

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 Eli Hovle House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1111 Dallas-Stanley Highway ☒ not for publication

city or town Dallas ☒ vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Gaston code 071 zip code 28034

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] SHPD
Signature of certifying official/Title

11/6/98
Date

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:) _____

Eli Hovle House
Name of Property

Gaston County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
		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**

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls Weatherboard

roof Tin

other Brick

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheet.

Eli Hoyle House
Name of Property

Gaston County, North Carolina
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or 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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

Ca. 1830-1833

Significant Dates

1832

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

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:

North Carolina Division of Archives and History

Eli Hovle House
Name of Property

Gaston County, North Carolina
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.76 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	487170	3909120
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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood
organization _____ date 9 March 1998
street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331
city or town Vale state N.C. zip code 28168

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 Mr. Mitchell D. Hoyl
street & number 63 Diamond Street, #4 telephone 415/626-6278
city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94114

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.

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Eli Hoyle House, Gaston County, North Carolina

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The Eli Hoyle House, a handsome, well-finished, and remarkably intact Federal style frame house of ca. 1830-1833, stands on the north side of the Dallas-Stanly Highway (NC 275) about two miles east/northeast of the former Gaston County Court House (NR, 1979) at the center of the old county seat. The house was built as the seat of a 356-acre plantation conveyed by Andrew Hoyle to his son Eli Hoyle on 2 June 1832, and it remained Eli Hoyle's home until he died in 1844. The house was the property and sometime residence of Eli Hoyle's descendants until 1872 when it was sold to Eli H. Withers. During the division of the Withers land in 1911, the plantation acreage was divided into three lots. Lot number 1, including the house and 101 acres, was assigned to Sallie Withers Hoffman; she and her husband held the property until selling it in two transactions in 1916 (twenty-five acres) and 1929 (the house and seventy-six acres) to Walter Larrington Stroup. During the long ownership of Mr. Stroup and his descendants (1929-1997), the house lot was gradually reduced to a very small parcel of 2.76 acres on which it sits today; the two frame outbuildings on the nominated property were erected during the Stroup family ownership. Although the house has been separated from its lands and now stands in a built-up rural setting, it holds a strong physical presence in the landscape and retains its relationship to the ancestral Hoyle House (NR, 1993)—long occupied by Andrew Hoyle—which stands a few hundred feet to the southeast and on the south side of NC 275. An aged American holly, off the southwest corner of the Eli Hoyle House and possibly contemporary with it, stands on the grass-covered house lot with its later, twentieth-century plantings of deciduous trees, evergreen shrubs, and a low privet hedge along the east boundary.

Standing on a mortared stone foundation, the two-story-with-attic Eli Hoyle House is sheathed with closely-lapping beaded weatherboards (and some later replacement siding) and covered with a side-gable roof of patterned-tin shingles. The five-bay south, front elevation has a one-story full-façade shed-roof porch. Tall Flemish-bond brick chimneys stand at the center and near-center, respectively, of the east and west gable ends. A contemporary one-story kitchen and dining room ell, standing behind the east half of the house's north elevation, was originally connected with the main block by an open breezeway that continued up the ell's west side as a service porch. The ell's brick foundation enclosed a basement-level kitchen which connected with the large dining room thereabove by means of a staircase rising through and up to the west service porch. Exactly when the basement-level kitchen was abandoned and a new kitchen was created in the north end of the antebellum dining room is not known; however, early in the Stroup-family ownership the breezeway was enclosed, as was the west service porch, and the service stair, by which slaves/servants brought food from the kitchen up to the dining room, was removed. A new shed-roof service porch was then built on the east side of the house and its ell. About this time, a shed room was built across the west half of the main block's rear elevation to provide the house's first modern bathroom. While the principal front block of the house has

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remained virtually intact, save the replacement of its front porch supports and its front and rear hall doors, the one-story ell has undergone a series of modifications.

The architectural character and craftsmanship of the Eli Hoyle House is established on the symmetrical five-bay south front elevation where a full-façade shed-roof porch shelters the first-story elevation. Although the porch floor is now of poured cement on a cement-block foundation, the porch's original posts have been replaced with inexpensive 1960s-type decorative metal posts, and the front door has been replaced by a like 1960s hollow core door with three horizontal panes, the remainder of the façade is intact.¹ The flush-sheathed first-story elevation is enhanced by a molded baseboard and a molded chair rail. The receiving boards for the original porch railing, with mortises for the top and bottom rails, remain in place and affixed to the outer edges of the elevation; they have arched heads and chamfered sides. The center entrance is set in a classical frontispiece and comprises a door flanked by four-pane sidelights above a molded flat panel and surmounted by a three-pane transom. A quartet of fluted engaged columns, framing the door and sidelights, rise from tall square bases to molded impost blocks; a molded architrave connects these blocks and carries across the top of the door and sidelight openings. The inner pair of molded blocks serves as the base for fluted volute-like brackets which frame the transom and rise to its molded architrave. A three-part architrave also enframes the four window openings, resting on the molded chair rail, which are fitted with nine-over-nine wood sash; a number of pintles for the original blinds, visible in a documentary photograph, remain in place. The five window openings on the second-story elevation are slightly shorter, framed by the same three-part molded surround, and fitted with nine-over-six wood sash. Apparently the second-story windows were never fitted with blinds. A full-developed classical box cornice crowns the façade. A molded punchwork architrave with shaped ends carries below the projecting box; it, in turn, is enriched with heavy built-up moldings and a reeded band which return and taper on the gable ends to the apex of the roof. The porch roofline is similarly finished; its shed ends have reeded rakeboards, and a molded, reeded-block band carries across its front eave.

Exterior end Flemish-bond brick chimneys, rising from stone bases, stand at both the east and west gable ends of the two-story-with-attic house. On the west gable end, the chimney is positioned off-center and to the south; it provides fireplaces to the larger southwest corner rooms on both stories while the small northwest corner rooms were unheated. The chimney has stepped shoulders, queen closers, and a partially rebuilt upper stack. Symmetrically positioned window openings on each level contain nine-over-nine sash on the first story and nine-over-six sash on the second story. These windows, like those on the façade and throughout the original house, have three-part molded surrounds and molded sills. The small, slightly off-center attic opening is fitted with a replacement metal window. On the east gable end, the brick chimney is

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positioned in the center of the elevation and flanked by symmetrically placed windows on all three levels. The chimney, in addition to being larger, features more elaborate patterned brickwork. Here full-height tiers of stretcher brick, placed inside the queen closers, serve to enframe a subtle but distinct diamond-shaped patterning created by header brick in a tour de force of brick masonry. Immediately beside and to the south of the chimney is a ca. 1930-1940 brick enclosure, covered with a near-flat shed roof and fitted with a board-and-batten door, which protects stone steps leading down to a cut in the stone foundation opening into the dirt-floor partial cellar. The wall on the north side of the chimney is occupied by the ca. 1930 shed service porch which extends north and occupies the east end of the now enclosed breezeway. Its frame construction features an apron of weatherboards below a wide opening covered with woven screening; a screened door gives onto a simple flight of cement leading down to the east side yard. A modern cement block flue rises in the corner where the north wall of the porch abuts the ell. The two symmetrical window openings to the north, which originally illuminated the antebellum dining room and probably held nine-over-six sash, are now fitted with recent two-over-two horizontal sash.

The kitchen and dining room ell bears the appearance of a series of alterations during the Stroup family ownership from 1929 to 1997. The modern window sash is one mark of these changes, another is the insertion/enlargement of window openings in the partially-stuccoed brick walls of the basement kitchen and the removal of the cooking fireplace and its chimney on the north gable end; the nine-pane sash in these basement openings appears to be reused from two windows on the main block's first-story north side that were closed/alterd in the 1930s. A layer of dirt now covers the floor of the former kitchen; whether the room had a brick, stone, or wood floor is not known. A neat opening in the west wall of the kitchen marks the location of a door giving onto the staircase leading up to the west service porch and dining room. The location of the long lost chimney, in the center of the ell's north gable end, is now occupied by an enclosed, frame shed-roof porch flanked by window openings with replacement sash. Here brick and cement blocks support a poured cement stoop and steps. The standing seam metal roof of the ell splays to engage the now-enclosed former service porch along its west side. Vertical seams in the weatherboarding and the variety of boards indicates changes over time; two unequal size openings hold six-over-six sash. The use of both stone and cement block in the foundation of the former porch also indicates changes here. The shed room containing the bathroom, occupying the west half of the house's north first-story elevation, has a small window opening in the near center of its north wall and another in the center of its west end; both are fitted with replacement one-over-one sash.

