

() NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SOUTH CAROLINA INVENTORY FORM FOR HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND
INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES IN A MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION

NAME OF MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION: Springville Multiple Resource Area

PREFERRED NAME OF PROPERTY: Wilds Hall

HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY: Wilds Hall; Peter A. Wilds House

COMMON NAME OF PROPERTY: Wilson House

LOCATION: West of county road 228, approximately 3/4 miles northwest of its
intersection with S. C. highway 34.

CLASSIFICATION: Building

OWNER: Dr. Thomas Gray Wilson
P. O. Box 140
Darlington, S. C.

DESCRIPTION

Wilds Hall is a two-and-one-half-story, rectangular, weatherboard-clad, frame residence with gabled roof and twin interior, ridge chimneys on a low stuccoed brick pier foundation. The first story plan is irregular with sitting room and parlor on either side of a front stair-hall with a half-turn and landing staircase composing the front half of the house. These rooms along with the upper story and a half constitute the additions made when the house was made a permanent residence about 1850. The rear half of the first story, which contains the original core, has two rooms on either side of what appears to have been a narrow central hall. The narrowness of this space in relation to the room-sized scale of the foyer results in an irregular floor plan. A porch opening off the northwest rooms and partially underneath the story above fills in the space behind the northeast room on the first story. A one-story shed appendage runs the full width of the rear elevation, the central portion of which once housed an open porch and had small rooms to either side. The second floor exhibits a regular plan with four rooms separated by a central hall at the rear of which is a stair leading into the half-story above.

The facade, east elevation, has symmetrical fenestration of windows and entrance. There are two six-over-six, double-hung sash windows on each side of the central door. The entrance is a complex arrangement of two four-over-four, single-hung sash windows bracketing a double-leaf, paneled door with sidelights and four-light transom. The entire composition is enclosed by pilasters. A one-story, shed roof porch with square, solid pine, freestanding posts resting on stuccoed piers spans the facade. The balustrade is freestanding and consists of small rectangular balusters, square newel posts and rounded top rail. There are pilaster responds placed on the porch walls corresponding to the corner posts.

The second story facade employs a five-bay window fenestration that reflects that of the first story. The windows are six-over-six, double-hung sash. Pilasters are used to form the corner boards. A plain frieze and boxed cornices cap the facade.

The north elevation displays an asymmetrical composition. This is due primarily to the porch that undercuts the principal mass of the building at the northwest corner of the first story. The first story has two six-over-six, double-hung sash windows on the northeast half and the aforementioned porch on the northwest corner extending under the shed roof rear appendage as well. The porch is of three bays and square pine posts, the outside corner and two center posts are freestanding and rest on stuccoed piers. A one-story corner pilaster forms the juncture between wall and porch. The balustrade is of the same type as on the facade porch. The second story of this elevation utilizes two sets of paired six-over-six, double-hung sash windows and one-story corner pilasters supporting a plain frieze. A pedimented gable with full return and two nine-over-nine attic windows and triangular attic vent cap this elevation.

The south elevation resembles the north elevation but is simplified by the absence of the porch. The principal building then has two sets of paired six-over-six, double-hung sash windows. The pedimented gable has the same treatment as the north elevation. The one-story shed appendage has one small nine-over-nine, double-hung sash window.

The interior of the house has a number of interesting features. The most unusual features are in the southeast room of the first floor in what was the formal parlor. The fireplace mantel is of black marble which is said to have been brought up the Pee Dee River by boat and transported overland when the house was remodeled sometime between 1840 and the mid-1850s. Two of these were purchased for the house, the other to have gone in the northeast first floor room, or sitting room, but was broken during transport. The ceiling of this room has a circular medallion composed of three concentric rings of moldings (ovolo-torus-ovolo) and molding outlining the ceiling in the shape of a square with segmental clipped corners of three parallel bands that are the same as the medallion. The interior also features paneled pine wainscoting, which originally had hand-painted graining; original plaster walls; and fireplace mantels in much of the house.

There are four associated outbuildings of unknown historic usage, one of which might date from the antebellum period. The others probably date from the twentieth century.

SIGNIFICANCE

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture
Social History

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: _____ (for office use only)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wilds Hall, also known as the Peter A. Wilds House, dates from about 1839 and was enlarged to its present size about 1850.¹ The design of this house is almost exactly the same as was exhibited by several other houses in Springville which are no longer standing. Wilds Hall, therefore, provides excellent insight into the architectural character of old Springville.²

Peter Abel Wilds was the grandson of Samuel Wilds, who was one of the group of Pennsylvania Welsh that were the original settlers of the Darlington District in 1737. Peter Wilds was a wealthy planter owning 111 slaves in 1860. This house, lived in by four generations of the Wilds family over a 130-year period, had the largest continuous occupancy by members of the same family of any in Springville.³

ACREAGE: approximately 5.7 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The boundary for the Wilds Hall nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying Darlington County Tax Map No. 183, which is drawn at a scale of 400 feet to the inch. The nominated acreage includes the house and the four remaining outbuildings.

QUAD NAME: Darlington East

QUAD SCALE: 1:24000

UTM REFERENCE POINT: 17/606490/3797840

OTHER INFORMATION:

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Horace F. Rudisill, Darlington County, South Carolina (np:np, nd), p. 26.
- (2) Ervin, Darlingtoniana, p. 416.
- (3) Coker, "Springville," p. 194; Davidson, p. 263.