



THE PARKS-JETTON HOUSE AND FARM - DEMOLISHED



This report was written on 23 August 1991

1. Name and location of the property: The property known as the Parks-Jetton House and Farm is located at the western end of Neck Road, Charlotte, in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

2. Name address and telephone number of the present owner of the property: The owner of the property is:

Crescent Resources, Inc.
P. O. Box 30817, Suite 1300
Charlotte, North Carolina 28230

Telephone: (704) 373-3012

Tax Parcel Number: 013-161-01

3. Representative photographs of the property: This report contains representative photographs of the property.

4. A map depicting the location of the property: This report contains maps which depict the location of the property.

5. Current Deed Book Reference to the property: The most recent deed to Tax Parcel Number 013-161-01 is listed in Mecklenburg County Deed Book 3146 at page 175.

6. A brief historical sketch of the property: This report contains a brief historical sketch of the property prepared by Ms. Paula M. Stathakis.

7. A brief architectural description of the property: This report contains a brief architectural description of the property prepared by Ms. Nora M. Black.

8. Documentation of why and what ways the property meets criteria for designation set forth in N.C.G.S. 160A-400.5:

a. Special significance in terms of its history architecture, and / or cultural importance: The Commission judges that the property known as the Parks-Jetton House and Farm does possess special significance in terms of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations: 1) the Parks-Jetton House was built in 1905; 2) the Parks-Jetton House is believed to have been built by John Ellis McAulay, a prominent Hopewell carpenter; 3) the family of John Lindsay Parks, Jr., helped settle the land enclosed by the bend of the Catawba River; 4) the Jetton family, who leased the farm after its sale to Crescent Resources, Inc., is a good example of the yeoman farmers of northern Mecklenburg County; 5) the Parks-Jetton House and Farm is architecturally significant as a late vernacular interpretation of the I-house; and 6) the Parks-Jetton Farm contains several examples of early 20th century farm buildings.

b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and / or association: The Commission contends that the architectural description by Ms. Nora M. Black included in this report demonstrates that the Parks-Jetton House and Farm meets this criterion.

9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal: The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner to apply for an automatic deferral of 50% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property which becomes a designated "historic landmark." The current appraised value of the improvements is \$15,330. The current appraised value of Tax Parcel 013-161-01 (1157.77 acres) is \$4,634,430. The total appraised

value of the property is \$4,649,760. The property is zoned RR. It is anticipated that the house and a maximum of forty acres will be considered for prospective historic designation.

Date of Preparation of this Report: 23 August 1991

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Historical Overview

Paula M. Stathakis

The house known as the Parks-Jetton House was built c.1905 by the grandson of John Lindsay Parks Sr. According to Charles William Sommerville, author of *The History of Hopewell Church*, John Lindsay Parks Sr. moved from Cabarrus County to Mecklenburg County c. 1868.¹ While in Cabarrus County, the 1850 census agricultural schedule shows John L. Parks (Sr.) as the owner of a 275 acre farm. This farm was a prosperous and diverse enterprise. Parks Sr. owned horses, mules, and dairy cows, and he also raised 37 head of beef cattle, 32 sheep and 25 swine. He harvested 1000 bushels of corn in 1849 to feed these animals. Parks Sr. also grew buckwheat (130 bushels), oats (400 bushels), potatoes (20 bushels Irish, 30 bushels sweet), peas and beans (150 bushels), hay (13 tons) and cotton (11 400 lb. bales). This data suggests that Parks Sr. made the most of his 175 acres of improved land.²

By 1860, John Lindsay Parks Sr. had increased his holdings to 850 acres; 400 improved, 450 in woodlands. The cash value of his farm increased from \$2000.00 to \$12000.00. He shifted his crop emphasis to cotton and produced 40 400 lb. bales, nearly a 30% increase from 1850.³ Parks Sr. was not listed as a slave owner in the 1850 Slave Census, but in 1860 he was registered as the owner of 13 slaves (8 under age 10).⁴

The Civil War did not appear to have had adverse effects on John Lindsay Parks Sr.'s finances. By the 1870s, he had accumulated large tracts along the Catawba River in the Hopewell section. Parks Sr. purchased the homestead of Robert Davidson, [Holly Bend](#). This Federal style plantation house, constructed between 1795-1800, still stands

on Neck Road.⁵ He also purchased a 282 acre tract below Holly Bend near the river. John Lindsay Parks Sr. lived in Holly Bend and his son William Beaty Parks occupied the 28 acre site which was later known as the John Lindsay Parks homestead.⁶

