Gardner House

2. LOCATION

S.R. 1383, 0.5 mi. east of junction with S.R. 1140

Jamestown vicinity

N. Carolina

3. CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site</td>
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<td>Structure</td>
<td>Both</td>
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<tr>
<td>Object</td>
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<td>Preservation work in progress</td>
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PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural
Commercial
Educational
Entertainment
Government
Industrial
Military
Museum
Private
Religious
Scientific
Transportation
Other (Specify)
Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Mr. Samuel Richardson Wiley
2508 Camden Road
Greensboro, N.C., 27403

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Guilford County Courthouse
Greensboro

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Title of Survey:

Date of Survey:

Depositary for Survey Records:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

North Carolina

Greensboro

Guilford

27403

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The Gardner House is a two-story dwelling of brick laid in common bond. It is four bays wide and two bays deep with an exterior chimney at either gable end. The main (west) facade has an entrance in the second bay from the north; there is six-over-six sash at both levels throughout the house. All windows are set in broad molded frames and have simple flat arches except at the attic level. All windows have heavy stone sills. A late nineteenth century, one-story porch carries across the main facade and around the south end as far as the first bay to shelter a six-panel door with raised panels and applied moldings. The door is surmounted by a four-light transom. The south gable end has narrow windows with four-over-four sash flanking the chimney at the second story and attic levels, with a similar window paired against the first-floor door. The north gable end has only paired windows which flank an impressive pair of chimneys which join at the second level above an unusual arch and rises to the roof ridge as one. Like the front, the rear has four bays, but the north two bays are covered by a one-story, four-bay wing set perpendicular to the main house.

The floor plan, described by T. T. Waterman as a modified Quaker plan, is one that is characteristic of Piedmont North Carolina homes built by prosperous farmers during the Federal period. It consists of a central hall with one large room (in this case to the south) and two smaller rooms. A strikingly unique feature of this house is the use of interior stone window sills, found at all windows, which project from the wall in the interior. The front door has been replaced but it appears that it was a double door. The hall walls are plastered with a molded chair rail of awkwardly heavy proportions. The rear door is an unusually wide six-panel door with a five-light transom. The molded architraves throughout the house have broad, gently sloping planes, indicating late Federal styling. The doors leading from the hall into the rooms have six flat panels with applied moldings which are more delicate. The open-string stair with simple brackets rises to the north from the rear door for three steps to a landing from which it ascends in an unbroken flight. The square newel has a small molded cap; this newel is repeated at the landing. The rounded handrail is supported by slender balusters, rectangular in section and set three to a step. A two-panel door which leads beneath the steps has broader moldings than the other doors and has its original box lock. The house has much of its original hardware throughout. The wing to the rear has one exterior window exposed inside the wing. This window has shutters with three flat panels each. The shutters are held in place by strap hinges and both appear to be original.

The parlor, larger than any of those of other dwellings with similar floor plans, has a large Federal-style three-part mantel with paneled end blocks and pilasters. The center tablet is unadorned, and the molded shelf breaks out over all three elements. The two smaller rooms are similar, each having a mantel of Georgian form which has a broad, molded surround at the fire opening, a frieze punctuated by two small, vertical panels at each end and equal-sized horizontal panels in the center portion. All are surmounted by a large five-stage, molded shelf. These mantels are also found on the second floor, whose plan repeats that of the first. The chair rail found on the second floor is a much more gracefully molded one. The wing to the
rear is said to be the original kitchen and to have been joined to the house later. There is also a brick outbuilding by the approach drive as well as a log dwelling.

Northeast of the house is the site of the Gardner gold mine, of which considerable remains are said to exist. No exploration of it has been undertaken, but it is included in the nominated area because of its connection with the Gardner family, its potential archaeological value, and its importance to the history of gold mining in North Carolina.
The Gardner House is an important member of the significant group of Federal period brick houses characteristic of Piedmont North Carolina; it is notable for its brickwork, interesting variation of the Quaker plan, and unusual arch-linked double chimney. It is of local historical significance as the home of an early Quaker settler near Jamestown. Nearby is the site of a gold mine operated in the mid-nineteenth century as the "Gardner Hill Mining Company."

