# **National Register of Historic Places Inventory**—Nomination Form

See	instructions	in How to	Complete	National	Register Forms	;
Туре	e all entries-	-complete	applicable	e sections	5	

#### 1. Name

city, town

Montgomery

histor	ric	Watters	Willia	am House		
and	r common	Pennywin	ıkle Fa	rms Farmhouse or	Watters/Pursell Hou	ıse
2.	Loca	ation				
street	& number	Approximately Community on		ile sw of the Fa		$_{\rm VA}$ not for publication
city, t	own	Sylacauga		<u>NA</u> vicinity of	congressional dist	rict 3
state	Alaba	ma	code (	01 county	Talladega	<b>code</b> 121
<u>3.</u>	Clas	sificatior				
_X b s s	district puilding(s) structure	Ownership public _X_ private both Public Acquisitio in process being consider	n /	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum     park     park     x private residence     religious     scientific     transportation     other:
4.	Own	er of Pro	pert	У		
name		Parker F	<u>ertiliz</u>	er Company, Inc.	•	
street	& number	201 West	Fourth	Street (P. O.	Box 540)	
city, te	own	Sylacaug	а	NA_ vicinity of	state	Alabama 35150
5.	Loca	ntion of L	egal	Descripti	on	
courth	house, regis	stry of deeds, etc.	Tallade	ega County Court	house	
street	& number					
city, te	own	Talladeg	a		state	Alabama
6.	Repr	resentatio	on in	Existing		
title	Alabar	na Inventory		has this pr	operty been determined eli	gible? yes $X$ no
date		present			federal X stat	e county local
depos	sitory for su	rvey records Alab	ama His	torical Commiss:	ion	

For NPS use only received AUG 25 1987 date enteredEP 29 1987

state Alabama

# 7. Description

#### Condition

X excellent	deteriorated	unaltered
good	ruins	X_altered
fair	unexposed	

Check one X original site moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Check one

#### DESCRIPTION

Built prior to 1841, the William Watters House is a rare example of an earlier twostory log dogtrot which, through 19th-century alterations, evolved into its present classic I-house form. Characterized by its narrow profile and rear shed addition, this I-house also has a gabled roof extension to the rear, which, based on physical evidence and local tradition, seems to have been an outbuilding joined to the rear shed at some point. The I portion of the clapboard house has a gabled roof and exterior brick chimneys while the rear extension has an exterior fieldstone chimney on its gable wall. The vernacular interior is characterized by simple mantelpieces, dado, stairway and matched wall and floor boards. The I-house has maintained its late 19thcentury integrity in regard to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The exterior appearance of the house has been compromised somewhat by a 1950s porch alteration, while the remainder of the house is intact and well preserved.

\* \* \* \* \* \* \*

The five-bay facade has 5 1/4" flush mounted siding under the front porch. Four panel double doors with side lights and transom form the front entrance. The windows have six-over-six wooden sashes. The rear fenestration is rather peculiar. While the rear entrance also has four panel double doors with only a small four-over-four window to the side, the upstairs has only one central window.

The exterior appearance of the house has been compromised somewhat by porch alterations. A wide concrete floored porch, probably added about 1950, now skirts three sides of the house.

Inside, the William Watters House follows the typical I-house plan with a wide dogtrot hallway sided by two large rooms. In this case the hall is approximately 12 feet wide and the parlors are 18' 6" square. Shed rooms to the rear are approximately 18'6"x12'. A utilitarian stairway rises to the second floor from the back of the central hall. There is some indication that the stairs may have been altered or rebuilt. Some of the treads and rises are notched for a newel post which no longer exists as well as for some unknown purpose. The spindles are  $1 1/8" \times 1 3/8"$ .

The William Watters House has 5 1/2" board walls and floors. The central hall and eastern parlor are embellished with a simple paneled dado created by boards and rails applied over the wallboards. Window and door facings are plain as are the 12" baseboards. Heavy wooden mantel pieces of a somewhat "Country Classical" variety surround the two parlor fireplaces. All of the original interior doors were removed by a previous owner and new hollow core doors hang as temporary closures.

The second floor of the Watters House consists of a wide central hall with 18' 6" square rooms to each side. The rear end of the hall has been partitioned to create a bathroom. The entire upstairs has 3 1/2" pine flooring installed over the old as does one room downstairs. While one fireplace in the west room upstairs has been sealed, the other has a simple board mantelpiece. The walls upstairs are covered with new paneling. Twelve-inch baseboards survive in the west room.

