

1. Stewartfield

3. Spring Hill College  
4307 Old Shell Road  
Mobile, Alabama

2. 4307 Old Shell Road.  
Spring Hill College Campus  
Mobile, Mobile County  
Alabama

4. SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  S.14/ T4S, R2W

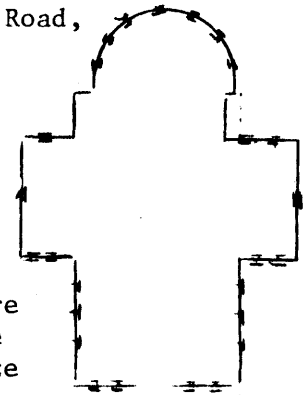
5. A parcel approximately 100' x 100', located 1375' S of the South Intersection of Old Shell Road and the Avenue of Oaks. See red line on city planning map.

Acreage: less than 1

UTM 16 / 390600 / 3396045

6. 1849-50, enlarged prior to 1857

7. Description: The building is a one-story frame, raised above brick piers of about 24 courses. With the offset wings and the rear semi-circular ballroom, the shape of the plan is basically a Greek Cross. The house faces north, set well back from Old Shell Road and approached by a long lane of oaks and azaleas. This lane formed the central axis of an oval race track that extended from the front of the house out to Old Shell Road, swinging to the east and circling around to return on the west. The present circular drive in front of the house is what remains of the old track site. The house has its original siding, painted white, with tongue and groove, flush siding on the porch wall. The front gallery of five bays has well proportioned, fluted, Doric columns without bases and with a shallow echinus curve and square abacus. The simple balustrade has square balusters and molded railing. The stair balustrade terminates in a square newel with molded cap. An unusually delicate dentil course accents the molding that separates the architrave and frieze of the entablature, and continues around the cornice of the building. The windows of the front gallery are 6/6 lights above jib doors. All other windows are the same double sash, 6/6 lights, except for the fenestration of the ballroom in which casements have been placed that have four panes surrounded by a narrow band of glass.



There is a small two-bay porch on the west corner between the offset west wing and the ballroom addition. The columns are simple square section without capitals.

In the interior plan, there is a long hallway with large rooms on either side. This leads to a secondary cross hall that opens up into the ballroom and could have been a rear gallery originally.

The main entrance of the Greek Revival cottage has a framing in the Greek-key pattern with eared architrave and shallow batter. All the interior doors have the same general style, but with a slight pedimentation of the

architrave. In the main entrance a transom of six lights extends across the door and sidelights. The sidelights consist of four panes of glass above a blind panel. Applied pilasters frame the door.

Old residents tell of a "spring floor" in the ballroom that "bounced" when dancing. The floor's joists were not braced with the usual cross bridging so that the floor was less rigid in construction. The old wine cellar survives and can be approached by a narrow interior flight of steps.

8. Significance: The Stewart Home is an excellent example of a straightforward, restrained use of the Greek Revival style and makes a good contrast with the more sophisticated treatment of the Marshall-Hixon house that was built at the same time. Taken together they exemplify the best of the Greek Revival residential development of the mid-19th century.

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The Stewart home was built as a summer cottage but soon enlarged as a permanent residence. It was accompanied by the race track already mentioned and by the usual outbuildings. Roger Stewart was from Scotland and upon coming to Mobile amassed a fortune in cotton. Upon his death at the age of 37, the property passed to his wife, Isabella Stewart, and then to their daughter, Annie Stewart. It was from Mrs. Field that the college bought the property in 1903, naming the building Gonzaga Hall. For many years it served for the offices of the Fine Arts Department.