

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Williamson House

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

401 Cedar Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Louisburg

VICINITY OF

2nd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

37

Franklin

069

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. Benjamin Williamson

Mrs. John P. Williamson

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 96

105 John Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Louisburg

VICINITY OF

North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Franklin County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Louisburg

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Williamson House is a little-altered example of the Greek Revival cottage, a house type rather common in Franklin County, of which very few well-preserved examples survive. The house stands amid a very large wooded lot in the town of Louisburg; it was originally on the edge of the town. The house shares features with Cascine, the E. W. Fuller House, and the Colonel J. F. Jones House; some features, too, are similar to the work of Warrenton architect Jacob Holt, but not enough to establish attribution.

The one-story frame house is three bays wide and two deep. It stands on a basement of brick; at the corners the brick breaks out to form bases for the fluted cornerposts that define the facades of the house. The cornerposts carry a wide, plain frieze beneath the wide overhang of the hip roof. Two paneled interior chimneys with molded caps pierce the roof. The central entrance is protected by an original porch. Two pairs of fluted Doric posts carry a plain frieze and overhang like the main house; the posts recur as pilasters at the ends of the porch at the facade. At each side there is a balustrade of small chamfered posts with tiny caps, linked by arches beneath a molded rail. The entrance consists of a double door flanked by sidelights and topped by a transom; square lights occur at the upper corners. The whole is framed by a wide, heavy molded architrave. Large windows in simple frames contain six-over-six sash and have louvered blinds. At the rear of the house is a central one-story one-room wing, which is original or a very early addition, as the finish is like that of the main block. In the angles between the wing and the main block are a few small one-story frame additions which do not detract significantly from the character of the house.

The interior, as suggested by the exterior configuration, follows a center-hall plan two rooms deep, with the rear door of the hall leading into the rear wing. The only significant alteration is that the hall has been partitioned recently midway back. The finish is consistent and well-preserved throughout, with high ceilings, plastered walls, tall molded baseboards, heavy molded door and window frames, and heavy Greek Revival mantels with some variation in design. The baseboard in the hall is marbled to resemble black marble, in an extremely skillful fashion. The front doors have pointed-arched panels set within the rectangular panels, and a few doors retain china knobs and molded china key-hole covers. The window frames extend to the floor to frame panels beneath the windows. Door and window frames break out from the baseboard to create a molded "foot." Some doors are skillfully woodgrained.

The mantel in the right (south) front parlor has tall narrow arched panels in the pilasters, which flank a frieze with a single narrow horizontal panel. The left (north) front room has a mantel with trefoil spear-headed panels beneath a frieze with a similar horizontal panel. The right rear room has a mantel with paneled pilasters and a slightly arched frieze. In the dining wing is a mantel with fluted pilasters flanking a single-paneled frieze. It is flanked by built-in cupboards, apparently original, with paneled doors at the bottom and glazed doors at the top. The house contains a quantity of nineteenth and early twentieth century furnishings, some of it original. Notable are the ornate bronze and glass drapery tie backs in the right parlor: sinuous bronze foliage springs from the window frame, carrying an open glass lily with stamens projecting from its throat. The essentially unaltered condition of the house, plus its excellent state of preservation and the presence of much traditional furniture and other pieces is quite evocative of the family history of the house.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) black history
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1850s

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Williamson House, located on land originally in a rural setting but now in the town of Louisburg, is a representative and very well-preserved Greek Revival cottage, with details that relate it to other Franklin County houses of the 1850s. The house has remained in the same family since it was built for Tempie Perry Williamson. Among the slaves who came to Franklin County with Mrs. Williamson when she returned as a widow from Covington, Georgia, was John H. Williamson, who was after the Civil War a prominent black legislator and founder of the Raleigh Banner and Gazette.

