

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

302

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 Latta, Rev. M. L., House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1001 Parker Street N/A not for publication

city or town Raleigh N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27605

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Jeffrey Crow SHPO 3/5/02

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Name of Property

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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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 Oberlin, Wake County, North Carolina 1865-1952

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

LATE 19th and EARLY 20th

CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD/Weatherboard

roof SLATE

other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1905-1922

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Latta, Rev. M. L.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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:

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM grid for Zone, Easting, Northing (1, 2)

UTM grid for Zone, Easting, Northing (3, 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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sherry Joines Wyatt, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization David E. Gall, AIA, Architect date November 7, 2001

street & number 938 West Fifth Street telephone 336-773-1213

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

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

name Adryon H. Clay

street & number 418 South Boylan Avenue telephone

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27603

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

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

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1
Latta, Reverend M. L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

7. Narrative Description

The Reverend M. L. Latta House is located at 1001 Parker Street, in Raleigh, North Carolina. At the time the property was built this area, now in the northwestern part of Raleigh, was a freedmen's village known as Oberlin. The Latta House is situated facing east on a large lot measuring two acres. The house is set back from Parker Street and is nearly centered on its lot, which has several mature trees. Various planting beds of an unknown age are to be found throughout the property. The present occupant has installed a barbeque pit and several pieces of outdoor sculpture on the south side of the property.

The Latta House is a substantial, two-story Queen Anne style residence with a Tuscan order wraparound porch. The circa 1905 house has irregular massing and roof typical of the Queen Anne style. The facade, which faces east, features two, front-facing gables connected by a cross gable, all of which have deep cornice returns and diamond-shaped attic vents. The front-facing gable on the north side of the main block of the house projects forward. The south elevation of the house is reminiscent of a typical tri-gable house with a central gable located on the side gable main roof. The central gable is accented by a diamond shaped attic vent. This elevation is symmetrical with two windows on each level. The north elevation is quite simple, being three bays wide with a side gable roof. A small one-story, hip roof addition is located at the western (rear) corner. The overall plan of the house features a central hall accessed via an entry on the eastern facade. The hall is flanked by two large rooms on each side with additional rooms at the rear.

The roof of the house is slate and is pierced by two corbeled chimneys. The house originally had an open, brick pier foundation which has now been enclosed. The exterior is clad in weatherboards. Windows in the main block of the house are twelve-over-one and six-over-one. The one-story front porch follows the contours of the facade and wraps around the length of the south side of the house. The porch has a shed roof on its north end and a hip roof at its termination on the south elevation. The porch incorporates Tuscan columns and a balustrade with square balusters. The window on the second floor, directly above the central entrance has been enclosed. The front entry consists of a single door with a glazed panel above other paneling. The door is surrounded by simple sidelights and transom with large, rectangular lights.

The west or rear elevation of the house is nearly identical to the front elevation with two front gables connected by a cross gable. The southern gable projects farther west than the northern gable. The first floor of this elevation is obscured by a series of one-story additions or porch enclosures. Directly behind the main block of the house are two hip-roof sections connected by a shed-roofed room. This complex may have originally been a back porch. On either side of these

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2
Latta, Reverend M. L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

enclosures or additions at the northern and southern corners are small shed roof additions. All additions and/or enclosures are clad in siding which matches that of the rest of the house. Windows in these areas are six-over-six, three-over-one, and four-over-four.

The interior of the house is organized around a central hall. The stair rises along the north wall of the hall in a single run and features a simple newel post with a ball finial. The hall has plaster walls and two-panel doors into the rooms on either side of it. Original or historic stenciling can be seen in the two downstairs rooms on the north side of the hall. These rooms are joined by a double-width opening with another opening leading to a third room at the western end of the house. This configuration would seem to mark these rooms as the principal living areas and suggests that they were intended as the most elegant spaces in the house. Only one fireplace remains intact in these rooms. Its mantel is extremely simple with a mantel shelf finished with molding underneath and supported by simple pilasters at each side. The two rooms on the south side of the house were not available for survey.

The rear additions, namely the room behind the central hall and behind the two southern rooms are quite plain. The weatherboards on the original exterior walls were left in place in these spaces, which appear to have been used as storage or possibly a small bedroom.

On the second floor, there are five bedrooms, two on the south side of the hall and three on the north side. The central hall has a molded chair rail. The doors on this level are five-panel with two vertical panels above and below a horizontal panel. There are no mantels on this level of the house. Wide baseboards with no moldings and the relatively simple moldings around doors and windows are found throughout the house and appear to be original or added during the historic period.

