

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Resub
Rename

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Jemison School

Other names/site number: Dr. John R. & Sarah Drish House; Monroe Place

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 2300 Seventeenth Street

City or town: Tuscaloosa State: AL County: Tuscaloosa

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B C ___ D

See Anne Wofford /Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer 1/26/2015

Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ Date

Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

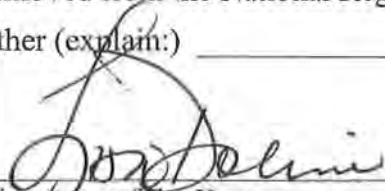
Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

3/17/15
Date of Action

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

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

EDUCATION/School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not in Use

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY/Greek Revival

MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY/Italian Villa

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: foundation: brick
walls: brick;
roof: asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Located on the south side of downtown Tuscaloosa, the Jemison School (formerly the John R. and Sarah Drish House) features attributes from Greek Revival and Italianate architecture. The early nineteenth-century former residence is constructed of brick, wood, plaster, and stone. The school, also known as "Monroe Place," is situated on a 221 foot wide, circular lot located at the hub of a series of radiating streets. Rising to a height of two stories with a three-story tower, the building measures 61' 2" across the façade (north and south elevations); 67' 10 1/2" deep; and 60' high (ground elevation to the top of the tower). The vacant building has not one but two monumental porticos. The Jemison School retains overall integrity in terms of workmanship, design, materials, location, feeling, and association.

Constructed in 1837 as the residence of John Drish and his family, the former school building is located at 2300 Seventeenth Street in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This location is at the heart of the historic Southside neighborhood just twelve blocks south of downtown Tuscaloosa. Southside is defined by Interstate 359 to the west, 15th Street to the north and the intersection of

Jemison School

Tuscaloosa County, AL

Name of Property

County and State

Interstate 359 and the Southern Railroad. The Southside neighborhood is characterized by late nineteenth- to mid-twentieth century-residences, contemporary professional office space and warehouses, an early twentieth century-commercial strip located on Greensboro Avenue, and late nineteenth- to mid-twentieth century religious buildings. The building's circular lot is at the heart of the Southside neighborhood.

The exterior walls of the building are constructed of bricks, as are the portico columns and pilaster bases (Mellown 2001:61). John R. Drish's craftsmen hand crafted these bricks. His craftsmen carved the stone capitals featured at the top of the Tuscan pilasters (Mellown 2001:61). The original stucco coating the exterior of the walls, columns, and pilasters was stripped and restuccoed in the 1940s (Mellown 2001:87).

At the very crown of the former Drish House is an asphalt shingle-covered hip roof. Exterior appointments include fascia and soffit boards. Wide eaves wrap around all four sides of the roof. Presently the eaves lack stylistic details. Beneath the asphalt shingles and plywood decking is a structural support system consisting of hand-hewn and fastened king posts and hip rafters. Additionally, the framing system consists of common rafters and purlins (Mellown 2001:57).

A distinctive three-story Italianate tower visually divides the north façade into three sections. Built circa 1860 to 1862, the tower rises approximately 60' from the ground to the peak of its hip roof. Like the main roof of the house, the tower roof features wide eaves that wrap around all four sides of the structure. The eaves are decorated with brackets. Egg and dart molding and composite ornaments accentuate the spaces between the brackets. These decorative details rest atop four Ionic pilasters, one pilaster set at each corner of the third-story tower room. Arches resting atop additional Ionic pilasters define the walls between each of the corner pilasters. Once encasing windows, these arcuated openings were enclosed with brick in the early twentieth century.

The second story of the tower features only two arch top voids (now encased in brick). They face north. The west and east side walls are solid while the south side wall has two openings that access the second floor interior of the building.

Arches define three sides of the tower's first story. Single open arches in the west and east walls permit lateral movement across the full extent of the house's northern monumental portico. The tower lacks a south side wall, making the main entrance to the building visible through the three open arches. An arcade featuring a central open arch and two enclosed flanking arches marks the north wall. Above the arcade, a denticulated cornice delineates the division between the first and second floors.

The central component of the main entrance, or frontispiece, is a double leaf paneled door. Sidelights with inset panels, decorative corner blocks, and fluted moldings flank the doors. In turn, fluted Doric pilasters stand on either side of the sidelights. Above the door in succession are a transom and a pediment, the crowning piece of the composition. The double doors were

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

added by the Southside Baptist Church during remodeling in the 1940s and 1950s (Mellown 2001:60).

The fenestration on either side of the tower consists of two windows per floor. Covered with plywood, the windows date to the 1950s. The stone window sills are original, however.

Five pilasters divide the west elevation into four bays. On the second floor, three windows occupy spaces between the pilasters. On the first story, four windows punctuate the wall mass. Like the north façade, the windows have protective plywood covers.

Similar design principles determine the composition of the east elevation; however, four, not five, pilasters exist on the east side. The space between each pilaster features a window on the second story. Bay openings on the first enclose two doors and one window.

Like the north façade, the south side of the building has a colossal portico. The portico consists of an engaged roof, two pilasters, and six Tuscan columns. In addition to supporting the roof, the columns and pilasters visually frame the five-over-five bay façade. On the second story, two windows flank either side of a central window/jib door. The windows are appointed with stone lintels, drip edges, and a protective sheet of plywood. The second-story fenestration pattern repeats on the first story. In this instance, two windows flank either side of a central door. The door has a transom but no sidelights.

The first floor interior of the former school building contains five rooms. The largest of them, measuring 55' 8 ½" wide and 24' 0 ½" deep, is a former auditorium. It extends across the width of the north side of the house (Ayers 1940). This large space was once divided into three rooms: a parlor, a sitting room and, a hall, which extended the full depth of the house (HABS 1934; Mellown 2001:67). The Southside Baptist Church removed the interior walls, supported the second floor with I beams, and created the auditorium (Mellown 2001:67; Ayers 1940).

The remaining rooms on the first floor include three former classrooms and a center stairwell. Located in the southwest corner, the largest of the three classrooms measures 19' 6" wide and 18' deep. A wide opening in the north wall of this room, originally a parlor, permits traffic flow between the auditorium and classroom. An opening featuring a single leaf door in the east wall permits traffic flow between the classroom and the central hall.

The central hall measures 13' 9 ½" wide and 18' deep. At its south end is a door way (the aforementioned central door of the south face), which facilitates ingress/egress to/from the south portico. An opening in the north wall of the hall leads to the auditorium, and one in the east wall to the other two classrooms. The central corridor houses twin stairs. They rise to a landing and from there a central single flight of stairs rises to the second floor. Built prior to 1934, the stairwell replaced the original "unique double elliptical staircase that swept up in two sensuous curves to a landing where, making a reverse curve, they joined into a single flight to the second floor" (Mellown 2001:67).

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Formerly, the southeast corner room of the first floor measured 20' 3" wide and 18' deep (HABS 1934). The Southside Baptist Church converted the former dining room into two classrooms via the construction of a 6" partition wall (Mellown 2001:69; Ayers 1940).

First floor interior finishes include wood and plaster. "The floors on both levels of the mansion are heart pine. The original flooring is still intact underneath the present quarter sawn oak floors installed in the 1940s" (Mellown 2001:67). Windows and doors feature fluted side trim and architraves and corner block paterae. Plaster covers walls. Lath work in the ceiling of the auditorium is visible, the plaster having been removed by the Southside Baptist Church (Mellown 2001:88). Southside replaced the plaster with acoustic tiles. The tiles are no longer intact.

Like the first story, the second story once featured a double pile floor plan: two rooms flanked either side of a central hall (HABS 1934). The Southside Baptist Church eliminated the central hall and flanking rooms (Mellown 2001:90; Ayers 1940). In their place, the Church built central assembly rooms, flanking halls, and classrooms along the outer walls. This room layout remains intact today. The present two-panel doors with frosted glass and hopper transoms in the classrooms were added during the Church's alterations.

The Jemison School (formerly the Dr. John R. and Sarah Drish House) retains overall architectural integrity. The original footprint, brick and masonry work, carpentry work, fenestration pattern, Greek Revival monumental porticos, entrance compositions, and Italianate tower and details remain intact.

Archaeology Component

While no archaeological survey has been undertaken on this property, the possibility of subsurface remains that would help us understand and interpret the history of the Drish family remains high.

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Education

Period of Significance
1906-1925

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Drish, Dr. John R.

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Jemison School is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of education. Originally the residence of the locally prominent physician, builder and plantation owner John R. Drish, the mansion was turned into an elementary school from 1906 to 1925. Much of its exterior and interior appearance dates from that time period. Compared to other communities in Alabama, Tuscaloosa was late to establish a public school system, not doing so until 1885. Once established, the system was not well supported and was heavily in debt by the 1890s. Tuscaloosans committed themselves to improving and expanding their public school system in the early 1900s. The establishment of Jemison School in the former Drish House was an important step in this process.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Education

The Alabama legislature established a state public school system in 1854 at the behest of Baptist and Methodist ministers in the Black Belt. Natives of New England who remembered the good public schools back home, these ministers hoped to bring quality education to their adopted state. It would take another thirty years, however, for Tuscaloosa to create a public school system for its children.

