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 Andrew Carpenter House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number North Side SR 1820

city, town

state N. C. code 037 county Gaston code 071

3. Classification

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4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Gerald W. Deal

street & number 519 Eastwood Drive

city, town Gastonia vicinity of Gaston County

state N. C. 28052 code 071

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Register of Deeds

street & number Gaston County Courthouse

city, town Gastonia

state N. C. 28052

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

An Inventory of Historic and Architectural Resources of Gaston County, North Carolina
title has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1979–1981

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

city, town 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh

state N. C. 27611
The Andrew Carpenter House, standing in splendid isolation on the north side of SR 1820 on a knoll overlooking Leeper's Creek, is a deteriorating yet handsome example of a Federal plantation house. The house, constructed in 1836-1837, is a two-story, five bay double-pile frame structure with a later one-story ell at the east rear. The foundation wall of the original portion of the house rises from the ground approximately three feet. Five courses of brick, laid in Flemish bond, rest on a base of stone. Small wood ventilation grates with alternating iron and wood verticals are found on all sides of the house at the top of the foundation walls. The rear ell rests on stuccoed brick piers. The house is covered with weatherboards framed at the corners by narrow cornerboards. The Flush eaves of the house are ornamented with molded rake boards. A molded box cornice carries across the front and rear elevations. The house's roof is covered with sheet tin while the porch is covered with asbestos shingles.

A one-story, three-bay porch with a hipped roof is the main element on the south front elevation. The porch appears to reproduce the form of the original porch and rests on tall brick piers. The porch columns and balusters are extremely plain and square-in-shape. The stair has crude handrails and no risers. On the first floor the door occupies the central bay but it is slightly to the right (east) of center. The entrance consists of a single glass paneled door—appearing to date from the 1920s—below a four-light transom which also appears to be a replacement of a similar original transom. The unit is enframed by a plain board surround.

The second floor of the south facade has five windows spaced above the lower five bays. Window openings on both floors contain four-over-four sash which were installed in this century to replace the original nine-over-nine and six-over-nine sash. Many, if not all, of the original sash units are stored in the loft of the granary. The windows are enframed by three-part molded surrounds. Windows on the first floor have molded flat panel blinds with a three-part division which appear to be original to the house. These have been removed for safe-keeping. There is no evidence that blinds were ever installed on the second story windows.

Two of the house's three original chimneys remain, one on each gable end of the house. Both are exterior, single shoulder chimneys. The chimney on the east side is made of brick laid up in Flemish bond with glazed headers. The surviving chimney on the west elevation—it and its original companion chimney are flanked by window openings on each level—has been stuccoed, but evidence of the Flemish bond brickwork can be seen in places where the stucco has spalled. The location of the third chimney is easily seen. The space it occupied in the house's west wall was simply framed in and covered with weatherboards leaving the complete outline of the chimney. A modern flue stack for the oil-fired heaters' was added at the northwest corner of the (now enclosed) rear hipped roof porch.

The one-story rear ell is in poor condition and the interior finish is of a much cruder construction than either its exterior or the main block. It appears that the shell of the ell was finished sometime in the antebellum period—it has simple Greek Revival moldings—whereas the interior was not sheathed until later in the nineteenth century. The interior of the ell has a two-room plan. The exterior walls are sheathed with random horizontal boards while the partition is made of vertical boards. An exterior chimney on the north gable end has long since fallen away leaving a gaping hole in the wall. Remnants of the chimney's stone foundation remain in place. The roof is
covered with sheet tin and engages a shed porch along its west elevation which connects to the aforementioned and earlier hipped roof porch. The porch is supported by turned posts not original to this house. There are two window openings on the east elevation and a third opening on the west wall which contain nine-over-nine sash. A small window opening near the north end of the ell's west wall has no sash but a single leaf board and batten blind on both the exterior and interior. The doors in the ell are of board and batten construction. (The ell has deteriorated beyond the point of salvage and will be taken down and replaced when the house is restored.)

