

PH 0669318

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAY 22 1978
DATE ENTERED	JAN 3 1979

**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

~~Wilson Park Complex~~

AND/OR COMMON

Wilson Park Complex

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

209, 217 and 223 East Tuscaloosa Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Florence

— VICINITY OF

5

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alabama

01

Lauderdale

077

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

— DISTRICT

— PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

— AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

— PRIVATE

— UNOCCUPIED

— COMMERCIAL

— PARK

— STRUCTURE

BOTH

— WORK IN PROGRESS

— EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

— SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

— ENTERTAINMENT

— RELIGIOUS

— OBJECT

— IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

— GOVERNMENT

— SCIENTIFIC

— BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED Kennedy-Douglas

— INDUSTRIAL

— TRANSPORTATION

— NO

— MILITARY

— OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

See continuation sheet.

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

— VICINITY OF

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lauderdale County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

South Court Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Florence

Alabama

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

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

Built between 1890 and 1918 as upper-middle class residences, the three houses at the north end of Wilson Park are fine examples of the Victorian and Georgian Revival styles. The handsome Georgian Revival Kennedy-Douglass House dominates the group with its appealing symmetry, and together the three structures depict the sharply contrasting styles which were popular during one of Florence's most prosperous periods.

The Southall House, the oldest in the group, was built around 1890. It is a two-story frame structure, having its upper story covered with shingles which overlap to form a crenellated pattern. The combination gabled and hipped roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The L-shaped porch has four pairs of square wooden columns and a corner cluster of three columns supporting its metal roof. The ground floor has a bay window projecting on the east front. The large-paned door is flanked by slender sidelights and crowned by a large transom. The double-pane sash windows are arranged asymmetrically. The large gable surmounting the projecting portion of the facade has a row of three small casement windows. The gable is decorated with scalloped shingles, except for the peak which is frame. Extending from the hipped portion of the roof is a smaller dormer with two casement windows. There are two interior chimneys.

The house has remained in the Southall family since 1894, currently being owned and occupied by Mrs. James Morton Southall. Slight alterations made around 1900 included removing a porch gable, the Victorian porch ornamentation, and the cresting along the roofline. Today it is threatened by the potential expansion of the Florence Clinic.

The 1918 Kennedy-Douglass House, located in the center of the group is a fine Georgian Revival home designed by a Birmingham architect, Mr. Stokes, to the specification of James Joseph Douglass. The symmetry of the facade creates the handsome appearance and sharply contrasts with the Victorian structures on either side. The house is a two-story brick structure with an asphalt-shingled hipped roof. There is a one-story elliptical portico which has four slender Roman Doric columns supporting the balustraded roof. Both the porch and the main structure have a dentilled entablature and box cornice. The large-paned double doors are flanked by ten-paned sidelights and surmounted by a large fanlight. Directly above the entrance is a pair of French doors opening to the balcony. These are crowned by a flat brick lintel with a keystone. The four sets of windows are symmetrically arranged, and all have the same brick lintel as the porch. Each set is made up of three sections of sash windows, the center one being wider than the end ones. On the east side of the house is a rectangular porch with the same dentils, box cornice, and balustrade as on the front porch. There are two chimneys, an exterior one on the east rear and an interior one on the west side. Neither is visible from the front. A two-story garage decorated with similar Georgian features sits on the northern edge of the property. In 1936, Hiram Kennedy Douglass planned the landscaping for the formal gardens which are being restored in conjunction with the Arts Center.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1875-1912

The group of houses overlooking historic Wilson Park exemplify the styles of upper-middle class residences dating from the period of Florence's turn-of-the-century prosperity. The two included in the estate of Hiram Kennedy Douglass are the 1918 Kennedy-Douglass House and the 1910 Wright-Douglass House. He specified in his will that they should be given to an institution willing to maintain them for the use and benefit of the public. After his death in 1975, the City of Florence accepted the property and established an Arts Center in the Kennedy-Douglass House. As soon as funds are available, the City plans to extend the Center into the Wright-Douglass House. The third structure, the Southall House, is still a private residence and is potentially threatened by the expansion of the Florence Clinic.

The oldest structure in the group, the Southall House, was built around 1890. A local pharmacist, Charles Morton Southall, purchased it in 1894, and upon his death it passed to his son James Morton Southall. Both the elder and younger Southalls were among Florence's outstanding citizens, operating their pharmacy from 1892 until after World War II, when J. M. Southall sold it and became Vice President of the First National Bank. The house currently is owned and occupied by Mrs. J. M. Southall.

Located in the center of the block is the Kennedy-Douglass House, the most elaborate of the three. It is a fine example of Georgian Revival architecture, having been designed and furnished by James Josephus Douglass (1866-1933). A prominent Florence resident, Douglass had settled there following a business failure at Russellville. In 1904 he opened a general merchandising establishment which became one of the most lucrative in North Alabama during the twenty-two years he operated it. In addition to his town property, Douglass owned a 500-acre farm on Cypress Valley Creek.

