

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Stagg House

and/or common Dr. Bradley House

2. Location

street & number 317 North Park Avenue

not for publication

city, town Burlington

vicinity of

state North Carolina

code

37

county Alamance

code 01

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Clara Holt Mills

street & number Route 8, Box 50

city, town Burlington

vicinity of

state North Carolina 27215

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alamance County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Graham

state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Architectural Inventory of Burlington has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981-82 federal state county local

depository for survey records N.C. Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh

state North Carolina

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Stag House is a frame, T-shaped two-story dwelling with a large wraparound porch. Numerous one-story wings appear to have been built in the late nineteenth century, after the original construction between 1857 and 1859. Most, if not all, of the original decoration survives. In combination with the asymmetrical configuration of the house, this fanciful turned and sawn millwork decoration renders the Stag House a fine example of the picturesque bracketed cottage. It is likely that the house originally was composed of the present two-story core, which is very similar in its "T" form and shallow cross-gable roof to "a small villa" featured in Samuel Sloan's The Model Architect published in 1852. There are also certain similarities in some of the detailing and the emphasis on the windows of the lower main facade. In addition to the principal gables above the main and rear elevations, however, the east elevation is surmounted by a pair of gables rather than a third, single gable seen in Sloan's plate. A wide, rectangular chimney projects from the center of the roof. The overhang of the roof, with its simple cornices, is quite deep. The front and rear gables feature large curved brackets with drop pendants against plain frieze boards. The paired gables above the east side feature bargeboards in a circle and scroll motif with a trefoil pendant at the peak.

The focal point of the house is the first-story main facade of the two-story central portion. Here, a rectangular projecting bay is filled with tall and narrow windows with four-over-four double-hung sashes--three on the front of the bay and one in each of its sides. Beneath each of these windows there is a panelled spandrel. Just west of this bay and slightly recessed, the main entrance is surrounded by multi-paned sidelights and a transom in a segmental arch. All of the original second-story windows are six-over-six double-hung sashes with shoulder architrave trim.

The deep wraparound porch is supported by chamfered box posts with molded bases and capitals. The balustrade has a simple railing and turned balusters. A scalloped bargeboard pierced with small circles trims the overhanging porch roof. The porch ceiling is covered with wide beaded boards and the floor has been replaced with a cement slab.

Although it is evident that the one-story wings and two-story addition were constructed at various times, it appears that most of this construction occurred in the late nineteenth century. The most obvious additions are the enclosure of the porch at its west corner and the rear of the east side. The one-story wing projecting from the west elevation and originally terminating in a three-sided bay is somewhat problematic: The chimney projecting from its interior wall and ascending along the second-story west elevation to pierce the deep overhang is ornamented with a recessed triangular-beaded panel in the first story only and corbelling at its cap. The treatment of this chimney, which serves a fireplace in the one-story wing in question, suggests that the wing is original or a very early addition. A smaller one-story, gable-roofed wing projecting from the three-sided bay definitely is a later addition.

A much larger, one-story hip-roofed wing wraps around the northwest and northeast elevations of the house with a very large chimney projecting from the center of its roof. The posts of its engaged porch, similar to but simpler than the front porch posts, indicate that this latter one-story also was built not too long after the original construction, perhaps to accommodate Francis Asbury Stagg's growing family. This wing partially envelops a two-story shed-roofed addition with a lozenge-shaped window in its west elevation. An exterior metal staircase leads to a second-story entrance in this shed-roofed wing.

All of the roofs are covered with standing raised seam tin. All three brick chimneys have been sheathed with cement.

If the house was indeed constructed as two stories without the one-story west wing, it originally had a side hall plan. Today, with this wing, the house has a center hall plan on the first story. Although some of the plaster walls have been covered with modern panelling, all of the original doors and molding, as well as the staircase, survive intact. The interior doors are four-panel--two tall and narrow panels above two shorter narrow panels--with three-

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part architrave surrounds. The baseboards are plain. The staircase rises along the west wall of the center, making a ninety-degree turn with three angled steps about half-way up; after five more steps to a landing, the staircase makes another ninety-degree turn and has two more steps to the second floor. The rounded handrail gracefully curves through all these turns. The balusters are turned and the tapered octagonal newel post has bulbous turned elements at its top and bottom. Beneath the staircase is a closet with two tall and narrow panels in its door.

A small one-story gable-roofed frame storage building stands to the rear of the house.

Although the surrounding property and the house itself have been considerably altered, the integrity of the Stagg House remains basically intact. The site has been somewhat compromised by road construction, additions have been built, and the house has been divided into rental apartments, yet the initial appearance of the little villa remains clear.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1857-59 **Builder/Architect** George H. Dudley and William Ashley

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Stagg House is important both for its architecture as well as its historical associations. This intact (though added to) dwelling is Burlington's only surviving example of the city's two extant antebellum residences with direct ties to the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCRR), only the Stagg House retains its original character. The fancifully embellished house is associated first with Cyrus P. Mendenhall and then Francis Asbury Stagg, two secretary treasurers of the NCRR who also gained prominence outside of Company Shops, later Burlington. Subsequent owners included a textile manufacturer, a grocer and a pharmacist, all well known local businessmen.

