

Theme 3. Development of English Colonies, 1700-1775

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Williamsburg	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70.10.45.0041	DATE 10/28/70

1. NAME

COMMON:
Thorntree (Witherspoon) House

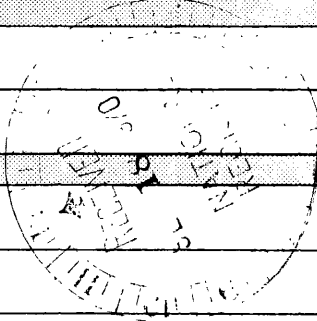
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
In Fluitt-Nelson Memorial Park, S.C. 527

CITY OR TOWN:
Kingstree

STATE: South Carolina CODE: ~~34~~ 45 COUNTY: Williamsburg CODE: 089



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>developing as historic house museum</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Williamsburg County Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
124 South Academy Street, P.O. Box 24

CITY OR TOWN: Kingstree STATE: South Carolina CODE: ~~34~~ 45

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Williamsburg County Court House, Clerk of Court

STREET AND NUMBER:
125 West Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Kingstree STATE: South Carolina CODE: ~~39~~ 45

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
South Carolina Survey of Historic Places

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
S.C. Department of Archives and History

STREET AND NUMBER:
1430 Senate Street

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: ~~39~~ 45

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

18th century frame plantation house; two-room type (great hall and parlor), end chimneys, piazzas front and back. Brick piers support hand-hewn heart pine beams, 12x12".

Exterior construction is 5/8-in. beaded clapboards 3/4-in. thick, overlapping at various widths. Piazza balustrade has beaded top rail; posts are square to height of rail, chamfered octagonally in center, square at top.

Of the 24 windows, all shuttered, 5 are on front second floor, 4 on front first floor, six over nine light. Solid pine paneled shutters fastened with strap hinges, hand-forged, and pintles reproduced from original.

Two types of roof rafters strengthened with tie beam joined to rafters by half dovetails. Cypress shingles fastened to original laths. Memory work dentil cornice under eaves.

Typical 18th century doors with 6 fielded panels. First floor front and back doors unusually large. Central door opens into 21x18' great hall. Partially recessed staircase.

Entire interior is pine: walls, ceilings, cornices, mantels and all overmantels except 2 that are plastered. Flooring of random-width yellow pine, quarter sawed. Wainscot of horizontally placed boards with vertical beaded boards above. Unique hand-carved memory work cornices and mantels.

Inner walls, except in great hall, of exposed post and beam construction with vertical beaded ship-lapped board partitions. Chimney breasts in parlor and small chamber room finished with panel of plastering.

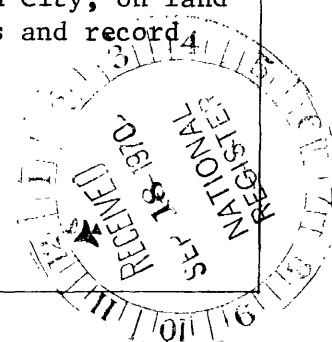
In 2nd floor master chamber, memory work mantel and saw-tooth cornice. Nursery and small room adjacent. Second-floor walls in original unpainted condition. Hall closets with batten doors under stairs.

Hardware throughout includes hand-forged locks and HL hinges, original leather washers. Furniture and accessories are of 1759-1826 period when James Witherspoon and his son, Gavin, lived here. Victorian trims, south piazza and shed rooms added c. 1800, have been removed. House now stands as it was in 18th century.

Moved from inaccessible rural site (6 mi. south of Kingstree, S.C. 377) to preserve it. Original site was unavailable for purchase, unattractive, unprotected against fire and vandalism. Present site, within city, on land given as memorial park. Additional house museums, and archives and record building, planned.

Restoration in progress.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1749

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Oldest known residence in Pee Dee area, excellent example of earliest plantation houses constructed entirely of native materials.

