United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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.

1. Name of Property
   historic name James Walker Nursing School Quarters
   other names/site number New Hanover County Dept. of Social Services Building

2. Location
   street & number 1020 Rankin Street
   city, town Wilmington
   state North Carolina code NC
   county New Hanover code 129
   zip code 28401

3. Classification
   Ownership of Property
   ☑ private
   ☑ public-local
   ☑ public-State
   ☑ public-Federal
   Category of Property
   ☑ building(s)
   ☑ district
   ☑ site
   ☑ structure
   ☑ object
   Number of Resources within Property
   Contributing: 1
   Noncontributing: 0
   buildings
   sites
   structures
   objects
   Total
   Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
   Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination ☑ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.
   Signature of certifying official: William P. Bain Jr.
   Date: 6-12-89
   State or Federal agency and bureau

   In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.
   Signature of commenting or other official
   Date
   State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification
   I, hereby certify that this property is:
   ☑ entered in the National Register.
   ☑ See continuation sheet.
   ☑ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
   ☑ determined not eligible for the National Register.
   ☑ removed from the National Register.
   ☑ other, (explain:__________)
   Signature of the Keeper
   Date of Action
6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
- Education
  - Education-Related Housing
- Health Care
  - Hospital

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
- Vacant/Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
- Other: Utilitarian industrial
- Colonial Revival
- Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
- foundation: Concrete
- walls: Brick
- roof: Asphalt
- other: Metal (cornices), Wood (solariums)

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The James Walker Nursing School Quarters is a simply configured, institutional building showing a restrained application of early twentieth-century stylistic motifs. Once standing as a part of the complex of the James Walker Hospital, the nurses quarters is the sole surviving building remaining on the property.

The building is four stories high on a raised basement. The facade width of the main block is 19 bays, with a solarium section at the north end and a later addition to the south. Another addition is centered on the rear (east) elevation. The original six-over-six sash remain; some entrance doors have been modified.

A reinforced concrete frame is the structural heart of the building. A reinforced concrete exterior skin and floors complete the structural configuration. The exterior skin is brick-veneered, with banding and decorative diamonds ornamenting the surface. Neo-Classical and Colonial Revival elements are sparsely applied to an otherwise utilitarian and institutional block. Originally having two main entrances, a third has been added at the north end of the facade by enlarging a window. The central entrance retains its original fanlight and leaded glass sidelights; these features have been replaced at the southern entrance. Originally, the central and southern entrances were covered by identical monumental porticos. (see attached documentary photograph) The porticos were articulated on the facade wall at each location by four flat pilasters with composite capitals topped with a frieze. The frieze continued around each portico and was topped with an iron railing above the cornice. The porticos were supported by massive columns, again with composite capitals. At some point after 1966, the porticos, frieze and pilaster capitals were removed, leaving white concrete ghost marks. Modern metal canopies were later added above each exterior door.

See continuation sheet
The cornice is of molded metal and is surmounted by a shallow parapet; the roof is flat. On the facade, three plaques are evenly spaced along the parapet, each plaque flanked by anthemion-derived brackets.

Wings and additions date from the original construction through the late 1960s. As completed in 1921, the north solarium was constructed contemporary to the main structure. An addition was made in 1926, but the specifics of this change are presently unknown. A south addition was made in 1937; in a 1961 photograph, it stood three-stories high. This addition was demolished after 1961; however, it appears from inspection of the building today that the simple stair it incorporated was retained and enclosed in brick, after demolition. A fourth story was added to the main building block in 1945. The fourth story copies original brick type, shape, color and patterning to the extent that it is nearly indistinguishable from the original walls; the fact that it was indeed an addition could only be confirmed through research, as architecturally the building reads as a whole. The original cornice appears to have been raised to incorporate the new floor. The rear elevator was added to the building in 1968, when the building was converted to use as offices for the County Department of Social Services.

The interior plan is divided into thirds, running the length of the building, with the hallway occupying the central third. The ceiling of the hall has been lowered, to enclose heating and air ducts. On the second, third and fourth floors, rooms flank the hall in a typical dormitory arrangement. Shared bathrooms are interspersed in the rows of rooms. All trim is simple and survives, ceilings generally remain at original level, and a closet is partitioned within each room. Although the fourth floor was added, its arrangement and finish copy that of the second and third floors. The first floor differs in incorporating communal areas, linked by rows of rooms as above. At the north end is a sitting room, to which recent partitions have been added; a simple Colonial Revival mantel is the focus of the room. The linear room arrangement is also interrupted by reception areas at both central and south entrances.
The main stair and hall remain one of the most handsome features of the building. It rises behind the central entrance, along the rear central bay of the building. The open-string stair is constructed of reinforced concrete, with plain iron balusters and a molded wood rail; the rail curves at each landing. Stair placement can be readily identified on the building's exterior by the paired windows lighting the stair hall, now located adjacent to the east elevator addition.

