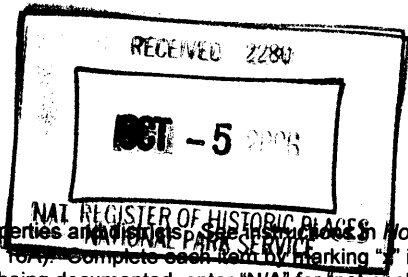


1040

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 107). Complete each part by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wilkinson-Keele House  
other names/site number Wilkinson, J.G., House; Keele, Judge Robert, House

2. Location

street & number 313 South Ramsey Street NA  not for publication  
city or town Manchester NA  vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Coffee code 031 zip code 37355

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Hagen 10/3/06  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
  - determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
  - determined not eligible for the National Register
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other,  
(explain:)

Edson H. Beall 11.15.06  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Name of Property

Coffee County, Tennessee  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
2	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
N/A

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**  
0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE/professional

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD

roof METAL

other WOOD; METAL

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1888-circa 1940

**Significant Dates**

1888

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Name of Property

Coffee County, Tennessee  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 1.4 acres Manchester 86 NE

**UTM References**

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>583089</u>	<u>3926673</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Chasity Nicoll  
organization NA date February 20, 2006  
street & number 313 South Ramsey Street telephone 931/723-7885  
city or town Manchester state TN zip code 37355

**Additional Documentation**

submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Chasity and John Nicoll  
street & number 313 South Ramsey Street telephone 931-723-7885  
city or town Manchester state TN zip code 37355

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

## Description

Built in 1888, the Wilkinson-Keele House is a two-story, gable roofed, L-shaped, frame Queen Anne house with bay windows, elaborate turned and sawn wood porches, and a porte cochere. The weatherboard walls and wood ornamentation are made of poplar; the foundation, front walk, front steps and side steps are constructed of site-made brick; and the roof is sheathed with metal. The interior of the house reflects the Queen Anne style with its ornate and intricate fireplaces, woodwork, and stairwell, as well as its original foyer ceiling wallpaper and doors with transom windows. The house is located in a once influential neighborhood close to the town square and across the street from the railroad. The house faces South Ramsey Street and is lined in the front with its original wrought iron fencing, a contributing element in the nomination. The home is placed in the center of a spacious 1.4-acre lot and surrounded by commercial properties on two sides. The property underwent a major rehabilitation from 2003-2005 using the federal preservation tax incentives. It retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

The traditional form of the gabled ell is enhanced by the well-crafted wood trim on the Wilkinson-Keele House. The west facade of the house is in three sections: the one-story porte cochere and porch, the two-story gable front ell, and the two-story side gable wing with its one story porch. The porte cochere and porches exhibit friezes with cut out quatrefoil trim, sawn circular trim below the eaves, and turned and sawn paired scroll-shaped brackets with pendants. The brackets fronting the columns and pilasters are extended to double the size of the paired eave brackets by reversing the top bracket. Quatrefoil and stylized floral designs are found on most of the porches on the house. Slender chamfered porch columns and pilasters rest on larger chamfered bases. The heavy porch balustrades are of turned wood.

Corner boards with simple capitals delineate the two-story gable front section of the façade. An unusual cut out starburst pattern bargeboard, with a teardrop or heart in the middle and stylized hearts on the edge of the bargeboard, is found in the gable. Below that, a bellcast roof with a sawn wood frieze and heavy supporting brackets shades paired one-over-one, double-hung windows on the second story. Leaf and floral patterns grace the sawn brackets. The tall, segmental arch windows are each surmounted by a low pitch gabled pediment that has a small ornamental bracket in the apex. Three engaged colonettes separate the windows. Windows are of different sizes but many are 36" x 86." This window ornamentation is used on all the windows on the house. A short turned wood balustrade sits on top of the first story bay window of this part of the façade. The three windows in the bay have two sets of paired brackets supporting the upper story balustrade. Ornamentation below the windows is composed of wood panels.

The (southern) ell portion of the façade has two one-over-one, double-hung windows on the second story and one one-over-one, double-hung window and a single leaf door on the first story. Door surrounds on the façade and all other historic doors are the same as the windows, with the exception of a segmental arch transom above the door. The exuberant porch continues here until

