

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 Foil-Cline House
other names/site number Foil, John A., House

2. Location

street & number 406 S. Main Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Newton N/A vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county Catawba code 035 zip code 28658

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic & Architectural Resources of
Catawba County, North Carolina

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.

William S. Park
Signature of certifying official 5-23-90
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

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
 Domestic: single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
 Domestic: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Foil-Cline House in Newton is a two-story frame house built in 1883 for John A. Foil. It is one of the best surviving examples of the Italianate style in Catawba County. The house has been left basically unaltered since the 1880s and retains its architectural integrity.

The Foil-Cline House is located on the southwest corner of South Main Avenue and East E Street in the shady residential area south of the commercial center of Newton. It is surrounded by smaller houses, mostly dating from the mid-nineteenth century. The Foil-Cline House is situated on a large lot with lush vegetation. A former path leading from the street corner to the northeast corner of the house is bordered by boxwoods. The house itself is surrounded by small boxwood and azalea bushes. The large yard surrounding the house is filled with randomly planted trees, including oak, fir, pine, crepe myrtle, pecan, fig, and willow trees.

The Foil-Cline House has an irregular configuration, characterized by projecting and receding planes. The house has a brick foundation and weatherboard siding which is terminated at each corner by a simple classical pilaster. The multi-gabled roof has a widely overhanging boxed and molded cornice supported by thick curvilinear brackets set against a wide frieze board. The east, north and south gables are each decorated by a bargeboard with pierced design and a kingpost with spade-shaped bottom and pierced spear-shaped top which projects upward beyond the ridge of the roof. There are two interior brick chimneys. The Foil-Cline House has symmetrically arranged four-over-four sash windows which are unusually tall, running nearly from floor to ceiling in the various rooms. The windows have a two-part molded casing with a projecting shelf lintel supported by three small modillions. One-story bay windows are found on the east and north sides of the house. They continue the use of the wide baseboard which wraps around the rest of the house, and have a four-over-four sash main window with the more narrow side windows composed of a vertical row of four panes. Like the main roof of the house, the roof of each bay window has a widely overhanging

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Foil-Cline House
Catawba County, N.C.

boxed and molded cornice supported by brackets identical to those of the main roof.

The front porch of the Foil-Cline House extends across the north two bays of the east facade. It continues and emphasizes the Italianate character of the house by its use of overhanging bracketed eaves, unusual paneled posts with angular V-shaped panels, and sawwork brackets.

The front (east) entrance continues the use of the angular V and diamond-shaped panels in its surround. Above the door are two sets of panels, separated by thick, curvilinear brackets, creating an elaborate cornice. This use of the decorative paneled surround instead of the more typical sidelights and transom is particularly interesting. The door itself is double-leafed, with square glass panels at the top, round-arched glass panels in the center, and wooden panels at the bottom.

On the north side of the house a porch shelters the west two bays. It is very similar to the front porch, but is smaller and slightly more simple. It has been somewhat altered and is currently lacks a floor. The north side entrance has a replacement door and a three-light transom.

The rear of the house has a one-story section in the southwest corner which serves as the kitchen. It has the same four-over-four sash windows with modillioned lintels as found on the rest of the house as well as a latticework porch on the east side. West of the one-story kitchen is a small enclosed porch with shed roof and German siding. There are two entrances to the cellar -- on the west side and on the southwest corner of the house.

The interior of the Foil-Cline House has a center hall surrounded by an irregular arrangement of rooms: one room on the north, two rooms on the south, and several rooms on the west (rear). Features common to the interior in general are wide board floors, plastered walls and ceilings, wide baseboards with either a beaded or a molded upper edge, four-panel doors, and two-part door and window casings.