Founded in 1819 as the county seat of Tuscaloosa County, the town also served as the state capitol from 1826 to 1845. The University of Alabama came to Tuscaloosa around 1830. Bryce Hospital for the Insane, a leading mental health facility at the time, was founded here in the 1850s. Located in the Black Belt along the Black Warrior River, Tuscaloosa was also the center of a large plantation region.

Many of its citizens valued education but were wealthy enough to send their children to private and religious schools. These were generally good institutions and along with the university, they established Tuscaloosa as “an educational center” in west central Alabama (*Tuscaloosa Times Gazette* 7 October 1907).

Tuscaloosa established its segregated public school system in 1885 with 447 black and white students. Mayor W. C. Jemison served as the school board’s first president. He sent members of the board to Birmingham and Atlanta to study their public school systems as preparation in developing one for Tuscaloosa.

Thus, Tuscaloosa joined a statewide trend in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in which city school systems were established under local boards. The local boards fell under the general direction of the state superintendent of education. And the schools made some progress.

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Across Alabama, longer school terms and the standardization of grading and textbooks were adopted. Better designed school buildings and better educated teachers contributed to educational progress as well. The state also began taking steps to develop a public high school system. State spending on public education grew from \$275,000 in 1870 to over one million dollars by 1900. That amount doubled by 1914. Alabama's entire educational system, including Tuscaloosa, however, still had a long way to go.

This is partly because the state legislature continued to grant charters allowing anyone to open a school. There were no accreditation standards to be met and no regulations defining a school as opposed to an academy or a seminary. Any individual could establish a school, give it a name, plan its curriculum and set the tuition and rules for the institution. The course of study was generally classical, including Latin, Greek, rhetoric, algebra and geometry. Secondary education barely existed in the state, but Alabama still established normal (teacher training) schools for both whites and blacks.

Unsurprisingly, the state had a hodgepodge of unregulated schools at the turn of the century: public, private, religious or denominational, agricultural and mechanical, normal and state colleges. But what it did not have was a compulsory school attendance law, as did many Northern states. Furthermore, while in 1890 the national average educational expenditure per student was \$2.84, Alabama was spending only fifty-nine cents per pupil. Alabama certainly met the historian C. Vann Woodward's description of Southern schools as being "miserably supported, poorly attended, wretchedly taught and wholly inadequate" (as quoted in Wayne Flynt, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*).

Tuscaloosa, unfortunately, illustrated this situation. According to the *Tuscaloosa Times Gazette* (7 October 1907 issue), the 1880s were boom years in Tuscaloosa and the growing prosperity of the community fostered a variety of civic projects that would never have been considered otherwise. For Tuscaloosa's elite (whose children were enrolled in private and religious schools) public education was just such a project. A white elementary school was established in the former antebellum home of Prof. and Mrs. Stafford in 1885-1886. Known as Stafford School, it occupied "four large and two small rooms" in the antebellum house. This was viewed as "philanthropy" by the town's leading citizens who believed that "it was . . . right and proper to provide cheap education for those who needed that kind."

Consequently, in many ways the city's public schools did not receive the support they needed. By the 1890s, the school system was drowning in debt. This forced a retrenchment in which the number of school facilities was drastically cut for both white and black students. The high school was discontinued. Tuscaloosa's public school system limped along for several years. By 1900, it needed more school buildings, but there was no money for construction. Either classroom space was carved out of the extant schools (such as from an assembly hall) and/or additions were built. Tuscaloosa hit bottom in the 1903-1904 school year when its city schools recorded the lowest enrollment they'd ever had and the smallest number of teachers ever employed. To many Tuscaloosans, the collapse of their public school system seemed imminent.

Jemison School

Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL

County and State

Other members of the community, however, would not give up so easily. The teachers were the backbone of the public school system and did everything in their power to keep the school doors open. Various members of the school board in the early twentieth century funded the system with their own money. William C. Jemison, the owner of the *Tuscaloosa Times* and a staunch supporter of public education, defended and encouraged the continued existence of the city schools through his newspaper.

Slowly, the community and the county rallied to the cause. In 1904, the voters of Tuscaloosa County approved a one mill tax for education. Tuscaloosa was expanding out to the east and the south of downtown by this time. Undoubtedly, some of this tax money was used to purchase "the Drish place" on Twenty-third Avenue in south Tuscaloosa. Christened the Jemison School, the building added five "grade rooms", four of which were immediately put to use in 1906-1907 as a white elementary school for grades 1 through 4. Considering the dire straits into which Tuscaloosa's school system had fallen, a new elementary school in the old Drish House symbolized a new beginning. Jemison School remained in this building from 1906 to 1925, where the first through the fourth or fifth grades were generally taught.

Miss Belle Strickland who had been a Tuscaloosa public school teacher since 1885 became the first principal of the Jemison School. She held this position until her marriage to Hamilton Woodruff in 1916 forced her into retirement. She created a well-run school in the old Drish House. The children were generally working class or poor, but their principal encouraged them to learn, introducing the arts and music into their lives. Miss Strickland was very involved with her students and their parents. She visited their families and assisted them in any way she could, even finding jobs for those who were seeking work. According to one of her contemporaries, Mrs. Bruce Brosius, Strickland's "loyalty, faithfulness, and unselfishness has [sic] left a lasting impression, and the personal visits which she made into the homes will never be forgotten. Miss Strickland was not only an educator but a character builder, and the position which she filled as principal of Jemison School was one of the most important in the school system at that time" (*The Tuscaloosa News* 10 March 1931).

It was during its tenure as an elementary school that the antebellum Drish House underwent major changes such as the removal of both the main staircase in the hall and the tower's spiral staircase. The former was replaced with a utilitarian staircase that is still extant. The removal of the mansion's marble mantles also probably occurred during this period. On the exterior, the balconies and the two-tier, iron galleries were removed. The pinnacle of the tower deteriorated to such a point that school officials removed it, but did not replace it. Many of these actions undoubtedly were undertaken to make the building safer for children. Others were probably just the most cost effective way to handle the problem.

Tuscaloosa's public school facilities continued to expand. In 1906-1907, white elementary students filled up "thirteen large and three small rooms" in schools across the city. A new high school building was constructed in 1910-1911. This would become the only high school in the county meeting the entrance requirements established by the Southern Association of Colleges. Consequently, any student in the county focused on a college career had to attend this high school. The following year, a new elementary school was built in west Tuscaloosa and music

Jemison School

Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL

County and State

classes were introduced into the public school curricula. The city established a public school for the first four grades in east Tuscaloosa in 1914 in the former Searcy-Somerville Infirmary. That school, known as the East End School, was relocated to the old Methodist College building and back again to the infirmary over several years. Along the way, it acquired a fifth grade and was renamed the Verner School. Tuscaloosa's original white elementary school, Stafford, was the only public elementary school teaching classes above the fifth grade level.

Most of the schools, including Jemison, needed more classrooms by 1914. Tuscaloosa's public school system had started out with only 447 students (both black and white) in 1885-1886. In the 1903-1904 school year, student enrollment fell to its lowest numbers ever. A decade later, though, in 1912-1913 enrollment had grown to 1,497 pupils. In 1920, it topped two thousand. By 1930, the student population would more than double to 4,480.

These developments in Tuscaloosa mirrored statewide efforts in education, including the establishment of a high school system across Alabama and improvements in school buildings. The Alabama legislature in 1915 passed a compulsory school attendance law. Although it was not stringently enforced, the law was a step in the right direction and may have helped to boost public school enrollment. Other legislative reforms in the 1910s included the creation of county school districts overseen by superintendents, new taxes to fund education and the enactment of a school code. These improvements were spurred by Alabamians' embarrassment over having one of the highest illiteracy rates in the country, the failure of many of the state's draftees to pass intelligence tests given by the military during World War I and by the findings of the Sage report. Governor Charles Henderson requested the Russell Sage Foundation of New York to study quality of life issues in Alabama and report on them. The study was released to the public in December 1918. In terms of education, it noted that the state's public schools suffered from underfunding, neglect and inequity. Alabama was dead last in educational efficiency according to the U.S. Commissioner of Education.

Tuscaloosa's educational and civic leaders embarked on an aggressive school building program in the early 1920s after convincing the town's citizens of its necessity. The West End and the Stafford elementary schools were renovated and received new additions. A new Verner School was built in east Tuscaloosa. In 1925, the Jemison School was relocated from the Drish House into a new school building where it was renamed Southside School. This new building was considered to be one of the best school buildings in the city. Both the junior high and the senior high schools also gained new buildings that year. The curriculum of Tuscaloosa Senior High School reportedly made it one of the best schools in the country at this time. On the eve of the Great Depression, Tuscaloosa boasted four elementary schools and a one-room school for the Kaul Lumber Company neighborhood, a junior high school and a senior high school for its white students. The schools for black students were being well maintained with additions, renovations and new buildings being added as needed. The school system had strengthened its curricula and added art, music and health education. Each school was also better equipped.

