

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Carpenter Historic District  
other names/site number NA

2. Location

street & number Along Carpenter-Morrisville Road (SR 3014) east of CSX Railroad Tracks and west of Davis Drive (SR 1613)  
 not for publication

city or town Cary  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27512

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Stephen J. Crow* SHPO 4/7/00

Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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

5. Classification

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

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

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>66</u>	<u>17</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	sites
<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	structures
		objects
<u>75</u>	<u>28</u>	Total

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

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

Historic and Architectural Resources of Wake County, North Carolina  
(1770-1941)

0

6. Function or Use

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

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

see continuation sheet  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

see continuation sheet  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

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

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian  
Colonial Revival  
Commercial Style  
No style

foundation: brick  
walls: weatherboard  
brick  
roof: metal  
other: concrete block  
\_\_\_\_\_

X see continuation sheet

**Narrative Description**

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

8. Statement of Significance

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

X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

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

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Agriculture

Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

Late nineteenth century - 1933

Significant Dates

ca. 1895

1906

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data

X State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

X Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Wake County Planning Department



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Section 6 Page 1

Carpenter Historic District, Wake County, North Carolina

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**SECTION 6: FUNCTION OR USE**

**Historic Functions**

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC: secondary structure  
COMMERCE/TRADE: general store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse  
SOCIAL: meeting hall  
GOVERNMENT: post office  
FUNERARY: cemetery  
AGRICULTURE: agriculture field  
AGRICULTURE: processing  
AGRICULTURE: outbuilding  
FUNERARY: cemetery  
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

**Current Functions**

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC: secondary structure  
COMMERCE/TRADE: general store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse  
AGRICULTURE: agriculture field  
AGRICULTURE: processing  
AGRICULTURE: outbuilding  
FUNERARY: cemetery  
RELIGION: religious facility  
RELIGION: church-related residence  
LANDSCAPE: park  
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related  
VACANT: not in use

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Carpenter Historic District, Wake County, North Carolina

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**SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION**

**Materials, continued**

**foundation:** stone  
concrete  
**walls:** tin  
vinyl  
terra cotta tile  
**roof:** asphalt  
**other:** N/A

**Narrative Description**

Located in western Wake County straddling Cedar Fork and White Oak townships, the Carpenter Historic District consists of a commercial crossroads and surrounding residences, farmsteads, and community buildings. The district includes approximately 210 acres, made up primarily of gently rolling farmland and expansive pine woods. Though agriculture is becoming a rare pursuit in growing Wake County, fields cultivated in tobacco, hay, and soybeans are still found around Carpenter. The fields are often bordered by woods and fences and feature ponds used for crop irrigation.

The tracks of the former Durham and Southern Railroad (now the CSX) form the western boundary of the district (no. 1). Adjacent to the tracks on the east side, the crossroads consists of a T-shaped intersection formed by the east-west Morrisville-Carpenter Road (historically known as the Chapel Hill Road) and the Carpenter-Upchurch Road extending south. The crossroads constitutes the commercial heart of the district, boasting three general stores and six relatively modest early twentieth-century homes of the families who worked in the stores and other workers in the community. The district boundary extends east from the crossroads to include eight small farmsteads along or near Morrisville-Carpenter Road, as well as the Good Hope Baptist Church (no. 21) where most of the community worshiped and the church cemetery where many buried their dead (no. 21b).

The focal point of the crossroads is the Carpenter Farm Supply Company (no. 6). Built by William Henry Carpenter, the store consists of a ca. 1895 one-story frame section and a two-story brick section added in 1916. The most substantial early twentieth-century store building in rural Wake County, this store closely resembles the commercial buildings constructed in small towns in the county during the period with its two-story height, brick construction, and parapet roof. Located on an angular lot, the Carpenter Store sits at the intersection of the Morrisville-Carpenter Road and the Carpenter-Upchurch Road facing the two other major commercial structures in the village: a store that local tradition holds was built in the late nineteenth century and served for many years as a farmers' cooperative store and meeting hall and a Masonic lodge (no. 5) and the ca. 1916 Ferrell store (no. 12). Both are two stories tall of frame construction. To the east of the Carpenter Store stands a utilitarian, metal-covered, frame building that housed D. Judson "Judd" Clark's 1920s machine shop, and which later housed an automobile garage and dealership (no. 8). The crossroads also includes two warehouses which stand next to the railroad tracks on the north side of the Morrisville-Carpenter Road that were associated

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with the store business of C. F. Ferrell (nos. 12a and 12b).

Surrounding the stores are six dwellings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. While most of these dwellings housed the families of the store owners, several served as rental property for railroad laborers and other workers. With the exception of the two-story home of William Henry Carpenter, the houses are one story tall and of frame construction with simple Victorian trim. The most prominent dwelling in the community, the William Henry Carpenter House (no. 3) displays the traditional I-house form and the three-gable "triple-A" roof found so often on turn of the century dwellings, as well as simple Victorian porch and gable ornamentation.

The remainder of the district contains eight farm complexes and surrounding associated farm fields and woodlands. While none of these is notably significant on its own, the ensemble provides a glimpse of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century rural development patterns associated with bright leaf tobacco cultivation. Reflecting the relatively small amount of acreage required to produce a profitable tobacco crop, these complexes are somewhat closely spaced along the Morrisville-Carpenter Road. Each of the farm complexes includes farmhouses of typical Wake County types dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. All of these are one to one-and-a-half stories tall and of frame construction; most display simple Victorian, Craftsman, or Colonial Revival details. Surrounding most of the farmhouses are collections of both domestic and agricultural outbuildings. Generally clustered close to the house, domestic outbuildings include wellhouses, smokehouses, greenhouses, garages, and domestic storage buildings. One building on the Byrd-Ferrell property is said to have been a Delco power house that supplied power for C. F. Ferrell's home and businesses (no. 14a). In addition, most of the complexes include buildings associated with tobacco cultivation, the mainstay of the local economy from the late nineteenth century through recent decades. Most often located beyond the domestic complex, these buildings include traditional curing barns of log and frame construction, frame grading houses, and frame packhouses. The A. M. Howard Farm (no. 24) also contains one terra cotta-tile curing barn--representing a 1930s experiment in new, heat-absorbing materials for tobacco barns. Other outbuildings found on the farms include barns for animal and hay storage, equipment sheds, and a variety of storage sheds.

The Good Hope Baptist Church, located between the village and five eastern farms, has occupied this central geographic point in the community since the late nineteenth century. The property includes the 1960 classical-style church building, (no. 21) that replaced the earlier church, a Tudor Revival parsonage built in 1951 (no. 21a), and a cemetery that includes the graves of many community residents dating from the early twentieth century to the present, including members of the Carpenter and Ferrell families (no. 21b). While the Good Hope congregation's resources are non-contributing due to age, the property links the church with the community's past.

At the present time, the aggressive suburbanization of the last decade has reached Carpenter, which up to now had changed very little since the early twentieth century. This is particularly remarkable, given its location near the burgeoning towns of Cary, Morrisville, and Apex. The Town of Cary annexed most of Carpenter in the late 1980s. A new development known as Carpenter Village is being constructed across the Morrisville-Carpenter Road from the three easternmost farms. New development does not yet intrude on the village.

