

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**  
Office of Archives and History  
Department of Cultural Resources

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House**

Mt. Ulla, Rowan County, RW1138, Listed 9/1/2009  
Nomination by Davyd Foard Hood  
Photographs by Davyd Foard Hood, March 2008



Façade view



Side and rear view

**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 Sherrill, John Carlyle and Anita, House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 14175 NC Highway 801  not for publication N/A  
city or town Mount Ulla  vicinity N/A  
state North Carolina code NC county Rowan code 159 zip code 28125

**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 for 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.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or 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:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Sherrill, John Carlyle and Anita, House  
Name of Property

Rowan County, NC  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	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**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories and subcategories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories and subcategories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

weatherboard

roof asphalt

other wood

vinyl

**Narrative Description**

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

Sherrill, John Carlyle and Anita, House  
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**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** moved from its original location.
- 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Commerce  
Industry

**Period of Significance**

1938-1948

**Significant Dates**

1938  
1948

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Sherrill, John Carlyle

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Brown, Charles Henry---builder

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State Agency
  - Federal Agency
  - Local Government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository:  
Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC

Sherrill, John Carlyle and Anita, House  
Name of Property

Rowan County, NC  
County and State

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreeage of Property** Approx. 1.75 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u> Zone	<u>524640</u> Easting	<u>3945800</u> Northing	3	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____

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.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Davyd Foard Hood  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 27 October 2008  
street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-1847  
city or town Vale state NC zip code 28168

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**Additional Documentation**

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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.)

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**Property Owner**

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

name John Carlyle Sherrill III and April Sherrill  
street & number PO Box 599 telephone 704/278-2196  
city or town Mount Ulla state NC zip code 28125

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**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 listing. 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 20303.

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Sherrill, John Carlyle and Anita, House  
Rowan County, North Carolina

## 7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

### Overview

The John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House, a two-story Colonial Revival-style brick house, stands on the south side of the Sherrill's Ford Road (NC 801), at 14175 NC Highway 801, in Mount Ulla, a small village in the agricultural countryside of western Rowan County. The house was built by the Sherrills to replace a large ca. 1920 frame bungalow built by Mr. Sherrill's brother, Price Elias Sherrill, which was the residence of John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill from October 1931, when they acquired it, until fire destroyed it in summer 1936. The house is located some 350 feet west of the Rankin-Sherrill House (NR, 1982), a two-story antebellum brick house finished in the Greek Revival style that became the residence of Adam Elliott Sherrill (1847-1900) and his family in 1886. The lawns of the two houses merge and are partially shaded by several, aged towering white oaks that survive from the expansive grove decimated by winds during Hurricane Hugo in September 1989. The Sherrill House is part of a village landscape comprising the houses, post office, volunteer fire department firehouse, and related buildings that line the Sherrill's Ford Road, Grampian Road, (SR 1753), and Centenary Church Road (SR 1763), at their junction on the south side of the Southern Railway Company tracks that carry on the north side of and parallel with the path of the Sherrill's Ford Road.

The John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House and its garage stand on three small adjoining parcels that were set apart in a slightly different form as "building lots," in a 1915 division of the Adam Elliott Sherrill estate. The nominated acreage, that comprises the site and setting of the house and its outbuilding includes all of tax parcels #566 048 and #566 061 and the east portion of parcel #566 109 (as defined on the accompanying tax map) plus the right of way area between the lots and the path of NC 801, which includes the north ends of the circular driveway that serves the Sherrill House. The total acreage is about 1.75 acres. The Sherrill House stands on tax parcel #566 048 while the ca. 1920 Price Sherrill garage (#2) stands on the east portion of parcel #566 109. The small grass-covered area of parcel #566 061 is part of the lawn setting.

The expansive, partially shaded lawn and house grounds of the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House (#1) merge with those of the Rankin-Sherrill House on the east and those of the lost ca. 1920 bungalow on the west side. They carry across the internal lot lines to the west boundary, the wire fence of a horse pasture, and include the site and setting of the frame two-car garage (#2) built by Price Sherrill that continues in use. The grounds are largely open, except for the shade provided by a small number of aged white oak trees that survived the hurricane in 1989. Other ornamental deciduous trees have since been added to the landscape, whose plantings date largely to the Sherrills' occupation of the house. The drive, which carries in a half circle off the south side of the Sherrill's Ford Road, was gravel until

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being paved with concrete in 2007. Its junction with the highway is marked by paired English boxwood at its east end and one of the original paired evergreen shrubs at the west end. A border of mixed shrubs, including boxwood, azaleas, and a camellia carries across the front of the house, along the north edge of the porch whose broken terra cotta tile floor continues as an open terrace to the east in front of the sun parlor. Here, boxwoods, azaleas, and camellias grow on the east side of the sun parlor and the house. Clumps of nandina, including old original plants and seedlings, wrap the southeast corner of the house. Foundation plantings along the west elevation of the house include rhododendrons, azaleas, and hydrangeas. The original back yard of the house is now included in a pasture and defined in part by a colonial-style picket fence that abuts the southeast and southwest corners of the house. This fence line appears to be historic, at least on the west, as plantings of peonies, iris, and various bulbs, dating to Mrs. Sherrill's residency here, appear on the north, lawn side of the fence. Mock orange, clumps of iris, and at least one aged rose bush remain in the area of the garage and appear to comprise maintained features of the landscape treatment of the earlier house. To the east of the house crepe myrtles and clumps of forsythia grown near the undefined east border with the Rankin-Sherrill House.

1. John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House  
1937-38  
Contributing building

The John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House is well-preserved, remarkably intact two-story Colonial Revival-style brick house distinguished by its symmetrical elevations, a classical one-story entrance porch supported by Tuscan columns that shelters the period entrance, and its original fenestration featuring single, paired, and triple six-over-six sash windows in varied-size openings. The elevations are laid up in dark, multi-colored common bond brick whose exposed faces feature decorative embossed patterning (or wire-cutting). The sill line of the first story is defined by a soldier-course water table. The window and door openings throughout the house have soldier-course lintels and sills of end-course brick. The medium-depth eaves are molded and sheathed with flush beveled boards. The house is covered by a tall hip roof of asphalt shingles pierced by a brick chimney serving fireplaces and coal grates and a brick flue for the furnace. The footprint of the house is essentially a rectangle that is expanded by the front porch centered on the north facade, a one-story sun parlor on the east elevation, and the shallow one-story hip-roof "shed" block occupying the house's south elevation. Except for the vinyl railings atop the porch and sun parlor, that were added as temporary measure to replace the deteriorated original wood railings of similar appearance, and some minor changes to the cabinetry and interior decoration of the kitchen, the house remains as built and occupied by the Sherrills and their family in about March 1938.

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The symmetrical north-facing façade of the Sherrill House is three bays wide. Its architectural development is focused on the central entrance and the one-story, one-bay porch that shelters it. The classically-finished porch is supported by trios of wood Tuscan columns at its northeast and northwest front corners. Its molded frieze rises to a flush sheathed eave of beveled boards. The columns stand on a floor paved with broken terra cotta tiles, enframed in a soldier-course brick border that extends as an open terrace to the east. Originally the terrace carried fully across the north elevation of the sun parlor; however, that easternmost portion of the terrace, damaged by freezing water that penetrated the mortar, has been taken up prior to rehabilitation. The house's arch-headed entrance is enframed by a flush soldier-course surround. The six-panel door retains its original brass hardware. It is flanked by eight-pane sidelights above molded panels and surmounted by a Federal-style fanlight with wood tracery. The flanking bays on the first-story elevation contain large three-part windows that illuminate the living and dining rooms in the house's northeast and northwest corners, respectively. On the second story, openings holding paired sash windows flank a smaller window that illuminates a bathroom between the front corner bedrooms.

