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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 Willing, Colonel William James, House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 272 South Jackson Street N/A  not for publication

city or town Crystal Springs N/A  vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Copiah code 029 zip code 39059

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 forth 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.)

Kenneth H. P. Pool June 1, 1992  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
State of 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Andrew J. ...

Entered in the  
National Register

Date of Action

7/14/92

Willing, Colonel William James, House  
Name of Property

Copiah County, Mississippi  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

N/A

**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)

Greek Revival

Gothic Revival

Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Weatherboard

roof Other: Composition Shingle

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Willing, Col. William James, House  
Name of Property

Copiah County, Mississippi  
County and State

**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 whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Exploration/Settlement

**Period of Significance**

c. 1855-1870

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Willing, Colonel William James

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**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):**

- 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 Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Willing, Col. William James, House  
Name of Property

Copiah County, Mississippi  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 2.517 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1   5	7   4   9   6   5   0	3   5   4   1   4   1   0
	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.)

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Brenda R. Crook/Architectural Historian

organization Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History date April 9, 1992

street & number P.O. Box 571 telephone (601) 359-6940

city or town Jackson state MS zip code 39205-0571

**Additional Documentation**

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)

**Property Owner**

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

name Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Beach

street & number 272 South Jackson Street telephone (601) 892-4736

city or town Crystal Springs state MS zip code 39059

**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 listings. 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 20503.

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Willing, Col. William James, House, Crystal Springs, Covich Co., MS

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Only three blocks from downtown Crystal Springs, on the old Jackson-Gallatin Road now known as South Jackson Street, is the Colonel William James Willing House, a one-and-one-half story, side-gabled cottage constructed circa 1855. Situated on a two-and-one-half acre parcel of land, the house rests upon high brick foundation piers infilled with latticed panels, and the walls are finished with weatherboard. The house originally was a vernacular Greek Revival cottage featuring a partial-width portico with box columns and a central hall plan with two rooms on each side of the hall. Around 1870, Gothic Revival style bargeboards were applied to the gables and front eaves, a polygonal bay was added to the south elevation, and a rear (east) ell was also added. Between 1909 and 1915, the house was remodeled in the then-popular Colonial Revival style, with alterations including the addition of the full-width porch, dormer, hall screen, and two Colonial Revival mantelpieces.

Facing west, the main facade is a symmetrical, eave-oriented, five-bay elevation dominated by a full-width gallery. At the central entrance, double-leaf glazed and panelled doors are framed by three-light sidelights and a nine-light transom. Windows are six-over-six, double-hung sash protected by louvred blinds. The doors and windows are trimmed with plain surrounds. Nine wooden steps lead to the gallery, which features a wooden deck, beaded-board ceiling, and six Doric columns supporting a flat roof that is trimmed with a denticulated frieze. The roof of the house is pierced by a central dormer that has a Palladian window and pedimented gable.

The north elevation has four six-over-six, double-hung windows in the main section of the house and one two-over-two, double-hung window in the ell. Two shuttered windows are in the upper half story. The south elevation is highlighted on the west end by a polygonal bay that has six-over-six, double-hung windows, and the roof of this bay is trimmed with bargeboards like those trimming the eaves and gables of the house. In 1990, a second rear ell was added, creating new kitchen space.

The interior of the house retains its central hall plan with two rooms opening off each side of the hallway. The central hall is divided by a Colonial Revival screen consisting of box columns and pilasters resting upon molded bases and supporting a denticulated frieze. The hall has wide baseboards, wide chair-rail and vertical board wainscoting. Doors throughout the house interior are four-panel doors

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Willing, Col. William James, House, Crystal Springs, Copiah Co., MS

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that appear to be original, and the door and window openings are surrounded by plain trim. In the two front rooms, original mantels were replaced circa 1910 with Colonial Revival mantels. The mantel in the parlor has a mirrored overmantel with Ionic columns supporting the overmantel shelf, and the opening is faced with glazed tile. The front bedroom's mantel features very slender colonnettes. The dining room and rear bedroom retain their original vernacular Greek Revival mantels. The four rooms of the original section of the house have plain wide baseboards, and all but the back bedroom have picture rails. The circa 1870 rear ell contains the master bedroom and a bathroom, and in the second rear addition is the breakfast room, bathroom, and kitchen.

Although the Willing House has been remodeled several times since its construction, the building retains integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship and association.

A frame, gabled garage that appears to be of post-World War II construction is south of the house and is a noncontributing element.

