

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Olzie Whitehead Williams House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number North Side SR 1332 0.4 mi. west of jct. w/ SR 1327 not for publication

city, town Wilson X vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state North Carolina code 037 county Wilson code 195

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. John and Mrs. Nancy Barber

street & number 1115 Watson Drive

city, town Wilson vicinity of state North Carolina 27893

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wilson County Register of Deeds

street & number Wilson County Courthouse

city, town Wilson state North Carolina 27893

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wilson County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Survey and Planning Branch
Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh state N.C.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>October 1981</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Williams House is one of the most interesting and complete smaller houses in Wilson representing the late nineteenth century penchant for the picturesque, Italianate-inspired detailing. While the basic L-shaped form of the house is not uncommon, the retention of the elaborate wooden embellishments makes the Williams House a valuable example of a style once common in the 1870s and 1880s.

The structure is a single-story, six-bay frame house with a gabled projecting end pavilion all resting on a low, brick pier foundation. The gabled roofs have a standing-seam tin covering. The exterior is sheathed with plain weatherboards. Originally the long section of the house was one room deep with the projecting eastern section two rooms deep. A host of rear additions were added between 1882 and 1929.

The main facade is dominated by a veranda stretching the length of the recessed section of the house, and the shed roof is carried by five chamfered posts with molded caps, set on pedestals with heavy applied molding. A flat, sawn balustrade connects the pedestals.

The fenestration of the main facade is asymmetrical. The principal entrance, to the left of the ell, has a deep, two-light transom and four-pane sidelights above flat panels. The four-panel entrance door has circular-headed upper panels and rectangular lower panels.

To the left of the door is a large, six-light-over-six-light double-hung sash window that matches the window on the left end of the main facade. A full-length six-over-nine sash occurs in the middle of the five bay recessed section as well as on the projecting pavilion. Between the full-length window and end window is a lower, standard-sized secondary entrance servicing the end or westernmost room. All fenestration has plain architraves. The louvered blinds that accompany major windows appear to be early, if not original. The unusual six-bay length and asymmetrical fenestration of the main facade may be attributed to the tradition that the present dwelling incorporates an earlier, antebellum structure comprising the westernmost two room. But if the two westernmost rooms are older, they were extensively remodelled in the early 1870s when the central hall and double pile of rooms were added to the right elevation and the house given its decorative trim.

The full-length window of the ell is sheltered by a tin-roof Italianate style canopy carried on elongated S brackets and adorned by a skirt sawn in a stylized fleur-de-lis motif. In front of the window is a balustrade of low, classically-inspired pedestals and Chinese trellis, perhaps a later addition or replacement of the original. The ell features a bracketed, molded cornice that returns in the gable end, and the modillion block-style brackets have incised, scrolled decoration on the sides. The highly decorative treatment of the eaves is repeated on the eastern and western ends of the house.

The right side elevation is three bays long and is characterized by a variety of fenestration sizes. The left side gable end is pierced by a single six over six sash. The rear presents a host of gabled and hip roofed one story ells void of architectural embellishment.

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The interior of the house is rather plain in contrast to the embellishments of the exterior. Generously sized rooms have heavy molded door and window surrounds and plain mantels. In every room except the front center room there are standard mid-nineteenth century mantels. The mantels are of the post-and-lintel type with plain board shelves and chamfered pilasters. The front center room has an early twentieth century mantel with fluted pilasters and applied swag motifs.

The present owners' renovation of the house is mainly evident on the interior of the house although a few features on the exterior have also been changed. The changes which were made respected the architectural integrity of the house and an attempt was made to retain as many of the original features as possible. On the exterior a small, late nineteenth century hipped-roof wing and an early twentieth century porch, both damaged in the 1929 fire and remodelled at that time, have been removed. The wing and porch stand detached from the house at the rear of the house lot and the present owners plan to renovate them as outbuildings in the future. Other changes to the exterior included the rebuilding of the upper and lower sections of the chimneys, necessitated by the move, and the replacement of the wooden porch floor and steps by a tiled floor and brick steps. At the rear of the house a deck and sliding glass doors were added. These doore represent the only change in fenestration made to the house. The deck will be painted the same colors as the house.