From Holly Bend, Parks Sr. worked 800-900 acres. He devoted most of his land to corn and cotton, a practice prevalent among post-bellum Southern farmers. In 1880 he produced 80 bales of cotton and 3800 bushels of corn. He also raised orchard products and livestock. He employed 221 laborers to tend to these crops.⁷

John Lindsay Parks Sr. probably had a cotton gin and saw mill on the premises of the Holly Bend estate.⁸ Sommerville wrote that the ginning was done by "mules and darkies" until improved methods were introduced.⁹ The estate of John Lindsay Parks Sr. does not account for a cotton gin or a saw mill, but the receipts listed in the final settlement of the estate show payments made to his estate from the sale of cotton seed and from ginning fees. There receipts, dating from 1906-1908 show the same farmers using the gin repeatedly.¹⁰ The frequency of the same gin customers suggests that either Parks Sr.'s gin was never a large enterprise, especially since this gin was not located near a railroad depot, or that by the time of his death in 1905, his ginning business declined.¹¹

John Lindsay Parks Sr. appeared to be financially secure on his grand acreage on the Catawba. He hired over 200 laborers. Evidence strongly suggests that he operated a cotton gin and he is known to have dabbled in money lending for his neighbors, holding their crops and land as collateral against the loans.¹² However by the late 1880s, Parks Sr. had his share of economic difficulties. The details of his misfortunes are sketchy. One sign that he had problems is a Deed of Trust in which he was indebted to Mrs. Susan Wallace and Miss Mary K. Gilkey for \$1300.00, a debt that he never paid off in his lifetime. The collateral for this loan was the 282 acre tract occupied by his son William. The debt was cleared by his grandson John Lindsay Parks when he acquired this land in 1905.¹³ This 282 acre tract was once part of Robert Davidson's Holly Bend estate. It was sold as a separate tract by Davidson's nephew, also named Robert, to James Osborne who later sold this tract as well as the tract containing Holly Bend to John Lindsay Parks Sr.

William Beaty Parks lived on the 282 acre tract with his wife Nancy Alice Gluyas and their twelve children. W.B. Parks concentrated in forest products. He had a total of 464 acres, 68% of which was in woodland. He raised no cotton, but he kept 320 laborers in his employ in 1879 and he was one of the rare farmers who maintained working oxen. In 1880, W.B. Parks harvested 225 cords of wood from 320 acres of woodland, a fairly heavy cutting, especially if he cut from mature woodland.¹⁴ He is also listed in the 1880 census of manufactures as the owner of a saw mill in Long Creek.¹⁵

John Lindsay Parks, son of William Beaty Parks and grandson of John Lindsay Parks Sr., purchased the property his father lived on from his grandfather in 1905. ¹⁶ The house that originally stood on the property burned and was rebuilt in 1905 for Parks Sr. by Hopewell carpenter John Ellis McAulay. McAulay was a "country carpenter" not a contractor, and built several houses in the Hopewell area. ¹⁷ John Lindsay Parks and his wife, Luella Temple (married 1904) lived in this house with their two children. Luella died in 1913. J.L. Parks remarried in 1917 to Cora Colson from Norwood, N.C. They had five children. Aside from farming, J. L. Parks served as a County Commissioner from 1914-1920. ¹⁸ Cora Colson Parks was educated at Presbyterian (now Queens) College She was a musician, taught music in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools, and was an organist at [Hopewell Presbyterian Church](#) for twenty years.

In 1920 the Parks family sold their property to Catawba Manufacturing and Electric Power Company. ²⁰ The agreement negotiated between John Lindsay Parks and Catawba Manufacturing and Electric Power Company stipulated that J.L.Parks would sell three tracts totaling 357 acres for \$75.00 per acre. This arrangement should have paid J.L.Parks \$26,775.00. John Lindsay Parks, the second Parks generation to live on and work this land left no record of how he felt about having to leave the area. He kept the Holly Bend property until 1930 when he lost it in a foreclosure. ²¹

The current resident of the John Lindsay Parks House, Burnett Jetton remarked that J.L. Parks and his wife Cora were "good people" who suffered a very difficult financial period in the 1920s. After they sold their property in Hopewell, the J.L. Parks family ran a boarding house in Charlotte on Church Street and also ran a hotel in Albemarle for some time. ²² They ended up back in Charlotte and resided at 808 Kenilworth Avenue until their deaths. ²³

The Jetton family has rented the John Lindsay Parlous House since it was purchased by Catawba Manufacturing and Electric Power Company. William Franklin Jetton (1861-1926) and his wire Leonora Sifford (1870-1961) and their eight children were originally from Bethel Church in Lincoln County. ²⁴ The outbuildings that now occupy the site are the work of William Franklin Jetton and his son Burnett, who now occupies the property.

