

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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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

Henry Gray Turner House and Grounds

AND/OR COMMON

Same as above

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1000 Old Madison Road

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Quitman

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second - Dawson Mathis

STATE

Georgia

CODE

013

COUNTY

Brooks

CODE

027

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. W. Roland Knight

STREET & NUMBER

1000 Old Madison Road (P.O. Box 679)

CITY, TOWN

Quitman

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Georgia 31643

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Superior Court

STREET & NUMBER

Brooks County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Quitman

STATE

Georgia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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 Henry Gray Turner House is a two-story, four-over-four-with-central-stair-hall house. The foundation consists of brick piers, and the main roof is hipped, with hipped dormers. The front (west) of the house is five bays wide with a centered, side- and over-lighted doorway; a one-story hip-roofed porch with pedimented entry extends across the full width of the front and wraps around the south side. A second story, hip-roofed balcony is centered over the front porch. A shallow, two-story bay and a first-floor bay window project from the north side of the house. To the rear (east) extend a two-story, hip-roofed ell with shed porch and a one-story, shed-like addition. The bulk of the house is sheathed in weatherboards; shingles cover the bays, dormers, and balcony. Windows, originally flanked by louvered blinds, are double-hung sash in a variety of arrangements, including 1x1, 6x1, 12x1, 2x2, 4x4 and 6x6. Decorative details in addition to the singles include double-tapered, paired porch columns on pedestals, scrollwork in the porch pediment, garlands and swags on the balcony entablature, and modillion blocks grouped over the windows under the eaves.

The interior of the Henry Gray Turner House is organized according to a four-over-four-with-central-stair-hall plan. Floors are of heart pine throughout, walls are plaster on lath (with the exception of some recently installed sheetrock over lath) with narrow picture rails and crown moldings, ceilings are smoothly plastered, with a grid pattern of wood battens applied to three of the upstairs bedroom ceilings, and woodwork including baseboards and door and window surrounds is stained and varnished heart pine. Door and window hardware, mostly original, is brass, cast in vaguely Eastlake patterns. Several downstairs doors are double sliding doors; others are conventionally hinged. The stairway at the east end of the hall is a half turn with landing, and it continues from the second floor to the attic, overlighted by a round-headed dormer window. Fireplaces present a variety of late-Victorian mantels featuring exposed firebrick or glazed tile, iron coal frames, wood surrounds and mantelpieces, and mirrored overmantels; the original kitchen, in the rear ell, has a tall, narrow, open fireplace. An original bathroom contains a zinc bathtub in a paneled enclosure, a marble sink with iron brackets, and vertical tongue-and-groove wainscot. Upstairs bedrooms have large, built-in closets. Speaking tubes remain in place throughout the house.

The Henry Gray Turner House is constructed of standard-dimensioned heart-pine lumber assembled in a balloon frame and held together with cut nails. The weatherboard siding is of painted heart pine; the shingles, also painted, are cypress. Foundation piers are built of brick. The roof, originally covered with cypress shingles, is now surfaced with modern composition shingles.

The grounds around the Henry Gray Turner House are divided into two distinct parts. The front (west) yard, of approximately ten acres, is heavily

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wooded with large trees and clumps of bushes above an underlying coarse lawn. A meandering gravel driveway (slightly realigned from its original course) cuts diagonally across the front yard from the northwest corner of the property to the house. The rear (east) yard, also of approximately ten acres, is level and largely cleared, with the exception of a few large trees standing individually or in groups. An extensive stand of bamboo is located in the side yard just north of the house.

Several outbuildings are located on the grounds of the Henry Gray Turner House. South of the main house is a smaller residence made by joining two one-story, wood-framed, gable-roofed tenant houses on the property. Behind (east of) this residence stands a small structure with overhanging gable roof believed to have been a smokehouse. North of the main house is a one-story, wood-framed, hip-roofed carriage house with shingled walls, diamond-paned windows, and diagonally paneled doors. In the cleared field behind (east of) the main house stand two small contemporary barns and storage sheds. Other outbuildings known to have existed but no longer extant include a barn, stable, and carriage facility directly behind (east of) the main house and a row of tenant houses along the southern boundary toward the rear of the lot.