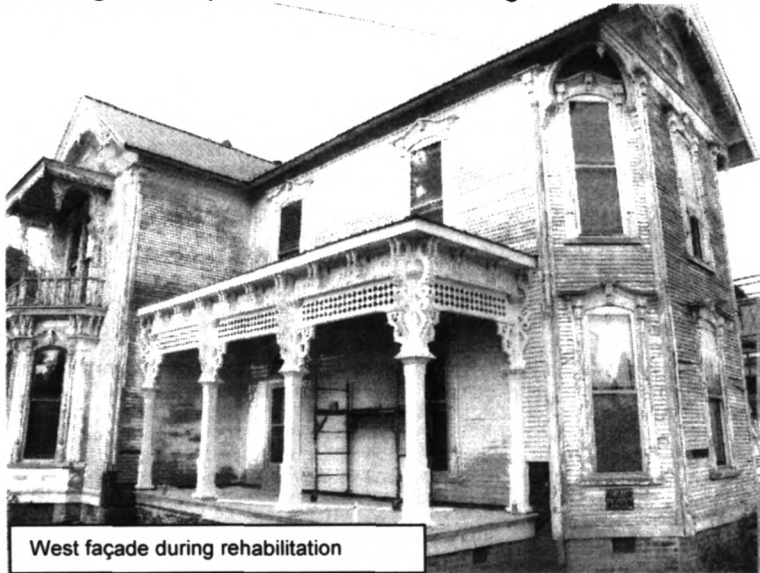
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

it reaches the canted edge of the façade where there is a window on each story. Narrow flush boards cover the exterior surface of the façade below the one-story porch. The porch has a 1/12 pitch metal roof and a bead board ceiling. Originally, the porch had a flat roof, but due to the extensive water damage, the roof was replaced during the 2003-2005 rehabilitation. Although, the front porch had to be completely rebuilt, most of the wood trim was salvaged and that which was unsalvageable was duplicated with like materials. The original bead board ceiling and plank flooring of the porch were not salvageable, but were replaced with like materials.



During the 2003-2005 rehabilitation, it was discovered that the original design may have included turned balusters and a railing on top of the porch roofs. Notches that matched the existing ground level porch railing shape and cut at the height of the existing ground level railings were found on the exterior walls by the roofs. Also, raised platforms that would have held a bottom railing were found on the porte cochere roof.

Corner boards found at the façade also delineate the north elevation of the Wilkinson-Keele House. The second story

has two one-over-one, double-hung segmental arch windows with the same trim that is found on the façade. The porte cochere and a one-story porch cover the entire first story of this elevation. Details of the porch and porte cochere match the façade porch. Narrow flush boards also cover the first story of the house below the porch as they do on the facade. Prior to the 2003-2005 rehabilitation, many of the turned balusters and a few decorative pieces were severely water damaged and were replaced with like materials. Otherwise, the porch is as it was originally built with one exception. There is a small room that is built onto the house and a portion of the porch that currently serves as a downstairs half bath. This room is not original to the house, but according to Judge Keele's daughter, Polly, was built by her father during the late 1930s, early 1940s when he turned the adjoining room into his bedroom. The bathroom originally had an exterior entrance, but said entrance was closed after one winter and Judge Keele added an interior entrance. A smaller version of the windows seen on the rest of the house is on this addition. A single leaf door with segmental arch transom and a one-over-one window are the only features found on the first story of the house on this elevation. East of this, and set back slightly from the two-story elevation, is a one-story gable roof extension. Two of the large one-over-one, double-hung windows are located here.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

The east elevation of the house consists of a porch added during the 2003-2005 rehabilitation that connected the historic shower house to the main house. Porch columns are simpler versions of the chamfered columns on the historic porch. The porch shields the original single leaf rear entrance door and a French door added during the 2003-2005 rehabilitation. The most prominent feature of the rear exterior of the house is the eight-sided shower house. The shower house was used as an outdoor bathing facility by the original owners. There was a cistern and a pump that were used to pump water into a holding container inside the building. This was done in the morning so as to let the water warm over the course of the day. By the 1930s, the Wilkinson-Keele House had indoor plumbing and the shower house was used as a playhouse.

Prior to the 2003-2005 rehabilitation, the rear (east) exterior of the house consisted of a kitchen (now the family room), utility room, pantry (now both part of the kitchen), and an unattached shower house. There was and still are minimal ornamental exterior decorations. During rehabilitation, it was discovered that the pantry room/utility room was added sometime after the original construction, but sometime prior to the 1930s when the house was sold to Judge Keele. It is believed that the pantry was probably added close to the time that the kitchen was moved into the home. It is believed that originally, the back room was not used as a kitchen and that the kitchen was actually a separate building (no longer there) behind the house.

