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This investigation considers the mill housing in Carrboro, North Carolina, and its evolution once it passed from company to private ownership. Seeking to bring together an existing body of knowledge, and apply it to a specific place and time, the study supplements the scholarship and evaluations of the built environment. Carrboro fits into a national textile history, and its mills are simultaneously consistent with and different from the industry as a whole. Like much of the Southern textile industry, the company built the workers' housing, maintained it for decades, and then sold the majority of the properties at auction in 1939. A change in the houses was inevitable, as individuals altered what were once identical structures. Using material cultural theory, industrial landscape studies and an understanding of the ways that buildings evolve, a small sample of the original mill houses reveal the cultural weathering and alterations made after the auction. These renovations demonstrate the shifting requirements and desires of the owners and how people show personal identity within the built environment.

MAKING CARRBORO HOME:
USER ALTERATION OF
COMPANY SPACE

by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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INTRODUCTION

Sitting in front of Weaver Street Market, the co-op grocery located next to the old cotton mill in the heart of Carrboro, North Carolina, one can sense the town's distinctive atmosphere. The area retains a unique identity through its residents, community, and built environment despite being nearly subsumed by its larger neighbor, Chapel Hill. This character is enhanced and celebrated by the people who live in the mill houses that



Figure 1: Twelve of the 15 houses included in this study. All photographs by the author, 2005.

surround the old textile building, the people who love, maintain, and individualize the structures that were built quickly and cheaply a century ago.

This investigation of Carrboro's mill houses focuses on their evolution of the structures as they passed from company to private ownership and further seeks to supplement how one evaluates the built environment. Although many studies concentrate on company towns, few explore what happens after the mills step out of their role as landlords, and the houses pass into private ownership. Change is inevitable in the houses, as individuals' needs alter the once identical structures. The evolutions of the buildings demonstrate the shifting requirements of subsequent owners and exemplify how one expresses personal identity within the built environment.

Historically, Carrboro fits into the tapestry of the textile industry in the United States, which began in New England in the early 19th century and moved South after the Civil War. The industrial patterns of paternalism followed the technology from North to South and created the distinctive Piedmont mill town. Like many others, the owner of Carrboro's mill built worker housing and maintained the structures for decades, until the majority of the properties were sold at auction in 1939. Since the sale, the buildings have become homes, through sixty-five years of alterations and renovations.

The mill houses have all been adapted, each uniquely but with revealing similarities that demonstrate the vernacular design process and the ways in which we shape the spaces around us. A backdrop of Structuralism and Post-Structuralism, vernacular design research, industrial landscape theory and material culture theory allows

Carrboro's mill houses to peel back their layers to reveal the choices that individuals have made over the decades.

Although I lived for only one year in one of the old mill houses on Carr Street, three blocks from the remaining factory building, my attachment to Carrboro persists. My memories of the house are strong – old beadboard walls, high ceilings, and a creaky wood floor were charming; oddly arranged rooms, giant drafty windows, and a lack of proper insulation were less so. Regardless, my housemate and I loved that space and wanted to stay longer than we could; each of us wished desperately to buy it and change it, to make it into our home.

Returning to Carrboro for this research, I found a group of houses that blended historic original features and personal touches. The buildings, a rich source for understanding the evolutions of Carrboro and the industrial landscape, shed light on a universal phenomenon that reaches far beyond these particular mill houses. The study of these structures reveals the alterations and changes over time that reflect how individuals create home by shaping the once-corporate space around them.



Figure 2: House E, former residence of the author, who lived here from 2000-2001. The building is still a rental. Photograph by the author, 2005.

CHAPTER I

CONSTRUCTING CARRBORO

...

'Thomas Lloyd commissioned rural carpenters to build the village surrounding his Alberta cotton mill. The carpenters worked according to traditional designs rather than blueprints, and they relied on building methods that had long served farmers' need for housing that was inexpensive and easily erected with neighbors' help.

'Lloyd would send word that he needed another mill house, and my grandfather would cut it out of the woods -- cut the logs, cut the lumber, build the whole thing and take it to town and put it up for him. Then Mr. Lloyd [would] pay him for it, and that allowed another family to move in and to work at the mill.' (Hall, 1985, p. 115)

...

To fully understand and appreciate Carrboro, North Carolina and its architecture, one must begin with an overview of the textile industry's history – both locally and nationally. The mill that still stands on Weaver Street is a remnant of two centuries of industrial progress and decline that began in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in the early 19th century. From there, new technologies and economies necessitated a shift in the industry out of New England and into the Southern piedmont regions of Virginia, Georgia, and North and South Carolina. Understanding this framework places Carrboro within an historical context, which in turn reveals what makes the town such an interesting place, ripe for investigation.

The Textile Industry in the Northeast, 1800-1880

Setting precedents in Lowell

A number of different types of textile mills had been operating in New England by the beginning of the 19th century, but they were all small operations run by a few families with limited power and manufacturing potential. Additionally, they usually produced yarn; domestic weavers in each mill's vicinity would work the yarn by hand, although some wool and cotton cloth was made too. The production of yarn in these small mills was a far cry from the processes used in England. There, manufacturing that took cotton from raw form to finished product had been taken to grand proportions, with purely industrial cities like Manchester leading the way. Contemporary descriptions of the British factory towns, full of metaphorical images of hell and polluted rivers, allowed observers to bemoan the living and working conditions of the laborers as well as the sharp class distinctions the factories created there (Kasson, 1976). While few Americans wanted the many negative aspects of the manufacturing process, industrialization was thought to have great potential. There remained a question, however, of how to organize a factory without bringing on the multitude of labor challenges and manufacturing problems that seemed to follow industrialization.

Lowell's founders, Francis Cabot Lowell, Nathan Appleton, and Patrick Tracy Jackson, were already armed in 1815 with the technology needed to start a cotton mill when they invested in a waterpower site in Waltham, Massachusetts. In testing their equipment, they discovered that the Charles River did not generate enough power. On the other hand, the system, and particularly the powered looms, increased worker

productivity by three and a half times. Francis Lowell died soon thereafter, and his partners went on to purchase land on the Merrimack River to found the community of Lowell; the first factory began production in 1823. The most impressive aspect about the new manufacturing center was not the technology or the industrialization: it was the organization of the factory itself, as an institution with total control. It was, in fact, how the Lowell founders distinguished themselves from their European counterparts. A rotating group of young women off of the region's farms served as the tractable Lowell workforce.

Because the factories needed waterpower and were positioned in a rural area away from established cities, providing housing for the workforce was a necessity. In addition to the factory itself, Lowell contained boarding houses, family homes for overseers, churches and schools, all built and maintained by the company. The mill buildings themselves were monumental brick structures, four to six stories high, that formed a "trim little quadrangle [that] must have shown a marked resemblance to the academic



Figure 3: The rural surroundings of Lowell are evident in this section of Panoramic view of the city of Lowell, Massachusetts, from the northeast side, by P.V. Ayotte, ca.1874.



Figure 4: Regular and overwhelming factory housing in Lowell, Massachusetts. Photograph by Jack Delano, 1941, Farm Security Administration – Office of War Information Photograph Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

groups of the period” (Coolidge, 1993, p. 32). The foursquare house, a common vernacular form in rural New England, served with some alteration as the home for both managers and laborers. Multiples of the basic form were added together to create boarding houses for the mill employees, and likewise they would stand alone with added decoration to house the overseers (see Figures 3 and 4).

Lowell leaders wanted to avoid creating a single class of people, the proletariat, who would become the destitute and immoral workers seen in England. To prevent this outcome, they hired young women from farms in the region who were sent home after a few years to marry and work on the farm, and to be replaced at the mill by their younger

sisters. Order, industrial discipline and constant worker supervision filled their days and kept concerned parents happy while the girls filled their free time with self-improvement out of their own motivation (Crawford, 1995, p. 26). The farmhouse-style dormitories reinforced the domestic aura and paternalistic notions that surrounded the young women workers.

The economic pressures and accompanying decline in wages spelled the decline of the idealistic façades of Lowell. With the first strike of the mill operatives (the “turn-out” in 1836), the romantic front started to show cracks. These pressures and the need to economize eventually ended the rotating work force of young women; it was replaced by cheaper immigrant labor in the form of Irish families, who evolved into the dreaded proletariat. The initial idea that potential company owners “sought to regulate the fluid urban industrial society so as to safeguard their vision of an ordered republic while at the same time enjoying its benefits” became enjoying the benefits while no longer guarding the ordered republic (Kasson, 1972, p. 73). The companies continued to enforce rules of propriety and discipline; however, increasing individuality and ethnic diversity found their place at Lowell. Recent archaeological evidence showed the back lots behind the large boarding houses full of beverage containers and pipes, giving a glimpse “of workers finding both the time and space to be themselves... it appears that the companies cared more for appearances than for substance in such matters” (Beaudry and Mrozowski, 2001, p. 121). Archeological evidence reveals details of the new managerial group beginning to assert class differences and also sheds light on the operatives themselves.



Figure 5: Map of Massachusetts with arrows pointing to the locations of Lowell to the north and New Bedford to the south of the state. Map from Yahoo! Travel.

New Bedford and Howland Mills

The textile industry blossomed contemporaneously with Lowell and developed in many areas of New England. A few decades after Lowell, New Bedford, Massachusetts began its shift from whaling capital to textile capital (Figure 5). No attempt was made there to keep a proletariat from forming, although the first mills kept the paternalistic ideas of providing housing and minimal care for the laborers, mill owners built the first tenements in 1848. They were large, multi-family units, brick and monolithic, with little reference to domestic architecture. The tenements were grouped together, creating a defined working-class ghetto. This lack of concern about the workers marks a significant difference from its Lowell precedent, and lays the groundwork for the future Progressive Movement's influence over industrial housing.

Experiments like Howland Mill placed New Bedford squarely between the textile industry's origins at Lowell and what it would become in the South. Howland Mill was developed at the end of the 19th century by an idealistic man who "had not only the predisposition to investigate enlightened attitudes toward industrial labor but also the business training and opportunity to do so as well" (Heath, 2001, p. 89). With this position and his stock backing, William Howland founded his mill and accompanying village in the town of New Bedford. Although the mill only operated for a short time, it was an experiment that influenced future mill development. His mill complex fits into a specific time in New Bedford, between the large tenement buildings of the mills and the speculative builders' three-deckers, and "also chronicles how ideas about laborers' housing had changed as 19th century came to an end" (Heath, 2001, p. 87). The large mills had produced tremendous amounts of tenement housing over the course of seventy years, and there were always reform issues in the background. However, it was not until after the Civil War that concern about sanitation, space, ventilation, and "the monotony of standardized housing blocks" began to gain momentum (Heath, 2001, p.100).

Howland developed his village plan with gently curving streets and small, single family bungalows for the mill workers and similar larger versions for overseers. Every home, constructed with advances in plumbing and ventilation, was sold on a payment plan to workers. Due to economics and local business politics, Howland Mill failed after a very short time, and the local businessmen wrote off the attempt as idealistic and overly paternalistic. However, the idea of individual houses for workers remained and helped move planners closer to the new company town that would develop in other regions.



Figure 6: Three-decker Houses in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Photograph by Jack Delano, 1941, part of the Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

After the demise of Howland Mills, much of New Bedford’s housing stock moved away from mill-owned and into speculative housing. The tenement houses, replaced by the three-decker, incorporated three essentially identical apartments stacked on top of each other, with nods to the current Victorian sensibilities of the later 19th century (Figure 6). With few adventurous details, they represented an “omnipresent commonality of design,” a hallmark of industrial housing (Heath, 2001, p.161). The shift away from mill-owned to speculative was an example of paternalism, initially so strong in Lowell, that shifted over the course of the 19th century into different styles of mill management.

George Pullman returned to paternalism with Pullman, Illinois, a town that would “elevate his workers’ lives while ensuring a stable and problem-free workforce for

himself” (Crawford, 1995, p. 27). The industrial housing offered the newest advances in building and late Victorian design (Figure 7), but no matter how pretty the landscaping or well designed the village, there was no panacea for labor unrest. Workers still reacted against unfair hours, treatment, and wages, as evidenced by the major labor strikes between 1880 and 1920. This uprising confirmed the opinions of many industrialists that paternalistic benevolence was a waste. Nevertheless, “a small group of government experts and urban reformers continued to assert that many of Pullman’s principles had been correct and that comprehensive planning and architecture should be used to improve living conditions in company towns” (Crawford, 1995, p. 45).



Figure 7: Residences in Pullman, Illinois, from the Chicago Daily News negatives collection, DN-0003451. Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society.

Improving the nation's social conditions

A growing concern about “the excesses of industrial capitalism and urban growth” became the basis for the Progressive Movement (Faragher, 2003, p. 632). The movement developed out of a rejection of the 19th century’s paternalistic control and industrial excesses, manifest in company towns like Pullman and New Bedford. The broad-based movement, found within local, state, and national politics, emerged gradually from the 1890s to the 1910s. While the movement appeared throughout different areas of society, there were common threads and concerns, including the conviction that individuals must act to improve social conditions and the belief that modern society and economics worked not through social Darwinism but through cohesion and cooperation. The Progressive Movement’s contributors spearheaded social, educational, and political reforms and the development of labor laws.

Motivated by an urban middle class, the Progressive Movement leaders “urged cooperation between capital and labor in the interests of a greater social good,” away from both the large labor unions and massive corporations (Crawford, 1995, p. 46). Religious and humanitarian concerns combined with ideas of rationality and organization created a new ideal for society, and the concerned citizen evolved into the professional. Beginning with the turn of the 20th century, Progressive



Figure 8: Progressive Party National Convention, 1912, from the Chicago Daily News negatives collection, DN-0059374. Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society.

reformers sought to inspect the working situations at factories all over the world and improve the conditions for the employees (Figure 8). With recommendations on every subject, from working hours to the cleanliness of the washrooms, reformers saw upgrading of working conditions as valuable to the employees, certainly, but also couched these improvements as beneficial to the bottom line. Happy employees would produce better, work harder, have fewer illnesses, and make the company more money in general. Within the industrial world, many companies paid lip service to the new Progressive ideals by pulling out of their employees' lives, but the majority of them continued to keep a watchful eye over what the workers did outside of work. The industrialists' ideology started to focus on the companies' self-interest, justifying good

works in terms of economic rationality. Instead of direct charity, employers favored schemes that stressed self-reliance and promoted entrepreneurial virtues of thrift and hard work. This shift away from paternalism into a socially and economically responsible management defined the change to the Progressive era.

With this ideology in mind, a number of guidebooks aided mill managers and owners with advice on improving both relations between owners and employees and the factory conditions in general. Edwin Shuey's *Factory People and their Employers* (1900) provided examples from existing factories in various industries of successful efforts to improve working conditions and profits, centered on simple ideas of respect and the Golden Rule. In the sections on housing and its beautification, Shuey dismisses the idea of building the company town for rental: "American independence is inclined to resent some of the 'paternal' things done in English factory towns... The experience of Pullman and similar efforts has not encouraged others to do much toward building towns owned and controlled by the company" (p. 131). Several examples of successful company towns followed this assertion; then Shuey pointed out that in the South, the idea of full company ownership of the village appeared more acceptable and successful. Focusing on Pelzer and Piedmont as Southern cotton factory examples, Shuey speculated that the success of paternalism "can be told better after a few years more of experience" (p. 137). Shuey's rejection of paternalism did not mean that companies should stay out of their employees' lives; on the contrary, he thought that with a combination of awards, model homes, lectures, slideshows and so on, mill workers could be motivated to live in the way the industrialists valued.

The Textile Industry in the South, 1880 and Onwards

Origins and beginnings

Before the advent of Progressivism, mill owners began shifting their business concerns outside of New England. While there had been small attempts at cotton manufacturing in the South before the Civil War, it was only after Reconstruction that the mills sprang up in earnest. “There is every reason for selecting the year 1880 as the beginning of cotton manufacturing development in the South,” based on census records, railroad construction, the end of earlier financial troubles, and a cotton shortage (Mitchell, 2001, p. 59). As railroad lines improved, textile technology blossomed, and owners established mills in the rural areas of the Piedmont, from North Carolina to Alabama. The combination of good waterpower, available capital, proximity to raw materials, and particularly the massive potential labor force (available for 40% less than



Figure 9: Houses in the company town of Swepsonville, NC. Photograph by Jack Delano, 1940, part of the Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Prints and Photographs Division.

equally capable Northerners), made the textile industry a sound investment and quickly a booming business. The technology and mill construction, as well as the general pattern of “transformation of a preindustrial agricultural population into factory workers,” reflected Northern precedents, but the similarities between the two regions’ industry end there, as radical differences shaped the way each functioned (Crawford, 1995, p.141).

The workforce, for example, was significantly different in the South than in the North. Unlike the first Lowell employees (single young women eager for experience and income from the mills) or the later generations of operatives (families of immigrants from varied locations), the Southern mills drew from an existing, homogeneous population of Anglo-Saxon Protestant farmers. In many ways they represented a pre-existing proletariat, and there was no reluctance on the part of the mill owners in reinforcing this fixed class. Some historians say that these workers had been neglected for generations. “From the time that cotton began to control until after the period of Reconstruction, these people [the ‘poor whites’] lapsed into the background” (Mitchell, 2001, p.161). Before they migrated to the mills, the ‘poor whites’ were suffering from a downward spiral on the farms with continued hard years and losses. The potential consistency and reliability of ‘public work’ was extremely attractive to this population. Additionally, because they were from farming backgrounds, the idea of working collectively as a family was perfectly natural. The mills kept the wages very low and could “purchase a family’s labor as a package” (Crawford, 1995, p.142).

Part of this package was housing, similar to the Northern companies’ provisions of shelter, yet the house forms themselves were quite different. There were very few

examples of group housing apart from one or two boarding houses for single adults. Due to the family hiring practices, individual houses were provided to mill workers, sometimes rent-free (Figure 9). The stipulation of one worker per room kept the families tied to the mills and the houses full. The buildings themselves were extremely vernacular, as were the initial boarding houses of Lowell, based on the farmhouses from which the families relocated. Regional vernacular differences between the Northern mills' favorite foursquare house type and the South's preferred center hall plan, while both farmhouse types, show the differences visually. House lots were made large enough for garden plots and farm animals, options that were never available in Northern mill towns. Communal styles of living, much as in an agrarian community, persisted and further helped ease the migration to the industrial setting.

Southern mill villages themselves were initially built near running water, just like their Northern counterparts, and often in rural areas. They included more than just the factory building and the houses, as mill owners often ran a company store, churches, an elementary school, and opportunities for recreation like a baseball field: "even after leaving the mill, workers lived, shopped, studied, played, and worshipped in an environment created by the employer" (Crawford, 1995, p.144). The neighborhoods created by these mill villages, even when they were in a more urban situation like in Charlotte, North Carolina, never mirrored the Northern company towns. For example, there was "none of the jumble of immigrant groups that characterized Northern industrialization," no major clash of religion between the mill operatives and the other residents of the city, and indeed no wealthier men who decided to remain in the workers'

district, staying “among their countrymen” instead of moving to the suburbs (Hanchett, 1998, p.105).

Paternalism in the South

In general, Southern mill owners perpetuated the paternalism and control begun in the North; while their methods were not codified, yet patterns recurred throughout the mills’ distribution. The company owners sought to create self-sufficient communities for the workers in an effort to retain a transient workforce, thus inventing a landscape where the mill and its owner dominated the lives of the residents “from the cradle to the grave” (Hall, 1987, p. 114). The workers rented mill houses, bought from the company store, attended factory churches, and played for the mill’s own baseball team. Mill owners and communities created varied combinations of these industrial welfare projects, but in general – just like their Northern counterparts – “corporate authority had produced landscapes of unified control and visual order, while regulating nearly every aspect of operatives’ lives as a means of ensuring a clean and morally upright industrial setting” (Kasson, 1976, p.106).

The situation for workers in the mill village of the South was often compared with their rural origins; everything, including wages, housing, education, and social community were supposedly better than on the farm they left behind. As for the housing, the major difference from the Northern mills was away from the multifamily brick tenements to small, farmhouse-style homes, built based on a local vernacular. A survey of mill housing in the 1920s found that the average number of rooms in a company house

was 4.0, while other rental houses and homes owned by individuals averaged slightly higher (4.3 and 4.9, respectively). Some mills had houses as small as two rooms or as large as six or seven rooms, but these aberrations were comparatively rare (Rhyne, 1930).

A guidebook written for the Southern textile industry gave a full recipe for building and running a cotton mill, creating and governing the town around it, and overseeing all accompanying details. Dr. Daniel Tompkins, engineer from Charlotte, North Carolina, combined his schooling with collective wisdom and produced *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features* (1899). Dr. Tompkins had explicit ideas about the types of houses and their construction. Houses owned by and gathered around the factory were the “most satisfactory plan in the South, for both the mills and the operatives. They seem disposed to live to themselves and attend their own schools and churches even when the mill village is in a city” (p. 115). Earlier mill houses were built exactly alike, but Tompkins advised a variety of house plans and types because “different families have



Figure 10: Rendering of D.A. Tompkins’ three-room mill house, from *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features*, 1900.

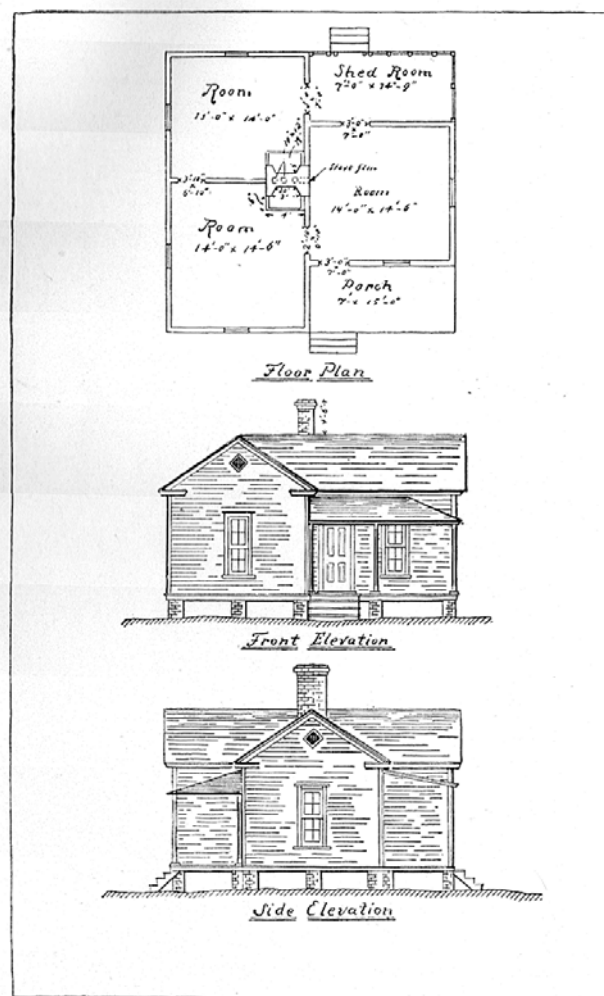


Fig. 32. Three-Room Gable House. Cost \$325

Figure 11: D.A. Tompkins' drawing for a three-room mill house, from *Cotton Mill, Commercial Features*, 1900.

different tastes" (p. 116). His explicit plans called for a four room house on about a half acre, with brick piers not less than 24" high, window sills 2" thick, and so on.

"Weatherboarding," he writes, "to be 3/4" thick and show 5 1/4", to be of novelty pattern which will be selected by the President of the Company" (p. 119). The six house plans he includes, with elevation and construction price, describe a small shotgun style, a three-

room gable and wing type (Figures 10 and 11), a “three-room narrow house,” a four-room gable and wing house, and two others with a second story.

