

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received **SEP 5 1985**

date entered

**OCT 3 1985**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historical name Clifton Plantation House

and/or common name same as above

**2. Location**

street & number Township 15 N, Range 1 E, Portions of Sections 22, 23, 27 NA not for publication

city, town Howard  vicinity of

state Mississippi code 28 county Holmes code 51

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Frank A. Jones

street & number Rt. # 2, Box 52

city, town Lexington NA vicinity of state Mississippi

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Holmes County Courthouse/Chancery Clerk's Office

street & number Court Square

city, town Lexington state Mississippi

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Survey of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1985  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Mississippi Department of Archives and History

city, town Jackson state Mississippi

## 7. Description

<u>    </u> excellent	<u>    </u> deteriorated	<u>    </u> unaltered	<u>  X  </u> original site	
<u>  X  </u> good	<u>    </u> ruins	<u>  X  </u> altered	<u>    </u> moved	date <u>  NA  </u>
<u>    </u> fair	<u>    </u> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Clifton Plantation House is a rare Holmes County example of a vernacular plantation home with Greek Revival architectural details. It is a regularly-massed, one-and-a-half story frame residence raised on brick piers and sheltered by a low-pitched, pyramidal roof. Notable architectural details include its three-sided, undercut gallery, its simple, gabled dormers, and its Greek Revival style entries, gallery fittings, and chimneys. (See photo #1.)

The five-bay facade features paired six over six double hung sash windows in plain frames to either side of the central entrance. Entry is through recessed, double-leafed glass and wood-panelled doors set in a pilastered frame with multi-light transom and multi-light sidelights over panelled aprons. On the facade plane, pilasters matching the gallery pillars support an entablature with plain frieze and dentil moldings under a boxed cornice. (See photo #2.) Shutters within door and window frames are indigenous. Siding under the galleries is flush tongue-in-groove. Eight boxed and battered wooden pillars support the gallery on the facade and four pillars each carry the gallery down the north and south elevations. Gabled dormers with six over six double hung sash windows in plain surrounds frame the entry at the second floor level. Dormers also pierce the roof on the north, south, and east elevations. Many of the window lights are glass original to the house. (See photo #3.)

The original lines of the house are complete within the roof lines, with the house increasing in width at the rear of the gallery by one room's depth. A full-length gallery originally shaded the rear (eastern) elevation. A single dormer is centered over the rear entry, which is similar in design to the one on the facade but has seven equal sized lights making up the transom.

Alterations to the home's exterior include: the installation of a composition roof in the 1950's; the additions, at the rear, of bathrooms and an attached kitchen (See photo #4.); and the conversion of cellar space formerly used for food storage into an office/living area. The original kitchen was located on axis with the home's central hall and was connected with the dining room by a covered walkway. When a newer kitchen was added to the house at the southeast corner, access was provided through an existing pantry. Bathrooms were added under the gallery roof on the north side of the rear elevation and enclosing the southeast corner of the building.

The home's interior layout remains remarkably intact. Flanking the 12' wide central hall on the north side are a formal parlor (See photo #5.) and a bedroom. An additional bedroom is located at the rear, beginning where the house juts out at the rear of the gallery. South of the central hall, a second parlor (now a den) and two additional bedrooms are located in similar configurations. (See photo #6.) The dining room is located between the back bedrooms, on a cross-axis with the central hall. Interior stairs lead from the south side of the dining room area to the second floor, which is divided into four diverse rooms. (See floor plan, continuation page 1.)

Interior details of note include plaster moldings in the main parlor and the central hall, one remaining plaster rosette in the central hall, white marble mantle pieces in both parlors, eared architraves on door and window frames, four-panelled cypress doors with brass fittings, wide-board heart pine floors, and brass carbide gas light fixtures (electrified) in the four bedrooms.

Interior alterations include: the installation of "built-in" wooden bookshelves flanking the mantle and grass-cloth paper on the walls in the southern parlor; the replacement of the hall floor with narrow-width hardwood flooring and the dining room floor with edge-grained flooring (in the 1920's); the installation of floor registers for the heating system; an oriental 1920's "make-over" of the dining room, and the kitchen and bath additions.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
..... prehistoric	..... archeology-prehistoric	..... community planning	..... landscape architecture	..... religion
..... 1400-1499	..... archeology-historic	..... conservation	..... law	..... science
..... 1500-1599	..... agriculture	..... economics	..... literature	..... sculpture
..... 1600-1699	X ..... architecture	..... education	..... military	..... social/
..... 1700-1799	..... art	..... engineering	..... music	..... humanitarian
X ..... 1800-1899	..... commerce	..... exploration/settlement	..... philosophy	..... theater
..... 1900-	..... communications	..... industry	..... politics/government	..... transportation
		..... invention		X ..... other (specify) ..... history

