United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Kernodle-Pickett House

and or common

2. Location

street & number N side SR 1136 at jct. SR 1131

00: not for publication

city, town Coble Township vicinity of Bellemont

state North Carolina code 037 county Alamance code 001

3. Classification

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4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Danny Watson

street & number Rt. 6, Box 243

00: not for publication

city, town Burlington vicinity of state North Carolina 27215

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alamance County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Graham state North Carolina 27253

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Carl Lounsbury

title Alamance County Architectural Heritage

has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1980 federal state X county local

depository for survey records Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh state North Carolina 27611
The Kernodle-Pickett House is a richly detailed, virtually intact frame Queen Anne style house with a two-and-one-half story L-shaped main block from which asymmetrically placed one, and one-and-one-half story wings project. Constructed between 1895 and 1896, the house is located in a rural setting on the north side of the Bellemont-Alamance Road (SR 1136) at the junction of Dr. Pickett Road (SR 1130) in Coble Township approximately six miles southwest of Graham, the Alamance County seat. The south-facing house is set near the road and surrounded by 4.4 acres of lawn dotted with large deciduous trees, small fruit trees and ornamental shrubs.

The Kernodle-Pickett House is a characteristic example of the Queen Anne style in its asymmetrical composition which displays a wide variety of materials, textures and colors. However, the house's balloon-frame construction infilled with brick nogging is most uncharacteristic. This framing and insulation method is very unusual in a house of this late nineteenth century vintage and is more commonly found in late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth century structures. In rural Alamance County this archaic building tradition was apparently long-lived, appearing also in houses constructed c. 1880 for workers in the textile mill village of Glencoe, located on the Haw River about ten miles north.

The Kernodle-Pickett House, which exhibits a tall, rather narrow main elevation, rests on brick piers infilled with brick to form a continuous foundation. It is sheathed with narrow weatherboards, with scalloped shingles in the second story gable ends, and is crowned by a multi-gable roof covered by embossed tin shingles which replace the original slate roof. A tall interior brick chimney, with recessed panels on the stack and a decoratively corbelled cap, rises above the roof. The house is ornamented by a great variety of molded, sawn, and turned millwork which includes heavily molded eaves with applied bulls-eye bosses defining the gables with returns; applied wooden sunbursts on the first story gable ends; decorative pierced and sawn bargeboards with drop pendants accenting the gable peak of the front-facing wing and a small gable perched atop the cross-gable at the attic peak. The elaborate one-story attached hip-roof porch features turned posts and balusters; delicate triangular sawn spandrels; a spool frieze; and, marking the entrance bay, a pedimented gable with applied sunburst and scalloped bargeboard with bulls-eye bosses. The porch shelters two handsome entrances, each composed of ornamented panels and a single glass pane surrounded by a variety of robust sawn, fluted, and decoratively gouged applied trim; each door retains the original embossed hardware. The center door opens into the main hallway, and the door to the right (east) opens into a slightly recessed small one-story wing designed to contain Doctor Loften Kernodle's and later, Doctor John Pickett's medical office.
The main elevation is dominated by the porch and by a two-and-one-half story three-sided projecting bay. Each level of the bay is ornamented differently. The first story of the bay features a large fixed window with a single pane surrounded by smaller panes of stained glass. This window is flanked by narrow one-over-one sidelights, set atop a fluted tongue-and-groove apron, and topped with an applied inverted fleur-de-lis swag and a bellcast metal hood. The second level contains a one-over-one window shaded by a flat roof with a swag frieze like that seen below. A small decorative balcony with turned posts and balusters highlights a small sixteen-over-one stained glass window at the third stage of the bay.

Several of the decorative elements seen on the main elevation are repeated on the west (left) elevation. These include on the first story, a three-sided projecting bay with hip roof, fleur-de-lis swag, and plain paired one-over-one sash windows set atop a fluted tongue-and-groove apron. Paired one-over-one sash windows mark the second story, and the attic is lit by a multi-pane stained-glass window.

The rear (north) elevation presents a busy, three-level multi-gable staggered roofline and a variety of window types including narrow asymmetrically placed one-over-one sash and short, paired two-over-two sash windows, as well as a narrow multi-paned stained-glass window marking the attic level.

