundary Street Salisbury, N. C. 28144				
No. 78-85	Cannon Mills Co. P O Box 107 Kannapolis, N. C. 28081				
No. 86	Ruby T. Jones 404 E. Cemetery St. Salisbury, N. C. 28144				
No. 87	Paul Morris 600 E. Cemetery St. Salisbury, N. C. 28144				
No. 88-89	Rowan County Board of Education P O Box 1340 Salisbury, N. C. 28144				
No. 90 - 101	Cannon Mills Co. P O Box 107 Kannapolis, N. C. 28081				
No. 102 - 103	Irene & Lewis Lake 724 E. Franklin Street Salisbury, N. C. 28144				
No. 104	Luther & Jeannie Morris 720 E. Franklin St. Salisbury, N. C. 28144				
No. 105	Tommy & Janet Miller 716 E. Franklin St. Salisbury, N. C. 28144				

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Kesler Manufacturing Company/Cannon Mills Plant No. 7 Historic District consists of a large complex of industrial buildings, including the manufacturing, warehousing, and shipping facilities of the former Kesler Manufacturing Company, now Cannon Mills Plant No. 7., surrounded by several varieties of standardized housing built for mill employees, as well as a handful of dwellings originally built by private middle-income owners. Of the several textile mills built in Salisbury during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Kesler/Cannon Mills complex of industrial buildings and mill dwellings is the only complex that has survived in a high state of architectural integrity and preservation.

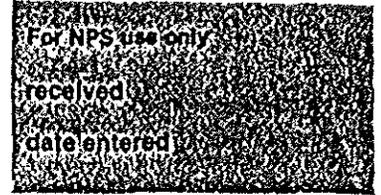
The district is located in the eastern section of Salisbury and abuts the southeastern edge of the North Long Street-Park Avenue Historic District, a neighborhood of elaborate owner-occupied and more modest owner-occupied and rental dwellings which was developed by the Central Land Company during the period 1890-1930. The Kesler Manufacturing Company/Cannon Mills Company district is a somewhat rectangular-shaped area including the 700-800 blocks of Park Avenue, the 300-600 blocks of North Boundary Street, the 600 block of East Cemetery Street, the 700 block of East Franklin Street, part of the 700 block of East Liberty Street, and the small mill village lanes of Arlington Street, Keslers Place, and Cedar Street. This area is bounded on the north by sparsely developed land, on the east by a modern low-income housing development, on the west by incompatible housing along East Liberty Street, on the northwest by the North Long Street-Park Avenue Historic District, and is bounded on the south by open land along Town Creek.

The district began to develop in 1895 when the Kesler Manufacturing Company was organized. The original stockholders of the company were some of Salisbury and Rowan County's most prominent business leaders, including Tobias Kesler, a wealthy Rowan County farmer and landowner who was the largest stockholder and gave his name to the company, Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless, D. R. Julian, and the Rev. Francis Johnstone Murdoch. In August of 1895 the Kesler Manufacturing Company purchased five acres of land between Park Avenue and East Cemetery Street from the Central Land Company and erected its first mill building (Building E on the district map). At the same time the Central Land Company built twenty-two frame mill houses and a frame store along the northeast side of Park Avenue just west of the mill. The Kesler Manufacturing Company experienced difficulty in establishing itself as an efficient and profitable concern and the district did not experience additional growth during the last years of the nineteenth century.

Under the leadership of J. W. Cannon, who assumed control of the company at the end of 1899, the mill complex and surrounding mill village experienced a significant period of growth during the first decade of the twentieth century. Cannon increased the capital stock of the company and expanded the mill complex by constructing a second mill building (Building C on map). The company also purchased the dwellings and store previously built by the Central Land Company in 1900. During this period the company also purchased vacant land southeast and

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northeast of the mill complex where it built mill houses during the first few years of the decade. In 1910 the company also replaced its original frame office with a new brick building. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the district consisted of the mill complex surrounded by seventy-two dwellings.

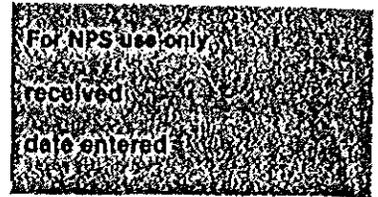
The district experienced its slowest period of growth during the second decade of the twentieth century. The mill complex was expanded by the construction of a new machine shop and supply room (Building B on map), by the construction of new cotton warehouses (Building G on map), as well as by the expansion of its existing facilities. In the mill village surrounding the complex only four dwellings and two warehouses, not associated with the mill were erected. By 1919 the district consisted of the mill complex surrounded by seventy-six dwellings, one store and two warehouses.

During the third decade of the twentieth century, under the guidance of J. W. Cannon and C. A. Cannon, who assumed the leadership of the Kesler Manufacturing Company after the death of his father J. W. Cannon in 1921, the district experienced another period of intense development. Several additions and expansions occurred in the mill complex. The weave room built in 1903 was expanded, a new warehouse building was erected, as well as a new waste house and picker room. A great deal of construction activity also took place in the mill village during this time. During the early 1920s several variously designed bungalows were constructed along the southeast side of the 700 block of Park Avenue, along the northern side of North Boundary Street, and along the southeast side of East Franklin Street. The bungalow of the early 1920s reflect a great variety of design, and contrast of the standardization of earlier, as well as later, mill houses. The most notable of these bungalows is a row of three different dwellings situated on a high bank along North Boundary Street overlooking the mill entrance. These are the only houses in the district known to have been built specifically for mill supervisors. Also built during the 1920s were a row of clipped side gable bungalows built along the southeast side of the 800 block of Park Avenue and a row of gable front bungalows situated along the northeast side of the 600 block of East Cemetery Street. The district was also impacted during this decade by the dissolution of the estate of D. L. Arey. Arey, a prominent distiller, owned land along the northeastern edge of the district which was sold by his widow after his death in 1919. The division of this estate, brought about the construction of a handful of bungalows by private owners on the northeastern edge of the district along East Franklin Street and North Boundary Street. By 1928 the district had assumed its present configuration and contained the mill complex, 100 frame dwellings, one frame store, and two corrugated tin warehouses not associated with the mill complex.

The character, form and design of the Kesler Manufacturing Company/Cannon Mills complex and village is quite similar to that of other late nineteenth and

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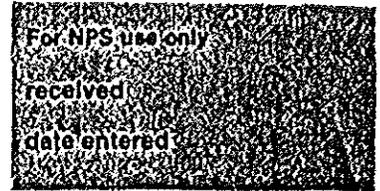
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early twentieth century piedmont North Carolina textile mills, as discussed by Peter Kaplan in The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County, North Carolina. Kaplan points out that most mill complexes were divided into five standard sections: The main mill, where the manufacturing process took place, the picker room, where bagging and ties were removed from cotton bales, the warehouse, where the raw cotton was stored, the engine room, where the mill's power supply was generated, and the tower, which usually held the water supply used to combat fire through a sprinkler system. Kaplan further points out that the placement of these individual operations and the design and function of the buildings which housed them were influenced by two major functional imperatives: the provision of a well lit and well ventilated work place and the prevention of destruction by fire. Most of the Kesler/Cannon Mills complex developed during the period 1895-1930 and reflects these basic, accepted principles of form, design, and function.

The earliest portion of the mill complex (Building E on map) was built in 1895 and incorporated all of the mill's manufacturing activities. The front portion of the building originally housed the opening and picking rooms which were separated from the main manufacturing process by a heavy brick firewall. The engine room occupied the rear section of the building and was also separated by a brick fire wall. The tower was located in the southeastern corner of the building and still survives without the metal water tank which occupied its top. The next oldest portion of the complex (Building C on map) was built in 1904 and housed spinning, weaving, and beaming operations. Like other late nineteenth and early twentieth century mill buildings they are characterized by a lack of exterior architectural detail. They were designed to promote safe and efficient production and did not make a public statement through elaborate architectural detail. The only exterior architectural detailing featured on these buildings were corbeled and parapeted ends. Most of these have been destroyed by later remodeling, but their original form can be seen along the roof where Buildings C and E join at their southern ends (see photograph No.39). These buildings are sturdy, brick structures, with thick walls, with tall segmental - arched windows and broad, almost flat, roofs supported by heavy wooden beams which extend out over the exterior walls. These buildings feature wide, open interiors with thick brick fire walls and sturdy wooden floors. These interiors are broken only by rows of heavy wooden posts which support the juncture of similarly heavy wooden ceiling beams (see photographs Nos. 8, 11, 12) such construction not only accommodated the rows of heavy machinery used in the manufacturing process, but also served the two major goals of mill design: the provision of a well lit and ventilated work place and the prevention of destruction by fire. Old photographs and drawings in the possession of Cannon Mills Company reveal that these buildings also featured clerestory windows, or monitors, structures three to six feet high with windows on all sides which protruded above the roofs of the buildings and ran almost their entire length. These structures admitted additional light and air to the manufacturing area and were a common feature of mill

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design. They were removed as technological advances -- mainly air conditioning and fluorescent lighting -- made them obsolete.

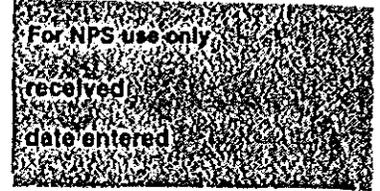
The mill's warehouse buildings were always located to the northeast of the main manufacturing buildings. This separation prevented the spread of any fire from the warehouses to the main production areas. The oldest warehouses were frame structures northeast of the manufacturing buildings in the area now occupied by Building F on the map. These buildings were torn down about 1920. The oldest surviving warehouse buildings are located northeast of the manufacturing buildings along a rail spur that runs through the complex. These buildings were constructed in 1915 and consist of a row of simple corrugated tin sheds with almost flat roofs with simple heavy wooden beams, set on brick piers and wooden braces. Each separate warehouse compartment is separated from its neighbor by a brick firewall which extends well above the metal warehouse walls (see photographs Nos. 20, 21, 25, 26, 27). Such construction was designed to enable the quick dismantling of a warehouse compartment in case of fire and to prevent the spread of fire to adjacent compartments.

Several other interesting features complete the significance of the Kesler Manufacturing Company/Cannon Mills complex. A cluster of small gable roofed frame structures (see photograph No. 19) are located just to the east of the manufacturing buildings. The structures were built during the first two decades of the twentieth century and were used for a variety of support services. The tall, tapered brick chimney, a common feature in many industrial complexes, rises from the rear juncture of Buildings C and E (see photograph No. 16). It was probably erected about 1904 when Building C was constructed. A typical metal water tower is located just west of Building C (see photograph No. 43) behind the mill dwellings strung out along the northeast side of Park Avenue. It probably replaced the original tower as the complex's water storage facility about 1910. A wooden rail trestle extends from the rear of Building E to the rail spur which runs through the complex. It is constructed of extremely heavy wooden beams and crossties and is supported by an equally heavy wooden bracing system. It provides rail access to the oldest portion of the complex and is similar and appearance to the wooden bracing system supporting the nearby warehouses built in 1915.

