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 Rose Hill

and/or common

2. Location

street & number S side NC 58, 3.0 mi. NW of jct. w/ US 64

not for publication

city, town Nashville

county Nash

state North Carolina

code 037

congressional district Second

code 127

3. Classification

Category

- district __
- building(s) __
- structure X
- site __
- object __

Ownership

- public X
- private __
- both __

Status

- occupied X
- unoccupied __
- work in progress __

Present Use

- agriculture __
- commercial __
- educational __
- entertainment __
- government __
- industrial __
- military __
- museum __
- park __
- private residence X
- religious __
- scientific __
- scientific __
- transportation __
- other:

Accessible

- yes: restricted X
- yes: unrestricted __
- no __

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Ben Mayo Boddie

street & number 800 Hill Street

city, town Rocky Mount

county Nash

state North Carolina

code 27801

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Nash County Courthouse

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date

- federal __
- state __
- county __
- local __

repository for survey records N/A

city, town

state
Rose Hill Plantation, built on a small rise, surveys the rolling fields of Nash County. Located approximately one half mile from the main road, it is secluded and set at the head of a long drive surrounded by mature shade trees.

Rose Hill, as it exists today reflects the evolution of a house over the period of nearly two hundred years. The main components of Rose Hill are two dwellings; one a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century house, the other a Victorian addition. The house, as seen from the approach by the main drive is an impressive two-story frame structure enhanced by a handsome early twentieth century portico. The one-and-a-half-story structure at the rear, oriented to face east, is the earliest section of the house which was subsequently altered. The original section of the house appears to have consisted of a central hall for which double entrance doors with transoms survive. This hall was flanked by two rooms and a narrow enclosed stair leads from one side of the hall to the loft. One of the original chimneys survives at what is now the rear of the house. This chimney is constructed of brick laid in common bond with tumbling at the shoulders. Some flat-paneled and flush sheathed wainscoting survives in this section of the house, as well as a simple Federal mantel. The original appearance of this section of the house has been altered by the addition of dormer windows and a slate roof and by the enlargement of the house through the construction of a large two-story block on the south elevation which partly engulfed the smaller, earlier house.

The newest section of Rose Hill was probably built in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, and it reflects the taste of that period in its consistent late Victorian finish. This section consists of a basically square two-story structure, three bays wide, topped by a gable roof set at right angles to the gable roof of the older section. The pedimented dormers and arched windows in the gable ends enrich the otherwise simple design of the facade, as does the trabeated door. Unusual elliptical and circular lights are found in the transom and the paired doors boast arched molded panels. As in the older section, a central hall plan is followed. A wide stair, with a heavy and elaborate newel ascends to the second floor from the rear of the hall. The moldings and woodwork are Victorian in style throughout this section.

The porch, probably constructed in the early twentieth century, dominates the front facade. The robust fluted doric columns are two stories high and the broad frieze is ornamented with guttae and triglyphs.
### Significance

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**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Rose Hill Plantation is said to have been constructed by one of the founders of Nash County, North Carolina, Nathan Boddie, for his son George. It evidently dates from the late eighteenth or more likely the early nineteenth century. George owned the property between 1797 and 1842 and was a prominent landowner and an influential political figure in Nash County. Nicholas, George's son, was probably responsible for the large Victorian style section erected in the late nineteenth century. A well preserved example of the evolution of the North Carolina plantation house during generations of family ownership, Rose Hill has been owned and occupied by the Boddie family for nearly one hundred and fifty years and today the family has returned to renew their commitment to their ancestral home.

**Criteria Assessment:**

B. It is associated with the Boddie family, an influential group of individuals who helped shape the history of Nash County, North Carolina.

C. Rose Hill embodies the distinctive characteristics of two different periods of construction. Furthermore, it represents an example of the growth and change of a house over a period of nearly two hundred years in the context of the lifestyle and taste of a prosperous family of planters in eastern North Carolina.
The Boddie House, located on the old Rose Hill Plantation, stands as an enigma in the history of Nash County's most prominent family. That it was built by one of the Boddies is undeniable, but when, and whether by the patriarch Nathan or his son George, remain a mystery. The records likewise fail to document beyond question just who occupied the house before the Civil War.