The founding of an elementary school in the antebellum Drish House was an important stepping stone in the gradual improvement of Tuscaloosa's white public school system. Since very few of Alabama's children attended high school, their early years of education became even more

Jemison School

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Name of Property

important. Jemison School represents the commitment of a determined group of local citizens to revitalize and improve educational opportunities for their children even though it was an uphill struggle.

Historical Context

The following context is excerpted from Dr. Robert Mellow's *Historic Structures Report, John R. Drish House, 2300 17th Street, Tuscaloosa, Alabama* (2001).

Dr. John R. Drish built the Drish Mansion, "Monroe Place," in 1837 as the nucleus of a working plantation. Eventually, with the expansion of Tuscaloosa in the late 1880s, it was transformed into a suburban house isolated on a circular lot from its former fields and pastures. The construction and subsequent changes made to the Drish Mansion reflect the desires and aspirations of some of the most interesting early settlers of Tuscaloosa and their descendants. The following pages chronicle the lives of the people who lived in this house from its construction in 1837 until 1906 when it was transformed into a city school building.

Charles Drish (b. ca. 1763/ d. Aug. 14, 1837, Blount Springs, Alabama) was the patriarch of the branch of the family that immigrated to Tuscaloosa in 1822. His vocation in Leesburg [Virginia] has not been discovered, but it is likely that he was a landowner and businessman of some sort. His family consisted of his wife, Susanna (b. ca. 1785?/ d. Oct. 4, 1835, Tuscaloosa, Ala.), one son, and four daughters (United States Government 1820; United States Government 1830; and West 1893:315). Drish's children's marriages aligned the family with some of the most prominent families in Virginia and in early Tuscaloosa.

His son, John R. Drish (b. 1795 Loudoun Co., Va./ d. 1867 Tuscaloosa, buried Greenwood Cem. Tuscaloosa), had trained as a doctor before marrying on October 20, 1818, Catherine Washington, the daughter of Washington John Washington, a resident of neighboring Prince William County. After their marriage Dr. Drish may have practiced medicine there, for the 1820 Virginia census lists him as a resident of that county with one female child less than 10 years of age and three slaves. Mrs. Drish died earlier that year, possibly in giving birth to their daughter, Catherine M. Drish (b. ca. 1820, Va.). Later, in Alabama, Catherine married William Woodson King in Tuscaloosa, March 18, 1840, in Dr. Drish's home, Monroe Place. King (b. 1813, Griffin Co., Ga./d. 1881 New Orleans, La.) was from Montevallo, Ala (Genealogy.com 2001; United States Government 1820; Tuscaloosa County 1840).

William R. Smith in his *Reminiscences of a Long Life* gives an account of Dr. Drish's professional life (1889:143):

Dr. John R. Drish came to Tuscaloosa in 1822. He was not long in getting into a fine practice. He was able and successful, and commanded a very extensive business. His

Jemison School

Tuscaloosa County, AL

Name of Property

County and State

repute was such as to make his presence at the sick bed eagerly sought from the farthest corner of the county, and even from other counties. It is said by his professional friends who knew him well that he seldom opened a medical book. His popularity as a practitioner with the people was kept alive by his unmistakable successes, which were attributable more to his strength of native intellect than to his scientific knowledge.

Dr. Drish never lost his high popularity as a physician, but withdrew from the practice voluntarily and almost forcibly, to the great regret of his friends.

Little has been recorded about Dr. Drish's personal life during his first years in Tuscaloosa. Apparently, the widower left his infant daughter Catherine in Prince William Co., Virginia to be cared for by his Washington in-laws when he and his Drish relatives immigrated to Alabama (Schwank 2001). William R. Smith recalled that Dr. Drish was a striking looking individual:

In appearance, when a young man, Dr. Drish was fine looking, with a handsome face and graceful figure. His manner in society was at once bold and deferential, but in the practice of medicine his will was indomitable. There his positiveness amounted to austerity.

On the street he was always pleasant. In his manner of greeting a friend he was extremely cordial, and nobody, while grasping his hand, could have had the faintest idea of the amount of ice that lay beneath the summer surface of his bland and genial smiles (Smith 1889:145).

Dr. John R. Drish married Sarah Owen McKinney on January 6, 1825 (Tuscaloosa County 1825). Though this was a second marriage for both, and clearly a marriage of convenience, it proved to be a happy one. Even before his marriage Dr. Drish was beginning to grow wealthy. He invested his money in real estate and slaves. In 1825, among other acquisitions, he purchased a large farm on the south margin of town as well as 160 acres of Federal lands in Tuscaloosa County. With Sarah McKinney's \$20,000 inherited from her first husband, Drish was able to buy even more property and slaves.

It is not known where Dr. Drish lived on first coming to Tuscaloosa. As early as 1823, however, he had acquired property on East Margin Street (Queen City Ave.) on which he eventually built a house. It may be that he built it in anticipation of marrying Sarah Owen McKinney and providing a home for his daughter Catherine.

The Drish house faced Queen City Ave. but Dr. Drish's small brick office whose portico was supported by two wooden columns faced north towards University Boulevard. No doubt Mrs. Drish enjoyed living in her new house, especially since it was next door to that of her brother and their aged mother. The Drishes did not live there long, however. At the beginning of

Jemison School

Tuscaloosa County, AL

Name of Property

County and State

1835 Drish rented his house to Huntsville native, Clement Comer Clay, who had been elected governor and who needed a house in Tuscaloosa since the state did not provide an executive mansion (Nuereberger 1958:75; Levere 1923).

According to William R. Smith, Dr. Drish was "energetic" and "untiring" in his diverse business interests. "He invested extensively in lands and negroes, but was not exclusively a farmer. Many of his slaves were first-rate mechanics-masons, carpenters, plasterers, and blacksmiths" (Smith 1889:144). By literally owning his labor force Drish was able to make even greater profits as a building contractor. Over the years his interest in business and construction took precedence over his less remunerative profession as a physician.

In the mid-1820s Drish must have employed many of his slaves on the construction of his above-mentioned house on East Margin Street. After completing that project his slave craftsmen were kept busy with a project on the campus of the University of Alabama then under construction. Dr. Drish and a Mr. White received the brick contract to build the first two dormitories on the campus. These were designed by Captain William Nichols, an English-born and -trained architect who designed both the state capitol and state university campus. Washington and Jefferson halls were completed by April 18, 1831, the opening day of the new institution. Both were destroyed on April 4, 1865, when the campus was burned by Union troops under Gen. John T. Croxton (Wolfe 1982:12-13).

Between 1837 and 1839 Drish's best workers and craftsmen would have been employed on the construction of his new home, "Monroe Place." By June 1839 it was complete and he was actively looking for construction jobs for his slave workmen. On June 4, 1839, he bid on the plastering and stucco contract for the President's Mansion at the University of Alabama. In it he stated:

I take the liberty of again to say to you on the subject of the Contract for the plastering of the Contemplated President's House that I will certainly have the work done by competent workmen, & that it shall be done in the very best manner and that it shall Compare with any Job done in the City. All Cornicing & Centerpieces which is [sic] desired to be done I will do in accordance with my first proposition, at so much less for each Centerpiece & so much less per foot for the Cornicing. I am able to furnish any pattern round or Square for Centerpieces, free of cost to the institution, as also any moulding for Cornices that may be desired (The University of Alabama 1839).

Drish was also involved with another construction project at the University. In 1840 he provided the bricks for the construction of the observatory which had been designed by the brilliant young professor, F.A.P. Barnard (The University of Alabama n.d.).

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

In the same year Drish is reputed to have constructed Magnolia Grove in Greensboro, Alabama for Isaac and Sarah Croom. According to family tradition, "Some of the slaves [who built the house] were well trained and there were expert carpenters among them. Dr. Drisch [sic], a prominent physician who also was a noted building contractor, furnished the plan and design of the building and in great measure superintended the work of construction. His home was in Tuscaloosa" (Hobson 1964). No records or documents have so far been discovered to verify that Dr. Drish had a hand in the construction of the mansion. However, it seems entirely likely that he was involved in this project.

Dr. John R. Drish was the major investor in the Warrior Manufacturing Company, later known as the Black Warrior Cotton Factory, and also a large stockholder in an antebellum railroad that would later become the Alabama Great Southern. Drish served as the contractor for the large cotton factory, a (150 foot by 50 foot) brick building which was equipped with the latest Northern machinery. It was well lighted with 150 windows. According to local historians, "the main output of this factory was coarse osnaburgs, a tremendous amount of which was annually sold to the plantations of this section for the purpose of making clothes for slaves." Most of the building was destroyed by a fire just before the Civil War. What remained was bought and rebuilt by Baugh, Kennedy, and Co. which operated it during the war years. Drish's slaves were employed in grading the roadbed for the railroad (*Tuscaloosa Times Gazette* 1907:4; *Independent Monitor* 1846; Little 1924: 21-22).

One of Dr. Drish's largest commercial buildings which he built with his own money remained intact until February 1987 when it was demolished by the city of Tuscaloosa which planned to construct a hotel/civic center at that location. The complex was never built and the site remains empty. Located on the northwest corner of the intersection of University Boulevard and Greensboro Avenue, the two-story brick building dominated the main intersection of antebellum downtown. Known as the "Drish Building" or the "Drish Corner," the upstairs housed doctors, dentists, and lawyers. The lower floors contained clothing and drygoods stores and even an auction house (*Independent Monitor* 1848, 1849; Clinton n.d).

