

15

State of North Carolina
Division of Archives and History

Iredell COUNTY

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

_____ QUAD

Iredell County

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR _____ THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Morrison-Mott House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

332 N. Center Street

____ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Statesville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

____ VICINITY OF

9th

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

037

COUNTY

Iredell

CODE

097

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Dr. Ralph Bentley

STREET & NUMBER

332 N. Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Statesville

____ VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 28677

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Laura A. W. Phillips (Winston-Salem)

ORGANIZATION

Consultant for Survey and Planning Branch

DATE

February 4, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

Archives and History

TELEPHONE

(919) 733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Morrison-Mott House, located on N. Center Street just north of Statesville's central business district, was built ca. 1905 in the grandiose Neo-Classical Revival style. The generous proportions of this two-story frame, three-bay wide house are magnified by the one-story Ionic porch which wraps around the front and two sides of the house--extending on the right side to form a porte-cochere--and by the dramatic two-story, center-bay portico. This portico features fluted Ionic columns with matching pilasters and an ornate plastered pediment topped by an anthemion crest. The flat roof of the one-story porch, which runs beneath the portico, is surrounded by a simple balustrade, forming a second-story balcony/deck onto which several of the second-story full-length windows open. The house is crowned by a slate hip roof which is edged with overhanging eaves and a modillioned cornice.

The interior design of the Morrison-Mott House matches the grand scale of the exterior and exhibits a wealth of detail in the Colonial Revival manner. The focal point of the interior is the elegant Georgian-influenced stairway which rises from the center of the broad entrance hall and then splits in two directions as it nears the second story.

Both the house and its lushly landscaped grounds are well maintained.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

_____ NATIONAL _____ STATE X LOCAL

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1905 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Morrison-Mott House is one of the finest domestic examples of the popular early twentieth century Neo-Classical Revival style remaining in Statesville and Iredell County. Throughout its history this grandiose house has reflected the prosperity of its various owners, perhaps the most prominent of whom was Dr. John J. Mott, late nineteenth and early twentieth century physician, farmer, industrialist and political power.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. The Morrison-Mott House is associated with the early twentieth century growth and prosperity of Statesville and more specifically is a sophisticated reflection of the personal wealth resulting from late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial and commercial development in Statesville.
- B. The Morrison-Mott House is associated with the adult lives of several prominent Statesville businessmen and industrialists during the first half of the twentieth century. Perhaps the most significant of these was Dr. John J. Mott who, as president of the Western North Carolina Railroad, state chairman of the Republican Party, partner in the Statesville Milling Company, organizer of the Virginia Power Company in southwest Virginia, and through other activities, wielded influence not only in Iredell County but to some extent in North Carolina as a whole as well as southwest Virginia.
- C. The Morrison-Mott House embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Neo-Classical Revival style popular during the early years of the twentieth century across America. As was typical of many houses built in this style in North Carolina, the exterior--with its sweeping one-story classical porch and monumental two-story central portico--is clearly Neo-Classical, while much of the interior detailing is reflective of the Colonial Revival style which was also popular during this period.

The Morrison-Mott House was built ca. 1905 by ¹ Morrison, a lumber broker and Statesville industrialist. Morrison was an avid supporter of community sports and recreation. During the 1880s he was a member of the Statesville baseball team, and in 1908 he built a baseball park--later known as Bristol Park--north of Fourth Creek Cemetery and near his residence. Along with others, Morrison established a Boy Scout troop in Statesville in 1913. Later in life (1923) Morrison and his sons built a furniture factory in Statesville, known first as the Morrison Manufacturing Company and later reorganized as the Morrison Furniture and Fixture Company. Morrison even dabbled in politics, running a strong though unsuccessful campaign for mayor in 1921.²

During the 1910s the house was owned by perhaps its most illustrious occupant, Dr. John James Mott, who by that time was in the final stages of a long, multi-faceted and immensely productive life. Mott was born in Hillsborough, North Carolina on May 7, 1834. After training at Catawba College and Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Mott began to practice medicine in 1856 at Beattie's Ford, North Carolina.³ After the Civil War he represented Catawba County in 1866-1867 in the State Legislature--the only time during a long political career when he held an elective office.⁴ In 1868 Mott was chosen by the board of directors of the Western North Carolina Railroad as their president, a position he held for four years. In 1870 he moved to Statesville, where from 1872-1882 he served as collector of internal revenue for the 6th district--a lucrative position.⁵

