

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lenoir Plantation House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number On gravel road W from U.S. Hwy 45 Alt. N/A not for publication
city, town Prairie 3 mi. S of 382 vicinity
state Mississippi code MS county Monroe code 95 zip code 39756

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	<u>1</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Kenneth H. P. Pool March 10, 1992
Signature of certifying official Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Patricia Andrews 4/28/92

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & Early 20th Century Revivals:
Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls weatherboard
roof asphalt
other wood porch

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Lenoir plantation house is a two story, Classical Revival building located at the end of a long drive from a section line road in the rolling prairie land west of Aberdeen, Mississippi. Large oaks frame the house, which sits in a landscaped 8-acre yard within the remaining 1600 acres of associated plantation lands.

Family history says the house was built in 1847, but the alleged builder of the house inherited the land in 1851. No pictures or drawings of the original house have been located, but it is known that a complete remodeling in the then-current Classical Revival style was undertaken in 1910 by William S. Lenoir, the builder's son. During this remodeling the house was enlarged by the addition of two rooms on the second story and of a one story kitchen wing at the rear (northeast corner). The portion of the foundation now visible indicates that hand-hewn trees were used for sills on the perimeter of the house. Large, uneven circular saw marks on the joists under the main house seem to indicate production at some early local sawmill. The rear (northern) sill appears to be a well-dimensioned "standard" sized timber replacement from the 1910 remodeling. The original house may have been built in a Vernacular Greek Revival style. Evidence for this remains in the first floor plan -- rooms massed two deep on either side of a central hall -- and in the simple paneled Greek Revival style mantels remaining on the large, wood-burning, first-floor fireplaces.

Although scant evidence remains of its original style, Lenoir has been well-maintained and preserved in its Classical Revival form. The main mass of the house is rectangular. The low hipped roof is capped by a fretwork balustrade and pierced by two corbelled brick chimneys. Its southern facade is three bay on both first and second levels, with paired 9/9 double hung windows flanking a classical entry surround on the first floor and paired 6/6 double hung windows flanking a simpler surround on the second. (See photo #1.)

A segmented, two level porch wraps the facade and parts of the eastern and western elevations. The central feature of the porch is a massive pedimented portico over the entry bays. The projecting gable has a centered demi-lune louvered vent and false modillions under the boxed eaves which continue along the portico and around the main body of the house. The portico is supported on paired two story wooden Ionic columns. The frieze is layered bands of wood and is continued on the house. Beginning under the edges of the two story portico, one story, flat roofed gallery sections wrap the facade and continue on the sides. The one story galleries also have banded friezes and Ionic column supports. They also have balustrades with fretwork railings (matching the one on the roof), milled rails, and square corner

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAR 17 1992

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Lencir Plantation House, vicinity of Prairie, Monroe County, Mississippi

Section number 7 Page 1

and support posts with molded capitals. The gallery floors are wood, the steps and walkway are brick. A shallow wooden balcony serves as a porch at the second level. The house is sided with weatherboard and supported on brick piers. A brick skirting wall covers the foundation.

The main entry surround, in good Neo-Classical form, has pilasters under an entablature with a heavy molded and denticulated cornice. (See photo #2.) Leaded and bevelled glass sidelights and overlights are separated by reeded moldings with bull's eye corner blocks. A double-leafed door with leaded glass lights and wood frame has double leafed screen doors. The second floor entry is similar, but plainer in detail. East, north, and west elevations have 6/6 and 9/9 double hung windows in molded surrounds. (See photos 3,4,&5.) A one story, hip roofed kitchen wing was added at the northeast when the house was classicized c.1910. This wing has been extended westward across most of the rear of the house.

The home's most impressive interior feature is its double staircase, an exact replica of the main feature of "The Magnolias," a National Register and Mississippi Landmark House in nearby Aberdeen. (See photo #6.) On the eastern side of the 15 1/2 foot wide central hall, stairs rise at both the front and the rear to land on a "bridge" which crosses the hall and leads onto second level steps on the western side. The western steps land on the second level, where four bedrooms and a sunporch were added c. 1910. The original staircase, located in the same position, was removed. (See photo #7.) The tongue-and-groove floors were installed at that time, as were the milled moldings on door surrounds and baseboards on both levels.

In keeping with their design eras, downstairs fireplaces have wide, wood-burning openings and paneled wooden mantels. (See photo 8.) Second floor fireplaces are designed for coal, having small openings fitted with coal grates and decorative tile surrounds. (See photo # 9.) Both upstairs and down, interior walls are drywalled. Some upstairs rooms also have wallpaper coverings, as does the central hall on both levels.

A few original furnishings remain in the house, among them: an Empire sofa in the library, a small marble-topped table and four walnut side chairs in the parlor, a plantation desk now used in the family room, a long cherry table and a child's chair attributed to slave woodworkers, and the posts of a massive canopy bed now recreated in the master bedroom.