William R. Smith noted that many of Dr. Drish's slaves were skilled craftsmen (Smith 1889:144). Identifying individuals is extremely difficult, however. Only in exceptional circumstances, as when a slave was sold, hired out to someone else, or escaped, was he or she recorded by a first name in official records. A slave's last name was generally assumed to be that of his or her master.

Only one of Drish's slave craftsmen has so far been positively identified by name. William (Drish) appears to have been one of his master's most skilled plasterers since Drish hired him out in Montgomery in 1848 to William Knox to execute the elaborate plasterwork for Knox Hall, Mr. Knox's grand town mansion in Montgomery (*Montgomery Advertiser* 1915). William's

Jemison School

Tuscaloosa County, AL

Name of Property

County and State

work was so well liked that he was hired to work on the ornate plasterwork of the interior of the state capitol (*Montgomery Advertiser* 1915). Still later, in 1860 back in Tuscaloosa, William was hired from Dr. Drish by Sen. Robert Jemison, Jr. to plaster and paint his elaborate new Italianate villa on Market Street (Greensboro Ave.). He is probably the same William Drish who, after the war abandoned his slave name and assumed the name William Murphy. Murphy became the first pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church of Tuscaloosa which was founded in 1866 (*Tuscaloosa Times* 1896:10; Sellers 1968:124; and Glynn 1976:4).

In 1836 Dr. Drish sold his house on East Margin Street and built a much larger structure, "Monroe Place." Monroe Place was not just a house, but also a working farm of 450 acres located immediately adjacent to the southern city limits of Tuscaloosa. The road leading to the mansion was an extension of Monroe Street (hence the name of the plantation). On the west side of the entrance gate on the corporation line was a porter's lodge. According to a contemporary, James Thomas Maxwell, it was "occupied by a family of negroes that were the property of Dr. Drish. Someone was supposed to be always in attendance to open and shut this gate as needed. The style was that of an Englishman's country estate, and this large plantation was well cultivated at all times" (Maxwell 1926:19).

Some idea of the scope of farming that took place on Monroe Place is given by the 1860 Agricultural Census. Drish declared that the cash value of it was \$41,800. He estimated that his livestock—four horses, 5 asses and mules, fifteen milk cows (whose milk produced 400 lbs. of butter), 19 cattle, and 34 swine—were worth \$2,065. His slaves produced 125 bushels of wheat, 40 bushels of rye, 2000 bushels of "Indian corn," 25 bushels of oats, 500 bushels of peas and beans, 25 bushels of Irish potatoes, 800 bushels of sweet potatoes, and \$500 worth of orchard products. The farm also produced 16 tons of hay and 5 bushels of grass seeds. Drish's field hands also managed to produce 199 cotton bales (400 lbs. per bale) (United States Government 1860). According to Maxwell, "In the large field...perhaps 200 yards west of [the] Greensboro road, was the gin house and long-armed wooden screw press to gin and press all the cotton raised on the place and that of many neighbors contiguous with smaller farms (Maxwell 1926:20).

When Alabama seceded from the Union in 1861, Dr. John Drish was one of the wealthiest men in West Alabama. In Tuscaloosa County, alone, he owned real estate valued at over \$150,000, and personal property valued at \$250,000 (this figure presumably reflects the value of his 43 Tuscaloosa slaves). To get an accurate picture of Drish's net worth, one would have to add to these figures the large numbers of slaves and extensive land holdings in Pickens County, Alabama and in Mississippi. Despite his wealth, Smith recounts that "Dr. Drish was a man of sorrows. He encountered great family afflictions; and in the later part of his life he was retired in his habits and of sad and melancholy appearance" (Herzberg 1955:135, 140, 160; Smith 1889:144). Drish's views about secession are not recorded, but being an astute businessman, he, like his near neighbor, Sen. Robert Jemison, Jr., must have dreaded the

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

inevitable turmoil war would bring to his secure and privileged world that he had spent a lifetime constructing.

William R. Smith recorded that Dr. Drish was "in the latter part of his life...retired in his habits and of sad and melancholy appearance" (Smith 1889:144). Robert Little in his "Facts and Legends about the Drish House," stated that Dr. Drish "had two unfortunate weaknesses—he gambled and he drank and he was constantly unlucky in his gambling. He took boatloads of cotton to Mobile and lost the proceeds in a few nights' wild play at the cards accompanied and followed by heavy drinking" (Little 1924). Little went on to say that "Dr. Drish drowned [his] sorrows as well as that of the diminishing of his wife's estate under his ruinous management in constantly increasing draughts of alcoholic liquors (Little 1924). One cannot substantiate Little's comments because he cites no sources in his manuscript and there appears to be no written evidence concerning Drish's gambling or alcoholism.

It is also impossible to verify Little's account of Dr. Drish's death in August 1867. According to Little:

Delirium Tremens came to add its horrors to the troubles of the house and in a final attack he jumped from the bed in which several negroes were trying to hold him, and rushed down the beautiful curved stairway, uttered a terrible cry and fell dead midway down (Little 1924).

Dr. Drish may have been an alcoholic but he was also suffering from other serious health problems as well. Perhaps recognizing that the end was near he made out his will on July 13, 1867, just weeks before he died (Tuscaloosa County 1867a). The will indicates that Dr. Drish was unaware of (or unwilling to admit, even to himself) his serious financial difficulties. Possibly, he hoped to live long enough to recoup his fortunes so that the various bequests could be honored by his executor, his eldest grandson and namesake, John R. Drish King.

At Drish's death it was discovered that there was not enough money to pay the claims against the estate. Settlement took more than two years. Drish's extensive real estate had to be sold at public auction. Even Monroe Place was sold out from under Mrs. Drish. Thanks to her husband's will, however, she was not left homeless. The land and the house (but not its contents) were sold at a sheriff's sale on May 3, 1869, to E. A. Powell, a Northport merchant and lawyer, for \$5,150.00 (Tuscaloosa County 1867b). Because of the wording of the will, however, Mrs. Drish retained the "Dower or live estate" and was allowed to live there during her lifetime. For the next fifteen years Sarah Drish, who used to be one of the richest women in West Alabama, lived in genteel poverty, her only possessions consisting of her clothing and a house full of expensive furniture, china, and silver.

Jemison School

Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL

County and State

Catherine Drish King continued to live with her stepmother after the death of her father for she is listed in the 1870 Tuscaloosa census. At some point after Dr. Drish's death, Mrs. Drish's niece, Virginia Green, her husband, and their three children came to live with Mrs. Drish and Catherine. Little gives a touching account of life in Monroe Place in the 1870s:

A niece of Mrs. Drish with several little children had come to live in the house and Catherine showed at once a deep affection for them and a pathetic interest in their childish games. When they first came she tried to read fairy stories to them or little tales, but after a few pages she could not control her fleeting fancies and she would close the book and begin her incomprehensible mutterings and broken ejaculations. The children were never afraid of her in the least. One, a little boy who was her favorite, would often beg when locking up time came: "Aunt Sarah, let Cousin Catherine stay up a little longer. We want her to play with us. I'll take her up to her room after a while." And Aunt Sarah, Mrs. Drish, would consent and Catherine would stay, not to play, but to look and listen with apparent pleasure till the children's bedtime and then the little boy would take her hand and say: "Come on, Cousin Catherine, its time to go up for the night. She never spoke but one connected sentence after the time of the arrival of these children. One night as the family was sitting before the fire, Mrs. Drish said to her, "Catherine, do you know who made you?" Catherine looked at her fixedly for a moment, then replied, "He who had the burning coal laid on the lips of the prophet Isaiah made me" (Little 1924).

As Mrs. Drish grew older, she was no longer able to care for Catherine. At some point in the 1870s, according to Little, one of her sons (he does not state which) took his demented mother to live with him and his family. The subsequent fate, death, and final resting of this unfortunate woman have not been ascertained.

When Mrs. Drish died in 1884, the contents of the house were sold at public auction on June 4, 1884, by the administrator of her estate, William G. Cochrane (*Tuscaloosa Times* 1884). The inventory and appraised value of the items gives an intimate glimpse of the furnishings of this once grand mansion.

Mrs. Drish's house and the tract of land on which it was located actually belonged to E. A. Powell who had allowed her to live there. Ezekiel Abner Powell (1817-1892) was a self-made man. He grew up in modest circumstances in Fayette Co., Alabama where he received only six months of formal schooling. Nevertheless, he later became a merchant in Northport, studied law, and was admitted to the bar. He served in the house and senate of the state legislature in the late antebellum period. During the Civil War he was a captain in the Confederate Army. In later years he became a Methodist minister and wrote about the history of Alabama (Owen 1921:1381). Powell sold the property soon after Mrs. Drish's death to the Tuscaloosa Coal, Iron and Land Company (Tuscaloosa County 1887:463).

