1. Name of Property
   historic name Bell-Sherrod House
   other names/site number HX 409

2. Location
   street & number 207 South-East Railroad Street N/A not for publication
   city, town Enfield N/A vicinity
   state North Carolina code NC county Halifax code 083 zip code 27823

3. Classification
   Ownership of Property Category of Property Number of Resources within Property
   X private X building(s) Contributing Noncontributing
   public-local site 1 buildings
   public-State structure sites
   public-Federal object structures
   Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0
   Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
   X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
   National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In
   my opinion, the property does not meet the National Register criteria. X See continuation sheet.
   Signature of certifying official
   State Historic Preservation Officer State or Federal agency and bureau
   Date
   9 Sep 85

5. National Park Service Certification
   I, hereby, certify that this property is:
   X entered in the National Register. X See continuation sheet.
   X determined eligible for the National Register. X See continuation sheet.
   X determined not eligible for the National Register.
   X removed from the National Register.
   X other, (explain:)

   Signature of the Keeper
   Date of Action
The Bell-Sherrod House is situated in the 200 block of south-east Railroad Street in the Town of Enfield. The property consists of one acre, bounded by Railroad Street and Llewellyn Avenue at the front and back respectively, and by adjoining lots on either side. Originally comprised of 6½ acres, the property was subdivided in the 1920s; the house remained centrally located on the surviving one acre. The house is a substantial and intact example of the mid-19th century Greek Revival house, though Italianate features are found on the front porch. A small grove of mature magnolias and oaks line the circular drive, creating an impressive visual entrance.

Stately and impressive in form and size, the Bell-Sherrod House is simple and straightforward in detailing, enlivened by the intricate lattice and floral porch ornament. Clad in weatherboard siding, the house is a rectangular two-story, frame structure with a shingled hip roof pierced by two interior chimneys. Simple, scroll-shaped, sawn brackets support a plain box cornice, showing additional Italianate influence. The brackets are uniformly spaced along the entire entablature. The facade is three bays wide with simple pilaster corner boards, found at all four corners. The windows have double-hung sashes with 6/6 lights. A flat ogee-arched eyebrow window hood or crown with a peaked lintel is a feature over all windows. Beneath a hipped Italianate porch with gingerbread supports and trim, a spindle railing, and more scroll-shaped brackets, a heavy six-panel front door with sidelights and three-light transom leads inside. The horizontal boards of the enframement are decorated with dentils above and below the transom.

The front porch, featuring ornate Italianate trim quite different from the more restrained main body of the house, appears to be contemporaneous with the main block; however, the more ornate design of the porch brackets in comparison to the main roof brackets may indicate that the porch is a slightly later addition.
Four main rooms are symmetrically arranged around a central hall. There, a straight-run stair with tapered spindle balusters and a large turned newel post rises to four upstairs rooms. A five foot diameter, handpainted, floral medallion was recently uncovered on the ceiling of the first floor hall. Doors are largely the traditional four-panel type, though a few closet doors consist of two vertical panels, and one bathroom door is comprised of five cross panels. Door and window surrounds on the first floor have simple peaked lintels. Mantels date from two periods. The Greek Revival mantels are simple post-and-lintel designs with Doric pilasters, and are found in three of the four upstairs rooms. In c.1910, the mantels on the first floor, and in the fourth room upstairs were replaced with mirrored, Colonial Revival ones, marked "E.L. Pike," an Enfield contractor. Each was different, though most had columns supporting the lintel and columned overmantel; one, however, had elongated console brackets in lieu of lower columns. The rear door, aligned with the front door, is a double-leaf door with single lights. The sidelights and three-light transom match the front. The dining room is furnished with one cabinet flanking the fireplace; the cabinetry is simple and unadorned, not matching the surrounding peaked lintels of doors and windows.

The original structure has been well preserved, though some alterations were made over the years to increase space and add conveniences. The majority of changes were made after William L. Sherrod purchased the house in 1909. In c.1915, a conservatory was added off the front west room, connected to the house by replacing the window with French doors. During the 1950s, the large conservatory windows were replaced with one double-hung 2/2 sash. A smaller room was added off the back of the conservatory at this same time, to serve as a dressing room. Originally the back porch spanned the entire rear of the house, but two end porch rooms were added between 1921 and 1927. They first appear on the Sanborn maps of Enfield in 1927. The materials employed in the construction of the rooms seem to be contemporary to the house itself, but were reused to build the additions. In the 1940s, the house was converted to apartments. An upstairs bathroom was made by partitioning the rear, east room. Many of the ceilings were lowered to conserve heat when the house was subdivided for apartments.

