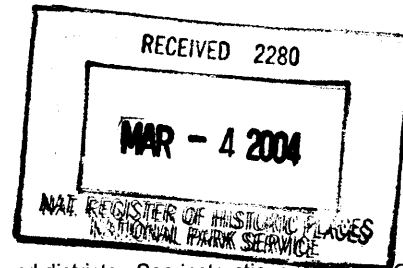


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



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 16A). Complete each item 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 Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House

other names/site number Halpern, Max, House; SY 3369

2. Location

street & number 810 McLemore Avenue

NA  not for publication

city or town Memphis

NA  vicinity

state TN

code 047

County Shelby

code 157

zip code 38106

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. Hays  
Signature of certifying official/Title

3/2/04  
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:)

Jo  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

Daniel J. Hill

4/15/04

**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	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

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

**6. Function or Use**

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

Domestic/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Domestic/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

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

OTHER: American Four-square  
Colonial Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation CONCRETE  
walls CONCRETE  
roof ASPHALT: shingle  
other STONE  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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 who's 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 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE:BLACK  
HEALTH/MEDICINE

**Period of Significance**

1926-1953

**Significant Dates**

NA

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M.

**Cultural Affiliation**

NA

**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):** 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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Name of Property

Shelby County Tennessee  
County and State Shelby, Tennessee

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## 10. Geographical Data

---

**Acreege of Property** .33 acres (Southwest Memphis 404 SE)

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 770193 3889936  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

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

Ver

### Boundary Justification

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

---

## 11. Form Prepared By

---

Name/title Judith Johnson, Preservation Consultant  
Organization Judith Johnson & Associates date Oct. 12, 2003  
Street & number 176 Windover Cove #1 telephone 901/324-4618  
City or town Memphis state TN zip code 38111

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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

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## Property Owner

---

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

Name Mrs. Alma R. Booth  
Street & number 810 McLemore Avenue telephone 901 948-9846  
City or town Memphis State TN zip code 38106

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**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

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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## Narrative Description

Built in 1914, the Dr. Christopher M. Roulhac House is a two-story, frame, vernacular American Four-square and Colonial Revival style house with a rectangular plan. The Roulhac house has a central hall plan with two parlors, a pantry, kitchen, dining room and bath on the first story. The second story has four bedrooms and a bath. It is located at 810 McLemore Avenue in Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee, on a double lot in the Person Subdivision. This subdivision was established in 1879 as a residential subdivision with fifty-foot lots. The house fronts south onto McLemore Avenue and is set behind a modest cultivated lawn that slopes sharply towards the sidewalk. There are no remaining outbuildings on the property. The neighborhood is composed mainly of one-story bungalows from the 1910s and 20s with varying set backs. The property is in good condition and retains integrity.

The Roulhac House has a concrete foundation, and a hip roof with asphalt shingles. There is a central dormer with paired wood louvered vents housing an interior stucco chimney at its rear. A second interior stucco chimney at the rear of the house and all exterior walls are of a rusticated concrete block veneer. The eaves are plain and have aluminum gutters added at an unknown time.

There is an original one-story, full-width, raised front porch with a four-foot overhang decorated with sawn scroll brackets, a low-pitch hip roof, and concrete Composite columns resting on recessed panel bases. The original porch balustrade is closed on the west, has an opening for the main stairs and an opening on the east side with concrete stairs to access the porte-cochere which was added to the east elevation in 1927. The porte-cochere has a flat roof with hip skirt, exposed rafter ends and is supported by brick piers.

Wide concrete stairs leading to the front porch narrow as they approach the porch and are enclosed by a concrete retaining wall topped with a finial at the bottom of only one of the retaining walls. Original painted cast concrete flower boxes line the porch balustrade and a metal awning from the 1940s shields the west side of the porch from the afternoon sun. A concrete driveway leads to the porte-cochere.

The façade (south elevation) has a single light central entry door with a full, leaded glass transom and full leaded glass sidelights flanked by tri-part, one-over-one double-hung windows to the east and paired one-over-one double-hung windows to the west. The second floor of the façade has c. 1965 paired eighteen-light, double hung windows and an original central double glass door with full transom. All the exterior windows have painted, cast concrete sills.