Perhaps the best insight into the rural and agricultural life of the area is through the recollections of Burnett Jetton, whose family farmed much in the same way that the Parks family had done. The Jettons raised cotton, corn, wheat, oats and hay on this land, which was relatively good farmland compared to the soil at Holly Bend, which Jetton said had eroded into "red gullies". The soil on the Jetton tract is more "loamy". ²⁶ Jetton figures that he plowed through a good eight inches of loam before he hit clay. Thin land was supplemented by the use of fertilizer which he or his father

bought every spring on credit. Guano, or "jewaner" as Jetton and other farmers of his generation call it, was obtainable at the Royster and McAbe Plant in Charlotte or from merchants in Huntersville. Sometimes farmers would pool their resources and order a carload of fertilizer from the manufacturer to be sent to Caldwell Station. The use of guano was prevalent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially among farmers who grew cotton as their cash crop.

In the early twentieth century, cotton gins were capable of pressing 500 lb. bales. A farmer was lucky if he could get one bale to the acre. However, Jetton said there was not much of "that kind of land" around. Farmers devoted most of their acreage to the cash crop which left less land for subsistence crops. During this period, most farmers lived on credit and it was difficult for them to make ends meet. Even if a farmer had most of his land in cotton, most of the money he made from the sale of this crop was paid to the merchants with whom he had credit. In the 1920s when the price of cotton got as low as six cents a pound most farmers rarely had cash left over after they settled their debts. It was therefore important for farmers to strike the difficult balance of maximizing land use for their cash crop and leaving enough to raise some livestock and food crops. Although Jetton is in his nineties, he emphatically says that the farmer worked hard but only merchants were prosperous.²⁷

The Jettons and other farmers in the area could take their cotton to a number of gins. William Franklin Jetton purchased shares in gins in Huntersville and in Cornelius. A gin was also located on Beatties Ford Road approximately one mile north of Neck Road known as Stillwell's gin. Stillwell owned the land that the gin occupied and a grocery store there. The gin was not near a railroad, so Stillwell was not personally involved as a middleman between farmers and cotton brokers. Instead, agents from cotton brokerages in Charlotte came to Stillwell's (as well as to other gins in the area) to buy cotton from individual farmers. Jetton remembers one such brokerage, McIver and Parks, was interested in long lint cotton and would cut a small hole into the bale to extract cotton for examination. There were always agents from other firms, and farmers could shop around for the best price; a broker could make a sale by offering a half a cent more than his competitors.

In their effort to be self-sustaining, the Jettons raised or made almost everything they needed except coffee, salt, sugar and lard. They grew sorghum to make molasses. Burnett Jetton recalled that in his youth, several molasses mills operated in the county. The manufacture of molasses was done entirely by individual farmers and the helpers they took with them to these mills. After cutting the cane with scythes and stripping it, each farmer had to haul the cane and enough wood to process it to the mill. The cane was ground by a device powered by a mule "hitched to a pole". A helper was essential for skimming the molasses as the mixture cooked because the liquid had to be kept clear during processing. All of this was tedious work which Jetton remembers as

backbreaking. The owners of the molasses mills were paid in quantities of molasses instead of cash.

The Jettons also raised wheat, often as much as ten acres. They took their wheat to a mill in Mooresville. Initially, farmers could leave a specified amount of wheat at this mill and return as often as necessary to get flour; no money was exchanged. This practice was later discontinued, farmers sold their wheat to the mill and purchased the flour when they needed it.