Specific dates 1850 Builder Architect unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of Clifton Plantation's architectural and historical place in the history of Holmes County cannot be over-emphasized. Only three other buildings in the county have been placed on the National Register: the birthplace of the Order of the Eastern Star, and two residences -- one in the Queen Anne and one in the Neo-Classical style. Clifton represents two styles not otherwise represented in the county's official list: a vernacular/Greek Revival architectural style unusual in the "hill-delta" area; and an agriculturally-oriented lifestyle that is a rare survivor of the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the modern age.

The date of construction on the house (c. 1850) is uncertain. The first documentation of its existence is its sale, as "Gameswood Plantation," in 1856, by an Anna Adams to Mr. and Mrs. B.J. Kizer. (Holmes County Deed Book "N" page 204.) (A Henry C. Adams, 33, unmarried, is listed as the owner of a large plantation in the Tchula Police Beat of Holmes County in the 1850 population and agricultural censuses. Perhaps Anna is his bride/widow.) W.F. Stansbury, the plantation's owner as of 1857, was a successful merchant in nearby Tchula and a planter. (Margaret G. Peaster, The History of Tchula, 1830-1954 /The Tchula Business and Professional Women's Club, 1954, p. 7). He apparently changed the plantation's name to Clifton. Descendants of the Stansburys still owned furniture from Clifton in the 1930's, according to the WPA Records for the County History. (Assignment #15, "Old Homes," subheading "Furniture," p. 10.) After the Civil War, Stansbury sold the plantation (Deed Book "P" page 131) and it passed through two other sets of owners till it was bought by a "carpet bagger," Myron Waters of Pennsylvania, in 1873. (Deed Book #2 page 304.) Water's sister, Marie T. Abbott, and her husband Liberty C. Abbott, and their descendants have occupied the house since.

Liberty C. Abbott was a federal employee sent to Mississippi during U.S. Grant's presidency to oversee the Reconstruction of the South. A former Cavalryman with the New York Fifth, he served, in turn, as: an Internal Revenue Service Agent at Holly Springs (1869-1872), Superintendent of Schools of Marshall County (1872 - ?), and (after studying law by mail), Chancery Judge until the Democrats won the 1876 election. (Letterhead stationery attests to his official status in these positions. Liberty C. Abbott Collection, Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi Collection, Mississippi State University. Folder "To Mrs. L.C. Abbott.") Letters to Clifton at this time reveal that his family was already at the plantation before he "retired" there in 1876 to farm until his death in 1894. (New York newspaper obit. Folder "To Mrs. L.C. Abbott," L.C. Abbott Collection.) Marie Abbott bought the plantation from her brother following L.C.'s death (Deed Book #19 page 409) and it has passed down to her daughter, her grandson, and her great-grandson, Frank Abbott Jones.

Clifton is still a working plantation, with most of its 1080 acres (of the original 1300) cultivated. Although its original slave quarters and most of its original outbuildings have deteriorated or have been replaced, its survival as a modern farm with an ante-bellum showplace home is extremely unusual. Local history oral history says it holds another significant place in architectural history: Clifton is reputed to be the "model" on which Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis's last home, was built in 1852 by James Brown, a planter from neighboring Madison County.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

L.C. Abbott Collection, Special Collections, Mitchell Memorial Library, Miss. St. Univ. Peaster, Margaret Grafton. The History of Tchula, 1830-1954. Tchula Business and Professional Womens ' Club, 1954.

Mississippi State, MS, Mitchell Memorial Library. "History of Holmes County," WPA, 1937.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Tchula, Miss.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 5	7 6 2 6 4 0	3 6 6 9 2 6 5	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** A square of land 200 x 200 feet (40,000 sq. ft.) centered on the center of the house, with its sides parallel to the sides of the house, located in the Southeast corner of the Northwest corner of Section 27, Township 15 North, Range 1 East, Holmes County, Mississippi

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joan Embree

organization N/A date 3/31/85

street & number Drawer KK telephone (601) 324-0410

city or town Mississippi State state MS 39762

## 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

*Kenneth H. P. Pool*

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date August 22, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*John H. Brown*  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 10-3-85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

Clifton Plantation House, Holmes County,  
Continuation sheet Mississippi

Item number 7

Page 1

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## CLIFTON PLANTATION

### HOUSE

