

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

3123  
DEC 05 1988  
NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Williamson, James Spullock, House  
other names/site number Merry Oaks Farm

2. Location

street & number East side of Hwy. 31  not for publication  
city, town Letohatchee Sandy Ridge  vicinity  
state Alabama code AL county Lowndes code 085 zip code 36047

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> objects
			<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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  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.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 11-29-88  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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 and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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 Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls Aluminum

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roof Asphaltother Wood

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Williamson House is a c.1860 vernacular Greek Revival dwelling which faces west toward the old Stage Road, now Highway 31. It is located in the Sandy Ridge Community of Lowndes County, Alabama. The main block of the wood frame house, that is, the original four-room portion of the house, is rectangular. It rests on brick piers, infilled with brick. The house is in pristine condition, proudly cared for by fourth generation owners.

The Williamson House embodies those characteristics most representative of the Greek Revival style including its heavy, rectilinear, masculine scale; a low pitched gable roof; a pedimented entry porch supported by dominant square Doric columns; an elaborated door surround with narrow sidelights and rectangular transom lights; an emphasized cornice line with simple architrave and corner pilasters. The front entrance is provided by a pair of solid four-panel doors.

Inside, Greek Revival mantels mimic the exterior pilasters, and the typically molded door surrounds have shouldered architraves. The wide central hallway is embellished with wide crown molding and molded dado. A stone fireplace was added at the back of the hall during the 1920s. Presumably the rear loggia was enclosed at that time. The interior doors are typically solid five-panel doors with c.1920 knobs and plates. One door exhibits an early, perhaps original, rim lock. The floors are random 4 to 6 inch width pine. The main parlor, the northwest room of the Williamson House has molded interior window lintels and door head.

Tradition holds that the kitchen of the Williamson House, a gabled roof extension shown in photograph #2, was detached at some point during the early 20th Century. It is said that the tenant house a few hundred feet to the southeast of the main house is that kitchen wing. At this writing access is not available to the tenant house, which is covered with asbestos shingles and has a pedimented stoop addition to the west side. There are also various sheds that are not of substantial size or scale scattered about the property.

The Williamson House maintains its integrity in spite of aluminum siding that was installed by the previous owner. The narrow width siding corresponds to the original weatherboard and no architectural detail of the house was impaired, damaged or obscured by the installation. All of its distinctively Greek Revival details survive in excellent condition with the exception of the six over six double-hung windows which were replaced by one over one sashes in the 1920s.

See continuation sheet

**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)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
c.1860  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
c.1860  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  
Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Criterion C - Architecture

The Williamson House is significant because it is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style as interpreted in a vernacular dwelling and is the only outstanding example of domestic Greek Revival architecture in the Sandy Ridge Community. The house embodies those characteristics most representative of the style including its heavy, rectilinear, masculine scale; a low pitched gable roof; a pedimented entry porch supported by dominant square Doric columns; an elaborated door surround with narrow sidelights and rectangular transom lights; an emphasized cornice line and corner pilasters. Inside, Greek Revival mantels mimic the exterior pilasters, and the typically molded door surrounds have shouldered architraves. Built c.1860 at the end of the Greek Revival era, the house exemplifies the little Greek temples that celebrated cotton prosperity in Alabama from about 1840 until about 1860.

\* \* \*

By 1860, James S. Williamson, a Lowndes County planter and legislator had accumulated significant wealth producing cotton, corn, wool and sweet potatoes on his 2500+ acre farm. His real and personal property was valued in excess of \$150,000 and he owned 98 slaves. By 1860 Williamson had also begun a second family and had a new wife and three small children. Thus it was that in about 1860 he built a handsome vernacular Greek Revival House facing the stage road in Sandy Ridge on a site given to him by his new father-in-law.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Brewer, Willis. Alabama, Her History, Resources, War Record and Public Men.  
The Reprint Company, Spartanburg, S.C. 1975.  
1830, 1840, 1850 and 1860 Alabama Census.  
1850 and 1860 Alabama Agricultural Census.  
1860 Alabama Slave Census.  
Lowndes County Deed, Marriage, Public Lands Records. Lowndes County Courthouse.  
Owen, Thomas McAdory. Dictionary of Alabama Biography. The Reprint Company,  
Spartanburg, S.C. 1978.  
Gamble, Robert. The Alabama Catalogue. University of Alabama Press, 1987.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 14 acres (see attached tax assessor's map)

UTM References

A 

16	551980	3543000
Zone	Easting	Northing

C 

16	551620	3543090
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B 

16	551980	3543080
Zone	Easting	Northing

D 

16	551620	3543190
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Refer to red line on accompanying tax assessor's map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundaries correspond to current ownership.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Marilyn Sullivan date May 10, 1988  
organization Chambless and Associates telephone (205) 279-9881  
street & number 5720 Carmichael Rd. state Alabama zip code 36104  
city or town Montgomery

