



The John W. Sheppard House



This report was written on 29 January 1992

1. Name and location of the property: The property known as the John W. Sheppard House is located at 601 North Poplar Street, Charlotte, in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

2. Name, address and telephone number of the present owner of the property: The owner of the property is:

Mr. Joseph Ashley Parlier
601 North Poplar Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28202

Telephone: (704) 358-1464

8. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets criteria for designation set forth in N.C.G.S. 160A-400.5:

a. Special significance in terms of its history, architectural and /or cultural importance: The Commission judges that the property known as the John W. Sheppard House does possess special significance in terms of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations: 1) the John W. Sheppard House was completed by 1899; 2) John W. Sheppard was one of the first university-trained professional pharmacists in the United States; 3) John W. Sheppard joined with J. P. Woodall to open the Woodall and Sheppard Drugstore in 1896 at the corner of Trade and Tryon Streets; 4) the John W. Sheppard House was owned and maintained by the family of Edith Sheppard Shaw until 1961; 5) the John W. Sheppard House has survived through the years with most interior appointments, such as wood paneling, stained moldings, and wooden pocket doors, intact and in very good condition; 6) the John W. Sheppard House has many exterior appointments, such as original front doors and full facade porch, intact and in very good condition; 7) the John W. Sheppard House is architecturally significant as one of the best examples of the Free Classic, Queen Anne style house in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County; and 8) the John W. Sheppard House is one of only a few houses that is original to site and orientation in Fourth Ward.

b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and /or association: The Commission contends that the architectural description by Ms. Nora M. Black included in this report demonstrates that the John W. Sheppard House meets this criterion.

9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal: The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner to apply for an automatic deferral of 50% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property which becomes a designated "historic landmark." The current appraised value of the improvements is \$141,060. The current appraised value of Tax Parcel 078-031-06 is \$99,840. The total appraised value of the property is \$240,900. The property is zoned UR1.

Date of Preparation of this Report: 29 January 1992

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Historical Overview

P.M. Stathakis

The John W. Sheppard House at 601 North Poplar Street was built in 1898 and 1899 by John W. Sheppard. Sheppard, a native of Cedarville, New Jersey, came to live in Charlotte in 1896. In that year, he and his partner, J.P. Woodall, bought the Reese and Robertson Drugstore on the Northwest corner of Independence Square. ¹ Sheppard received his degree in pharmacy from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. After completing an internship at the prestigious Philadelphia firm of Henry C. Blair, Sheppard moved to Memphis, Tennessee and worked for James A. Robinson with his friend J.P. Woodall. ² Two years later, Sheppard and Woodall decided to go into business for themselves. After touring several Southern towns for potential business opportunities, Sheppard discovered Charlotte. He was "so pleased with the town and the people" that he wrote his friend Woodall and urged him to come see Charlotte for himself. ³



The Sheppard and Woodall Drug Store

The Woodall and Sheppard Drugstore opened in 1896. Woodall and Sheppard quickly secured their niche among the other established drugstores in Charlotte at that time: Burwell and Dunn, McAden's, and Jordan's. The gala grand opening for the drugstore was described by the newspaper as a "record breaking" event, and as "one of the most successful affairs of the sort, if not the most notable in the history of the city." It was

standing room only on opening day at Woodall and Sheppard; Charlotteans were attracted by the advertised low prices and the limited supply of free gifts to be given to the first customers. Free ice cream was available for part of the day and special gifts were provided for ladies. ⁴ Sheppard later attributed part of his early success to the fact that Woodall and Sheppard was the first drugstore in Charlotte to make and sell ice cream all year long. Other drugstores only kept their fountains open in the summer. Woodall and Sheppard were also the first in town to offer bicycle delivery to their customers. The delivery man was James Davidson. "Whistling James" as Davidson was commonly known, delivered for Woodall and Sheppard for twenty-five years. When Davidson became too old to make bicycle deliveries, Sheppard arranged employment for him in a local bank. ⁵

