National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries

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Self=Trott-Bickett	House,	Catawba	County,	N.C.
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6. Function or Use			
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Func	tions (enter categories from instructions)	
Domestic: single dwelling	Domestic	single dwelling	
7. Description			
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)		
	foundation	brick	
Italianate	walls	brick	
Classical Revival		· · · ·	
	roof	asphalt	
	other	stucco	
		wood	

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The 1883 Self-Trott-Bickett House in Newton is one of only a two-story brick, double pile houses few remaining ήn Catawba County from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. (Öther include the Yount-Witherspoon House in Newton's examples North Main Avenue Historic District and the Clement H. Geitner House in the Oakwood Historic District in Hickory.) The Self-Trott-Bickett House faces west on the east side of South College Avenue in residential area just south of the center of town. a The house largely shielded from the street by a row of trees -- mostly is dogwoods -- planted between the sidewalk and young the street. The house is surrounded by boxwood and azaleas, and other types of shrubbery are found throughout the yard. The heavily wood lot contains magnolia, dogwood, maple and elm trees.

The original part of the Self-Trott-Bickett House is three bays wide and two deep with a low hipped roof and exterior and chimneys, two per side, with corbelled caps. Bricks are laid ήn five-to-one common bond with pencilled joints. The symmetrically arranged windows consisting of twelve-over-twelve and nine-over-nine sash are circa 1972 replacements of casement windows which were themselves circa 1915 replacements of the sash windows which had larger and fewer original panes. The windows have a simple surround with ovolo molding and are headed bν flat-arched brick lintels. Original exterior embellishment consists of the widely overhanging eaves with heavy, curvilinear sawnwork brackets set against a wide, plain frieze board -an Italianate influence.

Local tradition claims that originally the house had only ä small entrance portico, however a circa 1900 photo shows ඊ three-bay porch of simple late Victorian style. This was replaced circa 1915 during Bickett ownership by the unusually heavy wrap-around porch. This porch has a hipped roof, cement floor, large square stuccoed posts, a solid brick skirt in lieu of a balustrade. and a full classical entablature with architrave, frieze and boxed and molded cornice. The central entrance which is sheltered by the front (west) porch was also remodelled (probably about the same time by the Bicketts) and now consists

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Self-Trott-Bickett House Catawba County, N.C.

of a glass-paneled door with beautiful leaded and beveled glass sidelights and transom.

A one-story brick gabled ell projects from the north end of rear (east side) of the house. Whether it was an early the addition or originally a separate kitchen structure that was later attached to the house is not certain. According to family tradition this ell served as servants' quarters in early years. The present owner believes that the ell once had a porch along the north side. Now there is deck of recent construction alonq the south side. At the same time this deck was built, a second story deck was also built on the east side of the house, with a wood exterior stair leading to it along the rear, north side of the house. The south side of the ell is a solid brick wall Taid in common bond, but the east and north sides have been brick veneered. The ell windows appear to be recent alterations.

The interior of the two-story portion of the Self-Trott-Bickett House has a center hall flanked by two rooms per side on each floor. The walls and ceilings were originally plastered, have been covered by sheet rock. First story floors are but carpeted, but on the second story the original wide board flooring remains visible. Rooms are surrounded by a simple baseboard and molded cornice. Door and window surrounds are plain. Most of the original doors -- of the four-raised-panel type -- remain intact, but have been replaced, probably circa 1915, in the first floor west rooms by glass-paned French doors. In the center hall the stair rises from west to east along the south wall. It has a heavy, square newel with simple moldings (possibly a circa 1915 replacement of the original), an angular hand rail, square-cut balusters, and unusual curvilinear sawn brackets. No original mantels remain on the first floor. Those in the west (front) rooms have been replaced with mid-twentiethcentury brick mantels, while those in the east (rear) rooms have been removed and the fireplaces enclosed.

On the second floor, however, the four original frame mantels do remain intact. Nearly identical but with slight variations, all are of the classical post-and-lintel type with base blocks, side pilasters, plain wide frieze, and plain shelf supported by a molded band.

The interior of the rear ell has been completely remodelled and now includes a modern kitchen across the east half, and a den, bathroom and small hall across the west half.

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In the southeast corner of the lot is a small, frame gamage (B, noncontributing) with German siding, gable roof, and shed attachment across the south side. This is definately pre-1932, and is believed to have been built circa 1915 by Lawrence Bickett. (The 1932 Sanborn Map of Newton, the only one in a series of Newton Sanborn maps which includes South College Avenue, clearly shows the present porch and garage.)

While the Self-Trott-Bickett House has undergone numerous changes, beginning with the classical facelift give to it in 1915 and continuing with minor alterations from the 1950s into the 1980s, the house nevertheless retains sufficient integrity to convey a distinctive and imposing presence in Newton. The main block of the house is intact on the exterior, and the second floor of the interior is basically unaltered.

