United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form  

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking “x” in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter “N/A” for “not applicable.” For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property  
   historic name  Carter, William, House  
   other names/site number  Carter-Burge-Miller House  

2. Location  
   street & number  S side SR 1626, 0.35 mi W of jct w/SR 1625  
   city, town  Mount Airy  
   state  North Carolina  
   code  NC  
   county  Surry  
   code  171  
   zip code  27030  

3. Classification  
   Ownership of Property  Category of Property  Number of Resources within Property  
   □ private  □ building(s)  Contributing  1  
   □ public-local  □ site  Noncontributing  3 buildings  
   □ public-State  □ structure  sites  
   □ public-Federal  □ object  structures  
   □ site  □ object  objects  
   □ structure  □ object  Total  2  
   □ object  □ object  5  
   Name of related multiple property listing:  N/A  
   Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register  0  

4. State/Federal Agency Certification  
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. □ See continuation sheet.
   
   Signature of certifying official  
   Date  
   State or Federal agency and bureau  
   
   In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. □ See continuation sheet.
   
   Signature of commenting or other official  
   Date  
   State or Federal agency and bureau  

5. National Park Service Certification  
   I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
   □ entered in the National Register.  
   □ See continuation sheet.  
   □ determined eligible for the National Register. □ See continuation sheet.  
   □ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
   □ removed from the National Register.  
   □ other, (explain):  
   
   Signature of the Keeper  
   Date of Action
### 6. Function or Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
<th>Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DOMESTIC/single dwelling</td>
<td>DOMESTIC/single dwelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)</th>
<th>Materials (enter categories from instructions)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>foundation Brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>walls Brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roof Asphalt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

[See continuation sheet]
The William Carter House is a ca. 1834 Federal vernacular dwelling located in rural Surry County northwest of Mount Airy. The stately two-story brick structure has a plain exterior which belies the richness of the interior detailing with its sophisticated decorative painting. Facing northeast, the house is prominently situated on a hilltop above Pauls Creek, which serves as half of the perimeter boundary of the nominated property. The house is surrounded by six early twentieth-century outbuildings—three noncontributing buildings (blacksmith shop, barn, and tobacco packhouse), two noncontributing structures (crib/granary and equipment shed), and a small open shed (not "counted"). These outbuildings are not intrusive and are noncontributing largely because of their post "period of significance" construction dates.

The William Carter House has seen remarkably few alterations through the years and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A ca. 1900 photograph shows that the house today appears virtually the same as it did then, except that the present asphalt-shingled roof was then covered with wood shingles. Nineteenth-century alterations include the addition of a first-story door and window on the southeast end of the house and the changing of the original hall-and-parlor plan to a center-hall plan (an early modification). Twentieth-century changes to the exterior include the removal of a small rear porch (of unknown date) and the construction in 1931-1932 of a one-story rear kitchen ell which replaced the original detached kitchen which had burned. A bathroom attached to the ell has recently been removed and a shed porch has been added to the southeast side of the ell. Twentieth-century interior changes include the recent remodeling of the frame ell to accommodate a modern kitchen, bathroom, and laundry room; the recent enclosure of the front end of the second-story hall to create a bathroom, and the replacement of much of the plaster (which was in deteriorated condition) with sheetrock. The house is protected by a preservation covenant with The Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Inc., and has been recently rehabilitated according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The straightforward exterior of the Carter House is characterized by three-to-one common bond brick walls with a simple corbelled cornice. Centrally located at each gable end is a chimney positioned half to the interior and half to the exterior of the house. The northwest chimney is single-shouldered, while the southeast chimney has only a half shoulder. Both have a stuccoed stack. The gable roof is flush at the ends with molded rake boards, and the eaves on the front and rear have exposed rafter ends. Six-over-six sash windows—which are taller on the first story than on the second—have plain surrounds and flat-arched heads. Wooden bar ventilators open to the
cellar. The six-panel front and rear doors retain evidence of handsome panel graining with three-quarter-circle cut-out corners. The symmetrically-arranged three-bay facade features a central door flanked by windows at each level. The presence of a second-story door implies the original intention of a front porch, but physical evidence suggests that it was never built. The rear elevation is asymmetrical and has two doors—one leading to the center hall and the other leading to the dining room. A one-story frame ell projects from the east half of the rear elevation and is characterized by German siding, a gable roof, and a shed porch along a portion of the southeast side. The northwest elevation is symmetrically-arranged with windows flanking the chimney on both first and second-story levels and at the attic level. The southeast elevation has symmetrically-placed windows at second-story level, but the rest of this elevation is asymmetrical with only one attic window, a window and a door (both added) snug to the chimney at first-story level, and the entrance to the cellar on the southwest side of the chimney.