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HISTORICAL SUMMARY

In 1836 a man named John Perdue purchased, among other tracts, the SE 1/4 S9 T12 R16 from the United States Government.<sup>1</sup> He and his wife Mary held the land except for a small portion in the southeast corner of the quarter section until May 8, 1852, when they sold 100 acres to Conrad Webb for \$500.<sup>2</sup>

Three days later James Spullock Williamson married Webb's stepdaughter, Eugenia C. Read.<sup>3</sup> In June of 1852 Webb deeded the 100 acres to Williamson and his bride.<sup>4</sup>

Williamson was a son of Lowndes County's first Judge of the County Court, Peter Williamson, who emigrated from Wilkes County, Georgia, about 1819 and served the Court from 1830 until 1841.<sup>5</sup> According to the 1850 and 1860 Agricultural Census, Peter Williamson planted on only a small scale while pursuing his legal career.

James S. Williamson, however, became very successful as a planter at the height of pre-Civil War prosperity. Property records indicate he began accumulating land during the 1840s. While he does not appear in the 1850 Agricultural Census, his personal and real property was valued at \$150,000.<sup>6</sup> He farmed 900 acres and owned an additional 1600+ acres of unimproved land. Ninety-eight slaves worked Williamson's farm which, in 1860, produced, among other crops, 6,000 bushels of corn, 275 bales of cotton, 60 pounds of wool, and 1,000 bushels of sweet potatoes.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lowndes County Tract Book page 220. Lowndes County Courthouse.

<sup>2</sup> Lowndes County Deeds. Book B pages 633-634.

<sup>3</sup> Lowndes County Marriage Records page 177.

<sup>4</sup> Lowndes County Deeds. Book D pages 426-427.

<sup>5</sup> Brewer. Page 329. Owen. Vol. IV pages 1779-1780.

<sup>6</sup> 1860 Alabama Census.

<sup>7</sup> 1860 Alabama Agricultural Census.

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Williamson represented Lowndes County in the Alabama House of Representatives during the 1857-1858 term and later at the 1861 Constitutional Convention.<sup>8</sup> Entering the 14th Alabama infantry<sup>9</sup> regiment as a captain, Williamson was killed in 1862 at Frazier's Farm, Virginia.

Evidence documenting the construction date of Williamson's house in Sandy Ridge is, at this point, circumstantial. Family tradition holds that Williamson had been in his new house for only a very short time when he was killed. This seems to be substantiated by the 1860 census records which indicate Williamson and his little family were still living in the Mt. Willing Community when the census was taken. Additionally, Williamson's deed for the property was not recorded until 1858 although he actually acquired the property in 1852.<sup>10</sup> Family tradition also holds that a Mr. Hines or Hinds built the house.

At any rate, the house has been continuously owned by descendants of James S. Williamson since its construction. Hugh Read Williamson who was six when his father died passed the house to his daughter Mary Eliza (Mamie) who in turn passed it to her daughter and son-in-law, the present occupants.

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<sup>8</sup> Brewer. Page 329.

<sup>9</sup> Brewer. Page 329. Owen. Vol. IV pages 1779-1780.

<sup>10</sup> Lowndes County Deeds. Book D page 427.