The house boasts two stairs -- a formal front stair in the center hall and a more simple, though nicely detailed, rear stair in the northwest room of the house. The front stair, which rises from east to west along the north wall of the hall, has a heavy

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Foil-Cline House
Catawba County, N.C.

turned newel, a molded hand rail, turned balusters, and an open-string with simple curvilinear brackets. This stair turns gracefully at a landing before proceeding onward to the second floor. The rear stair rises from north to south along the east wall of the northwest room. Now partially enclosed, this stair has a slightly bulbous turned newel, an angular hand rail, rectangular balusters and an open string. It makes an angular turn at its landing, several steps below second floor level.

Two handsome mantels remain in the house. The mantel in the first floor southeast room is Italianate in feeling, having paneled pilasters with base blocks, a slightly pedimented frieze with horizontal panels with rounded ends, and a plain shelf. The mantel in the southeast second floor room is more reminiscent of the Greek Revival style in its classicism. This well-proportioned mantel has plain side pilasters with baseblocks and caps, a plain frieze, and a plain shelf with slightly curved corners.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Education

Period of Significance

1883-1912

Significant Dates

1883

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Foil, John A.

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary

The **Foil-Cline House**, built in 1883 at 406 South Main Avenue in the Catawba County seat of Newton, has local architectural significance as one of the best surviving examples of the Italianate style known to exist in Catawba County. It is related to the Property Type "Houses in Catawba County: Postbellum (1865-1900)." As the residence of Catawba College professor John A. Foil from its construction to his death in 1912, the property is eligible for its educational significance. (See Historic Context, "Education in Catawba County.")

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Foil-Cline House
Catawba County, N.C.

Historical Background

The Foil-Cline House at 406 South Main Street in Newton is situated adjacent to the former campus of Catawba College (the school moved to Salisbury in the 1920s). It is an "L"-shaped, two-story frame house incorporating elements of the Italianate style, such as elaborately detailed bay windows and sawn moldings. As such it is one of the few Italianate structures in the region. The history of the house is linked to the growth of Newton and to the development of Catawba College. The house was built in 1883 by John A. Foil, professor at the college and German Reformed minister. The newly-built house was among those damaged by a tornado which struck Newton on March 25, 1884. Foil's heirs sold the house to the school in 1919. George Lamar Cline, assistant postmaster in Newton, bought the property after the college moved to Salisbury in the 1920s. The present owners bought the house and lot from Cline's heirs in 1977.

John A. Foil (1847-1912), the son of farmer Allison Foil, received his first education in the private schools of his native Cabarrus County. At the age of seventeen he enlisted in a Confederate company which saw some action before the war's end.¹ From 1867 to 1871 Foil attended what was then known as Catawba High School. From there he went to Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, which he attended from 1871 to 1873. In 1889 he received an honorary Ph.D. degree from Ursinus, said to be "as unsought as unexpected."² In 1873 Foil joined the faculty at Catawba, where he taught mathematics, science and Greek for twenty-nine years. In the same year he married Susan C. Lantz, daughter of Rev. John Lantz, also a member of the Catawba faculty. They had three children, all daughters: Helen (born 1874), Miriam (1876) and Ethel (1883).³ In 1874, the year following his marriage, John A. Foil was licensed to preach by the North Carolina Classis of the German Reformed Church. The Reverend Mr. Foil served a number of congregations in Catawba County, both Reformed and Lutheran, including St. Peter's, St. John's and Grace churches. In several of these he assisted J.C. Clapp, who was at the time president of Catawba High School (later College).⁴

In February 1874 the newly-married and recently-employed Foil bought a lot at the corner of College and Elm streets in Newton. The fact that he paid Adam Hogan and Reuben Setzer only \$125 for the tract indicates that it was unimproved at the time of the purchase. However, he soon built upon the lot as indicated by the fact that the property was valued at \$400 beginning in

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

Foil-Cline House, Catawba County, N.C.