In 1899, Sheppard returned to Cedarville, New Jersey to marry his childhood sweetheart, Anna Stanton Mulford. Their wedding, held on October 10 at the Mulford home, was described by the Cedarville paper as an elegant affair. The paper also noted that after their "wedding tour", Mr. and Mrs. Sheppard would reside in Charlotte, "in their furnished home now awaiting them." By 1899, Sheppard was clearly well established, and, in accordance with the gentlemanly practice of the day, was able to provide a home for his wife in advance of her arrival. ⁶

Sheppard acquired the lot at 601 North Poplar Street on February 22, 1898 from William and Lillie Morse, who lived on the adjacent lot, and from Thomas and Eliza Davis. ⁷ Sheppard's lot was originally part of the 100' x 198' lot owned by the Morse family. The Morse family acquired the land in 1892 for \$2500.00. A house already occupied the lot, built by the previous owner of the property, Joe McClure. (McClure died in 1885 and according to legend, haunted the Morse house.) Sometime between 1892 and 1898, the Morse family decided to divide the lot. To accommodate this decision, they moved the house from the middle of the lot to the half away from the corner, and ultimately sold the corner half to Sheppard for \$1000.00. ⁸ Unlike many houses in Fourth Ward, the John W. Sheppard House was an original part of the neighborhood and occupies its original site.

When John Sheppard built his house in Fourth Ward, Charlotte was still a walking city. The commercial core was at the center of town, and immediately flanking this core were the homes of the wealthiest citizens. Since everyone walked to work, only the most prestigious and prosperous people lived close to their jobs. Unlike the present spatial arrangement of Charlotte, the finest homes were found at the edge of the commercial district; on Tryon and on Trade Streets.

The middle class occupied the area immediately behind the upper class. Fourth Ward was a middle class neighborhood, and was situated near enough to town for its residents to walk to work. Sheppard bicycled to work everyday, as did many of his

Fourth Ward neighbors. The working poor were relegated to the outer fringes of this residential arrangement.¹⁰

John and Anna Sheppard had three sons and one daughter. Tragically, all three sons died in childhood; James died at age 6 of spinal meningitis, infants John and Louis died of colitis when the family was on summer vacation in New Jersey.¹¹ Daughter Edith survived, and she and her parents were a typical family in the neighborhood. Mr. Sheppard was a professional man; Mrs. Sheppard tended the house with the help of her day servant Ora McIlwee; and Edith was sent to school and spent most of her youth amusing herself with her friends in Fourth Ward.

Edith's best friend was Mildred Morse, who lived next door. Edith, Mildred, and other girlfriends; Katherine Blakely, Mary and Margaret Blair, and the Grandy sisters played together and grew up together in Fourth Ward. As young girls, Edith and Mildred played see-saw on a loose plank in the fence that separated the Sheppard and Morse yards. They also crawled on their bellies exploring under the Morse house and cut paper dolls out of magazines. One afternoon, Mildred and Edith found a rat in the Sheppard's garage. Mildred, showing off for Edith, poked the rat in the face, and the rat bit her finger. Mrs. Sheppard had to administer first aid. Such dangerous pursuits were not generally the norm; Edith and Mildred and their friends liked to go to the movies. For a quarter they could catch up on the weekly installments of serials such as the "Perils of Pauline" and have enough money left over for ice cream. Because there were so many neighborhood churches, Edith and her friends could frequently find weddings to attend. The fact that the girls were not formally invited to most of these ceremonies did not trouble them; they found that they could observe most weddings undetected.¹²

Edith Sheppard attended the neighborhood schools- Bethune Elementary and Brevard Street High School. Edith also attended college at a time when few girls were allowed to leave home and pursue higher education. She graduated from Swarthmore College in 1923 with a degree in History and returned to Charlotte to teach third grade at the Elizabeth School for two years. In 1925, Edith married Thomas Willard Shaw, also a graduate of Swarthmore. Her wedding was held at home; the ceremony took place in the front parlor with approximately fifty guests in attendance.¹³

