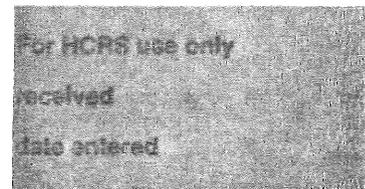


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**



**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 Bellamy-Philips House

and/or common Oak Forest

2. Location

street & number North side SR 1522,
0.5 mile East of junction with SR 1525 not for publication

city, town Battleboro vicinity of congressional district Second

state North Carolina code 037 county Nash code 127

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 N/A | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | <u>N/A</u> | <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. and Mrs. Frank Philips, Jr.

street & number

city, town Battleboro vicinity of state North Carolina 27809

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Nash County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Nashville state North Carolina 27856

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Architèctural and Historic Resources of the
title Tar-Neuse River Basin has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977 federal state county local

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

city, town Raleigh state North Carolina 27611

7. Description

19th = early house, 20th = 1905 house

| | | | | | | |
|------|---|--|---|---|-----------|------|
| 20th | Condition | 19th | Check one | 19th | Check one | both |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site | | |
| | <input 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

Oak Forest Plantation in Nash County is the site of two houses whose proximity documents the relationship of architecture, prosperity and changing taste in eastern North Carolina. The earlier house, called the Green House by the family, was built in the early nineteenth century and characteristic of the adaptation of Georgian and Federal architectural details to an earlier plan. The later house, built in 1905, is an excellent example of the Neo-Classical Revival and its adaptation to produce what must have been perceived as a "plantation style" house.

The Green House is a gable roof, three-bay, single pile two-story wood frame house with exterior end chimneys, a one-story attached porch across its south front, a secondary entry porch in the east rear bay and a shed roofed one-story section across the rear. Perpendicular to and centered on the rear is an open passageway which joins a later one-story building, possibly a kitchen, to the house. Raised on a continuous brick foundation, the height of the house, its central door, windows centered in each bay and the thin paired square posts of the front porch create the scale and appearance of the Federal style. This effect is enhanced by the thin corner boards, the nine-over-nine sash windows of the first floor and the nine-over-six sash on the front of the second. The window frames, however, have flat triple molded jambs and top plate with mitered corners which rest on a heavy molded cushion sill. These details are a vernacular reference to the more robust Georgian vocabulary from which the house is derived. Similarly, the beaded siding, the beaded and tapered raking cornice, the elaborate box cornice, and a double row of dentils and punch work below the box cornice and at the eave line recalls the richer decoration of the 18th century.

The symmetry which is associated with both the Georgian and Federal styles conceals the hall-and-parlor plan of the house. This plan is a vernacular retention of domestic design which is medieval in origin. The hall fills the western and central bays of the house so that the exterior central door is located in the room's eastern corner. To the right is the parlor with its secondary entry from the outside. Directly opposite the front entrances is the door to the hall that bisects the one-story shed. This hall contains the enclosed stairway to the second floor and also provides access to the rooms located on either side. A door at the rear leads to the open breezeway.

The two main rooms are decorated by triple molded chair rails, a recessed panel wainscot and deep shoe molding. All this woodwork is simulated wood-graining, the recessed panel and the bead which are inset in each panel being in a lighter and larger grain than that of the rails and stiles. Plaster on lathe covers the walls and ceilings. The rectangular fireplace openings have dark marbelized surrounds which consist of chamfered unfluted pilasters on bases supporting a plain arched panel with triple molded continuous shelf above. The window and door frames are triple molded and the doors have six raised panels and strap hinges. The rooms are tall in proportion, and the absence of a molding at the ceiling emphasizes the quality of relative sparseness associated with Federal detail.

These details continue in a thinner, still more simplified form in the shed rooms and back hall. Windows here have four-over-four sash and the room on the west has a simple Federal fireplace.

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The enclosed stair is flush paneled although raised paneling appears on its underside in the east parlor below. The stairway has a square newel, balusters and turned top rail.

The second floor is divided into three rooms, one over the central door and a large room to the left and right of the small hall. These have simple late Georgian fireplace surrounds, that is, paneling and a narrow molding on the outside edge. The wainscot is a plain recessed panel with a double molded top rail.

The addition to the house can best be described as Greek Revival in character, although the interior has been so altered as to make any conclusions difficult. It has broader proportions, unbeaded siding, and a shallow gable roof. The windows are modern. The door frames and doors have a simple molding and paneling that is associated with Greek Revival building. Its simplicity may also be attributed to its vestigial nature.