The industrial complex is surrounded by a large group of over one hundred dwellings which combine with the industrial buildings to create a well preserved textile mill village. As pointed out by Peter Kaplan in his book The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County, North Carolina, the development of the mill village around piedmont North Carolina textile mills grew out of conditions prevalent in the south during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was necessary for early mill owners to provide housing for their employees, for many of the early mills, run by water power, were located near water sources and were not located within easy walking distance of adequate housing. Kaplan also states

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that even when mills were located in or near existing towns, housing was still necessary because of the small size of most North Carolina towns. These small towns did not have the housing to serve the large influx of people from surrounding rural areas who were drawn into town by the opportunity to work in the mill. The construction of housing for mill workers usually was undertaken by the mill owner or his financial backers who had access to the capital needed for such an investment.

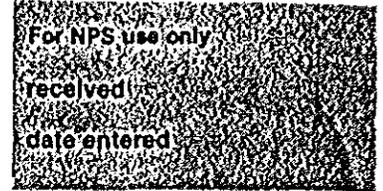
Social and economic conditions in the south also shaped the plan of the mill village and the type of dwelling constructed within it. Most of the workers in North Carolina mills during the late 1890s were recruited from depressed rural areas surrounding towns where the mills were located. Mill owners learned that they could be more successful in attracting and keeping a reliable supply of workers if they provided conditions familiar to and favorable to their new work force. Therefore, in an attempt to retain the general conditions of the countryside while offering the conveniences of town life, most North Carolina mill owners provided single family houses set on ample lots. Such an arrangement provided shelter for entire families, with several members working in the mill, and provided a garden space in which families could grow their own food and even supplement their income. Mill owners developed a very paternalistic attitude toward their workers and in many cases attempted to provide them with a variety of amenities within the mill village. For this reason many North Carolina mill villages include a church, recreational facilities such as a YMCA, a school, and company stores which catered to the mill employees.

The Kesler Manufacturing Company/Cannon Mills village features most of the elements that characterized other late nineteenth and early twentieth century textile mill villages in North Carolina. There appears to be no formal plan for the village and it developed and expanded as the company gradually purchased surrounding land to build new houses. There is also little evidence of any attempt to provide a well landscaped village. In only a few instances along portions of Park Avenue and Arlington Street are the streets lined with trees so often found in more affluent owner-occupied Salisbury neighborhoods of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There are no churches within the boundaries of the district, although the company did finally support the Park Avenue United Methodist Church, located two blocks north of the district in the North Long Street-Park Avenue Historic District. One frame store owned by the company is located on the northwest edge of the district and an adjacent store, which served mill workers is located in the North Long Street-Park Avenue Historic District. The only recreational facility located near the district is a vacant ball field just to the northwest of the district. The company did operate a school for the children of its workers at various locations throughout the district, but no school building still stands today.

*Handwritten notes:*  
Cannon Mills  
Park Avenue  
Arlington Street  
1890s  
1900s

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The housing stock of the district consists of one- and two-story modest late nineteenth century and early twentieth century dwellings. The great majority of these houses were built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company to house mill workers, however a few dwellings were originally built by private owners. The privately built dwellings are typical, modest turn-of-the-century frame houses built by moderate-income citizens and, when compared to the standardized mill housing, reflect a higher level of individual expression. These private dwellings usually have hipped or gable roofs and possess a symmetrical composition with a variety of rear and side projections. The most elaborate of these private residences is the Kepley-Trexler House at 801 Park Avenue. Although now covered in aluminum siding, the enthusiastic Victorian decoration provided by a porch with turned balustrade and posts and an airy spindle gallery rivals some of the houses in the North Long Street-Park Avenue Historic District a few blocks to the northwest. More typical of the handful of privately built dwellings is the Henry-Kesler Manufacturing Company House at 701 Park Avenue. Built about 1910 by a local carpenter, the house features a gable roofed, double pile main block with rear and side additions. The wraparound porch features simple square posts and balustrade. The interior features a stair with a large turned newel and balustrade, a living room mantel with square posts and a heavy bracketed shelf, and a lighter Victorian dining room mantel with turned decoration.

The district's mill housing, including eighty-five of the districts 104 dwellings, can be divided into several different types built at different periods as the Kesler Manufacturing Company expanded. Most of the mill housing is grouped in rows of identical houses which line many of the district's streets. These rows of identical dwellings give the district its special character and provide a great deal of visual interest. The small mill lanes of Arlington Street, Kesler's Place, and Cedar Street contain rows of one type of house while three separate housing types line both sides of Park Avenue. Type No. 1 includes the oldest houses in the district and is the district's most prevalent type, including thirty-eight individual dwellings. Type No. 1 mill houses are one-story, two-room plan frame dwellings with three bay symmetrical facades featuring six-over-six and four-over-four double-hung windows, single interior chimneys, side gable roofs with a rear pitch that splays over a rear shed, and an attached porch supported by square, tapered, or chamfered wooden posts. Like most of the other types of mill houses, these houses have simple interiors featuring a two room plan, plain door and window surrounds, and modest mantels with square posts and a bracketed shelf. Most houses have living room and dining room fireplaces and many are now equipped with oil or kerosene heaters. Type No. 1 houses were built during the Kesler Manufacturing Company's initial period of development between 1896 and 1903. These dwellings were occupied by a succession of mill workers and are located just west of the mill complex along the northeast side of Park Avenue and southeast of the mill on Arlington Street, Keslers Place, and Cedar Street.

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The second type of mill house is represented by only five individual structures. Type No. 2 mill houses are two-story, three bay, frame dwellings with symmetrical facades featuring six-over-six double-hung windows, side gable roofs, and hipped roof porches supported by tall, tapered posts. Most of these dwellings have rear sheds which, according to Sanborn maps were added during the period 1907-1913. Type No. 2 houses also feature two-room interior plans with simple bracketed mantels. These houses were also built during the Kesler Manufacturing Company's first period of development in 1896 and are located just west of the mill along the northeast side of Park Avenue.

The third type of mill house was built during the period 1900-1906. Included in this type are fourteen dwellings located southeast of the mill particularly along the southeast side of Cedar Street. These Type No. 3 mill houses are one-story L-shaped frame dwellings with side gable roofs with louvered vents, symmetrical three bay facades with four-over-four and six-over-six double-hung windows, and single interior chimneys. These houses also have attached porches supported by either tapered, turned, or square posts. These Type No. 3 houses also have the same simple two-room plan interiors with modest mantels with square posts and bracketed shelves that characterize the other early mill houses.

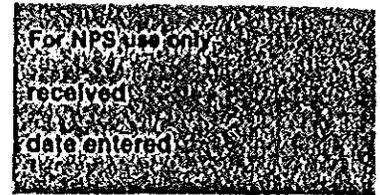
Mill house Type No. 4 includes a row of seven identical bungalows along the southwestern side of the 800 block of Park Avenue. These bungalows were built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1927. They feature clipped side gable roofs which extend to form porches supported by tall, tapered, wooden posts. They have the same modest interiors as the earlier mill houses and feature simple mantels with simple fluted posts and heavy shelves.

Another type of bungalow can be classified as mill house Type No. 5. This type includes a row of four identical dwellings built in 1925. These bungalows have a long, narrow box-like shape and feature broad gable front roofs with extended rafter ends and a three-part window and louvered vent in the shingled gable face. The attached front porch has extended rafter ends and is supported by simple square posts. The interior is characterized by the same simple plan and mantels with bracketed shelf that characterize the other modest mill house types. These dwellings are located along the 600 block of East Cemetery Street.

Although their individuality prevents them from being placed into a specific mill house type, a group of fourteen variously designed one-story frame bungalows built during the early 1920s are situated through the mill village and complete its streetscape. An entire row of these bungalows occupies the northwest side of the 700 block of Park Avenue and their individuality contrast with the more standardized appearance of the other mill houses. These dwellings are characterized by a variety of front and side gable roofs, some with exposed purlins, and a variety of porch treatments. Some porches feature the typical bungalow, tapered wooden piers, while others have tall, tapered or square posts.

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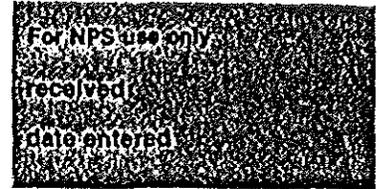
It is not known why these dwellings reflect more individuality than the other nearby mill housing. They are now owned by the mill company and have always housed lower-level mill employees but could have been built by private owners. A row of three individual bungalows along the northern side of the 400 block of N. Boundary is particularly notable because they housed mill supervisors or foremen. They are much larger than the other contemporary bungalows and feature more expansive interior plans and interesting mantels with corbeled brick faces. These dwellings sit high above their surrounding neighbors on an elevated bank overlooking the mill office.

The only non-residential or non-industrial structure in the district is a frame commercial building built in 1896 by the Central Land Company and purchased by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1900. It has a long narrow shape and is covered in an interesting combination of weatherboards and novelty siding. It features a false parapeted front and a projecting shed porch now supported by modern iron posts.

Together, this combination of industrial, residential, and commercial buildings forms the best preserved textile mill village in Salisbury and remains an important element in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial development of Salisbury and Rowan County, as well as of North Carolina's industrial growth.

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INVENTORY LIST

Rw 378

1.  
Kimball-Kesler Mill House  
708 East Liberty Street  
1916  
Contributing

This modest one-story early twentieth century weatherboarded frame house was built in 1916 by local barber E. L. Kimball, who operated a nearby barbershop in the 300 block of North Boundary Street. Kimball sold the house to the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1924, and Cannon Mills still retains ownership of the house. Partially hidden by a large tree, the three-bay house features an attached porch with square posts and balustrade, gable sides with diamond-shaped louvered vents, and two original ells which extend from its rear.

Rw 379

2.  
Morgan-Kesler Manufacturing Company House  
700 East Liberty Street  
1914  
Contributing

This typical two-story weatherboarded frame dwelling was built in 1914 by local truck farmer and contractor W. G. Morgan after his wife had purchased the lot upon which it sits from the Central Land Company. The house was purchased by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1925 and was used to house mill employees. Local tradition states that it was used as a boarding house for single mill employees. It is still owned by Cannon Mills. The house features gable sides with diamond-shaped louvered vents and a porch with square and turned posts. The 1922 Sanborn map, the first map to show the house, reveals that by 1922 the house had a one-story rear ell. Most of the rear sections now attached to the house were probably added during the 1920s as the house was adapted to house mill employees.

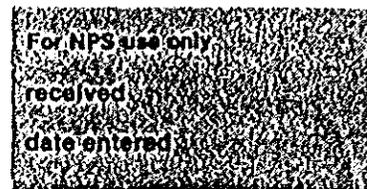
Rw 380

3.  
Kesler Manufacturing Company House  
309 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1910  
Contributing

The history of this modest one-story weatherboarded frame dwelling is obscure and has not been confirmed by a deed search. It was probably built

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about 1910 by a private owner and later purchased by the Kesler Manufacturing Company, as were several of the dwellings on the western edge of the district. Its original owner is not known, however, and it is still owned by Cannon Mills. Typical of most of the modest houses in the district, the dwelling features gable sides with louvered vents and a rear ell that is probably original. It's attached porch is supported by chamfered posts, found occasionally on houses in the district built for mill workers.

