# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

Name of Property		
historic name Dellinger Mil	1	·
other names/site number		
2. Location		
South side of Ca street & number <u>with SR 1239</u>	ne Creek Road (SR 1211)	
city or townHawk		
stateNorth Carolina code _	NC county Mitchell	code121 zip code28705
3. State/Federal Agency Certification		
As the designated authority under the Nation request for determination of eligibility med Historic Places and meets the procedural and meets does not meet the National Re nationally statewide locally. ( So Signature of certifying official/Title	ets the documentation standards for regis d professional requirements set forth in 3 egister criteria. I recommend that this profee continuation sheet for additional commend that the commend that the profee continuation sheet for additional commend that the com	stering properties in the National Register of 16 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property perty be considered significant ments.)
In my opinion, the property   meets doe comments.)	es not meet the National Register criteria	. (L See continuation sheet for additional
Signature of certifying official/Title	Date	
State or Federal agency and bureau		
4. National Park Service Certification		
hereby certify that the property is:   entered in the National Register.   See continuation sheet.   determined eligible for the   National Register   See continuation sheet.	Signature of the Keepe	er Date of Action
<ul> <li>☐ determined not eligible for the</li> <li>National Register.</li> <li>☐ removed from the National</li> </ul>		
Register.  other, (explain:)		

Dellinger Mill		Mitchell County, North Ca	ırolina
5. Classification			
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the	count.)
<ul><li>☼ private</li><li>☐ public-local</li><li>☐ public-State</li><li>☐ public-Federal</li></ul>	building(s) district site structure object	Contributing Noncontributing  2  1  3	sites structures objects
Name of related multiple p (Enter "N/A" if property is not part  N/A  6. Function or Use	oroperty listing of a multiple property listing.)	Number of contributing resources pre in the National Register	viously listed
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	
,	ng facility	WORK IN PROGRESS	
7. Description			
Architectural Classification		Materials	

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_ walls \_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other \_\_\_\_\_

Stone ·

Metal

Wood

Iron

Narrative Description

(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet.

Name of Property

Mitchell	County,	North	Carolina
County and State			

8. St	atement of Significance	
Appli (Mark		Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
		Architecture
A K	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of	Social History
	our history.	
□в	Property is associated with the lives of persons	
	significant in our past.	
±x C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or	
	represents the work of a master, or possesses	
	high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack	Period of Significance
	individual distinction.	Ca. 1901-1936
	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield,	
	information important in prehistory or history.	
	ria Considerations "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates
`		Ca. 1901
Prop	erty is:	1936
□ A	owned by a religious institution or used for	
	religious purposes.	Significant Person
□В	removed from its original location.	(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
□с	a birthplace or grave.	
□ D	a cemetery.	Cultural Affiliation N/A
□ E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	N/A
ΠF	a commemorative property.	
		Architect/Builder
□G	less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Unknown
Narr (Expla	ative Statement of Significance ain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)	·
Eu-Demorrana	lajor Bibliographical References	
Bibil (Cite	ography the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one	e or more continuation sheets.)
Prev	rious documentation on file (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:
	preliminary determination of individual listing (36	
_	CFR 67) has been requested	☐ Other State agency
	previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National	<ul><li>☐ Federal agency</li><li>☐ Local government</li></ul>
	Register	☐ University
	designated a National Historic Landmark	☐ Other
	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey	Name of repository:
	# recorded by Historic American Engineering	North Carolina Division of Archives and
<u></u>	Record #	History

Jellinger Mill	Alteneti County, North Carolina
ame of Property	County and State
0. Geographical Data	
acreage of Property3.60 acres	
JTM References Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)	
1 1 1 7 4 0 1 0 4 0 3 9 8 6 1 7 0  Zone Easting Northing 2 1	3 Zone Easting Northing 4 See continuation sheet
<b>/erbal Boundary Description</b> Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)	
Boundary Justification  Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)	
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Davyd Foard Hood	
organization	date <u>10 April 1998</u>
street & numberIsinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road	d telephone704/462-4331
city or townVale	stateNCzip code28168
Additional Documentation	
Submit the following items with the completed form:	
Continuation Sheets	
Maps	
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the	property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties havi	ing large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs	
Representative black and white photographs of the	property.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)	
Property Owner	
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)	
nameDellingers Mill, LLC, Attn: Jack Da	avid Dellinger
street & number Post Office Box 1125	telephone828/688-1009
city or townBakersville	stateNC zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Dellinger Mill

#### Narrative Description

The Dellinger Mill and the contemporary apple house are modest rectangular, gable-front unpainted frame buildings, believed to have been built ca. 1901-1903, which occupy a long narrow rectangular lot. This parcel of 3.60 acres was set aside in March 1997 from the larger Dellinger family holding here, comprising 94 acres, which is held by Stephen Wayne Dellinger (approximately 44 acres), his brother Jack David Dellinger (44 acres), and their sister Mabel Dellinger Hollifield (2 acres); it is owned by Dellingers Mill, LLC. The lot, which has the appearance of a natural woodland, is bounded on the south by a line carrying in the middle of Cane Creek and on the north by the center line of the Cane Creek Road (SR 1211); the east and west boundaries of the lot are straight lines which link respective corner points in the creek and road. During the period of significance this small tract was mostly open, shaded here and there by a tree, but during the past half-century, volunteer trees have created a sparse woodland which serves as the setting for these historic buildings and effectively merges with the native woodlands on the steep hillside to the south and along the other, more open edges of the property.