Rural life was hard, but not without moments of recreation. The main form of entertainment were square dances. Burnett Jetton played banjo in a small band with John Flanager and Henry Kearns. They played at many square dances some as far away as Newell, and made \$7.00-\$8.00 a week as musicians. The dances were usually on Saturday night: they began around 7:00 and were over before midnight. In addition to the musicians, a caller "called figures", something like "in behind in a single swing back in front in a double swing" all of which made perfect sense to the dancers who followed his instructions. Square dances were generally held at someone's home; food was not provided, but some people would bring a bottle with them. Jetton's most vivid square dance memory was of a dance held at [Long Creek School](#). The gym was packed with Hopewell residents including most of the deacons from Hopewell Presbyterian Church. The next day, Rev. Burwell, minister at Hopewell Presbyterian Church preached against dancing and against that dance in particular. For ten years after that incident, there were no square dances in Hopewell.

Even work, when it was a group activity, could be made into a social gathering. Corn shuckings were popular in the Hopewell section. Farmers invited neighbors to help shuck corn, and in return the farmer provided his neighbors with a "big supper". Corn shuckings were large events as 200-300 bushels of corn had to be cleaned, and some engaged in friendly competition to see who could shuck the most corn in the least time. Most farmers were able to have "supper shuckings" but the poor farmers could only afford to have "candy shuckings". Instead of a meal, the poor farmer passed out candy as a treat for those who helped him. Jetton, remembers having only one shucking. He preferred to put his corn up with the shucks on because he believed that the corn kept better that way, and the mules ate the shucks without complaining. ²⁹

The kind of rural life described by Burnett Jetton began to disappear in the 1930s. Cotton production declined, and fewer people were willing or able to survive on their farms during the depression. Jetton went to work for the County Police in 1936. Country merchants were gradually put out of business by large grocery chains which did business on a credit basis. Burnett Jetton still rents the 40 acres from Crescent Land and Timber, but he does not farm anymore. The land surrounding the Jetton farm is now a wildlife preserve.

Notes

¹ Charles William Somerville. *The History of Hopewell Presbyterian Church For 175 Years From the Assigned Date of its Founding, 1762*, (Charlotte: Observer Printing House., 1939) p. 171.

² 1850 Census. Agricultural Schedule. Cabarrus County.

³ 1860 Census. Agricultural Schedule, Cabarrus County.

⁴ 1860 Census. Slave Schedule. Cabarrus County.

⁵ Deed 8-98, October 1872.

⁶ Deed 8-97. Filed 1-1874. Both deeds 8-97 and 8-98 refer to the tracts purchased by John Lindsay Parks Sr. as the "Neck Place".

⁷ 1880 Census. Agricultural Schedule. Mecklenburg County.

⁸ See Sommerville, *The History of Hopewell Church* p. 171. This information was confirmed by Burnett Jetton, current resident of the John Lindsay Parks house. Interview with Burnett Jetton, August 5, 1991. However, the 1880 Census Manufactures Schedule does not show a cotton gin owned by John Lindsay Parks. At least this name does not appear in any of the legible sections of this microfilm. It does show that William Beatty Parks operated a saw mill. The microfilm copy of the 1880 Manufactures Schedule is of such poor quality that it is conceivable that John Lindsay Parks was recorded as the owner-operator of a gin, but the general illegibility of this document makes it virtually impossible to read. The original manuscript Copy in in the North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh and may be in better shape than this copy. No disclaimer was included in the microfilm copy to suggest that the overall poor quality of the copy was due to the deteriorated condition of the original. If this is not the case, then the copy is simply a sloppy job and as such is of little use to anyone.

⁹ Sommerville, *The History of Hopewell Church*, 171.

¹⁰ Many of the repeat users were relatives: his son William Beatty Parks, his son-in-law R.M. Allison, and his grandson, William Gluyas Parks, and Calvin Ross Parks.

¹¹ Estate of John Lindsay Parks. Annual Accounts 13:107. Final Settlements 4:442. Clerk Estates Mecklenburg County Courthouse. The Final Settlements also show that

John Lindsay Parks Sr. was attended by Dr. W.P. Craven, a country doctor and farmer in the Long Creek area For more information on Craven, see the National Register of Historic Places form for the [Dr Walter Pharr Craven House](#).

¹² Deed 20-44a, 2-28-1879; Deed 49-229, 11-15-1889. Register of Deeds, Mecklenburg County Courthouse.

¹³ Deed of Trust 49-494, 12-9-1885. Register of Deeds, Mecklenburg County Courthouse.

¹⁴ 1880 Census. Agricultural Schedule, Mecklenburg County.

¹⁵ 1880 Census. Manufactures Schedule. Mecklenburg County.