1876. In April 1883 he sold the same lot to C.F. Jarrett for \$800.⁵ Thus he and his family (enlarged to five members with the arrival of his third daughter in February 1883) kept their residence at College and Elm for just under ten years. It seems likely that construction on their next house, today's Foil-Cline House, commenced shortly before or after the sale of the College and Elm lot in April 1883. Yet the Main Avenue lot upon which the second house is located was not transferred to Foil until December 28, 1885. Foil and the seller of the lot probably made other financial arrangements (possibly renting or making delayed payments) for the period from spring 1883 to late 1885. The seller was Reuben Setzer, a farmer born in 1811, who had donated much of the land used for college buildings a few years earlier. Setzer was also a trustee and supporter of the school. Foil paid Setzer \$100 for the four-tenths of an acre, indicating that the transaction was only for the unimproved lot.⁶ Yet, three pieces of evidence indicate that the lot had indeed been built upon before 1885. First, Foil sold his first house and lot in April 1883 and obviously would have required a new residence. Second, tax records for the period indicate that the property's valuation fluctuated in such a way as to indicate the placement of a house on the lot 1883. In 1882 Foil was taxed on a single town lot (the one at College and Elm) valued at \$400. A year later his single lot (the newly-bought one on Main Avenue) was valued at \$100; in 1884 its value had risen to \$800.⁷ Finally, according to published accounts, the Foil house on Main Avenue was among those damaged by a tornado which struck Newton on March 25, 1884. The twister, "fearful to behold," cut a 200-yard-wide swath through town, leaving one dead, many injured, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in property damage. Twenty homes were demolished; the Foil house and several of the school buildings on the adjacent property lost their roofs.⁸

Educational Context

During the 1700s Catawba County had been settled in large part by Germans. Incidental to their settlement was the creation of several institutions of higher learning. In addition to the establishment of Catawba County in 1851 in Newton, members of the German Reformed Church formed Claremont College in Hickory for women. Lutherans established Lenoir College in Hickory and Concordia College in Conover. All four schools were set up within ten miles of the others. One observer noted, "It is an interesting fact that in this early period more schools and colleges were founded than a wealthy and populous community would

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Foil-Cline House, Catawba County, N.C.

ultimately be able to maintain."⁹ The Newton school held its first classes in the fall of 1851 and received a charter from the General Assembly in 1852. The institution was operated as a college during the 1850s, even though it had the services of only one professor for much of that time. From 1861 to 1885 it regained its status as a college. Owing to financial and other problems the school lost its accreditation in 1915 and transferred all of its operations to Salisbury between 1923 and 1925.

John A. Foil's path to the presidency of the school was blocked only by the fact that his friend and colleague J.C. Clapp held that office from 1861 to 1900. When Clapp stepped down Foil was reportedly offered the position but declined it. Foil advocated a return to a college curriculum and it was only upon his urging that Clapp agreed in 1885 to a transition from a high school back to a college for Catawba.¹⁰ Foil also devoted time to community work. In the 1890s he served as chairman of the county board of education and later as the superintendent of public schools.¹¹ Foil lived comfortably but, befitting a clergyman, less than ostentatiously. His lot and house were valued at \$700 through the 1890s. His personal property carried a value of \$1,000 (included in that was a \$100 library).¹² In 1900 he, his wife, and three unmarried daughters lived at home. The oldest, Helen, was a music teacher. Living with them was a thirty-six-year-old black woman, Lavina Boyd, identified in the census records as a cook. Mrs. Foil was generally listed in the same records as a housekeeper; yet a listing in an 1890 business directory identifies her as a teacher.¹³

After almost thirty years of teaching at Catawba College, John A. Foil felt it necessary to leave the school and profession for other work in 1902. His salary of \$600 a year would seem to have been adequate to his needs, but he may have felt it necessary to try his luck in the business world. At any rate in 1902 he left the college to become secretary-treasurer of Union Cotton Mills. This was one of three such manufacturing firms established in Newton in the late nineteenth century. Their effect over time was to shift the economy of the area from an agricultural to an industrial base. Another result was the growth in the size of the town, which almost doubled in population between 1890 and 1900. The company which employed Foil had been established in 1882 by Henry F. Carpenter and his sons. The reasons for Foil's move are unclear. He regularly preached at the Maiden Church where Carpenter was member; their acquaintance likely was made there. Beyond that Foil suffered from arterio-