Most of the changes within the district consist of expansions or minor modernizations to the houses, stores, and farm outbuildings in the district in recent decades. Most of these changes do not adversely affect the integrity or

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contributing status of the resources. There appear to have been only three major construction projects within the district in the second half of the twentieth century: Good Hope Baptist Church built its new sanctuary in 1960; Mr. and Mrs. George Rimer built a house on the Saunders Farm property in 1977; and the local ruritan group constructed a small park adjacent to the Ferrell store in the mid-1980s (with a picnic shelter, storage building, and basketball and tennis courts). Other changes include the demolition of the railroad depot in the early 1950s and the removal of a few railroad-related residences that were located near the tracks.

Despite these changes and growth at the edges of the community, the primary commercial, residential, and agricultural buildings of the Carpenter Historic District remain essentially intact, as do the field patterns and other pastoral features that have identified this rural community for over a century. None of the above-listed alterations harms the overall integrity of the district. The district's twenty-eight non-contributing resources are limited to buildings, structures, and one site constructed after the period of significance and a few resources that have been more heavily altered. The district as a whole remains remarkably intact, retaining integrity of setting, location, design, materials, feeling, and association.

### Inventory List

The following inventory list begins at the west side of the district with the railroad tracks and continues with properties along the Carpenter-Upchurch Road. It then moves east along the north side of the Morrisville-Carpenter Road, including some resources on nearby Carpenter Fire Station Road, Saunders Grove Road and Good Hope Church Road, until reaching the eastern edge of the district, which is marked by the property line of the former C. F. Ferrell farm.

Resources are identified by street addresses when available. Geographical locations are given for properties without known street addresses.

### Inventory List Key

C=Contributing  
NC=Non-Contributing  
B=Building  
S=Structure

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | West end of the district, running north-south parallel to NC 55 | <b>Durham and Southern Railroad tracks.</b> These tracks, which include the main tracks and a spur leading to the refueling stop at the Carpenter depot, were a part of the Durham and Southern Railroad. The Durham and Southern connected northern Harnett County and southern Wake County with the town of Apex and the agricultural markets of Durham. The coming of the railroad marked a period of growth and prosperity for the rural crossroads community of Carpenter, and greatly influenced the current appearance of the community. Now a part of the CSX railroad, the tracks are still in use. |
|   | C-S<br>ca. 1906   |  |

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- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | 3041 Carpenter-Upchurch Road<br><br>C-B<br>late 19th/early 20th century | <p><b>William Henry Carpenter Boarding House.</b> The earliest section of this one-story frame house is said to have been built in the late nineteenth century, predating the Carpenter Farm Supply Company (Dale Carpenter, interview, June 1999). The building, which is said to have been used as a boarding house for railroad and other workers, was expanded several times in the early twentieth century with additional frame rooms and wings (many of which have since been removed). The oldest surviving section of the house is essentially L-shaped, with a cross-gable roof, interior brick chimney and plain weatherboard siding. Windows are one-over-one sash. More recent frame additions have been added to the side and rear. The house has also served as a rental home for individual families and continues to be used in that capacity.</p> |
|   | C-B<br>ca. 1930s  | <p><u>2a. Garage.</u> Frame, gable-roofed garage.</p>   |
|   | C-B<br>Early 20th century   | <p><u>2b. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-roofed shed.</p>   |
| 3 | 3040 Carpenter-Upchurch Road<br><br>C-B<br>ca. 1910                     | <p><b>William Henry Carpenter House.</b> Built around 1910 by William Henry Carpenter, the first store-owner in Carpenter, this frame I-house is topped by a triple-A roof. Rear additions include a rear shed and T-shaped wing. The house is clad in German siding. It features a wrap-around porch supported by turned posts with simple sawn brackets and decorative gable vents. Windows are two-over-two sash. The house sits on eight acres of farmland that remain in cultivation.</p>  |
|   | C-B<br>ca. 1910   | <p><u>3a. Greenhouse.</u> This shed-roofed brick greenhouse used to preserve plants in the winter is similar to others found in western Wake County. It is one of two such domestic greenhouses in the Carpenter Historic District. The windows have been removed, but it retains its original form and all other original materials.</p>   |
| 4 | 3048 Carpenter-Upchurch Road<br><br>C-B<br>ca. 1915                     | <p><b>Adelaide Carpenter Page House.</b> Built around 1915 for Adelaide, the sister of William Henry Carpenter, this one-story frame house has a triple-A roof and rear shed and ell extensions. A room has been added to the side of the rear ell in recent years. The house retains its German siding, although the original windows and porch have been replaced. The current gable-roofed porch stoop retains sawn trim from the original porch (identical to that found on the William Henry Carpenter House).</p>   |

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C-B  
early 20th century

4a. Smokehouse and washhouse. This early twentieth-century, one-story, frame side-gable-roofed smokehouse has German siding and an attached frame side shed used as a wash house.

NC-B  
1980s

4b. Storage building. This modern frame storage building is noncontributing due to age.

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- 5 SW corner, jct  
Morrisville-  
Carpenter Rd and  
Carpenter-  
Upchurch Rd
- C-B  
late 19th century  
early 20th century  
mid 20th century  
ca. 1990

**(Former) Store.** Two stories tall with a gable-front orientation, this frame store building is said to have been built in the late nineteenth century and was expanded several times to the side and rear with frame additions in the early to mid twentieth century. The main block, which displays exposed rafter ends, has been covered with corrugated tin. A porch spans the front of the building, also serving as a loading dock for current customers of the Carpenter family's feed business. The porch contains both early and replacement structural materials and shelters original double six-panel doors. Windows have been covered with the metal siding, although wooden shutters are visible on the second story of the main block. A frame, hip-roofed belfry has been added to the original section of the building in recent years. The one-story, gable-roofed side addition on the west (track) side of the building also has a corrugated tin covering. This section features a loading dock and a metal silo. The one-story rear ell has German siding.

Strong local and Carpenter family tradition holds that the building, referred to by some long-time residents as the "Union Hall," was built in the late nineteenth century to serve as a farmers' cooperative store, with an upstairs meeting room for a farmers' organization. It is also said to have served as a Masonic lodge for the Junior Order of Masons in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Records of the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union (known as the "Farmers' Union), which had thirty-eight chapters in Wake County in the early twentieth century (Wake County MPDF, 47-48; Lally 1994, 64-65), indicate that a local chapter met in Carpenter from 1912 until at least 1920 (NC Farmers' Union Records, 1912-1923). Given the dates of construction for the other buildings in the village and the strong oral tradition associated with this building, it seems likely that this was the group's meeting place. However, no written records indicate the building's date of construction or original use. William Henry Carpenter is said to have acquired the building around the turn of the century for use in his farm supply business, although family members indicate that the lodge and farmers' group continued to meet in the building for a number of years after Carpenter's acquisition (Dale Carpenter, interviews, June and October 1999).

