



**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Ripshin Farm is a tract of approximately seventy-six acres situated along Ripshin and Laurel Creeks among the hill of Southwest Virginia. The acreage includes the residence of Sherwood Anderson, two guest cottages, and a log cabin in which Anderson did much of his writing.

A short gravel drive leads to the rear of the house from State Route 732, across a narrow wooden bridge spanning Laurel Creek. The bridge rests upon stone piers banked with mountain laurel. The house itself conveys the flavor of the southern Appalachians and was designed by William Spratling, an architect whom Anderson had known when he lived in New Orleans. It is a story-and-a-half fieldstone structure, with two projecting asymmetrical log wings embracing a glass-in back porch which serves as a summer dining room. The front of the house, seven bays in length, faces eastward onto a croquet lawn scooped partially from a hillside and enclosed by a low stone wall.

Inside, a large living room oriented around a stone fireplace occupies the center portion of the house, with glass doors at the rear of the room leading onto the back porch. The living room is flanked on the north by the kitchen, and by the master bedroom on the south. The bedroom extends into the log wing which, besides containing a bath and dressing room, forms a sleeping alcove, being separated from the larger chamber by a broad stone archway. This arch was built by mountain craftsmen according to Anderson's specifications.

A stairway containing balusters from the old St. Louis Hotel in New Orleans is located in the northeast corner of the living room.\* Upstairs there are three low-ceilinged bedrooms, two of which open onto small iron balconies.

Since Anderson's death in 1941, the house has remained virtually unchanged. The author's library, numerous autographed pictures from friends, and antique furniture acquired during Anderson's residence in New Orleans or from the mountains around Ripshin Farm have been preserved. Even the furniture arrangement itself is for the most part undisturbed.

The small, rustic guest cottages stand west of the house, and the cabin used by Anderson as a writing retreat about two hundred yards farther away, at the edge of Laurel Creek. Originally it stood on the crest of the hill which rises behind it, but the structure was later moved by Anderson to this secluded spot. Although the cabin is unused today, built-in writing desks at either side of the front door remain, along with a wooden couch built by Anderson and facing the broad fireplace.

Mrs. Eleanor Copenhaver Anderson, the author's widow, now uses Ripshin Farm as a summer home.

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\*The lighter balusters from the hotel are interspaced with darker reproductions, locally-made.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/>	16th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	18th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	20th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	17th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1926-1941

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>		_____
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

Sherwood Anderson is generally credited with reintroducing subjectivity into American literature through his frankly self-revealing works. By so doing, he set a powerful example for the novelists and short story writers of the next decades--Stephen Vincent Benet, William Faulkner, Katherine Ann Porter, Eudora Welty--in evolving a free form of writing where plot is subordinated to theme and form springs from the situation. Faulkner has termed Anderson "the father" of his generation of American writers.<sup>1</sup>

After a vacation to the Southwest Virginia mountains in the summer of 1925, Sherwood Anderson decided to make the area his permanent home. At the end of the year he returned and purchase an isolated farm on Ripshin Creek near Marion. He lived in a small cabin on the place before moving into his newly-completed house in 1927, and except for extended lecture tours, he spent the rest of his life here. All of his later works were produced at Ripshin, including Hello Towns! (1929), Beyond Desire (1932), Death in the Woods (1933), Puzzled American (1935), and Home Town (1940). A published memoir, I Build A House, enthusiastically describes the construction of Ripshin Farm. Today Anderson lies buried on a hillside above the town of Marion.

Biography

Sherwood Anderson was born in Camden, Ohio on September 13, 1876, the fourth of seven children, and the son of an unsuccessful sign-painter and harness-marker. During the author's youth, his family moved frequently as their fortunes floundered and declined. A sporadic schooling was interrupted by periods when young Anderson worked at odd jobs and began to know the laborers, Negroes, and hangers-on at livery stables which would later populate his short stories and novel. The emotional problems of a turbulent childhood also formed the substance of his highly impressionistic autobiographical works and perhaps explains why Anderson was among the earliest American writers to respond to the new Freudian psychology, convinced as he was that much of human behavior is a reaction to subconscious realities and to experiences hidden in the forgotten past of the individual.<sup>2</sup>

At his mother's death in 1896, the family fell apart. After a stint as a soldier in Cuba during the Spanish-American War, followed by one more year of formal education at Wittenberg Academy in Springfield, Ohio,

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Virginia	
COUNTY	
Grayson	
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(Number all entries) Ripshin Farm

8. Biography continued (first sheet)

Anderson embarked upon an advertising career in Chicago.

His first marriage occurred in 1904, and by 1912 he had become the successful head of a paint factory in Elyria, Ohio. Meanwhile, however, his artistic nature withered and the resulting inner conflict finally brought on a nervous breakdown which marked a turning point in Anderson's life. Realizing that his need to write was basic, he returned to Chicago to start afresh, publishing his short stories in the "little magazines" that Chicago's avant garde climate had spawned to give scope to original talent.