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Foil-Cline House
Catawba County, N.C.

sclerosis which may have influenced his decision. He remained in the position until 1910 when he returned to Catawba College as professor and vice-president. However, ill health soon forced him to retire at which time he became a professor emeritus.¹⁴

Foil died in 1912 at the age of sixty-four. No will was recorded at the time but it is apparent that his wife and children received the house. The property was valued at \$1,150 in 1915.¹⁵ By 1919 Susan Foil had moved to Mecklenburg County where her three daughters lived. In that year they sold the house and lot to the trustees of Catawba for ten dollars and "valuable considerations."¹⁶ It is not known how the college used the house. It may have been used as a residence for a professor or, owing to its proximity to the campus, for classroom space. However, the latter seems unlikely since the school had just entered a period of retrenchment and financial difficulties, "the darkest years of the College," according to a history of the institution. Those clouds were lifted only with the relocation of the school to Salisbury in the mid-1920s. As a consequence of the move school officials in 1925 sold all of their property in Newton, some eight lots on both sides of Main Street, to the Newton Land and Loan Company for \$3,380. That company in turn sold three of the lots, including the Foil property, to Lillie Cline for \$3,000.¹⁷ Mrs. Cline and her husband George Lamar Cline had owned adjacent property for some time.

George Lamar Cline (1885-1965) was a native of Catawba County, the son of blacksmith Gilbert Cline and his wife Fredonia. George's wife was the former Lillie Setzer, born in 1888. Her grandfather, Reuben Setzer, had owned the Foil-Cline House property prior to its purchase by Foil in 1885. G.L. Cline worked as an apprentice blacksmith with his father until 1911 after which time he worked various jobs, including dredge boat operator, for a couple years. In time Cline became a well-known figure in Newton through his work at the post office and as county registrar for many years. In his later years he became something of an authority on the history of the town.¹⁸ He died in late 1965 at the age of eighty. By the terms of his will, probated in March 1966, his widow received all of his property, real and personal. At the time of his death he owned two lots in Newton, one of which was the Foil-Cline House lot, together valued at \$1,358.¹⁹ Lillie Cline died in the early 1970s. Her heirs sold the house and original lot, along with their adjacent lot, to the present owners, Claude and Faye Smith, in 1977.²⁰

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Foil-Cline House, Catawba County, N.C.

FOOTNOTES

¹William Stevens Powell, The North Carolina Gazetteer (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 93, 350-351; George W. Hahn, The Catawba Soldier in the Civil War (Hickory: Clay Printing Company, 1911), 60.

²Leonard, History of Catawba College, 109-113.

³Twelfth Census, 1900, Population Schedule.

⁴Leonard, History of Catawba College, 113; Levi Branson (ed.), Branson's North Carolina Business Directory (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1877-1897), 1877/78, p. 62; 1890, p. 170; and 1897, p. 167.

⁵Catawba County Deed Book 11, p. 124 and Deed Book 38, p. 40; Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

⁶Catawba County Deed Book 28, p. 529; Leonard, History of Catawba College, 62.

⁷Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives. In 1883 Foil was also taxed on a total of \$1,600 worth of personal property: \$200 worth of tools, the same amount in furniture, \$550 in credits due him, and \$300 in various other items.

⁸Newton Observer-News, 26 March 1965, and Hickory Daily Record, 11 September 1965.

⁹Jacob Calvin Leonard, History of Catawba College (Columbia, Mo.: Published for the Trustees of Catawba College, 1927). 40.

¹⁰Leonard, History of Catawba College, 117.

¹¹Charles J. Preslar, Jr. (ed.), A History of Catawba County (Salisbury: Published for the Catawba County Historical Association, Inc., 1954), 150.

¹²Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

¹³Twelfth Census, 1900, Population Schedule; Levi Branson (ed.), Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1890, p. 174.

¹⁴Leonard, History of Catawba College, 110-121.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Foil-Cline House, Catawba County, N.C.