On the first floor of the east elevation is a single, one-over-one double-hung window. Immediately north of that is a one-story, hip roof rectangular projection with a pair of double, one-over-one double-hung leaded glass windows. The second story has three, irregularly spaced, one-over-one double-hung windows and a single light rectangular casement window in the bathroom at the rear.

The north elevation has an original, two-story back porch with a shed roof and exposed rafters. The first floor retains the original narrow bead board enclosure and has an original divided, screened  $\frac{3}{4}$  length sleeping porch on the second floor. The western end of the first floor porch was enclosed to make a large pantry in the 1920s.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

The first story of the west elevation has three irregularly spaced, one-over-one double-hung windows separated by two fixed, single light rectangular windows. The window at the front provides illumination for the front room stairs and the one at the rear provides natural light for the pantry. The second story has two irregularly spaced one-over-one double-hung windows.

The interior of the house reflects the Craftsman style with built-in cabinetry, hard wood floors throughout, and wood baseboards and wall trim. All of the interior doors are original hardwood inset with five panels. All of the interior walls are original plaster except the downstairs bathroom installed in 1966. The front door opens directly into the west parlor which has a built-in glass door cabinet stretching from the hall door to the front stairwell on the west side of the room. The wood stairs on the west wall have a block newel post and turned spindles and turn to the west at a landing about half way up. The west parlor also contains a wood mantel fireplace with a bracketed shelf and inset rectangular mirror flanked by a pair of decorative full-length wood columns surrounding a ceramic tile framed, original gas fireplace and tile hearth.

The east parlor is accessed by a door from the west parlor. It has a pair of pocket doors on the north wall which opens into the dining room. A 1940s glass chandelier hangs from the center of ceiling. The dining room has a built-in china cabinet lining the north back wall. The dining room opens onto the rear center hall. The kitchen is on the northwest corner of the house and has 1940s metal cabinets and sink, and an original wood floor covered with 1940s linoleum. Part of the rear porch in the far northwest corner was converted into a pantry in the 1920s. Immediately south of the kitchen, a downstairs bath was added in 1966 on the first floor which replaced a rear set of stairs that originally shared the front stairs landing. On the ground level, a door opening off the rear of the central hall accesses the remainder of the original bead board enclosed back porch.

The second floor has a central corridor which allows access to the four bedrooms and an original bathroom. The bathroom retains the original wood medicine cabinet, tile floors and porcelain toilet, bathtub and sink. The double glass doors located on the façade that aligned with the back door and allowed for circulation to ventilate the bedrooms was converted into a hall closet in the 1940s after an attic fan was added. One original light fixture remains in one bedroom, and the original hardwood trim remains in all rooms on the second floor. At the north end of the corridor is the screened back porch, originally used for sleeping during the hot summer months but is no longer used.

McLemore Avenue slopes steeply uphill 100 feet east of this property. All of the houses have grass yards, set backs similar to the subject house and most of the hardwood trees are in side or rear yards. Although this subdivision was platted in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, some of the original housing stock remains, however, none of the 19<sup>th</sup> century houses retain integrity. Most of the early twentieth century homes are one-story bungalows which are in fair to good condition. The Roulhac House retains integrity while exhibiting use over time.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

