

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Varina Commercial Historic District
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Broad and South Fayetteville Streets not for publication
city, town Fuquay-Varina vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27526

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>
			Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. 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. See continuation sheet.

William S. Pin, Jr. 12-14-89
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.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution
COMMERCE/TRADE/department store
DOMESTIC/hotel
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
RELIGION/religious structure
VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/early 20th century commercial
vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

Wood

roof Asphalt

other Metal

Stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Varina Commercial Historic District consists of approximately a block and a half of one- and two-story brick commercial buildings arranged in an L facing the frame, former Union Station sitting in an expanse of open ground. Located just north of what was until recently the intersection of two railroad lines, the principal stretch of buildings extends along the northeast side of Broad Street, a wide boulevard paralleling the former Durham and Southern tracks, abandoned in the 1970s and removed. The curve of the Norfolk and Southern tracks from the southwest to the southeast remains, and forms a boundary. Standing alone at the west end of the L are the trapezoidal, two-story, brick Varina Supply Company building and its one-story companion building. Although there have been alterations to all of the structures in the district, as a whole, and particularly above their shopfronts, they maintain an integrity of materials, design, setting and feeling.

Beyond the district's buildings to the west are the much-altered facilities of the former Varina Brick Warehouse, now a wholesale distribution facility. To the north of the historic commercial district are a modern building supply store and its parking lots, and to the rear of the Broad Street buildings are turn-of-the-century residential areas. At the southeast corner of the district is a small group of one-story brick commercial buildings constructed after World War II.

Within the district are 12 contributing and no non-contributing properties. All of the buildings, with the exception of Union Station [#1], are of brick masonry construction and date from 1910 to approximately 1925. All are in a modest commercial vernacular style distinguished only by simple masonry details such as corbelled cornices, squint quoins, stone window sills and lintels and pressed brickwork. Approximately half of the buildings have painted masonry. These one- and two-story commercial buildings are aligned in a block face that is further joined by continuous metal and fiberglass canopies added in 1964. A few original shopfronts have survived, notably on the Bank of Varina (1) [#4], but most have been replaced with simple modern aluminum, glass and brick fronts.

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Union Station [#1] is a small, frame passenger/freight station typical of the simple stations used along subsidiary rail routes in the early twentieth century. Projecting from the side of its boxy office and waiting room is a three-sided bay, while at the rear of the station extends the freight warehouse, with docks on either side sheltered under the main roof.

A documentary photograph of Broad Street during the 1930s shows an unpaved boulevard down the center of which were mature deciduous trees. The sidewalks of this block of Broad Street also contained at least two gasoline pumps. Today Broad Street is a wide, paved boulevard at the other side of which is the landscaped green surrounding Union Station.

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Inventory List

C = contributing
N = noncontributing
OB = other building

<u>List#</u>	<u>Street#</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Height</u>	<u>Description/original owner-occupant</u> <u>(if known)</u>
Broad Street, South Side				
C 1.	525	ca. 1910	1	Union Station ; Combined freight/passenger station of frame construction used by the Norfolk and Southern and Durham and Southern Railroads. Overhanging hipped metal roof with large triangular brackets; clapboarded sides with sliding freight doors; three-sided bay on north elevation, novelty-sided addition to west end with matching freight bays.
Broad Street, North Side				
C 2.	519-523	ca. 1925	2	Varina Hotel ; Rectangular stretcher bond brick corner building with clipped outer corner; second floor segmentally-arched windows with sandstone sills; corbelled brick belt courses and cornice; squint-quoined corners; shop fronts mix of older wood and modern brick, glass and aluminum, transoms filled in; originally in four segments; west half of building retains ornamental tin ceilings; built for Dr. J. M. Judd, A. W. Thompson, R. M. Dickens as hotel/retail building; hotel lobby and dining rooms were on eastern side, rooms on upper floor; later operated as furniture stores; one-story brick addition at rear.
C 3.	517	ca. 1917	1	Commercial Building ; small, stretcher bond brick-faced building with dog-toothed corbelled brick cornice; modern brick, aluminum and glass shopfront under original