The interior of the rectangular main body of the William Carter House follows a center hall plan. In the hall, the open-string stair rises from front to rear along the southeast wall, turning at a landing several steps below second-story level. From the second story it continues onward in the same manner to the unfinished attic. Beneath the stair on the first floor is a closet with four-panel door entrances from both the hall and the dining room. Also beneath the stair is an inscription in the ceiling plaster, "W C 1834." The interior wall next to the stair is brick, while the wall on other side of the hall is a frame partition. On the first floor, large rooms (10' x 22' and 13' x 22'), each with a fireplace centered on the end wall, flank the hall. On the second floor, this arrangement is repeated on the northwest side of the hall, but on the southeast side there are two rooms of equal size with corner fireplaces. Interior walls have plaster or sheetrock surfaces, except for the flush-board sheathing beneath the stair and on the partition dividing the two small second-floor rooms. A molded churrail remains throughout much of the house. Except for the four-panel doors of the hall closet, the other doors are six-paneled. Most of the doors and windows have two-part surrounds, although those in the first-floor parlor have three-part surrounds. All surrounds have a beaded inner edge. The five mantels have molded surrounds and shelves, and the dining room mantel has a paneled frieze. The stair features a simple tapered newel, a ramped handrail, and square-cut balusters.

The most impressive interior detailing is the comprehensive and well-preserved decorative painting, found on doors, mantels, stair, and some baseboards. The doors are painted with a sophisticated mahogany graining typical of the Federal period. The central feature
of this style of painting is that the panels are detailed with yellow ochre outlines and quarter-round cut-out corners to give the illusion of raised panels. Two of the mantels—in the parlor and in the bedroom above the parlor—are stippled in a dark green, presumably in imitation of Virginia greenstone. The stair risers and wall string are stippled in the same manner, but in black, with moldings painted a dark green. Some of the hall baseboard also retains its original black stippling. The open string of the stair is grained, and the landing features a combination of graining and stippling. An important discovery made during the recent rehabilitation of the house is that the flush-boarded stair spandrel is painted with a trompe l'oeil wainscot with grained panels and a green chairrail. The combination of mahogany graining, green and black stippling, and dark green trim creates an interior of great visual richness.

The interior of the 1930s ell has been recently remodeled with a handsome kitchen (cabinets painted a dark green to coordinate with the dark green trim in the main part of the house) in the room closest to the original part of the house and with a bathroom and a laundry room in the rear section.

Outbuildings associated with the William Carter House include:

1. Blacksmith shop. Early twentieth century. Noncontributing building. The blacksmith shop built and operated by Dick Miller is a deteriorated one-story board-and-batten building with a metal-sheathed gable roof, a batten door which retains one wrought iron strap hinge, and a stone forge with leather bellows. Because the blacksmith shop is not associated with the William Carter House's period of significance, it is designated as noncontributing within the context of this nomination. Nevertheless, it is a rare survivor of its building type in Surry County.

2. Crib/granary. Early twentieth century. Noncontributing structure. The combination crib/granary is a weatherboarded frame structure with a metal-sheathed shed roof, a central entrance, and a slatted wood wall along the crib side.

3. Equipment shed. Early twentieth century. Noncontributing structure. The equipment shed is a delapidated structure with a metal-sheathed gable roof and an open southeast side supported by log posts. It nearly touches the crib/granary on the northeast side.

4. Barn. Early twentieth century. Noncontributing building. The barn is a rambling structure with log inner partitions, vertical board sheathing on the outer walls, a vertical log-supported open wall along the northwest side, and a shallow shed roof sheathed in
metal. It includes animal pens and an overhead loft.

5. Packhouse. Early twentieth century. Noncontributing building. The tobacco packhouse is a frame building sheathed with vertical boards with a batten door and a gable roof.