The Grounds ca. 1901-to the present Contributing site

This small lot, the site and setting of the mill and apple house, is also the location of related mill facilities, and it was earlier the location of a now-lost barn. The eastern "half" of the narrow parcel, bisected by the southerly flow of Laurel Fork Branch into Cane Creek, is marked by the path of the earthen mill race, reinforced by a partial stone lining. The race, partially inset in the ground, follows a course generally parallel to present-day Cane Creek Road. Near the center of the mill lot, the mill race emptied into an elevated chestnut board flume which carried water on a southwesterly diagonal to the mill wheel. Here, where the mill race emptied into the flume, is a tail race, also earthen, which carried unused or unneeded water in a southerly path into Cane Creek. Immediately east of the tail race and south of the mill race are the partial three-sided stone walls which enclosed the small yard around the barn; owing to the land gradation, the raised side of the mill race functioned as the north boundary of the barnyard. The dry-laid stone walls vary from three to four feet in height.

The western "half" of the mill lot is dominated by the mill and its companion apple house. The two unpainted frame buildings are built on a general east/west axis but with a slight turn of their facades to the northeast; for ease of description they will be described as facing east. A stone-lined tail race flows from under the water wheel, on the south side of the mill, in a southerly course to Cane Creek. When the mill was built and for many years thereafter, it was served by two roads. One carried from the north side of the mill, up the steep bank to the old road from Hawk to Bakersville which is now largely the path of Cane Creek Road. A second road traversed the southwest corner of this lot, connecting with the Hawk-Bakersville road and continuing across Cane Creek to the former site of the Cane Creek Baptist Church. A cane mill

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Dellinger Mill, Mitchell County, North Carolina

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was situated to the west of the saw mill shed and its site remains marked by a few stones and rotted boards. To the northeast of the cane mill are the substantial remains of the molasses furnace. The furnace is a rectangular stone support about a foot-and-a-half in height, which held the copper pan in which the molasses were boiled. The molasses was put in one-gallon earthernware jugs and stored in the apple house. During 1997, some of the smaller volunteer growth in the western part of the lot was cleared away, and a gravel access road has been built in a position nearly parallel with the turn-of-the-century road.

The Dellinger Mill
Ca. 1901-1903; shed extension on west gable end, early 1940s
Contributing building

The Dellinger Mill is a small unpainted rectangular frame building with an eighteen feet wide east gable front and west rear elevation and fourteen-and-a-half feet side elevations. The building is low to the ground with sills resting on stones. Its walls are sheathed with vertical chestnut boards of varying widths; the north and south gable ends are weatherboarded. The roof, originally covered with overlapping three feet long chestnut boards, was recovered with sheet metal in the 1940s and this type of roofing has been maintained thereafter. An opening in the center of the east gable end is fitted with a board and batten door; a small opening above it, providing light to the interior, lacks any covering. There are two smaller openings for ventilation and illumination; one is at the north edge of the west wall and the second one at the west edge of the south wall. Both are fitted with board and batten blinds. Through the south opening, the miller could also look out onto the water wheel, which is positioned on concrete aggregate pedestals parallel to the mill's south wall at its west edge. The iron wheel is twelve feet in diameter, thirty inches wide, and fitted with forty buckets. It was made by the Fitz Water Wheel Company of Hanover, Pennsylvania, and bears serial number 13779.

The water wheel also powered a saw mill housed in an open-sided shed on the west side of the grist mill; that shed, the width of the mill and originally twenty-eight feet in length, was rebuilt to twenty-three feet in length in the early 1940s. The shed has a packed earth floor, cut-tree upright supports, and a simple shed roof of sheet metal. Although the sawing machinery of the mill was sold in the late 1930s/early 1940s, the system of large pulleys and line shafts and related machinery remain in place. The north terminus of the water wheel's axle rests under the saw mill shed and has an eight-foot diameter cogged gear mounted on it, which mates with a two-foot diameter cogged gear on a line shaft which contains a large pulley used to pull a leather belt which extends (about twelve feet) into the mill and under the platform and turns a vertically mounted small diameter wooden pulley on whose axle the runner millstone is mounted.

The interior of the mill is a single space with two levels. The simple construction of the mill is left exposed, there is no sheathing on the walls or ceiling; however, both levels are floored with heavy boards. The east third of the interior is at/near ground level; the west two-thirds is raised about three feet on a platform. A simple flight of four steps rises up to this level in the near center of the platform face. Of its machinery what can be seen in the mill is simply the hopper, for feeding corn onto the grindstones, and the round wood cover over the paired granite stones. Shelled white corn was emptied by the bushel sack full into the wooden mill hopper. The

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hopper capacity is two bushels. (The toll for grinding corn was one-tenth of a bushel and it was dipped out prior to grinding with a toll box which was dimensioned so that when full it held exactly one-tenth of a bushel; it had a divider in the middle so if the customer only had one-half bushel then the appropriate toll could be taken.) The same toll box was used by Reuben Dellinger, his son David R. Philip Dellinger, and grandson Marvel G. Dellinger from the late nineteenth century until 1955.