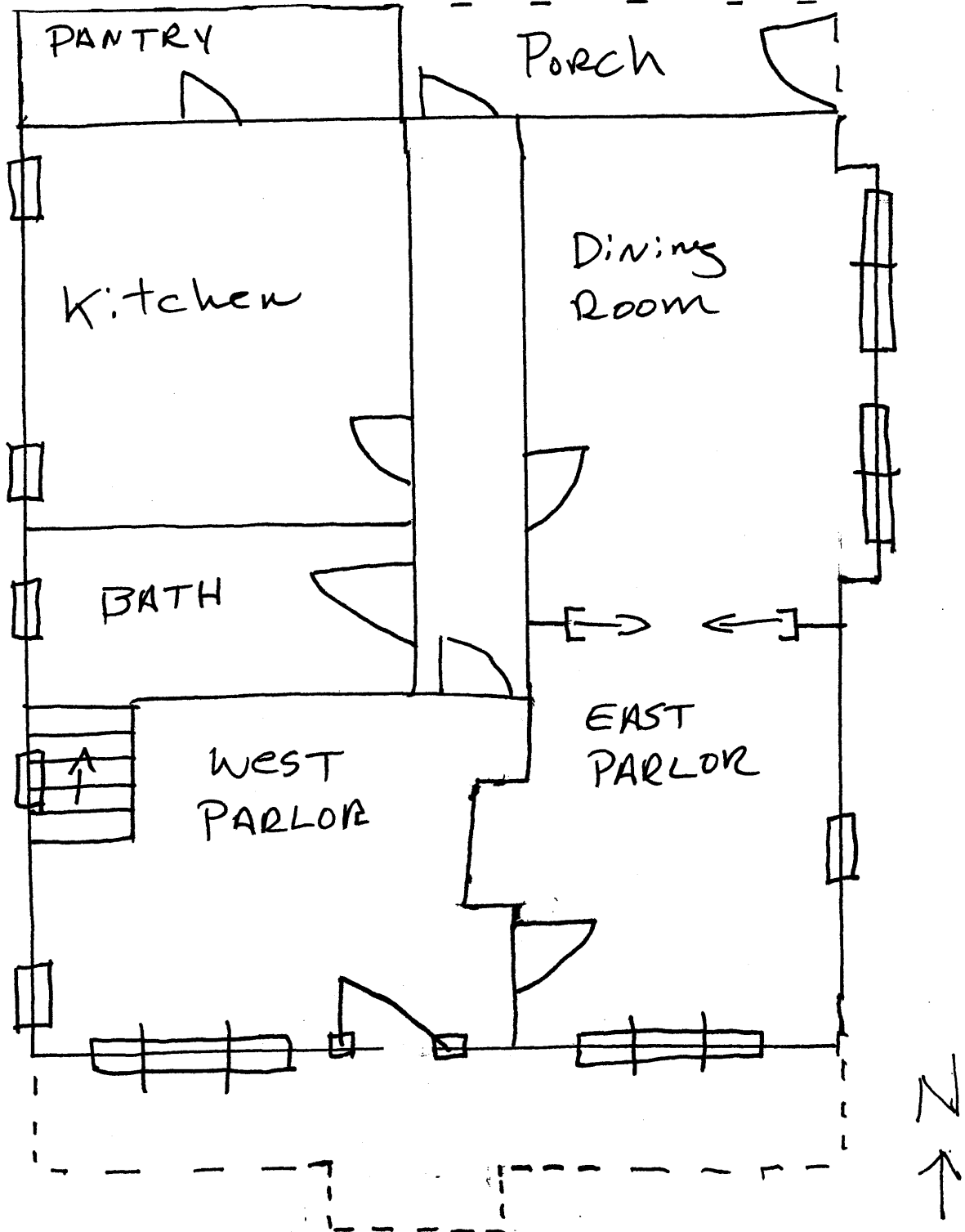
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