The interior of the Eli Hoyle House reflects the same high craftsmanship of the exterior finish and a hierarchy of refinement extending from the principal parlor on the first floor to its

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secondary rooms and from the first story to the private bedrooms on the second story. Linking these spaces is a well-executed and fully-developed staircase which rises from the north end of the first story hall to the second story and on to the attic where it opens onto a floored but otherwise unfinished space. Except for the aforementioned loss of the original front and rear hall doors, the interior of the house is remarkably intact except for the removal of the original box locks and knobs on its six-panel doors. The complete program of interior woodworking, including four mantels, all doors, wainscoting, door and window surrounds, baseboards, chair rails, and cornices, together with the very handsome staircase remains intact and unusually well-preserved. While the quality of the woodworking reflects the original character of the house, another clue to its refinement can be seen at the south end of the second-story hall where lengths of the original stained and grained wainscoting were preserved inside Stroup-era closets that have now been removed. The center-hall plan of the house is the same on both stories. The area on the east side of the hall is given over to a single large room while the space on the west side of the hall was partitioned into two rooms of unequal size; the front rooms in the southwest corner of each story have fireplaces as do the large chambers on the house's east side.

The hall, extending the depth of the house, is a well-proportioned space dominated by the staircase positioned in its north end. A classical surround with fluted pilasters enframes the front door and its sidelights. The plaster walls are finished with a flat-panel wainscot carried between a molded baseboard and molded chair rail. The door openings into the east parlor, the pair of rooms on the west, and the former breezeway are enframed in three-part molded surrounds which rise from molded inward-splaying bases. The doors to the three rooms have a six, flat-panel arrangement as does the door opening into a closet under the stairs; the doorway at the north end of the hall is a modern hollow-core door. The plaster walls above the chair rail were covered with inexpensive sheet paneling in recent years which is now being removed. A cornice of built-up moldings finishes the top of the walls.

The well-developed staircase, one of the finest of its period to survive in the western Piedmont, features two unequal flights of steps, per rise, between first and second stories and the second-story and attic. A landing, parallel with the north wall, occurs about two-thirds of the distance upward in each rise. The soffits of each flight are fully, flat paneled as is the enclosure of the closet at the base of the staircase. The newels are turned as is the railing carried by the shaped handrail; the rise of the hand rail is shadowed on the wall by a molded chair rail. The tread ends on the flights leading to the second story are finished with brackets based on the well-known plate in Owen Biddle's *Young Carpenter's Assistant* of 1805 but omits the signature tulip. A cutwork panel of circular motives graces the exposed face of the first landing. The two flights of the stair's rise from the second story to the attic is the same in its design; however, its finish varies. Here the tread ends are finished by a simpler bracket with recessed cutwork comma-

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shapes. The panel facing the upper landing features a cutwork fylfot flanked by heart shapes, an obvious reference to the German ancestry of Eli Hoyle.

A door in the center of the hall's east wall opens into the large parlor on its east side which is finished in manner and materials like the hall. Two symmetrically placed windows occur in its south wall, two others flank the fireplace on the east wall, and a fifth window in the north wall occupied the pendant space to the outer (easternmost) window on the front wall; early in the Stroup ownership it was remade as a doorway and fitted with a three-pane above three-panel door which opens into the former breezeway that was enclosed and incorporated with the dining room. Each of the four surviving windows here has a projecting scalloped-edge board above the window openings which was probably a part of an original/early drapery treatment; these uniform boards survive throughout the house above every window opening.

The parlor mantel is the most elaborate and imposing of the four original mantels installed in the house, and like the entrance frontispiece it reflects a free composition of classical ornaments. The firebox, faced and infilled with stretcher brickwork when the room came to be heated with an oil circulator, is surrounded by a reeded band with molded borders which rises from a square base and terminates, with cornerblocks ornamented with sunbursts. At each side paired fluted columns, recalling those at the entrance, rise from a similar, offset base to impost panels framing the mantel frieze; these panels are ornamental with oval-shaped sunbursts, centered by a ray-like motive. A like, larger oval sunburst is carved on the face of the frieze's center tablet: it is centered by a four-leaf clover with pine cones to the top and bottom, enhanced by the curving lines of the rays, and other ray-like features projecting to the right and left sides. This decorative feature, incorporating a four-leaf clover (the symbol of good luck) with pine cones (or possibly beehives) with a sunburst has no known precedent in North Carolina architecture. The mantel shelf, which breaks forward over the columns and table, is built up by applied moldings including a band of reeding and a band featuring triglyph-like verticals. Handsome in itself, it was a fitting complement to the fine furnishings known from a surviving inventory to have been used here by Eli Hoyle and his family.

The finish of the southwest corner room on the first story is virtually equal to that of the parlor except that the composition of the mantel is not quite so distinguished. Here both the molded architrave surrounding the firebox and the pilasters supporting the molded shelf rise from a wide, shared base; the outer band of the two-part architrave is faced with reeding applied on the diagonal. In a departure from convention, the faces of the pilasters are fitted with two unequal-size rectangular panels below a two-part capital block, flanking the frieze band, with oval sunbursts; the lower sunburst is placed with its length parallel to the shelf, while the upper sunburst is positioned with its length perpendicular to the shelf. These sunbursts, like the larger

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one in the frieze's center table, have center bosses. The built-up moldings forming the cornice of the mantel shelf include a reeded band; the cornice and shelf break forward over the pilasters and tablet. A door in the near center of the north wall connects with the northwest corner room. While the other first-story rooms had carpet on their floors and celotext covering the ceilings, the original flooring and flush-sheathed ceiling in this northwest chamber is visible; the floor, surely pine, was painted during the Stroup ownership. Lacking a fireplace, this room was clearly a secondary chamber and its status is further defined by the simple use of a molded baseboard and chair rail to finish its lower walls. The single window in the west wall was originally complemented by a window in the north wall; however, in the 1930s this north window was closed up and the opening fitted with bookshelves when the bathroom shed room was added.

Although the second story hall was essentially a private, family space, it was finished with the same flat-panel wainscoting seen in the first-story hall. When the Stroups acquired the house, they added closets, to either side of the window, in the front southeast and southwest corners of the hall. Doing so, they preserved inside these closets lengths of the original stained and grained finish of the wainscoting. The panels have a strippled tobacco-brown coloration while the baseboard, stiles, and chair rail have a darker brownish paint. Also visible inside these closets is a slight staining of the perimeter of the flooring which indicates the size of the original carpet of wood or oilcloth used here by the Hoyles. (These simply-sheathed closets were removed in the winter of 1997-1998). The south, outside wall of the hall is plaster while the east and west partition walls with the bedrooms are made up of thick vertical boards.

The finish of the three bedrooms is identical except that the rear northwest corner room, like its pendant below, has no fireplace. The pine flooring is painted as are the flush-sheathed ceilings in each room. Like the hall the rooms' outer walls are plastered while the partition walls shared with the hall are flush vertical boards. The walls are finished with a beaded-top baseboard, chair rail, and simple cornice. The door and window openings are finished with three-part molded surrounds. The doors connecting the hall with the bedrooms have a six-panel arrangement, but the panels are raised in the earlier Georgian tradition rather than flat. The mantels in the large east bedroom and the smaller southwest bedroom have a transitional Georgian-Federal appearance. The fireboxes are enframed by wide three-part molded surrounds rising from bases which splay inward; the backbands of these surrounds carry outside the bases to the floor. Reeded blocks are positioned at the outer edges of the plain-board frieze and a larger reeded block occupies its center. The molded cornices and shelves of each mantel break forward above these elements.

The attic level of the house was fully floored at construction but is otherwise unfinished.

