United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  

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 Duke-Lawrence House  

and/or common Lawrence House, Shoulars House  

2. Location  

street & number South side of NC 305/561, 0.6 mi. east of Junction with SR 1521  

city, town Rich Square  

county Northampton  

code 037  

3. Classification  

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<th>Status</th>
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<th>Accessible</th>
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4. Owner of Property  

name Mr. and Mrs. Edward Regan  

Telephone Number: (919) 539-2297  

street & number Post Office Box 118  

city, town Rich Square  

county Northampton  

code 037  

5. Location of Legal Description  

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Northampton County Courthouse, Register of Deeds  

city, town Rich Square  

county Northampton  

code 037  

6. Representation in Existing Surveys  

North Carolina State University School of Design/Historic American  

Buildings Survey  

Date 1964  

Has this property been determined eligible? yes X, no  

Federal X State  

Depositary for survey records North Carolina State University School of Design  

City, town Raleigh  

State North Carolina
7. Description

The Duke-Lavrence House, currently under renovation after a period of neglect, is an atypical Georgian dwelling. The house is located approximately two miles east of the town of Rich Square in a grove of trees at the end of a lane. The one-and-a-half-story building has a "T"-shaped plan with the top of the "T" being constructed of brick and the stem of the "T" being frame with a brick end, which contains the chimney. Both portions of the house contain interior chimneys and gable roofs, which are presently covered with tin. The brick, eastern, portion of the house is probably unique in North Carolina domestic architecture. Its east elevation rises a full two stories in height while its west elevation is only one story, with a narrow dormer having originally been placed in the sloping roof at the second floor level near each end of this elevation. The frame portion of this house was constructed first, but the workmanship and detailing of the larger brick portion are like those of the frame portion, indicating that the same builder was responsible for both.

The brick, eastern, part of the house is laid in Flemish bond, both above and below the molded water table. Most of the headers are glazed. At the first floor level, the four, evenly-spaced windows on the east elevation and the doorway on the south elevation are surmounted by rubbed-brick, segmental arches, while the two windows located near the ends of west elevation are topped by jack arches. The second-floor windows, which exist only on the two-story, east elevation, are topped by soldier-coursed arches. Above the basement windows and door the brick is simply laid in courses. The inside walls of the basement are English bond.

The foundation and brick chimney end of the earlier, western, frame wing of the house are also laid in Flemish bond with most of the headers being glazed. The brick chimney end, at the west end of the wing, has an unmolded water table on its west elevation, and corbeled brick, of which two courses are exposed below the existing bedmolding of the cornice, on the north and south (side) elevations. The remainder of the north and south elevations are sided with beaded weatherboards put on with drawn-point, "L"-headed nails. The two shed dormers which survive on the south elevation of this wing date from the nineteenth century. There were originally three, taller, narrower dormers on both the north and south elevations which corresponded with the fenestration at the first floor level of this wing.

Each floor of the brick, eastern, part of the house is divided into two rooms. The north basement room is entered by a doorway located at ground level in the east elevation. This room contains, at its north end, a large, cooking fireplace in which the weight of the chimney above is carried by an interior brick arch as well as by the massive wooden lintel. In either side of the interior of the fireplace, immediately below the springing of the arch, there is a small, pointed niche similar to those in the Newbold-White House in Perquimans County. There is original iron, used for cooking, surviving at the back of the fireplace. Running from east to west across the ceiling, near the center of the room, is a large beam. The ceiling joists are parallel to the beam and have a half-round bead on their lower edges. The joists to the north of the beam rest on a plate laid into the brick, while the joists to the south of the beam are mortised into a wooden sill. Much of the original plaster survives in this room and shelves, installed prior to plastering, are located on the south wall. The low-ceilinged, south basement room is entered through a low opening located near the center of the wall between the two basement rooms. In the center of the south room is a large, approximately-square pit surrounded at floor level by a worn brick edge on
which rests a large wooden frame. The four boards which comprise the frame stand on their narrower edge, with the top edge of the boards on the north and south sides each having three notches. The chimney footing, located at the south end of the room, is filled in with bricks laid in English bond.

