

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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 U. S. Sugar Crop Field Station

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Sonny Montgomery Industrial Pky at Peavy Dr. N/A not for publication

city, town Meridian vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Lauderdale code 75 zip code 39301

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
<u>6</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
<u>1</u>	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>7</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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.

Kenneth H. P. Pool

Signature of certifying official
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Nov. 30, 1990
Date

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.

Melvin Byrum **Entered in the National Register** 1/11/91

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

fu
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Subsistence:

Vacant/Not in use

Horticultural Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

foundation Brick and concrete

Bungalow/Craftsman

walls Brick, Stucco, Wood

No Style

roof Slate, Synthetics

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The former U. S. Sugar Crop Field Station is located at the corner of Sonny Montgomery Industrial Parkway and Peavy Drive about two miles northeast of Meridian. The Field Station began with 36.55 acres in the 1930s and by 1983 consisted of 160 acres. The Station was closed in 1983 and the property that remained with station complex now measures 487 1/2 feet north and south by 525 feet east and west, about 5.87 acres.

The station complex contains six buildings and a muscadine arbor. The buildings were built by the Public Works Administration from 1933 through 1935. The oldest building is the original Administration Office and Laboratory, built in 1933.

The following inventory of buildings and objects of the Field Station property will correspond to the numerical listing on the site plan.

1. Original administrative and laboratory building built in 1933. (After 1935 it was used only as a laboratory.) The building has six-over-one, double-hung windows. The wood-lap siding is covered with nonhistoric corrugated metal panels. The entrance is on the east facade with a triangular-pediment having wooden brackets. The door is six-lights over two panels. The low-pitched, side gable roof has wide eave overhangs. The gables are on the north and south facades. Bungalow/Craftsman (Photo 1).
2. The greenhouse was built ca. 1934 of brick and glass on a concrete slab. The north, east and west facades have six-over-six, double-hung windows. The entrance on the north facade has a triangular-pediment with wood brackets. The door is four-lights, over two panels. The back two-thirds of the building is brick with metal framing and glass. Bungalow/Craftsman (Photo 2).

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)
Agriculture

Period of Significance
1931-1940

Significant Dates

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.

The significance of the U. S. Sugar Crop Field Station lies in the contribution the research conducted at the Meridian Station made to Southern farmers. Farmers were able to use the information on improved growing techniques to produce a higher quality product at lower cost. The American consumer would benefit because high quality sirup* was made available at a more competitive price (U.S. Sugar Crops Field Station, Meridian, MS, Agriculture/2000, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture). The research began in 1931 and continued until 1983. The period of significance for the Sugar Station is from 1931, when the Station began as a horticultural experiment station doing research on a variety of crops, to 1940, by which time the station was specializing in research on sugar crops. Research was conducted on sugarcane and sweet sorghum for sirup production and granulated sugar. As a result, twelve sweet sorghum varieties and three sugarcane varieties superior to the ones that they replaced were released to farmers. Three sugarcane and six sorghum varieties were developed for sirup production. Five high sucrose varieties were developed for potential sugar production. The research was conducted to provide superior yield and disease-resistant crops. Genetic material of more than 4,000 sweet sorghum lines were collected from throughout the world and stored at the Station to develop breeding stock and varieties to be used in diverse growing conditions. The research at the Station not only was used by Southern farmers but also in developing countries to meet the world's food needs.

The Field Station began in 1931 as a horticultural experiment station doing research with pecans, muscadines, grapes, sweet potatoes, peaches, pears, dewberries, asparagus, tomatoes, strawberries and sugar-cane. With influence from Congressman Ross Collins, the Field Station

* Historical spelling as used by agronomists in research.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.

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 Approximately 5 acres

UTM References

A

1	6	3	4	8	3	9	0	3	5	8	7	0	0	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is bound on the north by Sonny Montgomery Industrial Parkway, runs south 487 1/2 feet. Bound on the west by Peavey Drive and runs east 525 feet. (See enclosed site map).

