

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

Selma MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR \_\_\_\_\_ THEMATIC NOMINATION

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
William E. Smith House  
AND/OR COMMON  
The French Country Inn

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
309 West Railroad Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Selma  
STATE  
North Carolina  
VICINITY OF  
Third  
COUNTY  
Johnston  
CODE  
037  
CODE  
101

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Phillip Forman  
STREET & NUMBER  
309 West Railroad Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Selma,  
VICINITY OF  
North Carolina  
STATE  
North Carolina  
27576

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC  
Johnston County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
Market Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Smithfield,  
STATE  
North Carolina  
27577

**6 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE  
Thomas A. Greco - Principal Investigator  
ORGANIZATION  
Town of Selma  
STREET & NUMBER  
Box 357  
CITY OR TOWN  
Selma,  
DATE  
August, 1980  
TELEPHONE  
(919) 965-3388  
STATE  
North Carolina  
27576

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William E. Smith House, located on a large town lot, fronting on the Southern Railroad right-of-way, was enlarged c. 1912 from a modest one story cottage. The present building is a grand Neo-Classical, two story residence. An imposing pedimented portico supported by giant order Ionic columns, dominates the front elevation. Originally a one story Doric columned porch encircled the three principal facades; most of this porch, however, was removed in the mid 1960's, except for a small portion on the east elevation. Also removed in the 1960's was a porte cochere on the west side. The side entrance from the porte cochere was replaced by a bay window. The front elevation shows evidence of the 1912 enlargement in the window arrangements of the first and second floors. The first floor is divided into three bays, while the second floor has five bays, creating a pleasing contrapuntal rhythm. The central entrance bay has a main entrance with leaded glass sidelights and transom. The fine second story door, which originally led to a small wooden balcony over the porch and now has a mock wrought iron balcony, has graceful half arched side lights.

The interior has a traditional center hall plan, two rooms deep with a rear service wing. An elongated Ionic column screen separates the entrance from the stair within the hall. The open string stair has a finely carved newel post and turned wood balusters. The four principal rooms have handsome hand carved wood mantels. The two front rooms have classical mantels, Doric and Ionic columns framing the opening and beveled glass mirror. The original dining room mantel, in its original natural oak finish, has two leaded glass cabinets, which were used as plate warmers. The cabinets are supported by volutes. The dining room also has an elegant arched opening leading to the bay window, which was originally an entrance from the porte cochere. The door and window surrounds consist of symmetrically molded architraves supporting simple wood cornices. Unfortunately the ceilings in all rooms, except the hall and the new rear kitchen, have been lowered. However, all of the cornice moldings seem to have been reused on the lowered ceilings. The rear wing houses a new kitchen and storage area for the French Country Inn, a fine restaurant which now occupies the first floor. The entire second floor which had suffered from conversion into a hotel during the 1930's and 40's, has been redone as one living unit.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

\_\_\_\_ NATIONAL

\_\_\_\_ STATE

 X 

\_\_\_\_ LOCAL

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES c.1900, c.1912

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The two story William E. Smith House is an imposing example of the Neo-Classical style. The overall symmetrical massing and the Ionic pedimented portico are hallmarks of this style which replaced the picturesque Queen Anne style. William E. Smith was owner of the W. E. Smith and Company Clothing and Millinery Store. Mr. Smith was also president of the Bank of Selma when the bank became The First National Bank of Selma #10739, 1915.

## CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

B. The house is associated with William E. Smith, a successful Selma merchant and president of the Bank of Selma, c.1915.