When the Hoskinses purchased the Bell house in 1987, restoration began. The lowered ceilings were removed and the hall medallion was uncovered. All 1940s partitions were removed except that enclosing the upstairs baths. While the house is currently listed as 'work in progress,' the Hoskinses plan to restore most of the finish to its original state; the house will become their residence as well as a bed & breakfast and antique shop. The conservatory will be restored to its c.1915 state, and a modern bath and kitchen will be sympathetically built off the rear of the east room.
8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

- [ ] nationally
- [ ] statewide
- [x] locally

Applicable National Register Criteria

- [x] A
- [ ] B
- [x] C
- [ ] D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)

- [ ] A
- [ ] B
- [ ] C
- [ ] D
- [ ] E
- [ ] F
- [ ] G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Period of Significance</th>
<th>Significant Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. 1859-1920</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cultural Affiliation

- [ ] N/A

Significant Person

- [ ] N/A

Architect/Builder

- [ ] Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Bell-Sherrod House is a significant reflection of agricultural, socio-economic, and architectural trends in and around the rural community of Enfield during the period from about 1859 to 1920. Facing the tracks of what began as the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad (later the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad), the house is associated with Enfield's development as the center of trade for a rich agricultural region in south-central Halifax County, and with socially prominent owners who has strong ties to neighboring Edgecombe, Nash, and Martin counties. David Barnes Bell, who built the house about 1859, operated farms in Edgecombe and Halifax counties, worked as a cotton broker, and in other ways promoted the interests of his community, which depended largely on cotton production and the railroad for its economic well-being. Centrally located on a large piece of property, the imposing structure subsequently provided housing of appropriate scale for Bell's son, a prominent attorney, and William L. Sherrod, a wealthy farmer with extensive landholdings in several counties. The dwelling, a two-story, double-pile house with a hip roof and central hall, exemplifies vernacular adaptations of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles prevalent in this area of North Carolina during much of the two decades before the Civil War. Although the house remained in the Sherrod family until 1985, William L. Sherrod's death in 1920 essentially ended its association with the agricultural economy of the area.

CONTEXT: AGRICULTURE

Enfield, with origins in the eighteenth century, developed after the arrival of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad in 1840 as a center of trade for the surrounding agricultural region. Known originally as Huckleberry Swamp, Enfield was made the county seat of Edgecombe County in 1745. When the General Assembly divided Edgecombe County in 1758 to create Halifax County, Enfield was located in the extreme south-central portion of the new county. Edgecombe County obtained a new site for its courthouse, and the General Assembly designated Halifax, rather than Enfield, as the county seat of Halifax County.† The Wilmington and Weldon

[ ] See continuation sheet
Railroad, chartered in 1834 as the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad, was completed to the Enfield vicinity in 1840. Realizing that this important new link between North Carolina's largest port at Wilmington and the trade centers of Petersburg and Richmond could stimulate economic growth, merchants and townspeople relocated along the railroad, about two miles east of Enfield's original location. The town continued to grow around the railroad.2

During a period characterized by improved transportation facilities, agricultural reform, and relative prosperity in North Carolina, the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad aided local farmers and businessmen. Naval stores comprised the bulk of cargo on this railroad during the 1840s and early 1850s, but by 1860 shipments of cotton and wheat surpassed naval stores in importance.3 Local farmers, some of whom depended heavily on slave labor to produce large crops of cotton, underpinned Enfield's economy. In 1859 Halifax County produced 10,432 bales of cotton, second in quantity among North Carolina's counties. Neighboring Edgecombe County produced 19,138 bales.4 Although farmers and farm laborers represented the majority of residents in and around Enfield, the growing village in 1860 supported a railroad overseer, some four merchants, two grocers, three cabinetmakers, five carpenters, two hotel keepers, and two physicians, as well as other professionals, craftsmen, and tradesmen.5

Enfield's growth led the General Assembly to incorporate it in February, 1861. Not surprisingly, the railroad served as the town's axis. The assembly stipulated that the corporate limits be established one-half mile down the tracks in each direction from the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad ticket office, and 600 yards on each side of the railroad.6

CONTEXT: ARCHITECTURE

New houses built by prosperous citizens in Halifax and surrounding counties during this period often featured vernacular adaptations of Greek Revival motifs found in pattern books. These structures had plain, box-like forms. Shallow hip roofs supplanted the gable roof as the preferred style, causing houses to take on a horizontal appearance. Inside, the traditional hall-and-parlor plan gave way to the central hall; two-story houses featured staircases rising from the central hall. Heavy, plain woodwork and post-and-lintel mantels appeared in houses throughout the Tar and Neuse river basins. During the 1850s, as the Italianate style found favor, roofs with wide overhangs supported by brackets appeared in several dwellings in the region. In neighboring Edgecombe County, a number of houses of this period featured porches supported by latticework posts connected by scrollwork brackets.7
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

