

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Allison Woods

other names/site number _____

2. Location

East and south sides of US 21, carrying for approximately 1.55 miles from the South street & number Yadkin river northward to SR 2156 (Church Lake Road) N/A not for publication

city or town Statesville vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Iredell code 097 zip code 28688

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William J. Pugh SHPO 1-18-95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

~~Willson Woods~~
Name of Property

~~Teedell Courtyard, North Carolina~~
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	buildings
<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	sites
<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	structures
		objects
<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- AGRICULTURE/processing
- AGRICULTURE/agricultural field
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation
- LANDSCAPE/natural feature
- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
-
-
-

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- AGRICULTURE/agricultural field
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation
- LANDSCAPE/natural feature
- LANDSCAPE/conservation area
- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- AGRICULTURE/horticultural facility
- SOCIAL/meeting hall
- OTHER/woodworking shop VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Bungalow/Craftsman
-
-

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Stone
- walls Brick
Stone
- roof Asphalt
- other Wood
Metal

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Agriculture
- Architecture
- Landscape Architecture
- Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance

ca. 1926-1941

Significant Dates

- ca. 1926
- 1929
- 1939

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

- Tomlinson, L. Boyer--builder
- Guy, Baldy Franklin--builder/stone mason

Allison Woods
Name of Property

Iredell County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 298 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	7
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5	1	5	5	8	0
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3	9	7	2	7	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

1	7
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5	1	6	9	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	7	2	5	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

2

1	7
---	---

5	1	6	3	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	7	3	1	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4

1	7
---	---

5	1	6	4	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	7	1	1	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization _____ date 26 August 1994

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331

city or town Vale state N.C. zip code 28168

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Also notify: Allison Woods Foundation
437 Walnut Street
Statesville, NC 28677

name Thomas Ausley Allison

street & number 1122 Dogwood Road telephone 704/873-4478

city or town Statesville state N.C. zip code 28677

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Allison Woods, Iredell County, N.C.

Allison Woods

Narrative Description

Allison Woods, a rural retreat containing the principal lands and buildings of a gentleman's farm developed by William Locke Allison between ca. 1926 and ca. 1939, is an irregularly-shaped tract of some 298 acres. It is situated in the upper center of a holding of 928.14 acres presently held by his son and heir Thomas Ausley Allison. It includes a portion of the 360-plus-acre parcel acquired on 17 March 1784 by Allison's ancestor William Allison which was enlarged in subsequent generations. Allison Woods and the associated, but not nominated, surrounding acreage are located to the northeast of Statesville in northeast Iredell County. The larger tract, of which Allison Woods is a fractional part, lies on both sides of the South Yadkin River and on both sides of US 21 from the point at which it crosses the river for a distance of approximately 1.55 miles to the north/northeast. The topography of Allison Woods is a gently rolling landscape, typical of the western Piedmont; the land descends from a high point of 915 feet above sea level to about 738 feet at its lowest point along the South Yadkin River. The greater part of this larger tract is wooded, and these woodlands enclose Allison Woods on every side except along its north and northeast boundaries where there is a transition from woodland to open cultivated fields which carry up to US 21 and to SR 2156, respectively. The public highway, US 21, forms the physical west and north boundaries of Allison Woods.

Within these enclosing woodlands, there are two major water features which generally mark the northern and southern ends, respectively, of the historic area. The upper lake, formed by an impoundment of the eighteenth-century tanyard spring, is the earliest part of the gentleman's farm developed by Allison. This is one of two major recreational/pleasure areas comprising Allison Woods, and associated with it are a springhouse and a mill house. Construction on the lake, the springhouse, and the mill house occurred largely between ca. 1926 and ca. 1928. Below the earthwork dam at the south edge of the lake, a stream course flows southward toward the South Yadkin River. That stream course, flowing between the upper and lower lakes, is one of two principal arteries carrying on a north/south axis through the historic area and linking its resources. The other is a simple packed-clay and gravel farm lane, dating from the period of significance, which stretches from US 21 southward, on the east side of the lake and stream, to the lower lake where it merges with a ca. 1970 ring road which encircles the lower lake.

About mid-way between the upper and lower lakes, at the site of a nineteenth century tenant farm, Allison erected a brick residence in 1928-1929 for his farm manager and a brick smokehouse for his swine operation. Here, too, stands the unfinished stone barn which was abandoned on the death of the

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stone mason in 1939. The nineteenth century log barn and log crib which stood here into the 1940s have been lost. From ca. 1963 to 1970, a farrowing house and piggery for an enlarged swine operation were built and used; they were largely abandoned after 1970. These buildings, of simple frame construction, meld inobtrusively into the wooded landscape of Allison Woods. Both, in fact, have come to serve useful purposes for the Allison Woods Foundation that presently leases the property for conservation and educational purposes: the piggery houses a small sawmill operation while the interior of the farrowing house has been fitted up as a meeting room. The farm manager's house has been continuously occupied to the present.

The third and final major area of concentrated development on the property by William Locke Allison is the lower lake. The lake and its dam were built in the early 1930s. A handsome three-level stone mill house was completed here about 1933, and an ice/party house, also of stone masonry, was erected ca. 1936-1937. During 1968-1970, Thomas Ausley Allison repaired and raised the dam by about ten feet and thereby enlarged the lake to its larger, present dimensions. At that time, the south end of the farm lane, which was partially covered by the enlarged lake, was replaced by a simple packed-clay ring road which encircles the water feature. It is similar to and connects with the old farm lane at the north end of the lake and with a separate south entrance into Allison Woods which connects to US 21 just above the South Yadkin River.

In addition to the natural woodlands and water features, the landscape of the nominated acreage includes areas that have been cultivated over a long historical period--and throughout the period of significance--and others which were cultivated for periods of time and which have grown over as woodlands in the past several decades. The principal open areas that were cultivated during the period of significance, as well as before and after, are located in the northern part of the nominated acreage. There is large field in the curve of present-day US 21, north of the windmill and west of the lost plantation house, which was probably put into cultivation in the nineteenth century and has remained in constant cultivation to the present. On the northeast edge of Allison Woods, there is a large field which was cultivated in the period of significance and which remains in use for seasonal crops. It lies on the south side of present-day SR 2156. A hedgerow separates it from a meadow which was used for pasture in the period of significance and which remains under a grass cover to the present: it is cut on a regular basis for hay. (The minor rerouting of SR 2156 in this area somewhat altered the original boundaries of Allison Woods here; however, the historic field patterns remain intact and the old path of SR 2156 remains visible as a grass-covered way between and along the open fields. There were also vegetable plots located at points in Allison Woods and these have mostly become integrated by volunteer growth with the natural landscape. One

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exception is the old vegetable patch off the south side of the south entrance which is now planted with cedar trees: cedars are also planted in a small area on the north side of the south entrance. The orchard, comprising some twenty acres, was a principal feature of Allison's agricultural estate. It lay on the east side of the upper lake, between the farm lane and SR 2156. It has long been lost and the area is now a woodland.

Most of the historic buildings and structures comprising the standing architectural resources of Allison Woods are either of brick or stone construction. At least one of the three brick buildings, the farm manager's residence, is known to have been built by L. Boyer Tomlinson, a Statesville contractor. The stone springhouse, the stone mill house, and ice/party house at the lower lake, and the first, stable story of the barn are all said to have been the work of local stone mason Baldy Franklin Guy (1885-1939). Guy also erected the stone wall retaining the front yard of the farm manager's residence and other incidental stonework, mostly walls, which appears throughout the historic area. As a result there is a consistent level of craftsmanship displayed in the surviving buildings, structures, and other stone features.

The physical condition of the resources vary and generally reflects the changing appreciation of Allison Woods from the high point of its development, ca. 1926 to ca. 1939, through a period of inactivity at the upper lake area in the 1970s and 1980s, to a renewed interest and increased stewardship of the property by the owner and the foundation in the past half-dozen years. From ca. 1929 to the present, the farm manager's residence has been continuously occupied and kept in good repair. The lower mill house, originally fitted up with kitchen and bath facilities, is occasionally occupied as temporary housing. The other buildings have been kept water-tight and weatherproof.

In the near-seventy years since William Locke Allison first turned his attention to the development of a gentleman's farm at Allison Woods, the landscape has matured and some recreational and pleasure areas that were earlier open and sun-drenched are now somewhat shaded. The exception to this statement is the area around the lower lake which has generally remained in continuous recreational and pleasure use since ca. 1933. During the 1970s and 1980s, the area around the upper lake became a mass of vegetation and most of the original ornamental plantings became overgrown and died. Some few trees and shrubs, including an aged ornamental cherry, have survived; as the overgrowth has been cleared and trimmed in recent years, dormant bulbs and other plants have returned in bloom and renewed their presence in the landscape. The large orchard of some twenty acres was virtually abandoned during World War II and all of the fruit trees save the occasional hardy pear tree have been lost and replaced by deciduous hardwood or pine growth. Six of

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the Chinese chestnut trees which formed an allee in the orchard also survive to mark the place of that now lost avenue. Within the past half dozen years, new plantings, recalling the materials and schemes of the original interwar landscape of the gentleman's farm, have been installed under the direction of Lislott Harberts, a trained and practicing forester.

The identification of buildings, structures, and sites as "contributing" or "noncontributing" is based on their relationship to the areas of significance and the period of significance for Allison Woods. The noncontributing buildings, which do not visibly intrude on the character of the resource, were built after the period of significance or, as is the case with the granary, a building whose condition is seriously deteriorated. The four noncontributing sites, including the sites of two houses marked by brick and stone chimneys and the abandoned cemetery, merge with the vegetation of Allison Woods. (If the scope of the nomination were broadened, the house sites could be identified as contributing sites for their archaeological potential. See Potential Archaeological Resources.) The four noncontributing structures, of varying functions, are small in size and consequently nonintrusive: the island park in the lower lake is an attractive but later-day landscape feature.

1. Allison Plantation Seat Site
ca. 1809
Noncontributing Site

A pair of single-shoulder brick chimneys are the critical remains of the two-story-with-attic weatherboarded frame family seat which was erected here, ca. 1809, by Thomas Allison (1773-1844). The brick chimneys, laid up in Flemish bond, stand on low stone bases and flank the sunken area of the basement which is now overgrown with vegetation. The chimneys have inset fire boxes on both the first and second story levels. The top of the south chimney is lost above the shoulder level. The chimneys rise in a grove of mostly deciduous trees, including Kentucky coffee trees, walnut, and mimosa, and volunteer plant growth. The house was last occupied by Elizabeth Beatty Johnston Allison (1823-1918), the widow of the builder's son William Matthews Allison (1816-1870). It stood unoccupied and in good condition until the late 1930s and gradually fell into ruin.