Once the toll was measured, the miller then turned the water wheel control wheel, adjacent to the hopper, and started the water wheel turning which, in turn, turned the runner mill stone. This runner mill stone, three feet in diameter and two feet thick, rests on the vertical wooden pulley shaft driven by the belt under the platform. A stationary mill stone, similar to the runner stone, rests level with the mill floor directly underneath it. Both the runner stone and the stationary stone have fan shaped grooves cut into the bottom and top of the stones, respectively, to cause kernels of corn to be crushed into cornmeal and to feed the meal to the outside of the turning stone. A wooden cover sets over the runner stone and forces the cornmeal down a spout and into the meal bin on the interior's ground level. Simple, time-honored devices allow the miller to control the flow of corn kernels into the grinding process. He can also control the coarseness/fineness of the cornmeal by raising or lowering the runner stone, thus widening or tightening the space between the stationary and runner stones.

Every six months or so, the stones' fan-like grooves would wear down and require sharpening and dressing. A wood bracket, fitted with an iron crane, is built against the interior's west wall and is used to lift the runner stone, invert it, and lay it on the floor. Hand held picks were then used to regroove both the runner stone and stationary stone. The single bin for storing corn in the mill is a large wood box which arrived in Mitchell County as a shipping case and contained an organ sent to Edward Wood Anderson Young (1881-1961) who in 1903 had married Mary Belle Dellinger (1882-1959), the eldest surviving daughter of David Dellinger. Mr. Young managed a store at Clarissa, near the Dellinger Mill, for his father James E. Young; whether the organ was purchased for personal use or resale is not known within the family. The boxed organ was sent to Mr. Young at the Toecane Station of the Carolina, Clinchfield & Ohio Railroad, which was located near Loafer's Glory, just east of Toecane where Cane Creek empties into the Toe River. Portions of the crate's paper lithograph label survive and illustrate a three-story brick factory with a fragment of the factory name "...ph B. Cornish," "... Cornish & Co.," and "Pianos & Organs."

The Apple House Ca. 1901-1903 Contributing building

The apple house is a rectangular weatherboarded frame building standing on a mortared stone foundation and covered with a sheet metal gable-front roof. Unpainted since its construction it is somewhat deteriorated, particularly on its south side, where a wagon shed has collapsed; however, the structural fabric of the building is intact and sound and it will be restored as a part of the mill restoration project. The building is fifteen-and-a-half feet in width and approximately twenty-three feet in length. Two door openings, one above the other, are positioned in the center

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of the east front elevation. The lower opening, conventional in size, is fitted with a six, horizontal panel wood door and opens into the main level of the apple house. The opening above it gives onto the loft where apple slices were dried; it is fitted with a board-and-batten door. The remnant of an exterior stair, rising southward along the front of the building to a shallow stoop at loft level, remains in place. Small rectangular openings, for air and seasonal ventilation, are set in the center of the north, south, and west side elevations while a fourth such opening occurs in the upper west gable end; these openings are simply framed and fitted with side-hinged blinds.

The lumber used in the construction of the apple house and its interior sheathing was probably cut and sawn on site; saw dust, a by-product of saw milling, was poured into the wall space for insulation between the weatherboards and the interior sheathing. Much of it remains in place, and, in other instances where the weatherboards have deteriorated, it can be seen leaking out of place.

The interior of the apple house is simply finished with board floors and sheathed walls. The center passage, measuring the approximate width of the door, carries the full depth of the building. Wood-partitioned bins for different varieties of apples are ranged on either side, at floor level, with secondary bins directly above. The loft level is an open area and was used for drying apples. In addition to storing apples and dried fruit, and housing the family vinegar barrel, the apple house was used to store molasses and some canned goods. It has stood here unused since the death of Susan Matilda (Buchanan) Dellinger in 1958.

#### Endnote

1. The description of the grist mill machinery and its operation are based on a letter from Jack David Dellinger to this author of 25 March 1998. It remains in the possession of the author.

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Dellinger Mill, Mitchell County, North Carolina

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#### Summary Statement of Significance

The Dellinger Mill, a small weathered frame grist mill standing on the north bank of Cane Creek in east central Mitchell County, is a modest building of deceiving simplicity which holds statewide significance in the areas of architecture and social history. Erected ca. 1901-1903 by David R. Philip Dellinger (1853-1936), the mill, surviving intact with all of its original equipment, was built and operated as a water-powered grist mill from ca. 1901 until 1955. Although electrical power was brought to the Cane Creek Valley in the late 1920s, Mr. Dellinger did not convert his mill; instead, he continued to grind corn in the traditional manner, and this practice was followed by his son, Marvel Greenberry Dellinger (1881-1955), until his death in 1955. The Dellinger Mill survives today as the only known intact water-powered grist mill of its type in North Carolina.