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-
- I-beam; built by Dr. J. M. Judd for the Progressive Store, a grocery.
- C 4. 513-515 ca. 1914 2 **Bank of Varina (1)**; handsome, two-story brick commercial building faced with tan pressed brick, including corbelled cornice and belt course; four over four second floor windows have rockfaced sandstone sills and lintels; 513 has original recessed entrance of wood and glass, one-room interior with plaster walls and ornamental tin ceilings; 515 has modern shopfront and hung ceilings; built ca. 1914 by Dr. J. M. Judd for Bank of Varina, incorporated that year, of which he was vice-president (later president); second floor was offices of Cardenas Telephone Company in 1920s.
- C 5. 511 ca. 1920 1 **Commercial Building**; small brick commercial building with rebuilt wood and glass shopfront; originally part of row of three commercial buildings with sheetmetal pent cornices; built for J. B. Womble's Department Store, later a movie theatre.
- C 6. 509 ca. 1920 1 **Commercial Building**; small, common bond brick commercial building with sheetmetal pent cornice over modern wood and glass shopfront; part of a row of three; built for Grady Stevens for the Carolina Feed Store.
- C 7. 507 ca. 1920 1 **Commercial Building**; small, common bond brick commercial building with sheetmetal pent cornice over wood, glass and brick shopfront; interior has original ornamental tin ceiling; part of a row of three; built for Milton Stevens as a dry goods store.
- C 8. 503-505 ca. 1918 2 **Varina Garage and Machine Company Building**; five-bay brick commercial building with segmental-arched second floor windows (covered with plywood) and corbelled pendant cornice; modern brick, aluminum and glass shopfronts; constructed by A. D. Averette and

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- A. V. Autry, who operated a garage and machine shop in one half of the building and a hardware store in the other half in the 1920s and 1930s.
- C 9. 501 ca. 1917 2 **Drug Store**; stretcher bond brick-faced corner commercial building with recessed, angled corner entrance; second floor has segmentally-arched windows with rock-faced stone sills; corbelled brick cornice and belt courses; first floor has modern aluminum and glass shopfronts; built by Dr. and Mrs. J. M. Judd on property purchased in 1917; from early 1920s to 1970s contained a series of drug stores and barber shops; originally in two sections with stair to second floor.
- C 10. 407 1926 2 **Bank of Varina (2)**; yellow brick-faced rectangular commercial building with angled corner; projecting molded wooden cornice beneath flat parapet; stuccoed water table; pedimented classical entrance on corner with modern door; original sash and jambs in large windows replaced with glass block; molded wooden frieze serves as continuous lintel; built by contractor A. Y. Hairr for the Bank of Varina as their new offices.
- South Fayetteville Street, West Side
- C 11. 211 ca. 1925 2 **Varina Supply Company**; trapezoidal brick commercial building with angled street corner; second floor windows, covered with plywood panels, have segmental arches; building corners are squint-quoined; dog-toothed cornice on corner and Fayetteville Street facades, stepped parapet along Durham Street; shopfronts on Fayetteville St. elevation are replacement wood, glass and brick; corner entrance has aluminum doors; metal awnings added at first floor; from 1920s to 1960s was general merchandise house.
- C 12. 209 ca. 1925 1 **Commercial building**; trapezoidal brick double

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store building with squint-quoined corners;
wood and glass shopfronts; aluminum awnings
added; originally a dry cleaners.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

COMMERCE
TRANSPORTATION

1898-1941

1899, 1923
ca. 1910

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Architect/Builder
Hairr, A. Y.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Varina Commercial Historic District is significant under Criterion A for its association with the growth and development of Fuquay-Varina in the early twentieth century from a rural crossroads and minor resort to a major tobacco market and important railroad junction. Varina's commercial area is the only substantially intact portion of the business district of the twin towns, and the portion most closely associated with the railroad junction that was largely responsible for the community's existence.