Edith and her husband moved to New Jersey after their wedding and also lived in Maryland before returning to Charlotte in 1934, prior to the birth of their third son, Robert. The Shaws moved back to 601 North Poplar to stay with John Sheppard (Anna Sheppard died in 1932). Edith Shaw raised her sons in the same house and neighborhood where she grew up. The Shaw boys attended Bethune Elementary School, and later attended Alexander Graham Junior High School (when it was located on Morehead Street) and Central High School.

Edith's sons enjoyed growing up in Fourth Ward as much as she did. They played baseball and football in various vacant lots in the neighborhood. The boys and their friends were adept at sneaking rides and small pieces of ice from the ice man. They tied tin cans to car bumpers (this was best done when cars waited at stop signs at night) and tried to hit the Poplar Apartments with marbles shot from slingshots from their bedroom windows.¹⁴

The Shaw boys were also able to enjoy the companionship of their grandfather until his death in April of 1955. John Sheppard used to take them for walks to the train station, and would also walk them to Sunday School and to church when they were young. Sheppard offered his grandsons gold watches if they did not smoke or drink before their twenty-first birthday.¹⁵

The John W. Sheppard House remained with the Sheppard family until 1961. The property was subsequently purchased by Mrs. Robert Neal. The Neal family maintained the property and kept the house in good condition during the years that the rest of Fourth Ward declined.¹⁶ The present owner, Joseph Ashley Parlier, acquired the property in 1991. Parlier has refurbished most of the house back to its original style, and uses the house as his private residence and as a bed and breakfast. This restoration has not been unusually difficult because the house was never allowed to fall into disrepair.

Notes

¹ *Charlotte Observer*, section three, September 13, 1942, "Interesting Carolina People" by Mrs. J.A. Yarbrough.

² Sheppard and Woodall were among the first wave of university-trained professional pharmacists in the United States. The professionalization of the discipline began in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century, and expanded into British and American universities by the late nineteenth century. Further information about this issue may be found in Charles Singer and E. Ashworth Underwood, *A Short History of Medicine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.

³ *Charlotte Observer*, September 13, 1942.

⁴ Clipping from *Charlotte Observer*, 1896, n.p. from the files of Mr. Robert Shaw, grandson of John W. Sheppard. Interview with Robert Shaw, 1-10-92.

⁵ *Charlotte Observer*, September 13, 1942. Interview with Mrs. Edith Shaw, daughter of John W. Sheppard, 1-10-92.

⁶ Wedding Announcement from the Cedarville, New Jersey newspaper, October 11, 1899. Property of Robert Shaw.

⁷ Deed 123-581, County Court House.2-21-1898. Register of Deeds, Mecklenburg County.

⁸ Copy of letter of Mildred Morse McEwen to Mrs. Robert Neal (former owner of 601 North Poplar), May 19, 1976. Copy property of Mr. J. Ashley Parlier, present owner of the property. Deed 123581.

⁹ Thomas Hanchett, *Charlotte and Its Neighborhoods. The Growth of a New South City. 1850-1930.* Unpublished manuscript compiled for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission.

¹⁰ Ibid. This kind of pattern is described here in general terms, but is a fairly accurate description of late nineteenth century Charlotte and of other cities in the preindustrial phase of their development. For further discussion of the transitions in the spatial arrangement of urban areas see David Ward, *Cities and Immigrants. A Geography of Chance in Nineteenth Century America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1971; David R. Goldfield and Blaine A. Brownell, *Urban America. From Downtown to No Town.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979.

¹¹ Interview, Robert Shaw and Mrs. Edith Shaw.

¹² Interview, Mrs. Edith Shaw. Mildred Morse McEwen, *Growing Up in Fourth Ward*, Charlotte, N.C.: Heritage Printers, 1987, pp. 50, 67, 77-78.