4.  
Kimball-Kesler Manufacturing Company House  
313 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1910  
Fill

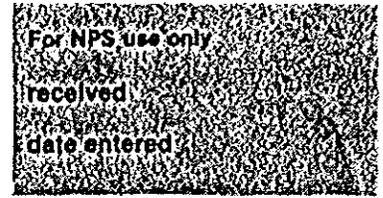
This one-story weatherboarded frame dwelling has a broad hipped roof interrupted by two tall interior chimneys. Its attached hipped roof porch is supported by ornamental iron posts on brick bases, which probably replaced the original tapered wooden piers. The alteration of its porch reduces the significance of the house. A small frame garage and storage building, built about 1920, occupy the rear of the lot. The house was probably built about 1910, but its original owner is not known. Rowan County deeds show that it was purchased at public sale in 1919 by E. L. Kimball, who operated a nearby barbershop and lived in the house at 708 East Liberty Street. Kimball sold the house to the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1924. The current owner is A. L. Collins, a former mill employee who rented the house from about 1950 until he purchased it from Cannon during the late 1970s.

Rw 381 5.  
Mill House  
317 North Boundary Street  
1927  
Contributing

This two-story weatherboarded frame, gambrel roofed house is the first of two identical dwellings built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1927 to house mill employees. Both houses were built on the site of an earlier frame store built about 1900 and used as a grocery and later as a barbershop by E. L. Kimbell. This house features a gambrel front roof with pairs of gabled dormers projecting from its side and a porch supported by typical, tapered, wooden piers set on brick bases. A small frame garage built during the 1920s sits just behind the house.

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Rw 382      6.  
Mill House  
321 North Boundary Street  
1927  
Contributing

This two-story mill house is identical to the adjacent dwelling at 317 North Boundary, except that it does not feature gabled dormers.

Rw 383      7.  
Henry-Kesler Manufacturing Company House  
701 Park Avenue  
Ca. 1910  
Contributing

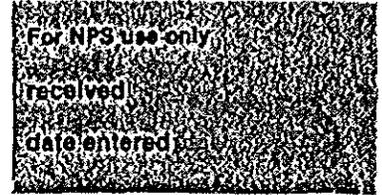
Like many of the dwellings along the southwestern edge of the district, this house was built by a private owner and later purchased by the Kesler Manufacturing Company during the mid-1920s. It was built about 1910 by local carpenter S. W. Henry. After Henry's death in 1910, his daughter, Maggie, operated a boarding house for mill employees until she sold the house to the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1924. Cannon Mills still retains ownership of the house. The dwelling consists of a two-story, single pile, main section with a side gable roof and a wraparound porch with a square balustrade and square, as well as turned posts. Sanborn maps show that by 1922 only a one-story ell extended from the rear of the house. Most of the rear and side additions and enclosures were completed after 1924 when the house was purchased by the Kesler Manufacturing Company. The original section of the house still retains its original mantles and stair. The living room has simple square posts and a heavy shelf supported by a pair of molded brackets. The dining room mantle has a much lighter Victorian motif featuring turned posts. The open string stair features a large turned newel and a tall, turned balustrade.

Rw 384      8.  
Mill House  
709 Park Avenue  
1923  
Contributing

This dwelling is the first of six one-story frame bungalows built along the southwestern side of the 700 block of Park Avenue by the Kesler Manufacturing Company during the early 1920s. The dwellings housed a succession of mill employees and for some reason reflect more variation in

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appearance than other sections of mill housing built before and after these houses. This typical one-story frame bungalow sits on a slightly elevated lot and features a broad hipped roof with a broad front gable engaged porch with exposed purlins supported by tall, tapered wooden piers on brick bases.

Rw 385      9.  
Mill House  
713 Park Avenue  
1923  
Contributing

This typical one-story frame bungalow was also built as a mill house in 1923. It is one of a row of similar but not identical frame bungalows that housed mill employees. This particular dwelling features a broad side gable roof with exposed purlins which extends to form a porch supported by tall, tapered wooden piers without brick bases. The trees that line this section of Park Avenue almost obscure this house from view.

Rw 386      10.  
Mill House  
717 Park Ave.  
Ca. 1920  
Contributing

This one-story weatherboarded frame bungalow, is also hidden from the street by trees. It features a rectangular box-like shape with a broad front and rear gable roof with exposed purlins which extends to form a porch with heavier, tapered wooden piers and a square balustrade. It was built as a mill house about 1920.

Rw 387      11.  
Mill House  
721 Park Avenue  
1920  
Contributing

This one-story frame mill bungalow features a broad side gable roof with exposed purlins and extended rafter ends. This roof extends to form a porch supported by tall square posts without a balustrade. This house is also obscured by trees that line Park Avenue.

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Rw 388 12.  
Mill House  
725 Park Avenue  
Ca. 1920  
Contributing

This one-story frame mill bungalow is similar to its neighbors along the southeastern side of Park Avenue but features an attached hipped roof porch with extended rafters supported by plain square posts.

Rw 389 13.  
Mill House  
729 Park Avenue  
Ca. 1920  
Contributing

This one-story frame mill bungalow is the last of a row of six houses built during the early 1920s by the Kesler Manufacturing Company to house its employees. Obscured from the street by trees and small shrubs, this dwelling features the typical broad gable ends with exposed purlins that characterize several of its neighbors along Park Avenue. The roof extends to form a porch with square posts and no balustrade.

Rw 390 14.  
Kepley-Trexler House  
801 Park Avenue  
1906  
Contributing

Set on slightly raised lot defined by a low stone retaining wall and surrounded by a variety of small shrubs, this one-story, late Victorian, weatherboarded, frame cottage is now covered in aluminum siding. The house features a triple A roof and a wraparound porch with turned posts and balustrade and an airy spindle gallery, which provides a fanciful, eclectic motif not found elsewhere in the mill village. Two gabled ells, one with its own rear shed, extend from the rear of the house. Sanborn maps reveal that these additions were added between 1913 and 1922. The house was built in 1906 by J. A. Kepley an engineer with Kesler Manufacturing Company. Kepley occupied the house with his family, most of whom also worked at the mill, into the 1920s. During the 1920s and 1930s the house was used as a boarding house while Kepley retained ownership. Kepley sold the house to the current occupant, Pearl K. Trexler, in 1937.

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Rw 391 15.  
Mill House  
805 Park Avenue  
1927  
Contributing

This Type No. 4 mill house is a one-story, three-bay, weatherboarded frame bungalow and is the first of a row of seven mill houses built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1927 along the southwestern side of the 800 block of Park Avenue. It sits on a very slightly elevated lot and features a clipped side gable roof, interrupted by a single interior chimney, and an attached shed roof porch supported by tall, tapered, wooden piers.

Rw 392 16.  
Mill House  
809 Park Avenue  
1927  
Contributing

Type No. 4 mill house - same as above.

Rw 393 17.  
Mill House  
813 Park Avenue  
1927  
Contributing

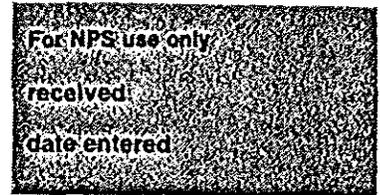
Type No. 4 mill house - same as above.

Rw 394 18.  
Mill House  
817 Park Avenue  
1927  
Contributing

Type No. 4 mill house - same as above.

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Rw 395 19.  
Mill House  
819 Park Avenue  
1927  
Contributing

Type No. 4 mill house - same as above, except that a line of small trees not found elsewhere in this block, separates it from the street.

Rw 396 20.  
Mill House  
825 Park Avenue  
1927  
Contributing

Type No. 4 mill house - same as above, except that this mill bungalow is given a special sense of place by a variety of landscaping.

Rw 397 21.  
Mill House  
829 Park Avenue  
1927  
Contributing

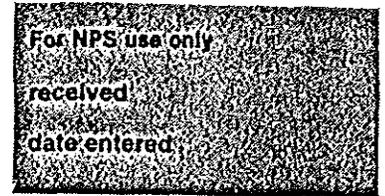
Type No. 4 mill house - same as above.

Rw 398 22.  
Mill House  
905 Park Avenue  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

This Type No. 3 mill house is a one-story weatherboarded frame house with side gable with diamond-shaped, louvered vents, a three-bay facade with six-over-six double hung windows, a porch with chamfposts, and a rear ell that is probably original. It has the appearance of the mill houses built about 1900 near the extreme southeastern edge of the district along Cedar Street. It was probably built as a mill house by the Kesler Manufacturing Company about 1900, but does not appear in city directories or on Sanborn maps until the 1920s.

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Rw 399 23.  
Mill House  
57 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1922  
Contributing

Although it is almost identical in appearance to its neighbors which were built about 1900, Sanborn maps do not show this mill house until 1922. Although other mill houses built in the district during the 1920s were influenced by the bungalow style, this dwelling may have been built to conform with the dwellings around it. It is the first of six almost identical Type No. 3 mill houses featuring gable sides with louvered vents, a three-bay symmetrical facade with six-over-six double-hung windows, and an interior chimney rising from the junction of a rear ell that is probably original. The attached hipped roof porch is supported by simple tapered posts. The interior is laid out in a two room plan and features simple mantels with heavy bracketed shelves.

Rw 400 24.  
Mill House  
58 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

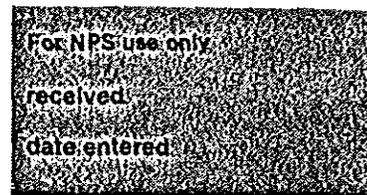
Type No. 3 - same as above, except that it has robust turned porch posts and an elaborate Victorian mantel with tapered spindle-like posts, beaded decoration, and a light shelf with a single heavy molded bracket. This mantel is much more elaborate than those found in surrounding houses. Perhaps this house is older than its neighbors or was occupied by a mill foreman or manager.

Rw 401 25.  
Mill House  
59 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 3 - same as above, except that it has tall, tapered porch posts.

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Rw 402 26.  
Mill House  
60 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 3 - same as above, except it has plain square porch posts.

Rw 403 27.  
Mill House  
61 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 3 - same as above.

Rw 404 28.  
Mill House  
62 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

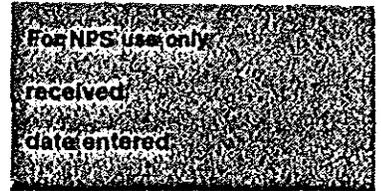
Type No. 3 - same as above.

Rw 405 29.  
Mill House  
23 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

This type No. 1 mill house is a one-story frame dwelling with a side gable roof with a roof pitch that changes in the rear to splay over a rear shed, a three-bay asymmetrical facade defined by an attached porch with tall tapered posts, and a one-story rear shed.

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Rw 406 30.  
Mill House  
24 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 mill house - same as above.

Rw 407 31.  
Mill House  
41 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 3 mill house - same as the dwellings on southeast side  
of Cedar St.

Rw 408 32.  
Mill House  
42 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as No. 30.

Rw 409 33.  
Mill House  
43 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

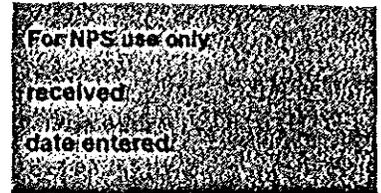
Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 410 34.  
Mill House  
44 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above

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Rw 411 35.  
Mill House  
45 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above with minor landscaping.

Rw 412 36.  
Mill House  
46 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except it has tapered porch posts.

Rw 413 37.  
Mill House  
47 Cedar Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except it has square porch posts.

Rw 414 38.  
Mill House  
34 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

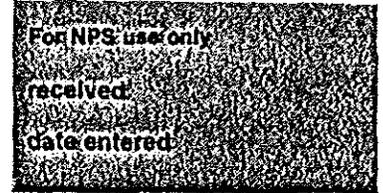
Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has chambered porch posts.

