

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Franklin
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Archibald Taylor House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Not for publication, see continuation sheet #2

CITY OR TOWN:  
Wood

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Second

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Franklin CODE: 069

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mr. Douglas Gupton

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 6, Box 267

CITY OR TOWN:  
Wood

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Franklin County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Louisburg

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  
 Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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2. Location

End of dirt lane, off S.R. 1446, north of church.

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Archibald Taylor House, surrounded by large trees, stands at the end of a long, straight drive--once lined by trees--amid rolling farmland in northeast Franklin County. The large frame house, standing on a full-height raised basement, is a notable example of the full-blown Italianate idiom of Warrenton builder Jacob Holt. Although it is unpainted and somewhat deteriorated, nearly all the original fabric survives unaltered.

The simple boxlike form of the house is emphasized by heavy corner posts, wide exterior baseboards, and the wide bracketed frieze beneath a hip roof. In contrast to this strongly rectilinear form is the highly ornamental use of arches, which are, in contrast to the variety of arches used by Holt in other houses, all ogee-shaped. This play between the straight, heavy rectilinear elements of the Greek Revival and the rather fanciful arched ones is used consistently inside and out and is characteristic of Holt's work.

The house, which stands on a roughly seven-foot-high raised basement, is three bays wide and two widely spaced bays deep, with two interior chimneys with simple molded caps. Heavy fluted corner posts on large square bases rise to bracketed caps and carry the wide bracketed frieze beneath the deep overhang of the roof. The brackets are triangular, with turned pendants. Across the main (south) facade extends a full-width three-bay porch with paired posts resembling the corner posts. Each pair is joined at the top by an open arch above and beneath by a balustrade-height arched panel. The porch repeats the bracket cornice of the house, but the brackets are widely spaced--occurring in pairs above the posts and at the apex of the shallow openwork ogee arches in each of the three bays of the porch; a turned pendant repeating the bracket pendant drops from the apex of each ogee arch. A balustrade once extended around the porch; remnants survive of a heavy molded rail and slender turned balusters. The paired posts recur at the facade on the ends of the porch. The ceiling of the porch is flat-paneled, and here a surprising amount of probably original paint exists, with rails and stiles in blue-green and panels in lime green. (Traces of the blue-green are barely visible under the eaves of the west wall.)

The front doorway is quite an elaborate composition, reflecting the elements used throughout the house. Very heavy fluted pilasters flank the doorway and carry a full-width frieze. The pilasters project from the wall, and their inner sides, fluted in panels like their fronts, serve as reveals for the doorway. The soffit is also fluted. In the center of the upper frieze is a gilded, painted cartouche with scrolls. The doorway itself consists of a double door--each leaf with four tall ogee-arched panels with heavy moldings. This is flanked by ogee-arched sidelights. The transom has three lights, separated and flanked by heavy bracketed elements: a wide, ogee-arched central transom light, and smaller ogee-arched lights above the sidelights. Some vestiges of the frosted glass, with tiny quatre-foil patterns, exist. This is the most ornate doorway treatment yet seen in a Holt house, and may be unique in the thorough application of the ogee-arched motif.

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7.A

The flanking bays of this facade contain tall double windows: each is set in a heavy rectangular frame and contains two four-over-four sash windows with each upper sash ogee-arched. Some louvered blinds survive. Similar windows occur at the second level, on the sides of the house, and at the rear. The first level of the rear, however, is four bays wide, all bays being filled with doors with four panels. The porch that once existed at the rear is completely gone.

The basement, of brick laid in one-to-five common bond, has windows corresponding in location to those of the main floors. The entrance to the basement, beneath the main entrance, is set in a heavy molded frame and has paneled reveals and pilasters terminating in brackets, that separate the doorway from the sidelights.