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- 6 1933 Morrisville-Carpenter Rd  
C-B  
ca. 1895; ca. 1916;  
ca. 1983
- Carpenter Farm Supply Company.** Built in several stages, the Carpenter Farm Supply Company is an excellent and unusually prominent example of a crossroads commercial building. The one-story, frame, gable-front portion of the building was built by William Henry Carpenter in 1895 as a replacement to an earlier Carpenter family store. The Carpenter's commercial establishment was greatly expanded in 1916 with the addition of a two-story brick building adjacent to the earlier store. This larger brick store, which resembles store buildings built in Wake's incorporated towns during the period, features a stepped parapet roof, a corbelled cornice, common bond brick walls, and segmental-arch windows of six-over-six sashes. It was attached to the earlier store building with a frame section (probably in the 1920s). The frame connecting portion still holds the post office boxes of the Carpenter Post Office, which closed around 1933. The current porch with turned posts and sawn brackets that spans all three sections of the building was added in the 1980s and is a replica of an early twentieth-century porch. Two rear additions were added in 1983-1984: a rear shed and a long wing with three garage bays--both of concrete block construction.
- William H. Carpenter established his first store about a half-mile to the east around 1885, but moved his business to this crossroads location ten years later. Carpenter and his family donated land for the Durham and Southern Railroad and were instrumental in getting a railroad depot for the community. During his life, William H. Carpenter served as post master, deputy sheriff, and member of the school board (Nifong 1998). Carpenter family descendants still own and operate the farm supply business.
- 7 **Vacant Lot.** Small wedge-shaped parcel located behind the Carpenter Farm Supply building.
- 8 S side Morrisville-Carpenter Rd, just east of jct with Carpenter-Upchurch Rd  
C-B  
ca. 1920
- D. Judson Clark Machine/Garage.** D. Judson ("Judd") Clark is said to have built this one-story, gable-front, frame structure for use as a machine shop around 1920. The building was used in the 1930s as an automobile garage and car dealership (Dun, Mercantile Agency Reference Book, 1933, 1936, 1938, 1939, 1940). The utilitarian building has a parapet roof, exposed rafter ends, six-over-six sash windows, and a wide front service entry. Exterior walls are covered with corrugated metal, and are said to have been so covered since its construction (Dale Carpenter, interview, June 1999). Various members of the Russell family have owned the property in the latter half of the twentieth century. The current tenants still operate an automobile repair shop in the building.



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Carpenter Historic District, Wake County, North Carolina

12 N side Morrisville-  
Carpenter Rd just  
east of RR tracks

C-B  
ca. 1916

**C. F. Ferrell Store.** Built ca. 1916 by C. F. Ferrell to replace an earlier store building, this two-story, hip-roofed frame store is another excellent example of the country store. The store sits on a triangular lot that is bound by the railroad tracks to the west, the Morrisville-Carpenter Road to the south, and the Carpenter Fire Station Road to the northeast. Behind the store is a cultivated field currently planted in tobacco.

The building sits on a brick pier foundation, is clad in German siding, and has a roof of metal shingles. It retains its original storefront with recessed entry, a two-pane transom above the door, and display windows of six panes with wooden muntins. Other notable features include exposed rafter ends, metal finials marking the peaks of the roof, and a shed-roofed front porch supported by chamfered posts. The porch is marked by tongue and groove wainscoting; the metal railing on the porch roof is a later addition.

For many years, Ferrell operated his store in partnership with Mallie Butts. In addition to the general merchandise business, from the 1910s through the early 1930s he operated a lumber and planing mill business, as well as a cotton gin, in partnership with his sons. Ferrell went out of business during the early years of the Depression. Various owners ran the store until the 1960s. It has served several functions since that time and now houses an antiques business. This building was moved a few feet to the east of its original location next to the tracks when the Morrisville-Carpenter Road was straightened in the 1940s (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999).

N side Morrisville-  
Carpenter Rd just  
east of RR tracks

C-B  
early 20th century

12a. Ferrell Warehouse. Located adjacent to the railroad tracks and built as a storage facility for Ferrell's store in Carpenter, this one-story, frame warehouse resembles a railroad depot with its wide overhanging hip roof, exposed rafter ends, and tall brick pier foundation. The double freight doors originally opened onto a loading platform, which has been removed. The exterior of the building has been covered with corrugated tin.

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- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
|    | N side Morrisville-Carpenter Rd just east of RR tracks          | <u>12b. Ferrell Fertilizer Warehouse.</u> One story tall with a gable roof, this frame building was built to serve as a fertilizer shed and still serves the same purpose. It sits on a tall brick foundation and has been covered with corrugated tin. The building was originally located on the south side of Morrisville-Carpenter Road, just west of the railroad tracks, but was moved to this location in the 1920s (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999).   |
|    | C-B<br>early 20th century                                       |   |
| 13 | N side Carpenter-Morrisville Rd<br>NC-site<br>ca. 1985          | <b>Carpenter Ruritan Park.</b> Developed in the 1980s, the Carpenter Ruritan Park is located in a grove of oak trees just east of the Charles. F. Ferrell store. The park includes a playground, basketball court, and tennis court. It is non-contributing due to age.   |
| 14 | N of jct Morrisville-Carpenter Rd and Carpenter Fire Station Rd | <b>Byrd-Ferrell House.</b> Probably built in two or more stages beginning around the turn of the century, this one-story, cruciform-shaped house is said to have been owned by the Byrd family until it was purchased around 1906 by C. F. Ferrell and his family. The Ferrells moved to Carpenter from a nearby farm to set up business when the Durham and Southern Railroad was being constructed through the community (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999). The house features two front doors, a full facade front porch with turned posts and sawn brackets, numerous brick chimneys, and two-over-two sash windows. German siding covers the building. |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1920   |   |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1920   | <u>14a. Delco power plant building.</u> This frame, gable-front building is said to have housed a Delco power plant that provided electricity for C. F. Ferrell's businesses in the early twentieth century (Dale Carpenter, interview, June 1999). It has German siding and exposed rafter ends.   |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1920   | <u>14b. Garage.</u> Frame, gable-front garage with German siding and side sheds.  |
|    | C-B<br>early 20th century                                       | <u>14c. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-front shed with plain siding and flanking enclosed sheds.  |
| 15 | E side Carpenter Fire Station Rd                                | <b>Vacant lot.</b> Small vacant parcel just northwest of the intersection with the Morrisville-Carpenter Road.  |

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|----|--|--|
| 16 | 6716 Carpenter Fire Station Rd<br><br>C-B<br>early 20th c.<br><br><br>C-B<br>ca. 1930  | <p><b>Byrd Tenant house.</b> One of two nearly identical houses built side by side on Carpenter Fire Station Road, this one-story, frame dwelling is said to have been a farm tenant house owned originally by the Byrd family (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999). The four-bay facade features two front doors flanked by windows with replacement two-over-two horizontal sashes. The house has a central brick chimney, German siding, and a shed porch supported by plain posts. To the rear is a shed addition.</p> <p><u>16a. Shed.</u> Ca. 1930 frame, gable-roofed shed covered with metal siding.</p>  |
| 17 | 6720 Carpenter Fire Station Rd<br><br>C-B<br>early 20th c.<br><br>C-B<br>ca. 1930<br><br>NC-S<br>ca. 1990<br><br>NC-B<br>ca. 1990<br><br>C-S<br>ca. 1950 | <p><b>Byrd Tenant house.</b> One of two nearly identical houses built side by side on Carpenter Fire Station Road, this one-story, frame dwelling is said to have been a farm tenant house owned originally by the Byrd family (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999). The four-bay facade features two front doors. Windows have six-over-six sashes. The house has several small brick flues, asbestos-shingle siding, and a shed porch that has been screened in. To the rear are several shed additions.</p> <p><u>17a. Outbuilding.</u> Frame, gable-front farm building with plain siding, side shed, and a small six-over-six sash window.</p> <p><u>17b. Pumphouse.</u> Modern brick pumphouse. Non-contributing due to age.</p> <p><u>17c. Storage shed.</u> Modern gable-roofed frame shed. Non-contributing due to age.</p> <p><u>17d. Pumphouse.</u> Frame, gable-roofed pumphouse.</p> |
| 18 | 101 Saunders Grove Lane<br>NC-B<br>ca. 1977<br><br>NC-S<br>ca. 1977<br><br>NC-B<br>ca. 1977  | <p><b>Gordon and Nell Rimer House.</b> One-story, frame gable-roofed house built ca. 1977. Non-contributing due to age.</p> <p><u>18a. Carport.</u> Freestanding metal carport built ca. 1977. Non-contributing due to age.</p> <p><u>18b. Shed.</u> Frame gable-front carpentry workshop with side and rear additions built ca. 1977. Non-contributing due to age.</p>  |