Adjacent to the blacksmith shop is a metal-roofed open shed (not "counted" due to its small size and indeterminate use).

The outbuildings are arranged with the blacksmith shop and open shed east of the house and the crib/granary, equipment shed, barn, and tobacco packhouse located west and southwest of the house. All of these, with the house, stand atop a knoll. From southwest to southeast of the house and outbuildings the land slopes downward to the uncultivated fields of the river bottom. Along the northeast edge of the nominated property runs the dirt and gravel SR 1626 cut deeply into the hillside so that the house stands high above it. A tree and hedge-lined drive northwest of the house leads from the road around to the rear of the house. Down the hill beyond the drive (and beyond the property line) is a corn field. Across the road in front of the house is a wooded hillside (not included in the nomination). No other houses are visible from the William Carter House, and thus it retains a strong rural feeling and sense of isolation.
SUMMARY:

The William Carter House is significant as an outstanding representative of early nineteenth-century Federal-style architecture in Surry County, North Carolina. One of the best preserved of the few remaining examples, it is, in fact, the only brick house of the period surviving in the county. The stately two-story house is a vernacular expression of the style and has experienced few alterations to its original form and detail. The William Carter House is also significant as a remarkably intact example of decorative interior painting in piedmont North Carolina from the Federal period. Its comprehensive collection of sophisticated painting includes graining, stippling, and trompe l’oeil work. The period of significance for the William Carter House is ca. 1834, its time of construction. Stylistically, the painting appears to date from the same period.
CONTEXT: Early Nineteenth-Century Federal-Style Architecture in Surry County

Surry County’s historic architecture is primarily a legacy of simple structures steeped in long-standing vernacular traditions. The predominant character of the county has always been rural, even with the growth of towns and industries during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In rural Surry County the historic architecture is generally conservative, traditional, and practical, and rarely is there any stylistic sophistication. Few houses in the county survive from the early nineteenth-century Federal period. Of the more sophisticated examples, most are of heavy-timber construction. Brick construction was used only rarely, so that any such building was considered an imposing structure by virtue of its masonry construction, even if the details were simple. The finest of the surviving houses of the period in Surry County is the Edwards-Franklin House (NR), a two-story frame dwelling built in the 1790s and remodeled in the Federal style in the 1820s. This elegant house has a three-room "Quaker plan," double-shouldered Flemish bond chimneys, and Federal-style woodwork with extensive decorative painting. Among the remaining style-conscious buildings of the period— including the York Tavern and the Masonic Lodge in Rockford, the Copeland-Harbour House, the Reeves-Hardy House, and the Jervis House—several have been either heavily remodeled or have collapsed from neglect. Others—including the Dick Snow House, the Doss-McKinney House, the Adam Marion House, and the Tyson Snow Wilmoth House—exhibit the basic house form of the period (two-stories with vertical proportions, a gable roof with tightly fitted eaves, at least one gable-end chimney, and a two or three-bay facade) while all but ignoring the Federal stylistic influences. These houses date from the 1820s to the 1840s. By comparison, the ca. 1834 William Carter House is one of the most impressive, as well as one of the best preserved, dwellings of the period. It is the only pre-1850 brick house remaining in Surry County (and one of only three surviving from prior to 1900), which, in itself, renders it significant. Although the exterior is a simple vernacular expression of the Federal style, the well-executed interior contains handsome (albeit simple) woodwork of the period and amazingly well-preserved decorative painting.

CONTEXT: Decorative Interior Painting in Piedmont North Carolina during the Federal Period:

North Carolina's decorative interior painting—wood-grained, marbled, stenciled, smoked, polychromed, stone-blocked, scenic, and trompe l'oeil architectural decoration—constitutes a dramatic aspect of the state's art and architectural history. A wealth of examples survives from the late eighteenth century through the early twentieth century and reveals a broad geographic distribution and marvelous variation in form, style, and technique. The painting ranges from the highly sophisticated and primly academic to the unschooled and sometimes bizarrely energetic examples of folk art. Historically, the most common form of decorative painting in North Carolina was wood graining. It remained popular well into the twentieth century. Different types of wood were imitated, and examples range from the realistic and precisely-executed to the brashly stylized. Wood graining was used primarily for doors and secondarily for wainscots, mantels, and other architectural elements where wood would naturally have been used. Following closely behind wood graining in popularity was the imitation of various types of stone, categorized generally as marbling. Marbling was frequently used in conjunction with graining to give a more comprehensive, well-integrated approach to interior painted decoration. A variety of types of marble were imitated, as well as other stones like granite and Virginia greenstone. Like wood graining, examples range from the highly realistic to the stylized. Marbling was used primarily for mantels, baseboards, and stair risers, and secondarily for wainscots, door casings, and other trim. Though not as common as graining and marbling, one of the most visually fascinating forms of decorative interior painting in the state was trompe l'oeil painting. This type created illusionary architectural elements where none existed, such as imitation doors, windows, wainscots, wall niches, cornices, ceiling medallions, and ceiling and stair panels. Like other forms of decorative interior painting in North Carolina, examples of trompe l'oeil work range from the highly sophisticated to simple folk art.

These three forms of painting—graining, marbling, and trompe l'oeil—were all found in the piedmont during the Federal period. A

group of eight piedmont houses of the period (more than identified in any other section of the state), displays a distinctive form of woodgraining associated with the Federal period. This form consists of mahogany graining with panels detailed with yellow ochre outlines and quarter-round (or in rare cases, three-quarter-round) cut-out corners to give the illusion of raised panels. Of the eight examples--including the William Carter House, the Charles Benbow House (NR, Guilford Co.), the Fewell-Reynolds House (NR, Rockingham Co.), the Edwards-Franklin House (NR listed as Bernand Franklin House, Surry Co.), the Durrett-Jarrett House (Yadkin Co.), the David Hendricks House (Davie Co.), Mt. Vernon (NR, Rowan Co.), and the Wilfong-Wilson House (Catawba Co.)--the graining at the William Carter House is among the most sophisticated. While all the houses exhibit graining of the same genre, renditions range from the academic to the more abstract. The William Carter House graining is most closely aligned, stylistically, with that found at the Fewell-Reynolds House, to the extent that both may have been executed by the same artist (name unknown). In addition to graining, four of these houses--including the William Carter House--exhibit a stippled version of Virginia greenstone. Another displays marbling, and several--including the William Carter House--utilize dark green painted trim typical of the period. The William Carter House and the David Hendricks House also boast trompe l'oeil paneled wainscots. As a whole, the well-preserved decorative painting at the William Carter House constitutes a prime example of that found in the piedmont region of North Carolina during the early nineteenth-century Federal period.3

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Little is known concerning William Carter (1796-1840), the original owner of the two-story brick house on Pauls Creek. Born in Patrick County, Virginia, he married Elizabeth Moore in 1818.4 As late as 1826, the Carters were residing in Stokes County, where William Carter

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3 This analysis is based on the study of decorative interior painting in North Carolina currently being conducted by the author, which includes, to date, the recording of nearly 300 examples representing 66 of the state's 100 counties.

owned more than 500 acres. Carter soon acquired more than 800 acres along Pauls Creek in Surry County—the location of the present house—through a combination of purchase (350 acres from Hardin H. Moore in 1826, 240 acres from Fanning and Paulina Jane [Moore?] Jones in 1835) and his wife's inheritance (240 acres), all of which had been the property of William Moore. The 1835 deed reveals that Carter was then living in Surry County; thus he moved from Stokes to Surry sometime between 1826 and 1835. Indeed, inscribed in the ceiling beneath the stair hall of the William Carter House is "W C 1834."

Elizabeth (Moore) Carter died September 4, 1839, and William Carter died September 25, 1840. Both were buried in a hilltop cemetery on part of William Carter's land located several hundred yards northeast of the house. The 1840 Census reveals that the Carters had two sons and one daughter. Carter apparently died without leaving a will, and no estate records, guardianship records, or related documents have been found that clarify what happened to the property at that point. The 1850 Census shows that there were no Carters on the property at that time (and the children would have been of age by then). Local tradition claims that a man named Burge owned the property after

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5 Deed Book U, page 292, Hardin H. Moore to William Carter (of Stokes County), December 8, 1826, Office of the Register of Deeds, Surry County Courthouse, Dobson; Deed Book X, pages 39-41, Mordecai Fleming, Trustee, from William Carter (Trust Deed), February 14, 1838, Office of the Register of Deeds, Surry County Courthouse, Dobson.