The history of the Dellinger Mill and the family's operation of mills on Cane Creek predate the construction of this building. Henry Dellinger (1779-1851), a native of Lincoln County, relocated to Three Mile Creek, in what is now Avery County, in the 1830s, and erected a grist mill on Camp Creek which flows into the Linville River. It was there that his son, Reuben Dellinger (1820-1895), became a miller, working alongside his father, and then alone in the 1850s. According to family tradition, the tragic death of Reuben Dellinger's wife in a milling accident on 11 April 1859 prompted his sad leave-taking from that place. In 1861, he married a second time (to Nancy Pitman) and settled among his wife's people in the Cane Creek Valley, on the west side of Cane Creek Mountain. Here, in 1865-1867 he acquired property on the creek that appears to have included a mill operated by the Pitman family. Whether, in fact, he continued to operate an existing mill or established his own, is not presently known; however, he became a miller here and continued the trade until his death in 1895. The mill was never a commercial venture. Instead, it was a small private facility, like hundreds of others which once stood in North Carolina, where Mr. Dellinger ground corn into meal for his family, friends, and neighbors along the creek. His fee for this work was a simple toll of one-tenth of a bushel of the shelled corn brought to him for milling. This levy, with its Biblical reference, was honored by his son, David R. Philip Dellinger, and his grandson Marvel Greenberry Dellinger, until 1955.

In 1901, six years after Reuben Dellinger's death, his mill was destroyed by a spring freshet. David R. Philip Delinger elected to erect this replacement mill downstream of the older mill; it is built of trees felled on family lands and sheathed with vertical chestnut boards. The significance of the building and this place is enhanced by the survival of the original milling equipment and machinery and a substantial part of the machinery which operated the family's saw mill in an adjoining shed. Also here are the main mill race and tail races, a stone molasses furnace, a stone fence which enclosed the yard of a long-lost barn, and a contemporary frame apple house in which apples, dried fruit, vinegar, molasses, and other products of the orchard, field, and garden were stored. Altogether, these buildings and this site reflect the traditions of self-sufficiency which sustained family and community life in rural, mountainous western North Carolina.

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Dellinger Mill, Mitchell County, North Carolina

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#### Historical Background

The history of milling operations at this site, in a grist mill constructed here ca. 1901-1903 by David R. Philip Dellinger (1853-1936) and continued until 1955 by his son, Marvel Greenberry Dellinger (1881-1955), begins in the mid-nineteenth century; in three transactions in 1865 and 1867 Reuben Dellinger (1820-1895) assembled a home tract of 110 acres on Cane Creek, and it was on that tract, a short distance to the east and upstream of this building, that he operated a simple grist mill which was destroyed in the spring freshet of May 1901. Following that flood his son located his new mill downstream to this site, still on family lands. Through good fortune, this building and the contemporary apple house survived the disastrous flooding of latewinter 1998 which wreaked havoc along the course of Cane Creek from Hawk, to the east, all the way downstream (west) to Bakersville, the seat of Mitchell County.

Reuben Dellinger was born on 20 October 1820 on the waters of the Henry Fork River in that part of Lincoln County that was set aside as Catawba County in 1842. The son of Henry Dellinger (1779-1851) and the grandson of John Phillip Dellinger (ca. 1740-1826), Reuben Dellinger was born into the large German community whose ancestors, including his own great grandfathers Johan Phillip Dellinger and George Heinrich Weidner (1717-1792), were the first settlers in this Piedmont region in the mid-eighteenth century. In 1829 Henry Dellinger, his wife, and family left Lincoln County and migrated to the northwest into Burke, now Caldwell, County. By 1840 they had moved further west and established themselves on Three Mile Creek, just above Linville Falls. Their property here, on a tributary of the Linville River, lay on the east side of the Cane Creek Mountain, whose ridge line forms the boundary between present-day Mitchell and Avery Counties. "As the crow flies," this farm was but some seven or eight miles from Hawk, on the west side of the Cane Creek Mountain, where Reuben would later live and operate his own mill.

Henry Dellinger built a grist and saw mill on Three Mile Creek, in the lower toe of Avery County sandwiched between Burke and Mitchell Counties, and it was there that young Reuben Dellinger first acquired his skills as a miller. About 1846 he was married to Mary Jane Coffey (1827-1859); the couple settled on a small farm of eighty-eight acres there. Their first born child, a son James Pinckney Dellinger, was born on the last day of December 1847; his birth was followed by that of a second son, Elcanah Hunter Dellinger (1850-1920); a third son, David R. Philip Dellinger (1853-1936); a fourth son, Melvin William Dellinger (1855-1929); and a daughter, Lovina Eugenia Dellinger (ca. 1857-ca. 1897). Milling sustained the life of the Dellinger family, but, ironically, a tragic accident at the mill took the life of Mary Jane (Coffey) Dellinger; on 11 April 1859 her dress was caught in the shaft of the mill and she was brutally killed. Her body was buried at Pisgah Methodist Church.

According to family tradition, the tragic accident caused Reuben Dellinger to depart his holding on the Linville River and relocate to Hawk. Previously, in 1856, he had made an apparent first step toward departure. On 20 June 1856, he sold an eighteen-acre parcel on Camp Creek, on the waters of the Linville River, for \$100 to his cousin, Augustus D. Childs. At the same time he sold Mr. Childs, for \$200, an undivided two-thirds interest in "a piece & parcel of land...

