**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Mistletoe Villa

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

Young Avenue, on the lot formed by the intersection of Young Avenue, Chavasse Avenue, and Dorsey Avenue

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**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mrs. Rebekah Cooper

STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 21

CITY, TOWN Henderson

VICINITY OF

STATE North Carolina 27536

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Vance County Courthouse

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**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

_FEDERAL_ _STATE_ _COUNTY_ _LOCAL_

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE
Sited on a spacious wooded lot in Henderson, Mistletoe Villa is the town's most flamboyant and best known nineteenth century mansion. There is a long local tradition that the house is the work of Samuel Sloan, most noted in North Carolina for his design of the Executive Mansion in Raleigh. While there is no documentation for this tradition, stylistic and circumstantial evidence gives some credence to the idea that it was designed by Sloan or one of his assistants, or taken from one of his pattern books or published drawings.

The house is impressively sited at the center of a large triangular lot, with its setting much enhanced by surrounding plantings, including pecan trees, oaks, crepe myrtles, azaleas, and boxwoods. The two-story frame Queen Anne style dwelling rests on a raised stone foundation which had been the cellar of an earlier, one-story Greek Revival house that was greatly overbuilt to form the present structure. The core of the house is rectangular in plan, three bays wide by three deep, covered with a hip roof pierced by interior brick chimneys. This basic form is broken and embellished on every elevation by an array of projecting bays, porches, and dormers that, though symmetrically arranged, give the house a complex massing. These elements, together with the shingled surfaces, sawn and turned ornament, and touches of colored glass, make the house one of the most distinctive representatives of the Queen Anne style in a several county region.

All elevations are covered with plain weatherboards on the first floor level; on the second story of all but the rear elevation the wall surfaces are patterned shingles. Also shingled are gables wherever they occur, over porches and in gabled wall dormers, and each gable has identical curvilinear sawnwork ornament at its peak.

Windows throughout the house are of double-hung sash with the lower sash composed of two large panes set vertically; the upper sash consists of a large pane surrounded at the top and sides by bands of smaller panes. On the first story most windows extend to the floor level and can be raised to provide access to porches and balconies.

The front (east) elevation is three bays wide with an exterior wainscot of narrow vertical boards running the entire length of the facade, broken by the centrally placed door and the flanking floor-length windows. The double door is crowned with a transom of colored glass in geometric patterns; bands of colored glass also run above and below the large glass pane in the top half of each leaf of the door.

This elevation is fronted by a deep one-story porch that is raised above the foundation to the level of the first story by chamfered posts. Its hip roof is carried by turned posts connected by chamfered rails; the rails and posts are treated with brackets and other sawnwork ornament. There are no balusters. A spindle frieze carries under the roof of the porch. At the center bay the porch projects downward and outward under a gable roof. The gable of this projection is fitted with a three-part window of colored glass. Concrete steps rise to a landing under this projecting roof; wooden steps carry the remainder of the flight to the main level. The treatment of the porch is markedly similar to that of the Hawkins Hartness House in Raleigh (1882, architect unknown), a near neighbor of the Executive Mansion; it less closely resembles the porch of the Executive Mansion.
The three bays of the second story of the front elevation are marked by wall dormers, the central one being a steep gable with deeply overhanging eaves that intersect with the facade as if they were sliced into the wall. The flanking wall dormers are under shed roofs supported on either side by curvilinear brackets.

At the first floor level of the north and south side elevations are enclosed hip roof bays, projecting outward from the foundation and supported by posts, that extend nearly the full width of the elevations. The central bay of this projection on the north elevation is recessed and treated with an open balcony that extends forward slightly, supported by posts and brackets below, and covered by a gable-on-hip roof; this balcony has embellishments identical to those of the front porch. On the south elevation there is a similar projection, though it is enclosed. The two bays of the second story of both of these side elevations are marked with gabled wall dormers similar to that centered on the front.

