

PH0003204

10th Congressional District  
Robert G. Stephens, Jr.

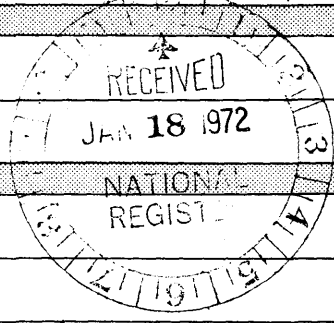
Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Georgia	
COUNTY:	Wilkes	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	APR 11 1972	



#### 1. NAME

COMMON:  
**Gilbert-Alexander House**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Fairfield Plantation**

#### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**116 Alexander Drive**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Washington**

STATE: **Georgia**      CODE: **13**      COUNTY: **Wilkes**      CODE: **317**

#### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments

#### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Alexander Wright**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**116 Alexander Drive**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE: **Georgia**      CODE: **13**

#### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Office of Clerk of Superior Court, Wilkes County**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Court Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE: **Georgia**      CODE: **13**

#### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Historic American Buildings Survey**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1934, 1936**       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Library of Congress**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Washington**      STATE: **D.C.**      CODE: **08**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	Georgia
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)			(Check One)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Altered			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Moved		
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

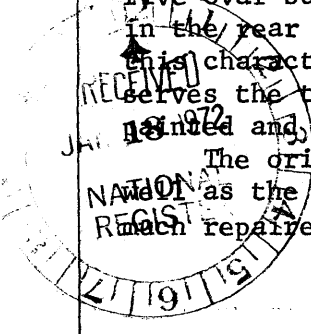
The Gilbert-Alexander House is a two-story brick, Federal style house standing in a fifty-two-acre tract in North Washington essentially as it appeared in the 1830's. The central portion of the structure was built in 1808 on a side hall plan, with a brick wing added c. 1823 to the west and a wooden addition attached to the east in the 1830's. The two-story porch on square, profile Doric posts probably replaced an earlier one-story gabled entrance on turned posts at the time of the second addition, but a similar feature remains at the back door. Original outbuildings still stand in the yard and a family graveyard is located beyond on the property. An unusual building material for this time in this area, the brick, as with most Georgia classical revival houses, is laid in common bond. Also common in Georgia was the staining of bricks and the pencilling of mortar joints which is still evident on the wall surfaces.

The two-story porch in front of the central section of the house tends to obscure the fact that the plan is not symmetrical, but is based on an earlier type of four-room plan in which two rooms open off to one side of the hall that extends the length of the house. The stairway is located in the back section of this hall. The entrance door opening into the hall from one side of the porch with its rectangular fan light and original louvered shutters is framed by moldings. The windows of both brick sections are set, in the eighteenth-century manner, in a full architrave flush with the brick wall. These are the twelve-light, large-pane sash, as Frederick D. Nichols points out in The Early Architecture of Georgia, that were common to the finer houses of the previous century. Palladian windows in both gable ends of the original portion and gables elaborated by a dentil cornice, an influence, according to Nichols, from Connecticut, are distinctive features.

The interior with most of its original detail preserved is a good example of a characteristic type of Federal style decoration. Only the addition of a partition wall to form a hall into the 1830 addition and the conversion of two of the tall paneled and inset windows of the stair hall into doorways leading into the 1823 portion, have changed the original plan. The entrance hall leads through an opening framed by reeded pilasters and an arch with key into the back stair hall. The front hall contains a molded plaster medallion in its ceiling. The ceilings of both front and rear parlors originally had plaster sunbursts with rosettes and egg-and-dart moldings. In the front room this feature is now gone, while the back ceiling needs some repair. The present owners plan to restore both to their original condition. As Nichols has indicated, the plaster rosettes in the cornices of these rooms are similar to the rather heavy detail in the nearby Ware-Sibley House in Augusta. The fine mantel in the front room with its five oval sunbursts in the frieze and reeded pilasters, and the black mantel in the rear with its ornaments picked out in gilt, are fine examples of this characteristic Federal style detail. In addition, the rear room preserves the typical original finish of the period with doors and wainscoting stained and grained to simulate rich veneer.

The original brick kitchen with much of the equipment still intact as well as the smoke house, c. 1820, and the carriage house, c. 1806, both well repaired, still stand in the backyard.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1808, c. 1823, c. 1830**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>History</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art          | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gilbert-Alexander House, according to Frederick D. Nichols, is one of the three earliest brick houses in the piedmont area of Georgia. In Wilkes County, one of the area's earliest settlements, the Gilberts were among the first settlers and their house is unique in that it has been owned and occupied by one family and its descendents since the original section was finished in 1808. The family graveyard on the property, in which the present owner's mother was recently buried, attests to this longevity. This home is a significant example of an early Federal style house with most of its original exterior and interior detail intact which contains some of the most distinguished family possessions in upcountry Georgia. Among these are two fine portraits, one of Adam L. Alexander and the other of his wife, Sarah Gilbert Alexander, by New Haven portrait painter Nathaniel Jocelyn.