The south elevation is dominated by the two story canted ell. Three large one-over-one, double-hung windows are found on each story of the ell. The side of the porch found on the facade is visible to the west of the ell while the glassed in porch, shed roof second story addition from circa 1930 and the 2004 one story gable roof kitchen are seen east of the ell. The exterior siding is poplar, although of a width significantly wider than the original siding so as to delineate itself from the original house (The siding on this part of the house was deteriorated when the current owners purchased the house and had to be replaced. The wider siding was used at the



South elevation during rehabilitation

suggestion of the SHPO). The one-story poplar porch is L-shaped in design running along the both the two-story portion of the house and the one-story portion of the house. When the house was purchased in 2003, much of the porch was in disrepair and was an outdoor porch. The railings to the porch were found in another building on the property. According to the Keele family,



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

the porch was screened in and used as a sleeping porch for most of the twentieth century. Upon renovating the home, the porch was enclosed with windows and the decorative trim, including the missing railing. Somewhat different than the other porches on the house, it has smaller turned spindles, less elaborate brackets, and a geometric pattern in part of the frieze. Porch columns are turned, not chamfered. The porch balustrade had been stored in the carriage house/garage and was installed during the recent rehabilitation.

Originally, the foundation of the house consisted of two layers of site-made brick laid side by side. However, by 2003 the masonry concrete mortar had deteriorated between the bricks. The floor joists in most rooms on the first floor are 17' and over time, the joists bowed in the middle. The two chimneys were substantially compromised in that the mortar had begun to turn to sand and the chimney was compacting and pulling the house down in the middle. Because of the deterioration, the two chimneys were removed by hand to preserve the original brick. The chimney brick is being preserved in order to replace the chimney if and when the roof is replaced. Said bricks will also be recycled for pathways and flowerbeds.

The original foundation bricks were also removed by hand and then cleaned. The foundation of the house was then replaced in sections using masonry blocks. The masonry blocks were faced with the original site made foundation brick that had been removed by hand and cleaned to give the house its original appearance. 2' x 2' x 8" concrete piers were placed under the house in different locations with 6" x 6' pressure treated beams on top and turn jacks in the middle

The principal features of the two-story entrance foyer are the main staircase and the elaborate circa 1888 wallpaper. The large oak newel post is embellished with carved panels and colonettes. The stair has a simple oak banister, turned wood balustrade, and sawn scrollwork. The wallpaper, restored in 2005 is composed of floral and geometric patterns. Walls were originally plaster but were replaced with sheet rock during the recent rehabilitation; floors are original wood. There are four historic paneled doors surrounded by simple wood surrounds that lead into interior spaces and a new room fashioned from a former porch. All rooms on the first floor have original oak, bead board ceilings, and original twelve-inch wood baseboards, window, and door surrounds. With the exception of two doors located under the foyer stairwell, all doors have transom windows.

The south parlor has a large bay window with historic interior wood shutters. The fireplace in this room is comprised of the mantel and mirrored overmantel. The fireplace opening is flanked by paired colonettes and topped by a mantelshelf supported by curved brackets. Sunburst motifs, egg-and-dart molding, a delicate turned wood "balustrade", and a multi-colored tile surround complete the ornamentation on the fireplace. The wood hearth is modern. A circa 1898 brass light fixture was restored in 2005. The west parlor also has a bay window and a fireplace with cobalt blue tile. As in other rooms, the historic light fixture was restored. The circa 1900 light was wired for both electric and gas, although there are no signs that a gas line was ever ran to the fixture. The light is made of metal painted to look like brass.



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

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The current reception area, used as a bedroom in the early twentieth century, has a wood fireplace mantel that is much less elaborate than the others. The rectangular fireplace opening is flanked by paneled pilasters and capped by a paneled frieze. A heavy wood bracket supports the curved mantelshelf. As in the other rooms, the wood hearth is modern. There are four historic doors, and a historic ceiling vent. Three doors were removed during the rehabilitation and two of these were used to create a double leaf door with a non-operable transom. The circa 1940 half-bath was remodeled.

East of the reception area is the conference room, historically the dining room. The fireplace mantel, originally in an upstairs room and similar to the one in the reception area, was moved here in 2003-5. This room has the original vertical board wainscoting, plate rail, and cove molding. The last historic room on the first floor is the current family room. This room had been used as a kitchen in recent years but its use before that is not known.

During the 2003-5 rehabilitation, a new kitchen was added south of the family room and a rear (east) porch was added. This addition incorporated a historic shower house. Also the south side porch was enclosed with glass and wood. Wood trim is similar to that found in the porches.

The second story of the Wilkinson-Keele House contains a small foyer, bedroom, and bedroom/sitting room in the historic portion of the house. All rooms have historic poplar wood floors, cove molding, baseboards, and simple wood window and door trim. The fireplaces are modern and walls were removed to create a larger room. The 2003-5 rehabilitation added bathrooms and a closet to the east or rear.

Fence. Circa 1898 iron fence set on concrete. Found on the South Ramsey Street part of the lot. Contributing.

