

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Charles E. Orr House

Brevard, Transylvania County, TV0299, Listed 12/6/2006
Nomination by Clay Griffith
Photographs by Clay Griffith, December 2005

See photo at the end of the nomination

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 any 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 Orr, Charles E., House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 334 East Main Street not for publication N/A
city or town Brevard vicinity N/A
state North Carolina code NC county Transylvania code 175 zip code 28712

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination/____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ____ nationally ____ statewide X locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|
| ____ entered in the National Register | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
| ____ See continuation sheet. | _____ | _____ |
| ____ determined eligible for the National Register | _____ | _____ |
| ____ See continuation sheet. | _____ | _____ |
| ____ determined not eligible for the National Register | _____ | _____ |
| ____ removed from the National Register | _____ | _____ |
| ____ other (explain): _____ | _____ | _____ |

Orr, Charles E., House
Name of Property

Transylvania County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 2 | 1 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 2 | 1 | Total |

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

Historic and Architectural Resources of Transylvania County, North Carolina, ca. 1820-1941

Number of contributing resources previously listed
In the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single-family dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single-family dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Tudor Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/granite

roof Asphalt

walls Stone/granite

other Glass

Narrative Description

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

Orr, Charles E., House
Name of Property

Transylvania County, North Carolina
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1926

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Transylvania County Library, Brevard, NC
Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC

Orr, Charles E., House
of Property

Transylvania County, North Carolina Name
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | <u>17</u> | <u>342610</u> | <u>3899920</u> | 3 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | 4 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | | | | | <u> </u> | <u>See continuation sheet</u> | |

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Clay Griffith

organization Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. date August 25, 2006

street & number 825-C Merrimon Ave., #345 telephone (828) 281-3852

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Henning and Virginia Meyn

street & number 31 Hunters Trail telephone 828-698-3905

city or town Hendersonville state NC zip code 28739

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Section 7. Narrative Description

The house built for Charles Edmund Orr (1880-1929) at 334 East Main Street in Brevard, North Carolina, occupies a prominent corner site as East Main Street transitions from the downtown commercial area to an early twentieth-century residential neighborhood. The Orr House stands at the northeast corner of East Main Street and Franklin Street. In 1926, when the Orr House was constructed, the elegant Franklin Hotel, built in 1900 by the Toxaway Company, stood immediately to the north. Also in 1926 construction began on St. Philip's Episcopal Church (NR, 1997), a monumental stone structure with a Norman-style front tower designed by Charlotte architect Louis H. Asbury, that stands directly across the street from the Orr House. The imposing 1902 Neoclassical Revival style William E. Breese Jr. House (NR, 1983) occupies the southeast corner of East Main and Franklin streets. Silvermont (NR, 1981), the 1917 Colonial Revival style mansion of Joseph Silversteen, Transylvania County's leading early twentieth-century industrialist, is located to the south of St. Philip's. The Franklin Hotel was torn down in the early 1950s and replaced in 1956 by the Brevard-Davidson River Presbyterian Church, which remains on the north side of the Orr House property.

The Orr House, which faces southwest, occupies an approximately one acre urban lot surrounded on the north, south, and west sides by tall hedges. Two openings in the hedge row on East Main Street mark the ends of a loop driveway that passes in front of the house. The north section of the driveway is paved with fieldstones and continues past the house to the contemporary cottage and mid-twentieth-century garage. A circular entrance walk is also paved with fieldstones. A low stone retaining wall borders the property on the south side along Franklin Street. To the rear of the house and beyond the two outbuildings, the lot begins to slope down from the house to a twelve-foot undeveloped easement. Originally platted for a small street, the easement is currently divided along its centerline between the Orr House property and the adjacent property owners. A deteriorated outdoor fire pit and chimney are located to the rear of the garage. The grassed lot encompassing the Orr House is generally open with scattered ornamental trees and mature evergreens.

Charles E. Orr House, 334 East Main Street. 1926. Contributing building.