While paternalism in the Northern textile mills was both celebrated and problematic, it was simply a given in the South. Southerners resisted the Progressive Movement, particularly around the turn of the century when the movement accelerated in the North. The paternalism put forward by these Southern mill owners was distinctive from other industrialists, as they “adapted the feudal rhetoric of the Old South to the new industrial order, mixing it with claims of solidarity with fellow whites, Social Darwinist ideas about self-selection, and Christian notions of duty.” These ideas set the Southern industry apart from its Northern counterparts who were already moving towards reduced direct paternalism and simpler welfare ideas. The control over the workers was reminiscent of the early New England Mills, but couched it in terms of company-as-family, in fact, “workers often actively collaborated with paternalistic claims, acquiescing in their own subordination” (p. 178).

In general, Southern mill owners did not follow the Progressive movement, but instead took the reformers’ language and momentum and put it towards their own goals, molding it to fit the context of Southern industry. Interjected into the region and era, there was a push to reform and improve the textile industry and mill villages in particular. Tompkins’ guidebook is an example of the early Southern twist on the Progressive movement, as his suggested changes in the industrial culture leaned towards some of the same ideas as the Progressives. Company towns were updated, professionals started advising and designing, and mill owners tried to move into a new rationality. Methods

for making every element of the factory system more efficient gradually replaced the traditional family-run management, vernacular building types, and factory patterns.

Some of the professionals brought in to accomplish the shift and modernization were designers and architects, hired to develop the communities. The design of the company towns, once an unplanned evolution, began to shift to professional planning such as that offered by Earle S. Draper. A young designer originally schooled in the North, Draper arrived in North Carolina in 1915 as a representative of John Nolen's planning firm and began his own business as the pre-eminent designer of the Piedmont mill village. Draper's work reflected the desire for rationalization and modernization of the cotton mill system, and he attempted to "balance the reformers' concern with improvement, the mill owners' economic priorities, and his own professional self-interest" in his projects (Crawford, 1995, p. 183). He believed that with better educational, social, and recreational possibilities, as well as improved housing, the mill operatives would eventually raise themselves up to middle class. His village plans, full of holistic landscape ideals in the Olmsted tradition and the notion of the English garden city, reorganized the common town's layout. Rather than the mill building dominating the entire area, the industrial structures would be set to one side, and the public buildings would be the core of the village.

Earle Draper stepped into this context when the mill owners were most concerned with keeping a permanent workforce, as the industrialists theorized that "upgrad[ing] the physical environment and amenities of the mill village [would] improve their public image and attract and retain steady workers," hopefully cutting down on the high

turnover rate (Crawford, 1995, p. 180). The mill villages were extant before Draper arrived and he had to adhere to the “characteristic morphology of factory and housing” as “expression[s] of vernacular form” with the mill dominating the gridded village plan (Crawford, 1995, p. 144). Sometimes, as in Chicopee, South Carolina, Draper could stretch predictable forms into something different. There he managed to completely redesign the mill village by taking away the previous hierarchy of structures and tucking the mill itself out of sight of the houses. Residences, made more individual and attractive, sat within generous green spaces and landscaping throughout. Nods to the vernacular were still included, and the project lauded, but “despite the excellence of his designs, Draper’s imagery and amenities could not efface the reality of the mill village system” (Crawford, 1995, p. 193).

In reality, only a small percentage of the Southern mill villages was designed by professionals. Most were constructed by local carpenters in the local vernacular, although enough examples of Tompkins’ houses exist that it is clear that some mill owners looked for and took professional advice early in the century. Within the Southern company towns in general, most of the houses do not show the variety and decoration that Draper, Tompkins, or other professional designers advocated. Instead, the vast majority of the houses are extremely simple and undecorated, with the exception of the larger examples built for mill managers and overseers (Ver Planck, 1997, p.1 and Crawford, 1995, p.187).

Southern mill owners did adopt Progressive notions in the way the mills were run. Programs, similar to those recommended by the Progressives, included ‘welfare

work' in town beautification, employee education, recreation, and home economics. However, the mill village system began to change with the boom times of World War I and the 1920s. Affordable transportation made it possible for mill workers to live outside the confines of the company town, and financial stability made it less necessary for companies to provide amenities to workers. Eventually, many mills dropped their welfare programs, sometimes replacing them with financial benefits like pensions, employee representation, or company unions (Crawford, 1995). Paternalistic attitudes, in general, waned, particularly with the advent of the automobile and public school systems. "The paternalism of the mill village is no longer needed and indeed is coming to be resented," observed one contemporary scholar (Herring, 1949, p.16). Besides, experienced mill workers instead of new ones could now be hired, as the growth of the industry slowed. Given the general tendencies of the number of workers per family to gradually decrease, "the traditional mill village had outgrown its usefulness, and the company-town environment no longer served the best interest of the firm" (McHugh, 1988, p.101).

Evolutions and difficulties

In the 19th century, the textile industry had employed whole families of textile workers and provided them housing. As the 1920s progressed, it was less financially effectual to hire everyone, regardless of skill level, and the criticisms of child labor began to be heard. Indeed, the Southern cotton factories began to struggle in the mid 1920s, and major problems appeared throughout the industry by the Great Depression. From the

perspective of the workers, it “just kept getting worse and worse.” The mills instituted processes to use less labor to run the same number of machines: “The ‘stretch-out’ was [the employees’] term for the cumulative changes that... robbed them of control over the pace and method of production” (Down Hall, 1987, p. 211).

The Depression brought a slew of changes that stressed the Southern textile industry to the breaking point. A minimum wage and limit to working hours established by the National Industrial Recovery Act in 1933 seemed in the workers’ best interest but were turned around by the industrialists. Companies sought to counteract the effects of the minimum wage and eight-hour workdays with “short time, production curtailments, and job reclassifications” (Hall, 1987, p. 300). All of this came to a head in the summer of 1934.



Figure 12: Labor unrest continued throughout the decade after the General Strike of 1934. Strikers outside a factory in Georgia. Photograph by Jack Delano, 1941. Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Prints and Photographs Division.

The New Deal launched a concerted effort to end the era of the company town by launching programs to help people purchase their own homes. By the late 1930s, some mills sold their company housing through realties or auctions, and the era of the company-owned mill town came to an end. In North Carolina throughout the 1930s, Burlington Mills bought mill facilities with financial troubles, but usually elected not to buy the houses, selling them to the workers. Companies throughout the industry sold their housing, and “the most active year was 1939 when a dozen companies sold some 30 villages. By this time it had become apparent, at least in textile circles, that something revolutionary was going on” (Herring, 1949, p.10). Six years later, at the beginning of World War II, some “twenty-five firms in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia had sold some sixty villages, or a total of nearly 7,000 houses” (Andrews, 1987, p.199). The era of the company-owned Southern mill village was over.

Carrboro and its Place within the Textile Industry

Founding and origins

Carrboro, North Carolina, was founded in 1883 and was the location for one of the Piedmont belt of cotton mills founded in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, operated successfully for over half a century. The mills’ founder took advantage of the technology developed in the Northern industrial areas and spreading transportation lines to increase the ready supply of laborers from nearby agricultural areas. Though a typical mill village in some respects, Carrboro did not fit perfectly into any one description or

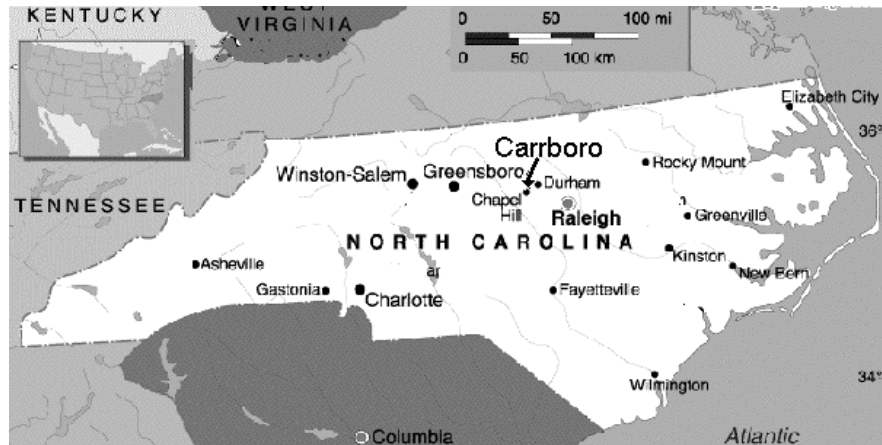


Figure 13: Map of North Carolina. Arrow points to location of Carrboro, to the west of Chapel Hill. Map courtesy of Yahoo! Travel.

convention as the village, located near a small town and on an existing train line, defied the relationship with the landscape so common with rural mills.

The town, originally called West End, grew along an extended rail spur, the train-stop for the university town of Chapel Hill (Figure 13). The university trustees, in order to save the young students from city temptations, originally placed University Station ten miles away from campus. The West End extension brought the train to the minimum allowed distance of one mile from the school. With the new possibility of bringing goods to more distant markets, people settled around the depot in the late 19th century; a gristmill and cotton gin occupied land in the town by 1883, and a flourmill was added around 1886.

In 1898, Thomas Lloyd opened a textile mill called the Alberta Cotton Mill in West End, and brought the real settlement of the village, mostly by immigrants from the surrounding rural areas. Like most textile mill owners, Lloyd provided employee housing as each joined the workforce. Instead of constructing buildings all at once or using a pattern book to generate the simple floor plans, Thomas Lloyd hired local

carpenters to build them as needed. Thus Carrboro did follow the folk vernacular in terms of housing and the basic grid pattern of the streets, even though not conceived nor created following a large plan like many of the other company towns.

The plot sizes, floor plans, and construction were mostly standardized, with the lots just large enough for a back-yard garden. All of the early houses, built in the shadow of the mill to the west and northwest, fit this mold. Other areas near the mill included houses of similar appearance built by individuals, landlords, and Lloyd to add to the housing stock and these are the houses that survive today. The authors of the Appearance Commission's architectural and historical inventory observed, "it is virtually impossible to distinguish these owner-occupied houses, as well as those privately-owned rental houses and those owner-occupied houses... from the houses built by the mills" (Brown, 1983, p.17).

Lloyd's mill houses stood on brick piers as side-gabled, three-bay wood sided structures, often with a front gable and a decorative vent centered over the long front porch. Four simple 4" x 4" posts supported the front porch, constructed with a tongue-and-groove floor. Centered on the front of the house, the entrance led directly into a long, wide hallway, approximately seven feet across and fourteen feet long. On each side of the hall were two front rooms of equal dimensions, about fourteen feet square. One of the front rooms stood alone; the other room connected to a rear ell (Figure 14).

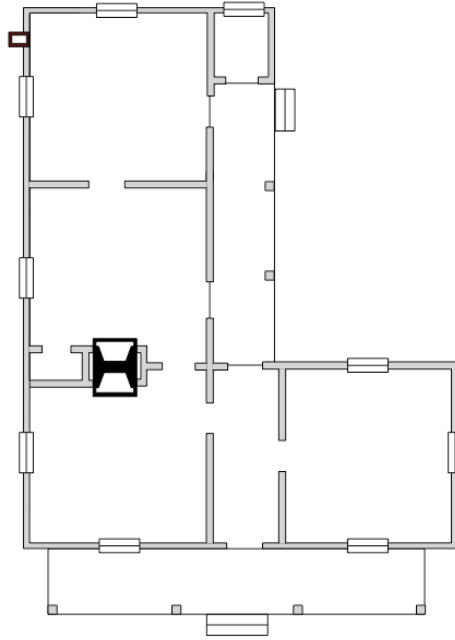


Figure 14: Initial floor plan of the Carrboro mill houses with mill-added bathroom, based on a drawing by Scott Simmons (1983) and altered by the author, not to scale.

At the end of the hall, a door led out onto a rear porch that ran along the length of the ell, one or two rooms deep. The first of these rooms shared a door and a chimney with the front room, while the back room of the ell – always the kitchen – had its own small chimney in the rear, far corner. Each of these rooms had internal connecting doors and a door that led outside to the back porch as well. The only closet or storage space in the home was tucked beside the chimney; this same storage space contained a small entrance to the attic.

The materials used on the interior were inexpensive but durable: uniformly beadboard wall and ceiling planes, tongue-and-groove wood, heart pine or basic

hardwood floors, simple quarter-round crown and base molding, and 1" x 4" or 1" x 6" planks as the door and window surrounds. A few homes did have the same 1" x 6" planks as baseboards instead of quarter-round. Simple six-over-six double-hung wood windows provided light and ventilation, while solid wood doors either five-panel (two vertically-oriented panels on the top and bottom, divided by a center horizontal panel) or six-panel (with all horizontal panels) gave access to rooms, clad with enamel knobs and exterior box locks. Fireplaces built back-to-back, brick with a stone slab hearth on each side of the chimney, featured a simple but elegant mantle flanked with plain scroll brackets.

Few alterations were made to the houses when they were owned by the mill. The mill did keep up the interior and exterior paint, but mostly left them alone (Sturdivant, 1924). The only major changes were functional: electricity installed in most of the houses in 1915 as part of the Carrs' attempt at "industrial democracy," and bathrooms added in 1925. Each lot contained a privy in its back yard; a new bathroom, located at the end of the rear porch, sat within an enclosure adjacent to the kitchen, accessed from the back porch rather than the interior. These new rooms, added identically on each house, featured porch rafters still exposed inside and beadboard walls. However, the location of the window in that small space varied from house to house, as does the exact size of the space.

Carr and Carrboro

General Julian S. Carr, born 1845 and “son of a well-to-do Chapel Hill merchant, attended the University of North Carolina and served in the Confederate Army” (Hall, 1987, p. 29). He started in tobacco, thanks to seed money from his father, and then founded the Durham Cotton Manufacturing Company in East Durham in 1884. He considered himself “benevolent, protective, and always accessible,” invested in a bank, newspaper, electric lighting company, and railroads; endowed churches, schools, and charities; and did not mind making money off of cheap labor. In 1907, Julian Shakespeare Carr purchased the entire mill and surrounding area, adding it to his Durham Hosiery Mill holdings, undertaking “many projects for the improvement of the mills... and the development of the community as a whole.” He and his sons “have enlarged the lawns, planted trees, shrubs, flowers, and have lighted the factories and homes with electricity... They keep a force of colored men who spend their time in working on the grounds and improving the general appearance around the homes of the operators” (Sturdivant, 1924, pp. 3-4). Building additional factory buildings, Carr encouraged the growth and development started a decade before, and brought with him comparatively progressive and liberal notions of how the mill should be run. In 1910, Carr retired and left his business to his four sons and, in 1913, the name of the community changed to Carrboro, on the condition that the Carrs would supply electricity to the town.

Because of Carr’s more modern outlook, the paternalism that dominated other early New England and later Piedmont mill villages was less visible in Carrboro. Particularly progressive, Julian S. Carr, Jr., eldest of the General’s sons, encouraged

many local programs. There was a town school, icehouse, electric service, and at the end of World War I an in-ground swimming pool that was the town's major entertainment. Carr, Jr. produced a company paper that was distributed free until "the whole welfare department was closed" (Herring, 1929, p. 212). The employees had more independence in contrast to those described in histories of the textile industry. Residents decided that they did not want the mill's supervision of religion, "preferring instead to worship in their own churches elsewhere in town" (Hall, 1987, p.126). Their hours were more moderate than the regional standard: ten-hour work days and five-and-a-half day work weeks.

Generally, little education was provided to mill hands; a contemporary survey of mill workers showed that many only reached the seventh grade, and anything beyond the eighth was highly unusual (Rhyne, 1930). Consequently, the night schooling program at Carr's mills was very unusual. Carr, Jr. established a collaborative project, launched in 1912 with a public school teacher to bring education to the mill hands at his Durham factory. Those who "attend regularly and put their best effort into the work" received "free tuition, books and supplies" (Herring, 1929, p. 70). After two or three years, interest and attendance had grown, and Carr hired two additional teachers with classes conducted at a local school in Durham. In 1915, night class started in Carrboro, where it was not as successful, in part due to "absences... not reported to the mill and to the lack of any arrangement for the cooperation of the foreman" (Herring, 1929, p. 71).

One particularly unique and distinctive program within Carr's mills brought attention from contemporary sociologists and commentators: "This is the industrial democracy plan of the Durham Hosiery Mills" (Herring, 1929, p. 201). J.S. Carr, Jr.,

came up with the idea of this industrial democracy – not to be in opposition to the unions but instead to improve on their ideas. In its constitution, the president said “he was willing to pass on anything that two-thirds of his people would ask for, unless it radically endangered the finances of the corporation” and more than 95% of the employees favored its adoption. A house, senate, committees, and cabinet were formed, and the cabinet acted as president – who retained veto power that could be overruled with enough votes. Many employee suggestions took form while the plan was in place, including

fire ladders attached to houses, back porches built, houses painted inside and out, homes lighted with electricity, a club house provided for the meetings, a reading and rest room for all, playgrounds for the children, nurses for full time, basins and paper towels placed in the mills (p. 205).

Harriet Herring (1929) continued in her description of the plan: “Unofficial figures show that in three months after the plan was put into operation, there was an increase in savings of more than \$40,000, of which the workers received one-half, less 50 per cent for actual expenses in keeping the plan in operation” (p. 205). Despite this success, the attempt folded after a rough financial period when many employees had to go elsewhere for extra work and therefore could not attend meetings. When the industrial democracy plan for Carrboro disbanded, Carr was particularly upset, yet there was never an attempt to revive it. This plan did not fail entirely even though hard times hit soon after establishing the plan – a little more than a year: “if nothing else lasting was accomplished, it was worth while in that it kept capital and labor on even keel during a turbulent time, when many other industries were going through strikes, lockouts, and other undesirable experiences” (Herring, 1929, p. 206).

This experiment in industrial democracy did not save Carr's mills from the General Strike of 1934. Although nothing is recorded about the strike in Carrboro, Carr's other mills in Durham participated fully and were "a marvel of self-organization" (Hall, 1987, p. 341). Seven different union locals existed in Durham's mill villages, and the strike was strongly supported by businesses and townspeople. Mill workers there were no more successful than in other communities around the state, but they did not suffer from the same punitive firings and reprisals because of the community support. Though difficult to determine whether Carrboro also enjoyed such encouragement from the business community, owners of the Durham mills did not call out armed guards there, and it was highly likely business support was a contributing factor.

Carrboro's mill housing, sold in an auction during the summer of 1939, reflected the decline of the mills in the 1930s, as workers often traveled to Durham or farther to find work. The houses sold for \$500 to \$550; most were sold to previous renters. Despite the decline of the mills themselves, other industries kept new homeowners busy, and the arrival of World War II reopened the Carrboro factories: one as a munitions plant, the other producing textiles for uniforms. In the mid 1950's, production in the mills ceased, but the University of North Carolina supplied enough work to employ the majority of Carrboro residents, and it was no great blow to the town. The town continued a fairly static growth pattern from the time of the mill's development after the turn of the century to just after World War II, when the GI bill brought many to the area for university studies. At that point, the faculty, staff, and students of UNC began to look to Carrboro as

a potential place to settle, and since then, the town has grown steadily through present day.

Some of the distinguishing features of Carrboro continue to keep the town alive. Specifically, the variety of economies present within Carrboro and neighboring Chapel Hill make the houses' location valuable for more than their proximity to the mill. Additionally, businesses like the University of North Carolina and those located in the Research Triangle Park have provided nearby money and employment opportunities. Simultaneously, the need for student rental houses has kept many of the original mill houses standing and relatively unaltered. The structures have become a valuable resource for investigating the changing conditions of the mill town.

Many other American industrial towns, both in the North and South, have followed a path similar to Carrboro's. The growth and decline of the industries, the shift between corporate and individual property ownership, and the presence of paternalism echo throughout all company towns. What makes Carrboro particularly ripe for study is its general similarities to the norm and its clear and distinct differences.

This history sets the stage for a series of questions: what happened to these mill houses in the past 65 years? What can the original floor plan, created by the carpenters and the mill owners, tell about the needs and intentions of the mill village and the world of the cotton mill? More importantly, after the 1939 auction, what did the new owners do to personalize the structures and make them homes? How and why do people claim a space as their own, and how did the mill workers make Carrboro home?

CHAPTER II
STARTING WITH THE OBJECT:
MATERIAL CULTURE THEORY AND PRACTICE

Though now situated within textile history, it is time to consider a theoretical background for this investigation of Carrboro buildings. Material culture and built environment theory both set a basis for this work while the context defines several areas of focus: industrial landscape studies, the hows and whys of vernacular architecture, and the issues of homeownership, renovation, and do-it-yourself. All of these pieces come together to inform this study; the theoretical approaches of the Structuralists and Post-Structuralists allow a deep reading of the structure itself as well as the changes made to it. With this background, Carrboro develops into more than just a mill town; it becomes a rich opportunity for investigation into how users alter space and how people invest objects and buildings with meaning.

Scholarship on the Built Environment and Material Culture: Structuralism and Post-Structuralism

Scholarship that spans the field of material culture includes authors who separate the studies by the type of material artifacts investigated; other scholars differentiate by the type of methodology (Upton, 1985). Upton distinguishes between object-, socially-, culturally-, and symbolically-oriented studies and defines each. Examples and

commentary on these divisions provides a good overview of the dominant ways to look at material culture. Upton's reflections leave out the larger context, however, because every one of the orientations defined under his work operate under a larger methodological and theoretical umbrella, Structuralism, based for the most part on the linguistic work of Ferdinand de Saussure and the anthropological theory of Claude Levi-Strauss.

Structuralism, a sturdy foundation for material cultural studies, began with evaluations of language and myth: each thing has a backdrop of meaning that comes together to form what the thing *is* (Storey, 1993). In material culture, this translates to looking at the object and investigating the cultural meaning embedded therein: not what the culture or the history books say, but rather what can be discerned from the object. Structuralism is all about framework and structure, about a set of relationships that are defined by existing objects; when a new object is placed into the scaffold, its meaning and place become clear.

These ideas have evolved since Levi-Strauss, however, into Post-Structuralist concepts; the term, revealing in that it is not *anti*-Structuralist, but rather a further development, borrows from post-modern ideas and deconstruction. The Post-Structuralists, like Jacques Derrida, say that every object has layers of meaning, and that in fact there is never a final concrete meaning. Instead, one meaning leads to the next, just as if one follows the definitions in a dictionary from one to the next: one word is always defined by other words, which must too be defined by words, and so on (Storey, 1993). While this can sound convoluted, the principle can be more simplified in material culture. Instead of the object revealing the intent of those who made it, it becomes a

reference to something else for those who use it. Thus, audiences create the meaning for the object after it is made.

Most material culture scholars stay on the Structuralist side of the debate. Getting involved in the layered meanings of an object or a building is usually not the intention of an investigation, which instead uses the initial construction or creation of an object to evaluate it. A very rich way of looking at the material world, Structuralism has firm trails of successful methodologies for scholars to employ. Jules Prown (2001) discusses a Structuralist methodology based on description, deduction, and speculation. He writes, “the way something is done, produced or expressed is its style. Style is manifested in the form of things rather than in content” (p. 53). In other words, insight into the culture that produced the thing is found in style apparent in its form.

Prown’s techniques leave room for criticism; John Storey (1993) says, in his overview of Structuralism and what followed, that “meaning is always in process” since there can always be further interpretations of the original interpretations (p. 85). Likewise, the original maker and users of an object certainly could see multiple references and meanings in a given piece— who are we to decide which of the many the maker intended? Dick Hebdige (1987) dives into this complex theoretical soup with his evaluation of youth subcultures between 1950 and 1980 in England. He asserts the idea that the user shapes the object and imbues it with meaning at the moment he or she uses it – not the creator, as Prown posits. With British punks in 1970 this is certainly the case, as the Union Jack in their hands means something different than it does hanging on the flagpole. Hebdige sees that the original form, meaning, structure of the object are

changed when it is used for a different purpose, when it is placed in a different context, when it is altered, added to, or renovated to fit a new purpose.