Historical Background

Until the late 19th century, the area now known as Fuquay was little more than a crossroads community with a locally-popular mineral springs, discovered in the early nineteenth century by farmer David Fuquay on his land in the Middle Creek Township of southern Wake County. As early as 1858, the spring was modestly developed as a resort by Parson McCoy, Billy Sexton and Cornelius Harnett Cofield.(1) The Fuquay Mineral Springs Corporation was founded in the 1890s to market and develop the spring for its reputed medicinal properties, and during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the small resort became popular for excursions, particularly around July 4 and Easter Monday.(2) Initially known as Sippihaw, in 1902 it renamed itself Fuquay Springs in honor of the original owners of the town.(3)

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The name "Varina" was derived from a nom de plume used by Virginia Avery in corresponding with her future husband, James "Squire" Ballentine during the Civil War. According to several versions of a local story, Ballentine had advertised for a young lady to correspond with him, and received letters from Miss Avery signed "Varina" (also the name of Jefferson Davis's wife). After the war they were married and settled in the Sippihaw area about a half mile south of the spring. Squire Ballentine was able to get a post office located at his home, which he called Varina.(4) He also opened in 1899 a large general store across the highway from the spring, called the Varina Mercantile Company.(5)

In the late 1890s two railroad lines were preparing to cross at a point about a mile north of the spring. According to local tradition, the name Varina Junction was given to the intersection because the Varina Post Office was the nearest point of communication.(6) With the crossing of two railroad lines at Varina Junction came the impetus for the establishment of a new town. In July of 1899, Surveyor D. E. Green recorded a plat for a "Town of Varina," located on the lands of B. G. Ennis. The new town consisted of six lettered blocks, each 400 by 300 feet, aligned with the route of the Cape Fear and Northern (later Durham and Southern) Railroad and crossed diagonally by the Raleigh and Cape Fear (later Norfolk and Southern) Railroad. The wide main street on both sides of the Cape Fear and Northern track was called, appropriately, Broad Street.(7)

Part of Block C facing Broad Street was purchased by Dr. J. M. Judd and his wife Amorette Ballentine Judd in October of 1907. (8) Judd erected several commercial buildings on the property, and sold lots to others who constructed them. Key buildings in this group include the Bank of Varina Building (1) [#4], constructed about 1914, the Varina Garage and Machine Company Building [#8], of ca. 1918, and the Drug Store Building [#9], ca. 1917.

The small, frame Union Station [#1], located across from this block between the tracks of the Norfolk and Southern and the Durham and Southern Railway, is reputed to have been built in 1910, following the burning of an earlier station, and is pictured in a 1915 publication.(8) Later, with the construction of a separate Norfolk and Southern depot, it became solely the Durham and Southern Railway depot.

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In late 1923 a portion of the land north of Broad Street was replatted. The northwest corner of Broad and Raleigh Streets was sold to A. W. Thompson, J. M. Judd, J. L. Adcock and R. M. Dickens in October of 1924, and they appear to have built The Varina Hotel [#2] soon afterward.(9) It catered to businessmen in town for the tobacco trade.(10)

Along with the tobacco business, with which it was linked, the Bank of Varina prospered, moving to a new banking house at the corner of Broad Street and Ransdell Road in 1926 [#10]. Local contractor A. Y. Hairr constructed the building.(11)

A small residential area also grew to the north and west of the commercial district in Varina.

Parallelling the growth of the Varina section, the Fuquay Springs community began to expand around Ballentine's store on Main Street, across from the spring. In 1908 the Fuquay Land Company filed a plat for a subdivision of a number of acres into town lots on the east side of Main Street, and in 1909 the entire area, including Varina, was incorporated as Fuquay Springs.(12) The Fuquay portion of town developed a larger concentration of stores and other commercial facilities, in part because it was on the main highway, now NC 401. However, disastrous fires in 1916, 1977, and in other years destroyed many of the earlier commercial buildings in this portion of town.(13)

Beginning in the 1950s, the Varina Commercial District struggled to compete with shopping centers and the increased accessibility of stores in Raleigh and Fayetteville. Because NC Highway 401 (Main Street) developed as the major route through town, commercial activity remained much stronger in Fuquay than Varina. The two sets of railroad tracks also helped isolate Varina from Fuquay, although the town's name was hyphenated in 1963 in acknowledgement of the dual nature of the community. Reductions in tobacco quotas in the early 1980s also reduced the number of tobacco warehouses throughout the state, and consequently diminished the local tobacco trade which had supported the district.

Late in the 1970s, the Seaboard Airline Railway, which had bought the Durham and Southern Railway in 1975, abandoned its tracks through Varina.(14) The tracks were removed and the area around the station grassed and landscaped.