The original interior plan of the first story provided four rooms. The front door opens into the parlor in the southeast corner of the house. Excepting the removal of the mantels in the northwest corner room on the first and second stories, the vernacular federal interior wood work appears to be intact. As the plastered walls cracked, they were covered with a manufactured material similar to sheetrock. The parlor, the largest room in the house, retains a flat molded paneled wainscot below a molded chair rail continuous with the window sills. The mantel—now removed for safe-keeping—is comprised of fluted engaged columns which support a flat paneled frieze with triglyph-like elements above the engaged columns and in a center panel. The projecting shelf is molded. The original floors in this and all the first floor rooms have been covered over with narrow oak flooring. All the original interior doors have six molded flat panels. Some of the hardware on the doors has been replaced.

The west side of the house contains two communicating rooms of near equal size. The southwest room contains its original fireplace and mantel similar in design, though far simpler in execution, to the parlor mantel. Here, simply molded pilasters support an entablature including a wide paneled frieze and minimally molded shelf. The molded chair rail remains in place; however, there is no wainscot and it is not known for certain that there ever was a paneled wainscot. The wall above and below the chair rail is covered with artificial, manufactured sheathing. Apparently in the 1920s or 1930s the aforementioned chimney on the west elevation was taken down and the fireplaces and mantels removed from the northwest room and its pendant above. Both are stored in the loft of the granary. It is also possible that a chair rail was removed from the room at the same time it was adapted for use as the kitchen. Whatever, the actual history of the room's finish, the three part molded window and door surrounds and the six-panel doors remain intact. Rather curiously the nine-over-nine sash in the window opening on the north wall was left undisturbed when, it can be assumed, the remainder of the sash were replaced by the present four-over-four sash. Perhaps it was because the porch on this wall was enclosed at this time.

A door in the east wall of this room leads into a stair hall in the northeast corner of the house—behind the parlor. Although the stair hall was partitioned in half—in the 1920s to enclose a bathroom—it would appear from the fabric available to view that the first run of the stair—rising to the east along the hall's north wall was open while the second run of steps rising from the house's northeast corner to the south along the east wall was enclosed by molded panels. The stair hall retains its molded chair rail and flat paneled wainscot; however, only the chair rail continues along the rise of the stairs to the second story where it ends. There is a diminutive six-panel door opening into the closet under the stair. A door in the hall's north wall—directly opposite the door into the parlor—opens on to the porch while a second
The stairs rise to a large hall on the second floor which contains three large bedrooms and a smaller one. The second floor interior finish is completely intact—except the aforementioned mantel stored and in good condition in the granary—including the original five inch wide pine flooring. Molded chair rails, three-part molded surrounds, and six-paneled doors survive in place. There is a pair of bedrooms at the west end of the second floor repeating the plan on the first story; however, because of the turn of the stair and its rise the bedroom above the parlor is but twelve feet deep (from the front of the house) whereas the parlor below is twenty-one feet deep. The second floor hall occupies the space behind this bedroom while the fourth—and smaller—bedroom occupies most of the space above the stair hall. The mantels in the two front (south)bedrooms are identical and have wide three-part molded architraves around the fire openings supporting a wide frieze and a shallow molded shelf. The fourth bedroom is accessible from the hall and also communicates through a twentieth century door—with the northwest bedroom. The stairs to the attic are enclosed in its northeast corner.

The attic is partially floored with wide planks and has a single window opening containing four-over-four sash at both the east and west gable ends.

The mortise and tenon construction of the house is easily seen in the attic. The timbers are hand hewn and numbered sequentially in Roman numerals, I through XII. The numerals are found at both ends of the joists, on the plates, the summer beam, rafters, collar, and ridge pole. Nail holes in the roofing strips indicate that the roof has been replaced at least once. The roof is in generally poor condition but some repairs have been made recently to minimize any further damage by weather.