On the interior the present owners have retained all the original woodwork and the original walls have been retained in place while a few new partitions have been erected. The ceilings have been lowered throughout in order to make the house more energy-efficient, but an effort has been made not to interfere with the original fenestration. The most major changes have been the installation of a modern kitchen in a late nineteenth century extension of the front hall (damaged in the 1929 fire) and the remodelling of what was originally a dining room, added after 1882 to the rear just to the left of the enclosed porch. In order to give access between the two rooms, one wall of the kitchen was removed. The feeling of a wall remains, however, through the construction of cabinets. One of the two corner cupboards in the dining room, installed in the late nineteenth century, was removed to make room for a door from the kitchen into the family room. Parts of the cupboard removed were used to build in the front center room. The westernmost front room, with its separate entrance to the porch, has been the most greatly altered in the house, in order that a second bathroom and another bedroom be created. This large room was divided by a hall and the new bath and bedroom were placed at the rear of the house. No walls were demolished to effect this transformation. On the opposite end of the house the bath created circa 1900 behind the eastern section just to the right of the kitchen has been converted into a laundry room.

The Barbers' renovation has been a thorough one which has increased the energy efficiency of the house and made the interior spaces more convenient for modern living. Without their efforts this historic house would probably have never survived.

8. 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Unknown	Builder/Architect	Unknown
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Olzie Whitehead Williams House is one of the oldest and most intact houses in Wilson, a town incorporated in 1849. The Williams House, dating circa 1860, is a good example of the evolution of a house under the ownership of the same family over a period of one hundred and twenty years. In 1980 the moving of the Williams House was necessitated by development pressures and it was at this time that the present owners recognized the significance of the house and had it moved in order to preserve it. The Williams House has long been recognized as a Wilson landmark worthy of preservation and it was among the first buildings to be designated as a local historic property by the Wilson Historic Properties Commission.

Criteria Assessment:

The Olzie Whitehead Williams house is an unusually complete survivor of the richly decorated, Italianate-inspired cottage of the mid and late nineteenth century. Documentary photographs suggest that elaborate programs of mass-produced wooden ornament once enhanced the many small one-story frame dwellings, but over the years many such houses were stripped of their Victorian detail. This house with its well-detailed porch, bracket cornice, and fanciful Italianate canopy recalls in rare completeness the character of such dwellings, which were an important dimension of the popular use of the Italianate style made accessible by mass production of brackets, moldings, and the like.

Note: the house was moved to avoid destruction and its architectural character and significance have been maintained.

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The Olzie Whitehead Williams House is a rare survival of the earliest period of the town of Wilson's history. Wilson was incorporated in 1849 and for the first decade of its existence it grew rapidly. But with the outbreak of the Civil War the town's expansion slowed significantly and much of the town's present architectural fabric dates after the war and from the early twentieth century when tobacco became the area's leading cash crop. The expansion of the town from 1890 until circa 1930 provided fashionable modern homes for prosperous Wilsonians and many of the early settlers' families abandoned their plainer older homes to less wealthy residents. The growth of the town's commercial district after World War II resulted in the destruction of many of these early houses, some of which were too large for modern single family residences and some of which had fallen into decay.

Fortunately the Olzie Whitehead Williams House has survived all the upheavals and changes of fortune and remains a good example of the evolution of a home of a middle class family from 1863 to the early twentieth century. The first documented owner of the land was E. W. Watson, who was forced to sell the property in 1861 to settle his debts.¹ The one-acre lot was sold for \$925, so it seems likely that the house or some improvement stood on the lot at this time. The appearance of the house, although altered by the Williams family over the years, seems to indicate that the house probably dates circa 1860, though its decorative character probably derives from the 1870s.

The purchaser of the property in 1861 was Edmond Moore.² Little is known about Moore except that he was a wealthy farmer born in 1814 who lived in the town of Wilson by 1860.³ Moore was no longer living in Wilson County by 1870, and it is unknown whether he ever occupied the Williams House.⁴

With the outbreak of the Civil War many eastern North Carolina families were driven from their homes because of the threat of enemy attack. Olzie Whitehead Williams and her children were among these. The Williamses, like many of the war refugees, made significant contributions to the civic and business life of Wilson. Mrs. Williams was the daughter of Howell Whitehead, a wealthy Pitt County planter, and she was born circa 1832.⁵ She married John B. Williams of Warren County prior to 1852.⁶ After Williams' death the young widow, by then the mother of two small children, went back to live with her family in Pitt County.⁷ The reason for Mrs. Williams' move to Wilson remains unclear.