Self-Trott-Bickett House, Catawba County, N.C.

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary

Self-Trott-Bickett House, 331 South College Avenue The ήn the Catawba County seat of Newton, is a two-story, double pile brick residence of Italianate Revival style built in 1883 by William R. Self, a prominent local manufacturer. The house 15 architecturally significant as one of a small number of nineteenth-century brick houses in the county, and one of än even smaller number that are double pile, and is eligible for listing under Criterion C within the property type, "Houses of Catawba County: Postbellum." In additon to Mr. Self, two other notable owners of the house were Sallie Trott, who ran a boarding house here in the early twentieth century, and Lawrence Bickett, a grocery wholesaler and brother of North Carolina governor Thomas W. Bickett. Bickett lived here from 1912 to 1921, and likely added the classical style entrance and front porch.

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Self-Trott-Bickett House Catawba County, N.C.

Historical Background

The Self-Trott-Bickett House at 331 South College Avenue in Newton was built between 1881 and 1883 by William R. Self and renovated around 1915 by Lawrence C. Bickett. It is located óne block north of the former site of Catawba College (the school was moved to Salisbury in the 1920s). Although rooms in the house were regularly rented to students in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the history of the house is generally not associated with the school or its development. Rather, the Self-Trott-Bickett House and its owners are associated with the commercial development of Newton. Self established a number of manufacturing enterprises in the Newton area in the 1870s and 1880s; Bickett operated the town's first wholesale grocery firm in the 1910s.

William Riley Self (1836?-1921), builder of the house, lived there for less than one year. Self was a prominent manufacturer in the small town of Newton. The bricks used in his house were made in his own kiln. Self's brick yard, located only a short distance from the site of the house, employed four adult males and five children in 1880, a year in which they produced 200,000 bricks. In partnership with W. L. Killian, Self also operated a flour and gristmill which employed a similar number of workers and produced 240 barrels of wheat flour and 60,000 pounds of corn meal and feed in 1880. In 1884 Self also had livery stables and a steam powered sawmill and was the proprietor of the Newton Foundry and Machine Works.¹ Self was apparently something of a tinkerer, remembered for having built an early steam-powered horseless carriage. In fact, he secured several patents, one of which he sold rights to locally in 1886. 2 Whether that sale was prompted by financial difficulties cannot be determined. However, three years earlier Self had obviously overextended himself and found it necessary to sell his newly-built house and other property.

Before becoming a manufacturer and inventor Self had been a soldier and farmer. In July 1862 he had enlisted as a private in Company E of the Fifty-Seventh North Carolina Regiment. He saw action with the Confederates at Fredericksburg, Lynchburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg, and was slightly wounded on two occasions. ³ Self's immediate postwar years were calmer ones spent farming, first in Cleveland County, and then in Catawba County. In 1865 Self married Mary Bost (1843?-1876), the daughter of Joseph Bost. They had two children, a son born in 1866

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and a daughter born five years later. The son, William Augustus Self, became a lawyer with a practice in Hickory beginning in the late 1880s and extending over forty years. The younger Self, said to have been a brilliant orator, was elected in 1902 to the state House of Representatives where he served one term.⁴ Seven years after the death of his first, wife William R. Self married Catherine Summerrow in 1883, by whom he had at least one child, a daughter Annie, born in 1887.

William R. Self owned no land in Catawba County in 1870 when his personal estate was valued at \$500.⁵ He began acquiring land 1874, first from his father-in-law Joseph Bost and then in from Ψ. F. Rader and others. In 1880 Self, then a widower, and his and daughter, then ages thirteen and nine, lived on Rader's son Self kept seventy acres in cultivation, mostly in farm. corn, oats, wheat, and cotton, with one-half acre in vineyards.⁶ **Only** with the purchase of several town lots in 1880 and 1881 did he from the farm into town. Self bought the lot where he move was build his house from Reuben Setzer, who owned much of to the property in the southern part of Newton and who had given land to Catawba College for its campus some years earlier. Self built upon a one-acre tract for which he paid Setzer \$250 in June 1881. While the building was underway Self is said to have loaned the plans to Sidney L. Yount, who is believed to be the builder of a nearly identical house on West 7th Street in Newton (the Witherspoon-Killian House, Historic District, N.R.).⁷ 128 W. 7th St., North Main Ave In October 1883 Self, presumably Avenue in financial distress, sold two lots, including the house tract to George Rabb for \$1,050.8 At the same time he sold his interest in one of his mills to his business partners W. L. Killian and W.P. Cline for \$3,000. It is not clear where Self, his new wife and children moved after the sale. As of 1910 Self still lived on College Avenue in a boarding house operated by his sister-in-Alice Summerrow. The establishment, known as the Summerrow law Hosue, had been in operation since the 1880s. Self, then age seventy, indicated that he was employed doing "odd jobs." Aside from him and his wife Catherine, their daughter Annie her and husband Floyd Yount lived in the Summerrow House in 1910. In addition ten others, mostly Newton merchants, clerks, and salesmen, boarded in the house.⁹ William R. Self died in 1921 at the age of eighty-four.

