

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR _____ THEMATIC NOMINATION
Wilson County

1 NAME

HISTORIC
General Joshua Barnes House
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
W side SR 1326 opp. jct. of SR 1327 _____ NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN _____ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Wilson VICINITY OF Second
STATE _____ COUNTY _____ CODE _____
North Carolina 037 Wilson 195

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS <u>N/A</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Mr. & Mrs. Emerson C. Winstead
STREET & NUMBER
P. O. Box 1308
CITY, TOWN _____ STATE
Wilson _____ VICINITY OF North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Wilson County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
Nash Street
CITY, TOWN _____ STATE
Wilson _____ North Carolina

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Kate Ohno, Preservation Consultant to Wilson County October 16, 1981
ORGANIZATION _____ DATE
Survey & Planning Branch, Division of Archives & History (919) 733-6545
STREET & NUMBER _____ TELEPHONE
109 E. Jones St.
CITY OR TOWN _____ STATE
Raleigh _____ North Carolina

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 General Joshua Barnes House is thought to have been built circa 1844 around the nucleus of an earlier, Federal style dwelling. Similar to the residences of Barnes' two brothers, William Barnes (in Stantonsburg Township) and Elias Barnes (in Saratoga Township), the General Joshua Barnes House is a two-story central-hall-plan dwelling three bays wide and two rooms deep with a shallow hipped roof. This type of Greek Revival plantation house achieved great popularity in this area between 1845 and 1860, and other examples of this sort of construction exist in Wilson County today.

The unique feature of the General Joshua Barnes House, which is otherwise very similar to a number of other Greek Revival plantation houses in Wilson County, is its incorporation of an earlier house in its construction. Mary Shoemaker, in her description of the house written for the Wilson Historic Properties Commission, speculates that the earlier structure may have been a two-story, single-pile central-hall-plan dwelling with a gable roof. Ms. Shoemaker contends that when Barnes remodelled the house in the Greek Revival taste the original house was enlarged and reoriented. She asserts that the double shoulder common-bond chimney which now stands at the rear of the house indicates the original side elevation of the older Federal style house. This is supported by an inspection of the interior of the house. (see below)

The exterior appearance of the house is very simple and elegant. The house is set in a grove of mature trees at the intersection of Waterworks Road and London's Church Road just outside the city limits of Wilson. Prime agricultural land surrounds the house. The boxy massing of the house is typical of Greek Revival architecture in general and of this type of plantation house in Wilson County in particular. The house, set on a low brick foundation, is oriented to the east and to the road. A plain continuous frieze forms a band under the boxed cornice. Applied diamond motifs ornament the rear and parts of each side elevation. Similar diamonds are found on buildings in Wilson dating from the last quarter of the nineteenth century and these diamonds may date from this period. Many plantation houses originally had a double gallery porch on the front elevation, which may account for the lack of frieze ornament on the main facade of this house. A single story porch with square posts with molded caps shelters the main facade. The broad trabeated door boasts some original etched cranberry glass in the transom and sidelights. Large six-over-six-sash windows are the dominant window type used in the house. The southern side facade has four bays on the first floor, but only three on the second floor. The rear elevation gives clues to the orientation and placement of the earlier structure as well as showing the additions which have been made to the house since 1844 including a pantry, laundry and enclosed porch. The two southernmost bays of the rear facade are consistent with the Greek Revival features of the house, but the northern end boasts a curious double shoulder chimney flanked by narrow windows on both first and second floors. The northern facade is the least symmetrical of all the elevations. A paved double shoulder chimney, the mate to the chimney on the rear elevation, is located near the front of the house and is flanked by the large six over six windows on both floors

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except where a window was altered on the first floor in the 1930s for a bathroom. The two bays nearest the rear of the house reflect the earlier structure and the windows are not only smaller and narrower, but have nine over six sashes.