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Two doors in the main block provide access to the rooms of the rear ell and shed, whose appearance reflects sequential changes during the long Stroup-family ownership. The floors, walls, and ceilings are all covered with modern materials of no distinction. The door at the rear, north end of the hall opens into a shallow passage where a door on the left (west) opens into the bathroom, in the shed, and a door on the right (east) opens into a large combination kitchen and sitting room. An opening in the passage's north wall gives onto the now enclosed original service porch carrying on the west side of the ell. The flush sheathed west wall of the ell remains visible and in it are two symmetrically-placed openings. The northernmost opening, originally for a window, retains its transitional Federal/Greek Revival molding; however, the original nine-over-six sash has been replaced by three-over-three sash. The southernmost opening was originally a doorway, providing access into the dining room from the basement kitchen, but it has been closed at the base and refitted for a window, now with two-over-two sash. The entire rear ell, including the area of the breezeway, has been combined into one large kitchen and sitting room. This probably occurred in the early 1930s—early in the Stroup ownership—when the window opening in the north wall of the parlor was refitted as a doorway which opens into the large room. Simple projecting verticals in the room's side walls indicate the location of the original south wall of the dining room. Portions of earlier, probably original wall and ceiling finishes and a simple cornice can be seen above the inexpensive dropped ceiling of the large room.

Two noncontributing frame outbuildings stand in the backyard of the Eli Hoyle House; both date to the Stroup-family ownership. The older of the two is an early 1930s combination shop and meathouse of weatherboarded frame construction which stands to the northeast of the house; it has a sheet metal shed roof. The front (west) half of the rectangular building has a poured cement floor while the rear half, divided by a board partition with a board-and-batten door, has a wood floor; a door is located in its west front, two window openings are set in its north wall, and single windows occur in its east and south walls. After World War II, Mr. Stroup added a cement block pump house to its south side giving the building an L-shape plan. The garage, erected in 1989-1990 after Hurricane Hugo destroyed the earlier garage, is a large two-part frame building of inexpensive modern materials covered by a front-gable asphalt shingle roof. The southern two-thirds of the building is open on the east side for vehicle access; the north third of the building is enclosed as a shop/storage area and fitted with paired board-and-batten doors on the east side. The building has paired windows on its north and south walls.

Through the course of its existence over a period of about 155 years, the Eli Hoyle House and its architectural finish have survived remarkably intact to the present. Not surprisingly, the only significant changes have occurred in this century, during the Stroup ownership (1929-1997), when the house was home to Mr. Stroup's large family; these alterations were confined mainly to

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the refitting of the kitchen and dining room ell. Given the number of children who lived and grew up here in the 1930s and 1940s, the integrity of the main two-story-with-attic block is all the more impressive. In its second story hall and in two bedrooms simple closets were enclosed; these have been removed by the current owner. Ironically, the creation of the closets against the side walls of the hall preserved lengths of the original stained and grained finish of the wainscot which would have been otherwise painted over and entirely lost to view.

The replacement of the porch floor and its supports are the only noticeable changes to the exterior appearance of the Eli Hoyle House. It is unclear now whether both features were replaced at the same time; possibly the original wood floor was replaced with the present cement floor and concrete block base in the 1950s. The inexpensive decorative metal posts date to the 1960s and probably to the period shortly after Mr. Stroup's death in 1961; they are similar to others in the region appearing on modest ranch houses of the late 1950s and 1960s. An early-twentieth century documentary photograph clearly shows the original porch posts and railing; it and the surviving receiving boards for the porch railing will be used to reconstruct the porch during the restoration. The original front door survived in place until the early 1960s when it, too, was replaced by a conventional hollow-core door. The house's original back door, in place until 1981 when it was photographed during the Gaston County architectural inventory, was subsequently replaced by a modern door. The 1981 photograph will be used as the basis for reconstructing the design of the original door during restoration.

Endnotes

1. A documentary photograph of the early-twentieth century records those original features and will guide their reconstruction during the restoration of the Eli Hoyle House by the present owner.

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Summary Statement of Significance

The Eli Hoyle House, the finest surviving Federal-style frame house in Gaston County, occupies an important place in the architectural history of Gaston County and the larger Catawba River Valley and satisfies Criterion C for statewide significance in the area of architecture. It stands as one of a small group of surviving houses of the later 1820s and early 1830s whose classical finish anticipates the handsome Greek Revival style houses of the antebellum period. The well-preserved house was built as the seat of a 356-acre plantation, forming a part of the ancestral Hoyl(e) family lands, which Andrew Hoyle (1771-1857) conveyed to his eldest surviving son, Eli Hoyle (1801-1844) on 2 June 1832.¹ The house was the home of Eli Hoyle until his death, and it remained the property and sometime residence of his descendants until 1872 when his eldest daughter and her husband sold it to Eli H. Withers. Mr. Withers' daughter, Sallie Withers Hoffman, resided here until 1929. In that year she sold the house and its residual seventy-six acres to Walter Larrington Stroup whose daughter lived here until 1997 when she sold the house to the present owner, a great-great-great-grandson of Andrew Hoyle's eldest brother Peter Hoyle (1765-____).

Eli Hoyle and his father, known as "Rich" Andrew Hoyle, were business partners in the A. & E. Hoyl Company, and residents of Hoyl(e)sville where Gaston County's first post office was established in 1817. Andrew Hoyle occupied the Hoyle House (NR, 1993) on the ancestral lands acquired by his own grandfather in the 1750s; Eli Hoyle resided in this imposing house which stands on a slightly higher elevation to the immediate northwest of his boyhood home. The pair of houses reflects both the high station and accomplishment of these members of the large family of German ancestry whose history is documented in *The Genealogy of Peiter Heyl and His Descendants 1100-1936* (1938).

The Eli Hoyle House, standing on a stone foundation and flanked by Flemish-bond brick chimneys, is a well-detailed, two-story-with-attic five-bay house distinguished by a complete program of Federal woodwork including molded rakeboards and cornices, doors and window surrounds, a flush-sheathed elevation, and a classical entrance. A like attention to detail and craftsmanship is seen on the interior where one of the most highly developed staircases of its period to survive in the western Piedmont links rooms enriched with paneled wainscoting and other molded woodwork, including their four original mantels. Although the builder of the house has not been established, its architectural finish links it with other houses in the Catawba River Valley, including Holly Bend in adjoining Mecklenburg County, which are associated with house-carpenter Elias Bost (1772-1857) of Lincoln/late Catawba County and his son Jonas Bost (1794-1870) who followed his father's profession.

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Historical Background

Eli Hoyle (1801-1844), the man who received the property on which this house stands from his father in 1832 and who occupied it with his family until his death in 1844, was the second son of Andrew Hoyle, one of Gaston County's wealthiest citizens, and a member of a large family of German ancestry allied to virtually every prominent family in what was then Lincoln County. Eli Hoyle was the great-grandson of pioneer Peiter Heyl (1710-1761), the progenitor of the (Heyl/Hoyl) Hoyle family, who settled here on the waters of the South Fork (of the Catawba) River in the early to mid 1750s when the area was still a part of Anson County. His memory has long been revered in the western Piedmont and it is immortalized in the title of the family genealogy, *The Genealogy of Peiter Heyl and His Descendants 1100-1936*, compiled by Elizabeth Hoyle Rucker (1872-1950) and published in 1938. That book remains, even with its occasional errors, the principal work on the family to the present.²

Eli Hoyle is descended from the pioneer settler through his youngest son, Lieutenant John Hoyle (1740-1822), who was married to Margaret Costner (1745-18__) in 1763. John Hoyle rose to a position of prominence in his community and served as an officer in the Revolutionary War Battle of Kings Mountain. He and his wife were the parents of at least thirteen known children. Andrew Hoyle (1771-1857), the second-born son, achieved a wide renown as a planter, businessman, and industrialist in Lincoln County, and he came to be known as "Rich" Andrew Hoyle. He was also the longtime postmaster of the Hoyl(e)sville Post Office situated on his estate. Andrew Hoyle was a member of the North Carolina Senate in 1807-1809.

Andrew Hoyle was born on 13 January 1771 and in 1794 he was married to Catherine Wilfong (1774-1850), the daughter of Major George Wilfong (1740-1818) and his wife Mary (Poff) Mull (1744-1816). That same year, 1794, Andrew Hoyle acquired the ancestral lands on which stands the Hoyle House (NR, 1993) where he made his home until his death in 1857.

Born on 9 July 1801, Eli Hoyle was the second son of the ten children known to have been born to the couple between 1795 and 1817. His elder brother Absalom Hoyle (1800) died as an infant; his younger brother Caleb Wilfong Hoyle (1810-1879) was a deaf mute and never married; Eli's youngest brother, Laban John Hoyle (1812-1829), died of typhus fever while a student at the University of Virginia. As one of four sons, Eli Hoyle showed great acumen; however, the promise placed in him as the carrier of the family's fortunes was relatively short-lived. From this distance it is unclear just when he entered into a business partnership with his father, but their joint ventures probably date from the 1820s; the partnership traded as A. & E. Hoyl(e) and operated store(s) and loaned money. Surely with the tragic death of Laban John

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Hoyle on 24 February 1829, the relationship of Andrew and Eli Hoyle became even closer, and it would remain so until Eli Hoyle's premature death in 1844.