Rw 415 39.  
Mill House  
35 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has heavy square porch posts.

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Rw 416 40.  
Mill House  
36 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 417 41.  
Mill House  
37 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has chamfered porch posts.

Rw 418 42.  
Mill House  
38 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has tapered porch posts.

Rw 419 43.  
Mill House  
39 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

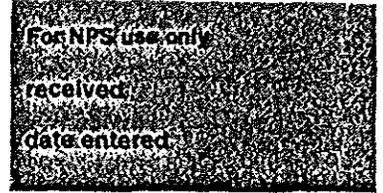
Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 420 44.  
Mill House  
40 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

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Rw 421 45.  
Mill House  
25 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has plain square porch posts.

Rw 422 46.  
Mill House  
27 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 3 - This ell-shaped mill house is similar to other Type No. 3 houses along the southeast side of Cedar St.

Rw 423 47.  
Mill House  
28 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

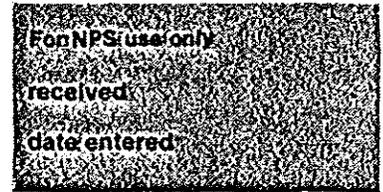
Type No. 1 - This mill house is similar to other surrounding Type No. 1 houses except that it features an unusual corner fireplace.

Rw 424 48.  
Mill House  
29 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except it has a more typical chimney placement.

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Rw 425 49.  
Mill House  
39 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 426 50.  
Mill House  
31 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has chamfered posts on its porch.

Rw 427 51.  
Mill House  
32 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has four-over-four windows.

Rw 428 52.  
Mill House  
33 Keslers Place  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

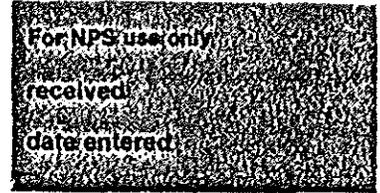
Type No. 1 - same as above, except that it has six-over-six windows.

Rw 429 53.  
Mill House  
17 Arlington Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above with tapered porch posts.

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Rw 430 54.  
Mill House  
18 Arlington Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above with square porch posts.

Rw 431 55.  
Mill House  
19 Arlington Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 432 56.  
Vacant Lot  
20 Arlington Street

This vacant lot was occupied by a Type No. 1 mill house similar to the surrounding houses.

Rw 433 57.  
Mill House  
21 Arlington Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

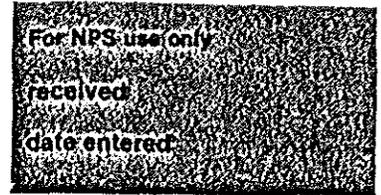
Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 434 58.  
Mill House  
22 Arlington Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above with tapered porch posts.

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Rw 435 59.  
Mill House  
763 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 436 60.  
Mill House  
759 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 437 61.  
Mill House  
755 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

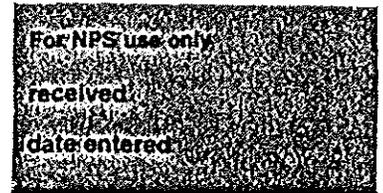
Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 438 62.  
Mill House  
751 Park Avenue  
Ca. 1920  
Contributing

This one-story frame bungalow was built about 1920 on the site of an earlier and smaller mill house built about 1896. This dwelling features a broadly sloped side gable roof, with exposed purlins and a protruding gabled dormer, which extends to form a porch supported by tall, tapered posts. It also has a recessed side entrance. It is larger and out of character with its neighbors and interrupts the orderly progression of Type No. 1 mill houses up the northeast side of Park Avenue. Its size may indicate that it was occupied by a mill foreman or an employee with a higher status than those occupying the surrounding houses.

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Rw 439 63.  
Mill House  
747 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as No. 61.

Rw 440 64.  
Mill House  
743 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 441 65.  
Mill House  
741 Park Avenue  
Ca. 1920  
Contributing

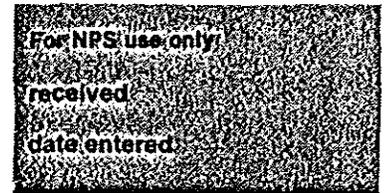
This one-story frame bungalow was also built about 1920 on the site of an 1896 Type No. 1 mill house. This dwelling may also have been occupied by a higher ranking employee and features a long, narrow shape with a broad front gable roof with extended rafters which forms a porch supported by square wooden posts. It is similar in appearance to the house located at 751 Park Avenue and features the same recessed entry.

Rw 442 66.  
Mill House  
735 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as No. 64.

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Rw 443 67.  
Mill House  
731 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 444 68.  
Mill House  
729 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 1 - same as above.

Rw 445 69.  
Mill House  
725 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

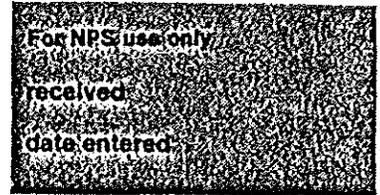
This Type No. 2 mill house is the first of five (originally six, one has been demolished) identical two-story frame houses that were built in 1896 during the Kesler Manufacturing Company's initial expansion. They may have originally housed mill supervisors, but according to local tradition and early twentieth century city directories, these houses functioned as boarding houses for single mill employees. This house type is a two-story dwelling with a side gable roof and an attached hipped roof porch supported by tall, tapered wooden posts. It is a single pile house with a three bay symmetrical facade, six-over-six double-hung windows and rear shed additions. Sanborn maps reveal that the first rear shed was added during the period 1907-1913 and the second was added during the period 1913-1922. Like most of the mill houses the interior of this type was laid out in a simple two-room plan and featured simple mantels with bracketed shelves.

Rw 446 70.  
Mill House  
719 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 2 - same as above.

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Rw 447 71.  
Mill House  
715 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 2 - same as above.

Rw 448 72.  
Mill House  
711 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

Type No. 2 - same as above.

Rw 449 73.  
Vacant Lot  
707 Park Avenue

This vacant lot was occupied by a Type No. 2 two-story mill house similar to adjacent houses. The house burned and was demolished in the 1970s.

Rw 450 74.  
Mill House  
703 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

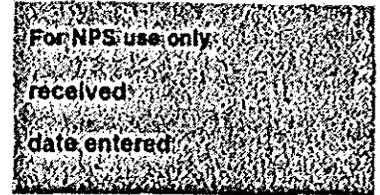
Type No. 2 - same as No. 72.

Rw 451 75.  
Kesler Manufacturing Company - Cannon Mills Store  
622 Park Avenue  
1896  
Contributing

This one-story frame store was built by the Central Land Company for the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1896. It served mill workers and was purchased by the company in 1900. Sanborn maps show that it was expanded

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to its present dimensions between 1913 and 1922. It has a long narrow shape and a typical parapeted false commercial front with a shed porch supported by modern iron posts. It is covered in novelty siding except near its foundation where it is sided in typical weatherboards.

Rw 452

76.

Kesler Manufacturing Company - Cannon Mills Plant No. 7  
417 North Boundary Street  
1895, 1903, 1910, 1915, 1917, 1926  
Pivotal

The Kesler Manufacturing Company was organized in the summer of 1895 by some of the most prominent businessmen and landowners in Salisbury and Rowan County. The original incorporators of the company included Tobias Kesler, Edwin Shaver, James Samuel McCubbins, and Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless. Tobias Kesler, a prosperous farmer, was the largest landowner in Rowan County and as the largest stockholder gave his name to the company. Edwin Shaver was one of the largest landowners and wealthiest men in Salisbury. McCubbins and McCanless were both prosperous businessmen and were officers of the Central Land Company, which purchased most of the land in Salisbury's east ward from Edwin Shaver in 1890.

Once the Kesler Manufacturing Company had been organized, its directors purchased five acres of land in east Salisbury from the Central Land Company in 1895 and began construction of a brick manufacturing building. The site chosen for the company's building was just southeast of the North Long Street-Park Avenue Historic District which was developed by the Central Land Company during the period 1890-1925. The company's first manufacturing building (Building E on map) was completed and placed into operation in September, 1896, at a cost of \$71,075.00.

The company's first few years of existence were characterized by inefficient and unprofitable operation. Initial debts incurred in placing the mill in operation were \$43,000.00 more than the total amount of originally subscribed capital stock. The company was, therefore, forced to issue another \$40,000.00 in bonds to finance its operations. In 1896, N. B. McCanless was replaced as the company's president by the Rev. Francis J. Murdoch, the prominent Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Salisbury. D. R. Julian, who later served as sheriff of Rowan during the period 1900-1906, was also appointed as the mill manager. Murdoch was familiar with the operation of textile mills, for he had been previously involved in the establishment of the Salisbury Cotton Mill in 1888 and the Vance Cotton Mill in 1893. These changes had little effect on the efficiency and profitability of the company's operations and during its first two months of

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operation, September through November, 1896, the company reported a profit of only \$700.00.

The initial difficulties experienced in the early operation of the Kesler Manufacturing Company helped bring about a change in ownership and management of the company. In December, 1899, an entirely new board of directors, headed by prominent textile executive J. W. Cannon as president, assumed leadership of the Kesler Manufacturing Company. Cannon (1852-1921) used his experience gained in the establishment of other piedmont North Carolina textile mills to transform the Kesler Manufacturing Company into an efficient and profitable textile manufacturer.

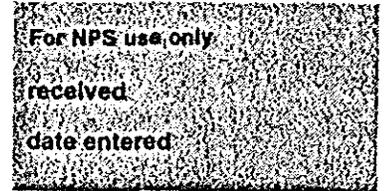
By the end of 1899 the Kesler Manufacturing Company complex consisted of only one brick manufacturing building (Building E on map) and a frame office building and frame warehouse which no longer stand. During the first decade of the twentieth century, however, J. W. Cannon initiated a program of growth and expansion which by the end of the decade had transformed not only the appearance of the mill complex, but the surrounding mill village as well. During this period a new weave building (Building C on map) was constructed in 1903 and a new brick office building (Building A on map) was built in 1910 at a cost of \$3,162.00. At the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the Kesler Manufacturing Company had increased its capital stock to \$250,000.00 and the mill complex consisted of two brick manufacturing buildings (Building C and E on map), housing over 20,000 spindles, a brick office (Building A on map), a frame warehouse, and several small frame outbuildings (Buildings I on map).

The expansion of the Kesler Manufacturing Company's mill complex continued during the second decade of the twentieth century. During this period two new frame and metal warehouse buildings (Buildings G on map) were built in 1915 at a cost of \$9,413.00. These structures increased the company's warehouse space by 14,200 square feet. A new brick machine shop and supply room were constructed in 1917 at a cost of \$6,200.00. By 1920 the mill complex had been expanded to include two brick manufacturing buildings, a brick machine shop, a brick office building, two frame and metal warehouse buildings, and a small group of frame outbuildings.

During the third decade of the twentieth century the Kesler Manufacturing Company experienced another period of expansion which was directed by Charles A. Cannon, who assumed the presidency of the company upon the death of his father J. W. Cannon in 1921. Additions to the mill during this period included an expansion of the weave mill (Building D on map), construction of a third cotton warehouse (Buildings G), the erection of a new waste house (Building H on map), and the construction of a new picker room (Building F). These additions provided the Kesler

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Manufacturing Company complex with most of its present appearance by 1928. Only minor additions to the southeastern end of Building D have occurred since that time.