David Barnes Bell, a prosperous farmer and cotton broker, built a house in Enfield that epitomizes these trends. The son of Mary and Reason Wright Bell, David Barnes Bell was born in Edgecombe County about 1827. Like his father, described as a "respectable planter," Bell farmed for a living. In 1850 he owned 320 acres of land and 17 slaves. His plantation produced 7 bales of cotton as well as corn, potatoes, and other crops. Bell, his wife (the former Margaret S. Petway) and children moved to Halifax County between 1857, when Bell purchased a farm north of Enfield, and 1859. In January of 1859 he purchased 3 lots in Enfield from the estate of Benjamin Burnett. Fronting the east side of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, the lots consisted of approximately 6½ acres. Bell probably built his Greek Revival-style house, impressive because of its unusual painted ceiling medallion in the first-floor hall and its decorative front porch, shortly thereafter.

Bell's house reflected his wealth as a farmer and his prominence in the community. By 1860 he owned 722 acres of land valued at $10,000 and 36 slaves. Located four miles northeast of Enfield, the farm in 1859 produced 90 bales of cotton. Bell owned additional real estate valued at $10,000 and personal property worth $41,600. Aware of Bell's position in Enfield, the General Assembly in 1861 appointed him one of five commissioners for the newly incorporated town. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Bell was named captain of Company I of the First Regiment of North Carolina Infantry—the Enfield Blues.

After the war, Bell continued to play an important role in the local agricultural economy, although like many North Carolina farmers during the late nineteenth century, he suffered financial reverses. The lumber trade and corn production had a positive impact locally, but cotton continued to buoy the local economy. Halifax County farmers produced 11,716 bales of cotton in 1869, more than in any county except Edgecombe. Enfield had at least one cotton gin in operation in April, 1873, when a disastrous fire destroyed the warehouse of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad. Included in the losses were twelve bales of cotton and thirty tons of fertilizer. By 1884 five cotton gins and a cotton "factory" processed raw cotton in or around Enfield. In addition to growing cotton himself, Bell represented Joseph W. Jenkins & Company of Baltimore as a cotton commission merchant. He also sold fertilizer for the Stonewall Fertilizer Company. Moreover, he participated in the Enfield Agricultural Club. By 1880, however, Bell's fortunes had soured. Having already mortgaged part of his property, Bell claimed in March, 1880, that if his cotton crop did not generate enough income that year, then he would quit farming and sell his land. At the time of his death on April 3, 1887, Bell owed over $9,000 to Joseph W. Jenkins & Company.
David Bell, son of David Barnes Bell, lived in his father's house after his death, probably until 1904 or 1905. A prominent attorney in Enfield, Bell served also as a town commissioner and represented Halifax County in the General Assembly during its 1885 session. He died in 1908.17

The following year William Llewellyn Sherrod purchased the property at auction.18 Born in Martin County in 1836, Sherrod had lived near Hamilton. A prosperous farmer, Sherrod had accumulated several thousand acres of land in Edgecombe, Nash, and Martin counties. He helped direct banks in Hamilton and Robersonville and, with a brother, operated a lucrative mercantile business near his home.19 Viewing Enfield as a convenient location from which to manage his property, Sherrod moved there in 1910 to avoid malarial conditions near Hamilton. The house Sherrod purchased is strikingly similar in appearance to Hickory Hill near Hamilton, the residence of one of Sherrod's relatives.20 Sherrod divided his property in Enfield into lots prior to his death in 1920, and his heirs continued to develop the property known as Llewellyn Heights, but Sherrod's home remained in the family until 1985.21

Despite the loss of most of the original surrounding acreage, the Bell-Sherrod House, which still faces the railroad on Enfield's Railroad Street, stands as a well-preserved, unusually decorative reminder of Enfield's development as a center of trade prior to the Civil War.
NOTES


3Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, 380, 391.


5Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Halifax County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, J. Y. Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, hereinafter cited as Eighth Census, 1860, with appropriate schedule and county. Since Enfield was not incorporated until 1861, no census figures are available for 1860. In 1880, however, the town had a population of 504. Francis A. Walker, Statistics of the Population of the United States by States, Counties, and Minor Civil Divisions (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), 280.

6Private Laws of North Carolina, 1860-1861, c. 165.


9Bell's son, David, was born in Edgecombe County in 1857. The family resided in Edgecombe County in December, 1857, when Bell purchased a farm in Halifax County. The 1859 deed for Bell's three lots in Enfield, however, indicates that he already resided in Halifax County. In 1867 Bell sold the property, now a total of nine acres, to Redding Petway, trustee for Margaret Bell and her heirs. Petway, probably a relative of Bell's wife, paid $8,000 for the property--$6,800 more than the 6½ acres had cost in 1859. Given the depressed conditions in North Carolina following the Civil War, it is likely that Bell built his house soon after purchasing the lots. Assembly Sketch Book, Session 1885. North Carolina (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1885), 30, hereinafter cited as Assembly Sketch Book; Johnston, Deaths and Marriages, 70; Littleberry Manning to David B. Bell, December 18, 1857, Halifax County Deeds, Book 34, p. 618, hereinafter cited as Halifax County Deeds, with appropriate volume and page number; William Burnett to David B. Bell, January 3, 1859, Halifax County Deeds, Book 34, p. 508; David B. Bell to Redding Petway, March 21, 1867, Halifax County Deeds, Book 35, p. 642; Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, 461-462, 477-478.