Both of these perspectives of material culture are necessary to gain a full understanding of object or building. The shifting sands of Post-Structuralism are difficult to work with, and only a few authors have tried to apply it to the built environment or material culture. It suits particular types of studies, those that deal with times and places where the dominant culture or those who design and create the objects are far removed from the group of users. These instances are probably more common since mass production, as objects are not created by hand for a specific person, but are instead one of many, created for many.

Industrial Landscapes

Investigations of mill towns in the United States must begin in the North with Lowell, Massachusetts. Indeed, all the texts that examine company towns in any era make mention of the oldest major industrial site in the United States. Scholarship has looked to the Northern company towns, and Lowell in particular, for initial evaluations of the industrial environment that fall outside the Structuralist/Post-Structuralist debate. Lowell is the “senior member of the galaxy. Built before the others, it was to a great extent the model of all the rest, the largest and wealthiest... the one which can be the most thoroughly investigated” (Coolidge, 1993, p. 8).

Coolidge (1993), in his survey of the remaining architecture in Lowell in the 1930s, addresses almost every element of the town, with the most careful examination

directed at the mill company's buildings. Evaluations of style and form in the public buildings, stores, and private houses give an excellent encapsulated view of the Victorian architectural era, a neglected area of scholarship: "we can no longer dismiss conventional Victorian buildings with the phrase, 'sentimental architecture.'" Furthermore, an overarching evaluation was needed, and to reach that point a number of small surveys must be done; Coolidge considers this work to be such a "preliminary study" (p. 4).

Coolidge considers Lowell a perfect example for this study, not only because it was the ultimate industrial town, but because the city was a product of the century's shift from rural to urban life. Additionally, the town had changed very little since the decline of the Northern textile industry, thus rendering it a snapshot of an 1860 community despite the years that have passed since. Coolidge writes about both the mill buildings themselves and the boarding houses for the operatives, which he places within the confines of vernacular architecture. Indeed, the four-square house form, common in rural New England, served both the managers and the laborers with small alterations. Multiples of the basic form combined to create boarding houses for the mill girls, and likewise they would stand singly, and with decoration, to house the overseers. Because of his Structuralist perspective, Coolidge does not delve beyond the formal investigation of the architecture.

In contrast to Coolidge's overarching view of architecture and the administration of Lowell, a recent study looks at the workers' individuality despite the tight paternalism. Beaudry and Mrozowski (2001) use archaeology to explore the refuse left by Irish workers and others in the back yards of Lowell. Interesting in comparison to other

Lowell studies that pay attention to the early developments of the industrial city, this tract addresses what happened after the mill girls left and were replaced with immigrant labor. The archeological evidence shows that despite the control and paternalism of the mill supervisors, smoking and drinking definitely had their place at Lowell and left their marks in the refuse in the back lots. The remnants reveal further touches of individuality and ethnic identity that the authors see as small ways of rebelling against the rules of the factory and the homogeneity of the laborers' position.

Looking at the workers' lives in such an intimate way is different from approaching the mills through the owners' eyes, wherein the workers are a silent mass. Indeed, the individualism revealed by archeologists' survey is impressive, as they sought to "make use of the scrappy bits and pieces of everyday life in [their] attempt to understand how workers constructed and expressed identity within the tightly structured and controlled physical and social environment of a company city" (Beaudry and Mrozowski, 2001, p. 122). By looking at mass produced objects like pipe stems and determining the objects' meanings particular to the Irish workers, the New England overseers, and the town as a whole, the article reveals its Post-Structuralist directions.

Moving South, Hall (1987) addresses the mill existence from the point of view of the workers, with their values, communities, and personal histories at the forefront. Her perspective differs from looking to the industry or unions to fill out the story, instead giving "agency to human beings whom historians had either overlooked or assumed to be powerless" (Norrell, 2001). Created from a series of interviews with past mill workers, Hall paints a vivid picture of different aspects of the operatives' lives, dominated by the

mill “from the cradle to the grave” (p.114). Hall traces the history from the first Southern mills through the major labor crisis in 1934, interweaving personal tales and individual histories in with the overarching past of Piedmont mill villages. Neither Structuralist nor Post-Structuralist, the richness of the text comes from the primary evidence collected through interviews, not through any investigation of material culture. As a socio-historical text, it helps to set the cultural background for Southern textile mill studies, but not to further the theoretical framework.

Focusing on mill villages in particular, Crawford (1995) places her work within a larger theoretical and scholarly context, particularly by rejecting the manner in which that previous investigations had treated the industrial landscape. The author asserts that no general history has been written on company towns despite the broad range of fields that share overlapping interest in the subject. The studies deal with either 19th century towns or some specific aspect of the 20th century towns: “a particularly wide gap exists between those who look at the company town as a physical environment and those who address its economic, labor, and social aspects” (p. 4). Crawford fills this void by looking through a multitude of different lenses with a Post-Structuralist nod to the variety of meanings, in this architectural history of company towns. The book includes a broad overview and a few specific case studies, to acknowledge the massive role of capitalist development on the entire process. By doing so, Crawford’s study gives an excellent grounding to any evaluation of the corporate landscape, even though its focus is on Northern industry and the Progressive movement’s influence on the company town.

Crawford stops with the mill companies and does little to look past their ownership of villages or into the houses themselves, leaving a significant gap in the scholarship. Mulrooney (1991) touches briefly on what happens when the companies pulled out in an article about the Southwestern Pennsylvania coal towns. “The retired miners proudly point out such changes and draw attention to how nice the houses are now,” she writes (p. 136). This “modernizing and individualizing,” the first step the new homeowners took once the coal companies cleared out, included installation of new siding, added outbuildings, modern plumbing, and even movement of door and window locations.

Herring (1949) provides an account of what happened to the Southern mill villages when the companies sold off the buildings, a sociological overview of the dissolution of the paternalistic mill village system, written at the time when the sales were in process. Herring recognizes from the outset that the shift in real estate signaled the end of an institution, and does her best to document this process. Particularly interesting to this study are her sections on ‘The New Home Owners’ and their shifting psychology. Immediately “they began to care for and improve their houses and lots... the majority of purchasers began to show evidences of a feeling of permanency and an owner’s interest and pride” (pp. 55-56). Though limited in scope and perspective because of the time in which it was written, Herring’s work serves as an excellent starting point for further investigation of the mill villages.

In a geography dissertation, Moore (1999) focuses on economic and geographic theories rather than the built environment. He writes a historical overview of the mill

system in an effort to investigate the sense of place within the village itself and how it has evolved since the companies pulled out. Moore incorporates different points of view, from that of mill hand to owner to real estate agent, in discussing the development and eventual demise of the South's mill villages. One of the most pertinent sections covers the sale of the employee housing – why, how, and to whom the sales were made.

Moore suggests that originally “village houses were not homes but parts of the production facility” (p. 67). The village as a whole was neglected when the houses were simply rented, unless the mill itself took on renovation projects. Documenting the arrival of the car to the Southern landscape as “a sign of Southern mill hands’ entry into the growing world of American consumerism and a symbol of an approaching divorce between home and work in the Piedmont mill communities” (p. 157), Moore points out that the mill hands had been taught (through school, work, and mill-run religion) the work-as-salvation ethic, but shifted to a culture of consumerism and materialism. Even before the houses went up for sale, the mill owners began a campaign to encourage home ownership and “commodified leisure activities” (p. 158).

Like Herring and Mulrooney, Moore writes of the changes that homeowners made after purchasing a house for their own comfort or for resale value. Moore found that homeowners made changes “a little bit at a time” – insulating, adding on, painting, and modernizing, and the like (pp. 212, 219). While he only begins to offer explanations for these developments, Leone (2001) summed them up by saying “as industrialization continued, houses themselves became commodities, and people were assigned the difficult task of shaping their personalities out of things made by other people” (p. 348).

Combining all of these different texts leads to several intriguing ideas. Histories like those of Coolidge, Hall, and Herring describe the background of the people and places that formed the industrial world. Crawford's work focuses on the model company town – places that inspired other industrial landscapes, certainly—but she does not touch on the other communities that were built after the turn of the century. Beaudry and Mrozowski's article begins to delve into the objects that filled the workers' lives and what they reveal, but stays away from the built environment, while Mulrooney touches on the workers' homes and spaces. Moore's dissertation sets the stage for an investigation of a single industrial location, and leaves open the possibility of applying other types of methodology onto the general ideas and background that he puts forward. Together, these authors create a background for an investigation of workers' space within the company town, with an eye to the built environment and knowledge of the industrial landscape.

Vernacular Design

An overview of scholarship of vernacular architecture and design is useful for consideration of the material cultural theories as they relate to the built environment. Most of these next authors would not align themselves with the Structuralist or Post-Structuralist camps, but their writing can further shape the theoretical background of this study.

The initial construction of a vernacular structure is interesting, but so too is what happens to it after it is built and inhabited. After all, “the buildings that have survived in

numbers are those that have been best adapted to the lives of subsequent generations. They do not necessarily represent the dominant or preferred modes of the past” (Upton, 1985, p. 297). Without the evolution of the structures, they never would have lasted long enough to be studied; that evolution comes from a series of small choices made by the original builder and all of the inhabitants who alter it later.

Thomas Hubka (1986) argues for the importance and validity of vernacular design as he takes a Structuralist perspective on the design process. Hubka works from Henry Glassie’s models based on the ideas of a language with rules and forms that are assembled in a myriad of possible combinations. Indeed, while a group of vernacular buildings may have a number of similar elements (floor plan, material, decoration, and the like) there are also inevitable small differences among them, due to the hand of the builder/designer and the choices of the original owner. These choices are constrained by the structure given by the building tradition to which the owner and builder have been exposed.

Hubka’s argument can be applied beyond the original building of a house, for example, as the owners or inhabitants continue to make choices over the length of residency, based on their own “pre-constrained ideas derived from existing buildings” (p. 430). These choices further mark the building as an individual, as repairs are needed, additions added, improvements made, and new technology installed. None of the changes may be radical departures from the known possibilities of the region or building type, but the alterations continue to individualize the building and reveal the presence of its residents.

Stewart Brand (1994) investigates this process as he asserts that buildings must be considered over time instead of simply in space in order to make a full evaluation of the structure and the built environment as a whole. Due to the changes in lifestyle through the last century, existing houses have had to be remodeled to shelter new functions. The specific materials and techniques used reveal when the buildings were altered, while what was changed or added shows the new requirements of the residents. “Homes are the domain of slowly shifting fantasies and rapidly shifting needs. The widowed parent moves in; the teenager moves out; finances require letting out a room; accumulating stuff needs more storage; a home office or studio becomes essential” (p. 10). Brand’s ability to recognize the shifting meanings that a given building can represent as it evolves through time places him in the Post-Structuralist camp, although he does not delve deeply into the theoretical constructs developed by some of his counterparts.

Heath (2001), for example, keenly aware of the theoretical importance of his work, extends some of the ideas that Brand discusses: “original intention... represents only a brief snapshot of user accommodation” (p. 183). In a critique of the Structuralist focus on the maker of an object, he draws attention to the possible vantage points ripe for investigation:

Traditionally, we explore architectural history from the point of view of the *architect* for an understanding of the set of creative ideas and aesthetic principles that a single individual has brought to the project that relates the work to others nationally or internationally. However, by understanding the same object or artifact from different points of view, one can gain deeper insights into a more comprehensive system of relationships that, in truth, govern our built environments (Heath, 2001, p. 186).

Heath continues to list those points of view and to give examples, including the history of the client, the builder, and the user. This last point of view “often redefines the use, meaning and character of the building project over time as a result of various cultural systems that impact human behavior” (p. 186) – a perfect definition for Heath’s term ‘cultural weathering.’

To examine this idea of cultural weathering, Heath examines his hometown of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Once whaling capital, then textile center, now aging post-industrial town, New Bedford’s booms and busts show vividly in its architectural landscape. In terms of evolution, the town followed an evolutionary path similar to Lowell’s. The original mill owners kept the paternalistic ideas of providing housing and some minimal care for the laborers, building the first tenements in 1848. Unlike Lowell, where the founders strove to keep a proletariat class from forming by hiring a temporary work force, no attempt was made at the New Bedford mills to prevent the formation of a working class. This fact places these mills in between the American company town’s foundations in Lowell and its later manifestations in the South.

Significantly, Heath acknowledges and insists on including his own story within the text. Having grown up in the world of the three-decker, his distinct perspective on and understanding of layers of meaning may be invisible to an outside observer. The appearance of the personal into the analysis of form would undoubtedly cause a strict Structuralist, such as Prown, to balk: the basis of Prown’s work focuses on the culture or time of others, not his own. This acknowledgement and celebration of personal

knowledge of the subject, particularly useful for an investigation of Carrboro, ensure including observations and experiences as a potentially rich source of knowledge.

Homeownership and Remodeling

The initial construction of a building, whether vernacular or high-style, industrial or domestic, has been investigated by many scholars. The original design and manifestation reveals much about the people and culture that produced it, certainly, and the form of the building is perfect for a Structuralist investigation. Few people have taken on the subject of remodeling and renovation in and of itself, a question that requires a more Post-Structuralist perspective because of the need to consider more than the original maker. Brand discusses how buildings evolve, how important it is to see the structures through time, and how changes in a family might lead to alterations of a house. Likewise, Heath's ideas of cultural weathering obviously address the issues of changes in the built environment because of new inhabitants. Beyond these investigations, however, little attention has been paid to how and why people renovate their own homes and why they change structures in which they are living.

Many different facets of renovation must be investigated – issues of home ownership, remodeling by professionals, and do-it-yourself alterations all play a role, and unfortunately the scholarship is disparate and incomplete. The few authors who embrace the subject tend to take a Post-Structuralist, multi-disciplinary view, in large part because the artifact itself can no longer be referred to in its entirety.

Williams (1987) gives an excellent example of this sort of multifaceted study when she investigates “how conflicting functions and social meaning ascribed to a dwelling may result in its remodeling or eventual abandonment” (p. 101). Her research looks at houses in the southwestern North Carolina mountains and the juncture between design and use. She describes the construction of central-hall plan houses in an area where the majority of homes were single- or double-pen. Williams asserts that the social patterns never changed to fit the structure; instead, people changed the structure to fit the patterns, removing one wall of the central hall to make it essentially a double-pen, or otherwise incorporating the socially unnecessary space.

To arrive at these conclusions, Williams looks beyond the house itself and supplements the physical artifact with oral history, and by doing so she adds Post-Structuralist depth to her work. Her interest is how people inhabit and use the built environment and how that environment is changed over time. The recent disappearance of old building forms such as the double pen and the long memories of the residents in the North Carolina mountains were a perfect venue for Williams’ research; indeed, she intends for her studies to do more than shed light on a small, regional building tradition. She seeks to question how scholars use buildings as cultural artifacts. In essence, the building should not be read simply as a static physical form but also as a piece in a puzzle involving both how the structure is “used, socially and symbolically, and how buildings are physically constructed, altered, preserved, or destroyed” (Williams, 1991, p. 3).

While Williams seeks to use choices of alteration or renovation to investigate the changing social uses of a home in terms of the modern inhabitants, Thomas Carter (1987)

uses the same evidence to discover the original builder's intent. Employing a much more Structuralist methodology, he looks at recent renovations and the intent behind the changes, then asks, "If these were the reasons for removal, can we surmise like reasons for initial incorporation?" (p.132). His research is based on the late 19th century Mormon houses in Utah and their post-World War II renovations, and, while he questions what changed since the original owners, his focus is on uncovering original form rather than investigating why the changes took place.

Jones (1980) thoroughly considers how and why buildings are remodeled, through investigating the massive amount of renovation going on in Los Angeles. Jones suggests that symbol, association, cultural expectations, economics, space needs, territoriality, and sense of identity all play roles in the choices one makes in changing one's homes and proposes a new way of looking at folklore and vernacular studies as a whole. Questioning the definitions of "folk," "creativity," "tradition," and other recurring words, Jones argues that these words have multiple meanings, and their meaning depends on who uses the word, who hears it, and the context of the discussion. Jones ends with a call for a new center for folklore studies, one that revolves around behaviors instead of the more subjective terms described above. In this case, the behavior in question is that "of crafting and readjusting personal space" (p. 327). While Jones' piece focuses on the alterations of space that his neighbors were making in California during the 1970s, as a folklorist he seeks the commonalities to generalize beyond this narrow context.

Another text that resonates within this investigation involves worker housing; in 1926, Le Corbusier designed and built the Quartiers Modernes Frugés at Pessac, France.

The buildings, intended to be affordable, reproducible, simple residential structures, constructed out of two or three different concrete modules, in a cubist, modern style replete with terraces and polychromatic exterior painting. Forty years later, Phillippe Boudon (1969), a French architect, revisits Pessac to investigate the evolutions that Le Corbusier's buildings underwent over the decades. Boudon and colleagues assume that the owners of the structures would alter them to make them more individual, and indeed they find these changes: "They took what was offered to them and worked on it, converted it, added to it... They created distinctions, ...they added personal qualities" (p. i). Despite the investigators' assumptions that the owners of the most standardized houses would change them the most, the houses that were somewhat distinctive or set apart in their original construction are altered more. In fact, their differences are exaggerated, while the houses in the middle of the settlement that were most alike initially, remain the least altered.

Using a combination of interviews, original documentation, drawings, and photographs, Boudon determines that the changes illustrate an attempt to bring the familiar, vernacular architecture into the cubist, modern envelopes defined by Le Corbusier. The original houses were perceived as foreign, strange, and unlivable when first built, and the alterations make them more culturally acceptable. The issue of culture plays a large role in the study, and reveals the narrow path that Boudon walks between Structuralist and Post-Structuralist theory. The researchers are conscious of developing a structure or "a framework– without bringing any influence to bear – that would enable the occupants to think about their houses and recall their experiences" (p. 52). This

conscious format seems Structuralist, but the focus on the multiple points of view and reliance on interview for information leans towards a Post-Structuralist methodology. Balancing between the two schools, Boudon's survey provides a wonderful snapshot of a moment in time, and he delves carefully into the reasons why the changes were made in the Quartiers Modernes Frugés.

To further explore the questions surrounding remodeling and renovation, one must consider who did the actual work as does Bell (2002), by tracing the development of do-it-yourself and giving an excellent encapsulation of both the existing scholarship and the movement itself. Intended as a reference, Bell covers an array of books, magazines, television shows, and advertisements that have shaped do-it-yourself since before the advent of the phrase early in the 20th century. As Bell recognizes, few scholarly works have treated the idea of do-it-yourself, but they can begin to answer the 'how' part of the renovation question.

Gelber (1997) begins to look at how the do-it-yourself movement relates to the role of the man in the house, the rise of home ownership, and the growth of suburbs through the 20th century, by tying "male gender anxieties" about industrialization to their role within the house and family (p. 72). Based on a century of do-it-yourself advice guides, Gelber attributes great sociological meaning to the role of handyman, as it restored manual skills and traditional definitions of manhood removed earlier by the Industrial Revolution. His sociological perspective sheds light on the development of the skills, but neglects to investigate what projects were being completed and why.

In furthering a more complete investigation into home improvement and its role in the 20th century, Goldstein (1998) seeks to trace the “fascination with home improvement in contemporary America” using advertising, magazine articles, and changes in the tools and products themselves (p. 11). Using these sources, Goldstein places the height of the do-it-yourself movement in the early 1950s and considers the mass appeal to be more than financial. “For many American families,” she asserts, “home improvement activities provided a way of obtaining the house and lifestyle to which they aspired—a way of participating in the American dream” (p. 37). Skimming the surface of a century-long phenomenon, Goldstein offers little evidence of a theoretical background for the study of home improvement through the 20th century.

One commonality amongst the works on renovation and do-it-yourself is that they are merely scratching the surface of a very complex topic. As Jones (1980) observes, “an investigation of additions and alterations to homes has much to offer any student of human behavior” (p. 326). Each study begins investigation into a small facet of the whole issue, but there does not seem to be any overview that truly covers the topic at hand. While Gelber and Williams begin to ask about how the issues apply to larger questions within the culture, other writers seem only to skim over a field that needs a good deal more consideration. Boudon and Jones more fully consider the issues involved and these two studies provide rich starting points for an analysis of Carrboro mill houses.

Such a study offers fertile ground to marry both sides of the Structuralist/Post-Structuralist debate, and to develop the picture of a changing industrial landscape. The cool rationality of Structuralist evaluation blends with the multiple viewpoints and

focuses on the cultural evolutions of Post-Structuralism to yield a more thorough perspective of the complex landscape of an evolving company town like Carrboro. Taken together, these two schools guide an investigation of the built environment that invites both a close reading of the original structures and an understanding of user alteration of the buildings. All of these pieces blend to form the background for Carrboro itself, and can also tell *how* to go about the investigation. By returning to these authors and applying their investigations to the particular question of Carrboro, a methodology develops.

CHAPTER III

DOCUMENTING USER ALTERATION

The thesis was based on surveys of individual houses in Carrboro, North Carolina, initially considering changes to those buildings in the manner that Corbusier's Pessac was studied. Within the investigation of the alteration of worker housing in France were the same questions that must be asked about Carrboro: what did people do to their houses to mark them as their own? What alterations were needed, wanted, and made to the structures that were originally identical? Unfortunately, interviewing the residents who changed the buildings was impossible, as the majority of those residents were gone. Nor could this information be gathered fully by questionnaires, interviews, experiment or secondary source research, but instead had to be taken from the structures themselves. Carrboro's mill houses themselves became the basis of the study; the stories they told were the most important data.

In order to conduct the research, it was necessary to find a group of houses that were built in a repeating form by the mill owner for employees. The sample selection process began with a survey of the housing stock in Carrboro. There were older homes scattered within the town limits, and the density of this older housing stock increased with proximity to the mill buildings. This fact was evident both through the investigator's personal observation and through the 1983 survey of Carrboro architecture. The area for study was defined as roughly a 900-foot radius from the existing mill

building and a similar block with the same radius of location of the demolished mill building to the south (Figure 15), based on the existence of pre-1940s housing stock in these two areas. According to local history, a few blocks of these houses to the north of the existing mill were demolished to make space for commercial concerns, but substantial areas remain (Brown, 1983, p.15).



Figure 15: Map of Carrboro, from 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map of Chapel Hill. Outlined area is area surveyed; light grey shows the two areas that made up the sample. Dark grey shows the remaining mill building.

The investigator conducted a walking survey of both areas, which comprise about 16 square blocks and a total of 99 separate buildings. Of these, 32 were eliminated as unlikely mill houses based on their material, architectural style, scale, or known date of construction. For example, brick ranches, infill triplexes, and large commercial cinderblock buildings were removed from the list, as were structures for which owners confidently gave construction dates of post-1940. For the remaining structures, a brief description was written of each, listing the exterior features, probable floor plan type, condition, and any visible alterations. These notes, street addresses, and photographs of each structure formed the initial database.

The majority of the remaining 67 houses fit the typology of the mill house. Based on the repeated forms seen during the investigator's survey and the descriptions in Brown's inventory, two house types were identified as a repeated form throughout the area (Figure 16). The first was a one-room-deep saddlebag house with a rear el and a front porch the width of the house, immediately recognizable from the street by its two front doors. The second type was a center-hall plan house, one-room-deep, with a single chimney with two fireplaces in the wall between the main block and a rear el. These houses are distinguishable from the street as well, by a triple-A roofline with a decorated front gable over a large porch. These two types recur not only in Carrboro, but throughout the Piedmont of North Carolina.