Mrs. Williams settled in quickly, and she set up housekeeping and a small millinery shop in her two-room house on Nash Street with her two children, Latimer and Sudie.⁸ Her business was advertised in contemporary business directories.⁹ By 1872 she was able to move her business into a shop on Tarboro Street about two blocks away from her house.¹⁰ According to the 1870 census she owned real property, valued at \$2,000, which was a considerable property for a widow with two dependents.¹¹

By 1880 Mrs. Williams had moved out of the house and was living in her shop building.¹² Her son Latimer lived with her.¹³ The reason for and date of her move is unknown. With the growth of Wilson in the post bellum period it may be that she had a chance to rent the centrally located house on Nash Street. In 1882 her son Latimer married and he and his wife moved into the house on Nash Street.¹⁴

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Latimer Williams was born in 1852 and he became associated with George Green's hardware business as a young man.¹⁵ In 1882 he married Estelle Davis, daughter of James and Susan Gay Davis (see nomination on the Davis-Whitehead-Harris House).¹⁶ The couple had two children, Grace, who still lives in Wilson, and Latimer Williams, Jr.¹⁷ Latimer Williams, Sr. was largely responsible for the house's present appearance. Once his mother's business was well established in the early 1870s, he persuaded his mother to enlarge the house.¹⁸ According to his daughter he added two rooms and a hall to the house in 1872 or 1873 and once he was married he added the dining room, kitchen, and pantry.¹⁹

Olzje Williams continued to live in the house on Tarboro Street until her death in 1896.²⁰ She retained ownership of the Nash Street house until her death.

Latimer Williams and his family continued to occupy the house, which was devised to him by his mother. In 1900 in anticipation of city-wide running water, he installed a bathroom behind the 1872 addition. Few changes were made to the house until 1929 when a fire damaged the rear of the house. At that time the damaged section was remodelled and what had been a back porch was converted to a kitchenette and a closet was made into a second bathroom.²¹ Latimer Williams, Sr. died intestate on September 3, 1939, and his children, Grace and Latimer received equal shares of the house.²² Miss Grace Williams continued to occupy the house after her father's death. Her brother, Latimer, died in 1955 in Richland County, South Carolina.²³ Miss Grace continued to occupy the house until 1980 when it was purchased from Miss Grace and Mrs. Latimer Williams by First Union Bank.

First Union Bank had acquired the property for the site of a new bank and since they were concerned with the preservation of the house, recognizing it as one of the oldest in the downtown area, they offered it for sale to anyone who would move it. The house was purchased in July 1981, by Mr. and Mrs. John Barber, the present owners. Mr. and Mrs. Barber moved the house to its present location outside the city limits on a site on Lake Wilson Road. The present site is one acre of what was originally the road frontage of a cultivated field. The area is rural, but a few houses have been built adjacent to the house site. The Williams House is set well back from the road and faces southeast.

The Barbers were the only bidders on the Williams House and without their prompt action and desire to preserve the house in useable form, the Williams House would have only been a memory. The Barbers are presently renovating the house.

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Although the Olzie Whitehead Williams House was built within the boundaries of the town of Wilson, its architectural character is not inappropriate to its new rural site. In the period and region in which it was built, as in other eras, there was little significant difference in the character of rural and small town domestic architecture. In both, small-scale, more or less elaborately finished frame building dominated. The Olzie Whitehead Williams House is one of a number of modest but richly decorated frame cottages erected in Wilson and Wilson County in the post-Civil War era, when the spread of mass produced building parts gave unprecedented access to fanciful decoration for modest as well as ambitious buildings. In both the town and the countryside there are several one-story frame houses with decorated porches, windows, and rooflines; evidence of more examples exists in old photographs of houses since razed or denuded of such detail. The Olzie Whitehead Williams House is a prime example of the retention of a complete program of such detail on a small house, and as such it has significance within the context of the county as well as in the town in which it was built.

Prior to moving the house to its present site, the owners investigated the possibility of acquiring an in-town lot as a new location. However, at that time, zoning regulations in Wilson prohibited placement of the house in a similar orientation to the street on available lots. In selecting the new site, they took into consideration the direction in which the city is developing, which is toward the north and west.

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FOOTNOTES:

¹E. W. Watson to Edmond Moore, February 29, 1861, Book 23, 296, Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

²E. W. Watson to Edmond Moore, February 29, 1861, Book 23, 296, Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

³Eighth Census of the United States: 1860, Wilson County, population schedule, hereinafter cited as 1860 census.

⁴Ninth Census of the United States: 1870, Wilson County, population schedule, hereinafter cited as 1870 census.

⁵Wilson Historic Properties Commission research report on the Olzie Whitehead Williams House by Vicki Craft, available in the Wilson County Public Library. See also 1870 census, population schedule under Olzie Williams.

