

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 additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dorminy-Massee House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 516 West Central Avenue
city, town Fitzgerald (N/A) vicinity of
county Ben Hill code GA 017
state Georgia code GA zip code 31750

(N/A) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	3	3
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	3	3

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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 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 the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Richard Coates
Signature of certifying official

4-20-00
Date

W. Ray Luce, Director, Historic Preservation Division and
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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 or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Edson H. Beall 5/26/00

determined eligible for the National Register _____

determined not eligible for the National Register _____

removed from the National Register _____

other, explain: _____

see continuation sheet

for
Keeper of the National Register _____ Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/INN

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/CLASSICAL REVIVAL/NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL

Materials:

foundation	Brick
walls	Wood/Weatherboard
roof	Asphalt
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Dorminy-Massee House occupies a 1.11 acre parcel of land, occupying most of a block in downtown Fitzgerald, Georgia. The property includes the large main house, a two-story, Neo-classical Revival-style house, and five associated outbuildings. The house is set back from the road towards the middle of the property. The front yard features a concrete walk leading from the street to the front porch, foundation plantings, and informal groupings of trees.

The main house is a two-story, three-bay, frame Neo-Classical Revival-style house. Built in 1914-1915, the house features a two-story, full-width porch supported by four colossal columns with Corinthian capitals. Sixteen smaller columns support a wrap-around porch that includes a one-story balcony and porte-cochere. The house rests on a continuous brick foundation and is clad in weatherboard siding. The low-pitched hipped roof is covered with asphalt shingles and features six corbel-capped chimneys. The three-bay main facade features 1-over-1 sash windows flanking a decorative leaded-glass, single-leaf entrance with sidelights and transom.

The interior plan features a large entrance hall with a fireplace and dogleg stair. Other principal first-floor rooms include the front parlor, which features two sets of pocket doors, the dining room, and the master bedroom. A central hall, which includes a second, smaller stair, joins the front entrance hall with the rear entrance. Service rooms are located to the rear of the house and include the butler's pantry, kitchen, bathroom, a second bedroom, and a den. The second-floor plan features six bedrooms and three bathrooms divided by a central hall. The rear sun porch has been altered to include two bedrooms and a sitting room. Interior walls are wood-framed painted plaster. Significant interior features include grained paneled wainscoting and door and window surrounds and wood mantels. There are ten mantles throughout the house of varying degrees of elaborateness and located in all principal rooms. Many have tile fireplace surrounds and all have wooden mantles. The more elaborate mantles are decorated with dentils, classical columns, and scrolls.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7--Description

The only significant changes to the Dorminy-Massee House are the enclosure of the rear screened porch to enlarge the kitchen c. 1952, and the alteration of the rear sun porch to include two bedrooms and a sitting room. A modern HVAC system now serves the ground floor, replacing a coal-fired furnace that remains in place, but was taken out of service years ago.

The five outbuildings associated with the Dorminy-Massee House include two contributing buildings and three non-contributing buildings.

One of the contributing buildings is the 1915, two-car garage. It is the largest of the outbuildings and is located off the southeast corner of the main house at the end of the driveway on the south edge of the property. It is a two-story, frame hipped roof building with servants quarters on the second floor. The car entrance doors are located on the north facade and are sheltered by a shed roof extension. The entrance to the second floor is located at the rear of the west facade. Two six-over-six sash windows are located above the garage doors on the second floor. The walls are weatherboard painted white and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The garage is in fair condition and is currently used as a garage and for storage.

The barn is located on a parcel of land southwest of the main house across an alley. The building sits in the northeast corner of the parcel which serves as a parking lot for the main house which is now a bed and breakfast inn. It is a frame building with a gable roof and exposed rafters. The bottom one-third of the walls is weatherboard painted white. The remaining portion of the walls consists of evenly-spaced wooden slats painted white. The roof is tin. The entrance to the barn is on the south facade in the form of a vertical board door. The barn is in good condition and is currently used for storage.

The three non-contributing outbuildings include the smokehouse, garden house, and gazebo. These buildings are non-contributing due to construction date or loss of integrity due to alterations.