A few structures in the survey seemed larger, more ornate, or somehow unusual, but they were not immediately excluded. Brown's survey mentioned several atypical mill houses that had been built for larger families, including at least three two-story



Figure 16: Examples of the two house types apparent in Carrboro. On the left, the saddlebag house with two front doors, on the right, the three-gable house with a single door.

gable-and-wing homes. A few others mentioned in the Carrboro survey were built before the 1939 auction but out of sequence with the others, either filling in an empty lot or rebuilding after a fire. Additionally, there remained the possibility that mill-built houses had been altered beyond immediate recognition.

The investigator tracked the ownership of the selected 67 houses at the Orange County Register of Deeds in Hillsborough, North Carolina. Thirty-three were traced back to a period of mill ownership. While many other structures were built for rental to mill workers, only those owned by Durham Hosiery Mills were considered for the study. Additionally, those houses that were not sold during the 1939 sale, but instead remained in company hands for a longer time, were removed from the sample. This thinning left 20 houses for investigation, all located along Maple, Carr, Center, and Oak streets (see Figure 15). Of this collection, 14 houses sold during the 1939 auction and remained in private hands; the remaining six houses were sold initially during the 1939 property

liquidation and were later purchased by National Munitions Corporation in 1942, then returned to private ownership after World War II.

Using this limited sample of 20 buildings, the next step involved contact with the current residents. After receiving the approval of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Institutional Review Board, the investigator mailed a brief introductory letter to the resident of each mill house in the sample, describing the project and asking for the opportunity to conduct an interior survey (Appendix A). This mailing was followed by a personal visit from the researcher to arrange an appointment for documentation and further explain the research. Residents of 17 houses were happy to assist and welcomed the investigator into their homes; residents of three houses were not available to participate.

In total, 17 houses (Figures 17, 18, and 19) were visited and their interiors evaluated using a prototype floor plan drawn by Scott Simmons and originally published in the 1983 survey of Carrboro architecture (Figure 20). Two of the houses were removed from the sample because they did not conform to the prototype floor plan at all. Two others had a single significant difference from the prototype, but remained within the sample.



Figure 17: Map of downtown Carrboro, NC, with two areas of mill houses selected. Figures 18 and 19 are of area 1 and 2, respectively. From 2002 aerial photography of Carrboro, with Orange County GIS information overlaid.



Figure 18: Enlargement of Area 1 from Figure 17, with each lot in the sample group highlighted. From 2002 aerial photography of Carrboro, with Orange County GIS information overlaid.



Figure 19: Enlargement of Area 2 from Figure 17, with each lot in the sample group highlighted. From 2002 aerial photography of Carrboro, with Orange County GIS information overlaid.

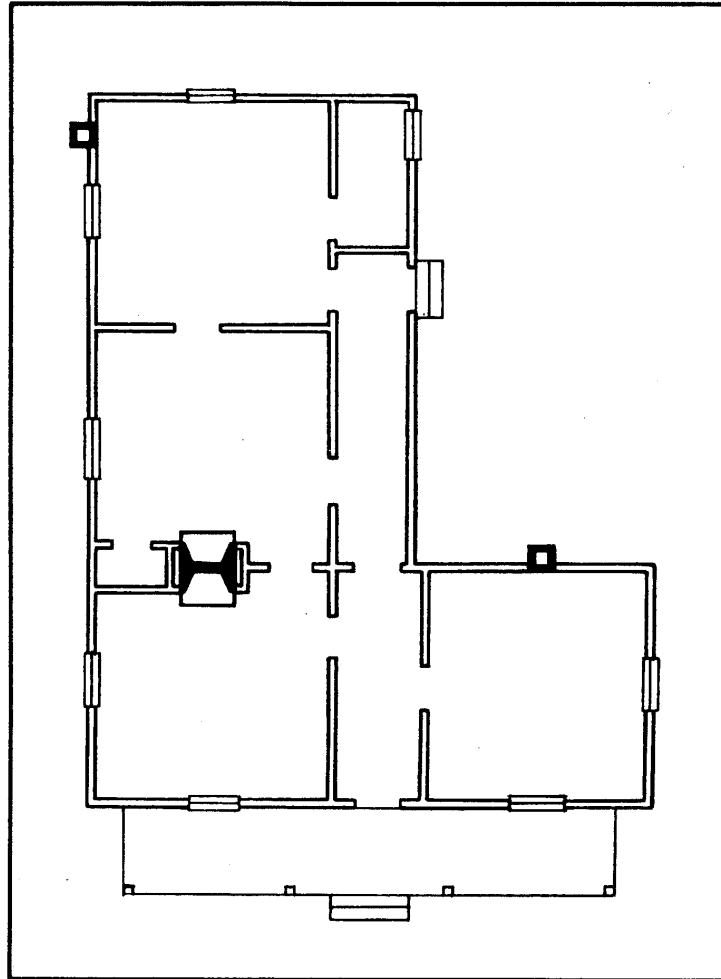


Figure 20: Prototypical Floor Plan, as drawn by Scott Simmons (1983), not to scale.

The researcher sketched a rough floor plan with room uses, doors, closets and windows, later transferred onto the standardized prototype plan. Additionally, several elements were considered, as were materials and changes to the original floor plan. Quenzel's (1988) checklist for assessing historic interiors was used as a basis and then amended to fit Carrboro's house types. For example, an entry for stairwells was

unnecessary as all of the mill houses in the sample were a single story (see Appendix B for form). These elements were noted:

- (a) Exterior covering including roof, siding, windows, etc.
- (b) Presence or absence of the chimney from the exterior
- (c) Condition and arrangement of porch, including the posts, steps, and ceiling
- (d) Interior wall materials
- (e) Presence and placement of the fireplaces, mantles, chimney mass, and hearth
- (f) Moldings and surrounds of fenestration and openings
- (g) Flooring
- (h) Ceiling height and covering
- (i) Room arrangement and purposes, including
 - length and purpose of the original center hall space
 - bathroom location
 - additions to the original floor plan

By considering these elements through qualitative analysis, evidence of subtle changes appeared. New openings were distinguished from old by comparing moldings; evidence of renovations was revealed by changes in wall material or finish. The visual evidence was supplemented by informal interviews with the residents, conducted as the researcher moved through the space. For the most part, homeowners knew only of renovations that had happened during the previous ten or fifteen years, while renters knew even less. Long-term residents proved particularly useful, as they not only

remembered information about their own houses, but also about alterations of neighboring structures.

The researcher compared and analyzed these floor plans through the lens of both Structuralism and Post-structuralism. Prown's ideas provided a method for the initial, analytic consideration of original house forms. Using the prototype floor plan, the researcher considered building meaning within the context of mill ownership. As Prown suggested, this phase of the research focuses on the style of things, therefore small stylistic choices such as moldings, surrounds, mantle, porch posts and doorknobs were important. The floor plan itself, room arrangement, and potential room uses were also considered, gathered from textile histories, mill guidebooks, and town surveys (Brown, 1983; Hall, 1987; Rhyne, 1930, Tompkins, 1900).

After the investigator considered the original construction of the houses, the gathered floor plans and notes were compared and contrasted. The investigator focused on the areas where structural additions and alterations were made, what had become of the center hall, and the existence and utility of the original fireplaces. Alterations to the exterior of the house, particularly ones that were made for stylistic rather than functional reasons (like a new style of porch post), were also noted. Finally, current room uses were considered and compared.

The researcher transcribed the field notes and created a chart of the major areas of potential alteration based on the survey results. These included exterior elements and materials (particularly the porch), interior spatial arrangement (focusing on the center hall and back porch/hall area), interior materials, fireplace, and built-in furniture (Table 1).

Original photographs of the exterior were included with the data; all can be found in Appendix C.

Through qualitative analysis of all data, the researcher compiled an accounting of change to Carrboro mill houses. By comparing alterations across the sample, the investigator discerned patterns to address the study questions, utilizing both Structural and Post-Structural methods and strategies to liberate meaning from the data. This information can be found in Chapter Four.

Table 1: House type and alterations

		House														(Sub)	Total	
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N			O
House Type	gable				•	•	•	•	•	•						•	7	
	no gable	•	•	•							•	•	•	•	•		8	
Porch and Exterior	porch posts	original style	•	•			•	•								•	6	
		altered			•	•			•	•	•	•		n/a	•	•		8
	siding	wood	•	•				•		•	•	•		•		•	7	
		other			•	•	•		•		•			•	•		8	
	windows	original		•	•		•	•		•		• ¹					6	
		new	•			•			•	•		•		•	•	•	•	9
Center Hall	open		•				•	•							•		4	
	blocked	with closet							•		•			•			3	8
		with bath				•					•		• ³				3	
		with other								•				•			2	
	N/A or removed			•	•											•	3	
Interior Arrangement	original arrangement										•		•	•		3		
	bath/hall/utility				•		•	•				• ²					4	12
	additions		•						•	•	•		•				5	
	all walls removed/other			•		•										•	3	
Interior Materials	floors	hardwood	•	•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	• ¹	12	
		other				•			•	•							2	
	ceiling	beadboard	•	•			•	•	•	•		•		•	•		9	
		other				•				•		• ⁴				•	4	6
		mix			•								•				2	
	walls	beadboard	•	•			•	•			•		•	•			7	
		drywall				•			•		•		•		•		5	8
mix				•					•						•	3		
Fire-place	open	original mantles	•							•						2	5	
		new mantles											•	•	•			3
	blocked	original mantles					•	•									2	4
		no mantles				•			•								2	
	mix of open/blocked or old/new									•		•	•			•	4	
	removed			•	•												2	
Built-ins	bookshelves		•			•			•	•	•	•		•		7	12	
	closets			•	•		•	•		•	•				•	7		
	none												•		•	•	3	3

NOTE. 1: mixed
 2: plus a closet
 3: cuts off hall very slightly
 4: dropped ceiling

CHAPTER IV

ANALYZING CHANGE

The original configuration of the Carrboro mill houses reveals the legacy of the mill. The floor plan, room usage, and minor changes made before the 1939 auction were determined purely by the mill owners, with the mill's bottom line clearly in mind. The houses, built quickly and inexpensively, relied on local vernacular patterns and the knowledge of the carpenters (the full description of the original houses is found in Chapter One).

Subsequent owners made changes to the houses and the current configuration of the mill houses reflects their legacy. Economics continued to inform the choices that people made and the materials they chose. Likewise, the local vernacular strongly influenced the range of changes that people found possible within the original floor plan, thus transforming a company template into distinct, individualized homes. Despite these limits on potential changes, Carrboro's mill houses show evidence of alterations made by successive owners from every perspective: the porch posts have been replaced, the buildings resided with vinyl or asbestos, the interior floor plan shifted, and rooms added on. People have adapted the houses to changing needs and living patterns, to make up for deficiencies in and to take advantage of the potential of the original building. They have used the architectural blank of the mill's architecture to express *home*.

Heath (2005) suggests looking for patterns of contradictions and discontinuities within the built environment, and for ways that the new owners retaliate against the original design and change it to meet their own needs (personal communication, 2.25.2005). By first considering the original form of the buildings and then moving on to the alterations and current configurations, the wealth of information within the structures appears. To do this fully, Structuralist and Post-Structuralist ideas must be employed, thereby highlighting details and comparisons that might be missed without both sides of the debate. Structuralism tells us that style matters, and that uncovering the original configuration of the house reveals what the original owners intended and desired from the structures. Likewise, Post-Structuralist analysis calls for finding the multiple perspectives contained within a single object or building, for hearing the voices of the subsequent owners in the buildings, and for allowing the meanings to change over the course of the century that the Carrboro mill houses have existed.

The Original Mill Houses: Economics and Paternalism

“The mill village is a curious institution,” wrote historian Frank Tannenbaum in 1923. “It has no life of its own. Its destinies are spun by the mill” (Hall, 1987, pp. xv-xvi).

Thomas Lloyd, the original owner of the mill and its houses, needed the mill houses to be purely functional, so that is all that they were. Constructed over a period of 10 or 15 years in two different areas, one group sits to the west of the first mill, built between 1898 and 1909, the second group occupies land beside the later mill, built

between 1910 and 1915. The original floor plan remained consistent throughout the building campaign and revealed a very basic house form, based on the simple farmhouse vernacular of the area. Stylistically, the houses appeared plain and simple: the beadboard walls, quarter-round trim, and basic window surrounds serviceable but without flourish. The only nod to decoration on the practical homes was the whirl pattern in the gable vents of the second group of houses (Figure 21). In the transition of one mill owner to the next (Julian S. Carr's 1909 purchase of the mill and its holdings), he certainly did not add any stylistic touches to the houses.

The houses had the same floor plan, but their gradual construction ensured that no two were exactly the same. The carpenters likely received feedback from both Lloyd and the residents about what succeeded and what failed in the completed houses, and they responded accordingly. The structures stood as an example of Hubka's ideas of the vernacular design process (1986): as the builders experimented within their own experience, there were always subtle differences among the houses. Furthermore, various materials were more affordable during the decade of construction, so a slight variety in doorknobs, locks, door panel configurations, baseboard, or crown molding was present. The hardwood floors and beadboard walls and ceiling remained consistent throughout.



Figure 21: Decorative gable vent from the façade of House I, the only original architectural embellishment. Photograph by the author, 2005.

Despite the fact that this mill village was not conceived nor built in one construction boom, it still remained very much a company town. Housing in many industrial towns fell under the pervasive control by the business over their employees, and Carrboro was certainly no exception to this fact, despite the Carrs' reputation as progressive employers. Whether termed paternalism or industrial welfare, the housing, as property of the mills, performed an important role in that environment. Their construction, plan, maintenance, and improvement, dictated by the mills, provided evidence of the company's control.

Throughout the textile region, large families occupied the serviceable homes and shared four rooms, each space serving several purposes simultaneously. A 1911 government study described four mill communities in North Carolina, the quantity of rooms in the mill houses, the number of residents therein, and how many spaces were used for sleeping: 16 of the 21 families listed used all but one room in their houses for sleeping, and the average family size was 8.5 individuals. Of the 12 houses with four rooms, like the majority of the Carrboro mill houses, all but one used three rooms for sleeping (Worcester and Worcester, p. 29). Every room, except perhaps the kitchen, served both as bedroom and living area; the equal sizes of rooms encouraged a lack of hierarchy between the spaces. Additionally, no room had any added features that might define its function to the exclusion of another: no bookshelves, cabinets, or storage. Indeed, the rooms were equally functional – and equally lacking.

The construction of the house and the layout of the four rooms further reinforced its pure functionality in terms of circulation and ventilation. The center hall allowed

individuals working different shifts to leave without disturbing each other's sleep; it also enhanced the air circulation through the building. With large windows and doors connecting all the rooms to the front or rear porches, cross breezes cooled the spaces. The cost-effective brick pier foundation provided for more airflow under the building as well, crucial in an area known for long, humid summers. Additionally, each room had its own heat source, through the main chimney's two fireplaces or through two individual smaller stoves in the other rooms.

The mill continued this pattern of simple sufficiency in its alterations to the houses. Specifically, the addition of bathrooms to each home was an example of inexpensive, efficient construction. The bathroom, added at the end of the rear porch close to existing plumbing, stood on existing supports, and was sheltered by an existing roof. Even simpler, a door was not cut through into the kitchen on the shared wall. Instead, the residents stepped outside onto the porch and entered the bathroom, surely an improvement to the backyard privy, but still awkward and inconvenient.

The adaptability of the original mill houses was an important asset, as they were essentially an architectural blank. While the mill itself only added the bathrooms to these simple houses, the original floor plan held a range of possibilities. Mill owners never permitted remodeling of individual houses, but could not prevent the houses from containing this potential. The original, vernacular floor plan contained the possibility of change, just as important as the actual alterations. After the mill sold the houses, they shifted from being one property, one owner, and one expression to individual examples of self-representation.

The First Alterations

“They began to care for and improve their houses and lots... the majority of purchasers began to show evidences of a feeling of permanency and an owner’s interest and pride” (Herring, 1949, pp. 55-56).

After the 1939 auction, the new owners of the mill houses began a process of renovation that continued over sixty-five years. These changes, a reaction to the legacy of the mill’s functionalism and control, traced the attitudes of owners with a new opportunity to alter the structures to meet the immediate needs of the family, and to exercise feelings of ownership and self-control. Essentially, these alterations reoriented the houses from the mill’s requirements to the homeowners’ own desires. Over time, many renovations were made (see Table 1 for an overview of the changes. See also Appendix C for the field notes for each structure).

The mill’s bathroom addition demonstrates how the houses were altered and what the owners encountered when they purchased the structures. The first changes made by the owners respond to the way the company had added on: enclosing the rear porch (Figure 22). Evidence for this first alteration hides in the back hall of each house. If the mill closed in this space, either when the bathroom was added or later, the materials and construction would be standardized. Instead, these spaces show a variety of fenestration configurations, surface finishes, and materials. The interior wall, once the porch wall, often displays exterior siding; the newly added wall is constructed of beadboard, rough planks, or gypsum board, but never the same material from house to house. Some of the spaces, lined with windows, preserve the porch feel, while others are closed up entirely

into closets, bathrooms, or other additions. As wide a variety as there is in contemporary usage, it is significant that this space in every house of the sample is enclosed (Figure 23).

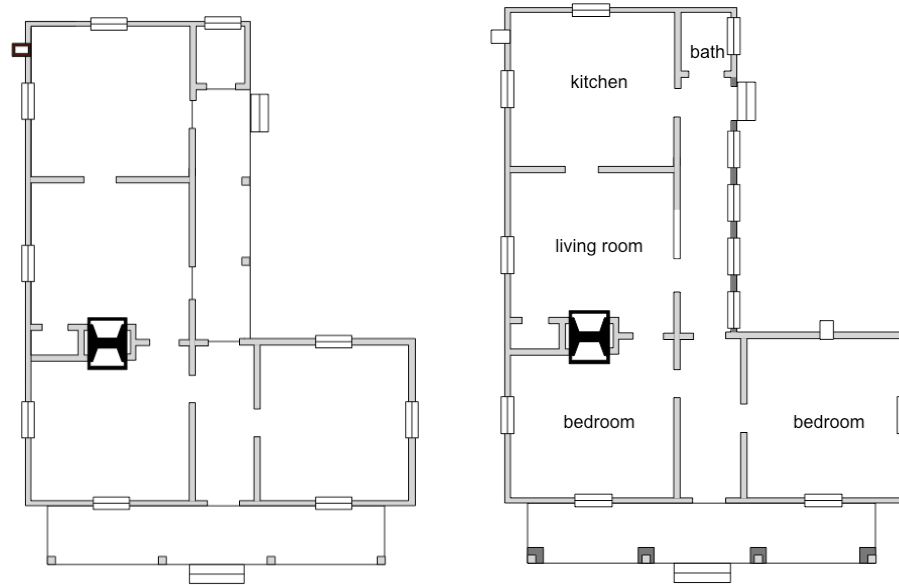


Figure 22: Left floor plan (by author) shows the original open back porch; right floor plan (House N) has enclosed porch.



Figure 23: Rear side of House F showing the enclosed back porch. Photograph by author, 2005.

Enclosing the porch meant that the residents did not have to go outside to reach the bathroom, as did the owner of one house (House J) when the home was purchased in 1981. That particular house had been a rental for many years, and the first renovation the new owner undertook was enclosing the screened rear porch. This change was partially about comfort, privacy and convenience, but was also functional as it prevented the bathroom pipes from freezing in the winter (Resident of House J, February 1, 2005).

The privacy and modernity gained by closing in the back porches compensated for the loss of a valuable ventilating element of the houses' original plan. The rear porches, always on the south side of the houses in the sample, shielded the rear end of the home from the sun and allowed a number of doors to be opened to capture cross breezes, providing cooling in an era before air conditioning. Now that every porch in the sample has been enclosed, many of the homeowners lamented the light blocked from their kitchens and dining rooms, not thinking of the thermal role of blocking the sun's heat from the interior (Resident of House M, January 16, 2005 and of House I, January 15, 2005). The recent renovator of House A captured the southern exposure's thermal possibilities, turning the rear porch area to a sunroom in a passive solar addition (see Figure 24).

The modifications to the houses reflect Hubka's ideas of vernacular design, although he considers only the initial construction in his work. Solving a problem with the materials on hand, the majority of Carrboro homeowners found similar solutions to enclose their back porches, but room for ingenuity still remained. In the back hall (now a bathroom) of House C, half of a double-hung window was hung in a custom frame,

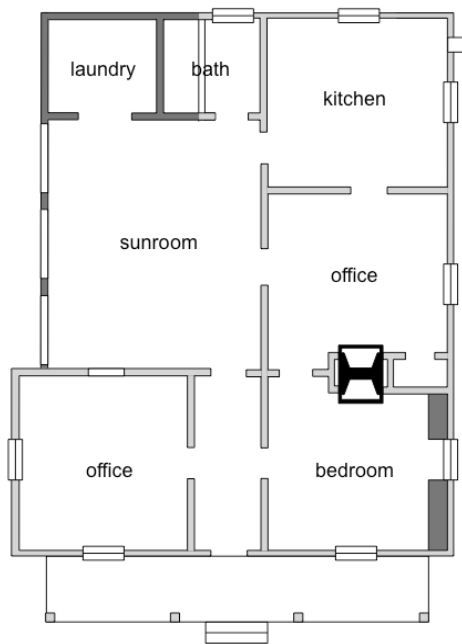


Figure 24: Floor plan of House A. Sunroom is passive solar addition from 1981 renovation.



Figure 25: Window in enclosed back porch of House C. It is half of a double-hung window used as a casement; note wooden latch closure. Photograph by author, 2003.

where the window slides up – not over its other half, but into the wall. Another homeowner took half of a double-hung window again, but this time hung it as a casement; a simple pivoting wood latch keeps it closed (Figure 25).

Subsequent Alterations: Individualizing Space

“As industrialization continued, houses themselves became commodities, and people were assigned the difficult task of shaping their personalities out of things made by other people” (Leone, 2001, 348).

Regardless of each individual owner’s connection to the mill over the decades, the changes each has made stand as reactions to the opportunities and deficiencies of the company’s original decisions. With their changes, the current residents are not rebelling against corporate ownership of their homes, but they are dealing with the rippling effect of the initial construction. As discussed previously, the mill houses’ original floor plan was limited and simple, with little storage space and a bathroom inconveniently placed at the back of the house. Many of the more recent alterations to the homes seek to improve these elements specifically and yet not alter the basic form of the four original rooms.

Interior Alterations

The two halls – the front center hall and the back hall created by enclosing the porch – are the two most frequently altered spaces within the structures. The specifics of what happened there differ from house to house; each homeowner made changes according to their specific needs, means, and desires. Examination of the current

structures as a group indicates that the changes seem to radiate from the center hallway that acts as a backbone to the rest of the floor plan. The halls are cut off and filled in with the elements that the original houses were ‘missing’: bathrooms, closet space, hallways that create private connections between the spaces, and in one case, a small bedroom. Williams’ (1987) work on the surviving traditional architecture of western North Carolina shows similar examples of a center hall that is considered ‘wasted’ space. Instead of cutting it off and filling it in, however, the most common alteration has “one wall of the hall removed, eliminating the formal passage and enlarging one room” (p.107). This center hall appears as the ‘extra’ area, both in the North Carolina mountains and in Carrboro, a space that serves functional purposes of circulation but does not fill the specific desires of the families.

