INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

Wilson County

1 NAME
Historic Edmondson-Woodard House

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER .15 mi. down a dirt rd. on NE cor. Rt. 58 & SR 1542
CITY, TOWN Stantonburg
STATE North Carolina
CODE 037
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Second
COUNTY Wilson
CODE 195

3 CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY X BUILDING(S) 
X STRUCTURE
X SITE
X OBJECT
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
N/A IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED
OWNERSHIP 
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH
STATUS
X OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
X YES RESTRICTED
YES UNRESTRICTED
NO
PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
EDUCATIONAL
X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT
GOVERNMENT
INDUSTRIAL
MILITARY
RELIGIOUS
SCIENTIFIC
TRANSPORTATION
OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Mrs. Thomas Woodard
STREET & NUMBER 611 Raleigh Rd.
CITY, TOWN Wilson

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Wilson County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER Nash St.
CITY, TOWN Wilson
STATE N.C.

6 FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE Kate Ohno, Preservation Consultant to Wilson County
ORGANIZATION Survey & Planning Branch
DATE Oct. 15, 1981
DIVISION OF ARCHIVES & HISTORY
STREET & NUMBER 109 E. Jones St.
CITY OR TOWN Raleigh
STATE N.C.
The Edmondson-Woodard House is located between Toisnot Swamp and Contentnea Creek about four miles north of Stantonsburg on Rt. 58. Both Contentnea Creek and Toisnot Swamp are major streams in Wilson County and the land upon which the Edmondson-Woodard House was built is well-watered and fertile. Contentnea Creek was the only navigable waterway in the Wilson County area in the second quarter of the nineteenth century when the house was built, and Stantonsburg became the area's first incorporated town in 1817. The present path of Rt. 58 follows an earlier road which linked the town of Wilson with Stantonsburg.

Wright Edmondson, a prosperous planter, built the Edmondson-Woodard House circa 1830, for an advertisement for his property dated 1835 describes the house as "entirely new" (See Statement of Significance). Also located on Edmondson's 1400 acres in 1835 "was a gin house and screw and all necessary outhouses." Today the house is set well back off the road in a grove of oaks. The house is screened from the road by young pine trees and an avenue leads from Rt. 58 to the front of the house. The house is two stories tall, follows an L-plan, and is sheltered by a gable roof. The earliest section of the house is a single-pile hall-and-parlor plan house with a shed along the rear elevation and double shoulder exterior end chimneys at the gable ends. The chimneys have been covered with stucco, so that the bond is not visible. The three-bay facade is sheltered by a hipped-roof porch with flared columns on brick plinths of 1920 vintage. In the mid-nineteenth century a two-story wing was added to the northeast end of the house. This wing projects about six feet on the north elevation from the main block. A massive single-shoulder exterior end chimney, also stuccoed, is located on the rear elevation of the wing. The usual shed-roof porches dating from the twentieth century project from the rear of the house.

The windows in the house have four-over-four replacement sashes throughout as well as simply molded three-part surrounds. One of the most unusual features of the house is the triple row of lacy gaugework on the rakeboards of the main block.

On the interior the house follows a hall-and-parlor plan with an enclosed stair leading from the rear of the front room to the second floor. Raised six-panel doors are used throughout and the doors and windows have deep molded surrounds. The two main rooms on the first floor have flat-panel wainscot and the parlor mantel is Federal in style boasting paneled pilasters and a heavily molded mantel shelf. The upstairs mantels in the main block are similar to the parlor mantel. The interior appointments of the wing indicate a later style, Greek Revival, and cruder workmanship. On the first floor of the wing the broad window surrounds are capped by a peaked lintel, and the mantel is of the simplest mid-nineteenth century type with plain pilasters supporting an unadorned shelf. On the second floor of the wing a Colonial Revival mantel with free-standing stop-fluted columns with egg-and-dart molding on the capitals has replaced an earlier mantel.
The farm buildings surrounding the Edmondson-Woodard House are limited to a shed, a twentieth century well shelter and a metal sided former cotton gin, now a barn.

In front of the house and slightly to the north in the pine grove is the old Edmondson family graveyard.

