

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**John Smith Miller House**

Boone vicinity, Watauga County, WT0468, Listed 1/29/2009

Nomination by Becca Johnson

Photographs by Becca Johnson, February 2008



Overall view



Side 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 Miller, John Smith, House  
other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number 561 Chestnut Grove Road  N/A not for publication  
city or town Boone  vicinity  
state North Carolina code NC county Watauga code 189 zip code 28607

**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	_____	_____

Miller, John Smith, House  
Name of Property

Watauga 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 count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	2	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 from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/secondary structure  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: I-House  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls WOOD: weatherboard  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof METAL: aluminum  
other Brick, stone  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

Miller, John Smith, House  
Name of Property

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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 N/A

(Mark "x" in all 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

#### Period of Significance

1906

#### Significant Dates

1906

#### Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Miller, John Smith

#### 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): N/A

- 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:

Miller, John Smith, House  
Name of Property

Watauga County, North Carolina  
County and State

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 6.5 acres

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 440340 4013440  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
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 Becca Johnson  
organization NC State Historic Preservation Office, WO date September 5, 2008  
street & number 1 Village Lane, Suite 3, Biltmore Village telephone 828/274-6789 ext 26  
city or town Asheville state NC Zip code 28803

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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 Launa Auton, Nellie Beach, Ernest Hoover, Lloyd Miller, Deborah Newman, Ann Wilson, Betty Conway  
street & number 331 Laurel Fork Road telephone 828/264-3219  
city or town Vilas state NC zip code 28692

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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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Miller, John Smith, House  
Watauga County, North Carolina

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## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The John Smith Miller House, built in 1906, is located on the south side of Chestnut Grove Road (SR 1324) just west of its junction with NC Highway 194 in Meat Camp Township, North Carolina, a small community five miles north of the Watauga County seat of Boone. The Miller House property was originally part of a larger parcel of two-hundred acres that has been split among heirs over the years, leaving approximately six and one half acres of wooded mountain land associated with the Miller House.

The setting is rural in character. Chestnut Grove Road passes close to the front of the house, and across the road is a steep, wooded embankment. A short distance south of the house Cobb Creek runs the width of the parcel. Across the creek is a grazing pasture that rises as a wooded hillside. Scattered homes of the early 1900s are to the east and a small field (formerly a garden) is to the west. A split rail fence dating from the 1980s divides the field from the yard of the house, and a small shed, moved to its location in the 1950s from across the road, is situated at the south end of the fence. A modern storage shed sits to the southwest of the house. Landscaping immediately surrounding the house is minimal with only a few small bushes and shrubs mixed in with mature trees.

The John Smith Miller house is a two-story, side gable, chestnut frame I-house with a centered projecting two-tier entry porch and restrained Victorian details such as the flat sawn Queen Anne-inspired sunburst ornamentation in the peaks of the gables of the main block. Like many I-houses in the region, there is a one-story rear ell with side porch at the rear of the main block that creates an L-plan. The seven-room center-hall house is sheathed in poplar weatherboard siding, exhibits corner boards on both the main block and rear ell, and has original two-over-two double hung windows with the exception of a 1920s one-over-one double-hung windows on the south elevation of the ell and a 1980s window on the west elevation of the ell. Boxed eaves run the length of the both main block and the ell. The impression of gable returns are given in the main block by a flat board that joins the top of the corners boards with a narrow raking frieze. A metal roof replaced the original chestnut shingle roof in 1945 due to deterioration of the shingles. That roof was damaged by weather and replaced with the current standing seam metal roof in 1996. An interior stone chimney is located between the main block and rear ell and appears to have been made taller with brick at an unknown date. The original stone pier foundation was replaced in 1983 by a concrete block foundation. Simple flat post and lintel window and door surrounds are found throughout.

The symmetrical three-bay main façade [north] of the house features a central gabled two-tier porch supported by square wood porch posts. The gable over the entry has diagonal siding flanking centered horizontal siding, which is aligned with the sunburst ornamental bracing in the peak of the

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gable. There is no balustrade on the first floor while the second-floor balcony has square-in-section balusters rotated 45 degrees in the balustrade. Both levels of the entry porch have two-light-over-solid-panel doors and porch walls sheathed with horizontally laid bead-board above a diagonally laid bead-board "wainscot" and char rail. There are flat board pilasters on both levels that separate the finished porch walls from the weatherboards on the rest of the façade. The front walkway and porch floor are recent replacements of concrete faced with flagstones.