¹³ Interview with Edith Shaw, *Charlotte Observer*, October 7, 1925, p. 20.

¹⁴ Interview, Robert Shaw.

¹⁵ Ibid. The Sheppards and the Shaws attended Second Presbyterian Church, which at this time was located on North Tryon Street next to Montaldo's.

¹⁶ *The Charlotte Observer* described 601 North Poplar Street as "one of Fourth Ward's best kept homes" in 1974, when interest in reviving the downtown suburb was initially publicized. *The Charlotte Observer*, December 1, 1974, sect. D-1. Mrs. Neal was featured in a story about the house in 1976. In this story, Mrs. Neal described the fine construction and detailed work in the house. This article also describes the Neal's

interior changes to the house which included red wall to wall carpeting downstairs (red carpet was intended to evoke the house's Victorian heritage) and paneling that covered the plaster walls. Parlier has removed both of these features in his attempt to restore the house to its original form. *The Charlotte News*, May 15, 1976, "Victorian Classic" by Edie Low, n.p.

Architectural Description

Prepared by: Ms. Nora M. Black

The John W. Sheppard House is located in Charlotte's Fourth Ward on the north side of North Poplar Street at the intersection of West 9th Street. During the era of rebuilding in Fourth Ward, the City of Charlotte closed several streets to reduce cut-through traffic. One of those closed was West 9th Street on the southwest side of the John W. Sheppard House. A small "pocket park" with a noisy fountain and benches fills the narrow area once used by cars. The driveway is located toward the rear of the lot at a point where West 9th Street reemerges beyond the "pocket park" seen from North Poplar Street. The front or south facade of the house faces North Poplar Street; the rear or north facade overlooks the side of an adjacent house. The house is located on a rectangular-shaped lot (roughly 48' wide by 104' deep) owned by Mr. Joseph Ashley Parlier. A low retaining wall runs along the south side of the tract facing North Poplar Street.

The John W. Sheppard House is a Victorian House built in the Queen Anne style. The house is a subtype of the the Queen Anne style called the Free Classic typed Houses built between 1860 and 1900, the last decades of the reign of Britain's Queen Victoria, are usually referred to as "Victorian." The advent of balloon frame construction, replacing heavy timber construction, simplified the home building industry making it easier to add bays and overhangs and to construct irregular floor plans. Industrialization in the United States allowed large factories to mass produce wire nails, doors, windows, siding, and decorative details; the growing railroad system carried these mass-produced items throughout the country. ² The John W. Sheppard House displays many of the benefits of the era including the projecting bays; the dormer and its decorative details, and the cross-gables of the varied roofline.

The ground plan of the John W. Sheppard House is a compound plan with irregular projections from the principal mass. The house presents an asymmetrical, two-story elevation to North Poplar Street. The front-view is dominated by the one-story porch

that encircles half of the first floor and the two-story cutaway bay. The band of shingles at the wall-roof juncture and in the gable ends adds the wall texture variation that is common in the Queen Anne style. The mansard roof with lower cross gables is a common roof type found in this style.

Exterior

The John W. Sheppard Houses has three types of siding: original horizontal board siding, Masonite siding, and wood shingles. The Masonite siding was applied in the 1970's by the Neal family, the owners at that time, to replace deteriorated horizontal board siding. The Masonite siding was cut down in width to match the original siding. Wood shingles form a band around the main block of the house at the roof-wall juncture. A narrow band of molding, painted eggplant as an accent, tops a single wide board that serves as a cornice dividing the horizontal siding from the wood shingles. Narrow corner boards terminate at the single board cornice. The cross gable ends are covered with wood shingles; the shingles are even laid at an angle to meet the fascia and shingle molding. The exterior of the house has a palette of seven colors including the cream-color of the trim and grey-green, the predominant color.