¹⁶ Deed 198-256, 1-15-1905. J.L. Parks paid \$3500.00 for the property plus \$1900.00 to remove the lien.

¹⁷ Sommerville, *The History of Hopewell Church* , pp. 157, 158, 209.

¹⁸ Obituary for John Lindsay Parks, *Charlotte Observer* 2-12-1956. While a commissioner, Parks was prominent in a group then known as the Better Roads Commission.

¹⁹ Obituary for Cora Colson Parks, *Charlotte Observer* 8-18-1966. Burnett Jetton remembers that Cora Parks helped him learn to play the banjo.

²⁰ Agreement 435-28, 8-6-1920, Deed 438-135, 12-28-1920. Register of Deeds, Mecklenburg County Courthouse. Catawba Manufacturing and Electric Power Company is now Duke Power. The property is owned by Crescent Resources, the real estate subsidiary of Duke Power.

²¹ National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, Holly Bend. It is not clear how John Lindsay Parks encountered such severe financial difficulties. Most of his misfortunes were probably related to the overall national difficulties. A natural disaster that he could not avoid was the flood of 1916. Burnett Jetton remembers this flood which wiped out all crops that were planted near the river or near creeks. Jetton also said that debris washing downstream, such as bales of cotton, houses and trees, clogged bridges and exacerbated the problem.

²² Interview with Burnett Jetton, 8-5-1991.

²³ Death Certificates: John Lindsay Parks #237 2-11-4956; Cora Colson Parks #1022 5-17-1966. Obituaries for John Lindsay Parks, *Charlotte Observer* 2-12-1956, and Cora Colson Parks. *Charlotte Observer* 5-18-1966.

²⁴ Their children were MacLane, Martin, Bessie, Willie, Chester, Burnett, Gaddis, and Edna. Burnett is the only surviving sibling. The Jetton family rented 40 acres from Catawba Manufacturing and Electric Power Company.

²⁵ Jetton remembers the eroded soil from his youth. Considering that the land around Holly Bend had been under constant cultivation since the time the Davidson family owned it and that the use of fertilizers was not widespread until the late nineteenth century, this memory of red gullies is probably accurate. John Lindsay Parks Sr. may have run into some of his bad luck at a point when the soil was too exhausted to produce to its normal capacity.

²⁶ The soil on this tract may have been in better condition because it was kept in woodlands and was put to more diverse use than the neighboring Holly Bend tract.

²⁷ Jetton and other farmers felt the squeeze from what historian Steven Hahn calls the "Vortex of the Cotton Economy". See Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1983.

²⁸ W.F. Jetton was paid dividends depending on available funds. When farmers stopped raising cotton, W.F. Jetton sold his shares in these gins and got out of these ventures at par.

²⁹ All of the above information about rural life and the Jetton family's tenure on the John Lindsay Parks land is taken from an interview with Burnett Jetton, 8-5-1991.

Architectural Description

by Ms. Nora M. Black

The Parks-Jetton House is located on the western end of Neck Road in the Long Creek Township of Mecklenburg County. The front or east facade of the house faces Neck Road; the rear or west facade overlooks a field and associated outbuildings. One house, twelve outbuildings, and one house trailer remain in a cluster near Neck Road. The house and associated outbuildings are located on a tract of forty acres leased by Mr. W. Burnett Jetton. The tract is part of Tax Parcel Number 013-161-01 which is a 1157.77 acre tract owned by Crescent Resources.

The Parks-Jetton House is an example of a two-story, extended I-house with center hall. The I-house was fairly common in the post-railroad years between approximately 1850 to 1890. This period, often referred to as the National Folk House period, coincided with the spread of the railroad throughout the United States. ¹ The Parks-Jetton House was constructed somewhat later in a period when Victorian Houses of the Folk Victorian era (ca. 1870-1910) ² were common in the farm communities of North Carolina; however, most of those later I-houses were enriched with Folk Victorian decoration on the front porch and at the eaves. The Parks-Jetton House lacks any decoration beyond the turned porch posts and the carved front door; therefore, it appears to be a throwback to the earlier style of construction. Over the years, the house has changed little.

The ground plan of the Parks-Jetton House is a compound, U-plan. The house presents a symmetrical elevation to the road. The two-story facade dominates the front view because of the low pitched roof. The ground plan of the two-story section of the house nearest Neck Road is that of a side-gabled structure three units wide. A one-story tripped roof porch runs the length of the front of the house. This front or public side of the house lacks the decorative details that many houses of this era would have had to enliven plain, utilitarian facades.