2. Family Cottage Site
ca. 1875
Noncontributing Site

A stone and brick center chimney and a smaller stone chimney (probably for an ell) are the physical remains of a small frame cottage that stood here and was occupied by Thomas Johnston Allison (1849-1924) and his wife for a period

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after their marriage and prior to their removal to Statesville in 1893. It is unclear whether the cottage was built for the couple, ca. 1875, or whether it was standing here from an earlier period. It has long been lost. American boxwoods stand in the thicket of volunteer plant material which has grown up around the house site.

3. Deteriorated Granary
Nineteenth Century
Noncontributing Building

This small frame building is covered with board and batten and a side-gable roof of sheet metal. It has a door on the east elevation and a shed addition on the west. The building long ago ceased to be used and is slowly decaying.

4. Upper Lake
ca. 1926-1928
Contributing Site

The upper lake was the first project which William Locke Allison undertook on his ancestral plantation and the first step toward the creation of a gentleman's farm. The work was undertaken by men, operating teams of mules pulling drag pans, under the direction of farm manager Gene Mitchell. The pond is an irregularly-shaped water course, impounded by an earthwork dam on the south and fed from a spring that originally provided water to the Allison family's tannery operations. During the 1970s and 1980s, a leak in the dam allowed the level of the lake to drop. About 1989, Thomas Ausley Allison and his son, Andrew Macgregor Allison, built a small cofferdam across the end of the springhouse bay to hold water in the part of the upper lake adjoining the springhouse: the water is held at the level of the former lake. The ground is dry along the coffer dam; however, below it and to the south the ground becomes increasingly wet and forms a marshland which merges into the water of the lower portion of the upper lake. The springhouse (#5) stands at the head of the upper body of water. A weatherboarded frame boat house was erected ca. 1928 at the lower west edge of the lake but it has long since been lost. A low curved stone wall which apparently carried on the west edge of the lake, behind the boat house survives at the south end of the path which carries from the springhouse. The poured cement pedestal base for the diving board stands nearby: the board has long been lost.

5. Springhouse
ca. 1927-1928
Contributing Structure

The springhouse, an exedra-shaped multi-level stone structure which has the appearance of a romantic ruin, is inset into a low hill at the north end of

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the upper lake. Incorporating a series of curved and curving stone retaining walls, a broad open terrace which overlooks the lake, and concentric terrace-like steps which descend into the upper end of the lake, it was imaginatively and informally conceived by Allison and executed by Baldy Guy and functioned as the principal entertainment space at Allison Woods. The upper terrace of the springhouse, reached by a flight of stone steps, was originally shaded by massive (white?) oak trees which have been lost. It has a generally rectangular shape with a low perimeter wall which incorporates bench-level seating. A round-pipe railing carries around the top of the wall. At the north end a "tanning rock" is set on stone pedestals and serves as a dining or serving table. ("Tanning rocks" are large flat stones on which animal skins could be spread flat and treated during the tanning process.) At the southwest corner of the terrace an old mill stone is mounted on a circular pedestal as a sun dial and functioned as either a bar or serving table for the adjoining stone barbecue grill. A winding flight of steps descends from the upper terrace to the lower terrace which, as noted, drops in stepped fashion into the water. Here, below the upper terrace and behind a wall fitted with arch-headed window and door openings, there is a large changing room with a shower stall and a toilet at the south end. The interior walls of the changing room are brick-faced. In addition to having been illuminated by arch-headed six-over-six sash windows, there are heavy glazed metal grilles set in the poured cement floor of the upper terrace which allowed light to pass through. The window sash have been lost and so, too, have the paired arch-headed, partially-glazed paneled doors which opened from the changing room onto the lower terrace level. Mounted on the north wall of the changing room is a lion's head from whose mouth a spring-fed flow of water emptied into a catch basin. Repeating the arched form of the window openings, there is an arch-headed alcove inset into the retaining wall on the northeast.

There are three important landscape or plant features which survive in their original relationship to the springhouse. The largest is a broad open, flat lawn originally used as a tennis court on the hilltop at the north end of the springhouse. It is enframed by a low curving bench-level stone wall on the north; on the south, the aforementioned flight of steps descend down to the upper terrace of the springhouse. Remnants of the original iris plantings survive behind the low north wall. One of the most important of the surviving plantings from the original scheme is a towering weeping cherry tree which stands on the west edge of the lake at the springhouse. Just off the southwest corner of the springhouse's upper terrace is the beginning of the path which carries down the west side of the lake to the site of the now-lost boat house and diving board. Lengths of its original stone-paving have been recovered to view by the removal of a dirt cover which has accumulated over them during the past thirty years.

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6. Upper Mill House
ca. 1928
Contributing Building

Built for the production of electricity and pumping water, the upper mill house is a small brick building set on a tall podium-like stone base which is partially inset in the sharp slope of the terrain below the upper dam. The main level of the building, inside the brick structure, is reached by a flight of brick steps with pipe railings which descends from the roadway carrying across the top of the earthwork dam. A flight of metal steps, attached on the west side of the building, descends to the lower level of the mill house which is contained in the stone podium. The building is covered with a hip roof which assumes a gable end form on the south. Here it projects to visually engage the over-shot, over-scaled metal water wheel positioned parallel to the south elevation. The roof was originally covered with green ceramic roof tiles manufactured by the Ludowici Celadon Company of Chicago. They were removed in the mid-1980s and the building was covered with asphalt shingles. The tiles, stacked at the edge of the dam roadway, are stamped with kiln dates: and examination of some dozen tiles included dates in August and November 1927. The common bond red-and-brownish brick building has trios of six-over-six sash windows in its north and east elevations, a door and window on the west, and a single window on the south. On the lower level there is also a doorway in the west elevation and a trio of sash windows in the east elevation. The building has poured cement floors and exposed brick and stone walls on the main and lower levels respectively. A brick chimney rises within the building in the southeast corner.

To the west of the building there is a curved wall, inset into the earth, which incorporates a bench. This sitting area, protected with a round-pipe railing connected to a column once fitted as a (water) drinking fountain, overlooks the stream course which flows southward toward the river. The banks of this waterway were once ornamentally planted.

7. Stream Course with Impoundments
Later 1920s/early 1930s
Contributing Site

The stream course flowing southward from the upper lake is now shaded in a woodland of mostly deciduous hardwood trees which includes white and other oak species, maples, poplars, and sourwoods. Areas of the woodland floor are covered with creeping cedar. At present there is a well-maintained footpath between the east side of the stream course and the west side of the farm lane, which extends from the upper mill house and exits onto the farm lane opposite the farm manager's house. There was once a similar path, said to be an eighteenth-century road, on the west side of the stream course. At two

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points along this stream there are relatively low stonework and earthen dams. They impound the water and create small ornamental water features which punctuate the stream's course between the two lakes: there were footpaths across the tops of these dams to connect the parallel east and west walking paths. In the 1930s these areas were cultivated with informal water gardens; however, most traces of these plantings have been lost.

8. Smokehouse
ca. 1930
Contributing Building

Erected ca. 1930 to the design of Allison and by a crew under his supervision, the smokehouse is one of two major buildings erected on the site of a nineteenth century tenant farm. It appears likely that these buildings, together with the earlier upper mill house (#6) were built in a substantial fashion when William Locke Allison was entertaining the idea of erecting a substantial family residence on his evolving farm. The smokehouse is a two-level brick building standing on a low mortared stone foundation: it is laid up in common bond with ornamental header courses. The building is covered with an off-center gable front roof, facing east, with exposed rafter ends and triangular bungalow-style brackets: it has a standing seam metal roof.

The building is designed for both the slaughtering of hogs and the curing of pork and hams: the interior has a two-chamber plan which is reflected in the arrangement of doors and window openings on the exterior. The south half of the building was the abattoir: it is fitted with a wide three-part folding glazed and paneled door on the east (front) elevation and a similar three-part glazed and paneled door on the south elevation which open to create an indoor/outdoor work area. Overhead and under the east and south eaves of the roof, there are ceiling-mounted metal trolleys to move the body of the hog through the process of butchering. This system was devised by William Locke Allison. On the east elevation there is a conventional door which opens into the smoking area, an opening into a storage area over the abattoir, a pair of inset metal grilles in the smokehouse area, and a circular opening in the upper gable end of the building for access to the attic level. Metal rungs are mounted in the face of the building for access to the attic. The north side of the building is blind. The west side has a conventional door and window opening into the abattoir, inset metal grilles in the smokehouse area, and a rectangular opening at the attic level. The interior of the building has poured cement floors and exposed brick walls. A poured cement and stone sluice, fed by a small spring on the east side of the farm lane, carries across the lane and down the south side of the smokehouse to carry blood and waste to the stream. The butchering was usually completed during a two-day period in hard winter and as many as fifteen to twenty hogs were slaughtered on a single day.

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9. Farm Manager's House
1928-1929
Contributing Building

Situated on a knoll and in the shade of a great white oak which earlier shaded the frame tenant house here, the farm manager's house is a well-built rectangular brick and hollow tile dwelling. The house was designed by William Locke Allison, erected by L. Boyer Tomlinson, and occupied by Eugene Mitchell (1893-1979) and his family from its completion until 1941. Thereafter it was occupied by either the farm manager, caretakers, or people who were charged a low rent in exchange for living on the place. The house is covered with a front-gable roof which is pent to form a pediment on the west, front elevation. Now covered with asphalt shingles, it was originally covered with red ceramic tiles. An exterior chimney stands on the south elevation, a brick flue stack rises through the roof, and there is an inset service porch in the southeast corner of the house. The three-bay west front elevation has a center-bay porch with square-in-plan brick columns and a broken tile floor. The large window openings, fitted with soldier course lintels, contain six-over-six sash windows in molded frames. There are attic windows in both the west and east gable ends. The interior contains a living room, dining room, kitchen, and two bedrooms and a bathroom off a small hall. The floors are oak, the walls covered with sheetrock, and the woodwork is stained and aged to a dark appearance. An enclosed stair rises to a partially, rough floored attic; another stair descends to a basement.