The mansard roof is tripped and dual-pitched with a steep lower slope. It encloses a large attic; however, the attic does not provide usable space to the interior of the house. Two interior brick chimneys with corbeled tops pierce the slate roof. The roof is supported by rafters of rough cut timber; the random width boards forming the roof sheathing are 3/4" thick. The original slate roof is laid in a simple, coursed pattern with four-course decorative bands cut and laid in a fish scale pattern. The metal ridge caps are finished with tall slender finials. The ledge-like, boxed eaves contain interior gutters which carry roof runoff to the downspouts. The high cost of repairs to a slate roof are well known to the current owner, Mr. Parlier. He paid \$6100 in 1991 to repair his slate roof. ³

Many of the windows in the John W. Sheppard House contain the original leaded glass. Most are double hung wooden sash; each sash contains a single large pane of glass. Custom-built, aluminum-framed storm windows have been added to conserve energy; they are painted white to match the simple window casings. Originally the house had interior screens to provide protection from insects. Only three of those screens are still in place. Both the front bay and the west bay have a shallow rectangular stained glass window over a rectangular main window of a single pane of beveled glass. A cantilevered wall extension (with curved support bracket) on the east side of the house contains a single square stained glass window.

The front elevation is three units wide with the widest unit being the two-story cutaway bay. The cutaway bay, characterized by the walls of the bay receding under

the corners of the gable, is located on the southwest corner of the front facade. The front entry forms the center unit; a single window completes the first floor of the front facade. The second story center unit is composed of two square windows with each having a St. Andrew's cross combined with a Greek cross. The last second story unit, on the southeast corner, has an oval stained glass window with a keystone detail at both the top and bottom of the wooden casing. The shingled gable end of the attic story (over the cutaway bay) has a three part decorative element; the oval-headed stained glass window flanked by wooden vents lends a Palladian look. A dormer with shaped front decorated with flat jigsaw cut trim is located in the attic story just off the centerline of the house. Its asymmetrical location, contrasting colors, and stained glass add a distinctive, although characteristic, touch to the lively Queen Anne facade.

The one-story porch extends across the front of the house, wraps around the bay in a quarter circle, and extends halfway down the west side of the house before terminating in a steep, narrow stairway. Engaged pilasters with moldings of contrasting colors flank the bay. The roof of the porch is supported by Tuscan columns raised to the level of the porch railing on brick pedestals. The porch railing is a simple wooden balustrade. Bands of molding painted in contrasting colors add interest to the otherwise plain architrave. The porch is floored with tongue and groove boards painted hunter green. It has a ceiling of beaded board painted soft blue. Four concrete steps, flanked by brick piers, lead to the porch. Although the exact age of the light fixtures is unknown, it is believed that they were installed when electricity was installed in the house.

The front entry has a wooden screen door, decorated with a Greek key design, that has been converted to a storm door. The owner simply replaced the screen with glass. The knob on this door bears an inscription that says it was patented in 1898. The inner door is also of wood with three lower wooden panels, a middle panel of glass, and one high wooden panel. The hardware is original.

The John W. Sheppard House has no porch on the back or north facade of the house at this time. Originally, the house had a large first floor porch enclosed with lattice and a second floor sleeping porch. The- framework of that porch has been enclosed with the same siding as the rest of the house. The back door, which not original, is approached by a single flight of steps running parallel to the back of the house.

Interior

The interior of the John W. Sheppard House has not been modernized to any great degree. The beautiful paneling, balustrade and woodwork were never painted. This can be explained by the fact that the house remained in the same family for many years. The descendants of Mr. Sheppard had little desire or inclination to change the

house of their forebears. Most of the historic fabric is not only intact but visible. The rooms have original pine moldings and original hardware for the wooden interior doors. Walls are of plaster; however, the plaster ceilings were so damaged that they had to be covered with sheetrock. The ceilings are approximately 11' high throughout the house. Tiger oak was used for the flooring on the first floor while pine was used on the second floor. Stained glass windows have a stylized floral motif portrayed in opalescent glass. Some of the stained glass windows are copies made when the originals were said to be far beyond repair. Several original sconces, reminders of the gas light era, are still in place in rooms and hallways.