Stephen Gardner was an early settler near Jamestown, in Guilford County. In November, 1779, Governor Richard Caswell granted to him a 222-acre tract of land lying "On the waters of Deep River." This is the first recorded reference to Gardner's land holdings in Guilford. He was a Guilford native and a Quaker, and was thirty-three years old at the time of this initial transaction.

Five years later, Gardner received two additional grants of land in approximately the same area, this time from Governor Alexander Martin. The first of these conveyed to Gardner a 594-acre tract; the second, a 640-acre tract, both "on the waters of Russells Creek." For this land, Gardner paid the then-standard price of "Fifty shillings for every hundred acres hereby granted." Gardner disposed of the 594-acre tract in 1786, but made the larger tract the site of his homeplace. Between 1779 and 1820, he freely bought and sold a number of smaller Guilford tracts lying either on Russell's Creek, the Deep River, or the Reedy Fork Creek (a part of the Haw River system). At one point (1780), Gardner owned as many as 1,034 acres in Guilford County alone.

No evidence could be found to indicate that Gardner ever served in public office or otherwise distinguished himself. He apparently spent most of his time at or near his lands in southwestern Guilford, upon which his house is said to have been completed about 1827. Gardner died in March, 1830. His will, dated December 3, 1826, contains a number of specific bequests of money to his four living daughters and nine living grandchildren. A total of $2,360 is so bequeathed. In addition, the will devises in equal shares to John and Stephen T. Gardner, two grandsons, a 180-acre tract of land in Guilford County and to a third grandson a 140-acre tract in Randolph County (including a tanyard). The remainder of the estate, including the homeplace, was left in equal shares to Gardner's two sons George and Abel, who were also named as co-executors. Abel Gardner
apparently took possession of the homeplace at this point.

Of special interest is a codicil dated February 26, 1830, which acknowledged that "there has since the date of the will been a gold-mine discovered, on the One Hundred and Eighty Acre tract of Land the tract devised to the two minor grandsons John and Stephen T. Gardner." The stated purpose of this codicil was "to make a different disposition of the minerals which may be found in Said Land." The mineral rights were specifically bequeathed "to my Executors George and Abel Gardner to be disposed of at their discretion during their lives, or the life of either of them."

Co-executor George Gardner died in August, 1836. Abel Gardner retained possession of the homeplace tract during the ensuing twenty-year period. Whether he made the house his actual dwelling place is uncertain. In September, 1856, Gardner sold the tract, "containing four hundred & forty acres," to William Millis Wiley, also a Guilford resident. Wiley paid $4,000 for the tract and in all probability acquired it primarily for its known gold and copper ore deposits. A geological survey of the mine site made that year noted that "the Gardner mine yields under careful management $20 a ton for ore with the poorest quality bringing about half of that price. The ore yields about 30 per cent of copper."

Wiley and several associates operated the mine under the name "Gardner Hill Mining Company," which is said to have "enjoyed a season of unusual prosperity" before the Civil War. At one time the company is said to have produced forty tons of copper ore per week. Unfortunately, the mine was abandoned in the mid-1870s.

William M. Wiley died intestate in 1908, leaving seven children. Each child received a one-seventh undivided interest in the tract, with Samuel Shannon Wiley taking the parcel which included the homeplace. The present owner is his nephew, Samuel Richardson Wiley, who purchased the property in 1926.
Research by Robert Topkins, survey specialist; architectural description by Charles Greer Suttlemyre, Jr., survey specialist.


Guilford County Records, Guilford County Courthouse, Greensboro, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

Guilford County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Records).


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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 60 acres

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

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History

STREET AND NUMBER:

109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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:

Thornton W. Mitchell

Title:

Acting Director, Division of Archives and History

Date:

31 May 1974

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register
Gardner House
Jamestown vicinity
North Carolina

USGS Map, High Point East Quadrangle
Scale: 1:24,000
Date: 1956; photorevised 1966

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