First Floor Plan

Not to Scale



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

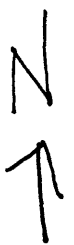
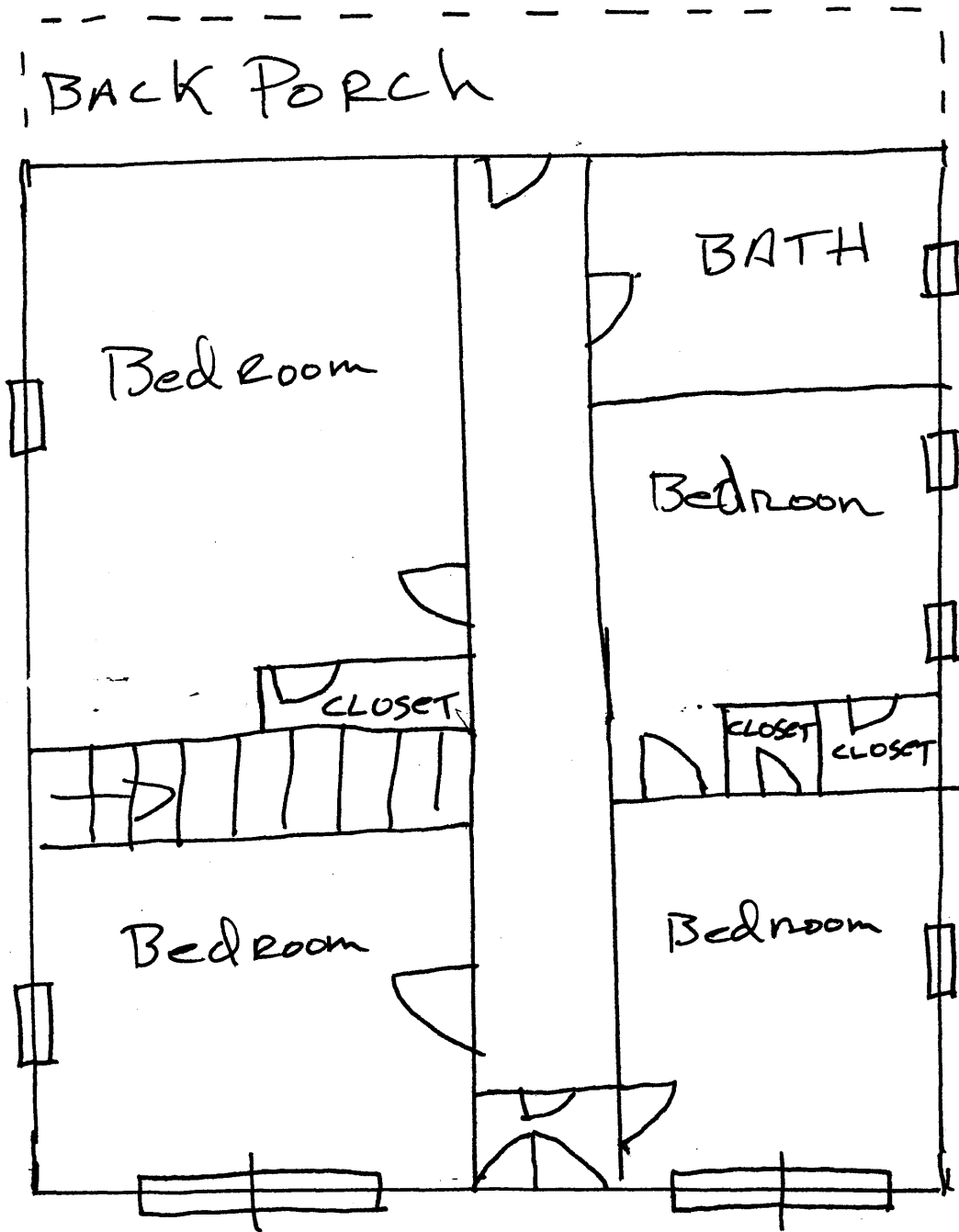
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

Second Floor Plan

Not to Scale





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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## Statement of Significance

The Dr. Christopher M. Roulhac House is being nominated to the National Register under criterion B because of its association with Dr. Rouhlac, an important African-American physician and community leader in Memphis in the early to mid-twentieth century. Dr. Rouhlac was important in the social history of the African-American community of Memphis – both as a physician working under racial separation to provide health care for other African Americans and as a community activist. His accomplishments as a community leader include working to advance civil rights, providing medical care for young African American athletes, helping provide recreational opportunities despite the limitations of segregation and providing guidance for educational and religious organizations by serving as a trustee for several of these groups. The home at 810 McLemore, which direct family members have occupied for the last seventy-six years, is the surviving property best associated locally with him. The building retains integrity and it meets the registration requirements of the Memphis residential MPS.

Between Reconstruction and 1920, the Negro population in Memphis passed from freedman status to a peculiar second-class citizenship. During this time, the Negro population of Memphis increased by 21,000 between 1890 and 1900, almost a 60 per cent increase. By 1900 almost half of Memphis' population was Negro, which was the greatest percentage of Negro population of the 38 cities with more than 100,000 population.<sup>1</sup> Institutionalized segregation began with the 1881 Jim Crow railroad legislation, was officially sanctioned when the 1883 Supreme Court outlawed the 1875 Civil Right's Act and was codified by the 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* court case which allowed for "separate but equal" accommodations for races. Negro citizens were further disenfranchised by voter registration, the secret ballot and the poll tax.