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

The Tuscaloosa Coal, Iron, and Land Company was founded in January 1887 by twenty-five citizens of Tuscaloosa who were owners of land surrounding the city. The main object of the company was to expand the city and develop the surrounding property. The company was incorporated the following month and investors were encouraged to buy stock in the company. William G. Cochrane of Tuscaloosa was one of the founding members, a major stockholder, and legal counsel for the corporation. Recognizing the potential value of the Drish mansion, Cochrane bought it for his family residence (Tuscaloosa County 1887:404).

According to the May 3, 1888, *Tuscaloosa Gazette*, "Mr. W.G. Cochrane is having many valuable improvements made on the old Drish place which will add much to the grandeur of that beautiful old mansion. It will be ready for occupancy about the 15th of May when Mr. Cochrane will move into it." Judge William Gilbert Cochrane (b. March 20, 1848, Tuscaloosa) had grown up in another large antebellum house, the "Cochran Place," built across town in Newtown by his parents. He was the son of William Cochrane, a New York attorney, who moved to Alabama and married Sophia Safina Louisa Perkins, daughter of Major Hardin Perkins, a pioneer Tuscaloosan who had been born in Washington Co., Virginia in 1791 (*Tuscaloosa Times* 1896:13).

A month earlier, on April 19, 1888, a reporter for the *Tuscaloosa Gazette* recorded:

During the past week the Tuscaloosa Coal, Iron and Land Company have sold over \$60,000 worth of land principally on the Drish place and on Cochrane and Market streets. All the lots belonging to the Land Company on the Drish place has [sic] been sold but three, and most of the lots that have been purchased will have improvements put on them right away. This has been the biggest week for Tuscaloosa since the 20th day of last April and has caused a better feeling to pervade our entire community. The men who have purchased this property are able to do what they say and the people of Tuscaloosa will shortly see scores of modern residences going on these lots. The Tuscaloosa boom likes a good deal of being dead.

A month later on July, 1888, a reporter for the *Tuscaloosa Times* reported that "a few days ago a *Times* scribe stood in the neighborhood of the Drish place and counted twenty houses that had been built within a year."

On October 22, 1902 he [Judge W. Cochrane] and his wife, Lily T. Cochrane sold their house to D. Clay Lilly for five dollars. The Rev. David Clay Lilly (b. 1870) had served as the minister for Tuscaloosa's First Presbyterian Church from 1896 to 1900. The Rev. Lilly may have become aware of Judge Cochrane's financial difficulties at this time and loaned him money with his house as collateral. It is not clear whether the Lilly's ever lived in the "old Drish Place" as the Cochrane house continued to be called, for they sold it within a year to the Snedecors, another Presbyterian family.

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

On November 23, 1903, D. Clay Lilly and his wife Mary G. Lilly sold for seven thousand dollars, the Drish mansion to the Rev. James George Snedecor (b. June 21, 1855, Louisville, Miss./ d. Nov. 20, 1916, Tuscaloosa), a lawyer and Presbyterian minister and his wife Emily Alston Estes Snedecor (b. 1858/ d. Sept. 7, 1942, Tuscaloosa).

The Snedecors sold Monroe Place and the adjacent property on Sept. 8, 1906, to the Mayor and Aldermen of Tuscaloosa for \$8,000. The city planned to convert the house into a school building. According to a newspaper account three months earlier, the city had negotiated an option to buy the property and was hoping to have it ready for use when school opened in the fall. According to the reporter, "This is the property known familiarly as the Drish place on Southside and is one of the handsomest of the houses in Tuscaloosa. Its rooms are of exceedingly generous dimensions and some will not need enlarging for use as school rooms right away (Tuscaloosa County 1906; *Tuscaloosa Times Gazette* 1906).

Two decades of use as a public school from 1906 to 1925 caused serious damage to the historic mansion. A photograph of the school in October 1907 shows little change. However, within a few years modifications were made on both the interior and exterior of the building. On the inside the delicate main staircase probably succumbed to the pounding of hundreds of school children's feet and was replaced with a simpler utilitarian flight of stairs. The unusual spiral staircase in the tower was also a casualty. No doubt, it was removed by administrators to keep the children out of the tower. The marble mantles throughout the house were also probably removed at this time. On the exterior the balconies on the north facade and the iron two-story porches on the east and west were eventually demolished and probably sold for scrap. The unusual balcony that extended around three sides of the tower was probably deemed unsafe by school officials and removed. As portions of the woodwork decayed, such as the pinnacle on the tower, they were not replaced. By the time the Jemison School moved to new quarters in 1925 the once grand Drish mansion was a battered wreck. Worse was to come (*Tuscaloosa Times-Gazette* 1907:6).

In 1925 the Board of Education leased or rented the property to Charles Turner who operated an automobile wrecking company out of the house, its former landscaped yard long since stripped as a playground, was now littered with wrecked cars and assorted junk-some of which was stored behind high board fences and even inside the mansion itself. It was being used in this capacity when Sydnia Keene Smyth recorded the house in her 1929 Master's Thesis at the University of Alabama (1929:46).

It was still being used as a junkyard when the house was documented in precise measured drawings by a Historic American Buildings Survey team in 1934. Though they contain some curious omissions and minor inaccuracies, these plans form an invaluable documentation of many now destroyed portions of the Drish mansion.

Jemison School

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Name of Property

The H.A.B.S. material was supplemented by a data page and photographs in 1936. In that same year the noted American photographer, Walker Evans, working for the Farm Security Administration took a number of photographs of the exterior of the mansion. One of them entitled simply "The Tuscaloosa Wrecking Company," has since become one of his most famous works. In 1938 he included an over scale print of this image in an exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (Mellow 1999:384).

The house was photographed about two years later by yet another famous American photographer, Frances Benjamin Johnston (1864-1952). Johnston, one of the first women to receive prominence as a photographer, included the Drish mansion in her Survey of the Architecture of the South sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation. By the time she photographed the house, the wrecking company had moved elsewhere and the now empty house had reverted back to ownership by the City of Tuscaloosa Board of Education (Johnston 1984).

In September 1940, the Board of Education sold the Drish House and adjacent property for four thousand dollars to the Southside Baptist Church (Tuscaloosa County 1940). The Southside Baptist Church had begun in the 1890s as a Sunday School created by Tuscaloosa's First Baptist Church in the vicinity of the Alabama Great Southern Depot. It was located in a still extant building located on the corner of 25th Ave. and 18th St. partly built with timbers donated by the A.G.S. railroad. Sunday School was held there until 1921 when it became an independent church. By the late 1930s the congregation had outgrown the building and it was seeking a new location. In September 1940 the Southside Baptist Church bought from the City Board of Education the old Jemison School property which had for many years been used by Charles Turner to house his Tuscaloosa Wrecking Company. The church paid the city \$4,000 for the property; \$1,000 as a down payment, the remainder to be retired in annual payments. The building was in a dilapidated condition and required considerable work. It was not until May 15, 1942 that the congregation moved into the building. In the meantime they sold their old church to the Salvation Army for \$5,000. This enabled them to pay for improvements on the old Drish Mansion. In April 1942 the old kitchen wing was repaired and renovated as a church kitchen and Sunday school room. The church held its services on the first floor of the interior which it remodeled by removing the walls of the center hall and the northeast and northwest rooms to create a large sanctuary. The upstairs of the house was gutted and reconfigured into numerous small Sunday school rooms. Even the tower room on the second floor was subdivided. Throughout the building (but not the kitchen wing) the remaining six over six window sash were removed and replaced with modern windows. The Southside Baptist Church used the Drish House as its main building until 1952 when it erected a new red brick "Georgian Colonial Style" sanctuary immediately adjacent to the west side of the old building (Olive 1947:2, 7, 12; Southside Baptist Church Bulletin 1955; and *Tuscaloosa News*, Oct 1952). This was followed some years later by the erection of a one story red brick structure to the east containing additional Sunday school rooms.

Jemison School

Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL

County and State

By the nineteen eighties, the congregation of the church had decreased as the Southside area of Tuscaloosa deteriorated. The upkeep of the now very large building complex became a burden and church officials closed off the Drish House and used it for storage. By the early nineteen nineties they investigated the possibility of demolishing the old mansion and using the land for a parking lot. Fortunately, the cost to demolish the structure, estimated at about \$30,000 was prohibitive, and the church decided against demolition. Faced with the dilemma of owning a structure that it could not afford to demolish, the Southside Baptist Church approached the Heritage Commission of Tuscaloosa County and the Preservation Society of Tuscaloosa County for advice. After lengthy negotiations the Heritage Commission entered into a ninety year lease of the building (Heritage Commission of Tuscaloosa County n.d.).

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Tuscaloosa County, AL

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Tuscaloosa County, AL

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Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

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Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

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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 #AL-201
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- 1. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____
- 2. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16	Easting: 3673323.17	Northing: 447632.94
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Tuscaloosa County tax parcel identification for the Jemison School is as follows:
31-08-27-1-020-001.000 (see attached map).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This parcel is legally defined by the Tuscaloosa County Tax Assessor's Office. The Jemison School building has been associated with this parcel since 1887 when the Tuskaloosa Coal, Iron and Land Company subdivided the surrounding area (see attached map).