Criteria Assessment

- A. The Stagg House is one of only two surviving antebellum residences built at Company Shops by the North Carolina Railroad, which provided housing for all of its employees working in its maintenance shops there.
- B. The Stagg House was built for C. P. Mendenhall, Secretary and Treasurer of the North Carolina Railroad from 1850 to 1859. Its subsequent occupant, and owner until 1908, was Francis Asbury Stagg, a later secretary and treasurer of the NCRR for many years.
- C. The Stagg House is a fine example of the picturesque bracketed cottage building type popularized by such architects as A.J. Davis and A.J. Downing, and the only surviving example of the type in Burlington.
- D. The Stagg House site may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest deed for the Stagg House, recorded in 1869 when the North Carolina Railroad Company sold it to Francis Asbury Stagg, describes the property as "... a certain lot on ground in the village of Company Shops, adjoining the lot whereon the church recently built and known as Union Church is located, and on the South by said company's Railroad"; the house is cited as "... on the lot whereon the said F.A. Stagg now resides and upon which one C.P. Mendenhall erected the buildings."¹ Cyrus P. Mendenhall resigned as secretary and treasurer of the NCRR in March, 1859, after nine years of service to the company.² Born in 1817 in Jamestown, N.C., Mendenhall had established a home in Greensboro in 1856, to which he apparently returned upon resigning from his position with the NCRR. In 1874, he became Greensboro's sixth mayor.³

The exact date and circumstances of construction of the Stagg House have not been positively determined. Prior to the Civil War, contractors George A. Dudley and William Ashley of Raleigh and the contracting firm of Huston and McKnight of Greensboro erected all of the NCRR's buildings at Company Shops; it appears that Dudley and Ashley built all of the NCRR's dwellings.⁴ According to the president of the NCRR, "... the plans and estimates of every building at the company shops, except those for the hotel and master of the road ... were prepared under the eye of the chief engineer, Col. Gwynne, and adopted."⁵ Between 1856 and 1858, the NCRR built approximately twenty residences at Company Shops. By July, 1857, "8 dwellings for Mechanics" and "8 wooden houses for men" had been completed, and it was recommended that "the dwellings for Officers of the Road should be further completed by the erection of one for the General Superintendent and one for the Master of the Road..."⁶ These latter two houses, and perhaps two others, were completed in the second half of 1858, after a July, 1858, resolution by the NCRR Board of Directors "that there be no further erection of buildings at the Shop, without first obtaining the approbation of the Stockholders."⁷ A January, 1859, report by the president of the NCRR lists "18 dwellings for Mechanics," "2 dwellings for Section Hands," and "4 Principal Dwellings."⁸ It is possible that the NCRR permitted C.P. Mendenhall to build his own house on railroad property, as the company allowed two other private individuals, James G. Moore and John M. Worth, to do prior to 1860.⁹ Considering that Mendenhall was a company executive, however, it appears more likely that the house is one of the "4 Principal Dwellings" built by the NCRR between 1857 and 1859.

The chief engineer's preparation of the house plans, cited by the president of the NCRR, may be a reference to the engineer's selection of plans from a pattern book rather than his actual execution of the designs. Although there were relatively few trained architects in the nineteenth century, particularly in rural areas, many of them, especially after 1830, presented their designs in published pattern books to which local builders desiring fashionable structures could turn for guidance.

Popular taste in some parts of the South was turning away from classical architecture to other revival and eclectic styles by the late 1840s. In the 1840s and 1850s, the "picturesque bracketed cottage" was popularized through publications by Alexander Jackson Davis and A.J. Downing. Typically, numerous gables, a commodious porch, ornamental chimney stacks, decoratively sawn bargeboard, and of course brackets in the eaves lent the cottage its picturesque quality and helped to integrate it into the landscape.¹⁰ Frequently, a simple asymmetrical form characterized the picturesque cottage, especially larger examples of the type. The spacious and elaborately appointed versions of the picturesque cottage constructed for well-to-do residents often were termed "villas."

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By the late 1840s, Davis and Downing's publications were known in Alamance County. In 1849, pioneer textile manufacturer E.M. Holt built Locust Grove, several miles south of Company Shops, from plans by Davis that were published in the January 1849 issue of Downing's popular journal, The Horticulturalist. This "small villa" has been cited by Carl Lounsbury as "The first clearcut example [in Alamance County] of popular architectural tastes supplanting the vernacular tradition" and a precursor of "similar developments in the last half of the nineteenth century."¹¹ In the pitch of the gables, bracketed eaves, panelled chimney stacks, porch posts, and groupings of tall and narrow windows with panelled spandrels, the Stagg House recalls the Davis design. By the 1850s, there were pattern books of cottages and villas by many other architects in wide circulation. One of these, The Model Architect by Samuel Sloan, contains a design for "a small villa," that is similar in form and decoration to the Stagg House.¹² Either of these, or any one of the numerous other designs readily available, may have been the inspiration or direct source for the Stagg House.

