

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

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

1. Name

historic The Rankin-Sherrill House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number South side N.C. 801, opposite junction with SR 1753
(Grampian Road) not for publication
city, town Mt. Ulla vicinity of Congressional District 8th
state N. C. code 037 county Rowan code 159

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. J. Carl Sherrill, Jr.

street & number Post Office Box 85

city, town Mt. Ulla vicinity of state N. C. 28125

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Rowan County Office Building

street & number 402 North Main Street

city, town Salisbury state N. C. 28144

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

An Inventory of Architectural and Historical Resources in Rowan County
title has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977-1981 federal state county local

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

city, town Raleigh state N. C. 27611

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Rankin-Sherrill House, sheltered by a grove of tall trees on the south side of N.C. 801 in the village of Mt. Ulla, is a two-story brick house covered with a low hipped roof. The brick is laid up in one-to-four bond. The wide eaves of the house are edged with a series of applied flat moldings. The house is a reverse "L" in plan with the bottom of the "L" and about a third of the initial's stem being two stories in height. The remaining portion of the stem is one-story in height and contains the kitchen. This somewhat unusual exterior configuration can be more easily seen in a review of the interior plan. The central entrance on the three-bay north front elevation opens into the house's center/stair hall which extends the depth of the house. To the left (east) is a large living room. To the right (west) of the hall is a pair of rooms, one behind the other, as might be ascertained by the pair of interior end chimneys on the house's west elevation. In plan it is this double pile arrangement which projects to the south and breaks out of what would otherwise be a rectangular two-story block.

The north (front) elevation of the house has a symmetrical three-bay division with the first-story elevation protected by a simple hipped roof Colonial Revival porch sheltering the three bays but stopping short of carrying fully across the facade. It has a wood floor with slender, simple wood columns rising to support its roof. A decorative gable, its face sheathed with tongue and groove ceiling, rests on the roof above and in front of the central entrance. Ghost marks on the wall to either side of the main entrance suggest that the original porch may have been only one bay wide. This porch appears to date from the early years of this century. The entrance consists of a pair of three panel doors flanked by sidelights.

The five-pane sidelights rest on a flat wood panel. The plain board entrance surround has a peaked lintel. The window openings on either side, on the second story, and throughout the house are rather large with flat sills and lintels; they contain six-over-six sash windows. Most of the windows retain either their two leaf or single leaf blinds. The east elevation of the main block is without any openings and contains an interior end chimney. The west elevation of the two-story block has windows on both stories near the corners of the house while the center of the elevation is given to a pair of interior end chimneys. The west elevation of the one-story ell has a two-bay arrangement with a door in the northernmost bay closest to the main block and a window in the southern bay. The lower elevation of the ell's gable end is blind and brick while the upper portion is weatherboarded. As will be seen on the interior plan this wall contains an interior end chimney. The stem of the porch fitted inside the house's "L" plan--carrying along the east wall of the one-story ell--was enclosed in the 1950s for use as a kitchen and is covered with board and batten siding. The remainder of the porch has been enclosed in a less permanent fashion and continues to serve as a porch. Windows carry across its south elevation while an aluminum storm door and another window occupy the east end of the porch.

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Continuation sheet

Description

Item number 7

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As noted earlier a pair of three panel doors give into the center/stair hall. The plain exterior surround with a peaked lintel is repeated on the interior. This peaked lintel device is the predominant decorative feature on the interior which has an almost stark cubical quality. In the center of the hall's east wall is a door into the large living room. The closed string stair rises along the hall's west wall in a direct flight to the south to an intermediate landing in the southwest corner of the hall then continues two steps to another landing (across the rear of the hall) from which the stair then rises along the hall's east wall northward to the second-story hall. The stair has a round handrail and rectangle-in-plan balusters. At the back of the hall and under the stair is a door opening onto the back porch. The interior door and window surrounds are composed of plain unmolded vertical members rising to support a peaked lintel. The windows have splayed reveals. The doors are also somewhat unusual with a pair of flat vertical panels above a wide horizontal panel.

The mantel in the living room is the most ornate of those in the house but is simple in composition with pilasters, containing recessed panels, rising to a double board frieze below the mantel shelf.