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|----|--|---|
| 19 | 105 Saunders Grove Lane<br><br>NC-B<br>early 20th century<br><br>C-S<br>early 20th century<br><br>NC-B<br>ca. 1930<br><br>NC-B<br>mid-20th century<br><br>NC-S<br>mid-20th century<br><br>C-B<br>ca. 1930s<br><br>NC-S<br>ca. 1960s<br><br>C-B<br>ca. 1935 | <b>Saunders House.</b> Probably built in the early twentieth century, this one-story, frame dwelling has been associated with the Saunders family for many years. This five-bay, gable-roofed house originally consisted of a main block and rear shed. The house has been significantly expanded to the side and rear and remodeled with replacement siding, windows, and porch posts in recent years. It does retain several original features, including an original chimney with stone base and brick stack, as well as a few sections of original German siding and a four-over-four sash window in the gable end, but is noncontributing due to alterations.<br><br><u>19a. Wellhouse.</u> Open frame, gable-front structure.<br><br><u>19b. Shed.</u> Frame building covered with plywood has exposed rafter ends and attached modern greenhouse. Non-contributing due to alterations.<br><br><u>19c. Outbuilding.</u> Frame, gable-front outbuilding with concrete block foundation, batten door, rear shed, and replacement siding. Non-contributing due to age.<br><br><u>19d. Pumphouse.</u> Concrete-block pumphouse. Non-contributing due to age.<br><br><u>19e. Barn.</u> Frame, gable-front barn with side sheds, covered with metal.<br><br><u>19f. Vehicle shed.</u> Frame, gable-front shelter for farm vehicles covered with metal. Non-contributing due to age.<br><br><u>19g. Barn.</u> 1930s-1940s frame, gable-front barn with open shed on three sides, covered with metal. |
| 20 |  | <b>Vacant lot.</b> Triangular vacant lot bounded by Saunders Grove Lane, Morrisville-Carpenter Road, and Good Hope Church Road.   |
| 21 | 6636 Good Hope Church Rd<br>NC-B<br>1960   | <b>Good Hope Baptist Church.</b> Built ca. 1960 on the site of an earlier church building, this T-shaped brick-veneered church features a prominent Classical porch and steeple. It is non-contributing due to age.   |

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NC-B  
ca. 1951

21a. Good Hope Baptist Church Parsonage. Built ca. 1951 ("History of Good Hope Baptist Church," 1980), the brick-veneered parsonage of Good Hope Baptist Church is a simple and relatively late example of Tudor Revival architecture with its multi-gabled roof and arched entry. It has been modernized with new windows. It is non-contributing due to age.

NC-site  
early 20th century  
to present

21b. Good Hope Baptist Church Cemetery. The church cemetery contains graves marked mostly with manufactured marble and granite stones. The earliest marked grave is 1910. While there are a number of marked graves that date from the early twentieth century, the majority of graves are less than fifty years old. Prominent community names found on stones in the cemetery include Carpenter, Ferrell, Maynard, Paschal, Ellis, Butts, Hatcher and McGhee. Among those buried here are William Henry Carpenter (1865-1927) and his wife, Alice (1869-1928) and their descendants, as well as the descendants of C. F. Ferrell and his wife.

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|----|---|---|
| 22 | 1604 Morrisville-Carpenter Rd                               | <p><b>Mallie and Cora Butts Farm.</b> Said to have been built in the late nineteenth century, the home of Mallie and Cora Butts was expanded and completely remodeled in a simple version of the Colonial Revival style in 1930s. While the rectangular form of the house's main block, with its gable roof and exterior-end brick chimney, is consistent with late-nineteenth-century architecture in Wake County, all other details reflect its 1930s remodeling. One-and-a-half stories tall, the house has an original or early rear ell and several more recent additions to the rear. Notable Colonial Revival details include two front gabled dormers and small gabled porches on the front and rear with open and x-pattern supports and zig-zag trim. Front windows include a picture window and a double window of four-over-four sashes; earlier four-over-four sash windows survive in the east gable end. The house has been covered in aluminum siding.</p> <p>In R. G. Dunn's mercantile agency reference books, Mallie Butts is listed as C. F. Ferrell's partner in the general store business from at least 1909 through 1914. He shows up in later years as the community's undertaker (Dun, <i>Mercantile Agency Reference Book</i>, 1909, 1912, 1914, 1922, 1923, 1926, 1927, 1930, 1933). Local residents remember that the undertaker's business was located directly across the Morrisville-Carpenter Road from this house. The building no longer stands. Later Butts moved his undertaking business to Apex. It was the precursor to Apex Funeral Home, a business that is still in operation (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999).</p> |
|    | C-B<br>late 19th century,<br>ca. 1930s<br>late 20th century |   |
|    | C-S<br>early 20th century                                   | <p><u>22a. Wellhouse.</u> Open frame, gable-front structure with square corner posts, diagonal open slats in the gables, and a low railing with diagonal and vertical posts.</p>  |
|    | NC-S<br>late 20th century                                   | <p><u>22b. Pumphouse.</u> Modern gable-front pumphouse. Non-contributing due to age.</p>  |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1930s  | <p><u>22c. Woodshed.</u> Frame gable-front woodshed.</p>  |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1930s  | <p><u>22d. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-front shed.</p>   |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1930s  | <p><u>22e. Garage and workshop.</u> Frame gable-front building with board-and-batten siding is open on the west end of the main section for the storage of vehicles and enclosed on the east end. Both ends have shed wings.</p>  |

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| C-S<br>ca. 1930s                    | <u>22f. Equipment shed.</u> Shed-roofed equipment shed covered with metal siding has two open bays.   |
| NC-B<br>ca. 1980s                   | <u>22g. Shed.</u> Frame gable-front shed with attached dog pens. Non-contributing due to age.   |
| C-B<br>early 20th century           | <u>22h. Dairy.</u> Frame gable-front structure with board-and-batten siding elevated on stilts. Said to have been relocated to current location from the woods. Its elevation on stilts suggests that it once served as the farm's dairy.   |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s                    | <u>22i. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-front structure with board-and-batten siding and two front doors.  |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s                    | <u>22j. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-front structure with board-and-batten siding and recently attached dog pen.  |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s                    | <u>22k. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Log tobacco curing barn with gable roof and later metal covering.  |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s                    | <u>22l. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Log tobacco curing barn with gable roof and later tar paper covering.  |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s                    | <u>22m. Mule barn.</u> Frame, gable-front barn with weatherboard siding and three front entrances.  |
| 23<br>1600 Morrisville-Carpenter Rd | <b>Bill Sears House.</b> Built ca. 1905 by Bill Sears, this one-story, L-shaped house features a cutaway bay window on the front, gable returns, and a few original four-over-four sash windows. The house is sided with plain weatherboards on the main block and German siding on the bay window. In the early 1980s, the house was expanded with a carport to the side and a rear addition. Other changes include the replacement of the porch columns and most of the windows. The house was later owned by members of the Butts family for some time. Omer and Betty Lou Ferrell bought the property from the Butts family in the 1960s and operated an active farm here until recent years. |
| C-B<br>ca. 1905, 1980s              |   |
| C-S<br>ca. 1905                     | <u>23a. Wellhouse.</u> Well shelter has a low hip roof, exposed rafter ends, and a solid railing of vertical boards.  |