The front door opens to a large entry hall; an open staircase to the second floor is to the right (east) of the door. The entry hall is striking in appearance. Pine paneling, with a rich honey stain, encloses the closet at the base of the stairwell. A built-in bench, of the same wood, has a seat that lifts to reveal a storage area. The wainscot matches the paneling. A fireplace adds a welcoming touch to the entry hall. The fire surround is of stained pine with laurel wreaths used as decorative elements. Tucked beside the fireplace is a small projecting window seat with a stained glass window. The square newels on the first floor and the landing have laurel wreath decorations; each newel corner is beaded. Urns top each newel.

To the left (west side of the house) when standing at the front door is the guest parlor. It is approximately 14' by 16' although it appears larger because of the bay. There are fixed stained glass transom lights over the windows. The focal point of the guest parlor is the delicate fire surround with oval mirror. The maple fire surround has tall slender columns on each side of the fireplace; each column supports a disc designed to hold a plant or a knickknack. Pale green, rust and ivory tiles (looking almost like marble) surround a black cast iron fireplace insert. This is the only fireplace in the house that is not usable. It was closed in 1915 when the boiler was installed to provide central heat. Privacy could be provided for the guest parlor by closing the 9' tall pocket doors. The seven-panel doors, made of pine, are still operable.

From the front door, a person could continue through the entry hall past the the guest parlor to the family sitting room also on the west side of the house. The family sitting room is approximately 16' by 18' and has a bay with a door that opens onto the west side of the porch. This bay also has a fixed stained glass transom light over the center window. The fire surround has slender posts supporting two shelves. One shelf is high, placed above the rectangular mirror, while the other shelf is above the the fire tile surrounding the fireplace opening. This fire surround has a much sturdier feel than that of the guest parlor. The simple floral wreath and dentil molding lend it a masculine air. Brown and white tiles surround a cast iron fireplace insert which has a floral motif. A large closet (with a window to provide light) is adjacent to the family sitting room.

The dining room is approximately 16' by 15' and is located on the east side of the house beyond the entry hall. The fireplace occupies the south wall of the room to share a chimney with the entry hall fireplace. The fire surround is flanked by Ionic columns which support a single shelf; laurel wreaths provide a decorative element. Variegated beige tiles surround the fireplace opening; a cast iron fireplace insert repeats the laurel motif. A plate rail with small support brackets surrounds the dining room. An original corner cupboard stands in the northwest corner of the room. A radiator from the butler's pantry, complete with a top warming section, has been moved to the dining room.

The dining room has a doorway leading to a butler's pantry. This room has not undergone rehabilitation. The cracked plaster and layers of old paint speak to the true age of the John W. Sheppard House. A smaller storage pantry is located to the west side of the butler's pantry. To the rear (north side) of the butler's pantry is the kitchen. The kitchen was partly renovated several years ago, but the cabinets, sink, and floors are not in good condition. The original plaster walls and pine wainscot are covered with sheets of paneling. The kitchen does have an original built-in pie safe with an unusual pass-through door to the storage pantry.

The last room on the first floor is the enclosed back porch. It is located on the northwest corner of the house. At the extreme northwest corner of the enclosed porch is a bathroom. Originally installed by the Sheppards, it was for the sole use of the maid who worked for the family. The fixtures have been replaced in recent years. The tongue and groove flooring and the beaded board ceiling are original finishes. An item of interest is the wood conduit found on the back porch.

The front staircase climbs from the entry hall to a landing large enough to accommodate a grandfather clock. The stair continues to climb into an opening that reaches the full height of the second floor ceilings. Two oval stained glass windows, one on the south wall and one on the east wall, provide light in the stairwell. The balustrade has simple turned balusters. The long single-run stair ends in a room sized landing on the second floor. The second floor has a double newel, each topped with a carved ball rather than the urns used on the first floor and landing. A service stair is located at the rear (north end) of the house. That stair, unlike the main stair, is narrow, winding and dark.