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 details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological 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.
The Edmondson-Woodard House is one of the finest Federal-style ante-bellum plantation houses extant in Wilson County. Built circa 1830 for Wright Edmondson, it was the home of one of Stantonsburg Township's major landed families. The simple but elegant form of this two-story three-bay house follows closely the form of other Federal plantation houses in the Wilson County area, but it is distinguished by the high degree in which its original appearance has been preserved and maintained over the years.

B. The Edmondson-Woodard House is associated with Wright Edmondson, a prominent ante-bellum planter and with the Woodard family who have in Wilson County's history been members of the planter class and active in local religious and educational undertakings.

C. The Edmondson-Woodard House embodies the distinctive characteristics of a Federal style plantation house.
The Edmondson-Woodard House, one of the last remaining antebellum plantation houses in Stantonburg Township, was built circa 1830 by Wright Edmondson (sometimes spelled Edmondson). Edmondson was the son of Theophilus and Penelope Edmondson, and he was born in 1796. Edmondson was married circa 1817 to Susanna Dickinson, daughter of Shadrack Dickinson and Keziah Simms of Black Creek Township. The Simms family of Black Creek were among the most prominent landowners of that area and Shadrack Dickinson's holdings through his wife's family were extensive (for more information see the Black Creek Rural Historic District nomination).

Edmondson began to acquire property in the mid-1820s and more land was added to his holdings in the 1830s. The descriptions on the early deeds provide inadequate information as to which parcel of land eventually became the house property, but there is surprisingly good documentation as to the date of the house construction. In the mid-1830s many eastern North Carolinians were selling out and moving west. State revenues and property values were declining. Like many other planters in the area Edmondson decided to sell his property. The advertisement that he placed in the Tarborough Press of December 26, 1835, provides an excellent description of his holdings, including the house:

One of the Most Valuable PLANTATIONS In Edgecombe County, LYING on Tosnot Swamp, about four miles north of Stantonburg, and two from Contentnea Creek, where boats pass to and from Newbern during the winter and spring. The Tract contains About 1400 Acres, About 800 cleared and in a high state of cultivation—the most of the land is well adapted to cotton. There are on the premises a good two story dwelling house, gin house and screw, and all necessary outhouses entirely new. A great bargain will be given in the above property, and terms made easy by the Subscriber.

Judging by the wording of the advertisement the house must date between 1825 when Edmondson began to acquire property, and 1835, when the advertisement was written. A date of circa 1830 is consistent.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Edgecombe County Deeds, Edgecombe County Courthouse
Wilson County Deeds, Wilson County Courthouse
Wilson County Wills, Wilson County Courthouse

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 321 acres

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The property being nominated is outlined in red on the enclosed planimetric map.
with the style and construction of the main part of the house. For some
unknown reason the property so enticingly described in the 1835 advertise-
ment was not sold by Edmondson, but remained in his hands until his death
circa 1861. The improved conditions following the political and economic
changes made by the Constitutional Convention of 1835 may in part account
for Edmondson's decision to keep the property.

Edmondson is said to have owned 3,000 acres of land between Toisnot
Swamp and Black Creek, making him one of the leading landowners in Stan-
tonsburg Township. By his death Edmondson was one of the wealthiest
planters in North Carolina as well as being a local community leader.

At Edmondson's death his vast holdings were divided between his nine
children; Rufus, Garry, James, Elizabeth (who married Redding S. Petway),
Martha (who married John F. Saunders), Sarah (who married W. L. Quarles),
Zillah, Penelope and Susan (who married Dr. William T. Brewer of Black
Creek). His widow continued to live on the property until her death in
1872. Wright Edmondson is listed in the 1860 census, just prior to his
death, as a farmer owning real property valued at $32,000 and personal
property valued at $98,600. In 1860 four of his children, Zillah,
James, Penelope and Susan were living at home. Edmondson died between
July 21, 1860, when the census was taken, and April 20, 1861 when his son
Rufus conveyed his interest in his father's property to his sisters
Zillah, Penelope and Susan. Garry Edmundson did the same and Elizabeth
Petway conveyed her interest to the three unmarried sisters as well as to
her sister Sarah Quarles. Eight years later, in 1869, Sarah Quarles
conveyed her interest to Zillah, and Penelope conveyed her interest to
Zillah, Susan and Sarah Quarles. Zillah Edmundson devised her interest
in the property to her brother, James P. Edmundson, and to her sisters
Susan W. Brewer and Martha Saunders. Her will was probated on August 6,
1895. Early in the following year her heirs sold four hundred and
thirty-six acres of the former Wright Edmondson property, including the
house, to Warren Woodard.