The two first-floor rooms in the brick part of the house are at different levels. This accounts for the different window heights at this story on the east elevation. The south room, which is above the basement room containing the pit, is at a lower level than the north room, which is above the kitchen. The two rooms are connected by a doorway located at the east end of the wall between them. Three steps lead down from this doorway into the south room. In the early 1930s the original interior paneling and woodwork were removed from the house and installed in 1937 in Willow Oaks in Richmond, Virginia. Five interior photographs taken in 1932 before the paneling and woodwork were removed are extant. The woodwork that is presently in the house was installed soon after 1932 and is extremely plain and scanty.

In the north first-floor room the chimney is flanked on the left (west) by a closet, which contains its original plaster and some of its original shelving. To the right (east) of the chimney a half-turn stair leads to the second floor. This stairwell also contains original plaster. The fireplace opening has been closed up but the arched outline of the opening can still be seen. There was no hearth originally, but there was a hearth in place when the present, wide, circular-sawed, heart-yellow-pine floor boards were installed. The 1932 photograph of the chimney wall shows a fully-paneled wall with an arched fireplace opening and two doors to the right of the fireplace. The door to the extreme right in the photograph corresponds to the existing location of the stair which leads to the second floor.

In the south first-floor room the chimney projects into the room and is flanked on the left (east) by an exterior doorway. Here too, the fireplace opening has been closed up but the arched outline of the opening can be seen. A doorway located at the north end of the west wall of the room connects it with the frame wing. The 1932 photograph of the chimney wall in this room shows a fully-paneled wall with an arched fireplace opening in the center, flanked on the left by a doorway and on the right by a glass-doored cabinet. The 1932 photograph also shows a paneled dado and a paneled and/or shuttered window reveal at the south end of the west wall.

The two second-floor rooms are at the same level. The stairwell rises into the northeast corner of the north room and contains some of its original plaster. The adjacent north wall framing, lath, and some plaster are original, including the closet opening at the west end of the wall. Behind the north wall the chimney steps back to the gable. There is, and was, no fireplace in this room. The location of an original dormer can be seen near the north end of the sloping west wall. The second-floor rooms in the brick part of the house are connected by a doorway near the center of the wall between the rooms. The south wall of the south room is flush, with a closet, containing some original plaster, to the east of the chimney. The fireplace opening has been closed up. A doorway located at the north end of the sloping west wall of the room connects it with the frame wing. There have never been baseboards in either of these rooms; the plastered walls continue down to the floor. Some original floor boards survive under the eave on the west. Their edges were planed and form a butt joint.
The earlier frame wing is three bays wide with the eastern, or inner bay on both sides being a doorway leading into a passage at the top of the stem of the "T". The 1932 photograph of this passage shows an open, half-turn-with-landings stair rising against the east wall and returning against the west. A paneled dado rose with the closed-string stair. The triangular area below the stringboard, the closet door under the stair, and the dado on the north wall were also paneled. The stair had square-section newels and turned, non-symmetrical balusters.

The remainder of the first floor of the frame wing is occupied by a large room with a chimney at its west end. The chimney wall is flush, with a recessed closet on either side of the central chimney. Here again, the fireplace opening has been closed up but the arched outline of the opening can be seen. Both closets contain their original plaster and the one on the north has outlines of its original shelving. The 1932 photograph of this chimney wall shows a fully-paneled wall with an arched fireplace opening, with a door to each side. The photograph also shows a paneled dado at the west end of the north wall.

