

"Millwood" (Wade Hampton Mansion) Ruins
U. S. Route 76 (Garners Ferry Road) near
intersection with Hampton Hill Road,
approximately 5 miles east of Columbia
Columbia Vicinity
Richland County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-256

HABS

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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"MILLWOOD" (WADE HAMPTON MANSION) RUINS

Location: U. S. Route 76 (Garners Ferry Road) near intersection with Hampton Hill Road, approximately 5 miles east of Columbia, Columbia Vicinity, Richland County, South Carolina.

Present Owner: Frank Hampton, who lives in house in rear of ruins.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

"Millwood" plantation was one of the largest and most profitable plantations in the middle section of the state. Colonel Wade Hampton I owned the property as early as 1787. His son Wade Hampton II was born in Columbia on April 21, 1791. Hampton I operated a toll bridge across the Congaree River, which was washed away in 1791, and was a member of Congress in 1795. He erected a cotton gin at his mill on Gill Creek in 1799. The following year he harvested and ginned 600 bales from 600 acres, proving that the center section of the state was good for cotton, a fact on which the tremendous fortune of the family in later years was built. In 1815, Colonel Hampton I carried the message of the victory of New Orleans to Washington. He died in 1835, and Hampton II took over the plantation. He built the great house, of which these ruins remain. Hampton II died in 1858.

Wade Hampton III was born in 1818 and became the great Civil War cavalry general; his cavalry, known as Hampton's Legion, was outfitted, armed, and paid from the family fortune. Hampton II purchased the mansion house, known as the "Hampton-Preston" house (also in HABS) as a wedding present for one daughter. Another daughter married Lawrence Manning and took him a dowry large enough to enable him to build "Milford" house (also in HABS) in Sumter County, probably the finest plantation house ever erected in the southeast.

"Millwood" was burned by Sherman's raiders in 1865; the men were all at war, and very little of the vast accumulation of art, books, and family records was saved, except a few paintings and silver that had been taken to "Woodlands," another Hampton plantation about two miles south of "Millwood" house.

Sources of Information:

Hennig, Helen Kohn. Columbia, 1786-1936.

Handbook of South Carolina, 1908, published by the State Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

Prepared by Walter F. Petty, AIA
Columbia, South Carolina
July 1961

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Only the ruined portico of this important South Carolina plantation house survives. These are the remains of a hexastyle, prostyle, Greek Revival portico, supported by square, red-brick piers. The two end columns were square in plan, with sunk panels and molded bases. The four round center columns were fluted and had molded bases. They are of red brick, stuccoed. In height they range from 2 feet to 20 feet.

The ruins are in a well-kept semirural setting. There is a modern frame house behind the portico ruins. Two, small, square, two-story buildings nearby may be survivals from the plantation; one is in ruins. The lawns are well kept, and there are mature trees and shrubs in a generally wooded area. A gravel driveway loops around the portico.

Prepared by James C. Massey, Architect
National Park Service
April 1960