Eli Hoyle was twenty-eight years of age, when on 14 January 1830, he was married to his cousin, Miss Cynthia Sarah Ramsour (ca. 1813-1837), the daughter of David Ramsour (1775-1842), a wealthy Lincolnton merchant, and Sarah Salome Wilfong (1788-1837)—the daughter of Mrs. Andrew Hoyle's eldest brother. The marriage, announced in the *Raleigh Register* in its semi-weekly and weekly editions of 1 and 4 February 1830, respectively, further united members of two of Lincoln County's most affluent families. Miss Ramsour was the granddaughter of Jacob Ramsour (17__-1826), the owner of the grist mill where the Revolutionary War Battle of Ramsour's Mill was fought in 1780. In the announcement the groom was identified as "Eli Hoyl, Esq. Merchant, of Hoylesville." Five known children were born to Eli and Cynthia Hoyle: Sarah Catherine Hoyle (1831-1907); Mary Ann Hoyle (1833-1908); Margaret Elizabeth Hoyle (183_-__); Andrew Laban Hoyle (1835-1914), who in later life was known as Laban Andrew Hoyle; and David Ramsour Hoyle, of unknown birth date, who died as an infant.

On 2 June 1832, Andrew Hoyle conveyed a tract of 356 acres on the south side of the South Fork River, probably a part of the ancestral Hoyle family lands, to his son Eli (Lincoln County Deeds, Book 36, 149-150). This tract lay to the immediate northwest of Andrew Hoyle's dwelling and his son's childhood home; the two places shared a common boundary. Probably for interfamily financial reasons, Eli Hoyle paid his father a token \$100 for the property. Whether this house was standing on the property in 1832, having been built by Andrew Hoyle for his son Eli, whether Eli Hoyle anticipating the conveyance, had built the house for his family prior to 1832, or whether the house was built by Eli Hoyle upon receiving title to the tract is not known at present. Since the 1830 Federal Census for Lincoln County does not show Eli Hoyle as the head of a household, but surely living in his father's house, the house was probably built during the period after the 1830 census was recorded and up to 1833.

Indications of the character and style of life enjoyed by Eli and Cynthia Hoyle in this handsome Federal-style house can be seen in its surviving finish and public records of the period. The surviving Lincoln County Tax List for 1837 indicates that Eli Hoyle owned 356 acres valued at \$2,000 and six slaves; his father owned nine tracts of land totaling 2,067 acres valued at \$8,725 and nineteen slaves. The year of 1837 came to a sad close for Eli Hoyle and his family. On 20 November 1837 the *Raleigh Register* carried a notice of Mrs. Hoyle's demise in its "Deaths" column: "In Lincoln county, after a painful and protracted illness, Mrs. Cynthia S. Hoyle, consort of Mr. Eli Hoyle, aged 24 years." Two days later, the *North Carolina Standard*, also published in Raleigh, carried the same notice. Eli Hoyle was appointed guardian of the couple's children; he, his father, and his late wife's brother, Jacob A. Ramsour, were appointed trustees of

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her estate. In March 1844, in his final act as guardian of the minor children, Eli Hoyle reported the value of Mrs. Hoyle's estate, held in trust for the four children, at \$10,627.56 (Lincoln County Estate Records, Cynthia S. Hoyle, State Archives). Andrew and Catherine Wilfong Hoyle took their four grandchildren into their house to raise and they were listed in Andrew Hoyle's household in the 1840 Census; Eli Hoyle was then living alone in this house. That same year the Lincoln County Tax List showed him as the owner of 476 acres and seven slaves; the additional 120 acres had been conveyed to Eli Hoyle in trust for his four children by his wife's maternal grandfather John Wilfong (Lincoln County Deeds, Book 37, 327-328).

The decade of the 1840s opened with promise for Eli Hoyle; however, he would shortly die at the age of forty-three. On 11 January 1841 when the North Carolina General Assembly passed the bill creating Cleveland County out of parts of Rutherford and Lincoln Counties, he was one of nine men named to a committee to establish its county seat (*Annals*, 30-31). By 1840 Eli Hoyle had become a principal investor in the High Shoals Manufacturing Company which evolved from an iron foundry established by John Fulenwider on the South Fork River where it made cannon balls for the American army during the War of 1812 (Lincoln County Deeds, Book 43, 39). The company was headed by Henry Fulenwider, who was married to Ann Ramsour, a sister of Eli Hoyle's late wife Cynthia. The relationship between Henry Fulenwider, Andrew Motz, Samuel P. Simpson, Eli Hoyle, and John Motz was formalized in a deed of 4 March 1841 whereby Eli Hoyle, in exchange for the payment of \$6,000 to Mr. Fulenwider became the owner of a one-tenth undivided interest in the company and its vast holding of 17,250 acres (Lincoln County Deeds, Book 38, 478-486). John Motz and Mr. Simpson each also paid \$6,000 to Mr. Fulenwider and acquired interests of one-tenth each while Andrew Motz acquired a one-fifth interest for \$12,000. Henry Fulenwider retained the controlling one-half interest in the company. Three months later, on 7 June 1841, the one-tenth undivided interest was exchanged for seventy-five shares of stock in the High Shoals Manufacturing Company (Lincoln County Deeds, Book 43, 219-220).

On 19 October 1841 the *Raleigh Register* reported Eli Hoyle's marriage on 6 October to Miss Elizabeth Burton (1813-1899), the daughter of Alfred M. Burton, Esq. (1785-1857); her mother was Elizabeth Fulenwider (1793-1872), the daughter of John Fulenwider and the sister of Henry Fulenwider, Mr. Hoyle's partner at the High Shoals Manufacturing Company. Like his first marriage, this second one further solidified relationships among the elite of Lincoln County; Miss Burton's maternal uncle, Jacob Fulenwider, was married to Eli Hoyle's eldest sister Mary Magdalene Hoyle (1795-1846). On 7 September 1843 a son was born to Eli and Elizabeth Hoyle; he was named Alfred Eli Hoyle (1843-1862) in tribute to his father and his maternal grandfather. Eli Hoyle's marriage and the birth of a second son brought a certain joy back to this house in the early 1840s, during which time the Lincoln County Tax Lists also indicate that the

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number of Hoyle's slaves had risen to twelve in 1842; this may have been through natural increase, purchase, and/or reflective of slaves that Miss Burton brought with her to her new home. Also during this period, between his marriage and the birth of a son, Eli Hoyle served as one of three executors of the large estate of his former father-in-law David Ramsour (1775-1842) of Lincolnton (Lincoln County Wills, Book 2, 124-131, and Lincoln County Deeds, Book 38, 624-630, 634-635; Book 39, 334, 341-342, 533-534; Book 40, 84-85).

Just as the *Raleigh Register* had carried notices of Eli Hoyle's marriages to Cynthia Ramsour and Elizabeth Burton, on 5 November 1844 it reported his death on 12 October 1844. The household was plunged into grief, and his body was buried in the family cemetery to the east of this house. In his will, written on 5 April 1842, he had named his father as his executor, and to Andrew Hoyle fell the unhappy task of settling the estate of a son in whom he had placed such great hope (Lincoln County Wills, Book 2, 227-230). Having been married but six months when he wrote his will, Eli Hoyle anticipated his widow's return to her family and he bequeathed to her "all the property she brought to me of every kind" and \$4,000 to be paid in four annual installments. He was particular about the disposition of his plantation.

The plantation on which I live it is my wish that my Father if he wishes to take it with the improvements (if my wife declines it as a residence) at what he may think a reasonable consideration, taking into consideration the situation in which he may be placed as he has as many improvements on his place as is of service, or would be needed by him; and if not needed for some of our family or near friends to live on the improvements would not be of much value to him. As to the value I leave it entirely to him as I am well satisfied he will never speculate to take advantage of Eli's orphan children.

If not desired by him I wish it either sold or rented out to some person who will not abuse the buildings until my son Andrew Laban attains the age of twenty one years.

Eli Hoyle also proposed that the stock in the High Shoals Manufacturing Company be sold to "the highest bidder"; however, "As respects the commercial connexion between my Father & myself it will be dissolved only at his pleasure, I should prefer its continuance."

