

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  
Shady Oaks

AND/OR COMMON  
Cheek-Twitty House

**2** LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
E. side S.R. 1600, 0.7 mi. south of S.R. 1601

CITY, TOWN  
Warrenton

STATE  
North Carolina

VICINITY OF  
CODE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

COUNTY

Warren

CODE

185

**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                   | <b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>                   | <b>ACCESSIBLE</b>                            | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS         | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO       | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY      | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:                       |

**4** OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Mr. W. Kenneth Mustian

STREET & NUMBER  
Route 2

CITY, TOWN  
Warrenton

VICINITY OF

STATE  
North Carolina

**5** LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Warren County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Warrenton

STATE  
North Carolina

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Frances Benjamin Johnston Collection

DATE  
1930s

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN  
Washington

STATE  
D. C.

# 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 Shady Oaks is a frame plantation house, set near the road, surrounded by large trees and a stone wall. To the south, and west, beyond the wall, are a number of outbuildings, including one of log. The house is of the tripartite configuration found most frequently in this northeastern section of North Carolina; it consists of a rather narrow two-story central block, with its gable end to the front, flanked by perpendicular two-bay wings; to the south and rear are one-story frame additions. The central block and wings are covered with beaded weatherboards and rest on a stone foundation, with a cellar beneath the central section. The exterior finish is consistent and rather simple, with windows having molded frames and plain sills. Beneath a boxed cornice runs a molded strip that stops short of the ends of the facade. The raking cornice is tapered and slightly splayed at the ends. With some exceptions, nine-over-nine sash is used at the first level, and six-over-nine at the second, with tiny four-pane windows flanking the chimney stacks used in the gables.

The facade of the central block has at the first level a double door closely flanked by windows; at the second level are two windows directly over the first-level ones, and in the gable is a window with six-over-six sash. A one-story shed porch, a plain replacement, extends across this facade. To the rear of this block is a single-shoulder chimney of brick laid in Flemish bond, with tumbling at the shoulder and a molded cap. Narrow windows with vertical six-over-six sash flank the chimney at the first level; the second level has no openings, and tiny windows occur in the gables. At the end of each wing is a heavy chimney of large, irregular stones, with double paved shoulders.

The interior plan has, as indicated by the exterior configuration, a transverse stair hall with a large room to the rear and a room in each wing. This recurs on the second floor as well. The finish of the hall and rear parlor is a startling contrast to the rather plain exterior, having extremely elaborate and fanciful Federal woodwork, possibly related to that of other Federal houses in Warren and Halifax counties. Both have flat-paneled pedestal-type wainscots with heavy molded baseboards. Most openings are flanked by pilasters carrying heavy entablatures that break out over the pilasters. The doors leading from the hall into the adjoining rooms have symmetrically molded frames with cornerblocks. The hall contains on the north wall a curious and elaborate stair. It rises in three short flights, the first along the front (west) wall, the second along the north, and the third along the east. Plain posts square in section and slim balusters carry a molded handrail that neither ramps nor eases; the profile, including the posts, recurs on the wall. The open string is adorned with delicate scroll brackets, and the string below is rather heavy and molded, as are the sides of the treads. The soffit of the two upper flights has long flat panels, and the fascia of the third flight, placed above the door into the north wing room, is treated with a remarkable carved blind arch, apparently unique in the state. (It is illustrated in T. T. Waterman's Early Architecture of North Carolina.) At either side of the fascia is an end block--the left one at the juncture of the two flights and the right at the partition wall--with lower and upper molded cornices. The latter cornice extends across the base of the fascia and is a continuation of the heavy molding of the tread of the stair at this level. Springing from the end blocks is a richly carved arch, with an inner band of radiating fluting, a pointed arcaded corbel band, and an outer rim of cable molding. Recessed slightly is the blind tympanum, outlined by a cable molding and a band of scallops, and

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at the center is an elaborate demi-sunburst with two rows of fan sections.