An interesting feature of the house is a small one-story Greek Revival frame structure which has been attached to the rear of the house by an enclosed breezeway. The structure is gable roofed with the corner-posts typical of Greek Revival buildings. The owners of the house refer to this house as a "kitchen", but it shows no sign of ever having had a chimney, and it seems more likely that it may have been a plantation office or some other structure associated with the house which was converted into a kitchen after the Civil War.

Although the exterior of the house appears largely to be the plantation house as it was built by General Joshua Barnes circa 1844, the effects of a remodelling undertaken by General Barnes between 1865 and 1875 are also evident. Barnes is thought to have added the present porch and the trabeated door with its cranberry glass during this period.

On the interior the house is bisected by a broad central hall with an unusual dog-leg stair ascending from the front of the house. A handsome robustly turned walnut newel post is similar to those in other contemporary plantation houses of this type and delicately turned slender balusters support the graceful balustrade. The rear section of the hall is enclosed by two large panelled doors with glass in their upper sections. To the left of the stairhall is the formal parlor which boasts panelled spandrels under each window, a simple but bold mantel and a deeply molded door surround with a four-panel door. Behind the parlor, but not communicating with it, is a dining room which was lengthened by a one-story addition to the rear of the house. The finish of this room is consistent with that of the parlor, but two flat-panel built-in cupboards flank the fireplace. The rooms to the right of the hall indicate the presence of the Federal house. The front room has been altered and the mantel was removed in the 1930s when a modern bathroom was built out into the room, however the rear room boasts the finest Federal woodwork in Wilson township. The mantel is unusual and beautifully detailed; fluted molding enhances the pilasters while a central panel of mitered reeded strips surrounded by delicate scallops is set below the shelf. The second floor follows much the same plan as the first floor. Federal woodwork is to be found in the northwestern room while the remaining rooms have a very simple Greek Revival finish.

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.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

General Joshua Barnes was one of Wilson County's most influential and civic-minded citizens. Barnes came from a long line of prosperous planters. His father, Jesse Barnes, married Edith Jordan in 1797¹ and in the early nineteenth century he was one of the leading landowners in the area which later became Wilson County. Joshua Barnes was born on June 14, 1813, in Edgecombe County.² Little is known of Barnes' early years, but like most young men he enlisted in the local militia.³ On March 18, 1839, at the age of twenty-six, he was appointed lieutenant colonel of the Edgecombe County Militia. Later he was promoted to brigadier general of the Halifax District of the North Carolina Militia and his command included regiments from Nash, Northampton and Edgecombe counties.⁴

Barnes began to acquire land in the late 1830s, receiving 474-1/2 acres from his father in 1836, 200 acres from Lancaster and Guilford Parker in 1837, and 541 acres from Caswell Horn in 1838.⁵ These tracts formed the core of Barnes' extensive holdings and it was upon this property that he later built his plantation house.⁶ On May 16, 1843, Barnes married Matilda Bynum, daughter of Turner Bynum,⁷ another prominent landowner. Barnes is thought to have built his dwelling shortly after his marriage, circa 1844.⁸ The site which Barnes chose was already occupied by an earlier house, built in the Federal style, which was incorporated into the Barnes House. The origins of this earlier house are unknown, and the deeds to the property fail to mention the existence of such a house although its presence is clearly documented by the structure of the house and the style of its interior woodwork. Barnes is thought to have enlarged and reoriented the original house and enclosed it within a shell consisting of the popular Greek Revival plantation house.⁹

In the 1840s while he was engaged in building a home and raising a family Barnes also became involved in politics. This was a natural step, for as a prominent landowner and a man of some breeding and education his opinions were respected. He represented Edgecombe County in the lower house of the state legislature in 1840, 1842, 1844, 1850 and 1854, and he became one of Wilson County's first senators in 1868.¹⁰ Barnes was a major force in the incorporation of Toisnot Depot and Hickory Grove

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Bass, Vidette. Branch: A Tradition with a Future. Wilson, N. C.: Branch Banking and Trust Company, 1962.
- Edgecombe County Deeds, Edgecombe County Courthouse.
- Eighth Census of the United States: 1860. Wilson County.
- Gold, Daisy H. "A Town Named Wilson." Unpublished manuscript in the Wilson County Library.
- Shreve, Clark G. "The Development of Education in 1900 in Wilson, N. C." M.A. Thesis. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1941.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.9 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	237590	3961270	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Property is located on parcel 3, Wilson County Tax Map # 299-2-3.
See enclosed tax map with property outlined in red.
The original farm has been subdivided many times, and the 3.9 acres on which the house stands are all that remains associated with it.