At the rear elevation the central bay projects forward and rises two stories under a steep gable roof; this projection is surrounded on two sides by a two-tier porch under a shed roof. The shed roof continues around the north side of the projection, but the space beneath is enclosed. On the south end of the porch an open stair rise in two flights per level from the ground to the second floor, a total of four flights. The porch has simple chamfered members and handrails and traces of the embellishments of the front porch. Flanking the porch on the second story are shed-roof wall dormers identical to those of the front elevation.

The interior essentially follows the two-room deep, center hall plan inherited from the Greek Revival house here originally, with the stair rising in the projection at the rear of the center hall. The major change in plan is in the north side of the house; here the partition dividing the east and west rooms was removed completely, leaving the interior chimney free-standing and creating one spacious room, sometimes called the music room.

One of Mistletoe Villa's finest features is seen in the richness and quality of the woodwork and plaster ornamentation of the interior. This exquisite, carefully executed detail, coupled with the breadth and loftiness of the rooms, creates interior spaces of an opulence rarely found in the region. All of the woodwork of the first floor dates from the 1880s expansion of the house, and here as in other houses of the period, it is to a large degree a Victorian elaboration of the forms and devices introduced in the Greek Revival period. A wide baseboard with its upper half deeply molded and reeded runs throughout the first floor; in the hall a wainscot of vertical boards, with alternate boards reeded, carries above the baseboard. In the rooms of the first floor the reeded chairrail is employed over a plaster dado. All door frames of the first floor are symmetrically molded with reeding, with corner blocks of unusual form, being elongated and molded at the upper and lower ends and marked with incised lines and roundels. The feet at the base of the door surrounds are similarly molded and marked.
Throughout the first floor the reeding, incisions, and roundels of the woodwork are embellished and emphasized with gold paint.

The four first floor mantels are all of nearly identical execution, consisting of reeded pilasters with heavy molded brackets supporting a shelf, and adorned with sawn and incised ornamental devices at the center of the frieze and elsewhere. These elements are composed around a narrow frame of reeded members and incised corner blocks which in turn enclose the brick or colored tile face of the fire opening. The reeding and incisions of the mantels are also gilded. The mantels of the southeast and southwest rooms are fitted with mirrors above the shelves.

A special feature of the interior is the remarkable painted plaster ceiling ornament that is applied throughout the first floor and in the hall of the second. Similar work is known to exist in a later (ca. 1910) house of the region, and since no mention is made of the work in the detailed building specifications that survive for the house, this ornament was probably applied some years after the house was built. In the center hall the decoration consists of festoons of stylized foliage suspended below the cornice, with intricate floral scrolls and bands in the ceiling above. In the large music room the scrolls are of rococo inspiration, gilded, and similar to the designs of the brown velvet and gold of the paper that covers the walls of the room. In the southwest room the plaster design is vine with clusters of blue and purple grapes spilling down at intervals onto the walls, which are painted with blending patches of golds, blues, and other hues. In the southwest room the plaster ornament consists of intertwining stems of yellow and red flowers and green foliage, and at the center these same elements radiate around a ceiling medallion. The open string stair rises at the end of the hall in the projection on the west side of the house. The large square-in-section newel is chamfered and incised. A molded handrail is carried by turned balusters which overlap the sides of the risers rather than fit into the runners, and the bottom of each baluster is given a pendant.

The woodwork and plaster ornament of the first floor center hall are carried up the stair and repeated in the second floor hall. The four rooms of the second floor are simply finished and fitted with the Greek Revival mantels and woodwork removed from the first floor of the earlier house; the specifications dictated that "the 4 mantels that are in the 1st story will be taken down carefully and used in the 2nd story." It appears likely that the baseboards and door surrounds were reused from the same source. The interiors of these second floor rooms reflect the massing of the hip roof and multiple dormers.

The simple woodwork of the four rooms of the cellar, which contained the kitchen and servants quarters, is retained from the original house.