The west elevation comprises the two-story main block of the house and the length of the ell. The main block has one centered two-over-two window at each story, and the one-story ell has one off-center two-over-two window on the north portion of the ell, close to the main block. The south elevation of the house shows the rear of the gabled ell with a single, centered one-over-one window, and the rear elevation of the two-story block. The east elevation is identical to the west elevation with the exception of an engaged shed-roof porch in the ell supported by square porch posts with matchstick balustrade and off-center stair leading to a single-light-over-panel door that opens into the dining room. The stairs handrail is a replacement from the 1970s, but the balusters are original and identical to those on the front porch. The north portion of the rear porch was enclosed in 1975 to create a bathroom. The enclosure matches the materials of the house and contains a single one-over-one double-hung window. To the east of the porch is the original hand pump to the hand-dug well that once was the primary water source for the house. When the bathroom was constructed, an electric pump was installed, but the functioning hand pump still remains.

The house retains its original floor plan, arranged around a center-hall with a stair to the second-story bedrooms running to the south along the east wall. The single-run open-string stair features a plain square in section newel post and balustrade consisting of slender squared balusters. The balusters and newel tops are angled and nailed to the underside of the handrail; there is one baluster per step placed at the front of each tread. A riser is applied to the cut string and joined with each tread; an application that is seldom seen.

The hall is covered with painted horizontal flush board sheathing and a bead-board ceiling. The flush sheathing continues along the wall to the top of the staircase. Unfinished wide oak plank flooring is found throughout the two-story block of the house while the wood floors in the kitchen and dining room in the ell have been covered with vinyl sheet flooring. All interior doors are the original four-panel chestnut doors with original hardware, made by local woodworker Roby Bryant. Window and door surrounds are both painted and unpainted post and lintel flat boards.

At the south end of the hall is a door that originally opened to the rear kitchen porch but now leads to a bathroom that was created by enclosing part of the porch. The west side of the hall has a doorway leading to the living room where the stone chimney serves both a mud and stone fireplace in the

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(south) wall as well as the fireplace in the kitchen of the ell, which is accessed from the living room. Both fireplaces have stone lintels and retain their original simply constructed post and lintel chestnut surrounds. The living room fireplace has "1906" carved into the lintel, a stepped mantelshelf and what look to be pieces of bead board applied to the surround. The kitchen fireplace has a block mantelshelf and post and lintel on pier applied to the surround. A central opening from the kitchen provide access to the dining room. Along the east wall of the dining room is a single-light-over-three-panel door to opening onto the back porch.

At the foot of the stairs and on the east side of the entry hall is a doorway to a bedroom which still shows the unpainted poplar flush board sheathing on the walls and ceiling that was originally found throughout the house. In an attempt to provide additional insulation in the 1940s, the walls in all the other rooms except the hall were covered with sheetrock or wallpaper though the sheathing remains intact beneath it. At the same time the walls were sheet-rocked, first-floor beadboard ceilings were also covered with sheetrock.

The second floor of the house mirrors the first floor plan. There are two bedrooms on either side of the hall and a door to the second-story porch at the north end of the stair passage. The simplicity of the balustrade from the first floor is echoed upstairs around the open stairwell but with the balusters rotated forty-five degrees as in the front and back porches. The hall floor and eastern bedroom have area rugs and unattached carpet covering the original wood floor. Different from the first floor is the appearance of a paneled ceiling, which is original. A door in the south wall of the west bedroom leads to a large unfinished attic in the rear ell, which was always used for storage. There is also an attic door in the hall above porch door. The attic was intended to be finished living space, but has always remained unfinished.

The John Smith Miller House is an excellent representative of a two story, center hall I-house with rear ell and a two-tier entry porch. The house retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, feeling, and association. There has been some loss of integrity of materials, and consequently also of workmanship, but the loss that occurred over fifty years ago in discrete areas of the house by covering original wall and ceiling material (which remain intact underneath) does not seriously diminish the property's overall integrity.