10. Silo and Barn Foundation
ca. 1938-1939
Contributing Structure

The stone barn was the last major project undertaken at Allison Woods by William Locke Allison and it was left incomplete at the death of local stone mason Baldy Franklin Guy on 21 February 1939. During the period of ca. 1938 to 1939, Guy raised the ground (stable) level stone perimeter walls of the rectangular barn and further enclosed a stable area, destined to be fitted with wood partitions to form stalls, on the west side. This stable area has four tall arch-headed openings on the west, farm lane side of the barn and a variety of circular, demi-lune, and rectangular openings on the north, east, and south walls. In recent years it has been covered with a simple shed roof and is used for lectures, meetings, and other warm-weather gatherings. The arrangement of the proposed stalls is indicated by the presence of metal hay mangers and poured cement feed and water troughs. At the north end of the barn there is a stone store room and a stone staircase which would have risen to the main, loft level of the barn. Standing in the northwest corner of the

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barn is a silo of precast elements held in place by a series of metal rings: it has an access chute on the east and both the chute and the silo are covered with a metal roof. The silo was built by the Marietta Silo Company of Marietta, Ohio. A stone staircase rises along the silo on the west where it is partially inset in the earth.

11. Farrowing House
ca. 1963, refitted in 1994
Noncontributing Building

The farrowing house is a rectangular weatherboarded frame building erected on creosote posts and covered with a 5-V sheet metal shed roof. It was erected ca. 1963 when a decision was made to expand the swine operations here and it was used for its original purpose until 1970 when swine production ceased. It has two board-and-batten doors on the west end. In 1994 most of the south half of the building was fitted up as a meeting/break room for the Allison Woods Foundation: a sextet of one-over-one sash windows was installed in the near center of the south elevation. The building, of traditional form and materials, is inobtrusive in the landscape.

12. Corn Crib
1940s, rebuilt ca. 1991
Noncontributing Structure

The corn crib, a long, narrow rectangular frame building covered with a shed roof, was erected in the 1940s and replaces a log crib which stood in this area as a part of the tenant farm complex. The building passed into disuse in the 1970s and deteriorated. About 1991, it was rebuilt, reusing the vertical supports, with a new board floor and slatted sides with openings on the east facing the farm lane. It now functions as an outdoor sitting area and shelter.

13. Piggery
ca. 1963
Noncontributing Building

The piggery is a substantial L-shaped series of connected pig pens which was erected ca. 1963 for the expanded swine production operation. It ceased to be used in 1970. The building has a poured cement floor with creosote pole uprights and shed roof with sheet metal. Many of the sawn board pen partitions have been removed. The building was abandoned for swine production in 1970. Since about 1990, it has been used as a wood-working area by Dr. Arthur Harberts, and both sawn and finished lumber is stored in the former pen area. In 1994, Harberts added a well-finished shed on the east end of the piggery: it has bark-covered tree supports.

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14. Solar Wood Kiln
1991
Noncontributing Structure

This wood frame and glazed kiln was built in October 1991 by Dr. Harberts to cure lumber. It is a rectangular structure and located to the east of the piggery.

15. Lower Lake
ca. 1932-1933; enlarged 1968-1970
Contributing Site

The construction of the lower lake, originally larger than the upper lake, represented William Locke Allison's final embellishment of his farm with water features. The lake was constructed under the supervision of farm manager Gene Mitchell who employed local farmers with their teams of mules as day workers when crops were laid by or harvested. The removal of rock at the bottom of the lake by dynamite, the excavation work, and the construction of the rock and earthen dam were undertaken over a period of years and largely completed ca. 1933. The lake appears in its original form on the USGS map included in this nomination. The map is dated "1969." During 1968-1970, Thomas Ausley Allison undertook repairs to the dam and in the process he raised the dam ten feet and thus substantially enlarged the lake to the east, west, and north. This enlargement followed the natural contours of the land, as did the original lake, and retains its important function as the southern focus of the farm and as a recreational area. Except for the dam at the south boundary, the perimeter of the lake continues to be enclosed with natural woodland growth. From the time of its completion, it (and the farm manager's house) has remained in continuous use to the present.

16. Log Cabin
Nineteenth Century, with ca. 1932 refitting
Contributing Building

Interestingly enough, of all the buildings which stood on the Allison plantation when William Locke Allison undertook the redevelopment of the family place as a showplace gentleman's farm, this is the only building which he chose to refit and retain as a part of his new scheme. That, in fact, is not surprising since log cabins were often built on farms and rural estates of the interwar periods as rustic follies and contained sleeping or entertainment quarters. The log cabin, believed to be on its original site, is a rectangular log building on a partial mortared stone foundation: its corners are fitted with dovetail joints and it has mortar chinking with wood battens. The roof is comprised of sawn rafters with flush eaves and asphalt shingles. The handsome rebuilt stone chimney on the north gable end, flanked by windows, probably dates to the ca. 1932 refitting of the cabin. The cabin

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has a board-and-batten door on the east side and ca. 1932 windows on the south and west sides. The interior is a single space with replacement pine floors, exposed log walls, and a ceiling (the floor of the loft) carried on round beams. A stair rises eastward to the loft on the south end.

17. Boat House
1986
Noncontributing Building

This simple cement-block building, rectangular in shape and covered with a flat deck roof, is partially inset into the earth bank at the edge of the lower lake.

18. Deck Bridge
1987
Noncontributing Structure

This simple timber deck bridge, with low side guard rails, was erected to provide access to the log cabin from the ring road encircling the lake. Its construction was necessitated when the level of the lake was raised and earlier ground access was covered by the lake.

19. Island Park
1984
Noncontributing Structure

This small ornamental island, raised at the near south end of the lower lake, is reached by a three-span deck walkway from the south bank. It was erected by Thomas Ausley Allison and his son Andrew. The Iredell Soil and Water Conservation District planted a spruce tree with a memorial plaque as a tribute to William Locke Allison, junior, who died on 7 November 1989. Incorporating ornamental stones, poured cement, and a large "tanning rock" together with a range of plant materials including cedar, weeping willow, dogwood, juniper, holly, and ornamental grasses, it is a skillfully-designed park for passive leisure and swimming.

20. Lower Mill House
ca. 1933
Contributing Building

This three-level stone building, standing on a steep slope at the south side of the dam impounding the lower lake, is perhaps the most picturesque building at Allison Woods and one of a small important group completed by Baldy Franklin Guy. The building was erected for recreational and shop use; it never functioned as a grist mill as did some other estate mills of the interwar period.

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A large metal mill wheel is positioned parallel with the west side of the building to generate electrical power for the area, mechanical power for the sawmill and shop which occupy the second story, and to pump water. Construction on the mill is said to have begun soon after work on the lake was begun: it is built entirely from stone which was removed (with dynamite) from the bottom of the lake and thus had only to be transported a few dozen yards. Because of the drop in grade at the edge of the dam, only the uppermost story, facing north to the lake, is visible on the front elevation. It has a symmetrical three-bay facade with a center door flanked by arch-headed window openings: the windows contain two-over-two sash. The replacement door is set in a flat-headed opening. This combination of flat and arch-headed openings is used to interesting effect on the other asymmetrical elevations of the mill house. A pair of stone and cement benches flank the cement stoop on the center front of the building. In the upper cable end of the facade, there is a large circular opening fitted with metal doors. From it an overhead trolley carries northward over the roadway to the edge of the lake where it is supported by a metal platform which incorporates a diving platform. The trolley was designed by William Locke Allison and used to move boats out of storage in top of the mill house to the lake and back again. On the east side, there is a large rectangular opening onto a poured cement terrace which is a level below the roadway. This doorway, fitted with a trio of glazed and paneled doors, opens into a shop area: the door hinges are highly wrought. There is also an arch-headed window here. An exterior end chimney rises on this elevation. On the tall south elevation there are arched openings at the lowest level, flat-headed windows in the center (shop) level, and a pair of arch-headed windows on the main level. A metal and cement deck carries across the center of this elevation and wraps the southeast corner of the mill house to continue along the west side, above the top of the mill wheel. It is accessible from the main level, via an internal stair, from a door in the west wall. There are several window openings here as well.

The large room occupying the main level was designed for entertainment and family use. It is fitted with a Federal period mantel that was removed here from the old plantation seat and a wainscot of the many different species of wood on the plantation: the upper walls are exposed stone. There is a kitchen area on the east side and a small bathroom tucked into the northeast corner. The second level of the mill has a cement floor and stone walls. It was used as a saw mill and wood shop. There was a small blacksmith shop on the lower level, gear machinery for the waterwheel, a pump and well, and a dynamo for generating electricity for lighting the mill and ice houses and the dam area.

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21. Ice House
ca. 1936-1937
Contributing Building

The last building at Allison Woods completed by stone mason Baldy Franklin Guy, this building is a one-story stone masonry building erected on two below-ground levels--the lowest of which is the ice chamber. The rectangular building, like the mill house, is built of stone removed from the lake bottom and features stonework that is similar to the mill house. It is covered with a front-gable roof of painted standing seam metal. The flush-board eave of the roof extends on the west elevation. There is a decorative gable brace on the front elevation. The north front elevation has a two-bay division with a door on the west and a large window to the east. The window opening is fitted with nine-over-nine double-hung sash and a metal grille. The three windows on the east and west side elevations and two tall windows flanking the exterior end chimney on the south gable end are all fitted with sash windows and protective metal grilles. All openings have flat arches with narrow stones positioned like soldier-course brick.

The interior of the building on the main level is one large room with an oak floor, exposed stone walls, and a pine ceiling. The openings are fitted with plain board surround. A stair in the front left corner descends to the cool storage area on the middle level and then downward to the ice chamber. There is a below-ground chute for transporting ice from the lake to the ice chamber.

22. Windmill
ca. 1928
Contributing Structure

The windmill was erected ca. 1928 on the highest point of land in Allison Woods: it stands at the edge of a woodland, due east of the upper lake. The windmill is built of prefabricated galvanized steel members which were assembled on site by Allison, Gene Mitchell, and a crew. Lengths of the steel are stenciled "Major Wm. L. Allison, Statesville, N.C." The structure, square in plan, rises on four legs, inset in poured cement pads, and tapers to the top where the wind wheel is affixed. There are rungs attached to the southwest corner leg which enable access to the top of the windmill.