Outbuildings remaining on the property include the stable, smokehouse, carbon gas house, and garage.
Specific Dates: 1883-1885
Builder/Architect: possibly Samuel Sloan

Statement of Significance

Mistletoe Villa, the grandest Victorian house in Henderson, is a picturesque, well-preserved example of the Queen Anne style. Built during the years 1883-1885 (incorporating an earlier house) for prominent Henderson citizen Colonel Ike Young, the house is associated by family tradition with the architect of the North Carolina Executive Mansion, Samuel Sloan; though credible stylistically and circumstantially, this tradition has not been documented. The two-story frame house, among the state's most notable examples of the style, is dramatized by an array of porches, balconies, and dormers, and a rich variety of forms, textures, and details. The spacious interior is lavishly finished as well.

Criteria: (A) associated with the post-Civil War development of Henderson. (B) associated with Colonel Ike Young, prominent citizen of Vance County and Henderson and—by tradition confirmed only by circumstantial and stylistic, not documentary, evidence—with architect Samuel Sloan (C) embodies the distinctive characteristics of Queen Anne style domestic architecture of a sophistication unusual in the state at its time, and (as noted for —B) possibly represents the work of a master, Samuel Sloan of Philadelphia.

In the early 1820s, Demetrius Ellis Young left Oak Hill, his family home in northern Granville County, and moved southeastward to what is now south central Vance County. From his new home on the site now occupied by the American Legion hut in Henderson, Ellis Young accumulated a large tract of land that included the knoll on which Mistletoe Villa was eventually built. The Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, when completed in 1840, cut diagonally across his land, and the Young children could watch from the windows of the house as small locomotives chugged along wooden rails covered with iron strips. The railroad brought prosperity to the community which in 1841 was incorporated as the town of Henderson. Ellis Young's home was inside the town but his lands extended southward beyond the corporate limits.

On December 20, 1853, Ellis Young sold a portion of his tract near Henderson to William H. Hughes for $368.12 1/2$. The deed called for 24 5/8 acres, two of which were reserved for the Male Academy established ten years earlier. About 1855 Hughes constructed a two-story Greek Revival house almost within sight of the Young house. Both Hughes and Young engaged in the merchant trade, and on June 2, 1866, Ellis Young and his son Isaac bought a store on Garnett Street formerly operated by Hughes. Whether they were ever business partners is uncertain. Hughes, an antebellum planter as well as a merchant, suffered severe financial losses as result of the war that eventually cost him his homeplace in a lengthy and complicated court fight. At the 1883 spring term of Granville Superior Court, Colonel Isaac Young was awarded a clear title to the Hughes Lot, based on his agent's purchase of the property in 1867.
To make the transaction complete, Ike Young paid Hughes $600 on October 26, 1883. The tract contained fourteen acres and the Hughes' homeplace. The litigation had taken seventeen years during which time Hughes had continued to reside in his antebellum home, making his total residence there about twenty-eight years.

Colonel Ike Young was one of Vance County's most prominent citizens. He enlisted in the Civil War at age twenty-three, received a facial wound at Malvern Hill, and was promoted through the ranks. Having distinguished himself in military service, Young returned to Henderson to serve four years as mayor (1866-1870). When the drive to create Vance out of Granville County reached its zenith in 1881, Ike Young stood at the forefront.

Shortly after clearing his title to the Hughes lot, Young decided to build a modern mansion on the site. Business had frequently taken him on extended visits to Raleigh where, according to family tradition, he engaged Samuel Sloan, architect for the Executive Mansion. Sloan had moved to Raleigh in 1874 and was well known in the South for his many designs of churches, hospitals, asylums, and residences. Late in 1883 the Hughes House was torn down leaving only the stone basement. A new Victorian structure in Queen Anne style was built on the old foundation. Some of the antebellum mantels were installed in the new house while the original doors and features of the basement were left intact. The basement (actually the first floor) was designed as servants' quarters; the second floor contained living and entertaining rooms; and sleeping facilities were in the upper story. The structure was completed in 1885 at which time Colonel Young christened it Mistletoe Villa, named for the abundant mistletoe in the trees surrounding the mansion.