Family tradition has been consistent in its presentation that Nathan had the house built for his son George in 1792, and that George and his descendants occupied the structure until the 1930s. The tradition was given public authentication when the Boddie family history was published in 1918 with its numerous references to Rose Hill, the plantation established by Nathan Boddie and the ancestral seat of the family. Plantations often gave their names to the manor houses of the planters, and Rose Hill is no exception. However, a second house was constructed near the manor house about 250 feet away, and the two dwellings coexisted for some years. The second one, later enlarged, is the present Rose Hill. Yet the crucial question eluding researchers remains: which house was the primary seat of the Boddie family, particularly in the antebellum years? Family tradition provides the only substantive information on the subject, but there are some questions that the tradition fails to address.

The contention that Nathan Boddie, wealthy planter, political leader, and "Father of Nash County" built the home for his son George in 1792 cannot be verified in the documentary records. By that date George had been married for two years and had established his own household. Moreover, Nathan must have intended to make George the primary heir to his house (the original Rose Hill) and plantation for some time prior to the writing of his will in 1797; consequently, the necessity of constructing the second house in 1792 must be questioned. Finally, an architectural analysis of the oldest part of the present Rose Hill suggests that it was built sometime in the early nineteenth century which also seems more compatible with available documentary evidence.

George Boddie inherited his father's mantle of leadership in the family, community, county, and state. He served nine terms in the General Assembly, seven years as a member of the House of Commons, and two years as a state senator. Also active in less significant politics on the local level, George was among the petitioners who in 1811 appealed to the legislature to pass a law giving the county court the authority to license the sale of spirituous liquors on the public ground at the courthouse.

George Boddie apparently felt obligated to assume the burdens of family difficulties. His two older brothers, Bennett and Elijah, died prematurely leaving minor children who, with their widowed mothers, came to live at Rose Hill. George married twice and fathered seventeen children of his own, making a total of twenty-two children and at least four adults living at Rose Hill in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Although no documentary evidence exists to prove the theory, the second home may have been built during that time to ease the crowded conditions in the older manor house. That would place the construction date sometime between 1800 and 1820 with a higher probability in the decade 1810 to 1820. Still there is no definitive evidence to indicate which members of the family may have moved into the second house. Another family tradition contends that Mourning Boddie, daughter of Nathan, married James Hilliard "in the back room of her brother George's house"
in 1798. Quite possibly this is a reference to the oldest part of the house now standing, but since George Boddie had established a separate household as early as 1790, the statement remains unclarified. However, the strength of the family tradition suggests that George did live in the present Rose Hill and lacking any proof to the contrary, it is assumed that he did so, but the exact dates of his residence cannot be determined from available records.

When George Boddie died in December of 1842, he left a plantation of several thousand acres and more than fifty slaves. The latter were valued at $13,485. Personal property consisted of numerous pieces of walnut furniture, a few of mahogany, and a library of about eighty volumes. His will bequeathed his homestead and most of his plantation to his wife Lucy "until my son Nicholas W. Boddie arrives to the age of Twenty one years..." or upon the death of his mother. 10

Nicholas Williams Boddie was born on August 25, 1825, the last child of George and Lucy Boddie. 11 He seems to have lived in Georgia for some years, and while there he married Louisiana Crudup on December 5, 1850. 12 He returned to North Carolina a few years later and took his family to live at Rose Hill. By 1860, four children had been born and the Nicholas W. Boddie family was enjoying life as members of the planter class. The plantation was valued at $15,400 and his personal estate was worth $50,240, much of which was tied up in twenty-seven slaves occupying six slavehouses. 13

Again, the records are vague about who was living in the second house on the plantation, but there is considerable circumstantial evidence that it may have been one of Boddie's overseers named William F. Hollingsworth. The order of visitation in the 1860 census shows that Hollingsworth and his family resided in a house next to Boddie's, and that Hollingsworth himself owned no real property and his personal estate was valued at only $100. 14 Some years earlier, many members of the Boddie family had left the estate for the more productive farmlands of the southwest, including most of Nicholas's brothers; consequently, there were fewer members around Rose Hill, and the house may not have been in demand as a family dwelling. 15 It may well have been with one of his brothers that Nicholas resided during this time some distance away from the plantation in Nash County. 16 Location of an overseer in or near the manor house from which he could direct the activities would seem to have been a logical course of action.

