

**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 Smith-Alston House

and/or common Alston House

**2. Location**

street & number 405 Ponder Street        not for publication

city, town Richland        vicinity of congressional district 3rd-Jack Brinkley

state Georgia code 013 county Stewart County code 259

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mr. and Mrs. William J. Walter

street & number 405 Ponder Street

city, town Richland        vicinity of state Georgia 31825

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Stewart County Courthouse

city, town Lumpkin        state Georgia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Historic Structures Field Survey:  
title Stewart County, Georgia has this property been determined eligible?        yes   X   no

date 1976        federal   X   state        county        local

Historic Preservation Section  
depository for survey records Georgia Department of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta        state Georgia

## 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 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 Smith-Alston House, built in 1857, is a Greek Revival cottage. Built with mortise-and-tenon framing, this one-story structure measures thirty-one feet square in size and is built on a stone-pier foundation infilled with cinder blocks. It has a hipped roof. The exterior covering material is weatherboard with flush paneling on the facade under the portico.

The facade of the house is three bays wide. The main entrance, creating the central bay, consists of two front doors which open into two different rooms. The doors have a large pilaster in between them and a smaller one on the two outer edges. The center pilaster visually supports a large wooden keystone while the two flanking pilasters each support one smaller keystone. The whole of this arrangement is set off from the rest of the house by the use of flush siding under the small front porch. This porch is supported by square wooden columns, one on each corner. These columns are reflected by pilasters on the facade which distinguish the end of the flush siding and the beginning of the weatherboard. To either side of the entrance is one large double-hung window which is nine over six in configuration.

The remainder of the house is very simple. The corners of the building are set off with slender pilasters which have moulding at the top. These pilasters, along with those on the porch and the porch columns, appear to support a complete entablature which runs around all four sides of the house.

Alterations in the original exterior appearance include the addition of a shed porch to the rear of the house at the turn of the century. This porch was later screened in and one section was enclosed as a storage area. Sometime in the 1940s, the pier foundation was infilled with cinder block and the east chimney was removed to be replaced by French doors. The west chimney collapsed and the gap was infilled with weatherboard. The mantel and fireplace opening, however, were left intact. Presently, the house is undergoing renovation and a room to the east is being added. The owner is taking great care to maintain the character of the house, carefully incorporating the proportions of the original structure into the new room.

The floor plan of the interior of the structure is a five-room arrangement. The front section of the house consists of two rooms, each of which can be entered through one of the front doors. Behind these two rooms are three smaller rooms of varying sizes, the center one being the largest.

All interior woodwork is intact. The whole of the house is walled with horizontal flush paneling. The floors are of heart pine, but were covered with two-inch oak flooring, probably when other changes were made in the 1940s.

The only interior structural change was the addition of a wall in the east rear room to provide for a bathroom. Other changes include the addition of a kitchen in the rear west room and the updating of plumbing and electrical wiring added when those modern conveniences became common.

[continued]

# 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				local history

**Specific dates** 1857 **Builder/Architect** James Oxford (?)

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

The Smith-Alston House is significant in architecture, agriculture, and local history. It is important to the early development of Richland because the owners of the property have contributed much to the growth of the community by their dedication to their chosen fields--religion, medicine, and agriculture. The house itself is a unique and interesting example of Greek Revival architecture for the county and perhaps the state.

The house was built in 1857, according to tradition, as the home of Dr. Jubilee Smith (1822–1901) and his wife, the former Mary Ann Audolf, herself a member of one of the community's pioneer families.

Smith was associated with Providence Chapel Church at Red Hill Community near Richland. This body, constituted in 1837, was an offshoot of the Christian Church or Church of Christ faith founded by his father, the Reverend George Lynch Smith.

The Reverend Smith began preaching under a "brush arbor" at Red Hill around 1830. When Dr. Smith finished college, he became pastor of the group and led them in the building of a new house of worship in 1857. A doctor and druggist, as well as a minister, Dr. Smith served his congregation for fifty two years, from 1843 until 1895.

Dr. Smith operated the first drugstore in Richland in 1849 and was a company commander during the Civil War. He chartered the Smith Masonic Lodge No. 223 at Red Hill in 1858 and was an Arch Mason in Lumpkin in 1867.

Nathaniel C. Alston, born 1820, purchased the house in 1870, and it remained in his family until the mid-1950s. He was also a doctor, having graduated from Jefferson College in Philadelphia. He moved to Richland and was soon involved in local affairs, serving not only as a doctor and druggist, but as an official of the first bank, the Bank of Richland, organized in 1890. He was postmaster of Richland for ten years and served three terms as a state senator.