Within Carrboro, the most common alteration to the center hall creates a foyer by adding a wall within six to eight feet from the door. Specifically, nine of the 15 houses have had a wall dividing the center hall, although one owner has just removed that wall with recent renovations (Appendix C, House F). In the original configuration, the front door entrance allows access to every room; by creating a foyer, access is limited to just the two front rooms, and imposes a buffer between the entering visitor and the rest of the house. This entrance space tends to be small (as tight as four feet deep in House J), but always retains the width of the original hall and entrances to both of the front rooms (Figure 26). Often, those two rooms function as bedroom and living room; to stress the difference, the wider entrance, which leads to the living space, often has no door (Figure 27).

These two doorways are not original openings to the front rooms, instead they were added when the hall was blocked to create the foyer (original doorways were halfway down the center hall). The similarities between the original door surrounds and those added here point to the early date of most of these alterations. Furthermore, about half of these new walls are covered in beadboard, additional evidence of early modification. House M has paneling on this wall and Houses G, H, K, and L have gypsum board, thus making it difficult to speculate about the time of these alterations. Gypsum board and paneling were both common from the mid-20th century on, and some of the homeowners now have drywall over the original beadboard throughout their homes.



Figure 26: Two front halls: on the left, view from front door of House D into a blocked hall, on the right, view from the end of open hallway of House F, towards front door. Built-in storage on the right has narrowed this hall. Photographs by author, 2005.



Figure 27: View from living area of House D through center hall to bedroom; note the larger opening with no door in the foreground. Photograph by author, 2005.

Six of the 15 houses have additions; in five of these, the addition is in back porch/rear hall area. What was originally an exterior space was expanded into a combination of a pantry, hallway, closet, bathroom, or additional bedrooms. A logical choice for an addition not only because of the constraints of the long and narrow lot, but also because of the relatively easy extension of the shed roof that once sheltered the porch.

Only the owner of House J had the luxury of building on to the side rather than the rear of the house, probably because the lots of Houses J and K are wide instead of deep due to the nearby ravine. The owner chose to keep the integrity of the original floor



Figure 28: Two-story addition to south side of House J, the only mill house altered with a side addition and a second story. Photograph by author, 2005.

plan and shape of the house, and constructed a small extension from the south wall into a two-story addition with bedrooms and bathrooms. The addition also presented the opportunity to make the attic area of the original house into living space; two bedrooms are tucked into the eaves. There are very few houses in the neighborhood – mill-owned or otherwise – that have two floors, and while all of the houses have tall, peaked roofs with ample headroom, this is the only house with inhabitable space in the second story (Figure 28).

Other interior changes have less to do with square footage allotment than with room usage. It is certainly the case that the rooms in the original mill houses were fluid: if the general guideline of one worker per room was kept at Carr Mill, then almost every room would serve double duty as public space and as private sleeping area. The rooms, originally uniform, undefined, and multi-purpose, have gradually become more

specialized. Additions of closets, bookshelves and other built-in furniture define room function as bedroom, living room, dining room, or office.

These alterations add useful items to each space and shape visitors' experiences and perceptions of the spaces. The interchangeable rooms in the early houses contained no real distinction between public and private. Now, many of the mill houses have a clear line between public rooms and those that are private; the large bookshelves beside the fireplace define the living space and the closets make it clear which room is the bedroom, for example. The creation of the foyer begins to draw that distinction, and in four of the houses the space behind the new wall is a pass-through between bedrooms – and sometimes simultaneously a closet or bathroom, the ultimate private space.

Exterior Renovations

Alterations to the exterior of the mill houses fall into two categories: maintenance and fashion. This oversimplification stresses the difference between replacement windows or new siding, which reduce upkeep, and a new style of porch posts chosen for aesthetic reasons. As owners seek to personalize a house and delineate it as their own, both of these desires come into play.

The practical changes to the exterior include replaced porch floors, asbestos shingles, and replacement windows. Some residents replaced the original six-over-six windows with vinyl or double paned wood (sometimes retaining the mullions). Aluminum, vinyl, or asbestos siding covers the original wood clapboard on many houses. In fact, nine of the 15 houses have replacement windows; only six retain their original

wood clapboards. Perhaps if more of the houses still had wood siding, there would be greater variety of house colors; as is, the different types of sheathing give the texture and individuality that was accomplished with paint in New Bedford or Pessac. While a bright purple door or high-contrast trim does appear sporadically, House D was the only landmark with its bright pink paint job until it was repainted in 2004.

The front porch reflects more individuality than do windows or siding, as the place where presentation and maintenance combine. Not only are the porch supports and floor more susceptible to rot than other parts of the building due to exposure, but also the porch often defines a house's personality. Culturally, the front porch acts as an idealized gathering place, exemplified by the 12 front porches that had chairs or benches even during the January survey. Additionally, every house but one has retained the original characteristic stoop since the mill's sale despite their constant need for maintenance.

Within the mill village, changing a porch acts as a quick way to individualize a home. Seven of the 15 porches are wrapped with a wooden railing, added over the past decades – House E received a railing as recently as 2004 (Figure 29). The oldest houses on Center Street have Victorian style scrollwork brackets, probably original (Figure 30). Another group has bungalow style post, with brick or stone on the bottom and wooden battered posts above (Figure 31). These new posts would have made the simple front of the mill houses look more contemporary, as John Blumenson (1981) identifies Craftsman style battered porch piers as popular through 1940 (p. 71). By the 1950s or 1960s, the Craftsman style would have appeared old-fashioned, so this change to the porches of Houses 8, 13, and 14 probably occurred shortly after the mill houses' auction.



Figure 29: House E, with original style porch posts and newly added railing. Photograph by author, 2005.



Figure 30: House B, with original style posts and Victorian scrollwork details. Porch floor has been replaced with concrete since 2002. Photograph by author, 2005.



Figure 31: House M, with added battered porch posts. Photograph by author, 2005.

The financial aspects of maintenance and repair balance with presentation and aesthetics on the exterior of the houses. Notably, none of the houses have radically altered façades, whether to make a statement of individuality or otherwise. The changes of porch posts, siding, and new windows do not make any of the homes unrecognizable as mill-built structures, although they make each distinguishable and unique to the visitor and homeowner alike. The houses' vernacular origin may well account for this, as there is no need for the new owners to make them more visually familiar. Instead, the shape and style of the houses already fit into the domestic concept of the mill workers and today's residents.

Other significant changes and alterations in the mill houses, relate to heating efficiency and needs. Evidence of dropped ceilings remains in many of the houses,

although most of the contemporary owners have removed the acoustic tiles and repainted the original beadboard ceiling. Only one, House K, still has a dropped ceiling throughout the home, and the perceived scale of the large rooms differs significantly from houses with the original ceiling height. House K's owner commented that their rooms felt larger and warmer than their neighbors'; indeed, the experience of being in those spaces was quite different than being in other houses of the sample (Resident of House K, January 31, 2005).

The existence, use, and condition of the fireplaces vary from home to home as well, ranging from complete removal to preservation of the original. Only Houses B and C have no chimney mass at all. In House B, the fireplaces were removed during a gut renovation in 2002; the bathroom now sits where the chimney mass once rested. In House C, the owners had difficulty with the brickwork at the base of the chimney and there was no cost-effective way to rectify the situation. Many of the fireplaces were blocked, freestanding kerosene heaters were installed on their hearths and the heaters' flue used the existing chimneys. Such large heaters have since been removed and central heating and air conditioning installed, leaving another layer of changes to the house.

Cultural Weathering in Context

"It is clear that it is not only the contemporaneous setting within which a work is built that holds importance, but also the building's reflected response to the evolving nature of place and its accommodation of social change" (Heath, 2001, p. 168).

The residents of the Carrboro mill houses are not the only people to experience this transition from company owned to privately owned homes. Comparing this study with other examples of the cultural weathering of worker housing brings to light roads not taken by the Carrboro homeowners.

The study of Le Corbusier's Pessac, France (1969), discussed in Chapter Two, compares with this study of Carrboro in terms of interior and exterior alterations. The worker housing designed by Le Corbusier began as a form unfamiliar to the residents, a modern, international style row of boxes with an open floor plan, ribbon windows and roof terraces. The vernacular form of the region was radically different, including long halls, small windows, and peaked roofs. The Pessac homeowners renovated the modern structures into more familiar forms and shapes that originated in the local vernacular, breaking up the windows, adding dividing walls, and sometimes changing the roofline. Perhaps if the mill houses had been less like the familiar form of farmhouse, there would be more exterior alterations to the general shape of the buildings in Carrboro, too.

Another contrast to Carrboro and example of user alteration suggested by Heath (2001) discusses how different groups of people used and adapted the three-decker apartment, altering it to their needs over the course of time. Much like their Southern counterparts, the three-decker apartment buildings were inhabited by extended families, often with many individuals living together in a single three-bedroom apartment. Historically, however, the cultures differed between New Bedford and Carrboro: while the Southern mills were staffed with farming families from the surrounding areas, Portuguese immigrants altered the three-deckers. Heath (2001) states, "the Portuguese-

American transformations of the three-decker building style demonstrate the power of subculture over physical form” (p.180).

The cultural origins of the workers have visible consequences in both New Bedford and Carrboro. The families in the Massachusetts three-deckers brought “Old World sensibilities from their inhabitants’ Portuguese cultural experience” including wrought iron verandas, side-yard grape arbors, and pastel colors (Heath, 2001, p.168). Applied onto houses with Anglo-American origins, these additions express a distinct cultural identity. In Carrboro, the subculture and the house form are from the same place and context. This common origin does not mean that there is no improvement and alteration within the houses – clearly there exists ample opportunity within the Carrboro mill houses. Additionally, the shared associations of the residents and the house type would last for a generation or two. As new owners come to the mill houses, whether mill hands, locals, or new arrivals, each brings his or her conception of what home should be, and then alters the structures accordingly.

What Remained the Same: the Unchanged and the Restored

“When people alter or rebuild, they reject past concepts and embrace new ones” (Carter, 1987, p. 114).

The fireplaces, hearths, and mantles represent a good point of departure for discussing what has remained the same in the mill houses. The four basic rooms of the original houses have been left generally as they were in terms of size, scale, and

fenestrations, with small changes in surface, closet additions, and the like. Many original details and material are preserved in these homes. In fact, the majority of the houses (11 of 15) display original beadboard walls and ceiling and hardwood floors, for example. While 13 of the 15 homes made small changes to the fireplaces, either blocking them, updating the style of the mantles, or adding gas logs, only four of the 15 houses contain changes to erase the evidence of the fireplaces either by stopping them up entirely or removing them as discussed above. Instead, in most the houses, the fireplace remains a visual anchor to the front room. Not all of the fireplaces function, but even those that have been entirely blocked have a visible mantle and hearth. Furthermore, in eight of the 12 homes that still have a visible fireplace, at least one mantle is the original (Figure 32).

This consistency among the fireplaces illustrates that some elements remain impervious to the addition and renovation. The fireplaces themselves add more than an attractive focal point, they also embody cultural ideas of the home and hearth (Tichi, 1991). Additionally, the expense and difficulty of removing or seriously altering a chimney and firebox provide a serious deterrent. Financial issues also have kept the kitchen in its original space in all but two of the houses, both of which have been recently and extensively renovated. However, small cosmetic and technological changes have subtly altered both the fireplaces and the kitchen with improvements in fuel and appliances. The symbolic value within elements of the house ties to the resurgence of the historic within the mill community as a whole. Recent owners who place value on the history of the area have returned many of the surfaces and details to their original condition.



Figure 32: Original mantle located in House C; the firebox and chimney behind it were removed. Photograph by the author, 2003.

While these new owners are interested in local history and the appropriate materials for their homes, none of them attempt to return to its original state. The materials are restored to their original and the floor plan partially re-established, but no one is ripping out all the closets, opening up the back porch area, and putting in little stoves. Comfort and cultural expectations of home still trump the historic, and individualization and personalization hold great value. The items that have changed and have since been restored – such as flooring, wall covering, ceiling height – are almost all cosmetic and surface issues. Interestingly, many of the alterations from past decades protected the original materials quite nicely, such as linoleum over hardwood floors or drywall over beadboard.

The return to the original materials and historic interest in the mill houses, present throughout the sample, carries through to local or state designation. Specifically, the six homes found on Maple Avenue and one on Carr Street, listed in the National Register of

Historic Places as the Thomas F. Lloyd Historic District, created in 1986, form part of a locally designated conservation district. With this designation, some of the homeowners have taken great pride preserving their homes' current condition. House F in this area has been renovated in the past two years using the National Register's tax credit program.

The group of homes on Oak and Center Avenues is not listed or protected either nationally or locally, despite an attempt in the mid-1980s. Brown's survey (1983) was produced by a push for registering the larger mill neighborhood; unfortunately, too many non-contributing structures make it a poor candidate for nomination. Additionally, some of the older residents fought the historic district idea vociferously, stating that there was no way Carrboro could ever be like Charleston or Savannah (Pardington, personal communication, September, 2002). The current homeowners in that area profess to have no interest in such designation, but they express a similar desire to preserve what they see as original to their homes as do those in the conservation district.

Luckily for the area as a whole, it has become a very popular place to live because of its proximity to the university and the commercial district formed by the old mill, and its scale, walkability, and sense of community. People rent or buy the mill houses eagerly, and accordingly the houses are a mix of owner-occupied and rental property (Table 2). Now that property values are increasing rapidly in the mill neighborhood, it is interesting to question why the small houses have not been torn down and replaced with larger houses. Indeed, the only infill in the area has been in the ample back yards of some of these smaller houses. Houses G, H, and I are each overshadowed by a second house in the rear of their lots (Figure 33).

Table 2: Occupancy and Location of Sample Houses

	Owner-Occupied	Rental	Total
Conservation District	4	2	7
Not in District	4	5	10
Total	9	8	17



Figure 33: House I, with large, newly constructed house in rear of lot. Photograph by author, 2005

Despite an attempt to find patterns distinguishing rented from owner-occupied and historic district from unprotected, none were apparent. The houses in the sample reflect the same variety of alterations throughout. No significant distinctions between those groups exist, nor between those homes that stayed in private ownership since the 1939 auction and those that were briefly owned by the National Munitions Corporation during World War II. Instead of distinguishing between different groups of homes, the variety of renovations marks each house as individual.

Recollection, Renovation, and Reinvention

“Meaning is always in process” (Storey, 1993, 85).

Through all of the gradual changes to the Carrboro mill houses, their occupants have left their mark upon a building that began as an extension of the mill’s equipment and have turned it into a home. This evolution is cumulative and continuing, and it defines cultural weathering and vernacular architecture. The process has happened and is happening all over the world, as families start with the architectural blank of a house and change it into their home.

In a recent study on mobile homes, Farnsworth (2005) finds that individuals buy mobile homes and gradually change and personalize them much like the Carrboro residents alter the mill houses. Conceptually, the mobile home owners feel that they are taking the trailer and turning it into a home by anchoring it with foundations, landscaping, porches, and so on. Changing the profile and siding of the mobile home further mark it as different from a trailer, and continues to incorporate the cultural, personal, and community desires of the homeowner.

Indeed, it is a combination of cultural, environmental, economic, and personal needs that creates cultural weathering and brings the alterations to the Carrboro mill houses. Standing in the front hall of one of the least-altered buildings, House E, the renter mulled over his home. The renter loved living in it, enjoyed the high ceilings and wood details, and ignored the many layers of paint, the drafty floors, and the lack of

storage. Wondering aloud about the center hall, the renter announced that if he owned the building, it would be the first thing changed. “It’s wasted space,” the renter said, “it’s nice to walk into, but there are so many other things it could be” (Resident of House E, January 14, 2005). This idea echoes what many of the homeowners must have thought over the years since 1939.

CHAPTER V

COMING HOME

The unique characteristics that appear to set Carrboro apart from other mill communities might make research accomplished there applicable only to that milieu. Indeed, the gradual construction of the mill houses, the mixed economy provided by the nearby university, and the current flourishing community distinguish the town from other company towns. While those differences are valid and important, the developments and evolutions of the mill houses were by no means an unusual event. All over the country, companies sold houses to new owners who had to meet the challenge of making a home out of a product they purchased: individualizing the mass-produced. Furthermore, the concept of home reaches beyond industrial housing to tract homes, suburban landscapes, and mail-order houses of the past century. Just as people sought to personalize the mill houses in 1939, families now struggle to fashion trailers, condominiums, and ranch houses into “real” homes and mark each as personal, unique places.

Through the investigation of a sample of houses within Carrboro’s mill village, this researcher suggests a perspective on how user alteration can affect company space. The group of houses, all with the same original floor plan, provides a launching point to trace each homeowner’s desires, needs, and expectations for what should be in a home and how it should function. This group of houses passed into private ownership at the same time, which limits the possibility of one house having many more additions because

its ownership changed during better economic times. Keeping potential variables to a minimum allows each house's gradual alterations to speak more loudly, and the researcher to see the variety of changes more clearly.

The particular sample was selected with a close eye on the historical context for Carrboro and the Southern textile industry. From the origins of cotton manufacture in England through the textile factories in New England, mill owners, concerned with the living and working conditions of the employees, balanced between paternalism and progressivism or welfare work and union desires as forms of over a whole village of mill hands. While the workers themselves rarely had any say in the matter, the owners' control over housing, activities, and conduct could vary widely across places and eras. Understanding the particular factors in Carrboro required knowledge of the larger picture of the textile industry.

Regardless of the location of an American textile mill, the history of Lowell looms behind it and is critical to understand. Since Lowell's founding in the early 19th century through its current existence as technological park and historical site, the choices made there influenced the industry nation-wide. The rural atmosphere and paternalistic mode that the owners cultivated were perpetuated throughout the cotton mill regions, down to providing the workers with housing reminiscent of the local vernacular. The specific styles, floor plans, and house types varied from location to location, be they the large foursquare brick boarding houses of Lowell, the three-decker apartment buildings of New Bedford, or the individual farmhouse style dwellings of the Southern textile industry.

Part of the evolution of company housing in different mills, different eras, and different regions includes whether or not the homes were designed buildings or vernacular structures. The planned company towns further strengthened the idea that the owner knew best for the residents, and while many companies who brought in a designer to be forward-thinking, often the product was as paternalistic as earlier mill villages. The gradual construction of Carrboro's simple, vernacular homes takes on a greater significance in comparison with designed towns throughout the country. For both types of industrial housing, however, almost every company divested its role as landlord during the first half of the 20th century. Carrboro's 1939 auction, a few years after the General Strike that marked the beginning of the mill villages' sales, was not out of the ordinary for the area's industry.

Since the auction of the mill houses, every building has undergone the gradual renovations and alterations that define the cultural weathering process. The changes to each house are individual and specific, yet similar choices have been made over the past 65 years: closing off the front hall, adding closets and bathrooms, and dividing the public and private spaces, for example. Simultaneously, particular elements of the houses – like the fireplace and the kitchen – remain untouched, at once too expensive or too symbolic to erase or remove, but instead upgraded with new technology.

These alterations stand as excellent examples of the vernacular design process: a cumulative manipulation of the original house by individuals to meet the needs of the family, the community, and the culture of the mill villages. Just as the specific changes

made to the Carrboro houses are particular to that context, so is the phenomenon of this vernacular evolution specific to the local yet apparent worldwide.

Only recently have scholars begun to tackle vernacular design as more than an initial building type and instead as a process. Vernacular architecture, such as these mill houses, is by its very nature adaptable and impermanent and reinforces origins and continuity for future generations even in the alterations that are made to it. Inherently a very local experience, vernacular architecture is of a people, a time, and a place, so the exact changes that have taken place in Carrboro should not recur exactly anywhere else (Heath, 2005).

The mill houses themselves started as a particular, vernacular architecture which reveals elements of Carrboro's textile history and the needs of Thomas Lloyd at the turn of the 20th century. What has happened since then brings new issues and elements to the fore, and touches on the village's specific history and changes in the needs of the homeowners and the community over time. The product of these evolutions is specific to the place, yet the process itself happens universally. Williams (1987) observed, "builders offered... the beginnings of a dialog rather than the resolutions to conflicting functions. Remodelings are not only responses to social change, they are also responses to conflicts inherent in the acceptance of design from the moment of construction" (p. 111).

Stewart Brand, Kingston Heath, and Thomas Hubka all discuss the way that buildings are built and changed, but through different perspectives. As Brand (1994) stresses in his work, as time passes, residents had to accommodate shifting needs; his insistence on considering a building over the length of its existence is particularly

important. *How* they chose to alter their homes is better answered by Hubka's concept of "pre-constrained ideas derived from existing buildings" (Hubka, 1986, p. 430). While Hubka focuses on the construction of buildings, Heath uses the evolution of three-deckers in New Bedford, Massachusetts, to develop an idea he termed "cultural weathering," essentially a continuation of the vernacular design process.

These three scholars shed light on how and why Carrboro residents made the choices of renovation. The combination of the changing needs, known possibilities, and redefined meanings shaped the investigator's perspective on the mill houses and informed the research from beginning to end. Furthermore, Heath brought his personal experience within the houses and community to his treatise on New Bedford, an excellent model for the researcher's own experiences living in the mill village in Carrboro.

Just as the specifics of alteration are particular to Carrboro but the phenomenon of cultural weathering universal, so this study's results stand as exclusive to this mill community yet its methodology applicable to other research. Much like Boudon's study of Pessac, France, where this combination of approaches revealed the evolution of Corbusier's structures, or Heath's look at the three-decker in New Bedford, Massachusetts, to start with the object and let it speak from a multitude of perspectives lets the layers of the building peel away. The combination of Structuralist and Post-Structuralist methodology made the research more than just a consideration of Carrboro, but also a new way to look at the built environment to extract the rich information contained inside.

While Heath, Boudon, Williams, Brand, Hubka, and others discuss vernacular construction and alteration of spaces, gaps remain in the scholarship. Renovation and modification have often been ignored, as architectural history and historic preservation traditionally places greater import on the initial construction of a building than on its development over time. Seeing the original product as more important than the process limits what a building can say about its history and inhabitants, and ignores every subsequent owner's attempt to make a home.

Within Carrboro, the houses that once spoke for the mill owners and their need for utilitarian housing became the vehicles for each family to express pride in ownership and to delineate their personal space from the mill. The structures have evolved further as a new generation of people tied to the broader community has sought to return the houses to a semblance of their historic form, creating a new sense of place within the mill village. The recent value placed on the history of the area underscores the fact that place is more than a geography or landmark, but a psychological construct of social and spiritual values, events, and real or invented history. Many of the current Carrboro residents know that their homes were originally built for and occupied by mill workers, but they are ignorant of the history of these houses. Their ideas of historic authenticity in their homes range from the accurate to the idealized, sometimes assuming that they purchased their home in original condition and only have to maintain it that way, not recognizing the previous owners' changes separate them from the original. Regardless, they value the history in their home, and it is part of how they create home.

Place is significant in shaping who we are, just as we shape spaces to create place. A home shapes its residents even as the residents shape their home and establish it as their own. This principle is universal, as is the idea of vernacular design and evolution. By investigating the mill houses in Carrboro, not only are the local details of the mill community explored, but also the greater phenomenon of the user alteration of space, of how individuals create and establish *home*.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER TO RESIDENTS OF HOUSES IN SAMPLE

2513 Englewood Avenue
Durham, NC 27705

January 24, 2005

Dear Resident,

I need your assistance: I am currently working on my master's thesis in Historic Preservation and Interior Architecture, and I am focusing my research on the mill houses like yours. I am investigating how the individual mill houses in Carrboro, NC, have changed over the years.

The textile mill owners built your house around the turn of the 20th century as rental property, with the same floor plan as many of your neighbors. In 1939, the mill auctioned off most of their houses including yours — it was sold to an individual or family, was later bought back by the National Munitions Corporation, then was sold again to private owners in the 1940s. Your house is one of only a few in the area that have followed this particular course, although its story is shared at least in part by houses all over North Carolina.