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes greenhouse, storage shed, labs and administrative buildings, pump house and foreman's house that have historically been part of the Field Station and that have maintained historic integrity. The remaining acreage of the property has been excluded because it has been subdivided and developed into an industrial park.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Fonda K. Rush, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization _____ date December 30, 1989

street & number Route 1, Box 569 telephone 601-482-3356

city or town Meridian state Mississippi zip code 39301

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U.S. SUGAR CROP FIELD STATION, MERIDIAN, LAUDERDALE, MISSISSIPPI
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3. Storage shed with a low-pitched, side-gabled roof was built ca. 1934. Wooden lap-siding is covered with nonhistoric sheet metal panels. Nine entrances on the west facade have over-head doors. The gables are on the north and south ends. No Style (Photo 3).
4. The muscadine arbor is all that remains of the muscadine vineyard used for research. Muscadines were one of the crops used in early research at the station.
5. The well and pump house were built in the late 1930s. They replace a metal pump house and water tower built in 1933. Part of the original water tower base is in the interior of the pump house. This base is used as part of the roof support system. The well house is wood lap-siding with a low-pitched hipped roof. The pump house is brick on a concrete slab. The windows are six-over-six, double hung. The roof is low-pitched hipped. The entrance is on the north and west facades with paneled doors. The pump house was used to pump and purify water that came from a 20,000 gallon cistern. The pump house was also connected to the irrigation system that ran underground throughout the Field Station. Colonial Revival (Photo 4).
6. Foreman's house (caretaker's) built ca. 1934, is wood lap-siding on a brick foundation. The windows are six-over-six, double-hung and one-over-one, double-hung. The roof is cross-gabled having exposed rafter tails. The front porch has square columns with wooden brackets and balustrade. The west facade entrance has been replaced with a nonhistoric, three-light door. Bungalow/Craftsman (Photo 5).
7. 1935 office, laboratory and cold storage building is a two-story, brick and stucco Colonial Revival. The windows are six-over-six, double hung and eight-over-eight, double-hung having keystone and brick lintels. The corners and east facade entrance have brick quoins. The roof is a low-pitched hipped, slate with two brick chimneys. The main entrance has a segmental-pediment with fluted pilasters on the east facade. A four-light transom is over a eight-light, double door and wooden screens. Concrete steps with metal railings lead to the entrance. A copper lantern is

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hung above the entrance (Photo 6). Two entrances are on the west facade, one single door with eight lights and an eight-light, double door having a six-light transom. On the north, south and west facades there are gabled dormers for air ventilation (Photo 8, 9, 10). The building was used as the main laboratory for research at the Station. The upper floor was office, labs and dark room. The basement (lower floor) was used for cold storage, weighing, labs and steam heating system. The interior walls are clay tile with plaster. The flooring on both levels is concrete, as are the stairways. Colonial Revival (Photo 6, 7, 8, 9).

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U.S. SUGAR CROP FIELD STATION, MERIDIAN, LAUDERDALE, MISSISSIPPI
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was authorized by an act of Congress. Congressman Collins was interested in helping area farmers with better crop production and local economy. This was during the Depression of the 1930s when most of the farmers in East Central Mississippi were small truck farmers and crops were grown to supplement family incomes and food. The research was begun to provide farmers with varieties that produced high crop yields with disease resistance.

One of the major staples of the Southern farm family was sugarcane or sorghum sirup. These crops were also grown for commercial production of sirup and granulated sugar. Sugar crops investigation started in Meridian in 1931. Sugarcane varieties were brought from Cairo, Georgia, and planted in a field at the Station. As the cane began to thrive in conditions found favorable in Lauderdale County, the U.S. Department of Agriculture established a Sugar Crop Station on the west end of the Horticultural Station. As experimentation and research on sugar crops increased, all acreage would be used for sugar research.

Sweet sorghum seed arrived at the station in May 1938. Sweet sorghum had been recognized as a potential source of sugar but was never grown commercially for granulated sugar. The U.S. Department of Agriculture began research on sweet sorghum for granulated sugar at the Field Station during World War II, when much of the world's supply of sugar was disrupted.

The U.S.D.A. Station was part of the Southern Region, Delta States Area of the Agricultural Research Service. The Station employed four scientists, a geneticist, two agronomists, a plant pathologist and agricultural technicians that worked together to produce high quality sirup and sugar at more competitive prices for farmers. To conduct this research, exploring parties were sent to Africa for breeding materials. They brought back 2,000 varieties and began to expand their search to other parts of the world. Special Foreign Currency Sweet Sorghum Research was begun with India in 1981 to develop high sucrose sweet sorghum varieties for sugar production. The Field Station also conducted cooperative investigations with 26 stations in fifteen states.

In the 1970's biomass or alcohol production was begun using sugarcane and sorghum as a means for fuel. This research continued until the Station closed in 1983. The research was then moved to the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station at Newton, Mississippi.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture closed the Meridian Station in 1983 due to increase cost of maintenance. After the closing of the Station, the property was turned over to the Lauderdale County Board Supervisors. The Board sold the property to Peavey Electronics, who has plans for utilizing existing buildings as a museum relating to both the Sugar Station and to Peavey Electronics.

