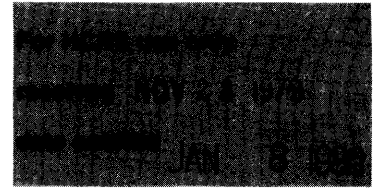


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Wardlaw-Steele House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 128 Wardlaw Place not for publication

city, town Ripley vicinity of congressional district Seventh

state Tennessee code 047 county Lauderdale code 097

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Dr. Everett L. Sutter

street & number 128 Wardlaw Place

city, town Ripley vicinity of state Tennessee 38063

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lauderdale County Courthouse

street & number Court Square

city, town Ripley state Tennessee 38063

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Tennessee State Architectural Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date June 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission, 4721 Trousdale Drive

city, town Nashville state Tennessee 37219

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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wardlaw-Steele house is situated on the south side of the town of Ripley on a short, secluded street surrounded by large deciduous trees. This 14 room two-story Greek Revival house was built ca 1842 by Joseph Wardlaw for his son, Dr. Jacob N. Wardlaw.

Resting on brick piers, the house has three large chimneys which accommodate 8 fireplaces. The hipped roof has a pediment over a flat topped two-story portico supported by six large ionic columns with terra cotta capitals. Originally, this portico extended completely across the facade of the house, but in 1967 its size was reduced.

This house has a 3 bay facade. The original six over six windows were beveled glass but they were replaced by the present one over one windows ca 1887 when a general remodeling of the interior was undertaken. The central bay has a glass door that is flanked by side lights and a transom. Distinctive diamond shaped side lights flank the door on the second story porch. The east elevation has a flat roofed extension that is supported by four columns that serve as a carport.

The house is framed and sided with yellow poplar. The original portion of the house is supported by massive hand hewn beams measuring 18 inches square that are mortised and tenoned together. This portion of the house is insulated with raw cotton.

The interior of the Wardlaw-Steele house was remodeled about 1887 in a Victorian tradition. The eight fireplaces and mantels are of various designs ranging from simple to very ornate. All but one are presently in operating condition and are fired by coal. The interior walls are plaster on lath and are either wall papered or painted. The original pegged floors are underneath a later narrow oak planks floor.

The dark stained 9 foot doors, frames, and woodwork are original to the house, and there is a moderate use of ornate plaster molding that surrounds the 12 foot high ceilings. The windows in the parlor are topped by ornate walnut window cornices. Wooden decorative scrollwork that joins to form a music lyre in the center separates the parlor from the dining room.

There are four generations of roofs which cover the house. The oldest roof was metal, while the present roof is composed of asphalt shingles.

Food was originally prepared in a detached kitchen by slaves and was served in a cellar dining room. Later, a kitchen was built in the cellar. About 1905, the Wardlaw-Steele house was expanded, and a new kitchen, breakfast room, back porch, and bathroom were added. By the addition of a bathroom with plumbing fixtures, the Wardlaw-Steele house became the first house in Ripley to benefit from these modern conveniences.

There are two outbuildings situated approximately fifty feet from the rear of the house. The first building, constructed about 1914, serves as a two car garage. The other building, built approximately the same time as the garage, is a general storage shed 20' x 24'.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Wardlaw House, built ca. 1842 by Joseph Wardlaw for his son, Dr. Jacob N. Wardlaw, has been the hub from which both the political and social activities of Lauderdale County have emanated for nearly one hundred years.

Joseph Wardlaw, a native South Carolinian, arrived in West Tennessee in 1827. A prominent farmer, Wardlaw built the large framed house for his eldest son, Jacob. Jacob began the study of medicine in 1840 and later attended Louisville Medical College. Wardlaw's active medical career lasted about 10 years when his interest in business and politics emerged.

Wardlaw opened a mercantile business in 1856, but the advent of the Civil War forced its closing. After the war, Wardlaw was appointed Clerk of the Circuit Court. He held that position until 1870 when he was appointed Clerk and Master of Chancery Court. Politically, Wardlaw was a Whig before the war, opposed to secession, but during the war he sided with his state of Tennessee.

After the war many socially and politically influential people were entertained at the Wardlaw House. Author Joseph S. William wrote Old Times in West Tennessee while a house guest of the Wardlaws in 1873.

Ownership of the house passed from Jacob Wardlaw to his daughter Laura. Laura married prominent attorney Thomas Steele in the front parlor of the house on June 11, 1878. Steele, a Civil War veteran who served under General Nathan Bedford Forrest, practiced law in Ripley, Tennessee for 67 years. A devout Democrat, Steele was a leader in the Lauderdale County and West Tennessee politics.

Steele entered into legal partnership with his two sons, Thomas Steele Jr. and Wardlaw Steele who were both graduates of Vanderbilt Law School. Wardlaw Steele became quite well known in the legal profession within the state and served as president of the Tennessee State Bar Association from 1930-31.

After Thomas Steele's death in 1932, ownership of the house was passed to Wardlaw Steele. Many of Thomas and Wardlaw Steele's personal and professional papers are still stored in the basement of the house. Among the most important correspondence are several letters written by Cordell Hull in 1923 regarding the law school at the University of Tennessee.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Goodspeeds, 1887, History of Lauderdale County, Tennessee.
 Peters, Kate, 1957, Lauderdale County from Earliest Times.
 Unpublished Letters and Correspondence of Thomas and Wardlaw Steele in possession of Dr. E. L. Sutter.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 3/4
 Quadrangle name Ripley, South Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>2</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>9</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>5</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property nominated is a tract of land containing 3/4 acres. The boundary of the Wardlaw-Steele House property is shown as the red line on the accompanying map which was drawn on a scale of 1 inch to 100 feet and available at Tenn. State Board of Equalization.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen T. Rogers, Cultural Resource Surveyor
 organization Tennessee Historical Commission date September 1979
 street & number 4721 Trousdale telephone (615) 741-2371
 city or town Nashville state Tennessee 37219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert E. Harper

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 11/26/79

For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Sally G. Olds</u> Keeper of the National Register	date <u>1/8/80</u>
Attest: <u>Kristin O'Connell</u> Chief of Registration	date <u>1/2/80</u>