The house's agricultural significance stems from Dr. Alston's son, N.C. Alston, Jr. (1855–1933), who was also a doctor in Richland. According to Love Kimbrough, a great-nephew of Alston, Jr., the latter was responsible for the introduction of the pecan industry into Stewart County and he worked to improve productivity of the tree. He did his own grafting and budding and was known as the "Pecan King of Southwest Georgia." A two-acre section of his pecan grove is part of the nominated property. It was, according to Mr. Kimbrough, originally planted with peach trees in between the pecan trees to provide a double crop. Alston, Jr., is responsible for planting

[continued]

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

[see continuation sheet]

# 10. Geographical Data

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property 3.2 acres

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Quadrangle name Richland, Georgia

Scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	6	7	2	0	6	8	0	3	5	5	3	0	6	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

As marked on the enclosed plat. It is all the current owner owns.

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title a) Nancy Alexander, Historic Preservation Planner  
b) Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr. (contact)

organization a) Lower Chattahoochee APDC  
b) Historic Preservation Sec., Ga. DNR date December 11, 1979

street & number a) P.O. Box 1908 a) (404) 324-4221  
b) 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone b) (404) 656-2840

city or town a) Columbus  
b) Atlanta state Georgia

# 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 Elizabeth A. Lyon

Elizabeth A. Lyon

title Acting State Historic Preservation Officer date 5/6/80

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>W. Ray Luce</u>	date <u>6/20/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Carol Duke</u>	date <u>6/12/80</u>
Chief of Registration	

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Continuation sheet

Description

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Landscaping around the property is limited. There is no shrubbery around the house. Pecan trees are located on the property in the rectilinear arrangement of an orchard. One palmetto tree stands in front of the house and local legend proclaims it was planted by N.C. Alston, Jr. According to information collected by Sara Dixon when she began to prepare the History of Stewart County, Vol. II, the house was originally built in the center of a four-acre grove of oak trees, and a border of cedar trees was later added by Smith. These two types of trees are no longer in evidence in any pattern of landscape. The majority of them were probably removed when the pecan grove was planted.

The grounds being nominated are 3.2 acres in extent. The size of the original tract was not located, but in January, 1934, when the will of N.C. Alston, Jr., was recorded in the Stewart County Courthouse, he owned 600 acres of land, "200 acres of which are now in pecan grove." A large portion of this grove remains; however, over the years since Alston's death, the property has been sold in tracts and the grove has been cut up by roads and fence lines. The small portion of this grove (approximately two acres) being recommended for inclusion in this nomination allows a part of the original grove to be recognized as a representation of the work that N.C. Alston, Jr., did for the betterment of the pecan industry.

The remaining 1.2 acres of land include that land in the immediate vicinity of the house and a small weatherboard shed, the only outbuilding on the property, probably built in the 1930s.

To the south of the land being nominated is a neighborhood consisting of Victorian cottages. To the west is a small, nondescript, 1950s house, and the north and east are pecan groves.

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almost all the property around Richland that presently boasts pecan trees.

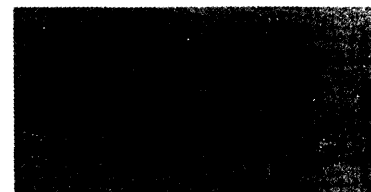
Prior to his death, Alston, Jr., sold his property, including the house, lot, and a drugstore he operated, to his son, Grover Cleveland Alston, who was also postmaster for several years. G.C. Alston passed the property to his wife, Susie, who was the last Alston to live in this house.

The house's architectural significance rests on the uniqueness of its architecture for the area. The two front doors of the house with the large keystone decorations make it unusual locally, the only one known in the county. Houses built during the Greek Revival period in Georgia (c. 1830-1860) generally had single entrances and a four-room plan. This double-door house also has a five-room plan, another unusual feature.

The house is attributed to James Oxford, supposedly the first carpenter in the community in the 1830s. He is also credited with a church. No biographical details about him are known or any other information on his subsequent career.