A door at the foot of the stairs opens to the front room on the west side of the hall. Its finish is the same as that of the living room except that the mantel is simpler in composition. Here plain pilasters rise from easily molded bases to banded capitals supporting a double board frieze and shelf. A door in the center of its south wall connects to the room behind it--the back room in this double pile arrangement. It is finished in the same manner as its pendant to the north. A door in the center of its south wall connects to what was the original dining room. To the east of that door is a second door opening into a bathroom created from the northeast corner of the dining room. The dining room boasts the same mantel seen in the pair of rooms; however, the fireplace wall is given additional interest through the design of built-in cupboards on either side of the interior end chimney. The cupboards are arranged on two levels with pairs of doors fronting each level of the east cupboard. The smaller closet to the west of the fireplace has but a single door at the top and bottom. The kitchen was created by enclosing the porch along the dining room's east wall in the 1950s.

The second story of the house repeats the plan and finish of the first story.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates Unknown Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

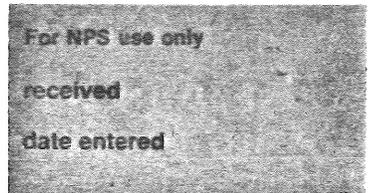
Nestled in a grove of tall oak trees, the Rankin-Sherrill House has been a landmark in the village of Mt. Ulla since its construction for Dr. Samuel D. Rankin in the mid-1850s. Rankin (1821-1860), a native of Guilford County, married Mary Ella Gillespie in 1843. The Gillespie family were prominent landowners in Rowan County during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Dr. Rankin combined his profession as a medical doctor with that of a planter in addition to his services as a layman to Back Creek Presbyterian Church. His role as chairman of the Building Committee for Back Creek Church was surely pivotal in his decision to build this house. Back Creek Church, the county's finest surviving Greek Revival temple form church, was constructed in 1856-1857, and it can be reasonably assumed that the construction of this house occurred about that time. After Rankin's death in 1860 his widow and children continued to reside here. In 1876 Mrs. Rankin deeded the house to her eldest surviving son, Sylvester Chalmers Rankin (1848-1902), who in 1886 sold the house and its lands to A. E. Sherrill. The two-story brick house has continued to the present as the residence of the Sherrills, a farm family who are also members of Back Creek Church. In addition to its historical associations with these two locally prominent families the Rankin-Sherrill House, a vernacular Greek Revival dwelling, is significant as one of the very few brick houses erected as plantation seats in antebellum Rowan County. Its simple and well-crafted exterior and interior woodwork remains intact.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Through the role of its builder, Dr. Samuel D. Rankin, the house is associated with Back Creek Church and along with the church is an expression of the emerging wealth of the planter class in antebellum Rowan County.
- B. The Rankin-Sherrill House is associated with the life of Dr. Samuel D. Rankin (1821-1860) a doctor and community leader who served as Chairman of the Building Committee for Back Creek Church (1856-1857), the county's finest surviving Greek Revival temple form church. The house is also associated with the lives of members of Dr. Rankin's family and members of the Sherrill family who have now occupied it for nearly a century and have been prominent in the affairs of Back Creek Church and Mt. Ulla.
- C. Symbolizing the strength and traditional values of the Scotch-Irish in western Rowan County, the Rankin-Sherrill House embodies the distinctive characteristics of Greek Revival domestic architecture in both its design and simple detail.

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Continuation sheet

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

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The Rankin-Sherrill House was built near the western Rowan County community of Mount Ulla in the middle 1850s by Dr. Samuel D. Rankin. The house remained in the Rankin family until the 1880s when it was sold to the Sherrill family, which still owns it. The two-story house is one of Rowan's few brick Greek Revival homes.

Dr. Rankin was born in Guilford County in 1821. He was the ninth and last child of John C. and Tabitha Wharton Rankin. In 1843 he married Mary Ella Gillespie, daughter of Robert Gillespie and member of a large landholding Rowan family. They had seven children. Samuel D. was born in 1847, Sylvester Chalmers in 1848, Walter L. in 1851, Millard F. in 1852, Howard G. in 1855, Jesse in 1857, and Mary D. in 1859. Rankin set up a medical practice in Mount Ulla and became a prominent member of the community, as well as a farmer. He was Chairman of the Building Committee for the Back Creek Presbyterian Church.¹