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into the town of Wilson in 1849¹¹ and he was named one of the town's first commissioners,¹² although he resided outside the town boundaries.

Barnes was also interested in the creation of good schools in the burgeoning community which was later christened Wilson. In 1847 he was one of the incorporators of the area's first school, Toisnot Academy.¹³ In 1853 Barnes helped to erect the successors of this early school, the Wilson Male and Female academies which were located on the corner of Pine and Green streets and Vance and Goldsboro streets respectively.¹⁴ In 1859 Barnes became one of the incorporators and a member of the board of trustees¹⁵ of Wilson's most ambitious educational venture, the Wilson Female Seminary. The Female Seminary was a large, commodious building designed in the Italianate style by Lind & Murdoch, a prominent architectural firm from Baltimore. Because of troubled times during the Civil War this grand creation survived only a few years, and when the Wilson Collegiate Institute, a co-educational school, was organized in 1872¹⁶ on the same site, Barnes also lent this institution his support.¹⁷

Barnes' contributions in the field of education, however, have been obscured by his success in the political arena. Today in Wilson he is remembered as "the father of Wilson County." In 1854 Barnes campaigned for a seat in the house on the platform of the formation of a new county.¹⁸ Barnes was elected and along with Colonel David Williams and Judge George Howard managed to push the legislation ratifying an act on February 13, 1855, creating a new county from parts of Edgecombe, Nash, Johnston and Wayne counties.¹⁹ The celebration in Wilson was described in this way:

We are informed that the citizens of Wilson had quite a spirited and lively celebration last week, in honor of the New County. A ball on Thursday night, enlivened by Frank Johnson's brass band--a Party on Friday night--and a Barbecue and public speaking on Saturday, were the prominent objects of hilarity and enjoyment. A large concourse of ladies and gentlemen from adjoining counties attended. On Saturday, Geo. Howard, Jr., Linn B. Sanders, and Charles C. Bonner, Esqs., made public addresses which were well received by their auditory. Dancing and other sports were continued until midnight closed the festivities.²⁰

In 1860, on the eve of the Civil War and five years after his great success in the legislature, Barnes was one of the wealthiest men in Wilson County. According to the 1860 census he was a farmer owning \$27,500 worth of real property and \$79,000 worth of personal property.²¹

The formation of Wilson County had set the seal on Barnes' reputation. Josephus Daniels, who came to Wilson at the age of three in 1865 remembered General Barnes in his later years in this way:

General Joshua Barnes was the leading citizen in the early days. He served in the Legislature and was a leader in

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securing the creation of the County of Wilson. He was head of the militia when that position was a coveted one of distinction, and was the most influential member of the first Board of Commissioners of the town. I remember him as an old man pushed in a rolling chair, always treated with marked respect. He was called "The Father of Wilson County."²³

