

Orange Factory Village, House No. 16  
Old Orange Factory Road (St. Rt. 1628)  
Durham  
Durham County  
North Carolina

HABS No. NC-9 I

HABS  
NC,  
32-ORFA,  
10-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ORANGE FACTORY VILLAGE, HOUSE No. 16

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10-

Location: Old Orange Factory Road, Durham County, NC  
(Number 16)  
USGS NW/4 Durham North 15' Quadrangle, Universal  
Transverse Mercator Coordinates  
17.691100.400070

Present Owner: Susanne Schneider  
Real Estate Administrator  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, NC 27701

Present Occupant: Demolished, summer 1984

Significance: The Orange Factory houses, dating from the 1860's were built to accommodate employees of one of the earliest cotton mills in North Carolina. They assume historical significance as components of the mill complex and as the former nucleus of a company village, Orange Factory, North Carolina.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1850's or earlier
2. Original and subsequent owners: Pages 33-36 of Orange Factory Village, HAB No. NC-9, show the chain of title to the land on which the house stands.
3. Original plans and construction: No original drawings or plans have been located. Two-story, three bay wide, frame house with central chimney is original.
4. Alterations and additions: At undetermined dates, a small shed room and porch was added to the rear and a shed porch with tree trunk posts was added to the front.

B. Historical Context:

Orange Factory, a small rural mill village located in the Little River valley, dates from the 1850's and provides an important picture of the early stages in the development of industrial life in North Carolina. Its collection of Greek Revival style workers' housing represents one of perhaps less than five remaining examples in North Carolina of pre-Civil War mill workers' housing. The remains of the cotton factory, water race system and grist mill, along with the dam, workers' housing with garden plots, supervisors' houses, schoolhouse, church, cemetery and well show the physical context in which the social and economic life of this self-sustaining community functioned. Orange Factory village is representative of the period when industrial sites were dependent on water power and thus located along the waterways of North Carolina in relatively isolated, rural settings. Unlike some early industrial sites which developed into larger towns, and other later ones which started out in more urban settings, Orange Factory has retained its small-scale, rural atmosphere indicative of the early mill villages in the state.

Prepared from materials cited in  
Orange Factory Village, HABS No. NC-9, by

Annette Liggett  
Environmental Coordinator  
City of Durham  
March 1984

(House Number 16)

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Unlike the Georgian I type plans of the neighboring houses, the plan of this house was developed around a central chimney mass and was originally designed to serve two separate families.
2. Condition of the fabric: The exterior masonry was in sound condition as were the clapboard walls, windows and doors. Roofs were generally in good condition. The structure was scheduled to be demolished during the summer of 1984.

B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The main section of the house measures 36'-5" x 18'-7". A one story addition measuring 18'-1" x 5'-11" adjoins the south side of the house.
2. Foundations: Rubble field stone walls provide support for the main section and the addition.
3. Walls: The exterior of the house is clad in horizontal clapboards with a 5" exposure. Plain, unbeaded corner boards stop the clapboards.
4. Structural system, framing: The interior and exterior walls were constructed with wood studs which supported wood floor joists, neither of which were accessible. The roof system consisted of wood rafters, and it is assumed from the upper story configuration that the rafters were connected with wood ties.
5. Porches, stoops: A simple shed roof porch is attached to the front (north elevation) of the house. A concrete slab floor is supported by brick piers at third points with rubble stone infill foundation walls. The simple shed roof is supported by slender tree trunks. Five (5) concrete steps lead up to the center of the porch, neither of which have handrails. At the rear of the house, an extension of the roof of the addition protects a small concrete slab-on-grade which forms a rear porch. A log post supports the roof.

6. Chimneys: A centrally located chimney projects a few feet above the roof ridge. The corbelled brick element is nearly square in plan, and was erected to provide flues for two, back-to-back fireplaces; now infilled, located on the first floor.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The front (north elevation) door is a solid wood door with six (6) lights over three (3) horizontal panels. The doorway is trimmed in flat boards. The rear (south elevation) door of the house is solid wood containing five (5) raised panels, four (4) vertical and one (1) horizontal panel. The doorway is trimmed in flat boards.

b. Windows: All but one of the windows contain six over six, double hung sash trimmed in flat boards. The exception, located on the first floor of the south elevation, appears to have been altered and consists of a large opening trimmed in flat boards. The opening, which is similar in size to the adjacent windows contains two (2) two-light sliders at the top and the remainder of the opening has been infilled with horizontal clapboard siding.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The main section of the house is roofed with a simple gable. The front porch is protected by a shed roof. The rear addition and adjoining porch are covered by a continuous hipped roof. All roofs are corrugated galvanized tin.

b. Cornice, eaves: Overhanging eaves projecting from the two story section of the house are trimmed with a single board cornice and barge boards at the gable ends. The hipped roof of the rear addition lacks the projecting overhangs of the main section of the house although the eaves are also trimmed with a single board.

c. Dormers, cupolas: None.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. Crawl space: Inaccessible.