Concern for his children was paramount in Eli Hoyle's considerations.

If it is thought it can be taken care of I would like to have each of my children to a bed & Furniture of their parents, and other articles my Executor thinks proper to retain for my children as mementoes of those who were not allowed the pleasure of rearing them.

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The four children were to share equally in the estate except that Andrew Laban, as the only son, was to have \$1,000 above the amounts to his three sisters. He also made equal provision for the possible birth of a daughter or son through his marriage to Miss Burton. A final paragraph concerning the children makes explicit his affection for them and those who gave attention to their upbringing:

To those who have had the trouble & care of my children since they have been deprived of their mother, & my sisters who have all been so desirous of having a share in the pleasure & trouble of raising them, and particularly to my Father & Mother they have my lasting gratitude.

Two final quotations from the will indicate Eli Hoyle's understanding of his station within family and community. After bequeathing his "entire clothing and sulkey to my only brother Caleb W. Hoyle to each of my sisters & sisters in law of both families with my wife I will a good black silk dress to be purchased in some city expressly for that purpose." Having written and signed his will he concluded, "At the time this was completed there was no person about that I wished as witness, therefore I have none. I deem it unnecessary as my signature is well known."

The Estate Record files for Eli Hoyle in Lincoln and Gaston Counties show the settlement of Eli Hoyle's estate occurring over a five-year period from his death in October 1844 into April 1849. The sale of this house and its 356 acres came two years later on 8 August 1851. The documents in these files show not only the relatively simple distribution of the estate's assets but also the handsome state in which this house was furnished and the refined style of life enjoyed here by Eli Hoyle and his family. Following her husband's instruction, Elizabeth W. Burton Hoyle received the property which she brought with her at their marriage: nine slaves "Said to belong to Mrs. Alfred M. Burton"; livestock; two beds and furniture; a chest of drawers and mirror; a dining table; a work table; two small chairs; a set of white granite tea ware; an ewer and wash bowl; a set of knives and forks; one dozen silver tablespoons; four jars and preserves; a half dozen table cloths; one dozen towels; a copper wash bowl; a griddle iron; a trunk and boxes; a gold watch and chain; six wine glasses; a lady's settle; and seventeen volumes of miscellaneous works. This property was conservatively estimated at \$3,000; one partial explanation for that figure is that only one of the slaves was identified as an adult while three were girls, three were boys, and two were simply identified as "Children." Andrew Hoyle gave Mrs. Hoyle his note for \$4,000.

As instructed, each of the four children of the first marriage received certain items as "mementoes of those who were not allowed the pleasure of rearing them." Sarah Catherine Hoyle, the eldest daughter and then a girl of about thirteen, received the prescribed bed and furniture, the "Piano Fortee" valued at \$200, "One gold Neck Chain and Basket" valued at \$15,

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silver teaspoons, curtains, and other bed furnishings, etc., altogether amounting to \$293.25. Mary Ann Hoyle likewise received "One Bed and Furniture" valued at \$35, a bureau and looking glass, six silver tablespoons, silver teaspoons, and other items amounting to \$88.25. Margaret Elizabeth Hoyle received a bed and its furniture, a work table and candle stand, a set of silver teaspoons, a set of silver tablespoons which had belonged to her mother, a pair of gold earrings, and other items valued at \$84.75. Andrew Laban Hoyle, then a child of seven or eight years, was allotted a mahogany book case valued at \$45. The remaining property of the estate, including household furnishings, livestock, farm implements, saddles, the hire of slaves, the sale of a female slave "Judath" at \$220, etc., occurred over three days, 26-28 December 1844, and amounted to \$1,722.88. Other like property, including a corner cupboard, was sold on 22 January 1845 for a total of \$242.42. On 3 March 1845 two lots in Lincolnton were sold there for \$266, the "Interest in the High Shoals property" was sold for \$2,700, and a "Negro woman & 4 children" were sold for \$1,001. The total receipts from all these sales totaled \$5,932.30. A second return for the estate was filed in September 1846 in Lincoln County and showed receipts of \$2,628.625 including the proceeds from a sale held on 25 December 1845 that was comprised entirely of the plantation's wheat and corn crops except for "1 corner cupboard" sold to John Beaty for \$12.

In 1849 two returns for the estate were submitted to the courts in Gaston County. On 20 February 1849 Andrew Hoyle submitted a return with \$6,359.58 in the estate. The final returns filed in April 1849 showed \$6,267.97 plus notes of \$15,060.00 which appear to be Eli Hoyle's share of the partnership holding with his father. The record of the distribution of the estate assets has apparently been lost; none of Eli Hoyle's children had reached the age of twenty-one by 1849.³

Andrew Hoyle's final documented action as executor of his son's estate occurred on 8 August 1851, when he conveyed the house and its 356-acre plantation for \$2,500 to Martin L. Phifer who Elizabeth Hoyle Rucker cites as the second husband of Sarah Catherine Hoyle, Eli's eldest daughter. Notwithstanding Mrs. Rucker's statement that "very much of the data which I am using in this book (*The Genealogy of Peiter Heyl*)" came to her from Sarah C. Hoyle, she was mistaken: Martin L. Phifer (ca. 1817-1853) was Sarah C. Hoyle's first husband; however, an identity for him beyond his name has not been established. Presumably, Martin and Sarah Catherine Phifer occupied this house when acquiring it. Mr. Phifer died on 9 March 1853 and was buried in the Hoyle family cemetery. His widow later married William J. Keenan of Union, South Carolina. Mr. Keenan, too, was dead by 5 October 1870 when, as historian William Sherrill writes, Mrs. Sarah Keenan was married to Major Henry W. Burton (1821-1898), the son of Judge Robert Henderson Burton (1781-1842), the developer of the Lithia Springs Inn near Lincolnton (*Annals*, 126, 207).

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Meanwhile, according to the Federal Census of 1860 this house was then occupied by Eli Hoyle's second daughter Mary Ann Hoyle (1833-1908) and her husband Elisha S. Barrett (ca. 1827-1877) together with their four children. Mr. Barrett, a native of New York, gave his occupation as "gentleman" with real property worth \$15,000 and personal property of \$3,155; the couple had been married in 1851 and lived in Lincolnton for some time. The question of how long the Barretts occupied this house cannot now be answered; about 1866 they removed to Sedalia, Pettis County, Missouri, where they died.

In 1872, after four decades of ownership by Eli Hoyle and his heirs, his handsome Federal house and its lands were sold out of the Eli Hoyle family; however, the new owners, like those to follow in the twentieth century, were also descendants of pioneer Peiter Heyl, and thus distant cousins. On 13 February 1872, James H. Wilson and wife Mary L., William F. Phifer and wife Martha M., John F. Phifer and wife Elizabeth C., Sarah _ White and Ann E. Erwin, heirs of Martin L. Phifer (and apparently his children by an earlier marriage), conveyed the property to Sarah Catherine Hoyle (Phifer) Burton and her husband Major Henry W. Burton. The conveyance was made subject to Mrs. Burton's dower rights as the widow of Martin L. Phifer. Cited as 365 acres by estimation, the tract was described as "the Martin L. Phifer tract of Land being the tract upon which he lived at the time of his death" (Gaston County Deeds, Book 5, 195-200). Mr. and Mrs. Burton acquired the Phifers' interest in the property for \$1,750, and one month later, on 14 March 1872, they sold the property for \$3,940 to Eli H. Withers. In this second deed some slight variations in the description of meets and bounds, explain the tract's increase to "Three Hundred & ninety four acres more or less" (Gaston County Deeds, Book 5, 201-202).

Eli H. Withers (18__-19__), the son of Samuel Withers (1791-1855) and Sarah "Sallie" Rhyne (1793-1867), was a man of prominence in Gaston County. He and his wife Cansada McIlwaine probably occupied the house until their deaths. Mr. Withers apparently died intestate and in 1911 this now 382-acre property was divided among his three children by commissioners appointed by the Superior Court of Gaston County. The house tract of 101 acres (#1) comprising the east side of the larger property, was awarded to Mrs. Sallie Withers Hoffman, the wife of Thomas G. Hoffman. The center, largest, tract (#2), comprising 147 acres, was awarded to Bessie Withers. The 134 acres of the western tract (#3) were allotted to John S. Withers (Gaston County Deeds, Book 83, 351-353).

