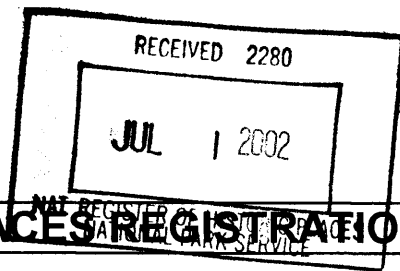


841



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Alfred and Jane Ables House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 230 East Fifth Avenue
city, town Buena Vista () vicinity of
county Marion **code** GA 197
state Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 31803

() not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing

Noncontributing

buildings	2	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	2	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

W. Ray Luce
Signature of certifying official

6-26-02
Date

W. Ray Luce
Historic Preservation Division Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

() entered in the National Register

Edson H. Beall 8-09-02

() determined eligible for the National Register

() determined not eligible for the National Register

() removed from the National Register

() other, explain:

() see continuation sheet

[Signature] _____
Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

OTHER/FOLK VICTORIAN
OTHER/NEW SOUTH COTTAGE

Materials:

foundation	Brick
walls	Wood
roof	Metal/Tin
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Alfred and Jane Ables House is located in a traditionally African-American neighborhood east of downtown Buena Vista, the county seat of Marion County. The house sits on a triangular-shaped lot in a stand of pecan trees. The house backs onto the railroad right-of-way.

Built in 1892, the Ables House is a one-story, New South cottage with Folk Victorian details (photographs 1 and 12). The main portion of the roof is hipped with a protruding gabled portion (photograph 1). There is an historic ell addition on the rear with a separate gable roof (photographs 2, 3, and 4). The original portion of the house has a raised-seam metal roof, two interior brick chimneys, weatherboard siding, and a brick pier foundation. The rear ell has two interior brick chimneys. The windows are nine-over-nine double-hung-sash. There is a porch on the front of the house (photograph 1). The front door has four lights with two panels. The two-light transom is operable. There are three turned posts supporting the porch's shed-roof (photograph 1). The window shutters, wood-paneled doors, and screened doors are all original. There is a side porch running the length of the east side of the house and turning the rear corner to connect the main portion of the house to the addition(photograph 12). There are five doors opening onto the side porch and an original well beneath the porch.

The interior floor plan is intact with a central hall (photograph 6) and two rooms on each side. The house has wood floors and beaded-board ceilings throughout. The wood, hardware, and mantels are original to the house. The main hall has vertical beaded-board wainscoting, chair rail, horizontal beaded-board walls, and baseboards.

The front room on the west side of the house (photograph 7) has its original wood mantle with

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

pilasters and dish medallions. The walls are flush-board planks and the windows and door surrounds are plain. There is a closet on the left side of the fireplace, a door to the outside, and another door to the next room.

The front room on the east side of the house (photograph 8) has horizontal beaded board walls, vertical beaded board wainscoting, baseboards, and a chair rail. The original mantel is wood with turned columns, bull's eye medallions, and an iron gate. The window and door surrounds are fluted. There is a closet on the left side of the fireplace.

The rear east room (photograph 9) has horizontal, beaded board walls above a chair rail that runs around the room and under the windows. The wainscoting is vertical, beaded board under the chair rail. The original mantle is wood with turned columns and bull's eye medallions. There are simple surrounds on the two windows and the doors to the hall and the front room. A low closet door is to the left of the mantle.

The rear west room (photograph 10) has pine floors, wide baseboards and fluted surrounds on the west and south six-over-nine windows. Vertical beaded boards make up the wainscoting and horizontal beaded boards are above the chair rail. The original mantle, situated on a brick hearth, is wood with fluted columns and a rectangular detail in the center.

The rear addition to the house was originally a rear building that was connected at some point by a corridor. The corridor has pine boards for the floor, replacement planks on the walls and beaded board ceilings. The dining room (photograph 11) has its original beaded board ceiling and walls, except for one wall of replacement planks. The dining room has one westerly window and one easterly door. The kitchen at the rear of the addition has plain plank walls and ceiling. Its floor has been replaced with plywood because of water damage from flooding.