The west elevation of the house has a generally symmetrical four-bay elevation. Complementing openings holding paired sash windows are set in the near center of the elevation. The north "third" of the elevation has a symmetrical two-bay fenestration with single windows in complementing positions on each story. In the south portion of the wall small paired sash windows appear on the first story, positioned above the interior kitchen sink, while a single window is located above on the second story. A single small window, replicating the size of those in the kitchen, appears in the west face of the shallow one-story projecting, shed-like bay that contains the pantry. Small four-pane windows at the base of the elevation, just above ground level, illuminate the house's basement.

The appearance of the Sherrill House's east elevation is dominated by the one-story sun parlor that occupies the north half of its first story. The sun parlor walls are fitted with a centered glazed door flanked by windows on the north elevation, a large opening holding four sash windows on its long east elevation, and an opening holding paired windows on its south side. Its shallow hip roof is encircled by a white picket railing. (The sun parlor has doorways in its interior west wall opening into both the living room and the family sitting room in the east center of the house.) A glazed fifteen-pane door and single window, serving the sitting room, are set in the center of the first-story east elevation while an opening holding paired sash illuminates Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill's bedroom in the house's southeast corner. The fenestration on the three-bay second story reflects the arrangement of three bedrooms here, along the east side of the second-story hall, an arrangement recurring on the west side of the hall but less clearly evident on the exterior.

On the rear elevation, the projecting shed-like one-story block fully occupies the first story of the



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house. The frame center section of this projection, containing the enclosed porch, is framed by brick blocks of unequal size that contain the pantry on the west and a part of the Sherrill's bedroom on the east. The porch itself projects about two feet beyond the hip-roof "shed." It has four-over-four sash windows in its narrow east and west ends and a three-part arrangement on the long south elevation featuring a center opening with paired replacement doors flanked by equal-sized openings fitted with paired sash windows. The present owner has added an open wood deck across the south front of the porch with steps descending to ground level off its east and west ends. Above, on the three-bay second story of the house single windows serving the southeast and southwest corner bedrooms flank a smaller window that illuminates the rear second-story bathroom.

While most Colonial Revival-style houses have a center-hall plan, reflecting the insistent symmetry of the style, the first-story of the Sherrill House departs from that convention and has a plan more typical of bungalows. The front door opens directly into the living room, which is wider than the dining room in the house's northwest corner. This front tier of rooms is complemented by a like pair of rooms, of equal dimensions, in the center of the house; the larger room behind the living room is the family sitting room with the staircase rising to the south along its west wall which partitions it from the breakfast room in the west center of the house. The south tier of rooms is three-part in plan. Here the kitchen in the southwest corner and the Sherrills' bedroom in the southeast corner, both being about the size of the dining and breakfast rooms, flank a small service passage and a first-story bathroom. The second story of the house has a center hall, with bathrooms at its north and south ends, and three equal-sized bedrooms tiered along both its east and west sides. The interior decoration of the house has a generally consistent appearance on both levels but with the expected diminution in the level of finish from the public reception rooms at the front of the house, through the more private living quarters, to the bathrooms and service areas. The rooms have narrow oak flooring, painted plaster walls fitted with molded baseboards and varying cornice treatments, and plaster ceilings. The door and window openings have mitered three-part surrounds. Except for the glazed fifteen-pane French doors in the front part of the house, its doors all feature a molded six-panel arrangement.

The living and dining rooms at the front of the Sherrill House are treated *en suite* and linked by paired French doors centered in the partition wall. The living room has a handsome Federal-style mantel with paired, fluted pilasters rising to a classically-molded five-part frieze and projecting shelf. The hearth is black marble. A single French door, on axis with the front door opens into the family sitting room while a second, like door opens in the east wall into the sun parlor. The living and dining rooms have the same molded cornice and their original ceiling-mounted light fixtures are also complementing. The living room light has a flush-metal mount, with classical stamping, from which five concentric tiers of crystal pendants taper to a faceted ball. The dining room fixture is essentially that same design but suspended on a wrought chain from a small mounting affixed to the ceiling. A swing-hinged six-panel

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door connects the dining room with the breakfast room.

The finish of the family sitting and breakfast rooms is essentially the same except that the cornice has a less developed profile and the mantel on the sitting room's north wall is likewise a somewhat simpler version of the living room mantelpiece. The firebox was refitted in the 1980s with a wood-burning insert. The staircase linking the two levels of the house is positioned on the family room's west wall. It features simple round balusters that encircle a turned newel and then rise to the south and upward under a simple shaped handrail. A molded chair rail echoes the diagonal rise of the handrail. French doors in the room's east wall open into the slate-floored sun parlor and onto the east lawn. An arched opening in the south wall communicates with the corner bedroom while a six-panel door beside the staircase opens into the rear private passage. A fifth door, at the front of the staircase on the west partition wall, opens into the breakfast room, which had swing-hinge doors linking it with both the dining room to the north and kitchen to the south. The door into the kitchen has been removed and stored. The breakfast room retains its original colonial-style chandelier with a hammered pewter finish and three glass globes.

As previously noted, the appearance of the kitchen reflects the only changes of any degree made on the interior of the house. Here the original counter-top and wall-hung cabinets on the west and north walls were supplemented in about 1995 with cabinets on the south wall, between the doorway into the pantry and the door opening onto the enclosed porch, and a free-standing island. Paneled wainscoting was added on the kitchen's east wall in the 1980s. The enclosed porch has unpainted brick walls, narrow oak flooring, and an unpainted ceiling of mellowed pine boards. The doors and window sash, and their surrounds, also have a natural, unpainted surface.

A door in the kitchen's east wall opens into the small rectangular rear passage, a space whose walls are almost entirely fitted with doors. In clockwise fashion, they open into the stair, under the main staircase, which descends to the concrete-floored basement, and into the sitting room, a closet, Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill's bedroom, and a bathroom positioned between the passage and the enclosed porch. The bathroom retains its classic 1930s finish including black and white lattice-pattern ceramic tile floor, a tall white shoulder-height ceramic tile wainscot fitted between a black base and molded cap, and its original white fixtures including a pedestal sink. The tilework includes inset mounts for towels and tissue and a recessed soap dish. The chrome-finish wall sconces and mirror-fronted medicine cabinet are also original. The finish of Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill's bedroom repeats that of the sitting room except that the deteriorated plaster ceiling was covered with celotex embossed with a patterned-tin design. The closet door in its north wall is fitted with a dressing mirror. This bedroom also has a door opening onto the enclosed porch that could be opened for cross ventilation.

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The six bedrooms and two bathrooms on the Sherrill House's second floor are arranged around the center hall which is illuminated by a ceiling mounted fixture whose design and finish replicates the pattern seen in the hanging light in the breakfast room. All six of these bedrooms have a small closet and open only into the hall except for the northeast corner bedroom which is *en suite* with the front (north) bathroom. For many years up to four of these bedrooms were rented to teachers at the Mount Ulla School, where Mrs. Sherrill also taught, who boarded with the Sherrill family. The finish of these bedrooms is essentially the same as that of the couple's first-story bedroom except that there is no cornice treatment. In the east tier of bedrooms, the northeast corner and center rooms, located above the living and sitting rooms, are fitted with decorated metal coal grates, and both are enhanced with mantels featuring bracketed shelves. The grate surround and hearth in the northeast bedroom are faced with pale yellow ceramic tile. The mantel in this room and its woodwork remains unpainted and has mellowed to a warm brown color. The ceiling mounted light fixture in this room is also original. In the center bedroom, the coal grate has an exposed brick surround and a ceramic tile hearth. Its mantel and woodwork also retain their natural, mellowed finish, however, the light fixture is a replacement. The southeast corner bedroom, now a girl's room, has painted woodwork and a replacement ceiling light. On the west side of the hall the northwest corner and center bedrooms retain identical ceiling-mounted lights with Art Deco-style glass globes. The woodwork in the front bedroom has been painted while that in the center room remains unpainted. The southwest corner bedroom has painted woodwork, a replacement door on its closet, and a ceiling-mounted light which has lost its globe.