The Charles E. Orr House is a two-story Tudor Revival-style dwelling of uncoursed rock-faced granite construction with beaded mortar joints of concrete that is light brown in color. The gray building stone varies in its shading with exposed feldspar, mica, and quartz components. The house is topped by a combination hip and clipped gable roof that slopes low to shelter a one-story sunroom at the south end. An interior chimney projects at the point where the one-story section joins the two-story block of house. A second interior chimney rises through the north rooms of the house to vent the boiler and radiant steam heating system as well as the kitchen stove. At the center of the asymmetrical southwest façade is a projecting shed-roof entrance vestibule with an eyebrow gable, Tuscan columns, ceramic tile floor, and French doors, which were added in the 1980s. A round arch opening in the side wall of the vestibule opens onto a stone terrace with low stone wall. A prefabricated

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

curved-glass solarium installed in the mid-1980s now covers the terrace. Due to the prefabricated size of the solarium, a concrete slab was added to the top of the terrace wall and the projecting edge of the solarium frame is supported on metal pipe columns. Except for three six-light casements located in a shed-roof bay above the vestibule, windows on the façade are six-over-one sash arranged in pairs or triples with flat arch lintels composed of keystones and voussiors and stone sills. A lancet arch louvered vent is positioned in the gable end of the projecting bay at the north end of the façade.

The northwest side elevation of the house is three bays wide and contains six-over-one sash windows arranged as singles or in pairs. A recessed porch at the north, rear corner was enclosed in the 1980s to enlarge the kitchen, and a round arch opening on the first story of the north side was fitted with paired casements when the porch was enclosed. The asymmetrical rear (northeast) elevation of the house features two abutting clipped gable ends and an uncovered stone terrace. The windows are typically six-over-one sash arranged in singles, pairs, and triples, with the notable exception of a segmental arch opening on the second story with paired twelve-light casements that illuminates the interior stair landing. Two single-leaf entrances on the rear are approached by exterior stone steps. The central door, which is sheltered by an attached shed-roof canopy supported on wood brackets, features six lights above two vertical panels and appears to be original. Additional stone steps lead down to the basement entrance below grade. At the southeast end of the house, the sunroom is accessed from the front and rear terraces by single-leaf glazed doors flanked by twelve-light windows within segmental arch openings. The southeast side elevation is dominated by the expansive roof slope, and the sunroom is lit by two three-part groups of multi-light casement windows.

The interior of the Orr House is arranged around a center transverse hallway with stairs to the second story rooms and features plaster walls and oak floors throughout. From the enclosed vestibule, a single-leaf glazed entry door opens into a small foyer with sets of French doors leading to a large living room to one side (south) and to the dining room to the other (north). The stair features a paneled newel, plain balustrade, and molded handrail. The hallway and stair display a flat chair rail, and the hall leads through the house to a rear entrance, basement stairs, and a half bathroom with original wall and floor tile. A rock-faced stone mantel dominates the south end of the living room, which is illuminated by triple window groups on the east and west walls. The living room is finished with crown molding and plain window surrounds. A French door flanking the fireplace at the south end of the room opens into the sunroom. The dining room located at the northwest corner of the house displays a small crown molding and molded chair rail, which may have been added later. Paneled, swinging wood doors connect the dining room and kitchen through the remaining built-in wood cabinets and shelves of the original butler's pantry. The kitchen, which was enlarged and updated in 1986, is currently being remodeled.

The second story contains three bedrooms and two bathrooms radiating from the central hall. The second story hall is illuminated by the arched window above the stair landing. Two small bedrooms at the north end of the house share a bathroom with original ceramic tile walls and floor. The large main bedroom occupies the south part of the house with two closets located at the south end of the room flanking the enclosed chimney stack and positioned beneath the roof slope. A third small closet is located at the northeast corner of the room.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Reportedly the bedroom was originally two rooms, and an exposed ceiling beam supposedly indicates the location of the dividing wall. The bedroom is finished with crown molding and plain door and window surrounds. Also located off the hall, a bathroom located in the projecting bay at the front of the house was remodeled in the 1980s. The large open attic is accessed by pull-down wood stairs from the hallway, which still bear their original shipping label. Manufactured by the Bessler Movable Stairway Company of Akron, Ohio, the stair unit was shipped to "Mr. Charles E. Orr, Secretary Roads Commissioner, Brevard, N.C."