The interior, as is standard in Holt's houses, follows a center-hall plan two rooms deep, with rooms 24 feet square. The basement, with plastered brick walls, follows the same scheme. It has rooms once used as kitchen and dining room. The finish of the main floors is also typical of Holt's work, with very heavy molded baseboards and door and window frames throughout, the door frames ending in heavy molded feet that break out from the baseboards. At the windows, the frames extend to the floor to frame paired panels. Some panels are painted and gilded with floral and scroll motifs. Many of the baseboards are marbled, and floors woodgrained. The interior doors, like the front doors, have four ogee-arched panels. Mantels are of several different types--all common to Holt's houses. That in the west front parlor has pilasters and a frieze each adorned with long flat panels terminating in a trefoil spearhead design; there is a wide shelf and slightly arched backboard. In the rear west room is a similar mantel but with a fluted frieze "roll." Other mantels follow variations of these schemes, while others follow simple Greek Revival lines.

The most remarkable room in the house is the central hall, which contains the stairs. Typical of Holt's work, it is divided midway its length by a wall with a large doorway; hinges remain indicating the existence of a probably louvered door common to Holt's houses. In each half of the hall rises a stair, the front one from front to back, the rear from back to front. Each has a very heavy turned newel with faceted cap and turned finial, a heavy molded rail, slim turned balusters, and an open string adorned with simple moldings. A small landing connects the long initial flight and a shorter transverse flight. The rail of the front stair ramps dramatically at the junctures of the flights.

The plastered walls and ceilings of the front hall are painted in colorful--almost garish--trompe l'oeil fashion; others of Holt's houses retain some trompe l'oeil painting, including pink marble blocks at Reedy Rill, but none yet seen rival the work here. The walls, above baseboards resembling black marble, are painted to resemble blocks of slate blue, tan, and white marble. At the top of the wall and extending slightly into the ceiling there is painted a cornice adorned with paired brackets. The ceiling is painted with several

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7.B

large panels, each with scrolls in the corners and an elaborate "plaster" medallion in the center. All of this is done with a skillfulness that makes it quite convincing. The plastered soffit of the upper flight of stairs has mostly fallen down, but enough remains to see the outline of a framed portrait painted there--said to have been of a son, Archibald Lennox, who died young. The second-floor finish is somewhat simpler than the first with wide baseboards, rectangular panels beneath the windows, and two-tone brown painted doors. Door and window frames are symmetrically molded with roundel corner blocks, and mantels are similar to those below.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |  |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian; | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century   | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) ca. 1856

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Archibald Taylor House was built by Jacob Holt, evidently between 1855 and 1858. It is among Warrenton builder Holt's more elaborate dwellings: his typical two-story Italianate composition is heavily ornamented with Tudor-arched motifs, and the interior contains impressive trompe l'oeil wall and ceiling painting. The grand scale, ornate trim, and rundown condition of the unpainted plantation house give it a memorable aura of faded elegance, evocative of its brief heyday in the 1850s before the coming of the Civil War and its owner's bankruptcy.

Archibald Taylor was born about 1820, son of Robert Taylor, a large Granville County landowner who provided him with a plantation in Granville County; Robert Taylor's will of 1845 confirmed his son's ownership of the land he was already occupying and left him slaves as well. In 1847, Archibald Taylor married Mary Boddie Perry of Franklin County--a member of a family numerically, socially, and economically dominant in that county, said to be descended from seven Perry brothers who settled there in the mid-eighteenth century. In 1850 Taylor bought a 120-acre tract of land in Franklin County, and may have also acquired other tracts as well. On November 20, 1855, he bought at auction from the estate of George W. Stamper for \$10,000 a tract of 2,400 acres on Shocco Creek near property owned by his wife's relatives. It is evidently upon this tract and shortly after this purchase (paid in full by 1858) that Archibald and Mary Taylor began an elaborate Italianate plantation house.

Stylistic evidence makes it abundantly clear that the house is the work of Jacob Holt, a Virginian who practiced as architect-builder in Warrenton from the mid-1840s until at least 1860. Family tradition says that the interior painting was done by craftsmen from Philadelphia, but at least one other Holt-built house has similar--though simpler--work and was probably done by Holt's workmen. It is interesting to note that there were at least two other Holt-built houses within a few miles of the Taylor House closely related by family: Dr. Sam Perry was Mary's brother and John B. Williams of Buxton Place was her uncle. Other Holt-built houses in Franklin and Warren counties were also built for slightly more distant relatives. References exist in the farm journal of the owner of another nearby Holt house to visiting "Arch Taylor's" in 1858 and to visiting Oxford along with "A. Taylor."