Nicholas Boddie survived the war in better financial condition than many of his contemporaries. He retained 2,700 acres of the plantation, 200 of which formed a farm in 1870 valued at $6,000. Farm production included nearly $1,000 worth of livestock, 500 bushels of corn, and 6,300 pounds of ginned cotton. 17 As in the prewar years, cotton continued to be the leading crop. The major difference was the labor force used to work the fields. Though freed as a result of the war, many of Boddie's former slaves stayed on to work for the wages Boddie paid, a total of $600 in 1870. 18 Though nowhere near the size it was then owned by Nathan Boddie, Rose Hill was still a substantial, productive farm under his grandson during the depression years following the Civil War.

Sometime after the war, Nicholas Boddie decided to enlarge and modernize the structure. Boddie's motivations were not found in the written records, and the possibilities are too numerous for speculation. He built a two-story addition to the dwelling and somewhat renovated the interior. The date of completion has been given in one source as 1876, and while
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that cannot be verified in the records, it certainly seems logical. By that year Recon-
struction had virtually ended, economic prosperity was returning to the state, and Boddie
was beginning his second term in the General Assembly. The Victorian features of the
renovated structure placed the new Rose Hill among the fashionable styles of the day, one
that befitted a gentleman farmer and state legislator. Who occupied, if anyone, and whether
the old Nathan Boddie home still stood after the war, is uncertain. It would have been well
over a hundred years old. It seems to have been destroyed long before 1941 when the first
owner outside the Boddie family decided to remove the old foundation.

Nicholas W. Boddie died in 1894 leaving all his real and personal property to his wife,
Louisiana, to dispose of as she pleased. Louisiana and her sons, George and Nicholas W.
Jr., remained in the home after the death of Nicholas W. The youngest daughter, Louisiana
(named for her mother), had married Bennett Bunn and lived briefly at Rocky Mount. By 1900
Bennett Bunn had died, and Louisiana had returned to Rose Hill with her three children.
Her brothers George and Nicholas, Jr. had died by 1914, and as sole remaining heir of her
mother, Louisiana (Anna) B. Bunn assumed ownership of Rose Hill upon her mother's death.

Anna Bunn's oldest son, Nicholas Boddie Bunn, became the head of the family at Rose Hill.
On July 1, 1914, he petitioned the Nash County Superior Court to change his name to Nicholas
Bunn Boddie "on account of the fact that his grandfather Boddie bore the name of Nicholas
Boddie and all of his male predecessors having died in the past there is no one in his family
to bear the name of Boddie . . ." The request was granted on July 7. Nicholas Bunn Boddie
married Lucy Valeria Mayo in 1924 and the couple made their home at Rose Hill with Nicholas's
mother, Anna Boddie Bunn.

On November 15, 1926, Anna B. Bunn mortgaged the home and 478 acres of the old Rose Hill
plantation to the Chicamauga Trust Company to cover a debt of $12,500. The onset of the
Depression prevented repayment of the debt according to the terms of agreement. The property
was sold at auction on June 16, 1930, at which time the Prudential Insurance Company became
the owner with a bid of $13,800. Eleven years later, December 17, 1941, Prudential trans-
ferred title to W. Robert and Thelma Everett for $17,500. The Boddie family continued to
live at Rose Hill until the mid 1930s, apparently by leasing the property. Their departure
ended a continuous family occupancy of the plantation of nearly 175 years, but it was not
to be the final association with Rose Hill.

The passage of time and depression economics took their toll on the house. Everett
described his newly purchased dwelling as a "broken-down mansion." The plantation reflected
the same neglect:

When we bought it, it was just a washed out old farm with gullies all over it.
A lot of beautiful trees had been cut down . . . We had flowers and a garden. We
rebuilt the home and modernized it, repaired the tenant houses and stock barns . . .
We spent $100,000 reclaiming it.