Apparently the Barnes plantation was little affected by the ravages of the Civil War and Barnes used his wealth to help rebuild the town's economy after the war. On November 7, 1865, Barnes' only surviving child, Nannie (Nancy), at age twenty-one married enterprising young merchant Alpheus Branch.²⁴ Branch was educated at the Deems Military Academy operated by Charles Force Deems, a prominent figure in education and religion in North Carolina.²⁵ In 1861 Branch enlisted in Company I, 1st Regiment of the North Carolina Infantry, but after his six month term of enlistment was over he enlisted in what became Company G, 41st Regiment, North Carolina Troops (3rd Regiment North Carolina Cavalry, also known as the "Scotland Neck Mounted Riflemen") in Onslow County on May 6, 1862. Branch served as a private, first under Captain George A. Higgs and later under Captain Benjamin Gordon Smith.²⁶ After his marriage to Nannie Barnes the couple moved to Halifax where Branch was a private banker for three years.²⁷ Branch returned to Wilson by 1869 and set up a prosperous mercantile business, which later grew into Branch Banking and Trust Company, the oldest continuously operated bank in the state.²⁸ Branch was also the principal owner of the Wilson Cotton Mills, a director of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, and one of the original directors of the Bank of Wilson.²⁹ Branch and his family are said to have shared the General Joshua Barnes House with his father-in-law from 1869 until 1875 when Barnes suffered from a debilitating stroke.³⁰ The 1870 census indicates that Barnes and Branch lived adjacent to each other in that year. It was probably during this six year period that the Barnes House was remodelled. In 1875 the family moved to an Italianate house on the corner of Nash and Pine streets in Wilson because of Barnes' failing health.³¹ Later, in the mid-1880s, a finer house was built on Nash Street and the corner of Park Avenue for Barnes and the Branch family.³² In 1883 Matilda Barnes died³³ and on October 13, 1890, her husband died at the age of seventy-seven at his daughter's home. He was buried in Maplewood Cemetery in Wilson. His obituary, published in the Wilson Mirror, gave some indication of his standing in the community.

As evidence of the exalted esteem and devoted affection in which he was held by the people of Wilson for whom he had done so much, business houses were closed on yesterday while the remains laid in state in the Primitive Baptist Church, and hundreds wended their way hither to gaze in affectionate sorrow upon the quiet features of the honored dead.³⁴

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Barnes died intestate and his daughter, Nannie Branch, inherited his vast holdings and his plantation house.³⁵ After the Barnes family moved to town in 1875 a series of tenants who farmed the land occupied the plantation house.³⁶ This practice continued under the ownership of his daughter. Nannie Branch died on July 19, 1901³⁷ and her son, Alpheus Paul Branch inherited the property.³⁸ After his death in 1910 his widow inherited the house property³⁹ which she sold in 1918 to A. C. Monk and J. H. Dupree.⁴⁰ The house has since passed through the hands of numerous owners. The present owners, Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Winstead, purchased the property in 1970. Since the Branch family sold the house and farm property the actual farm land has been subdivided many times until although the area has remained in agricultural use the house property, consisting of only 3.9 acres, is too small to farm. The present owner and his family occupy the house as their primary residence and keep it in good repair.

Footnotes

¹Files of County Historian Hugh B. Johnston, hereinafter cited as Johnston files.

²Wilson Daily Times (Wilson), January 10, 1950.

³Wilson Daily Times (Wilson), July 30, 1960.

⁴Johnston files.

⁵Jesse Barnes to Joshua Barnes, March 5, 1836, Book XXI, 496, Lancaster Parker and Guilford R. Parker to Joshua Barnes, November 3, 1837, Book XXII, 114; Caswell Horn to Joshua Barnes, November 16, 1838, Book XXII, 248, Edgecombe County Deeds, Tarboro.

⁶A thorough search of the Edgecombe County deeds does not reveal which property of the three tracts described in fn. 5 was the house tract, due to the poor quality of the boundary descriptions. A house is not mentioned in any of the deeds and when the chain of title was checked a large part of the land was found to have come from the home plantation of a certain Joseph Barnes, but no house is mentioned in any of the earlier deeds.

⁷Daisy Hendley Gold, "A Town Named Wilson", 26, unpublished manuscript in the Wilson County Public Library, hereinafter cited as Gold, "Wilson."

⁸Research Report on the General Joshua Barnes House prepared by Vicki Craft, Planning Technician, City of Wilson and Mary Shoemaker, architectural historian.

⁹See architectural description.

¹⁰Johnston files.