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adjoining the 18 acre tract above mentioned & is the saw Mill Property. . . . Containing Three acres of land be the same more or less. Containing a saw Mill & Grise Mill & all thereunto belonging" (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 1, 249-251). Six years later, on 3 December 1861, Reuben Dellinger sold Mr. Childs two additional tracts of land on the Linville River, thirty-eight acres for \$250 and an adjoining tract of twelve acres for \$50 (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 1, 229-231).

The year of 1861 was critical in his life for another reason; during that year he is said to have married Nancy Pitman (1823-1893), who is cited as the daughter of Thomas Pitman; the couple's only child, Caroline Dellinger (1862-1928), was born in November 1862. In the mid-1860s Reuben Dellinger established himself at Clarissa on Cane Creek in Mitchell County. His presence in the county is indicated by the fact that on 15 August 1864 he, Moses Young, and Henry Norman stood as surety for \$4,000 on the bond of Mr. Norman as constable of Grassy Creek Company (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 6, 18-19).

In 1865 and 1867 Reuben Dellinger purchased three tracts of land on Cane Creek which became his home place, the location of his mill, and of which ninety-four acres, including the site of this mill (the nominated acreage), remained in the ownership of his descendants. These three deeds were all recorded on 21 September 1869 (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 3, 135-138). On 25 February 1865 he purchased fifty acres on the waters of Cane Creek for \$50 from Robert Pitman. Reuben Dellinger purchased a tract of ten acres for \$45 on the waters of the creek on 18 October 1867 from William S. Buchanan. Two months later, on 20 December 1867, Mr. Dellinger purchased from Thomas Pitman for \$100 a fifty-acre tract that, from internal references, appears to adjoin both of the above tracts. This property lay at the confluence of Laurel Fork Branch and Cane Creek; the final calls in the third deed read "thence with said Clarissa Buchanan('s) line to W. S. Buchanan Line to Said Dellinger('s) own Line thats with the old Pipman (sic) mill tract line to the Beginning" (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 3, 136). At this distance, and without exhaustive deed research, the question of whether Reuben Dellinger bought the old Pitman mill and continued to operate it or bought adjoining land on which he erected his own mill cannot be answered.

Whether Reuben Dellinger continued to operate the Pitman mill or built his own new mill building, the critical fact is that he, his son, and grandson would operate a community mill here, that might be traced back into the antebellum period, for nearly ninety years, from ca. 1867 to 1955. The Dellinger Mill, being a small water-powered community mill, was such a small-scale, private enterprise that it was never listed in the sequential editions of BRANSON'S NORTH CAROLINA BUSINESS DIRECTORY during Reuben Dellinger's lifetime. However, today none of the five corn and flour mills listed with a Bakersville post office in the 1884 edition survive, and the only other mill in Mitchell County surviving today is a tall three-story on basement twentieth-century frame mill on Cane Creek, west of Bakersville, just east of where the creek empties into the Toe River.

For three decades from 1865-1867 until his death in 1895, Reuben Dellinger was a respected member of the community which developed at Hawk along the headwaters of Cane Creek draining the west side of Cane Creek Mountain and White Rock Mountain. In addition to

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operating his small private grist mill he was a farmer on a small but self-sufficient scale; according to the 1880 Agricultural Census he had thirty improved acres, ten of meadowland used either for hav or grazing, and sixty acres of woodland; the status of the other ten acres of his 110acre purchase is unknown at present. His livestock included milk and beef cattle, horses, sheep, swine, and poultry; his principal crops were Indian corn and oats. Mr. Dellinger sold other of his Linville River lands to Augustus D. Childs in 1872 (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 7-A, 225) and on 22 January 1874 he and Joseph M. Buchanan exchanged ten-acre tracts, probably to even out their holdings (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 7-A, 530-531, 591-592). On 2 July 1877 he conveyed a one-acre tract on the south side of Cane Creek, just southeast of the present mill site, for \$10 to T. C. Green and his son David Dellinger, trustees of the Cain (Cane) Creek Baptist Church (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 16, 272). Mr. Dellinger inserted a provision in the deed prohibiting the grantees or their successors from allowing "any public school taught in the church house or (on) the aforesaid lands." Nearly thirty years later, on 5 June 1906, David R. Philip Dellinger and William Green sold a three-eighths acre parcel adjoining "the Grave Yard Lot" at Hawk to the Mitchell County Board of Education for a school (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 53, 380).