There is a front gable, wooden smokehouse (photographs 2, 3, 4, and 12) approximately 15 feet from the house. It is presently used for storage.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture
Commerce
Ethnic Heritage/Black

Period of Significance:

1892-1916

Significant Dates:

1892-Construction of Ables House
1916-Death of Alfred Ables

Significant Person(s):

Alfred Ables

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Alfred and Jane Ables House is significant in the area of architecture as a good and intact example of a New South cottage-type house with Folk Victorian details. According to Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings (1991), a statewide context, the New South cottage was a popular house type for upper-middle-income Georgians between the 1890s and the 1920s. However, it is rare to find this type of house in a small-town African-American community in Georgia. Character-defining features of this house type include its central square mass, hipped roof with gable projections, emphasis on symmetry, and a central hall flanked by two rooms on each side, one or both of which might project forward.

The property is also significant in the areas of Commerce and Ethnic Heritage/Black as the home of Alfred Ables. Mr. Ables was one of the most prominent and influential men in Buena Vista. He provided jobs, housing, education, and leadership to the African-American community in Buena Vista. As the proprietor of an overnight express delivery company, the owner and operator of 26 farms, the broker of numerous properties and the owner of a timber business, Ables was one of the most prominent businessmen in Buena Vista. This magnitude of entrepreneurship is extraordinary for an African-American businessman in a relatively small town in rural Georgia during the late 19th and early 20th century. His influential business interests were a significant economic impetus for the small community. He also constructed housing for the less fortunate in the Buena Vista community and upon his death donated 16 acres of land for the site of a school for the African-American children in the community. Ables' house reflects his social and economic status; relatively large houses like his New South-type cottage are relatively unusual in Georgia's small-town African-American communities that tend to consist of smaller house types such as saddlebags, central hallway cottages, and gabled ells.

National Register Criteria

The Alfred and Jane Ables House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and B as the home of Alfred Ables, a prominent African-American businessman in Buena Vista and under Criterion C as a good and intact example of a New South cottage, a popular house type in Georgia.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance for the Alfred and Jane Ables House begins in 1892 with the construction of the house and ends in 1916 with the death of Mr. Ables.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The two contributing resources on the property are the Ables House and the associated smokehouse. There are no noncontributing resources on the property.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

****NOTE: The following history was compiled by Diana G. Miles, Preservation Planner Assistant, August, 1995, and Bettye Lovejoy-Scott and Beverly VaShon Woods, August, 2000. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

The Ables House was constructed in 1892 by Alfred Ables (1863-1916), an African-American foreman for the Georgia Central Railroad Company. The Folk Victorian New South cottage was the home of Alfred Ables until his death in 1916 and remains virtually intact today. The house is a good example of the type of residence that was built in the later years of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century. While the cottage is a typical vernacular example of a New South cottage with Folk Victorian details, the fact that it was constructed in 1892 by a prominent African-American businessman in the rural South is not typical. The house is a testament to a determined and gifted African-American man who overcame barriers to make his mark in business and community affairs in a rural southern town at the turn-of-the-century.

Alfred Ables came to Buena Vista, Georgia in his early twenties as a foreman of a rail-laying work crew for the Georgia Central Railroad. He rented a room from the Sampson family and met their only daughter, fifteen year old Jane. Alfred and Jane were married two years later. From this union, the eight surviving children were Robert, Effie, Ruth, Beulah, Annie Mae, William, Bertha, and Fred Ables.

Being new to the community and with neither credit nor recognition, Alfred's first order of business was to establish an economic base. He sought out an honorable man of means from whom he borrowed an amount of money that he had already in his possession-the amount of \$75.00. He repaid the loan well ahead of the agreed upon time, therefore securing trustworthiness and credit for future business dealings.

After leaving the Georgia Central Railroad, he started his own overnight delivery express, delivering goods at night by horse and buggy. He sold pianos and organs out of his home. Across the street from the Ables house, he had a stable of horses and at the corner lot, a funeral home. As the children grew, he opened a grocery store and had the older son, Robert, and his sisters, Effie and Ruth, operate the businesses. There was always a garden of vegetables for the small children to attend. They learned the value of productive work habits through their work and by observing their parents, which transcended to the generations to come.