23. Barn
ca. 1942
Noncontributing Building

This simple rectangular frame barn, covered with a shed roof, stands on the north edge of the former pasture on the east side of the property. The lower

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level, supported by cedar posts set in the earth, appears to have served as an open stable for shelter and feeding; there is a continuous interior hay rack to the west of the opening on the south side. The lower level is sheathed with lengths of vertical and horizontal boards. The upper, loft level is flush sheathed with vertical boards. The roof is covered with 5-V sheet metal. The barn is now used for hay storage.

24. Cemetery
Nineteenth Century
Noncontributing Site

Although there are no stones marking graves nor obvious depressions in the ground, this small space at the outside southwest corner of the former path of SR 2156, is said to have been a burying ground. Thomas Allison and Gene Mitchell's sons recall the fact that Major Allison acknowledged the cemetery, held it apart, and would not allow disturbance at the site. Today the cemetery is marked by cedar trees which merge with the hedgerow between the field and the former pasture. There is no known record of the number or identity of the burials at the site. The name "Montgomery" is associated with the cemetery.

25. Amphitheatre
ca. 1985
Noncontributing site

This simple grass-covered amphitheatre represents a refinement of an existing natural amphitheatre by Tom Allison. It appears as a small opening in the woodland and is accessible by way of trails which connect with the circle road. It is used mainly by boy scouts who hold their night campfires (camporees) here when they are camping on the property.

26. Allison Woods, woodlands, lakes, and fields
ca. 1926-1941
contributing site

Developed by William Locke Allison between 1926 and 1941, the gently rolling 298-acre site of Allison Woods is a portion of his greater holdings that he designed to support both recreational and agricultural activities. The irregularly-shaped tract is enclosed by woodlands on the south along the South Yadkin River; on the southeast along a west-facing slope; and on the west along US 21. The north and northeast sections feature transitions to open fields that are bounded by US 21 and SR 2156. The dual purpose of the property is reflected in the placement of the recreational resources in western and southern sections, and the agricultural activities in the middle-to-north and

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northeast sections. The tract is roughly bisected north-to-south by a stream course along which are two recreational lakes with associated buildings and structures. Adjacent to the stream course on the east is a packed-clay farm lane. A small farm complex lies on both sides of the lane approximately in the center of the tract. The buildings in this complex supported Allison's agricultural activities that were largely concerned with the livestock he raised in fields lying in the north and northeast sections of the property. Remnants of a former orchard are found in the volunteer growth on the east side of the farm lane, north of the farm complex. The present layout of the property reflects its 1926-1941 appearance although the property no longer supports livestock production, and the original recreational activities centered around private parties and outings have given way to environmental conservation projects and organized outdoor activities such as Boy Scout camping trips.

Integrity Assessment

As with historic rural landscapes in general, the matter of historic integrity at Allison Woods is a complex issue which reflects the family's ownership and use of the land over a period of 200 years, the 1920s-1930s overlaying of a gentleman's farm on a traditional Piedmont agricultural landscape, changing interests in agriculture and recreation from generation to generation, and the natural changes to a cultural landmark which is made up, in part, of thousands of trees and plants. In short, evolution and change are critical parts of a cultural landscape where a combination of woodlands, fields, waterways, lakes, gardens, and related features coexist on equal footing with permanent buildings and structures. From the outset, William Locke Allison took his cue from the landscape and used a historic water course--the stream which flowed from the tanyard spring to the South Yadkin River--as the axis along which he developed the upper and lower lakes and attendant architectural and horticultural features. An appreciation and enhancement of topography, the landscape, and historical traditions were important components in his efforts to create a place that he called "the farm" and which is now known as Allison Woods. Although there have been both natural and man-made changes in the shapes and sizes of the lakes and areas that were once open and are now wooded (the orchard--abandoned in the early 1940s--has now virtually disappeared) the essential landscape elements and buildings which shaped the character of the place during the period of historical significance, ca. 1926 to 1941, remain intact. The qualities of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association are preserved.

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Through the selection of boundaries which enclose the principal resources comprising the gentleman's farm, Allison Woods is a rural landscape whose characteristics retain their historic location and it has integrity of location. Every major building erected during the period of historical significance remains in situ and the nominated acreage includes the site of features such as the orchard which have been long lost. The boundaries are drawn to exclude the larger, outer reaches of the 1,500-plus-acre property which has been reduced through inheritance and sale or which has been developed in recent times. The design of Allison's estate, laid out and developed along the parallel water course and the farm lane, remains intact and visible to the present. The changes in the size of both the upper and lower lakes came about in response, in large part, to a gradual weakening of Major Allison's dams and the need for repair. At the lower lake, the dam was raised and the lake enlarged along the existing natural contours: it continues to be enclosed by woodlands except on the south side. Over time, mostly in the 1970s and 1980s, the level of the upper lake slowly dropped due to leakage. It is possible that the level could be raised to its original position in the future; however, the marshlands which have developed here have assumed an environmental value of their own. Nevertheless, in 1989 the north end of the lake was restored to its original level at the springhouse bay so that the important relationship between water and structure could be renewed.

Because of its somewhat remote location and the continued family ownership of the large acreage which includes Allison Woods, the setting of the agricultural estate has remained largely intact and undisturbed. Except for the inobtrusive introduction of the more intense swine operations in the early 1960s, the changes in the setting have been mostly the result of maturing plant material and the encroachment of woodlands in areas which saw increasingly occasional use in the 1970s and 1980s. Over the past half dozen years, portions of this overgrowth have been cleared away. The vegetation at Allison Woods is one of the links between setting and materials which constitute important elements of the integrity. The property's natural plant materials have continued to reproduce themselves here and additions have been similar in scale, species, and type to those used by Allison. Certain historic plant materials have survived from Allison's time, including the flowering cherry overhanging the water at the springhouse, and others, principally bulbs, reemerged from a state of dormancy as years of overgrowth have been cleared away.

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Likewise, sections of the stone paving which formed the walk from the springhouse to the boathouse have been found and exposed by the removal of accumulations on the woodland floor. Brick was an introduced material at Allison Woods and used for three principal buildings. The stone used for the springhouse, lower mill house, ice house, and the barn foundation, as well as walls and other features was a native material, much of it raised from the ground by the excavation for the lakes. Through the survival of buildings, structures, and smaller features, the stone continues to bind these elements to the landscape.

Through the survival of these brick and stone buildings, structures, and objects the workmanship and craftsmanship of builder L. Boyer Tomlinson and stone mason Baldy Franklin Guy continue in evidence. Likewise, these buildings, together with their workmanship and materials, combine with the vegetation to create a mood and feeling about Allison Woods which recalls the historic spirit of the place. It is that spirit, nearly tangible in the relationships of buildings, lakes, plants, fields, and woodlands, which recalls the association of Major William Locke Allison and his genius in the creation and nurturing of the gentleman's farm which survives today as Allison Woods.

Potential Archaeological Resources

Although the scope of this nomination did not include the investigation of potential archaeological resources within the nominated acreage, it is likely that the site includes archaeological remains which have the potential to yield information about pre-history and history. Oral tradition and the existence of "tanning stones" have encouraged the belief that portions of the property might have been used by Native Americans for manufacturing purposes and perhaps settlement. It is possible that the tanning operations and yard established by Thomas Allison occurred at or near the site of a possible earlier tanyard. Thomas Ausley Allison and the Mitchell brothers, the sons of long-time farm manager Gene Mitchell, all recall the excavation of tanyard artifacts during the construction of the upper lake. The site of the family plantation house, surviving undisturbed, might also yield information about the historical occupation of the place. Included within these boundaries is one small parcel, near the east boundary, which is believed, by tradition, to be a burying ground; there are, however, no visible remains to support this tradition.

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Summary Paragraph

Allison Woods, the gentleman's farm created by William Locke Allison between ca. 1926 and 1939, is important in the history of agriculture, architecture, and landscape architecture in Iredell County and the state. It is one of the very few episodes of that rare agricultural and architectural form to survive in North Carolina from the interwar period of the twentieth century. The property occupies a tract of some 298 acres in the near center of a 900-plus acre holding, which enlarged (and decreased) through descendant generations, has remained in the Allison family for over two hundred years. While other major social and industrial figures such as George Washington Vanderbilt (Biltmore Estate), Richard Joshua Reynolds (Reynolda), Robert Edward Lasater (Forest Hills Farm), and James Stillman Rockefeller (Long Valley Farm) acquired new lands as the site of their similar undertakings in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Allison turned to his family's ancestral plantation on the South Yadkin River. Here he would develop agricultural and recreational facilities as a rural retreat for his family, friends, and the invited public. Trained as a mechanical engineer and having earned his fortune with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, the Franklin Railway Supply Company, the American Arch Company, and The Baldwin Locomotive Works where his employment began in 1898 and concluded with his retirement as a vice-president in 1931, William Locke Allison (1876-1970) brought his experience, travels, and fortune to bear on the creation of Allison Woods in a brief time.

In the manner of Virginia aristocrats (and others) who departed family plantations at the turn of the century and returned, with larger fortunes, in the interwar period to renew, restore, and embellish their estates, Allison impounded the waters of an old spring which had earlier fed the family's tannery operations on the plantation. Here he created a large lake and enhanced it with a brick mill house, a boat house, and a romantic stone springhouse which functioned as both a bathhouse and the center of entertainment for family and friends. Next, in 1928-1929, he erected a brick residence for his farm manager and a later brick smokehouse with an abattoir. In the early 1930s, his farm manager Eugene Mitchell (1893-1979) and crews of workmen erected a new and larger lake about midway between the upper lake and the South Yadkin River. Here Baldy Franklin Guy (1885-1939), a local stone mason who had built the springhouse, erected a picturesque stone mill house and a stone ice/party house: the later building came to be known as the "Lee Fraley House" in honor of a long-time African American family retainer and caretaker whose efforts also shaped the appearance of Allison Woods. The final architectural project at the farm, a stone barn, was left incomplete at the death of the stone mason in 1939.

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The pair of lakes, located on a true north/south axis and connected by a stream course and the farm lane, were the principal location of buildings and facilities of a recreational nature. Ornamental plantings, paths, and gardens were developed in conjunction with these pleasure grounds. A twenty-acre fruit orchard together with grape arbors were developed while the fields were planted with corn, grains, hay, and crops. Poland China and Duroc hogs, Hertford cattle, sheep, and a small dairy herd of Jersey and Gurnsey cows completed the traditional farm activities at Allison Woods in the years up to 1941 which were mostly renewed for a period after World War II. In the 1970s and 1980s, the enlarged lower lake and its facilities continued to be the focus of family and community activities while the upper lake and other facilities fell into decline and occasional use. In the late 1980s, new attention and an increased level of interest in the entire property brought a new level of stewardship to Allison Woods. In 1992 the Allison Woods Foundation, a nonprofit organization, was established to preserve, protect, and restore this important resource in the agricultural, architectural, and landscape history of the county, region, and state.

