INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

NAME

Snow Creek Methodist Church and Burying Ground

LOCATION

SR 1905

CITY, TOWN

Statesville

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNER

PUBLIC

STATUS

- OCCUPIED

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE

- OCCUPIED

- UNOCCUPIED

- COMMERCIAL

- WORK IN PROGRESS

- EDUCATIONAL

- PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- ENTERTAINMENT

- PRIVATE

- ACCESSIBLE

- RELIGIOUS

- IN PROCESS

- UNRESTRICTED

- GOVERNMENT

- BEING CONSIDERED

- SCIENTIFIC

- INDUSTRIAL

- MILITARY

- TRANSPORTATION

- OTHER

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Snow Creek Methodist Church
Rev. Robert M. Harris, Pastor

STREET & NUMBER

Route 5, Box 103A

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME

Laura A. W. Phillips (Winston-Salem)

ORGANIZATION

Consultant for Survey & Planning Branch

STREET & NUMBER

Archives and History

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina
The SnOH, about The and woodlands to the north and east and woodlands to the west and south. The church faces southward toward the woods and Snow Creek, and the cemetery is arranged within a stone-fence area behind the church.

The present church building was erected in 1884-1885 and is a simple example of the late Greek Revival style. The frame 1 x 4 bay building has a steep gable roof with boxed eaves, wide eave returns and a plain frieze board under the eaves. The windows along either side of the church are large, 9/9 sash with wood-louvered shutters. A small rectangular apse projects from the rear of the building. Originally the church had no projections from the front gable-end facade, and instead had two double-leaf doors with four-light transoms above. Its original form was very similar in design to nearby Bethany Presbyterian Church and was generally of the same type as Centre Presbyterian Church at the south end of the county, which is to say, it exhibited the same basic late Greek Revival form typical of many Piedmont churches built during the mid to late nineteenth century. (See sections of nomination for Bethany Presbyterian Church and Centre Presbyterian Church.) During the mid-twentieth century a vestibule, which repeated the design of the main body of the church with steep gable roof, boxed eaves with wide returns, frieze board and tall, narrow louvered vent, was added to the front of the church along with a small entrance porch with three plain posts clustered at each corner. The church rests on a low fieldstone foundation.

The interior of Snow Creek Methodist Church remains largely unaltered. The flush-sheathed walls and ceiling give a rather austere appearance. Some decorative relief is provided by the broad segmental arch, supported by scrolled brackets and headed by a carved fleur-de-lis type ornament, which leads to a shallow apse. The original double-leaf front entrances are still intact, now connecting the sanctuary with the added vestibule.

Connected to the west side of the church by a breezeway is a mid-twentieth century, one-story frame education building with simple gable-end facade which is sympathetic to the design of the main building.

Behind the church is the Snow Creek Burying Ground, established in 1780 although most tombstones date from post 1800. Some are delightful examples of the sculptural abilities of local artisans, such as the stone of Mary Feimster (1810) which shows a mourning woman in classical garb leaning on a tomb with urn, rather crudely done and signed by J. Hall, and the stone of Mary's husband, Capt. William Feimster (1842) which pictures an old man seated in an armchair also rather crudely executed, but this time unsigned. (See section of nomination on William Feimster House.)

Surrounding the cemetery is a dry-laid fieldstone wall with flat top about three feet high. Apparently the wall was rebuilt, for a granite marker near the south gate says "Cemetery Enlarged and Wall Rebuilt 1954 by Field & Stream Garden Club" and a plaque on the wall next to the gate says, "Gatea Constructed by Allen and Ernest 'Billy' Jurney as a contribution to Snow Creek Cemetery 1954." However, the stone post into which this gate is hinged carries the carved words "VELYN 1879." This wrought-iron gate is composed of simple vertical pickets. The west wall of the cemetery has a wrought-iron gate of more elaborate design. This gate is composed of vertical rails which terminate in finials of a flame or teardrop shape, the pointed tips of which are turned toward the center rail of the gate. This west gate is similar to the main gate at Bethany cemetery (see Bethany Presbyterian Church section of nomination) and both of these are more decorative than those found in South Iredell.

