

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Moore-Holt-White House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 520 Maple Avenue

not for publication

city, town Burlington

vicinity of

state North Carolina

code 037

county Alamance

code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Burlington

street & number P. O. Box 1358

city, town Burlington

vicinity of

state North Carolina

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alamance County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Graham

state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Architectural Inventory of Burlington has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981-82 federal state county local

depository for survey records N. C. Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh

state North Carolina

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	(slightly)	date 1890s; c. 1909

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on a corner lot, the Moore-Holt-White House is flanked at the front by two very large hardwoods, but the foundation is devoid of plantings. Most of the house is constructed of heart pine. It rests on brick piers, with brick infill, very close to the ground.

The Moore-Holt-White House is a characteristic example of vernacular domestic Greek Revival architecture built in the North Carolina Piedmont; the basic form of the house consists of a main two-story front block one room deep with a porch across the front. The one-story rear wing and its flanking porches cover the entire width of the elevation. There are shallow hipped roofs on all portions of the house, including the porches. The main facade is bilaterally symmetrical. The large windows are six-over-six double-hung sashes. The rear elevation of the two-story block has no windows.

As originally constructed, the Moore-Holt-White House was quite decorative. The deep eaves of the two-story block were highlighted with simple, curvilinear brackets which remain. The most striking aspect of the house was the front porch, with its latticework connecting arches. Early in this century, this latticework was replaced with the slightly tapered box posts with moulding at top and bottom that remain today. A simple railing, with slat balusters, connects the posts. When the porch was altered, the main entrance also was redesigned in a similar, neoclassical vein, the original double doors replaced with a single, multi-paned door with five-paned sidelights and transom. The exterior window surrounds and corner boards of the house are quite plain.

With their chamfered posts and lattice balustrades, the side porches of the rear wing are reminiscent of the original appearance of the front porch. The porch on the east side of the rear wing also has a latticework archway at its entrance. Originally, the east latticework porch continued around part of the back wall of the rear wing and one side of a smaller kitchen wing (destroyed).

From the outside, the interior plan is indicated by the symmetrical placement of the interior chimneys which bracket the center hall. Each floor of the two-story block contains two rooms, of equal size, opening on to the center hall. Each of these rooms has a very simple fireplace. All of the door and window surrounds are the same fairly simple two-part elements found on the exterior. Along the east wall of the first-floor center hall, the staircase ascends to a landing and a ninety-degree turn of a few more steps to the second story. The newel post and balusters are plain, square in section. At the back of the first floor center hall, a cross hall runs the full width of the rear wing. The two rooms in this wing are not connected by any doorways and may be entered only from the side porches or from the cross hall; in the connecting wall, there is a large chimney which accommodates a fireplace in one room and a flue in the other. All of the interior walls are plastered. With the exception of the installation of electrical wiring and plumbing, the interior is basically intact, although deteriorated, as is the exterior.

(Information about original aspects of the house which have been altered was gathered in interviews with Robert D. White, Jr., conducted in Burlington, North Carolina, by Allison Harris in September, 1982, and by Claudia Roberts in March, 1983.)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1859

Builder/Architect

Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Moore-Holt-White House is one of the few surviving antebellum domestic structures in Burlington. This characteristic example of the vernacular Greek Revival style in the North Carolina piedmont was built by James G. Moore on land owned by the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCRR). Moore provided materials, labor, and provisions to the NCRR at Company Shops from the establishment of the town in 1854 to the relocation of the shops in the 1880s. Moore's activities in the early development of Company Shops also included ownership of a general merchandise store and a tanyard and membership on the first board of commissioners. After Moore, his house was owned by Lawrence S. Holt from 1883 to the early 1890s and then by his son Eugene Holt until 1909. The elder Holt's interests included the establishment of Aurora Cotton Mills, a major force in the revitalization of Burlington after the removal of the railroad shops; his son managed Aurora and other area mills owned by the family. Both were very active in community affairs. The family of Robert D. White, a respected foreman and bookkeeper in area mills, owned the house from 1910 to 1937.

Criteria Assessment

- B. The Moore-Holt-White House was built by James G. Moore, who played an active role in the establishment and early development of Company Shops, later Burlington, through his numerous contracted jobs for the North Carolina Railroad Company as well as his private enterprise. Subsequent owners Lawrence S. Holt and his son, Eugene Holt, were two of the most effective leaders of Burlington's textile industry.
- C. The Moore-Holt-White House is one of only a few antebellum houses surviving in Burlington and the only example there of the vernacular Greek Revival style built in the North Carolina piedmont.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Moore-Holt-White House Item number 8 Page 1

Historical Background

The Moore-Holt-White House is one of the few documented surviving antebellum houses in Burlington. Of the three remaining antebellum houses associated with the North Carolina Railroad Company that established and developed Company Shops, later Burlington, the Moore-Holt-White House is particularly interesting for the nature of its association with the railroad. Furthermore, through its later owners, it reflects subsequent, pivotal phases in the city's development after the railroad's shops were relocated.