By 1907, public lynching of Negro men and race riots as well as the collapse of a Negro-owned transportation in Nashville caused many Negro Tennesseans to feel the Jim Crow caste system was steadily tightening and many upper-class Negroes were already heading north resulting in a drop in Negro citizens to 40 per cent of the city's population despite the efforts of Julia Hooks, a prominent Negro musician and teacher and early civil rights activist and newspaper editor, Ida B. Wells.<sup>2</sup> It was into this atmosphere that the newly graduated Dr. Christopher Maxwell Roulhac and his young bride, Isabelle, moved to Memphis for unknown reasons in 1913.

The Florida born Christopher Roulhac's family name traces back to 15<sup>th</sup> century Limoges, France. A white European family named Roulhac began immigrating to the America in 1777. Francis Leonard Gregiore de Roulhacs purchased plantations in Tennessee and Florida and their African slaves adopted the surname. After Freedom, Christopher Roulhac's parents lived in Chipley, Florida where a public school bears the family name. Christopher was born in Chipley in 1880 and later attended Florida A & M University, Atlanta University and received his M.D. from Howard University Medical School in Washington, D.C in 1910. It was there that he met his future wife, Isabelle Wood, the daughter of Thomas and Anna Roden Wood. The socially prominent Anna Wood was an employee of the Chinese Embassy. Born in 1884, Isabelle Wood

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<sup>1</sup> Robert A. Sigafos, *Cotton Row to Beale Street* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979) p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Gloria Melton, "Blacks in Memphis, Tennessee, 1920-1955." (Ph. D. diss., Washington State University, 1982) p.1.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 6Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

was educated at Minor Normal School and was a member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church. She later taught at two Negro Memphis city schools, Kortrech and Florida Street Elementary.<sup>3</sup>

When the Roulhacs first arrived in Memphis in 1913, they lived in South Memphis at 1369 Adelaide. The young couple was expecting their first born child and prepared to move back to Florida to be close to his family. Dr. A. Sidney J. Burchett (1862-1916), one of Memphis' pioneer Negro physicians, befriended the Roulhacs and persuaded them to remain in Memphis. A member of Emmanuel Episcopal Church, the socially prominent Dr. Burchett also acted as a godfather to his namesake, the Roulhac's daughter, Alma Burchett Roulhac, born in 1914.<sup>4</sup> In that same year, Dr. Roulhac began his private practice at 540 ½ Rayburn (South Third) Street.

Due to Dr. Burchett's efforts, the number of Negro Memphis physicians continued to grow. In 1900, 11 per cent of the physicians in Memphis were Negro. That number increased to 14 percent in 1910 and rose to 20 percent in 1920, which was at a time when the proportion of Negro males in the general male labor force in Memphis dropped from 48 per cent in 1900 to 39 per cent in 1920.

Since Negro doctors were excluded from practice in white hospitals and from joining medical associations, a small number of infirmaries and hospitals were opened in the early 1900s to serve both private and charity patients in the Negro community, including the Dr. J. C. Hairston's medical facility in his home on Orleans Street; the Jane Terrell Baptist Hospital (later Terrell Memorial) at 698 Williams; the Collins Chapel Hospital situated at 418 Ashland organized by the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, and Mercy Hospital at 729 Mississippi Boulevard. Only the Terrell Memorial Hospital is still extant.

By 1916, Dr. Roulhac had relocated his offices to 321 Beale Street (Beale Street Historic District, NHL 5/23/1966, NR 10/15/1966), one building west of the Daisy Theatre #2 (Old Daisy) where he was listed as physician and surgeon which he shared with four other doctors and dentists. This building is no longer extant. His office hours were 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6-8 p.m., allowing him time to serve as a surgeon at Mercy Hospital (now the site of Booker T. Washington High School) until it closed in 1933 and to teach at the University of West Tennessee until it closed in 1924. The University of West Tennessee began in Jackson, TN as a Negro school founded in the 1890s by Dr. Miles V. Lynk. It taught in departments of medicine, law, dentistry, pharmacy and nursing. To be accessible to more students, the school moved to Memphis in 1907 and was located at 1190 Phillips Street (a block south from 810 McLemore, not extant).<sup>5</sup>