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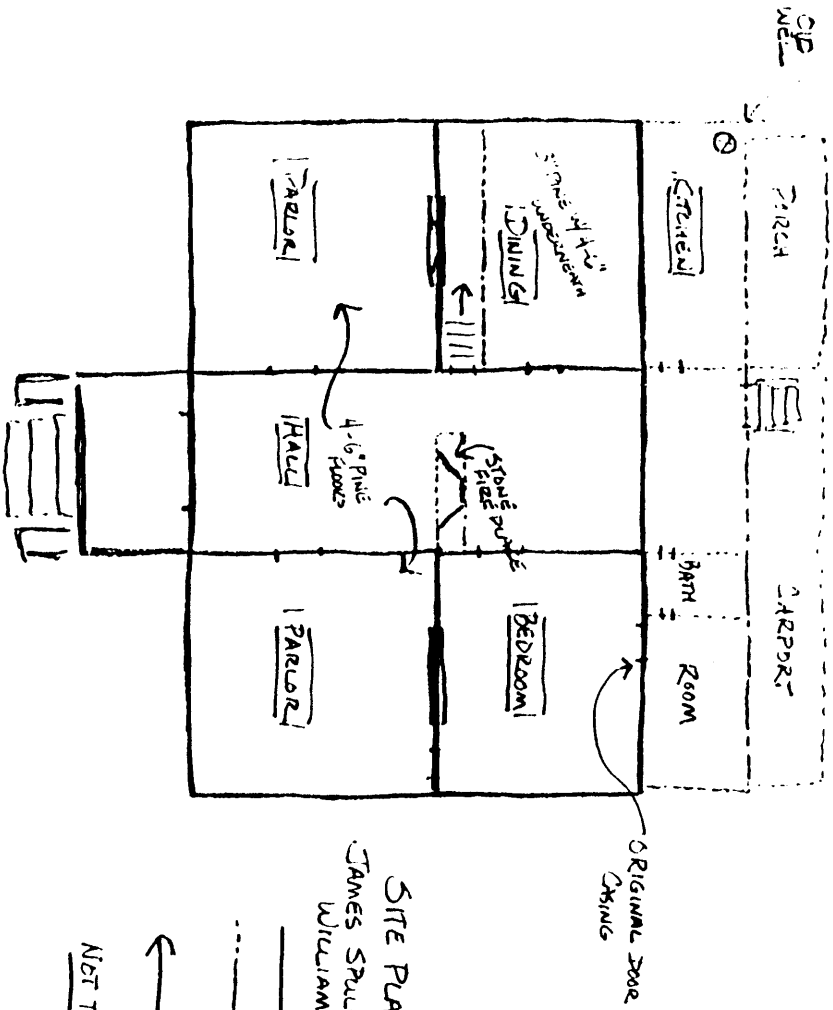
Section number 10 Page 1  
Williamson, James Spullock, House

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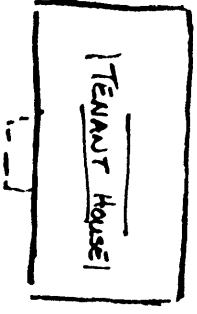
UTMs continued

E. 16/551700/3543200

F. 16/551730/3543300



SITE PLAN  
 JAMES SPRULLOCK  
 WILLIAMSON HOUSE  
 ——— ORIGINAL  
 - - - - - Addition/Alteration  
 ← NORTH  
 NOT TO SCALE