Burlington's example of the bracketed cottage is best known for its occupancy by Francis Asbury Stagg. The son and nephew, respectively, of prominent Orange County residents James Stagg and Washington Duke, Stagg moved to Company Shops/Burlington with his family in late 1864 or early 1865.¹³ He was already living in the house built for Mendenhall when he purchased it from the NCRR, and it is likely that he had been living in it since moving to Company Shops.¹⁴ Stagg's association with the NCRR went beyond his employment: His wife's brother was Dr. Bartlett Durham, whose land sold to the NCRR for a station developed into the city of Durham. Stagg's son, James Edward Stagg, in 1895 began an active involvement with the Southern Railway, formed in the early 1890s from a number of smaller roads, including the Richmond and Danville Railroad which had begun leaving the NCRR line in 1871.¹⁵ During his residence in Company Shops, F.A. Stagg took part in community affairs, including service on the committee that supervised construction of a combination church and school in 1865.¹⁶ In the 1880s, after the Richmond and Danville Railroad took over the operation of the NCRR's lines, Stagg returned to Durham, but retained ownership of his house until 1908.¹⁷

A succession of individuals and institutions owned the Stagg House over the next five decades. Stagg sold his house to Burlington textile executive Lynn B. Williamson, who immediately sold it to Alamance Insurance and Real Estate Company.¹⁸ In 1913, J.O. Guthrie sold the house for \$4500 to J.M. Tisdale, a grocer who had been residing in Burlington for some twenty years.¹⁹ Nothing of significance is known about the Tisdales, although it may be assumed that during their lengthy residency they executed some alterations to the house. After Tisdale's death in 1941, his daughter and her husband, Jesse C. Bradley, a local pharmacist, remained in the Stagg House until the widowed Mrs. Bradley sold the house in 1959.²⁰ Over the years, more additions were made to the house. Divided into rental apartments, the house has had numerous owners since 1959.

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often evident only in the archeological record. Therefore, archeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time, no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probably that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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Notes

(Much of the data on this building was compiled by Allison Harris, who conducted the architectural inventory of Burlington.)

1 Alamance County Registry of Deeds (ACRD), Deed Book 4, Page 532.

2 "Ninth Annual Report of the Committee of Finance of the North-Carolina Railroad Company to the General Meeting of Stockholders," Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the North-Carolina Rail Road Company, held at Greensboro, 14th and 15th of July, 1859, p. 17.

3 "Greensboro's Mayors: Cyrus P. Mendenhall....," Greensboro Daily News, 16 November 1946.

4 "Report of the Joint Select Committee on the North Carolina Railroad," Document No. 71, North Carolina Legislature, Session 1858-9, p. 17.

5 "Communication from the President of the North Carolina Railroad, in reply to the Report of the Chairman of the Joint Committee on the North Carolina Railroad," Document No. 71, North Carolina Legislature, Session 1858-9, p. 15.

6 "President's Report," Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the North-Carolina Rail Road Company, held at Salisbury on July 9, 1857, pp. 7 and 9.

7 Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the North-Carolina Rail Road Company, held at Hillsboro' on July 8, 1858, p. 7.

8 "Report of the President of the North Carolina Rail Road to the Governor of the State," Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the North Carolina Rail Road Company, held in Salisbury, January 20, 1859.

9 Durwood T. Stokes, Company Shops: The Town Built by a Railroad, (Winston-Salem, John F. Blair, 1981), p. 71.

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10

William H. Pierson, Jr., Technology and the Picturesque, The Corporate and Early Gothic Styles, Vol. 2, Part 1 of American Buildings and their Architects (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1980), p. 390.

11

Carl Lounsbury, Alamance County Architectural Heritage, (Graham, N.C.: Alamance County Historical Properties Commission, 1980), pp. 33-34.

12

Samuel Sloan, The Model Architect, (Philadelphia: E.S. Jones and Co., 1852), pp. 67-69.

13

Samuel A. Ashe, editor, Biographical History of North Carolina, Vol. VIII (Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1917), p. 495.

14

Alamance County Registry of Deeds, Deed Book 4, Page 532

15

Ashe, p. 495.

16

Stokes, P. 93.

17

Ibid, p. 122.

18

ACRD, Deed Book 35, Pages 325 and 328. Notation on back of photo of Stagg House in possession of W.T. Lasley, Burlington.

19

ACRD, Deed Book 50, Page 458; Burlington City Directories. Lasley photo.

20

ACRD, Deed Book 275, Page 556.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Burlington, N.C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	6	4	0	6	4	0	3	9	9	5	7	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 89, Lot 6, Burlington Tax Maps, Map #26

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Claudia P. Roberts

organization Consultant to the City of Burlington

date March 15, 1983

street & number 422 South Lexington Avenue

telephone (919) 227-3603 Ext. 79

city or town Burlington

state North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 S. Price, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date November 16, 1983

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