## **1. Shed – moved 1950s – non-contributing building**

Located to the southwest of the house is a ca. 10' x 5' frame shed-roofed building covered in raised seam tin applied vertically. There is a six-light wood window on the north elevation. The original date of construction is unknown, but the shed was moved from its original location across the road at the time Chestnut Grove Road was widened and paved in the 1950s.



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## **2. Storage Shed – 1999 – non-contributing building**

Located on the southeast corner of the yard is a 12' x 16' modern prefabricated frame one-story, one-bay, gambrel-roof storage shed resting on concrete block piers. It is sheathed with T-111 siding and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### SUMMARY

Built in 1906, the John Smith Miller House is an excellent and well-preserved example of an I-house with restrained Queen Anne detailing, which was a common house form in the county throughout the nineteenth century and into the beginning of the twentieth century. The Miller House differs from other I-houses built in the area at the beginning of the twentieth century in that it was constructed with a two-tier entry porch, which was more commonly found in the nineteenth-century examples. Overall the house retains good integrity and meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion C for architectural significance at the local level. Around 1901, area farmer John Smith Miller began drawing up plans for a new home for his wife and children. The unexpected death of his wife in 1902 set construction back, but with the help of his brothers, Miller finished construction of the house in 1906, its period of significance.

### Historical Background

Watauga County, located in the extreme northwestern corner of North Carolina, was formed in 1849 when it was carved out of parts of the surrounding counties of Ashe, Yancey, Caldwell and Wilkes. By 1800, the fertile bottomlands along the county's rivers and larger creeks were more heavily settled by early Watauga County settlers. This left the more marginal coves and smaller valleys formed by smaller creeks and branches to later settlers.<sup>1</sup> Settlers arriving too late to stake a claim to the rich bottomlands along a handful of rivers and larger creeks would establish an economy consisting of agricultural subsistence supplemented by the exploitation of the abundant forest products and a heavy reliance on the pasturing of livestock while the settlers who had gravitated to the rich bottomlands planted commercial crops of corn, buckwheat and other grains.<sup>2</sup>

Meat Camp, located approximately five miles north of the county seat of Boone in central Watauga County, was one of these fertile bottomland areas. The area was so named because of a cabin that stood on land where Daniel Boone and other hunters would store their supplies, meat and hides while they hunted the land.<sup>3</sup> Meat Camp was both one of the first areas to be settled and the center of which succeeding cove and valley settlement radiated from. The Miller family settled and made their living for generations along Cobb Creek, a tributary to Meat Camp Creek, which is part of the New River system.<sup>4</sup> John Smith Miller, known to friends and family as Smith to distinguish him from the large

<sup>1</sup> Tony VanWinkle, draft "Historic and Architectural Resources of Watauga County, North Carolina, ca. 1763-1952," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Form, 2003, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>3</sup> *North Carolina High Country Host*. Copyright 2002. <http://www.highcountryparkway.com/276.html> (accessed April 10, 2008) and Wadsworth, E.W., "Landmark Sought by Early Pioneers, Hunters". *Watauga Democrat*, 2005. [http://www.wataugademocrat.com/2005/placecalledhome/apch\\_07\\_bw.pdf](http://www.wataugademocrat.com/2005/placecalledhome/apch_07_bw.pdf) (accessed April 10, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 16.

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number of John Millers, was the fifth generation of the first Millers to come to this part of Watauga County from London, England, in 1787. At that time settlers moving to the county represented a wide variety of several ethnic backgrounds such as German, Swedish, Dutch, English, Scottish, and African.<sup>5</sup>

John Smith Miller married Launa Elizabeth Hayes on April 19, 1892. The couple had three children and in 1901, Smith began drawing up the plans for a family home to be built on two hundred acres of land recently purchased from Dr. John Bullard.<sup>6</sup> While the construction was taking place, the young Miller family lived in the old Bullard home on the property. After Launa died suddenly in October of 1902, Smith's sister Frances lived with the family for about eight years to help care for the children while Smith and his brothers continued to work on the house. They harvested trees on the property and had them milled at a local sawmill. Windows, door hardware and nails were all purchased at Todd General Store (Todd Rural Historic District, NR 2000) in neighboring Ashe County about seven miles north. The home was finally finished in 1906 at which time the Bullard home was torn down.<sup>7</sup>