Warren Woodard was the son of William and Elizabeth Woodard (for
further information see the Woodard Family Rural Historic District nomi-
nation). Woodard, like his ancestors, was a prominent planter. According
to the 1870 census he was born in 1823. In 1870, before he purchased
the Edmondson property, he was living in Stantonsburg Township and he
owned real property valued at $10,000 and personal property valued at
$3,000. Woodard moved to Wilson before the turn of the century and it is
unlikely that he ever occupied the Edmondson House in Stantonsburg
Township.

Woodard devised one-third of his estate to his son, Walter F. Woodard,
and this one-third included the house property in Stantonsburg Township.
Warren Woodard's will was probated on February 9, 1903. Like his
father, Walter F. Woodard was a town dweller, although he owned a good
deal of farmland. Walter lived with his family in a large turn-of-the-
A century house at 400 North Goldsboro Street, Wilson, on "Woodard Circle", so called because of the four imposing houses built for the Woodard family in this area. Thus, it appears that the Edmondson House was probably occupied by tenants until the early 1960s when Thomas H. Woodard and his wife Matilda Barnes Woodard began to renovate the house. Thomas H. Woodard inherited the property from his father, Walter F. Woodard, in 1923 and by 1960 he and his wife were using the house as a weekend retreat. The Woodards enclosed the back porch, creating a modern kitchen and bath, and had the house wired for electricity, but they did little to otherwise alter the plan or exterior appearance of the house.

Upon Thomas Woodard's death in 1966 his wife, Matilda Woodard, inherited the property. She is the present owner.

Footnotes
1 Author's interview with Hugh B. Johnston, Jr., Wilson County Historian, hereinafter cited as Johnston interview.
3 Johnston interview. See also Book 17, 147, Edgecombe County Deeds, Tarboro. Susanna and Wright Edmondson's son, Rufus Edmondson, was born in 1818 according to the 1860 census, so it seems likely that the couple was married prior to this date.
4 See Blake Little to Wright Edmondson, 1825, Book 18, 367, Peter Knight to Wright Edmondson, 1825, Book 18, 369, Stephen Felton to Wright Edmondson, 1829, Book 19, 446, James B. Woodard to Wright Edmondson, 1832, Book 20, 300, and Ephraim Daniel to Wright Edmondson, Book 21, 377, Edgecombe County Deeds, Tarboro.
5 Tarborough Press (Tarboro), December 26, 1835.
7 These children are listed in Susanna (in the will called Susan) Edmondson's will, Book 2, 86, made May 28, 1865 and proved March 5, 1872.
8 Ninth Census of the United States: 1870, Wilson County, North Carolina.
9 Susan Edmondson Will, Book 2, 86, proved March 5, 1872.
11 1860 Census.
12. Rufus Edmondson to Zillah, Penelope and Susan Edmondson, April 20, 1861, Book 1, 867, Wilson County Deeds, Wilson.


17. Zillah Edmondson Will, Book 3, 150, proved August 6, 1895, Wilson County hereinafter cited as Zillah Edmondson Will.

18. Zillah Edmondson Will.


20. Johnston interview.


22. 1870 Census.


25. Warren Woodard Will.


ADDENDUM

The property which remains associated with the Edmondson-Woodard House is part of a tract of 1400 acres originally accumulated by Wright Edmondson from 1820 to 1835. Edmondson built the house which is being nominated. The original plantation has been divided and only 321 acres remain with the house today. The land has continued to be farmed since the 1820s, and very likely was farmed when Edmondson acquired it in the early nineteenth century.


10 - BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property being nominated with the Edmondson-Woodard House is a 321-acre tract which has been associated with the house since its construction about 1830. Edmondson began acquiring property in 1820, and by 1835 owned 1400 acres on which he built his plantation house. The property is still an active farm.

13 - PHOTOGRAPHS

The Edmondson-Woodard House was initially photographed during the 1980 survey of Wilson County. The site was revisited in 1985 to determine its present condition. The house is still occupied, and well-maintained. The 1980 photographs depict the 1985 condition of the property.