Hiram Kennedy Douglass (1893-1975), the only child of James Josephus and Mary Sue Brooks Douglass, acquired the house upon the death of his parents. Successful in his endeavors like his father, the younger Douglass received a Bachelor of Letters Degree from Oxford University in England, was ordained in the Episcopal ministry, and became a noted genealogist (My Southern Families, published in 1967, is his major work). Many of the valuable items in the house are additions which Hiram Kennedy Douglass made to those collected by his father. Among those items are many fine pieces of furniture, mostly Georgian reproductions; many personal treasures which Hiram Kennedy Douglass acquired during his ministry; a variety of old photographs, tintypes, and dauguerreotypes; a 350-year old posset cup; and a map of Florence believed to pre-date the 1852 Samnoner map. Since Hiram Kennedy Douglass's death in 1975, the Kennedy-Douglass Trust and the City of Florence maintain the house for public use as an Arts Center.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Beard, Nancy. Proposed nomination form submitted March, 1976.

Douglass, Hiram Kennedy. "Facts about the Kennedy-Douglass House," n.d.

McCroskey, Alfred. Personal communications, Fall, 1977.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Florence Quadrangle, 1971

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	6	4	3	8	2	40	3	8	5	1	3	2	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

See continuation sheet.

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

W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director and Sally Moore

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Alabama Historical Commission

May 10, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

725 Monroe Street

(205) 832-6621

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Montgomery

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer Alabama

DATE

May 10, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

1/25/79

DATE

1/25/79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAY 22 1978
DATE ENTERED	JAN 25 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 1

---

SOUTHALL HOUSE  
Mrs. J. Morton Southall  
209 East Tuscaloosa Street  
Florence, Alabama 35630

KENNEDY-DOUGLASS HOUSE AND WRIGHT-DOUGLASS HOUSE  
City of Florence (Mayor William B. Batson)  
P. O. Box 98  
Florence, Alabama 35630

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 1979

DATE ENTERED

JAN 23 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

The interior features a wide central hallway extending almost the full length of the structure. The furnishings are well-preserved and, for the most part, were selected to coordinate with the style of the facade. The two fine carved mantels are of the Georgian style. In addition, there are several Adamesque light fixtures and much Georgian reproduction furniture. The interior has been maintained according to the manner specified by Hiram Kennedy Douglass in his will. The house itself is in excellent condition and bears no alterations.

The fine Victorian structure on the corner, the Wright-Douglass House, was built around 1910. It is a one and a half story frame structure resting on a brick foundation. The combination gabled and hipped roof is covered with tin and trimmed with plain cornices. The L-shaped porch has slender Ionic columns which rest on brick pedestals and support a Mansard roof. The facade is covered with weatherboarding and painted green. Double-pane sash windows are arranged asymmetrically, projecting into a bay on the west front. There are two gabled dormer windows, the dominant one being Palladian. There is one interior chimney. The exterior has been maintained in its original appearance, but the interior has been divided into apartments. The City of Florence plans to extend the offices of the Arts Center into this structure as soon as funding is available, and further interior alterations may be made after this.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAY 22 1978
DATE ENTERED	JAN 20 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

The Wright-Douglass House is part of the Kennedy-Douglass estate, having been purchased by Hiram Kennedy Douglass in 1939. It was built in 1910 by Dr. E. B. Wright, who soon retired from his medical practice and moved to Tennessee. Mr. Will Simmons, an uncle of Hiram Kennedy Douglass, purchased it from Dr. Wright. Since that time it has been owned by Robert Douglass (a cousin of Hiram Kennedy Douglass) and later his daughter, by Judge John Dewitt Petree, and finally by Hiram Kennedy Douglass. The home is a good example of an upper-middle class Victorian residence. The exterior has been maintained, but the interior is now divided into apartments. Tenants still occupy the building, but soon the City of Florence plans to restore it as offices for the Arts Center.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 12 1979
DATE ENTERED	JAN 28 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

This is an addendum to the Wilson Park Houses, Florence, Lauderdale County, Alabama.

8. Statement of Significance.

Built between 1890 and 1918, the Wilson Park Houses are the only three structures remaining from a cluster of late-19th and early-20th century homes which once surrounded the city park. During the 28-year time span in which they were built, Florence was experiencing one of its major economic boom periods. Catalyzed by the opening of several industries, most notably the Florence Wagon Factory in 1889, and the completion of a canal project on the Muscle Shoals of the Tennessee River in the same year, prosperity continued into the decade of the 1920's. The homes share an historical association in being the only true vestiges of an upper-middle class turn of the century neighborhood and in depicting the architectural tastes of this class during the boom period. Though the park itself was an integral part of the original setting, it has been altered in recent years and does not presently bear a significant relationship to the three houses overlooking it from the north.