¹⁵Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

¹⁶Catawba County Deed Book 146, p. 328.

¹⁷Catawba County Deed Book 208, pp. 412, 415.

¹⁸Twelfth Census, 1900, Population Schedule; Hickory Daily Record, 12 April 1956.

¹⁹Catawba County Will Book 10, p. 208; Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

²⁰Catawba County Deed Book 1113, p. 700.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one (1) acre

UTM References

A

1	7
---	---

4	7	9	6	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	4	5	8	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Zone Easting Northing

D

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

All of lots 1 and 2 in block 3, sheet 10N of Catawba County tax maps.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Entire parcel historically associated with the house.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Kooiman, compiler; Laura A. W. Phillips, description; Michael Hill, history
 organization Catawba County Historical Assn., inc. date May 25, 1989
 street & number Rt. 1, Box 76 AB telephone 704/256-3040
 city or town Conover state N.C. zip code 28613

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Foil-Cline House, Catawba County, N.C.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Branson, Levi, ed. Branson's North Carolina Business Directory.
Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1877-1897.

Catawba County Deeds, Tax Records, and Wills. North Carolina
State Archives.

Hahn, George W. The Catawba Soldier in the Civil War. Hickory:
Clay Printing Company, 1911.

Hickory Daily Record, 12 April 1956 and 11 September 1965.

Leonard, Jacob Calvin. History of Catawba College. Columbia,
Mo.: Published for the Trustees of Catawba College, 1927.

Newton Observer-News, 26 March 1965.

Powell, William Stevens. The North Carolina Gazetteer. Chapel
Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968.

Preslar, Charles J., Jr., ed. A History of Catawba County.
Salisbury: Published for the Catawba County Historical
Association, Inc., 1954.

United States. Tenth and Twelfth Censuses, 1880 and 1900:
Population Schedules.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 1 Foil-Cline House, Catawba County, NC

The following pertains to all photos unless otherwise indicated:

- 1) Foil-Cline House
 - 2) Newton, North Carolina
 - 5) North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC
-
- A.
 - 3) Laura Phillips
 - 4) May 1983
 - 6) House overall, to northwest
 - B.
 - 3) Laura Phillips
 - 4) May 1983
 - 6) House overall, to north
 - C.
 - 3) Barbara Kooiman
 - 4) April 1989
 - 6) House overall, to south
 - D.
 - 3) F. Bogue Wallin
 - 4) January 1980
 - 6) House, front door, to east
 - E.
 - 3) Laura Phillips
 - 4) May 1983
 - 6) House interior, mantel
 - F.
 - 3) F. Bogue Wallin
 - 4) January 1980
 - 6) House interior, stair detail

NOTE: Most of the photos used in this nomination were taken in 1983 and 1980. As some of these and the 1989 photo indicate, heavy foliage makes it virtually impossible to obtain a good overall view of the front of the house. The property was thoroughly field checked by Barbara Kooiman in 1989 and determined to be unchanged from its appearance and condition portrayed in photos taken prior to 1989.

**NEWTON QUAD
ZONE 17**

1502. McCORKLE + MILLER HOUSES
E - 480000
N - 3947820

NEWTON QUAD ZONE 17

BOST FAMILY HOUSES

A E - 417340
N - 3946940
B E - 417470
N - 3946950
C E - 417750
N - 3946680
D E - 417450
N - 3946440

BOST-BURRIS HOUSE

E - 477050
N - 3946880

(FORMER) GRACE REFORMED CHURCH

E - 479820
N - 3946180

SELF-TROTT-BICKETT HOUSE

E - 479840
N - 3945940

FOIL-CLINE HOUSE

E - 479660
N - 3945840

**NEWTON QUAD
ZONE 17**

700 000
FEET

STARTOWN 1.2 MI.
3945
3944
3943

35° 37' 30"
81° 15'



1340 000 FEET MAIDEN 4.5 MI. GASTONIA 30 MI.
81° 12' 30"