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Gene A. Ford, Katherine Richter, Susan Enzweiler (AHC NR Coordinator)
organization: Tuscaloosa County Preservation Society; Alabama Historical Commission
street & number: P.O. Box 1665
city or town: Tuscaloosa state: Alabama zip code: 35403
e-mail: kmautertcps@bellsouth.net
telephone: 205.758.2238
date: December 26, 2013

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

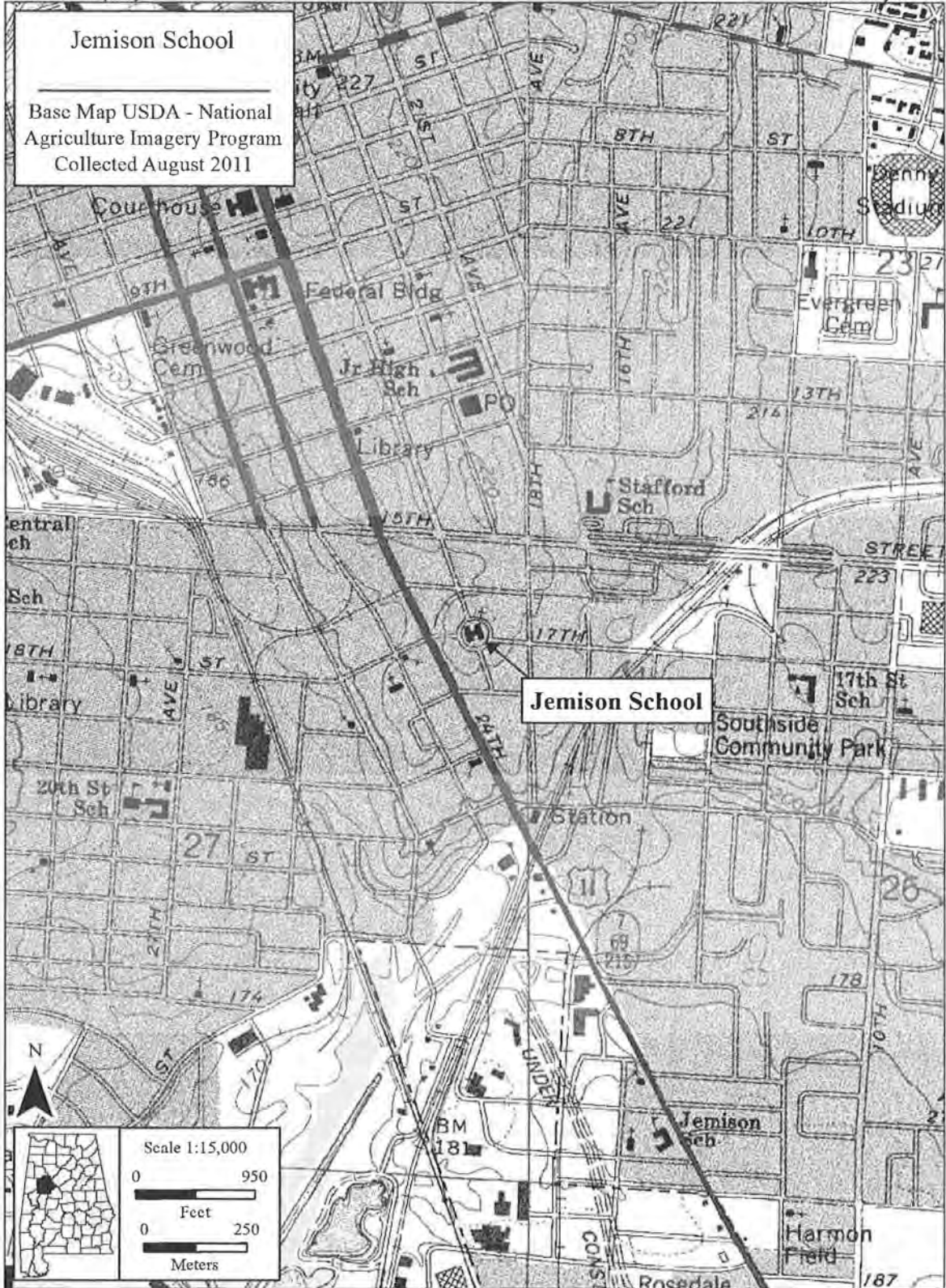
Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Jemison School
Name of Property

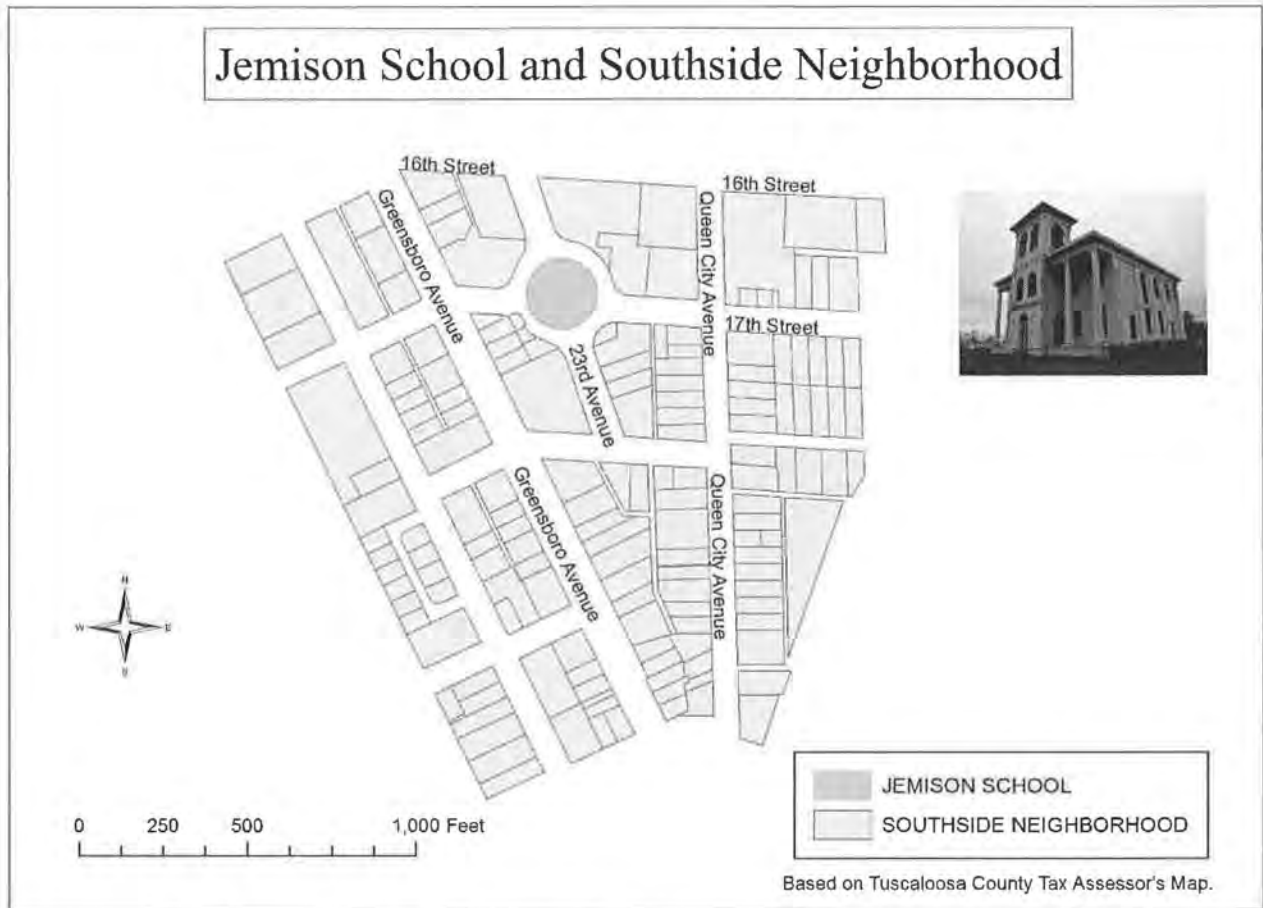
Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State