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|---|---|
| NC-B<br>early 20th century  | <u>23b. Howard Tenant House.</u> This one-story, two-room log house with side-gable roof and square notching was moved to this location from the adjacent A. M. Howard Farm in 1998 and restored by Mrs. Betty Lou Ferrell. Mrs. Ferrell rebuilt the shed-roof porch and repaired windows during the restoration. Although it retains its integrity, the building is non-contributing because it has been moved from its original location.   |
| 24 1580 Morrisville-Carpenter Rd<br><br>C-B<br>early 20th century | <b>A. M. Howard Farm.</b> Probably built in the 1910s, the one-story, frame, pyramidal-roofed dwelling at the center of the A. M. Howard Farm has a central front gable. The building, which is clad in German siding and topped with a tin roof, is also marked by interior brick chimneys and two-over-two sash windows. The bungalow-type porch supports (with square posts on brick piers) replaced turned posts with sawnwork brackets in the 1920s or 1930s (as evidenced by surviving turned pilasters). Current owner A. M. Howard bought the property in the 1930s and farmed tobacco here until recent years. Twelve outbuildings, including two tobacco curing barns, a tobacco strip room, and a packhouse, stand behind the house. |
| C-B<br>early 20th century   | <u>24a. Barn.</u> Frame, gable-front barn with plain weatherboard siding.   |
| NC-S<br>late 20th century   | <u>24b. Equipment shed.</u> Late twentieth-century open metal equipment shed. Non-contributing due to age.  |
| C-B<br>early 20th century   | <u>24c. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Gable-roofed log tobacco-curing barn with square notching and two open metal sheds.  |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s  | <u>24d. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Gable-roofed, terra cotta-tile tobacco-curing barn with one open metal shed.   |
| C-B<br>early 20th century   | <u>24e. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-roofed shed with attached open shed.   |
| NC-B<br>ca. 1950s   | <u>24f. Garage.</u> Concrete-block, gable-roofed garage. Non-contributing due to age.   |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s  | <u>24g. Smokehouse.</u> Frame gable-front smokehouse.   |
| NC-S<br>ca. 1950s   | <u>24h. Wellhouse.</u> Concrete-block well house. Non-contributing due to age.  |

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| C-B<br>early 20th century   | <u>24i. Shed.</u> Frame gable-front outbuilding with board-and-batten siding.   |
| C-B<br>early 20th century   | <u>24j. Tobacco strip room.</u> Frame, gable-front building on tall stuccoed foundation with exposed rafter ends and board-and-batten doors.  |
| C-B<br>late 19th century  | <u>24k. Packhouse.</u> Apparently a dwelling originally, this one-and-a-half-story, frame house is topped by a side-gable roof and has a one-story rear shed, board-and-batten walls, and a board-and-batten door. The faciaboard is notched to fit with the wall battens. The windows and interior chimney have been removed. The building served as a tobacco packhouse from at least the 1930s through recent tobacco-growing years, although is currently used for storage.   |
| NC-B<br>late 20th century   | <u>24l. Mobile Home.</u> Late twentieth-century mobile home. Non-contributing due to age.   |
| <b>25</b><br>N side Morrisville-Carpenter Rd, 0.2 miles east of Good Hope Church Rd<br><br>CB<br>ca. 1900 | <b><u>Barbee-Williams Farm.</u></b> Said to have been owned by the Barbee family originally, this property has been owned by the Williams family for many years (Dale Carpenter, interview, June 1999; Macon Williams, interview). Built around the turn of the century, the one-story frame farmhouse is topped by a triple-A roof, covered with plain weatherboard siding, and has an L-shaped rear addition. The dwelling is detailed with simple Victorian details, such as a wrap-around porch with turned posts and sawn brackets and patterned shingles and decorative vents in the gables. Windows are two-over-two sash. In recent years it has been used as the office of a landscaping firm. Thirteen outbuildings, including five tobacco curing barns and a packhouse, stand behind the house. |
| C-B<br>early 20th century   | <u>25a. Greenhouse.</u> This shed-roofed brick greenhouse used to preserve plants in the winter is similar to others found in western Wake County. It is one of two such domestic greenhouses in the Carpenter Historic District. The windows have been removed.  |
| C-B<br>early 20th century   | <u>25b. Tobacco packhouse.</u> Frame, gable-front tobacco packhouse with side sheds.  |
| C-S<br>early 20th century   | <u>25c. Wellhouse.</u> Frame, gable-roofed wellhouse.   |
| C-B<br>ca. 1930s  | <u>25d. Garage.</u> Frame, gable-front garage with weatherboard siding.   |

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| NC-B<br>mid-20th century  | <u>25e. Outbuilding.</u> Concrete-block outbuilding with side-gable roof.  |
| C-B<br>early 20th century | <u>25f. Potato house.</u> Log potato house with diamond notching and brick chimney.  |
| C-B<br>early 20th century | <u>25g. Barn.</u> Two-story, frame, gable-front animal and hay barn with open side shed.   |
| C-S<br>early 20th century | <u>25h. Hay shed.</u> Frame open hay shed with metal roof.   |
| C-B<br>early 20th century | <u>25i. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Log tobacco curing barn with gable roof, later metal covering, and attached open side shed. Barn appears to have been raised up on a higher foundation in the mid-twentieth century.    |
| C-B<br>early 20th century | <u>25j. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Log tobacco curing barn with gable roof and attached open side shed. Barn appears to have been raised up on a higher foundation in the mid-twentieth century.                           |
| C-B<br>early 20th century | <u>25k. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Log tobacco curing barn with gable roof and attached open side shed. Barn appears to have been raised up on a higher foundation in the mid-twentieth century.                           |
| C-B<br>early 20th century | <u>25l. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Log tobacco curing barn with gable roof, later metal covering, and attached open side shed. Barn appears to have been raised up on a higher foundation in the mid-twentieth century.    |
| C-B<br>early 20th century | <u>25m. Tobacco curing barn.</u> Log tobacco curing barn with gable roof and attached open, L-shaped shed sheltering two sides. Barn appears to have been raised up on a higher foundation in the mid-twentieth century. |

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| 26 | 1132 Morrisville-Carpenter Rd | <p><b>C. F. Ferrell Farm.</b> Built ca. 1900 by C. F. Ferrell, the one-story frame dwelling at the heart of the farm complex has a triple-A roof and rear shed and ell additions. The house is clad in somewhat unusual “beaded” German siding and features patterned shingles and an elaborate vent in the front gable. Other details of note include an interior corbelled brick chimney and gable returns. Original two-over-two sash windows have been replaced with modern windows with a six-over-six sash configuration. The bungalow-style porch with pyramidal posts on brick piers, as well as the Chippendale-style railing, are 1920s or 1930s modifications.</p> <p>A few years after building this house, Ferrell moved with his family to a house in the village of Carpenter opened a general store. He operated this store with partner and neighbor Mallie Butts for several years and also ran a lumber and cotton gin business with his son. The farm is still owned by descendants of C. F. Ferrell. Fourteen outbuildings for tobacco processing and other agriculture functions are scattered behind the house.</p> |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1900               |  |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1930s              | <p><u>26a. Barn.</u> Frame, gable-front barn with side sheds and metal covering.</p>   |
|    | C-B<br>early 20th century     | <p><u>26b. Barn.</u> Large two-story, frame, gable-front barn with side sheds.</p>   |
|    | C-B<br>early 20th century     | <p><u>26c. Tobacco packhouse.</u> Two-story, frame, gable-front tobacco packhouse with side shed and metal covering.</p>   |
|    | C-B<br>early 20th century     | <p><u>26d. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-front shed.</p>  |
|    | C-B<br>ca. 1920s              | <p><u>26e. Garage.</u> Frame, gable-front garage.</p>  |
|    | NC-B<br>mid-20th century      | <p><u>26f. Outbuilding.</u> Concrete-block outbuilding with gable-front roof and chimney flue. May have been a wash house. Non-contributing due to age.</p>  |
|    | C-B<br>early 20th century     | <p><u>26g. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-front shed.</p>  |
|    | NC-S<br>late 20th century     | <p><u>26h. Equipment shed.</u> Open metal equipment shed. Non-contributing due to age.</p>   |
|    | C-B<br>early 20th century     | <p><u>26i. Shed.</u> Frame, gable-roofed shed.</p>   |