There are three surviving and deteriorated early-twentieth century frame outbuildings associated with the house and included in this nomination. The well house, a rectangular one-story weatherboarded structure, is located several yards northeast of the northeast corner of the ell. The east end of the well house is enclosed and weatherboarded where-as the west end is open and serves as a shed over the well. A door in its south elevation opens into the east end. The building is covered with asbestos shingles. The barn and granary are located nearly due south of the house on the south side of SR 1820. The barn, the larger of the two, is a large rectangular weatherboarded frame structure with the ridgeline of its gabled roof on a near north-south axis. There are ventilated openings parallel to and just under the eaves of the roof. A passage carries through the center of the building with stables to either side and a loft above. The granary/crib stands to the west of the barn and is also a rectangular weatherboarded frame building covered with a gabled roof. There are two openings on the north elevation, one into the granary on the west side of the building and a second door into the crib along its east side. The sheet tin covered gable roof continues on the east elevation to engage a shed. There is a shorter—more recent—shed along the granary's west elevation.
8. Significance

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Specific dates | None | Builder/Architect | Unknown |

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Andrew Carpenter House, sited on a knoll overlooking the bottomlands of Leeper's Creek possesses local architectural and historical significance. The two-story with attic Federal plantation seat, erected in 1836-1837, is one of the oldest houses in Gaston County and represents the lives and activities of a small society of planters on the waters of the Catawba River in Lincoln County and after 1846, Gaston County. Although the house survives in a deteriorated condition, the vernacular—but well crafted—Federal fabric of the house is sound and survives awaiting restoration. It is one of the first generation of fine houses erected in the area in the development period after settlement. The house was erected for and remained the residence of Andrew Carpenter, a planter of substantial means until his death in 1879. The house and its lands have remained in the Carpenter family to the present though it ceased being a family residence many years past.

Criteria Assessment:

A. The Andrew Carpenter House is associated with the development of a small planter society in Lincoln County on the waters of the Catawba River which would largely disappear in the years following the Civil War when the energies of its sons would turn to the city, industry, and the learned professions.

B. Having been built for Andrew Carpenter in 1836-1837 the house is the oldest surviving house in Gaston County associated with the Carpenter family and its descendants. The house served for just over forty years as the residence of Carpenter, a planter of modest yet comfortable means.

C. Although deteriorated, the Andrew Carpenter House embodies the distinctive characteristics of vernacular Federal domestic architecture of its region. The Flemish bond brick work and interior finish of the house are particularly noteworthy as is the character and intactness of the first-story's four room plan.
On April 19, 1831, Andrew Carpenter married Anna Sophia Smith. He was the son of Henry and Frances (Laymen) Carpenter. Andrew Carpenter had been born and raised near Clark's Creek in present Lincoln County, North Carolina. Henry Carpenter had accumulated a significant amount of wealth and provided a good education for his children. Anna Sophia Smith was the daughter of David and Elizabeth (Arndt) Smith. David Smith resided between Lincoln and Stanley in present Lincoln County. He had constructed a large brick home which he called Magnolia Grove. His home is restored and still stands in very good condition.¹

On October 5, 1831, Henry Carpenter deeded 312 acres of land on Maiden Creek to his son Andrew Carpenter. Andrew and his new bride made their first home on this Maiden Creek property.² Probably because of a desire to get closer to the parents and relatives of his wife, on July 31, 1835, Andrew Carpenter purchased 290 acres of land on Leeper's Creek from Jacob Forney. On this property he planned to construct a respectable home for his wife and family. Work was begun and the house of Andrew Carpenter was completed by the early months of the following year. In 1836 he was listed as a resident of Captain James Rutledge's District.³

The new house was a large structure and served as the center of his spacious plantation. The home itself would soon serve to make money for the family. Andrew Carpenter, like his father, invested in slaves which furnished labor on the plantation. On March 17, 1838, Andrew, already the owner of a male slave, purchased one Negro girl named Milly, about 16 years old, and her child of about four months, from Catherine Warlick. He paid $615 for both. By 1840, the census listed Andrew Carpenter with five slaves. The number continued to increase so that in 1850 he was the owner of thirteen slaves.⁴ The slaves labored in the fields but some also served in the Carpenter home.