Ables gradually expanded his business interests into farming, real estate, and timber. As a farmer he owned and operated 26 farms in the area; he managed sharecroppers on each farm. It was a family

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

venture as well. All of his family helped by working on the farms. During the 1880s, Ables entered the real estate market by acquiring properties around town, especially in the African-American area of town. All told, Ables purchased and sold over 20,000 acres of land in Buena Vista from 1880 to 1916. Ables also found success in the timber business. He sold timber to large lumber companies and invested the profits largely in stocks and bonds. Ables was one of the wealthiest and most prominent men in Buena Vista, and he maintained the leadership of the African-American community. Ables not only dealt in real estate, but he also constructed housing for many of the poor black and white individuals who were experiencing difficult times. Ables was not just a financial success, but he also helped to shape the community of Buena Vista through housing development and business activity.

Alfred Ables was an influential man in the Buena Vista community, respected by both blacks and whites for his financial success and his humanitarian efforts. His many financial and humanitarian investments in the local community left an indelible mark.

When Alfred Ables died in 1916, he left a will providing for a college education for each of his children. Significantly for Buena Vista, he also donated 16 acres of land to have a school built for the African-American children of Buena Vista. The school was to be named in honor of Alfred Ables, however, the school board eventually named it Buena Vista Elementary and High School. The school still stands on the same site today and is home to the Marion County School Board and Head Start Program.

Jane Ables lived in the Ables House with her daughter, Ruth, until her death in 1951. After that time several descendants of Alfred Ables occupied the house until 1978. The house, still in the possession of the Ables family, stood vacant until 1994 when restoration efforts were initiated.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bridges, Clyde. Citizen of Buena Vista, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, October, 1994 to August, 1995.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources. "Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings." 1991.

Jernigan, Wayne. Attorney for Ables' Estate, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly v. Woods, December, 1994 to August, 1995.

Langston, Charlie Jane. Ables' Family friend, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, November, 1994 to August, 1995.

Lovejoy-Dixon, Terrellyn. Granddaughter of Alfred Ables, Rufflola, New York. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, October, 1994 to August, 1995.

Marion County, Georgia. Land map of Buena Vista.

Marion County, Georgia. Probate Office. Alfred Ables' will.

Marion County, Georgia. Probate Office. Jane Ables' will.

Marion County, Georgia. Superior Court. Deed Book O, p. 47; Deed Book L (1885), p.52; Deed Book O (1892), p. 118.

Murray, Mae Bell. Neighbor, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, October, 1994 to August, 1995.

Pryor, Rosa. Citizen of Marion County, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, October, 1994 to August, 1995.

Story, Floyd. Mayor of Buena Vista, Ables' Family friend, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, October, 1994 to August, 1995.

Walls, Marianne. Bookkeeper at the time of the construction of the Buena Vista Elementary and High School, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, October, 1994 to August, 1995.

Wright, Ethel. Neighbor, Buena Vista, Georgia. Interview by Beverly V. Woods, October, 1994 to August, 1995.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9—Major Bibliographic References

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued:
- 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, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.5 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 734282 Northing 3578250

Verbal Boundary Description

The proposed boundary of the nominated property is indicated on the attached map by a heavy black line.

Boundary Justification

The proposed boundary of the nominated property includes the Ables House, the associated smokehouse, and the intact acreage historically associated with the house.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Holly L. Anderson, National Register Historian
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
mailing address 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** June 24, 2002
e-mail holly_anderson@mail.dnr.state.ga.us

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) () not applicable

name/title Diana G. Miles, Preservation Planner Assistant
organization Middle Flint Regional Development Center
mailing address 228 West Lamar Street
city or town Americus **state** Georgia **zip code** 31709
telephone (912)928-4120
e-mail

- () **property owner**
() **consultant**
(X) **regional development center preservation planner**
() **other:**

Property Owner or Contact Information

name (property owner or contact person) Beverly V. Woods
organization (if applicable)
mailing address 67 Georgia Drive
city or town Columbus **state** Georgia **zip code** 31907
e-mail (optional)

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

Name of Property: Alfred and Jane Ables House
City or Vicinity: Buena Vista
County: Marion
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: September, 2001

Description of Photograph(s):