SHED

SHED

SHED

SHED

OP  
WELL

PORCH

APPROX  
ROOM

KITCHEN

DINING

TABLE

HALL

PARLOR

BED ROOM

BATH

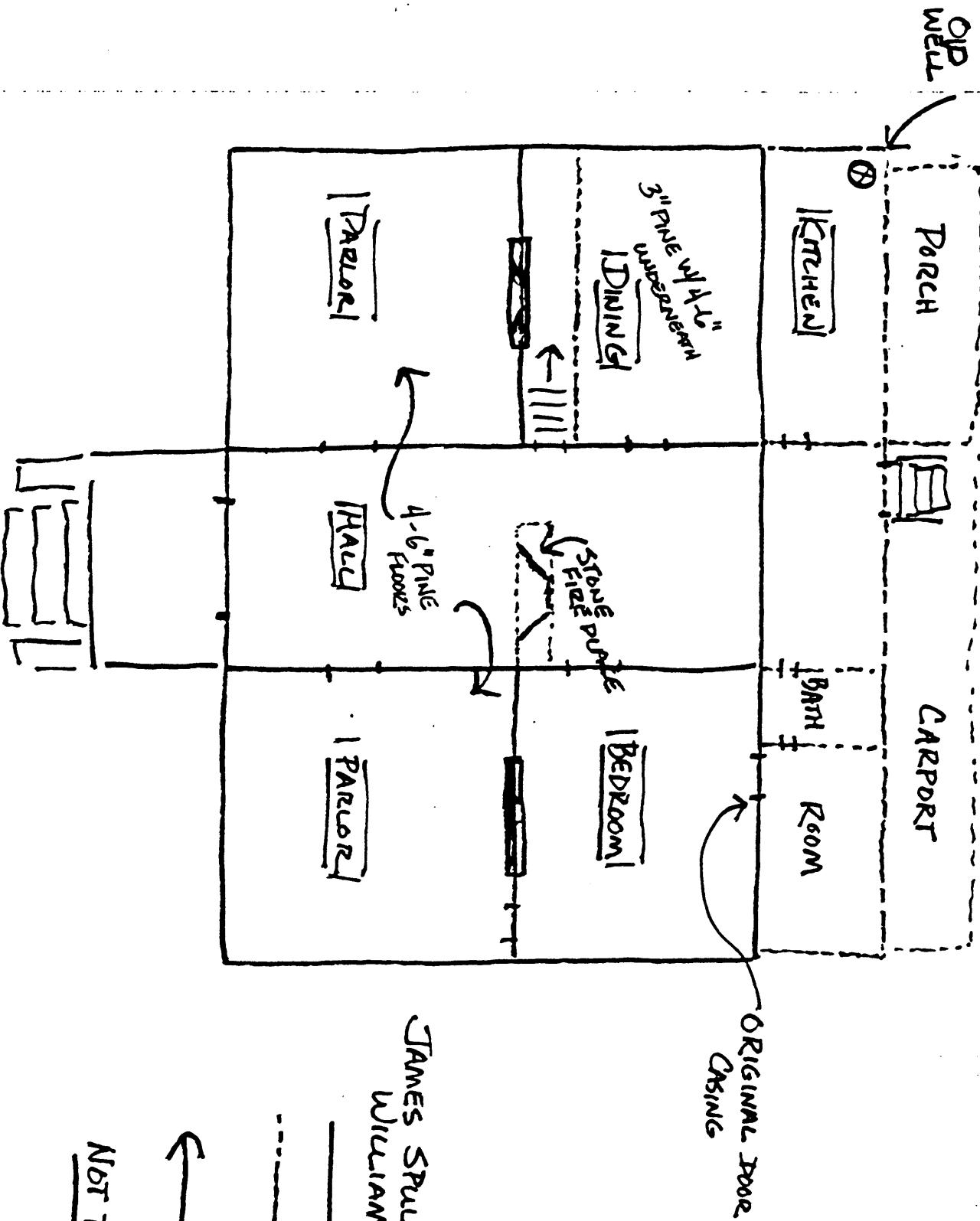
ORIGINAL DOOR  
CRACKING

4-6" PINE  
FLOOR

STONE  
SIDE  
PIECE

STAINES  
WOOD





JAMES SPULLOCK  
WILLIAMSON HOUSE

— ORIGINAL

- - - - - ADDITION/er  
ALTERATION

← NORTH

NOT TO SCALE

17 7.01  
sh, Hudson C. Jr.

07.01

200' (s)  
210' (s)  
200' (s)  
210' (s)  
158.51(d)

07.02

7.8 A.

Hayden,  
James M.

05

15.8 A.(d)

White, Edith M. &  
Geraldine W. Cawthen -  
Life Estate

Booker, Janice Carol  
Cawthen - Rem.

15

210'(s)

20'(s)

14

210'(s)

COMMUNITY  
HOUSE

16

14 A.(c)

Booker, Virginia Brooks

COUNTY RD. 30' R.O.W.

580'(s)

17

5.7 A.(c)

Stewart,  
Claire G.

480'(s)

18

450'(s)

09

6230'(s)

05

40 A.(c)

White, Edith M. &  
Geraldine W. Cawthen - Life Estate  
Booker, Janice Carol  
Cawthen - Rem.

James Spullock Williamson  
House

Merry Oaks Farm  
Sandy Ridge, Alabama  
Lowndes County

06 SANDY RIDGE  
BAPTIST CHURCH  
PARSONAGE

210' X 210'(s) PARSONAGE

1470's

02.01

5A.(c)

Company  
NEVA, C.  
460's



SCALE: 1" = 400'

45-27-05

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number photo-  
graphs Page 1

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No. 1

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Photographer unknown
- 4) c. 1910
- 5) Unknown
- 6) Front facade

No. 2

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Photographer unknown
- 4) c. 1910
- 5) Unknown
- 6) Rear facade

No. 3

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) April 1988
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Camera facing east

No. 4

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) April 1988
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Camera facing northeast

No. 5

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) April 1988
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Facade detail, camera facing east

No. 6

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Camera facing southwest

No. 7

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) View from Highway 31, camera facing east

No. 8

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Rear of house, camera facing west

No. 9

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Tenant house, camera facing southeast

No. 10

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Tenant house, camera facing southwest

No. 11

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Front entrance, camera facing southwest

No. 12

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Center hall, camera facing south

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Section number photo-  
graphs Page 2

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No. 13

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Typical millwork

No. 14

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Mantel, northwest parlor, camera facing east

No. 15

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Northwest parlor, camera facing southwest

No. 16

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Mantel, southwest parlor, camera facing southeast

No. 17

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Mantel, southeast parlor, camera facing southwest

No. 18

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Center hall facing c. 1930 fireplace and partition, camera facing east

No. 19

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Kitchen, facing old well in northeast corner, camera facing northeast

No. 20

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Typical flooring

No. 21

- 1) James S. Williamson House
- 2) Sandy Ridge Vcn., Letohatchee, Alabama
- 3) Marilyn Sullivan
- 4) Summer 1987
- 5) Chambless & Associates
- 6) Dado detail, center hall