Felix H. Gilbert, the builder of the oldest part of the house, was one of two sons of Felix Gilbert, who came to Wilkes County from Virginia about 1784, bought 400 acres in the area which later became the family plantation, and developed a prosperous merchant's business. At his death in 1801 his sons, Felix Haywood and William Grant, formed a partnership to carry on the family business. In 1802 Felix married Sarah Hillhouse, the daughter of newspaper editor David P. Hillhouse and Sarah Porter Hillhouse, who were early Washington residents from Connecticut. In 1805 Felix began building the house, finishing this in 1808 just after his wife died on May 1, 1808, at the age of twenty-five years. Not long afterward, in 1813, Felix also died, leaving the house to his brother William, and his only child, Sarah, to the guardianship of her grandmother Hillhouse. In 1819, William gave Sarah Gilbert the house and in 1823 she married Adam Leopold Alexander, a Georgian attending Yale, whom she had met while visiting her uncle in Connecticut.

The Alexanders, who had ten surviving children, enlarged the house, first about 1823 by a two-room brick addition to the west, and later in the 1830's by a wooden two-room and shed wing to the east. One of these children, Edward Porter Alexander, served the Confederate Army with distinction as a brigadier general and was later president of the Georgia Railroad. Another, Charles Atwood Alexander, farmed the plantation and lived in the house with his second wife, Rosa Calhoun. Charles died in 1907 and at his wife's death in 1912 much of the property was sold. The house, however, went to their daughter, Ida Calhoun Alexander, who in April, 1916, married Dr. James Goode Wright. Mrs. Wright lived there until her death in 1971. Her son Alexander Wright is planning to maintain the house in its original state, restoring such details as the plaster ceiling decorations of the parlors and gathering in some of the older furnishings from the descendents.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Marion Alexander Boggs, comp., The Alexander Letters 1787-1900 (1910).  
 Eliza Bowen, The Story of Wilkes County (Marietta, 1950).  
 Grace Gilliam Davidson, Early Records of Georgia, I, II (Macon, 1932).  
 Frederick Doveton Nichols, Early Architecture of Georgia (Chapel Hill, 1957).  
 Willis C. Lindsey, A History of Washington Wilkes County, Georgia and Homes and Sites of the Residents of Washington, bound typescripts, 1955, 1953-1958.  
 Elizabeth A. Lyon, personal inspection, July, September, 1971.  
 Georgia Writer's Project, W.P.A., The Story of Washington-Wilkes (Athens, 1941).  
 Robert Marion Willingham, Jr., We Have This Heritage (Washington, 1969).

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

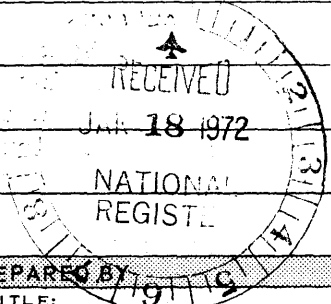
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	33° 44' 28"	82° 44' 14"				
NE	33° 44' 28"	82° 44' 0"				
SE	33° 44' 17"	82° 44' 0"				
SW	33° 44' 17"	82° 44' 14"				

NO UTM  
CX

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **20 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Dr. Elizabeth A. Lyon, consultant for Washington-Wilkes Historic Foundation  
 ORGANIZATION: Department of the History of Art DATE: October 15, 1971  
 STREET AND NUMBER:  
Emory University  
 CITY OR TOWN: Atlanta STATE: Georgia CODE: 13

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**      **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:  
 National  State  Local   
 Name: Mary Gregory Jewett  
 Title: State Liaison Officer  
 Date: January 12, 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.  
Robert M. Wiley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
 Date: APR 11 1972  
 ATTEST:  
William D. Muntz  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date: APR 11 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