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Allison Woods
Historical Background

Although the surviving buildings and certain landscape features which comprise Allison Woods reflect the activities of a gentleman farmer of the twentieth-century interwar period, the background of the property should be traced to the later eighteenth century. It was in that period that William Locke Allison's great-great-grandfather began acquiring property on the waters of the South Yadkin River that would form the core of the ancestral plantation. It was that property, held intact and enlarged by descendant generations of the Allison family, which formed the setting on which William Locke Allison would undertake his gentlemanly pursuit of agriculture and estate development in the 1920s. Today, some 200 years after William Allison first acquired land in which is now Iredell County, a core tract of 928.14 acres remains intact in the hands of his descendant: that large holding forms the setting of Allison Woods.¹

When William Allison (1741-1827) came into the North Carolina backcountry, probably in the 1760s or 1770s, he was one of the many Scotch-Irish who departed Pennsylvania and came south in a steady tide on the "Great Wagon Road" and settled primarily in the valley of Virginia and in Piedmont North Carolina. William Allison, like many of his fellow settlers, was a Presbyterian. He and others settled not only their families but their faith on the soils of the backcountry. Relatively little is known of the life of William Allison. He and his wife Agnes formed part of the Presbyterian community which developed around Bethany Church and Clio's Nursery operated by the Princeton-educated Reverend James Hall (1744-1826). They are both buried in the yard at Bethany Church. In March 1784, William Allison acquired a tract of 367 acres from David Logan. On 17 April 1809, William Allison conveyed a parcel containing 252.50 acres of that tract to his son for \$500; the younger Allison was identified in the deed as "Thomas Allison, Tanner."

Thomas Allison (1773-1844) continued the agricultural operations established by his father on these lands. A part of this property is believed to have been the site of tanning works of the Indians and large flat rocks, called "tanning rocks," survive here. It is unclear where William Allison lived on his holding. According to family tradition, his son Thomas erected a two-story Federal-style house in 1804-1805 which remained a primary family residence until 1918. It appears more likely that the house was built about 1809 when Thomas Allison received title to the core holding from his father. The two brick chimneys which flanked the house at its gable ends continue to stand and to mark the site of the old seat. Since William Allison, the progenitor, did not die until 1827 it is possible, if not probable, that he occupied the plantation seat with his son and his family. In 1809, Thomas

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Allison was married (second) to Mary Matthews (1784-1856): in 1816 she gave birth to the couple's only (known) son. William Matthews Allison (1816-1870) was named for his grandfathers, William Allison and Major Mussendine Matthews.

William Matthews Allison (1816-1870) and his wife Elizabeth Beatty Johnston (1823-1918) were the third generation of the Allison family to occupy the ancestral plantation on the South Yadkin River. They were also the last generation which would live their entire lives there. In fact, Elizabeth Beatty Johnston who came as a bride to the Allison plantation in 1846 and lived in the Federal-style house until her death in 1918, resided on these lands for a longer period than any other member of the family. The matriarch of the Allison family, she was the daughter of Jesse Johnston (ca. 1785-1846) and his wife Annabella Robinson; she was born on 22 July 1823 in Rowan County. She was married to William Matthews Allison on 12 February 1846. The couple's only son, Thomas Johnston Allison (1849-1924), was born on 2 February 1849.

In retrospect, it becomes clear that Elizabeth Beatty Johnston Allison exerted a strong influence on both her son and her grandson William Locke Allison who developed the property which has come to be known as Allison Woods. A graduate of Salem Female Academy (now Salem College), she had a strong sense of family and church: education was, perhaps, the third pillar of her moral life. William Matthews Allison died on 8 June 1870 and was buried with his parents and grandparents at Bethany Presbyterian Church which is located south of the South Yadkin River between the Allison plantation and Statesville. His grave is marked by a white marble obelisk.

Five months later, on 23 November 1870, his son Thomas Johnston Allison, was married to Bettie Crawford Chunn. Like her mother-in-law, Bettie Crawford Chunn (1852-1930) was a daughter of the predominantly Presbyterian plantation society of western Rowan County; however, her father, Dr. Matthew Locke Chunn (1827-1879), was an Episcopalian. Her mother was Caroline Foard (1822-1907), the daughter of John Foard (1790-1866) and the sister of John Cicero Foard (1821-1892) who had married Catharine "Nancy" Johnston, a sister of Elizabeth Beatty Johnston Allison. The couple made their home in the Federal-style house presided over by Elizabeth Beatty Johnston Allison until they removed to a small house to the southeast and within view of the family seat. Thomas Johnston and Bettie (Chunn) Allison had six children who lived to adulthood. Their first-born child was a daughter Carrie. The second child and first of three sons, William Locke Allison, was born on 20 March 1876 at the home of his maternal grandparents, the Chunns, in the South River community in Rowan County. (The house no longer stands.) As the eldest son, William Locke Allison (1876-1970) was destined to possess the Allison plantation on the South Yadkin River.

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The first two decades of William Locke Allison's life were surely formative in shaping his character and interests in a manner not unlike the way his adult experiences would influence his gentlemanly farming pursuits on the ancestral plantation. These years were spent on the plantation where his father Thomas Johnston Allison continued the farming and tanning operations which had been practiced here by his ancestors for three generations. In the later-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the farm was operated by tenants on a share-crop system, permanent hired hands, and temporary, seasonal workers. Allison also had a small manufactory where he produced leather harness and saddles: he is said to have also operated a small mercantile establishment. While agricultural pursuits interested him his life-long, he, like others of his generation in the later-nineteenth century, turned to professional pursuits and politics. He was elected to the first of a series of terms as sheriff of Iredell County in 1884 and served in that office continuously until 1893 when he was appointed by President Grover Cleveland as United States Marshall for the Western District of North Carolina. He held the position until 1897. In 1893 Allison moved his family to Statesville where they would remain. The first house occupied by the family is lost; however, the large Queen Anne-style house at 318 Davie Avenue which Allison erected about 1900 and occupied until his death on 10 October 1924 survives.

In 1895/1896, while the Allison family was living in Statesville, William Locke Allison departed the county seat for Philadelphia and his career in the railroad industry. Allison was a graduate of the Davis Military Academy in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and family tradition holds that he attended and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. In March 1898 he began employment with the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia and remained with the company in various capacities for six years. In January 1904 he became chief mechanical engineer for the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe Railroad. He remained with the Santa Fe Railroad until August 1909 when he resigned to become vice-president of the Franklin Railway Supply Company. He later became vice-president of a related industry company, the American Arch Company, which maintained offices in New York and Chicago. Following the entry of the United States into World War I, Allison, then a forty-one-year old executive, volunteered for service and entered officers' training camp at Camp Sheridan, Illinois. He was commissioned a major and served with the 344th Infantry, 86th Division, at Camp Grant, Illinois, until the war's end. He then returned to the American Arch Company and his railroad work.

In the mid 1920s, a series of events occurred which shaped the remainder of Allison's days and the future of the Allison plantation. On 20 June 1923, at the age of forty-nine years, he was married in Statesville to Mary Lyon Fawcette Ausley: Miss Ausley, born on 4 March 1904 and the daughter of Daniel

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McNair Ausley (1871-1928) was then nineteen years of age. On 24 April 1924, a son, Thomas Ausley Allison, was born: two years later, on 14 August 1926, the second of the couple's two sons, William Locke Allison, Jr. (1926-1989) was born. On 10 October 1924, between the birth of these two grandsons, Thomas Johnston Allison died. William Locke Allison bought out the interests of his siblings in the Allison family plantation and its lands on the South Yadkin River. In 1926, Allison returned to The Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia as a vice-president under president Samuel Matthews Vauclain (1856-1940).

William Locke Allison's tenure as a vice-president of the Baldwin Locomotive Works from 1926 until his retirement in 1931 was instrumental in the development of his capital fortune as well as the final stage in his career in the railroad industry which had begun with the Baldwin parent company in 1898. He was an executive of the company in the twilight years of its great financial success. (Samuel Matthews Vauclain was one of the legendary captains of American industry in the early twentieth century. He was largely responsible for the development of the vast Baldwin plant at Eddystone, Pennsylvania, which produced munitions for both the United States and Allied governments during World War I. Elected a vice-president in 1911, he became senior vice-president in 1917 and president of The Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1919. He held that position until March 1929 when he became chairman of the board.) Even as Allison worked in Philadelphia with Vauclain, he was anticipating his own retirement. The Crash of 1929 sealed his future. A third child Edith Fawcette Allison was born on 20 October 1929 and the fourth, and final, child Bettie was born on 21 February 1931. In 1931, William Locke Allison retired from The Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia. He returned with his family to Statesville and to the family home at 318 Davie Avenue which his mother had occupied until her death on 30 April 1930 and which he somewhat refashioned for his residence.

From family accounts, it appears that William Locke Allison began his series of agricultural and recreational projects on the plantation lands upon acquiring the property. His son, Thomas Ausley Allison, also recalls that his father intended to build a family home on the plantation--for use as a primary residence--however, Mrs. Allison did not wish to live in the country. As a consequence, this North Carolina exercise in the creation of a gentleman's farm on an ancestral agricultural holding, did not focus upon a major dwelling. (The Federal-style house occupied by Elizabeth Beatty Johnston Allison until 1918 was never used as a residence after her death.) Instead, Allison used, as the focus of his development, the spring which rose to the south of the early-nineteenth century house and water course which flowed from it in a southerly direction to the South Yadkin River. This same spring had provided water to the family's tanning operations here beginning in the eighteenth century.

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In the mid 1920s when William Locke Allison bought out the interests of his siblings in the family plantation, and set about his building projects, the landscape of the Allison property reflected the long occupation of his family. In addition to the frame Federal-style family seat, occupied by Elizabeth Beatty Johnston Allison until 1918, there was a group of related domestic and agricultural frame outbuildings which stood to the southeast: all of those, including the family seat, have been lost except for one frame shed. The site of the cottage, probably built in the 1870s for Thomas Johnston Allison, is marked today by some boxwoods. There were also at least three frame residences and a log cabin occupied by farm workers or tenants on the plantation: except for the log cabin, these have also been lost. One house stood at the site where, in 1929, William Locke Allison completed the brick house for his resident farm manager.