While the Varina Commercial District remains somewhat depressed, the Fuquay Preservation Alliance has begun a drive to restore Union Station as a catalyst to spur rehabilitation of other properties in the district.

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Commerce and Transportation Contexts

Although the Fuquay area was originally best known for its mineral springs, the rapid growth and development of Fuquay Springs and Varina in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was to a larger degree a result of the complementary growth of the tobacco market and local railroad connections. At the turn of the century there was an increased awareness that the area of southwestern Wake County had particularly good soils for growing bright leaf tobacco. Experienced tobacco farmers from older sections of bright leaf cultivation, such as Granville, Person, Alamance and Durham counties, moved into the area in large numbers, in part to escape the blight known as the "Granville Wilt" that was afflicting crops on the Virginia border.(15) Writing in 1933, Mayor W. S. Cozart remarked that "Today, two-thirds of all our growers were originally ... Granville and Person men. These men brought with them years of experience in production and curing of the leaf..."(16)

The first tobacco warehouse was opened by W. H. Aiken in Fuquay in 1908, and was followed in successive years by several additional warehouses, including the Center Brick Warehouse, Planters Warehouse, Varina Brick Warehouse and Star Warehouse located in both Fuquay and Varina.(17) Constructed as adjuncts to the warehouses were prize houses (storage facilities for the purchased tobacco) operated or leased by tobacco companies with a capacity in 1915 of 10 million pounds of leaf per year.(18) During the early 1930s the Fuquay-Varina market was reported to be the largest market in Wake, Harnett, Chatham, Lee, Moore, Johnston, Sampson and Cumberland Counties, and in 1940 was the largest "one-sale" market (a market with a single set of buyers assigned to the market, for continuous sales) in the entire bright leaf belt of the Carolinas and Georgia.(19)

In 1898, John A. Mills of Raleigh was issued the first charter for a road to run from Raleigh through Sippihaw to Fayetteville, called the Raleigh and Cape Fear, later Raleigh and Southport.(20) Mills's railroad was primarily a lumber railroad, but capitalizing on the popularity of the Fuquay springs, he built seats across flatcars and ran "Moonlight Excursions" in the spring.(21) Using a charter issued in 1887 for the Cape Fear and Northern Railroad, the Duke family of Durham constructed a railway from Apex to Angier, (later extending from Durham to Dunn) and incorporated it as the Durham and Southern Railway in 1904.(22) The junction of these two railroads was located near Sippihaw, but took its name from the Varina Post Office.(23)

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A few years after the initial junction, the Norfolk and Southern Railroad organized a subsidiary railroad known as the Raleigh, Charlotte & Southern, which joined together four short lines, including the old Raleigh and Southport, by constructing short stretches of new track. This railway was in turn absorbed by the Norfolk and Southern in 1914.(24)

A booster publication of 1915 noted,

...we have direct railroad service as follows: Durham and Southern Railroad to Durham and the west, connecting at Apex with the Seaboard Air Line. Eastward the line reaches Dunn, connecting with the Atlantic Coast Line for the south. The Norfolk Southern Railroad has here three lines, one to Raleigh, Norfolk and the north, one to Fayetteville and the south, and another to Charlotte, the south and southwest. The Norfolk and Charlotte connections mentioned is (sic) this road's main line giving us through passenger and freight service northward and southward.(25)

With such extensive rail connections, Fuquay Springs, and Varina in particular, was a natural trade and transportation center for nearby areas of the surrounding counties. Rail connections to Durham tobacco factories also boosted the business of the tobacco warehouses.