Prior to the Civil War, the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) allowed only two private individuals, James G. Moore and James Worth, to erect structures on the company's property. ¹ (Worth's frame store building has been destroyed.) The house was built in 1859 after Moore received special permission for the construction. In 1858, the board of directors of the NCR had resolved "that there be no further erection of buildings at the Shop, without first obtaining the approbation of the Stockholders." ² On July 1, 1859, Charles F. Fisher, the president of the NCR, executed the following agreement:

For the purpose of affording to him what he otherwise cannot get here (at Company Shops) as no further building is now allowed to be done for residences of the men, I have agreed to allow to James G. Moore, whose engagements and duties as Store Keeper require his presence at all times to build a house on the land of the Company and include (sic) about three or four acres in rear of Superintendents house all at his own cost and charges, and it is further agreed that at any time when the said Company may choose, they have the right on thirty days notice to said Moore, to take possession of said property by paying said Moore the actual cost of the same, He in the mean time to have possession rent free but not at any time to place in possession an objectional occupant.³

There is no indication that Fisher, who often clashed with the board of directors about his management of the company, sought permission from the stockholders for this agreement.

Though not an employee of the NCR, Moore's association with the company was very close. Moore donated \$25.00 to the fund for the purchase of land for the machine shops; his father, Robert Moore, contributed \$50.00 and three acres of land abutting the south side of the tracks and encompassing the eventual site of the depot.⁴ From the beginning of construction at the Shops until their relocation in the 1880s, James G. Moore provided materials, labor, and provisions to the NCR. His innumerable contracted jobs for the railroad ranged from clearing the land in 1855 for the construction of Company Shops,⁵ to digging and cleaning wells for the company's dwellings from 1856 to 1858,⁶ and providing the shops with furniture, tools and food in the 1850s and 1860s.⁷ An 1859 report from President Fisher states that Moore had a contract to furnish hands for any and all work required of him

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Moore-Holt-White House

Item number 8

Page 2

to serve in the shops, on the engines, or cars, on the road, or in any other capacity--to board and clothe them, to lose all lost time of bad weather or otherwise all sick time--and to be solely responsible for them.⁸

The U.S. census of 1860 lists Moore as a "railroad agent."⁹

The scope of James G. Moore's interest went beyond his jobs for the NCRR especially after the Civil War. When Company Shops was incorporated in 1866, Moore became a member of the first board of commissioners.¹⁰ The previous year, he was on the committee appointed by the NCRR to oversee construction of a combination church and school for the community.¹¹ Records in the Alamance County Registry of Deeds reveal that from the late 1850s through the 1870s he purchased a great deal of property throughout the county, much of it along the railroad line and a good deal of it acquired at estate and foreclosure sales.¹² His business enterprises included a tanyard near the present Spring Street, and a general merchandise store operated with William A. Erwin (a business associate of the Holts in the local textile industry and later general manager for the Dukes of Durham of the Erwin Cotton Mills) in the early 1880s.¹³ One of Moore's most interesting ventures was a partnership formed in 1883 with Dr. James Davis, Jr., a dentist, and Corning A.R. Davidson to "develop an improved sewing machine stitch...heretofore patented by James Davis" and other improvements to sewing machines.¹⁴ The outcome of this partnership remains unknown.

With its two-story, one-room deep form, shallow hipped roof with curved brackets in deep eaves, and double doors with a transom, the house that Moore built in 1859 is a handsome characteristic example of the vernacular Greek Revival style in the North Carolina piedmont, and the only one of its kind to remain standing in Burlington today. The ornate latticework that originally adorned the front porch was identical to that on the porch of President Fisher's brick house one block north, indicating a common source of materials that most likely was Moore himself.¹⁵ Cited in the agreement with the NCRR as "three or four acres in rear of Superintendents house" the location of Moore's house was the south side of East Davis Street, approximately where Lexington Avenue later was cut.¹⁶ The three to four acres were designated as lots 76 and 87 in the early plats of Company Shops. Early deeds for the property record that another dwelling referred to as the Swann House (sic), also was built by Moore on lot 76, probably for one of three NCRR employees--two engineers and a machinist from Rhode Island--by the name of Swan.¹⁷