The two bathrooms located at the north and south ends of the second-story hall also retain a high degree of period integrity. The north bathroom has a lattice-pattern floor of cream, pale yellow, and black rectangular ceramic tiles. The tall, shoulder-height wainscot is composed of yellow tiles in two shades, with the darker yellow shade used for the base and molded cap. The tile work incorporates mounts for towel bars, a tissue holder, and a soap dish recess. The white pedestal sink and commode are replacements, however, the corner tub is original. The mirror-fronted medicine cabinet is also original, but the brass wall sconces are not. The south bathroom has a green ceramic floor and wainscot which has been painted over. The tile work includes a recess for the original tub. The sink, commode, and ceiling lights are replacements.

2. Garage  
ca. 1920  
Contributing building

Constructed by Price Elias Sherrill about the time he built his bungalow residence that became the home of his brother in 1931 and burned in 1936, this now deteriorated garage remained in use when John Carlyle Sherrill and his family occupied their new Colonial Revival-style house. Rectangular in

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plan, the garage is a weatherboarded frame building covered by a hip roof of sheet metal. Its north front elevation is open with a center support defining its two-bay/two-vehicle plan. The garage has a poured concrete floor. The longer east elevation has a single window opening at its center fitted with a sliding six-pane sash. The pendant opening in the garage's west elevation has lost its sash. The garage incorporates a storage room in its south end which is partitioned from the larger space for vehicles. It is accessed by a three-pane above three-panel door in the garage's west elevation. A later, open shed, supported by cedar tree lengths, occupies the south elevation of the building. It has a dirt floor and sheet metal shed roof.

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## 8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Summary

The John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House, a two-story Colonial Revival-style brick house built in 1937-38 in Mount Ulla by Troutman, North Carolina, builder Charles Henry Brown for the Sherrills, meets National Register Criteria B and C and holds local significance in Rowan County in the areas of architecture and John Carlyle Sherrill's contributions to the economic development of Mount Ulla. The period of significance begins in 1938 with the construction of the Sherrill House and ends in 1948 with Mr. Sherrill's death. As the residence of John Carlyle Sherrill from 1938 until his death in 1948 the house is associated with him and his role in the development of Mount Ulla as an important trading and milling community in western Rowan County. From his father's death in 1900 until his own in 1948, John Carlyle Sherrill operated the general store established by his father that remained in family operation until closing in 1966 and he oversaw two commercial milling concerns that operated with some interruption from about 1900 to about 1967. The association of people and place, seen here since the Sherrills arrived at Mount Ulla in about December 1884 and particularly in the life of John Carlyle Sherrill, reflects patterns throughout rural North Carolina where small trading centers in agricultural communities, as seen for example at the Washburn Historic District in Rutherford County (NR, 2002), were uniquely associated with individual families and their scions who exercised commercial and civic leadership.

Fires, storm damage, and demolitions have reduced the physical fabric at Mount Ulla associated with the Sherrill family's critical role in the development of place. The two-story brick store built in 1923 by John Carlyle Sherrill was heavily damaged during Hurricane Hugo in 1989 and demolished in 1990. The storm and associated tornado-force winds likewise damaged the multi-story brick buildings and grain silos housing the Mount Ulla Flour Mills. That long disused and deteriorated complex was reduced to rubble in 2005. Today the Rankin-Sherrill House (NR, 1982) and one nineteenth-century outbuilding and this house, together with a small frame garage that survived the 1936 house fire, are all that remain as reflections of the Sherrill family's long, historic role in the architectural, civic, and economic development of Mount Ulla and the fortunes of the community. The John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House is the single important building built by the family, retaining integrity and associations, that remains from their 124-year long residency in the place whose history is forever intertwined with the Sherrills' own.

John Carlyle Sherrill (1884-1948) was brought to Rowan County at the age of ten months in about December 1884 when his father, Adam Elliott Sherrill (1847-1900), relocated his family from Sherrill's Ford in Catawba County. The family appears to have first occupied lands Mr. Sherrill acquired from John W. Poteat. Some fourteen months later, after Mr. Sherrill bought the adjoining

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residual Rankin lands and the antebellum brick house built by Dr. Samuel D. Rankin (1821-1860), they moved into the house that has been occupied by five generations of the family to the present. Mr. Sherrill lived there until his marriage in 1911 to Anita Miller (1887-1977). The couple then occupied a one-story frame cottage (that has been radically altered) nearby on Grampian Road until 1931. In that year Anita Sherrill acquired the large spacious bungalow built in about 1920 by Mr. Sherrill's younger brother Price Elias Sherrill (1893-1953), a few yards west of the house that is the subject of this nomination. John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill and their family relocated to the bungalow and lived there until it was lost to fire in 1936. After occupying rooms on the second story of Mr. Sherrill's brick store, the family moved into the Sherrill house in about March 1938. Mrs. Anita Sherrill resided there until her death in 1977, and since 1980 the house has been the residence of her grandson, John Carlyle Sherrill III, and his family.

The local architectural significance of the house reflects its twofold importance as an outstanding, essentially rural example of the Colonial Revival style in Rowan County. Standing at the southwest edge of the small rural trading center, the Sherrill House was historically both a part of the village fabric and the seat of the Sherrill farm, whose fields and pastures extended south and west and held the village in their embrace. Erected by Charles Henry Brown (1867-1946), a builder and businessman based in Troutman, Iredell County, North Carolina, in 1937-38, the house represents the final, pre-World War II stage of the Colonial Revival style in Rowan County, where the style held sway and popularity principally in Salisbury, its county seat, and other towns and villages, including Mount Ulla, from the 1890s. It is also one of the very few surviving Rowan County farmhouses erected in the Colonial Revival style. In its design, materials, finish, and integrity, both on the exterior and its interior, the Sherrill House is an important representation of Colonial Revival-style domestic architecture and the signal features of that mode in this Piedmont county.

## Historical Background

The historical background of this house and the role of John Carlyle Sherrill (1884-1948) as a successful merchant, miller, and leading citizen of Mount Ulla from his father's death in 1900 until his own in 1948 begins with the family's relocation from Catawba County to the fertile fields of western Rowan County in about December 1884. At this distance the circumstances prompting the move remain unclear. As the crow flies the distance between Mr. Sherrill's birthplace on the family's expansive land holding at Sherrill's Ford, on the west bank of the Catawba River that forms the boundary between Catawba and Iredell counties, is relatively short. Mount Ulla is located about two-and-a-half miles inside Rowan County and its shared border with Iredell County, and about fifteen miles from Sherrill's Ford.

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The credit for the relocation lies not with John Carlyle Sherrill, who was ten months old in December 1884, but with his father, Adam Elliott Sherrill, who established the family at Mount Ulla. Adam Elliott Sherrill (1847-1900) was the great-great-great-grandson of pioneer Adam Sherrill (ca. 1699-ca. 1774), a native of Maryland, who migrated south on the Great Wagon Road and crossed the Catawba River in 1747 into what was then Indian territory and is now, since 1842, Catawba County. The point of his crossing has thereafter been known as Sherrill's Ford. Adam Elliott Sherrill was the eldest of five known sons born to John Smith Sherrill (1818-1883). The coincidence of dates suggests that Mr. Sherrill had decided to remain in Catawba County through his father's life and his death on 22 December 1883.<sup>1</sup>

Adam Elliott Sherrill was born on 30 January 1847 in Catawba County and attended local schools. He enlisted at the age of fifteen, on 19 March 1862, and served through the war in Company I, 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment North Carolina Troops. For a part of his three-year service he acted as a courier and orderly on the staff of Brigadier General Matthew Whitaker Ransom. He was released on 3 June 1865 at Point Lookout, Maryland, where he had been confined for two months. He returned to Catawba County and lived with his parents. On 12 January 1869 he married Josephine Setzer (1848-1938), a daughter of John and Emmaline (Dellinger) Setzer. Alda Veta Sherrill (1870-1915), their first child, was followed by four daughters, Elizabeth Melisa (1873-1963), Etta Augusta (1876-1878), Essie Fannie (1877-1896), and Lucy Edna (1879-1903), before the birth of the couple's first son, Russell Ransom Sherrill (1882-1903). John Carlyle Sherrill was born on 16 February 1884, two months after the death of his grandfather and namesake.

