

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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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

William J. Wilson House

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

S.R. 1109, 0.6 mi. south of junc. with S.R. 1108

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Crowder's Creek Community

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10th

STATE

North Carolina

VICINITY OF

CODE

37

COUNTY

Gaston

CODE

071

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

X PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Penegar

STREET & NUMBER

2613 Armstrong Circle

CITY, TOWN

Gastonia

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Gaston County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Gastonia

STATE

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William Wilson House is a two-story Federal style brick dwelling, embellished with later Victorian era porches and eave trim. Built on a hillside, the house rests on a stone foundation containing a full basement with two large, well finished rooms which were once the kitchen and dining room. The brick walls are laid in Flemish bond and the front and rear elevations terminate in fine, molded brick cornices. A pair of exterior end chimneys marks each of the three-bay gable ends. The entrance bay of the five-bay main (north) facade is slightly off-center to the right (west). At both levels, the windows contain six-over-six sash and have stone sills and either plastered or painted flat arches or stone lintels. There are blinds with movable louvers at both levels. The basement stone walls have small, horizontal windows on the lower (south) side, with unusual, large horizontal, movable louvers fixed into heavy, pegged, wooden frames. Stone steps lead to the front and rear porches. During the late nineteenth century renovation the present doors were installed; the doors are similar, both having four panels with a pair of arch-top glazed vertical panels above a pair of square solid panels. The front entrance has a four-light transom surmounted by a lintel like the ones over the windows.

A one-story, late nineteenth century porch with porte cochere at the northwest corner carries across the front and around the east side of the house. Above the entrance is a one-bay second-story porch with gable roof serving a second-level door; this upper porch has turned balusters and posts with brackets supporting a spindle frieze. The southeast corner of the first floor porch is enclosed. There is a one-story shed porch which joins this enclosed area and extends the length of the rear. Though the rear section of the porch has late nineteenth century trim, it probably reflects the original, if it is not, indeed, the original. In the east gable end, which faces the road, a secondary entrance with sidelights and transom has been cut between the two chimneys. Late nineteenth century bargeboard trim has been added to the extended eaves of both gable ends. At the southwest corner is a one-story, frame late nineteenth century kitchen wing, also resting on a stone foundation.

The house follows a center hall plan two rooms deep; however, the front left (northeast) parlor is by far the larger of the two east rooms and the two west rooms are roughly the same size. Most of the finish is of Georgian-Federal character, but some elements date from the late nineteenth century.

The stair, a late nineteenth century replacement with large turned newel, rises from the rear of the hall along the east wall in one flight. The interior architraves are three-part molded ones, and the doors have six flat panels with applied Federal style moldings. The largest room is the parlor, which has an elaborately molded chair rail and flat-paneled wainscot with Georgian moldings. The three-part mantel has raised-paneled pilasters and end blocks as well as a long, horizontal center tablet with the same motif. The richly molded cornice and shelf break out over the end blocks and center tablet. The northwest room has a replacement, Victorian mantel. The room to its rear (southwest) has a wainscot similar to the parlor with a less elaborate Federal style mantel. It has plain pilasters with molded bands at the top and bottom, with three flat panels in the frieze surmounted by an unbroken molded shelf. The other rooms of the house are finished with plastered walls and simple chair rails and baseboards. The secondary mantels vary somewhat but are basically late Georgian in form, each with a three-part molded band surrounding a square fire opening and either plain

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or paneled frieze surmounted by a molded shelf supported by a molded strip. Doors are fixed with butt hinges throughout, and on the second floor, most of the box locks survive. The stair from the second floor to the large attic appears to be original. It is Federal style with a slender, square newel having a molded cap. The squarish handrail is supported by paired, slender balusters, square in section.

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/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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1824

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The William Wilson House is a substantial, impressive Federal style brick dwelling representative of the simplicity and good craftsmanship of the major brick houses of the period in the Catawba River Valley. In 1827 William Wilson, Lincoln County register of deeds and later proprietor of a gold mine and justice of the peace, played host to the perambulating state geologist Elisha Mitchell, whose description of the "large brick house" and of having supper in the basement dining room, enhances the history of the house.

It is thought that William Joseph Wilson built his house in 1824 on land that was at that time in Lincoln County. (Gaston County was formed from Lincoln in 1846.) At any rate the house was completed by 1827 when Dr. Elisha Mitchell, state geologist, made a tour through the Rutherford and Lincoln County area. The following is taken from his diary.