Flanking the openings in the parlor to the rear are pilasters each with a convex reeded central member and diagonal reeding flanking it, and a molded border. The entablature over each opening is quite heavy, breaks over the pilasters, and has a band of diagonal reeding. The chair rail has a band of vertical reeding. The mantel on the rear wall, tightly flanked by narrow windows, is a three-part vernacular Adamesque one, with an astonishing array of gouged and carved ornament. (A similar mantel is seen at the John Wilson House in Franklin County.) The pilasters feature reeded panels, which provide a background for a high relief urn with a vine growing out of it, winding in a guilloche-like pattern up the pilaster, with pendant buds. The pilaster caps have rows of gougework. Above the caps and across the base of the frieze stretches a band of alternating vertical gougework and deeply incised floral motifs. The end blocks and center tablet feature pinwheel sunbursts in high relief. The cornice has a band of pierced work with a lozenge motif and a band of rounded three-dimensional dentils below the heavy molded shelf, which is adorned with diagonal reeding.

The remainder of the house is finished rather simply, with plastered walls, molded baseboards and chair rails; plain wooden dados appear in the first-floor rooms and plastered ones above. The north wing room has a mantel resembling the parlor overdoor treatment, with a lower frieze band of a geometric gouged pattern. The south room mantel has similar form but lacks the ornament. An enclosed stair with the first flight open is in the northwest corner of the room. The attics of the wings have walls flush-sheathed to the angle of the roof; the mantels here and in the rear second-floor room have molded architraves, plain friezes, and molded shelves.

# 4 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD         | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |                           |                           |                        |
|----------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ___PREHISTORIC | ___ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC                        | ___COMMUNITY PLANNING     | ___LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | ___RELIGION            |
| ___1400-1499   | ___ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC                           | ___CONSERVATION           | ___LAW                    | ___SCIENCE             |
| ___1500-1599   | ___AGRICULTURE                                   | ___ECONOMICS              | ___LITERATURE             | ___SCULPTURE           |
| ___1600-1699   | X_ARCHITECTURE                                   | ___EDUCATION              | ___MILITARY               | ___SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| ___1700-1799   | ___ART   | ___ENGINEERING            | ___MUSIC                  | ___THEATER             |
| X1800-1899     | ___COMMERCE                                      | ___EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | ___PHILOSOPHY             | ___TRANSPORTATION      |
| ___1900-       | ___COMMUNICATIONS                                | ___INDUSTRY               | ___POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | ___OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|                |  | ___INVENTION              |                           |                        |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Shady Oaks, the early nineteenth century plantation home of Robert Tines Cheek, is among the small but significant group of tripartite Federal style houses in Warren and Halifax counties, evidently reflecting a strong Virginia influence. Like others in the area, it is distinguished by unusually elaborate and inventive Adamesque interiors.

Robert Tines Cheek was the son of William Cheek and Sarah Blake. The elder Cheek was a large landowner who had obtained property in Granville County (what is now Warren) as early as 1755, when he was deeded 250 acres from his father-in-law William Blake. William Cheek's will of 1797, proved February, 1800, left the plantation "on which I now live" to his wife Sarah, and at her death it was to go to his son, Robert Tines Cheek. Two other sons, John and Randolph, were each provided "400 acres of land on which he now lives."

Robert Tines Cheek, born in 1772, married Mary Hinton Alston in 1802; she was a member of a large family quite influential in the area. He acquired large tracts of land, and in the 1812 tax list was recorded as the owner of 2,422 acres and twenty slaves. He served as justice of the county court, pleas and quarter sessions from 1804 to 1813, and was as well a businessman owning commercial property in Warrenton--the Eagle Tavern, a billiard room, stables, and other property. In 1812 he bought from Benjamin Maclin of Virginia 562 acres on the waters of Fishing Creek and Opossum Quarter, along the road to Warrenton, to John Hall's corner. Presumably it was on this property that the house was built. Stylistic evidence is such that the house could have been standing then and the fancy woodwork installed for Cheek later, or the whole could have been built for Cheek. Cheek's will of 1841 left to his wife Mary H., for her lifetime the "plantation whereon we now live called the Shady Oaks" adjoining the lands of Daniel Turner, Kemp Plummer, and others, and containing 460 acres. At her death the property was to go to his son, William Alston Cheek; William was also to receive "my whole establishment in Warrenton, called the Eagle Tavern with seven lots."

William Alston Cheek, who inherited the homeplace, is said according to family tradition to have told his nephew Robert Cheek Twitty that if he would name their child "William Alston Cheek Twitty" in his honor, he would deed the place to the child. When a child was born on May 14, 1884, he was so named, and on November 15, 1892 a deed was registered from Dr. William Alston Cheek to William Alston Cheek Twitty, identified as the former's grandnephew. The land is described as "The Oaks," the same being the homeplace of Robert Cheek and Mary H. his wife, father and mother of the said party of the 1st part. At the death of William A. Twitty, the homeplace was sold to A. K. Mustian by an executor. Mr. Mustian is the present owner, and the house is occupied by tenants.



