

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR  THEMATIC NOMINATION  
Wilson County

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

South side SR 1539 0.3 mi. east of SR 1540

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Stantonsburg

VICINITY OF 2nd. Congressional dist

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

037

Wilson

195

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS N/A

YES RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mrs. Ora T. <sup>Lane</sup> Lewis

Mr. John H. Lane, Jr.

2201 Charlotte Ct.

Raleigh, N. C. 27607

STREET & NUMBER

Box 265

CITY, TOWN

Stantonsburg

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 27883

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Wilson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Nash Street

CITY, TOWN

Wilson

STATE

North Carolina

**6 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Kate Ohno, Preservation Consultant, August 23, 1982

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Survey & Planning Branch, Division of Archives & History (919)733-6545

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

109 E. Jones St.

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

# DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House stands just south of the Town of Stantonsburg, Wilson County's oldest incorporated town. The Greek Revival plantation house dates circa 1859 and when it was constructed it was not only built in the most ambitious style possible, it was also located at an important site. The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson farm is situated on the south side of SR 1539 facing northeast. On the east it is bordered by the confluence of Whiteoak and Goss Swamps, on the north it is bisected by SR 1539, on the west by Rt. 58 (the old road to the coast) and on the south by Contentnea Creek, Wilson County's only navigable waterway in the nineteenth century. Thus, this well-watered, flat and fertile tract, adjacent to the county's oldest established town, was a prime site for the home of an important planter. Later, in the early twentieth century, the Norfolk and Southern Railroad, the first railroad line to reach southeastern Wilson County, was built running through the Town of Stantonsburg. The line proceeds in a southeasterly direction from the Stantonsburg depot and bisects the Ward-Applewhite-Thompson farm.

The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House possesses significance not only because it was owned and occupied by several of the leading farmers in this section of the county, but because the house and associated buildings are architecturally significant. First of all, the house has been little altered since it was constructed circa 1859. It typifies the ambitions and tastes of Wilson County's antebellum planter class just prior to the Civil War. Although there are other good examples of this house form in the county, few of these have remained intact. Secondly, the combination of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century out-buildings associated with the house and farm are among the most rich and varied of those found in Wilson County. With the exception of the construction of the Norfolk and Southern Railroad in 1907 the site has suffered few changes since David G. W. Ward purchased the property in the late 1850s. Even the crops grown on the farm have changed little in the last ninety years except for a shift away from cotton cultivation and more emphasis being placed on tobacco since the 1920s.

The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House stands several hundred feet back from SR 1539 and mature shade trees surround the house and outbuildings. This boxy three-bay, two-story, double-pile frame Greek Revival plantation house is a common house form in eastern North Carolina. The low hipped roof sprouts symmetrically placed interior chimneys large six-over-six windows allow plenty of light and air into the house. The exterior ornamentation is very plain; the doors and windows have simple flush surrounds and only the monumental trabeated door is imposing. The basic square form of the house is complimented by a detached gable-roof one-story kitchen, now attached to the house by an enclosed breezeway. A generous wrap-around Colonial Revival porch shelters the front, east and rear elevations. The porch features a plain frieze, a molded cornice and Doric columns. A section of the porch corresponding to the entrance bay projects to frame the door. The porch was probably added circa 1900 by B. J. Thompson and a documentary photo from the early twentieth century

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Wilson County MRN, Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House #8

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shows the house and porch, much as they are now except for a balustrade which once accented the roof of the projecting entrance. The side section of the porch was screened-in after the photo was taken.

On the interior a central-hall plan is followed with stairs rising from the front of the hall and two large rooms opening off of each side. The stairs have a plain, rounded banister and a robust turned newel post. The interior woodwork is simple; the mantels are of the post-and-lintel type and the door surrounds are boldly molded with crossetted corners. Flat panel wainscot is found in the main rooms. The doors are typical of Greek Revival construction in Wilson County and consist of three long, narrow panels set above three shorter, narrow panels. An early twentieth century chandelier with glass prisms hangs in the front hall. The second floor of the house is similar in plan to that of the first and also retains its original woodwork. A small fluted early-twentieth-century Colonial Revival mantel is found in the dining room section of the kitchen wing. The kitchen has a shed roof porch on the rear opening onto the back yard.

Directly behind the kitchen, only a few feet from the porch, stand four buildings that typify early twentieth century farm life; a small brick acetylene plant with a hipped roof, a small frame milk house and two frame early-twentieth century gable-roof sheds flanking the acetylene plant and milk house. Both sheds have board and batten doors and may have originally been used as wash houses or smokehouses. Behind these four buildings stands another smaller gable-roof shed facing the farm path on the east side of the house. On the other side of the farm path stands a one-and-a-half story early-twentieth century frame packhouse. To the rear of the packhouse, also paralleling the farm path, stands a one-and-a-half-story frame stable, probably originally used to house the farm's mules. A second frame packhouse stands in the rear of the house on the other side of the farm path. All the tobacco barns associated with the farm are on the northside of SR 1539 opposite the house. This group of tobacco barns, set in a grove of trees, consists of four frame clapboard tobacco barns and one log tobacco barn with saddlenotched joints. The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson complex boasts an unusually rich complement of outbuildings.