Number of photographs: 12

1. Front (north) façade and west façade; photographer facing southeast.
2. East façade and smokehouse; photographer facing west.
3. Rear (south) façade and smokehouse; photographer facing north.
4. Rear ell addition; photographer facing northeast.
5. West façade at ell connection; photographer facing east.
6. Interior; central hall; photographer facing north.
7. Interior; northeast room; photographer facing southeast.
8. Interior; northwest room; photographer facing southwest.
9. Interior; southeast room; photographer facing northeast.
10. Interior; southwest room; photographer facing northeast.
11. Interior; dining room into kitchen; photographer facing southwest.
12. Front façade and east façade; photographer facing southwest.

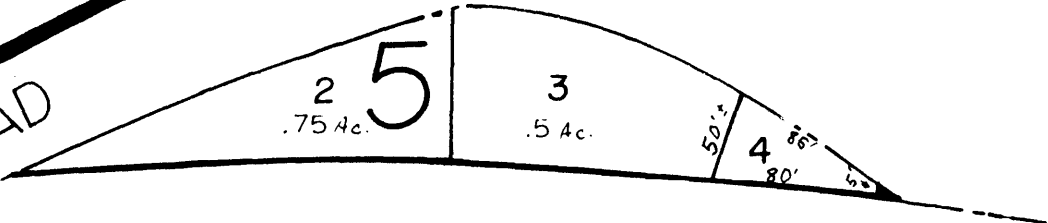
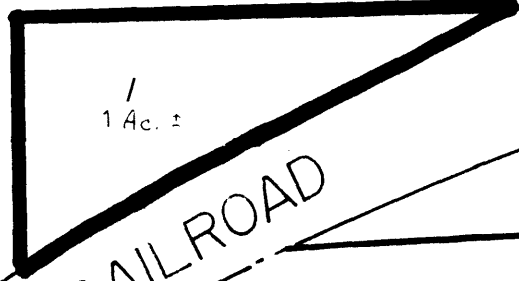
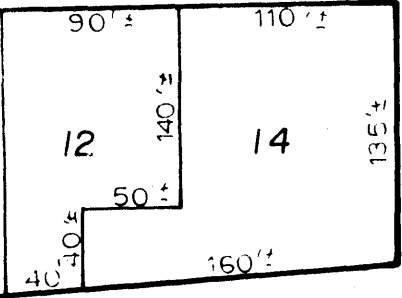
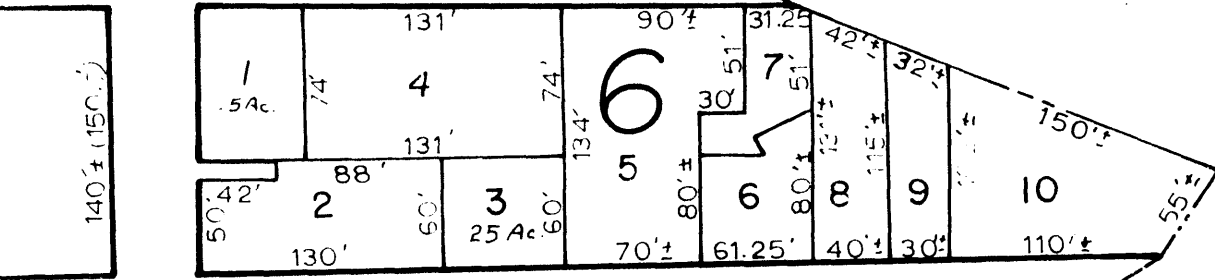
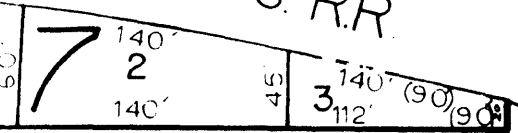
(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)



C.O.F.G. R.R.