C. The building was executed in the Neo-Classical style and is a unique example of this imposing style in Selma.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The William E. Smith House was remodeled from a one story cottage into a two story Neo-Classical structure, c.1912. <sup>1</sup> It is not known who built the original structure, however there was a house on the site in 1904 when Claude R. McCauley rented the property to C. W. Smith. <sup>2</sup> It is assumed that C. R. McCauley was the original owner of the cottage which dates from c.1900. On July 20, 1912, the property and cottage was sold by Mr. McCauley to William E. Smith for \$2,250. <sup>3</sup> The next reference to the house is found in an article in the Smithfield Herald, dated December 3, 1915. At that time W. L. Talton was completing the interior decoration of the W. E. Smith House. <sup>4</sup> It seems that the house was expanded sometime between 1912 and 1915. The 1911 Sanborn Map Company's Map of Selma shows the house as a one story cottage. <sup>5</sup>

During the time that William Smith was living in Selma, he started the W. E. Smith and Company Clothing & Millinery Store. <sup>6</sup> Also in 1915 he was the president of the Bank of Selma, when the bank became the First National Bank of Selma #10739. <sup>7</sup> In 1918, Smith sold the house to A. V. Driver for \$7,500. <sup>8</sup> Mr. Driver lost the house during the Depression and the house passed through several hands. During the late 1940's, under the ownership of E. M. Gordy, the house was turned into a hotel. <sup>9</sup> During the 1950's and early 60's, the house fell into a state of disrepair. Mr. and Mrs. M. Paul Herring purchased the property in 1963 and proceeded to restore the house to its former glory. The Herrings removed the one story porch and added the bay window in the dining room. <sup>10</sup> Currently the house is owned by Phillip Forman. Mr. Forman adapted the house as a French restaurant called the French Country Inn.

FOOTNOTES

1. Date is based on deeds and Smithfield Herald article dated Dec. 3, 1915.
2. Register of Deeds, Johnston County Courthouse; Smithfield, N. C. Deed Book R-8, page 589. Cottage was at that time occupied by J. W. Robertson.
3. Deed book U-11; page 176.

Continued on attached sheet . .

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1. "Selma News", The Smithfield Herald. December 3, 1915; May 14, 1915; September 3, 1915.
2. Sanborn Map Company. 1911 Map of Selma. New York, New York.
3. Register of Deeds. Johnston County Courthouse. Smithfield, North Carolina.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	7 4, 5 9, 9, 0	3, 9 3, 5 6, 2, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Being Lot Number 72 in Block 16 in the plan of the Town of Selma, N.C. lying on the west side of Railroad Street and described as follows:

Continued. .