The basement rooms are partially finished, sharing room for mechanical systems. A kitchen and two large rooms occupy the majority of the finished space at this level. In 1957, these areas were used as teaching and recreational facilities for the nurses.
8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

- [ ] nationally
- [x] statewide
- [ ] locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: [X] A  [ ] B  [ ] C  [ ] D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) [ ] A  [ ] B  [ ] C  [ ] D  [ ] E  [ ] F  [ ] G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health/Medicine</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Period of Significance</th>
<th>Significant Dates</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1921-1939</td>
<td>1921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

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

The James Walker Nursing School Quarters is of statewide historical significance due to its embodiment of a major theme in medical education in North Carolina and its comparative rarity in the state as an early nurses' dormitory. The Quarters, a four-story brick dormitory, was built in 1921 and functioned as the nurses' quarters of the James Walker Nursing School until 1967 when the associated hospital closed. The hospital has been demolished, and the Quarters is the only building surviving from this medical complex. Its period of significance closed in 1939, the last year that it continued to meet the fifty-year-old criterion of eligibility. The Quarters is the second oldest nursing school building surviving in North Carolina. The earliest such building known to survive is Wyche House, a 1910 nurses' dormitory on the former Watts Hospital campus in Durham. Although the James Walker Nursing School Quarters has undergone a number of changes, it retains enough physical integrity to convey its association with the early period of medical education in North Carolina. It is therefore eligible for the Register under Criterion A, although because of the changes it no longer appears to be eligible under Criterion C for architectural significance.
HISTORIC CONTEXT:

The formation of nursing schools within North Carolina occurred congruent with the growth of hospitals in the state, during the postbellum period. Motivation for the development of these facilities came largely as a result of increased knowledge by medical practitioners of the need for surgical anesthesia, surgical nursing and surgical cleanliness in care provided to patients. (1) As early as 1887, an editorial appeared in the North Carolina Medical Journal entitled "Trained Nurses in Smaller Communities". The editorial urged the establishment of "a cottage-hospital and small training-school in provincial communities" as a means for physicians to secure better care for their patients. (2) The first nursing school in the state, however, did not become a reality until 1894.

In May of 1894, Rex Hospital opened in Raleigh, N.C. In July of that year, they hired Mary Wyche, a recent graduate from Philadelphia General Hospital, as head nurse. Miss Wyche began the first training school for nurses in the state in October of that year. (3) Other nursing schools were established throughout the state, shortly thereafter. (see attached appendix) As can best be determined, the James Walker Nursing School was the thirteenth such school begun in the state.

As nursing schools had proliferated throughout the state and throughout the country, needs arose for qualitative standards by which these training programs and their graduates could be evaluated. A movement began, largely within state Nurses' Associations, for the institution of state legislation creating registered graduate nurses and specifying requirements for attaining this designation. North Carolina was the first state in the country to secure registration for nurses, with a bill signed into law by Governor Charles B. Aycock on March 3, 1903. (4) The North Carolina law required two years of training or passage of an examination issued by a state board of nursing examiners, before a nurse could be registered. Upon registration, nurses were entitled to use "the title 'Registered Nurse' signified by the letters R.N." (5) The enabling legislation is significant as it created the designation of "registered nurse" and established the first professional criteria for nurses in the state and in the country.
Most of the state's hospitals and nursing schools have experienced many moves and consolidations during the twentieth century. Only one nurses' building is known to predate the James Walker Nursing School Quarters: Wyche House, at the former Watts Hospital site, Durham, built in 1910. Other known early buildings of this property type are the Highsmith Hospital Nurses Dormitory in Fayetteville, built in the 1940s, and the Presbyterian Hospital Nurses School Building in Charlotte, also built in the 1940s. A list of early North Carolina nursing schools and their associated buildings is contained in the appendix.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The James Walker Memorial Hospital, completed in 1901, was the sixth known hospital built in or near the city of Wilmington. It was preceded by the State Marine Hospital (1817-1822), Mount Tirzah Hospital (1835 - c. 20th c.; General Hospital No. 4, during the Civil War), the Marine Hospital (1857 - c. 1871), the Small-Pox Hospital (1865-1866), and W.W. Lane's Hospital (1875 - 1881, which became City-County Hospital and so functioned until c. 1900). (6) The James Walker Memorial Hospital building was constructed on the site of and replaced the late nineteenth century City-County Hospital. (7) The building received its name from its donor, James Walker, a native of Scotland and a builder. Walker had constructed the 1857 Marine Hospital, among other structures in the city. (8) When completed, the hospital had a fifty-bed capacity.