The basement, which is accessed by a stairway beneath the main stairs or by an exterior rear door, is unfinished with exposed stone foundation walls, brick piers, poured concrete floor, and unexcavated earth.

Cottage. 1926. Contributing building.

A one-story, stone veneer cottage stands to the north of the house. Originally planned as a garage, the structure was built as a house for the Orrs' married daughter. The cottage is faced with the same granite as the main house and is topped by an asphalt-shingled pyramidal roof. A shed roof canopy supported on angled braces shelters a glazed and paneled single-leaf entry door. Windows throughout are paired nine-light wood-frame casements. An interior brick flue rises against the northwest side wall on the interior, which is divided into a single large room with a separate kitchenette and bathroom. Interior walls are sheetrock over wood frame. Hardwood floors remain throughout the interior.

Garage. Ca. 1946. Non-contributing building.

In the mid-1940s, W. M. Melton constructed a one-story, gable-front, two-bay frame garage to the east of the cottage. The garage rests on a brick foundation wall and faces a concrete slab driveway. Originally covered with asbestos shingle siding, a thin layer of roughcast stucco over wire mesh was applied in the mid to late 1990s. The garage doors consist of three rows of wood panels and a row of fixed glass panes across the top. Two six-light windows are located on the rear wall. An engaged shed-roof porch along the southeast side of the building features wood decking and square posts, which are supported by stucco-covered piers. An open shed with wood lattice siding was added to the rear ca. 2000.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Section 8. Statement of Significance

Summary

The Charles E. Orr House at 334 East Main Street in Brevard, North Carolina is an imposing Tudor Revival-style dwelling that occupies a prominent site to the southeast of the small mountain town's business district. Built in 1926, the Orr House is a distinctive example of a small group of important stone and rock buildings and structures erected between 1915 and 1943 in Transylvania County. Attributed to the Wright brothers, local stonemasons, the Orr House is a good example of their use of native stone in constructing substantial and stylish buildings, and is also a good example of English-inspired Tudor Revival style, which enjoyed regional popularity during the residential building boom of the 1920s in western North Carolina. The Charles E. Orr House meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion C for architectural significance at the local level. The period of significance for the Orr House is 1926, the year of its construction.

The local context and significance of the Charles E. Orr House is established in the multiple property documentation form entitled *Historic and Architectural Resources of Transylvania County, North Carolina, including the incorporated towns of Brevard and Rosman, ca. 1820-1941* (NR, 1993). The historic context for the house is presented in Context 4: Building and Rebuilding, War to War, 1917-1941 (Section E, pages 34-37). The house is discussed within two property types—Property Type 5: Housing from World War I to the Eve of World War II, 1917-1941 (Section F, pages 54-56) and Property Type 12: Stone and Rock Masonry Construction in Brevard and Pisgah Forest (Section F, pages 78-85). The house and its contemporary cottage retain integrity of form and architectural character, thus meeting the registration requirements for Property Type 4, as outlined in Section F, pages 55-56. By retaining integrity of form, materials, and construction method together with the signal features of its exterior and interior plan and finish, the Orr House also meets the registration requirements for Property Type 12, as defined in Section F, pages 84-85.

Historical Background

The historic contexts for the Charles Edmund Orr House are established and presented in the Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled *Historic and Architectural Resources of Transylvania County, North Carolina, including the incorporated towns of Brevard and Rosman, ca. 1820-1941* (1993). The Multiple Property Documentation Form also addresses the early settlement and formation of Transylvania County in the nineteenth century and the period of economic growth and prosperity that influenced the development of Brevard in the first decades of the twentieth century. Although the center of government for the county,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Brevard remained a small village until the arrival of the Hendersonville and Brevard Railroad in 1895, which opened the county's abundant forest resources to increased tourism and recreation as well as industrialism.¹