- b. First floor: The entry door from the front porch opens into a small vestibule formed by the chimney breast and doors to the right and left. The room to the right (west) contains a large, now infilled fireplace on the inside wall, a stair in the southwest corner, and a door which leads to the exterior. The room on the east side also contains a large, now infilled fireplace on the inside wall, kitchen facilities, a closet containing a heater, and a door on the south wall leading to the rear addition. The addition consists of two rooms; a full bath next to a pantry with a door to the exterior.
  - c. Second floor: The upper floor consists of two large rooms on opposite, east-west sides of the chimney breast. The eastern room contains an enclosed stair from the first floor, doorless at the top. A large closet, located on the north side of the chimney opens into this room. The room to the west includes an enclosed stair (open at the landing) which runs along the west wall. A small bathroom existed in the space to the south of the chimney with doorways to each adjoining room.
  - d. Attic: Inaccessible.
2. Stairways: Both of the stairs run from the first to the second floors. Starting from the bottom, these wood tread and riser stairs step up three (3) steps to a door through which is an enclosed landing. The concluding run of stairs continues at right angles along the abutting wall. The stairs, although enclosed with a plastered stud wall, is doorless at the upper landing.
  3. Flooring: The flooring throughout the building was painted, tongue and groove, pine flooring. The floors in the two, large, second floor rooms and the large room on the east side of the first floor have been covered with vinyl asbestos tile.
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls throughout the house are plastered as are the ceilings. Acoustic tile has been applied to the ceilings of the main rooms on both floors.
  5. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: Painted, wide, flat boards have been used to trim out the doorways. The doors are solid wood with raised panels.

- b. Windows: The windows, like the doorways, are trimmed in wide, flat boards with simple sills and skirt boards.
6. Decorative features and trim: The only decorative features of the house, if they could be called that, are the simple fireplace surrounds. Each mantle shelf is a single board, one square edged, one rounded, secured in place with quarter round trim top and bottom. The fireplace surrounds are completed with a few flat boards.
7. Hardware: The doors were hung on simple cast butt hinges and operated with surface mounted rim locks with china knobs. Window sash locks were simple metal castings.
8. Mechanical equipment:
  - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Heat was provided by an oil fired hot air furnace. Cooling is provided by portable window units. Ventilation is achieved through open windows.
  - b. Lighting: The house is equipped with wiring, outlets, and a few rooms have modest ceiling mounted light fixtures.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house is located on the south side of Old Orange Factory Road. The front of the house faces due north on land which slopes gradually from southwest to northeast.
2. Historic landscape design: The house is surrounded by an open grass lawn with a few randomly placed trees of moderate height.
3. Outbuildings: None.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early views:

1913 Sanborn Insurance Map

1937 Sanborn Insurance Map

B. Interviews:

Interviews are cited in Orange Factory Village, HABS No. NC-9, on page 46.

C. Bibliography:

Secondary and published sources: The major source for all material was Cultural Resource Investigations at Orange Factory, Libscomb's and Johnston's Mills, Durham Co., NC prepared by Mid-Atlantic Archaeological Research, Inc., Newark Delaware, in December 1983. Other sources were those cited in that document, as shown.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Due to the proposed construction of a water supply reservoir by the City of Durham, a Memorandum of Agreement was designed which would assure the mitigation of impact to defined significant cultural resources within the reservoir basin. These included archaeological resources consisting of three mill sites and a mill village, Orange Factory; the architectural resources at the mill village (workers houses), and the history and folk-lifeways of the villagers. The necessary data recovery operations, as specified in the MOA, were conducted by Mid-Atlantic Archaeological Research, Inc. and qualified consultants. This was accomplished during the spring and summer of 1983. Data recovered concerns 18th and 19th century grist mills, a 19th and early 20th century textile mill operation, and the 19th and 20th century workers village and community residents.

The combination of historical site archaeology, historic documentary research, architectural recordation, and oral history studies, was generally effective in assuring the preservation of much of the cultural background and details of the rural North Carolina industrial complex.