The Henry Gray Turner House is located in the southeast quadrant of Quitman, at the very edge of the city. Land to the east and south is largely farmed or wooded; land to the north and east, beyond narrow, intervening fields, is largely developed. Boundaries of the nominated property coincide with the legal description of the land and constitute the main body of varying amounts of land historically associated with the house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1895

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Munn and Company, New York City

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Henry Gray Turner House is significant to the architectural history of Georgia as a late-Victorian design which combines several contending design influences of the late-nineteenth century in a single country residence. It is further significant architecturally as one of the few documented houses in Georgia to have been built according to mail-order plans. Its grounds are significant as a remarkably well-preserved example of late-nineteenth-century landscaping. The house is significant to the political and judicial history of Georgia as the home of, and principal property associated with, Henry Gray Turner, a soldier, lawyer, politician and judge who sat in the state legislature, the U.S. House of Representatives, and, briefly, the Georgia Supreme Court.

The Henry Gray Turner House (ca. 1895)

The Henry Gray Turner House is a late-Victorian design combining up-to-date eclectic stylistic motifs and period materials with a fairly traditional floor plan. The overall arrangement and massing of the house, and especially the hipped roof with its hipped dormers, the windows, the modillion and gable-and-swag detailing, and the overall proportions, strongly reflect the Neoclassical design tendencies of the very-late-nineteenth century. The bay window, balcony, and use of shingles likewise reflect late-nineteenth-century Victorian-design predilections. Stylistic motifs such as the paired double-tapered columns, the modified modillions, and the scrollwork in the porch gable are truly eclectic and also characteristic of the late-nineteenth century. The floor plan, however, is both traditional and innovative: the four-over-four-with-central-stair-hall arrangement is traditionally Southern, yet enjoyed a turn-of-the-century revival of sorts with the Neoclassical style. The Henry Gray Turner House is thus not so much "transitional" as it is an amalgam of several contending design influences in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Such amalgams of design are found frequently in moderately priced country houses of the time, and this house is a good example of the type.

As significant as the design of the house itself is the method of design. Plans for the Henry Grady Turner House were apparently prepared by a mail-order-catalog company rather than a local architect or contractor. Original

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blueprints for the house, found in the attic by the current owner, are signed (but not dated), "Munn and Company." Munn and Company was a New York City publishing firm that specialized in technical and patent publications and published the Scientific American magazine. From 1886 through the early-twentieth century, Munn and Company also published a special monthly supplement to Scientific American (bound annually in two volumes) entitled the Architects and Builders Edition. This Edition constituted, in the words of the editors, "a large and splendid Magazine of Architecture," featuring plans, elevations, views, and specifications for a wide variety of buildings, especially country and suburban houses. For "any of the structures illustrated in this publication," Munn and Company would "supply at moderate cost the full plans, specifications, details, bills of materials, etc., ready for the builder." Their work, they noted, "extends to all parts of the country," and they were "assisted by able architects." The existence of the signed blueprints for the house and a favorable comparison of them with published Munn and Company designs demonstrates that the plans for the Henry Gray Turner House are indeed mail-order plans. As such, they are among the very few such plans representing this significant late-nineteenth-century American architectural tradition to have been documented in Georgia.

The grounds around the Henry Gray Turner House are as historically significant as the house itself, for they constitute remarkably well-preserved late-nineteenth-century landscaping. The division of the grounds into two distinct parts, with the front yard attractively landscaped and the rear yard used for gardening and agriculture, is typical of landscape architecture plans for country houses through the second half of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the front yard, with its gravel driveway, lawn, and trees and shrubbery, is a period piece of picturesque landscape gardening. Although no plans for the landscaping have been found, numerous similar examples exist in popular publications such as Frank Scott's The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds (1870, 1881, 1886). As with the mail-order plans for the house, it is likely that the landscape plans for the grounds were at least inspired by, if not actually based on, a similar published or cataloged design.