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Moore-Holt-White House

Item number 8

Page 3

James G. Moore did not buy his homesite from the NCRR until 1877, in the course of settling his debts after filing for bankruptcy. After the NCRR leased their road, including the maintenance shops, to the Richmond & Danville Railroad in 1871, activities at Company Shops quickly began to wane in reaction to the location of the new owners' offices and shops elsewhere.¹⁸ Population declined with the diminishing local economy, and in 1875, Moore filed for bankruptcy. All of his assets were turned over to an assignee, James E. Boyd, who sold them as needed to settle Moore's debts. Although it appears that the NCRR still owned lots 76 and 87, a deed records that Boyd sold the one acre of lot 76 containing the Swann (sic) House to W.C. Tarpley. Apparently all debts were settled before it was necessary to sell the remainder of Moore's property. Lot 87 and the rest of lot 76, designated as his homestead, was deeded back to Moore by Boyd, with the stipulation that Moore would pay the NCRR the \$631 at which the land was valued; the homestead, or house, was appraised at \$1,000.¹⁹ In the deed of sale for the land, dated March 23, 1877, the NCRR characteristically included the restrictive covenant that Moore could keep his homestead as long as he did not operate a "house of ill fame" or sell liquor on it.²⁰

In order to purchase their homestead, James G. Moore and his wife obtained a mortgage from John W. Graham, trustee for Mildred C. Cameron.²¹ It appears that Moore's fortunes did not improve much after his bankruptcy, for on September 1, 1883 the heirs of Mildred C. Cameron sold lots 76 and 87 which "formerly belonged to James G. Moore" for \$1500.²² The buyer was Lawrence S. Holt, who would soon own all of the land on the south side of East Davis Street between Spring and Broad streets.²³

Lawrence S. Holt was then 32 years old and well launched on a career in textiles and finance that would greatly influence the development of Company Shops/Burlington during the next four decades. Already he had spearheaded his family's establishment of the Commercial National Bank of Charlotte, begun a tanyard at Company Shops, worked actively as a partner in his father's E.M. Holt's Sons Cotton Factory at Alamance, and organized Bellemont Cotton Mills with his brother, Banks.²⁴ He purchased the Moore-Holt-White House when he decided to move to Company Shops in order to promote and finance E.M. Holt Plaid Mills. Two years later, he purchased Lafayette Mills in East Company Shops from R.J. Reynolds, who had become more interested in his Winston-Salem tobacco factories. Holt immediately remodelled the knitting mill to a weaving and dyeing operation and renamed it Aurora Cotton Mills.²⁵ The boom of the Aurora Cotton Mills, with rapid expansion of operations and enlargement of the plant during the next eight years, was a major factor in the resurrection of Company Shops/Burlington's economy. In the early 1890s, Holt moved his house one-half block to the east to make room for construction of an elaborate Queen Anne house designed by George Barber of Knoxville, Tennessee, that was more in keeping with Holt's wealth and status in the community.²⁶

Holt's son, Eugene, occupied the Moore-Holt-White House in its new location near the corner of Broad Street. In 1893, at about the same time he acquired the house, Eugene and his brother Erwin began to work with their father, who consolidated his business interests as Lawrence S. Holt and Sons in 1896. In the 1890s, further additions were made to the Aurora Cotton Mills, and in 1899, a finishing department was begun. By the early 1900s, in addition to Aurora Cotton Mills, Lawrence S. Holt and Sons included Gem Cotton Mills of Gibsonville, N.C., Sevier Cotton Mills of Kings Mountain, N.C. and an interest in Holt, Gant and Holt Manufacturing Co. of Altamahaw, N.C. They also built a warehouse at Aurora Mills.²⁷

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Moore-Holt-White House Item number 8 Page 4

When Eugene Holt married in 1905, he and his brother Erwin were managing the three mills in Burlington, Gibsonville and Kings Mountain. Later, as synthetic materials became popular, Aurora Cotton Mills was dissolved and Eugene Holt became affiliated with Burlington Mills. His interests in his hometown also included service on the board of education and as a city alderman, and active membership in St. Athanasius Episcopal Church which his father had helped found.²⁸ Like Lawrence Holt, as his career developed, Eugene also wanted a larger, more fashionable house and in 1909, he moved the Moore-Holt-White House to its present location on Maple Avenue to make room for construction of a handsome Colonial Revival style house.