In 1818, the Cypress Land Company hired the Italian engineer Ferdinand Sammoner to survey the town and divide it into lots. At that time, he set aside one block for a "public walk", and this area later developed into a fashionable city park, with gas lighting, cedar plantings, and a bandstand. The block to the south of the park was the site of the Florence Synodical Female College, an institution with two handsome Greek Revival structures built around 1850 on the lot reserved by Sammoner for a school building. The three remaining sides of the park, overlooking the pleasant pastoral view, became a desirable building location during the city's economic boom, and a number of nice homes were built there in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Over the years, the houses on the east and west sides of the park have been torn down and replaced by a variety of commercial structures. On the south side of the park, one of the college buildings was demolished around 1912 when the present U. S. Post Office was built, and the school's other structure was torn down in the early 1970's to make room for an addition to the Post Office. In 1930, the park itself was redesigned, replanted, and renamed Wilson Park in honor of Woodrow Wilson, and more recent changes in 1973 have further altered its original character. Of the neighborhood which developed in conjunction with the park, only the one Georgian Revival and the two Victorian homes at the north end of the park remain.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

M.A.

DATE ENTERED

JAN 2 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

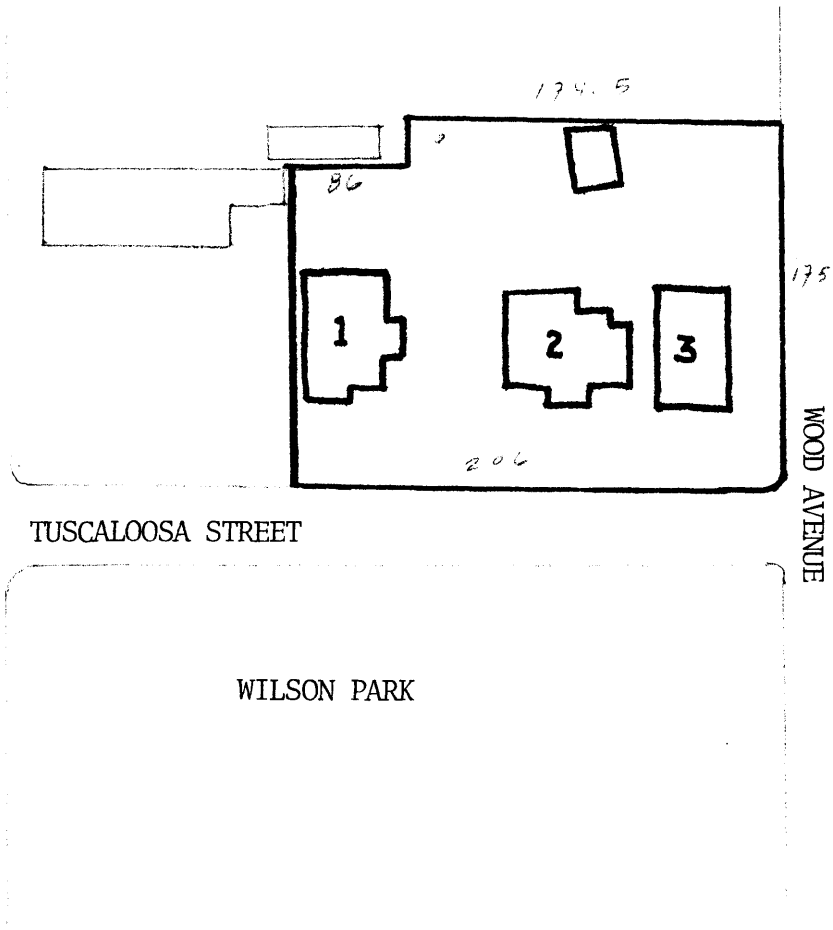
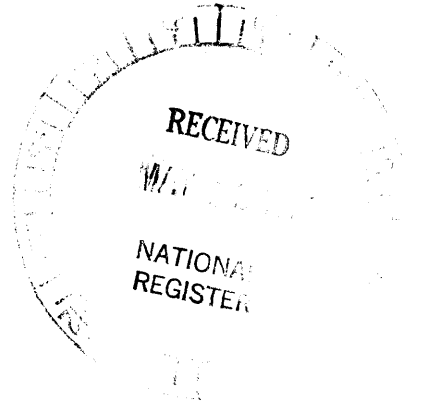
ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 1

Beginning at the western corner of the intersection of Tuscaloosa Street and Wood Avenue, proceed in a northwesterly direction for approximately 175 feet along the ~~northwestern~~ side of Wood Avenue; thence in a southwesterly direction for approximately 174.5 feet along the rear property lines of the Wright-Douglass and Kennedy-Douglass houses; thence in a southeasterly direction for approximately 10 feet to the rear property line of the Southall House; thence in a southwesterly direction for approximately 86 feet along said rear property line; thence southeasterly along the ~~south~~ east side of the retaining wall between the Southall private drive and the Florence Clinic drive to the northwest side of Tuscaloosa Street; thence in a northeasterly direction for approximately 260.5 feet along said street to the point of beginning.

WILSON PARK COMPLEX

1. Southall House
2. Kennedy-Douglass House
3. Wright-Douglass House



SOURCE: City of Florence  
DATE: 1976  
NOT TO SCALE