Thomas G. and Sallie Hoffman, who may have occupied the house prior to receiving title to it in 1911, would remain owners and occupants of the Hoyle House until 1929. However, it was early in this eighteen-year period that the acreage comprising the house tract was further reduced. On 15 April 1916, the Hoffmans sold a twenty-five acre parcel in the northeast corner

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of the larger tract and adjoining the South Fork River, to Walter Larrington Stroup (Gaston County Deeds, Book 114, 589). It is unclear at present whether Stroup bought the land as the site of a house for his family or whether the parcel included productive bottom lands that he might have farmed. Ten years later, on 18 March 1926, Thomas G. and Sallie Hoffman mortgaged the house and its remaining seventy-six acres as security for a loan of \$1,800 from the Raleigh Banking and Trust Company (Gaston County Deeds of Trust, Book 169, 370). The mortgage required that the Hoffmans maintain an insurance policy for \$1,100 on the buildings which surely meant the former Hoyle house. Whether the Hoffmans were in ill health is uncertain; however, during the next three years Thomas G. Hoffman died, leaving Sallie Withers Hoffman a widow. On 22 November 1929, she conveyed the house and its remaining seventy-six acres to Walter Larrington Stroup for \$100 and his assumption of the mortgage (Gaston County Deeds, Book 254, 349). The house built for Eli Hoyle would be home to Mr. Stroup and his descendants from 1929 until 1997.

The Stroup(e) family was one of many in Gaston County whose ancestors were among the German families who emigrated to America in the eighteenth century and settled in what is now the western Piedmont of North Carolina. However, unlike the Hoyle(e) family which prospered, members of the Stroupe family remained small farmers and people of relatively modest circumstances; that said, there is no little irony to the fact that members of the Stroup(e) family became owners in this century of both this house and the eighteenth-century ancestral seat of the Hoyle family, standing to the southeast of Eli Hoyle's house. Walter Larrington Stroupe (1890-1961) was born on 19 January 1890 to Miles E. Stroupe (born 1864) and his wife Frances Costner, a member of the same family which had earlier included Margaret Costner (born 1745), Eli Hoyle's paternal grandmother. Mr. Stroupe was married to Bessie Leona Robinson (1893-1989) on 12 November 1912; twelve children were born to the couple between 1914 and 1940.

During the three decades that Mr. Stroupe occupied the Hoyle house he was engaged in general farming on the property and utilized the now-lost large nineteenth century log barn which stood to the north of the house together with a corn crib. He added the frame shop and meat house in the early 1930s, and after World War II he built the cement block pump house. In 1929/1930, with seven children ranging in age from a few months to fifteen years of age, he was compelled to make some improvements to the antebellum Hoyle house to accommodate his large family. The principal efforts occurred at the rear of the house where its open breezeway, linking the main house with its kitchen/dining room block, was enclosed and a shed-roof service porch was added on the east elevation of the one-story ell. A bathroom, opening into a part of the former breezeway, was added in a shed room behind the house's northwest corner bedroom. Inside the house, Mr. Stroupe added a pair of closets in the front south end of the second-story hall and a large wardrobe in the large east bedroom. These simple closets and wardrobe were made of

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tongue-and-groove boards. While the original (and later) wall and woodwork finishes in the house were painted over during the Stroupe ownership, the enclosure of portions of the second-story hall's paneled wainscot inside the closets allowed lengths of the original stained and grained finish to survive intact to the present.

Walter Larrington Stroupe resided here until his death on 26 August 1961; on 14 September 1961 his children conveyed the house to their mother, and it remained the home of his widow Bessie until her death on 17 December 1989, two days short of her ninety-fifth birthday (Gaston County Deeds, Book 798, 119-120). After Mr. Stroupe's death, she had added some modern finishes and sheet paneling over the plaster in the house, and replaced the front porch posts with insubstantial metal supports typical of the 1960s. During Mrs. Stroupe's widowhood, her daughter Helen Leona Stroupe Perkins (1923-1997) and her husband, David Eck Perkins (1929-1996), made their home here. At her mother's death, Mrs. Perkins inherited the house. With her husband's death on 22 December 1996, seven years after that of her mother, Mrs. Perkins considered the future of the Hoyle house and her own affairs. On 2 April 1997 she sold the house and its residual lot of 2.76 acres to Mitchell Dan Hoyle, the son of Rufus Sylvester Hoyle, a great-great-great-great-great-grandson of pioneer Peiter Heyl, who will undertake its restoration. She remained in the house into the summer of 1997 when she relocated to an apartment at 103 Ballard Drive, located within view of her former residence and built on property which once comprised a portion of the Hoyle house lands. Helen Leona Stroupe Perkins, the last occupant of the Hoyle house, died on 26 October 1997, and her body was interred beside her husband's in Hillcrest Cemetery, Mt. Holly, North Carolina.

During this period of Stroupe family ownership the property which serves as the setting and arable farm lands for the house were steadily decreased by sale after sale; by 2 April 1997, when Helen Leona Stroupe Perkins sold the house to the present owner, Mitchell Hoyle, it had long stood on a very small lot of 2.76 acres (Gaston County Deeds, Book 2646, 349-350). These reductions of the house lands began in 1936, perhaps to raise money, and they continued in 1941 when Mr. and Mrs. Stroupe conveyed a lot of six-and-one-half acres, situated immediately west of the former Hoyle house, to their eldest daughter, Annie Frances Stroupe Ledwell (born 1917) and her husband, C. H. Ledwell (Gaston County Deeds, Book 420, 14). The Ledwells built a small one-story frame house on the lot which survives as the west border of the nominated acreage.

Architectural Significance

The Eli Hoyle House, erected ca. 1830-1833 and occupied by Mr. Hoyle until his death in 1844, is a well-finished and remarkably intact late-Federal frame house which enjoys architectural significance on both local and statewide levels. Whether the house was built by Andrew Hoyle

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and conveyed by him with its South Fork River Plantation of 356 acres in 1832 to his son Eli Hoyle, or whether it was built by Eli Hoyle upon receipt of these lands on 2 June 1832, cannot now be answered. There is no doubt, however, of the fact that the house stands today as the finest surviving Federal-style house in Gaston County and the finest frame house of its period to survive in the larger area that comprised Lincoln County in 1830 and was divided into Lincoln, Catawba, and Gaston Counties in 1842 and 1846, respectively.

The house was built ca. 1830-1833, a full eighty years after the first substantial settlement occurred here, along the waters of the South Fork (of the Catawba) River in the 1750s. From the initial settlement period until the later eighteenth century, most residents of the larger Lincoln County area lived in log houses that featured either exposed log construction or were covered with weatherboards. In the 1780s and the 1790s, more affluent citizens of the area began to build houses of heavy timber frame construction or brick. Prominent among this group of houses are the frame William Rankin House, the brick Thomas Rhyne House of 1799, and the now-lost brick house, Oak Grove, of Colonel James Johnston, all in Gaston County. Contemporary with these houses is the Hoyle House (NR, 1993), standing within view and to the southeast of this house, whose construction history remains unresolved and uncertain as do the dates of a series of late-Georgian and Federal style refinements. The Hoyle House was the residence of Andrew Hoyle (1771-1857) and the probable childhood home of Eli Hoyle. The sequential construction of the Hoyle House is paralleled, to a degree, by Vesuvius Furnace (NR, 1974) in present-day Lincoln County, that shares its name with the iron forge established by its builder, General Joseph Graham (1759-1836). The two-story brick house (NR, 1972) built by the Reverend Andrew Loretz (1762-1812) in 1793 to the northwest of Lincolnton is also within this group of accomplished late-eighteenth century houses.

