

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

Iredell County

QUAD

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR _____ THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC Col. Silas Alexander Sharpe House
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
402 S. Center Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

Statesville

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

COUNTY
Iredell

CODE

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 | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Gray, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER
402 S. 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

DATE

February 4, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

Survey and Planning Branch

TELEPHONE

919/733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Archives and History

STATE

North Carolina

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" 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 Col. Silas Alexander Sharpe House, located at the southwest corner of S. Center and Sharpe streets near the commercial core of Statesville, is for its region an unusually sophisticated example of the mid-nineteenth century Classical Revival style. Begun around 1860, it was not completed until after the Civil War.

The two-story frame, three-bay wide house boasts an elegant two-story portico with many interesting features. Unusual slender clustered columns rise full-height from floor to roof-line. The second-story balcony with turned balustrade is bolted by cast-iron bracket to the columns for support. The simplified entablature and unusually wide roof overhang of the portico is repeated on the main body of the house. The boldly designed main entrance features a double-leaf door with three raised panels per leaf, sidelights and transom, all of which is enframed by clustered, or reeded, pilasters supporting a broad architrave. The balcony entrance is nearly identical to the main entrance, but lacks the transom. Glazed French doors (replacements of original windows) with bold crossetted and peaked surrounds flank the center bay entrances of both stories. Unlike the weatherboarded main body of the house, the wall and the porch is covered with flush sheathing, which further accentuates its decorative detailing. The corners of the portico at both levels are accented by clustered, or reeded, pilasters which match those of the main and balcony entrances.

Other exterior features of note include flat-paneled corner pilasters, four exterior single-shoulder brick chimneys, a brick pier foundation, 6/6 sash windows with louvered shutters, a rear entrance with sidelights and transom, and a very low hipped roof. The left rear of the house has several small additions.

The interior of the Sharpe House consists of a center hall plan with two rooms on either side. Around 1937 the current owners, under the supervision of architect J. Don Jordan, greatly remodelled the interior in the Adamesque Revival style. However, original interior fabric which remains intact includes a downstairs mantel with reeded colonettes and slightly arched frieze (reminiscent of the portico detailing), highly molded baseboards and cornices, and second-story doors with three flat panels.

The heavily shaded corner lot has been somewhat reduced through the years from its original size.

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

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Col. Silas Alexander Sharpe House, built during the 1860s, is one of the oldest houses remaining in Statesville and serves as a highly sophisticated example of the Classical Revival style. Col. Sharpe, longtime owner of the house, was a prominent industrialist and political leader in Statesville throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- B. The Sharpe House is associated with the productive life of Col. Silas Alexander Sharpe, who played a significant role in the industrial and political life of Statesville during the second half of the nineteenth century. Sharpe, colonel of the Home Guard during the Civil War, served as frequent mayor of Statesville during the post Civil War years, built a tobacco warehouse in 1872, and for half a century operated a tannery which stood near his home.
- C. The Sharpe House embodies characteristics typical of the popular mid-nineteenth century Classical Revival style, while at the same time its special design features--centered around its two-story portico with clustered columns, reeded pilasters, monumental doorways and full-length, crosssetted window surrounds--make it one of the most highly sophisticated and imaginative houses built in Iredell County during that period. Although the interior has been largely remodelled, the quality of the exterior design is such that would warrant the inclusion of this house in the National Register.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Silas Alexander Sharpe (5 March 1830--8 December 1903) was born on his father's plantation north of Statesville. As a youth he went to Laurens County, South Carolina, where he learned the tanning trade. ¹ Soon after his return to Iredell County (about 1853) and with the backing of his uncle, Quincy Sharpe, he purchased a tanyard south of the commercial area of Statesville. This purchase was made from Sarah Ramsour, whose deceased husband, Eli Ramsour, along with H. Mohran, had operated a tannery on the site from at least the 1830s. ³ Local tradition indicate that by the outbreak of the Civil War Sharpe had commenced construction on his imposing Classic Revival house near the tanyard, at the southwest corner of South Center and Sharpe streets. ⁴ However, even if begun this early, it does not appear that the structure was completed and occupied until after the close of the war. Sharpe's first two children were born at his wife's (Sarah Jane McKee) homeplace ⁵ in 1856 and 1864, while his remaining two children (1866 and 1868) were born at the new house. ⁵ During the conflict Sharpe served as lieutenant colonel of the 5th Regiment, North Carolina Home Guard, and was responsible for arresting deserters and reluctant conscripts. ⁶

Until after 1900 Sharpe continyed to operate his tannery where he also manufactured leather into harness and saddle goods. Not content with this single enterprise, however, Sharpe became active in another area of Statesville ⁸ industry, building a tobacco warehouse which he called the "Farmer's Warehouse" in 1872.