7.5' USGS 1971 Tuscaloosa, AL Photorevised 1983 Topographic Quadrangle map

Jemison School
Name of Property

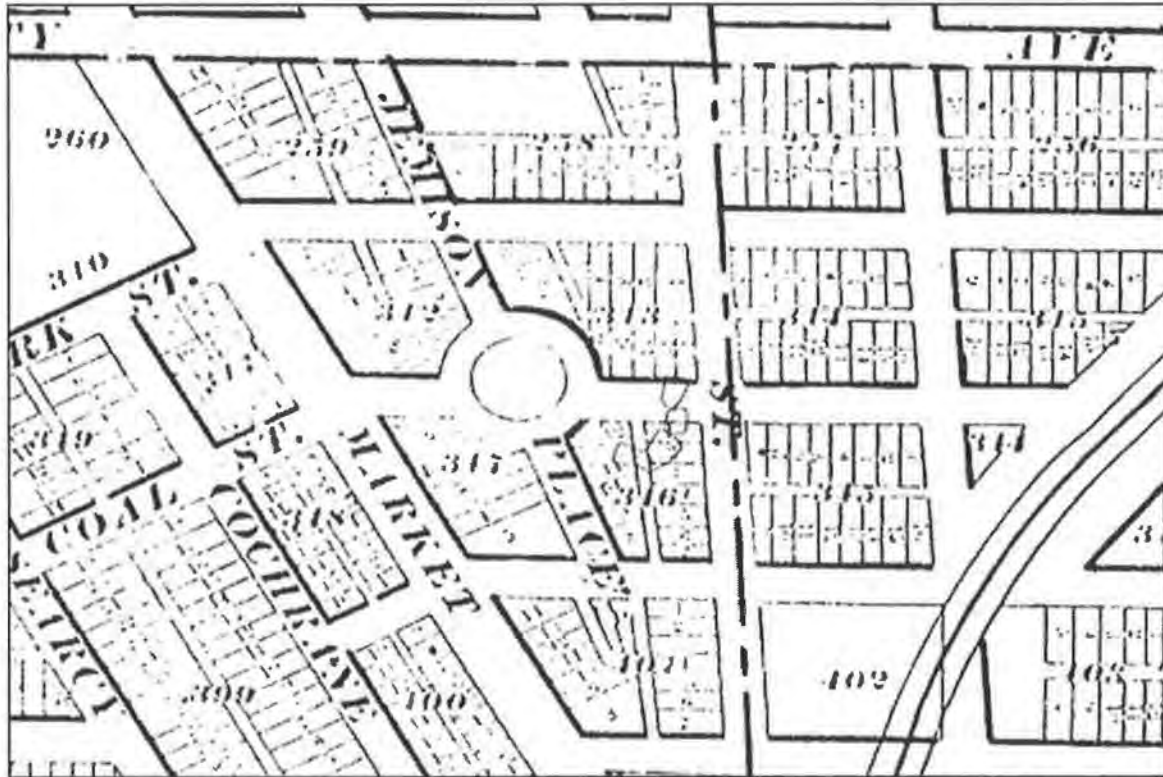
Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State



Base map, Tuscaloosa County Tax Assessor's map

Jemison School
Name of Property

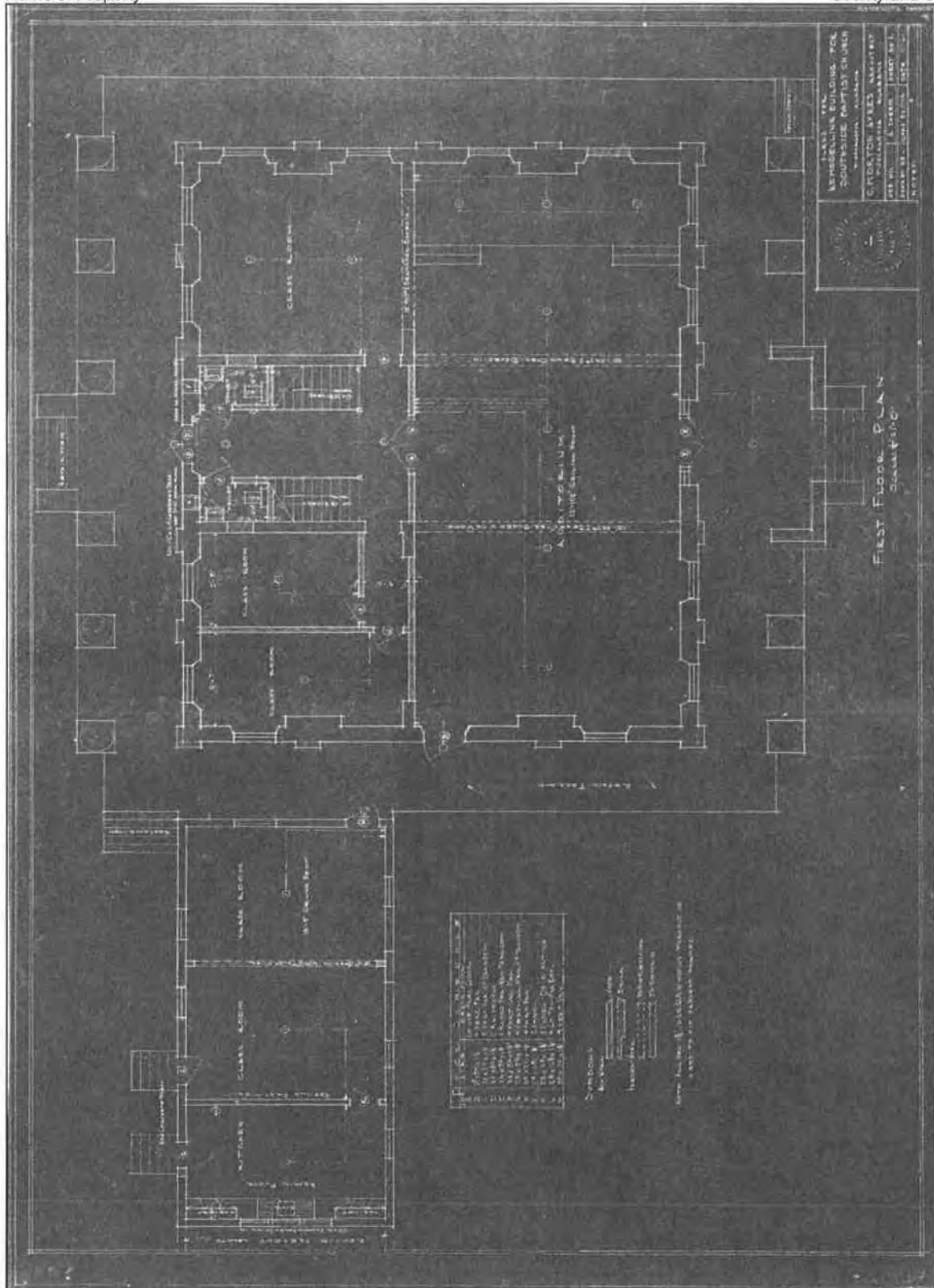
Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State



1887 Tuscaloosa Coal, Iron and Land Company map showing circular parcel of Jemison School

Jemison School
Name of Property

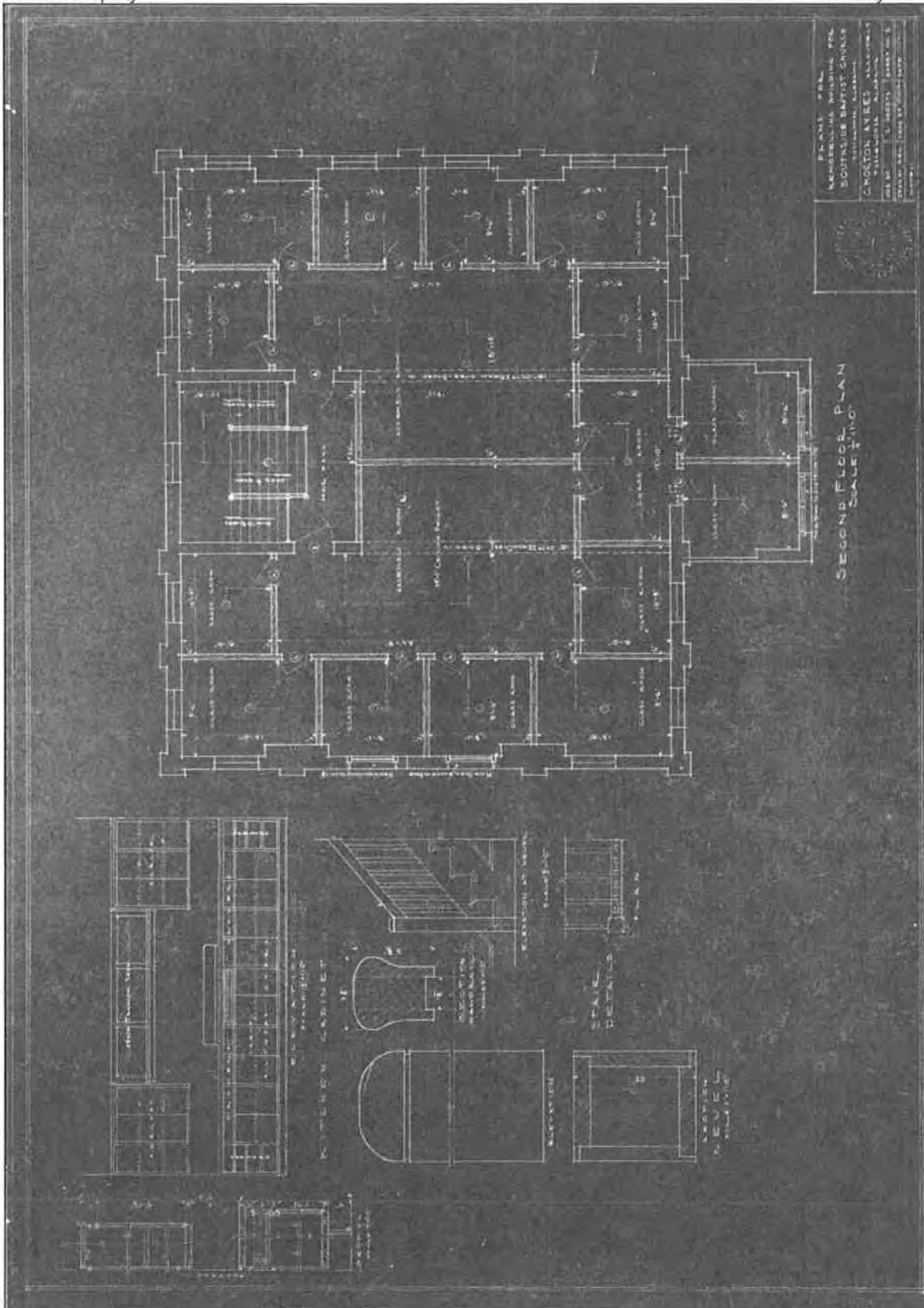
Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State



First Floor Plan, Southside Baptist Church alterations to Jemison School (Ayers 1940).