In remodeling the mansion, Everett replaced all of the original fireplaces and added the
lining on the roof of the front porch. He also removed what was left of the original
manor house which stood closer to the creek. The Everetts moved into Rose Hill in 1942. A year later they acquired an additional 129 acres of the old plantation. 30

Robert Everett was a farmer by profession. He converted the former cotton plantation into a productive, well balanced farm consisting of cattle, hogs, tobacco, corn, and soybeans. But while farming was his vocation, Everett’s avocation was playing the stock market, which he apparently did very successfully. The Everetts lived at Rose Hill for twenty-five years before bad health forced them to leave in 1967. They donated the entire 607 acre plantation to North Carolina Wesleyan College. 31

For a year after transfer to Wesleyan, the mansion house remained vacant. Afterwards, personnel employed by the college occupied the home while the land was leased for pasturage or for the production of tobacco, soybeans, and cotton. Profits from the leasing of Rose Hill land returned to the college where most was applied to the maintenance and repair of the old manor house. The cost of upkeep, however, outpaced the income; consequently, only the basic essentials were kept in repair. 32 The house continued a slow but effective deterioration. In June, 1979, Ben Mayo Boddie of Rocky Mount, the son of Nicholas Bunn Boddie, purchased the plantation from Wesleyan College. 33 Ben Boddie was born at Rose Hill, and he and other members of the family hope to restore the old home to its grandeur as the seat of the once vast Boddie plantation.
## FOOTNOTES

1. T. E. Ricks (ed.), Nash County Historical Notes (Rocky Mount: The Nash County Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 331, hereinafter cited as Nash County Historical Notes. See also Jeanie R. Farish "Nathaniel Boddie and Rose Hill Plantation: A Study of the Significance of Local History" (Typed report submitted to North Carolina Wesleyan College, December, 1970), 10. Mrs. Farish cites the collection of J. Byron Hilliard of Rocky Mount whose papers have been turned over to East Carolina University. Future references to this source will be cited as Farish, "Nathaniel Boddie"/Hilliard Collection.

2. John Thomas Boddie and John Bennett Boddie, Boddie and Allied Families (Privately printed, 1918), 23-39, 57, hereinafter cited as Boddie, Boddie Family.

3. For location, see Farish, "Nathaniel Boddie"/Hilliard Collection, 10. Distance given by Mayo Boddie based on alleged site of Nathan Boddie's house. Only the foundation remained in 1941 when Robert Everett began his improvements of the property. Ben Mayo Boddie to Dr. Jerry L. Cross, November 10, 1980. Letter in Rose Hill File, Survey and Planning Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Boddie to Cross, November 10, 1980.

4. Since Nathan Boddie owned the property until his death in 1797, deed records were of no value. The same is true of estates papers. The tax records are too incomplete to offer any clarification, and no personal papers of the family have been located unless they exist in the mysterious Hilliard Collection (see fn. 1).

5. Nathan Boddie's will is dated 1797, but George was the youngest of his sons, and the only one living in Nash County by 1790. Thus, a man in his sixties (Nathan), would seem to have decided by then just how he wanted to dispose of his vast estate, making the erection of a house for his primary heir seemingly unnecessary. See Boddie, Boddie Family, 23-24; Walter Clark (ed.), The State Records of North Carolina (Winston and Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 16 vols., 1895-1906), XXVI (Census of 1790), 805, hereinafter cited as Clark, State Records; and Nash County Wills, Office of the Clerk of Superior Court, Nash County Courthouse, Nashville, Will Book 1, p. 8, hereinafter cited as Nash County Will Book.

6. See memoranda from Catherine Cockshutt [Bishir]7 to Dr. H. G. Jones, director of the Division of Archives and History, April 12, 1973; and to John G. (Jack) Zehmer, head of the Historic Sites Section [now Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section], April 17, 1973. Copies of both letters in Rose Hill File (see fn. 3).


8. Bennett died in 1809; Elijah died in 1788. Boddie, Boddie Family, 30-32.

Continuation sheet

10 Nash County Estates Papers, State Archives, Raleigh, George Boddie; and Nash County Will Book 1, p. 465.

11 WPA Pre-1914 Graves Index, State Archives, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as WPA Graves Index. See also Boddie, Boddie Family, 32.