This was the golden age of Beale Street. The socially prominent Hooks Brothers had their photography studio there. The Solvent Savings Bank established by the late Robert R. Church, Senior was located at 390 Beale Street and upstairs was The Pace and Handy Music Company where Mr. Handy penned the *Beale Street Blues*. Robert Church, Junior had his offices across the street at 391 Beale in the family owned Church Auditorium. A major property owner on Beale Street, Robert R. Church, Senior was

<sup>3</sup> Alma Booth, interviewed by author, written notes, Memphis, TN, 5 August, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Roberta Church and Ronald Walter, *Nineteenth Century Memphis Families of Color 1850-1900*. Edited by Charles W. Crawford, (Memphis: Murdock Printing Company, 1987) p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Perre Magness, "Historic Commission Honors Doctor," (*Memphis Commercial Appeal*, 6 June, 1996, Neighbors section), p.3.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 7Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

Memphis' first Negro millionaire. (In addition to establishing the Solvent Savings Bank, he had opened the Church Auditorium as a private park when Negroes were barred from using city parks under segregation).

Robert R. Church, Senior's granddaughter, Roberta Church, and Dr. Roulhac's daughter, Alma, became lifelong friends when they attended Emmanuel Episcopal Church and the private LeMoyné Institute together. Alma also attended Howard University, her father's alma mater. Upon returning to Memphis, Alma followed in her mother's footsteps and became a teacher at Porter School where her students included Maxine Smith, former Secretary of the NAACP. Briefly retiring to start her family, Alma later taught at Hamilton High School and then served as principal at the old Keel School for Crippled Children. She then received a scholarship to Columbia University where she received an MA degree in Special Education in 1953.<sup>6</sup>

In 1917, the Roulhac family moved to 359 Cambridge Street where Christopher, Jr. was born. In 1924, Dr. Roulhac relocated his offices to 332 Beale Street above the old Grand Theatre. It was 1926 when Roulhac purchased the middle-class residence at 810 McLemore for his family home and resided in it for the remainder of his life. That in itself was an extraordinary feat at time when only 11.3 percent of Negro Memphis families owned or were buying their homes.<sup>7</sup>

The vernacular structure was built in 1914 for Max Halperin, a white Memphis grocer and his three brothers. A search of the Memphis City Directories reveals that the McLemore Avenue/Mississippi Boulevard area had been predominately white in the early years of the twentieth century. However, by the late 1920s, the area was integrated as a result of an influx of Negro professionals into the neighborhood despite the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan which was chartered locally in 1921. To their credit, the white *Memphis Commercial Appeal* attacked and rebuked the Klan over the next three years with editorials and political cartoons and received the Pulitzer prize in 1923 for their efforts.<sup>8</sup>

These McLemore Avenue/Mississippi Boulevard area Negro residents included Dr. Joseph E. Walker, who built a large home at the corner of Mississippi Boulevard and Edith Avenue in 1923. Originally a medical doctor educated at Alcorn University (Alcorn State, Mississippi) and Meharry Medical College (Nashville), racism forced Dr. Walker to give up his medical practice in Indianola, MS. He relocated to Memphis and was a charter member of the board and later vice-president of the Mississippi Life Insurance Company. He resigned and organized the Universal Life Insurance Company in 1923. He was president and chairman of the board until his death in 1952. In 1933, Dr. Roulhac moved into the second floor of the Universal Life Insurance Company's new \$100,000 home office at 234 Hernando Street to become their medical examiner. Also sharing the second floor were *The Memphis World*, the Memphis Negro newspaper, and William Foote, a Negro attorney.

<sup>6</sup> Alma Booth, interviewed by author, written notes, Memphis, TN, 5 August, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Gloria Melton, "Blacks in Memphis, Tennessee, 1920-1955." (Ph. D. diss., Washington State University, 1982) p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 97.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

The Depression hit the Negro Memphis community very hard but Dr. Roulhac continued to treat patients, even when they could not pay him. According to his daughter, her father would take her and her brother with him on his rounds, first in a horse and carriage, then later he drove an old Studebaker automobile that a patient had given him. Dr. Roulhac would attempt to collect money that was owed him by sending Christopher, Jr. to the door to collect and promising him he could keep the money if he could get it.