Temperance Perry, born March 11, 1805, was a daughter of Jeremiah Perry, who owned the large and early-settled plantation, Cascine. Perry's will of 1838, proved in 1839, left property to his six sons, including Sidney (A. S.), who received Cascine, and Willie; to his three daughters went numbers of slaves: Temperance received seventeen slaves plus \$1,000. In 1846 Temperance married John P. Williamson and soon moved to Covington, Georgia, his home. In the 1850s Williamson died, and his widow soon returned to Franklin County with two young sons. She was evidently assisted by her brother, Willie, a physician and planter of considerable wealth; he provided her with the "Fox Swamp" property, upon which a house was soon built. The relatively small house is appropriate for a widow with two children. The time of her return to Franklin County is uncertain: family tradition puts it in the mid-1850s; the first reference to Mrs. Williamson is in the 1859 tax list where she is listed under Willie Perry's entry. The Fox Swamp property was listed in 1860 as having 85 acres worth \$18.00 per acre (a high price), the total worth \$1,530. Evidently Tempie owned a large number of slaves by the time she set up housekeeping in Franklin County: the 1860 Census lists her as the owner of 94 slaves: her brother Willie owned 79; and another, A. S., who inherited Cascine, had 147.

Willie Perry's will of 1865 confirmed his gift to Tempie, for he left her "my tract of land known as the Fox Swamp tract whereon she now resides containing about 100 acres," plus \$10,000. Tempie remained at the Fox Swamp house until her death in 1880; she left the "Dwelling and that portion of the lot on which I now reside" to Lela M. Williamson, wife of her son W. B. Her other son, John, was devised other property. John and W. B., who ran a Louisburg dry goods store, died in 1881, and Lela--widowed at 19--remained in the house until her death in 1948. About the turn of the century, her son Benjamin married, and moved his wife into the house as well. Benjamin's wife, Mamie Tucker Williamson, still resides there; it is owned by heirs of Benjamin.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Of considerable interest to the history of the property and of post-Civil War Franklin County is its connection with John H. Williamson. Born in Covington, Georgia, he evidently was among the slaves who came to Franklin County when Tempie returned in the 1850s. He is said to have been thirteen when he came. Blacks in eastern North Carolina counties obtained political power during Reconstruction, and John H. Williamson was among the more important of them. According to Frenise A. Logan, in The Negro in North Carolina, 1876-1894, "he had no educational advantages except what he acquired by his own efforts." Logan records that he was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1868 and a delegate to the National Republican Convention at Philadelphia in 1872 and in 1884. He was elected from Franklin County to the North Carolina House for the terms of 1868, 1870, 1872, 1876, and 1887.

In 1877 Williamson introduced a bill requesting the General Assembly to encourage the state's senators and representatives in Washington to urge passage of a law setting apart territory beyond the Missouri River "for the sole and exclusive use and occupation of the colored race." He said he introduced the bill because of the hostility of whites to Negroes, and because he believed there was no hope for justice for Negroes in North Carolina. He declared that "the origins of the Negro race, his color, physical formation, ignorance and poverty formed the principal hobby for Democratic politicians to indulge in during political excitement." The proposal attracted considerable attention, but in general the black political leadership opposed colonization. Williamson was described as one of the leaders in the lower house who "commanded the respect of the entire body of members, Democratic and Republican." In 1881 Williamson founded the Raleigh Banner, the organ of the North Carolina Industrial Association; he later sold it and founded the Raleigh Gazette, which "became one of the most influential Negro papers in the state." Both papers urged the "advancement of the educational and industrial status of the Negroes in the state."

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Cockshutt, Catherine W., interview with John P. Williamson, III, and Benjamin N. Williamson, III, 1974.
- Cockshutt, Catherine W., interview with Benjamin N. Williamson, III, March 14, 1975.
- Franklin County Records, Franklin County Courthouse, Louisburg, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate papers).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4½ L&L: 36° 06' 03" 78° 17' 45"

UTM REFERENCES

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Research and architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Division of Archives and History