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- ¹¹Gold, "Wilson," 10.
- ¹²Gold, "Wilson," 10.
- ¹³Clark Gerow Shreve, "The Development of Education to 1900 in Wilson, North Carolina," Masters thesis submitted to the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1941, 17, hereinafter cited as Shreve "Education in Wilson."
- ¹⁴Shreve, "Education in Wilson," 17.
- ¹⁵Shreve, "Education in Wilson," 26-27.
- ¹⁶Shreve, "Education in Wilson," 37.
- ¹⁷Josephus Daniels, Tar Heel Editor, (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press: 1939), 67, hereinafter cited as Daniels, Tar Heel Editor.
- ¹⁸Gold, "Wilson," 20.
- ¹⁹Gold, "Wilson," 21.
- ²⁰Tarboro Southerner (Tarboro), March 31, 1855.
- ²¹Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Wilson County.
- ²²Daniels, Tar Heel Editor, 149-150.
- ²³Vidette Bass, Branch: A Tradition With A Future, (Wilson, Branch Banking and Trust Company: 1962), 17-19, hereinafter cited as Bass, Branch.
- ²⁴Daniel E. Sutherland, "Charles Force Deems and the Watchman: An Early Attempt at Post-Civil War Sectional Reconciliation," The North Carolina Historical Review, V. LVII (October, 1980), 412.
- ²⁵Louis H. Manarin, ed., North Carolina Troops 1861-1865: A Roster (Raleigh: Department of Archives and History, 1968), Vol. 2, 229.
- ²⁶Bass, Branch, 23.
- ²⁷Bass, Branch, 23.
- ²⁸Bass, Branch, 19.
- ²⁹Author's interview with Tweety Etheridge, whose grandfather was a tenant on the Barnes plantation after 1875, hereinafter cited as Etheridge interview.
- ³⁰Gold, "Wilson," 27.

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³¹Gold, "Wilson," 27. See also Gray's New Map of Wilson, Jacob Chace, Philadelphia, 1882.

³²Johnston files.

³³Record of Maplewood Cemetery, Wilson, North Carolina 1886-1931, Wilson: 1976. unpublished manuscript in Wilson County Public Library.

³⁴Wilson Mirror (Wilson), October 15, 1890.

³⁵Will of Nannie Barnes Branch, Wilson County Wills, Book III, 454, hereinafter cited as Branch will.

³⁶Etheridge interview.

³⁷Johnston files.

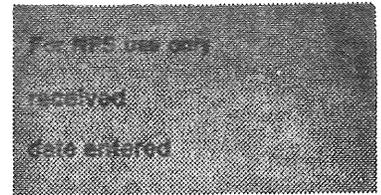
³⁸Branch will.

³⁹Alpheus Paul Branch estate, Wilson County Special Proceedings, Book XIII, 255.

⁴⁰Annie H. Branch to A. C. Monk and J. H. Dupree, October 7, 1918, Book CXVI, 455.