As you can see just by driving around town, the once-uniform houses have been altered gradually and now have their own individuality, which adds to the wonderful character of Carrboro. With this study, I hope to determine how and why these changes were made.

To do this, I need your help. Specifically, I would like to survey your house for at most an hour sometime during the next two weeks. I would like to look at the floor plan, the materials and arrangement of rooms inside, and see what alterations have been made over the years. I will be evaluating the structural changes (not paint color, furniture, or your housekeeping!) and will keep my visit quick and unobtrusive. I would like to ask you questions about what you may know about your house's history and alterations.

Please let me know when I may visit you and your home; I will come any time you are available. I will drop by over the weekend, in order to set up an appointment; feel free to contact me as well, at (919) 593.1181 or sara@series1studio.com.

If you have any questions or concerns, the chair of my thesis committee is Patrick Lee Lucas, available at (336) 256-0308 and plucas@uncg.edu. Within Carrboro, feel free to contact Frank Popa from Phydeaux pet shop at (919) 960-3606 or John and Katherine Lindsey, the architects working at 100 E. Carr, at (919) 967-4191.

Because there are only twenty-one houses that fit into my sample, your participation is very important. I would like to present you with the history of your house when my research is complete, by way of saying thank you. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Sara Lachenman
Department of Interior Architecture
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

APPENDIX B

FORM TO STANDARDIZE FIELD NOTES

Address

Owner

Date visited

Exterior

Roof –

Windows –

Siding –

Chimney –

Porch

Posts –

Materials –

Ceiling –

Interior

Wall material –

Flooring –

Moldings/surrounds –

Fireplace/chimney/mantle –

Door types –

Ceiling height –

Kitchen details –

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) –

Bathroom location –

Purpose of rooms –

front left:

front right:

first in el:

rear in el:

APPENDIX C

DATA COLLECTED FROM HOUSE VISITS AND INTERVIEWS INCLUDING PHOTOGRAPHS AND FLOOR PLANS

House A

Visited January 14, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin

Windows – new vinyl 1/1

Siding – wood siding

Chimney – existing, not obviously used

Porch

Posts – simple, original style

Materials – wood

Ceiling –

Interior

Wall material – in old section: beadboard. In addition: drywall

Flooring – in old section: hardwood. In addition: brick

Moldings/surrounds – in old section: surprisingly fancy. Must ask owner if this has been changed. There's some decoration, especially above the doors and windows and at the foot of the door surround. However, crown and baseboard are just quarter-round.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – original mantles, but surround is new tiling

Door types – all six panel. Some with new porcelain knobs.

Ceiling height – original. In addition, slanted away from roofline and towards glass wall.

Kitchen details – all new

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – ends at beginning of old side porch, but in between front rooms still original.

Bathroom location – beside kitchen, where original would have been. Redone.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: office

front right: office/bedroom

first in el: office

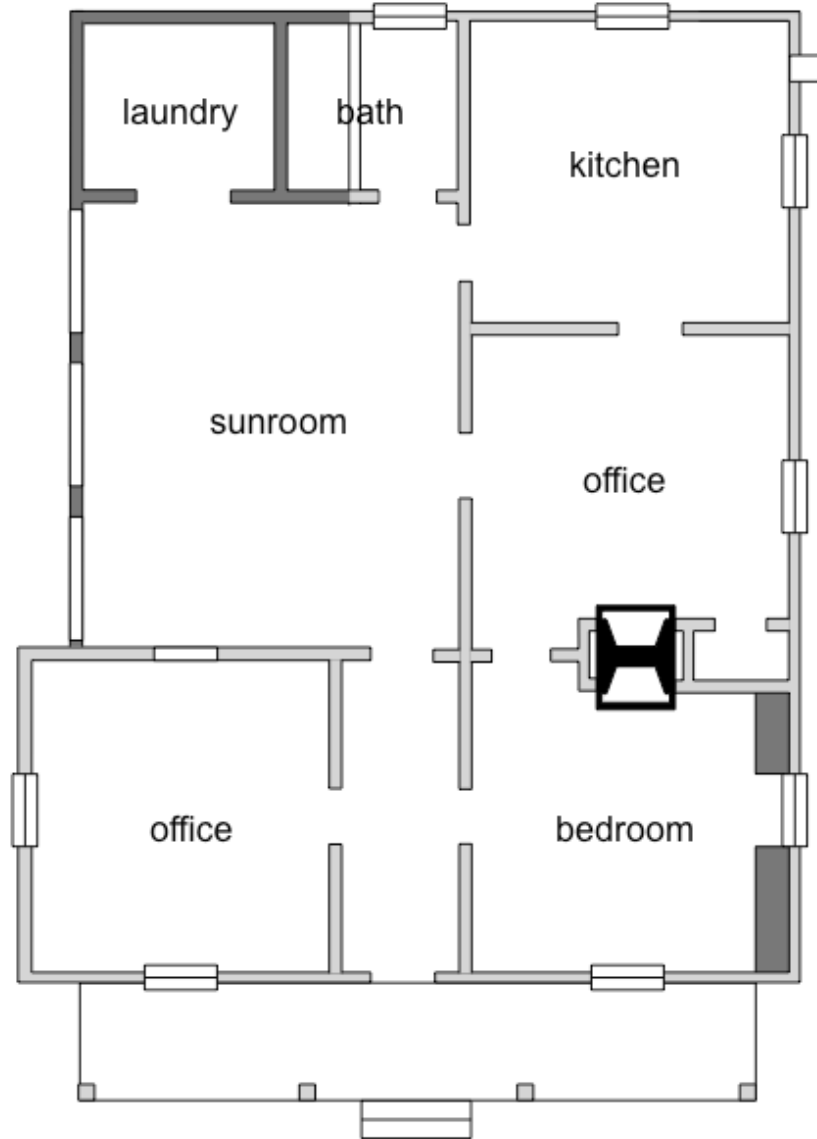
rear in el: kitchen

Notes: House renovated in 1981 by current landlord. Moldings, fireplace surrounds, built-ins, and sunroom added at that time.

Photographs of House A



Floor Plan of House A



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House B

Visited January 15, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin

Windows – old 2/2 wood

Siding – wood siding

Chimney – removed

Porch

Posts – simple, original style. Slightly lower than expected (step up to door)

Materials – cement floor, wood above

Ceiling – roof joist visible

Interior

Wall material – beadboard except for kitchen tile wall, a mixture of old and new

Flooring – hardwood, but not original, except tile in bathroom.

Moldings/surrounds – new on doors except for front door, which is 1x6”.

Windows all original, 1x6” with lip for sill. Baseboard are flat 8” or so panel, with a new quarter-round at base. No crown.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – all removed entirely

Door types – all new, except front door. Old doors all turned into small cabinet doors for soffit storage cubbies in the bedrooms.

Ceiling height – all original. Interesting arch cut along galley kitchen ceiling

Kitchen details – concrete countertops, all new, simple, efficient.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – removed entirely

Bathroom location – where fireplace had been.

Purpose of rooms – difficult, because it’s all open plan and loftlike now.

front left: living room

front right: bedroom

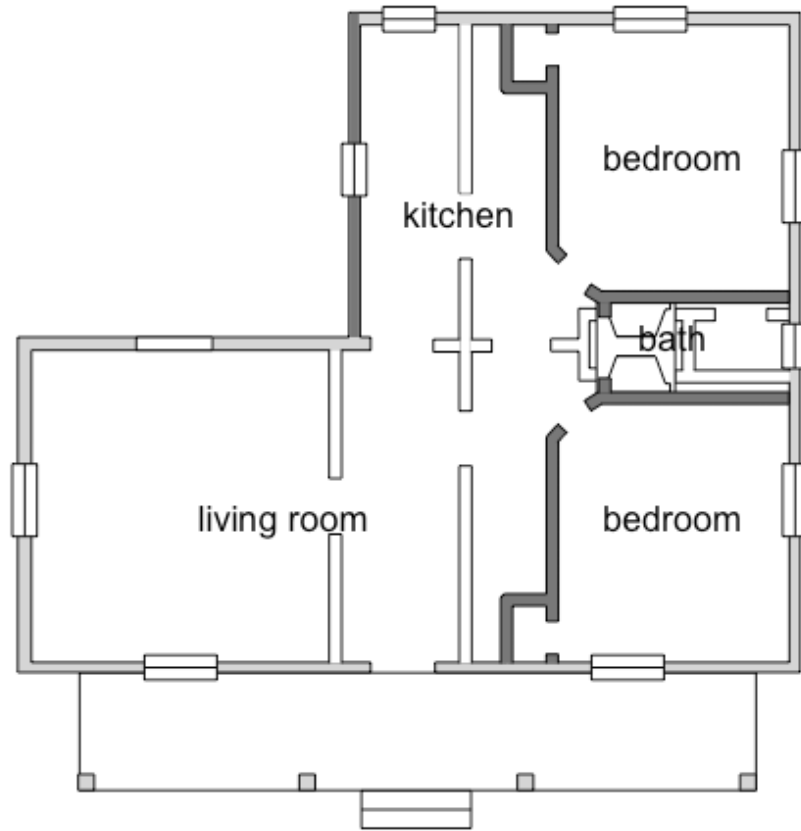
first in el: bedroom

rear in el: NA

Photographs of House B



Floor plan of House B



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House C

Visited January 16, 2005

Exterior

Roof – painted tin

Windows – original wood 6/6

Siding – asbestos shingles

Chimney – original and not in use.

Porch

Posts – replaced with y shaped posts, railing.

Materials – all wood

Ceiling – underside of roof structure

Interior

Wall material – mixture: beadboard shows in two rooms where recently exposed. All others were drywalled over.

Flooring – new hardwood (ash?) throughout, except kitchen and bath with vinyl tile.

Moldings/surrounds – quarter-round as crown, 1/6” or pieces of siding as baseboard. Surrounds different in various rooms, but basically simple, with a little bit of decoration at the top.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – removed, although original mantle remains in bedroom.

Door types – six panel

Ceiling height – original: beadboard in front three rooms.

Kitchen details – much lower ceiling. Cabinetry unremarkable, 15+ years old.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – NA; house built up gradually, started in saddlebag form.

Bathroom location – in old side porch space

Purpose of rooms –

front left: bedroom/storage

front right: living room

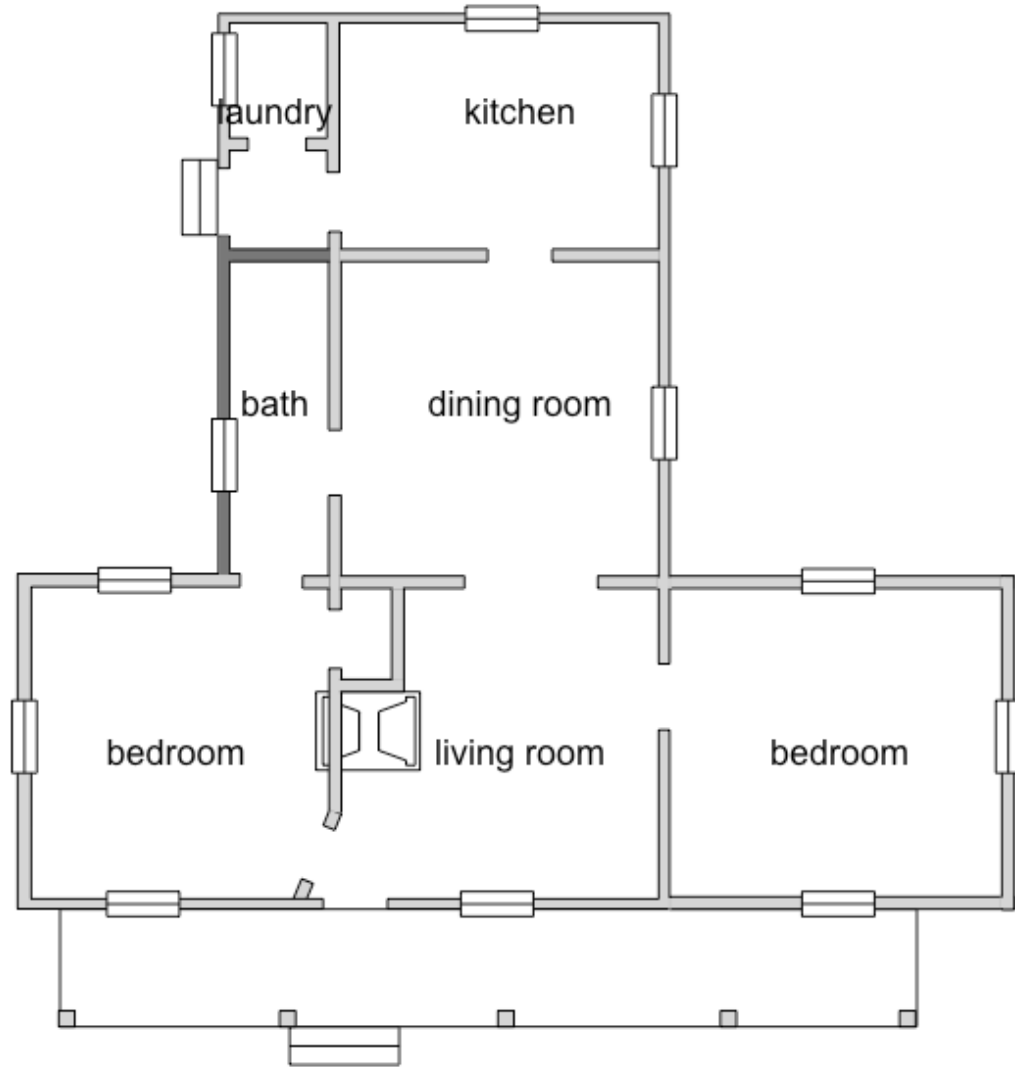
first in el: dining room

rear in el: kitchen

Photographs of House C



Floor Plan of House C



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House D

Visited January 14, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin

Windows – wood, 1/1 replacement.

Siding – asbestos shingles (once pink, now green)

Chimney – visible, not used.

Porch

Posts – doubled, with some detailing at top (see drawing). Ramp to driveway.

Materials – wood

Ceiling

Interior

Wall material – plaster/drywall

Flooring – carpet over hardwood. Existing problems around fireplace. Kitchen is laminated tile.

Moldings/surrounds – all contemporary, with square corners instead of rondells at the joins. Crown is contemporary, not grand but more than quarter-round.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – fireplace enclosed, no mantle or record of existence beyond the thickness of the wall. Closet converted to shelving on both sides.

Door types

Ceiling height – all original, with acoustical tile added.

Kitchen details? – little cabinetry, all from mid-1980s.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – clipped short into foyer space (7' x 7'?), with openings on both sides to the front rooms – the right door is double-wide. Middle space of hall made into bathroom.

Side porch – walk-through closet to back door, laundry room in very back.

Bathroom location – in center hall between front rooms.

Purpose of rooms –

Front left: office

Front right: office

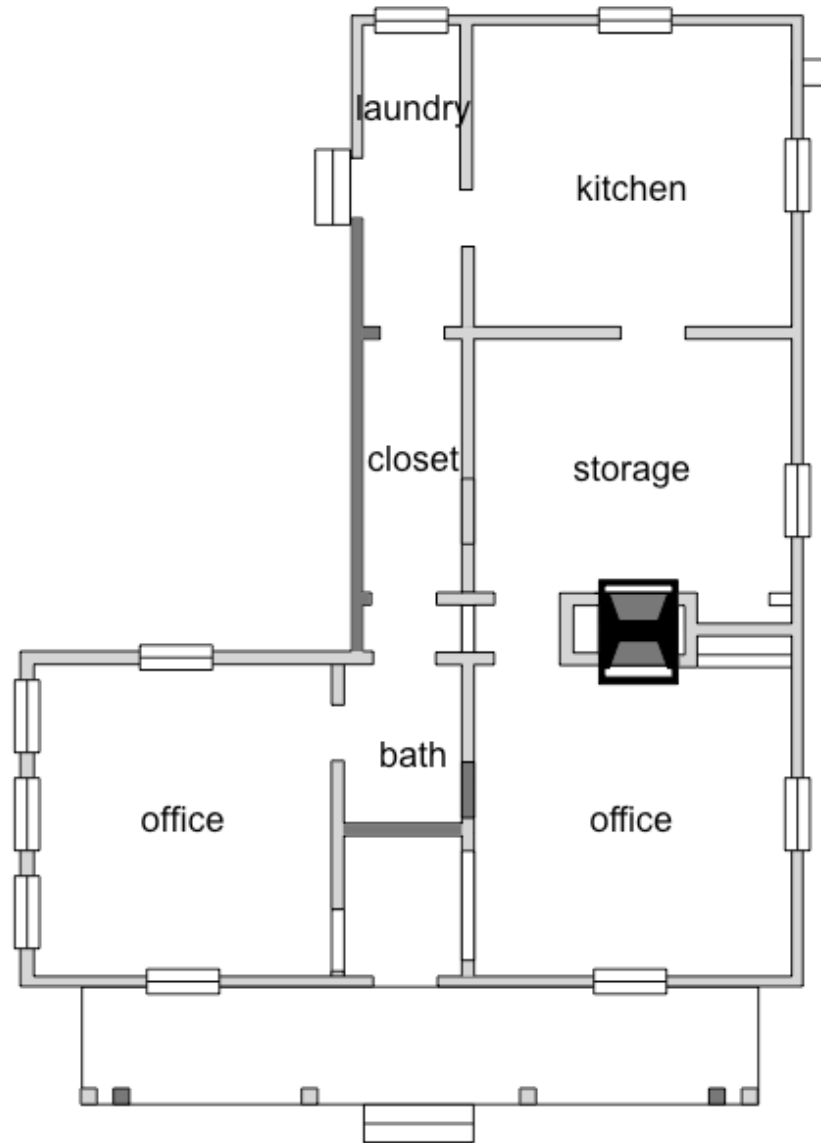
First el: storage of plans

Rear el: storage and kitchen

Photographs of House D



Floor Plan of House D



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House E

Visited January 14, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin

Windows – original wood 6/6.

Siding – asbestos shingle, beige

Chimney – visible, not used

Porch

Posts – simple, in original style but replaced. Railings added recently.

Materials – wood

Ceiling – none; underside of porch roof visible

Interior

Wall material – beadboard in all rooms but kitchen, which has paneling, and beside back door (exposed wood). Bathroom's exterior wall is made of simple wood, not beadboard, and woodgrain is visible through paint.

Flooring – all wood, painted, except hall in front of bath, which is subflooring

Moldings/surrounds – all 1x6", simple, original. Crown is inverted quarter-round.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – both fireplaces closed in, with remains of gas heater hole in front of wood. Mantles original, painted white. Remains of hearth on both sides.

Door types – all five panel. Knobs are white enamel.

Ceiling height – all original; laundry/utility space has exposed roof joists

Kitchen details – wood cabinets above are fairly new; very old enameled sink and cabinet unit (1940s?) is only base cabinetry, with freestanding water heater beside it.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – original length, ends at bathroom. Renter expressed desire to put the space to good use.

Bathroom location - in old side porch

Purpose of rooms –

front left: bedroom

front right: bedroom

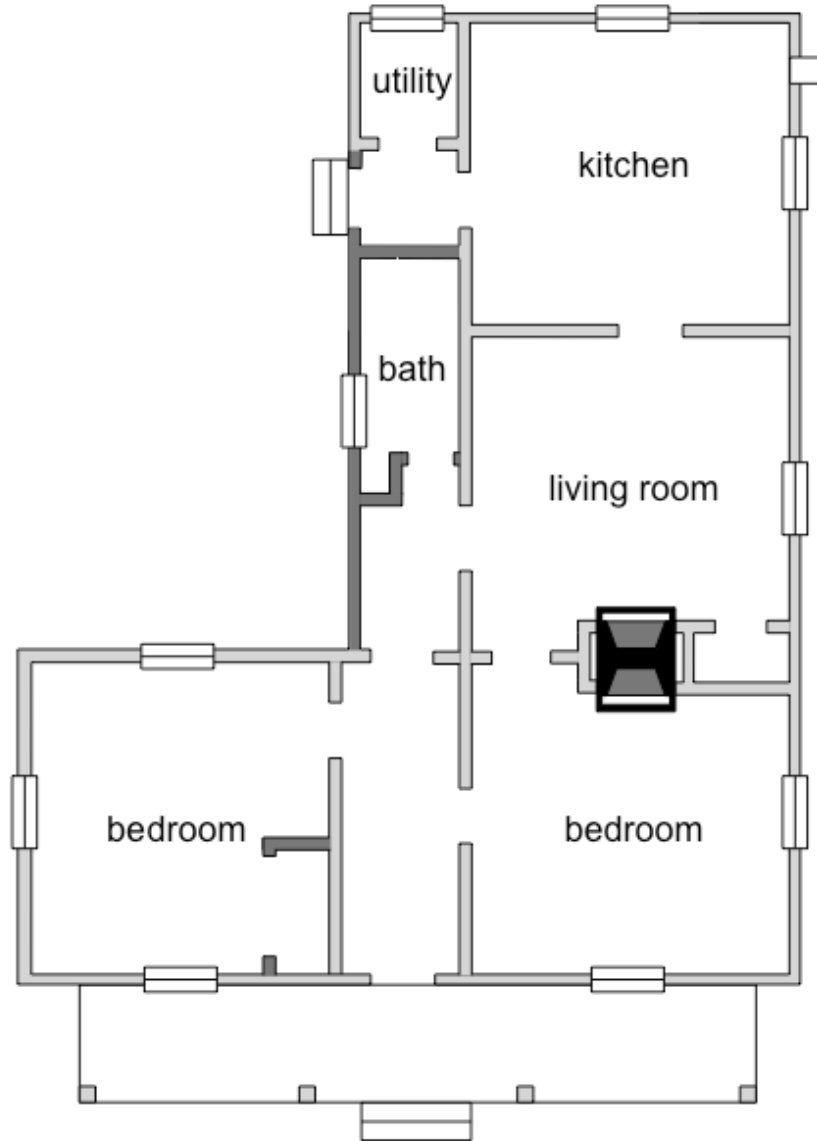
first in el: living room

rear in el: kitchen.

Photographs of House E



Floor Plan of House E



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House F

Visited January 31, 2005

Exterior

Roof – Tin

Windows – Original, 6/6

Siding – original wood siding

Chimney – extant

Porch

Posts – old, 4x4”, new balustrade added

Materials – all wood

Ceiling – porch rafters visible.

Interior

Wall material – he uncovered a lot of beadboard, replaced it in some spots. Other walls have a weird textured drywall that was there when he moved in (almost like textured plaster, but seams are slightly visible under glancing light).

Flooring – maple everywhere but LR, which has pine. Maple is mixture of original and new.

Moldings/surrounds – almost all 1x4”, in bedrooms and renovated spaces, some 1x4” crown was added by current owner, otherwise the slightly fancy crown. Baseboards are the quarter-round-1x4”-quarter-round, like in 213 Maple- it’s nicer than 1x6” or siding. Doors are all 1x4” or 1x6”, whether original or new.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – both have been covered up, but original mantles still present. Hole for kerosene stoves is visible. Remains of chimney for two stoves (in kitchen and front bedroom) still exist.

Door types – all five-panel type, including front door with two glazed panels on top. Mostly metal knobs.

Ceiling height – original and restored to beadboard: had been acoustic tiles.

Kitchen details – recently remodeled with craftsman style cabinets; opening to LR has been enlarged, although original doorway width retained. It’s just above counter height that there is now a large pass-through to the height of the original doorway.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – hall present and extended into back hall, although made slightly skinnier by built in cabinet/closet.