At the turn of the twentieth century, Brevard began to develop rapidly with an influx of investment from northern entrepreneurs such as J. F. Hayes and Joseph Silversteen. George Vanderbilt's extensive land holdings in the county encompassed vast amounts of forested mountains, and through his efforts the influential Biltmore School of Forestry was established in 1898 under the direction of German forester Carl A. Schenck. As a result, Brevard and Transylvania County benefited from the development of scenic mountain resorts, progressive forest conservation practices, and substantial timber and tanning industries which attracted new residents and visitors to the area.²

Pennsylvania-born Charles Edmund Orr (1880-1929) came to Brevard in the years after the turn of the century. It is unclear what brought the family to Brevard, but in 1902, Orr and his brothers were actively involved in several local businesses. The son of James B. Orr, Charles Orr owned and operated the Main Street Livery and Feed Stables in Brevard, and between 1903 and 1905, corresponded with Carl Schenck at the Biltmore School of Forestry about the sale of horses to Dr. Schenck. Andrew Knox Orr served as the treasurer of the Transylvania Railroad Company from 1902 to 1904. In 1905, Andrew Orr became the Division Freight Agent for the Southern Railway Company in Asheville, a position he held through the 1920s. Another brother, Walter Robertson Orr, also worked as an agent and flagman for the Southern Railway in Asheville. The brothers frequently visited each other in Asheville and Brevard. Charles Orr married Rowena Cooper of Statesville, North Carolina, in 1903. Mrs. Orr's sister also lived in Brevard and was married to Frank DeVane, a prominent businessman.³

In 1906, Charles Orr was appointed postmaster for Brevard, and assumed his duties in January 1907. According to newspaper accounts, Orr was often described as "our popular postmaster" and maintained an active role in the community. Orr remained the postmaster until 1915, when he was replaced by William Henry. Charles Orr was appointed as a Commissioner of Roads for Transylvania County, a position he held in the 1920s.⁴

¹ Deborah J. Thompson and Davyd Foard Hood, *Historic and Architectural Resources of Transylvania County, North Carolina, including the incorporated towns of Brevard and Rosman, ca. 1820-1941* (Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register of Historic Places, 1993), E-20-23.

² Laura A. W. Phillips and Deborah Thompson, *Transylvania: The Architectural History of a Mountain County* (Brevard, NC: The Transylvania County Joint Historic Preservation Commission, 1998), 39-45

³ Biltmore Estate Forestry Department Manager's Records, Series O, 1895-1909 (The Biltmore Company, Museum Services Department, Archives Division, Asheville, NC). Asheville City Directories, 1920-1927. *United States Census* (1910).

⁴ See Sue Dempsey Brewer, *The Sylvan Valley News, 1900-1907* (Anderson, SC: published by author, 1992). Mary Jane McCrary, *Transylvania Beginnings: A History* (Brevard, NC: The Transylvania County Historic Properties Commission, 1984), 65. *United States Census* (1920).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

The Orr House property was purchased on April 18, 1902, from the Toxaway Company by A. K. Orr, C. E. Orr, and Mary A. Orr (wife of Walter Orr). The Toxaway Company, which built and operated the luxurious Franklin Hotel in 1900, began selling lots surrounding the hotel as part of an exclusive development known as Franklin Park. The Orr brothers purchased a lot contiguous to the hotel property that was restricted to a single dwelling, with no stables, cribs, barns, tenement houses, shops, warehouses, or granaries permitted. Charles Orr had the house built in 1926, and the stonework is attributed to Joseph Few “Joe” Wright and William “Doc” Wright, prominent local stonemasons. The contemporary cottage to the rear was originally designed as a garage, but during construction it was converted into a house for the Orrs’ seventeen-year-old daughter Rowena, who had married H. C. Harrison. A deed dated September 21, 1927, released the ownership rights of A. K. Orr and Walter and Mary Orr to Charles Orr and his heirs.⁵

In 1944, the Orrs’ children—Charles Jr., Rowena, and Rufus—sold the property to Pisgah Mills, the company that assumed control of the Transylvania Cotton Mill in the 1930s and operated until 1960. Witcher Moss Melton, vice-president and manager of Pisgah Mills from 1940 until his retirement in 1959, lived in the house with his family. Melton erected the two-bay garage soon after taking up residence in the house. The house was sold by the E. W. Montgomery Co. of Greenville, South Carolina, parent company of Pisgah Mills, in 1963 to Charles and Virginia Cook.