Two other structures are located in the yard, both of which are non-contributing. A metal water tower consisting of a tank on iron-pipe "legs" was constructed to the west of the house in the early 1930s, when a "Delco" electric system was installed. It is the only remaining farm outbuilding of historical age but its fabric is deteriorating and it is scheduled for removal. A one story, frame storage building covered with wide lap Masonite siding is located at the rear of the house to the northeast. The storage building has a concrete foundation and a three bay facade (w,d,w) in the south elevation. Built c. 1975, its plain style and location keep it from detracting from the main house.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

 nationally statewide locallyApplicable National Register Criteria A B C DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1910

Significant Dates

1910

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Brannin, Addison (for 1910 rebuilding)

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

The William T. Lenoir House is significant for its architectural character (Criterion C) -- an unusual rural example of the Classical Revival style adopted in the prosperous early 20th century by the grandsons of the early white settlers. No complete listing of Monroe County architectural resources is available, so a determination about how Lenoir compares with other similar county homes is difficult. No other "Neo-Classical" plantation homes have been thus far listed on the National Register in Mississippi. The closest registered Neo-Classical homes of similar size and style are street numbers 743 and 744 in the East Main Street District of West Point, Mississippi, 20 miles to the south in Clay County. A list provided by the Historic Preservation Division indicates that of some 28 listed extant Classical Revival buildings, more than 95 percent are located in Jackson or south of Jackson, making northern examples of the style more unusual. The Lenoir home's significance also rests on its conversion from a vernacular, rural, ante-bellum building to an early 20th century, high-style, classicised architectural statement.

Classical Revival architecture swept the country following the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, at which the revival of classic plan and detail for all of the main exposition buildings was a popular and influential choice. (McAlester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Architecture [New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1984] pp. 344-346.) "Neo-Classical" buildings offered an appealing alternative to the irregularity, darkness, and layered detail of Victorian styles and toward the relative simplicity, the light color palette, and the American-interpreted classical design elements used by the nation's founders. To the Southerner, at last overcoming the hardships and losses of the war, the Neo-Classical may have appealed as the current style most nearly approximating the overwhelming choice of the early planters -- Greek Revival. (Richard Cawthon, Chief Architectural Historian, MDAH, interviewed by Joan Embree, architectural historian, at Jackson office, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Sept. 21, 1990.)

The man credited with building the original house, William T. Lenoir, was a South Carolinian who had moved to Mississippi following stopovers in Alabama and Texas. (Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi, [Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1891] pp. 1120, 1121.) He and his wife Mary Blanchard

 See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1992

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Lenoir Plantation House, vicinity of Prairie, Monroe County, Mississippi

Section number 8 Page 1

Lenoir inherited the land on which the house was built in 1851, after Mary's father, Augustus Blanchard, died. (Monroe County, MS, Deed Book 18:142.) (Family history dates the house at 1847, but that would have been during Blanchard's ownership.) Blanchard had acquired Sections 20 and 29 of Township 15, Range 6 East in 1841 and 1845, respectively. (Monroe County, MS Deed Book 9:71.) His property was divided into two adjoining "L" shaped sections when he died intestate, with Mary and William receiving the eastern and southern "L" and Mary's brother, William Blanchard receiving the other.

Although no written documents, photographs, or drawings of the original house have been located, there are indications that the first home the Lenoirs built may have been in a vernacular Greek Revival style. The surviving Greek Revival features are the central hall plan and the simple, classically-inspired mantels in the four first-floor rooms. However, the home's significance lies primarily in the high integrity of its 1910 remodeling rather than in its original design.

By the early 20th century, when William T's son, William Smith Lenoir had been running the plantation for 50 years, cotton production had returned to being a profitable business. In the 1910 U.S. Census, William S. , 68, and his wife, Julia, 55, had five children ranging from the age of 38 to 18 living with them: Mary, 38; W.S. Jr., 35; Ruth, 25; Sterling Paine, 22; and Whitman H., 18. (Population Schedules, Monroe County, MS, 1910, Enumeration District 70, sheet 15B.) Family records show that the Lenoirs sold some Texas property and put the money into the expansion and refurbishing of the house. They chose as their builder a man named Addison Brannin, well known in Aberdeen for his contracting and construction work.

Brannin learned the building trade from S.H. Berg, an Aberdeen builder of good reputation who practiced following the Civil War. Brannin family documents in the Evans Memorial Library in Aberdeen say that he had no formal engineering training, but "a natural gift" for building. Lenoir and other buildings constructed by Brannin indicate he adhered to current fashion as well as sound building practices. Lenoir is almost a textbook example of the popular Classical Revival style, as evidenced by references in A Field Guide to American Houses and other publications. Other buildings Brannin constructed or renovated include the Aberdeen City Hall (a Beaux-Arts structure placed on the National Register in 1987), the rebuilding of the Monroe County and Federal courthouses in Aberdeen, and several regional houses. (King family papers, Evans Memorial Library, Aberdeen, MS.)