The smokehouse, construction date unknown, is located directly behind the main house on the south edge of the property. It is a front-gable, frame building with a vertical board entrance door in the north facade. The smokehouse has vertical board painted white in the gables. The walls are brick and lattice and the roof is covered with asphalt shingle. The smokehouse is in good condition and is currently used for storage. The smokehouse is non-contributing due to the fact that the walls have been brick veneered and the construction date cannot be determined.

The garden house was moved from another location on the property to its present location c. 1952. It is a frame gabled-roof building located east of the main house on the south edge of the property. The entrance to the garden house is a vertical board door painted white. The walls are weatherboard painted white and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The garden house is in poor condition and is currently used for storage. The garden house is non-contributing due to the fact that it was moved to a new location and the construction date can not be determined.

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Section 7--Description

The gazebo, constructed in 1985, is a hexagonal-shaped structure located to the east of the main house. It has a hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles, turned balustrade, and decorative barge board. The gazebo is in good condition. The gazebo is non-contributing due to its construction date.

Also located on the property are the remaining foundation of the 1915 greenhouse and the 1915 fish pond which is no longer in use. The greenhouse foundation is brick and is located west of the main house. The fish pond remains open and is located west of the main house, between the house and the greenhouse foundation.

Landscape features include concrete drives and walks, foundation plantings and informal groupings of trees and low shrubs. Camellia and azalea plantings remain from the original owners of the house.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture

Period of Significance:

1914-1915

Significant Dates:

1914-1915

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

T. Firth Lockwood, Sr., of Columbus, Georgia, Architect

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Dorminy-Massee House is significant under the theme of architecture as a good example of an early 20th-century Neo-classical Revival-style dwelling. Popular throughout Georgia from the 1890s to the 1930s, the Neo-classical Revival style employed combinations of Greek and Roman details drawn from the Early Classical Revival and Greek Revival styles of the early 19th century. The Dorminy-Massee House features a symmetrical facade and a two-story, full-width portico with classical columns and an integrated balcony, the most common elements of the style. Other significant character-defining features include the Corinthian-style columns with their elaborate capitals, the modillions under the broad eaves, and the front doorway with its flanking pilasters. The interior is largely intact and features a large entry/stair hall and main rooms connected by wide pocket doors, both hallmarks of this period. Fine craftsmanship is evident in the fireplace mantels and the grained paneled woodwork. The Dorminy-Massee House has remained in the same family since it was constructed and retains a high level of historic integrity.

Thomas Firth Lockwood, Sr. (1868-1920), designer of the Dorminy-Massee House, was a prominent Columbus, Georgia architect who practiced from 1892 until his death in 1920. Lockwood designed and supervised the construction of a wide variety of public and commercial buildings in Columbus and the surrounding area, including churches, schools, libraries, and courthouses. Several of Mr. Lockwood's buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including the Hiram Warner Hill House, the Arlington Methodist Episcopal Church, the Columbian Lodge No. 7 Free and Accepted Masons, and Columbus High School. The Dorminy-Massee House is one of his few documented residences.

National Register Criteria

The Dorminy-Massee House is eligible under National Register Criterion C as a Neo-classical house designed by T. Firth Lockwood, Sr.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance represents the period in which the house was constructed.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

There are three contributing resources on the nominated property. The three non-contributing buildings have lost their historic integrity due to alterations or do not fall within the period of significance due to construction date.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

Fitzgerald, Georgia was founded in the summer of 1895 when settlers from across the United States began moving into what was then the north central portion of Irwin County. One hundred thousand acres of South Georgia's timberland had been purchased by the American Tribune Soldier's Colony Stock Company, a stock company organized by Philander H. Fitzgerald, editor of the Indianapolis, Indiana, American Tribune.

Fitzgerald conceived the idea of a colony in the south for Union veterans and their families as an escape from cold winters, economic depression, and drought ruined farmlands. He wrote of this concept in his newsletter, a publication which enjoyed wide circulation. Letters flooded the newspaper urging Fitzgerald to begin the colony.

The American Tribune would be the vehicle by which Fitzgerald would advertise his desire to establish a colony for Civil War veterans and their families. Why was the state of Georgia ultimately selected as the site for the proposed colony? In 1894, Richard H. Edmonds, editor of the Boston Manufacturer's Record wrote of the thousands of Midwesterners who were struggling to survive crop failure and a two-year drought. The state of Georgia, under the leadership of former governor William J. Northen, responded by sending twenty-one box cars filled with hay and corn to Lincoln, Nebraska. Known as "the friendship train," Georgia's humanitarian effort was brought to P.H. Fitzgerald's attention. He immediately contacted Governor Northen.