The east (right) elevation has a variety of asymmetrically placed one-over-one windows; a one-story hip-roofed wing with pedimented gable near the south end; a recessed one-story shed-roofed rear service porch with turned posts and sawn spandrels which shelters the well and two entrances—one to the dining room and the other to the kitchen. (Family members report that the porch dining room door was used by field hands who were served their noon meal at the house). The only apparent exterior alterations to the house are the replacement of the wooden steps with concrete at both the front and rear porches.

On the interior, the Kernodle-Pickett House follows a side hall plan. The staircase rises against the east wall of the narrow hall. The staircase displays a heavily molded handrail; substantial, turned balusters; and an elaborate carved newel post ornamented with egg-and-dart molding, bulls-eyes, and a bulbous turned knob atop the fluted cap. Features common throughout the interior include pine floors; walls, ceilings and wainscot of beaded or fluted tongue-and-groove boards; and, except in the parlor, simple mantels with plain pilasters, scalloped friezes and plain shelves.

The parlor is located to the left (west) of the hall. It retains the original tall molded baseboards, molded door and window surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks, and mantelpiece with slender free-standing Tuscan columns supporting a plain shelf and a Tuscan-columned overmantel with beveled mirror and simply carved frieze. In the early 1960s, the parlor walls are covered with modern replacement paneling and the ceiling was lowered and covered with acoustical tile.
Originally, a bedroom was located in the room to the rear of the parlor, and beyond that was the kitchen. The current owners removed the wall between these two rooms and remodeled the large space as a modern kitchen/sitting room. Removal of the beaded tongue-and-groove boards which originally covered the kitchen and bedroom walls revealed the brick nogging used to insulate the balloon-framed house.

The first story hallway terminates in the large, well-lit dining room. In the south wall of the dining room is a door which provides the only interior access to the small doctor's office located in the one-story wing at the east (exterior entrance is from the front porch). The office retains full-height built-in shelves formerly used to store medicines and other pharmacy items.

Two large bedrooms and one small bedroom (now converted into a bathroom) are located off the narrow second story hallway. A new enclosed staircase on the west wall rises to a spacious attic, recently remodeled as a bedroom with a loft.

Originally, the Kernodle-Pickett House had a number of outbuildings located in the rear yard including two substantial barns, a chicken house, granary, wood shed, privy, tractor shed, and dairy house with water piped from the well to the stone cooling troughs. None of these buildings survive, although the troughs remain in a small square concrete building (renovated or rebuilt at an undetermined date) located close by the back porch steps. A contemporary five-bay open shed used for automobile and boat storage is located several hundred feet at the rear of the house, on the east edge of the cleared yard.

The nominated area consists of one contributing building, the Kernodle-Pickett House, and two non-contributing buildings, the well house and open shed.
The Kernodle-Pickett House is a richly detailed, little-altered two-and-one-half-story L-shaped frame Queen Anne style house constructed between 1895 and 1896 and located on the Bellemont-Alamance Road in rural, central Alamance County about six miles southwest of Graham, the county seat. Architecturally, the house is notable as one of the best representative examples of the Queen Anne style in Alamance County. It features the characteristic elements of that style including a complex multi-gable roofline pierced by a tall, corbelled brick interior chimney; elaborate sawn bargeboards at the gable peaks; molded cornices ornamented with applied bulls-eye bosses; sawn spandrels and turned posts and balusters at the porch and balcony; multi-pane stained glass windows, including one which dominates the front projecting bay; and, on the interior, robust turned newel post and balusters on the staircase; heavily molded door and window surrounds; beaded and molded sheathing; and a mantel with Tuscan columns and beveled glass overmantel. The house is unusual for its anachronistic balloon-frame construction infilled with brick nogging. Historically, the handsome house is associated with two prominent Alamance County physicians, Dr. Loften Kernodle (1869-1933) and Dr. John A. Pickett (1863-1947). Designed to include a small medical office, the house was constructed and owned for a short time by Dr. Kernodle, but is more commonly associated with its long-time owner, Dr. Pickett, a popular Alamance County physician, politician and civic leader who lived and practiced medicine at the house from 1900 to 1947. The Kernodle-Pickett House continues in Pickett family ownership to the present.