Rankin died of dropsy of the chest (edema) in 1860 at the age of 39. He willed his land and newly built house to his wife until their eldest son Sylvester Chalmers Rankin came of age (Samuel D. Rankin, Jr. died in 1853 at the age of six).² Mrs. Rankin continued to operate the farm in 1860. It consisted of 550 acres, 200 of which were under cultivation. The farm was valued at \$8,250. The livestock was valued at \$1,105 and included 32 swine and 20 sheep. The Rankin farm produced 7,500 pounds of tobacco, 800 bushels of wheat, 1,600 bushels of corn, and 20 tons of hay. Mary Rankin owned 13 slaves in 1860.³

In the 1870 census Sylvester Chalmers Rankin was listed as the head of the household. He was living with his mother, two sisters, and a brother. The farm, reduced to 280 acres, was valued at \$2,000. Rankin grew 400 bushels of oats. He apparently did not grow any tobacco. His livestock was valued at \$411.⁴ In 1876 his mother formally deeded him the house and 265 3/4 acres. In 1886 Rankin sold the property to A. E. Sherrill for \$5,000.⁵

Sherrill continued to farm the land which he gradually increased. An 1890 tax list credits him with the ownership of 320 acres valued at \$2,150, while in 1892 he owned 413 acres valued at \$2,900. Sherrill and his wife Josephine had nine children.⁶ He died in 1900 leaving the property to his wife, who continued to farm it. In 1915 the Sherrill estate was divided among the children with J. C. Sherrill inheriting the house and 40 acres. Like his father he also farmed the tract. He and his wife Anita had three children and were prominent members of the Back Creek Presbyterian Church. J. C. Sherrill, who died in 1948, left \$7,500 to the church for the construction of a manse. The house and property were divided among the children. J. C. (Carl) Sherrill, Jr. is the present owner of the house.⁷

Although well into its second century the Rankin-Sherrill House has been owned by only two families. These families have been prominent in Rowan agricultural, medical, and religious circles and are typical of Rowan's sturdy Presbyterian settlers.

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Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8

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NOTES

¹Samuel M. Rankin, The Rankin and Wharton Families and Their Genealogy (n.p., 1932), 150, 155, hereinafter cited as Rankin, The Rankin and Wharton Families; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Rowan County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

²Rankin, The Rankin and Wharton Families, 155; Rowan County Will Book K, 278.

³Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Rowan County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Slave Schedule.

⁴Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Rowan County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule.

⁵Rowan County Deed Book 55, p. 193; Book 67, p. 116.

⁶Rowan County Tax Lists, 1890, 1892; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Rowan County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

⁷Rowan County Will Book 3, p. 353; Deed Book 140, p. 174; Will Book 12, p. 191.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Rankin, Samuel M. The Rankin and Wharton Families and Their Genealogy. N.p., 1932.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 7.34 acres

Quadrangle name Cleveland Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UMT References

A

1	7	5	2	4	6	2	0	3	9	4	5	8	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property being nominated is a tract of 7.34 acres identified as Parcel 36, Rowan County Tax Map 566, Mt. Ulla Township. Original in the Tax Supervisor's Office, Rowan County Office Building, 402 North Main Street, Salisbury, N. C. 28144

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Architectural description, statement of significance, and criteria assessment prepared by Davyd Foard Hood; historical research by Jim Sumner.

organization Division of Archives and History date July 8, 1982

street & number 109 East Jones Street telephone (919) 733-6545

city or town Raleigh state N. C. 27611

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. King, Jr.

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date August 13, 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

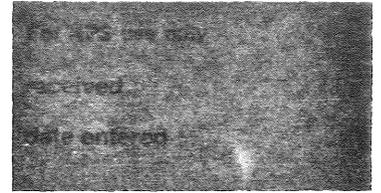
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation sheet

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Item number 9

Page 1

Rankin, Samuel M. The Rankin and Wharton Families and Their Genealogy. N.p., 1932.

Rowan County Records. Deed Books, Tax Lists, Will Books. Microfilm copies.
Raleigh: Division of Archives and History.

United States Census Office. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Rowan County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Rowan County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Rowan County, North Carolina, Population Schedule. Microfilm copies.
Raleigh: Division of Archives and History.

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Rankin-Sherrill House - Additional Documentation
Rowan County, NC

Additional Documentation -

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Gary Row SHPO 7/22/09
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date
 North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
 State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____ _____ _____	Signature of the Keeper _____ _____ _____ _____	Date of Action _____ _____ _____ _____
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5.