Several of the original buildings of the agricultural complex remain including an office, necessary, and smokehouse as well as a walled cemetery with Bellamy family stones dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Of additional importance for the site is the later house.

This house was built by D. J. Rose, a well-known Rocky Mount contractor, for the Philips family. When it was completed in 1905, the family moved into the house which is sited approximately 100 yards south and east of the Green House which became a household and farm storage area.

The later house is a white frame, cubical two-story, two room deep central hall plan dwelling with a pyramidal slate roof topped with a flat platform and decorative balustrade. The two central interior chimneys are white plastered and have sharply pointed arches sculpted on their faces. A secondary porch fills the first bay on the east side of the house. Additional rooms were added to the rear of the house several decades ago but do not disrupt the original fabric. These were recently renovated for modern living.

The outstanding feature of the exterior is the one story porch across the front which is centered with a conical roofed circular portico. Crisp Ionic columns which carry a correct Ionic architrave and entablature support the porch and portico roofs. Like the Green House, the three bayed symmetrical arrangement recalls the classical source of these domestic designs. Like the Green House, also, the interior is finished with a combination of details which are dependent on various sources.

The central hall is elaborately paneled with a shoulder high wainscot and rail, which, like the stairway is dark, stained oak. Halfway down the hall and suspended from the ceiling is a three foot deep screen of arches infilled with turned ball and post decoration. This extends to the stairs on the east wall. Three steps rise to the first landing and the arched screen creates the illusion of a cage around the landing. Although dark in color this woodwork provides a lightness and whimsy which contrasts with the heavy, somber scale and decoration of the four great rooms of the first floor. To the west are the main living room and dining room; to the east are the parlor and a bedroom. The wainscot and chair rail of all these rooms is plain and

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heavy with a heavy ceiling cornice of convex and concave moldings. Each of the four downstairs rooms has a fireplace. They are paired, back to back and centered on the interior walls. Unfluted columns on heavy bases support heavy molded mantel shelves and overmantels of mirrors framed by columns. Large windows centered on each exterior wall have simple heavy stock frames, jambs and sills. Each ceiling is centered with a circular rosette of plain moldings.

The second floor is a duplicate of the plan of the first. The wide hall opens on generous bedrooms. The atmosphere of this house is one of graciousness, spaciousness and prosperity, which echoes the ideas that informed the Green House, almost 100 years earlier. These two houses are a perfect compliment to each other since both depend on the classical language of architecture, translated to this country, and then, in the case of the newer house, revived and refined to produce a nostalgic memory of the plantation era which is evoked by the great porch, scale and the detail of the later house.

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 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/ |
| <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 checked="" 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 1905 **Builder/Architect** D.J. Rose, Contractor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Oak Forest is the seat of a prosperous Nash County plantation which has remained in single family ownership for over one hundred years and the site of two significant houses--one Federal style, the other Neo-Classical Revival. Built in the mid 1820s for Reverend William Bellamy, the earlier style house follows the hall and parlor plan typical of regional vernacular houses of the eighteenth century; the finish is executed in a vernacular Federal idiom which retains elements of the Georgian. Dr. James Jones Philips purchased the farm in 1863 and sold it to his son Joseph seven years later. Active in local politics, Joseph Battle Philips was also one of the area's leading scientific farmers. Around 1905 he hired D. J. Rose, a prominent Rocky Mount contractor, to build the Neo-Classical Revival house for his family. Together the houses and their outbuildings represent not only the architectural but the historical development associated with a large single-family agricultural complex in eastern North Carolina.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. As a single-family farm for more than a century and the site of two significant Nash County houses, Oak Forest is associated with the broad patterns of architectural change and historical development in the agriculturally rich area of eastern North Carolina.
- B. The plantation is associated with the Bellamy and Philips families which have been prominent in the economic, political, and social life of Nash and Edgecombe counties.
- C. The two houses at Oak Forest embody distinctive characteristics of their respective types, the Federal and Neo-Classical Revival, and the vernacular adaptation of those forms to the conservative eastern North Carolina setting. The later house is also the work of Rocky Mount builder D. J. Rose.
- D. The site, which is still a working agricultural complex, is likely to yield information about nineteenth century farm life in rural Nash County.

