

PROPOSAL OF
THE ANDREW CARPENTER HOUSE
TO THE GASTON COUNTY HISTORIC PROPERTIES
REGISTER
OCTOBER 1982



GASTON COUNTY HISTORIC PROPERTIES COMMISSION

Mrs. Richard Penegar, Chrmn.
Mr. Robert Carpenter
Mrs. W.N. Craig
Mr. Alvin Cain
Mrs. H.O. Williams
Mr. Frank Rankin
Mrs. Douglas Bell

1. Name and location of the property. The property known as the Andrew Carpenter house is located on State Road 1820 between Alexis and Lucia, Gaston County, North Carolina.
2. Name, address, and telephone of the present owner of the property.
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Deal
Rt. 2 Box 335
Stanley, N.C. 28164
phone 263-1325
3. Representative photographs of the property.
4. Map depicting location of the property, and survey by Bruce Rhyne indicating amount of property to be proposed for historic designation.
5. Current deed reference of the property.
6. Historical sketch of the property prepared by one of the Commission members, Robert C. Carpenter, who has written Carpenters A Plenty. It serves as the best geneological source on this family.
7. Copy of the "laying of the widow's year support", Jan. 31, 1880. Copy of inventory and sale list of the personal property of A. Carpenter.
8. Architectural description of the property prepared by Mr. Alan Waufle, Director of the Gaston County Museum of Art and History. Also included is a scale drawing of the house by Architect Jack Croft of Asheboro, N.C.
9. Reaction from the North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C..

DEED RESEARCH - ANDREW CARPENTER HOUSE

- (1) 2/6/1832 Peter Eddleman to Jacob Forney 270 acres on Leeper's Creek \$1100. Lincoln Deed Bk. 34, p. 417, 418.
- (2) 7/31/1835 Jacob Forney to Andrew Carpenter 290 acres on Leeper's Creek \$2000. Lincoln Deed Bk. 38, p.235.
- (3) Estate settlement papers A.W. Carpenter, executor
- (4) 9/28/1883 A.W. Carpenter (son of Andrew Carpenter) willed the home place and 300 acres more or less to his son Andrew Franklin Carpenter. Gaston Will Bk. 2, p. 222.
- (5) 4/19/1912 A.F. Carpenter and wife Deed of Trust securing notes, E.M. Lowe Trustee for I.C. Lowe. Bk. 114, p. 239.
- (6) 3/21/1916 A.F. Carpenter and wife to M.A. Carpenter and F.L. Carpenter 300 acres more or less \$3250. Gaston Deed Bk. 115, p. 275.
- (7) 2/26/1935 Reorganization of First National Bank, 300 acres mentioned as tract No. 36. Gaston Deed Bk. 306, p. 312, 313.
- (8) 4/1/1938 Robert Carpenter and others (Frank L. Carpenter, Ben and Bernice H. Carpenter) to L.B. Carpenter $\frac{1}{2}$ interest for \$10.- Excepting therefrom the $\frac{3}{4}$ a. school house tract known as "Luckey School". Gaston Deed Bk. 364, p. 545.
- (9) 4/19/1938 First National Bank Trustees to Lewis B. Carpenter $\frac{1}{2}$ interest \$100. -Excepting therefrom the $\frac{3}{4}$ acre school house tract known as "Luckey School". Gaston Deed Bk. 348, p. 18.
- (10) 11/14/1939 Deed of Trust traces chain of title and mentions plat and survey by John L. Stacey on March 13, 1937. Gaston Deed Bk. 339, p. 279.
- (11) To Nancy Carpenter Gregg and husband John N. Gregg from Wachovia Bank and Trust Company, N.A., Trustee under the Will of Lewis B. Carpenter, from Lenoir-Rhyne College, Inc., from N.C. Lutheran Homes, Inc., and from St. Lukes Evangelical Lutheran Church of Charlotte, Inc. by instruments recorded in Gaston County Public Registry Bk 1418 p. 616, Bk. 1418 P. 892, Bk. 1418 P. 888, and Bk. 1420 P. 374.
- (12) "Historic Preservation Easement" dated 12/28/82 Deed Bk. 1420 P. 1.
- (13) 2/1/83 Nancy Carpenter Gregg and husband John N. Gregg to Gerald Wilson Deal and wife Suzanne Deal 13.04 acres Gaston Deed Bk. 1422 P. 409.