Two [gable-roofed](#), one-story wings at the rear of the house form the rest of the U-shape of the ground plan. The south wing is two rooms deep while the north wing is only one room deep. Between the two wings is a back porch that was enclosed to form a room many years ago. The porch/room fills in the interior of the U-shape. The south gable-roofed wing has a smaller gable-roofed addition on the west end.

Exterior

The siding is lapped horizontal boards with wide vertical corner boards. According to Mr. Jetton, the siding was white-washed in the 1930's; he doesn't recall an application of white-wash since that time. ³ Most of the siding is original; some original siding has been replaced because of deterioration. In a few areas on the back of the house, pieces of paneling and other materials cover deteriorated sections. The foundation consists of original brick piers.

The roof has a low pitch; the green asphalt roofing material was installed after Hurricane Hugo in 1989. The original roof was "crimped tin" but it had rusted through.⁴ The tripped roof front porch has very old asphalt shingles. The gables have a wide overhang; the wide eave overhang is boxed.

Many of the windows in the Parks-Jetton House contain the original leaded glass; most are 2/2 double hung wooden [sash](#). Some broken windows have been replaced

with new glass. Many of the windows have been covered with pieces of paneling or plywood to prevent the entry of vandals and thieves. The window surrounds are wide boards and not elaborate; however, they do have decorative moldings to form a cornice. The only exceptions to the 2/2 windows are three 6-pane rectangular windows in the small addition at the rear of the south wing.

The side-gabled (front) section of the house is one unit deep by three units wide. The front elevation is divided into two bays having symmetrical single windows and one center bay with a door on the first floor and a window on the second floor. Each gable end has two windows - a single, 2/2 window centered on each story. The side-gabled section of the house has two masonry chimneys on the back facade exiting the house at the peak of each rear gable wing. This arrangement allows each of the two chimneys to serve three rooms - one room upstairs, one room downstairs in the side-gabled front section and one room in each gable wing

The north one-story wing to the rear of the side-gabled section forms one room that the Jettons used as a bedroom. The main part of the south one-story wing is two rooms deep by one room wide; it contains the dining room and the kitchen. The additional small wing at the rear of the south wing consists of one unit that is open on the north side and one enclosed unit used for storage.

The entry porch on the front facade is a one-story [hip-roofed](#) porch with six turned wooden posts. A narrow band of vertical boards forms a cornice protected by the wide boxed eaves of the porch roof. The turned wooden posts sit directly on the porch flooring; they have no bases. The porch has wooden flooring of same width boards; much of the wood is deteriorated. The porch ceiling is made of beaded board. An unshielded bulb in a ceramic fixture is centered in the porch ceiling. There are no steps leading to the porch. The wooden enframing surrounding the single door consist of wide boards painted white. A screen door has a wooden frame painted white. The door consists of nine panels. The panels are a rectangular carved wooden panel at the top, a square pane of glass, another rectangular carved wooden panel matching the top panel, and six small square carved panels arranged in horizontal rows of three each. The carving is a stylized flower in each of the six square panels and a branch in each of the two rectangular panels.

Interior

The interior has not been changed or modernized to any great degree. The rooms have beaded-board ceilings, picture moldings, window and door surrounds with a deeply carved reed design, and original woodwork. Original hardware and door knobs are still in place on many of the doors. Hardwood floors throughout the house are generally of equal width oak boards although some floors have been covered with

linoleum. Walls are plaster; gypsum wallboard was used for partitions in a small bath located at the west end of the porch/room.

The original fireplace surrounds are still in place; they are simple arrangements of mantles supported by turned engaged posts. When the Jetton family moved into the house in 1920, all heat was provided by open fireplaces. In the late 1920's, the fireplaces were closed and wood stoves were installed.⁵ The stoves have been removed, but the fireplaces have not been reopened for use. An oil space heater provides the heat for the two rooms that Mr. Jetton uses.