From the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s, the house passed through a series of owners, with the property selling every few years. In 1986, Thaddeus and Eileen Fabian bought the house and resided there until 2005. The Fabians undertook several renovation projects including the addition of the solarium on the front terrace, enclosing the rear corner porch, updating the kitchen, and remodeling the upstairs hall bathroom. In July 2005, the property sold to the current owners, Henning and Virginia Meyn, who are undertaking a certified rehabilitation of the house.

Architecture Context

The architectural significance of the Charles E. Orr House is based on its position among an important group of buildings and structures of stone construction in Brevard and Transylvania County and as a good example of the Tudor Revival style in Brevard. The architectural significance of the Orr House is established and presented in the multiple property documentation form entitled *Historic and Architectural Resources of Transylvania County, North Carolina, including the incorporated towns of Brevard and Rosman, ca. 1820-1941* (1993). The house is discussed within two property types—Property Type 5: Housing from World War I to the Eve of World War II, 1917-1941 (Section F, pages 54-56) and Property Type 12: Stone and Rock Masonry Construction in Brevard and Pisgah Forest (Section F, pages 78-85).

⁵ Transylvania County Register of Deeds Office, Book 58, page 536.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Built in 1926, the Orr House is an imposing two-story stone dwelling with a combination hip and clipped-gable roof that slopes low at the south end over a one-story sunroom. The gray granite for the house came from William Breese's Cove Mill quarry as was the stone for St. Philip's Episcopal Church, which was under construction across the street at the same time. Built adjacent to the elegant Franklin Hotel, the Orr House occupies a prominent site on East Main Street as it extends from the downtown commercial area to a stylish early twentieth century residential neighborhood.

The Orr House, along with other impressive houses and public buildings built of stone masonry at the time, reflected both the growing affluence of Brevard and Transylvania County and the popularity of this native building material, which was plentiful throughout the county. Initially limited to high-income clients in the 1910s and 1920s, stone masonry eventually became more readily available to a wider population across the county. The large number of stone houses, churches, public buildings, and other structures, as well as the sophistication of the masonry work, set Transylvania County apart as one of the most important locations of twentieth century stone buildings in North Carolina.⁶

Much of the impressive stone work in Brevard is attributed to a group of skilled masons working from the 1920s through the 1950s. The best known of these masons were the Wright brothers—William Benjamin Franklin “Doc” Wright (1879-1936), James Robert Wright (1895-1959), and Joseph Few “Joe” Wright—who came to Brevard from Hendersonville around 1919. Three other brothers remained in Hendersonville, and all six of the Wright brothers had learned the trade from their father, James Wright. The one-armed black stonemason Fred Mills (1892-1981) learned the craft from the Wrights and worked for them in the 1920s and 1930s. Mills also went on to work individually and in partnership with another black stonemason, Avery Benjamin.⁷

The oldest stone house in Brevard is the Royal and Louise Morrow House at 563 East Main Street, partially constructed in 1915 of stone from the antebellum Hume Hotel, which burned during the Civil War. A civil engineer for the US Forest Service and private camps and mountain resorts, Morrow's choice of a rustic, Craftsman style house built with native stone clearly stemmed from his interests in the natural environment. The stonemasons for the Morrow House, however, are not known. The Morrow House was followed in 1918 by the Godfrey-Barnette House (NR, 1993) at 411 South Broad Street, a two-story Tudor Revival-style dwelling with a dramatic roofline that compares favorably to the general form and character of the Orr House. Both the Morrow and Godfrey-Barnette houses predate the arrival of the Wright brothers in Brevard, but signal the beginning of more widespread use of stone construction in Brevard. The stone work on the Charles Orr House is attributed to the Wright brothers, specifically “Doc” and Joseph Wright. The Wright brothers were working across the street from the Orr House property as stonemasons for St. Philip's

⁶ Phillips and Thompson, 79-84.