During the five-year period from 1886 to 1891, David R. Philip Dellinger, the third-born son of Reuben Dellinger, acquired the principal family holdings on Cane Creek, including his father's mill. On 7 July 1886 he purchased a tract of unspecified acreage, which appears from its description to encircle his father's mill, and adjoined the lands of Thomas and Sophia Pitman, Reuben and Nancy (Pitman) Dellinger, and Joseph M. and Cenia Buchanan who sold the tract to him for \$100; references are made to the mill, the mill race, a stone fence, and to Cane Creek in the boundary calls. The Dellinger family tradition of fruit (largely apple) cultivation here, noted in the 1880 Agricultural Census report when David Dellinger had twenty-five trees on two acres is also confirmed by a condition in the deed "Reserving however one half of all the fruit that grows on said Tract to the use of Reuben Dellinger and wife Nancy Dellinger during their natural lives" (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 20-X, 39-40). On 29 February 1888 Reuben and Nancy Dellinger conveyed a tract of sixty-six acres, apparently including the family's nineteenthcentury mill, to David Dellinger for "consideration of their natural affection and the further sum of two hundred dollars." Internal references include "a rock fence near Laurel Fork branch," "mouth of the same at a mill race Thence up the side of said race," and "the old dogwood corner of the old mill race tract" (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 20-X, 48-49). (As the sketch map indicates, a portion of this property is included in the nominated acreage.) Five months later, David Dellinger acquired an adjoining twenty-four acres for \$40 from Joseph M. and S. A. Buchanan, who might have been his aunt and uncle (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 20-X, 406-407). Finally, on 24 April 1891, Reuben and Nancy Dellinger conveyed the second half of his holding here on Cane Creek, a tract of 65 acres adjoining the property conveyed in the 1888 deed, to David Dellinger "in consideration of being supported and maintained during their natural life here at their old home where they live at the date above written by David Dellinger & Rachel his wife" (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 32, 295-296). Nancy (Pitman) Dellinger was dead within two years of this final transaction, and Reuben Dellinger died two years later on 20 November 1895; both are buried in the Cane Creek Cemetery where their graves are now marked by a later stone.

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David R. Philip Dellinger, who built the mill building and apple house at this site, downstream from his father's mill, was born on 5 May 1853 in Watauga (now Avery) County. He probably received a rudimentary education at home. At the age of twenty-two, on 26 August 1875, he was married to Rachel Green (1853-1903), the daughter of Josiah/Joseph Green. David and Rachel Dellinger were the parents of at least twelve known children, born between 1876 and 1895, of whom only four lived full adult lives. Flavah Dellinger (1890) died as an infant in 1890; however, between 1900 and 1908 seven of the couple's children died of tuberculosis, pneumonia, or other causes including their eldest daughter Minnie's death in childbirth. The family's original house was built on damp low ground, near Cane Creek. During this period David Dellinger built a new house for his family on an elevated site above (north of) the place where he erected this mill following the May freshet of 1901. Leaving the old house did not stem the tide of death, and on 8 April 1903 Rachel Green Dellinger died of tuberculosis; her body was buried in Cane Creek Cemetery.

From 1903 until his death in 1936, David Dellinger lived in the new house, farmed his better lands, and ground corn into meal for his family, friends, and neighbors. His "toll" for grinding corn was one bushel (reserved to him) for every ten ground for customers. He is well remembered in a series of anecdotes recorded by his great-granddaughter, Kathy Gunter Sullivan, in the account of his life appearing in THE HERITAGE OF THE TOE RIVER VALLEY, VOL. 1, 1994. Her account recalls the family life of a self-sufficient farmer in northwestern North Carolina where he was both the head of his family and a "pillar in the community." Milling was an important part of his life and so, too, was the cultivation of apples.

He grafted apple trees, had his own orchards, and built a cold storage house (#2) for apples. It was double-walled with the space between the walls insulated with sawdust from his own water-powered sawmill.

He had orchards: cherry, apples of every kind, peaches, walnuts. We'd go to gather them. . . . He had the spring house, then a pretty bridge over the stream, and a trellis at the bridge with grape vines, and then the huge apple house with a different bin for each kind. He had a big drying house for the fruit (HERITAGE, 192).

While the Dellinger grist mill would remain water-powered for its entire operating life, electrical lines were erected up the Cane Creek Valley in the late 1920s bringing electrical power to the mountain residents. In October 1928, David Dellinger signed deeds providing right-of-way across his property with the Northeast Carolina Utilities Company and the Carolina Power and Light Company which continues to provide electrical service to the community (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 50, 630-631; and Book 54, 60).

David R. Philip Dellinger signed his will on 22 April 1935, and less than a year later, on 10 February 1936, he died and was buried beside his wife in the Cane Creek Cemetery. He made but two important bequests in the will, which was not entered for probate until 20 January 1938. He devised "the home place of 94 acres of land" to his only son Marvel Greenberry Dellinger (1881-1955); this tract included his residence, the mill, and the surrounding acreage on both sides of Cane Creek at and along the mouth of Laurel Fork Branch. To his second eldest

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surviving daughter Lourah Irene Dellinger Snyder (1884-1956), he bequeathed "70 acres of land known as the Polly Pitman place." The minerals on the two places were to be equally divided among his four surviving children and one grandchild; however, he next gave his son the right to "mine on these properties all he wishes without paying any royalties of any kind to any person" (Mitchell County Wills, Book 2, 121-122; Mitchell County Deeds, Book 99, 573).

