

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0666 106

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED APR 3 DATA SHEET
DATE ENTERED JUL 12 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Rockby
AND/OR COMMON Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER NE of Sparta off GA 16
Route 3
CITY, TOWN Sparta *vic* VICINITY OF 10th--Barnard
STATE Georgia CODE 13 COUNTY Hancock CODE 141

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME 1. Mr. W.P. Rocker ✓ 2. Mrs. Ginger R. Rocker 3. Mrs. Louise M. Rocker
STREET & NUMBER 3530 Old Ivy Lane, N.E. Rt. 3, Box 14A Rt. 3, Box 14A
CITY, TOWN Atlanta, Georgia 30305 Sparta, Georgia 31087 STATE Sparta, Georgia 31087
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hancock County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Sparta STATE Georgia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Survey of Hancock County by Bill Moffat
DATE October 1975 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section
CITY, TOWN Atlanta STATE Georgia

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The principal facade of this two story, Gothic style frame house faces south-southwest. The truncated gable roof encloses a full attic lit by dormer windows.

The front door is on the center line of the front facade, flanked by one window on either side, with three evenly spaced windows above. The two dormer windows are centered above the outside windows on this facade; the center attic window resides in a decorative gable. The front door is of the trabeated variety with sidelights. However, in place of the usual transom, there is instead a decorative overdoor consisting of a sawn wood hood and horizontal wooden architrave ornamented with carved bulls eyes. This ensemble is repeated over the two ground floor windows.

The plan is a four room, central hall type. The front door leads into the entrance hall. All the doors of the four major rooms on this floor open into this hall. A half-turn stairway, dog-leg, with intermediate landing, begins on the right side of the hall, rising a full three stories. Opposite the front door, at the far end of the central hall, there is a door similar to the front door, lacking sidelights, which opens onto a back porch. Enclosed ends of the back porch form rooms which extend beyond the width of the house.

The second floor hall, front, is narrowed by two large closets which project into the hall. Four rooms of equal size open into this hall.

The attic consists of two long rooms opening into a central hall. They are lit at each end by dormer windows. A central chimney projects through the center of each room.

The house is elevated several feet above ground on rough quarried granite foundation pillars.

Exterior: The Gothic style of this house is suggested by exterior details such as the pointed gingerbread moulding which extends the length of the front porch. Beneath this moulding the porch is also pierced by five arches across the front.

The first floor front facade windows have been described. The rest of the windows in the house are not as elaborate, having only wooden pedimented lintels.

Gingerbread "drops" in the pointed style ornament each end of the gable roof, front and rear. A bargeboard in the pointed style dominates the center front gable, which breaks the otherwise horizontal line of the roof.

The two main chimneys located at opposite ends of the roof along the ridge are brick and apparently were designed originally as four separate flues connected at the top by a brick cap with dentils. The openings between these flues have been closed in.

(continued)

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A one-story bay window, also on rough quarried granite pillars, extends from the west side of the southwest (front, left) parlor.

The wings formed by the extension of the back porch are ornamented at the eaveline by an applied lattice decoration in wood beneath which is a row of wood dentils. The northeast wing has a small addition extending even further beyond to the east, which appears to have been used as some kind of pantry. Each wing has an inside end wall chimney.

The front and rear porches are approached by a short flight of wood steps, centrally located.

Interior: The interior does not sport Gothic detail, but rather a more restrained Greek Revival. The door and window frames are of the Greek Ear type, and, with the exception of the southwest parlor, all the mantels in the house are alike and are very plain...a rectangular architrave supported by rectangular pilasters, and rectangular shelf. The southwest parlor mantel is wood and marbelized. Its massive proportions and curves give it a definite empire feeling. The overmantel extends to the corniceline.

The pine doors and stair stringers are grained on a golden field, possibly to resemble maple.

The interior walls are plaster on lath, with no evidence of wainscoting or chair rail in any room. There is a moulding about three quarters of the way up the walls in the second floor hall and rooms, as well as in the attic rooms. The nails in this moulding suggest that it was possibly used for hanging clothes, as these upper rooms were used as dormitory chambers.