Christopher, Jr. was a very athletic young man and he later coached Alice Coachman, the first Negro American woman to earn an Olympic Gold Medal for track. To make sure that Christopher, Jr. did not do himself an injury, Dr. Roulhac served as the physician and sports doctor for the school athletic programs at St. Anthony's Colored School (now St. Augustine's) from 1930-31 while Christopher, Junior attended that school, from 1932-35 at Booker T. Washington High School, the only Memphis city high school for Negroes when Christopher joined the football team, and from 1936-39 at LeMoyne College when he played college football as well.<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Roulhac's other community activities included serving as a trustee at St. Anthony's (later St. Augustine's) Catholic Church as well. During his son's youth, Dr. Roulhac was also involved with the Negro Boy Scouts who held their jamborees and camped at the segregated Douglass Park out in the county at that time. He became an Archon in the Delta Boule Chapter of the Sigma Phi Pi fraternity in 1940 and remained a member for the rest of his life. He held the post of Grand Grammateus (Secretary) for many years. Sigma Phi Pi was founded in 1904 in Philadelphia, PA as a fraternal organization to provide a civic and social life for Negro men excluded from white societies. The Memphis chapter of this fraternity was founded in 1910. Because segregation would not allow the members access to public meeting places, they were forced to meet in their own homes.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Roulhac was also a trustee at Owen College, which was chartered in 1954 under the auspices of the Tennessee Baptist Missionary Society. It was initially housed at the former Siena College and St. Agnes Academy on Lauderdale Street. Unlike LeMoyne College, it offered dormitory facilities for its 33 initial students. The enrollment had grown to 383 students when Owen College merged with LeMoyne College in 1967 and became known as LeMoyne Owen College.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Harold Chandler, *The Legacy of Dr. Christopher M. Roulhac*. (Memphis: MSU Oral History Conference, 1987), video recording.

<sup>10</sup> Hobart S. Jarrett, *History of Sigma Phi Pi*. (Philadelphia: Quantum Leap Publisher, 1995) p.3-8.

<sup>11</sup> Sylvia Searcy, "Critical decisions affecting the 1968 merger between LeMoyne College and Owen College of Memphis", Ph D. diss. University of Illinois, 1981) p. 22-24.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number   8   Page   9  

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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In 1943, Dr. Roulhac was 63 years old when he moved from the Universal Life offices to an office at 367 Hernando, and then closer to home at 545 Mississippi Boulevard. Neither of these buildings are extant. He practiced medicine for over 50 years before his 1965 death at home from a lingering illness.

After his passing, Alma and her husband moved into the family home at 810 McLemore and cared for Isabelle Roulhac until her death in 1975. Alma Roulhac Booth inherited the home at 810 McLemore and continues to reside there today.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   10  

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 11

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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## Boundary Description and Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Roulhac House is shown as a solid line on the accompanying map entitled City of Memphis Tax Map, J-8.

The boundaries are determined by the original boundaries of the two parcels in the 1875 Person Subdivision.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

