

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**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 ALEXANDER WADE HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

Alexander Wade House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

256 Prairie Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

Morgantown

VICINITY OF

2nd

STATE

West Virginia

CODE

54

COUNTY

Monongalia

CODE

061

**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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES, RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES, UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Miss Rebecca Wade

STREET & NUMBER

256 Prairie Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Morgantown

VICINITY OF

West Virginia

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

High Street

CITY, TOWN

Morgantown

STATE

West Virginia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

West Virginia Antiquities Commission Survey

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

West Virginia Antiquities Commission

CITY, TOWN

Morgantown

West Virginia

# DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Alexander Wade House, located on Prairie Avenue at Wagner Road in Morgantown, Monongalia County, West Virginia, was constructed in 1860 for Judge Edward C. Bunker. At that time, and for almost the entire residence of Alexander Wade (c. 1872-1904), the house was essentially a simple, Greek Revival mass. Rectangular in shape, it was constructed of brick laid in common bond on a hewn-stone foundation. The structure had a classic, one story portico and three-windowed front facade with stone sills and lintels at all openings. At that time, the roof was slightly pitched with gabled ends and a centrally placed dormer on either side. Change was first made in about 1901 when the bay projections were added to each side with tall windows, again with stone sills and lintels in the Italianate spirit. Until the death of Wade in 1904, there were no other major changes to the house.

The present Wade (or Bunker-Wade) House is in the design which reached culmination in 1911 when the third story under the mansard roof was added. Pierced by ornamental dormer windows (16/1 double hung sash) and extending a few feet beyond the lower floors under a simple cornice, the most recent addition brought a bit of the Franco-American Mode, or French style, to the Greek and Italian already existing. It may be said, then, that the building is a composite mode, displaying a well-balanced mixture of features common to a variety of styles.

The Wade House has been divided into three apartments, one on each of the three levels. An entrance is located on the south side of the house and is believed to be the accessway to the second and third floor apartments. Little is known of the interior of the house as a visit throughout was not possible. The first floor, however, is quite modest. It is used by the present owner, Miss Rebecca Wade, and her sister. One enters from the west into a hallway, which serves as a sitting room. To the north is the living room. The hallway leads back to a bathroom, located just to the left, and to the right is a doorway which leads to the bedrooms and kitchen.

Since these alterations, the structure has undergone only regular maintenance with no major changes. The brick is painted red, and green shutters are on the front windows of the first and second floors. The grounds complement the white trim with the mixture of white birch and evergreen trees. Immediately south of the Wade House is a one story structure. This building was originally the wash house. It is presently used as a storage house. To the south of the building is the garage which has accommodations for two vehicles. Both structures are painted red like the house.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

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valuable that methods."

Through his popularity as an "institute" lecturer and through publication of his book A Graduating System for Country Schools, Wade's system was adopted throughout the country. In his advocacy of the metric system he still was somewhat ahead of his time.

# 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 checked="" 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 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      1872-1904

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Alexander Wade, as a teacher in the schools of West Virginia and superintendent of schools in Monongalia County, developed a system of graduation in country schools which was adopted throughout the United States. He had observed that rural children lost much time in enrolling and re-enrolling through their school careers. He found a remedy for this situation in a system of grades, promotions, and graduations. His system of graduations and promotional examinations, introduced into Monongalia County schools in 1874, brought such favorable notice that he was invited to explain it to the National Education Association in 1879. The NEA passed a resolution commending his plan, and within a few years it was widely adopted.

Wade lived in this two-story brick house at 256 Prairie Street, Morgantown from 1872 until his death in 1904. It is essentially unaltered from his time, though now converted into three apartments. The building is privately owned.

## BIOGRAPHY/HISTORY

The Wade house was the home of Alexander L. Wade, who as a teacher and superintendent in the public schools of Monongalia County developed a graded system for country or village schools which was adopted nationally.

The home he acquired in 1872, and where he spent the remainder of his life until 1904, was built by Judge Bunker about 1860. Wade was born in Rushville, Maryland, but came to West Virginia when he was seven.

Wade's experiments on material grades <sup>what?</sup> to a student's capacity, and his system of promotion based upon examinations attracted national attention in 1879, when he read a paper in Philadelphia at a meeting of the National Education Association. A resolution by the Association favorable to the Wade plan was directed to superintendents throughout America.

At the Paris Exposition of the preceding year, the Honorable J.D. Philbrick, U.S. Commissioner of Education, had already expressed the conviction that "Monongalia County ought to be marked as a bright spot in the educational map of the country."

To test theory with practice, Wade resigned as superintendent of schools and assumed a position as a principal of a little school four blocks from his home. One of his instructions, often received coldly by his contemporaries, was that educational matter should be presented in palatable form, and that education can be an enjoyable experience. As he expressed it, "Motives are esteemed more

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Wade, Alexander. Graduating System for Country Schools. (Boston, Mass., 1881).

West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State, sponsored by the Conservation Commission of West Virginia (Oxford University Press, New York, 1941).

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	7	589400	4386420	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

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

Joseph S. Mendinghall, Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Sites Survey

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1100 L Street, N.W.

(202) 523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington, D.C. 20240

# 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

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Wade, Alexander, House