Mott had already become influential in the Republican Party and in 1876 he was chosen as state chairman of the Republican Party, in which capacity he served officially until 1886. Aided by the use of federal patronage, Mott ruled the party with an iron hand, becoming known as the "Iron Duke."⁶ During this time the affairs of the State Republican Party were largely administered from Statesville. When Mott retired from this position, he was able to name his successor, so that for some years he in fact continued to wield strong power and political influence in North Carolina.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century Mott added industry to his list of concerns. In 1890 he and two partners built a four-story brick roller mill--the Statesville Milling Company--and by 1893 it was running day and night during harvest time.⁸ Mott's last big venture came during the early twentieth century when he was in his 70s. In 1907 he sold his Statesville house and farm and moved to Radford, Virginia, where he began quietly purchasing water power sites in southwest Virginia, primarily along the New River.⁹ In 1912 he organized the Virginia Power Company, a million dollar hydro-electric operation, and became its president.¹⁰ Later Mott purchased the house on N. Center Street--a perfect reflection of his wealth and influence and spent the rest of his life living alternately in Statesville and Radford.¹¹ Although

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

¹ Interview by Laura A. W. Phillips with Mrs. Ralph Bentley, Statesville, N.C., November 2, 1979. Hereinafter referred to as Bentley Interview. Mrs. Bentley said that her family found an inscription on the plaster in one of the rooms which said "1904-June 4, 1907," suggesting that the house was being built at that time, during Eugene Morrison's ownership. The style of the house supports this dating.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 7	5 0, 9 9, 1, 5	3, 9 6, 0 3, 5, 5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of Tract 60 of Block C, Map 6J-5, Statesville Township, Iredell County, consisting of a four-sided lot measuring 152' X 202' X 167.5" X 200'.

The property being nominated consists of the house and the city lot on which it stands.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Iredell County

Morrison-Mott House

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Significance

Historical Background (Cont'd)

John James Mott died in Radford on January 29, 1919, he was brought home to Statesville to be buried in Oakwood Cemetery.¹²

The next owner of the Morrison-Mott House was Frank Jenkins, who worked in real estate.¹³ During the 1940s Jenkins sold the house to P. McNeer Dillon, an industrialist of some prominence in twentieth century Statesville.¹⁴ In 1924 the newly formed Kiwanis and Rotary clubs persuaded Dillon to move his underwear plant from High Point to a building on N. Center Street just north of Water Street (and not far from the Morrison-Mott House). The Dillon-Vitt plant became the first wearing apparel factory in Statesville. In 1933 that building burned, but by 1936 Dillon was again manufacturing, this time men's shirts. After operating in several locations he purchased the Barnes Hotel building at the foot of Court Street (see Statesville Commercial Historic District, Bldg. No. 68) and converted it to a factory.¹⁵

McNeer Dillon died in 1971 and the following year his widow sold the Morrison-Mott House to its present owners, the Ralph Bentleys.¹⁸ Dr. Bentley is a Statesville physician, and he and his wife have preserved the fine qualities which make this house one of the most impressive in Statesville.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Iredell County

Morrison-Mott House

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Footnotes (Cont'd)

²Homer M. Keever, Iredell Piedmont County (Iredell County Bicentennial Commission, 1976), pp. 317, 357, 426, 467, 474. Hereinafter referred to as Keever.

³W. S. Pearson, "John James Mott," in Biographical History of North Carolina, Vol. IV, ed. by Samuel A. Ashe (Greensboro, N.C.: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1906), p. 331.

⁴Keever, p. 305.

⁵Pearson, pp. 334-335.

⁶Keever, p. 304.

⁷Pearson, p. 336.

⁸Keever, p. 359.

⁹Ibid., p. 380.

¹⁰Statesville Landmark, March 17, 1912.

¹¹Keever, p. 380.

¹²Homer M. Keever, unpublished typewritten notes on John James Mott, in Keever files, James Iredell Room, Iredell County Public Library, Statesville.

¹³Bentley Interview.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Keever, p. 355.

¹⁶Bentley Interview.