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Willing, Col. William James, House, Crystal Springs, Copiah Co., MS

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The Colonel William James Willing House is locally significant in the area of exploration and settlement (Criterion A), dating prior to the founding and incorporation of the town of Crystal Springs. In addition, the house is significant for its association with William James Willing (Criterion B), a leading citizen of Crystal Springs during its formative years. The period of significance begins circa 1855 when the house was constructed and ends in 1870, the year of Willing's death. According to WPA records, the Willings were among the early settlers of Copiah County and the first settlers of Crystal Springs. The Willing House is a rare surviving building from the initial settlement of the town.

The land on which Copiah County was settled was originally part of the Choctaw Indian lands that stretched across Mississippi and Alabama. The Treaty of Doak's Stand on October 18, 1820, relinquished Indian claim on the Delta and central Mississippi to the United States. Copiah County was subsequently formed from a portion of this land, being created out of Hinds County by an Act of the Mississippi Legislature on January 21, 1823. Crystal Springs was originally located, early in the history of the county, about two miles west of the present town on a Choctaw Indian crossroad that joined the Natchez Trace. Old Crystal Springs was settled about 1825 by Elisha Lott, an itinerant Methodist preacher who also built a grist and lumber mill.

In the 1840s the cotton merchants of New Orleans realized that unless a railroad was built connecting New Orleans to the cotton-producing lands around Jackson, the city of New Orleans would lose its importance as a cotton shipping point. The Mississippi Legislature chartered the New Orleans and Jackson Railroad Company on February 20, 1850. The final rail of the New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern, connecting New Orleans and Jackson, was laid on March 31, 1858. This rail line ran about two miles east of Old Crystal Springs. In 1857, the old community was moved to the site of the railroad. A post office was established in July 1857, and the town of Crystal Springs was incorporated on June 4, 1859. Stephen A. Cook, a Crystal Springs pioneer associated with the New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroad, was instrumental in establishing the present site of Crystal Springs. Much of the land on which the town was laid out was owned by Colonel William James Willing, who according to the WPA records was an early settler of Copiah County and the first settler of Crystal Springs.

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Willing, Col. William James, House, Crystal Springs, Covich Co., MS

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William James Willing was born in 1810 in Somerset County, Maryland. He came to Mississippi in 1832 and located first at Grand Gulf, where he operated a mercantile store for about a year. He then moved to Gallatin, the old county seat of Covich County, where he opened a store and in 1835 married Malinda Ann Patton, the daughter of a wealthy Claiborne County planter. In November 1842 Willing purchased property from Thomas Holiday in what would eventually become the town of Crystal Springs. (Willing received the title of colonel in 1846 when he recruited a company for the War with Mexico, being made colonel of the regiment, but was never called to field service.)

In the 1850 U.S. Census, Willing gave his occupation as a teacher, and his real estate was valued at \$500. According to the WPA records, Willing built a small school room in his back yard, where he taught his own children and the children of his neighbors. This small school was said to have been of the plantation-type school and was never enlarged or opened to the public. It is not known whether Willing taught in any of the other schools in the county.

The 1860 census lists Willing's occupation as farmer, the value of his real estate as \$7,000, and the value of his personal property as \$16,500. This great increase in the value of his real estate between the census of 1850 and that of 1860 indicates that the Willing House was built sometime in this ten-year period. This house is known to have been constructed prior to 1858 due to a reference in a deed when Willing and his wife sold land to Ozias Osburn. The Willing House, therefore, predates the establishment of Crystal Springs. Much of what is now the southeast quarter of the town was originally owned by Willing (Alford).

William J. Willing was actively involved in the political life of the newly incorporated town. He served as either mayor or alderman during the formative years of the town; in fact, he held office five of the first six years after the town's incorporation. He served as an alderman from 1859-60 and was the second mayor of Crystal Springs, serving four terms: 1860-61, 1862-63, 1863-64, and 1864-65 (Register of Commissions). Willing died on January 4, 1870, at the age of 59. At the time of his death in 1870, the population of Crystal Springs was 864; no earlier population records are available. The Willing House was acquired by J.G. Siebe in 1879,



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Willing, Col. William James, House, Crystal Springs, Copiah Co., MS

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who sold it to W. H. Barron in 1889. The house remained in the Barron family until 1981.

Although the Willing House has been remodeled several times since its construction circa 1855, the building retains sufficient integrity from its period of significance to qualify the house for listing in the National Register as a rare surviving building from the initial settlement of Crystal Springs and for its association with William James Willing. The house retains its original massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, and materials, and has integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, and association.