HISTORICAL SKETCH * ANDREW CARPENTER HOUSE

On April 19, 1831, Andrew Carpenter married Anna Sophia Smith. He was the son of Henry and Frances (Laymen) Carpenter. Andrew Carpenter had been born and raised near Clark's Creek in present Lincoln County, North Carolina. Henry Carpenter had accumulated a significant amount of wealth and provided a good education for his children. Anna Sophia Smith was the daughter of David and Elizabeth (Arndt) Smith. David Smith resided between Lincoln and Stanley in present Lincoln County. He had constructed a large brick home which he called "Magnolia Grove". His home is restored and still stands (1982) in very good condition.¹

On October 5, 1831, Henry Carpenter deeded 312 acres of land on Maiden Creek to his son Andrew Carpenter. Andrew and his new bride made their first home at this Maiden Creek residence.² Probably because of a desire to get closer to the parents and relatives of his wife, on July 31, 1835, Andrew Carpenter purchased 290 acres of land on Leeper's Creek from Jacob Forney. On this property he planned to construct a respectable home for his wife and growing family. Work was begun and the new home of Andrew Carpenter and family was completed by the early months of the following year. In that year he was listed as a resident of Captain James Rutledge's District.³

Their new home was a large structure, beautifully built and with practical applications. It served as the center of his spacious plantation, and the home itself would soon serve to make money for the family. Andrew Carpenter, like

his father, saw the need to own slaves which would furnish cheap labor on the plantation. On March 17, 1838, Andrew purchased one Negro girl named Milly about 16 years old and her child of about four months, from Catherine Warlick. He paid \$615. for both. The 1840 Lincoln County Census listed Andrew Carpenter with 5 slaves. Andrew continued to add slaves so that in 1850 he was listed owning 13 slaves.⁴ The slaves labored in the fields but also worked in the impressive home Andrew had constructed.

The location of the Andrew Carpenter home was very important economically to the family. It was located on the major road between Charlotte and Lincolnton. Stage coaches which ran regularly along this road found that the Andrew Carpenter home made an excellent stop. Passengers could spend the night in the spacious house, could refresh themselves, and could purchase food and drink at the Carpenter home. The Carpenter family and their servants busied themselves treating their guests. Andrew Carpenter called his successful stagecoach stop "Happy Home".⁵

The Carpenter lifestyle depended upon slavery which was consistent with the prevalent southern attitude concerning the plantation system. It is no surprise then that Andrew and his family supported the Confederate war effort. His three eldest sons served in the Confederate Army. On May 1, 1861, John A. Carpenter enlisted in Company M, 16th N.C. Regiment. He served as a color bearer, was wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville, and was killed at the Battle of the Wilderness. On March 1, 1862, Benjamin Franklin Carpenter (

enlisted in Company E, 34th N.C. Regiment. He was promoted to First Sergeant. In July 1862, Perry D. Carpenter enlisted in the same company as his brother Benjamin Franklin. He was promoted through the ranks to First Lieutenant. On May 3, 1863, Perry D. was killed at the Battle of Chancellorsville.⁶ Three sons had entered the Civil War, but only one survived to return home. The joy of seeing Benjamin Franklin return contrasted with the sorrow upon the loss of the other two sons.

The Civil War brought significant changes to the slave-owners of the South. Andrew Carpenter's slaves were free. Their freedom meant an investment loss for Andrew and his family. Yet, the innovative southern farmer found ways to keep his Negro labor force. Andrew continued to grow corn, wheat, and cotton on his farm. He also raised cattle, hogs, and sheep. By the turn of the century Andrew or other members of his family had set aside $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres of the homestead tract for the "Luckey School", which was a local Negro school.⁷ It is assumed that some of Andrew Carpenter's former slaves remained on his farm to work as sharecroppers. The creation of the "Luckey School" filled the Negroes' desire for education.