<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	1	6	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	1	12	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0	objects
	2	18	Total

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Rankin-Sherrill House - Additional Documentation
Rowan County, NC

7. Narrative Description

The following resources stood on several parcels which composed the 7.34 acres originally nominated in 1982 in conjunction with the Rankin-Sherrill House. Section 7 of that nomination provided a physical description solely for the Rankin-Sherrill House. This additional documentation corrects the omission of these resources found within the nominated area at that time. Of these additional resources, only the Rankin-Sherrill House, its smokehouse/dairy/well house, the John and Anita Sherrill House, and its garage stand today. A recently reconstructed concrete block barn stands in the same location to the south of the Rankin-Sherrill House as the original ca. 1940 barn. The earlier barn was torn down after severe damage caused by Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

Smokehouse/Dairy/Well House ca. 1853 Contributing Building

One-story weatherboarded outbuilding with an east facing engaged front gable porch. The building is divided into a smokehouse in the north half of the building with an entry to the east; a dairy at the west end of the south half of the building with an entry facing south; and an open southeast corner sheltering the well. The roof is metal and the foundation is brick.

Barn ca. 1940 Noncontributing Building

Located on a separate parcel to the south of the Rankin-Sherrill House, this one-story concrete block barn has a front gable metal-sheathed roof and weatherboarded gables. The central passage runs north to south and is flanked by stalls. A hay loft is located on the upper floor.

Pole Barn ca. 1940 Noncontributing Structure

On a separate parcel across Mt. Ullah Road (now Centenary Church Road) to the east of the Rankin-Sherrill House, stands a long one-story barn with a metal-sheathed shed roof supported by diagonally braced skinned tree trunk poles.

Storage Building ca. 1940 Noncontributing Building

This one-story brick building is located on a separate parcel to the south of the pole barn. Its side-gable roof is sheathed with metal. Equipment can be driven into the building through a sliding door centered on the rear (east) elevation. An entry door is centered on the façade and a single window is located on the gable ends.

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Grain Bin ca. 1940 Noncontributing Structure

This short, round, metal grain bin is located to the south of the brick storage building.

J. C. Sherrill's Grocery ca. 1924 Noncontributing Building

On a lot at the southwest corner of the intersection of Sherrill's Ford Road and Mt. Ullah Road stands a two-story brick store building with a flat parapet roof on the façade and parapet walls that step down to the rear (south) on the side elevations. An intact angled and recessed storefront with a double-leaf entry is sheltered by a metal-sheathed shed roof canopy. Two gas pumps are located at the north edge of the canopy. A one-story shed roof brick addition runs along the rear half of the west elevation.

John and Anita Sherrill House 1938 Noncontributing Building

This two-story Colonial Revival-style brick house stands to the west of the Rankin-Sherrill House and was built to replace a ca. 1920 frame bungalow built by Price Elias Sherrill and occupied by John and Anita Sherrill from 1931 until 1936 when the house was destroyed by fire. The Sherrill House has a classical one-story entry porch, tall hip roof sheathed with asphalt shingles, six over six sash windows and a one-story sunroom on its east elevation.

Garage ca. 1920 Noncontributing Building

This one-story weatherboarded garage located on a separate parcel to the west of the Sherrill House was built by Price Elias Sherrill at about the same time as the contemporary bungalow destroyed by fire in 1936. The hip roof is sheathed with metal and its two open bays face north. John and Anita Sherrill continued to use the garage after the construction of their 1938 brick house.

Mt. Ullah Mill ca. 1948 Noncontributing Building

Located on the north side of Sherrill's Ford Road across from J. C. Sherrill's Grocery, this five-story-on-basement brick grist mill has a flat roof, metal frame industrial windows and a main entrance at the east end of the south façade at ground level and sheltered by a bracketed shed roof canopy. A one-story metal-sheathed shed roof brick wing on the main block's west elevation contains offices at its south end and an open loading dock to the north running along a flat roof two-story-on-basement brick wing at the north end of the main block. A later metal one-story shed addition is located at the north end of the east elevation.