During the period after the War of 1812, and into the 1830s, another important group of houses was erected in the larger Lincoln County area. The Eli Hoyle House is a member of this impressive class of brick and frame dwellings erected from the profits of agriculture, commerce, and the iron industry. Ingleside, erected for Daniel Forney, said to have been built about 1817, is without peer in its period and place. A large brick five-bay house with elaborate plaster ornamentation and carved finish, it was soon joined by Magnolia Grove (NR, 1972), built nearby about 1824 for David Smith (1787-1874); Shadow Lawn (NR, 1972), erected about 1826 on West Main Street in Lincolnton for Paul Kistler (1782-1848); and Woodside, standing to the west of Lincolnton, and built for Lawson Henderson (1774-1843) in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Within present-day Gaston County, formed out of Lincoln in 1846--two years after Eli Hoyle's death--the Eli Hoyle House stands as a fully-realized, well-finished, and virtually intact Federal

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Eli Hoyle House, Gaston County, North Carolina

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house without equal. Its nearest peers are the two-story brick house (NR, 1976) believed to date from the late 1820s, that was built for William Joseph Wilson (1777-1854) who served as register of deeds for Lincoln County, and the Andrew Carpenter House (NR, 1983). While the ancestral Hoyle House, Eli Hoyle's childhood home, reflects a series of late Georgian and Federal style improvements to a probably older eighteenth-century log house, the Eli Hoyle House is an imposing and distinguished building of one date with a complete exterior and interior finish of consistent and well-developed character. The two houses, however, do have one feature in common: both are sheathed with closely overlapping weatherboards. This rare feature has been seen on no other surviving houses in North Carolina. The bottom of each board, which lies behind the bead and overlaps the weatherboard below, has been rabbeted so that the siding lies much flatter than is usual with overlapping siding.⁴

While the overall two-story-with-attic form and much of its woodwork fit the conventions of the Federal style in North Carolina, aspects of the Eli Hoyle House's detailing, with their slight idiosyncrasies, suggest a relationship to a small but significant group of buildings in the larger Catawba River Valley. The punch-work and reeded ornamentation on the rakeboards and cornices of the house and its full-façade shed porch display a high level of traditional Federal craftsmanship as do the molded window surrounds and the flush-sheathed elevation, behind the porch, with its molded baseboard and chair rail. However, the use of fluted engaged columns to enframe the door and its sidelights and the fluted bracket-like consoles flanking the transom reflect a free, nonacademic, and yet skilled combination of Federal elements. Although they do not specifically match the enframing at the front door of Holly Bend (NR, 1972), there is a similar spirit evident at the two plantation seats. Holly Bend, standing about twenty miles to the northeast, on the east side of the Catawba River which forms the boundary between Gaston and Mecklenburg County, was built in the early 1820s by Elias Bost for the wealthy planter Robert Davidson (1769-1853).⁵ Mr. Bost (1772-1857) was a native of that upper part of Lincoln County that became Catawba County in 1842; his house (NR, 1990) still stands as does St. Paul's Church (NR, 1971) whose interior refinements are believed to be his work. A more specific point of similarity between this house and Holly Bend is the use of herringbone-pattern boards for facing on the inside back doors of both houses which were mounted on long strap hinges; alas, the back door of this house, photographed in situ in 1981, has been replaced. Although a definite attribution of this house to Elias Bost cannot be proved at this time, the similarities are convincing, and an association with either Mr. Bost or his son Jonas Bost (1794-1870), also a carpenter, is a distinct probability.

The interior finish of the Eli Hoyle House, like that of the exterior, follows the conventions of a well-finished Federal style house, and, here again, an inventiveness enlivens its woodwork. The front door opens into a center, stair hall with a large room on the east and two rooms of unequal

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size on the west. In addition to the paneled wainscot, which retains portions of its original stained and grained finish on the second story, decorative interest was focused on the mantels and on the fully-realized staircase which rises from the first story to the attic level. The classically composed mantel in the east parlor is the most elaborate in the house and repeats the decorative devices seen on the house's rakeboards, cornices, and entrance. The design and ornamentation of this mantel is remarkably similar to the main parlor mantel of Magnolia Grove which also features paired colonettes and oval sunbursts in the same positions. The more unusual element here is the four-leaf clover which centers the large sunburst in the center tablet; it is enriched with pine cones above and below the clover leaf and ray-like devices to each side. These ray-like forms also center the sunbursts on the side blocks supported by the mantel's paired fluted colonettes. The mantel in the southwest first-story room features the more conventional oval sunbursts with center bosses. These mantels bear a strong visual similarity to the mantels at both Magnolia Grove, as noted, and at Bellevue, Burke County; the finish of Bellevue, also a brick plantation house, is attributed to Jonas Bost (*North Carolina Architecture*, 135, 137).

The staircase, with its turned newels, railing and pendants, paneled soffits under its flights, bracketed tread ends, and decorated landing faces is unusually handsome, and it represents an ambitiousness—and survival—that is rare in the western Piedmont of North Carolina. The two-part rise from the first story to the second is marked by a landing faced with a geometric cutwork panel; the tread ends feature brackets copied from Owen Biddle's *Young Carpenter's Assistant* of 1805, but the tulip is omitted. The brackets on the parallel two flights between the second story and attic are enlivened with a comma-shaped recess which is virtually identical to the brackets on the staircase at Magnolia Grove; the panel across the south face on the landing here is centered by a fylfot flanked by hearts.

The architectural significance of the Eli Hoyle House on a statewide level derives in part from its importance as one of the finest frame Federal-style houses to survive in western North Carolina; it, Holly Bend, Rosedale, and some few others, including the Maxwell Chambers House, (NR, 1972) in Rowan County, stand as a group with their contemporaries in the central and eastern parts of North Carolina as reflections of the growing wealth and sophistication of house-builders in the opening decades of the nineteenth century. While these western North Carolina Federal-style houses are generally not as elaborately finished as their eastern counterparts, they echo parallel aspirations and hold the same position in the cultural history of the state as creations of an increasingly ambitious citizenry anxious to make—and leave—their mark in the landscape. Today Eli Hoyle's house remains a landmark while virtually all other expressions of his wealth, accomplishment, and status have been lost. The Eli Hoyle House is also important on a statewide level as one of a small number of important houses, including Stonewall (NR, 1970) in

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Eli Hoyle House, Gaston County, North Carolina

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Nash County, that were erected in the late 1820s and the early 1830s in that transitional period between the early-nineteenth century when the patternbooks of William Pain, Owen Biddle, and Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion* of 1806 influenced the design and finish of dwellings in the state and the middle years of the century when Asher Benjamin's unrivaled series of Greek Revival architectural patternbooks—*The Practical House Carpenter* of 1830, *The Practice of Architecture* of 1833, and *The Builder's Guide* of 1839—together with those of Minard Lafever were a dominant influence on North Carolina building.

Endnotes

1. The German spelling of the family surname "Heyl" was generally Anglicized to "Hoyl" in the later eighteenth century in North Carolina. In the opening decades of the nineteenth century the spelling "Hoyl" remained in use by many members of the family while others, including Eli Hoyle, added an "e" to the end of the family name. In some instances, individuals such as Andrew Hoyle appear as both "Andrew Hoyl" and "Andrew Hoyle" in private and public records. Within this nomination "Hoyle" is used except where other spellings appear in quoted records or public documents. Mitchell Dan Hoyl, the current owner of the house, has reverted to the earlier spelling of the family surname and has dropped the "e" from his name.
2. As the principal published genealogy of the Hoyle family, Elizabeth Hoyle Rucker's *The Genealogy of Peiter Heyl and His Descendants 1100-1936* was invaluable in the preparation of this nomination and in understanding the lines of descent for Andrew Hoyle, his son Eli Hoyle, and members of their family associated with this house. Nevertheless, I must also call attention to the fact that the book is plagued by errors that limit its value as a final authority. Mrs. Rucker cited incorrect birth and/or death dates for Eli Hoyle's first-born daughter, Sarah Catherine Hoyle and her siblings, and she reversed the order of Sarah Catherine's first two marriages to Martin L. Phifer and William J. Keenan, respectively. Sarah Catherine's birth on 3 January 1831, recorded on her gravestone at St. Luke's Church, throws Mrs. Rucker's attribution of 15 July 1831 as the date of Margaret Elizabeth Hoyle's birth into dispute. Mrs. Rucker gives 1837 as the year of Andrew Laban Hoyle's birth; however, both his death certificate and his gravestone at the Old White Church Cemetery cite 25 September 1835 as his birth date. Within this nomination I have corrected those mistakes; however, I have repeated dates for other persons and events from Mrs. Rucker's book herein for context and to aide the reader's understanding of events. It is possible that some of those dates, where I had no other means of confirmation, are also incorrect. Any historian subsequently using this nomination for research will understand the situation which appertains here.