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U.S. Sugar Crop Field Station, Meridian, Lauderdale, Mississippi

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Bibliographical References:

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Broadhead, Dempsey M. "History of U.S. Sugar Crop Field Station, Meridian, Mississippi, 1931-1984." and "Research at the U. S. Sugar Crop Field Station, Meridian, Mississippi." Personal Papers.

Blount, Clyde L. "Sorgo, Millet Crops Compared In Silage Study." Mississippi (State College) Farm Research. Vol. 17, No.2, February, 1954.

Coleman, Otto H. Agronomist, U. S. Sugar Crop Field Station, Meridian, Mississippi, 1942-45, 1947-1970. Interviewed by Fonda K. Rush, Historic Preservation Consultant. November 3, 1989.

Coleman, Otto H. and Dempsey M. Broadhead. "New Variety of Sweet Sorghum Resists Lodging". Mississippi (State College) Farm Research. Vol.31, No. 4, April, 1968.

Gossard, A.C. Photographs Pertaining to the History of U. S. Horticultural Field Station, 1933 to 1964. Personal Collection.

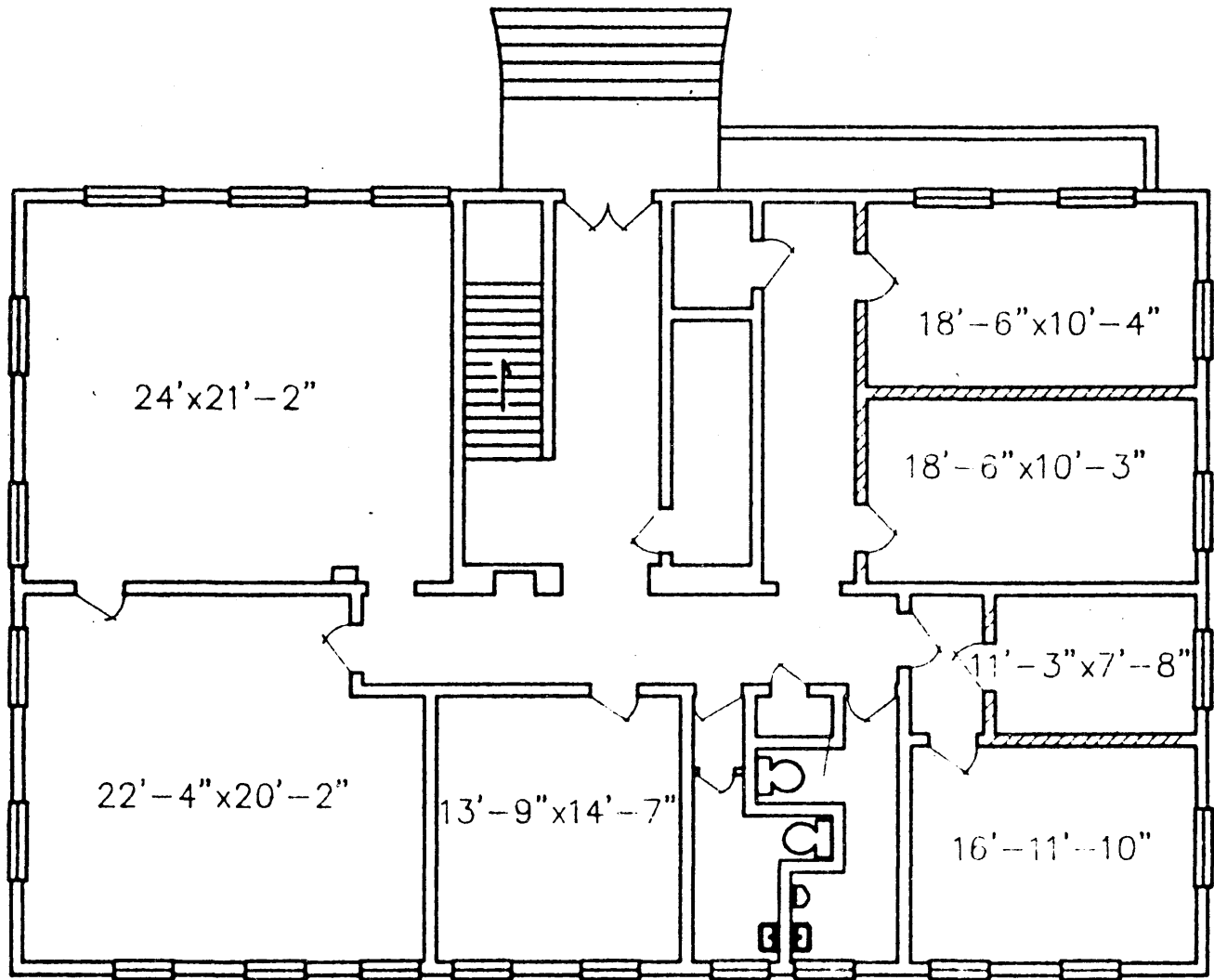
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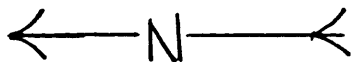
United States. Department of Agricultural, Agricultural Research Service. U. S. Sugar Crop Field Station, Meridian, Mississippi. Agricultural/2000.