Governor Northen responded to Fitzgerald's request by assisting the recently formed American Tribune Soldier's Colony in purchasing 50,000 acres of land in Irwin County, Georgia. Later purchases doubled the acreage. According to the colony's charter, investment and allotment stocks were sold at \$10 per share and were limited to ten shares per stockholder. Should the stockholder improve or occupy his property, the parcel would then be acquired gratis.

The proposed colony was located at Swan, a small turpentine and saw-mill community situated approximately fifteen miles west of the Ocmulgee River. The community had been named for The Swan, the small boat which brought the four Drew brothers and their families from Darien in 1880. The Drews subsequently purchased thousands of acres and established a post office, commissary, and naval store operation.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

In the spring of 1895, David, Jesse, Ben, and Henry Drew agreed to sell Swan and the surrounding land to the American Tribune Soldier's Colony Company. Purchase of the property was subsequently advertised in Philander H. Fitzgerald's The American Tribune. While all "good people" were invited to join the colony, Union veterans predominated.

The land division pattern of the colony was established in July, 1895, when the city's 1,000 acre tract was surveyed into four wards. Each ward comprised four blocks. In the residential areas these blocks were divided into sixteen lots. Blocks designated for commercial use contained twenty-eight lots. Upon completion, Fitzgerald's land division pattern contained 256 city blocks of identical size. In a matter of months, Swan's population had swelled from forty persons to 2,500. By the fall of 1895, 5,000 colonists were camped around Swan waiting for the colony's survey to be completed.

The colony survey began in the spring of 1895 and required the assistance of 462 men and 72 teams of horses. Divided into four wards, the city was intersected by Main Street (running north and south) and Central Avenue (running east to west). Each ward was subdivided into four blocks and each block into sixteen squares. Of the 256 resulting squares, four were reserved for schools, 36 for commercial purposes, 48 for factories. The remaining 168 lots were designated residential.

Both Main Street and Central Avenue measured 120 feet wide and were designed with landscaped medians. The remaining thoroughfares (28 in number) measured 60 feet in width. There were seven avenues north and a like number south of Central. The former were named for Georgia rivers, the latter for southern trees and plants. The streets east of Main were named for Federal generals while Confederate commanders were remembered in those streets West of Main. The city was named Fitzgerald in honor of its founder.

From the outset P.H. Fitzgerald had determined that the colony would be both self-sufficient and a place where the bitterness of the Civil War would be forgotten. To facilitate self-sufficiency, Fitzgerald ordered that tracts of land measuring five, ten, and twenty acres each be established along the colony's perimeter. Once surveyed, these tracts were farmed to provide food for the colony.

P.H. Fitzgerald's original audience had consisted of pensioned Civil War veterans who subscribed to the American Tribune. As a direct result, the colony's early population was dominated by pensioned Union veterans who were well passed middle age. These were colonists who were not dependent upon wages for survival. In December, 1895, it was estimated that government pensions provided the colony with \$50,000 per month. This sum provided an annual economic base of \$600,000, a figure which helped guarantee the colony's success.

In the city's first year, ten sawmills were established. In late 1896, the Fitzgerald Brick and Tile Yard opened. Settlers moved onto colony lands with the idea of making Fitzgerald their home. The construction of homes and the establishment of businesses soon resulted.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

P.H. Fitzgerald proposed that the colony be a permanent settlement. With new settlers arriving from other parts of the country, Georgians who had lived within the settlement's environs moved into town to open businesses, build homes and educate their children.

Community leaders expressed strong interest in increasing Fitzgerald's population and in cultivating a tourist trade. This goal was approached from two directions. In 1897, a three-story, 108 room frame hotel was constructed on Central Avenue. Known as the Lee-Grant Hotel, the structure was intended to house visitors during the winter months. The hotel's construction also provided badly needed work for the colony's unemployed. In the years following Fitzgerald's initial settlement, the colony experienced an economic recession. Between 1897 and 1899, property values plummeted, prompting unemployment and a decrease in the colony's population. Construction of this privately owned hotel provided work and pumped new life into the colony's sluggish economy. Completed in 1898, the Lee-Grant Hotel was painted Confederate gray. Rooms rented for \$8 per day. The colony's economy stabilized in 1901 marking a period of steady growth.