Marvel Greenberry "Marv" Dellinger was married to Susan Matilda Buchanan (1893-1958), the daughter of Stephen and Ella (Greene) Buchanan. From the time of their marriage ca. 1910, the couple made their home with David Dellinger, and it was at the home place that they raised their family of seven children born between 1911 and 1933. The patterns of life continued on in much the same fashion through the late 1930s, and 1940s, and the early 1950s as they had in the earlier decades of the twentieth century. Farming and apple cultivation were important both for family and livestock sustenance and as cash crops. Like his father and grandfather, "Marv" Dellinger continued to grind corn into meal upon request by family, friend, and neighbor. Sawmilling was another important cash-generating activity here, and the saw mill was housed in a shed built across the west end of the grist mill. "Mary" Dellinger also continued to make sorghum molasses here in a small mill and furnace standing to the northwest of the saw mill. In short, Mr. Dellinger continued the traditions of rural mountain life from the nineteenth century into the mid-twentieth century. The only change to the mill and apple house occurred in the 1940s when the original chestnut board roof was replaced by a sheet tin roof. A short article on the mill, illustrated by an exterior and an interior photograph appeared in the ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES on 18 October 1953. During this period, when his sons were young and still living at home, they helped him with the operation of the mill.

Marvel Greenberry operated the family mill on the same terms honored by his father until his death on 21 December 1955, and his body, likewise, was buried in the Cane Creek Cemetery. His widow remained in residence until her death on 5 March 1958. On 8 March 1958, six of Mrs. Dellinger's children and heirs conveyed the ninety-four-acre home place to the seventh, youngest sibling, Stephen Wayne Dellinger, who had remained at home to care for his mother (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 121, 448). The mill and apple house entered a period of benign neglect which has persisted until recently; its survival owes largely to the fine chestnut lumber of which it was built. In 1959, the family home place was torn down for its materials, and its site is marked today by shrubs and bulbs which have persisted to bloom through four decades. Stephen Wayne Dellinger (b. 1933) chose not to live on the property after his mother's death, and he shortly came to share it with two of his siblings (his four sisters and their husbands lived out of state). On 15 June 1965, he sold the forty-four acres of the holding lying on the south side of Cane Creek, largely mountainous, to his brother Jack David Dellinger (b. 1931) (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 130, 242). Seven years later, on 11 August 1972, he sold a small two-acre lot, to the east of the former house site and on the north side of Cane Creek Road, to his sister Mabel and her husband, John H. Hollifield, who erected a house there where they now make their home (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 148, 241).

Concern for the preservation of the Dellinger Mill, a landmark on Cane Creek, has developed in recent years, and in 1997 Stephen Wayne and Jack David Dellinger undertook measures toward its stabilization and restoration. In March 1997, the Dellinger family property located between

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Cane Creek and the Cane Creek Road, a 3.60-acre parcel that is the site and setting of the mill, its related features and facilities, and the apple house was set aside as a separate parcel. On 14 May Stephen Wayne Dellinger and his wife, Mary, conveyed a one-half undivided interest in the tract to his brother Jack David Dellinger, and wife Leslie (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 283, 643). The clearing of overgrowth on the tract was begun in the summer and continued through the autumn; a simple gravel road was built, off the south side of the road and down the northwest corner of the tract, to provide vehicular access to the mill. Stabilization measures have been undertaken on both the mill and the apple house in anticipation of their restoration. On 18 December 1997 Stephen Wayne and Jack David Dellinger conveyed their separate undivided one-half interests in the 3.60-acre parcel to Dellingers Mill, LLC; the company was established to undertake the restoration of the mill (Mitchell County Deeds, Book 290, 383). The brothers are the officers of the company.

#### Architectural and Social History Significance

The Dellinger Mill, a modest building of deceiving simplicity, possesses statewide significance in the areas of architecture and social history as an intact example of a building type which was once commonplace and is now exceedingly rare. The mill is the only known surviving representative of the small private mill, built to serve family, friends, and community, water-powered and never adapted to electricity, which survives in North Carolina. Built as a result of the freshet of 1901, it survived the flooding on Cane Creek in the winter of 1998, and with its attached saw mill shed, contemporary apple house, stone barnyard fence, molasses furnace, and mill race, the Dellinger Mill recalls traditions of nineteenth-and early-twentieth-century rural life that have otherwise disappeared in the landscape of North Carolina.

The Dellinger Mill is the second mill (and possibly the third mill building) to be operated here on Cane Creek in the valley bearing its name. At present nothing is known of the size and appearance of the mill preceding this one that was operated by Reuben Dellinger and his son David R. Philip Dellinger (hereinafter David Dellinger) upstream and east of this site from the Reconstruction period into early 1901. In the late winter/early spring of 1901 that mill was destroyed by a freshet. According to family tradition, David Dellinger decided to locate his replacement mill a few hundred feet downstream, to this site, where he built this building ca. 1901-1903. Whether that earlier mill building was log or frame construction is not known; however, by 1901-1902 water-driven saw mills were a part of the small-scale rural industry in Mitchell County, and David Dellinger built a sawn-frame building. The mill, with eighteen-feet-wide east and west elevations and north and south sides measuring fourteen-and-half feet in width, is utilitarian in appearance, form, and finish; it is covered with vertical chestnut planks and finished with weatherboarded gable ends. Its original chestnut board roof, having become deteriorated after forty years, was replaced with sheet metal in the 1940s.