East Broad Street-Davie Ave. Hist Dist.
 Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West
 Scale 1:24000
 UTM References: Zone 17

Reference	Easting	Northing
A	510980	3960640
B	510710	3960060
C	510280	3959940
D	510280	3960210
E	510880	3960730

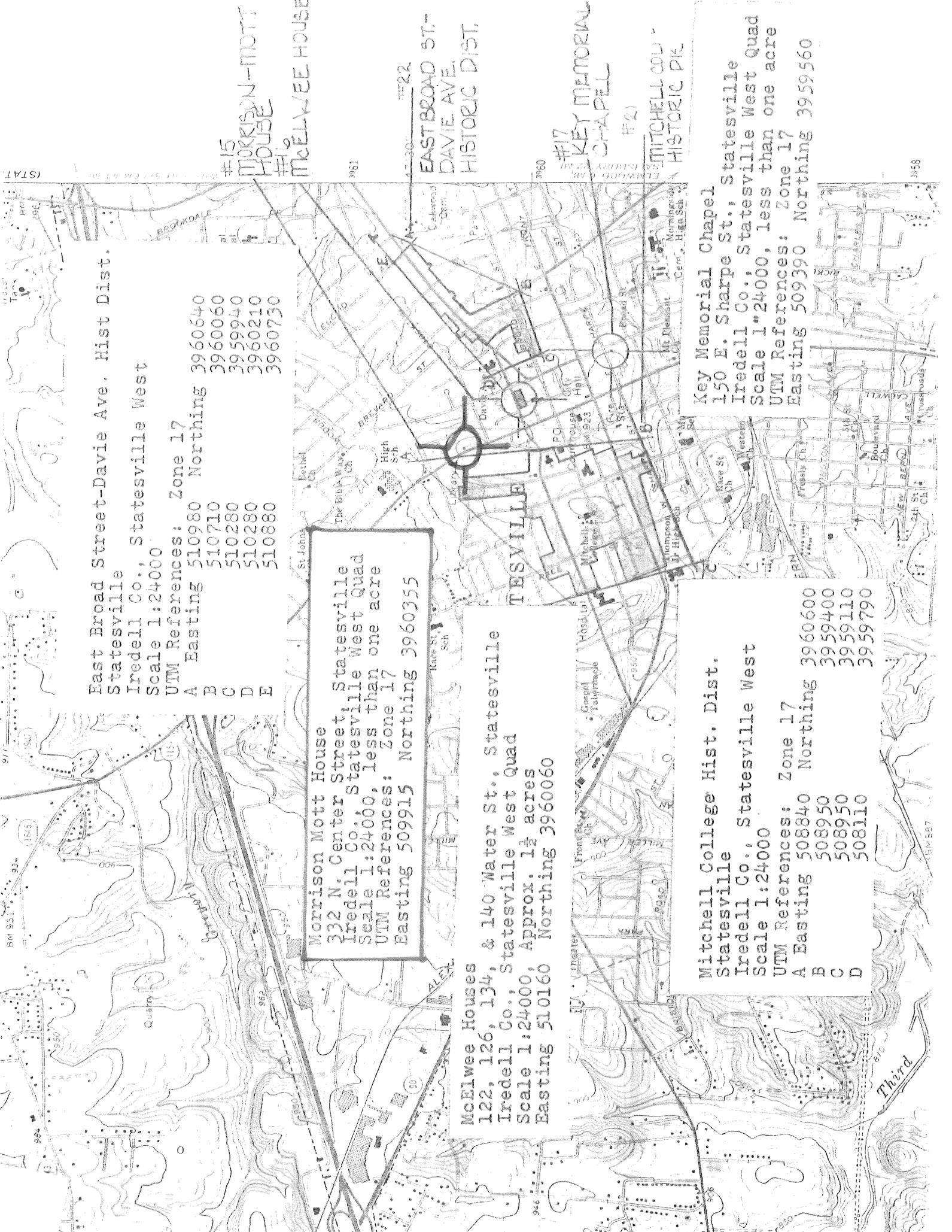
Morrison Mott House
 322 N. Center Street, Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West Quad
 Scale 1:24000, less than one acre
 UTM References: Zone 17
 Easting 509915 Northing 3960355

McElwee Houses
 122, 126, 134, & 140 Water St., Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West Quad
 Scale 1:24000, Approx. 1 1/2 acres
 Easting 510160 Northing 3960060

Mitchell College Hist. Dist.
 Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West
 Scale 1:24000
 UTM References: Zone 17

Reference	Easting	Northing
A	508840	3960600
B	508950	3959400
C	508950	3959110
D	508110	3959790

Key Memorial Chapel
 150 E. Sharpe St., Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West Quad
 Scale 1:24000, less than one acre
 UTM References: Zone 17
 Easting 509390 Northing 3959560



(STAT)

3958