While the house is in fair condition, it retains sufficient integrity from the period of significance. It has had relatively few modifications.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1
Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

Summary Paragraph

Located in the freedmen's village of Oberlin, now part of the city of Raleigh, the Reverend M. L. Latta House is locally significant as the home of noted Oberlin citizen Reverend Morgan L. Latta, founder of Latta University in Oberlin. The house is indicative of the financial success that Latta achieved by 1910. Even more importantly, the large size and fashionable aspect of the house illuminate Latta's position as a prominent African American. Unlike many other successful men in Oberlin, Latta often found himself at odds with that community and its ideals. Latta's strong personality and independent nature, along with his ideas about what African Americans should strive for, were often in opposition to the local society and culture. Traveling throughout the United States and overseas promoting his school, Latta won recognition among upper class black and white citizens who, in turn, funded his institution. Part of a statewide trend of establishing African American higher education institutions during the late-nineteenth century, Latta University was distinctive among North Carolina's African American higher education institutions because it was privately funded. It provided an alternative to the other African American educational institutions in Raleigh and the state generally, which were usually affiliated with an established religious institution or society. Just as Latta intended, the school was at his sole discretion, both for financial support and in its governance. From about 1892 to about 1922, Latta operated his institution until financial difficulties forced the loss of all of his holdings in Oberlin.

Architecturally, the Reverend M. L. Latta house is locally significant for its classically-influenced Queen Anne style. Based upon this design and its lack of inclusion in the illustrations of Reverend Latta's 1903 autobiography, it is believed that the house was constructed around 1905. The irregular form of the two-story house and its classical, Tuscan order, porch columns are relatively simple, but this house was one of the largest and most fashionable in Oberlin at a time when small Queen Anne or tri-gable cottages were the norm. Although the condition of the Latta House is only fair, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity both on its weatherboarded exterior and its very simply appointed interior.

The significance of the Reverend M. L. Latta House relates to the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic and Architectural Resources of Oberlin, Wake County, North Carolina, 1865 - 1952" under the following contexts: "The Cultural and Social Life of Oberlin" (pages E 10 - 22) and "The Jim Crow Years: Modest Prosperity and Sense of Community, 1880 - 1950" (pages E 22 - 28) and under the following property type: "Residential Buildings" (pages F 31 - 36). The Latta House satisfies the registration requirements for its type as set forth in the MPDF

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2
Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

(pages F 35 - 36) in that it possesses the required level of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and feeling to be an important representation of the historical development of Oberlin; illustrates its direct association with an individual important in Oberlin's history; and is an intact example of an architectural style important in Oberlin's development. The Latta House is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for African American ethnic heritage and for education as the only remaining property associated with Latta University; under Criterion B for its association with Reverend Latta; and under Criterion C for architecture as an important large and very well-articulated Queen Anne house in Oberlin. The period of significance of the property extends from c.1905, the construction date of the house, until 1922, the year Latta University closed its doors.

Historical Background

Reverend Morgan London Latta was an ambitious man. In a time when African Americans were neither expected nor encouraged to achieve prominence or wealth, Latta endeavored to solve his race's problems with a university of his own design and creation. Reverend Latta's arrogance was a defining feature of his personality as well as one of the motivating factors of his work. Latta's skill as a fund-raiser was well-known and in 1903 he published an autobiography entitled *The History of My Life and Work*, which he utilized to promote his university. In this book he addresses his ambitions:

I will admit that we all can not establish institutions and various enterprises, but we should not stop just as soon as we can read I John and II John, and get a house and lot, and other previous things, and then say we can compete with other nationalities that have established various kinds of enterprises and accumulated millions of dollars. We should strive to get just what they have got.¹

¹Reverend Morgan L. Latta, *The History of my Life and Work*, 1903, electronic version, Documenting the American South website, produced by University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/>, 22.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3
Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

Latta believed that ambition was the means to equality and that money bought you respect. He was fond of saying in his speeches that "if I should see a white man in heaven, I am satisfied that he would be there chasing a silver dollar, because he loves the mighty dollar."² Latta was equally harsh with members of his own race, reciting an incident from his school years at Shaw University where he struggled to pay tuition, Latta wrote that "Before I taught school it was a common saying among the young ladies and young men, "Latta"; but after I returned with a hundred dollars it was "Mr. Latta" all over the campus. I said to myself, 'Don't you see what a hundred dollars will do?'"³