Carriage House/Garage. The early twentieth century building is constructed of rusticated concrete blocks and has 1930s wood garage doors. It was built prior to Keele's purchasing the home in 1937. Originally, it consisted of two horse stalls and a middle storage area for a carriage. The middle carriage door is a reproduction from one of the original doors found in the carriage house during the rehabilitation. The building has a new metal roof and the roof pitch was changed during the rehabilitation of the main house. Noncontributing due to alterations.

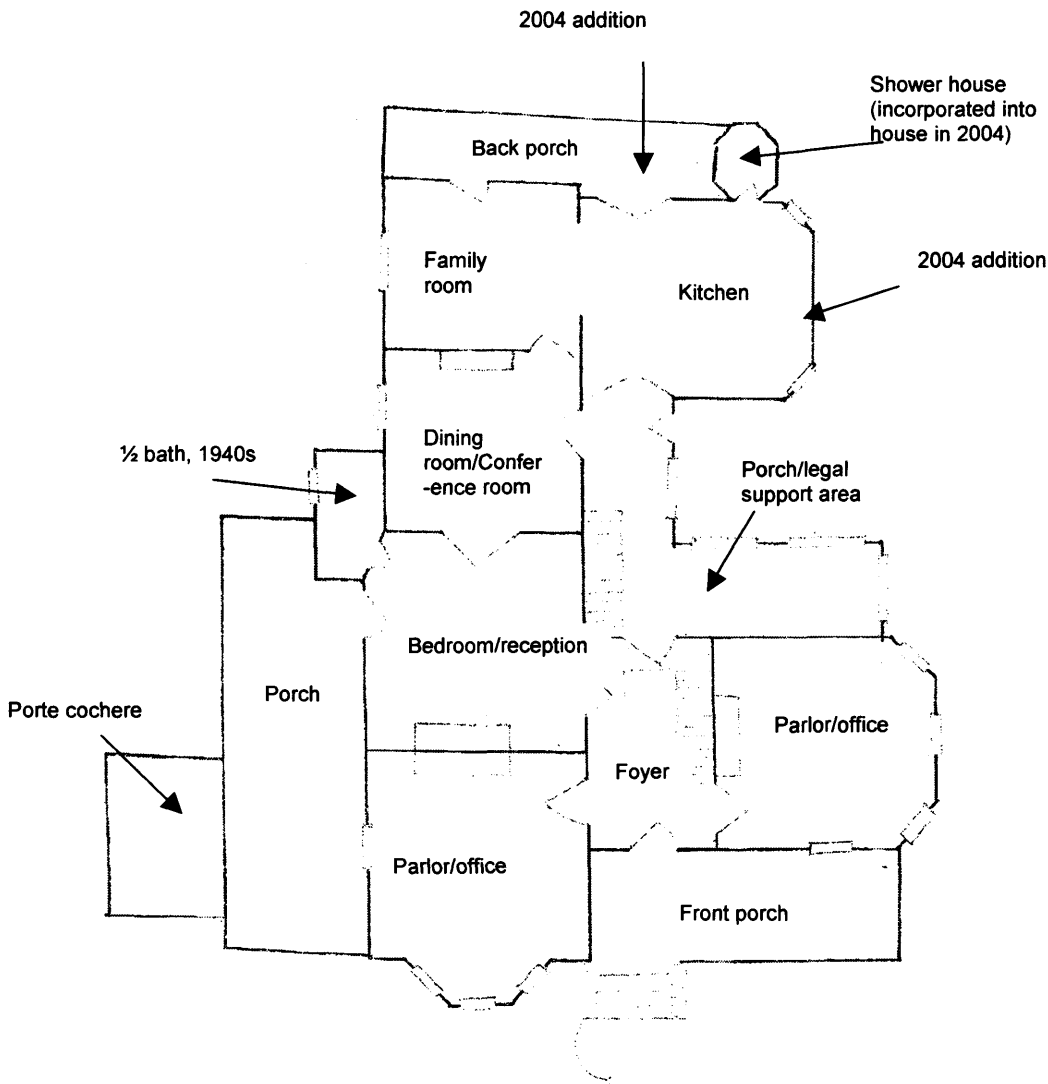
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

