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

NAME OF MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION: City of Darlington Multiple Resource Area

PREFERRED NAME OF PROPERTY: Wilds-Edwards House

HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY: Col. Samuel H. Wilds House

COMMON NAME OF PROPERTY: Edwards House

LOCATION: 120 Edwards Avenue

CLASSIFICATION: Building

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY: 2 Contributing Buildings

OWNER: Miss Mary Edwards and Mrs. D. W. Horton
120 Edwards Avenue
Darlington, South Carolina 29532

DESCRIPTION

Built ca. 1856 by Col. Samuel H. Wilds, the Wilds-Edwards House is a two-story Italianate style house with a high masonry foundation. Square in plan, the wood frame residence has a symmetrical roof plan, in the center of which is a square pedestal that may have once been the base of a belvedere or a widow's walk; the center gables of the west, north, and east facades terminate in the sides of this projecting pedestal. Three massive stuccoed chimneys project through the roof. On each elevation there is a one-story porch, the back (west) porch having been partially enclosed ca. 1905 for a kitchen. The porches on the north and east facades are characterized by square paneled Corinthian columns.

About 1905, after the creation of Edwards Avenue to the east, the house was modified to have its principal entrance on the east side. The north elevation, which originally was the front of the house, is divided into three bays, the central bay projecting outward approximately three feet. In the center of the north side is an entrance, which is characterized by a single door, sidelights and transom ornamented with sawn wooden trim, and a surround with paneled Corinthian pilasters and bracketed entablature. The second story windows of the north side are round-arched, two-over-two lights, and have their original blinds. Wood siding depicting ashlar block construction is featured on the first floor, while flushboard siding appears on the second floor. Entablature

appears on the second floor. Entablature brackets and Corinthian pilasters abound on both the north and east facades.

Behind the house is the original 19th century kitchen.

SIGNIFICANCE

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: L (for office use only)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wilds-Edwards House is significant as one of the few relatively intact antebellum residences remaining in the city of Darlington and as a locally important example of the Italianate style. The house is primarily defined by its massive square form, roof terminating into a square pedestal, square paneled chimneys, one-story Corinthian-columned porches, and profusion of Italianate details. The sophistication of its massing and command of classical details alludes to the formal training of its architect, J. L. Klickner.[1]

It is not definitely known who first settled this site, but it was owned for years before the Civil War by Colonel Samuel Hugh Wilds (1819-1867) of Wilds Quarters Plantation in Springville who inherited it from his mother.[2] The first house on the site was a small cottage, which about 1856 was moved to the Wilds Plantation; the present house built in its place was completed in the summer of 1857.[3] S. H. Wilds became Colonel of the 21st Regiment of S.C. Volunteers during the War Between the States. Col. Wilds also served as Vice President of the Darlington Agriculture Society and was a member of the House of Representatives before and after the war.[4] Following the death of Col. Wilds, the house was rented for a few years to Col. Fillebrown, a member of the Federal Garrison.[5] Col. Fillebrown is reportedly responsible for cutting down a number of large oak trees in order to plant cotton on the grounds.[6]

According to local tradition, the Wilds-Edwards house was not destroyed by Sherman's army because the architect, who was from the North, was in the detachment and persuaded the captain of the raiding company to wait until afternoon to set fire to the house. In the meantime, the Union troops went on a foraging expedition down the old Florence road where they met General Joseph Wheeler's Cavalry and suffered a defeat which prevented their return to Darlington.[7]

Unfortunately, little is known about the architect, J. L. Klickner, or how he came to Darlington. We do know that while the Wilds-Edwards House was under construction, J. L. Klickner had designed a fine house for J. P. Lide in Darlington County.[8] This house is known as "White Plains" and is still standing.

The house was purchased from the Wilds estate on December 1, 1870, by the Hon. Berryman Wheeler Edwards (1824-1885) who was a prominent Darlington attorney and county senator.[9] His son, Charles B. Edwards (1857-1932) was a mayor of Darlington, was in the wholesale grocery business, and was founder and president of the Carolina National Bank.[10] C. B. Edwards added electric lights and the arch in the east hall about 1905.[11] His daughters, Miss Mary Edwards and Mrs. D. W. Horton, presently own the house.

ACREAGE: Approximately 2.7 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The boundary of the Wilds-Edwards House nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled "Wilds-Edwards House." This map was copied from a map of the town of Darlington, S.C., which is dated June, 1980, and is drawn at a scale of one inch to 500 feet. The nominated property includes the historic house and outbuilding, and the lot on which they are situated.

QUAD NAME: Darlington West, S.C.

QUAD SCALE: 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCE POINT: 17/603460/3795620

FOOTNOTES

[1]Eliza Cowan Ervin and Horace Fraser Rudisill, Darlingtoniana (Columbia, S.C.: R. L. Bryan Co., 1964), p. 349.

[2]Carl Julien and James McBride Dabbs, Pee Dee Panorama (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1951), p. 116.; Chalmers Gaston Davidson, The Last Foray (Columbia, S.C.: University of S.C. Press, 1971), p. 263.

[3]Horace Fraser Rudisill, "A Brief History of Darlington County, South Carolina" (Darlington, S.C.: Darlington County Historical Booklet Task Force, Darlington, S.C., 1983), p. 9.

[4]Ibid; W. A. Brunson, Glimpses of Old Darlington (Columbia, S.C.: State Co., 1910), p. 11.

[5]Ervin and Rudisill, p. 349.

[6]Julien and Dabbs, p. 116.

