

### **North Washington Avenue Workers' House**

East side of 300 block of North Washington Avenue  
Reidsville

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many rural farm workers in North Carolina left the depressed agricultural sector and moved to growing towns seeking work in expanding industries. While whites often found work in textile mills, many black workers were in factories in the tobacco industry such as the American Tobacco Company in Reidsville. With the tremendous influx of workers, affordable housing for workers became increasingly scarce. The North Washington Avenue Workers' Houses were built as inexpensive rental housing for the workers of the American Tobacco Company.

The modest frame dwellings derive from single-pen houses of log and frame that were common in North Carolina's rural landscape. Houses like these were usually built in clusters close to the tobacco factory and may once have numbered in the hundreds. The North Washington Avenue Workers' Houses are five houses standing in a row that were probably built in 1915 by Thomas Littleton Gardner, a local druggist. Although many windows and doors have been replaced and electricity and indoor plumbing added, the houses retain much of their original character and are the only surviving, intact group of this particular house type in the area.  
[Reidsville MRA, CA 12/11/86, 86003388]