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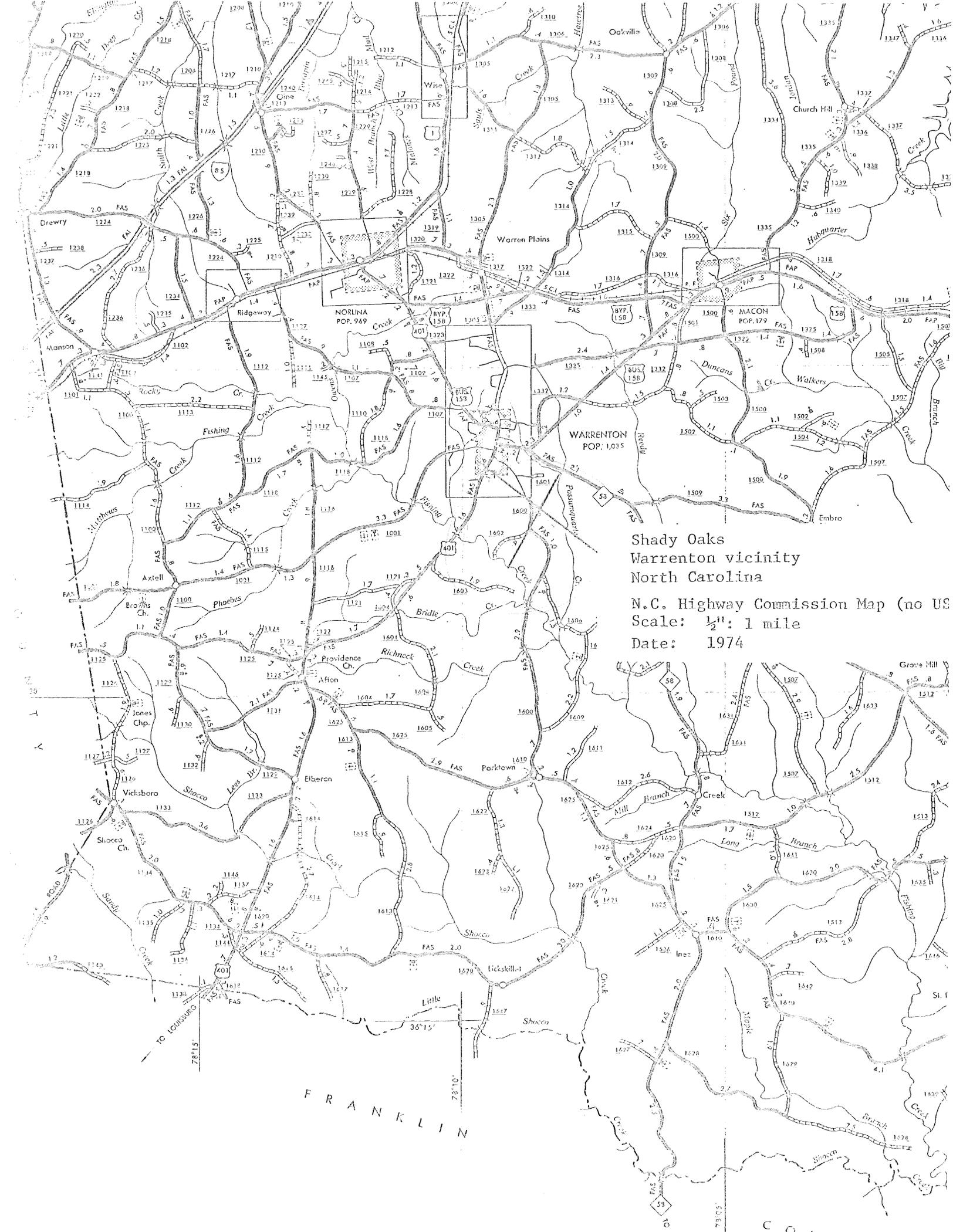
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Waterman, Thomas T., and Johnston, Frances B. The Early Architecture of North Carolina.  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1947.



Shady Oaks  
Warrenton vicinity  
North Carolina

N.C. Highway Commission Map (no US  
Scale: 1/2" : 1 mile  
Date: 1974

FRANKLIN