The James Walker Memorial Hospital received an amendment to its charter on February 5, 1903 to establish a school for nurses (9). The fact that the first class graduated a few months later suggests that the school had begun prior to incorporation. The first superintendent of nurses was Miss M. Lilly Heller (Mrs. Thomas Little) of Greensboro. The first graduating class of 1903 had two members: Alberta Robinson of Dunn and Florence Hayes (Mrs. Morris Caldwell) of Wilmington. Florence Hayes Caldwell received the first certificate of registration issued to a graduate nurse by the State of North Carolina. (10) Mrs. Caldwell received her registration in New Hanover County on July 1, 1903. (11)
As the James Walker Memorial Hospital grew, so also did its nursing school. In 1904, a thirty-five-bed addition was made to the original hospital. Named the Sprunt Ward, it housed black patients and also included nurses quarters and a dispensary. More growth came in 1909 with another addition, the Bear Building, used for patients with contagious diseases until its demolition in the early 1940s. In 1915, the Marian Sprunt Annex provided the hospital with a thirty-three-bed maternity and children's ward.

In 1920, $100,000 was raised as a memorial to Rev. A.D. McClure, a former pastor at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, N.C., and used to construct a nurses quarters. Completed in 1921, the quarters originally accommodated 50 nurses and is the sole surviving structure of the James Walker complex remaining today. In 1937, an addition was made to the south end of the quarters enlarging it to a total of 113 rooms for nurses; this addition was demolished after 1961, with only its stairway apparently retained. In 1945, a fourth floor was added to the original quarters building.

Construction of a three-story northern wing for the hospital aided in its expansion to 185 beds, in 1937. Additional enlargements were made to the James Walker Memorial Hospital in 1943, when a three-story building with basement (South Pavilion) was constructed. A women's ward and kitchen/dining room addition was completed in 1947 and was the last expansion made to the hospital. The cumulative age and deteriorating conditions of the James Walker complex had become a community concern by the 1950s; in 1957, a hospital consultant was hired to make recommendations on continued use of the facilities. The lack of fire resistance in many of the buildings combined with conditions ranked from "fair" to "very poor", led to the conclusion that the James Walker complex should cease to serve as a hospital. It was further suggested that the hospital site be turned over to the county for development as a housing project to replace many "low standard housing units" immediately surrounding the property.
The last class from the James Walker Nursing School graduated in 1966 (21); today, the University of North Carolina at Wilmington School of Nursing continues the educational role of this earlier nursing school. James Walker Hospital closed in 1967 and was absorbed by the then new New Hanover County Memorial Hospital. The James Walker complex was given to the City of Wilmington c. 1972-73 for use as a park, with the exception of the Nursing School Quarters, which was given to New Hanover County in 1968. All buildings except the 1921 Nursing School Quarters were demolished. The former quarters was remodeled as headquarters for the county Department of Social Services, a function which it served until July of 1988, when the department relocated into a new facility. The quarters is currently vacant and an adaptive reuse is being sought.
FOOTNOTES:


(2) Ibid., p. 279.


(4) Fitzpatrick, pp. 113-114; Wyche, p. 95. Three other states also adopted similar registration law in 1903: New Jersey on April 7, New York on April 27 and Virginia on May 14, 1903.


(7) Wyche, p. 36; Sanborn Map Company, Insurance maps of Wilmington, 1904, hereinafter cited as Sanborn maps.


(10) Wyche, p. 37; Fales, p. 121.

(11) Original certificate in collection of New Hanover County Museum, Wilmington, N.C.

(12) From a beginning graduating class of two in 1903, the school had expanded to 72 students by c.1938; between 1903 and c.1938, the school graduated 335 nurses. Wyche, pp. 37-38.

(13) Fales, p. 121; Sanborn maps, 1904, 1910 and 1915.

(14) Fales, p. 122; Wyche, p. 37.

(16) Wyche, photograph p. 43; Interview with Margaret Thompson, Wilmington, N.C., graduate of James Walker School of Nursing 1942, interviewed August of 1988.

(17) Fales, p. 122.


(19) Ibid., pp. 20-21, p. 37.

(20) Ibid., p. 42.