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

\_\_\_\_\_ NATIONAL

\_\_\_\_\_ STATE

\_\_\_\_\_ X LOCAL

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 checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

ca. 1859

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House (ca. 1859), a large two-story, three-bay Greek Revival plantation house of the type favored by prosperous planters between 1845 and 1860, is one of the best preserved examples of this kind of home in Wilson County. The frame structure, which stands on a prominent site just south of the town of Stantonsburg, was owned and occupied by several of the leading farmers in the southeastern part of the county. The site has an unusually complete complement of late-nineteenth and early twentieth century farm buildings and remains essentially unchanged since David G. W. Ward, the earliest known owner of the property, purchased it in 1857.

## CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. Associated with the development of the agricultural economy of Wilson County before and after the Civil War, the Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House and its outbuildings are representative of substantial plantations in the county.
- B. Associated with David G. W. Ward, a merchant and farmer active in civic and social affairs in the vicinity of Stantonsburg; and with W. H. Applewhite, a prominent Wilson County planter whose descendents are present owners of the property.
- C. One of the most intact examples of a typical 1850s Greek Revival plantation home in Wilson County, the Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House is accompanied by an unusually complete group of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century farm buildings, including a milk house, two packhouses, and five tobacco barns.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House, a large Greek Revival plantation house of the type favored by prosperous planters between 1845-1860, was built circa 1859. The Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House is one of the best preserved examples of this type of house in Wilson County and boasts an unusually complete complement of farm buildings.

The early history of the Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House is shrouded in mystery. It is unlikely that the original owner of the house will ever be fully documented. The house property was purchased on November 24, 1857, by David G. W. Ward from Richard Edmondson,<sup>1</sup> who lived east of Stantonsburg on what is now Route 222. The deed describes Ward as a citizen of Greene County.<sup>2</sup> Ward was born in 1815 and on June 7, 1859, he married E. A. Moye of Wilson County at her father's house.<sup>3</sup> The Moye family were prominent citizens of Stantonsburg and the area just east of Stantonsburg where Route 222 and Route 58 cross was called Moyton because it was here that Dr. Moye built his large Greek Revival plantation house.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Moye's house has been demolished, but photographs show that it was very similar to the Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House, and may have provided the inspiration for its design. Dr. Moye was a country doctor as was his son-in-law. It is possible that Dr. Ward came to Stantonsburg originally to work with Dr. Moye.

Local tradition maintains that the Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House was built circa 1859, but Dr. Ward is not listed as a citizen of Wilson County in the 1860 or the 1870 census.<sup>5</sup> The most probable cause for Ward's absence in the 1860 and 1870 census records of Wilson County is the unclarified boundary line between Wilson, Wayne and Greene counties which included much of the area around Stantonsburg. That boundary was not clearly defined until 1872, so census takers may have included Dr. Ward in either Wayne or Greene counties in the censuses in question. In 1870 his sons, David and Wyatt, were living with Francis Moye of Stantonsburg Township (probably a brother of E. A. Moye).<sup>6</sup> The two boys, aged nine and seven, were listed in the population schedule as students, probably attending Hopewell Academy, situated just outside of Stantonsburg, one of the oldest private schools in Wilson County.<sup>7</sup> Ward first appears as a citizen of Wilson County in the 1880 census.<sup>8</sup> Ward is listed as a merchant and farmer living with his wife Adeline, age thirty-nine, and his eight

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Census of the United States: 1860, 1870, and 1880. Wilson County Population Schedules.  
Wilson County Deed Books, Wilson County Courthouse

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 274 acres

UTM REFERENCES See continuation sheet also

A	1,8	2,4,5,6,8,0	3,9	4,4	7,8,0	B	1,8	2,4,6,5,6,0	3,9	4,4	7,8,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	
C	1,8	2,4,7,3,6,0	3,9	4,3	3,6,0	D	1,8	2,4,7,1,2,0	3,9	4,1	4,6,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See planametric map with property outlined in red.

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children who ranged in age from eight to twenty.<sup>9</sup> Ward was a member of the firm of Ward & Moye from as early as 1873 until at least 1887.<sup>10</sup> Ward & Moye operated a general merchandise business in the Stantonsburg vicinity.<sup>11</sup> Ward also purchased land on Contentnea Creek where he operated a mill.<sup>12</sup> He was active in the civic and social affairs of the area and was a prominent member of the Joseph Warren Masonic Lodge and a trustee of Hopewell Academy.<sup>13</sup>

Ward did indeed occupy the house by 1880<sup>14</sup> and he died intestate in Wilson County in 1889. In July, 1890, the land upon which he lived at his death was sold at public auction to his widow.<sup>15</sup> E. A. Ward continued to occupy the plantation which in 1890 consisted of 560 acres. Upon her death in 1893 Mrs. Ward devised the property to her son, Wyatt Macon Ward, who had resided with his mother for the ten years previous to her death.<sup>16</sup>