Allison's first project, ca. 1926-1928, was the construction of the upper lake and the erection of an earthen dam to impound the waters of the spring. Once this was accomplished he had a stone exedra-shaped springhouse built to enclose and enhance the spring at the head of the pond. It comprised stone terraces, changing, toilet, and shower rooms, a barbecue grill, and eating and lounging areas worked in stone masonry by Baldy Guy (1885-1939). The stone is said to have been quarried on the property or extracted during the excavation for the lake. A boat slip and diving board were installed on the west side of the lake, just above the dam. At the south edge of the road, carrying atop the earth dam, Allison erected a brick mill house in ca. 1928. It housed generating equipment for producing electricity and pumping water. To the south of the mill house, in an area along the farm lane where a frame tenant house, a log crib, and a log barn were located, he began the development of a complex of farm buildings. In 1928-1929 L. Boyer Tomlinson, a Statesville contractor, erected a brick bungalow as a residence for the farm manager, Eugene Mitchell (1893-1979). The house was built immediately behind (east) the frame tenant house in which Mitchell had lived with his father Martin Mitchell (1860-1922): the elder Mitchell came to the Allison plantation in the 1890s as a tenant farmer and remained here until his death. About the same time a two-level brick smokehouse was erected on the west side of the farm lane. It is said to have been built by crews of workmen assembled and supervised by William Locke Allison who designed the smokehouse.

The third major site of development by William Locke Allison was south of the above farm complex and along the flow of the water course which began at the tannery spring now feeding the upper lake. Here, in 1932-1933, Gene Mitchell and a crew of hired day laborers (area farmers) constructed the lake in periods after crops had been laid by or harvested. Rock was blasted out and later used for the construction of the mill house and the ice/party house. Teams of mules moved both earth and rock to create the earthwork dam. About

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1933 Baldy Guy erected the three-level stone mill house. The upper gable level of the mill house functioned as a boathouse and an elevated trolley system (which also included a diving board) carried boats out to the concrete bay at the water's edge. The building and its machinery, like others on the farm, were designed by William Locke Allison. About 1936-1937, Baldy Guy built the stone ice/party house for Major Allison: it stands to the east of the lower mill house and was given the name "Lee Fraley's House" in tribute to the faithful services of the long-time African American retainer.

In retrospect, there appears to be a different character and sensibility, aside from materials, to the three brick buildings near the center of the compound, in comparison to the stone springhouse and the paired mill house and ice/party house which stand at the north and south ends of the developed area, respectively. These stone buildings are all said to have been built by Baldy Franklin Guy. Conjecture toward Allison's intentions are then complicated by the fact that the last major project he initiated at the farm, the stone barn left incomplete at Guy's death on 21 February 1939, stood immediately east of the brick smokehouse and just south of the brick farm manager's house.

At the same time these building projects were under way, Allison continued to farm the fields of the plantation and he established an orchard here, comprising some twenty acres planted with apple, pear, peach, cherry, plum, chestnut, and other fruit trees. The orchard was in the area to the east of the farm lane and east of the upper lake. On the immediate west side of the farm lane, a long row of grape arbors was built and vines planted. In the gently sloping area between the arbors and the upper lake, Lee Fraley planted thousands of spring flowering bulbs including tulips, daffodils, and narcissus. Allison and Fraley also cultivated the areas adjacent to his buildings and the lakes with gardens and planned landscapes. Daffodils and iris plantings survive in part to the present. There was also a landscaped (partially) stone-paved walk, on the west side of the upper lake, from the springhouse to the diving board and boathouse: it is said to have been lined with boxwood; however, they have all been lost. The figure of Lee Fraley (18__-193__), an African American family retainer, was critical to these undertakings and the operation of the farm. Fraley was principally responsible for the vegetable and ornamental gardens at Allison Woods as well as the orchard.

The traditional agricultural operations of the farm were under the supervision of Eugene Mitchell (1893-1979), the son of Martin Mitchell (1860-1922) who came to the Allison plantation as a tenant farmer about 1899. Eugene Mitchell lived on the plantation from that time until 1941 when he departed Allison Woods for his own nearby farm. From the mid-1920s until 1941, he was the farm manager at Allison Woods and it was for him and his

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family that the brick farm manager's residence was completed in 1929: the family occupied the house in March of that year. It appears that long-held agricultural traditions persisted at Allison Woods from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century. The fields were planted in corn and small grains year after year. The principal changes which Major Allison introduced to operations were scientific approaches to fertilization and conservation, fencing, and a generally more business-like approach to the agricultural enterprise. He is said to have been among the first farmers in the region to plant hybrid corn and, in the late 1930s, to raise soybeans. Lespedeza was raised for hay for the beef and dairy cattle: sweet clover was raised for both hay and as a land-builder. The swine operation here was both for income-production and family use. Portions of the woodlands were fenced with woven wire (portions of this fencing survive to the present throughout the property) and the hogs pastured. Live hogs, mostly Durocs, were sold on hoof to White Packing Company in Salisbury: those sales represented about two-thirds or so of the marketable swine herd each year. The other hogs were slaughtered on the farm, cured and smoked in the smokehouse, and consumed by the Allison family and the families who lived on the estate. The major also introduced beef cattle at Allison Woods: the herd was mostly of mixed breeds before World War II.

From family tradition it appears evident that William Locke Allison opened the grounds on his farm, on a limited basis, to the public for recreational use. Boy Scout troops frequently used the property and often camped around the log cabin in which the boys usually slept. The construction of the facilities on the farm, their management and supervision, and their enjoyment at private and public entertainments functioned smoothly through the 1930s up to the critical years of 1939-1941. The death of Baldy Guy in February 1939 brought to an end the work on the stone barn--the last major project which William Locke Allison undertook at Allison Woods. The death of the trusted family retainer Lee Fraley in 193_, together with the departure of Gene Mitchell, the resident farm manager, in 1941, forced certain decisions upon Allison and his operation of the property even before the opening of World War II pressed more heavily upon the character of Allison Woods and the operation of the farm. Gene Mitchell was succeeded as manager by his cousin George Mitchell who had also long lived on the Allison farm. The orchard was virtually abandoned after Fraley's death. After 1945, farm operations generally returned to something of the pre-war character. Allison continued to raise hogs on the farm, including Duroc, Poland China, and Hampshire breeds, as well as Hertford cattle. The small-scale dairy operation, based on a herd of Jersey and Gurnsey dairy cows and started about 1939, appears to have folded during the war or soon thereafter.

In the mid-1960s, William Locke Allison's health began to fail and he would end his days in a nursing home in Statesville. Changes also occurred in both

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the operation, ownership, and physical fabric of the farm during the decade of the 1960s. In 1963 the swine production at the farm was given a big boost by the construction of a farrowing house and a series of covered, connected pig pens to the south of the 1938/1939 barn. A waste-holding lagoon was built to the west of the pig pens and on the west side of the farm lane. The swine end of the farm operations ceased in 1970--the year of Allison's death. On 2 January 1967 William Locke Allison and his wife Mary deeded the lands of the enlarged ancestral farm to their two sons. The larger part of the acreage, a tract totaling 919.83 acres and containing all of the farm buildings and Allison's improvements of the 1920s and 1930s, was conveyed to the eldest son, Thomas Ausley Allison (b. 1924). The smaller tract of 641.32 acres, mostly woodlands and lying north/northwest of the larger tract, was deeded to the couple's second son, William Locke Allison, junior (1926-1989).

While the construction of the swine facilities somewhat affected the appearance and use of the rural retreat, a larger change occurred in 1968-1970 when the lower dam was repaired, rebuilt, and raised some ten feet by Thomas Ausley Allison. In addition to increasing the physical size and presence of the lake, the enlargement also somewhat isolated a log cabin, formerly standing on the northwest edge of the lake, on a spit of land extending into the lake. A wood bridge was built later to connect the log cabin with a ring road which Thomas Allison also constructed around the perimeter of the newly-expanded boundaries of the lower lake. The other principal change that occurred in 1970 was that the fields of the farm ceased to be farmed by the Allisons: they were then and thereafter rented to area farmers who have continued to raise seasonal crops. The size of these fields in the Allison Woods tract have remained stable since the 1940s.

William Locke Allison died on 27 February 1970 at the age of ninety-three. He was buried in the family plot, marked by a towering white marble obelisk, in Oakwood Cemetery in Statesville. The family home at 318 Davie Avenue was sold and Mary Ausley Allison moved into smaller quarters. She died on 21 May 1986 and was buried beside her husband. Through the course of the 1970s and the 1980s the upper lake and the buildings of the farm complex came to be used only occasionally except for the farm manager's house which continued to be rented or occupied. After 1967 when Thomas Ausley Allison gained title to the property, he largely focused his attention on the lower lake. The enlargement project of 1968-1970 was the first of a series of efforts which have included the construction of an air landing strip, a hangar, and related improvements in the wooded area south of the lower lake and beyond the historic area.

In the late 1980s, the property gained the attention of forester Lislott Harbetts of Statesville. She has worked with Thomas Ausley Allison and others to bring attention to the buildings and landscape features of William

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Locke Allison's gentlemanly farming projects of the 1920s and 1930s. Gradually over a period of years, accumulated overgrowth has been cleared away, plantings renewed, and others which lay dormant during the period of inactivity, have flourished in their newly opened situation. In 1992 a nonprofit organization, the Allison Woods Foundation, was organized and incorporated to promote the preservation and enjoyment of William Locke Allison's interwar creation and to serve as an educational force for environmental concerns.

Agriculture, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture Significance

In North Carolina, a state which has a long tradition and history as an agriculturally-based society, the twentieth-century concept and practice of gentlemanly farming is one which has produced few, but very important, examples. While the practice of certain nineteenth-century planters to live in cultural enclaves such as Warrenton while their outlying plantations in Warren or nearby counties were left in the hands of overseers and farm managers, is one that might culturally complicate a discussion of the origins of the gentleman's farm concept in North Carolina, there is no doubt about the critical, primary role of Biltmore Estate in the modern practice.