On 1 January 1869, a few days in advance of his marriage, Adam Elliott Sherrill had entered into an agreement with Mrs. Mary J. (Sherrill) Connor to lease a portion of the Connor family's fabled Greenwood plantation on the waters of the Catawba River (Catawba Deeds, 7/529). The bounds of the leased tract and the conditions of the four-year lease were well-defined, however, no acreage was cited.<sup>2</sup> On 26 December 1874 Adam Elliott Sherrill acquired a farm on Litten's Mill Creek of about 303 acres in the larger Sherrill's Ford community where he and his family made their home for a decade (Catawba Deeds, 9/41). The move to Rowan County and Mount Ulla came ten years later.

The death of John Smith Sherrill on 22 December 1883 appears to have freed his son to undertake this relocation. In 1884 he both identified property to purchase in Rowan County and purchasers for his Catawba County farm. On 26 November 1884 Mr. Sherrill purchased of John W. Poteat and his wife a tract of 148 acres at Mount Ulla for \$1,850 (Rowan Deeds, 65/628-29). Some three weeks later, on 15 December, Mr. Sherrill and his wife sold their Catawba County property in three separate conveyances (Catawba Deeds, 23/187-90, 26/159-60, 26/164-65 and 37/398-99).<sup>3</sup> The Poteat property apparently included a dwelling house into which the Sherrill family moved in about December 1884. Just over a

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year later Mr. Sherrill acquired the farm which remains his family's residence to the present. On 24 February 1886 he purchased the antebellum brick house built by Dr. Samuel D. Rankin (1821-1860) at Mount Ulla and its residual 260.75 acres from Dr. Rankin's son Sylvester Chalmers Rankin (1848-1902) for \$5,000 (Rowan Deeds, 67/116-17, see Rankin-Sherrill House, NR 1982). The Rankin farm was one of the several valuable farms that lined the Sherrill's Ford Road, described in the deed as "the Great Road," including the Cowan family's Wood Grove plantation (NR, 1982), and Captain Newberry Franklin Hall's farm (see Hall Family House, NR, 1982). The Rankin property included fertile bottomlands on both the north and the south sides of Back Creek. Mr. Sherrill, his wife, and their seven children moved into the Greek Revival-style house.

Adam Elliott Sherrill's purchase of the Rankin property also included a frame store building in which Chalmers Rankin had carried on a general mercantile business, an enterprise that he continued with his relocation to Mooresville in Iredell County. Mr. Sherrill continued (or reestablished) mercantile operations in the Mount Ulla store and served the needs of the large agricultural community in western Rowan and eastern Iredell counties, in the area between Cleveland about six miles to the north in Rowan County and Mooresville, about seven miles south in Iredell County. The store was operated by three generations of the Sherrill family until closing in 1966 and offered rural residents a stock of groceries, clothing, hardware, seeds, fertilizers, agricultural supplies, and other merchandise. For most of this period, from ca. 1900 until his son returned from service at the end of World War II, John Carlyle Sherrill managed the store's operation. The family's operation of the store followed a practice seen in other rural communities in North Carolina, including Washburn in Rutherford County where members of the Washburn family have operated a store from the later nineteenth century to the present (see Washburn Historic District, NR, 2002).

Adam Elliott Sherrill prospered in his agricultural and mercantile operations and fortune continued to benefit him and his family in the closing decade of the nineteenth century. In about 1897 the route of the North Carolina Midland Railroad was devised through Mount Ulla, linking Barber Junction, a station on the Western North Carolina Railroad, on the north with Mooresville, Davidson, and Charlotte to the south. On 3 November 1897 Adam and Josephine Sherrill conveyed that portion of their property in the path of the railroad and its right of way, along their northern border, to the railroad company (Rowan Deeds, 84/132-35). A depot was built on this tract, between the Sherrill's Ford Road and the tracks, west/northwest of the family residence. Mr. Sherrill was appointed agent for the railroad and the depot supervisor.

Railroad transportation and links to markets and towns in a larger region presented Mr. Sherrill and his neighbors at Mount Ulla with new opportunity. On 26 October 1899 Mr. Sherrill, Robert Cowan Knox (1853-1931), and John Knox Goodman (1849-1933) presented articles of agreement for the



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incorporation of the Mount Ulla Roller Mill Company to the North Carolina Secretary of State. The incorporation was approved on 30 October 1899 (Rowan Record of Incorporations, 1/170-72). Mr. Sherrill and his partners clearly saw the potential of buying grains grown locally and in the region, milling it into flour and meal for human consumption and feeds for animals, and selling their products locally, regionally, and in the area beyond. Grains brought to their mill by wagon and rail was converted to products that the railroad could easily transport to a wide market. On 3 November 1899 Mr. Sherrill and his wife (together with J. M. Patterson, Mortgagee, and L. H. Clement, Trustee) conveyed a tract of 1.5 acres located between the Sherrill's Ford Road and the railroad line, north of their residence and store, to the Mount Ulla Roller Mill Company for \$40 (Rowan Deeds, 88/1-3). The milling company soon built a large, three-story weatherboarded frame mill and placed it in operation. At that point it joined a trio of such rural or village mills in Rowan County, including the Rice-Ratledge Mill at Woodleaf, and the Rowan Milling Company, Cleveland, and Shuping's Mill, near Faith, both of which were organized in 1895.<sup>4</sup> The operations of Grimes Mill, Salisbury, and the China Grove Roller Mills were then probably larger commercial enterprises.

Fate did not allow Mr. Sherrill to see this industrial initiative into operation. Adam Elliott Sherrill died after a short illness on 6 January 1900. His obituary in a Salisbury newspaper appeared the following week under the caption "Death Comes to one of Rowan's Best Citizens—A.E. Sherrill Dead." His funeral was held from his residence. "There were present not less than five hundred people, an immense concourse of the friends of the deceased gentleman having assembled from various sections." Although a member of Cleveland Baptist Church he was interred at Back Creek Church, where Dr. Rankin had been buried forty years earlier. Mrs. Sherrill was her husband's heir.<sup>5</sup>

In the event it was John Carlyle Sherrill, not his elder brother, who came to the aide of their mother in the operation of the family farm, their store, and the Mount Ulla Roller Mill Company. His son, John Carlyle Sherrill Jr. (1914-1987) recalled his rise to the occasion in an article published in the *Salisbury Post* on the closing of the family store in 1966. "He (Mr. Sherrill Sr.) was a student at old Trinity College when grandfather died. He quit his studies at Trinity and came home to help grandmother run the business."<sup>6</sup> John Carlyle Sherrill's responsibilities increased in 1903 when Russell Ransom Sherrill was shot to death in the presence of his mother in circumstances arising from a misunderstanding of his relationship with a young woman.<sup>7</sup> The farm prospered, as did the store, however the roller mill operation failed for reasons now unknown. In 1914 the Mount Ulla Roller Mill Company was formally dissolved (Rowan Record of Incorporations, 4/67).