The location of the Andrew Carpenter house was very important economically to the family. It was situated on the major road between Charlotte and Lincolnton. Stage coaches which ran regularly along this road found that the Carpenter house made an excellent stop. Passengers could spend the night in the spacious house, could refresh themselves, and could find food and drink readily available. The Carpenter family and their servants busied themselves treating their guests. Andrew Carpenter called his successful stagecoach stop Happy Home.⁵

The carpernter lifestyle depended upon slavery which was the basis of the general economy of the South and which formed the prevalent Southern attitudes concerning the plantation system. Thus, it was logical that Andrew and his family supported the Confederate war effort. His three eldest sons served in the Confederate Army. On May 1, 1861, John A. Carpenter enlisted in Company M, 16th N.C. Regiment. He served as a color bearer, was wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville, and was killed at the Battle of the Wilderness. On March 1, 1862, Benjamin Franklin Carpenter enlisted in Company E, 34th N. C. Regiment. He was promoted to First Sergeant. In July 1862, Perry D. Carpenter enlisted in the same company as his brother Benjamin Franklin. He was promoted through
the ranks to First Lieutenant. On May 3, 1863, Perry D. was killed at the Battle of Chancellorsville. Three sons had entered the Civil War, but only one survived to return home.

The Civil War brought significant changes to the slave-owners of the South. Andrew Carpenter's slaves, like all others, were freed. Their freedom meant an investment loss for Andrew and his family. Yet, the innovative southern farmer apparently found ways to keep his labor force. Andrew continued to grow corn, wheat, and cotton on his farm. He also raised cattle, hogs, and sheep. By the turn of the century Andrew, or other members of his family, had set aside 3½ acres of the plantation for the "Luckey School", a local Negro school. It is assumed that some of Andrew Carpenter's former slaves remained on his farm to work as sharecroppers. The creation of the "Luckey School" filled the Negroes' desire for education.

On December 28, 1879, Andrew Carpenter died in Gaston County. His sons Benjamin Franklin and Albert Wade Carpenter served as executors of his estate. Albert Wade, the youngest child, inherited the homestead tract of 300 acres which included Happy Home. His mother Anna Sophia Carpenter continued to reside in the old house with the family of Albert Wade Carpenter. On September 28, 1883, Albert Wade wrote his will. He willed his 300 acre "Home place" to his only son Andrew Franklin Carpenter. At that time Andrew Franklin was a minor, as were his sisters. On February 26, 1884, Albert Wade Carpenter died.

Albert Wade and the Carpenter family had considered education to be of utmost importance. His father, Andrew Carpenter, had been well educated and had amassed a wide array of books which served to improve the education of his children. On January 13, 1885, Anna Sophia Carpenter, Andrew's widow, wrote her will. She divided her personal property into thirds among her two living children (Benjamin Franklin Carpenter and Martha E. F. Duncan) and the children of Albert Wade Carpenter, her deceased son. She also made special provision that $100. should be used "to school" her grandson, Andrew Franklin Carpenter.

Andrew Carpenter's grandchildren and great grandchildren found a lifestyle and society which differed greatly from that experienced by Andrew. The plantation system had died. They found that agriculture did not offer the financial rewards it had offered in the past. John Carpenter, son of Benjamin Franklin Carpenter, became a lawyer and served as Solicitor (District Attorney) for Gaston County. His brother Miles A. Carpenter served as Gaston County Register of Deeds 1899-1905, and brother Oscar B. Carpenter served in the same capacity 1919-1921.

Andrew Franklin Carpenter became involved in other business interests and was forced to mortgage the Andrew Carpenter house. On March 21, 1916, he and his wife deeded Happy Home and its 300 acre tract to Frank L. and M. A. Carpenter, his first cousins and sons of Benjamin Franklin Carpenter. On September 12, 1919, Frank L. Carpenter died. His minor heirs retained ownership of the homeplace.
On April 1, 1938, Robert Carpenter, Frank L. Carpenter, Ben Carpenter, and Bernice H. Carpenter (the children of Frank L. Carpenter) deeded the Andrew Carpenter home to Lewis B. Carpenter, their brother.

While the ownership of the home has been maintained within the Carpenter family, time has taken its toll. Tenants have resided in the home in recent years, and it has fallen into disrepair. Lewis B. Carpenter and his wife have died, and the home and property is owned by the heirs.