Windy Mcpherson's Son, his first novel, appeared in 1916 followed by another, Marching Men, in 1917 and a volume of verse, Mid-American Chants, the next year. Finally, in 1919, came his masterpiece, Winesburg, Ohio. A collection of short stories unified through the setting and figure of a youthful reporter to whom all the "grotesques" and "emotional cripples" of a town turn when they can communicate with no one else, the book explored the effect upon the individual of emotionally-sterile small town life and the impersonality of the big city. Anderson's candor provoked wide criticism of the work, but such writers as Dreiser and Sandburg immediately recognized its merit.<sup>3</sup>

Much of Anderson's later work dealt with the same theme: the undercurrent behind the daily facades, the subliminal in everyday American life. And in his subjective, even impressionistic treatment, Anderson broke from the convention of an age which, as one of Anderson's critics has stated, "believed it could master the disorder of existence with patterns of order derived from myths and ideologies of the past, or else with descriptions of objects and behavior that possessed that irreducible precision of scientific writing."<sup>4</sup> Like Willa Cather, Anderson eschewed "the half-gods of rhetoric" and sought his own way of telling the truth, projecting himself utterly into his writing.<sup>5</sup>

Divorced and remarried by the time Winesburg, Ohio appeared, Anderson produced Poor White (1920) and The Triumph of the Egg (1921) before going first to Europe, where he met and was influenced by James Joyce and Gertrude Stein, then to New Orleans in 1922. There he exerted considerable influence upon the young William Faulkner, with whom he shared an apartment.<sup>6</sup>

Dark Laughter, Anderson's most popular novel, appeared in 1925. Settling in Virginia the same year, Anderson continued to write while publishing two newspapers--one Republican and the other Democratic--in Marion. At the same time, he became involved in proletarian movements and for a while championed the cause of the Southern textile worker.

During the last decade of his life, Anderson published two more novels, Beyond Desire (1932) and Kit Brandon (1936), in addition to collected short stories, essays, and autobiographical works. With his fourth wife, whom he married in 1933, Anderson traveled and lectured extensively. In 1941, at the start of a South American tour, he died at Colon, Panama.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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COUNTY	
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8. Biography continued (second sheet)

Spurning the stereotyped lives of the successful, the products of America's code of progress, Anderson explored instead in inner recesses of life. And, comments one source, "in whatever he wrote there is always the fascination of his personality, complex and brooding, groping for answers to the riddle of the individual being, and desperately aware that to find answers for others, he must overcome the disunity of his own experience."<sup>7</sup> To the generation of the 1920's, he was a force and a pioneer. This and the intrinsic merit of his better works have assured him a place in American letters.<sup>8</sup>

1. Robert E. Spiller and others, eds., Literary History of the United States, revised (New York: MacMillan Co., 1960), p. 1233.
2. Scully Bradley, Richmond C. Beatty, E. Hudson Long, eds., The American Tradition in Literature, vol. II (New York: W.W. Norton & Co.), 1962, p. 1043.
3. Ibid., p. 1044; John H. Sullivan, "Winesburg Revisited," Antioch Review, Vol XX, Summer, 1960, pp. 213-21.
4. Brom Weber, Sherwood Anderson, Pamphlets on American Writers #43 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1964), pp. 12-17.
5. LHUS, p. 1231.
6. American Tradition, p. 1044.
7. Ibid., p. 1043.
8. Ibid.; LHUS, p. 1233.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anderson, Sherwood, *Memoirs*, New York, 1942, pp. 356-75.  
 Bradley, Scully, Richmond C. Beatty, and E. Hudson Long, eds. *The American Edition in Literature*, vol. II, New York, 1962, pp. 1043-45.  
 Spiller, Robert E., and others, eds. *Literary History of the United States*, (revised). New York, 1960.  
 Sullivan, John H. "Winesburg Revisited," *Antioch Review*, Vol. XX.  
 Weber, Brom. *Sherwood Anderson* (Pamphlets on American Writer #43, University of Minnesota). Minneapolis, 1964, pp. 12-17.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Robert S. Gamble, Historian

ORGANIZATION: DATE  
 Division of History, National Park Service 6/21/71

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE CODE

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

2. Location (boundaries)

Ripshin Farm, Sherwood Anderson Home

The scenic area of Ripshin Farm is circumscribed by an eight-sided figure following the ridges which surround the small cove where the house is located, between the forks of Laurel and Ripshin Creeks. The boundaries are described as follows: beginning at a point approximately .2 of a mile due west of Laurel Creek, at 36°41'39" Latitude, 81°24'17" Longitude; thence north by northwest approximately .1 of a mile to a point at 36°41'47" Latitude, 81°24'12" Longitude; thence due north approximately .1 of a mile to a point at 36°41'52" Latitude, 81°24'12" Longitude; thence northwest across Laurel Creek to a point on the opposite ridge at 36°42'00" Latitude, 81°24'18" Longitude; thence west by southwest approximately .3 of a mile, crossing Ripshin Creek, to a point west of the Young Cemetery at 36°41'54" Latitude, 81°24'42" Longitude; thence due south approximately .2 of a mile to a point at 36°41'44" Latitude, 81°24'42" Longitude; thence approximately .1 of a mile southeast to a point at 36°41'40" Latitude, 81°24'37" Longitude; thence continuing southeast to a point at 36°41'39" Latitude, 81°24'28" Longitude; thence due east approximately .2 of a mile to the point of beginning.