Events in the 1910s would also lead eventually to the construction of this house in 1937. The first came in 1911, on 25 October, when John Carlyle Sherrill, then twenty-seven years of age, married Anita Miller (1887-1977), a daughter of William W. and Maggie Booe Miller and a native of

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Mocksville (see Mohny, 213; see also William Miller House in the North Main Street Historic District, Davie County, NR, 1990). A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, she was a school teacher. Four children were born to the couple: John Carlyle Sherrill Jr. (1914-1987), William Miller Sherrill (1917-1918), Margaret Hill Sherrill (b. 1922) and Sarah Josephine Sherrill (1924-2000). John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill established themselves in a one-story frame Queen Anne-style cottage at 665 Grampian Road in Mount Ulla on the north side of the railroad tracks, which they are believed to have built. They resided in that house until 1931.<sup>8</sup>

The second event of the 1910s was the division of the lands of Adam Elliott Sherrill among his heirs. This decision by Josephine Sherrill, well in advance of her death in 1938, again reflected certain family realities. The death of her eldest daughter, Alda Veta Sherrill Barber, on 18 January 1915, and the rising maturity of her two sons encouraged her actions. Joseph Shepherd Hall (1856-1935), John Knox Goodman, and Victor C. Edmiston (1859-1929), contemporaries and friends of the Sherrill family and respected men in western Rowan County, were appointed commissioners by the court to survey the lands and make the division. Josephine Sherrill retained possession of the homeplace and store; the remaining 413-plus acres were divided among her five surviving children and the minor children and heirs of Alda Sherrill Barber. The commissioners set apart a substantial tract of woodland and fields to each of the six heirs of Mr. Sherrill (Rowan Deeds, 140/174-79). In addition they set aside six small, rectangular, equal-sized, adjoining "Building Lots" on the south side of the Sherrill's Ford Road and immediately west of the Rankin-Sherrill House and assigned one of those to each of the heirs. Whether this was done to encourage each of the six to build close to Mrs. Sherrill or to build up the village is unclear, but only three of the six heirs would build on these lots. John Carlyle Sherrill received building lot one immediately beside his childhood home, and Price Sherrill received lot two immediately to its west. Lucy Sherrill Linn, then residing in Salisbury with her husband, received lot three on its west side and so forth. John Carlyle Sherrill and his family remained in their Grampian Road house. In June 1920 Price Sherrill and his wife, Carolyn Miller (1893-1983), a younger sister of Anita (Miller) Sherrill, bought lot three from the Linns and they built a large frame bungalow, which was the predecessor of this 1938 house on those lots. They also erected the frame two-car garage (#2) which remains.

John Carlyle Sherrill was engaged in two major building projects at Mount Ulla in the 1920s. First, in 1923, he moved the two-story nineteenth-century frame store back on the store lot to the south and erected a sizable two-story brick store building. Its symmetrical façade featured a centered, recessed first-story entrance flanked by large plate glass display windows, and a five-bay second-story elevation below a horizontal recessed brickwork panel.<sup>9</sup> Later, in 1930, Mr. Sherrill entered into a lease agreement with the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey (Esso) to install gasoline pumps at the front of the store (see Rowan Deeds, 208/51-52). The second important project at Mount Ulla involved the

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renewal of milling operations as the Mount Ulla Flour Mills. The 1899-1900 building had been lost in about 1920 and Mr. Sherrill erected a large frame building comprising a three-story on basement main block. In time the mill came to include a sizable two-story shed addition, a one-story shed, and concrete grain silos. The new mill is believed to have been built in 1923. In 1926, Messrs. Knox and Goodman, the original incorporators of the roller mill in 1899, and Mr. Sherrill, successor to his father, conveyed the mill property to Mr. Sherrill (Rowan Deeds, 193/80). These enterprises physically enhanced Mount Ulla's role as a commercial trading center in western Rowan County, expressed a growing prosperity in the larger agricultural community, and reflected the strong association of family to place and the role of John Carlyle Sherrill in shaping both his family's and Mount Ulla's fortunes.

Further improvements came to Mount Ulla and the Sherrill family in the 1930s. In 1931 Price Elias Sherrill decided to relocate from Mount Ulla to Mooresville, where he continued as a sales representative of Armour Fertilizer Company. On 17 October 1931 he and his wife sold their large bungalow residence and its grounds, comprising building lots two and three set apart in the 1915 division, to Anita M. Sherrill (Rowan Deeds, 207/211). John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill moved their household from the Grampian Road house to their new residence. Their enjoyment of the house was relatively short lived. In mid 1936, a fire broke out on the second story and eventually consumed the entire house.

The handsome bungalow home of Mr. J. Carl Sherrill at Mount Ulla was completely consumed by fire Monday morning, when a colored man in passing along the highway discovered flames issuing from the roof. Mrs. Sherrill was notified by the colored man and a search of the rooms and closets on the second floor showed no signs of fire, but the roaring of the flames were very positive. In the meantime men at the store and the roller mills were summoned by the alarm and Mr. Sherrill said within no time there were at least fifty people there, all assisting in removing the household furnishings. Practically everything in the down stairs rooms were saved, but articles of furnishings, etc., in the three upstairs rooms were lost.<sup>10</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill and their three children moved into rooms on the second story of the store and resided there through the building of this house and their moving into it in March 1938. The source of the design of the house is not known, however, it was constructed by Charles Henry Brown of Troutman, North Carolina. The house was erected slightly east of the site of the bungalow and northeast of the frame garage which the Sherrill family continued to use. Its brick construction and symmetrical façade repeated features of the antebellum Rankin-Sherrill house while its Colonial Revival style was in contrast to the Greek Revival character of the earlier home. Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill

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occupied the house until their deaths. Several of the house's six second-story bedrooms were also rented to Mrs. Sherrill's fellow teachers at the Mount Ulla School in the 1930s and 1940s.

John Carlyle Sherrill's decade-long residency in this house was marked by important events at its start and end. On 2 May 1938, the Sherrill family matriarch, Josephine Setzer Sherrill, died and was buried beside her husband at Back Creek Church. In 1943 his siblings conveyed the Rankin-Sherrill House to him (Rowan Deeds, 276/537-39). On Friday evening, 7 November 1947, a fire began burning in the frame mill, while only three millers were at work, effectively destroying the mill in the space of a few hours. The *Salisbury Post* gave front-page coverage to the fire under a headline, "\$150,000 Fire Consumes Mount Ulla Mill and Grain," accompanied by photographs of the mill, made earlier in 1947, and in flames. The fire destroyed the mill and then weakened the tin-covered bins adjoining the building which spilled thousands of bushels of wheat into the conflagration. The account suggested that grain stored in five new concrete bins, each with a capacity of 10,000 bushels of wheat, standing at the rear of the complex, escaped injury. The matter of insurance coverage was unconfirmed. "Because of the scarcity of milling machinery, J. C. Sherrill, owner, said it might be two years before the plant, possibly the largest in the county, could be rebuilt and placed in operation again."

In the event John Carlyle Sherrill did not see the rebuilding of the Mount Ulla Flour Mills. Mr. Sherrill died in Lowrance Hospital, Mooresville, on 26 February 1948. His obituary, published on the front page of the *Salisbury Post* on 27 February 1948 described him as "One of the best known and most influential citizens of Western Rowan County" and noted that "Mr. Sherrill's store in Mount Ulla handling general merchandise and farm supplies, did a wide business in that rich farming section of Rowan and Iredell counties. His flour mill was reputed to be the largest in Rowan County, and its products were widely distributed." His funeral was held from this house and his body buried in the cemetery at Back Creek Church. Following his father's example he devised his real estate to his wife for her life and afterward to be divided equally among their three children. He bequeathed \$1,000 to Barium Springs Orphanage and the session of Back Creek Church. He also devised a sum, not exceeding \$7,500 for the purpose of erecting a new manse at Back Creek Church (Rowan Wills, 12/190-92).