The church and cemetery at Snow Creek are both well maintained.
Snow Creek Methodist Church is a well-preserved late Greek Revival country church built in 1884-1885. The congregation, however, dates from 1801 when the Great Revival swept into Iredell. It became one of the most prominent in the county during the nineteenth century when Methodism was at its height. Snow Creek Burying Ground, which predates the congregation by some twenty years, contains imaginatively carved gravestones and decorative wrought-iron gates which rank among the finest in the county.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

A. Snow Creek Methodist Church is associated with the beginnings of the practical manifestations of the Great Revival in religion which swept Iredell County shortly after the turn of the nineteenth century.

C. The present Snow Creek Methodist Church, built in 1884-1885, embodies the distinctive characteristics of late Greek Revival style religious architecture as interpreted in Piedmont country churches during the middle and second half of the nineteenth century. Snow Creek Burying Ground possesses both gravestones and wrought-iron gates which exhibit the imaginative design capabilities of local artisans in nineteenth century Iredell.
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Snow Creek Burying Ground was established in 1780, when Arnold McArmand died from a rattlesnake bite and his body could not be taken across the flooded South Yadkin River to Bethany Cemetery for burial. For years Snow Creek Burying Ground served as a common tie between the Methodist and Presbyterian elements in the community, for members of both persuasion were buried there, including twenty-two Revolutionary War soldiers.

It was not until nearly a quarter of a century after the burying ground was established that a Methodist congregation became associated with the site. In the fall of 1801, Philip Bruce, a young itinerant preacher, wrote to Francis Asbury that he had organized two Methodist societies in the Snow Creek territory of north Iredell where he had been holding prayer meetings. One of these societies was organized at Squire William Sharpe's home near Snow Creek and was composed of about fifty people. This was on the eve of the Great Revival.

Under the leadership of Richard Huggins King, a licensed Methodist preacher who later became an ordained Presbyterian minister, and Peter Claywell, Sr., who had moved into the Snow Creek community from Virginia in 1800, the society which Philip Bruce had organized became a full-fledged church. In 1806 William Sharpe gave a deed for land next to Snow Creek Burying Ground for King's Methodist Episcopal Meeting House. King's Meeting House soon became known as Snow Creek.

While Snow Creek was not the first Methodist church in Iredell County, it became the most prominent during the pre-Civil War period ministering to a large number of black communicants as well as whites. By the end of this period the Methodist denomination had grown to be the strongest in Iredell with the largest membership, and Snow Creek itself became the main camp meeting site in north Iredell.

The present frame church was completed in 1885. The February 23, 1883, edition of The Landmark informed its readers that the Snow Creek congregation resolved "to build a new church building 38 x 50 feet, not to occupy the exact site of the existing church but nearer the graveyard." Work had commenced by the summer of 1884, but it was not until August 28, 1885, that The Landmark noted "the new Methodist Church at Snow Creek--a creditable building--has been completed, and the first service was held in it week before last."

The burying ground received the attention of the Field and Stream Garden Club in 1954, and for these efforts the club won second place in the statewide garden club contest. In 1957 an "educational and activities building" was added to the complex. Snow Creek is still in active use with a small congregation.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


"Great Revival in Iredell." Typewritten manuscript in Homer Keever files, James Iredell Room, Iredell County Public Library, Statesville, N.C.

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 11 3/4 (Approx.)

<table>
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| VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION | All of Tract 13, Block A, Map 14G, Sharpsburg Township, as outlined in red on map.

The property being nominated consists of the church property, which includes the church, the cemetery and the surrounding wooded area which provides visual protection for the historic environment of the Snow Creek complex.
Bibliographical References (Cont'd)

Iredell County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Iredell County Courthouse, Statesville. Microfilm copies at the State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.


"William Sharpe File." Research Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

Statesville Record and Landmark.

The Landmark. Statesville.