Morgan Latta was born a slave in 1853 on the Cameron plantation at Fishdam near the Neuse River about twenty-five miles from Raleigh. His parents were Zack and Creasy, who were believed to have been house slaves. Latta was only seven years old when his father died leaving a family of thirteen children. Latta's oldest brother was drowned soon after the close of the Civil War and left Latta to support the family before he was eighteen years old. Working as hired labor, Latta was unable to attend school regularly, but studied at night and attended school when poor weather prevented work. He was eventually able to attend a "free school" for five or six years.⁴

Latta writes that he entered Shaw University in Raleigh with only ten cents in his pocket. He worked odd jobs around the campus to pay his fees and was made an outcast for his lack of proper attire. This experience helped to set Latta's stringent work ethic. He studied vigorously, but cared little for the social aspects of the school. Eventually, Latta's health failed, a failure apparently caused by his studies, and he was forced not to finish his last year of college. An honorary doctorate was conferred on him later in life by A.M. Barret's Collegiate Industrial Institute.⁵ During his college career and after it when he had earned a teaching certificate, Latta worked as a teacher. He continued to teach in public schools for about twenty years.⁶

²Ibid, 16.

³Ibid, 31.

⁴Ibid, 11-12 and James Cameron, *Slave Schedule of 1856, James Cameron's Plantation at Fishdam*, in Hallman, 16..

⁵Ibid, 296.

⁶Ibid, 25-33.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4
Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

Although the schools where Latta taught are not mentioned by name in his book, he appears to have been living in Wake County in 1885 when he and Eliza Evans filed for their marriage license. The license was returned unused however, and Latta later married one of his students whose name was Laura. This marriage did not take place in Wake County.⁷

Latta and his wife arrived in Raleigh, probably around 1890, with only sixty cents. The couple had purchased a house in the developing African American neighborhood of East Raleigh.⁸ Latta had quit teaching public school by the early 1890s and was employed as a sewing machine salesman. Latta writes that he "found it was very easy to make sales, but hard to collect money."⁹ Doubtless this experience honed the skills that he would later apply to his fund-raising effort for Latta University.

According to his memoir, Latta founded his school in 1892, his purpose in establishing this institution as well as the manner in which he alone managed it are illustrative of both his personality and his beliefs. He writes:

I first thought that I would establish a university and connect it with some religious denomination. The second thought came to me, if I do that it will not begin to solve the negro problem, because the accusers would say, if it is connected with any particular denomination, that would not be evidence that a member of the colored race could do anything.

My purpose from the beginning up until the present, as far as I have gone, was to prove that the negro race could do something, regardless of color or previous condition of servitude. I have always desired, from my youth, to do something worthy of speaking of, that would be a light to the race that I am identified with.¹⁰

⁷Wake County Marriage Index.

⁸Latta, 131.

⁹Ibid, 33.

¹⁰Ibid, 37 and 42.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5
Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

Incorporated on February 15, 1894, Latta University, was first listed in the *Raleigh City Directory* in 1905. Though nonsectarian, the school strove to provide study of the Bible and religious instruction that would result in what Latta called "a thoroughly Christian character." The school educated both males and females. The Industrial Department provided Night School instruction and required labor on the school's farm to pay for tuition. Carpentry and brick laying, in addition to farming, were taught to the young men. Young ladies entering the Industrial School were taught laundry and housework.¹¹

The school also had an orphanage. Without an endowment for its support, Latta created a boy's band, which was paraded throughout Raleigh as a means of enticing charitable donations.¹² Paying students at Latta University were charged six dollars and seventy-five cents if they were male and five dollars and seventy-five cents if they were female. These sums included board and instruction.¹³ According to Reverend Latta, however, the school did not have enough paying students. He writes:

There have been several thousand pupils to attend this institution since it has been founded, and we have had to carry almost one-third of them because they were unable to pay their school bills. Sometimes I would go in debt so very heavy until I would have to leave school during the school term and work, rain or shine, never stopping for sleet or snow, wind or rain, raising money to pay the bills of those that were not able to pay their own bills.¹⁴

It appears that Latta's estimate of thousands of students may have been an exaggeration. The university accommodated only ninety-two students during the 1893-1894 school year.¹⁵ Latta also

¹¹Ibid, 55-58 and *Raleigh City Directory*, 1905.