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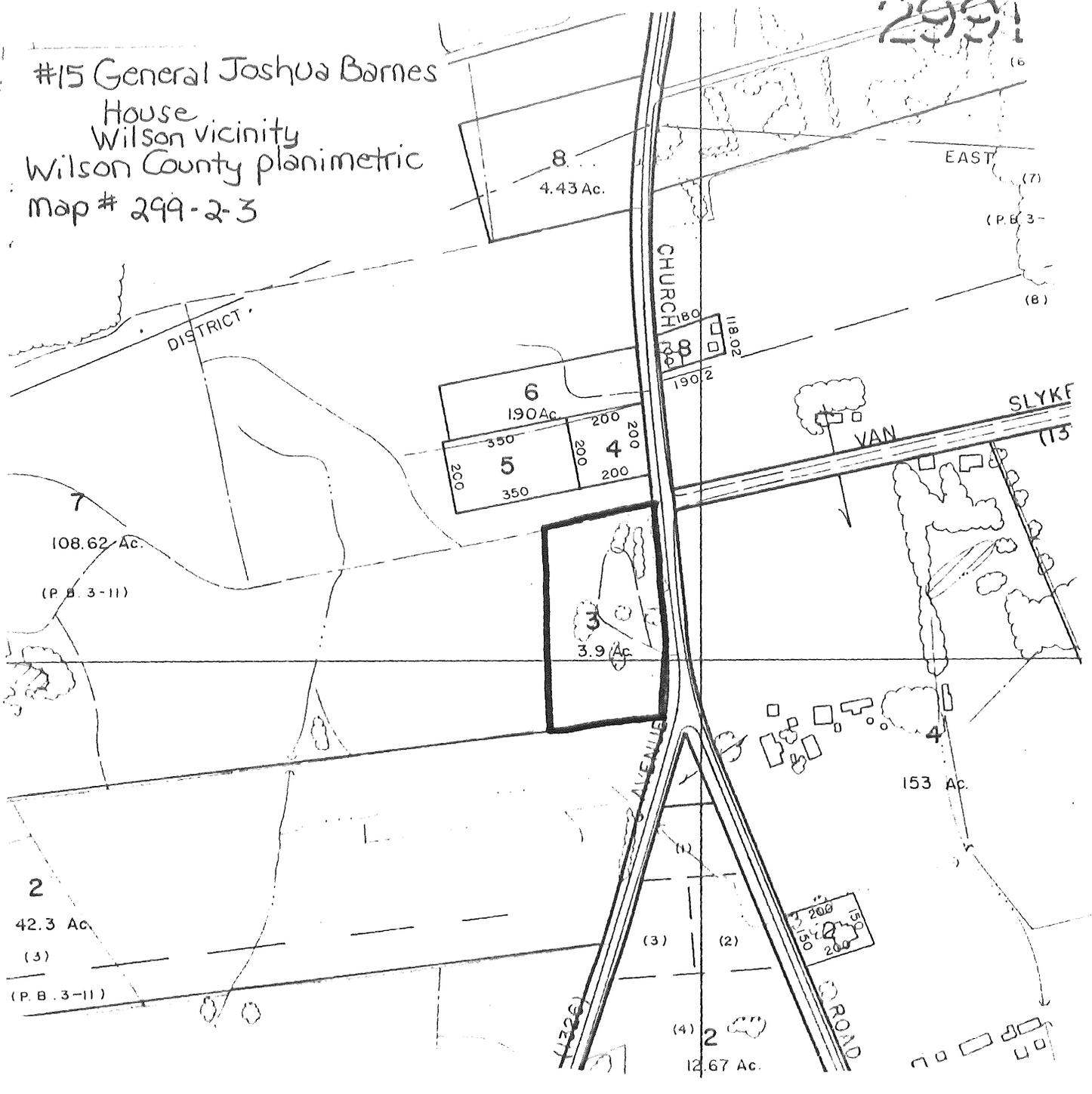
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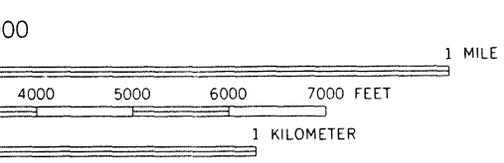
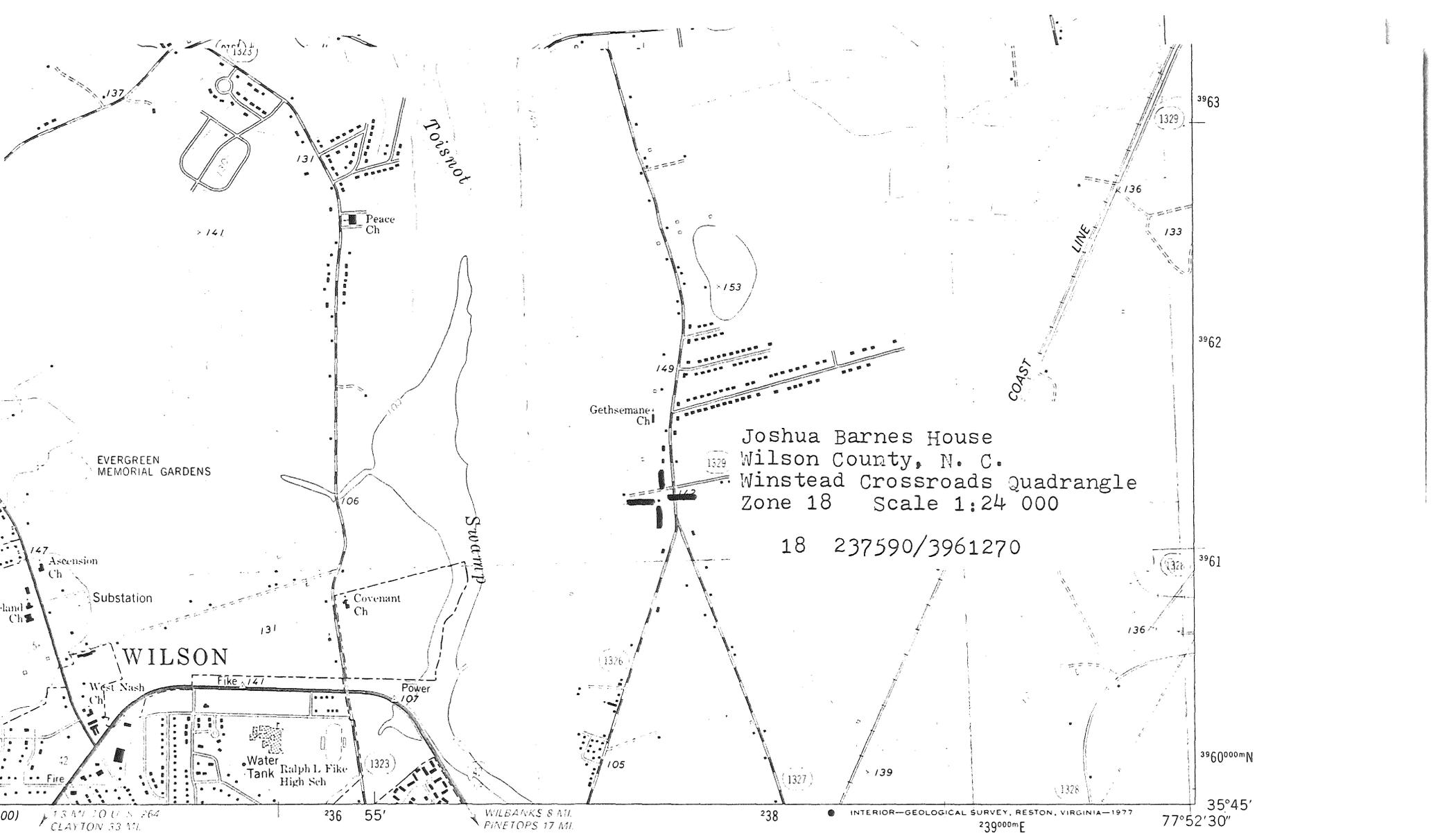
PHOTOGRAPHS

The property was originally surveyed in 1976 and again during the county-wide inventory in 1980. The photographs included in the nomination were taken during the initial survey in 1976. Slides taken during the 1980 survey show the house in the same well-maintained condition of 1976. The site was revisited in 1985 and the house was still occupied, well-maintained, and its appearance is the same as in the 1976 photographs.

#15 General Joshua Barnes
House
Wilson vicinity
Wilson County planimetric
map # 299-2-3

2991





ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface		Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface		Unimproved road	
	Interstate Route		U. S. Route
	State Route		



WINSTEAD CROSSROADS, N.C.
 SW/4 ROCKY MOUNT 15' QUADRANGLE
 N3545—W7752.5/7.5

MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 REVISIONS, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
 SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1977

(WILSON 1:62 500)
 5-65 III