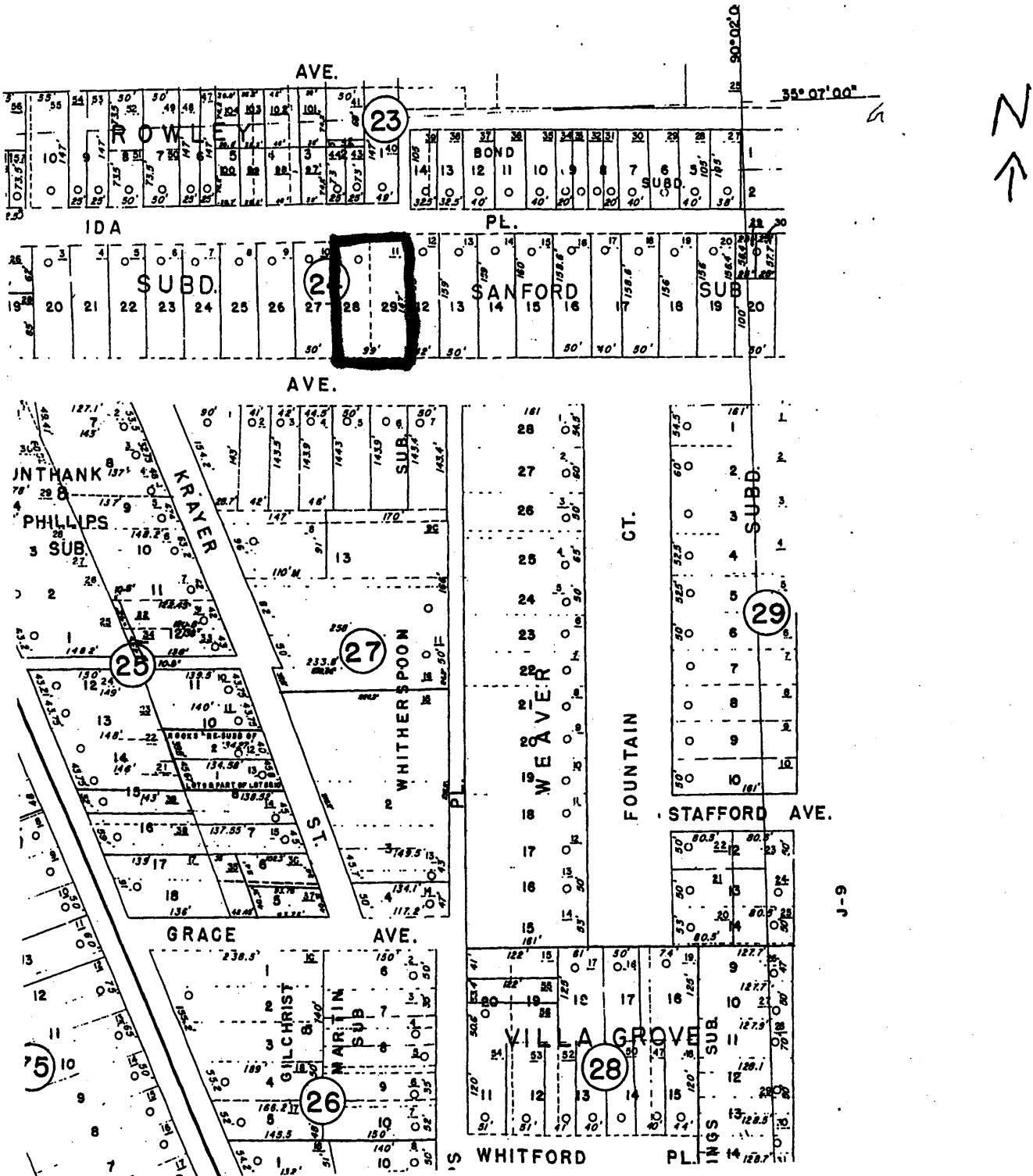
Section number 10 Page 12

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

City of Memphis Tax Map J-8

Parcel ID 01402400011

1" = 200'





**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 13

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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Photographs by: Judith Johnson  
Preservation Consultant  
176 Windover Cove #1  
Memphis, TN 38111

Date: September 22, 2003  
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission  
2941 Lebanon Road  
Nashville, TN 37214-0442

1 of 25  
Façade, looking north

2 of 25  
Porch-column detail

3 of 25  
Porch-detail

4 of 25  
Front door detail

5 of 25  
Façade and east elevation, looking northwest

6 of 25  
East elevation, looking west

7 of 25  
East elevation window detail, looking west

8 of 25  
NE elevation, looking south west

9 of 25  
West elevation, looking east

10 of 25  
Interior-entry room and stairs

11 of 25  
Interior-detail of leaded glass transom

12 of 25  
Interior-detail of fireplace

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 14

Roulhac, Dr. Christopher M., House  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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13 of 25

Interior-parlor

14 of 25

Interior- detail of parlor chandelier

15 of 25

Interior-detail of parlor pocket doors

16 of 25

Interior-downstairs hall-view to rear

17 of 25

Interior-downstairs bathroom

18 of 25

Interior-kitchen

19 of 25

Interior-Dining room

20 of 23

Interior-stairwell to second floor

21 of 23

Interior-2<sup>nd</sup> floor hall-view to rear

22 of 23

Interior-2<sup>nd</sup> floor front bedroom #1

23 of 23

Interior-2<sup>nd</sup> floor bedroom #2

24 of 25

Interior-2<sup>nd</sup> floor bedroom #3

25 of 25

Detail-typical five-panel door