The second floor of the frame wing has the same plan as the first. There is a passage, into which the stair originally rose and which is connected to the south room of the second floor of the brick part of the house, and a larger room to the west. The passage was originally lighted by one tall, narrow dormer in both the north and the south slopes of the roof. The dormer in the south slope of the roof has been enlarged to its present configuration. The west room originally had two dormers in each slope of the roof. At present, one enlarged dormer is located in the south slope. The 1932 photograph of the west, chimney wall shows a partially-paneled wall with an arched fireplace in the center flanked on either side by a low closet. The removal of the paneling exposed Flemish-bond brickwork on the interior of the brick end wall. The chimney is laid in English bond and the interior of the fireplace retains some of its original plaster. The original fireplace floor survives and is brick laid in a basket weave pattern. The fireplace is extremely deep and has never had a hearth. The original, mitered firebead is still in place in front of the fireplace opening. The original floor boards have been removed from this wing except under the side walls and the eaves. The plastered walls continue down to the floor. There were no baseboards. Above the fireplace opening, the chimney steps toward the gable.

The basement of the frame wing is unfinished. Here, as in the attic, the interior walls are Flemish bond and the chimney footing is English bond. The chimney footing is filled in with bricks laid in English bond. There are two windows in the foundation walls. One near the west end of the south elevation and the other, containing part of an original grille, near the middle of the north elevation. In addition to the two windows, there are two larger openings in the foundation. One, located in the wall between the frame wing and the south basement room of the brick part of the house, connects the two at basement level. It once contained a door which opened into the south basement room, as there is evidence of hinges and a keeper on that side of the frame. The other large opening is near the center of the south elevation.

The basement window grilles in the brick part of the house are of the same design as the surviving fragment in the frame wing. The grilles are divided in half by a mullion and the edges of the mullion and the inner edges of the frame are molded.
In each half of the grille four, heavy, square-in-section bars are set vertically on the diagonal.

No original or old sash or doors survive. However, all of the window jambs and the door jamb on the south elevation of the brick part are original. On all of these original jambs, the exterior architraves, including the backband molding, are part of the jambs. They are not applied but are part of the same piece of wood.

The same, simple, box cornice is found on both the frame and brick portions of the building.
One of the most unusual and outstanding Georgian dwellings in North Carolina, the Duke-Lawrence House reflects the increasing economic prosperity of eighteenth century plantation life found in the northeastern portion of the state. Constructed for John Duke in two separate phases, the house was originally a typical Georgian story-and-a-half dwelling which was enlarged by a two-story brick addition with atypical features: a split-level floor arrangement and a sloping one-story roofline to the rear. Through the years Duke enlarged his original 1,250 acre holding to an excess of 6,000 acres. Today, the Duke-Lawrence House stands as the single most important example of this period remaining in Northampton County.

The Duke Lawrence House is located approximately two miles east of Rich Square, about 750 feet south of state highways 561 and 305. It is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Regan, formerly of Frenchtown, New Jersey, who have recently moved into the structure. It was acquired by the couple from the Murfreesboro Historical Association, Inc. and the heirs of Dr. Quinton E. Cooke, Sr.

The Regans are the last of a series of owners of the house which stretches back to the first half of the eighteenth century. Though it is traditionally believed by many that William Maule, a surveyor general for the colony under Governor Charles Eden, built the original frame portion of the house in 1716, all architectural evidence indicates that John Duke constructed the frame west section sometime shortly after 1747. Duke acquired the tract from William Cathcart, son-in-law of Maule.

Duke paid Cathcart $370 for the 1,250 acre tract along Catawisky swamp in 1747. The purchase price, plus the fact that in the conveyance the property was referred to as "Somersett" strongly supports the argument that some form of improvement was then situated on the tract. The improvement, however, was probably not in any way connected with the present house, due to the lack of physical evidence predating 1747.

John Duke was originally a planter from Nansemond County, Virginia. In addition to the Cathcart conveyance, he acquired a number of other tracts and at one time owned in excess of 6,000 acres. In 1749 Duke was appointed a justice of the peace within the county of Northampton. He also was appointed sheriff in 1753, serving in that capacity for several years. The wealthy planter married Sarah Peele, a Quaker, and they had six daughters.