As the Kesler Manufacturing Company's complex approached its present configuration in 1928 it was impacted by sweeping organizational changes initiated by Charles A. Cannon, president of the company. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Kesler Manufacturing Company had been operated under the leadership of J. W. Cannon as president. During this same period Cannon was involved in the operation of several other piedmont North Carolina textile mills in which he served as president or a director. In addition to the Kesler Manufacturing Company, Cannon's other mills included the Cabarrus Cotton Mill, the Gibson Manufacturing Company, the Patterson Manufacturing Company, the Franklin Cotton Mill, the Norcott Mill Company, all located in Piedmont North Carolina. Charles A. Cannon assumed a major role in all of these mills upon the death of his father in 1921. As his father before him had done, Charles A. Cannon continued to serve as president or a director of each of those mills. In 1928, however, Cannon consolidated these mills and the Hobarton Manufacturing Company into one large textile conglomerate known as the Cannon Mills Company. Since the 1928 consolidation the former Kesler Manufacturing Company complex has been operated as Cannon Mills Company Plant No. 7.

*primary*  
The design of the mill complex and its buildings reflects basic principals of function and design which characterized the late nineteenth and early twentieth century textile industry. Industrial buildings of the period were built to promote safe and efficient operation. Early textile mill buildings, therefore, were simple, sturdy structures which lacked elaborate architectural detail. Two other premises of function also influenced the design of late nineteenth and early twentieth century mill buildings. According to design theories, mill buildings should be constructed in a manner that would minimize the potential damage of fire and in a manner that would promote the introduction of light and air into the mill. Consequently, most late nineteenth and early twentieth century mill buildings were simple, sturdy brick structures with shallow gabled, almost flat, roofs with a simple, yet extremely heavy rafter system, and wide, segmental-arched windows. It was also common practice to construct monitors along the roofs of mill buildings. Monitors were long, narrow structures three to six feet in height with rows of windows on each side which extended above a building's roofline and often extended almost the entire length of a building. These structures allowed the introduction of additional air and light into the building.

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In an effort to minimize the potential damage by fire, the textile mill complex was organized into five standard divisions: The main mill, where the actual manufacturing process occurred; the tower, which housed the metal tank containing the mill's water supply; the engine room, where the mill's power supply was generated; the picker room, where the cotton bales were opened; and the warehouse, where raw cotton was stored. Experience demonstrated that most textile mill fires started in three of these departments: the picker room, the engine room, or the warehouse. For this reason these functions were separated from the main manufacturing area in the mill. The picker room and engine room were usually located near the manufacturing area in the same or an adjacent building, but were separated by thick brick fire walls with a single opening. The frame warehouse was usually constructed in a simple manner so that it could be quickly dismantled in case of fire and was always located away from other sections of the mill.

The design of the individual buildings as well as the design of the complex itself clearly reflects these practices of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century textile industry. The buildings are characterized by a lack of exterior architectural detail. The only ornamentation was provided in the corbeled and parapeted ends which originally adorned the earliest mill buildings and the rhythm of the windows. Although most of these parapeted ends have been destroyed, one can still be seen at the rear junction of Building E, the complex's first building built in 1895, and Building C, built in 1903.

The three earliest manufacturing buildings, Building E (1895), which contains the mill's original cornerstone, Building C (1903), and Building B (1917) are simple, sturdy, two-story brick structures with shallow gabled, almost flat roofs with simple, yet extremely heavy wooden rafters which extend beyond the exterior walls, and wide segmental-arched windows. The two oldest buildings originally featured monitors which extended above their roofs. However, as technological advances of central heating and air conditioning and fluorescent lighting made the introduction of light and air into the mill less of a problem, these monitors were removed and the large windows were filled with brick. These early buildings also feature wide, open interiors punctuated with tall, heavy wooden beams which support the junction of similarly heavy wooden rafters. These interiors not only were designed to prevent the spread of fire, but also provided space for the rows of heavy machinery necessary in the production process. Later buildings involved in the manufacturing process, added to the complex during the second and third decades of the twentieth century also feature this same simple, yet safe and efficient appearance and design. The oldest surviving warehouse buildings in the complex also reflect these construction practices. Built in 1915 and 1927, they are

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simple, one-story, corrugated tin sheds set on tall brick piers with a complex bracing system of heavy wooden timbers. Each separate warehouse compartment is separated from its neighbor by a thick brick firewall which extends above each roof which was designed to prevent the spread of fire from compartment to compartment. The company's brick office, built in 1910, provides the complex with its only source of architectural elaboration. Probably given a more elaborate treatment because it was the company office, this one-story brick domestic-scale structure features a hipped roof with projecting front and side pedimented gables and an attached wrap-around porch supported by slender wooden columns. It also features the same segmental arched windows as the complex's early buildings.

The layout of the complex itself also reflects the basic principles of textile mill design. Since the construction of the first buildings in 1895, the operations of the complex have been divided into the five standard departments: The main mill, the tower, the engine room, the picker room, and the warehouse. The mill's first building (Building E on map) housed the manufacturing process, as well as the tower, the picker room, and the engine room. The opening and picker rooms were located at the front of the building closest to North Boundary Street and were separated from the manufacturing area, which occupied the central portion of the building, by a thick brick firewall. The engine room, also separated by a thick brick firewall occupied the building's rear. The original brick mill tower was located at the rear southeastern corner of Building E. The tower, without its original tin water tank, still services. The original frame cotton warehouse, now demolished, was located just to the northeast of the mill building. As the complex expanded during the first quarter of the twentieth century, these five departments were moved to other locations within the complex, however the same design precautions were always followed. The engine room and picker room were always separated from the manufacturing area by thick brick firewalls and the warehouse buildings were always located away from the manufacturing buildings. The tower became obsolete about 1910 with the construction of the present metal water tower:

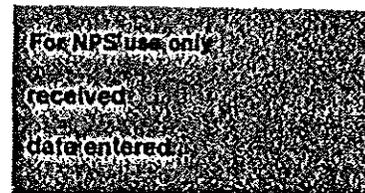
Rw 453

77.  
Mill House  
422 North Boundary Street  
1921  
Contributing

This one-story frame bungalow is the first of three different bungalows built for mill supervisors in 1921 on a high bank overlooking the mill office. All three of these dwellings are larger and more spacious than the

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surrounding mill houses and are typical of the bungalows built by middle-income owners in other Salisbury neighborhoods during the 1920s. These three houses are the only dwellings (dwellings) in the district that can be specifically identified as the houses of mill supervisors. It's present occupant, a retired mill supervisor who rented the house from the company for many years, has recently purchased the house. Sitting on an elevated lot with a row of tall trees, the house features a broad hipped roof which joins a broad front gable forming a porch supported by tapered wooden piers set on brick bases. The house is laid out in an irregular plan featuring a living room separated from the rest of the house by French doors. The living room features a mantel with a rustic corbeled brick face, while a side bedroom features a more simple mantel with bracketed shelf.

Rw 454

78.

Mill House  
426 North Boundary Street  
1921  
Contributing

This one-story weatherboarded frame bungalow was also built by the mill company to house its supervisors. It is still owned by the mill and occupied by a retired supervisor. Like its neighbors, this bungalow sits atop a raised lot overlooking the mill complex. It features a (hipp) on gable roof with front and side gables with exposed purlins. The front gable forms a porch supported by tapered wooden piers on brick bases. It is surrounded by small shrubs which add to its sense of place.

Rw 455

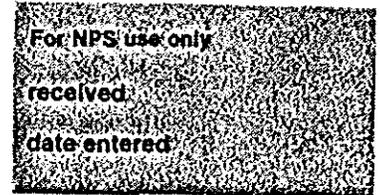
79.

Mill House  
430 North Boundary Street  
1921  
Contributing

Also a supervisor's house built in 1921, this one-story weatherboarded frame bungalow features a (hipp) on gable roof with exposed purlins and a protruding shed dormer which extends to form a porch supported by short, tapered wooden piers on brick bases. It has the same interior plan and corbeled brick mantel as its neighbors and like those dwellings is occupied by a retired mill supervisor who rents from the company. A two-car frame garage faces East Cemetery Street on the rear of the lot, and a row of small identical frame storage buildings are located behind each of these similar houses.

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Rw 456

80.

Wilson-Kesler Manufacturing Company/Cannon Mills Company House  
630 East Cemetery Street  
1905  
Contributing

This two-story weatherboarded frame house is almost identical to the Type No. 2 mill houses built along Park Avenue in 1896 by the Central Land Company for mill employees. It features a three-bay facade, side gable roof, and an original rear ell and smaller rear shed. It features a center hall interior plan and mantels that are far more elaborate than those found in surrounding mill houses. One mantel has a raised diamond-shaped motif on its posts and a heavy shelf supported by heavy molded brackets. Another downstairs mantel features an unusual ribbed decoration on its posts, a curved frieze, and a heavy shelf supported by heavy brackets. The stair, which rises from just inside the main entry has a large turned newel and simple balustrade. It was built in 1905 by W. W. Wilson after he purchased the lot upon which it sits from the Central Land Company. In 1907 Wilson mortgaged the house to the Kesler Manufacturing Company. It was eventually purchased by the company about 1920.

Rw 457

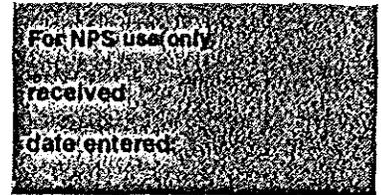
81.

Murphy-Kesler Manufacturing Company/Cannon Mills Company House  
628 East Cemetery Street  
1906  
Contributing

This two-story frame house is almost identical to the adjacent house at 630 East Cemetery, except it does not have such elaborate mantels. One downstairs mantel has been replaced with a 1920s brick face and another original mantel features only simple raised posts and a heavy bracketed shelf. The lot upon which the house sits was sold by the Central Land Company to Mrs. Martha J. Murphy in 1906. The house had been built by the time Mrs. Murphy mortgaged the property to the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1907. Murphy operated a boarding house for mill employees and later sold the house to the company.

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Rw 458      82.  
Mill House  
622 East Cemetery Street  
1925  
Contributing

This Type No. 5 mill house is the first of a row of four identical bungalows built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1925 along the northeast side of the 600 block of East Cemetery Street. This one-story weatherboarded frame bungalow features a narrow box-like shape with a broad front gable roof with exposed rafters and a three-part window and vent set in the shingled, gable face. The attached roof is supported by simple square posts. The interior features the same two-room plan with simple mantels with bracketed shelves that characterize the older nearby mill houses.

Rw 459      83.  
Mill House  
618 East Cemetery Street  
1925  
Contributing

Type No. 5 - same as above.

Rw 460      84.  
Mill House  
614 East Cemetery Street  
1925  
Contributing

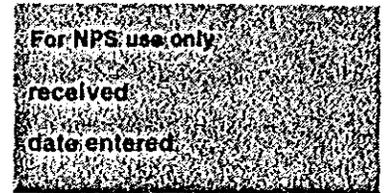
Type No. 5 - same as above.

Rw 461      85.  
Mill House  
610 East Cemetery Street  
1925  
Contributing

Type No. 5 - same as above.

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86.  
Harold B. Jones House  
604 East Cemetery Street  
Ca. 1950  
Fill

This one-story frame house, now covered in aluminum siding, was built about 1950 by Harold B. Jones and is still occupied by his widow Ruby T. Jones.