On December 28, 1879, Andrew Carpenter died in Gaston County. His sons Benjamin Franklin and Albert Wade Carpenter served as executors of his estate. Albert Wade, the youngest child, inherited the homestead tract of 300 acres which included "Happy Home". His mother Anna Sophia Carpenter continued to reside in the old house with the family of Albert Wade Carpenter.⁸ On September 28, 1883, Albert Wade wrote

his will. He willed his 300 acre "Home place" to his only son Andrew Franklin Carpenter. At that time Andrew Franklin was a minor, as were his sisters. On February 26, 1884, Albert Wade Carpenter died.⁹

Albert Wade and the Carpenter family considered education to be of utmost importance. His father, Andrew Carpenter, had been well educated. He had amassed a wide array of books which served to improve the education of his children.¹⁰ The family had high expectations for Andrew Franklin Carpenter. On January 13, 1885, Anna Sophia Carpenter, Andrew's widow, wrote her will. She divided her personal property into thirds among her two living children (Benjamin Franklin Carpenter and Martha E. F. Duncan) and the children of Albert Wade Carpenter, her deceased son. She also made special provision that \$100. should be used "to school" her grandson, Andrew Franklin Carpenter.

Andrew Carpenter's grandchildren and great grandchildren found a lifestyle and society which differed greatly from that experienced by Andrew. The plantation system had died. They found that agriculture did not offer the financial rewards it had offered in the past. John Carpenter, son of Benjamin Franklin Carpenter, became a lawyer and served as Solicitor (District Attorney) for Gaston County. His brother Miles A. Carpenter served as Gaston County Register of Deeds 1899-1905, and brother Oscar B. Carpenter served in the same capacity 1919-1921.

Andrew Franklin Carpenter became involved in other business interests and was forced to mortgage the Andrew

Carpenter homeplace. On March 21, 1916, he and his wife deeded "Happy Home" and the 300 acre tract to Frank L. and M.A. Carpenter, his first cousins and sons of Benjamin Franklin Carpenter. On September 12, 1919, Frank L. Carpenter died. His minor heirs retained ownership of the homeplace.¹²

On April 1, 1938, Robert Carpenter, Frank L. Carpenter, Ben Carpenter, and Bernice H. Carpenter (the children of Frank L. Carpenter) deeded the Andrew Carpenter home to Lewis B. Carpenter, their brother.

While the ownership of the home has been maintained within the Carpenter family, time has taken its toll. Tenants have resided in the home in recent years, and it has fallen into disrepair. Lewis B. Carpenter and his wife have died, and the home and property is owned by the heirs.

In 1981 the Preservation Fund of North Carolina, Inc. became interested in preserving this architectural and historical gem. The Gaston County Historic Properties Commission began research on the Andrew Carpenter home in 1981. The goals of both organizations are to preserve the home by locating a buyer who is willing to invest in history.¹³ It would be a shame if "Happy Home" were not preserved for future generations to enjoy.

FOOTNOTES

1. Curtis Bynum, Marriage Bonds of Tryon and Lincoln Counties, North Carolina (1929) repr. Catawba County Historical Association and Lincoln County Historical Association, 1962, p. 26.

E.E. & M.L. Deppen, Counting Kindred, (Graverstown, Pa. Church Center Press, 1940), p. 314-316, hereafter cited as Deppen, C.K.

Laban Miles Hoffman, Our Kin, (Daniel E. Rhyne, Laban L. Jenkins, & L.M. Hoffman, 1915), repr. Gaston County Historical Society, 1968, p. 182, 324, 325, hereafter cited as Hoffman, O.K.

Robert C. Carpenter, Carpenters A Plenty, (at the printers to be released for publication by Christmas 1982.)

2. Lincoln County Deed Book 34, p. 246, Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Courthouse, Lincolnnton, N.C., hereafter cited as L.C.D.B..
3. L.C.D.B. 38, p. 235. "Capt. James Rutledges Dist. 1836", Lincoln County Tax Lists, list Andrew Carpenter 582 acres, 1500 valuation, 1 white poll, 1 black poll. "Sifford Company 1843", lists 283 acres, 2000 valuation, 1 white poll, 2 black polls. Both records are filed under tax lists Lincoln County Collection Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.
4. L.C.D.B. 38, p. 187. The 1840 Federal Census of Lincoln County, N.C. p. 130. The 1850 Federal Census of Gaston County, N.C., house # 610.
5. Deppen, C.K., p. 316. Hoffman, O.K., p. 324.
6. Robert F. Cope & Manly Wade Wellman, The County of Gaston, (Charlotte, N.C. Heritage Printers, Inc. 1961), p. 211, hereafter cited as Cope & Wellman, County of Gaston. Hoffman, O.K., p. 324, 325.
7. "Inventory and Sale list of the personal property of A. Carpenter which came into the hands of B.F. Carpenter & A.W. Carpenter Administrators, March 6, 1880".