The Andrew Carpenter House typifies the historical pattern of many antebellum plantation houses in North Carolina and throughout the South. With the passage of the Old South, the plantations were broken up and once vast fields gave way to smaller, individual farms that surrounded the old manor houses like patchwork quilts. Tenants and sharecroppers competed with the former planters for a share of the land. Changing economic conditions frequently forced former planters to leave their family homes, thus dooming them often to eventual destruction. The Andrew Carpenter House closely followed this typical historical pattern but, fortunately, efforts are now being made to prevent it from meeting the fate of most of its contemporaries.

In 1981 the Preservation Fund of North Carolina, Inc. became interested in preserving this structure. The Gaston County Historic Properties Commission began research on the Andrew Carpenter home in 1981. The goals of both organizations are to preserve the home by locating a buyer who is willing to invest in history.
FOOTNOTES


Robert C. Carpenter, Carpenters A Plenty, (to be released for publication by Christmas 1982.)

2 Lincoln County Deed Book 34, p. 246, Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Courthouse, Lincolnton, N. C., hereafter cited as L.C.D.B.

3 L.C.D.B. 38, p. 235; "Capt. James Rutledges Dist. 1836", Lincoln County Tax Lists, list Andrew Carpenter 582 acres, 1500 valuation, 1 white poll, 1 black poll. "Siford Company 1843", lists 283 acres, 2000 valuation, 1 white poll, 2 black polls. Both records are filed under tax lists, Lincoln County Collection, Archives and History, Raleigh, N. C.


7 Inventory and Sale list of the personal property of A. Carpenter which came "into the hands of B. F. Carpenter & A. W. Carpenter Administrators, March 6, 1880". Estate Papers for Andrew Carpenter 1879, Gaston County Collection, Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.; Gaston County Deed Book 129, p. 82-85, Register of Deeds, Gaston County Courthouse, Gastonia, N.C., hereafter cited as G.C.D.B. See also G.C.D.B. 364, p. 545; and D.C. 348, p. 18.
Andrew Carpenter is buried at Christ's Lutheran Church, Stanley, N.C. Estate Papers for Andrew Carpenter 1879, Gaston County Collection, Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C., furnish details of the legal transactions concerning the estate of Andrew Carpenter after his decease. The final settlement listed $9,987.89 which was to be "divided equally among" the four heirs: A.S. Carpenter, widow; B. F. Carpenter, son; A. W. Carpenter, son; Martha E.F. Duncan, daughter.

Gaston County Will Book 2, p. 222, Clerk of Court, Gaston County Courthouse, Gastonia, N.C., hereafter cited as G.C.W.B. His will named L.A. Carpenter, his widow, and B.F. Carpenter, his brother, executors of the will. He listed his son Andrew Franklin and daughters Eva and Ella Carpenter. Albert Wade Carpenter is buried at Christ's Lutheran Church, Stanley, N.C.

"Inventory and Sale list of the personal property of A. Carpenter which came into the hands of B. F. Carpenter & A. W. Carpenter Administrators, March 6, 1880." Estate Papers for Andrew Carpenter, Gaston County Collection, Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C. It listed 30 books including history books, and algebra book, law books, and others.

Anna Sophia Carpenter did not die until May 18, 1899, and was buried at Christ's Lutheran Church, Stanley, N.C.


9. Major Bibliographical References


Gaston County Will Book 2. Gaston County Courthouse, Gastonia, N.C.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 13.04 acres

Quadrangle name Lowesville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

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Verbal boundary description and justification The tract being nominated includes the site of the Andrew Carpenter House and its three surviving outbuildings on the immediate house grounds. See attached plat of the property.

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

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11. Form Prepared By

Architectural description prepared by Alan Waufle and Davyd Foard Hood (Staff); Statement of name/title significance and criteria assessment written by Davyd Foard Hood; historical research by Robert C. Carpenter

organization N. C. Division of Archives and History

date

street & number 109 E. Jones Street

telephone 733-6545

city or town Raleigh

state N. C.

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

For NPS use only

Keeper of the National Register

Chief of Registration
Andrew Carpenter House
Lucia vic.
Lowesville Quadrangle
Quadrangle Scale: 1:24000
13.04 acres
UTM References: Zone 17
Point A
Easting: 495210
Northing: 3916100
Point B
Easting: 495420
Northing: 3916045
Point C
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