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The front windows upstairs are 48" above floor level and the side windows are 38" above the floor placing them just above the log superstructure of the house which rises approximately 32" (or two large logs) above the 2nd story floor level. Physical evidence thus seems to indicate that the log dogtrot was a one-story structure, perhaps having a loft, and that the full second story was a 19th-century alteration. Access to the attic of the shed addition through an upstairs closet reveals the loginfrastructure. Approximately 15"-square hewn logs comprise the wall structure of the house. Some visible interstices are chinked and daubed; others are not. Rafters in the shed are unfinished poles as are those in the gabled rear extension.

At this writing, access has not been gained to the main attic nor the crawl space beneath the house. The west side of the house, however, rests approximately 1 1/2' above ground on new brick and cinder block piers and infill. One early fieldstone pier and sill are still visible. The east side is approximately 3' above ground with only new cinder block underpinning visible.

Two early support structures survive. One is the almost square rear extension and the other is a 19th-century barn located to the north of the house. The farming unit is completed by a mid-twentieth barn, silo and office and several sheds of unknown age.

2 contributing 5 noncontributing 7 total

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of SignificanceC	heck and justify below		
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Builder/Architect

NA

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### **CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE**

**Specific dates** prior to 1841

The William Watters House is architecturally significant because it is one of Alabama's few remaining early I-houses. Built before 1841 as a log dogtrot, the house underwent extensive alterations in the latter half of the 19th century and now embodies characteristics most common to the I-house. This includes a narrow two-story profile, one-room deep; a rear shed addition running the full width of the house; and two exterior end wall chimneys. Additionally, the interior of the house clearly illustrates available construction materials and design preferences of the farmers who most often built I-houses. Matched board walls and floors, simple dado, utilitarian stairway and wooden vernacular mantelpieces characterize the interior.

\* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

William Watters purchased the land on which this house stands at public sale in 1834. While there is some evidence that Watters may have purchased an "improved" farm when he came to Talladega County in 1833 or 1834, estate papers prove conclusively that by 1841 a dwelling, office and outbuilding occupied this site. The dwelling must have been rather commodious since in 1840 it was occupied by seven adults and three children.

Inherited by Watters' wife, Elizabeth, who lived there until her death in 1872, the house was then occupied by F. B. Thompson and his heirs until 1910. It has apparently been rental property since that time.

Unique among I-houses, the Watters House has a log superstructure. Approximately fifteen-inch square hewn logs form the framework for the clapboard exterior and board interior.

Today, two early support structures remain -- a square, gabled roof building with fieldstone chimney, now attached to the house and a 19th-century barn. The farming unit is completed by a mid-twentieth-century barn, silo and office and several sheds of unknown age.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

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#### HISTORICAL SUMMARY

While the Treaty of Cusseta (1832) ultimately resulted in the removal of the Creek Indians from the Talladega area, it specifically called for all-white intruders in the area to abandon their claims so that the newly ceded Indian lands could be surveyed, the Indian Fathers given land of their choice and the balance disposed of at public sale. Since this was considered by some, an intrusion on the state's jurisdiction, the State Legislature actually encouraged further settlement in the area by establishing county governments. Talladega was one of the new counties formed on the heels of the treaty in 1832.

In late July, 1833 William Watters of Perry County, Alabama, wrote a long and rather philosophical letter about the Indian lands to his brother, Joseph, who had remained in Georgia when much of the family moved to Alabama sometime before 1826. Political opinions aside, Watters told his brother of plans to move again. A transcription of the letter reads . . .

"We hope these lines may find you and all relatives enjoying health. You informed me of your views of Cherokee and Creek Lands. I am much of your opinion as respects a farming country. I have just returned from the nation and am well pleased with it and have picked out a settlement in Talladega County near the Southern boundary of that country on Cedar Creek where there is plenty of good land and water, and an everlasting range... I have employed a man to buy me a place there and I am determined to make a crop there next year, the only and best chance there is to buy an improved place there... I have authorized Obi Radford to give \$1,000 for one place. I expect an answer from him soon on the plantation. I think I can clear the money in one year..."

Radford's success in purchasing the plantation is unknown, but whatever the outcome, a public land sale to Watters is recorded on January 15, 1834. Another is dated March 7, 1834. The parcels he bought were in Sections 2 and 10 of Township 22, Range 2, and were both adjacent to the old road from Fayetteville to Talladega Springs lying be-

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Grandrud and Jones, Perry County, Vol. 182, p. 51, William Watters is appointed executor of Benjamin Gill's will. November 13, 1826.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Watters Papers, Transcript of letter dated July 25, 1833, copied from original in possession of Will Watters, Rome, Georgia.