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Continuation sheet

Bibliography

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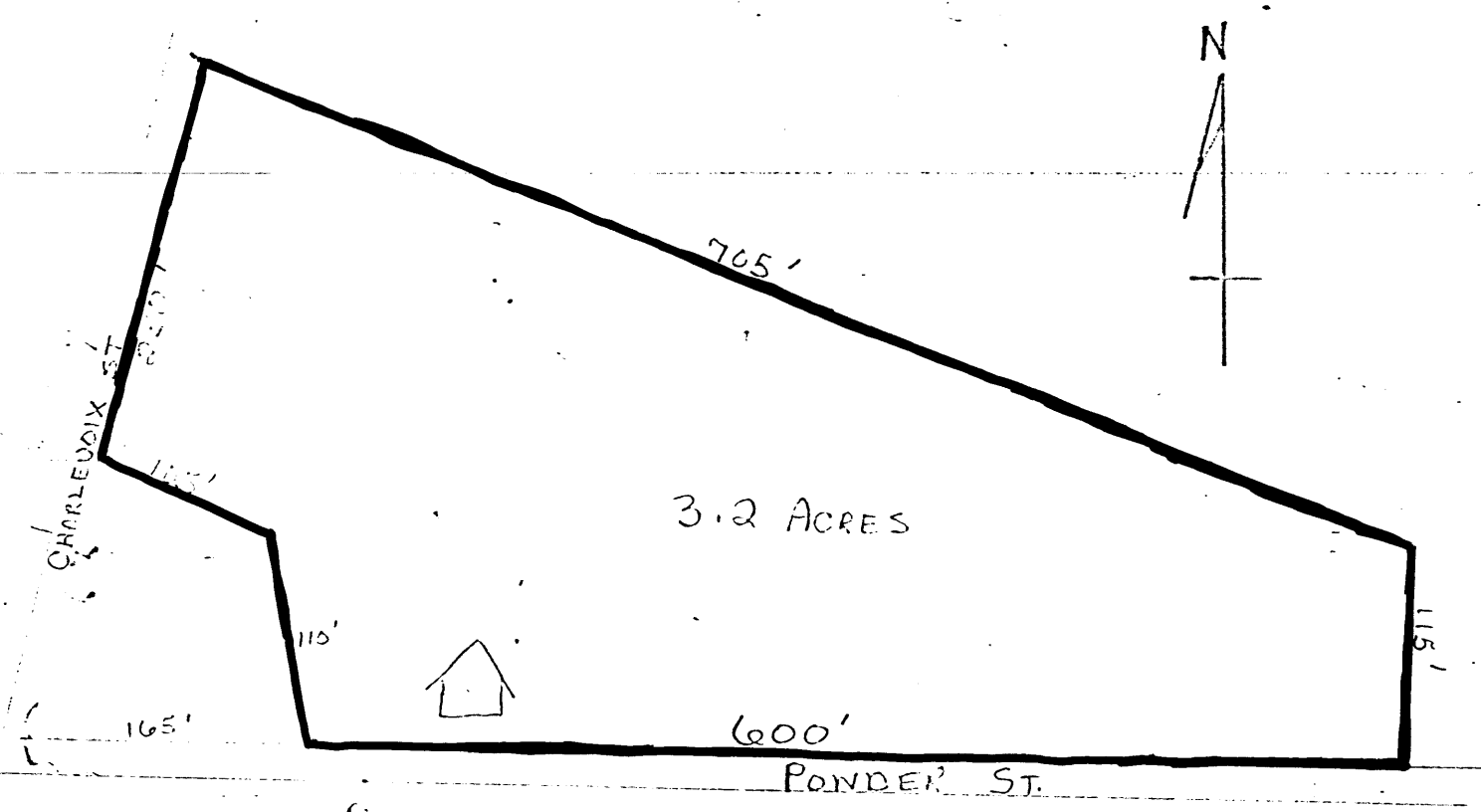
Clark, A.H., and Sara Robertson Dixon. History of Stewart County, Vol. II. Columbus, Ga.: Columbus Office Supply, 1975.

Dixon, Mrs. Harry M., Collection. Dr. Jubilee Smith Folder, Series 6, No. 6, Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Interview with Mr. Love Kimbrough, great-nephew of N.C. Alston, Jr., by Beth Walter, December 10, 1979.

Personal inspection of property, June 4, 1979, by Nancy Alexander.

Terrill, Helen Elizabeth. History of Stewart County, Vol. I. Columbus: Columbus Office Supply, 1958.



SCALE: 1" = 100'

Smith-Alston House  
 Richland, Stewart County, Georgia

**MAY 13 1980**

Scale: 1" = 100'  
 Source: Stewart County Superior Court  
 Date: 1979

Key: Nominated property outlined with a heavy black line.

PROPERTY OWNED BY  
 ELIZABETH C. WALTER  
 CITY OF RICHLAND  
 STEWART COUNTY, GEORGIA

JUNE 28, 1979

JUN 20 1980