Estate Papers for Andrew Carpenter 1879, Gaston County Collection, Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C..

Gaston County Deed Book 129, p. 82-85, Register of Deeds, Gaston County Courthouse, Gastonia, N.C., hereafter cited as G.C.D.B..

G.C.D.B. 364, p. 545. G.C.D.B. 348, p. 18.

8. Andrew Carpenter is buried at Christ's Lutheran Church, Stanley, N.C.. Estate Papers for Andrew Carpenter 1879, Gaston County Collection, Department of Archives & History, Raleigh, N.C., furnish details of the legal transactions concerning the estate of Andrew Carpenter after his decease. The final settlement listed \$9,987.89 which was to be "divided equally among" the four heirs: A.S. Carpenter, widow; B.F. Carpenter, son; A.W. Carpenter, son; Martha E.F. Duncan, daughter.
9. Gaston County Will Book 2, p. 222, Clerk of Court, Gaston County Courthouse, Gastonia, N.C., hereafter cited as G.C.W.B.. His will named L.A. Carpenter, his widow, and B.F. Carpenter, his brother, executors of the will. He listed his son Andrew Franklin and daughters Eva and Ella Carpenter. Albert Wade Carpenter is buried at Christ's Lutheran Church, Stanley, N.C..
10. "Inventory and Sale list of the personal property of A. Carpenter which came into the hands of B.F. Carpenter & A.W. Carpenter Administrators, March 6, 1880."

Estate Papers for Andrew Carpenter, Gaston County Collection, Department of Archives & History, Raleigh, N.C.. It listed 30 books including history books, an algebra book, law books, and others.
11. G.C.W.B. 3, p. 36. Anna Sophia Carpenter did not die until May 18, 1899, and was buried at Christ's Lutheran Church, Stanley, N.C..
12. Cope & Wellman, County of Gaston, p. 203.

G.C.D.B. 114, p. 239. G.C.D.B. 115, p 275.

C.K., p.316. O.K., p. 182, 325.

Gaston County Death Certificate of Frank L. Carpenter, Sept. 12, 1919, Register of Deeds, Gaston County Courthouse, Gastonia, N.C.

Frank L. Carpenter 1919, Estate Papers, Gaston County Collection, Dept. of Archives & History, Raleigh, N.C.
13. G.C.D.B. 364, p. 545. C.K., p. 316. O.K., p. 182, 325.

Interviews with Kim Withers Brengle, Gaston County Historic Survey Specialist, 1981 and Lucy Penegar, Chairman of Gaston County Historic Properties Commission, 1982.

Andrew Carpenter House

The Andrew Carpenter House is situated on the north side of State Road 1820 in the Riverbend Township of northeastern Gaston County. Constructed circa 1831, the house is a deteriorating but good example of a rural, farm house built in Federal style architecture. The house is a two storey, five bay, frame, double-pile structure with an ell addition at the back right. The roof is metal, standing seam construction except over the front porch where asbestos shingles have been used. The foundation wall of the original portion of the house rises from the ground approximately three feet. Five courses of brick, laid in Flemish bond, rest on a base of stone. Small ventilation grates made of iron are found on all sides of the house near the top of the foundation walls. The addition at the back of the house rests on brick piers which have been stuccoed.

A three-bay, single storey porch with hip roof is the main element on the south (front) facade. The porch is attached, raised on piers, and is not as old as the house. The porch columns and balusters are extremely simple and square in shape. The stairs have crude handrails and no risers.

On the first floor the door serves as the central bay but is slightly to the right of center. The doorway consists

of a single, glass-paneled door (a 20th century replacement), a four-light transom, and an extremely simple architrave which appears to have been replaced. Doorway architraves throughout the house consistently match the molded architraves of the windows with the exception of the main door. This architrave is simply plain, unmolded planks.

The second floor of the south facade has five windows spaced like the lower bays, the central window being off center to the right. Windows on both floors are four-over-four, sash type with molded architraves and simple sills. Windows on the first floor include three-paneled shutters which appear to be original to the house. There is no evidence of shutters ever being on the windows of the second floor. The eaves of the house are boxed and molded. The raking board is molded as well.