Sketch plan of first floor after rehabilitation, not to scale



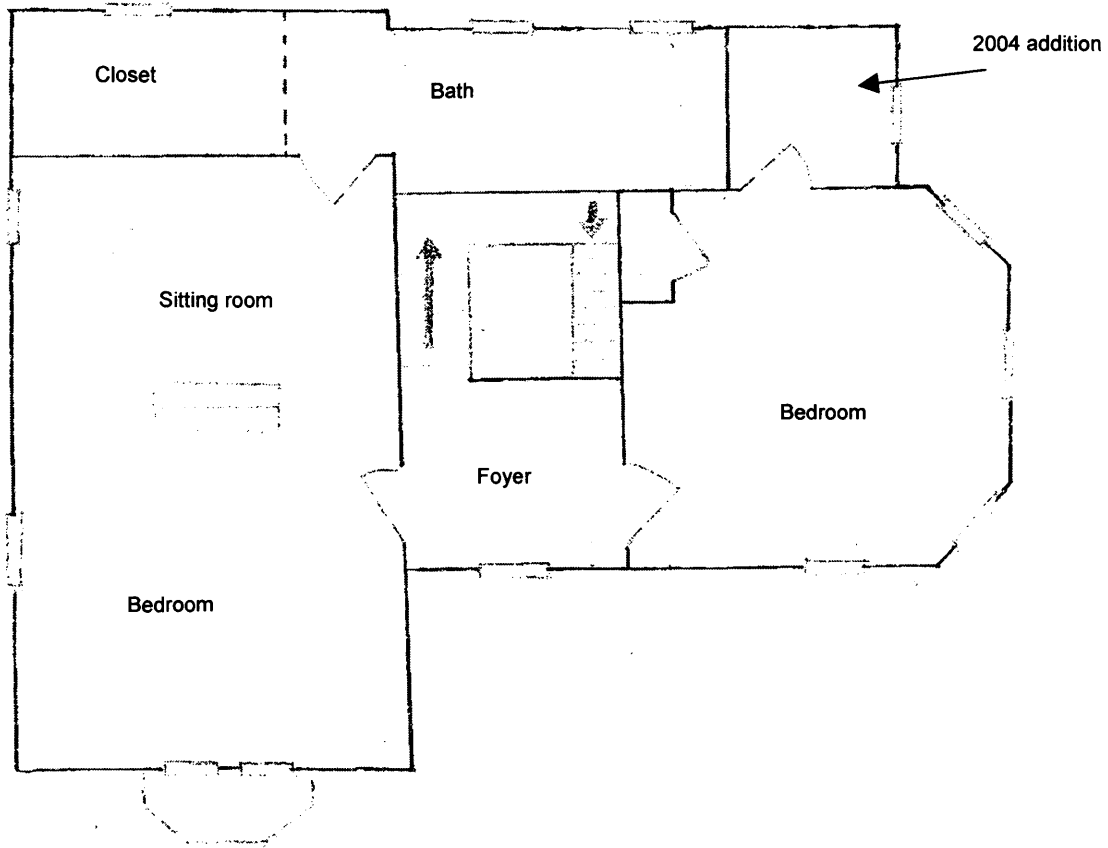
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

Sketch plan of second floor after rehabilitation, not to scale



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

## Statement of Significance

The circa 1888 Wilkinson-Keele House is being nominated to the National Register under criteria C for its local significance in architecture. The dwelling was built in 1888 and is a notable example of the Queen Anne style in Manchester. Constructed of poplar and site-made brick, the dwelling retains most of its original detailing and has not been significantly altered. The Wilkinson-Keele house is one of only two Victorian era houses left in Manchester's downtown area, and it is probably the best example of the exuberant architectural detail found on houses of the Victorian period in the county. Its highly refined styling and degree of elaboration are unusual in Manchester's surviving older residential areas. Character defining features of the house's Queen Anne style include the highly ornate exterior porches, large windows, and bay windows. Inside, the Queen Anne style is seen in the existing fireplaces, foyer stairway, historic wallpaper and lighting fixtures, and wood door and window surrounds. The dwelling has not been extensively altered and has recently been restored utilizing the preservation tax incentives.

The Wilkinson-Keele House is located in Manchester, Tennessee the Coffee County seat. Manchester was established in 1836 when two landowners deeded 200 acres to be divided and sold. It was incorporated two years later. Manchester takes its name from the great industrial town of Manchester, England, since community leaders thought its location on a river and near two falls would help it would become another great manufacturing center.<sup>1</sup> Manchester is full of history that dates back 2000 years ago when Native Americans roamed and ruled the Tennessee hills. A Native American site located at the confluence of the Duck and Little Duck rivers and now called Old Stone Fort (NR 2/20/73) is believed to have served as a central ceremonial gathering place for some 500 years.<sup>2</sup> Old Stone Fort also hosted several water powered milling operations during the mid-late 1800s.<sup>3</sup> Manchester and Coffee County also saw action in the Civil War as Union Forces moved southward from their victory at the battle of Murfreesboro and engaged Confederate forces in June of 1863. The battle was a very small, but it was the first time that a Spencer repeating rifle was used. In 1940 Camp Forrest, a military facility, was built near Manchester. General Patton's Army began maneuvers throughout the area during World War II.<sup>4</sup> Once a predominantly agricultural area, the city and county began to see its industry grow in the 1960's.<sup>5</sup> In 1910, the population was 1500; in 1970, it was 6,208; and in 2005, it was 9,442.