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Footnotes

- ¹"Mayor Predicts Glowing Future," The News and Observer, 7 October 1933, np.
- ²"Bicentennial Salute to Fuquay-Varina," The (Fuquay-Varina) Independent, 1 July 1976, p. 12, and "Water Gave Twin Cities Their Start," The News and Observer, 24 August 1950, p. 26.
- ³"Bicentennial salute," The (Fuquay-Varina) Independent, 1 July 1976, p. 12.
- ⁴Ibid.
- ⁵Ibid.
- ⁶"Varina Named for Flirting Girl," The News and Observer, 5 March 1950, np.
- ⁷Wake County Deeds, Book 153, p. 603.
- ⁸Wake County Deeds, Book 229, p. 199.
- ⁹Wake County Historical Society Program, 22 May 1977, unpublished, and Fuquay Springs, North Carolina, (Fuquay Springs: Fuquay Publishing Company, 1915), p. 15.
- ¹⁰Wake County Deeds, Book 476, p. 334, and interview with Edith Judd Parker, Fuquay-Varina, 1 June 1989.
- ¹¹Wake County Deeds, Book 493, page 553 and "From Resort to Business Town," The News and Observer, 26 April 1942, p. 14A.
- ¹²Wake County Plats, Book 1885, vol. 2, page 101.
- ¹³"Bicentennial Salute," The (Fuquay-Varina) Independent, 1 July 1976, p. 12.
- ¹⁴"Seaboard Coast Line Buying Durham-Based Railroad," The News and Observer, 4 February 1975, p. 27.
- ¹⁵"Bicentennial Salute," The (Fuquay-Varina) Independent, 1 July 1976, p. 12 and "Mayor Predicts," The News and Observer, 7 October 1933, np.

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- ¹⁶"Mayor Predicts," The News and Observer, 7 October 1933, np.
- ¹⁷"Market Twenty-Two Years Old With Promising Growth Ahead," The News and Observer, 9 August 1931, np.
- ¹⁸Fuquay Springs, North Carolina (Fuquay Springs: Fuquay Publishing Company, 1915), p. 11.
- ¹⁹"Market Twenty-Two Years Old," The News and Observer, 9 August 1931, np. and "Fuquay, Health Resort 75 Years Ago," The News and Observer, 18 May 1940, p. 6F.
- ²⁰Wake Historical Society Program, 22 May 1977, p. 3, and R. E. Prince, Norfolk Southern Railroad, Old Dominion Line and Connections, (Millard, Nebraska: R. E. Prince, 1972), p. 25.
- ²¹"Bicentennial Salute," The (Fuquay-Varina) Independent, 1 July 1976, p. 12.
- ²²Prince, Norfolk Southern Railroad, p. 164.
- ²³"Varina Named," The News and Observer, 5 March 1950, np.
- ²⁴Prince, Norfolk Southern Railroad, p. 25.
- ²⁵Fuquay Springs, North Carolina, p. 14.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property approximately 4 acres

UTM References

A

1	7
6	9
9	7
8	0

3	9
4	0
9	8
0	

Zone Easting Northing

C

1	7
6	9
9	4
0	

3	9
4	0
7	4
0	

B

1	7
6	9
9	4
0	

3	9
4	0
8	6
0	

Zone Easting Northing

D

1	7
6	9
9	6
4	0

3	9
4	0
7	6
0	

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries of the Varina Commercial Historic District are as shown by the dashed line on the accompanying map, drawn at a scale of 1 inch equals 100 feet.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Varina Commercial District are drawn to include the surviving intact portions of the early twentieth century commercial district in Varina, including the freight/passenger depot and accompanying property. Beyond the boundaries to the west are a wholesale distribution facility. To the north is a modern building supply store and parking lots, to the northeast are residential areas, and to the south and southeast are modern RR and commercial facilities.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David R. Black/Architectural Historian date 5/1/89

organization Black & Black, Preservation Consultants telephone (919) 828-4616

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Major Bibliographical References

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"Bicentennial Salute to Fuquay-Varina." The (Fuquay-Varina) Independent, 1 July 1976, p.1.

Fuquay Springs, North Carolina. Fuquay Springs: Fuquay Publishing Company, 1915.

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Interview with Edith Judd Parker, Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina, 1 June 1989.

Murray, Elizabeth Reid. Wake: Capital County of North Carolina, vol. 1. Raleigh: Capital County Publishing Co., 1983.

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The (Raleigh) News and Observer, 1930-1977.

University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill; North Carolina Collection Clipping File through 1975.

Vertical Files, Fuquay-Varina Branch, Wake County Public Library

Wake County, N. C., Register of Deeds, Deed Books

Wake County, N. C., Register of Deeds, Incorporation Papers

Wake County, N. C., Register of Deeds, Map Books