Sharpe, who served as Statesville's first mayor in the 1870s, began his political career as a Democrat, later became an independent, and still later joined the Republican party. In addition to serving several terms as mayor, he was also postmaster on occasion.

Colonel Sharpe died intestate, and upon the death of his widow in 1923 the estate was divided among the children. The homesite at 402 South Center Street became the property of John McKee Sharpe, the eldest son. ¹⁰ In 1924 John M. Sharpe and wife, Carrie, entered into a deed of trust with the Virginia Trust Company. ¹¹ Consequently, the house and lot was sold by default to the Investors Security Corporation in 1936. ¹² The following year the property was purchase ¹³ by Elizabeth Natress Gray.

Elizabeth Gray and her husband, John H. Gray, Jr., presently occupy the house. When the Grays purchased the house they remodeled most of the interior in the Adamesque Revival style, but the exterior has remained intact and well preserved through the years. ¹⁴ Mr. Gray, a prominent Statesville businessman, was for many years associated with Gray's Hotel and Cafe (Statesville Business District M.R.N.).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- ¹ Mildred J. Miller, The Family of John Sharpe Revolutionary Soldier (N.P.: n.p., 1976), 69.
- ² Ibid.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|-----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 117 | 5110200 | 395295015 | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | | D | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of Tract 1, Block A, Map 7A-5, Statesville Township, consisting of a four-sided city lot measuring 100' x 180'.

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

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Col. Silas Alexander Sharpe House

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Iredell County

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Footnotes (Cont'd)

³Homer M. Keever, Iredell Piedmont County (Statesville: Iredell County Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 159-160, 162. Hereinafter cited as Keever, Iredell County.

⁴Virginia Frazer Evans, compiler, Iredell County Landmarks (Statesville: Iredell County American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 40.

⁵Katherine Nooe Knox, "Silas Alexander Sharpe." Manuscript located in the Iredell Room, Statesville Public Library, Statesville, North Carolina. Mrs. Knox is the granddaughter of Colonel Sharpe. Her mother, Mary Sharpe Nooe, was born in the house in 1866. Hereinafter cited as Knox Mss.

⁶Walter McKenzie Clark, editor, Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65 (Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 1901), IV, 650; Keever, Iredell County, 235.

⁷Keever, Iredell County, 263; Sanborn Insurance Maps (Statesville, N. C.), 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900, and 1905.

⁸Keever, Iredell County, 260.

⁹Ibid., 308; Knox Mss.

¹⁰Iredell County Deed Book 74, p. 334.

¹¹Iredell County Deed Book 119, p. 356.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., 127, p. 341.

¹⁴Laura A. W. Phillips, telephone interview with Mrs. John H. Gray, Jr., February 4, 1980.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clark, Walter McKenzie. Editor. Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65. Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 1901.

Evans, Virginia Frazer. Compiler. Iredell County Landmarks. Statesville: Iredell County American Bicentennial Commission, 1976.

Iredell County Deed Books. Office of the Register of Deeds. Iredell County Courthouse, Statesville. Microfilm copies in the State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Col. Silas Alexander Sharpe House

Continuation sheet

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Bibliography (Cont'd)

Keever, Homer M. Iredell Piedmont County. Statesville: Iredell County American Bicentennial Commission, 1976.

Knox, Katherine Nooe. "Silas Alexander Sharpe." Manuscript located in the Iredell Room, Statesville Public Library. Statesville, North Carolina.

Miller, Mildred, J. The Family of John Sharpe Revolutionary Soldier. N.P.: n.p., 1976.

Phillips, Laura A. W. Telephone Interview with Mrs. John H. Gray, Jr. February 4, 1980.

Statesville Commercial Hist. Dist.
 Statesville
 Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West Quad
 Scale 1:24000
 UTM References: Zone 17
 A Easting 510240 Northing 3960040
 B 510240 3959600
 C 509840 3959600
 D 509840 3960040

Col. A. S. Sharpe House
 402 S. Center St., Statesville
 Iredell County, Statesville West Quad
 Scale 1:24000, less than one acre
 UTM References: Zone 17
 Easting 510200 Northing 3959505

Center Street A.M.E. Zion Church
 S. Center St., Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West Quad
 Scale 1:24000, less than one acre
 UTM References: Zone 17
 Easting 510380 Northing 3959240

Academy Hill Hist Dist.
 Statesville
 Statesville
 Iredell Co., Statesville West
 Scale 1:24000
 UTM References: Zone 17
 A Easting 510140 Northing 3959380
 B 510140 3958720
 C 509730 3958720
 D 509730 3959380

#20
 STATESVILLE
 COMMERCIAL
 HISTORIC DIST
 #18
 COL. S. A. SHARPE
 HOUSE
 #16
 CENTER STREET A.M.E.
 ZION CHURCH
 #23
 ACADEMY HILL
 HISTORIC DIST