John Duke died in 1787. He left his wife a life estate to his property but willed the plantation on which he lived to his daughter Mary Duke Lawrence, wife of John Lawrence.

According to a 1964 publication of the North Carolina State School of Design, the Lawrences were credited with the next major improvement to the house. Sometime between 1787 and 1796, they reputedly constructed the brick eastern section giving the entire edifice a "T-shaped configuration." However, recent on-site surveys tend to support the belief that, though the frame portion of the house was constructed first, the workmanship and detailing of the larger brick portion are like those of the frame section, indicating that the same builder was responsible for both. Further proof of John Duke's role in construction may be found in his will: At one point, he
In its heyday the house sported two porches neither of which remains. It has chimneys in each end of the T-shaped wings, each containing two fireplaces with the flue in the upper fireplace being split for the flue in the bottom one. The entire structure rests on a solid brick foundation.

Mary Lawrence died in 1817, surviving her spouse by 21 years. In her will, she equally divided all her lands between Thomas Duke Lawrence and Josephus D. W. Lawrence. This was Mary's personal estate; her husband's estate had been divided among his heirs by his will. Josephus D. W. Lawrence took the land to the south of the road "leading from Rich Square to Winton" as his inheritance. This parcel included the house tract.

Sometime between 1823 and 1830 Thomas D. Lawrence moved to Halifax County. Although not listed in the 1830 census for Northampton, his name appears on an 1823 tax list as being a resident of Northampton County along with his brother. Thomas owned 400 acres and Josephus was listed as owning 412 acres.

In 1835 Josephus Lawrence died and left to his son William Thomas Lawrence, a minor, his entire estate. Thomas D. Lawrence was named and appointed guardian and agent for his nephew. In 1839, Thomas D. Lawrence conveyed 400 acres on the southeast side of Catawisky swamp to Amos R. Peele. Thomas, acting as guardian for his nephew, William, conveyed the estate of his late brother, consisting of over 596 acres to Peele in 1850 at a foreclosure sale. From 1851 until 1939 the house was owned in succession by the Elliot, Shoulers, and Chappell families. In 1932, while R. A. Chappell owned the home, Mr. and Mrs. Ross Millhiser of Richmond, Virginia had the original interior paneling and woodwork removed and later installed in their home, "Willow Oaks" in 1937.

In 1929 and 1937, Dr. Q. H. Cooke purchased the house and surrounding tract from the Shoulers and Chappells. It remained in the Cooke family until 1974. In July of that year, James T. Cooke of Murfreesboro and Dr. Q. E. Cooke, Jr. of Hendersonville, Tennessee donated the structure to the Murfreesboro Historical Association, Inc., as a memorial to their father, Dr. Q. E. Cooke, Sr., a son of Q. H. Cooke.

In two deeds registered on November 20, 1979, the Murfreesboro Historical Association, Inc. conveyed .56 acres on which the house was situated to Mr. and Mrs. Edward Regan and the Cooke heirs deeded 1.7 acres of surrounding farm land to the present owners.

The old home stands no longer vacant at the time of writing and the encompassing acreage of which it was once a part is still an active farm.
Continuation sheet  Significance—Footnotes  Item number  8  Page 3