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tween Cedar Creek and the southern boundary of Talladega County.<sup>3</sup>

Little is known about William Watters' role in early Talladega County except that he was one of three commissioners listed on the Plat of Franklin (Talladega Spring's early name) in September of 1834.<sup>4</sup> Also, that year he served as an examiner on Zachariah Convile's petition to erect a mill in Section 2.<sup>5</sup>

Since the county census indicates that nine other people, six of them adults, were living with Watters in 1840, it would be safe to assume that he had, by then, erected a rather commodious dwelling. Indeed, William Watters' estate papers reveal that whether or not his "plantation" was improved when he bought it in 1834, there were a "dwelling house, office and outbuilding" on the SW 1/4 of Section 2 Township 22 Range 2 at his death in 1841.<sup>6</sup> The dwelling, office and outbuilding situated on a 160-acre portion of Watters' estate was valued at \$1,500 in 1850 and remained with his widow Elizabeth until her death in 1872.<sup>6</sup>

By 1873 all of Watters' eight children had also died and most of the grandchildren had dispersed to Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana. (Sarah Blount Edwards, Augustus Blount, Jr. and Catharine Blount were the only grandchildren left in Fayetteville.) The William Watters' farm was thus sold to Francis B. Thompson<sup>10</sup> who had, in 1865, married Mrs. Martha Funderbugh. Little is known about the Thompsons at this writing except that in spite of Mr. Thompson's death in 1877, the farm remained in family ownership until 1910.<sup>11</sup>

- $^3$  Abstract to property, information taken from Tract Book 1, pages 17,19 and 2 . Certificates numbered 74 and 831.
- <sup>4</sup> Plat of town of Franklin dated September 12, 1834, Talladega County Courthouse.
- <sup>5</sup> Luttrell Papers, transcription of Orphans Court Minutes, p. 113.
- <sup>6</sup> Talladega Co. Wills, Book C, pp. 255-256. William Watters Family Bible.
- <sup>7</sup> 1850 Talladega Co. Census.
- <sup>8</sup> Talladega Co. Minute Book L, pp. 323-325.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Talladega Co. Deeds, Book V, p. 53.
- <sup>11</sup> Talladega Co. Deeds, Book 65, p. 84.

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Mrs. Thompson remarried in about 1879 to 0. W. Galloway who, according to one source, was a doctor. The farm, however, passed to the Thompson's oldest daughter, Sallie, who with husband, W. I. Phillips, owned the property until 1910 when they sold "the home place" to J. J. Hightower.<sup>12</sup> While the 1910 deed indicates that the farm was also the residence of the Phillips, their occupancy was probably not continuous since the Harris family lived there c. 1900.

In 1911, Hightower sold the Watters Place to the Central Land Company of which he was secretary. J. W. Brown, President of Central Land, subsequently bought the farm in 1917<sup>13</sup> and subdivided a portion of it in 1921. (The J. W. Brown Subdivision consisted of five large lots lying on the south side of the road east of the Watters House.)<sup>14</sup>

In 1962 Brown's granddaughter, Mrs. Pitts, sold the Watters Place to Howard A. Parker and son, Howard, Jr., founders of the Parker Fertilizer Company. The Parkers almost immediately sold the farm back to the Hightowers but the family repurchased it in the early 1970s.

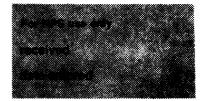
Today the Watters House and its support buildings form the hub of the Parker Fertilizer farming operation and after years of neglect the old I-style Watters House has been reclaimed as a residence by Parker's grandson.

12 Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Mrs. Winston Kent Harris, November 19, 1985.

<sup>14</sup> Plat of J. W. Brown Subdivision dated October 14, 1921.

15 Abstract.



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- Sulzby, James F., Jr. Alabama Hotels and Resorts, University of Alabama Press, 1960.
- Wilson, Eugene M. <u>Alabama Folk Houses</u>. Alabama Historical Commission, Montgomery, 1975.

#### Manuscripts

Averiett/Dean/Graham Papers (1825-c.1920). Deeds, letters, clippings and photographs in possession of Inez B. Graham, Fayetteville, Alabama.

Carolyn L. Luttrell Papers, Miscellaneous Talladega County genealogical and historical records held by the B. B. Comer Library, Sylacauga, Alabama.

Minutes of the Fort Williams Baptist Church. Two notebooks held by the B. B. Comer Library, Sylacauga, Alabama.

Ruth W. Burks and Virginia Watters Papers. Fayetteville, Sylacauga, Alabama.

Watters/Edwards/Hammond Papers, including William Watters family Bible, in possession of Mrs. John L. Hammond, Millbrook, Alabama.

#### County Records

Talladega County Orphans Court Minutes, Talladega County Courthouse.

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Talladega County Records of Conveyance, Talladega County Courthouse.

Talladega County Wills and Inventories, Talladega County Courthouse.

