

PH 0666106

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 3 1978

DATE ENTERED JUL 20 1978

DATA SHEET

**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  
Grice Inn

AND/OR COMMON

Grice Inn

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

East Elm Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wrightsville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st - Ginn

STATE

Georgia

CODE

13

COUNTY

Johnson

CODE

167 ✓

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Vacant

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Johnson County Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Wrightsville

STATE

Georgia 31096

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Johnson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Wrightsville

STATE

Georgia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Grice Inn in Wrightsville, Georgia, is located on the north side of Elm Street, two blocks east of Court House Square. Although the lot rises above the street, the site had to be dug out in order for the first floor to be at street level. This excavation was done at the corner of the lot where State Street intersects with Elm. The inn is a two story, four over four room, rectangular plan with central hallway. It is built of masonry and wood frame construction. The most prominent feature is the double porch with lattice balustrade that extends around two sides of the house. Its corner orientation is in the direction of the railroad station as opposed to downtown. Also prominent is the roof profile. It is one of a gable resting on a hip. Two interior chimneys extend from the apex. The windows in the house all have nine over nine lights. Immediately behind the back porch an addition of two rooms was made two years after the initial construction.

Across the front and on both levels, a central door is flanked on each side by two windows. The composition of the State Street elevation is the same as the front except that there is no door on the upper level. Paradoxically, on the side that is seen coming from town, there are only two windows on the second level. This gives a more stark impression of the inn than that given by the other elevations. The brick lower level is laid in stretcher bond. Segmented arches cap each opening. It is said that the windows on the first level had shutters at one time. Insets in the brick flank each window into which these shutters would have fitted. The upper level is wood frame and covered with clapboards. The porches have a shed roof supported by chamfered wood posts. The supports on the first level rest on a low brick wall. It is interesting that the posts on the upper porch are not, in every case, aligned with those of the lower porch. Also, there is one less post on the upper side porch than on the lower. The exterior doors are panelled and glazed with carved stick flowers in the square panels above and below the large square glass panel. Underneath the back porch, between the exterior wall of the house and a parallel retaining wall, is a "cellar" where meat was stored. The two room addition on the back was so built that the back porch became a functional dog-trot between the main house and the two rooms. The construction is the same as that of the upper level of the main house except that the floor is raised above the ground on brick posts. There is a central chimney in the addition. Also on the back porch there has been the addition of a bathroom.

On the first level inside, the floor is made of hexagonal concrete tiles that have been used frequently as sidewalk paving. The walls are plastered. The stair which is located at the rear of the hall is doglegged with the upper run enclosed. The lower run appears to be altered so that an enclosed toilet could be put on the landing. A lavatory is located next to the stairway. The room at the rear right served as the kitchen and connects to the dining room at the front right by a small hall. This hall also contains a side entry. Upstairs, narrow, horizontal, tongue and groove boards are used for the walls, floors, and ceiling. There is some decay in the floor and ceiling of the rear left room due to a leaking roof. As in the

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balustrade of the front porch, the one around the top of the stairs is also latticed. There is a gate also at the top of the stairs. The interior doors all contain four panels and have porcelain doorknobs. Victorian mantels with mirrors are used throughout the house and closets flank the chimneys. The lighting consists of a single bulb on a drop cord in each room.

Outside, a brick retaining wall parallels Elm Street extending westward from the edge of the front porch. Dirt from the excavation for the house was probably used for fill behind the wall to create a level area at the side of the house.

# 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1905      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      J. R. Grice

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Grice Inn, built 1905, is an unusual example of vernacular architecture whose form is unique to Middle Georgia and contains stylistic elements unprecedented in the state. It is a landmark to the community of Wrightsville, having played a significant role in the development of this small rural town during the period of its greatest growth. J. R. Grice, a local farmer and carpenter, built the structure as a home for his family and as an inn. For twenty years it served as a town social center where students boarded, couples or senior citizens rented rooms, and townspeople took their meals. Located near the railroad station, it was conveniently placed for hotel traffic.

Johnson County and the town of Wrightsville - founded late in the development of this region - were relatively undistinguished except for good farm and timberland. During the years 1870-1910, the county had its most significant growth, nearly doubling in population every decade. The Depression, however, halted growth as it did in most rural areas. During World War II, the county population began to decline. Wrightsville has managed a small growth pattern from that time until today.

It was during the height of Wrightsville's growth that J. R. Grice bought a lot in town from the Baptist Church. Having been a carpenter, he built the structure in 1905 and moved his family to town. Reportedly, he cut the timber for the structure at his farm and let it cure for a year before beginning construction. His three sons were all young men by this time and may have helped in the construction of the house.