Anita Miller Sherrill survived her husband by thirty-nine years, dying on 11 December 1977. During this period the mill at Mount Ulla was enlarged and rebuilt in brick and operated by their son John Carlyle Sherrill Jr. (1914-1987) who resided with his wife and four children in the Rankin-Sherrill House. Mr. Sherrill also operated the store into June 1966. As it neared its closing, the concern operated by three generations of the Sherrill family was described by staff writer Heath Thomas as "Rowan County's oldest country store" in an article published in the *Salisbury Post* on 29 May 1966 under the caption "Old Rowan Store To Close Doors." An editorial published in the same newspaper

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concluded with a lament. "After visiting Sherrill's Store now, one walks away with a feeling that he is looking back for the last time forever at something that is forever gone." It was about this time that John Carlyle Sherrill Jr. ceased the personal management of the flour mills and leased the mill facility to Coastal Mills of Johnson City, Tennessee. The mill was also rented for a time to Ward Ratledge. Lastly, a portion of the building was used as a feed store into the early 1980s. From about 1985 the mill building and its grain bins stood unused.

Following Anita Miller Sherrill's death her heirs conveyed this house to John Carlyle Sherrill Jr. On 31 August 1980 he and his wife conveyed this house and grounds of 1.180 acres to their only son, John Carlyle Sherrill III (b. 1953) and his wife, Susan (Reid) Sherrill who were married in 1977 (Rowan Deeds, 596/461). Five years later, in 1985, a sliver of land on the east side of this house, 0.142 acres, was added by the Sherrills to their son's holding (Rowan Deeds, 619/935). In 1988, as part of their divorce settlement, Susan Reid Sherrill conveyed the house and its grounds to John Carlyle Sherrill III (Rowan Deeds, 642/133 and 642/136). Mr. Sherrill, his second wife, April Eddinger (b. 1962), who were married in 1994, and their family continue to occupy the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House. In 2006 John Carlyle Sherrill III conveyed the acreage comprising the site and setting of this house (and his horse barn standing west of the house and outside the boundary) to himself and his wife, April Sherrill (Rowan Deeds, 1070/671).

During John Carlyle Sherrill III's ownership and occupation of his grandparents' house, it has remained virtually unchanged except for the renovations in the kitchen. However, changes have occurred in the appearance of the family compound at the heart of Mount Ulla. Damage incurred as a result of strong winds and small tornados during Hurricane Hugo on 22 September 1989 was a principal factor. The oak grove that shaded the lawn and grounds of the Sherrill House was decimated that day when thirteen oaks, a walnut tree, a pine tree, and a locust tree were downed by the wind and had to be removed. Shade trees were also lost on the adjoining grounds of the Rankin-Sherrill House. Some replanting on both properties has occurred. The strong winds also damaged the store and mill buildings. The roof and rear wall of the two-story brick store were essentially destroyed, leaving the building's façade and side walls mostly intact. The ruins of the store built in 1923 were demolished on 25 July 1990. The former site of the store, in the southwest corner of Sherrill's Ford and Centenary Church Road was grassed over and incorporated into the lawn of the Rankin-Sherrill House. The roof of the Mount Ulla Flour Mills building was also damaged during the storm and the frame feed section of the building was destroyed. The mill plant continued to deteriorate until 2005 when it was demolished. Today, the antebellum Rankin-Sherrill House, owned and occupied since 2006 by Sarah (Sherrill) Lomax and her family, and the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House remain architectural landmarks in Mount Ulla. They alone stand as the principal reminders of the family's milling and mercantile operations in the village, spanning three generations of ownership, and the critical role of

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John Carlyle Sherrill in shaping the civic and commercial life of Mount Ulla in the first half of the twentieth century.

## Architectural Significance

The John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House, a well-preserved two-story Colonial Revival-style brick house, meets National Register Criterion C and holds local significance in the area of architecture. The house was begun in the second half of 1937, probably in the autumn, and completed in about March 1938, when Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill and their family occupied it. The Sherrill House has remained remarkably intact and little changed during its sixty-year existence. It remained the home of its builders through the death of Mr. Sherrill in 1948 and until the death of Mrs. Anita Sherrill in 1977. Having been rented for about two years, it became the property and the residence of the Sherrills' grandson, John Carlyle Sherrill III, in 1980 and the Sherrill House remains his home to the present. During those six decades, the only change of any note occurred in the kitchen. In the 1980s salvaged paneled wainscoting was added along the room's east wall, and in about 1995, the original cabinetry was supplemented with new cabinetry on the kitchen's south wall and an island was added. In its form, plan, materials, pre-World War II finish, craftsmanship, and feeling, the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House reflects the final chapter in the long history of the Colonial Revival style in Rowan County.

At this writing the designer of the house has not been identified, nor do any plans survive, however, the builder of the house is known. Margaret Sherrill Sloop (b. 1922), the elder daughter of the Sherrills, recalls that her parents drove about in the area looking at houses in 1936 and early 1937, but she does not remember discussion of any particular house as the prototype for this house. She does recall that the house was built by "a Mr. Brown of Troutman," and that his house on that small town's Main Street was pointed out to her by her parents on a drive as the home of Mr. Brown. Charles Henry Brown (1867-1946), a son of Samuel Augustus Brown (1840/1841-1920), was a native of Iredell County and the settlement in the southern part of the county that became Troutman. During a long professional life he was first a merchant, later a co-owner of a cotton gin, an investor in the family-owned Troutman Shirt Mills Company, and a real estate speculator, in addition to being a builder. Three houses stand in Troutman today that he built and occupied with his family, in addition to other buildings for clients. In 1897 he built a one-and-a-half-story frame house in the southeast corner of today's Brown and West streets that he occupied until building another frame house, 305 North Main Street, in the northwest corner of today's North Main and Talley streets. In 1913 he began construction of the larger, more imposing two-story, frame Colonial Revival-style house at 345 North Main Street

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that remained his residence until death and that of his widow, Carrie (Cavin) Brown (1867-1963), until her death.

At present the extent of his career as a builder remains to be researched, however, a number of projects, including his first and third residences are documented in *Troutman and Environs: 1851-1940*. This book is a compilation of news and notices of Troutman and its citizens published principally in Iredell County and Statesville newspapers. Mentions of Mr. Brown as a builder begin in 1897 and continue to 1938. In Spring 1904 he and his workmen erected an auditorium on the grounds of the Troutman School that was also described as an "Opera house" to be used for entertainments. In the summer of 1905 he had "about completed the new bridge across the creek near Sherrill's Ford. This will be quite a convenience to the Catawba farmer, who want(s) to ford the river at this point . . ." (Alley, 62). In August 1906 Mr. Brown was building "a six-room house for Gus Davidson, colored" (Alley, 63). On 3 September 1913 newspaper readers learned that "Mr. C. H. Brown has lumber in place for his new residence" (Alley, 76). This new residence survives at 345 North Main Street. Five months later he was building two other houses (Alley, 77). One of the last mentions of Mr. Brown came on 21 January 1938 when a newspaper published notice of an injury to Mr. Brown when "underpinning gave way" on a house he was building for Mrs. E. J. Troutman (Alley, 151).<sup>11</sup>

During this period of four decades, from 1897 to 1938, Mr. Brown was a leading builder in Troutman, and, most of his buildings remain anonymous. There is no known documentary record of his construction of a warehouse addition to the plant of the Hall-Kale Manufacturing Company at Troutman or to his remodeling of his second residence, 305 North Main Street, in the bungalow style for Dr. John Samuel Talley, its later owner, or to the house Mr. Brown built for his son Fred, also on North Main Street, that was later the home of E. E. Sherrill (Alley interview).

Two prominent houses in Troutman of the 1930s were possibly built by Charles Henry Brown, and either may have been seen by the Sherrills on drives in 1936 and 1937. Both are two-story Colonial Revival-style houses with hip roofs, classically detailed front entrances under single bay porches, and one-story sun parlors or porches on one or both of their side elevations. The symmetrical five-bay house at 360 Wagner Street was built for Leon Atwood Brown (1894-1980), Charles Henry Brown's nephew, in about 1935.<sup>12</sup> Its two-story center block is flanked by a sun parlor and a side porch. The contemporary house built at 324 South Main Street for Russell H. Kale, the proprietor of the Hall-Kale Manufacturing Company, has a three-bay main block, like the Sherrill House, with large window openings holding paired sash windows.