7 Elizabeth and William Carter gravestones.

8 Sixth Census of the United States, 1840: Surry County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

9 A detailed search for the appropriate documents at both the Surry County Courthouse and the State Archives, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, has thus far proved fruitless.

Carter, but no deeds to or from an appropriate Burge were found.11

By the late nineteenth century, the property was in the ownership of the Miller family, though no deeds clearly relate how the parcel which includes the William Carter House came into Miller ownership. Miller family tradition claims that Francis (Fallenstein) Miller, a German immigrant, moved to the Pauls Creek area of Surry County from the Blue Ridge of Virginia (family birth records suggest between 1866 and 1868), and that after building his own house on the south side of the creek, he proceeded to purchase numerous tracts of land in the area, including the Carter house tract. Family tradition continues that Francis Miller, during his lifetime, gave the Carter house tract to his son, Jefferson Frederick (b. 1847, m. 1870 to Amanda Hill).12 (The Miller homestead itself was left to another son, James, and daughter Betty also received a large tract in the area.) In 1883 two of Jeff and Amanda Miller's children died and were buried in the Carter cemetery, suggesting that the family was occupying the William Carter House by that time. On July 14, 1914, Jeff and Amanda Miller sold approximately 65 acres (including the house tract) to their son, J. D. "Dick" Miller. Dick Miller operated the blacksmith shop on the property and built the rear ell of the house in 1931-1932. He and his heirs owned the property until the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Inc. acquired an option on it and revolved it with a preservation deed covenant to the present owners, 11

11 Interview with Julius Miller (86-year-old grandson of Francis Miller, son of James Miller, nephew of Jeff Miller), November 4, 1989; Burge may have lived on the property, for there are stories of his horse racing operation on the bottom lands of Pauls Creek.

12 Deeds show Francis Miller acquiring other property in the vicinity.

13 Julius Miller interview; a review of Francis Miller's will, dated January 10, 1890, with codicil dated April 29, 1893, shows that the property was not given to Jeff by that means.

14 Francis Miller will; Julius Miller interview.

15 Deed Book 66, page 180; Deed Book 66, page 181, Office of the Register of Deeds, Surry County Courthouse, Dobson.

Richard H. and Juanita S. Byrd, on April 7, 1988. The Byrds have rehabilitated the house, according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, for use as their residence.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Survey #: ____________________________________________
Record #: ____________________________________________

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property: 9.8 acres

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing
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B
Zone Easting Northing
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D
1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is illustrated by the heavy black line on the accompanying survey map entitled "Survey for Richard H. Byrd and wife Juanita S. Byrd," being that portion (9.8 acres) of the total surveyed property located southwest of SR 1626.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Laura A. W. Phillips, Consultant to
organization: Historic Preservation Foundation of N.C., Inc.
date: November 1, 1989
street & number: 637 N. Spring Street
telephone: 919/727-1968
city or town: Winston-Salem
state: North Carolina
zip code: 27101
Section 9: Bibliography


Miller, Julius. Interview, November 4, 1989.


Surry County Records, Office of the Register of Deeds, Surry County Courthouse, Dobson, N. C.


Section 10: Boundary Justification:

The nominated property consists of the William Carter House, its outbuildings, and the 9.8 acres which provide its immediate setting—the hill on which the house stands and the bottom land leading from the hill to Pauls Creek. This acreage was part of the original land associated with the house and connects it visually with Pauls Creek, the geographic feature most prominently associated with the house throughout its history. (The remaining portion of the present property, which is not included in the nomination, is woodland that is separated from the house and its immediate setting by the dirt and gravel SR 1626 which is deeply cut into the hillside in front of the house.)
The following information applies to all nomination photographs:

1) William Carter House  
2) Mount Airy vicinity, Surry County, North Carolina  
3) Laura A. W. Phillips  
4) October 18, 1989  
5) State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, N. C.

The photographs are keyed by letter to the property map.

A: 6) facade, to the southwest  
B: 6) rear elevation, to the east  
C: 6) packhouse, barn, and landscape, to the southwest  
D: 6) stair, to the southwest  
E: 6) stair landing, to the north  
F: 6) parlor mantel, to the northwest  
G: 6) doors to small chambers, second story, to the east