12 Nicholas W. Boddie does not appear in the 1850 census of North Carolina even though he then owned Rose Hill. In order to have time to court and marry Louisiana Crudup of Troup County, Georgia, he must have spent some time in that state. See Boddie, Boddie Family, 39. See also WPA Graves Index which lists Nicholas W. Boddie's wife and marriage date.


15 Boddie, Boddie Family, 31-39. See also Seventh Census, 1850, Georgia, index. Some of Nicholas W. Boddie's brothers are therein listed.

16 See fns. 12 and 15.


18 Ninth Census, 1870, Agricultural Schedule, 5. See also Population Schedule for blacks named Boddie who resided on the Rose Hill land and were listed as farm laborers.

19 Nash County Historical Notes, 331. The date in this source may have come from the Hilliard Collection cited by Farish, "Nathaniel Boddie," 11 (see fn. 1).


21 See fn. 3.

22 Nash County Will Book 5, p. 456.

23 Twelfth Census, 1900, Population Schedule, ED 62, sheet 9, line 86; Boddie, Boddie Family, 57; and Records of Nash County Superior Court, microfilm in State Archives, Raleigh, Orders and Decrees, vol. 14, p. 45, petition of Nicholas Boddie Bunn to change his name. In that petition reference is made to the nonexistence of males to carry on Boddie name. The petition was made July 1, 1914. Reference hereinafter cited as Orders and Decrees.

24 Orders and Decrees, vol. 14, p. 45.

25 Evening Telegram (Rocky Mount), August 8, 1971.
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27. Nash County Deed Book 347, p. 504; and Book 478, p. 12.


29. Lou Hopchas, "Historic Rose Hill is Slowly Deteriorating," Graphic (Nashville), April 5, 1973, hereinafter cited as Hopchas "Historic Rose Hill." Hopchas interviewed Robert Everett and incorporated some of the former owner's comments into the article.

30. Hopchas, "Historic Rose Hill." See also fn. 3; and Nash County Deed Book 478, p. 511.

31. Hopchas, "Historic Rose Hill"; and Enterprise (Spring Hope), November 16, 1967. Hopchas quotes the acreage as 604, but the deeds list the two tracts as 478 and 129.1 or 607.1 total acres.

32. Hopchas, "Historic Rose Hill." The reporter also interviewed Floyd D. Sawyer, comptroller for North Carolina Wesleyan College, and quoted him in the article.

33. See letter from Douglas E. Anderson to Catherine Bishir, November 30, 1979, in Rose Hill File (see fn. 3).
9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property  Approx. 1½ acres
Quadrangle name Castalia, NC
UMT References
Zone Easting Northing
A 117 7618 11410
C 819 817 91710

Verbal boundary description and justification The area included in this nomination is shown on the enclosed sketch map. It is an approximately 1½ acre portion of the original Rose Hill Plantation and is bounded by a farm road which divides the house and yard from the farm-lands.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Katie M. Ohno, Architectural Historical, Jerry L. Cross, Researcher
organization Survey and Planning Branch
Archaeology and Historic Preservation
N.C. Division of Archives and History
street & number 109 E. Jones Street

city or town Raleigh
state 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeper of the National Register</td>
<td>date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attest:</td>
<td>date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Registration</td>
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Nash County Records
Deeds
Estates Papers
Orders and Decrees (Superior Court)
Tax Lists
Wills

Ohno, Kate. Interview with Ben Mayo Boddie, summer, 1980.


United States Census Records
North Carolina 1850-1900
Georgia, 1850, index.

WPA Pre-1914 Graves Index. State Archives, Raleigh.
shaded area is area to be included in the National Register
Boundary is formed by the Farm Road – approximately 1½ acres.
Rose Hill
Nash County   Nashville vic.
Zone: 17   1½ acres
Easting: 768140
Northing: 3987970

Road Classification
- Primary highway, hard surface
- Secondary highway, hard surface
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road
- Interstate Route
- U.S. Route
- State Route

CASTALIA, N.C.
N3600—W7800/7.5
1979
DMA 5356 II SE—SERIES V842