Criteria Assessment:

B. Associated with the life of Dr. John A. Pickett, prominent Alamance County physician, politician and civic leader.

C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Queen Anne style including such features as a multi-gable roofline, turned and sawn millwork, corbelled chimney and multi-pane stained glass windows.
Dr. James Loften Kernodle, the son of Joseph and Jane Cummings Kernodle, was born in Morton Township in northwestern Alamance County on September 12, 1869. Little is known about Kernodle's early life or his medical training. By 1895, he had obtained his medical degree, was living in Coble Township, and was engaged to Frances "Fannie" Adelaide Nicholson (1866-1935) whose family lived nearby. In 1895 he purchased 55.5 acres on the Bellemont-Alamance Road from his fiancee and began construction of a house for them. It is not known who designed this handsome Queen Anne style house. Although the house is located in a rural setting in central Alamance County, it is not a farmhouse. With its tall, narrow form and side-hall plan, it looks more like a town house and would not look out of place in late-nineteenth century neighborhoods found in the nearby towns of Burlington or Graham. It seems likely that the design may have been taken from any one of the popular architectural pattern books or periodicals of the era, such as those published by R.W. Shappell in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Construction of Dr. Kernodle's house, which was designed to include a small medical office, was completed by 1896 according to a date inscribed on an attic rafter. However, by then he and Fannie Nicholson had broken their engagement and ownership of the house and acreage had reverted to Miss Nicholson. Kernodle re-purchased the newly constructed house and the land from his former fiancee in 1897; Fannie Nicholson held the mortgage on the property. Loften Kernodle married Lydia Alma Albright (b. 1876) on May 11, 1897 at the home of her parents in Coble Township. The newlyweds moved into the stylish house, but lived there only a few months before moving to the village of Altamahaw, located in the northwestern section of the county, where he joined his brother, George Washington Kernodle's medical practice. Loften Kernodle left his medical practice after 1910 and became a successful businessman in Burlington. By 1930 he was President of the Carolina Flour Mills, the Dixie Flour and Seed Company, Clapp Motor Company and the Love Knitting Company and was also part owner of the American Hosiery Company. Loften Kernodle died in 1933.

Kernodle's former fiancee, Fannie Nicholson, married Fletcher W. Nelson of Orange County in 1898. About 1900 she sold the house Kernodle had built for her and the 55.5 acres for $1400 to another local physician, Dr. John A. Pickett.

John Alfred Pickett was born on March 15, 1863 in Randolph County, the youngest of Wiley and Elizabeth Davis Pickett's six children. Although the family suffered financial hardship after Wiley Pickett's death during the Civil War, John Pickett aspired to become a doctor and was able to attend the Julian School in southeastern Randolph County and read medical books in this spare time. He taught school for a time in Randolph County before moving to Alamance County around 1890. Two years later, at the age of twenty-nine, he borrowed the money for medical school and entered the Nashville Medical College in Tennessee. When Pickett graduated in 1894, he returned to Alamance County, settled in the Bellemont area and began practicing medicine. He and Dr. Loften Kernodle were the only two physicians in the Bellemont area (population 350) in 1896. According to family members, Pickett also served as the postmaster of Osceola, near Bellemont, around the same time.
John Pickett shared his house with the Reverend William E. Swain, pastor of the nearby Bellemont United Methodist Church from 1897 to 1903, before he married his neighbor, Martha Virginia Nicholson (1874-1961) in 1906. John and Martha Pickett had four children: Dwight C. (1907-1959), Howard A. (b. 1911), Margaret P. Snuggs (1912), and Mattie P. Edwards (1918).

Dr. John Pickett's medical career lasted for almost half a century and his practice spanned three counties: Alamance, Guilford, and Orange. Throughout his career as a general practitioner, Dr. Pickett treated a wide assortment of diseases, performed amputations, set broken limbs, and delivered over 2,000 babies. Family members recalled that patients waited for him in the kitchen of this home and talked to his wife until he could see them in his small office. During the early years of his practice, he traveled the rough rural roads by horse and buggy. Dr. Pickett reportedly "went through" four buggies before purchasing a Model "T" automobile in 1916.