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Willing, Colonel William James, House, Crystal Springs, Copiah Co., Mississippi

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 4, Block 32, according to the map of the City of Crystal Springs, Mississippi, prepared by W.C. Stowell, Civil Engineer, under date of May 1, 1915, and filed for record in the Office of the Chancery Clerk of Copiah County, Mississippi, on November 2, 1915.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The above described 2.517 acres represents the amount of the original property presently owned by the occupants.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information is the same for all photographs:

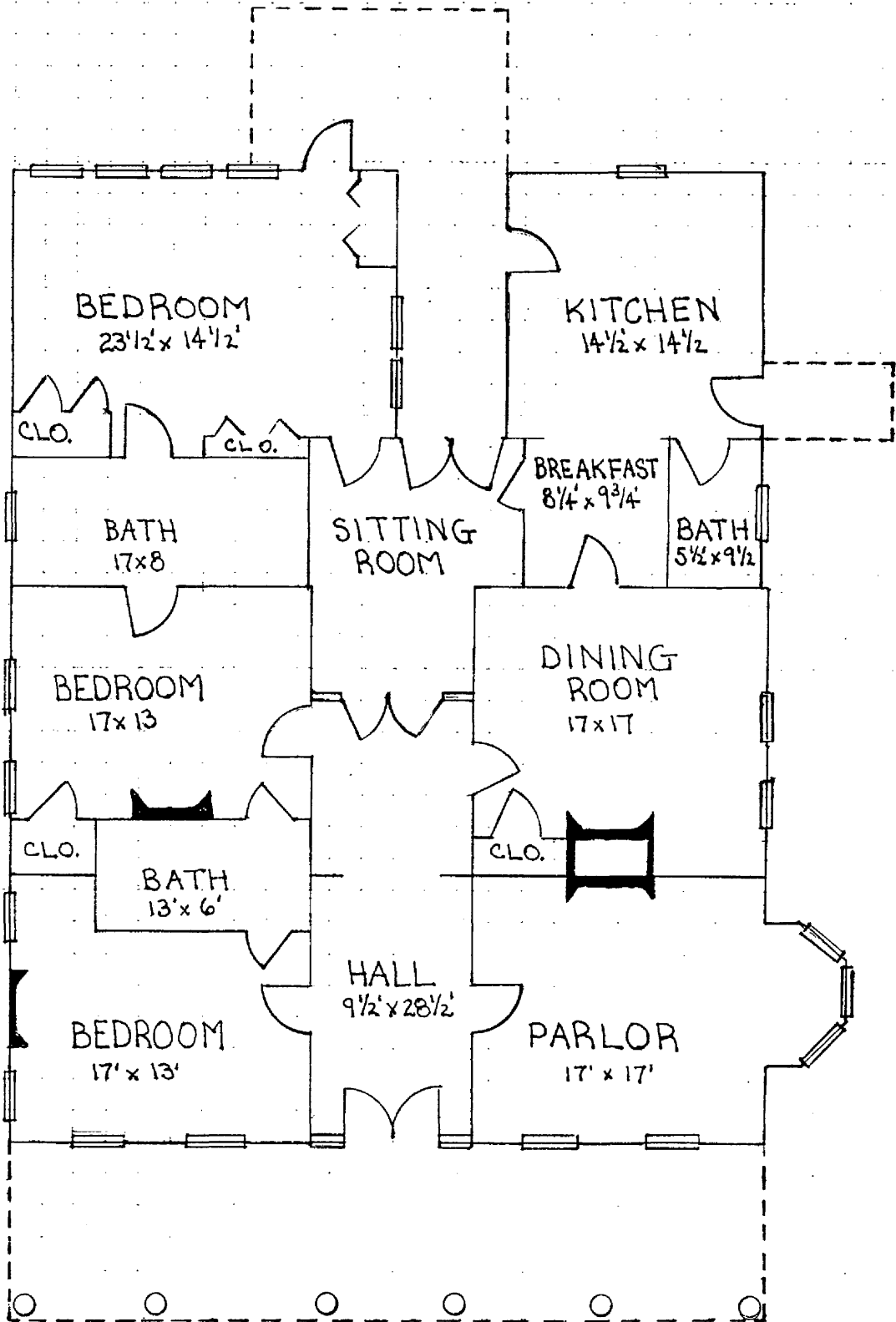
- (1) Willing, Colonel William James, House
- (2) Crystal Springs, Copiah County, Mississippi
- (3) Brenda R. Crook
- (4) February 21, 1992
- (5) Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson

Photo 1--(6) Main (west) facade and south elevation, view to northeast

Photo 2--(6) Main entrance, view to east

Photo 3--(6) North elevation, view to south

Photo 4--(6) Dining room mantel, view to north



William James Willing House  
 Crystal Springs, Copiah County, MS