The Wilkinson family was in this part of the state as early as 1830. The family owned significant farmland in a small town outside of Manchester called Hillsboro.<sup>6</sup> Joseph G. or J.G. Wilkinson

<sup>1</sup> West, Judy F., Manchester, *Coffee County, Tennessee, A Business and Community Pictorial Heritage*, (Page 23)

<sup>2</sup> Manchester Chamber of Commerce, "About the City of Manchester," ([www.macoc.org](http://www.macoc.org))

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> West, 23.

<sup>5</sup> Manchester, Tennessee ([www.manchestertn.org](http://www.manchestertn.org))

<sup>6</sup> Lewis, Joanna, Coffee County Historical Society Meeting, 16 May 2006 (Sources include Deeds, Census Records, Local Newspapers, Wilkinson Family Graveyard Headstones, *Historical Society Quarterly*)

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

was born 1858, the son of Isaac and Mary Wilkinson; he was one of their four children.<sup>7</sup> In 1880, Joseph (J.G.) moved into the town of Manchester. In 1884, J.G. and his uncle, J.G. Willis started buying real estate in town.<sup>8</sup> J.G. Wilkinson married Dessie Strickler on May 18, 1886. In October of 1887, Wilkinson and his uncle purchased the block where the Wilkinson-Keele House was built.<sup>9</sup> The house was constructed soon after that in 1888. Wilkinson was an active businessman in the community at the time he was erecting his home. - He was president of the newly opened Bank of Manchester in 1888 and a partner in Manchester Mills in 1889.<sup>10</sup> In 1891, J.G. Wilkinson and partners formed the Coffee County Bank with Wilkinson serving as cashier.<sup>11</sup> By 1895, he was selling groceries and dry goods at the J.G. Wilkinson and Millinery Company located on lot 19 of the original plat of Manchester.

In 1903, Wilkinson moved his family to Fort Worth, Texas. He kept the house in Manchester and used it as a summer residence with caretakers looking after the house in the winter months.<sup>12</sup> Once in Texas, he was one of the organizers of the Wichita Falls and Oklahoma railway in 1905. As of 1914, Wilkinson still owned several properties in Manchester, including the Ramsey Street house. He served as the president of the Continental Nation Bank of Fort Worth, as well as a number of other small banks in Texas. Eventually he served as chairman of the board of the Continental Nation Bank and his son Harry became president.<sup>13</sup>

In 1931, Wilkinson's wife Dessie died and was buried in the Wilkinson family cemetery in Hillsboro outside of Manchester. A year later Wilkinson died in Fort Worth, Texas. He was brought back to his home on Ramsey Street for a memorial service and then buried with Dessie and other family members at the Wilkinson family cemetery in Hillsboro.<sup>14</sup> Judge Robert Keele purchased the home for his wife, Amarillas S. Keele,<sup>15</sup> at auction on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1937, for \$4,500.00 and a down payment of \$1,500.00 with two annual payments thereafter.<sup>16</sup> He moved into the home with his first wife, Amarilla S. Keele, and their three children, Amarilla, Robert Jr., and Polly.

<sup>7</sup> Coffee County Census, 1860.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Coffee County's Register's Office, Tennessee, Deed Book W, Page 853, October 18, 1887. (At the time of purchase, the street is known as Railroad Street, East)

<sup>10</sup> Coffee County's Register's Office, Tennessee, Deed Book X, Page 455, April 24, 1889.

<sup>11</sup> West, 22.

<sup>12</sup> Klipfol, Polly Keele (middle daughter of Judge Keele), Summer 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Lewis.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Klipfol. (Mrs. Klipfol stated that her mother had always admired the home and that her father had always promised her mother that if it came available that he would purchase the home for her.)

<sup>16</sup> Coffee County Register's Office, Tennessee, Deed Book 46, Page 71, October 27, 1937.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Wilkinson-Keele House  
Coffee County, Tennessee

Judge Keele was born at Noah, Tennessee in 1894. He worked as a teacher, a mail carrier<sup>17</sup>, and served in World War I. Judge Keele was admitted to the practice of law in 1919; however,<sup>18</sup> he did not attend law school but worked as an apprentice and then later sat for the bar.<sup>19</sup>

In 1934, Judge Keele was elected Coffee County Judge. He served in that capacity until 1950. In 1960, Judge Keele served as the first General Sessions Judge of Coffee County. A year later, Judge Keele served as the Chancellor Judge Part II of the Twelfth Chancery Division (14 counties).<sup>20</sup> Judge Keele's first wife passed away in 1955. Shortly thereafter, he remarried a local schoolteacher named Ann Majors. Judge Keele died on December 9, 1966. The second Mrs. Keele stayed in the Wilkinson-Keele house until her death in 1990.<sup>21</sup>