Rw 462 87.  
Yarborough-Morris House  
600 East Cemetery Street  
1921  
Contributing

The history of this one-story weatherboarded frame house, which is now covered in asbestos siding, is obscure and has not been confirmed by a deed search. It was built in 1921 by farmer C. W. Yarborough, who occupied it through the 1920s. It has been occupied by the current owner Paul Morris since 1960. It has a steep side gable roof, a porch with simple posts, and an original rear ell as well as a rear shed added during the late 1920s.

88.  
Rowan County Board of Education Maintenance Shop  
North Clay Street  
Ca. 1950  
Intrusion

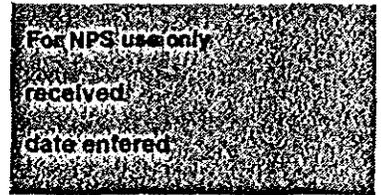
This modern one-story brick building was built as the maintenance shop of the Rowan County Board of Education and is still used as such.

Rw 463 89.  
D. L. Arey Warehouse  
Ca. 1915  
Contributing

This one-story corrugated tin storage building was built as a canning factory by D. L. Arey, a prosperous distiller. In 1931 it was purchased by the Rowan County Board of Education and is still owned by that organization. It has a long narrow shape with a side gable tin roof with exposed rafters and is covered in corrugated tin sheets.

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Rw 464 90.  
Mill House  
530 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1925  
Contributing

This story-and-one-half weatherboarded frame bungalow was probably built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company about 1925 on the site of a smaller and more modest mill house. A typical bungalow, it features a steep side gable roof with exposed purlins and extended rafter ends which is interrupted by a shed dormer as it extends to form a porch supported by tapered wooden piers on brick bases. It is now owned by the mill and city directories indicate that it has been occupied by mill employees since the 1920s. It is similar in size and style to the dwellings along the 400 block of North Boundary Street which were built to house mill supervisors and this house also may have been occupied by mill supervisors.

Rw 465 91.  
Mill House  
528 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

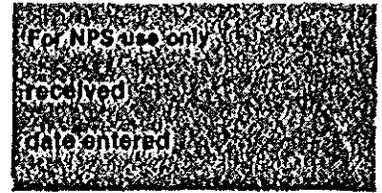
This one-story frame dwelling is a Type No. 3 mill house similar to the row of houses situated along the southeast side of Cedar Street and was probably built about 1900.

Rw 466 92.  
Mill House  
526 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

This one-story frame dwelling is a Type No. 1 mill house identical to the dwellings along the northeast side of Park Avenue and along Arlington Street, Keslers Place, and Cedar Street.

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Rw 467 93.  
Mill House  
524 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1900  
Contributing

Type No. 3 mill house - same as No. 91.

Rw 468 94.  
Warehouse  
520 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1915  
Contributing

This simple corrugated tin warehouse building was probably built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company about 1915. Sanborn maps show that it was used as a grocery warehouse. Perhaps the company stored supplies here that it sold in its store located nearby at the corner of Park Avenue and North Boundary Street. Covered in corrugated tin sheets and sitting on short brick piers, it has a broad side gable roof with exposed rafters, which tops its long, narrow shape.

Rw 469 95.  
Mill House  
527 North Boundary Street  
Ca. 1906  
Contributing

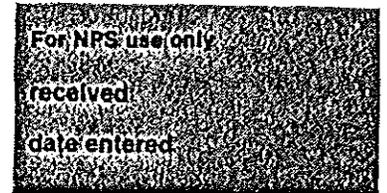
This Type No. 3 mill house was probably built about 1906 after the Kesler Manufacturing Company purchased the land upon which it is built. It is similar to other nearby Type No. 3 mill houses.

Rw 470 96.  
Mill House  
531 North Boundary Street  
1906  
Contributing

This rambling one-story house is one of the most spacious houses in the district and features more elaborate mantels than those found in most of the other houses in the district. The house was probably built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1906 after it purchased the land upon which

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it sits. The company then sold it in 1906 for \$1,800.00 to mill employee A. J. Rary. Rary worked in the nearby mill and his wife operated the house as a boarding house for other mill employees. Rary sold the house to C. E. Stevenson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1913 and city directories indicate that the house was occupied by mill supervisors. Stevenson sold the house back to the company in 1916 and it was used as a boarding house for mill workers. It is still owned by the mill and used as a boarding house for retired employees. It features a high hipped roof with projecting front and rear gables with cornice returns. It has a typical main entry flanked by narrow side lights and its front porch is supported by tall, tapered posts, while its side porch features chamfered posts. The interior features paneled wainscoting and several mantels with a variety of turned decoration.

Rw 471 97.  
Mill House  
713 East Franklin Street  
1914  
Contributing

This one-story frame bungalow was built by the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1914. It has a long, narrow shape with a front gable roof with exposed purlins and extended rafter ends which extends to form a porch supported by tapered wooden posts. Its small rear shed is original.

Rw 472 98.  
Mill House  
717 East Franklin Street  
1914  
Contributing

This one-story frame mill bungalow was also built in 1914 and is similar to its neighbor at 713 East Franklin Street, except that this house has a hipped roof and larger porch posts with a modest square railing.

Rw 473 99.  
Mill House  
721 East Franklin Street  
1906  
Contributing

This Type No. 3 mill house is identical to the dwellings along the southeast side of Cedar Street and was probably built in 1906 after the

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Kesler Manufacturing Company purchased the land upon which it sits from one of its directors F. L. Robbins.

Rw 474 100.  
Mill House  
751 East Franklin Street  
1906  
Contributing

Type No. 3 mill house - same as above.

Rw 475 101.  
Mill House  
727 East Franklin Street  
1906  
Contributing

Type No. 3 mill house - same as above.

102.  
Vacant Lot  
726 East Franklin Street

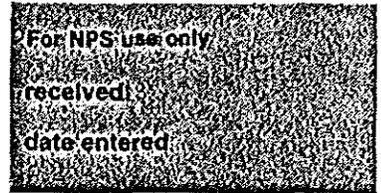
This lot, which has always been vacant is owned by the owner-occupant of the adjacent house.

103.  
Anderson-Ludwig House  
724 East Franklin Street  
1925  
F111

The last six dwellings on the inventory list were all built during the mid to late 1920s on the lands of the D. L. Arey estate, which occupied the block where these dwellings are located, was subdivided and sold by Arey's widow after his death in 1919. This one-story frame bungalow is now covered in aluminum siding and its front gable has been extended to one side to form a carport. These changes have reduced its significance. It was built as a rental house in 1925 by W. E. Anderson, who sold it to O. E. Ludwig in 1937. Ludwig and his wife occupied the house until about 1975. It was purchased by the current occupant in 1980.

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Rw 476 104.  
Mittie Hall House  
720 East Franklin Street  
1925  
Contributing

This one-story weatherboarded frame bungalow is now covered in asbestos siding. It has a broad front gable roof with extended rafters, which forms a porch supported by short, wooden piers on brick bases. It was built in 1925 by Mrs. Mittie Hall, a widow. City directories show that Hall occupied the house into the 1940s. The remaining history of the house is unclear, but it was purchased by the current occupant in 1980.

Rw 476 105.  
S. J. Lentz House  
716 East Franklin Street  
1925  
Contributing

The history of this modest story-and-one-half frame bungalow is also cloudy. It was probably built in 1925 by S. J. Lentz an employee of the Goodman Lumber Company. City directories show that Lentz occupied the house into the 1930s. The constant change of occupants revealed by city directories indicates that the house was used as a rental dwelling for many years. It was purchased by the current occupant in 1980.

106.  
Vacant Lot  
603 North Boundary Street

This lot has always been vacant.

Rw 477 107.  
W. G. Cline House  
605 North Boundary Street  
1925  
Contributing

Carpenter W. G. Cline built this one-story frame bungalow in 1925 and still occupies it. It features a hipped roof with a protruding dormer and extended rafters which extends to form a porch supported by pairs of slender wooden posts set on brick bases with stone caps. It sits on a

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slightly raised lot defined by a low concrete block retaining wall and its three-bay symmetrical facade features a main entry with a multi-paned door surrounded by narrow side lights found on many Salisbury bungalows. A concrete block garage sits just behind the house.

Rw 478

108.  
Charles Waggoner Rental House  
607 North Boundary Street  
1927  
Contributing

Charles Waggoner built this one-story frame bungalow in 1927. Waggoner used it as a rental house until he died in 1965 and the house passed to his widow Ethel who died in 1977. The house was purchased by the current occupant in 1978. Now covered in aluminum siding, added in 1968, the house has a broad front gable roof with extended rafters and a rectangular box-like shape. It also has a projecting side gable and an offset gable porch with typical, tapered bungalow piers, one of which has been removed.

# 8, Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics:government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1895 - 1928 Builder/Architect Various/Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Established in 1895 by the prominent Salisbury and Rowan County leaders Tobias Kesler, Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless, James Samuel McCubbins, D. R. Julian, and the Rev. Francis Johnstone Murdoch, the Kesler Manufacturing Company-Cannon Mills Company Plant No. 7 Historic District developed during the period 1895-1928. The district consists of the mill complex, with its two-story late nineteenth and early twentieth century brick industrial buildings with shallow gabled roofs and segmental-arched windows and accompanying warehouse buildings, and the intact surrounding mill village. The mill village is composed of one- and two-story late nineteenth and early twentieth century frame houses built on several different models. The repetition of the form along the streets of the district, provided by the standardization of the mill housing, creates a strong visual image. Of the several mill complexes that were established in Salisbury during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Kesler Manufacturing Company-Cannon Mills Company Plant No. 7 Historic District is the best preserved. It therefore represents an important element in the urbanization and industrialization of the city of Salisbury, as well as the development of the North Carolina textile industry.

### Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the development of the textile industry in Piedmont North Carolina during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as with the development of the city of Salisbury during the same period.
- B. Associated with the lives of such prominent Salisbury and Rowan County leaders as Tobias Kesler, Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless, James Samuel McCubbins, D. R. Julian, and the Rev. Francis Johnstone Murdoch.
- C. Embodies the form and characteristics of late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial construction and mill housing.

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Spurred by the availability of labor from the surrounding rural area, the proximity of good transportation facilities, and a steady supply of raw materials, the Kesler Manufacturing Company, later Cannon Mills Plant No. 7, and its surrounding mill village developed during the period 1895-1930. As one of several textile mills established in the city during the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Kesler Manufacturing Company-Cannon Mills Company complex is an important element in the urban industrial development of Salisbury during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Of these mills, the Kesler Manufacturing Company-Cannon Mill Company complex is the only one which survives in a good state of architectural preservation.

Difficulties were encountered in researching the history of the mill complex and the surrounding mill village. The major difficulty stems from the lack of information about the early growth of the area provided by historical maps and city directories. The first map to record the development of the area is Miller's 1902 Map of Salisbury. Miller's map, however, covers only a small portion of the area comprising the mill village. Sanborn Maps from 1902, 1907, 1913, 1922, and 1931 detail the expansion of the mill complex. However, the 1922 map is the first to cover the entire village area. Consequently, it is difficult to trace the early construction of the surrounding mill village. The survival of only three city directories, those for 1901, 1907, and 1910, during the first fifteen years of the company's existence further complicates the study of the area's early history. In addition, city directories seldom list the type of work performed by employees and usually list residents only as mill workers. It is, therefore, difficult to develop an understanding of where different types of workers or mill supervisors lived within the village. The comparison of information gathered from local deeds, historical maps, and city directories, as well as an unpublished research report based on information from minutes of the meetings of the company's board of directors (these minutes were not made available to the researcher) does, however, allow the compilation of a good general history of the area's development.