⁶John B. Williams estate papers, 1856, Beaufort County, Archives and History, Raleigh. See also 1870 census.

⁷John B. Williams estate papers, 1856, Beaufort County, Archives and History, Raleigh.

⁸1870 census, population schedule. See also Edmond Moore to E. A. Williams, January 30, 1863, Book 1, 823. Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson. There is no doubt that E. A. Williams was Olzie Williams. The description of the property she devised to her son tallies with the description of the land conveyed to her by Moore in 1863. Also, in the records there is a history of misspelling her name and reversing her initials. In her husband's estate papers, her sister's will and in the census her name is spelled Aalsey, Olsey and Olzie, and in the 1880 census her name is given as E. O. Williams.

⁹North Carolina Business Directory 1866-67, Branson's North Carolina Business Directory 1867-68, 1869, 1877-78 and 1884.

¹⁰Wilson Historic Properties Commission research report on the Olzie Whitehead Williams House by Vicki Craft. See also E. B. Mayo map of Wilson in 1872 copied in 1923.

¹¹1870 census, population schedule.

¹²1880 census, population schedule.

¹³1880 census, population schedule.

¹⁴Wilson Historic Properties Commission research report on the Olzie Whitehead Williams House by Vicki Craft. This report contains an account by Grace Williams,

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daughter of Latimer Williams, of the history of the house. Miss Williams is in her late 90s and although she still lives in Wilson her health does not permit her to remember any further details at the time of this writing, hereinafter cited as Olzie Whitehead Williams House research report.

¹⁵Wilson Advance (Wilson), April 16, 1896, hereinafter cited as Advance, April 16, 1896.

¹⁶Wilson County Marriage Licenses, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

¹⁷Olzie Whitehead Williams House research report.

¹⁸Olzie Whitehead Williams House research report.

¹⁹Olzie Whitehead Williams House research report.

²⁰Olzie Whitehead Williams House research report. See also Advance, (Wilson) April 16, 1896.

²¹Olzie Whitehead Williams House research report.

²²Under the intestacy laws of North Carolina Grace and Latimer Williams, Jr. inherited one-half interest in the property. See Administrator's Book 8, 294, Wilson County Clerk of Superior Court's Office, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

²³Latimer Williams will, Richland County wills, Richland County Courthouse, South Carolina.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.934 Acres

Quadrangle name Winstead Crossroads

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	1	8
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

Zone	Easting	Northing

D

Zone	Easting	Northing

E

Zone	Easting	Northing

F

Zone	Easting	Northing

G

Zone	Easting	Northing

H

Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached plat map - property being nominated is outlined in red.

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ms. Kate Ohno, Consultant

organization Survey and Planning Branch
Division of Archives and History date October 14, 1982

street & number 109 East Jones Street telephone 919-733-6545

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William S. Price, Jr.*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date February 7, 1983

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Bibliography

Beaufort County Records, John B. Williams Estate papers, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

Eight Census of the United States: 1860, Wilson County, population schedule.

Historical and Descriptive Review of the State of North Carolina, Charleston: Empire Publishing Co., v.2.

Ninth Census of the United States: 1870, Wilson County, population schedule.

North Carolina Business Directory, Raleigh: 1866-67, 1867-68, 1869, 1877-78, 1884.

Richland County Wills, Richland County Courthouse, South Carolina.

Tenth Census of the United States: 1880, Wilson County, population schedule.