During the 1918 pandemic outbreak of influenza, he worked around the clock and served on the Alamance County Board of Health which banned all public meetings in the county between October 28 and November 30. Over 200 cases of influenza were reported in the county, and at least 137 people died from this deadly strain of the disease between October and December. Dr. Pickett's practice was typical of early twentieth century rural medical practices in North Carolina and he is representative of country doctors of that era: he maintained an office at his home, travelled considerable distances on house calls, had a general practice which dealt with a wide variety of ailments, and acted as a pharmacist mixing the medicines he prescribed.

In addition to his medical career, Dr. Pickett had political ambitions. In 1904 he ran as a Republican for a seat in the North Carolina General Assembly's House of Representatives, but was defeated by George Graham. Soon after his marriage in 1906, Dr. Pickett was named Chairman of the Republican Party in Alamance County and in 1907 was once again a candidate for the state House of Representatives. This time he won, defeating W. H. Carroll, the chairman of the Democratic Party in Alamance County. During his term, he introduced a bill to improve the quality of education in Alamance County, and served on the Committee for Insane Asylums which drafted a law providing funds for the care of the mentally ill and the maintenance of the state's mental hospitals. In 1908, he won a second, and final term in the House by defeating "Farmer" Bob Scott (1861-1929), a popular Democrat and former State Senator.

Dr. Pickett did not seek re-election to the General Assembly in 1912. He ran for County Coroner in 1918 and in 1920 but was defeated both times.

Dr. Pickett was also involved in local religious, business, and civic affairs. He taught Sunday School at the Bellemont-United Methodist Church and was a member of the Atlantic Bank and Trust Company's Board of Directors. In 1927 he led a local effort to consolidate six one-room schools in Coble Township. The proposal for a modern educational facility, named the E. M. Holt School, was approved by the Alamance County Board of Education on March 7, 1927, and the school was completed by October 7, 1927. Dr. Pickett served as Chairman of the E. M. Holt School Committee between 1927 and 1945.
Dr. Pickett farmed the acreage surrounding his house, by hiring a number of tenant farmers between 1910 and 1930 who grew wheat and corn on the land. In 1913 Dr. Pickett enlarged his farm by purchasing ninety-two adjoining acres from Arthur L. Combs. Martha Pickett inherited forty-two acres from her father in 1924; this land was located near the house on the Bellemont-Alamance Road. As a hobby, Dr. Pickett raised fancy breeds of chickens. According to family members, the chickens were a "source of pride and pleasure" and he enjoyed loading a wicker basket with the eggs and delivering them to "a select group of customers."

Dr. Pickett continued to practice medicine until shortly before he died in August, 1947. He is buried at the Bellemont-United Methodist Church Cemetery. His wife, Martha Pickett lived in the house until her death in 1961.

Five years after Dr. Pickett's death, his daughter, Margaret Snuggs and her husband, Craven Snuggs moved in with her mother. Margaret Snuggs was a school teacher with the Alamance County School System and her husband was employed by Nash Automatic Sprinkler Systems in Haw River. Margaret became the owner of the house in 1953. Craven died in 1979, but Margaret lived in the house until 1981.

In 1982 Danny and Janice Pickett Watson purchased the Kernodle-Pickett House and 4.4 acres of land. Janice Watson is the daughter of Howard Pickett, Dr. Pickett's youngest son. The Watsons are currently remodelling portions of the interior and preserving the unaltered exterior of the family home.
FOOTNOTES


2 Temperance Sharpe, a native of Alamance County and a neighbor of Fannie Nicholson, sold the land to Fannie in 1884 "out of love and affection and further consideration of ten dollars." Sharpe maintained lifetime rights to the property and his name also appears on the 1895 deed from Nicholson to Kernodle: Alamance County Register of Deeds, Volumes 9, p. 353 and 18, p. 202.

3 Interview with Snuggs; and Interview with Howard Pickett, Kernodle-Pickett House, Burlington, North Carolina, 23 July 1986.