Smith was primarily a subsistence farmer but also pursued income-generating activities on his property. He sold cattle and horses, had dairy cows, and was a sheep farmer. He would sell lambs and wool to the Chatham Manufacturing Company in Elkin, about sixty miles to the east. He also kept bees on the property, straining and canning the honey to sell, and grew various produce such as grapes, cherries, plums, pears, peaches, and berries for food and income. He planted a large apple orchard on the property to the west of the house, some of which continue to bear fruit, where he grafted different varieties of apples. He would haul his goods by wagon to sell or trade in Lenoir, about thirty miles to the south, and Trade, Tennessee, about ten miles to the northwest. All outbuildings associated with his farming activities have been lost to age and deterioration. Smith was also a noted blue grass fiddle player, playing at family gatherings, schoolhouse contests and even traveling to Trade, Tennessee for fiddle contests.<sup>8</sup>

John Smith Miller died in his home after a long illness July 30, 1933. Since then, his two hundred acres have been divided between children and grandchildren, leaving approximately six and one half acres associated with the house.<sup>9</sup> Smith's son, Henry and his wife, Etta, resided at the house and reared their ten children there while caring for Smith. Henry Miller's daughter, Margaret, has lived in the house her whole life and continues to reside there today, while two of her brothers live on other nearby Miller acreage. In 2005, Margaret deeded the house and acreage to seven family members while retaining a life estate.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>6</sup> Personal family records.

<sup>7</sup> Miller family member interviews.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Register of Deeds, Watauga County Courthouse. Book 91, page 640

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During Henry's residence at the house, he built a no longer extant water wheel downstream Cobb Creek to the rear of the house to provide electricity for the house while the neighbors still used oil or gas lamps. A flood in 1940 washed away the water wheel, but Henry came up with a new method to get electricity. He built a room over the underground cellar and set up a gas powered engine, generator and glass batteries. This system was used until the late 1940s when Blue Ridge Electric Coop came to the area. The cellar and generator house were removed in the 1950s to make way for the paving of the road.<sup>10</sup>

### Architecture Context

Before the coming of the railroad to Boone in 1918 and the improved hard surface roads in the 1920s and 1930s, traditional vernacular house forms dominated the architectural development of the rural county. The presence of Victorian elaboration, especially the Queen Anne variety that began to appear in the late nineteenth-century, continued to influence traditional house types, such as the I-house, in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Originating in English folk culture, the I-house has been identified as the dominant house type from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century. The I-house is two-stories tall, at least two-rooms wide and one-room deep, most often found with a three bay center hall plan, and the main entrance located on the long side. Its popularity has been attributed to its characteristic long facade, designed to present the largest possible face for a basic four-room house, which is thought to symbolize agrarian prosperity.<sup>11</sup>

Variations of additions to the I-house included rear ell, T, and shed. Rear ell and T additions were built both single-story and two-story. The rear shed is almost always a single story in height, though occasional one-and-one-half-story sheds are also present. Most I-houses exhibit double exterior end chimneys or paired, center-hall flanking interior chimneys making the presence of the Miller House's single chimney uncharacteristic.<sup>12</sup>

Tony VanWinkle best sums up porch treatments in Watauga County at the end of the nineteenth century in the following text:

The characteristic two-tier entry porch with flat-sawn decorative porch trim and other minor Victorian embellishments became the dominant porch form by the mid 1880s. Two variants of

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<sup>10</sup> Family interviews.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Southern, "The I-House as a Carrier of Style in Three Counties of the Northeastern Piedmont" in *Carolina Dwelling*, Doug Swaim, ed. (Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 1978), 71.

<sup>12</sup> VanWinkle, 47.