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8.

As is evident from the scale and finish of the house, Taylor was--like the Perry, Alston, and Williams relatives of his wife--a substantial planter. The 1855 tax listing shows him with 925 acres, but from 1857 onward he is listed with 2,400 acres, gold and silver watches, carriages, and numerous slaves. The 1860 Census lists Taylor as farmer, aged 40, with real estate valued at \$24,330 and personal property at \$80,500. His wife Mary was 33, and after thirteen years of marriage they had but one child--Archibald, aged one. Taylor owned 62 slaves in 10 slave houses (his wife had been devised by her father's will 21 slaves). The farm included 800 acres improved and 1,633 unimproved. In addition to standard crops including 2,000 bushes of corn, the plantation produced 40,000 pounds of tobacco. These figures place Taylor among the upper echelon of farmers in a county made up primarily of small farmers.

During and immediately after the Civil War, Taylor held onto his property; tax listings from 1866 to 1871 show him with 2,431 acres and a personal estate of over \$10,000. The 1870 Census shows the household including Archibald and Mary Taylor, the son (Archibald) Lennox, aged 10, at school, two daughters and a 3-year old son, along with a 16-year old teacher from Virginia, and a mulatto farmhand. The eldest son is evidently the one at whose early death Taylor is said to have had a portrait painted on the stair soffit. In 1867, however, Taylor had had to mortgage the place in order to settle debts between himself and his brother Richard. During these years, according to a descendant, Archibald's brother Charles had come into financial difficulties; in the process of helping him, Archibald lost his own fortune and moved back to Oxford. On September 19, 1871, Richard W. Harris of Oxford was appointed assignee of the effects of Archibald Taylor, Bankrupt. In 1873 Harris advertised the sale of the Taylor property at auction. It was divided into lots, one of them 612 acres containing "the fine residence." The estate was sold to Benjamin F. Harris, also of Granville County, who paid \$6,500 for 2,105 3/4 acres. The house has had many years of tenants and is now in disrepair.

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(Number all entries)

9.

Granville County Records, Granville County Courthouse, Oxford, North Carolina  
(Subgroups: Wills).  
Granville County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North  
Carolina (Subgroups: Wills).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bryan, Mrs. Sally Taylor, of Oxford. Telephone interview with Catherine W. Cockshutt, December 16, 1974.  
 Franklin County Records, Franklin County Courthouse, Louisburg, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
 Franklin County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate papers, Tax lists, Census records, Marriage bonds).  
Franklin Courier, 1873, microfilm in Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	36° 11' 50"	78° 03' 49"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	36° 11' 50"	78° 03' 42"				
SE	36° 11' 38"	78° 03' 42"				
SW	36° 11' 38"	78° 03' 49"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 20 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Research and architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, supervisor survey

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 6 February 1975

STREET AND NUMBER: 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Robert E. Stipe

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 6 February 1975

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

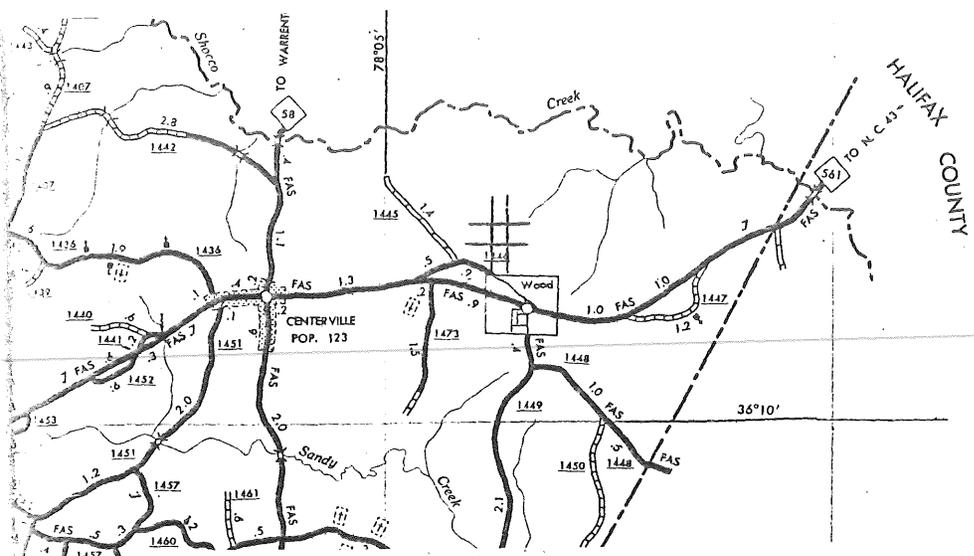
Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