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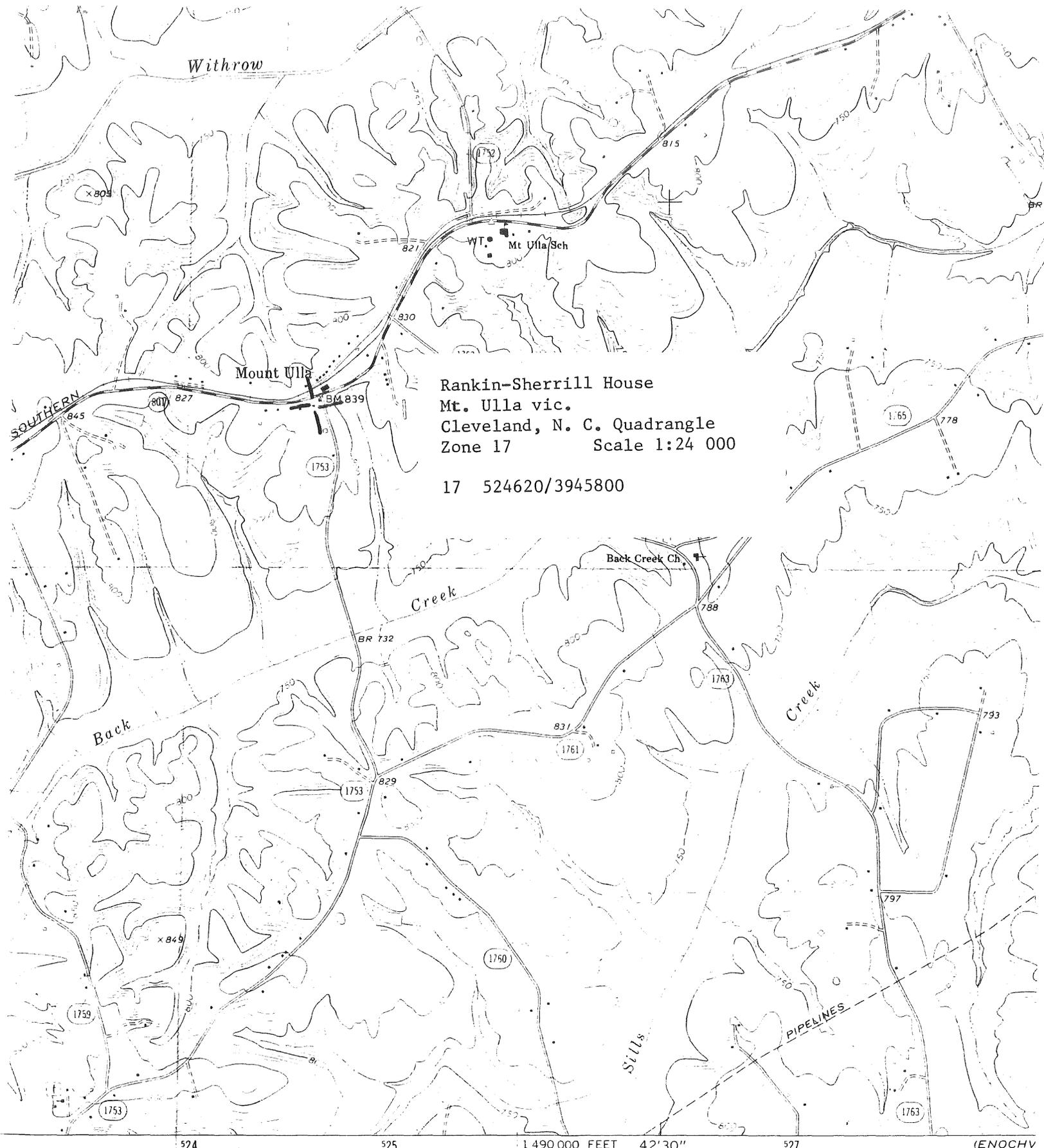
Rankin-Sherrill House - Additional Documentation
Rowan County, NC

Grain Silos (Ten)

ca. 1948

Noncontributing Structures

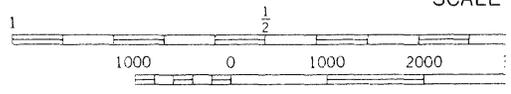
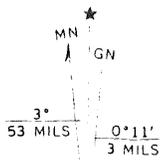
A tightly spaced group of ten concrete three-story grain silos are located to the east of the main mill with little setback from Sherrill's Ford Road.



Rankin-Sherrill House
 Mt. Ulla vic.
 Cleveland, N. C. Quadrangle
 Zone 17 Scale 1:24 000

17 524620/3945800

and published by the Geological Survey
 S and USC&GS
 photogrammetric methods from aerial
 en 1965. Field checked 1970
 tion, 1927 North American datum
 d based on North Carolina coordinate system
 versal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 n blue
 lines indicate selected fence and field lines where



CONTOUR INT
 DATUM IS MI