⁷ Phillips and Thompson, 79-80.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Episcopal Church, which was under construction at the same time. The gray granite for both buildings came from the same quarry, and it seems highly likely that the Wrights oversaw the stonework for both buildings.

In addition to its significance among the important stone buildings in Brevard, the Charles Orr House is also one of the best examples of the Tudor Revival style in Brevard from the early twentieth century. Furthermore, the Orr House appears to be identical to the Dr. Kenneth E. Montgomery House at 327 Charlotte Street in Asheville (Grove Park H.D., NR 1989). The Montgomery House, which was also built around 1926 or 1927, suggests the possible involvement of an architect in the design of the Orr House or the use of published plans. Given that Charles Orr had close family in Asheville and appeared to travel frequently between Brevard and Asheville, he may have known the Montgomerys, but the relationship between the two houses is not known at this time.⁸

The Tudor Revival style was one of several architectural styles influenced by English architecture that became especially popular in Asheville and the surrounding region during the early twentieth century. Richard Sharp Smith (1852-1924), supervising architect for the construction of George Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate (NR, 1966), was the man most responsible for introducing and popularizing English architectural models in Asheville and western North Carolina. Born in England and professionally trained, Smith opened his architectural practice in Asheville in 1895. He designed more than two dozen buildings in Biltmore Village (NR multiple resource area, 1979), employing pebbledash stucco, brick, and half-timbered exteriors to invoke an English feeling. Smith went on to design numerous public and commercial buildings, churches, and domestic structures across the region including at least two houses on Probart Street in Brevard and three churches that no longer stand.⁹

The Tudor Revival style—like the Shingle, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman styles—became popular across the country in the early twentieth century and appealed to buyers in Brevard's fast-growing neighborhoods. The earliest examples of Tudor Revival architecture in the United States date from the late nineteenth century, and the style achieved widespread popularity in the 1920s and early 1930s. Although the name alludes to sixteenth-century Tudor England, the style derives primarily from Medieval English prototypes, mixed with eclectic American expressions and materials. Tudor Revival-style houses are generally united by an emphasis on steeply pitched, front-facing gables, and typically incorporate decorative half-timbering, grouped multi-pane windows, prominent chimneys, and stucco, masonry, or masonry-

⁸ Grove Park Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination (1989) and Asheville City Directories.

⁹ Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern and Jennifer F. Martin, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 263-264. Also see John Hardin Best, Kate Gunn, and Deena Knight, eds., *An Architect and His Times: Richard Sharp Smith, A Retrospective* (Asheville, NC: Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County, 1995), 8-9.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

veneered walls. The use of masonry walls for Tudor Revival-style houses was a variant more common in the United States than in England.¹⁰

The Charles Orr House embodies many of the distinctive characteristics of the Tudor Revival style and its expression in native stone construction connects the house to the local building context. The gray granite reportedly came from the Cove Mill quarry in the eastern part of the county. The uncoursed stonework is finished with beaded mortar joints of light brown concrete, and window and door openings feature keystones and voussoirs. The stonework is similar to the 1926 James S. Bromfield House located at the end of Woodside Drive to the rear of St. Philip's Church, the Tudor Revival-style Miriam and Albert Kyle House built in 1928, and the Colonial Revival-style William Fetzer House. The multi-gabled roof with its steeply pitched south slope, prominent chimney, arched entrance vestibule, and grouped multi-pane windows represent the stylistic elements of the Tudor Revival in the Orr House design. The house bears some similarity to the earlier Godfrey-Barnette House, another well-executed Tudor Revival-style dwelling rendered in stone, although the more rustic character of the latter house appears to have been influenced also by the English Arts and Crafts movement and the popular Craftsman style. The interior expression of the Orr House is restrained with a logical interior plan, comfortable rooms, hardwood floors, and plaster walls. A simple stone mantel in the living room; central stair with a paneled newel, plain balustrade, and molded handrail; arched window above the stair landing, and several sets of French doors provide accents to the interior. Despite modern updates to the kitchen and bathrooms and the addition of the solarium covering the front terrace, the Orr House retains a relatively high degree of architectural integrity on both the interior and exterior. The semi-transparent glass and aluminum-frame solarium is attached to the exterior of the house and is a reversible change that has not resulted in the loss of any original building fabric.