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C-B  
early 20th century

26j. Barn. Frame, gable-front barn with side sheds and replacement siding.

C-B  
early 20th century

26k. Tenant house. Frame, gable-roofed tenant dwelling with central chimney and asphalt siding.

NC-S  
late 20th century

26l. Equipment shed. Open metal equipment shed. Non-contributing due to age.

C-B  
early 20th century

26m. Tobacco curing barn. Board-and-batten tobacco curing barn with gable roof and attached open side shed.

NC-B  
late 20th century

26n. Bulk tobacco curing barn. Metal bulk tobacco curing barn. Non-contributing due to age

27 C-site

**Carpenter Historic District Landscape.** The landscape of the Carpenter Historic District encompasses the natural and man-made pattern of rural commercial and agricultural development that prevailed in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Wake County. This pattern consists primarily of a group of closely-spaced commercial buildings and dwellings located conveniently at the intersection of two or more major thoroughfares and the surrounding farmsteads whose inhabitants depended on the businesses of the crossroads--and on which the crossroads businesses depended.

The farmsteads on the landscape are themselves representative of developments in late nineteenth-century agriculture. With the advent of bright leaf tobacco cultivation in the late nineteenth century, a crop that required less acreage than other crops to be profitable, as well as a host of specialized outbuildings, the rural landscape in western Wake County was transformed. The farmsteads in the Carpenter Historic District represent this transformation. During this period, large farms were subdivided and acreage was sold to an increasing number of farmers. These farmers cleared fields and built modest dwellings, domestic outbuildings, and curing barns, packhouses, and ordering houses for their new tobacco crops. The farmsteads are surrounded by pastures and fields, some no longer in use and others still cultivated with tobacco or other crops used to replenish the soil. The lightly rolling pastures and fields are bordered with woods of pine trees or fences and punctuated periodically with irrigation ponds. Despite heavy suburban development nearby, very little new construction has taken place within the boundaries of the district and Carpenter retains the landscape elements that distinguish it as a rural community of its era.

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## SECTION 8: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Summary

The Carpenter Historic District, a well-preserved rural crossroads in western Wake County, contains three general stores built from the late nineteenth century to ca. 1916 and some fifteen dwellings, nearly all built between 1900 and the 1930s when Carpenter was a thriving farm supply station with a railroad depot. Despite its location near the expanding suburban towns of Cary and Morrisville in the heart of the growing Research Triangle area of North Carolina, Carpenter retains its village character and continues to serve as a commercial center for residents of western Wake County.

The first known building in Carpenter appeared some time in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, when a two-story frame store was constructed at the junction of the Chapel Hill Road and the road leading south to the Upchurch settlement. About 1895 the young William H. Carpenter built a second general store across the intersection, known as the Carpenter Farm Supply Company. The area thrived when local farmers began to grow the lucrative bright leaf tobacco in the late nineteenth century, spurring entrepreneurs in the market town of Durham to build a new railroad through western Wake. In 1905, William Carpenter and his wife, Alice, donated right-of-way for the Durham and Southern Railroad, and the following year the tracks were built through the village, along with it a passenger and freight depot. The same year, a post office was established at the crossroads. Attracted by the railroad, local farmer Charles F. Ferrell opened up a small store adjacent to the tracks, across the road from the Carpenter Farm Supply Company. In 1916, Carpenter and Ferrell expanded their businesses with larger store buildings, and throughout the boom of the early 1900s both men built dwellings for themselves, family members, tenants, and renters. Others who worked in the stores or other businesses constructed dwellings in the village, and farmers on its outskirts built farmsteads with full collections of agricultural and domestic outbuildings, including tobacco curing barns, packhouses, smokehouses, livestock barns, and tenant houses.

Carpenter's growth ended during the Depression years of the 1930s. The post office was closed in 1933 and rail service was discontinued in the next several decades. The community has changed very little since that time. The stores continue to provide farm and garden supplies for local residents, and most of the surrounding farms have been in agricultural use until recent years. Fields of tobacco and other crops still surround the village. However, a new subdivision now abuts the southeast flank of the community, one of many planned for this growing section of western Wake County.

Depicting the vital interplay between agriculture and commerce in Wake County's development, Carpenter Historic District qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architectural significance and under Criterion A for its agricultural and community development significance. The period of significance begins in the late nineteenth century, corresponding with the approximate date of construction of the oldest building associated with the community, and extends through 1933, the year the Carpenter Post Office closed permanently. The context is established in the "Historic and Architectural Resources of Wake County, North Carolina (ca. 1770-1941)," a Multiple Property Documentation Form prepared in 1993. The most relevant historic contexts include: Civil War, Reconstruction, and a Shift to Commercial Agriculture (1861-1885); Populism to Progressivism (1885-1918); and Boom, Bust and Recovery Between World Wars (1919-1941). Additional context information is provided below. The architectural significance of the district relates to the following property types: farm complexes; outbuildings; houses; institutional buildings; and commercial and transportation-related buildings and structures.

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## CONTEXT STATEMENTS

### Agricultural Context

While many factors influenced the evolution of Carpenter as a rural commercial center, the changes that took place in the county's agricultural development were crucial. During the decades following the Civil War, farmers in Wake County, like those throughout North Carolina and the South, survived by growing cotton commercially. However a number of economic factors--including overproduction and competition from other countries--led to decreasing profits and increasing debt and tenancy among farmers (Wake County MPDF, 35-38). Western Wake farmers were among the first in the county to convert to tobacco farming as an alternative in the late nineteenth century, which, though labor intensive, required much less land and led to greater profits during that period (Wake County MPDF, 49-51). The Carpenter Historic District clearly depicts the prosperity of early twentieth-turn-of-the-century tobacco production for local farmers and merchants through a variety of historic resources, including the farm complexes with the specialized buildings the crop required; the railroad that was built to more quickly transport the crop to markets; and the general stores that provided farm supplies and other goods to the farmers.

A strong local tradition holds that the late-nineteenth-century store building (no. 5) was used as a cooperative store and meeting place for local agricultural and Masonic groups. The large number of farmers in the area would likely have made Carpenter a natural meeting place for local members of one or both of the two national organizations that sought agricultural reform through education and cooperative buying in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. The Farmers' Alliance and Cooperative Union, which got its start in North Carolina by the late 1880s, boasted forty-eight local alliances in Wake County by 1888. A successor organization, the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union (known as the "Farmers' Union") had thirty-eight chapters in Wake County in the early twentieth century (Wake County MPDF, 47-48; Lally 1994, 64-65). Records from this group indicate that a chapter met in Carpenter from 1912 to at least 1920 (NC Farmers' Union Records, 1912-1923). While local residents recall that old-timers in the community often referred to this building as the "Union House" (Dale Carpenter, interview, June 1999), no written historic records currently link the building with either of these groups.