Lenoir Plantation House in its Classical Revival form is important for three main reasons: 1. It is the physical representation of a change in early 20th century architectural taste away from the picturesque styles and toward classical designs; 2. It is the lone rural example of Classical Revival style thus far documented in the state; and 3. It provides evidence of the relative return to prosperity of Southern cotton growers after the Civil War and Reconstruction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAR 17 1993

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Lenoir Plantation House, vicinity of Prairie, Monroe County, Mississippi

Section number 9 Page 1

Mississippi. Auditor. Real and Personal Tax Rolls, Monroe County, 1860, 1870, 1900, 1910. Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University, Starkville. Mississippi Collection (1860,1870); Social Sciences Microfilm Room (1900, 1910).

Monroe County History. Compiled by Monroe County Book Committee. Dallas, Texas:Curtis Media Corporation, 1988.

Monroe County, Mississippi. Chancery Clerk. Deed books 9, 18. Monroe County Courthouse, Aberdeen.

Parham, Bonnie. "Lenoir Plantation Opens Historic Doors to Public," in the Jackson Daily News, (Pg. 8.) Oct. 13, 1969.

Rodabaugh, John. "Antebellum Homes, Part XVI," Port of Aberdeen Column in Aberdeen Examiner, April 27, 1972.

United States. Bureau of the Census. Population Schedules, Monroe County Mississippi, 1860, 1870, 1900, 1910.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MA 1992

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

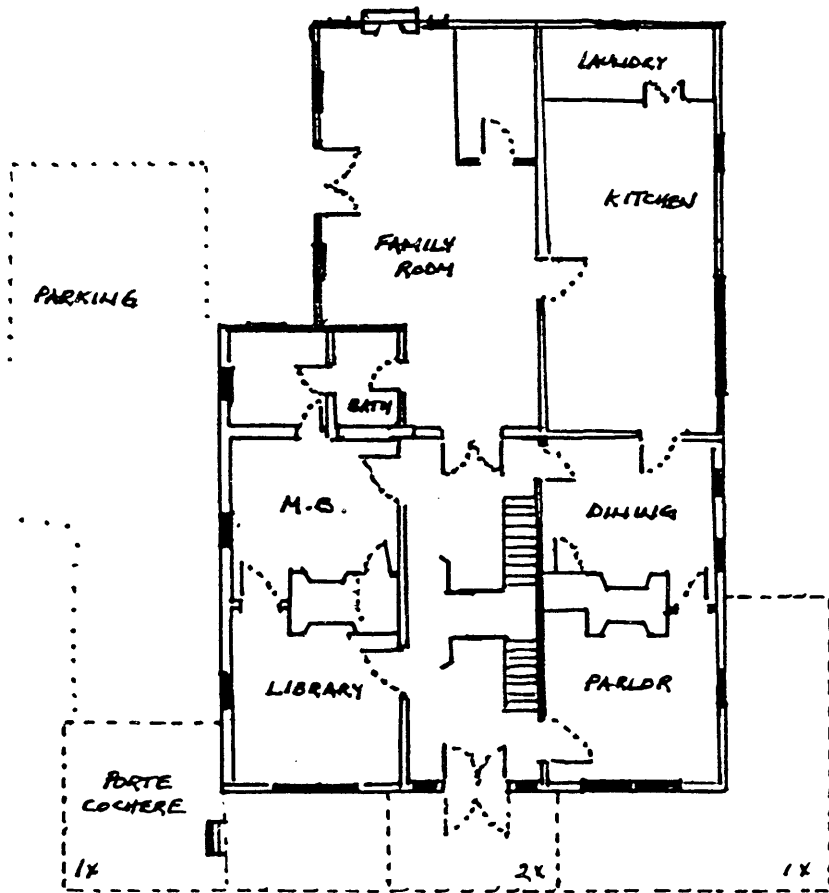
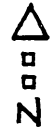
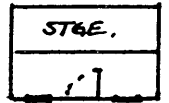
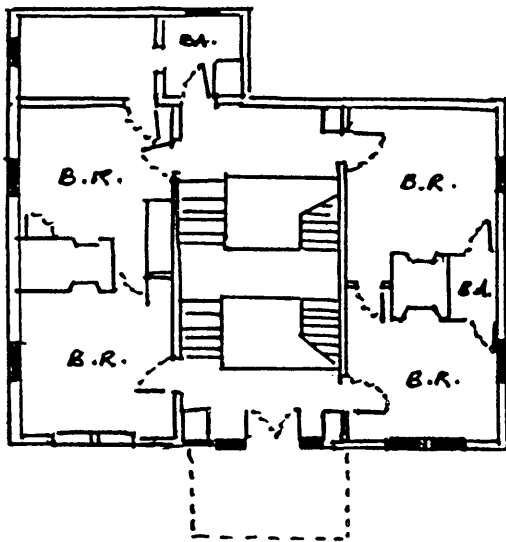
Lenoir Plantation House, vicinity of Prairie, Monroe County, Mississippi

Section number Photos Page 1

The following information is the same for photographs except #5 and 8:

- (1) Lenoir Plantation House
- (2) Vicinity of Prairie, Monroe County, Mississippi
- (3) Joan Embree
- (4) July, 1990
- (5) Department of Archives & History

(Item # 3 for photographs 5 & 8 is Marc C. Hammack; Item #4 for photographs 5 & 8 is Fall, 1989.)



LENOIR PLANTATION HOUSE