¹⁰ Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 355-358.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 10

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Section 9. Bibliography

Asheville City Directories.

Best, John Hardin, Kate Gunn, and Deena Knight, eds. *An Architect and His Times: Richard Sharp Smith, A Retrospective*. Asheville, NC: The Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County, 1995.

Biltmore Estate Forestry Department Manager's Records, Series O, 1895-1909. The Biltmore Company, Museum Services Department, Archives Division, Asheville, NC.

Bishir, Catherine W., Michael T. Southern and Jennifer F. Martin. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Brewer, Sue Dempsey, ed. "The Sylvan Valley News, 1900-1907." Anderson, SC: published by author, 1992.

Brombacher, Max and Claire, House National Register of Historic Places Nomination. Brevard, NC.

Buncombe County Register of Deeds Office, Buncombe County Courthouse, Asheville, NC.

Grove Park Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination. Asheville, NC.

McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.

McCrary, Mary Jane. *Transylvania Beginnings: A History*. Brevard, NC: The Transylvania County Historic Properties Commission, 1984.

Phillips, Laura A. W., and Deborah Thompson. *Transylvania: The Architectural History of a Mountain County*. Brevard, NC: The Transylvania County Joint Historic Preservation Commission, 1998.

St. Philip's Episcopal Church National Register of Historic Places Nomination. Brevard, NC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 11

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Thompson, Deborah J., and Davyd Foard Hood. *Historic and Architectural Resources of Transylvania County, North Carolina, including the incorporated towns of Brevard and Rosman, ca. 1820-1941*. Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register of Historic Places. 1993.

Transylvania County Register of Deeds Office, Transylvania County Courthouse, Brevard, NC

United States Census Records, 1900, 1910, and 1920.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 12

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Section 10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property for the Charles E. Orr House contains the full extent of Transylvania County tax parcel 8586-60-5370-000. The boundary is shown by a heavy line on the accompanying tax map and described fully on the accompanying survey map, "Property of Thaddeus W. Fabian and wife Eilwen [*sic*] Fabian," prepared by P. R. Raxter and dated October 29, 1986.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the one acre lot historically associated with the Charles E. Orr House. The property is described in Transylvania County Deed Book 289, page 632.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 13

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC



Charles E. Orr House – National Register Boundary Map
Tax Parcel PIN 8586-60-5370-000
(Source: Transylvania County Land Records Department)