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3. Elizabeth W. Burton Hoyle, Eli Hoyle's widow, returned to her parents' plantation at Beatty's Ford on the Catawba River with her son and lived there until her death fifty-four years later on 22 July 1899. Alfred Eli Hoyle, the son she bore Eli Hoyle was killed in the Battle of Seven Pines on 31 May 1862. He was buried in the Burton family plot at Unity Presbyterian Church, Lincoln County, where his grave is marked by a very handsome monument designed and signed by Boyne and Sp_____ of Columbia, South Carolina. Thirty-seven years later the body of his mother was interred beside his. Eli Hoyle's first-born daughter Sarah Catherine, survived her third husband, Major Henry W. Burton, and died at Lincolnton on 4 March 1907 without issue. She was buried beside Major Burton in the cemetery at St. Luke's Episcopal Church (NR, 1992). She bequeathed "our Father's portrait and family Bibles" to her sister Mary Ann Barrett along with other furnishings. Her silverware, bearing monograms from her first two marriages, was left to three nieces, and one of those nieces, Mrs. Mary Grier Witherspoon, was left her diamond ring and piano, which was probably the "Piano Fortee" she received in the division of her father's estate in 1844. Mrs. Burton left the residue of her estate "in trust for the purpose of providing a necessary and proper support for my brother Laban A. Hoyle" (Lincoln County Wills, Book 5, 360-363; Lincoln County Estates Records, Sarah Catherine Burton, North Carolina State Archives). Mary Ann Hoyle (1833-1908), probably Eli Hoyle's second daughter, was married in 1851 to Elisha S. Barrett (ca. 1827-1877). The couple eventually settled in Sedalia, Pettis County, Missouri, where his brother, J. R. Barrett had located. She died there in 1908 and was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery, Sedalia, beside her husband; owing to the financial misfortune which plagued their lives, their graves remain unmarked to the present. Margaret Elizabeth Hoyle (183_-1899), believed to be the third daughter of Eli and Cynthia Hoyle, was married first to Lucius Lusk in 1852 and later to Thomas Grier (1827-1895) in 1871. Andrew Laban Hoyle (1835-1914), later known as Laban A. Hoyle, was married in 1862 to Mary Helen Henderson (18__-1866), the daughter of Charles Cotesworth Henderson (1803-1869). Daughters Mary Laban Hoyle (1862-1864) and Frances Glenn Hoyle, were born to the couple and so, too, was a son, John B. Hoyle (1864-1879). Mary Laban and John B. Hoyle were buried in the Old White Church Cemetery (NR, 1994) in Lincolnton. In the Federal Census of both 1870 and 1880 for Pettis County, Missouri, Laban Hoyle was listed in the household headed, successively, by Elisha S. Barrett and his sister Mary A. Barrett. Laban Hoyle fell into misfortune or ill health and was dependent on the charity of his late sister, Sarah Catherine Burton, for his living expenses during the final years of his life. He died on 25 March 1914 and was buried beside his son with whom he shares a joint grave marker. He was the last surviving male descendant of "Rich" Andrew Hoyle and Eli Hoyle to bear Hoyle as a surname. Andrew Hoyle died on 19 February 1857 and was buried in the Hoyle family cemetery beside his first wife. The Hoyle family cemetery was thoughtlessly destroyed in the late

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1960s (after September 1968) and its site is now occupied by a nondescript apartment building.

4. This feature was noted by John Larson, a restoration architect and director of restoration for Old Salem, Incorporated, Winston-Salem; Mr. Larson is a consultant to the Hoyle family association which owns the ancestral Hoyle House (Peiter Heyl Homeplace).
5. The construction of Holly Bend and its association with Elias Bost and other houses in the Catawba River Valley is discussed by this author in an unpublished essay of 1993 which remains in the author's possession.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is the 2.76-acre tract located at 1111 Dallas-Stanley Highway, Dallas, North Carolina; the Gaston County tax parcel number is 13-077-008-11-000.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary encompasses the residual tract of land historically associated with the house which serves as its site and setting; it was acquired by the present owner from the last living occupant of the house on 2 April 1907.

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Photograph Schedule

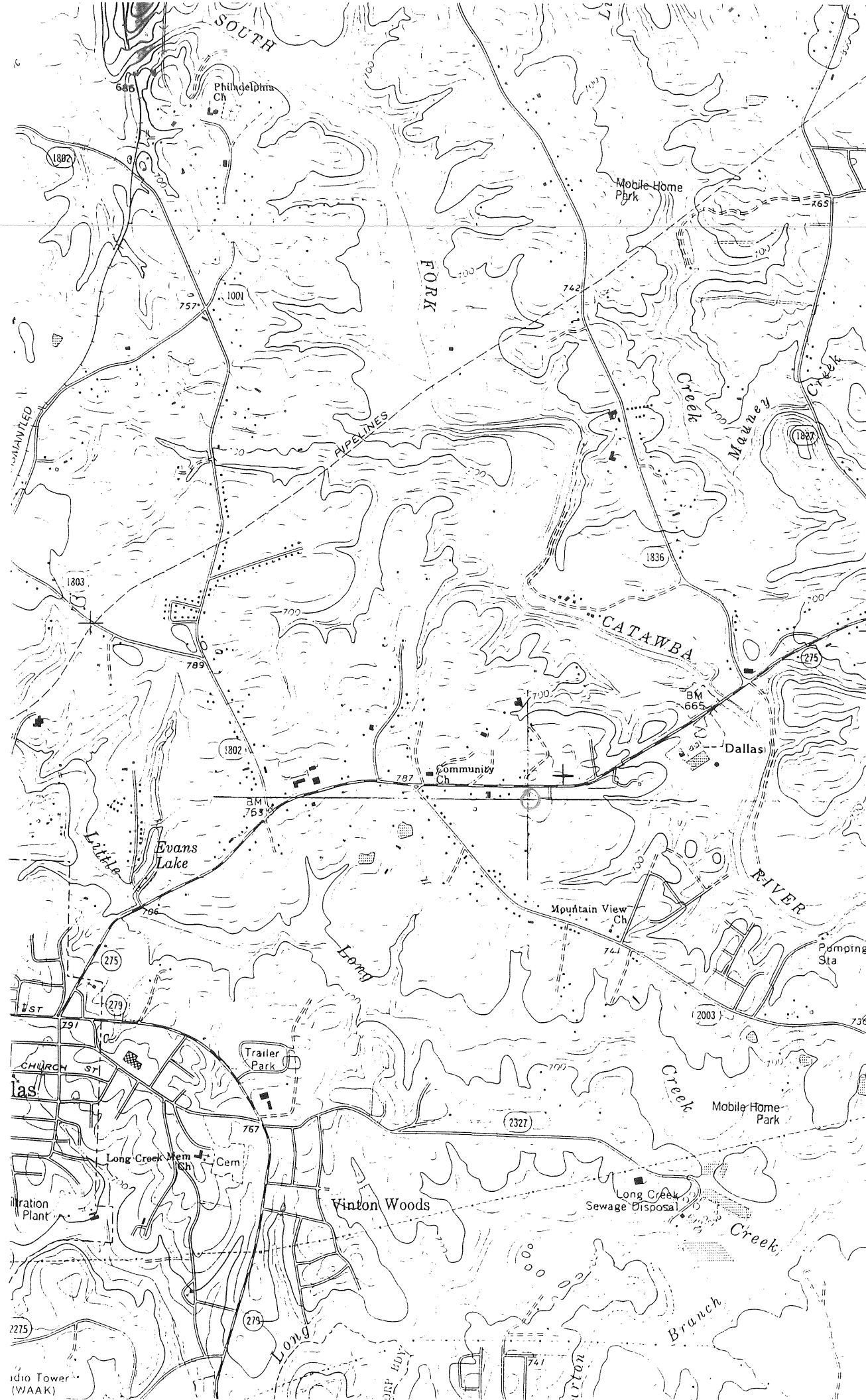
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Photograph Schedule (the following information applies to all photographs)

1. Name of property: Eli Hoyle House
2. Location of property: Gaston County, North Carolina
3. Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood
4. Date of photographs: 14 October 1997
5. Location of original negatives: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Photographs

1. Eli Hoyle House, overall view, looking north/northwest.
2. Eli Hoyle House, entrance frontispiece, looking north.
3. Eli Hoyle House, parlor, east wall with mantel, looking east.
4. Eli Hoyle House, southwest first-story chamber, looking west.
5. Eli Hoyle House, view in first-story hall, looking east/southeast into parlor.
6. Eli Hoyle House, staircase, landing between first and second stories, looking northwest.
7. Eli Hoyle House, second-story hall, looking northwest.
8. Eli Hoyle House, original stained/grained wainscot in second-story hall, looking southwest.



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