

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 16 1996

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic names Avant House

other names/site number

N/A

2. Location

street & number 909 Sanford Road not for publication n/a
city or town Andalusia vicinity n/a
state Alabama code Al county Covington code 39 zip code 36420

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 12/18/95
Signature of certifying official Date

Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)
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] _____
Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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 2/16/96
Entered in the
National Register

[Signature] _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

=====
5. Classification
=====

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

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

Category of Property (Check only one box.)

- X building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

N/A

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6. Function or Use
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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Domestic Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

roof Asphalt

walls Weatherboard

other Wood

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

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 (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- 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 c. 1914-1920

Significant Dates N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Lockwood, Frank, Architect (Attributed) Merrill, E.R., Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain significance on continuation sheet/s.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

- Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A
- 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: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 3.5

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	552740	3464800	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

____ See continuation sheet.

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

See attached

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

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title William W. and Teresa C. Avant, Owners & AHC Reviewer

organization N/A date 2/7/95

street & number Route 3 Box 22 telephone (334) 222-3283

city or town Andalusia state Al zip code 36420

Property Name Avant House

County and State Covington Alabama

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Additional Documentation
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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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name William W. and Teresa Avant, Owners

street & number Route 3 Box 22 telephone (334) 222-3283

city or town Andalusia state Al zip code 36420

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

JAN 16 1996

Section 7 Page 6

Avant House
Covington County, Alabama

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Avant House is located just east of Andalusia on Sanford Road. The two-story, wood frame, five-bay wide Classical Revival House was constructed circa 1914-1920, and is sited on 3.5 acres of flat, wooded terrain. It has a brick foundation and weatherboard-covered exterior walls. The side gabled roof features a projecting 2-story gabled bay. There are two gabled 1-story frame wings that extend from the rear of the house and form the side walls of an enclosed porch covering the back entrance to the house. There is also a small hipped 2-story projecting bay at the center of the rear exterior. Three fireplace chimneys are present in the structure; two serve rooms in the main house and one is in the west side gabled wing.

A 3-bay wide, 2-story pedimented portico with 4 fluted Ionic colossal columns on the front facade of the structure is the most visually striking element of the exterior. The center of the pediment is graced by a fanlight, while flanking pilasters define the porch width on the facade of the structure. The main block of the house features an entablature with a dentilled cornice. The single-door entrance is topped by a 3-paned transom and sidelights exhibiting complicated diamond-shaped panes. On the second floor a two-door entrance topped by a 5-paned transom opens onto a small, centrally located balustraded balcony. The balcony is supported by two brackets featuring a decorative scrollwork design. At the time of construction 1-story Doric columned porches topped by balustrades were built on the west and east sides of the house, with the west side porch extending further to accommodate carriages or automobiles. The east side porch was screened in during the 1940s and later enclosed by glass and converted into a sunroom. The house exhibits a variety of window styles, with the majority being 6 over 6 double-hung sash type.

The Avant house has a central hall plan on both floors. The interior of the first floor of the house is comprised of a living room, dining room, breakfast room, library, kitchen, pantry, bathroom, powder room, and a bedroom. There is a large central hallway that runs to the back porch. In the middle of this hallway on the east side is a staircase comprised of simple four-sided balusters and a handrail that terminates in an outward curving scroll pattern. Thirteen stairs lead to a landing, followed by an additional seven steps to the second floor hall. There are two fluted columns with Corinthian capitals halfway down the hallway on the first floor. Dentils accentuate the ceiling molding in three of the rooms on this level. The flooring and moldings throughout the house are all of heart pine, and the interior walls and ceilings are wood lath coated by sand plaster. The second floor of the house contains three bedrooms, a sleeping porch, and one bathroom. There are several varieties of fireplace mantels in the home. Imported marble facing is a feature of one of the fireboxes.

An extensive period of dilapidation affected the Avant house during the 1970s. In 1984 the present owners of the house began an extensive program of restoration in which a heating system was installed, new copper plumbing put in, and most of the wiring replaced. The house was also reroofed, repainted, and insulated.

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Section 7 Page 7

Avant House
Covington County, Alabama

At the time of original construction there were two outbuildings built to the rear of the home. One was a single-story garage which was converted in the 1930s to a 2-story servants' quarters and garage, while the other was used as a smokehouse and tool shed. The servants' quarters, in an advanced state of disrepair, was torn down in 1988, while the other dependency burned about 1935. The garage presently used by the owners was built in 1988.

When the home was constructed, it was wired for electricity and also had telephone service. To accomplish this, it was necessary to have utility poles placed along the three-mile stretch from town to the house. For many years the home had the only telephone service in the area.

From the 1920s until the 1940s the Avant house was the seat of a 525-acre farm, with five tenant houses located on the property. After this period the land was allowed to return to its natural state, and all the property except that which surrounded the house was sold. During the period of neglect in the 1970s the shrubs and bushes on the property became overgrown after help was no longer available to maintain the grounds. The Avants now keep a minimum of shrubbery around the immediate vicinity of the house to reduce the threat of excessive moisture damaging the structure.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPONENT

Although no formal archaeological survey has been made of this property, the potential for subsurface remains may be high. Buried portions may contain significant information that may be useful in interpreting the entire property.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Avant House
Covington County, Alabama

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Avant house, constructed ca. 1914-1920, represents perhaps the finest surviving example of Classical Revival architecture in Covington County, Alabama. It retains a high degree of architectural integrity as well as historic integrity in terms of workmanship, materials, design, setting, and association. Its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places would be under Criterion C, with the area of significance being Architecture.