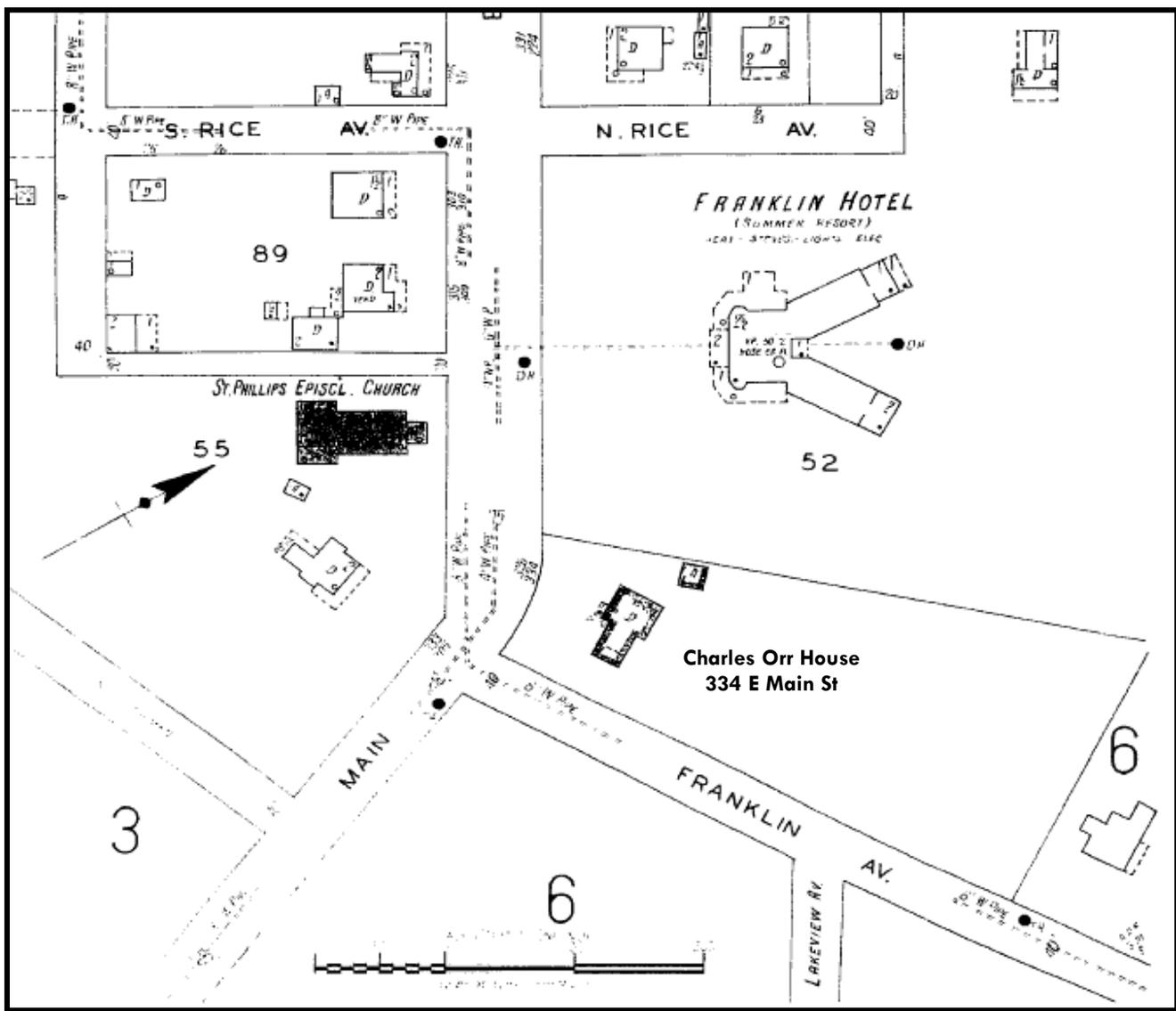
National Register Boundary is shown by the heavy solid line.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 14

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC



Charles E. Orr House, 334 East Main Street, Brevard
(Source: Sanborn map, Brevard, NC, January 1931, Sheet 4)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 15

Orr, Charles E., House, Transylvania County, NC

Photograph Index

All photographs of Charles E. Orr House at 334 East Main Street in Brevard by Clay Griffith of Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc., on December 16, 2005. Negatives are kept at the North Carolina Office of Archives and History Western Office in Asheville, North Carolina.

1. Charles E. Orr House – façade
2. Charles E. Orr House – oblique rear view, looking west
3. Charles E. Orr House – oblique view, SE side elevation
4. Charles E. Orr House – NW side elevation
5. Charles E. Orr House – front entrance detail
6. Charles E. Orr House, interior – living room mantel
7. Charles E. Orr House, interior – 2nd story stair hall
8. Cottage – front (SW side)
9. Garage – oblique view to north

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 2, 3, 4 Page 1

Charles E. Orr House, additional documentation
name of property
Transylvania County, North Carolina
county and state

Location

Street and number 269 East Main Street

The address of the Charles E. Orr House has been officially renumbered as the address above. The remainder of the address information in the original nomination is accurate.

Property Owner Information

The owners of the Orr House, Henning and Virginia Meyn, now have the above street address of the Orr House as their current address.

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

4. National Park Service Certification

| | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|
| I hereby certify that the property is: | | |
| <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:) | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