25 April 1975

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

109 East Jones Street

919/829-7862

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Raleigh

North Carolina

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE



TITLE North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer DATE 25 April 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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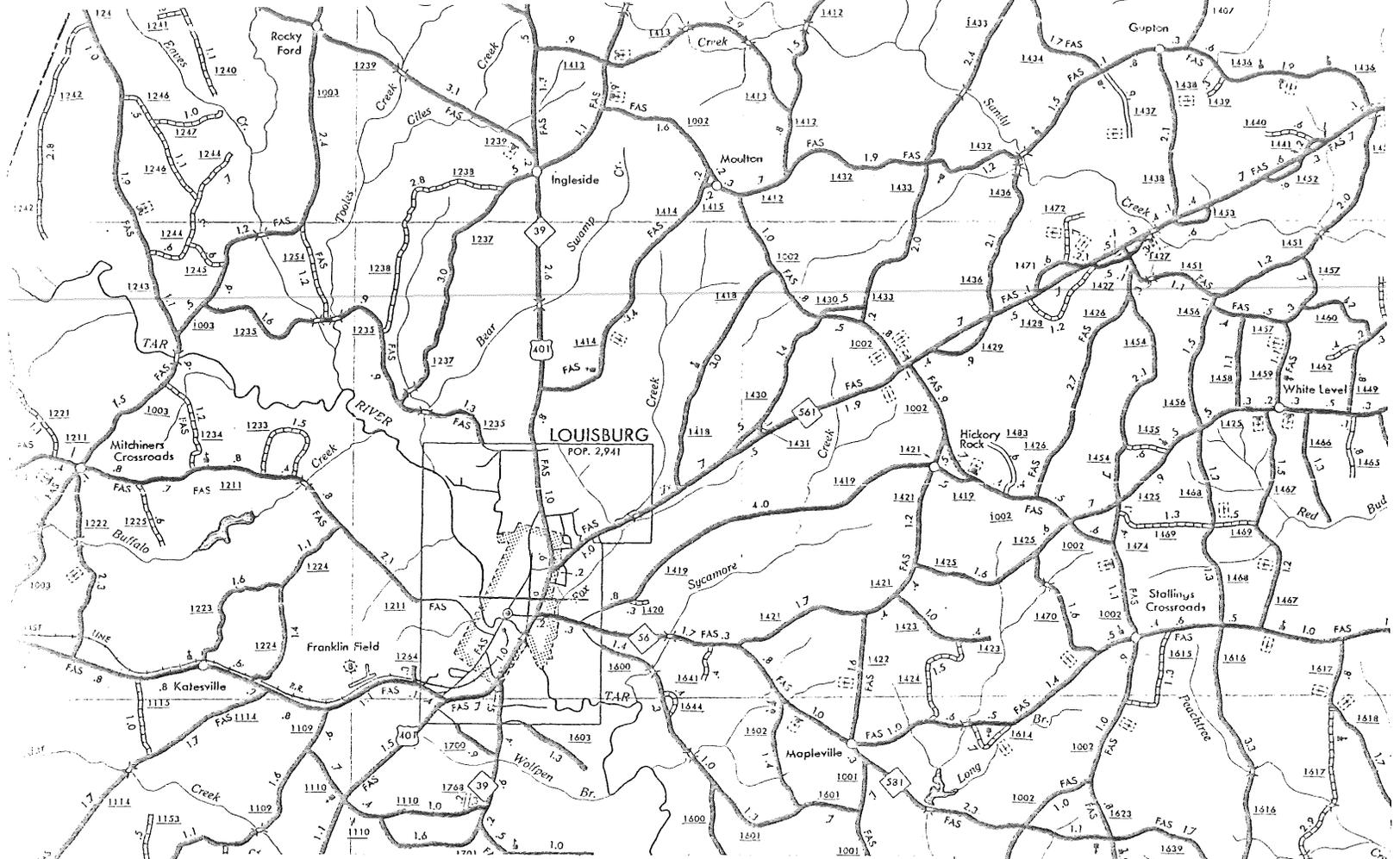
RECEIVED

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

Franklin County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina
(Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate papers).
Logan, Frenise A., The Negro in North Carolina, 1876-1894. Chapel Hill, University
of North Carolina Press, 1974.
U. S. Census Records, Franklin County, North Carolina, 1860 and 1870.



Williamson House
 401 Cedar Street
 Louisburg, North Carolina

N. C. Highway Commission Map (no USGS map available)
 Scale: 1/2" = 1 mile
 Date: 1974

Latitude Longitude
 degrees minutes seconds degrees minutes seconds

36 06 03 78 17 45