4 Alamance County Register of Deeds, Deeds of Trust, Volume 21, pp. 286-288.


6 Telephone Interview with Dr. G. Wallace Kernodle, Burlington, North Carolina, 28 July 1986; and Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: North Carolina-Alamance County.


8 Alamance County Index to Marriages, n.d.

9 The deed was not recorded until 1909. Alamance County Register of Deeds, Volume 37, p. 278.

10 Burlington Daily-Times News (North Carolina) 7 September 1944, p. 6; Euliss, Alamance County, pp. 342-343; and Interview with Snuggs.

11 Ibid.
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14Interview with Snuggs; and Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900, North Carolina-Alamance County; and "Pictorial Directory of the Bellemont-United Methodist Church, Burlington, North Carolina" (Private Publication, n.d.) no page number; Alamance County Index to Marriages, n.d.; and Euliss, Alamance County, pp. 327, 343.

15Euliss, Alamance County, pp. 327, 343.

16The cost of a house call, including the medicine, ranged from $2.00 to $3.00. Dr. Pickett also accepted other items such as food and even a sewing machine in lieu of a cash payment. Euliss, Alamance County, pp. 342-343; and Interview with Snuggs.


18Many of the victims in Alamance and throughout the nation died of complications, such as pneumonia. Alamance County Record of Vital Statistics, 1918 Death, Book 6; Gleaner, 7 October 1918; and Dictionary of American History, p. 416.

19Gleaner, 10 November 1904, p. 2.

20Gleaner, 12 July 1906, p. 2; Gleaner, 20 September 1906, p. 2; and Gleaner, 15 November 1906, p. 2.


23Gleaner, 15 November 1918, p. 2 and Gleaner, 14 November 1920, p. 2.


25Graham (North Carolina) Alamance County Board of Education, Minutes 1925-1932, meetings of 7 February 1927, 7 March 1927, 7 October 1927, 2 April 1928, 6 May 1929, 24 April 1931, 16 April 1932; and Minutes 1932-1945, meetings of 3 April 1934, 7 May 1945.

26Interview with Pickett; and Thirteenth Census.

27Alamance County Register of Deeds, Volume 51, p. 101; and Volume 60, p. 25.

28Alamance County Register of Deeds, Wills, Book 8, pp. 467-468.

29Interview with Snuggs.

30Euliss, Alamance County, p. 327, 343; and Interview with Snuggs.

31Interview with Snuggs.

32Ibid.

33Alamance County Register of Deeds, Volume 220, p. 348.

34Interview with Snuggs.

35Alamance County Register of Deeds, Volume 475, p. 684; and Interview with Watson.

36Most of the land has been divided among Dr. Pickett's descendants. Euliss, Alamance County, p. 344; and Interview with Watson.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Alamance County Register of Deeds, Index to Marriages, n.d.

Alamance County Register of Deeds, Various Volumes.

Alamance County Register of Deeds, Deed of Trust, Volume 21.

Alamance County Register of Deeds, Wills, Volume 8.


Graham (North Carolina) Alamance Gleaner, 10 November 1904; 12 July, 20 September, 15 November 1906; 15 November 1908; 7 October, 31 October, 15 November 1918; 14 November 1920.


North Carolina. An Act To Provide for the Care of Mental Defectives of the State. Public Laws and Resolutions. (1907).

North Carolina General Assembly House. Report On An Act to Provide for the Care of Mental Defectives of the State. HB 15, 1907 Session.

North Carolina General Assembly House. An Act to Promote the Cause of Education in the Counties of Alamance and Polk, HB 113, 1907 Session.


Secondary Sources:


10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property: 4.4 acres

Quadrangle name: Burlington

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Alamance County Tax Map, Sheet Number 2-13, Block 28

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Patricia S. Dickinson, Consultant; Shelia Bumgarner, Researcher

organization

street & number: Rt. 2, Box 1034

telephone: (919) 732-5439

city or town: Hillsborough

state: North Carolina

code: 27278

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national: ___

state: ___

local: XX

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature: William J. Peck

date: Jan. 21, 1987

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration