

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 William Madison Otey House

and/or common Greenlawn

**2. Location**

S of Meridianville  
W 1/2 of Section 30, T. 2S, R. 1E  
street & number E side U. S. Hwy. 431 app. 0.4 mi. N of Bob Wade Rd. — not for publication

city, town Meridianville vic vicinity of congressional district 5th

state Alabama code 01 county Madison code 089

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mrs. Leslie Cummins

street & number 310 Broad Street

city, town Sweetwater vicinity of state TN 37874

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Probate Office, Madison County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Huntsville state Alabama 35801

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Historic American Building Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1935-present  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Division of Prints & Photographs Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC 20540

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on a low, cedar-covered knoll looking west toward the rich farmlands along Beaverdam Creek, Greenlawn is essentially a five-bay rectangular structure, frame, on a low brick foundation. The two-story, one-room deep main block measures approximately 52 by 20 feet, and is paralleled at the rear by a single-story shed-roof extension of roughly the same dimensions. Brick chimneys terminating each end of the front portion of the house are unusual in that they are slightly extruded from the wall below the pediment, thence passing upward through the ridge of the roof behind the tympanum and enframing cornice.

A small later wing abuts the north side of the house and is served by a fieldstone chimney. The roof of the wing, sloping away from the main body of the house, is concealed by a wood parapet.

The three middle bays of the facade are spanned by a massive tetrastyle portico, the columns themselves being of a rudimentary Doric order and built of stuccoed brick. They rest on a stylobate of reinforced concrete. The double-leaf front door sheltered beneath the portico is enframed by sidelights and a rectangular transom.

Inside, a lofty bisecting hall is partitioned midway into an entrance foyer with stairhall directly behind. Rooms to either side of the foyer are 19 feet square, the parlor at the right opening through a triple-leaf folding doorway into the large dining room at the rear. The pair of rooms on the north side of the center hall are separated by an intervening six-foot wide side passage. To the right of the double doors leading from the foyer into the back hall, a partially enclosed straight-run stair with simple cherrywood handrail rises, in reverse flight, to the upper hallway. On the second floor, there is a single room to either side of the hall, while a single-leaf door, now permanently closed, at the west end of the hall once led onto the upper gallery. Woodwork throughout is characteristically mid-19th century: fluted door and window surrounds, with cornerblocks, being echoed by the fluted pilasters of the first-floor mantelpieces. Baseboards downstairs are likewise crowned by a broad cyma molding. Upstairs woodwork is somewhat simpler, with unmolded door and window facings articulated only by square cornerblocks. Doors are of the typical, two-panel Greek Revival type. Rooms throughout are rather unusual in that each has a built-in closet, with double doors, in one of the chimney corners.

The forerunner of Greenlawn's present portico was a full-length double porch composed of five segmentally arched, superimposed bays carrying a full entablature with cornice adorned by paired brackets (see photo #5). Behind the entablature was a deck-like roof. Besides the circa 1925 replacement of this portico, changes occurring during the same period included construction of a north bath-and-bedroom addition to match a south wing since destroyed; also, the insertion of a bathroom at the rear of the upper hallway. Much of the exterior clapboarding was also renewed during this period. In the 1950s, a narrow cinderblock-and-frame utility addition was constructed across the back of the house. The interior, however, remains generally unaltered, and still retains much of the original furniture.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

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None of the original dependencies survive. A caretaker's house and storage structures are of relatively recent origin. Some fifty yards southeast of the house lies the family cemetery, enclosed by a wall of ashlar construction. Traces of the geometrically arranged gardens are yet discernible in front of, and to either side, of the house.

Unoccupied and boarded up from more than a decade, the house remains structurally sound and susceptible of restoration.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1849-50; 1920's **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

In its scale and general arrangement, Greenlawn is representative of several mid-19th century plantation houses which once stood in northern Madison County. Today, it is the lone survivor. As originally constructed, with a two-tiered Italianate porch fronting a core structure that remained Greek Revival in character, the house expressed the increasing eclecticism of the late ante-bellum period. As renovated in the early 20th century, it was made to conform with a later generation's romantic preconception of the plantation house as inevitably a white-pillared mansion. Greenwood is significant, then, as an artifact which represents both an aspect of the past--socially and architecturally--and a particular viewpoint toward the Southern past which prevailed in the early 1900s. Situated on a tract cultivated by the same family for more than 150 years, Greenlawn is also a vivid reminder of the agrarian economy that once sustained this fertile region of Alabama.

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The land on which Greenlawn stands was patented in 1809 by Dr. James Manning. Some few years later, Walter Otey acquired the tract, settled there with his family, and placed the land into cultivation. Like many of his neighbors, Otey was a Virginian, a native of Bedford County and a son of Col. John Otey, an officer in the Revolution. Of the same family was the Rt. Rev. James Hervey Otey, nephew of Walter Otey and first Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee. (In 1859, Bishop Otey was a guest of his Greenlawn cousins on the occasion of the consecration of Huntsville's Church of the Nativity.)

On his plantation, Walter Otey erected a log house that continued to be the home of his widow and children following his death in 1823. Eventually clapboarded, and finished inside, this house stood just north of the present dwelling. It was Walter Otey's youngest son, William Madison Otey, who began construction of Greenlawn in 1849, at the time of his marriage to Octavia Wyche. The house was finished and occupied by the Christmas of 1850.

In addition to the dwelling itself, the complex included a kitchen, a smokehouse, servants' quarters, barns, corncribs, and other dependencies. A cedar-lined drive looped in front of the house, with formal boxwood gardens to either side. From this nucleus, the plantation stretched north and south along the eastern side of the Meridianville Pike.

Octavia Wyche Otey outlived her husband more than a quarter of a century, and upon her death in 1890 was buried beside him in the family cemetery. For several years thereafter, the house was intermittently rented or left vacant. About 1907, Mrs. John Bealle Walker of Rockingham County, Va., a daughter of the Otey household, returned with her husband to make her home at Greenlawn. It was during the Walkers' tenure that the house assumed its present appearance, with the construction of a pedimentated portico and the present north wing. At Mrs. Walker's death in 1948, the house descended to her daughter, Mrs. Leslie Cummins, who remained in the residence until 1963, when she moved to Sweetwater, TN. Since then, Greenlawn has been boarded up and currently is under the protection of a caretaker who lives on the property.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Historic American Buildings Survey. Greenlawn photographs and data pages (1935),  
 Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress.  
 Jones, Virgil Carrington (Pat). True Tales of Old Madison County. Huntsville:  
 Johnson Historical Publications, 1966.

UTM NOT VERIFIED  
 ACRES NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.78

Quadrangle name Meridianville

Quadrangle scale 7.5'

### UMT References

A 

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

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing									

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing									

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing									

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached plat.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert S. Gamble, Architectural Historian

organization for Alabama Historical Commission date October 6, 1981

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 832-6621

city or town Montgomery state Alabama 36130

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

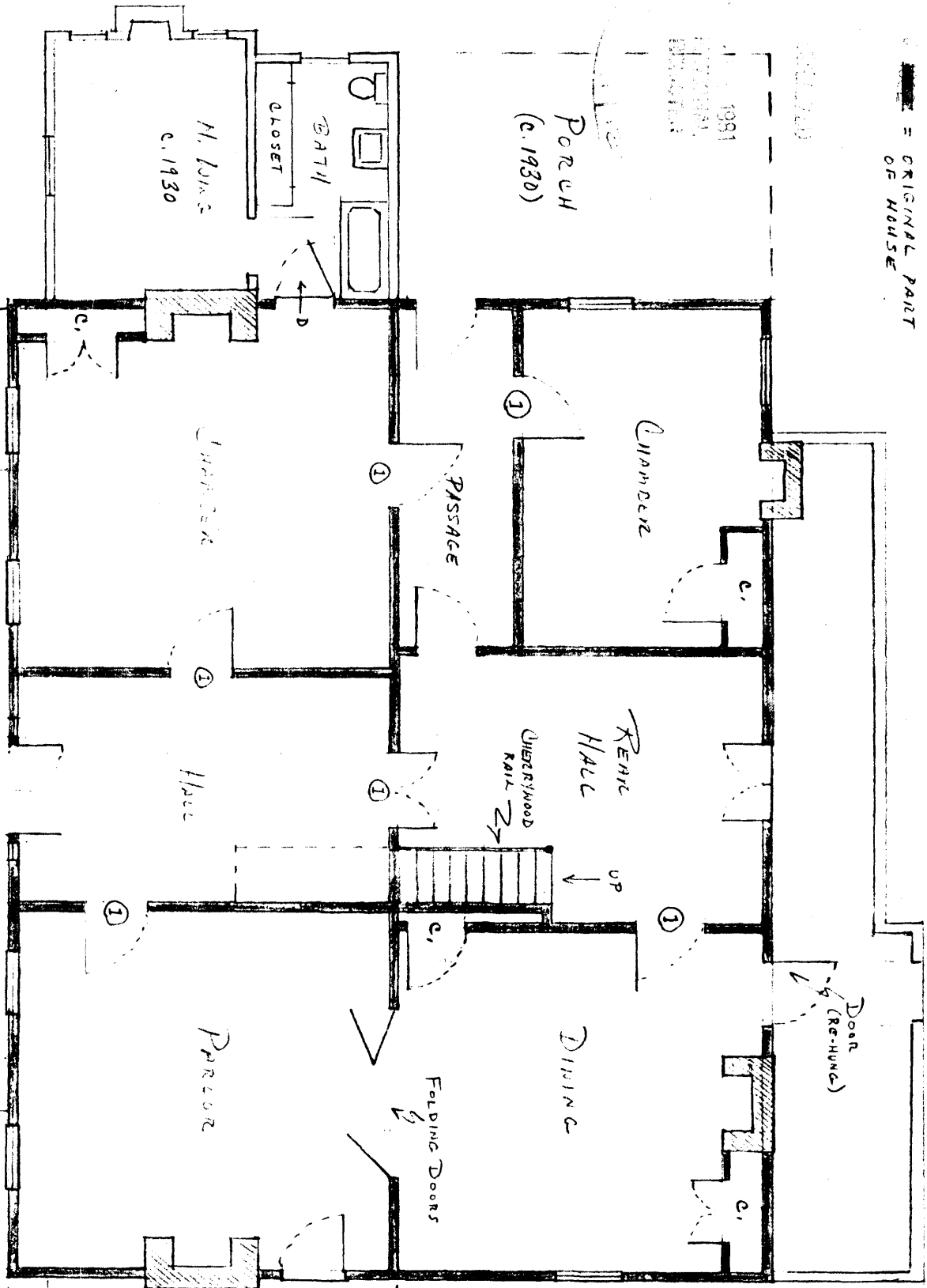
State Historic Preservation Officer signature Chris B. Howard Jr.

title SHPO Alabama date 10-6-81

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>William H. Braxton</u>	date <u>1.19.82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>W. J. Duhie</u>	date <u>1/19/82</u>
Chief of Registration	

— = ORIGINAL PART OF HOUSE

} GINDET BLOCK AND FRAMING ADDITION (MODERN)



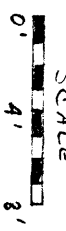
① = INTERIOR TRANSOM

APPROX. LINE OF ORIGINAL PORCH

MEASURED BY R. GAMBLE 12/80

1st FLOOR

PORTALS (20' W)



SCALE

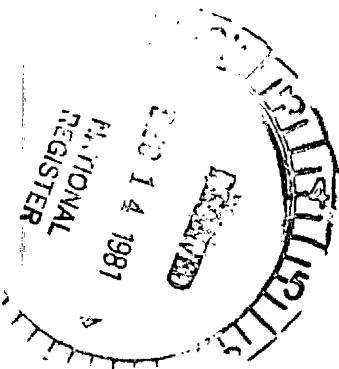
GREENLAWN (OTY HOUSE)

UNSCALED

SITE OF HOME OF UNDETERMINED DATE



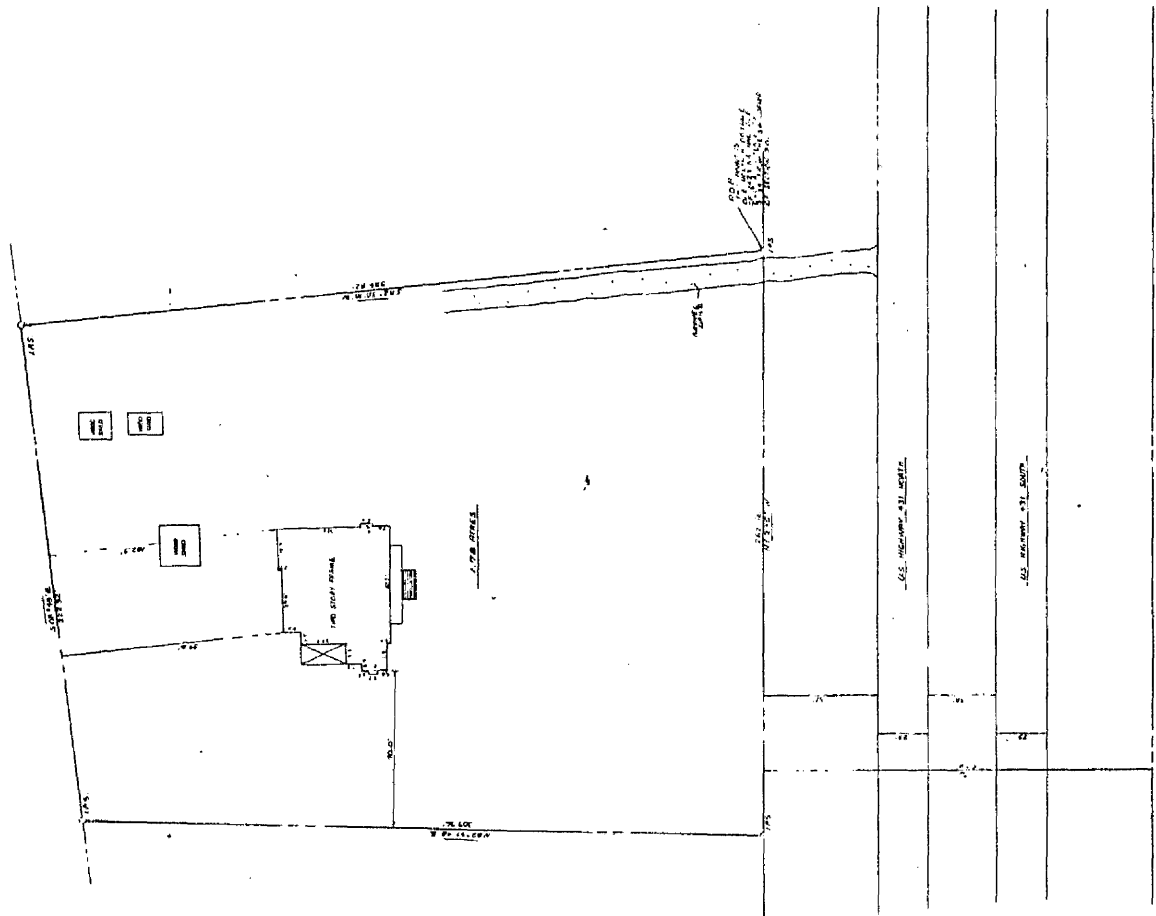
JAN 19 1982



STATE OF ALABAMA  
 ANDREWS COUNTY

ALL THAT PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 10, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 1 EAST  
 COUNTY OF ANDREWS, ALABAMA, WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS BEING THE NORTH 1/4 OF SAID QUARTER  
 OF THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 10, THENCE THE NORTH DISTANCE OF 240.00 FEET  
 TO A POINT; THENCE WE FACE A DISTANCE OF 91.14 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; SAID POINT  
 OF BEGINNING IS FURTHER DESCRIBED AS BEING ON THE EAST RIGHT-OF-WAY OF U.S. HIGHWAY 431;  
 THENCE FROM THE POINT OF BEGINNING NORTH 7 DEGREES 00 MINUTES WEST ALONG THE EAST  
 RIGHT-OF-WAY OF U.S. HIGHWAY 431 A DISTANCE OF 262.15 FEET TO A POINT;  
 THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 50 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 109.96 FEET TO A POINT;  
 THENCE SOUTH 8 DEGREES 40 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 272.71 FEET TO A POINT;  
 THENCE SOUTH 42 DEGREES 30 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 314.82 FEET TO THE  
 POINT OF BEGINNING, AND CONTAINING 1.17 ACRES,  
 ACCORDING TO AN SURVEY MADE THE 15TH DAY OF A TOWN IN 1979.

*Ray H. Hester*  
 SURVEYOR ANDREWS COUNTY, ALABAMA



SMITH ENGINEERING & LAND SURVEYING CO., INC.  
 774 MADISON STREET  
 MOBILE, ALABAMA

DATE: 1/19/82  
 BY: D. J. BROWN  
 CHECKED: D. J. BROWN