The Keele children tell wonderful stories about their childhood in the Wilkinson-Keele home. Specifically, they can recall a house bursting at the seams in the early years as their family members and friends came to live with them as they tried to rebound from the Great Depression.<sup>22</sup> They both recount memories of Patton's Army marching down Highway 41 on a hot day and breaking ranks to come sit under their shade trees and sip water from the water hose. They also remember their mother opening up their home to officer's wives while the soldiers were being trained for military duty for World War II and the fact that if their mother saw a man in uniform while she was in town that that young man would end up at their dinner table. The Keele's also grew up with multiple generations in their home as their grandparents lived with them in their later years. Polly Keele remembers the summer of the Polio epidemic when she was not allowed to leave the yard, calling it "the longest summer of my life."<sup>23</sup>

On July 3, 1991, Louis A. Hendrix purchased the Wilkinson-Keele home with dreams of restoring the house to its original glory.<sup>24</sup> However, his financial constraints and failing health left the house in disrepair until the John and Chasity Nicoll purchased the home in 2003.<sup>25</sup> The home underwent an extensive rehabilitation and is now utilized as a law office and residence for the Nicolls.

There are no other unaltered Queen Anne houses in Manchester. There are two more houses built around the same time as the Wilkinson-Keele House but one has vinyl siding (although it is being removed) and another home, the Renolds House, that has a simple but historic exterior and an altered interior. None of these houses share any commonality with the nominated house. A

<sup>17</sup> West at 62. (Robert L. Keele was appointed as a rural carrier on January 31, 1916. He had an annual salary of \$672.00.)

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>19</sup> Keele, Robert Jr., Oral Interview, (Summer 2005).

<sup>20</sup> Lewis.

<sup>21</sup> Lewis.

<sup>22</sup> Keele and Klipfol.

<sup>23</sup> Klipfol.

<sup>24</sup> Coffee County Register's Office, Tennessee, Book 222, Page 493, July 3, 1991.

<sup>25</sup> Coffee County Register's Office, Tennessee, Book 295, Page 107, July 3, 2003.

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few houses in the neighborhood contain elements of the Wilkinson-Keele House such as window framing or porch balustrades, but none have the amount or quality of design and details as this property. Nearby Tullahoma has the National Register listed L.D. Hickerson House (NR 8/18/93) and the North Atlantic Historic District (NR 7/14/88). The Hickerson house and some of the residences in the district exhibit the sawn and turned woodwork of the Wilkinson-Keele House, but none of the buildings appear to have as much Queen Anne detailing. The Wilkinson-Keele House retains all the important features of the style. Characteristics of this style, popular throughout the U.S. around 1880-1910, include multiple porches, a dominant front gable, spindlework, and bay windows. *A Field Guide to American Houses* divides the style into four shape subtypes – hip and cross gable roof, cross gable roof, front gable roof, and town house. The Wilkinson-Keele House fits into the cross gable roof subtype that<sup>26</sup> is found in approximately 20% of Queen Anne houses. It is an excellent local representation of the style.

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<sup>26</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf), 263.



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## **Verbal Boundary Description**

The Wilkinson-Keele House is located at 313 South Ramsey Street, Manchester, Tennessee. The boundary for the Wilkinson-Keele House is illustrated as the dark line on the accompanying Coffee County Tax Map 76H. The Wilkinson-Keele House is located on Parcel 6.0. The Wilkinson-Keele House is located on 1.4 acres.

## **Verbal Boundary Justification**

The boundary of the Wilkinson-Keele House includes the house, carriage house (circa 1920s), and front wrought iron fence that are historically associated with the property. The eastern boundary of the property is bordered by a storage facility and the southern boundary of the property is bordered by a commercial strip mall. The northern boundary is bordered by a residence.