¹²Ibid, 186.

¹³Ibid, 49.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵*Second Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Latta University, Oberlin North Carolina, 1893-1894* in Hallman, 18.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6
Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

stated that the school maintained twenty-three buildings having lost three (including the library) to fire. Only nine substantial buildings were documented in the c.1903 photographs taken for Latta's book, however. Three small, house-like buildings were labeled the "kindergarten department" and two, one-story frame houses were identified and the former and current residences of Rev. Latta. There were five buildings in the "Manual Training Department" photograph, but only one, the rear of a two-story building was not an outbuilding. The largest buildings on the campus were also the most traditionally institutional in character. These two, two-story, frame buildings were labeled as the chapel / young mens dormitory and as the young ladies dormitory. All total the school, as it was photographed could not have contained more than seventeen buildings with the majority of these being outbuildings. These numbers are supported by the 1914 Sanborn map which illustrates only two buildings as Latta University; the recitation hall and the dormitory. It is possible from their size and footprint that these two buildings are the two dormitories photographed in 1903. A cluster of three, small dwellings on the Sanborn may have been those appearing in the kindergarten department photograph.¹⁶

In his book, Latta discusses the location of the university, though he does not mention the Oberlin community by name, instead calling the area "West Raleigh." The location, he wrote, "is the very best that could be desired for this school, being outside the busy city, but within easy reach by means of the electric street cars, which run near the institution."¹⁷ The property for the University was purchased in 1891 and by 1903 totaled about three hundred acres "on the suburbs of the city."¹⁸

Perhaps the lack of information about the Oberlin community in Latta's book was due to the differences between the community and himself. It appears that Latta's ambition and harsh ideas ostracized him from the Oberlin community. Latta reports that local citizens criticized him for taking on such a large project alone, calling "indignation meetings, declaring that God would be angry if one man would attempt to do that much."¹⁹ Latta appears to have done little to appease his neighbors,

¹⁶Latta and Sanborn Map, 1914.

¹⁷Latta, 58.

¹⁸Ibid, 55 and 63.

¹⁹Ibid, 39.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

writing: "Our race is ignorant, as a rule, with few exceptions. The colored people, as a race, don't seem to have much ambition about them. I claim that it must be the way they were taught in modern times."²⁰

There were distinctions between Reverend Latta and many Southern African Americans. Throughout his life, Latta's manners and beliefs appear to have been similar to those of Northern African Americans and well-to-do white men. This attitude was derived from his belief that being able to compete with white men on their own terms was the only way in which to garner their respect. In terms of religion, Latta denounced the boisterous services typical of Southern African American churches in favor of the more intellectual style of the North. "As a rule," he writes, "the race goes almost crazy over religion, while other nationalities take it easy and quiet. You take the learned people that have inherited the highest degree of civilization: how modest they act in church and in State."²¹

Latta was also critical of the upbringing children in the vicinity of the university received. The president of a local bank reported to Latta that children threw stones at his passing carriage. Latta writes that he spoke to the neighborhood parents telling them to "bring their children up as God would have them. I told them to take an example as to how I brought up my children. I told them it was necessary to chastise their children ..." "My heart almost bleeds within me," agonized Latta, "to live in a community where people are not interested in raising their children."²²

Latta's strong ideas about how people of his race should behave are clear in excerpts from his many speeches. Traveling throughout much of the eastern United States and even venturing to Europe to collect funds for his school, Latta would often make public speeches about his school and his personal theories. In regards to African Americans, Latta held that so long as this race was dependent upon the "sympathetic treatment of the predominant race" there would never be equality nor true freedom.²³ This idea explains much about Latta's enduring confidence in himself and his

²⁰Ibid, 20.

²¹Ibid, 21.

²²Ibid, 109.

²³Ibid, 17.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8
Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

ability to accomplish great works alone. His views on racial issues are further illuminated by his comments on social equality for blacks. "The only ambition I have along that line," he writes, "is for the public to respect me on general principles. In dealing with the public I want them to treat me as a citizen in transacting business."²⁴

While Latta himself has illuminated much about his personal and intellectual life and the operation of the university, relatively little is known about the building which is believed to be the sole surviving resource from the school and Latta's life in Oberlin. Due to the size and fashionable design of the Latta House it seems likely that the house did not exist at the time of publication of Latta's book (1903) because it was not featured among the several photographs. Furthermore, the classical-influenced Queen Anne design of the dwelling is indicative of a construction date of between 1905 and 1910. The deed records are of little help in determining the age of the building because of the size, quantity, and vague legal descriptions of the several tracts of land purchased by Latta between the late 1880s and the early 1920s.