Students at Warthen College, a small grade school and Junior College in Wrightsville, made up the bulk of the Grice Inn clientele. Because of an evident demand, Grice added two more rooms on the back of the house three years after it was built. The Grices operated the inn for fifteen years, retiring in 1920. It was taken over by Mrs. Ida A. McWhorter, who ran it for another five or six years. She and her husband, James (Wrightsville's postmaster), attempted to buy the inn but were unable to continue the payments. The house then reverted back to Grice. Subsequently, it was rented out as apartments. Grice died in 1927. After division and redivision of the estate, the eldest son, Milo, acquired the structure. It continued to be rented as apartments for 17 years. Milo Grice sold the house in 1936 to W. L. Tompkins who later sold it to Robert Lord in 1944. Miss Belle Lord bought the house from her brother at that time. She lived there and rented rooms until recently when she sold the house to Mr. and Mrs. E. Hodges Rowland. The Johnson County Historical Society acquired the site in 1977 and plans to restore it to its original condition for use as a community center. During its seventy years of existence, the Grice Inn has played a central role in the history of Wrightsville.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Deeds & Records, Johnson County Courthouse, Wrightsville, Georgia.  
Johnson County Tax Digests 1900-1928, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta, Georgia.  
 Monette, John W., History of the Discovery and Settlement of the Valley of the Mississippi (New York: Harper & Brothers), 1846.  
The Wrightsville Headlight, Special Centennial Edition, May, 1958.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 7	3, 3, 9, 1, 50	3, 6, 2, 2, 4, 2, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is situated in the Town of Wrightsville on the southeastern corner of a city block bounded on the north by East Court Street, on the east by State Street, on the south by East Elm Street, and on the west by Valley Street. The southeastern portion of this block, on which the Grice Inn is situated, is a rectangular tract of land beginning at a point on State Street and running south approximately 105 feet along said street to the intersection of East Elm Street; thence along East Elm Street approximately

## 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

John A. Compton, Intern; Morton McInvale, Supervisor August 26, 1977  
 ORGANIZATION DATE  
 Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section 404/656-2840  
 STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE  
 270 Washington Street, S. W.  
 CITY OR TOWN STATE  
 Atlanta Georgia 30334

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Elizabeth A. Lyon*

TITLE DATE  
 Acting Chief, Historic Preservation Section 3/20/78

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Charles M. Henry* DATE 2-20-78  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *William C. Cole* DATE 6-29-78  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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A major portion of the structure's significance is architectural. The design stems from the French Colonial architecture found along the Mississippi River Valley, the West Indies and Eastern Canada. Its resemblance to the House on Ellicott's Hill, a National Historic Landmark, built in 1799, is remarkable. In the Grice House, however, the galleries are not encompassed in the roof profile of the house and the pitch does not change between the gabled and hipped portions of the roof. Even though the raised cottage is indigenous to Coastal Georgia, this is, as far as can be ascertained, the first time a form of this French Colonial style with its unique roof profile and galleries has been used in the state. The Grice Inn is also unique in being a raised cottage style located in the piedmont region. Nonetheless, it is well suited for use as an inn located in a warm, humid climate. Grice, in designing a modern structure, has managed to retain the integrity of this much older form. The inn has a pronounced simplicity, yet is an effective synthesis of contemporary elements with the original style.

(11)

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- Miller, Ron, Architectural Historian, Mississippi Division of Archives & History, Natchez, Ms., telephone interview by John Compton, August, 1977.
- Cook, J. Munroe, Wrightsville, Georgia, Personal interview by John Compton and Mrs. Mary Ann Rowland, August, 1977.
- Sumner, Grady, Wrightsville, Georgia, Personal interview by John Compton, August 1977.
- Lord, Clayton, Wrightsville, Georgia, Personal interview by John Compton, August 1977.
- Lord, Miss Belle, Wrightsville, Georgia, Personal interview by Mrs. Mary Ann Rowland, August 1977.
- Sanders, Mrs. Virginia McWhorter, Wrightsville, Georgia, Personal interview by Mrs. Mary Ann Rowland, August 1977.
- Stewart, Mrs. Allene Grice, Milledgeville, Georgia, Telephone interview by John Compton, August 1977.
- Joiner, Mrs. Lillian Hartley, Niece of Mrs. J. R. Grice, Tennile, Georgia, Personal interview by John Compton, August 1977.
- Linley, John, Architecture of Middle Georgia in the Oconee Area.  
Personal Inspection, John Compton, August 1977.

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130 feet to a point where the property of E. H. Hamilton begins; thence north from that point along the line between the two properties approximately 105 feet to a point; and thence east approximately 130 feet along the line between the property and that of Grady Sumner (this line having been marked by a wire fence since 1930 when the Grice estate was divided) to the point of origin on State Street. The inn is situated 4 feet from State Street and 13 feet from East Elm Street.

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