

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

John Henry Pfaff House

Local Historic Landmark #103

4798 Pfaff Lane, Pfafftown

Construction Date: c. 1905

Restoration Date: c. 1988

Landmark Designation Date: 12/08/1997

John Henry Pfaff (1858-1949) was the great grandson of Peter Pfaff (1724-1804), who settled in the Pfafftown area in 1786 and for whom the small community was named. As a young man, John Henry Pfaff went to Winston-Salem to work in a store. Later he moved to Bethania, where he worked in the O.J. Lehman tobacco factory and general store. While in Bethania, he married Sarah Tabitha Stroup; they moved back to Pfafftown to make their home. Pfaff served as a deacon in the Pfafftown Christian Church and became a prosperous merchant in the community. He constructed a one-story frame store (no longer standing) on the southwest corner of what is today Yadkinville Road and Pfaff Lane. Pfaff's store sold groceries, general merchandise, sewing machines, watches and clocks, gasoline, Goodyear tires, Ford automobile parts, and Johnson Harvester machinery, such as reapers, mowing machines, hay rakes, and plows. Highly esteemed in the community and known for his benevolent spirit and deeds, Pfaff operated his store until the mid 1940s, a few years before his death.

When Pfaff died in 1949, he left no will. According to his grandchildren, he could not decide how to handle the disposition of his homeplace relative to two of his daughters, Mary Louise Pfaff Douthit and Anna Winona Pfaff, who did not get along. Louise had taken care of her father in his last years, but Anna had never married and needed a place to live. Pfaff left these difficult decisions to the administrators of his estate, his sons. They had the property resurveyed, with a dividing line running through the center hall of the house. Louise received the portion of the house located north of the line, while Anna received the part south of the line. Both sisters died in 1983, and the property was then left to Louise's children. In 1988, they conveyed their joint property to new owners; thus, the two parts of the house were once again joined by single ownership.



The John Henry Pfaff House was constructed in the early part of the 20th century, although the exact date is not certain. It is a fine example of traditional, vernacular houses built in the Piedmont during the early 20th century. It is a two-story frame dwelling with an L-shaped configuration and Colonial Revival detailing. The house features a brick foundation and weatherboard siding. The gabled roof is pierced by interior brick chimneys. A one-story, gable-roof rear ell projects westward from the northwest corner of the house. The windows are two-over-two sash, and most have the original wood louvered shutters. On the front façade of the house, a shed-roof porch supported by Tuscan columns covers the three-bay façade and wraps around the projecting left front wing. The central entrance is composed of a pair of glass-and-wood paneled doors. At the southwest corner of the property stands a frame granary that was probably constructed around the same time as the house.

The property was restored in the late 1980s, carefully preserving the house's stylistic details, while remodeling the kitchen and bathrooms for modern use and comfort.

Today the John Henry Pfaff House is privately occupied.



John Henry Pfaff House, Date Unknown
Courtesy of Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission's Files



This information is also available
at the Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission's web site:
<http://www.ForsythCountyHRC.org>