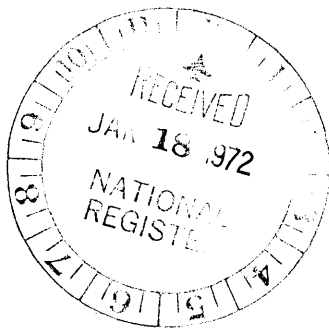
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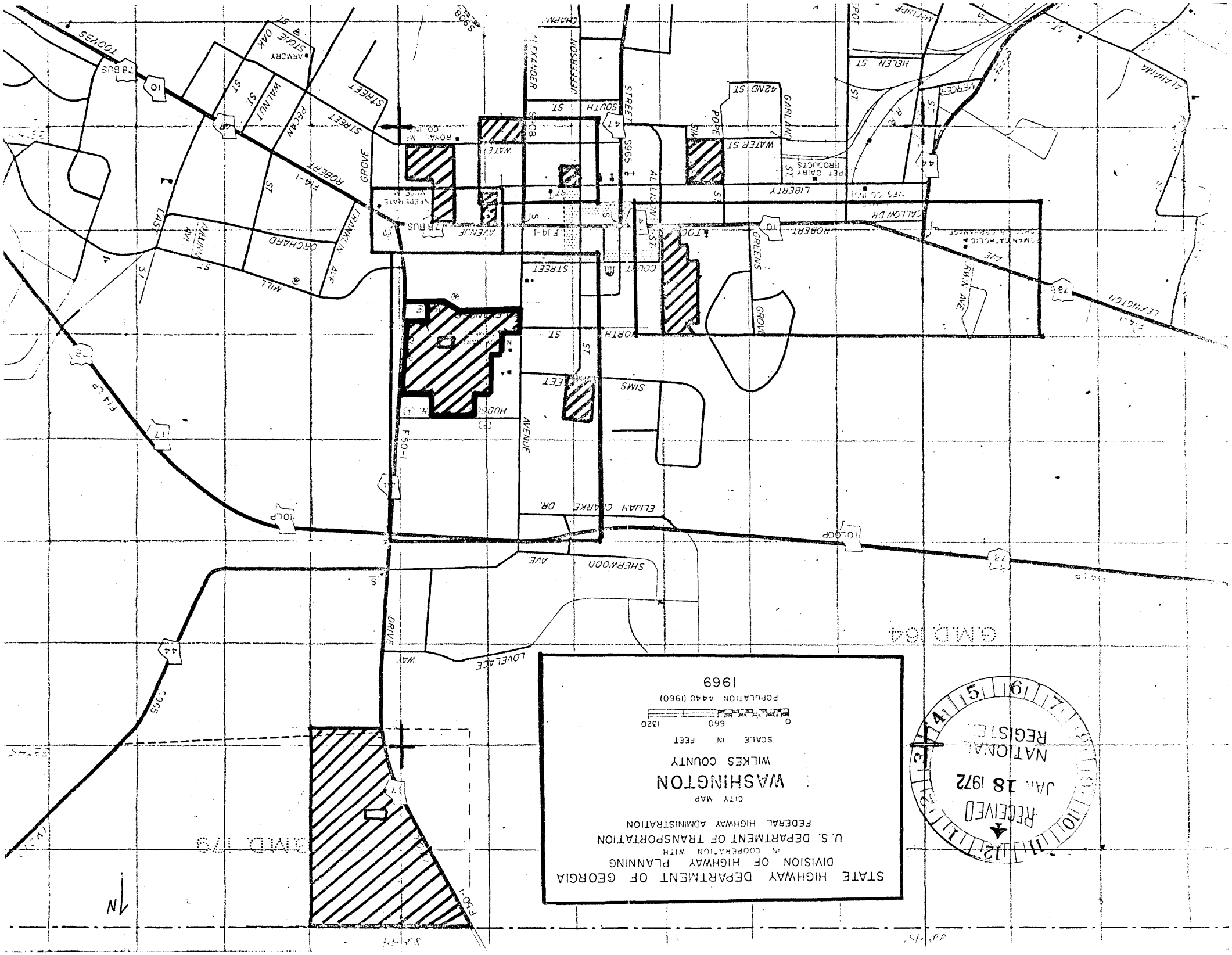
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(Number all entries) 8. Significance

Among the many pieces that have recently come back to the house are the two fine Jocelyn portraits that now hang in the front parlor and a petite child's windsor chair, dated 1736, from Connecticut. Also of interest is the four-poster bed in which the ten Alexander children were born and a Georgia-made cellerette stand.

This house in its setting of Linden trees, originally brought from Yale by Adam L. Alexander, its brick walk and mill stones and its interior graced by original furnishings, is a fine example of its period that has been lived in and cared for since its construction. In addition to its architectural quality, it has been the home of a distinguished Georgia family whose ancestors were among the earliest settlers of Wilkes County.



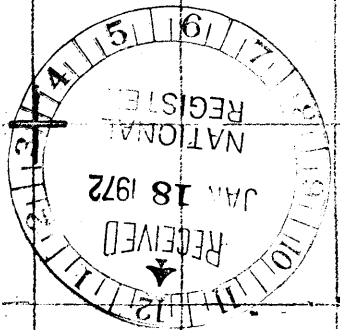


STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA  
 DIVISION OF HIGHWAY PLANNING  
 IN COOPERATION WITH  
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
 FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

CITY MAP  
 WASHINGTON  
 WILKES COUNTY

SCALE IN FEET  
 0 560 1120 1320

POPULATION 4440 (1960)  
 1969



GMD 64

GMD 79