The Kesler Manufacturing Company was organized during the summer of 1895 by some of Salisbury and Rowan County's most prominent and influential business and civic leaders. According to the company's first day book, the largest stockholders were Tobias Kesler, who purchased fifty-seven shares of stock at one hundred dollars per share, and Edwin Shaver who purchased fifty shares. Kesler, a prosperous farmer who gave his name to the company, and Shaver, who sold much of the area comprising Salisbury's eastern ward to the Central Land Company in 1890, were two of the largest land owners and wealthiest men in Rowan County. Other organizers of the company included D. A. Atwell, a prosperous hardware merchant, D. R. Julian, a successful real estate investor and sheriff of Rowan County during the period 1900-1906, prosperous businessmen Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless and James Samuel McCubbins, and successful merchant Ruben J. Holmes, who owned the land upon which the Brooklyn-South Square Historic

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District developed.<sup>2</sup> During the company's initial organization, \$46,000.00 of capital was raised through the sale of stock to forty-three original investors.<sup>3</sup> Although there is no evidence that J. W. Cannon, a prominent textile executive, founder of several other piedmont North Carolina mills and later president of the company, was among its original organizers, the proposed mill was referred to as a "new Cannon factory."<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the mill's activities were planned to follow certain theories of production or organization popularized by Cannon. Whatever the reason for this reference, it certainly demonstrates the scope of J. W. Cannon's influence in the North Carolina textile industry in the last few years of the nineteenth century.

The early organization of the Kesler Manufacturing Company continued at the first meeting of the company's board of directors which was held in August, 1895. At this meeting Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless was selected as president of the company, Tobias Kesler was chosen as vice-president, and D. R. Julian was appointed as manager of the mill. Committees were also set up to select a site for the mill, to determine the specifications for the mill buildings, and to arrange for the erection of housing for mill employees.<sup>5</sup>

The organizational activities of the company proceeded at a fast pace after the election of officers. On August 12, 1895 the Kesler Manufacturing Company purchased five acres of land from the Central Land Company in order to "...erect thereon a cotton factory..."<sup>6</sup> Rowan County deeds and the 1891 Central Land Company map reveal that this parcel was located on the block now bounded by Park Avenue, East Franklin Street, Arlington Street, and North Boundary Street.<sup>7</sup> The Central Land Company was organized in 1890 by such prominent Salisbury businessmen as John S. Henderson, James Samuel McCubbins, and Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless. McCubbins and McCanless were also directors of the Kesler Manufacturing Company. The Central Land Company purchased most of the eastern ward of Salisbury from Edwin Shaver, another original Kesler Manufacturing Company director, and developed the North Long Street-Park Avenue Historic District just to the northwest of the mill and its surrounding village.<sup>8</sup>

Although the initial organizational activities of the Kesler Manufacturing Company proceeded quickly during the late summer of 1895, the process of constructing a mill building and establishing an efficient manufacturing operation took place at a much slower pace. Construction of a mill building began soon after the purchase of the site and the cornerstone of the original building (Building E on map) is dated August, 1895. The building was not completed and placed into operation, however, until September, 1896.<sup>9</sup> The total cost of constructing the building and outfitting it with manufacturing equipment was \$71,075.00.<sup>10</sup> While the mill's first building was being constructed during 1895 and 1896, the Central Land Company erected approximately twenty-two modest frame cottages and a small frame store building on land that it still owned along the northeast side of Park Avenue, adjacent to the mill building. These

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modest dwellings were rented from the Central Land Company by the Kesler Manufacturing Company, which provided them as housing to its mill employees.<sup>11</sup> In November, 1896 after only one month of operation the records of the Kesler manufacturing Company show that the company employed 69 people and had a modest payroll of \$747.00.<sup>12</sup> By the end of 1896 a small mill complex and surrounding village had been developed. This complex consisted of a brick mill building, a frame office, and a frame warehouse and the village consisted of twenty-two mill houses and a mill store.

The establishment of the Kesler Manufacturing Company was typical of the tremendous amount of industrial development that was taking place not only in and around Salisbury but throughout the piedmont area of North Carolina and across the South as well during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Between 1880 and 1899 the number of cotton bales used by southern textile mills increased from 233,886 to 1,399,000, the number of spindles in southern mills increased from 667,000 to 5,000,000, and the amount of capital invested in southern mills rose from \$21,900,000.00 to \$125,000.00.<sup>13</sup> Much of this textile manufacturing development occurred in North Carolina during the late nineteenth century. In North Carolina during the period 1880-1900 an average of six new mills were built each year. During this same period the number of North Carolina textile mills increased four times, the amount of capital invested in the state's mills rose twelve-fold, the value of North Carolina textile products increased eleven times, and the number of textile workers in the state increased nine times. By 1900 approximately 90% of the state's textile mills were located in the piedmont region.<sup>14</sup> Several mills were organized in Salisbury and Rowan County. The Salisbury Mill, established in 1888, and the Vance Mill, organized in 1891, preceded the Kesler Manufacturing Company in Salisbury. J. W. Cannon was instrumental in the establishment of the Patterson Mill in Rowan County in 1893.<sup>15</sup>

This tremendous period of industrialization that occurred in piedmont North Carolina during the last two decades of the nineteenth century was stimulated by several factors. Raw materials and fuel were often cheaper in southern states and the milder climate and longer growing season made cheap, good quality cotton easily available. In addition, piedmont North Carolina possessed excellent rail facilities for the transportation of textile products and raw materials, and the depressed rural areas surrounding small piedmont North Carolina towns provided a good supply of cheap labor for the newly constructed mills.<sup>16</sup>

The Kesler Manufacturing Company's first few years of operation were not extremely successful. Debts incurred in placing the plant in operation were more than the amount of originally subscribed capital stock. The company was, therefore, forced to issue \$40,000 in bonds to finance its operation.<sup>17</sup> In 1896 Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless sold his stock in the company and was replaced

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as president by the Rev. Francis Johnstone Murdoch.<sup>18</sup> Murdoch, the prominent rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Salisbury, often invested in local industrial developments. He had previously been involved in the establishment of the Salisbury Cotton Mill in 1888 and the Vance Cotton Mill in 1893.<sup>19</sup> As president, Murdoch received an annual salary of \$300.00, while the secretary-treasurer was paid \$400.00 and the mill manager D. R. Julian received \$1,000.00.<sup>20</sup> In November, 1896, the company reported only a \$700.00 profit for the previous two months and the company was seeking another manufacturer to rent a vacant portion of the mill.<sup>21</sup>

These initial difficulties in early operation of the mill brought about a change in the ownership and management of the Kesler Manufacturing Company. In December, 1899, an entirely new board of directors, headed by J. W. Cannon as president, assumed control of the company.<sup>22</sup> No information concerning this change in leadership has been found, but the complete disappearance of the names of former directors from company records indicates that their financial difficulties may have encouraged them to sell the company to Cannon and other more experienced textile executives.

J. W. Cannon (1852-1921) was one of the most prominent textile promoters in late nineteenth and early twentieth century North Carolina. Cannon entered the textile business as a cotton-buyer in Concord, North Carolina during the early 1870s. With several associates he established the Cannon Manufacturing Company in Concord in 1887.<sup>23</sup> By 1906 this plant had become one of the state's largest cloth mills. Cannon was also involved in the founding of other piedmont North Carolina textile mills during the 1890s. In Cabarrus County, Cannon helped establish the Cabarrus Cotton Mill, the Gibson Manufacturing Company, and the Tuscarora Cotton Mill. He was also active in the formation of textile mills in Salisbury, China Grove, and Albemarle, North Carolina.<sup>24</sup>

By the end of 1899 the Kesler Mill village still consisted of only one brick manufacturing building, a frame office, twenty-two mill houses and a store owned by the Central Land Company, all located along Park Avenue just west of the mill building. As the new president of the company J. W. Cannon initiated a period of expansion during the first few years of the twentieth century from which emerged the mill village as it exists today. The company's capital stock was increased to \$80,000.00 in December, 1899. According to an unpublished report compiled from minutes of meetings of the company's board of directors, this money was used to pay bills from machine companies who supplied equipment to the mill.<sup>25</sup> Some of these funds may also have been used to purchase land around the mill for future expansion. In March of 1900 the Kesler Manufacturing Company purchased a tract of land from the Central Land Company for \$7,500.00. According to the deed for this property (which extended along Park Avenue from N. Boundary Street to Town Creek and included Arlington Street, Kesler's Place, and Cedar Street) it included the twenty-two mill houses and a store that had

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been built in 1896 by the Central Land Company.<sup>26</sup> This parcel of land provided space for new mill houses which were soon constructed for the enlarged work force created by the company's expansion during the first few years of the twentieth century.

J. W. Cannon moved quickly to place the Kesler Manufacturing Company in a position to compete with other North Carolina textile mills. The company's capital stock was increased again in August, 1900 to \$125,000.00. The funds were used to purchase new manufacturing equipment which brought the value of the mill to \$99,322.00.<sup>27</sup> An additional 5,000 new spindles brought the total number in the mill to 11,232, pushing the value evaluation up to \$158,076.00. New machinery increased<sup>28</sup> production and helped the company realize a net profit of \$5,754.00 in 1901. During 1902 the company's capital stock was again increased by fifty percent and the manufacturing activity was changed from the production of cotton yarn to the production of cotton cloth. In 1903 the mill was expanded by the construction of a second building (Building C<sub>2</sub> on map) which increased the number of spindles used by the mill to over 20,000.<sup>29</sup>

The tremendous expansion of the Kesler Manufacturing Company was typical of the North Carolina textile industry. During the period 1880-1900 the average North Carolina mill increased its number of spindles from 1,885 to 6,400, its capital stock from \$58,282.00 to \$186,000.00, the value of its products from \$52,132.00 to \$160,000.00, and the number of workers it employed from 66 to 175.<sup>30</sup> By 1900 there were 177 mills in the state capitalized at \$33,000,000.00. These mills<sup>31</sup> produced goods valued at \$28,000,000.00 and employed 30,273 workers.

The expansion of the Kesler Manufacturing Company complex during the first few years of the twentieth century increased the size of the company's work force and brought about a corresponding increase in the number of houses in the surrounding mill village. Information concerning the number of workers employed by the mill and the number of houses in the mill village during the first few years of the twentieth century is somewhat confusing. According to the 1901 city directory the mill village had a population of 510, comprising 102 families housed in ninety dwellings.<sup>32</sup> The 1907 city directory lists 144 mill employees housed in sixty-two dwellings.<sup>33</sup> An examination of later city directories and Sanborn maps indicates that by 1907 there were probably not more than sixty-two mill dwellings comprising the village. It is difficult to determine the exact date at which these dwellings were built, but most of the houses located south of the mill along Arlington Street, Kesler's Place, and Cedar Street were probably built between 1900, when the company purchased the land upon which they are located,<sup>34</sup> and 1903 when the company's second building was completed. Although they could have been built during the period 1900-1903, a handful of houses along N. Boundary and E. Franklin Street were probably not built until 1906 when the company purchased land in that area.<sup>35</sup>

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Although the company's profits fluctuated during the next few years, the expansion of the Kesler Manufacturing Company's mill complex continued throughout the first decade of the twentieth century. During the 1908-1909 fiscal year the company used 4,973 bales of cotton, produced 7,369,875 yards of goods, and earned a net profit of \$86,133.00. The company also converted the mill from steam to electric power, increased the capital stock to \$250,000.00, and installed new equipment worth \$100,000.00.<sup>36</sup> Although the mill used more cotton and produced more goods, the company's net profits declined to \$61,302.00 during the 1909-1910 fiscal year. Nevertheless, the company built a new brick office building (Building A on map) in 1910 at a cost of \$3,162.00.<sup>37</sup> By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the mill complex and surrounding village had expanded far beyond its original size. In 1910 the area consisted of the mill complex containing two brick manufacturing buildings, a brick office building, and a frame warehouse surrounded by sixty-two mill houses, ten privately owned dwellings, and two frame stores, one of which was later demolished.