The house which Self had built and soon after vacated in 1883 also served as a boarding house at the turn of the century. Before that happened, however, the house quickly passed through a

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succession of owners. Five months after the sale to George Rabb, on March 25, 1884, a tornado struck Newton causing an exceptional amount of damage. Self's barn and livery stable (and, by one report, his foundry) were destroyed but the house he built was Rabb sold the house and lot in 1888 to untouched.¹⁰ Self's friend and former neighbor W. F. Rader, who in turn sold it to Dakin in 1897.¹¹ In the following year Mrs. Dakin and her Ann. husband R. P., who was a manufacturer of sashes, doors and blinds, sold the tract to Sallie Trott, (1847-1910).¹² Trott had some experience in operating a boarding house. Her husband, Ψ. H. Trott, had had a hotel in the Catawba community in the northpart of the county in 1884. Mrs. Trott moved to Newton า่ท east and may, in fact, have begun operating a boarding house 1887 at that time.¹³ Tradition has it that she regularly boarded Catawba College students at 331 South College Avenue, although none were in the house at the time the 1900 census was taken. Boarding with her at that time was only one individual, Sinclair Davidson, a single forty-three-year-old medical doctor. Also at the residence were two black servants, thrity-five-year-old Dock Lynch and fourteen-year-old Hattie Trott, presumably living in the quarters in the rear of the house. $^{14}\,$ Mrs. Trott died in 1910. By the terms of her will all of her real estate was left to her stepson Wilfong Wilson Trott and to two nephews. In 1912 the heirs sold the house to Lawrence C. Bickett for \$2,400.15

Laurence C. Bickett was the brother of Thomas W. Bickett, the popular World War I governor of North Carolina noted as an excellent orator and advocate of progressive causes. L. Ĉ. Bickett and his wife Mary Lou attended his brother's inauguration in Raleigh in 1917.¹⁶ The governor paid return visits to Newton during his term. On those occasions he stayed in the northwest upstairs bedroom in his brother's house. A special lock installed on the door of that room for security purposes is still L. C. Bickett was the operator of Newton's place. first in wholesale grocery firm. Between 1912, when he moved to Newton, and 1919 he bought several town lots as well as property elsewhere in the county. In 1915 he paid tax on his home lot valued \$1,380 and a vacant lot valued at \$1,200.¹⁷ The classical at remodelling of the house, including the new entrance, front porch and casement windows, were probably made by Bickett. Like W. R. Self before him, L. C. Bickett encountered financial problems and was foreclosed upon in 1921. The sheriff sold all of his property including the house to the highest bidder, Floyd E. Yount, for \$8,110.¹⁸ Bickett reportedly moved to Mississippi.

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Floyd Elmer (Bud) Yount (1874?-19 September 1956) had married Annie Self, the daughter of W. R. and Catherine Self, in Thus the house was returned to the family that had built 1909. Yount was a livery merchant and the operator of a grocery it. store located opposite the northeast corner of the courthouse square in Newton. His wife kept cows in the backyard and made dairy products to sell through his store. F.E. Yount owned other property in Newton, especially on College Avenue. In 1945 he was taxed on fourteen lots valued at \$21,917 as well as 502 acres elsewhere in the county valued at \$29,382.19 Yount died in 1956 although he left no will, the property apparently went 'to and. his wife Annie.

Darwin Harrison Samples, the present owner, bought the house lot from Annie Yount in 1970.²⁰ Since the purchase Samples and has made numerous repairs and renovations to the building including covering the plaster walls with sheetrock, replacing many of the windows, putting new shingles on the roof, and installing new Samples was until 1978 married to Catherine Wolfe gutters. Yount, the daughter of William Sidney Yount, grandaughter of F. E. and Annie Yount, and thus the great-grandaughter of the house's builder William R. Self. Upon their separation in 1978 leading up to their divorce, Darwin Samples and his wife split their living arrangements between the main house and the onestory rear addition. Their son Steve, born in 1960, is thus the fifth generation of the same family to live in the Self-Trott-Bickett House.²¹

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FOOTNOTES

¹Tenth Census, 1880, Manufacturing Schedule; Levi Branson (comp.), <u>Branson's North Carolina Business</u> <u>Directory</u> (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1884), 197, 199.