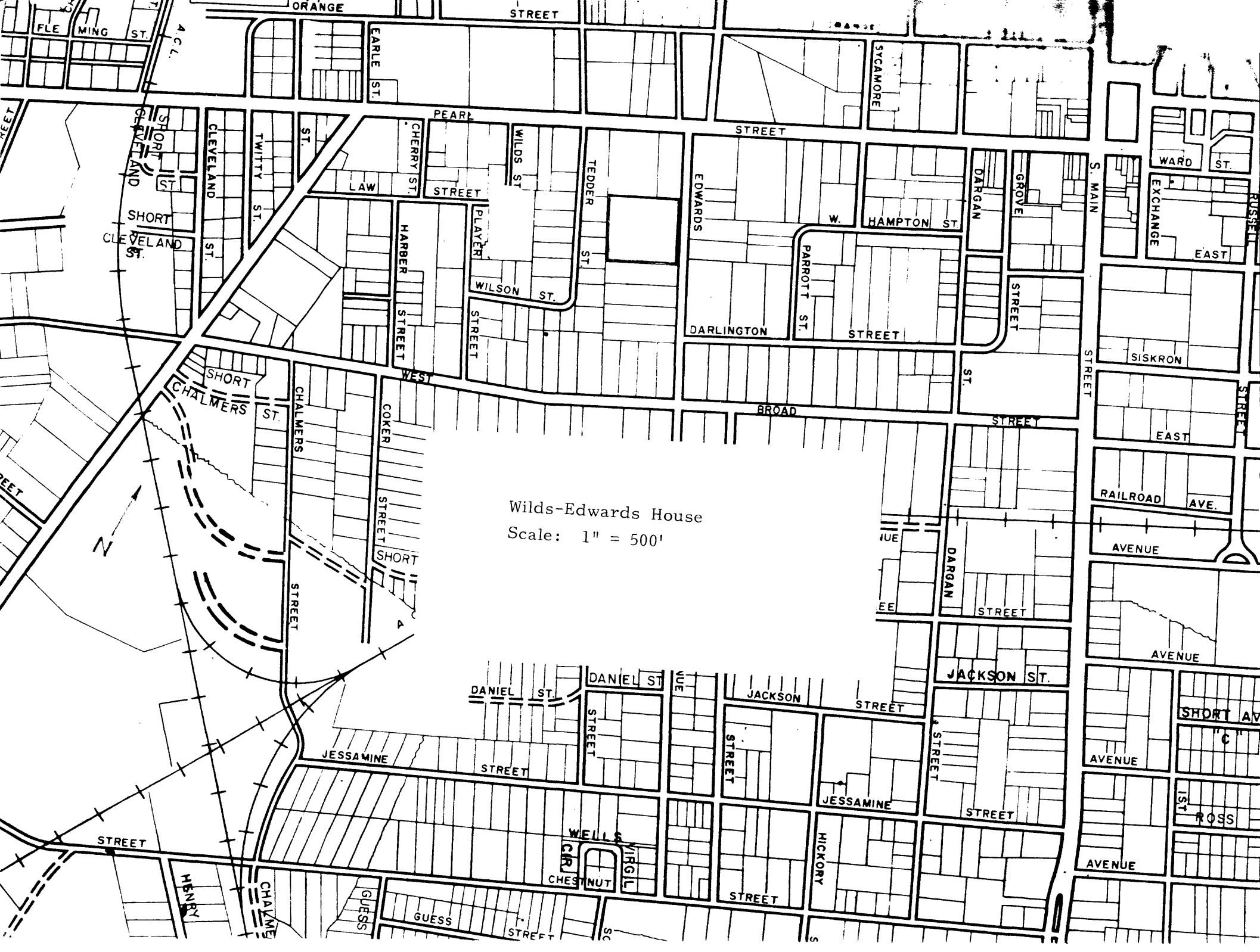
[7]Ibid.

[8]Thomas P. Lide to J. C. Clickner, (1857), Thomas P. Lide Papers, Darlington County Historical Commission, Darlington, S.C.

[9]Rudisill, "A Brief History of Darlington County, South Carolina," p. 9; Brunson, Glimpses of Old Darlington, p. 15.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Interview with Mrs. D. W. Horton, Darlington, S.C., 10 March 1986.


Wilds-Edwards House
Scale: 1" = 500'
ORANGE
STREET
FLEMING ST.
EARLE ST.
SYCAMORE
PEARL
STREET
CLEVELAND
SHORT
CLEVELAND ST.
TWITTY ST.
CHERRY ST.
LAW
STREET
WILDS ST.
TEDDER ST.
EDWARDS
HARBER
STREET
PLAYER
WILSON ST.
STREET
W.
HAMPTON ST.
DARGAN
GROVE
S. MAIN
WARD ST.
EXCHANGE
EAST
PARROTT ST.
DARLINGTON
STREET
STREET
SISKRON
ST.
STREET
SHORT
CHALMERS ST.
CHALMERS
COKER
WEST
BROAD
STREET
EAST
RAILROAD AVE.
AVENUE
STREET
SHORT
STREET
DARGAN
STREET
AVENUE
JACKSON ST.
DANIEL ST.
DANIEL ST.
JACKSON
STREET
STREET
STREET
SHORT AV
"C"
JESSAMINE
STREET
AVENUE
JESSAMINE
STREET
1ST.
ROSS
STREET
WELLS VIRGIL
CIR.
CHESTNUT
HICKORY
STREET
AVENUE
HENRY
CHALMERS
GUESS
GUESS
STREET