FOOTNOTES

1 Homer M. Keever, Iredell Piedmont County (Statesville: Iredell County American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 190, hereinafter cited as Keever, Iredell County.

2 "Great Revival in Iredell," typewritten manuscript in Homer Keever files, James Iredell Room, Iredell County Public Library, Statesville, N.C.; Virginia Fraser Evans (compiler), Iredell County Landmarks (Statesville: Iredell County American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 38.

3 William Sharpe (1742-1818) was one of western North Carolina's most outstanding revolutionary leaders. He served in the state legislature and in Continental Congress. He is buried at Snow Creek. "William Sharpe File," Research Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.

4 Keever, Iredell County, 189.

5 Ibid., 189-190. The first deed citation mentioning a proposed meeting house is dated July 8, 1805. Iredell County Deed Book F, p. 86.

6 Keever, Iredell County, 329.

7 Ibid., 188, 190.
Footnotes (Cont'd)


9. Ibid., August 22, 1884, August 28, 1885.


11. Ibid., August 16, 1957.
Architectural Description:

Church bldg - gable end front 1 x 4 bay frame bldg of simple late Greek Revival design, built ca. 1880. Foundation has hand-hewn sills, circular sawn joists beneath apse.

Cemetery is completely surrounded by 3' high flat-topped fieldstone wall, very well-built. Pk. of gates in west flank of wall are handwrought, w/ decorative tulip-shaped finials of wall on vertical rails. South gate is simpler, but appears hand-wrought also. Beside this gate, on stone gate post, is carved "Ve LYN 1879". Brass plaque on wall: "Gates constructed by Allen and Ernest "Billy" Turner as a contribution to Snow Creek Cemetery."

Historical Significance:

Oldest inscribed marker found is to Hill Sharpe, d1804. Burial ground established in 1780 when Arnold McArmand d1804 and couldn't be buried across river at Bethesda. Congregation established at home of Wm. Sharpe in 1801. Most prominent congregation in county in back country period.

Sources: Keeler, Piedmont County, p. 190

State Plan Thematic Categories
Aboriginal
Arts
Conservation
Education
Expl. & Settle.
Military
Political
Recreation
Science
Society
Technology

Inventory Source
Figs SF AT FOR RR HAER Blk H Other

Visit RecPh PubPh SL NR Map
9-77 4-77

Overall

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<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>ARCHITECTURAL CHECKLIST</th>
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<th>Material</th>
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**Architectural Checklist:**
- **Building Style:**
  - A: Georgian, Pre 1800
  - B: Federal, 1800-1825
  - C: Greek Rev, 1825-1865
  - D: Italian Rev, 1865-1885
  - E: Gothic Rev, 1885-1915
- **Occupancy Dates:**
  - A: Log, 1915-1929
  - B: Post 1929
- **Condition:**
  - A: Plain 19th
  - B: Excellent
  - C: Good
  - D: Fair
  - E: Leterioted
- **Height:**
  - A: 1 story
  - B: 2 story
  - C: 2 1/2 story
  - D: 3 story
  - E: 4-5 story
- **Roof Type:**
  - A: Log
  - B: Log cvt
  - C: Log v
  - D: Log sq
  - E: Log dia
- **Material:**
  - A: Frame/WB
  - B: Frame BB
  - C: Bk Com
  - D: Bk Flem
  - E: Bk ven
  - F: Stucco
- **Material:**
  - A: Log
  - B: Log cvt
  - C: Log v
  - D: Log sq
  - E: Log dia
- **Foundation:**
  - A: Plan Stone
  - B: Stone/Bk
  - C: None
  - D: Bk Com
  - E: Bk Flem
  - F: Other
- **Furnishments:**
  - A: None
  - B: Two room
  - C: Hall-Farl
  - D: Bk Flem
  - E: Bk ven
  - F: Other
- **Chimney:**
  - A: J Roof
  - B: Stone Cut
  - C: Gable
  - D: App Orig
  - E: Except'1
  - F: Int Fnd

**Site Plan:**
- Cemetery
- Church
- SR 1904
- SR 1905