Latta University ceases to appear in the Raleigh City Directory after 1920, but Reverend Latta and his wife continue to reside in the area until after 1924. It appears that the lack of student tuition alluded to by Latta had caught up with the school's financial status. Furthermore, as early as 1903, Latta stated that although there was no mortgage on the school property, the school did owe money, which he hoped to pay that year. He also wrote that without labor (presumably provided by the students) the land owned by the school "is worthless to us, for we could not think of paying one-tenth of its taxes."²⁵ Wake County deed records indicate that Latta purchased a great deal of property between 1888 and 1914 perhaps over-extending his capacity to raise money. Apparently, by 1922 the university had lost its financial basis and Latta sold the majority of its property in December of that year to Parker and Hunter Realty Company. In February of 1923, however, Reverend and Mrs. Latta purchased the single lot on which the Latta house stands from the same company. By 1931, however, Latta was forced to turn over his property to the Federal Corporation of Richmond, Virginia, who then sold it at auction for payment of Latta's debts.²⁶ While Latta's

²⁴Ibid, 89.

²⁵Ibid, 85 and 87.

²⁶Wake County Grantee Index and deed book 408, page 191 and 194; book 414, page

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 9

Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

experiment was of the grandest kind, his determination to build the school alone proved to be a misguided choice for his own finances. In 1900, Latta's real property was valued at \$1100 with additional personal property worth \$155. By the 1930s, however, the Lattas had lost all of their Oberlin property and were residing in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he continued to promote his book. Latta died between 1935 and 1945.²⁷ Unfortunately, Latta intended the school itself to be his epitaph. He poeticized: "It must remain as Latta University, for educating and helping a weak race, and to remain as a monument to show the work that I have done for the race, and to show that I am not dead, but simply sleeping."²⁸

The Latta House was purchased at auction by Chesley and Berta Haywood in 1933. The Haywoods had been long-time residents of Oberlin, having resided at 1009 Parker Street, only a few doors away from the Lattas at 1001 Parker. Chesley Haywood was a fireman with the Norfolk and Southern Railroad. The Haywoods were residing at 1001 Parker by 1935, but between about 1940 and 1950 a series of renters occupied the building. From the mid-1950s through the 1970s, however, Chesley Haywood's widow, Berta, lived in the house.²⁹ In 1994, her heirs transferred the property to Adryon Clay, the present owner.³⁰

The Latta House is one of only a handful of large, two-story houses built in Oberlin during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century. Much like the Queen Anne dwelling of Willis M. Graves (802 Oberlin Road), the Latta House exemplified the refined, fashionable taste of its owner, while symbolizing his wealth and status in the community. That Latta built the house cannot be proven at this time from existing deed records, but the circumstantial evidence for the house being Latta's originally is strong. Of the large tract of land Latta sold to Parker and Hunter Realty Company in 1922, only Lot 9 Block D, the house parcel, was re-purchased by Reverend and Mrs.

164; book 596, page 490; and book 648, page 246.

²⁷Hallman, 19-20.

²⁸Latta, 58.

²⁹*Raleigh City Directory*, 1927 -1975.

³⁰Wake County Deed Book 6264, page 886.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Latta, Reverend M.L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

Latta in 1923. Additionally, its location on lands owned by Latta and located just north of the bulk of the school campus is suggestive as is the design of the house. The subdued, classical-influenced Queen Anne stylistic treatment, the large size, and the house's fashionable aspect all are in keeping with Latta's personality. The irregular massing of the house and the classical porch details were common features of the Queen Anne style throughout the state shortly after the turn of the twentieth century. In fact, the Latta House would not seem out of place in a rural setting and is similar to many of North Carolina's Queen Anne farm houses. In Oberlin, the stylistic treatment of the existing Queen Anne style houses was often executed in the same restrained, unpretentious manner and in the case of the John T. and Mary Turner House (1002 Oberlin), exhibit similar classical influences, such as Tuscan columns.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

Latta, Reverend M. L. , House, Wake County, North Carolina

Jennifer Hallman, "Why is Oberlin Valuable?", c. 2001," unpublished student report

Latta, Reverend Morgan L. *The History of my Life and Work*, 1903. Electronic version,
Documenting the American South website. Produced by University of North Carolina -
Chapel Hill, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/>.