Whatever the origin(s) of the design of the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House, it stands at the close of the long, pre-World War II chapter in the history of the style that had its origins in events associated

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with the Centennial celebrations in 1876. In Rowan County elements of the style appeared first in Salisbury, the county seat, as decorative features in turn-of-the-century Queen Anne-style houses whose design, fabric and finish are such a successful amalgam of the two styles that they are alternately cited at times, by some, as examples of both styles incorporating the influence of the other. This group includes the Louis H. Clement House of about 1899 at 302 South Ellis Street, the Milton Brown House of about 1902 at 208 South Fulton Street, and the McKenzie-Grimes House, also dating to about 1902, at 228 West Bank Street. Development of the Colonial Revival style continued in Salisbury in the decades leading up to World War II with some degree of asymmetry seen in the style's combination with the four-square form or an alternative, increasing symmetry seen in conventional three and five-bay brick or frame houses, such as the Reamus-Hambley House at 602 Mitchell Avenue, and imposing one-and-a-half-story houses covered with gambrel roofs, such as the Ernest Lauriston Hardin House of about 1921 at 702 Mitchell Avenue (see Fulton Heights HD, NR, 1999). In other instances the Colonial Revival style was combined with the Classical Revival style on at least three houses with two-story porticoes in the Salisbury Historic District (NR, 1975): the David Franklin Cannon House of 1906 at 202 South Fulton Street; the Judge R. Lee Wright House of about 1912 at 302 South Fulton Street; and the Walter Henderson Woodson House of 1925 at 100 North Fulton Street.

In Rowan County, beyond the border of Salisbury, the Colonial Revival style arrived later, appearing first in the county's smaller towns and villages, and next in the countryside in rare instances as the seat of a farm, as here on a sizable edge-of-a-village farm. Arguably the most popular Colonial Revival-style house was the large, symmetrical, somewhat "boxy" house with a wide, usually three-bay façade, incorporating large, multiple-sash windows, expansive one-story porches supported by Tuscan columns, and tall hip roofs featuring gable-roof dormers. The Edwards-Black House of about 1909 at 421 South Main Street, Landis, with its three-bay facade, one-story Tuscan-column porch, and Palladian-style attic dormer, is one example and another is the Paul Talmadge Goodman House of about 1916, at the edge of Gold Hill, whose one-story porch features pairs and trios of columns on stone plinths (Hood, 240, 259). A third example of the style with a one-story Tuscan-column, wrap-around porch was built in about 1912 on Grampian Road (now 585 Grampian Road) in Mount Ulla for Dr. George Alexander Brown (1869-1938), another of Mount Ulla's leading citizens (Hood, 150).

In Rowan County's smaller towns, as in the county seat, houses in variant Colonial Revival modes continued to be built in the 1920s but with fewer examples in the 1930s, such as the beige brick Enoch Arthur Goodman House of 1936 at 602 South Fulton Street, Salisbury, built for a co-founder of the Goodman Lumber Company. During this period the expansive full-facade and wrap-around porches of the 1900s and 1910s gave way in the 1920s to smaller, single-bay classically-detailed entrance porches seen on both the Goodman residence and that of the Sherrills. Completed in 1938, the Sherrill House is



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among the very last of those built before World War II, which interrupted much of the domestic construction and altered representation of the style in residential construction. After the war and through the 1950s, "Colonial" houses, mostly erected in suburbs, had an altogether different character.

The architectural significance of the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House derives from its dual importance of being both a noteworthy example of a village house in the Colonial Revival style and one of the rare examples of the style erected as farm seats. When Dr. Samuel D. Rankin and the Reverend Andrew Y. Lockridge (1801-1876), minister to both Third Creek and Back Creek Presbyterian churches (for Lockridge see Hood, 150-51), built their houses at what is now Mount Ulla, this part of Rowan County was entirely rural. Their houses were the seats of farms of sizable acreages. While Mount Ulla took on the character of a village with the sequential construction of the railway depot, the Mount Ulla Roller Mills facility in about 1900, John Carlyle Sherrill's ca. 1911 dwelling on Grampian Road, the completion of Dr. Brown's house and office in 1912, and John Carlyle Sherrill's new brick store in 1923, the antebellum Rankin House and the Lockridge-Goodman House remained farm seats, while the village developed between them. In 1937-38, when this house was built, it, too, was the seat of Mr. Sherrill's farming operations while also the home of Mount Ulla's merchant and mill owner. As such, it represents an important example of the final phase of important farmhouse construction in rural Rowan County that closed with World War II. After the war there was very little important domestic building in the Rowan countryside as textile mills lured returning veterans to their plants along with many of the county's other sons and daughters. When the agricultural economy enabled the construction of the next generation of farm residences, they were a rural variant of one-story suburban Ranch houses.

Wood Grove and the Hall Family House, noted earlier in this nomination, represented important farm seats of their period as did the antebellum Rankin House that became home to the Sherrill family in 1886. After the Civil War, virtually all farm seats erected in Rowan County in the period leading up to the 1910s were of frame construction. They largely followed the traditional I-house form, comprising a two-story three-bay main block with a one- or two-story rear ell until the decades at the turn of the twentieth century when they were joined by L- and T-plan houses of one or two stories. The retardataire Greek Revival finish, seen on the Henry Connor Bost House (NR, 1982) that persisted after the war, was soon succeeded by Italianate detailing and other Victorian finishes that continued into the years after the turn of the twentieth century when the appearance of these iconic farmhouses, such as the Frank Cline House (Hood, 175), became insistently plain, as the size of farm acreages lessened and their status diminished. That said, some few highly individual houses of appealing character were also built in the area, including the Barger Family House, with a trio of gable-front wall dormers crowning its three-bay façade, on nearby Brown Road (Hood, 137). Beginning in the late 1910s, at about the end of World War I, the traditional two-story farmhouse was succeeded, when necessary, by a new house

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form, the one-and-a-half-story bungalow. Its plan, finish, and appearance reflected a less elaborate version of Craftsman-style houses, often seen in suburban residential parks. In rural Rowan County these farm houses were mostly of frame construction, sheathed with weatherboards, and often fitted with wood shingles in their expansive, usually bracketed gable ends. The house built here by Price Elias Sherrill in about 1920 and occupied by John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill from 1931 until its loss to fire in 1936 was an imposing example of the bungalow house, featuring nine-over one sash windows, a shingle-clad front dormer, and paired tapering wood supports on brick piers on its full-façade porch. Other rural bungalows stand on Sherrill's Ford Road and in western Rowan County, including the bungalow built in 1923 by Charles Johnston Wilkinson (1882-1965), who moved into it with his family from a weatherboarded two-story log house that was earlier the farm seat (Hood, 14-15), and the contemporary Chester Deal House near Mill Bridge (Hood, 154).

Bungalows continued to be built in rural Rowan County through the 1920s as farm houses and in smaller numbers after 1929, in the early 1930s. During the 1920s, another house form, the four-square dwelling, appeared in a few instances in the countryside. One of the most imposing of this group stands slightly west of Mount Ulla, at 14340 NC Highway 801 (Sherrill's Ford Road). Standing on a slight rise, facing south and overlooking the tracks of the Southern Railway, it was built by George Brown Ketchie (1858-1940) and has an expansive bungalow-style porch spanning its façade. Its size is one distinction, the other is that the Ketchie house is brick, features associating it with a small number of important nineteenth and twentieth century houses in this farming region of the county. For reasons that remain to be examined, rural house builders in this Piedmont county gave little favor to the Colonial Revival style. The often costlier finish of such houses might have been one factor, but this is belied in some degree by the contemporary updating of the nearby, now-lost 1860s-era White-Hamilton House with a two-story portico and a one-story wrap-around porch supported by Tuscan columns (Hood, 149).