²Darwin Harrison Samples, Information on the Self-Trott-Bickett House supplied to the Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, 1981; Catawba County Deed Book 32, p. 426.

³Robert Digges Wimberly Connor (ed.), <u>North Carolina: Re-building an Ancient Commonwealth</u> (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1929), IV, 421-422; John L. Cheney (ed,), <u>North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Narrative and Statistical History</u> (Raleigh: Secretary of State, 1975), 481; <u>Branson's Directory</u>, 1890, p. 171; 1896, p. 167; and 1897, p. 167.

⁴George W. Hahn, <u>The Catawba Soldier of the Civil War</u> (Hickory: Clay Printing Company, 1911), 325; John W. Moore (comp.), <u>Roster of North Carolina Troops in the War Between the</u> <u>States</u> (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1882), III, 621. The Hahn volume contains a photograph of William R. Self.

⁵Ninth Census, 1870, Population Schedule; Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

⁶Tenth Census, 1870, Population Schedule; Catawba Coutny Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

⁷Catawba County Deed Book 15, p. 346; see also Deed Book 11, p. 543; Deed Book 15, p. 345; and Deed Book 18, p. 109; Samples, Information of the Self-Trott-Bickett House.

⁸Catawba County Deed Book 18, pp. 585-587.

⁹Thirteenth Census, 1910, Population Schedule; <u>Branson's</u> Directory, 1890, p. 171.

¹⁰Charles J. Preslar, Jr. (comp.), <u>A History of Catawba</u> <u>County</u> (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Co. for the Catawba County Historical Association, 1954), 436; <u>Newton Observer</u>, undated clipping on the Self-Trott-Bickett House. . -

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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^{1,1}Catawba County Deed Book 37, p. 368, and Deed Book 55, p. 118.

¹²Branson's Directory, 1890, p. 171; Catawba County Deed Book 102, p. 149.

¹³Branson's Directory, 1884, p. 197; Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

¹⁴Twelfth Census, 1900, Population Schedule. Darwin Samples, the present owner, relates that at the turn of the century an argument took place between a doctor boarding at the house and a black servant. In the heat of the moment the doctor shot the black man, who fell dead in the driveway. Reportedly no charges were filed. Samples, Information on the Self-Trott-Bickett House.

¹⁵Catawba County Will Book 4, p. 41; Catawba County Deed Book 102, p. 246.

¹⁶Martin Santford (comp.) and Robert Burton House (ed.) <u>Public Letters of Thomas Walter Bickett</u> (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1923), v-vi; (Raleigh) <u>News and Observer</u>, 12 January 1917. No personal correspondence is included in the published volume of Governor Bickett's letters, nor is there any in the personal papers contributed to the North Carolina State Archives by his widow.

¹⁷Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

¹⁸Catawba County Deed Book 164, p. 117.

¹⁹Catawba County Tax Records, North Carolina State Archives.

²⁰Catawba County Deed Book 926, p. 438.

²¹Samples, Information on the Self-Trott Bickett House. Samples acquired full possession of the house by virtue of a deed in 1978. Catawba County Deed Book 1118, p. 896.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

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organization Catawba County Historical Assn.	date
street & number Rt. 1, Box 76 AB	telephone
city or townConover	

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ____Photos Page __1 ___ Self-Trott-Bickett House, Catawba County, NC

The following information pertains to all photographs:

- 1) Self-Trott-Bickett House
- 2) Newton, North Carolina
- 5) North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC
- A. 3) Barbara Kooiman
 - 4) July 1989
 - 6) House, to northeast
- B. 3) F. Bogue Wallin
 - 4) January 1980
 - 6) House, to east
- C. 3) Greer Suttlemyer
 - 4) January 1972
 - 6) House, to southeast
- D. 3) documentary photo
 - 4) circa 1900
 - 6) House, to east
- E. 3) F. Bogue Wallin
 - 4) January 1980
 - 6) House, to northwest
- F. 3) Laura Phillips
 - 4) June 1983
 - 6) House, rear ell, to southwest
- G. 3) Laura Phillips
 - 4) June 1983
 - 6) House interior, stair
- H. 3) Laura Phillips
 - 4) June 1983
 - 6) House interior, stair detail
- I. 3) Laura Phillips
 - 4) June 1983
 - 6) House interior, mantel

NOTE: Most of the record photos used in this nomination were taken in 1983 and one was taken in 1972. As the 1989 overall view of the house shows, today it is virtually impossible to take a good photograph of the building due to the heavy foliage. Consequently, earlier overall views which better show the details of the main facade are included. The building was thoroughly field checked by Barbara Kooiman in 1989 and determined to be unchanged from appearance and condition portrayed in earlier photos.