Raleigh City Directory, 1880 - 1980.

Raleigh Historic Districts Commission. "Wake County Historic Property Designation Form for
the Latta House, 1993." Raleigh Historic Districts Commission.

Wake County Deeds.

Wake County Grantee Index.

Wake County Marriage Index.

Wake County Tax Lists, 1900.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Latta, Reverend M. L., House, Wake County, North Carolina

Verbal Boundary Description

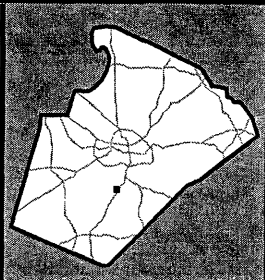
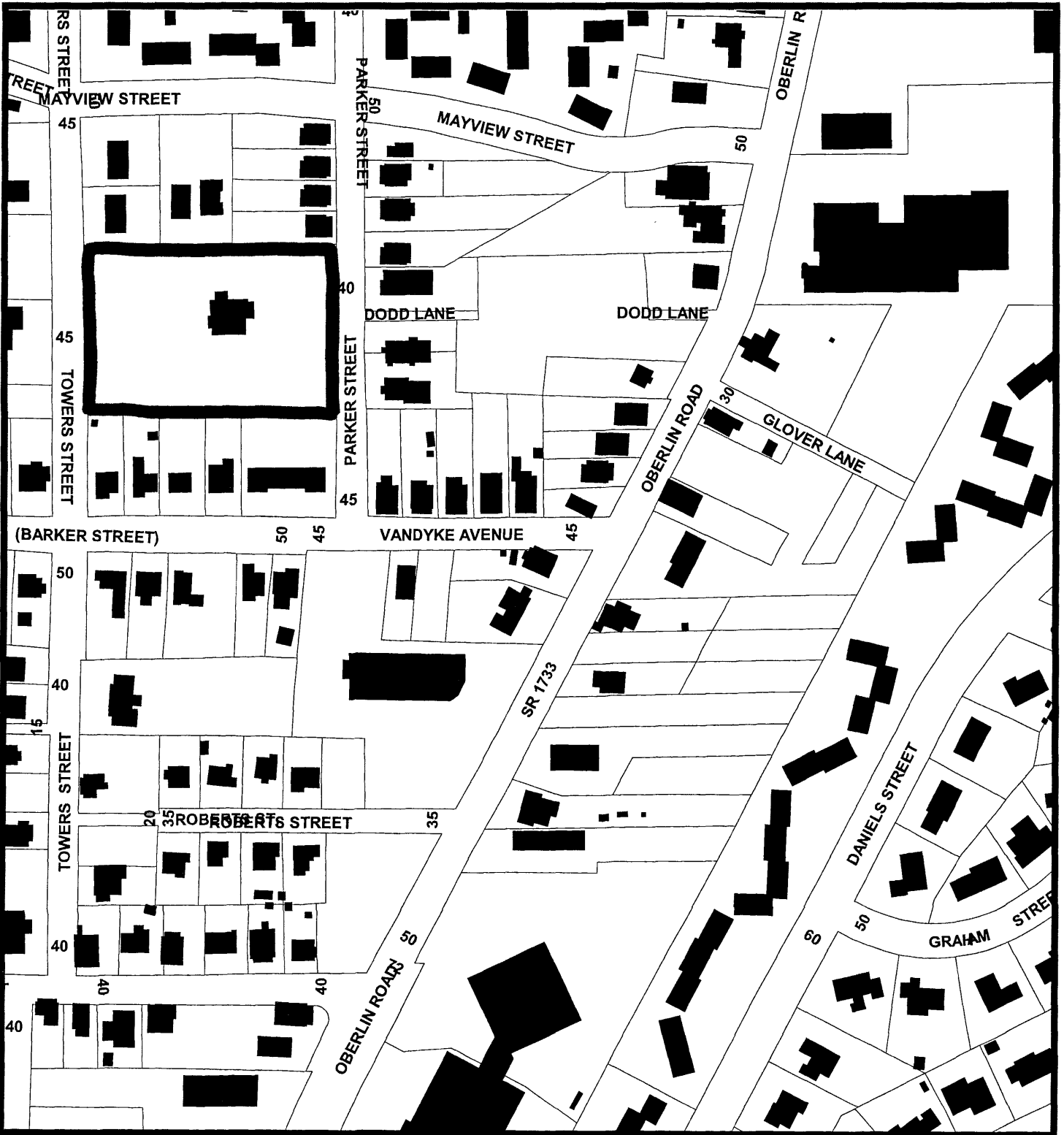
Two acre tract delineated by heavy solid line on 1 inch = 200 feet scale Wake County tax map labeled as Exhibit A.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes property that provides the appropriate residential setting for the house and is the same parcel that was re-purchased by Rev. Latta in 1923 after the sale of his large holdings in 1922.