The creation of a grand estate, modeled on those of England and the Continent, was clearly the major ambition which fueled George Washington Vanderbilt's (1862-1914) efforts in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Between 1890 and 1895 his great French Renaissance Revival-style chateau by Richard Morris Hunt (1828-1895) rose in the blue mountain mists and crowned a landscape designed by Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) and his firm. The creation of a school of forestry--the first in the nation--and a strong program of forest and land conservation were adjuncts of Vanderbilt's great estate making project. Another was the village which he erected at the entrance to his estate, known as Biltmore Village, which had the turn-of-the-century architectural function of a medieval feudal village. Another important factor in the making of Biltmore was the creation of a model, gentleman's farm. A great herd of Jersey cows was housed and milked in barns, designed by Richard Morris Hunt, which had no equal in North Carolina and few in the nation. The Biltmore Dairy was one without peer in North Carolina and a model which influenced the development of the state's dairy industry. In a related effort, the broad bottom lands along the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers were planted with corn, wheat, hay grasses, legumes, and other crops. In short--and in a matter of a few years--George Washington Vanderbilt created at Biltmore both the fabric and the life of a great European estate.

The horticultural, agricultural, conservation, and forestry programs undertaken at Biltmore were broadly published in both the popular and

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professional press. The Biltmore estate was a complete anomaly in North Carolina and one executed on a scale, refinement, and vision largely unequalled in the nation. In the area of model, gentleman's farms, however, it had a close equal in Shelburne Farms, Vermont, created in the 1880s and 1890s by Vanderbilt's sister, Eliza, and her husband Dr. William Seward Webb (1851-1926). Both estates, funded by the vast Vanderbilt fortune, would influence the making of important, proportionally lesser places throughout America.

In North Carolina the first probable result of Biltmore's influence was the creation of Reynolda, the suburban estate of tobacco magnate Richard Joshua Reynolds (1850-1919) and his wife Katharine Smith (1880-1924). Reynolds's fortune, based on tobacco, was one of the first great industrial fortunes amassed in North Carolina by a North Carolinian. Reynolds and his wife, like Vanderbilt, turned to a talented architect and one experienced in the field of country house design. Their choice was Charles Barton Keen (1868-1931), a Philadelphia architect whose handsome country houses were gracing estates outside Philadelphia. The hiring of Keen was the initiation of a Philadelphia-North Carolina connection which can be traced forward to William Locke Allison's gentlemanly farming projects at Allison Woods. The design of the Reynolda landscape and gardens were the work of Thomas Warren Sears (1880-1966), a Boston landscape architect. Reynolda included a manor house, gardens and greenhouses, an essential lake (appropriately called Lake Katharine), and the model farm and its village. Mrs. Reynolds also followed in the steps of George Washington Vanderbilt by establishing a fine dairy herd of Jersey cattle at Reynolda. Largely completed in 1917, the estate was enjoyed by Reynolds for but a couple of years and little longer by his wife, who died in 1924.

Vanderbilt's Biltmore estate, the Webb's Shelburne Farms, and the Reynolds's Reynolda estate were all discussed by Clive Aslet in his chapter on The Farm Beautiful, entitled "More fun than a yacht," in THE AMERICAN COUNTRY HOUSE (1990). However, a more regional group of related buildings and agricultural estates influenced by the Reynolda estate did not rise to Aslet's attention although they were acknowledged by a passing reference in Mark Alan Hewitt's THE ARCHITECT AND THE AMERICAN COUNTRY HOUSE, also published in 1990. The architectural influence of Reynolda cannot be separated from the tremendous financial influence which the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company exerted on life in Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, and the northwest Piedmont. The wealth generated by the tobacco company and a group of other family-controlled industries in Winston-Salem supported the construction of numerous houses and suburban estates in the area. Many of these were designed by Charles Barton Keen and landscaped by Thomas Warren Sears; most of these houses were built in Winston-Salem. Two of these estates bear mention here: one, the farm established by Robert Edward Lasater on the Yadkin River, enjoys an obvious relationship to William Locke Allison's farm projects.

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The death of Richard Joshua Reynolds in 1919 and his widow's death in 1924 resulted in a number of changes in the social, financial, and cultural life of Winston-Salem. One event was the elevation of Bowman Gray (1874-1935) to the presidency of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company in 1924. After the death of Mrs. Reynolds, the grounds of the suburban Reynolda estate were reduced. A large tract on west side of NC 67 (Reynolda Road) was acquired by Bowman Gray. Here, in stone, Gray, his architect Luther Lashmit, and Thomas Sears produced an alternative version of suburban country house life which also included a gentleman's farm complex with stone buildings in a fashion vaguely reminiscent of the Normandy countryside.

Stone was also the principal construction material with which Robert Edward Lasater crated Forest Hills Farm on the northeast side of the Yadkin River on the western edge of Forsyth County. Here, the partnership of Keen and Sears melded in the creation of the gentleman's agricultural estate which comprised some 1,300 acres. A stone farm seat, high on a ridge overlooking the Yadkin River and its rich river bottoms, presided over a group of stone and frame domestic and agricultural outbuildings. These included servants quarters, a greenhouse, a large gambrel-roof barn, and related farm buildings, as well as a lake and stone mill house begun in 1932. The farm included woodlands, fields for crops, and pastures for both horses and beef cattle. The connection between Forest Hills Farm and Allison Woods is more than one of time period, location on the Yadkin River (and its tributary South Yadkin River), the use of stone as a building material, and their parallel functions as gentlemen's farms. Thomas Ausley Allison (b. 1924) remembers from his boyhood trips with his father to visit Lasater at Forest Hills Farms. Although the expenditures of William Locke Allison at Allison Woods and the buildings executed there were short of Lasater's, they both sprang from a common impulse and ambition.

In retrospect, it becomes clear that when William Locke Allison retired with his young wife and children from Philadelphia to Iredell County, he had led a life of broad and rich experience. During his work with The Baldwin Locomotive Works, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, and the related railroad supply companies, he had lived in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and lesser, smaller places. It was, however, the life of Philadelphia which appears to have most influenced him. Simultaneously, the development of the residential estates along the Main Line out of Philadelphia had been supported in large measure by the fortunes of The Baldwin Locomotive works. A number of executives with the Baldwin company including Alba Boardman Johnson (1858-19), William L. Austin, Edward H. Williams, William P. Henszey (d. 1909), John Herman Converse (1849-1910), and Samuel Matthews Vauclain (1856-1940) had erected substantial houses or

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developed estates along the line. Allison would have been familiar with most of these as well as other estates and farms of suburban Philadelphia.

Exactly when William Locke Allison first held the concept of developing his farm as a rural agricultural and recreational retreat cannot easily be answered. As early as 1909, he bought property that was contiguous with his father's ancestral holdings. He also purchased rural property that does not appear to be near this tract. The major purchases occurred in 1926, apparently shortly after he acquired the interests of his four siblings in the family lands. Three tracts totaling just under 250 acres, contiguous with the family plantation, were acquired as well as a small farm of 113.5 acres that was described as six miles northeast of Statesville. Other purchases of real estate occurred in 1928 and 1929. Eventually the principal holding, representing an enlargement of the family's eighteenth century plantation, totaled some 1,561.15 acres.

It also appears likely that William Locke Allison began the series of construction projects at Allison Woods about 1926. The first of his efforts was the construction of the earthwork upper dam and the impoundment of the water flowing from the spring at the tanyard. Documentary photographs from the 1930s/1940s show a clear open vista from the lake, across fields, northward to the old family seat. The first building which can be dated with near-authority is the two-level mill house which stands downgrade, south of the road which carries across the earthwork dam.

The green Ludowici Celadon ceramic roof tiles which originally covered the building have kiln dates of August and November 1927, and it seems likely that the mill house was built in 1928. The lower level is mortared stone while the upper, second level is brick. The building was fitted with a large metal wheel on the south end and was used to generate electricity for farm use. Nearby, to the northwest, Allison erected a boat house at the west edge of the lake and installed a diving board.

Architecturally, the most developed structure erected in association with the upper mill is the stone spring house. The term spring house is one used by the family. In reality and in appearance, the structure has the appearance of an exedra that was built into the north end of the pond. It encloses one or more springs which flow into the lake. The spring house is an informally crafted structure, probably the first to have been built here by stone mason Baldy Guy who is credited with virtually all of the stonework at Allison Woods. It incorporates stone terraces on two main levels, a barbecue grill and eating area, changing, toilet, and shower rooms, a staircase, and inset stonework from which the spring water flows. A (partially) stone-paved path led down the west side of the lake from the spring house to the boat house and diving board.

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While completing the facilities at the upper lake, Allison turned his attention, about 1928, to the area south of the lake where a frame tenant house, log barn, and log crib were clustered along the old farm lane. Given his experience as a mechanical engineer, it seems likely that Allison had designed the upper mill house just as he did the new brick bungalow for his farm manager and a brick smokehouse: for the smokehouse Allison designed a series of ceiling-level tracks which were used to move the carcasses of hogs through the slaughtering and butchering process. L. Boyer Tomlinson, a Statesville contractor who lived a block west of the Allison family house, erected the farm manager's house immediately behind (east) of the frame tenant house. A part of the old house was moved across the lane to the southwest where it was used as a granary and tack room.

Although there are no known surviving documents to prove the case, it appears likely that William Locke Allison's decision to create the lower lake occurred about the time that Robert Edward Lasater was creating like features at his Forest Hills Farm. The cornerstone of the Lasater mill house is dated 1932. Between 1932 and 1933 Gene Mitchell and a crew of workmen constructed the earth and stone dam for the lower lake and about 1933 Baldy Guy completed the construction of the stone mill house. The work on the dam, the lake, and the mill house was largely finished in 1933. The companion ice/party house was built about 1936-1937. Concurrent with the lake construction project, Allison also rehabilitated a log cabin which stood at the north edge of the lake: a handsome stone chimney was erected on its gable end and a stone foundation was built, probably as a replacement for the typical stone piers. Allison, unlike other estate builders of the period, was able to reuse an existing log cabin as a rustic adornment to his estate.

The last major construction project undertaken by William Locke Allison at Allison Woods was the building of a substantial stone barn. According to Allison family tradition the building was left incomplete at the death of Baldy Franklin Guy on 21 February 1939. By that date, Guy had erected the ground-level stone walls of the barn's stable area and installed some of the metal work feeding racks. The silo, built by the Marietta Silo Company, stands at the northwest corner of the structure.