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The Bellamy-Philips House, known locally as Oak Forest, was built near the small Nash County town of Battleboro in the middle 1820s by Reverend William Bellamy. Little is known about Bellamy, who died in 1846.¹ His estate was purchased by Halifax County physician William Hunter, who was a native of Nash County. Hunter paid \$1,835 for 1,134 acres.² Hunter apparently never lived at Oak Forest and the property changed hands a number of times before being purchased in 1863 by Dr. James Jones Philips.³

Philips (1797-1874) was a prominent Edgecombe County physician. He received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1817. He married Harriet Amanda Burt of Hilliardston in 1834. His Edgecombe County house "Mount Moriah" was a gathering place for area physicians, and a number of medical students lived there.⁴ Shortly after the Civil War his son Joseph Battle Philips (1848-1925) began to farm the Nash County land. Philips, who served briefly in the Confederate Army in the waning days of the war, purchased the property from his father in 1870 for \$5,000.⁵

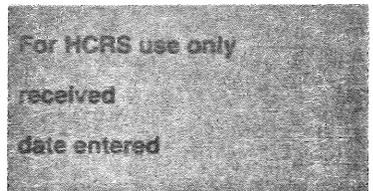
The 1870 census listed the value of the Philips property as \$6,000, with livestock valued at \$948. Philips grew 34 bales of cotton, and 1,000 bushels of corn. The figures for 1880 are comparable, with 35 bales of cotton, 574 bushels of corn, \$800 worth of livestock, and a total farm value of \$5,000.⁶ Philips was regarded as one of the area's leading scientific farmers. He was elected to the North Carolina Assembly as a Democrat in 1889 and 1891, and served as chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. A member of Battleboro's Church of the Good Shepherd, Philips died June 25, 1925 at the age of 77. The Raleigh News and Observer eulogized him as a man who "contributed greatly to the upbuilding of the section."⁷

Philips and his wife, the former Pattie Lane Battle, had six children. Around 1905 Philips built another house, adjacent to the older Bellamy House, and his family moved into it. The older house has remained unoccupied since then, although it has been kept in good repair, and has been used for storage.⁸ After the death of Joseph Battle Philips the property was willed to his son Frank Parker Philips (1886-1964), who continued to farm it.⁹ Frank P. Philips, Jr. and his wife Patty Arrington Philips, purchased the property from his siblings following the death of Frank Parker Philips, Sr. They paid \$27,000 for the 583 acre tract. Mr. Philips continues to own and farm the land.¹⁰ The Philips farm is one of the relatively few active farms in eastern North Carolina to have enjoyed over a century of single family ownership.

The structures of course are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structures. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archeological record. Therefore, archeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structures. 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.

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Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 2

FOOTNOTES

¹T. E. Ricks (ed.), Nash County Historical Notes (Rocky Mount: Nash County Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 344, hereinafter cited as Ricks, Nash County; Joseph W. Watson, Kinfolk of Nash County, 1778-1854 (Durham: Seeman Printery, 1979), 200.

²Nash County Deed Book 19, p. 33; Ricks, Nash County, 202.

³Nash County Deed Book 23, p. 56.

⁴Ricks, Nash County, 201.

⁵Nash County Deed Book 24, p. 301; D. F. Sinclair, Biographical Sketches of Members and Officers of the General Assembly of North Carolina, Session 1889 (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1889), 13, hereinafter cited as Sinclair, Biographical Sketches.

⁶Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Nash County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Nash County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule.

⁷News and Observer (Raleigh), July 1, 1925; Sinclair, Biographical Sketches.

⁸Letter from Mrs. Frank Parker Philips, Sr. to Dr. Larry E. Tise, January 18, 1979, hereinafter cited as Philips Letter.

⁹Nash County Will Book 9, p. 173; News and Observer (Raleigh), June 30, 1964.

¹⁰Nash County Deed Book 664, p. 541; Philips Letter.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 25 acres

Quadrangle name Drake

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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 Charlotte V. Brown, Architectural Historian
Jim Sumner, Researcher
 organization Survey & Planning Branch
Archeology & Historic Preservation Section date September, 1981
Division of Archives & History
 street & number 109 East Jones Street telephone (919) 733--545
 city or town Raleigh state North Carolina 27611

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

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

title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 15, 1982

| | |
|--|------|
| For HCRS use only | |
| I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register | |
| | date |
| Keeper of the National Register | |
| Attest: | date |
| Chief of Registration | |