Got my dinner at old Lewis's in Rutherford, went out to see Mr. Boggs's gold mine which furnishes nothing but mica, then rode down the county line to Jacob Fullen wider where I was hospitably entertained. After examining his forge on Friday morning started with him for his ore bank or rather for Fall's Lime kiln on Kings Creek where William Wilson had engaged to meet me. Country Granite. Did not find Wilson, examined the ore bank then started on foot for King's Mountain about 5 or 6 miles below, towards this I travelled for 4 miles and understanding it was within the limits of S. Ca. returned. I however discovered a gold region along the creek. Wilson not being come on my return to the ore bank, I started for his house but he soon overtook me and told me gold had actually been found on this formation. He conducted me between King's and Crowder's Mountains along a very bad road to his house. We turned aside to see the sulphate of Borytes. He lives in a large brick house, four rooms to a floor. He is a plain man--said nothing of his return, but sent word to his wife by one of his sons that we should want some supper and nodded to her in a very kindly way when we descended into the underground room to our repast. Saturday morning, Mr. Wilson accompanied me some miles. We rode near the line--sometimes in N. and sometimes in S. Ca. 5 miles west of the Catawba according to Mr. Wilson's estimate, fell in with the gold country, and Wilson soon left me.

William Joseph Wilson had succeeded his father as Register of Deeds of Lincoln County and held the position until Gaston County was established. Living in the new county, he resigned his position at the March term of court 1847. He was a justice of the peace, was generally familiar with law and was known as Judge Wilson. His reputation for fairness was such that people often appealed to him to arbitrate matters that would

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ordinarily have led to lawsuits. He was strong-willed and liked to have his way, as Major C. Q. Petty, one of his nearest neighbors once said, adding that "the beauty about it was that the Judge's way was almost always the right way."² He was a Whig and in 1833 a delegate to choose a presidential elector on the Henry Clay ticket. He was a Mason and a member of the Royal Arch Chapter that met at Robert Winters' in the King's Mountain neighborhood in the period of 1810 to 1820.

In August, 1829, gold was discovered near King's Mountain. William J. Wilson formed a company of ten to mine it and became secretary and treasurer of the company. In February, 1832, an injunction was served that stopped mining and resulted in a lawsuit that went to the State Supreme Court before mining could be resumed in 1838. In reply to a query from the Charlotte branch of the Federal Mint, W. J. Wilson estimated that up to 1840 about \$60,000 worth of gold had been mined. At the time of his death, September 18, 1851, of "a pain in the breast," he owned one-fifth of the company.³ His will gives an interesting picture of both the man and his possessions. In addition to considerable land slaves and household possessions, he left "control of two rooms in my dwelling house while she remains single," to his daughter Eliza; she died an old maid in 1885.⁴ The house "including my grist and saw mill and all other buildings and improvements" went to his son Lawson Wilson. His will also made mention of "my Kings Mountain Railroad stock."⁵

Lawson went to college at the University of Ohio, at Athens, while his uncle, Dr. Robert G. Wilson, was president. He died intestate on April 9, 1876, and the house was finally sold in 1890, at public auction to J. R. Falls. The house was owned by deed and inheritance in the twentieth century by G. W. Falls (1896), Robert A. Jackson (1916), and was purchased in 1975 by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Penegar from the Jackson estate.

¹Sprunt, James. Historical Monograph #6, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1905, pp 67, 68.

²Wellman, M. W. and Cape, Robert F. The County of Gaston, Two Centuries of a North Carolina Region. Gaston County Historical Society, Gastonia, North Carolina, 1961, p. 58.

³Ibid, p. 73.

⁴Glenn, Leonidas C. Genealogy of The John Glenn Family of Gaston County, North Carolina, 1726-1953. Unpublished manuscript, copy available in Geneological Section of North Carolina State Library, Raleigh, North Carolina, p. 26. (Copy of appropriate sections in Survey.)

⁵Gaston County Will Book 1, p. 56.

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- Glenn, Leonidas C. Genealogy of The John Glenn Family of Gaston County, North Carolina, 1726-1953. Unpublished manuscript, copy available in Geneological Section of North Carolina State Library, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Copy of appropriate sections in Survey.)
- Sprunt, James. Historical Monograph #6, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1905.
- Wellman, M. W. and Cape, Robert F. The County of Gaston, Two Centuries of a North Carolina Region. Gaston County Historical Society, Gastonia, North Carolina, 1961.

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19 MI TO U.S. 29
BETHANY 4 MI.

4754 III
(KINGS MOUNTAIN)

William J. Wilson House
Crowder's Creek Community
North Carolina

UTM Reference:
17/479950/3891050