Henry Gray Turner (1839-1904)

Henry Gray Turner was born on March 20, 1839, at a farm in Franklin County, North Carolina. In 1857, he studied briefly at the University of North Carolina and the University of Virginia, but when his father died that

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same year, he left school to seek employment. After a temporary assignment teaching school in Alabama, Turner was appointed principal of the Piscola Academy in Brooks County, Georgia.

At the outset of the Civil War, Turner joined with the Savannah Volunteer Guards. In 1862, he transferred to the North Carolina State Troops, where he was appointed captain of Company H, Garland's Brigade, Army of North Virginia. Captain Turner saw considerable field action and was wounded and captured at Gettysburg on July 1, 1863, and imprisoned on Johnson's Island. In November of 1864, he was released as disabled, and he returned to south Georgia.

On June 18, 1865, Turner married Lavinia C. Morton, the daughter of Judge James O. Morton, who lived on an antebellum plantation in Brooks County just south of Quitman. In October of that year, Turner was admitted to the bar in Nashville, Georgia, and began the practice of law in Quitman. While Turner was apparently not a party to any seminal cases, he helped satisfy the legal needs of his community and the region, earning a reputation for scholarly understanding of case law combined with an intuitive sense of justice.

Turner's political career began late in 1874 with his election to the lower house of the state legislature. Turner was a conservative, anti-Carpet-bagger Democrat, and local voters twice returned him to the house, where he served as chairman of the Judiciary Committee and speaker pro tem. In the fall of 1880, Turner was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served until 1896. He maintained his anti-Carpetbagger posture at this national forum and in 1890 co-authored with several other Southern politicians a report entitled, "Why the Solid South, or Reconstruction and Its Results." Turner was also violently against protective tariffs, and the subject brought forth some of his most polished invective: "We are villeins of the lords of taxation; we wear the collar of the tariff -- the shoddy livery of our masters. If we buy our clothing in some freer land, we are fined; if the fine is not paid, we are imprisoned. Our crime is poverty, and our poverty was imposed by law." Turner's support of the gold standard caused him to break ranks with the national Democratic Party in 1896 over the free-silver plank; he declined to run for re-election and instead "retired to his home, about a mile from Quitman," where he read extensively in his private library and continued, to some degree, his practice of law. In 1901, he turned down a

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request to run for governor, citing as an excuse his poor health.

Turner's judicial career reached its zenith in July, 1903, when Governor Terrell appointed him justice of the State Supreme Court. Turner's health was truly failing, however, and in April, 1904, he was forced to resign from the bench. On June 9th of that year, while in Raleigh, North Carolina, he died.

Turner County, Georgia, created on July 18, 1905, is named in honor of Henry Gray Turner.

Archeology

No formal archeology has been done at the Henry Gray Turner House. However, it is known that a large carriage house/stable/barn existed behind (east of) the house, and that several tenant houses were once located to the southeast. Furthermore, the gravel driveway has been realigned slightly (in the mid-twentieth century), and its exact original course has been forgotten. Thus, there is potential here for archeology to contribute significantly to our knowledge of the outbuildings and landscaping of the Henry Gray Turner property.

Preservation

The Henry Gray Turner House is currently being restored by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. W. Roland Knight, who will occupy the house as their primary residence when restoration is complete. The restoration is designed to preserve as much as possible of the original fabric of the house while providing for new electrical, plumbing, and kitchen facilities, and replacing extensively damaged or deteriorated elements. This National Register nomination was initiated by the property owners as part of their preservation efforts.

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"Memorial of Honorable Henry G. Turner," Reports of Cases Decided in the Supreme Court of the State of Georgia, Vol. 120. Atlanta: The State Library, 1904.

Huxford, Folks. The History of Brooks County, Georgia. Quitman, Ga.: Hannah Clarke Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1948.

Northen, William F. Men of Mark in Georgia. Atlanta: A.B. Caldwell, 1907.

Scientific American Architects and Builders Edition, Vols. 4-6, 9, 13-18, 37-38.

Structural and Site Survey Form, Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, prepared by Mr. and Mrs. W. Roland Knight (property owners).