Mistletoe Villa features many characteristics of a Samuel Sloan design, but despite an intensive search no evidence was found that connected the famous architect to the structure other than similarity to other Sloan designs. The current owner's father, Isaac Jones Young, II (nephew of Colonel Ike Young), who was fifteen when the house was completed, told the current owner that the house was designed by Sloan. The nature of the source makes the attribution a credible one. Given the lack of any documentation of Sloan's role, however, the nature and extent of his involvement in the design of the house remains a matter of speculation. It is possible, of course, that Sloan was employed by Young to create designs and specifications, but it is also possible that Sloan provided Young with a stock set, or that the designs were done by one of his assistants such as G. A. Bauer, or even that Young took the Sloan design from the architect's popular patternbooks or Sloan's drawings that were so often reproduced in Godey's Lady's Book and Lady's Magazine, a publication with which the fashionable Mrs. Young was no doubt familiar. Although specifications for the house survive in Young's estates papers, they do not mention an architect. Even unattributed as they are, the specifications obviously refer to this house and will be valuable in its future renovation. Several items are of particular interest. For example, though the house is now
painted white, the original (or at least intended) color scheme was much richer:

All the woodwork of the exterior will be painted three coats of light and dark Olive, relieved with Maroon on the chamfers and small reeds, and all the sash lath inside and out, the shingle roofs wall will be light red or the tile color where so indicated by the drawings, the other parts that are shingled will be slate color. The Porch and Balcony floors will be painted light olive. All the interior will have one coat of Whiden f---ing. Well rubbed with wooden rags, and two coats of hard oil. . . . the front door will be slightly stained so as to produce a Mahogany Color, the basement will be finished with two coats of boiled oil, and also the ceilings of all the Porches. The Glass of the 1st story will be best American with border and top lights of Cathedral where indicated, the transoms over the door . . . the sash in the gable of the porch will also be Cathedral. . . .

Convenience and sanitation were to be served by a tank in the loft 8 feet in diameter, 6 feet high; it was to be filled with rainwater from the roof which would provide water for water closets in each bath room, "of the Phila. standard or others that are equally good." Iron soil pipes would connect by terra cotta pipe to a "well dug and prepared for that purpose," walled with brick with an arched top.

Copper and tin bathtubs and china wash basins in each bathroom were to be served with hot and cold water, heated by a carefully described circular boiler. The house was to be fitted with gas pipe for light in the several rooms--parlor, dining room, entrance hall, sitting room, billiard room, and the various second-story and basement rooms; the pipe was to be connected with the (gas) Machine.

Ironically Colonel Ike Young, who had struggled so hard to obtain the land and spent a small fortune building the house, never lived in it. While in New York buying furnishings for his mansion, he was seized with an attack of apoplexy and died on July 16, 1885. He was forty-seven years old. His body was returned to Henderson where he was buried after lying in state at Mistletoe Villa. Colonel Young died intestate and Mistletoe Villa became the undivided property of his heirs. His widow resided in the house for a few years before moving to Maryland. The house was then occupied by Annie E. Young, widow of the colonel's brother, Dr. Wesley W. Young. For many years the house served as a mecca for all members of the Young family.

Annie E. Young died in 1909 at which time her youngest son, Isaac J. Young, II, acquired the house from the remaining heirs. He had married Celestia Gill at Mistletoe Villa on January 1, 1900; the mansion, with its elegant furnishings, gas lamps, and warm
hospitality was the showplace of Henderson. Isaac J. Young, II, died in 1940 and the estate passed to Celestia Gill Young and Isaac’s four children—Robert Gill Young, Rebekah Young Dodd, Ann Fuller Young Swain, and Isaac Jones Young, III. Celestia Gill Young continued to live at Mistletoe Villa until her death, after which her daughter, Rebekah Young Dodd, kept the house. On Christmas, 1964 Rebekah Young Dodd married J. C. Cooper and moved out of Mistletoe Villa. Mrs. Cooper is the heir of Isaac and Celestia Gill Young.

FOOTNOTES

1 Granville County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Granville County Courthouse, Oxford, Deed Book 2, p. 458; Deed Book 3, pp. 67, 165, 287, 508; Deed Book 4, pp. 57, 158; and Deed Book 9, pp. 215, 219, hereinafter cited as Granville County Deed Book; and Researcher’s interview with Rebekah Young Dodd Cooper, October 4, 1977, hereinafter cited as Cooper interview.