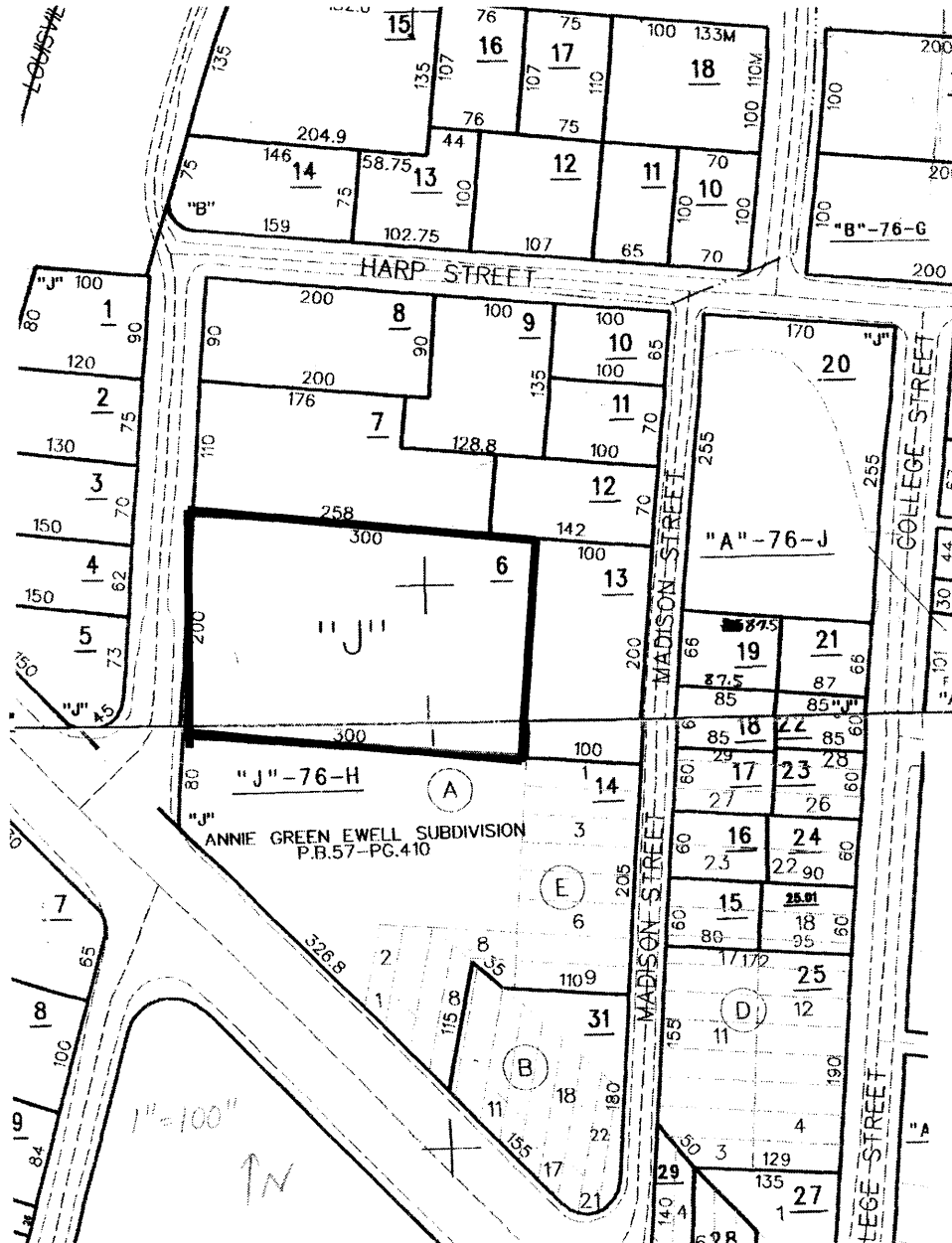
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Tax map 1" = 100' N ↑  
The boundary for the Wilkinson-Keele House is shown as the dark line



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## Photographs

Wilkinson-Keele House, 313 South Ramsey Street, Manchester, Tennessee

Photographs by: Chasity Nicoll

Date: 12 May 2006

Location of Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission

Photo 1 of 25: Primary (west) façade, view to the east

Photo 2 of 25: south elevation, view to the north

Photo 3 of 25: north elevation, view to the south

Photo 4 of 25: east elevation, view to the west

Photo 5 of 25: south elevation porch, view to the northwest

Photo 6 of 25: detail of porte cochere column, view to the west

Photo 7 of 25: north elevation porch window, view to the south

Photo 8 of 25: west façade door, view to the east

Photo 9 of 25: detail of south side of façade porch, view to the north

Photo 10 of 25: west façade detailing, view to the northeast

Photo 11 of 25: original iron fence, front of house, view to the east

Photo 12 of 25: view of first floor fireplace in first floor office (south of foyer)

Photo 13 of 25: view of first floor fireplace in reception area

Photo 14 of 25: View of first floor foyer, staircase, ceiling paper, and hallway

Photo 15 of 25: View of second floor staircase, landing, and ceiling paper

Photo 16 of 25: Detail of balustrade

Photo 17 of 25: View of first floor conference room

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Photo 18 of 25: View of original lighting fixture in office (south of foyer), circa 1898

Photo 19 of 25: View of doorknob on front door

Photo 20 of 25: View of upstairs' foyer/landing

Photo 21 of 25: View of upstairs' master bedroom

Photo 22 of 25: View of downstairs' foyer

Photo 23 of 25: View of south parlor, now an office

Photo 24 of 25: View of parlor, now the reception area

Photo 25 of 25: View of conference room into reception area