The architect responsible for the plans is unknown at this time; however, preliminary research and certain stylistic similarities suggest that it was the work of Montgomery architect Frank Lockwood (1866-1936), considered the foremost architect of the period in central and southern Alabama. Lockwood, a native of New Jersey, came to the South in the 1880s. Known primarily for his interpretations of Tudoresque and Classical Revival style structures, he practiced in Alabama from about 1898 until 1935. He also worked in Georgia and the Florida panhandle. The Avant house is similar to Lockwood's Ingalls house located in Montgomery's Old Cloverdale neighborhood.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

A prominent landmark in the community, the house sits on property that was purchased on March 30, 1914, by Robert Greenway Crittenden for the use of his daughter, Olive Elizabeth (Crittenden) Avant, and son-in-law, Laurin Avant, who had been married the previous year. Construction on the home began soon after the purchase of the land, but the home was not completed until 1920. The present owner, William Avant, was born there in 1922. He also had two brothers and two sisters. The house was built entirely out of heart pine, with the timber for the building having been cut and milled right on the property. The Andalusia Manufacturing Company, owned and operated by E. R. Merrill, constructed the house, with the main elements having been assembled on site.

The home was a focal point for many social activities during the 1930s. The five Avant children often had friends over to socialize after football games or to dance, and many of Andalusia's older residents recall these occasions. In 1939 the home was the scene of a "Gone with the Wind" party in which celebrants dressed in costume in honor of the movie.

During the 1940s the Avant's sons joined the military service and the two daughters married, and the home became the exclusive residence of Mr. and Mrs. Avant until her death in 1965, after which time a widowed daughter came to live with Mr. Avant. After Mr. Avant's death in 1973 the daughter stayed on alone in the residence, which began to fall into a state of disrepair. Mr. William Avant and his wife came into possession of the home in 1984, at which time they began a process of restoration.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Avant, William, interview by Teresa Avant, July 10, 1995.

Gamble, Robert, interview by Susan Enzweiler, September 7, 1995.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 9

Avant House
Covington County, Alabama

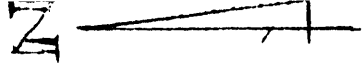
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Commencing where the west line of NW 1/4 of NW 1/4, Section 15, T 4 N, R 16 E intersects the south right of way line of Andalusia By-pass and run N 89 degrees 58' E along the south right of way line of By-pass distance of 277.8 feet to the point of beginning; thence continue N 89 degrees 58' E along the south line of By-pass for a distance of 665.3 feet; thence run S 00 degrees 02' E for a distance of 106 feet to the north right of way line of Sanford Road; thence run in a southwesterly direction along the north right of way line of Sanford Road for a distance of 574.4 feet, thence run N 23 degrees 20' W for a distance of 439.1 feet to the point of beginning. Said parcel of land lying in and being a part of the NW 1/4 of Section 15, T 4 N, R 16 E and containing 3.5 acres more or less.