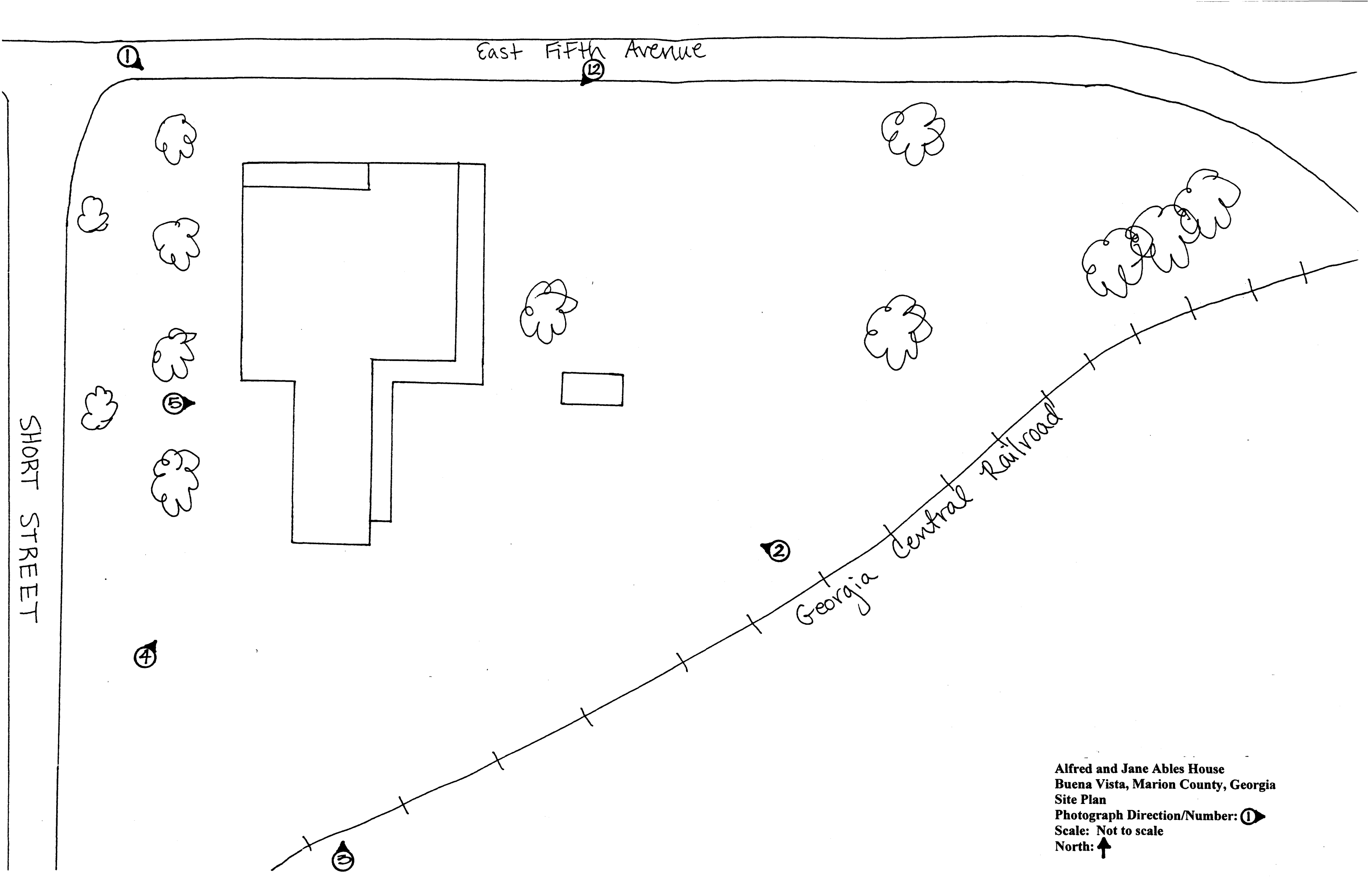
AVENUE

RAILROAD

GEORGIA



Alfred and Jane Ables House
 Buena Vista, Marion County, Georgia
 Marion County Tax Map C-8
 National Register Boundary 
 Scale: 1"= 100'
 North: 