The rural agricultural and pleasure retreat which William Locke Allison created between ca. 1926 and 1939 was enjoyed by family and friends at private and public entertainments up to the opening of World War II and for over a decade after the war. Simultaneously, crops continued to be grown in its fields, fruits and nuts in the orchard, and swine and cattle were raised here. Allison's interest in the place appears to have begun waning in the early 1960s: in 1960, Allison celebrated his eighty-fourth birthday. He died on 27 February 1970 and was buried in the family plot in Oakwood Cemetery in Statesville.

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As a group, the gentlemen's farms of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries have not fared well in the second half of the twentieth century. On the one hand the fortunes which supported them have been reduced in some situations or they have been divided among a group of heirs in others. Changes in agricultural and recreational technology have likewise rendered some facilities inadequate and maintenance on out-dated farm outbuildings are often the first casualty of reduced incomes or changed perspectives on agriculture and leisure. The creation of Biltmore consumed the larger part of George Washington Vanderbilt's fortune and his early death in 1914 further compromised the future of the great estate. Nevertheless, the Biltmore Dairy continued to operate well beyond World War II. In recent years, many of the buildings which housed its operations have been remodeled and expanded to house the wine-making operations of the Biltmore Estate Wine Company. In a more dramatic way the early deaths of Richard Joshua Reynolds and his younger wife in 1919 and 1924, respectively, likewise foreclosed the future of their Reynolda estate. Its dismemberment began within year of Mrs. Reynolds' death and a portion of the estate became the site of Graylyn. While the house and its immediate grounds and gardens remain visually intact, the former agricultural complex including the handsome dairy barns and related buildings now house a commercial shopping center. The fields and pastures of the thousand-acre estate have become the site of residential subdivisions. Robert Edward Lasater's Forest Hills Farm, likewise, was dismembered after his death. Today the house which once proudly crowned the hill overlooking the bottom lands of the Yadkin River is crowded and compromised by large unsympathetic additions which house the Blumenthal Retirement Home. The lake which Lasater built is now encircled by undistinguished later-twentieth century houses and the mill house has been substantially expanded and remodeled as a private residence. A barn, a granary, and some few other buildilngs including the greenhouse, survive; however, they are poorly maintained. In short, the character of the estate is lost.

Elsewhere in North Carolina some few related agricultural estates have fared better. James Stillman Rockefeller's Long Valley Farm in Cumberland and Harnett Counties survives intact and remains a distinguished example of a winter agricultural estate. Allison Woods, located in the upper center of a 900-plus acre holding which has remained in the Allison family for 200 years, has also survived despite the unintentional neglect of the past quarter century. Now, gradually being renewed, repaired, and restored, Allison Woods is an important example of the practice of gentlemanly farming which forms a small but significant chapter in the history of agriculture, architecture, landscape architecture in North Carolina.

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Footnote

1. The principal sources for the history of Allison Woods are the interviews conducted by the author with Thomas Ausley Allison, the owner of the property, at Allison Woods on 19 July 1994, and a telephone interview with William Eugene Mitchell. Mitchell's grandfather, Martin Mitchell, came as a tenant to the farm in the late nineteenth century: his father Eugene Mitchell (1893-1979) was farm manager, and William Eugene Mitchell was born at Allison Woods on Independence Day 1924. Mitchell lived here with his father and family until 1941 when they moved onto their own place a mile or so away. Both interviews, and a subsequent interview with Mitchell and his elder brother on 16 November 1994, are cited in the bibliography. William Locke Allison's fascinating career with The Baldwin Locomotive Works and related railroad enterprises and lines is broadly outlined in his obituary and in a genealogical sketch by his son.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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William Eugene Mitchell, interviewed by Davyd Foard Hood, by telephone, 22 August 1994; interview notes in the possession of the author.

William Eugene Mitchell and James Ernest Mitchell, interviewed by Davyd Foard Hood, 16 November 1994; interview notes in the possession of the author.

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Townsend, John William. THE OLD MAIN LINE. Privately published, 1922.

Westing, Fred. THE LOCOMOTIVES THAT BALDWIN BUILT. New York: Bonanza Books, 1966.

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10. Geographical Data

Additional UTM references

5. 17 515960 3971000

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of Allison Woods, enclosing its architectural and landscape features and its acreage, are delineated on the enclosed map of Allison Woods prepared in Autumn 1994 by Mark Robinson & Associates.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of Allison Woods have been drawn to encompass the architectural, agricultural, and ornamental landscape features developed by Major William Locke Allison on his ancestral plantation. They include the adjacent, surrounding fields, former pastures, and woodlands which comprise both the setting of the buildings, lakes, and related resources and were a part of his gentlemanly farming operations. The boundaries include/reflect natural features (the course of the South Yadkin River and topographic contour lines), man-made features (the route of US 21), legal boundaries of current ownership (on the northeast along SR 2156), patterns of land use (on the east), and short lines which best connect the above boundaries and are used to exclude later features and activities which do not contribute to the significance of Allison Woods.

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Additional Documentation

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Allison Woods, Iredell County, N.C.

Schedule of Photographs

The following numbered list of photographs is a schedule of those photographs included in this nomination. The following information applies to all of the photographs:

Name of property: Allison Woods
East and south sides of US 21
Statesville vicinity
Iredell County
North Carolina

Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood

Date of photographs: 21 June 1994

Location of original negatives: Division of Archives and History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2807

1. Springhouse, looking north/northwest.
2. Upper Mill House, looking southeast.
3. Farm Manager's House, looking east.
4. Smokehouse, looking west.
5. Farm Lane, looking north with smokehouse on the left and farrowing house and silo on the right.
6. Piggery, looking southwest.
7. Lower Mill House, looking south.
8. Ice House, looking south.
9. Island Park, looking north.

Allison Woods
Iredell Co, N.C.

1. Easting
515580
Northing 3972780

2. Easting
516360
Northing 3973140

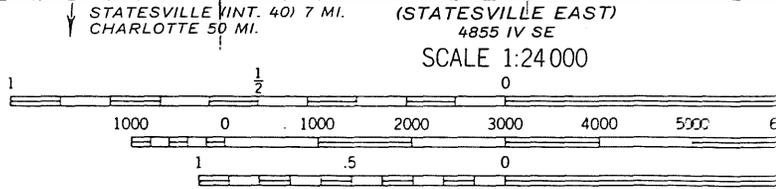
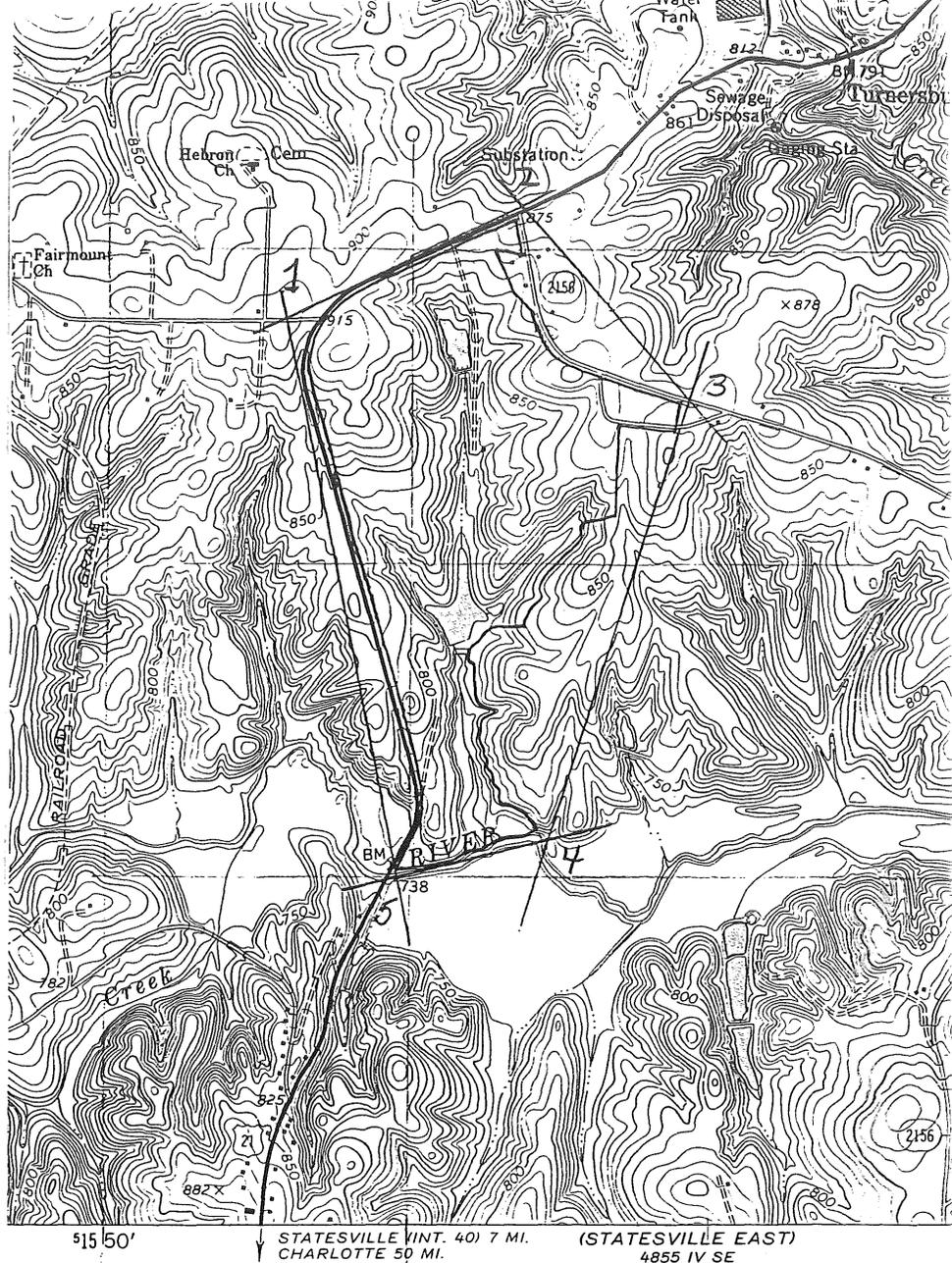
3. Easting
516920
Northing 3972520

4. Easting
516460
Northing 3971120

5. Easting
515960
Northing
3971000

Zone 17

Harmony Quad



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

TIC NORTH
F SHEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C.
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE.