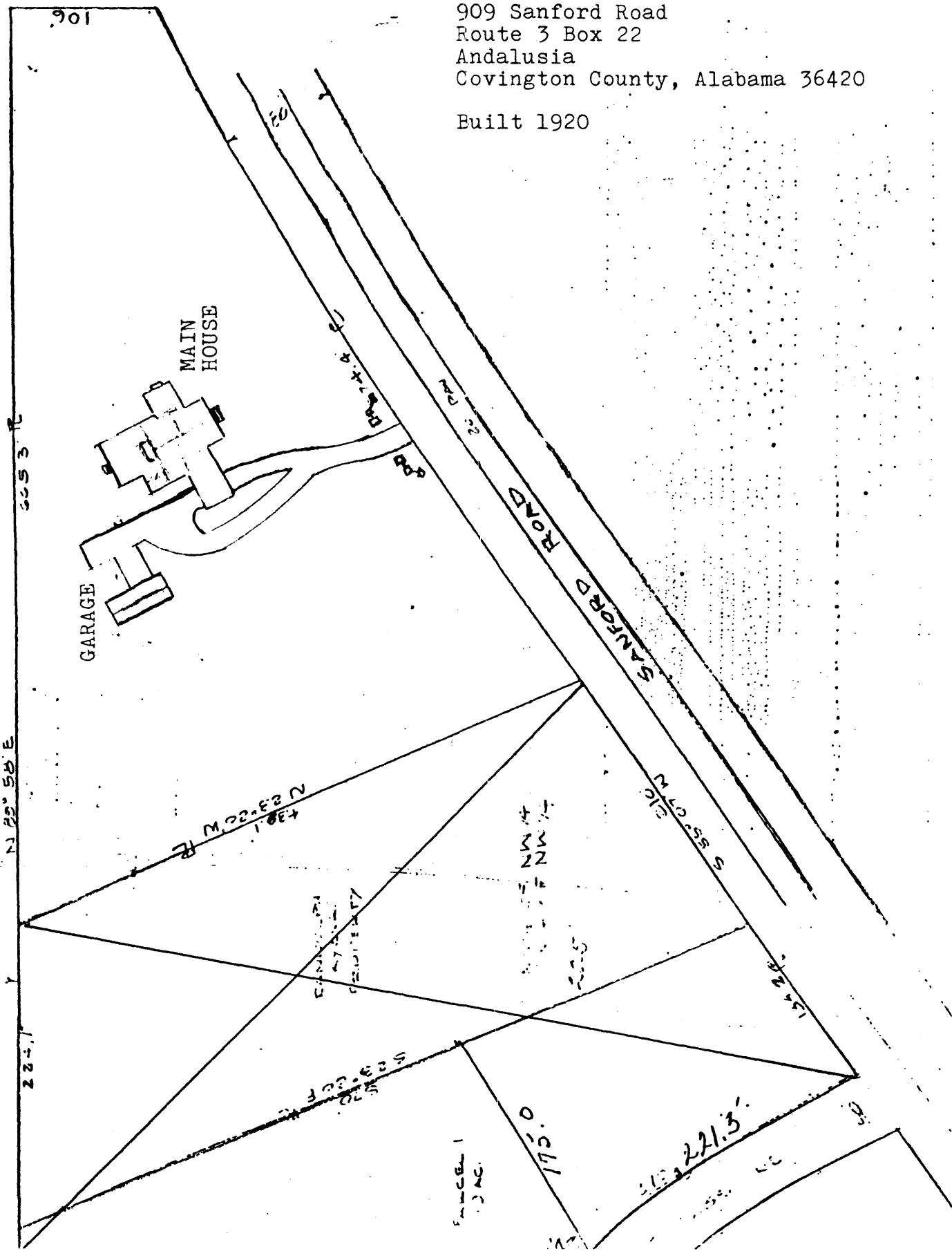
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These are the boundaries currently associated with the property.

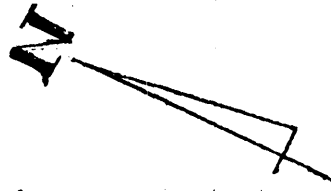


AVANT HOUSE
 909 Sanford Road
 Route 3 Box 22
 Andalusia
 Covington County, Alabama 36420
 Built 1920

ANDALUSIA BY PASS

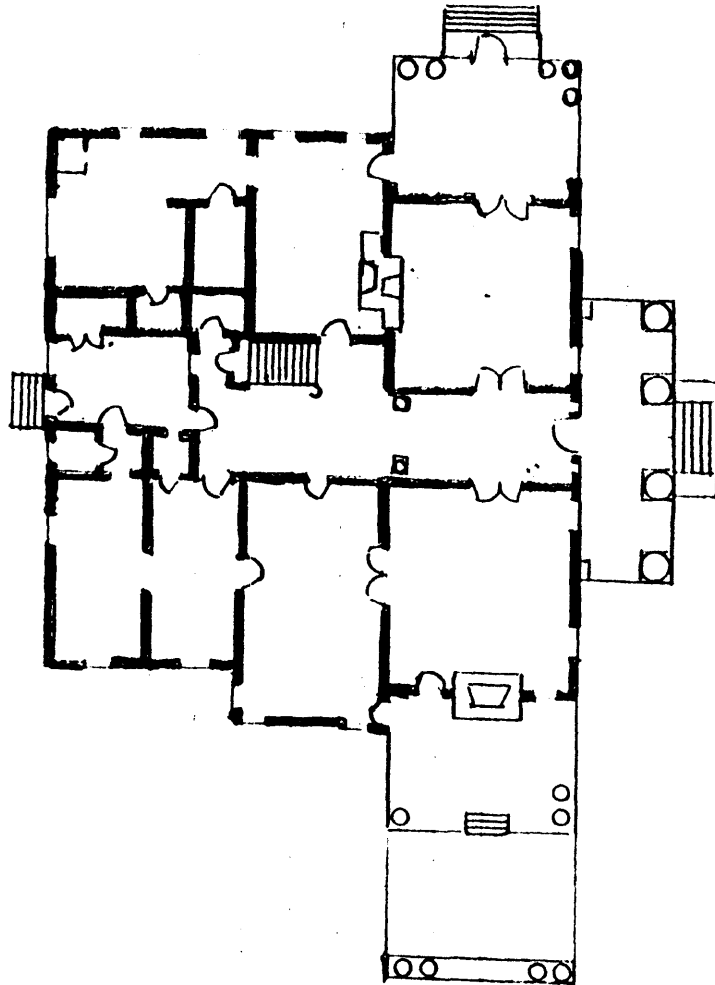


AVANT HOUSE
909 Sanford Road
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Covington County, Alabama 36420



Built 1920

MAIN FLOOR PLAN



AVANT HOUSE
909 Sanford Road
Route 3 Box 22
Andalusia
Covington County, Alabama 36420



Built 1920

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