The first floor consists of the center passage hallway that runs from the front door to a back door to the enclosed rear porch/room. Upon entering the front door, the Jettons had their living room in the front room on the right. Their front bedroom was to the left.⁶ At the rear of the center passage hallway, a door to the right opened into a bedroom while the opposite door on the left led to the dining room. The open stairway has the original balustrade and an unusual arrangement of two newel posts. It begins near the rear of the center passage hallway and lands in the upstairs hallway between two bedrooms. The rear door of the center passage hallway leads to the enclosed porch/room. The entrance to the kitchen is on the south wall of the rear portion of the enclosed porch/room. The kitchen can also be entered from a door on the west wall of the dining room. The door on the west wall of the porch/room leads to a small bathroom installed by Mr. Jetton.⁷

The one-story south wing on the rear facade provided a kitchen and dining room. At one time, a fireplace on the east wall of the dining room shared the chimney of the front bedroom fireplace. In the dining room, there are closets on each side of the former fireplace for storage of china and glassware. The kitchen, located in the west end of the south wing, has a sink in the southwest corner. A door on the north wall of the kitchen opens to a closet sized pantry.

The Jettons used kerosene lamps to provide light during the first twenty years of their tenancy of the Parks-Jetton House. Electricity did not come to the Neck Road area until the early 1940's; then it was provided by Crescent REA.⁸ Because they were not installed when the house was first constructed, light fixtures vary throughout the house. Most are single unshielded bulbs in ceramic fixtures.

Outbuildings

Twelve outbuildings and one house trailer are located west and northwest of the Parks-Jetton House. The house trailer has been parked west of the house since World War II; it has not been inhabited in some time. Just north of the house trailer is a gable front building that was used as a garage for a T-Model Ford. As cars grew bigger, they

would not fit in the tight quarters. The Jettons boarded up the car entrance, added a door and a window and used the building for storage.

All the outbuildings to the west and southwest of the house (with the exception of the log portion of one building) were constructed by Mr. Jetton and his family, primarily in the 1930's and 1940's. Several of these outbuildings were used by Mr. Jetton in his business, that of rebuilding T-Model Fords. The outbuildings to the northwest were constructed in the 1950's and the 1970's.

Starting at the southwest of the Parks-Jetton House, the outbuildings are arranged in a semi-circle around the house. The most southwest of the buildings is a late 1930's gable-roof garage with auto entry on the north gable end. The gable end has a sliding board door and a small 6-pane rectangular window above the door. It has siding of horizontal lapped boards and a metal roof.

Continuing in the semi-circle, just northwest of the garage is a brooder house for chicks. It has horizontal lapped siding and a [shed roof](#). Nearby is a hog pen with horizontal siding and a shed roof supported on pole rafters. Both of these buildings have metal roofs.

Almost due west at some distance from the house is a building that served as the primary workshop for the T-Model Ford rebuilding business. The building has a center work room covered with horizontal lapped siding. On each side of the work room, shed-roofed areas provided protection for the cars during reconstruction. The sides of the shed areas are supported on poles and covered with horizontal lapped siding.

Just northeast of the workshop are the remains of a granary. This building has log sills set on fieldstone piers. The shed roof has collapsed, but the vertical board walls still stand.

The next building in the semicircle is a log structure with a shed addition on each side. The roof of the log section collapsed into the center of the building several years ago. The square cut logs were assembled using a [half-dovetail corner notching system](#). It was a center passage building with rooms on either side. Mr. Jetton said the building was used for storage of the harness for the mules and was called the "Jerry Room." ⁹

North of the Parks-Jetton House is a three car garage with a storage area. The building has a metal roof and horizontal board siding. The storage area door is made of vertical boards.

There are four additional outbuildings located in a pasture northwest of the house. The oldest is a collapsed shed at the far north of the pasture. A large two-story, frame barn was built in approximately 1954. The last two buildings, both constructed in the 1970's, are an outhouse and a boy scout meeting shed with a partially completed brick chimney.

Conclusion

The Parks-Jetton House and Farm can provide information about farm living conditions at the first part of the 20th century in Mecklenburg County. Additionally, it can provide insight into the ways that yeoman farmers such as the Jetton family supplemented their farm income with other enterprises ranging from police work to the restoration of antique cars.

Notes

¹ Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, 1986), 88-90, 96-97.

² *Ibid*, 308-310, 314-315.

³ Interview with Mr. W. Burnett Jetton, the current leaseholder of the Parks-Jetton House and Farm, 27 July 1991.

⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵ *Ibid*.

⁶*Ibid*.

⁷ *Ibid*.

⁸ *Ibid*.

⁹*Ibid*.