### Architectural Context

The Carpenter Historic District retains an outstanding collection of commercial, residential, and agricultural buildings that reflect the history of the community and its prominence as a rural commercial center in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Carpenter is unique among small Wake County communities in that it retains its rural crossroads character and never grew much beyond it.

The cluster of surviving commercial buildings in Carpenter is unique--no other community in the county retains such an unaltered early twentieth-century commercial crossroads. The group includes what is believed to have been a cooperative store with upstairs meeting hall; a rare rural early twentieth-century brick general store; a large ca. 1916 frame general store; and two warehouses associated with the stores. While all of these buildings display functional commercial forms, rectangular shapes with open spaces for doing business and storing goods, the Carpenter Farm Supply Company is particularly noteworthy. Built around 1916 beside an earlier frame store, this two-story brick commercial building is the only one of its type outside of incorporated towns in Wake County (Wake County MPDF, 155). Marked by the utilitarian

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brick detailing, the store is a testament to rural prosperity the community of Carpenter experienced in the early twentieth century. (Note: the discussion of the Carpenter store in Property Type 5 in the Wake County MPDF mistakenly dates the construction of the brick portion of the store to 1918.)

Dwellings found in the village of Carpenter and the surrounding farmsteads are representative of the simply-finished frame house built and favored by Wake County--and North Carolina--farmers and townspeople alike in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Wake County MPDF, 133-135). All are one to two stories tall, of frame construction, with side gable, triple-A, or pyramidal roofs. All display very modest Victorian, Craftsman, or Colonial Revival trim, with some houses displaying a combination of these styles.

Carpenter-area farm outbuildings are also quite common in type and very similar to those found throughout the county and most parts of the state. Of special note are the tobacco-related buildings that reflect the dramatic change in Wake County's agricultural development around the turn of the twentieth century. These include a number of curing barns on several farms, most of log construction in the traditional square, gable-roofed form; several packhouses, where the crop was stored after being cured--most often recognizable by their two-story, gable-front form with doors at both levels; and at least one tobacco strip room (also known as the grading or ordering room or house), where the dried-out, cured crop was moistened in pits of water and "ordered" by grade before being taken to market. With changes in tobacco-curing technology in the second half of the twentieth century, most of these specialized barns became obsolete and are increasingly rare on the landscape (Wake County MPDF, 121-122).

### Historical Background and Community Development Context

While settlers and farmers along the road from Raleigh to Chapel Hill west of Morrisville--including members of the Carpenter family (Murray 1983, 103)--had formed a loose-knit community by the mid-nineteenth century, it wasn't until the last two decades of the century that residents in the area shaped a more identifiable community. During that period, a store building believed to have been used early in its history as a cooperative store for farmers and meeting place for local farmers' groups and Masons (no. 3) was constructed at the junction of the Chapel Hill Road (now known as the Morrisville-Carpenter Road) and a road running south toward Apex (now known as the Carpenter-Upchurch Road). (Though the local tradition for this building's use is strong, it is unclear at present if the building originally served these functions or evolved into such a multi-purpose facility). Around the same time, local landowner Lemuel Morgan established Good Hope Baptist Church on his farm along the Chapel Hill Road ("History of Good Hope Baptist Church"). Good Hope Baptist Church was one of a number of rural churches founded in the county during the decades after the Civil War (Wake County MPDF, 39-41). Around 1895, the church was moved to a new site about one-half mile to the east of Morgan's farm (WPA Historical Records Survey Project 1940; Apex Centennial 1973, 16). The congregation still owns and occupies that property, although the current classical-style church building replaced the old sanctuary in 1960 (no. 21).

One of many merchants establishing general merchandise stores in rural areas during the post Civil War years (Wake County MPDF, 36-37), William H. Carpenter (1865-1927) founded his first general store in the Carpenter vicinity around 1885. By 1895 he built a new store (no. 6) at its present location at the intersection of two main roads--Chapel Hill Road and the Carpenter-Upchurch Road across the road from the community's first store (no. 5). Around 1910, Carpenter built a two-story house (no. 4) just south of the store for himself, his wife Alice, and their four children (1920 Census).

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Like many other small villages and towns throughout Wake County, Carpenter prospered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century due mainly to interrelated developments in agriculture and transportation. Western Wake farmers, among them William B. Upchurch whose farm was located about a mile south of Carpenter, were among the first in the county to grow the lucrative "bright leaf" tobacco. The crop, which flourished particularly well on the rocky Triassic soils of western Wake, brought farmers as much as three times the money as cotton, the main cash crop until that date (Lally 1994, 66-67). Wake County farmers who grew tobacco thrived, as did local businesses--such as William Carpenter's store--that catered to their farming needs.

With hopes for greater prosperity, farmers flocked to Wake County areas with soils amenable to tobacco cultivation, including the Carpenter area on the border of White Oak and Cedar Fork townships. Census figures are telling: while most of the county's rural townships reported only modest gains in population between 1890 and 1920, the population of White Oak Township nearly doubled during those same years--a strong indication of tobacco's draw (Wake County MPDF, Appendix B). The transforming effects of tobacco are clearly visible on the Carpenter area landscape. This section of the county is densely populated with farmsteads established during this period--many of which display the specialized outbuildings that the crop required: curing barns, packhouses, and strip rooms. Within the boundaries of the Carpenter Historic District four farmsteads retain outbuildings associated with the cultivation of tobacco (nos. 22, 24, 25, 26).

While rural villages throughout Wake County sprang up along railroads around the turn of the century, Carpenter's strategic location between Apex, the home of an early Wake County tobacco warehouse, and Durham, the location of one of the largest tobacco and cotton markets in the state, led to added prosperity for this small community (Lally 1994, 82). In 1900, the Cape Fear and Northern Railway, which connected Apex with southern Wake County and northern Harnett County, announced plans to connect Apex to the markets of Durham. The new Apex-to-Durham railroad was chartered in 1904 and combined with the Cape Fear and Northern Railway the year after to form the Durham and Southern. Tracks were laid in Carpenter in 1906 (no. 1), the same year the federal government established a post office in the community, and completed to Durham in 1907. William H. and Alice Carpenter donated land for the railroad right-of-way in 1905 (Wake County Deeds, 1905), as did his neighbor to the south, William B. Upchurch (Murray, Carpenter file). Depots were constructed adjacent to the properties of both men and the railroad named the resulting stations after them. While both the Carpenter and Upchurch depots served as stations for freight and passengers, the depot at Carpenter also functioned as a refueling stop (Lally 1994, 82).

This turn-of-the-century increase in the Carpenter community's fortunes attracted additional merchants and businesses. Lured by the railroad, C. F. Ferrell (1870-1933) moved his family from a farm about a mile west of the crossroads (no. 26) to open a general merchandise store in Carpenter. Ferrell's first store building was located across the Morrisville-Carpenter Road to the north from the Carpenter Farm Supply Company, adjacent to the tracks (Dale Carpenter, interview). Ferrell and his family lived in a one-story Victorian dwelling just east of his store (no. 14).