The development of the Kesler Manufacturing Company and its surrounding mill village during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries took place during a period of intense growth for the city of Salisbury. A report issued by the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce in 1902 stated that the city's population had doubled between 1897 and 1902. The report further stated that real estate investments were earning a return of 12 - 15% and that houses were being built during the period at the rate of one per week.<sup>38</sup> The city of Salisbury's financial statement for 1907 supports these figures concerning the city's growth during the first few years of the twentieth century and reports that 145 new homes were constructed at a total cost of \$236,845.00 during the period from December, 1905 to February, 1907.<sup>39</sup> Between 1900 and 1910, Salisbury's population increased from 6,277 to 7,153 without an increase in the town's geographical boundaries.<sup>40</sup>

The tremendous period of growth of the Kesler Manufacturing Company and its mill village was followed by a more normal rate during the second decade of the century. New cotton warehouses (Buildings G on map) were built in 1915 at a cost of \$9,413.00.<sup>41</sup> These buildings added 14,200 square feet of storage space to the mill complex. A new machine shop and supply room (Building B on map) were also built in 1917 at a cost of \$6,200.00.<sup>42</sup> Very little building activity occurred in the mill village, however, during the second decade of the twentieth century. The Kesler Manufacturing Company built only three mill houses and private owners, who purchased lots from the Central Land Co., constructed only four dwellings and two warehouses in the district during this period. In 1919 the district contained seventy-six frame dwellings, two frame stores, two metal warehouse buildings and the mill complex. This period of slower growth was typical of other nearby residential areas in Salisbury, such as the North Long Street - Park Avenue Historic District. Although Salisbury's economy continued

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to expand during this period, the economic effects of World War I probably restricted construction activity in the mill village as well as other residential neighborhoods in Salisbury. The war brought about an increased demand for the company's products, but the shortage of workers due to the claims of military service made the construction of new mill houses unnecessary and uneconomical.

At the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, the Kesler Manufacturing Company's traditionally positive relationship with the city of Salisbury became strained. The company's records reveal numerous instances of generosity extended to the community. The company often donated money to the nearby Park Avenue United Methodist Church and even paid the salary of the church's pastor. Funds were also donated to the local Y.M.C.A., to the city library, and for city street paving.<sup>43</sup> However, in 1911 the company opposed the city's efforts to have Salisbury's boundaries extended to include some of the company's property.<sup>44</sup> The opposition probably stemmed from the company's concern over having its tax obligation increased. Momentary success soon abated; the city limits were extended in 1915.

The slowed development of the second decade of the twentieth century was followed by one of the most intense periods of growth in the company's history during the period 1920-1928. These halcyon years came in under the direction of Charles A. Cannon, who assumed the presidency of the Kesler Manufacturing Company in 1921 upon the death of his father J. W. Cannon.<sup>45</sup> J. W. Cannon had served the company as president since 1899 and had guided its expansion from a small inefficient manufacturing company into a profitable and well-managed textile complex. His son was to improve still more upon that success. Several additions to the company's mill complex were completed during the 1920s. These additions included an expansion of the weave building built in 1903, construction of a new cotton warehouse, and erection of a new waste house and picker room.<sup>46</sup> A great deal of construction activity also took place in the mill village in the 1920s. During the first few years of the decade several bungalows were built along the southwest side of the 700 block of Park Avenue, the northwest side of the 400 block of N. Boundary Street, and the southwest side of the 700 block of E. Franklin Street. The dwellings located along N. Boundary Street are the most significant of these houses for they are the only ones in the district that can be specifically identified as having been built to house mill supervisors. In 1925 a row of identical front gabled bungalows was built along the northeast side of the 600 block of E. Cemetery Street and another row of identical clipped side gable bungalows were built along the southwest side of the 800 block of Park Avenue in 1927. With the construction of these dwellings the mill village reached its present size and proportions and the building of mill houses by the company ceased. In 1927 the district consisted of the mill complex, one frame store building, two corrugated metal warehouses not associated with the mill complex, and ninety-nine frame dwellings.

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Although the development of the mill village ceased in 1927, changes in the operation and organization of the company continued. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century J. W. Cannon had been involved in the establishment or ownership of several other mills in the Rowan-Davidson County area. Cannon continued this involvement throughout his life and although these mills, which included the Kesler Manufacturing Company, the Cabarrus Cotton Mill, the Gibson Manufacturing Company, the Patterson Manufacturing Company, the Franklin Cotton Mill, the Norcott Mill, and the Cannon Manufacturing Company,<sup>47</sup> operated under other names, J. W. Cannon and later his son C. A. Cannon played major roles in their development. In 1928 the organization of these mills (as well as the Hobarton Manufacturing Co.) under the management of the Cannon family, which had been a reality for thirty years, became official with their consolidation into the Cannon Mills Company. At the time of this consolidation the Kesler Manufacturing Company, which became Plant No. 7 in the new order had a capital stock of \$1,500,000.00. The combination of capital stock from each of the incorporated mills gave the Cannon Mills Company a total capital stock of \$12,000,000.00.<sup>48</sup>

The expansion and eventual consolidation of the Kesler Manufacturing Company into the Cannon Mills Company was typical of the development of the textile industry in North Carolina during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Between 1900 and 1923 the amount of capital invested in North Carolina textile mills increased from \$33,012,000.00 to \$268,323,000.00. During this same period the value of products produced in the state's textile mills increased from \$28,373,000.00 to \$318,308,000.00, and the number of spindles in use rose from 1,134,909 to 5,463,547.<sup>49</sup> The consolidation of smaller mills into larger, more efficient operations as well as the passing of the mill village characterized the North Carolina textile industry during the second quarter of the twentieth century and is considered by some historians to have been the most significant development in the industry after 1930.<sup>50</sup>

After its consolidation into the Cannon Mills Company in 1928 the Kesler Manufacturing Company-Cannon Mills Company Plant No. 7 Historic District remained relatively stable. Some expansions to the mill complex occurred, but the development of the mill village ceased. The most significant change in the district was social in nature. Following the second World War, more jobs in the textile industry were available to blacks, and blacks began to make up a larger percentage of the company's workforce and to move into the company's houses in the mill village. Today over fifty percent of the dwellings in the district, originally available only to whites, are occupied by black residents. During the last few years the Cannon Mills Company has begun to sell its company owned houses in the district to current or retired employees and other private owners. In selling its mill housing, the company follows a trend that began to characterize the North Carolina textile industry during the mid 1930s. Although it has slowed during the last three decades, this trend of selling mill housing to

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workers had reached a milestone in 1950 when 83 North Carolina mills, or 21.8% of the state's total, had sold their mill housing.<sup>51</sup> Although exact figures are not available it is estimated that about fifteen percent of the district's dwellings are owned by private individuals.

The Kesler Manufacturing Company-Cannon Mills Company Plant No. 7 Historic District is the best preserved late nineteenth and early twentieth century mill complex and village which survives in Salisbury. As such, it is an important element in the urbanization and industrialization of Salisbury, as well as of the development of the North Carolina textile industry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

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<sup>1</sup> Kesler Manufacturing Company Day Book No. 1, p.1, hereinafter cited as Day Book No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Alice Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company" (unpublished report in possession of Cannon Mills Company, Plant No. 7), hereinafter cited as Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Central Land Company to the Kesler Manufacturing Company, August 12, 1895, Rowan County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Rowan County Courthouse, Salisbury, Book 81, 113, hereinafter cited as Rowan County Deeds.

<sup>7</sup> The exact dimensions of this parcel of land can be determined by comparing the Central Land Company map with the deed which refers to specific block numbers on the map.

<sup>8</sup> See the North Long Street - Park Avenue National Register Historic District Nomination.

<sup>9</sup> Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company" and Day Book No. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> "1899 Southern Supplement", The Manufacturers Record (Baltimore, December, 1899), p. 22-23.

<sup>14</sup> Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, The History of a Southern State: North Carolina, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, third edition, 1973), p. 509, hereinafter cited as Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina.

<sup>15</sup> Salisbury Evening Post, Bicentennial Edition, Section B, p. 7, hereinafter cited as Salisbury Evening Post.

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- <sup>16</sup> Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, p. 509.
- <sup>17</sup> Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Salisbury Evening Post.
- <sup>20</sup> Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> Peter Kaplan, The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County, North Carolina, (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1981), p. 25, hereinafter cited as Kaplan, The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".
- <sup>26</sup> Central Land Company to Kesler Manufacturing Company, March 2, 1900, Rowan County Deeds, Book 88, 246.
- <sup>27</sup> Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Lefler and Newsome, p. 508.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> Salisbury - Spencer City Directory, 1901, (Chicago: The Interstate Directory Co., 1901), p. 6.
- <sup>33</sup> Salisbury - Spencer City Directory, 1907, (Asheville, NC: Piedmont Directory Co., 1907), p. 209-214.
- <sup>34</sup> Central Land Company to Kesler Manufacturing Company, Rowan County Deeds, Book 88, 246.

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35 F. L. Robbins to Kesler Manufacturing Company, Rowan County Deeds, Book 108, 416.

36 Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".

37 Ibid.

38 Salisbury, 1902 (Salisbury Chamber of Commerce, 1902).

39 City of Salisbury Financial Statement, 1907 (Charlotte: Elam and Dooley Printers, 1907), p. 78.

40 Davyd Foard Hood, The Architecture of Rowan County: A Catalogue and History of Surviving Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Early Twentieth Century Structures (Raleigh: Glover Printing Co., 1983) p. 294.

41 Bumgarner, "Kesler Manufacturing Company".

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Consolidation Agreement, Rowan County Deeds, Book 199, 501.

48 Ibid.

49 "The South's Development", The Manufacturers Record (Baltimore, December 11, 1924), p. 401.

50 Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, p. 632-633.

51 Ibid.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Approximately 10 acres

Quadrangle name Salisbury, 1962

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	1	7
Zone	Easting	Northing

B 

1	1	7
Zone	Easting	Northing

C 

5	4	9	1	0	10
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

D 

5	4	9	2	8	10
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

E 

3	1	9	4	8	3	0	10	
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

F 

3	1	9	4	8	6	3	10	
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

G 

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

H 

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

Bounded roughly by Franklin Street to the Northeast; Cedar Street to the Southeast; Liberty Street to the Southwest and Clay Street to the Northwest. See map for specific boundary.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
-------	-----	------	--------	-----	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ray Manieri

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date February, 1985

street & number 5731-F Bramblegate Road telephone (919) 852-1858

city or town Greensboro state North Carolina

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Finley

title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 11, 1985

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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