

1. Collins-Marston House
2. 4703 Old Shell Road  
Mobile, Mobile County  
Alabama
3. Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Marston, III  
4703 Old Shell Road  
Mobile, Alabama
4. nw $\frac{1}{4}$  of se  $\frac{1}{4}$  of S 14, T4S, R2W
5. Lot at the s. side of Old Shell Road at the head of Marston with 179.5' along Old Shell Road; turn south 230', then east 53', then south 163', then west 185', then north 401.22' to the place of beginning.

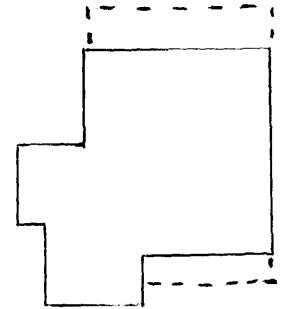
Tax lot 46, bl. 2

Acreage: 1 acre

UTM 16 / 389720 / 3395970

6. c. 1832; enlarged c. 1900; siding removed 1936; rear porch enclosed 1964.
7. Description: The frame cottage is on foundation piers about three feet high in the front and higher at the rear because of the slope of the land. The foundation has been infilled by lattice formed from the battens that were removed from the board and batten siding in 1936. The cottage faces the north, is located on the south side of Old Shell Road in the center of a large, irregularly shaped lot. A circular drive leads up to the well-shaded house. The old central lane is still visible running between an avenue of azaleas.

The cottage is of rectangular mass with the long axis parallel to the street. A gable covers the main section of the house with lower cross gables over the west and the rear-west wings. The front dormers are placed far apart with low gable roofs and seem to be a later addition. There is a single dormer on the rear that has a shed roof and is also a part of the later enlargement. The five-bay front gallery has Tuscan columns of square section with the shafts having a slight taper. The balusters are of square section and the balustrade continues down both sides of the front steps. The porch entablature is divided by a narrow taenia molding that separates the frieze from the architrave. The front entrance has a five-light transom that extends over both door and sidelights. The sidelights are formed of three panes of glass above a blind panel. The door framing is decorated by reeding on jambs and lintel. The windows of the older parts of the house are double sash, 6/6 lights. The dormers have casement windows and the rear porch is glassed in.



In plan the building consisted of two rooms to either side of a central hall when initially built. The house remained that size until around 1900 when the home was transformed from being exclusively a summer house to being a full-time residence. Two rooms and a kitchen were added at that time. In 1936 Lanau Marston inherited the property and finished out the attic adding the dormers at that time. He also removed the board and batten siding, replacing it with horizontal clapboarding, and using the original battens for foundation lattice. In 1964 the final alterations were made by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Marston, III, who infilled the rear porch.

Collins House, 4703 Old Shell Road

SIGNIFICANCE:

Architecture:

This early Gulf Coast cottage is typical of the small summer dwelling that was constructed in the Spring Hill area during the middle years of the nineteenth century. The cottage consisted of only four rooms opening off of a central hall. This plan and the square Tuscan columns along the porch reflect the classical influence on the indigenous Gulf Coast cottage form which was becoming prevalent in the area.

The cottage remained a summer residence until 1900 when the Marston family enlarged the house by adding two rooms and a kitchen. Later the back porch was infilled. This cottage along with its additions illustrate the transformation of cottages within the area from exclusively summer cottages to year around residences.

Integrity:

Despite the additions and modifications that have occurred to this cottage over time, the basic form and character of a Gulf Coast cottage is in evidence. The building is on its original site although the original 60 acres on which the house was constructed have been subdivided over the years. The house represents, despite its modifications, the character of mid-19th century Spring Hill.

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In 1828 Joshua Collins bought a part of the northeast  $\frac{1}{4}$ , section 14 T4S R2W. The land consisted of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  acres. In 1832 the U.S. Congress released an additional 160.2 acres to him, located in the southwest  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 14. It was on this portion of his property that he built a cottage. His two sons, Christopher and Joshua, inherited the property by will and in 1839 had 80 acres platted into eight 10 acre parcels.

4703 Old Shell Road

Sanborn Map, Vol. 3, Plate 275