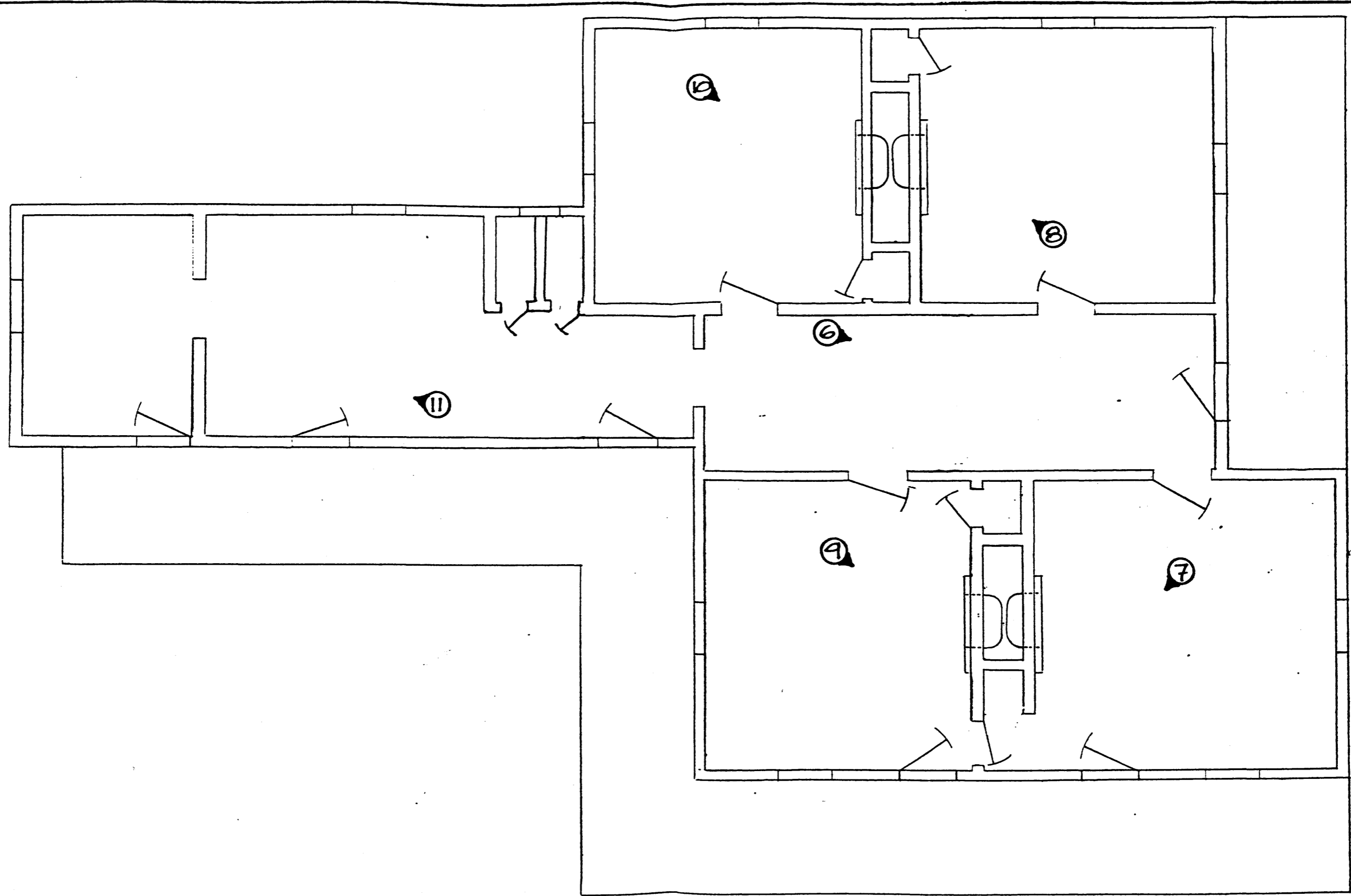


East Fifth Avenue

SHORT STREET

Georgia Central Railroad

Alfred and Jane Ables House
Buena Vista, Marion County, Georgia
Site Plan
Photograph Direction/Number: ①
Scale: Not to scale
North: ↑



THE ABLES HOUSE

BUILT IN 1892

OWNER:

BUENA VISTA, GEORGIA

BEVERLY V. WOODS

Alfred and Jane Ables House
 Buena Vista, Marion County, Georgia
 Floor Plan
 Photograph Direction/Number: ①
 Scale: Not to scale
 North: →