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the common local porch treatment seem to fall within distinct and definable geographic boundaries within the county. In the eastern half of the county, the lower level of the front porch spans nearly the full width of the facade, with the second level being a true entry-width portico. By contrast, in the western parts of the county, the front porch treatments almost always exhibit a full two-tier entry porch. In either case, the porch is the major location of ornamental embellishment. Full width front shed porches are found on a few I-houses from the late nineteenth century, though they are more common in earlier houses and then again after the turn of the century. (VanWinkle 2003, 48)

Since the I-house was so popular for so many decades, proportions, porches, and architectural stylistic treatments changed over time to echo changes in the latest architectural fashion. The adaptability of the I-house and other single-pile variants such as the gable front and wing form, made them particularly suitable for vernacular adaptations of high style decorative elaboration. By the later decades of the nineteenth century both Gothic and Queen Anne ornamentation were commonly applied, though minimally, to I-house forms throughout Watauga County. The most common areas for such ornamentation were the roofline, porch, and the gables.<sup>13</sup>

The two-story I-house with two-tier entry porch and center hall waned in popularity after the turn of the century, when the Miller House was built. It was during the first part of the twentieth century that smaller, one-and-one-half-story variants of the one-room-deep house became the norm. These smaller scaled houses often exhibited a single-story front shed porch rather than the two-tier versions more commonly found on the mid to late nineteenth-century I-houses. They also had single-story rear shed and ell additions with greater frequency than had been the case with earlier, fully developed I-house forms that usually had a fully two-story rear ell.<sup>14</sup>

The Miller House was built at a time when use of Queen Anne details was still very much in style. The Queen Anne style was nationally popular from the 1870s to 1910 and beyond. The most common Queen Anne elaborations found on houses in the county include the presence of decoratively placed boards, scaled shingles in gable ends, large wrap-around type porches, and cutaway bay windows.<sup>15</sup> Decorative details of the Queen Anne style represented on the John Smith Miller House include: a front facing gabled porch, carved ornamentation in the gables, and patterned application of siding.<sup>16</sup> There is a handful of known properties that exhibit the same use of diagonal siding found on the Miller House. For example the late nineteenth/early twentieth century Clay Eggers House in Forest Grove; a small, deteriorated one-story center hall vernacular farmhouse has diagonal siding in the gable ends.

<sup>13</sup> VanWinkle, 75.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., page 92.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., page 76.

<sup>16</sup> Cyril M. Harris, *American Architecture, an Illustrated Encyclopedia*. (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc, 1998), 966.

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Another example showing diagonal siding in the gable ends is the turn-of-the-century W.F. Winkler House in Sugar Grove. It is an I-house with rear two-story ell addition, a full width, single-story front porch, and two side porches off of either side of the ell, which is where the main entry is located.

Good examples of I-houses exhibiting the full two-tier front porch from the nineteenth century include the 1860 Fillmore Bingham House in Amantha, and the c. 1890 Jefferson Wilson House in Beaverdam. The Bingham House is a two-story, three-bay center hall house with a two-tier front porch and two-story rear ell. The Wilson House is a two-story, three-bay center hall house with a two-tier front porch and one-story rear ell.

The John Smith Miller House is an excellent early twentieth-century representative of the once common I-house with two-tier entry porch that dominated the Watauga County landscape in the latter portion of the nineteenth century but has disappeared from the county's landscape over time due to neglect, inappropriate changes, and modern development. Though there are numerous Vernacular Victorian I-houses in the county dating from the nineteenth century, there are only a few twentieth-century I-houses with the two-tier front porch and vernacular Queen Anne detailing known to survive in the county, the John Smith Miller House being the best-known example.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., page 75.

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## GEOGRAPHIC DATA

### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property for the John Smith Miller House contains the full extent of Watauga County tax parcel 2912-46-8006-000. The six and one half-acre tract contains all of the buildings and landscape features associated with the house. The property is bounded by Chestnut Grove Road on the north, and adjacent property lines on the east, south, and west. The boundary is shown by a heavy line on the accompanying tax map.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the full parcel currently associated with the John Smith Miller House. The property is described in Watauga County Deed Book 1143, page 402.



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## PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information applies to all photographs.

Name of property: John Smith Miller House, Meat Camp Township, Watauga County

Photographer: Becca Johnson

Date of photos: February 2008

Location of images: North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Western Office, Asheville

### Exterior

- 1) Oblique view NW elevation
- 2) Oblique view SE elevation
- 3) Oblique view NE elevation
- 4) Front door detail
- 5) Front gable detail
- 6) Modern storage shed/setting

### Interior

- 7) Entrance Hall/stairs
- 8) East Bedroom
- 9) Living Room
- 10) Kitchen mantel
- 11) Dining Room
- 12) Second floor hall