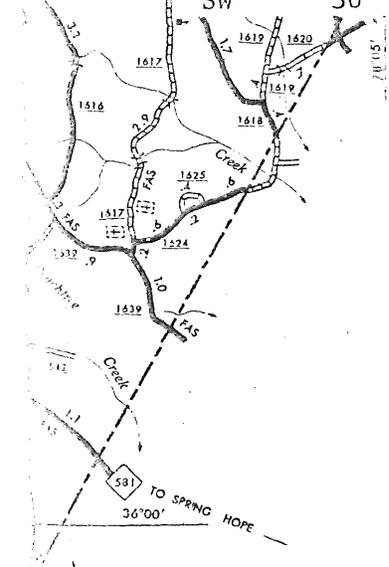
SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Archibald Taylor House  
 Wood vicinity  
 North Carolina

N.C. Highway Commission Map (no USGS map available)  
 Scale: 1/2" = 1 mile  
 Date: 1974

	Latitude			Longitude		
	degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
NW	36	11	50	78	03	49
NE	36	11	50	78	01	42
SE	36	11	38	78	01	42
SW	36	11	38	78	03	49



- TRAFFIC CIRCLE
- HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE
- DETAILED HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE
- INTERSTATE HIGHWAY
- U.S. NUMBERED HIGHWAY
- N.C. NUMBERED HIGHWAY
- SECONDARY ROAD NUMBERS
- UNDERGROUND CABLE
- RAILROAD, ANY NUMBER OF TRACKS USED BY SINGLE OPERATING COMPANY
- RAILROAD, ANY NUMBER OF TRACKS USED BY MORE THAN ONE OPERATING COMPANY ON SAME OR ADJACENT RIGHTS-OF-WAY
- RAILROAD STATION
- GRADE CROSSING
- UNDERPASS
- OVERPASS
- RAILROAD TUNNEL
- ARMY, NAVY OR MARINE CORPS FIELD
- COMM. OR MUNICIPAL AIRPORT
- MARKED AUXILIARY FIELD
- HANGAR ON FIELD "B" IN SYMBOL
- DOCK, PIER OR LANDING
- FERRY OR TOLL FERRY
- NAUTICAL HOUSE
- ST GUARD STATION
- LOW STREAM
- STREAM
- STREAM WITH LOCK
- VIVIER, POND OR LAKE
- ELEVATION
- THROUGH MOUNTAIN PASS
- WAY BRIDGE, OVER 20 FT.
- SPAN ON BRIDGE
- WAY TUNNEL
- LINE
- Fy LINE
- MITS
- STATION OR PARK BOUNDARY
- AREA
- DELIMITED AREA, POPULATION EST.
- COUNTY SEAT
- OTHER TOWNS AND VILLAGES
- TRIANGULATION STATION
- INCORPORATED CITY OR VILLAGE GENERALIZED
- SCHOOL
- CHURCH
- CHURCH WITH CEMETERY
- CEMETERY
- HOSPITAL
- CORRECTIONAL OR PENAL INSTN.
- HIGHWAY GARAGE, OR MAINT. YARD
- HIGHWAY DIV. OR DIST. OFFICE
- Wbght STATION
- PATROL STATION
- REST AREA
- MONUMENT—SMALL HISTORICAL SITE