Otherwise, the building survives today, after about ninety-six years, as built and fitted up ca. 1901-1903. The mill wheel, manufactured by the Fitz Water Wheel Company of Hanover, Pennsylvania, and bearing serial number #13779, is believed to date to the 1870s and might have been reused from the earlier, nineteenth-century mill. The architectural significance of the mill building is supported by the survival of the entire grist mill machinery, including the granite

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millstones, in good condition. The only element critical to the operation of the mill that is missing today is the chestnut board flume which carried water, diverted from Cane Creek, from the earthen and stone mill race and emptied it onto the wheel. After the mill was closed in 1955, the flume deteriorated over time, eventually collapsed, and rotted away.

The extent to which saw milling has been a part of the Dellinger family operations here on Cane Creek is uncertain; however, saw milling traditionally accompanied grist milling because of the existing power supply. The outfitting of a saw mill here was probably contemporary with the rebuilding of the mill, ca. 1901-1903; David Dellinger operated the saw mill until his death in 1936. In the late 1930s or very early 1940s Marvel Dellinger sold the saw mill to Carl Wise who probably adapted it to run on gasoline or steam engine power. The sawing of timber here had been done under a large open shed attached to the west gable end of the mill. When the saw mill itself was sold, the pulleys, line shafts, and other machinery linked to the water wheel were retained in place. A new shed, the width of the mill and about twenty-three feet in length, was added to protect it, the grist mill machinery, and provide storage (the original saw mill shed was about twenty-eight feet in length).

The apple house, standing to the east of the mill, is a rectangular weatherboarded frame building measuring approximately twenty-three feet in length and fifteen-and-a-half feet in width. The interior of the building was sheathed, and the space between the sheathing and weatherboards was filled with sawdust for insulation. Its front, east door opens into a center passage lined on the north and south with bins, on two levels, for storing the different kinds of apples raised on the Dellinger farm. Among the apples raised here were: Limber Twigs, Striped Queen, Red Pippen, Wolf River, Burleson's Seedling, and Grimes Golden. The family vinegar barrel was located here, just inside the door, while the loft was used in the late summer and early autumn for drying apples.

The survival of these rare buildings recalls a scale and manner of life which has virtually disappeared from the rural mountain landscape of North Carolina, and they reflect a degree of self-sufficiency in farm and community life which has been lost to modern industrialization. The apple house kept the Dellinger family well-stocked with apple and fruit products the year around. The Dellinger Mill, operated by two generations of the family from ca. 1901-1903 to 1955, ground com into meal for family, friends, and members of the Hawk and larger Cane Creek communities. They stand, in sturdy simplicity along the north edge of Cane Creek, and in sharp contrast to the county's only other known surviving mill, also on Cane Creek at Loafer's Glory, near where it empties into the Toe River. That large multistory frame building, where corn was ground into meal and wheat into flour, represents the large scale electrical-powered milling operations which displaced virtually every other such water-powered mill in North Carolina save Dellinger's Mill.

#### **Endnote**

1. Information concerning the lives of Reuben Dellinger and his son David R. Philip Dellinger and their families is taken from sketches on each of the men, prepared by Kathy Gunter Sullivan and published in THE HERITAGE OF THE TOE RIVER VALLEY, VOL. 1, 1994. Ms.

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Sullivan, a professional genealogist, is the great-granddaughter of Reuben Dellinger. Ms. Sullivan also answered many questions posed to her by this author in telephone conversations. Jack David Dellinger provided information on the life of his father, Marvel Greenberry Dellinger, and his family.

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#### Major Bibliographical References

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Dellinger, Jack David, to Davyd Foard Hood, letter, 25 March 1998.

Mitchell County Deeds, Mitchell County Administration Building, Bakersville, North Carolina.

Mitchell County Wills, Mitchell County Court House, Bakersville, North Carolina.

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#### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is the 3.60-acre tract located on the south side of Cane Creek Road (SR 1211) which was set apart by survey on 6 March 1997; the Mitchell County tax parcel number is 0883491315.

#### Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the property between the center line of Cane Creek, on the south, and the Cane Creek Road (SR 1211), on the north, which is the site and setting of Dellinger Mill, its mill-related facilities, and the contemporary apple house. This 3.60-acre tract, set apart by survey on 6 March 1997, is that part of the Dellinger family's 94-acre holding which is historically associated with the mill and its operation here from ca. 1901-1903 until 1955.

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#### Schedule of Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs submitted with this nomination.

Name of property: Dellinger Mill

Location: Mitchell County, North Carolina

Name of photographer: Davyd Foard Hood

Date of photographs: 7 November 1997

Location of original negatives:

North Carolina Division of Archives and History,

Raleigh, North Carolina

- A. The mill, looking southwest.
- B. Overall landscape view of mill and apple house, looking southeast from the edge of SR 1211 (Cane Creek Road).
- C. Water-wheel and machinery, looking southeast.
- D. Mill interior, looking southwest.
- E. The mill, looking south/southeast.
- F. The runner stone and crane, cover removed, looking south.
- G. Interior of the apple house, looking west/southwest.
- H. Rock molasses furnace, looking north.