Grandrud and Jones Index to Miscellaneous Perry and Talladega County Records, Archives Library.

Talladega County Census for 1840 and 1850.

Index to Conveyances, Shelby County Courthouse, Columbiana, Alabama.

#### **Miscellaneous**

Telephone interview with Mrs. William Kent Harris, November 19, 1985.

Abstract to property held by Parker Fertilizer Company, Sylacauga, Alabama.

Preservation Report, "Archifeature," "Plantation Plain: The I-type house was popular early farm dwelling," Robert S. Gamble.

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Legal Description of Parcel in Which Property is Located

A parcel of land described by its bounds as follows: Commence at the Southwest corner of Section 2, Township 22 South, Range 2 East, Talladega County, Alabama, the point of beginning of land herein described, and from this beginning point proceed North along the West boundary of said Section 2 for a distance of 2650 feet to the Northwest corner of the Southwest quarter of said Section 2; thence turn an angle of 90 03' to the right and proceed East along the North boundary of the Southwest quarter of said Section 2 for a distance of 1477.2 feet to a point; thence proceed South for a distance of 209 feet to a point; thence proceed East for a distance of 209 feet to a point on the West side of a paved street extending from the Sylacauga to Talladega Springs paved road to the Fayetteville High School; thence proceed South along the West side of said road and along a fence line for a distance of 1037.8 feet to a point in the center of the Sylacauga-Talladega Springs paved highway; thence proceed Northeasterly along the center of said highway for a distance of 201.8 feet to the Southwesterly corner of the J. W. Brown Subdivision as shown by the map of said subdivision on record in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Talladega County, Alabama, in Map Book 1 at Page 126; thence proceed Southeasterly along the Southwesterly side of said subdivision for a distance of 300 feet to a point; thence turn an angle of 90 to the left and proceed Northeasterly along the Southeasterly side of said subdivision for a distance of 600 feet to a point in the center of the Old Jackson Trace Road; thence proceed Southerly along the center of the Old Jackson Trace Road for a distance of 1748 feet, more or less, to the South boundary of said Section 2, a point on the South boundary of the Southeast quarter of the Southwest quarter of said Section 2 and a point on the North boundary of the Northeast guarter of the Northwest guarter of Section 11, Township 22 South, Range 2 East, Talladega County, Alabama; thence proceed East along the North boundary of the Northeast quarter of the Northwest quarter of said Section 11 for a distance of 378 feet, more or less, to the Northeast corner of the said Northeast quarter of the Northwest quarter of said Section 11; thence proceed South along the East boundary of said Northeast quarter of the Northwest quarter of said Section 11 for a distance of 1325 feet to the Southeast corner of said quarterquarter section; thence proceed West along the South boundary of the Northeast quarter of the Northwest quarter and the Northwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of said Section 11 for a distance of 2640 feet to the Southwest corner of the Northwest guarter of the Northwest quarter of said Section 11, which point also being the Southeast corner of the Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of Section 10, Township 22 South, Range 2 East, Talladega County, Alabama; hence continue to proceed West along the South boundary of the said Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of said Section 10 for a distance of 1320 feet to the Southwest corner of said guarter-guarter section; thence proceed North along the West boundary of the said Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of said Section 10 for a distance of 1325 feet to the Northwest corner of said quarter-quarter section; thence proceed East along the North boundary of the said Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of said Section 10 for a distance of 1320 feet to the point of beginning,

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Being the Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of said Section 10, the North half of the Northwest quarter of said Section 11, the West half of the Southwest quarter of said Section 2, and part of the East half of the Southwest quarter of said Section 2,

LESS AND EXCEPTING THEREFROM the right-of-way of the L & N Railroad, and the rightsof-way for public roads included in the above described property,

Containing 235.4 acres, more or less, after excluding the above exceptions.

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#### Boundary Descriptions and Justification

The acreage included in the original William Watters Farm was first divided at the settlement of his estate. The parcel on which the house is located was further divided at his wife's death and with subsequent changes in ownership. Therefore, the boundaries for this property are based on significant geographic features.

The southern boundary is formed by Highway 8, the old Fayetteville to Franklin Road which runs southwest in front of the house. The northern boundary is the old Louisville and Nashville Alabama Mineral Line Railroad which joined Sylacauga and the Springs (Franklin) in 1891. The western boundary is Perrywinkle Creek which flows northeast across the property into Cedar Creek. The eastern boundary is School Street.

The property is thus an irregular rectangle of approximately 25 acres situated in the SW corner of Section 2, Township 22, Range 2E.

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PENNYWINKLE FARMES -ARMHOUSE PANID & ELLEN PURSELL

William Watters House Fayetteville Community Sylacauga, Alabama Floor Plan