United States. Department of Agricultural. Agricultural Research Service. Report of Excess for the U. S. Sugar Crops Field Station, Meridian, Mississippi. October 15, 1984.

1935 Administration and Laboratory Building



UPPER LEVEL



SHEET NO.



PEAVEY ELECTRONICS CORP.
P.O. BOX 2898
MERIDIAN, MS 39301

DESCRIPTION:

U. S. SUGAR CROP FIELD STATION

DRAWN: TDG

MATERIAL:

FILE NAME:

CHECKED:

VP9\GBH

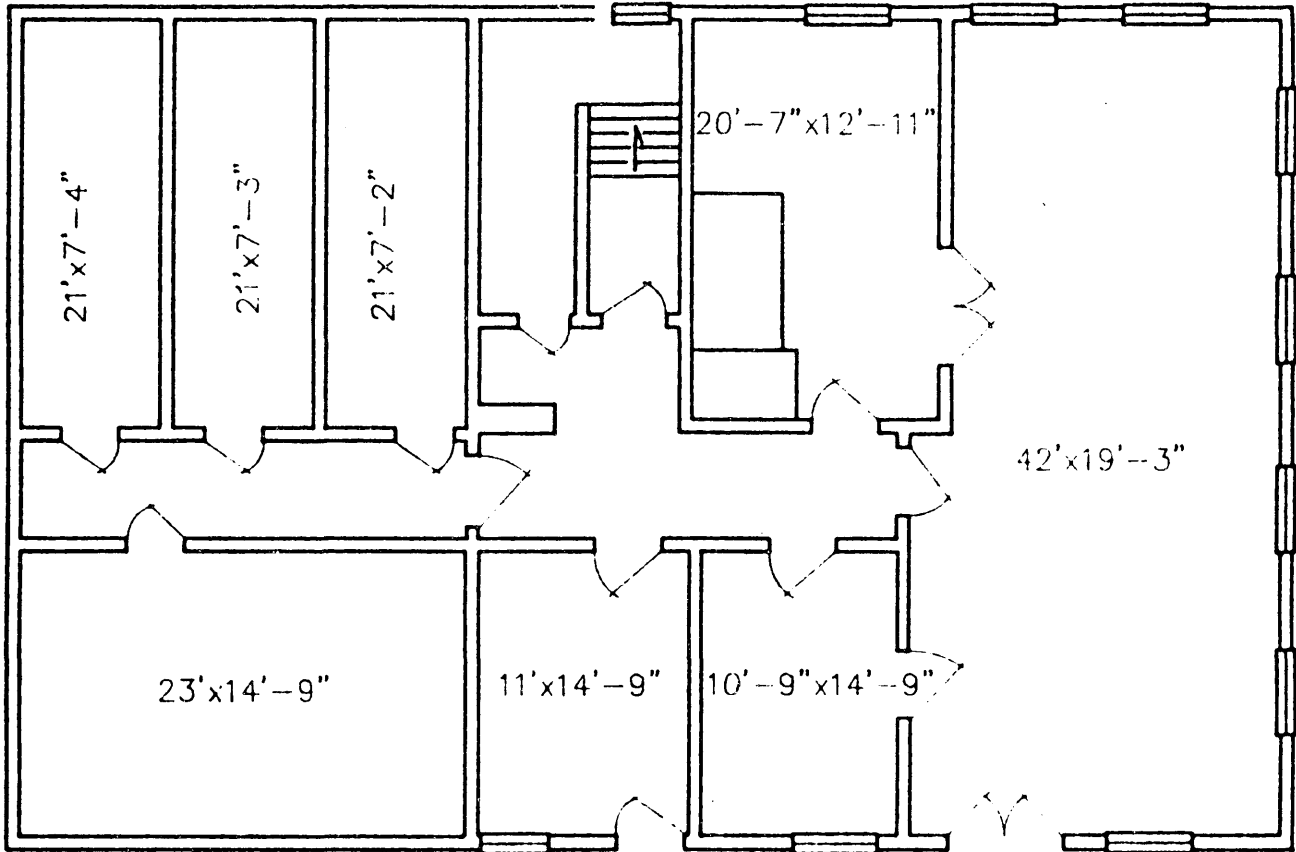
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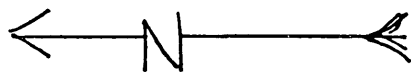
DRAWING NUMBER.