The second floor landing has plaster walls with a pine wainscot. It also has the original plaster ceiling. The rounded plaster corner turning from the landing into the second floor hallway was rebuilt by the current owner. The second floor landing has one of the original gas sconces mentioned earlier. It is located on the south wall of the landing adjacent to a door to the trunk storage room. One day, early in the life of the house but after the installation of electricity, someone left the door to the trunk storage

room open against the globe of the sconce. A large scorch mark on the door attests to the hazard of living with open flames during the gas light era. When Mr. Sheppard saw how close he had come to losing his beloved home to fire, he ordered the gas line to the sconces disconnected immediately. ⁵

The room with the scorched door off the second floor landing is located over a portion of the entry hall. It was originally used to store the trunks used by the Sheppard family for their long summer trips. The current owner converted the trunk storage room into a bath to be used by guests of the bed and breakfast. The trunk storage room has the two windows with crosses mentioned in the exterior description of the front facade. The windows, called "pie windows" by the current owner, were rebuilt to the original look using an early photo of the house.

To the left (west) of the second floor landing is a bedroom overlooking North Poplar Street. This room contains a piece of the original stained glass which the current owner found and purchased. The stained glass window hangs in front of a clear glass window located high in the bay. The second bedroom on the west side of the house overlooks West 9th Street. Situated above the family sitting room, it was originally Mr. John W. Sheppard's bedroom. In fact, Mr. Sheppard died in this bedroom in April of 1955. Mr. Sheppard's room has an adjacent closet with a window to provide light. Both of these bedrooms have received a fresh coat of paint and are used as guest rooms.

A third bedroom is located on the east side of the house. It has not been repainted yet. In the future it will be spruced up to receive guests of the bed and breakfast. A narrow closet, located in the northeast corner of the room, has a shelf with a semicircular cut-out sized to accommodate the opening closet door.

Unlike the elaborate fireplaces of the more public first floor, the bedroom fireplaces have simpler wooden fire surrounds with cast iron fireplace inserts. The color of the fire tiles is varied. Again the predominant decorative motif is that of laurel and stylized vegetation.

The only entrance to the attic is a trap door in the ceiling of a closet located between Mr. Sheppard's bedroom and the back service stair. The bathroom on the east side of the upstairs was the only bathroom when the house was constructed. It has not been refurbished. A high-back sink protected the walls from splashes.

The fourth bedroom, formerly the sleeping porch on the rear (north) side of the house, is encircled by original windows. However, the ceiling has been lowered to allow insulation to be placed between the original ceiling and the new ceiling. Inexpensive

paneling has been installed on the walls. The current owner plans to return this area to its original condition as time and money permit.

The John W. Sheppard House was constructed without a basement. The installation of central heat in 1915 necessitated the digging of a room-sized cellar to hold a boiler to serve the radiators. It is roughly the size of the library and has brick walls and a concrete floor. The original boiler has been removed. The house now has an electric central air conditioning system and a natural gas furnace. One damaged chimney has been repaired recently.

Conclusion

The John W. Sheppard House is an intact example of a Free Classic, Queen Anne style house from the last years of the 19th century. It is one of the few houses in Fourth Ward that is original to its site and its orientation to the street grid. The finishes and decorative details of the John W. Sheppard House stand in contrast to those of the simpler farmhouses moved to Fourth Ward during urban redevelopment. It can provide insight into the town houses that businessmen new to Charlotte and North Carolina constructed with wealth accumulated during the rise of the New South.

Notes

¹ Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, 1986), 264-265.

² *Ibid*, 239.

³ Interview with Mr. J. Ashley Parlier, current owner; 12 January 1992.

⁴ Interview, as in #3.

⁵ Interview, as in #3.