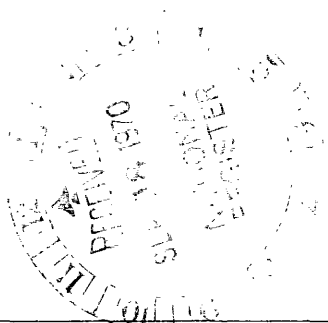
Built by Irish immigrant James Witherspoon, 1749. About 6 miles south of the King's Tree, Williamsburgh Township. Progressive rural domestic design. Located in wilderness and adapted to New World, but with refinements recalling good life of Old World.

Nationally-known Museum Curator Meyric R. Rogers called Thorntree a "rarity" in architectural structure and an irreplaceable loss if not preserved. Particularly notable: mantels, cornices, general trim, hand-carved from memory, many in original condition and partial coloring. Placement and position of main stairway also unusual, marking trend toward formation of separate hall which characterized later architecture. Architecturally much as its builder left it, Thorntree preserves interesting combination of details showing European, West Indian and Carolinian influences.

Preservation of Thorntree especially important since most Revolutionary era houses in Kings Tree area were burned by Tarleton and Wemyss. Thorntree spared because Tarleton with his British dragoons and a large number of Tories encamped at plantation in August, 1780.

Thorntree influence reached into various phases of state and national life through Witherspoon family, among earliest settlers of this early-settled inland area. They were prominent in government, education and religion in 18th century. Gordon family were prominent 19th century owners.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Boddie, W.W. History of Williamsburg. Columbia, S.C. The State Co., 1923.
 Davis, Henry E. History of Union Presbyterian Church And of the Salters, S.C. Community. n.p. 1963.
 Meriwether, Robert L. The Expansion of South Carolina 1729-1765. Kingsport, Tenn: Southern Publishers, Inc. 1940.
 McGill, Samuel D. Narrative of Reminiscences in Williamsburg County. Kingstree, S.C.: Kingstree Lithographic Co. 1952.
 Stoney, Samuel G. Plantations of the Carolina Low Country. Columbia, S.C. The R.L. Bryan Co., 1955.

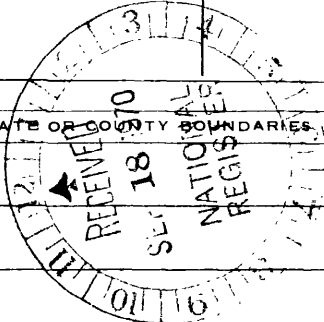
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds
NW	33 ° 39 ' 53.89	79 ° 49 ' 48.46	°	'	"	° ' "
NE	33 ° 39 ' 53.89	79 ° 49 ' 22 "				
SE	33 ° 39 ' 34.19	79 ° 49 ' 22 "				
SW	33 ° 39 ' 34.19	79 ° 49 ' 48.46				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 15.1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES.

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Mrs. James W. Fant, Historic Resources Division

ORGANIZATION: S.C. Department of Archives and History DATE: August 29, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:
 1430 Senate Street

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: 45

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Paul S. [Signature]

Title: Director, South Carolina Department of Archives and History

Date: August 29, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Connally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: OCT 28 1970

ATTEST:

William J. [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: OCT 20 1970

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COUNTY	
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(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

9. Major Bibliographical References:

- Cook, Harvey T. Rambles in the Pee Dee Basin, S.C. Columbia, S.C.: The State Co., 1926.
- Davis, Henry E. The Williamsburg Presbyterian Church. Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans, and Cogswell, 1961.
- Wallace, James A. History of Williamsburgh Church. Salisbury, N.C.: Bell and James, Printers, 1856.
- Wardlaw, Joseph G. Genealogy of the Witherspoon Family. Yorkville, S.C.: The Enquirer Office, 1910.
- White, Elizabeth. "Witherspoon Home Proves a Rare Discovery," The State and Columbia Record, Columbia, S.C.: Sunday, May 21, 1967, p. 3-B.
- Witherspoon, Robert. An Early Manuscript Copy of the Witherspoon Family Chronicle (originally written in 1780 by Robert Witherspoon, the son of James Witherspoon, the builder of Thorntree House), and Later Notes on Related Families. Columbia, South Carolina: The State Printing Co., 1967. Published for Williamsburg County Historical Society.