(21) The Epitome, yearbook of the James Walker School of Nursing, 1966.
General Notes: It is very difficult to determine chronological founding dates for nursing schools in the state. Within Wyche's book, for example, she notes differing dates of founding and incorporation. In compiling this list, N.C. Session Laws were reviewed from 1885 - date of the first mention of a N.C. School - to 1903 - date of the chartering of James Walker School, to attempt to confirm dates of incorporation. Only two dates of incorporation were found in these records. Thus, schools are here arranged in chronological order according to the earliest date of existence given by Wyche.

A second qualification of this chronology must be made about the definition of nursing related buildings. In surveying standing structures throughout the state, hospitals survive which were surely used in some capacity for nursing training. However, complete histories of many hospitals do not exist, hence the role each building has taken in nursing education cannot be assessed at this time. The chronology for this National Register Nomination is based, then, on the dates of buildings constructed specifically for nursing schools.

LEONARD HOSPITAL: Raleigh: p. 127
Black nursing school, associated with Shaw University school established in 1885?
No dates of incorporation found; existence of this school prior to the 1894 Rex Hospital school, cited by Wyche as first in the state, cannot be confirmed. Ruth Little, National Register Coordinator, NC Division of Archives and History, Raleigh: nothing known to be standing in conjunction with Leonard Hospital

GOOD SAMARITAN: Charlotte: p. 126
Black hospital, nursing school by 1888
No dates of incorporation found; again, as per Wyche noted above.
Dan Morrill, UNC-Charlotte, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Properties Commission, 704-376-9115: Hospital building exists, dating from early 1890s; however, no building constructed for nurses survive.
REX HOSPITAL: Raleigh: pp. 31-32
Oct. 1894, cited as 1st training school for nurses in NC
(Note: author of book started school)

As per discussion with Ruth Little, this hospital has been moved/rebuilt five times; nothing known to survive that is pre-1921.

WATTS HOSPITAL: Durham: p. 44
1895: incorporated hospital and school
Ruth Little, Raleigh; Jim McDuffie, Communications Officer, NC School of Science and Math, Box 2418, Durham, NC 27705: Original hospital complex built in 1895 on West Main Street at Buchanan Boulevard. The original main building was moved in 1914 to 302 Watts Street. Another c. 1900-09 building from the original Watts hospital remains on its original site as part of McPherson Hospital. All other original buildings were demolished after Watts Hospital moved to the new complex built in 1909, at the corner of Broad Street and Club Boulevard (property now occupied by the N.C. School of Science and Math). Of buildings in this complex, one related to nursing remains: Wyche House, constructed in 1910 as a nurse's dormitory. (Note: This is the oldest known nursing building in the state.) As per Mr. McDuffie, Watts School of Nursing retains archival records which can be accessed by contacting Vic Moore, Durham County Hospital Corporation: 919-470-4000. The former Watts Hospital/N.C. School of Science and Math is listed in the National Register.

ST. AGNES HOSPITAL: Raleigh: pp. 127-129
Black nursing school associated with St. Augustine College 1898?
As per Ruth Little, nothing known to remain.

HIGHSMITH HOSPITAL: Fayetteville: p. 46
Sept. 1, 1899: school
1st class graduated 1902
Demolished when new hospital built in 1926
Scott Loehr, Director of Museum of the Lower Cape Fear, Fayetteville, 919-486-1330: Museum located within former hospital nurse's dormitory: building dates from 1940s.
ST. PETER'S HOSPITAL: Charlotte: p. 29
1899 - organized school
Dan Morrill: Original hospital building stands, in modified form; no nursing building stands.

ASHEVILLE MISSION HOSPITAL: Asheville: p. 39
school organized 1896, incorporated 1901
old hospital demo'd 1921; new opened 1923
1929: nurses home built
Martha Fullington, Survey Specialist, Western Field Office, NC Division of Archives and History, Asheville, 704-298-5024: Main hospital building is earliest standing from complex. Built in 1929 from bequest in will of Edward Dillworth Latta of Charlotte, at cost of $140,000. All other building later.

1901: organized school and accepted first class nurse's home c. 1914?
new one built 1930
Lee Ann Pegram, Forsyth County Planning Department, 919-727-2087: Earliest known hospital in Winston-Salem is Central Hospital complex, built c. 1920: no more accurate date known. (Do not know relationship here if any of Twin-City and Central). Several buildings in complex; no known nurses buildings.

DR. HENRY F. LONG'S HOSPITAL (BILLINGSLEY MEMORIAL): Statesville: pp. 43-44
incorporated 1901
moved to Center St. in 1905
Ruth Little: Nothing pre-1921 known standing.