1 William Cathcart to John Duke, 1747, Deed Book 1, p. 317; James and Mary Wood to John Duke, 1736, Deed Book 2, p. 263; John Duke to Mary Lawrence, 1787, Will Book 1, p. 464; Mary Lawrence to Thomas D. Lawrence and Josephus D. W. Lawrence, 1817, Will Book 3, p. 197; Agreement between Thomas D. Lawrence and Josephus D. W. Lawrence, 1833, Deed Book 26, p. 70; Josephus D. W. Lawrence to William Thomas Lawrence, Minor, and Thomas D. Lawrence, guardian and agent, 1835, Will Book 4, p. 126; Thomas D. Lawrence to Amos R. Peele, 1839, Deed Book 28, p. 367; Thomas D. Lawrence, guardian of William T. Lawrence, to Amos R. Peele, 1850, Deed Book 33, p. 409; Amos R. Peele to Elias Elliott, 1851, Deed Book 34, p. 186; Lee Shoulars received lot 6 of Elias Elliott's estate, 1890, Deed Book 90, p. 2; Lee L. Shoulars to Voyt A. Shoulars and Troy V. Shoulars, 1918, Will Book 9, p. 129; Troy V. and Ruth Estelle Shoulars to R. A. Chappell, 1928, Deed Book 229, p. 427; Voyt A. Shoulars to Dr. Q. H. Cooke, 1929, Deed Book 228, p. 172; R. A. and Jessie Parker Chappell to Dr. Q. H. Cooke, 1937, Deed Book 252, p. 254; Q. H. Cook to Dr. Q. E. Cooke, Manning P. Cooke, and Dr. Charles S. Cooke, 1959, Will Book 12, p. 524; Manning P. and wife Brett Cooke, Charles S. Cooke and wife Dorothy to Quinton E. Cooke, 1961, Deed Book 459, p. 296; Quinton E. Cooke heirs to the Murfreesboro Historical Association, 1974, newspaper clippings, Northampton County Times News; The Murfreesboro Historical Association, Inc., to Edward and Mildred S. Regan, 1979, Deed Book 396, p. 455; Quinton E. Cooke Jr. and wife, Jacquelyn N. Cooke and James T. Cooke and wife, Marie V. Cooke to Edward Regan and wife, Mildred S. Regan. References on microfilm in State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Northampton County Records.


4 Northampton County Deeds.


8 Brandenberger, The Duke Family, 413.

9 Brandenberger, The Duke Family, 419.

10 Northampton County Deeds.
United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet Significance—Footnotes Item number 8 Page 4

11 Duke Lawrence File.
12 Duke Lawrence File.
13 Duke Lawrence File.
14 Northampton County Deeds.
16 Northampton County Deeds.
17 Duke Lawrence File.
18 Tax List 1823-1945 for Northampton County, State Archives, Raleigh.
19 Northampton County Deeds.
20 Northampton County Deeds.
21 Duke Lawrence File.

22 Northampton County Times News (Rich Square), July 18, 1974.
23 Northampton County Deeds.


Northampton County Records, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.


The Duke-Lawrence House is one of the relatively few brick Georgian houses surviving in the state from the second half of the eighteenth century and the unusual roofline of the house probably makes it unique in North Carolina domestic architecture. Except for the removal of the interior woodwork, which was subsequently installed in Willow Oaks in Richmond, Virginia, in the 1930s, the house has remained relatively unchanged. The basement and second floor, or attic, contain invaluable information about construction techniques and practices of the mid-eighteenth century. Despite the removal of the interior woodwork, the house retains much of its original fabric and character.

Criteria Assessment:

A. Representative of the development and growing prosperity of eighteenth century plantation life in the northeastern part of North Carolina.

B. Associated with members of the prominent John Duke family. It is John Duke who is thought to have built the house during the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of an atypical Georgian dwelling with a brick addition that is probably unique in eighteenth century North Carolina domestic architecture: the east elevation rises a full two stories in height while its west elevation is only one.

D. Is likely to yield information about eighteenth and nineteenth century plantation life.
PLAT SHOWING PROPERTY OF
EDWARD & MILDERED S. REGAN
RICH SQUARE T.P., NORTHAMPTON
SCALE 1" = 100' -- OCT. 6, 1973
M. VREELLE & ASSOC.
SURVEYORS

TOTAL AREA = 23.1 ACRES INCLUDING SHEET.
EGM = EXISTING GMENT MARKER
EIP = EXISTING IRON PIN
ST = STAKE

MAGNETIC NORTH