Bathroom location – both on rear hall: one at end of center hall, other in original location.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Bedroom

front right: Bedroom

first in el: Living room

rear in el: Kitchen/Dining room

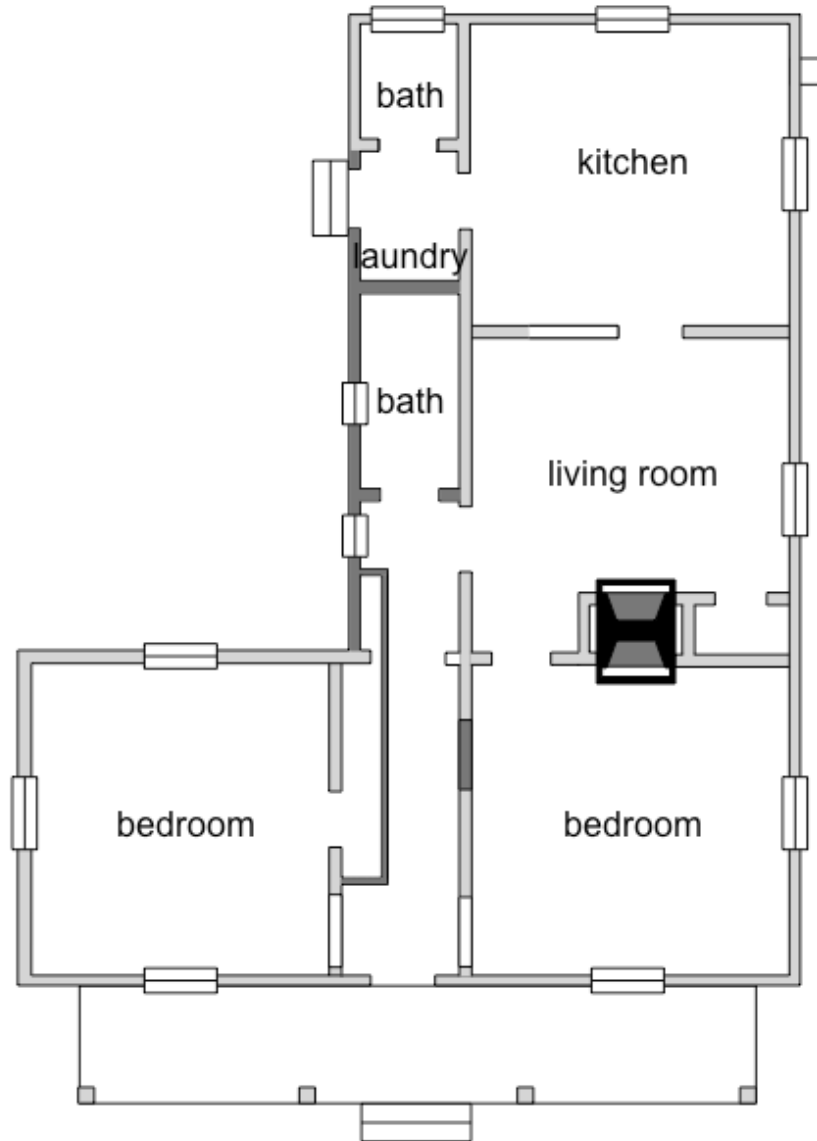
Notes: Current owner did a massive remodel upon occupation, 2003. When he first occupied: the front hall had been cut off and a bathroom was in it. A new hallway was

cut out of the side bedroom and extended into living room. A strange, unused hallway was in the old rear hall, and another bathroom was in rear. He had to remove the bathroom in the center hall because of major floor rot problems, and ‘found’ the original walls in the process. Also: he used tax credits for the project, and while he isn’t sure if what he did was right or not, he’s proud of it.

Photographs of House F



Floor Plan of House F



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House G

Visited February 5, 2005

Exterior

Roof – asphalt shingles

Windows – vinyl replacement 6/6

Siding – vinyl siding

Chimney – extant

Porch

Posts – chamfered posts, railing with large panels

Materials – wood post and railing, concrete floor

Ceiling – exposed roof beams

Interior

Wall material – drywall, except hall closet, over beadboard, evidence in molding.

Flooring – mostly carpeted except right front room, kitchen, bath, rear hall

Moldings/surrounds – mixture of old and new, tall baseboards in front rooms, with crown that is more complex than quarter-round but still simple. Closet is only space with original. Most crown has gap between top and beadboard (evidence of tiles once)

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – no evidence on both sides of fireplace. In DR, hole has been turned into bookshelves. In front BR, totally erased.

Door types – front door is 5 panel, with top two panels glazed. All interior doors that are not new are 6 panel.

Ceiling height – mostly original: dropped in kitchen, covered with tiles in left BR, otherwise beadboard in old rooms.

Kitchen details – home-grown cabinetry, shape radically different than original.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – cut off and filled in with walk-through closet; originally the doorway to the right was very large and the one to the left average, so probably bedroom on left and LR on right...

Bathroom location – mostly original location

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Bedroom

front right: Bedroom

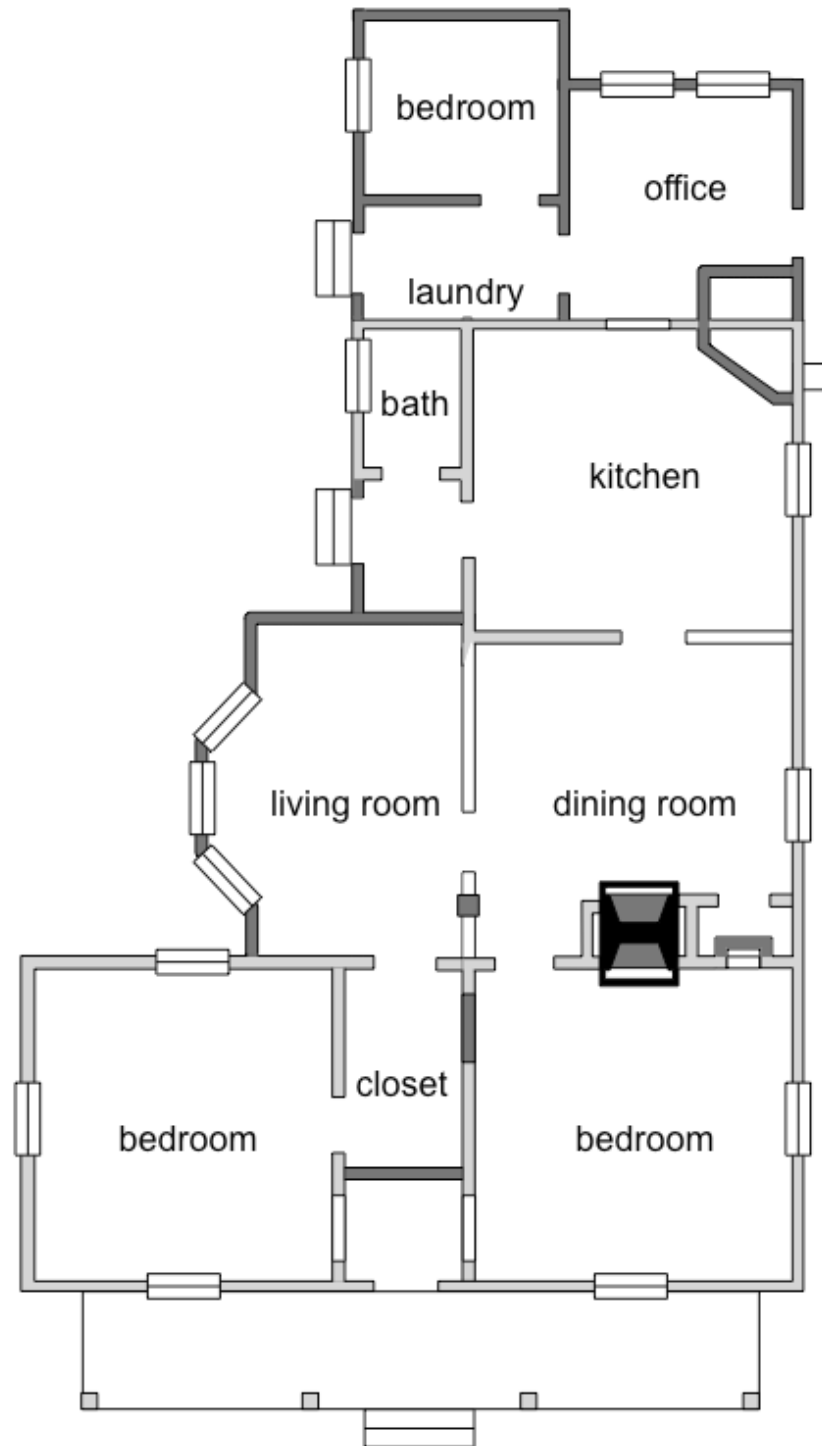
first in el: Dining room (expanded into living room too)

rear in el: Kitchen, with additions behind

Photograph of House G



Floor Plan of House G



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House H

Visited January 15, 2005

Exterior

Roof – asphalt shingles

Windows –

Siding – wood siding

Chimney – original

Porch

Posts – bungalow style, battered with some detail at top

Materials – posts are brick on bottom, wood on top. Wood floor, cinderblock skirting

Ceiling –

Interior

Wall material – first bedroom and hall have beadboard, everything else is drywall. From photos, it appears that living and dining room might have always been plaster, never beadboard.

Flooring – front hall, living, dining all have old hardwood. New addition has carpeting, kitchen and laundry have brick.

Moldings/surrounds – all basic 1x4”, baseboards are present, with a quarter-round on top of a 1x6”, with a quarter-round toe mold at the bottom. This baseboard is present in renovation photographs. Ceiling molding in lr and dr is modest but more than quarter-round. In kitchen, quarter-round.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – fireplace blocked on dining room side. Present and original in living room with traditional mantle.

Door types – five panel, with enamel knobs. Even new addition has old doors and hardware.

Ceiling height – throughout original house: beadboard and original height. Drop soffit in hallway where original house shifts to side porch/new addition. New addition has drywall ceiling, lower.

Kitchen details –

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – center hall has been cut off to make entrance way, new door added to bedroom. The rest of the hall continues as such on the other side. Interestingly: that added wall is beadboard, so the conversion was done a long time ago.

Bathroom location – off of original center hall, in new addition, and at rear of house.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: bedroom

front right: living room

first in el: dining room

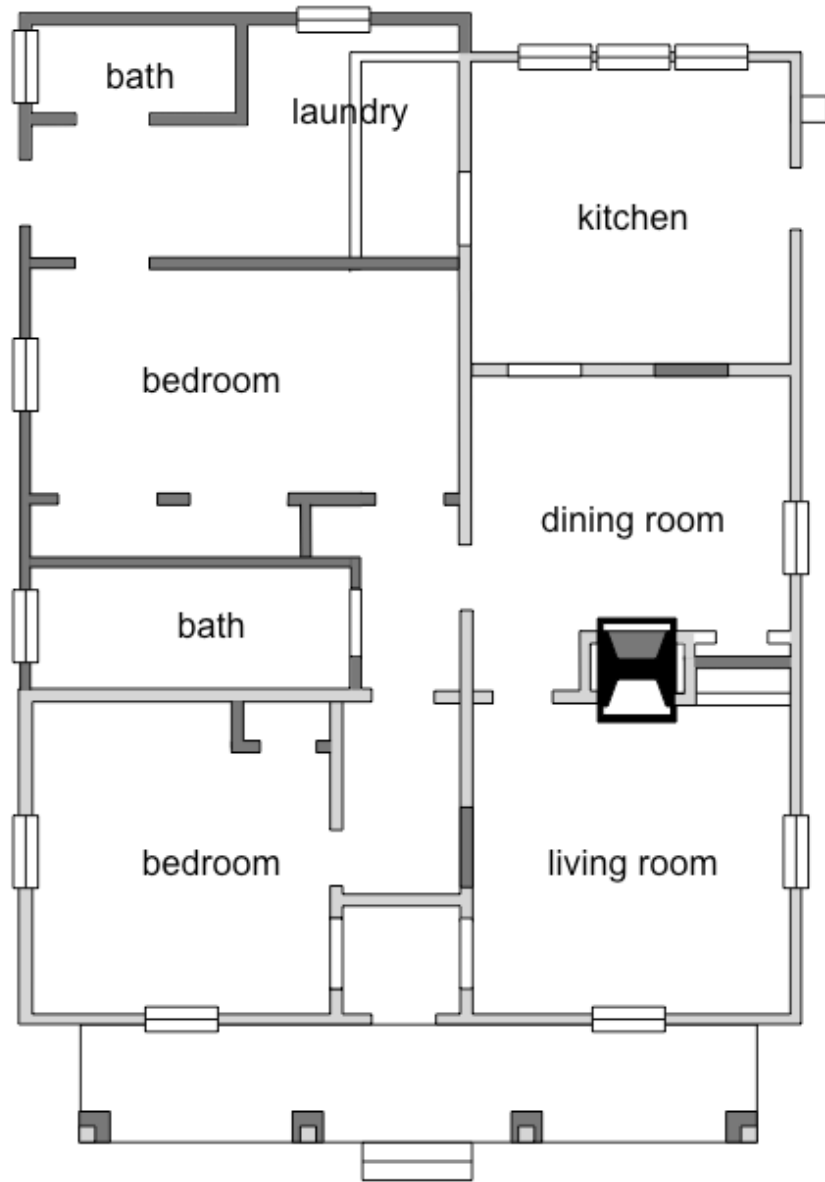
rear in el: kitchen

Notes: major renovation from 20 years ago, pictures show them removing dropped ceilings, wallpaper, etc., turning closet into built-ins, moving the kitchen door over.

Photographs of House H



Floor Plan of House H



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House I

Visited January 15, 2005

Exterior

Roof – asphalt shingles

Windows – old, original. Interestingly: windows in addition seem quite old, wood 1/1 in big wood casing that matches the rest of the house.

Siding – asbestos shingles

Chimney – original

Porch

Posts – new turned porch posts with railing

Materials – wood; new deck, has swelled. Brick skirting

Ceiling – underside of roof

Note: rear porch, with old simple posts and wood floor, is out kitchen door. Looks quite old.

Interior

Wall material – no beadboard, all drywall, potentially over beadboard because molding depth is shallow.

Flooring – all hardwood, except bathroom

Moldings/surrounds – baseboard looks like pieces of siding from 109 center. Other moldings are 1x4” or 1x6”.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – wood-burning insert and new surround, old mantle.

Door types – 5 panel with glass knobs

Ceiling height – height looks original although has been popcorned. Slanting ceiling in added office is beadboard.

Kitchen details – new, with counter sticking out where old kitchen/dining wall had been.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – cut off to create foyer, space behind it is bathroom for front bedroom. The rest of the hall/side porch was removed entirely and turned into bedroom and office space, with closets protruding into kitchen/dining space.

Bathroom location – one in center hall, one in rear of house.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: bedroom

front right: living

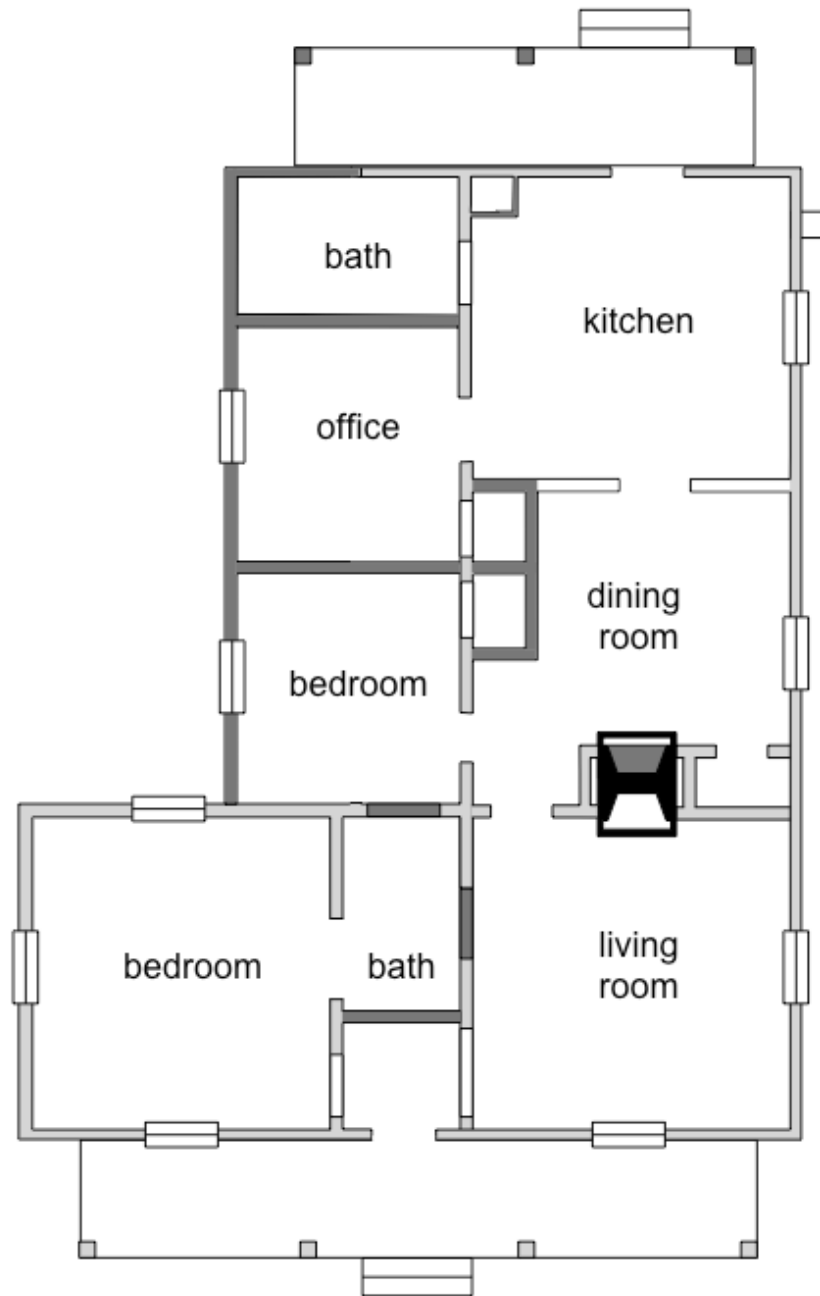
first in el: dining

rear in el: kitchen

Photographs of House I



Floor Plan of House I



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House J

Visited February 1, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin

Windows – replaced with wood 6/6 like originals

Siding – original wood clapboard

Chimney – extant, no side chimney

Porch

Posts – double porch posts, which were present when she purchased

Materials – wood posts and floor, which has been replaced.

Ceiling – beadboard

Interior

Wall material – all beadboard in original areas of house. Drywall in additions.

Flooring – all wood, original. She has a double-layered floor, with maple on pine? Only in back hall/bathroom, floor is tile. [upstairs has carpeting] in kitchen, vinyl flooring that she removed upon occupation.

Moldings/surrounds – window molding and crown have been replaced in LR and parlor, early on. Evidence in the paint around the window frames for the removal of previous, wider molding and replacement with the fancier molding. Baseboard is quarter-round in those two rooms, but higher (1x6”) in kitchen. One large kitchen window was replaced, frame and all, when she occupied. It had fancier trim too.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – when she moved in, kitchen fireplace was boxed in with closet beside it. She removed all of that, uncovered fireplace, doesn't remember a mantle there, and brought it down to the English cottage style stucco fireplace that it is now.

Door types – extant doors are six horizontal panels. Front door is glass on top half.

Ceiling height – beadboard, original height. She removed acoustic tiles when she moved in.

Kitchen details –

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – cut off close to door to make free-standing closet with storage on top. All in beadboard, but a slightly different type than that used throughout the house. On opposite side, a doublewide doorway is to the parlor, a normal door is to the LR. The nook is used as an office, and a half-wall (using an old door) separates the office from the back hall. The back hall shows siding on the walls and the bath in the rear.

Bathroom location – original, at end of back hall.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Parlor

front right: Living room

first in el: Kitchen/Dining room

rear in el: N/A

Notes: Large addition through living room leads to one guest bed with bath on the first floor and bedroom above, plus a link to get back into the attic of the original house, which has a bedroom and a 'lounge' for her daughters, plus storage over the kitchen area.

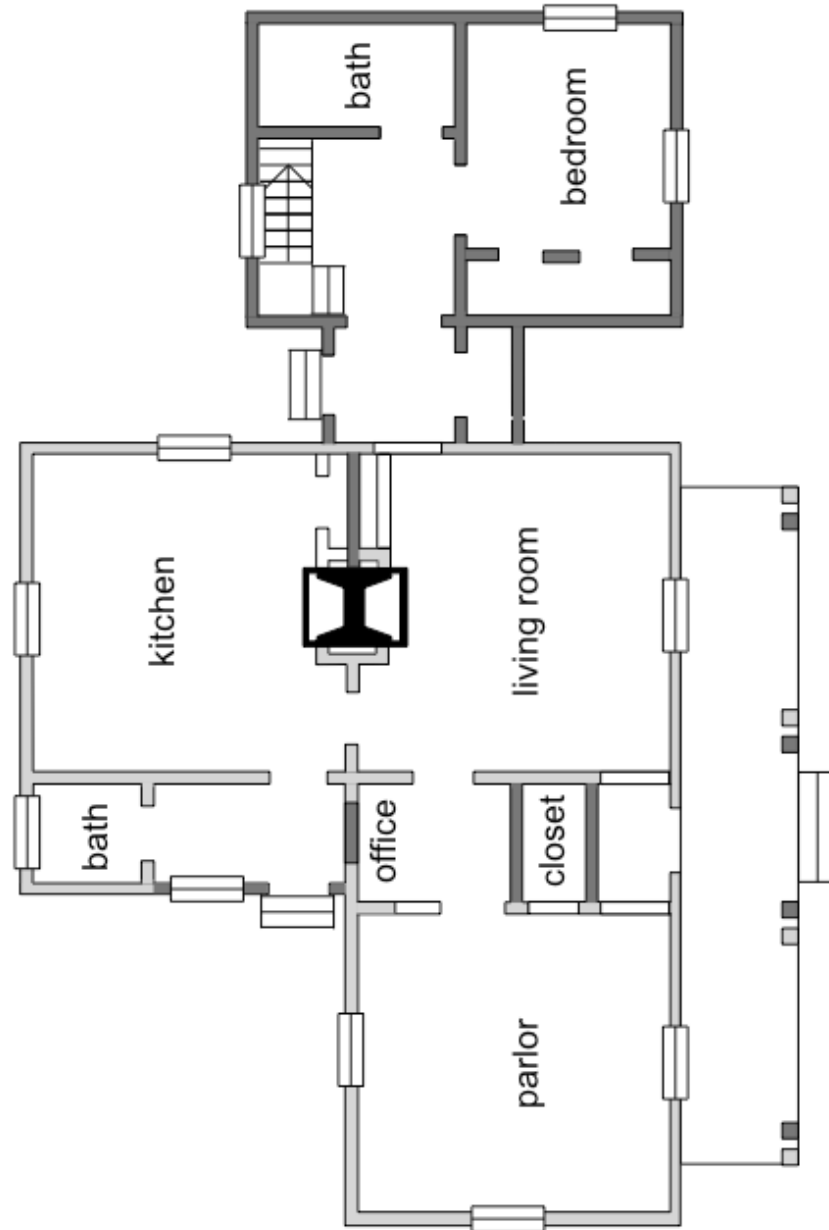
Very interesting house, because of what is left. She doesn't remember everything they have done until prompted, loves the house, and can tell interesting stories.

The back porch was open (although screened in) when she moved in; she remembers having to go outside to get to it, and having trouble with freezing pipes over the winter. The parlor was black and the kitchen blood red when she occupied.