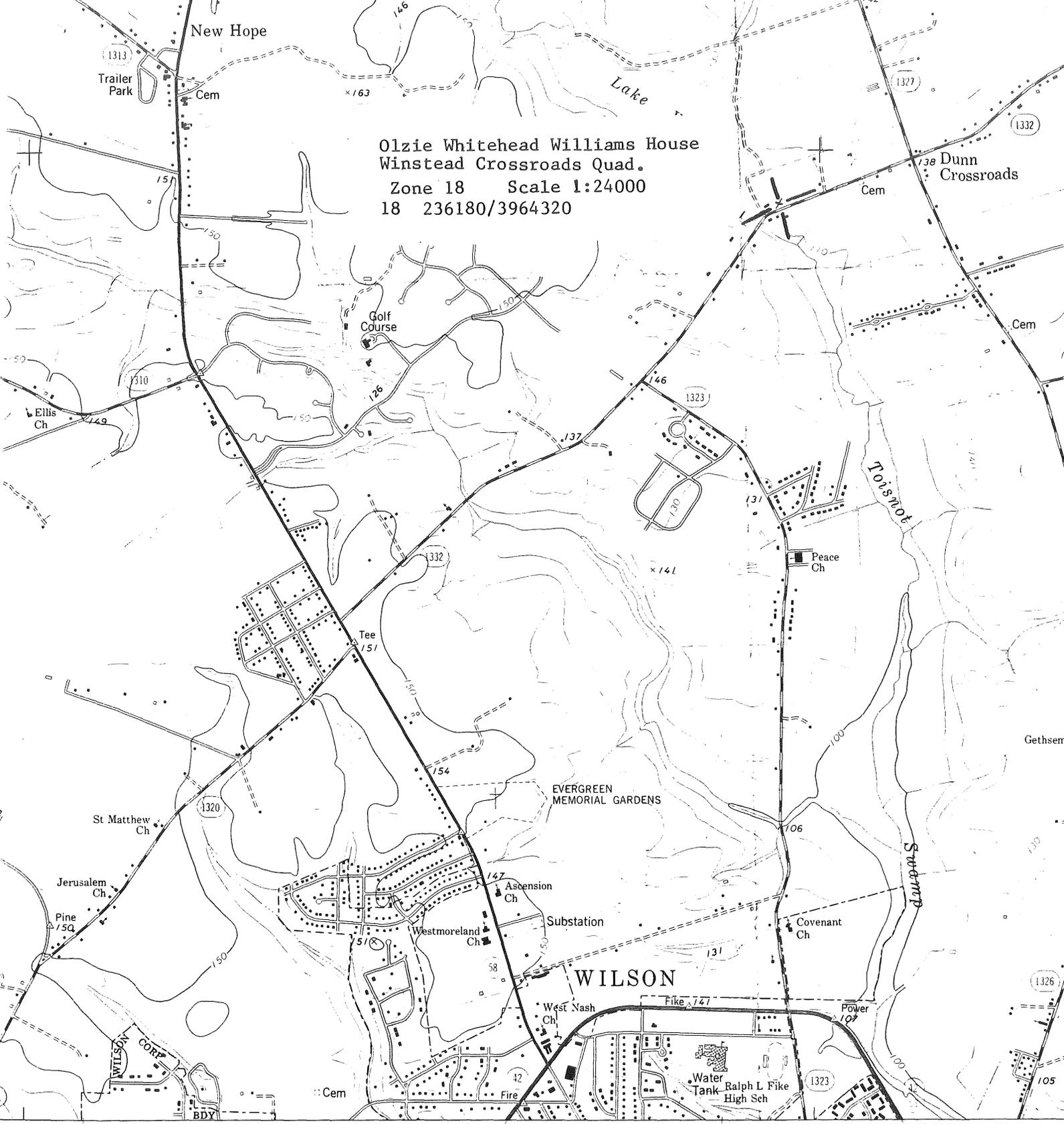
Wilson Advance (Wilson), April 16, 1896.

Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

Wilson County marriage licenses, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

Wilson County wills, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

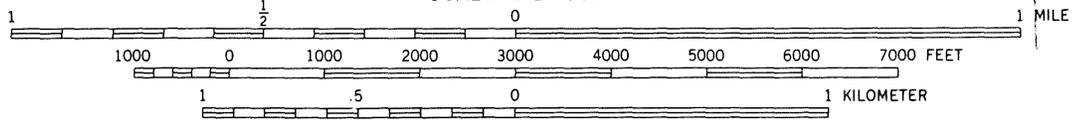
Wilson Historic Properties Commission research report on the Olize Whitehead Williams House by Vicki Craft.



Olzie Whitehead Williams House
 Winstead Crossroads Quad.
 Zone 18 Scale 1:24000
 18 236180/3964320

57'30" 233 (WILSON 1:62 500) 234 236 55' 1.3 MI TO U S 264 CLAYTON 33 MI. WILBANKS 9 MI. PINETOPS 17 MI.