Wyatt Ward sold the property almost immediately to leading planter W. H. Applewhite (see W. H. Applewhite House nomination) in February, 1894.<sup>17</sup> There is no indication that Applewhite ever occupied the property, so it seems probable that tenants resided in the house for several years. On January 20, 1897, Applewhite's daughter, Lena, married Benjamin J. Thompson, son of prominent Stantonsburg resident and planter Henry M. Thompson.<sup>18</sup> The following year Applewhite deeded the Ward plantation to Thompson and his wife who lived there for the remainder of their lives.<sup>19</sup> Thompson was born in 1863 and when he died in 1925 he devised his estate to his wife, Lena A. Thompson, for her life and then to his children, who are the present owners.<sup>20</sup>

It seems probable that it was B. J. Thompson and his wife who added the Colonial Revival veranda with its Doric columns, and the early twentieth century outbuildings and tenant houses. The Thompsons have been the owners of the property for more than eighty years although in recent years the house has been occupied by tenants.

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Richard Edmundson to D.G.W. Ward, 1858, Book 27, 380, Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

<sup>2</sup>The 1850 census also shows Ward as a head of household in Greene County with 46 slaves.

<sup>3</sup>Wilson County marriage licenses, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

<sup>4</sup>A photograph of Dr. Moye's house is in the possession of Travis and Nancy Thompson of Stantonsburg.

<sup>5</sup>Eighth and Ninth Censuses of the United States: 1860 and 1870, Wilson County, population schedules, hereinafter cited as the 1860 and 1870 censuses.

<sup>6</sup>1870 census, population schedule.

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<sup>7</sup>Kate Ohno, Wilson County's Architectural Heritage, Wilson: 1981, 108.

<sup>8</sup>Tenth Census of the United States: 1880, Wilson County, population schedule, hereinafter cited as 1880 census.

<sup>9</sup>1880 census.

<sup>10</sup>Wilson Advance (Wilson), April, 1880. See also Ward & Moye, grantee in Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

<sup>11</sup>Wilson Advance (Wilson), April, 1880.

<sup>12</sup>F. A. Woodard Comr. to Mrs. E. A. Ward, July 21, 1890, Book 28, 491, Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson. This deed mentions David G. W. Ward's land "whereon is located the grist mill."

<sup>13</sup>Kate Ohno, Ed. "Stantonsburg History", unpublished manuscript belonging to the Stantonsburg Historical Society, to be published in the fall of 1982.

<sup>14</sup>1880 census, population schedule.

<sup>15</sup>F. A. Woodard, Comr. to Mrs. E. A. Ward, July 21, 1890, Book 28, 491, Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

<sup>16</sup>Mrs. E. A. Ward will, December 18, 1893, Book 3, 142, Wilson County wills, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

<sup>17</sup>W. M. Ward to W. H. Applewhite, January 19, 1894, Book 35, 525, Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

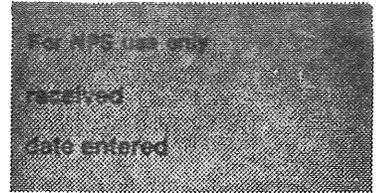
<sup>18</sup>Wilson County Vital Statistics, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

<sup>19</sup>W. H. Applewhite and Rachel O. Applewhite to B. J. Thompson and wife Lena Applewhite, December 23, 1898, Book 51, 88, Wilson County deeds, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

<sup>20</sup>B. J. Thompson will, December 5, 1925, Book 5, 112, Wilson County wills, Wilson County Courthouse, Wilson.

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UTM references cont'd.

E 18 245720/3941280  
F 18 245220/3943440

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BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The approximately 274 acres being nominated with the Ward-Applewhite-Thompson House were part of a tract purchased in 1857 by David G. Ward, who built the house about 1859. This land has been part of the farm associated with the house since that time.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

The project which resulted in this nomination was a survey conducted in 1980 by Kate Ohno. At that time the property was photographed and those photographs are included in this nomination. The site was revisited during the summer of 1985 by Dana Mintzer, consultant, and Virginia Oswald, on staff with the Survey and Planning Branch of the Division of Archives and History, to determine the present condition of the property. The photographs included in this nomination depict the present condition of the property.



#8 Ward - Applewhite-Thompson  
House  
Stantonsburg vicinity  
Wilson County planimetric  
map # 359-3-3  
Scale: 1 inch = 100 feet

SARATOGA TWP.  
STANTONSBURG TWP.

2

3  
109 Ac.

4  
64.96 Ac.

10.66 Ac.

House

(1539)

(1539)

4

1  
124 Ac.

3  
485 Ac.  
(290.5 Ac.)

STANTONSBURG TWP.  
SARATOGA TWP.

4  
59 Ac.

5  
55 Ac.

44.72 Ac.

(P.B. 8-82)