3 Granville County Deed Book 22, p. 319.

4 Granville County Deed Book 22, p. 33.

5 North Carolina Reports, 67 (June Term, 1872), 72-82; and Granville County Estates Papers—Richard D. Lathrop, State Archives, Raleigh. By November, 1865 William H. Hughes found himself deeply in debt. He issued to his brother Thomas what he intended to be a deed of trust for the tract of land on which his house stood. The money was to pay off the debts. Apparently not all of the creditors were satisfied for at the 1866 June term of the U. S. Circuit Court for the District of North Carolina H. B. Loney and Company obtained a judgement against Hughes and Young (who had purchased Hughes business about two weeks earlier) for a debt of $1,960.12. This action should have frozen all of Hughes' assets until settlement, but on October 24 Thomas Hughes sold the Hughes' Lot to Richard D. Lathrop of New York City. Meanwhile, as a result of the action brought by H. B. Loney and Company, the U. S. Marshall was directed by a writ dated November 29, 1866, to sell the Hughes' Lot at public auction. The sale was held on March 6, 1867, at which time James B. Batchelor, an attorney frequently employed by Colonel Isaac Jones/ Ike/ Young, became the highest bidder. Batchelor then assigned his title to Colonel Young. Believing that his was the legitimate title, Ike Young brought a civil action suit disputing Lathrop’s claim to the property. The court ruled in favor of Young but Lathrop appealed to the North Carolina Supreme Court. The case was heard in June, 1872, and in a split decision the Supreme Court ruled that Lathrop had purchased the property in good faith.
and was thus entitled to the privileges of ownership. Title reverted back to Lathrop
who died later that year. But Colonel Young refused to give up. By means not detailed,
Ike Young discovered that Lathrop had known that his claim was illegal, and that he had
taken part in fraudulent deeds to confuse the creditors of William Hughes, hoping that
he could take possession of the property during the confusion. Young brought suit
against the Lathrop heirs in Granville Superior Court using the evidence that he had
uncovered.

6 Vance County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Vance County Courthouse,
Henderson, Deed Book 2, p. 382, hereinafter cited as Vance County Deed Book

7 See Granville County Deed Book 22, p. 319 and Vance County Deed Book 2, p. 382.
See also Cooper interview.

8 Index to Moores Roster, State Archives, Raleigh; and Samuel T. Peace, "Zeb's Black
as Peace, "Zeb's Black Baby."


10 Cooper interview; and Peace, "Zeb's Black Baby," p. 12.

11 Cooper interview. For business connections see Estate Papers of Isaac J. Young,
folio 121, Register of Deeds Office, Vance County Courthouse, Henderson, hereinafter
cited as Young Estate Papers.

12 Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American
cited as Withey, American Architects.

13 Cooper interview. Communication with Michael Southern, architectural historian,
October 4, 1977; and Specifications for Construction of Young House, Young Estate Papers.

14 According to family tradition construction of the house began late in 1883. Cooper
interview. See also Withey, American Architects, p. 558.

15 Cooper interview. For age of Young see Tenth Census of the United States, 1880,
Young, II, was the son of Dr. Wesley W. Young who lived on Garnett Avenue in 1880.

16 George L. Hersey, "Godey's Choice," Journal of the Society of Architectural
Historians, 18 (October, 1959), pp. 104-111.

17 Cooper interview.
18 Cooper interview.

19 Cooper interview; and Vance County Deed Book 52, p. 43.


21 Cooper interview.

22 Cooper interview.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cooper, Rebekah Young Dodd. Reminiscences. Henderson, 1941.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 1/2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Description prepared by Michael Southern, Survey Specialist; Significance prepared by Jerry Cross, Researcher, and Catherine Bishir, Head, Survey & Planning Branch

ORGANIZATION Division of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh

STATE North Carolina

DATE 1978

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___  STATE X  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

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE January 12, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Mistletoe Villa
On lot formed by intersection of Young Avenue, Chavasse Ave. & Dorsey Ave.
Henderson, NC, Vance County

UTM Reference
17/732590/4022430