SCALE 1:24 000

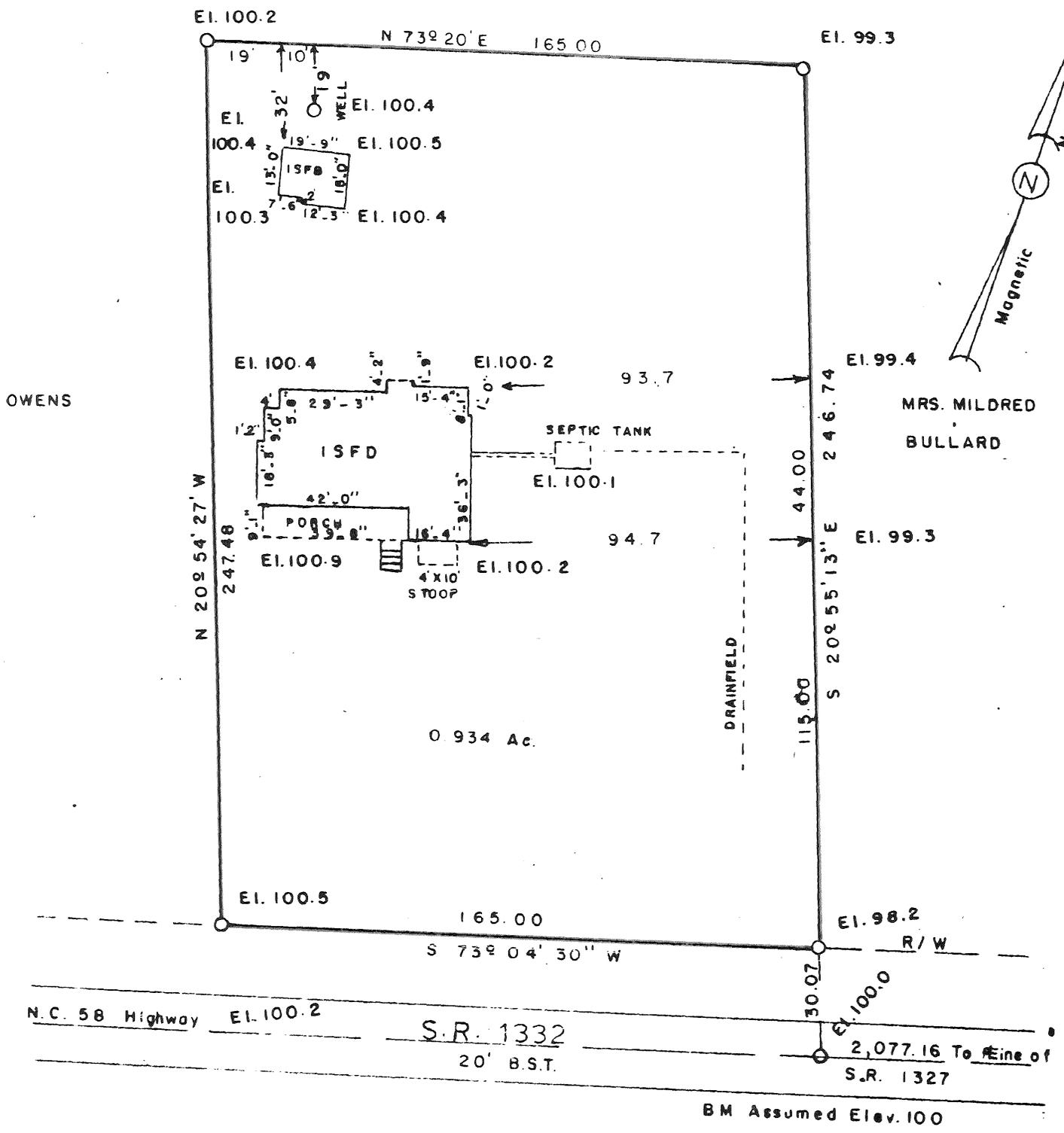


CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 ESTABLISHED BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA, 2002



NO ENCROACHMENTS OTHER THAN THOSE SHOWN AND INDICATED ABOVE.

LEGEND
O Iron Stakes

I, PRESTON E. LANE, CERTIFY THIS MAP WAS DRAWN UNDER MY SUPERVISION FROM AN ACTUAL SURVEY MADE UNDER MY SUPERVISION THAT THE ERROR OF CLOSURE AS CALCULATED BY LATITUDES AND DEPARTURES IS 1:10,000 THAT THIS MAP WAS PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH G.S. 47-30 AS AMENDED.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL THIS 2 DAY OF APRIL 1982.

REG. LAND SURVEYOR L-1316 REG. NO.

P. E. Lane-Reg. Land Surveyor-Saratoga, N. C., L.		
JOHN G. BARBER AND WIFE NANCY B. BARBER		
North Carolina	Wilson County	Taylor Township
Surveyed by	P. E. Lane	Date 4-23
Drawn by	P. E. Lane	Date 4-27
Scale	1" = 40'	