Even though they were competitors, it appears that Carpenter and Ferrell were on friendly terms and that their businesses complemented each other. Although both stores were classified by business directories as "general stores," Carpenter's business specialized in farm supplies, while Ferrell's store also sold clothes, including dresses for women (Jones 1979). The location of the community's post office moved back and forth several times between the Ferrell store and

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Carpenter store (U.S. Post Office Department Records film). In 1946, Carpenter's son Roland married Ferrell's daughter, Hilda; the current owners of the Carpenter store are descendants of both entrepreneurs.

Business continued to be quite profitable for both merchants and others in the 1910s and 1920s. In 1912, R. G. Dun's *Mercantile Agency Reference Book* showed two main businesses in Carpenter--the general stores of Carpenter and Ferrell. By 1914, the reference book lists five businesses, including three general stores (owned by Carpenter, Ferrell, and W. M. Waller), a grocery, a saw mill, and Ferrell's lumber and planing mill business (Dun, 1912, 1914). In addition, the Bradstreet Company's reference book shows that Ferrell operated a cotton gin in the community by 1914. Reflecting this continuing prosperity, around 1916 both William Carpenter and C. F. Ferrell built larger and more prominent commercial buildings (nos. 6 and 12). Ferrell also constructed two warehouses adjacent to the railroad tracks for the storage of goods (nos. 12a and 12b). In addition to the Carpenter and Ferrell family businesses, D. Judson ("Judd") Clark established a machine shop in Carpenter in the 1920s (Dale Carpenter, interview). By the early 1930s, Clark developed his business into an automobile repair garage and dealership (Dun and Bradstreet, 1933). The utilitarian metal-covered building that housed this building remains standing, still in use as a automobile repair garage (no. 8).

While William H. Carpenter operated his business primarily with the labor of family members, C. F. Ferrell had several partners. Until the late 1910s, Ferrell apparently owned his store with Mallie Butts (Dun, 1909, 1912; Bradstreet, 1914). Butts, who owned a nearby farm with his wife, Cora (no. 24), became the community's undertaker by 1922 (Dun, 1922). Ferrell's lumber business appears to have started as early as 1909 as a partnership with a man named Ellis, but by 1914 was operating under the name of C. F. Ferrell and Son (Dun, 1909, 1914). Another company by the name of Holly Springs Land and Improvement Company also operated a saw mill in Carpenter in the 1910s (Dun, 1914, 1915, 1917, 1918).

A 1922 study of rural organization in Wake County by the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station and North Carolina State College of Engineering provides a snapshot of the Carpenter community around 1920. The authors of the study, Carle C. Zimmerman and Carl C. Taylor, surveyed over eighty communities in the county and classified them according to their population and economic attributes. Zimmerman and Taylor dubbed Carpenter and three other surveyed communities as "Farm-Operator Villages," so named because "all its residents besides the merchants, section workers, day laborers, and widows are farm operators" (Zimmerman and Taylor, 10). The authors noted that each of these farm-operator communities, along with others like them, were located along the railroad, but were the location of rural stores before the coming of the railroad. Carpenter was the smallest of the four "farm-operator villages" profiled in the study. (The other three, Knightdale, Morrisville, and Rolesville, were all incorporated towns of 163, 211, and 250 residents, respectively.) The study shows the population of Carpenter to consist of 14 families with a total of 70 people. Six of the heads of household in the community were listed as farm operators, while five were listed as "other," and three were listed as "middlemen" (the merchants). The study also records the number of stores to be three, with one each of churches, lodges, schools, railways and post offices. No "professional men" were counted in Carpenter (Zimmerman and Taylor, 19).

Carpenter's growth ended in the early 1930s as the Great Depression settled in. While William H. Carpenter retained and continued to operate his store during the Depression, C. F. Ferrell's businesses were closed after his death in 1933, the same year the Carpenter post office closed permanently. The railroad discontinued service to Carpenter in the 1940s or 1950s and soon after demolished the depot (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999).

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Carpenter's decline as a central rural commercial hub mirrors that of other rural communities throughout the county, state, and nation in the middle of the twentieth century, as automobiles allowed greater mobility, farmers left agriculture for jobs in towns and cities, and people routinely shopped in larger cities and towns rather than small rural stores for their major purchases. While the Carpenter family continued to provide farming supplies and general merchandise to local farmers and residents in the mid-twentieth century, others moved their businesses to nearby Apex. Mallie Butts's undertaking business is said to have been the precursor for the Apex Funeral Home in Apex, while Judd Clark's auto dealership evolved into the Hendrick's Chevrolet dealership, also in Apex (Dale Carpenter, interview, October 1999). Both businesses still exist in Apex today.

Unlike many other villages Wake County, which have slowly become mere shadows of what they once were or been consumed by suburban development, Carpenter continues to serve its original purpose. Though Carpenter in the late twentieth century is by no means the commercial hub of earlier times, the crossroads is still bustling, fueled by recent suburban development in surrounding areas. Still owned by Carpenter and Ferrell family descendants, Carpenter Farm Supply continues to do a brisk business in feed and fertilizer--though now more for horse owners and gardeners than farmers. C. F. Ferrell's old store building currently houses an antiques business, while Judd Clark's old machine shop and garage building still serves its original purpose under different ownership. Good Hope Baptist Church continues to thrive, with a growing congregation. Though increasingly rare, tobacco is still raised in nearby fields--a testament to the agricultural heritage of the community. In the 1980s, the still-evolving community developed a small park near its center with picnic areas and basketball and tennis courts for use by residents and visitors alike (no. 13). Carpenter Village, a new subdivision being constructed about a mile east of the crossroads on the south side of the Carpenter-Morrisville Road, is being developed by residents of the community.

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**SECTION 10**

**UTM References**

	<b>Easting</b>	<b>Northing</b>
<b>A</b>	692140	3965720
<b>B</b>	693410	3966660
<b>C</b>	694040	3966000
<b>D</b>	692540	3966300
<b>E</b>	692440	3965560
<b>F</b>	692200	3965540

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary for the Carpenter Historic District is shown with a dashed line on the accompanying map, drawn at a scale of 1" = 200'.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary for the Carpenter Historic District is drawn to include all surviving historic resources in the crossroads village, as well as nearby farmsteads and associated acreage that depict the relationship between agriculture and commerce in this historic crossroads community. The boundaries exclude rural properties without buildings that show this relationship, as well as a recent suburban subdivision being constructed on the southeast flank of the district.

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**Photographs**

The following information applies to all photographs included in the Carpenter Historic District National Register nomination.

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Negatives on file at North Carolina Division of Archives and History

Letters below are keyed to the sketch map.

- A. Overall view of commercial area from the south  
photographer: Kelly Lally Molloy
- B. Overall view of commercial area from the west  
photographer: Kelly Lally Molloy
- C. William Henry Carpenter House, from the west  
photographer: Kelly Lally Molloy
- D. Setting shot, Saunders Farm, from the west  
photographer: Ruth Little
- E. George and Nell Rimer House (NC), from the east  
photographer: Ruth Little
- F. Good Hope Baptist Church (NC) from the northwest  
photographer: Ruth Little
- G. Good Hope Baptist Church Cemetery (NC) from the east  
photographer: Ruth Little
- H. Equipment shed (NC), C. F. Ferrell Farm, from the southeast  
photographer: Ruth Little
- I. Tobacco barn, C. F. Ferrell Farm, from the southeast  
photographer: Ruth Little
- J. Main house and barns, C. F. Ferrell Farm, from the west  
photographer: Ruth Little