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State



Second Floor Plan, Southside Baptist Church alterations to Jemison School (Ayers 1940)

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Jemison School (Dr. John R. and Sarah Drish House)

City or Vicinity: Tuscaloosa

County: Tuscaloosa State: Alabama

Photographer: Gene A. Ford

Date Photographed: December 16, 2013

Location of original digital files: 5328 Overbrook Road, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35405

Photo #1 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0001)
North elevation. View south.

Photo #2 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0002)
North elevation. View south.

Photo #3 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0003)
North elevation, third story tower detail. View south.

Photo #4 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0004)
North elevation, first story tower detail. View south.

Photo #5 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0005)
North elevation, frontispiece (entrance ensemble) detail. View south.

Photo #6 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0006)
West elevation. View east.

Photo #7 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0007)
West elevation, foundation detail. View east.

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Photo #8 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0008)
South elevation. View north.

Photo #9 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0009)
East elevation. View west.

Photo #10 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0010)
East elevation, exterior door detail. View west.

Photo #11 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0011)
First floor central hall brick, original plaster remnant, and beam detail. View west.

Photo #12 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0012)
First floor central hall. View west.

Photo #13 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0013)
First floor former central hall (later auditorium) and frontispiece (north elevation entrance).
View north.

Photo #14 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0014)
First floor former parlor (later auditorium). View north.

Photo #15 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0015)
First floor former parlor (later auditorium). View south.

Photo #16 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0016)
First floor former music room (later classroom). View south.

Photo #17 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0017)
Second floor tower room entrance. View north.

Photo #18 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0018)
Second floor tower room and Greek Revival door composition detail (north elevation). View
south.

Photo #19 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0019)
Second floor central window/jib door detail (south elevation). View south.

Photo #20 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0020)
Second floor former classrooms. View north.

Photo #21 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0021)
Second floor stairwell landing. View to first floor.

Jemison School
Name of Property

Tuscaloosa County, AL
County and State

Photo #22 (AL_TuscaloosaCounty_JemisonSchool_0022)
First floor central hall stairwell. View south.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



ONE WAY →

400







NO
TRESPASSING

PRIVATE
PROPERTY

ADS





TILLERY'S
BODY SHOP
FRAME & ALIGNMENT









REALITY

























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Jemison School--Drish House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ALABAMA, Tuscaloosa

DATE RECEIVED: 1/30/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/17/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000357

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3/17/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Education level
1906-1925*

RECOM./CRITERIA A
REVIEWER *W. M. ...* DISCIPLINE *H. S. ...*
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 3/17/15

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



STATE OF ALABAMA
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
468 SOUTH PERRY STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-0900



FRANK W. WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 20, 2014

TEL: 334-242-3184
FAX: 334-240-3477

Ms. Carol Shull
Keeper of the National Register
U. S. Department of the Interior, NPS
Cultural Resources
National Register, History & Education Programs
1201 "I" Street NW (2280)
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the nomination and supporting documentation to be considered for listing the following Alabama resource in the National Register of Historic Places:

Drish, Dr. John R., House
Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama

Your consideration of the enclosed National Register of Historic Places nomination is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Lee Anne Wofford
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

LAW/sme/nw

Enclosures

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Drish, Dr. John R. House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ALABAMA, Tuscaloosa

DATE RECEIVED: 5/22/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/12/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/27/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/08/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000357

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: ~~N~~ Y LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: ~~N~~ Y PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

 ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 7/7/14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

see return comments

RECOM./CRITERIA Return
REVIEWER W. Delaney DISCIPLINE Historic
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 7/15/14

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20240

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Comments

Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Drish, Dr. John R. and Sarah House

Property Location: Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa Co., AL

Reference Number: 14000357

Date of Return: 7/15/14

Nomination Summary

The Drish House, located at 2300 Seventeenth Street, is being returned for technical and substantive reasons.

The property is being nominated under Criterion C at the state level of significance with a period of significance of c. 1837 and for c. 1860-62, under the area of significance of architecture. However, due to alterations made during the early 20th century, the property lacks sufficient historic integrity from this time period. To qualify for listing in the National Register, a property must not only be historically, architecturally, or archeologically important, but it must also retain integrity from its period of significance. Collectively the nonhistoric alterations and loss of key design features have significantly impacted distinctive 19th century architectural elements of the Drish House.

Therefore, in order for this property to be considered individually eligible, a stronger argument needs to be made for the property's significance under architecture and the period of significance needs to be expanded to include and document alterations made to the building when it was converted for use as a school. In addition to architecture, the property appears to be significant under Criterion A, for its role in education, in Tuscaloosa, and this criterion and area of significance should be considered when resubmitting the nomination. For this revised nomination, the period of significance would be c. 1837 – 1925 with significant dates of c. 1860 to mark the addition of the Italianate tower/elements, and 1906, for the largely interior changes.

While the building retains its massing and Greek Revival symmetry, a stronger case is needed justifying why this is an important example of Greek Revival in the state, and the significance of this blended Greek Revival/Italianate style building. In the NR bulletin, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, pg. 18, it states, "A property is not eligible, however, simply because it has been identified as the only such property ever fabricated; it must be demonstrated to be significant as well." To strengthen the architectural significance of this nomination, provide some additional context regarding the other eight properties that are also combinations of these two styles.

Besides the tower addition, how does this house compare to the others? Was this hybrid style perhaps a popular trend in the state during the mid-19th century when several were hybridized and these are the only remaining examples? Or, were there only ever a handful constructed? What if anything does it say about the addition of the Italianate detailing and the tower on the eve of the Civil War?

Please provide additional details regarding the slave craftsmen and their work. Again, make a stronger case for this property's distinctive characteristics and method of construction and the talents of the "first rate mechanics-masons, carpenters, plasterers, and blacksmiths" who were slaves. What similarities are found between the Drish house and other buildings in Tuscaloosa with regards to the fine detailing done by these craftsmen? Provide additional information on where perhaps these slaves would have learned their trades. Refer again to the above-referenced bulletin, on pg. 20. With additional research and comparisons, could the work of some of these unidentified craftsmen be identified by their "characteristic style and quality?"

Next, referring to the bulletin, on pg. 19, define the significance (at the local level) of the house as a historic adaptation of the original property for the time period from 1906 to 1925. Provide additional information in the narrative description of the architectural adaptation of this original property from residence to school and in Section 8, explain the significance. These changes illustrate an early 20th century adaptive reuse.

Lastly, another approach to listing this property in the National Register would be to consider it as contributing to a potential historic district. Additional survey and research would be necessary to document what remains of the former Southside neighborhood and how this property, through its changing uses, adapted to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

Technical Issues

The photographs on disk were submitted as png files. Please provide tiffs.

The UTM references are reversed. Please correct.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Lisa Deline, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
Lisa_Deline@nps.gov

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Drish, Dr. John R., House

Other names/site number: Monroe Place

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 2300 Seventeenth Street

City or town: Tuscaloosa State: AL County: Tuscaloosa

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

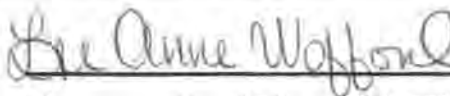
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B X C ___ D

	Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	May 20, 2014
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>Alabama Historical Commission</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government



STATE OF ALABAMA
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
468 SOUTH PERRY STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-0900



January 26, 2015

FRANK W. WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TEL: 334-242-3184
FAX: 334-240-3477

Ms. Carol Shull
Keeper of the National Register
US Department of the Interior, NPS
Cultural Resources
National Register, History & Education Programs
1201 "I" Street NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find a revised nomination and its supplemental documentation for the:

Jemison School
(previously submitted as the John R. Drish House)
Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County
Reference Number: 14000357

The original nomination for the John R. Drish House was submitted to your office in May 2014. It was returned by Lisa Deline, Alabama's NR reviewer at the National Park Service for technical and substantive reasons. Upon her suggestion, we have changed the area of significance from architecture to education and the period of significance to 1906-1925 to reflect the importance of this building as the Jemison School. We have also made the other corrections outlined in the return comments.

We believe that this revised nomination is now in order. Your consideration of this nomination is appreciated.

Truly Yours,

Lee Anne Wofford
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

LAW/sme/nw
Enclosures