LINCOLN HOSPITAL: Durham: p. 129
Black hospital, nursing school in 1902
Ruth Little: Nothing pre-1921 known standing.

WILSON SANATORIUM: Wilson: p. 45
1902 - incorporated school
class graduated in 1899, did not get diplomas until 1902
Lu-Ann Munson, Preservation Planner, City of Wilson, 919-291-8111: Building demolished, except for annex currently used as a commercial building; no known nursing training related to annex.
JAMES WALKER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: Wilmington: pp. 36-37
2/5/1903: chartered school
nurses home: 1921, with addition in 1937
(Note: Second oldest known nursing building in the state.)

MERCY HOSPITAL: Belmont: pp. 46-48
became Presbyterian Hospital in 1916
Nurses Home blt. 1922 w/ addition in 1937
Dan Morrill: Didn't know anything about this hospital.
There was a Mercy Hospital in Charlotte, which had no known connection to this hospital. Also, there is a current Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte, which had no known connection with this hospital (see below). No other sources for information now known.

ST. LEO'S HOSPITAL: Greensboro: p. 48
1906 - incorp. school
1922 - nurse's home
Ruth Little: Hospital has been totally demolished.

STATE HOSPITAL FOR INSANE (DOROTHEA DIX): Raleigh: p. 29
School c. 1918?
Ruth Little: No known nursing buildings pre-1921.

COMMUNITY HOSPITAL: Wilmington: p. 129
Black hospital, school operated 1920-1936
Angela B. Rowe, Historic Wilmington Foundation, Inc., 919-762-2511: Buildings stood at corner of Castle and S. Front Streets; all demolished.

L. RICHARDSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: Greensboro: p. 130
Black hospital, school 1927?
1929: nurses home
Note: Did not check further as post-dates 1921
NEGRO DIVISION STATE SANATORIUM: Raleigh: p. 129
  school organized 1926
  Note: Did not check further as post-dates 1921

DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NURSING: Durham: p. 48
  1931: 1st class enrolled
  Note: Did Not check further as post-dates 1921

PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL: Charlotte: p. 50
  1936: 1st nurse enrolled
  Dan Morrill: Oldest building standing is nursing school: 1940s. According to Morrill, an unpublished manuscript exists on the history of this hospital, authored by Jennette Greenwood; he knows how to contact her.
9. Major Bibliographical References

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Previous documentation on file (NPS):
☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _______________________________________________________________________
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _______________________________________________________________________

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .26 Acre

UTM References
A 1, 8
Zone Easting Northing
C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Angela B. Rowe
organization Historic Wilmington Properties
date Dec. 10, 1988; revised Feb. 1989
street & number 209 Dock Street
telephone 919-762-2511
city or town Wilmington
state NC
zip code 28401
Interviews:
Jim Duffie, Communications Officer, NC School of Science and Math, Durham, N.C., August 1988.
Martha Fullington, Survey Specialist, Western Field Office, NC Division of Archives and History, Asheville, N.C., August 1988.
Ruth Little, National Register Coordinator, NC Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C., August 1988.
Mrs. Margaret Thompson, graduate of James Walker School of Nursing in 1942, Wilmington, N.C., August 1988.


New Hanover County Museum, Image Archives, Wilmington, N.C.


Beginning at a point, said point being the northeast corner of Block 227 of the City of Wilmington, said point also being the intersection of the southern line of Rankin St. with the western line of 11th Street, and running thence from said beginning point west along the southern line of Rankin St. approximately 60' to a point thence running southwardly approximately 195' to a point thence running east and parallel with Rankin St. approximately 60' to a point thence running north along the western line of 11th Street approximately 195' to the point of beginning. The same being part of Block 227 according to the official plan of the City of Wilmington.

Originally, the James Walker Hospital and School complex covered the entirety of Blocks 227 and 213. The property was split in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the Nurses' Quarters was conveyed to New Hanover County and the residue of the property conveyed to the City of Wilmington. All structures standing on the land conveyed to the City were demolished and a park placed on the vacant land; hence, it is not appropriate to include this area, as it has no integrity.

The property nominated here consists of a portion of the original tract given to New Hanover County. The boundary is defined on two sides by streets: Rankin and N. Eleventh Streets. The remainder of the boundary is drawn to include the Quarters building and its immediate landscaped area. The boundary excludes the remainder of the property conveyed to the county as it consists of vacant land (formerly sites of buildings and additions), hence has no integrity.