DATE: 11/6/89

1935 Administration and Laboratory Building



LOWER LEVEL



SHEET NO.



PEAVEY ELECTRONICS CORP.
P.O. BOX 2898
MERIDIAN, MS 39301

DESCRIPTION:

U.S. SUGAR CROP FIELD STATION

DRAWN: TDG

MATERIAL:

FILE NAME:

CHECKED:

VP9\GBH

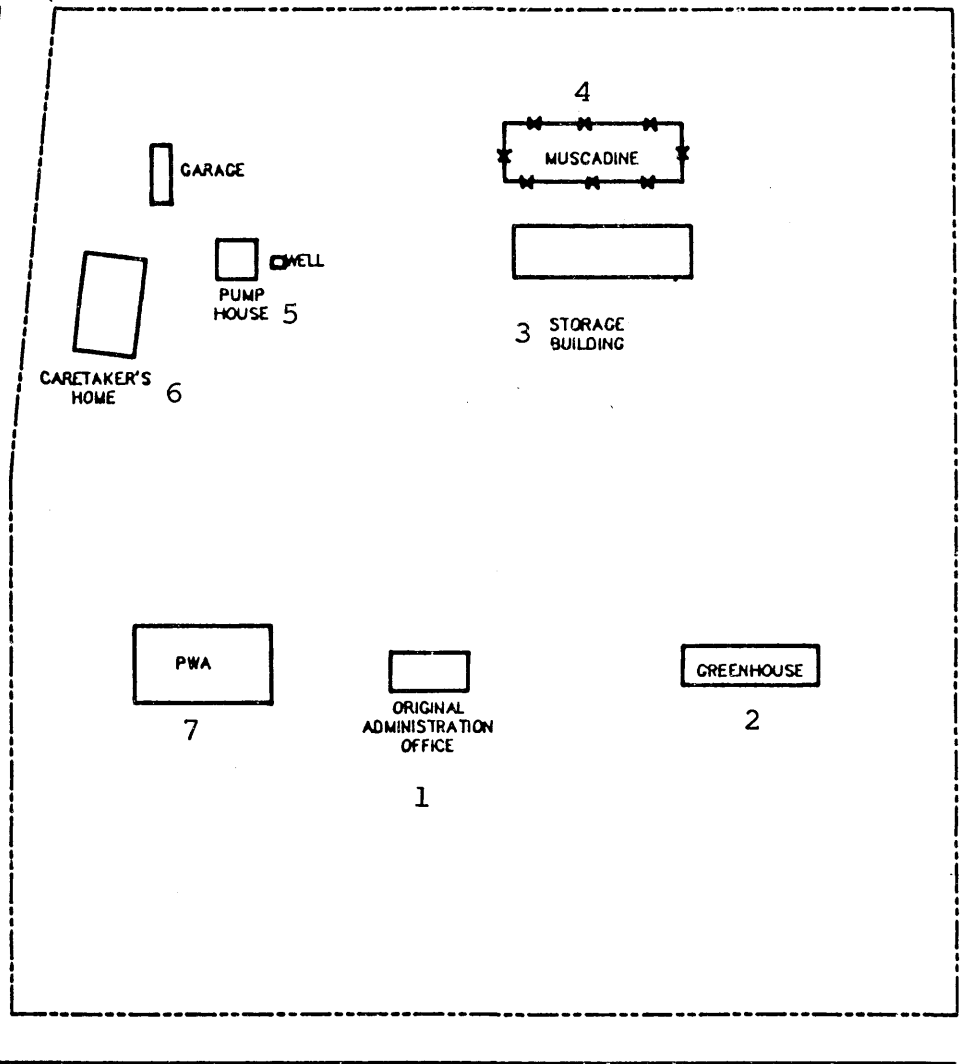
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USED ON:

DRAWING NUMBER

DATE: 11/6/89

SONNY MONTGOMERY INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY



PEAVEY DRIVE



SITE PLAN

SHEET NO.



PEAVEY ELECTRONICS CORP.
P.O. BOX 2898
MERIDIAN, MS 39301

DESCRIPTION:

U.S. SUGAR CROP FIELD STATION

DRAWN:	MATERIAL:	FILE NAME:
CHECKED:		
SCALE: 1"=100'	USED ON:	DRAWING NUMBER
DATE:		