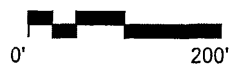
Exhibit A

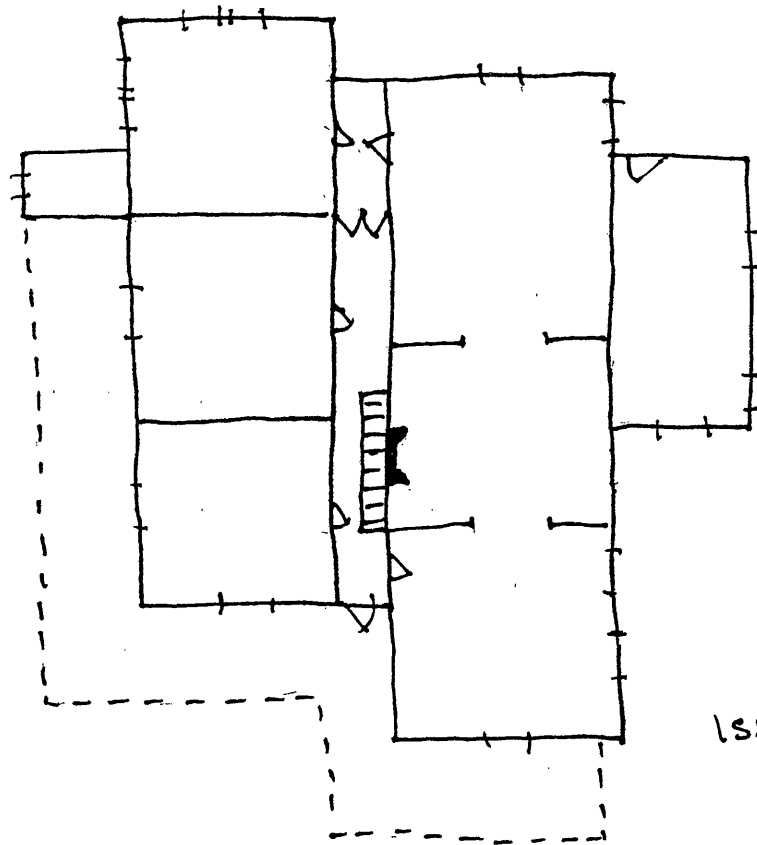
Wake Co. Tax Map



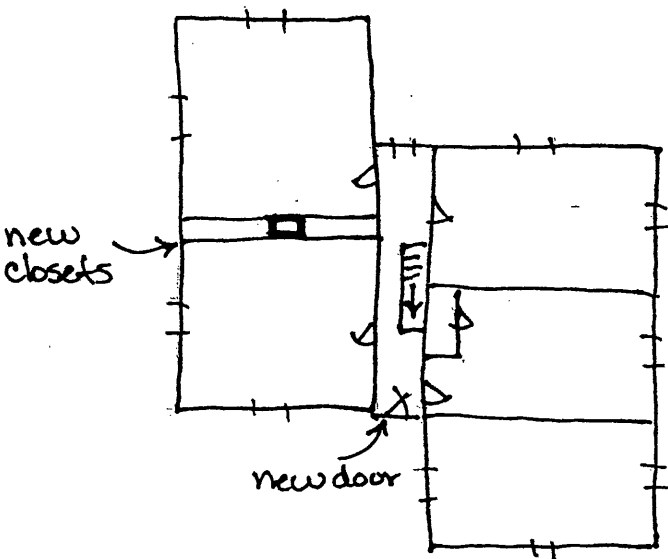
— = property boundary

Rev. M.L. Latta House





1st Floor Plan



2nd Floor Plan

→ north

Rev. M. L. Latta House
 1001 Parker Street
 Raleigh, Wake County, NC

Not to scale