The plain, unbeaded weatherboards have been painted a brick red color. All porch woodwork, architraves, sash, shutters, and doors have been painted white. All paint is in generally bad condition.

Two of three original chimneys remain, one on each end of the house. Both are exterior, single shoulder chimneys. The chimney on the east side is made of brick laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. The west chimney has been stuccoed. but evidence of the Flemish bond is seen in places where the

stucco has spalled. Evidence of a third chimney is easily seen also on the west wall and would have matched the extant chimney in size and shape. A modern chimney for oil-fired heaters has been added at the back of the house near the northwest corner.

The original plan of the first floor contained four rooms in a Hall and Parlor arrangement. The room at the back right (northeast) has been subdivided to include a modern bathroom situated under the stairway which is enclosed.

Although the interior walls have been recovered with a beaverboard-type material, many of the original, fine details of the Carpenter House remain. The parlor (southeast room) retains the paneled wainscot and a fine federal mantelpiece. The top rail of the wainscot appears as a visual extension of the window sills. The mantelpiece is comprised of fluted, engaged columns which support a paneled and reeded frieze and a molded mantelshelf. The floors in this and all first floor rooms have been replaced with narrow, oak flooring. All interior doors are six-paneled. Some of the hardware on the doors has been replaced.

The southwest room also contains an original fireplace which has a mantelpiece similar in design, though far simpler in execution, to that found in the parlor. Here, pilasters support an entablature of paneled frieze and minimally molded

mantelshelf. Although the wainscot rail remains in this room, there is no paneling. Through a door on the north wall, one enters a room which has undergone many changes and has most recently been used as a kitchen. Only window and door architraves seem to date from the original construction.

A door on the east wall of the modern kitchen leads to the northeast corner room, which originally was one large room with enclosed stair leading to the second floor. This room has been altered to include the modern bath along the east wall and under the stair. A door on the north wall leads onto the back porch which has a hip roof. From this porch one enters the ell addition.

The addition is in poor condition and is of cruder construction than the main part of the house. This portion of the house contains two rooms with interior walls of planed, vertical boards. The exterior, like the rest of the house, is weatherboard. An exterior chimney on the north end has fallen away sometime ago, leaving remnants of a stone foundation and a gaping hole in the wall. The roof is a standing seam, metal type and continues on the east side to form a shed roof over a porch. This porch roof is supported by turned posts. Three windows in the addition are nine-over-nine, sash type. One smaller window opening on the east wall has no sash remaining but has one

batten shutters on both the interior and exterior. Doors in this addition are batten and vertical board. Crude stairs in bad condition lead from the porch to the yard.

The stairs located in the northeast corner of the main house lead up to a large hall on the second floor. Off this hall are three large rooms and one small room. Flooring on the second level has not been replaced and is made of boards considerably wider than those on the first floor. They are approximately five inches wide.

The architectural details on the second floor are the same in all rooms and hall and are similar to the southwest room on the first floor. A molded rail at the window sill level is found on all walls. Architraves of windows and doors are molded like those on the first floor. All doors are six-paneled. The two remaining fireplaces in the southeast and southwest rooms have identical mantelpieces. They are similar in basic design to the mantelpieces found on the first floor but are executed with even less detail. There are no engaged columns nor pilasters. Instead, the fireplace frame is a molded architrave on which rests a simple, panel frieze and molded mantelshelf. There is some evidence of a fireplace having been between the two west windows of the northwest room. This would match the missing chimney on the west, exterior wall.

The small room located in the northeast corner of the

second floor can be reached through a door in the hall or through a door in the east wall of the northwest room. This small room has only a window on its north wall and a door in the northeast corner which leads to the attic stairs.

The attic is partially floored with wide planks and has a window (four-over-four, sash) at both the east and west ends. The mortise and tenon construction of the house is easily seen in the attic. The timbers are hand hewn and numbered sequentially in Roman numerals, one through twelve. The numerals are found at both ends of the joists, on the plates, the summer beam, rafters, collar, and ridge pole. Nail holes in the roofing strips indicate that the roof has been replaced at least once. The roof is in generally poor condition but some repairs have been made recently to minimize any further damage by weather.