10Eighth Census, 1860: Halifax County, Agriculture Schedule, 17; Eighth Census, 1860: Halifax County, Slave Schedule, 65; Newspaper clipping, November 30, 1888, advertising sale of land of David B. Bell, Estate Records of David B. Bell, folder 5, Halifax County Estates Records, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Bell Estate Records.

11Eighth Census, 1860: Halifax County, Population Schedule, 90. The $10,000 in real estate not associated with Bell's farm probably represented his house and lots in Enfield. Slaves probably accounted for a considerable portion of his personal estate.

12Private Laws of North Carolina, 1860-1861, c. 165.


15Letters of David B. Bell to Joseph W. Jenkins & Company, 1879-1885, folder 4, Bell Estate Records; Enfield Times, April 12, 1873. Prior to 1866, Bell was part owner of a store in Enfield, Bell, Maner & Company. See George W. Heptinstall to David B. Bell, June 1, 1866, Halifax County Deeds, Book 35, p. 492.


17Archibald Henderson, North Carolina: The Old North State and the New (Chicago: Lewis Publising Co., 5 volumes, 1941), III, 484, hereinafter cited as Henderson, North Carolina; Assembly Sketch Book, 30; Enfield Progress, July 8, 1887; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Halifax County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, Town of Enfield, East Enfield Township, sheet 23, microfilm of National Archives Manuscript copy, Halifax County Public Library, Halifax. According to The Pointer (Enfield) of October 14, 1904, Bell was in the process of building a new residence. Bell's son, Daniel B. Bell, later moved to Pittsboro, where he worked as an attorney and served in the North Carolina General Assembly, as well as on the bench of the Court of Chatham County.


20Hughes, Martin County Heritage, 562; Author's interview with Watson N. Sherrod, Jr., Enfield, May 14, 1988 (notes on interview in possession of author), hereinafter cited as Sherrod Interview; Celia Stokes Brazeal and others (comps.), The Historic Architecture of Hamilton, North Carolina (Hamilton: Historic Hamilton Commission, 1979), 75-76.

9. Major Bibliographical References


Enfield Progress.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [X] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings

Survey 
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record 
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering

Primary location of additional data:

- [X] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [X] Local government
- [X] University
- [X] Other

Specify repository:

- [X] Halifax County Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property: one acre

UTM References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The lot is shown on the enclosed Halifax Tax Map No. 402, lot 233, being approximately 123 feet by 325 feet.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries chosen for the Bell-Sherrod House nomination are based on the present lot size of one acre. This is all that remains of the original 6½ acres.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Lauren Brook Taves/preservation consultant & Maurice C. York/historical consultant
organization: N/A
street & number: 5 Prospect Street
city or town: Harrisville
date: June 4, 1988
state: NH
zip code: 03450
Enfield Times.


News and Observer (Raleigh).

The Pointer (Enfield).


Sherrod, Watson N., Jr. Interview, May 14, 1988, Enfield, N. C.

Taves, Henry V. Interview, May 22, 1988, Tarboro, N. C.

United States Census. Microfilm of manuscript records, 1850-1910, Halifax County Public Library, Halifax, N. C., and J. Y. Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, N. C.


Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on the southeast side of Railroad Street, said point being the intersection of the southeasterly right of way line of said Railroad Street with the common division line between Lot 3 and Lot 4 of a map of Llewellyn Heights recorded in Map Book 4, Page 70, Halifax County Public Registry; thence leaving said beginning point and running along the southeasterly right of way of Railroad Street North 48° 00' East 122.7 feet to a point; thence running South 43° 16' East along the southwesterly line of Lot 2 and Lot 13 327 feet, more or less, to a point in the northwesterly right of way of Llewellyn Avenue; thence running along Llewellyn Avenue South 48° 00' West 123.7 feet to the northwesterly line of Lot 12B; thence running North 43° 16' West along the northeasterly lines of Lots 12, 11, and 4 327 feet, more or less, to the southeasterly right of way of Railroad Street, the point of Beginning, and being all of Lot No. Three (3) as shown on map of Llewellyn Heights recorded in Map Book 4, page 70, Halifax County Public Registry.
The Bell-Sherrod House
207 SE Railroad St.
Enfield, NC 27823