John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill likely would have continued to occupy their spacious bungalow home for the remainder of their lives had it not been destroyed by fire in summer 1936. Certainly the experience of living through the Great Depression would have discouraged construction of a new house in this then conservative community. In setting about its replacement, they had the experience of living in a bungalow and the means for building a substantial rural/village residence of their choice. While the Sherrills could have followed the pattern of their neighbor, Mr. Ketchie, and built a four-square house, a form that persisted to some degree, they chose instead to build a Colonial Revival-style house. Whether they knew of the larger country house built a dozen or so miles to the northeast, with its symmetrical elevations, classical finish, and two-story north portico, begun ca. 1930 by Percy Griffith and completed by Lewis Sowers, is uncertain. However, the construction of this pair of 1930s Colonial Revival-style houses effectively marks the rural end of the style's representation in domestic

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architecture that had been sustained since the 1890s. Through this period the massing of Colonial Revival-style houses had remained consistent, and so, too, had the complementing symmetry of the façade and other elevations. Entrances were a focus of architectural development with classical compositions incorporating moldings, side lights, and fan lights, all under the shelter of classical porches usually supported by Tuscan columns. The John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House reflects these important features of the style on the exterior and others in its well-preserved, intact interior.

## Endnotes

1. For a fuller account of the Sherrill family in the western Piedmont see *Descendants of Adam Sherrill*, among other genealogical sources on this large and widespread family.
2. This lease arrangement, essentially that of a share-cropping tenant, was a matter of convenience for both parties. Mrs. Connor (1836-1889), the daughter of Hiram Sherrill, the widow of Charles T. Connor (1840-1865), and the mother of three young children, was faced with the cultivation of a sizable acreage without adult male labor or management assistance. Mary Jane Sherrill Connor was also a descendant of pioneer settler Adam Sherrill. She was married first in 1856 to Mr. Connor, a son of Henry William Connor (1793-1866) and his (first wife) Lucy Ann (Hawkins) Coleman, a daughter of William Hawkins (1777-1819), who was governor of North Carolina (1811-1814). In March 1869 she was married to Levi A. Lockman (1842-1925).
3. A tract of seventy-six acres was sold for \$1,360 to Archibald Fox and others (Catawba Deeds, 23/187-88 and 26/159-60). A larger tract of 173 acres was sold for \$1,730 to W. L. and Lillie Saunders/Sanders (Catawba Deeds, 23/189-90). The third, smaller parcel of 28.50 acres was sold to Thomas Benton Litten for \$285 (Catawba Deeds, 26/164-65). On 17 May 1890 Mr. Fox and his partner, Avery H. Harwell, and their wives sold the seventy-six acre tract back to Mr. Sherrill for \$1,360 (Catawba Deeds, 39/55-57). On 16 June 1890 Mr. Sherrill sold the tract to Charles Henry Lester (Catawba Deeds, 39/58-59). Five days later, 21 June 1890, this purchase was secured by a mortgage deed conveyed by Mr. Lester and wife to Mr. Sherrill for \$300 (Catawba Mortgage Deeds, 34/265). The description of the property was the same except for an important addition at its end, “. . . containing 76 acres on which is situated a saw mill and other machinery.” It would appear the \$300 was a loan for the purchase of the saw mill. The mortgage was not satisfied until 19 May 1898. Charles Henry Lester (1849-1940) has been identified as “Catawba County’s First Architect” and was a prolific building contractor.

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Among the most prominent of his many buildings and one of three houses that survive is the elaborately-detailed Stick-style house he built in the 1890s for Thomas Franklin Connor (1860-1947), the eldest child and only son of Mrs. Mary Jane (Sherrill) Connor.

4. As of 2000, only the Rowan Milling Company building was still standing.
5. Under the heading "Mr. Sherrill's Will," *The Salisbury Daily Index* of 11 January 1900 informed its readers of his bequest of his entire estate to his wife. His instruction to his widow was "to use (the estate) to the best interest of the family during her life, and after her death to be equally divided between our children" (Rowan Wills, 3/353-55). After the family's relocation to Rowan County, two children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill: Lena Watts Sherrill (1888-1972), and Price Elias Sherrill (1893-1953). The couple's third daughter, Essie Fannie Sherrill, had died in 1896, and their fourth daughter, Etta Augusta "Gussie," would die later in 1900. Mr. Sherrill had signed his will in August 1898, naming his wife and eldest daughter Alda Sherrill as his executors. Russell Ransom Sherrill, his eldest son, was then but sixteen years of age.
6. A photocopy of the article, missing its publication date, was made available to this author.
7. Russell Ransom Sherrill was shot to death on 17 September 1903 on the front porch of the Rankin-Sherrill House by Thomas J. and Chalmers L. White, brothers of the deceased father of Miss Annie White, who were set on a course of avenging her honor. In September 1904 they were convicted of second degree murder. The events were widely reported in the Salisbury and regional press.
8. That house remained in the family as a rental property until recent years when it was sold. The form of the house remains visible, however, it has been obviously remodeled, expanded, and sheathed with vinyl siding, which altogether compromise its integrity. A post-card view of the house, having a postmark in 1914, survives in the possession of Margaret Hill Sherrill Sloop, who was born in the house in 1922.
9. Following a fire in February 1925 that destroyed the frame Mount Ulla School, five rooms were partitioned on the second story of the store and school was held here for some time. In 1936 these same rooms would become living quarters for the Sherrill family following the fire that destroyed the frame bungalow then occupied by the John Carlyle Sherrill family.

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10. This quotation is taken from a longer account of the fire that was published in the *Mooreville Enterprise* in 1936. It was reprinted in the same newspaper in 1977 in a column under the heading "Our Community In Other Years . . . 1936, 41 Years Ago." A photocopy of the 1977 article was supplied to this author by Margaret Hill Sherrill Sloop.
  11. In September 1911 one of the area newspapers searched by Mr. Alley also carried an account of a different nature concerning Charles Henry Brown. "While operating the cotton gin of Brown Bros. at Troutman's Wednesday morning, Mr. C. Henry Brown was the victim of an accident which cost him his left hand" (Alley, 72).
  12. Leon Atwood Brown was the son of Arygell G. Brown (1876-1937), Mr. Brown's younger brother. Both were investors with Charles Henry Brown in the Troutman Shirt Mills Company. The company prospered and was later acquired by the Vanity Fair company.

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## 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the acreage included in this nomination of the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House is defined by the heavy line on the accompanying tax map at a scale of one inch equals 200 feet. This boundary includes Rowan County tax parcels #566 048 and #566 061, the east portion of parcel #566 109, and the acreage that lies between the north boundary of these three adjoining parcels and the south edge of NC Highway 801.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include the site and setting of the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House and its garage. This acreage, approximately 1.75 acres, includes the lawn and grounds that have been historically associated with the house and its occupation from 1938 to the present.



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## PHOTOGRAPHS

### Schedule of Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs included in this nomination.

1. Name of Property: Sherrill, John Carlyle and Anita, House
2. Location: Mount Ulla, Rowan County, North Carolina
3. Name of photographer: Davyd Foard Hood
4. Dates of photographs: 7-8 March 2008
5. Location of original negatives: Division of Archives and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601
6. -7. Photographs
  - A. Overall landscape view, looking south/southeast to the John Carlyle and Anita Sherrill House (#1).
  - B. Entrance on north facade under porch, looking south.
  - C. View, looking northwest, showing east and south elevations of the house and the garage (#2) on the left.
  - D. Living room, looking southeast, with mantel and glazed door to sun parlor.
  - E. View from the living room into the family sitting room, looking south, with stair rising to second story and six-panel door into rear private passage.
  - F. Mantel and coal grate in the north wall of the center bedroom in the east tier of rooms on the second story, looking north.