Ancillary Buildings: The outbuildings consist of a granite milkshed or tool house, a well, what appears to have been a granite root cellar or cold frame, and a wooden smokehouse, which is intact with meat hooks and firepit. These structures are all located a few feet from the rear of the house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1854

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rockby is significant both for its architecture and for its connection with Richard Malcolm Johnston, an eminent educator and writer on early Georgia education. It is believed that Mr. Johnston built Rockby shortly after 1854 when he purchased the land (602 acres) from Mr. Abner Cook for \$5,000. Mr. Johnston was a native of Hancock County, having been born in 1822 on his father's plantation "Oak Grove" near Powelton (date attributed by Mrs. Terrell Moore in the Sparta Ishmaelite, 13/6/1963).

After graduating from Mercer University in 1841, Johnston taught at Mt. Zion Academy near Sparta, but in 1842 decided to study for the bar. He entered the law office of Mr. Henry Cummings in Augusta and was admitted to the bar later that year. He returned to Hancock County and for the next 15 years alternated teaching with a law career.

In 1857 Johnston was offered a professorship of English literature at the University of Georgia, where he taught for four years before establishing a boarding school for boys in Hancock County. Johnston wrote in his autobiography, "At the end of the year I retired to the new settlement made upon the Plantation in Hancock, my native county, preparatory to opening a school for boys. I gave it the name of 'Rockby' suggested by the many huge granite boulders (sic) on the hillside above the Spring in the rear of the mansion."

The method in which Johnston ran the school was revolutionary at the time. In reaction to the strict disciplinary procedures of the rural field schools, he introduced a form of honor system and allowed much more freedom of movement for the students, even allowing them to go to town occasionally. He made recreation a part of the program and even used the mansion for cards, which were allowed under supervision in the drawing room, hall and piazza. Dancing took place in the dining room of the mansion (Johnston's Autobiography). The upper chambers were dormitories for the boarders.

Johnston wrote of his procedures in his autobiography: "I began this school upon a system unlike any other that I had known or heard of...the class beginning with twenty, was engaged several weeks before the opening in January, 1862, made up of sons of leading merchants, lawyers and planters in several portions of the state. At the opening I said to them I should neither practice espionage upon them myself, nor to permit them to practice it...with the intent of reporting to me..."

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Johnston, Col. Richard Malcolm, Autobiography. Washington: The Neale Co., 1900.
- Moore, Terrell, "Historic Home in Hancock County," Sparta Ishmaelite, 13 June 1963, p.1, c.5.
- Hancock County Deeds.
- Personal inspection by Beth L. Reiter.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 2

QUADRANGLE NAME Sparta

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 319320 3686370

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary shall be formed by a line that connects points determined to be 50 feet south of the south facade porch of the house; 100 feet from the east, west and north exterior walls of the north addition of the house, including the outbuildings marked (cont)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Beth Lattimore Reiter, Historic Preservation Planner/Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Preservation Section

DATE

December 5, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

270 Washington Street, S. W.

TELEPHONE

(404) 656-2840

CITY OR TOWN

Atlanta

STATE

Georgia

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Elizabeth A. Lyon

TITLE

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

3/17/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. M. ...

DATE

7/12/78

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

William ...
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

6-29-78

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than when I regarded it important for me to know about any matter of dereliction I would call them all together and demand that...the guilty should report themselves ...if any fail...and the fact should be ascertained...(he)...would at once be dismissed from school..."

In 1863 Johnston became one of Governor Brown's military aides and assisted in organizing the Georgia State Militia. He recruited James Stanley Newman to direct the military exercises, which he instituted at the school in 1864. For 5 1/2 years after its founding, the school was a great success.

In 1867, after the death of one of his daughters, he and his family removed to Baltimore, Maryland, where he opened a school called "Pen Lucy" established after the same methods as Rockby. Due to the depressed financial condition of the South after the Civil War, a sufficient number of southern boarders were unable to come north to school, so Johnston began to take day students from Baltimore. His system was not as successful with day students as it had been with boarders. After six years Johnston closed the school and accepted a position in the U.S. Department of Education. He retired to write in 1886. Among his publications are the Dukesborough Tales, which describes life in rural middle-Georgia, his Autobiography, and a manuscript entitled Early Educational Life in Middle Georgia.

The chain of titles for Rockby after Johnston includes James Stanley Newman, George F. Pierce and James A. Harley, and the Rucker family in whose hands the house still remains today.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Geog. Data

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Verbal Boundary Description (cont)

A-D on the accompanying sketch map, but not including the modern storehouse.

JUL 12 1978

Rockby, Sparta, Hancock County, Georgia

Modern
Storehouse

Sketch Map (not to scale)

- Key: A - Smokehouse
B - Well
C - Root Cellar
D - Granite Millshed