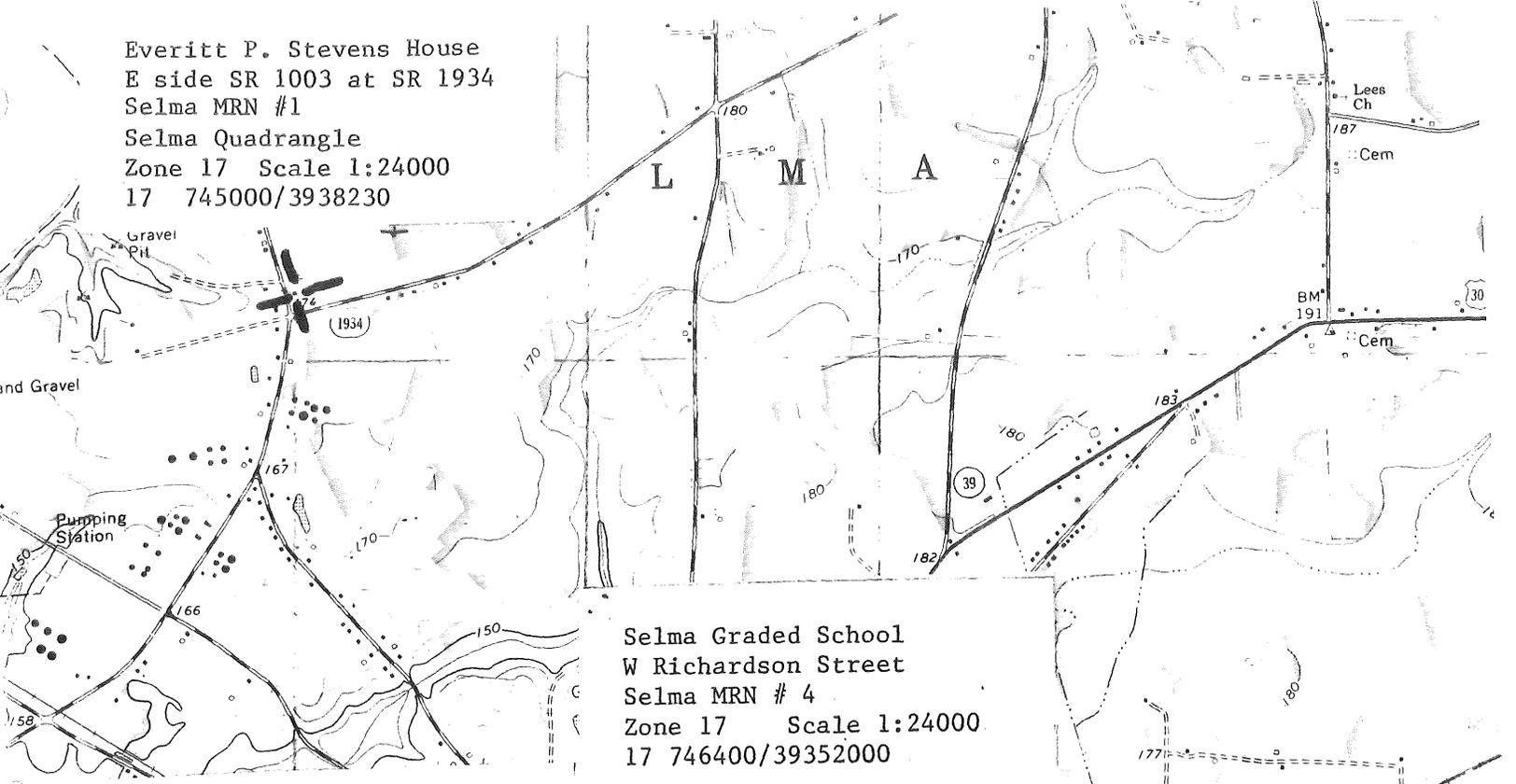
FOOTNOTES . . . Continued

4. "Selma News", The Smithfield Herald, December 3, 1915.
5. Sanborn Map Company. 1911 Map of Selma.
6. Op. Cit. Smithfield Herald. September 3, 1915.
7. Ibid. May 14, 1915.
8. Deed book 41, page 114.
9. Deed book 459, page 177.
10. Deed book 619, page 491.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA . . . Continued . . .

BEGINNING at the intersection of Railroad and Sumner Streets and runs as Sumner Street 150 feet to N.E. Edgerton's (formerly) now E.L. Womack's corner; thence 90 degree angle from Sumner Street and with the Edgerton and Womack line 150 feet to Womack's corner; thence 90 degrees angle with the Womack line 150 feet to the building line of Railroad Street; thence with the building line of Railroad Street 150 feet to the beginning, containing a fractional part of an acre.

Everitt P. Stevens House  
E side SR 1003 at SR 1934  
Selma MRN #1  
Selma Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000  
17 745000/3938230



Selma Graded School  
W Richardson Street  
Selma MRN # 4  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000  
17 746400/39352000

Nowell-Mayerburg-Oliver House  
312 W. Anderson Street  
Selma MRN # 5  
Selma Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000  
17 746020/3935830

Selma Historic District  
Selma MRN #2  
Selma Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000

17 745280/3935660

William E. Smith House  
309 W. Railroad Street  
Selma MRN #6  
Selma Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000  
17 745990/3935620

Union Station  
E. Railroad Street  
Selma MRN # 3  
Selma Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24 000  
17 746580/39353000

Noah Edward Edgerton House  
301 W. Railroad Street  
Selma MRN # 7  
Selma Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000  
17 745070/3935660

Waddell-Oliver House  
N side Pine Level Road  
Selma MRN # 8  
Selma Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000  
17 747800/39346000