In 1910, Robert D. White bought the Moore-Holt-White House for \$1800. White had a successful career in the day-to-day operations of the textile industry. In the late 1800s, he was a bookkeeper for Carolina Cotton Mills, owned by E.M. Holt and Sons and managed in part by Lawrence S. Holt for several years. From 1895 to 1910, White was a foreman in a small gingham mill in Kimesville, N.C. He moved his family to Burlington in 1910 when he accepted a position from Eugene Holt as shipping clerk and bookkeeper at Aurora Cotton Mills. White also served as city clerk of Burlington for a couple of years. The Whites installed plumbing and electricity in the house and replaced the latticework on the front porch with the tapered box posts that were stylish early in this century. After his death in 1914, White's wife and children remained in the house until 1937, when Robert D. White, Jr. took his mother to his new house on Circle Drive in Burlington and the family sold the house to the present owners, the Somers family of Burlington.²⁹

Although the Moore-Holt-White House has deteriorated during its use as rental property since 1937, it remains intact since the Whites' alterations. As such, the house retains its integrity as a material reflection of both the forces that founded Company Shops and the powers that charted the community's redevelopment as Burlington. When the Somers family scheduled the house for demolition in the spring of 1983, after their long-term tenants vacated it, the City of Burlington intervened and purchased the house a few months later, in July. Currently the City is rehabilitating the Moore-Holt-White House as part of its Community Development Program, with guidance from the Restoration Branch of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. Upon completion of the work, the City will either rent the house or re-sell it.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Moore-Holt-White House Item number 8 Page 5

Notes

(Some of the data on this building was compiled by Allison Harris, who conducted the architectural inventory of Burlington.)

- 1
Durwood T. Stokes, Company Shops: The Town Built By a Railroad (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1981). p. 71
- 2
"Ninth Annual Report of the Stockholders of the North Carolina Railroad Company, Held at Salisbury, North Carolina, July 8, 1858," p. 7.
- 3
North Carolina Railroad Company (NCRR) Records 1849-1952. Section XXII, Contracts, Leases, and Agreements, 1852-94, in the N.C. Archives, Raleigh, N.C.
- 4
Stokes, p. 140; and Alamance County Registry of Deeds, Book 1, Page 635.
- 5
NCRR Records 1849-1952, Section XXII.
- 6
"Report of the Joint Select Committee on the North Carolina Railroad," Document No. 71 of the North Carolina Legislature, Session 1858-9, p. 45.
- 7
Ibid; and NCRR Records 1849-1952, Section XXII.
- 8
"Communication from the President of the North Carolina Railroad, in Reply to the Report of the Chairman of the Joint Committee on the North Carolina Railroad," in Document No. 71 of the North Carolina Legislature Session 1858-9, p. 49.
- 9
United States Census, 1860.
- 10
Stokes, p. 144.
- 11
Ibid., p. 93.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Moore-Holt-White House Item number 8 Page 6

12 See Grantee Index in Alamance County Registry of Deeds.

13 Stokes, pp. 84 and 125.

14 Alamance County Registry of Deeds (ACRD), Book 5, Page 526.

15 See photograph in Stokes, p. 25, and copy of photograph taken by Robert D. White, Jr. in the file on the Moore-Holt-White House at the Survey and Planning Branch, N.C. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.

16 See map in Stokes, p. 22; and ACRD, Plat Book 1, Page 11, showing Lawrence S. Holt's property.

17 ACRD, Book 6, Page 604; and Stokes, p. 142.

18 Stokes, pp. 120-22.

19 ACRD, Book 6, Page 604.

20 ACRD, Book 6, Page 606.

21 ACRD, Mortgage Deed Book 2, Page 512.

22 ACRD, Book 9, Page 44.

23 ACRD, Plat Book 1, Page 11.

24 Julian Hughes, Development of the Textile Industry in Alamance County, privately printed in Burlington, 1965, pp. 128-29.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Moore-Holt-White House

Item number 8

Page 7

25

Ibid., p. 130.

26

Howard White, "Fine Old Burlington Homes Give Way to Civic Needs," Greensboro Daily News (1 September 1946).

27

Hughes, pp. 132-33.

28

Ibid., p. 140.

29

Interviews with Robert D. White, Jr., conducted in Burlington, N.C. by Allison Harris, September 1982 and Claudia Roberts, March 1983.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Burlington, N. C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

17	6	40	9	0	0	3	9	9	4	7	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing								

B

Zone	Easting			Northing								

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 39, Lot 10 (Burlington Tax Maps, Map #13)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Claudia P. Roberts

organization Consultant to the City of Burlington

date 3/15/83

street & number Municipal Building

telephone 227-3603

city or town Burlington

state North Carolina

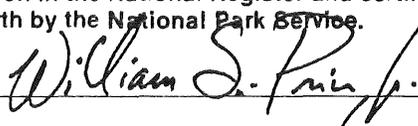
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date November 16, 1983

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