Photographs of House J



Floor Plan of Ground Floor of House J



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House K

Visited January 31, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin. No front gable.

Windows – mixture of new and old, replaced as necessary from rot.

Siding – asbestos

Chimney – extant

Porch

Posts – looks original

Materials – wood

Ceiling – exposed rafters

Interior

Wall material – all walls have been drywalled except in porch and closet, where siding remains.

Flooring – she removed carpet and tile that was everywhere, and refinished heart pine floors which are over something else, she thinks.

Moldings/surrounds – baseboards are the quarter-round-1x4”-quarter-round variety; she says she saved everything she could when she ripped up the carpet and tile. Door and window surrounds are all 1x4”.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – in front room is it bricked up, original mantle. In LR, has been extended with a big hearth, but has original mantle as well.

Door types – all six horizontal panels; knobs are porcelain

Ceiling height – dropped ceilings with acoustic tile throughout house.

Kitchen details – 1950s era kitchen, new window in back.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – mostly still there; very end (maybe 2 or 3’) has been cut off to add bathroom. She cut off part of back hall to add closet a few years ago.

Bathroom location – at end of center hall has evidence of porch roof beginning part-way through. Also cute window is added next to the tub, she says it was original to her purchase, and appears old. The former bath at the rear of the house is a closet/utility space.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Guest/spare room

front right: Bedroom

first in el: Living room/Library

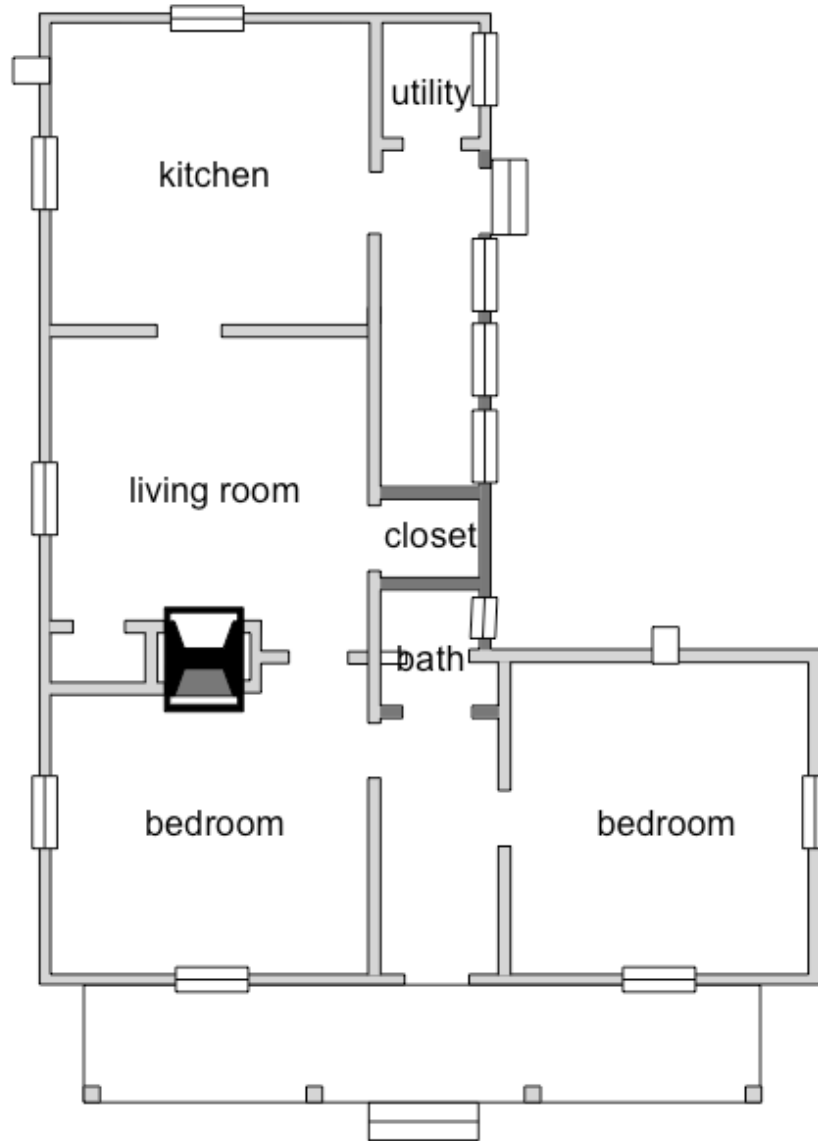
rear in el: Kitchen/Dining room

Notes: Owner has been here since 1994, bought from 1940s resident. All she has done is add the closet and side porch windows.

Photographs of House K



Floor Plan of House K



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House L

Visited January 16, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin

Windows – replaced wood 9/9 windows

Siding – replaced wood siding, as close as possible to original, but doesn't match

Chimney – extant.

Porch – removed before their purchase (1987)

Posts –

Materials –

Ceiling –

Interior

Wall material – all walls recovered in drywall by current owners except around fireplace and down main internal wall.

Flooring – all hardwood; BR and kitchen have been replaced but LR is original

Moldings/surrounds – all are new, although attempts to make similar to original

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – replacement mantles; fireplaces do work. They are ones who found out about the double-helix chimney.

Door types – all stripped, six horizontal panels

Ceiling height – all high, beadboard.

Kitchen details – redone nicely in contemporary style.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – cut off to make front hall. Unused door to right goes through closet into bedroom. Originally behind the hallway, a small bedroom was created; they removed one wall to make it into one large bedroom space; the remains of the hall wall are still present in ceiling beadboard. In rear hall, evidence of side porch (extant siding, etc.)

Bathroom location – in original location, rear hall.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Living room

front right: Bedroom

first in el: Kitchen/Dining room

rear in el: N/A

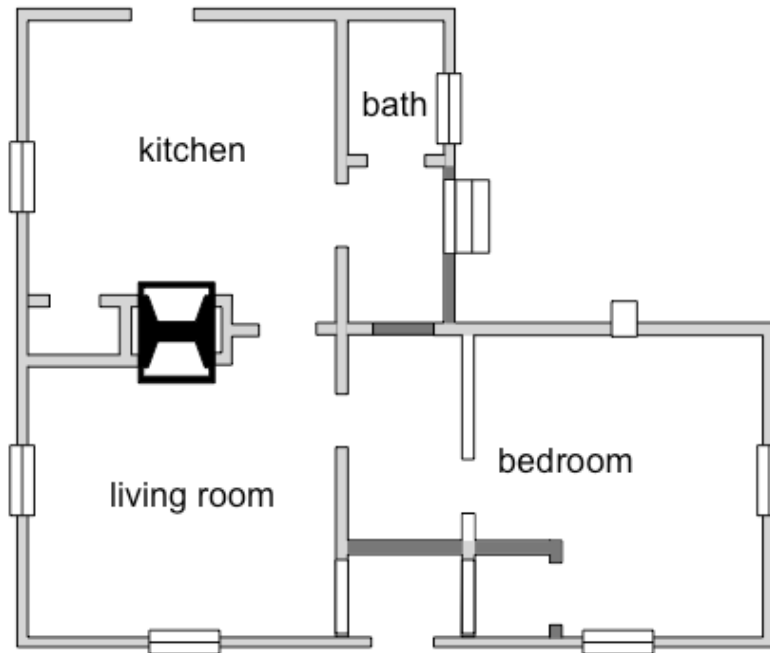
Notes: This house was slated to be used as a fire practice house when they purchased it. The inspector told them they were crazy, but John fell in love with the small barn in the rear of the property. The whole lot had belonged to Parker Reist and wife, who used it as a guest house for visiting UNC speakers. It was in terrible shape: they had to remove floor under bedroom and put down a slab, then rebuild; they think they may have to do something else in the other spaces soon. They've added a nice screened-in back porch with ceiling open to rafters where the last room in the el would be. The shed is a curiosity: it's clearly quite old, and the siding is the same as that used as baseboards in

109 Center and 206 Maple. Someone did stop by the house and say he broke his leg falling in the barn when he was a kid, so it was around in the 1940s.

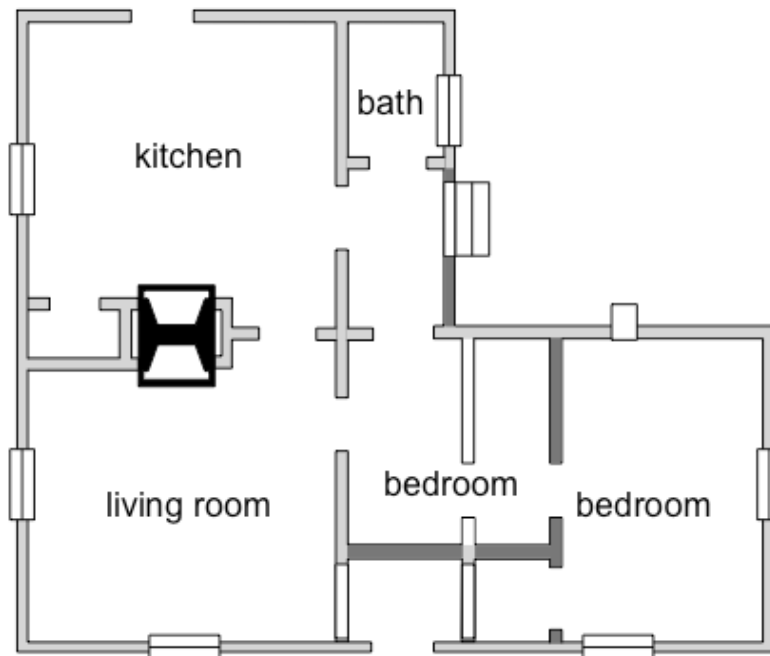
Photographs of House L



Floor Plan of House L



Floor Plan of House L when purchased by current owner, 1988



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House M

Visited January 16, 2005

Exterior

Roof – Tin

Windows – new vinyl 6/6 replacements

Siding – vinyl

Chimney – extant, beat up.

Porch

Posts – bungalow style, added

Materials – posts are stone on bottom, battered wood on top

Ceiling – ?

Interior

Wall material – all beadboard except in small bedroom, bath, and back hall. Also inside of center hall closet is paneling.

Flooring – all wood except kitchen, with vinyl floor.

Moldings/surrounds – around windows and doors, just 1x4”; quarter-round as crown in every room but LR, which has the slightly more complex version.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – in LR, contemporary looking brick surround; in DR more traditional looking, but doesn’t match others. Renter says original fireplace brick now part of the front walk.

Door types – front door is like the five panel but with one large window where top two panels would be. Knobs are small, metal, doors all six horizontal panels (except between closet and new BR is five panel with glass knob). Doorway from LR to center hall that was lost in enclosure has been turned into shelves- protrudes into closet. On the BR side, both the doors from the front hall to the BR and the BR to closet have old moldings, doors, and hardware (although hardware doesn’t match). Conversion seems quite old.

Ceiling height – original, except in front hall which has acoustic tiles, in the added bedroom, and the bath. Surprising drop between closet and added bedroom. All beadboard in original spaces.

Kitchen details – vinyl floor, very old cabinetry that was home-built. Back window replaced with a double casement.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – just a foyer; cut off to create walkthrough closet between original and added bedrooms. Back hall feels like an enclosed porch, very sunny.

Bathroom location – in historic location. Entrance through kitchen.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Living room (doorway to shelf conversion)

front right: Bedroom

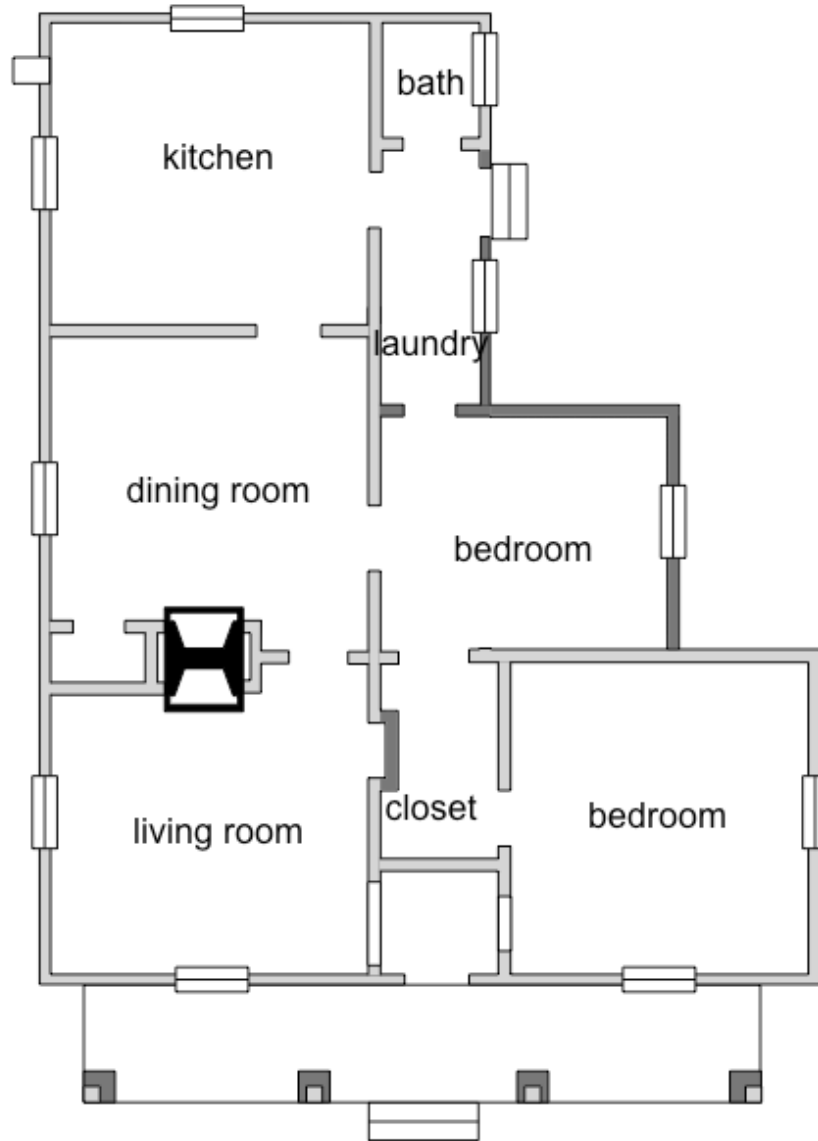
first in el: Dining room/play area (built-in bookshelves)

rear in el: kitchen

Photographs of House M



Floor Plan of House M



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House N

Visited February 6, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin. No front gable.

Windows – replacement aluminum 1/1

Siding – aluminum sided, over everything

Chimney – extant. Rear chimney on front room still present too.

Porch

Posts – bungalow style, battered, clearly replacements

Materials – posts are stone on the bottom, wood on the top. Floor is concrete?

Ceiling – vinyl to look like beadboard

Interior

Wall material – all beadboard except in back hall/rear porch area, where it's siding. The beadboard is a mixture of different widths; some seems wider than the other houses. Does that mean it's earlier?

Flooring – all old wood, except for in back hall/rear porch and bathroom, where it's a newer, wide-plank wood floor.

Moldings/surrounds – all 1x6", with the lip at the bottom of the window. No crown beyond quarter-round. The door between the front and back hall has a slightly more complex surround, looks more like an exterior door molding.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – both seem to work (one gas, one wood) and both surrounds/mantles have been replaced with stone, 'rustic' wood mantle and a big hearth.

Door types – all six horizontal panels except front door, which is glass on top of the usual 5 panel configuration. Knobs are a mixture of enamel and metal. Many of the interior doors have been stripped. The doors between the LR and the back hall are large French doors. Back door is glass.

Ceiling height – all at original height, no evidence of acoustic tiles.

Kitchen details – redone in the 1980s, perhaps, cheaply. Nothing is left that was old.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – in original configuration. Major change is large amount of windows used to close in the side porch. In the back hall, the doors seem to have fairly wide, basic molding, and it looks like it was done a while ago.

Bathroom location – in original space at end of back hall.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Bedroom

front right: Bedroom

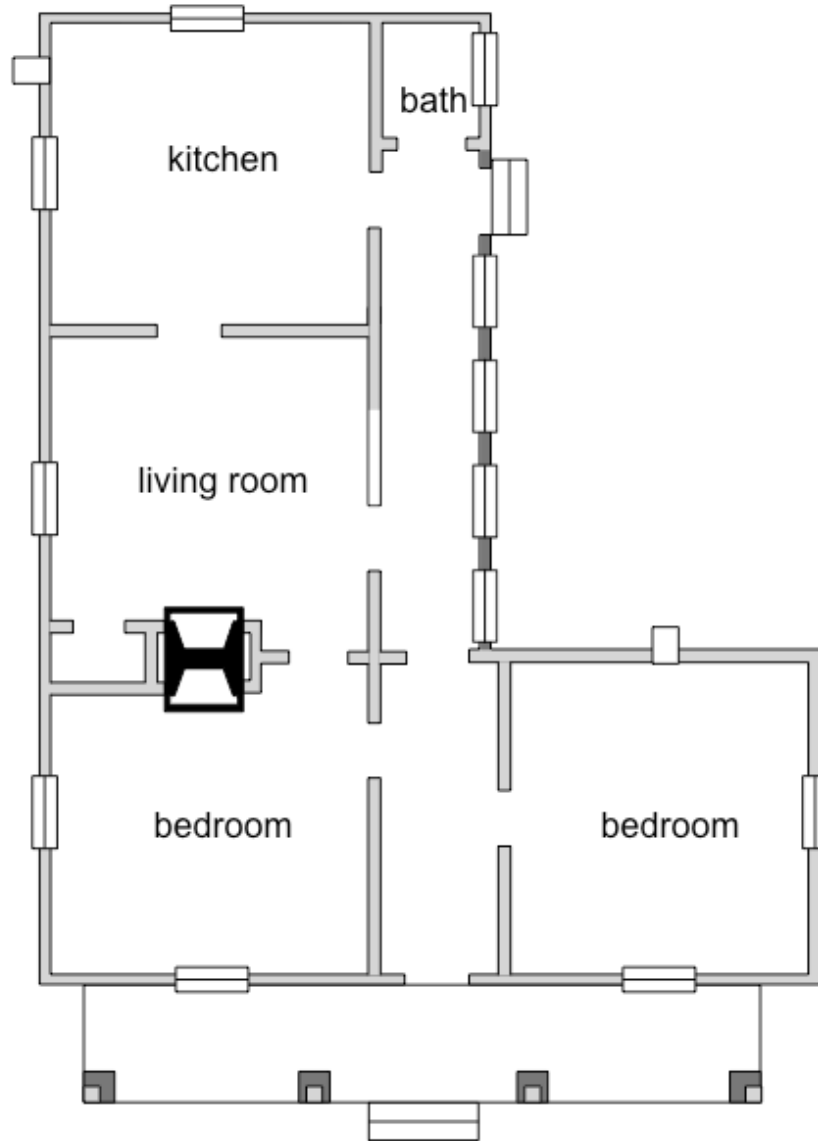
first in el: Living room

rear in el: Kitchen/Dining room

Photographs of House N



Floor Plan of House N



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.

House O

Visited January 17, 2005

Exterior

Roof – tin

Windows – replacement vinyl.

Siding – painted wood - looks original

Chimney – extant.

Porch

Posts – looks original, simple 4x4”s.

Materials – wood

Ceiling – exposed rafters

Interior

Wall material – all either painted-over paneling or drywall, no beadboard

Flooring – in LR, hall, and kitchen are large ceramic tile. In all BRs, painted hardwood (probably original).

Moldings/surrounds – in front BR it is original, rest of space it is new and cheap; baseboard is fairly tall although new, and crown is little more than quarter-round but definitely not original.

Fireplace/chimney/mantle – in LR, stuccoed-in fireplace with new mantle and surround. In BR, still has old mantle although fireplace entirely enclosed.

Door types – hollow, new.

Ceiling height – generally high, although covered in tile

Kitchen details – not in original location, newly redone.

Room arrangement

Center hall (length and purpose) – totally removed.

Bathroom location – two, both in old rear hall space.

Purpose of rooms –

front left: Bedroom

front right: Living room

first in el: Bedroom/hall/laundry closet

rear in el: Bedroom

Notes: Back of house reconfigured entirely: no evidence of sloped porch roof, back hall, etc. from the interior, although it is present from the exterior.

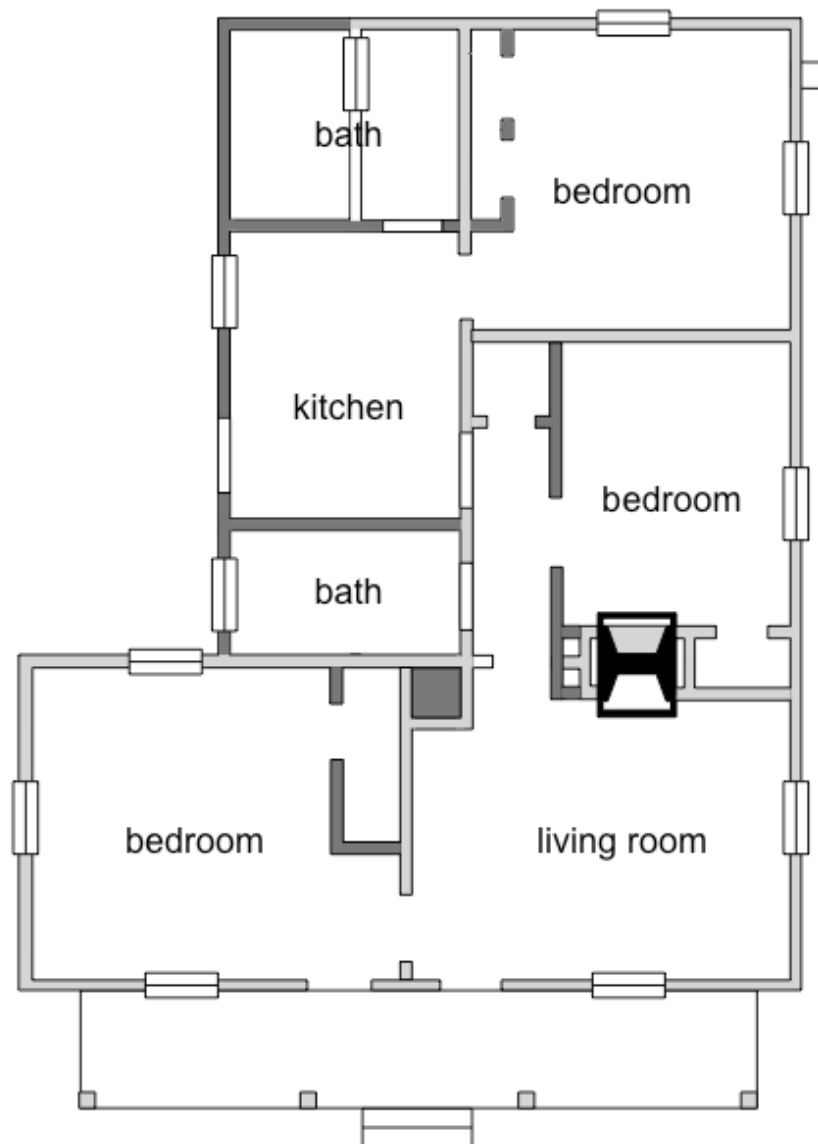
Note the house is set sideways on lot, oriented to street that is no longer there (because of Fitch lumber, I imagine).

This house, until recently, had a back door out of the rear el room’s side; I think it was pretty much the original floor plan until quite recently. One question though: I’m not sure it even had a center hall in the front, it might have been a slightly more saddlebag arrangement.

Photographs of House O



Floor Plan of House O



Notes: Not to scale. Light grey lines represent extant original walls. Dark grey lines are additions to original floor plan. Walls in white have been removed.