The colony's second marketing attempt occurred in 1908 when the Traffic Department of the Atlanta, Birmingham, and Atlantic Railroad issued a brochure entitled, Fitzgerald, Georgia: The Magic City. In 1902, the "railroad shop" (repair division) of the Atlanta, Birmingham, Atlantic (ABA) Railroad located their offices in Fitzgerald. As this division of the railroad employed approximately five hundred Fitzgerald citizens, the ABA was anxious to promote the community. Fitzgerald, Georgia: The Magic City enjoyed nationwide distribution. This twenty-seven page booklet boasted the city contained four newspapers, a cotton factory, city-owned water works, and a railroad system which led in six directions. The community's population now reached 5,000.

Ben Hill county was created on July 31, 1906. The new county, named for Georgia Senator Benjamin Harvey Hill, (1823-1882), was created when land formerly belonging to Wilcox and Irwin Counties was combined to form the new county. The City of Fitzgerald, easily the county's largest city, was designated county seat. The residential and commercial structures erected within the city reflected the prosperity Fitzgerald enjoyed.

By 1928, Fitzgerald's commercial and residential areas were solidly developed. The city's commercial core was based primarily on those squares bounded by Central, Pine, Main, and Grant Streets. While the downtown was basically surrounded by residential development, Fitzgerald's primary residential sections occurred to the northeast and southwest of the commercial core. The residential area bordering South Main, South Lee, and South Johnston Streets contained the city's most elaborate housing and wealthiest citizens.

The City of Fitzgerald had become primarily an agrarian-based community. With much of its economy tied to the exporting of its cotton crop, the city was practically paralyzed when the onset of World War I prevented cotton exportation to Europe. The economic crisis was felt across the community.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Fitzgerald's development had slowed with the beginning of World War I and halted with the Great Depression. During the Depression, Fitzgerald, like other American communities, participated in public works projects. In 1936, the first W.P.A. project involved expansion of the Fitzgerald High School auditorium which was originally built in 1926.

By the late 1930s, Fitzgerald began recovering from the Depression years. This was evidenced by the construction of the Grand Theatre. Located on the northern end of South Main Street, this art deco style building replaced the Grant, an earlier theater, destroyed by fire on September 4, 1935. The Grand Theatre was closed in 1977.

The City of Fitzgerald is unique in its history and pattern of land subdivision. It is also unique in that for several years it may have been the only community in the nation which celebrated two Memorial Days; April 26 observed Georgia's Confederate Memorial Day ; May 31 commemorated the memory of the Union dead. The city was founded and later developed as a result of cooperation of people from almost every state in the Union.

J.J. "Captain Jack" Dorminy commissioned Columbus architect T. Firth Lockwood to design the Dorminy-Massee House. Lockwood designed numerous public and commercial buildings throughout South Georgia in the early 20th century. Mr. Dorminy resided in the Dorminy-Massee House from its completion in 1914-1915 until his death in 1952. Dorminy, a prominent local citizen, owned a cotton gin, a cotton oil mill, a cotton warehouse, farms, and saw mills in Broxton and Waycross, Georgia. He also served as president of the First National Bank of Fitzgerald. His daughter, Eulalie Dorminy Massee, purchased the house from the estate and occupied the house until her death in 1995. The house is currently owned by Marion Massee, III and Mark Massee, grandson and great grandson of J.J. Dorminy respectively, who are rehabilitating the house as a bed and breakfast guest house according to the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" under the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Brooks, Carolyn. "Hiram Warner Hill House." National Register Nomination Form, February 14, 1983. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Massee, III, Marion H. Historic Property Information Form. July, 1996. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. With Supplemental information.

Raflo, Lisa. "Fitzgerald Commercial Historic District." National Register Nomination Form, February 13, 1992. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Raflo, Lisa. "South Main-South Lee Street Historic District." National Register Nomination Form, January 10, 1989. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): () N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued: May 16, 1997
- previously listed in the National Register**
- previously determined eligible by the National Register**
- designated a National Historic Landmark**
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #**
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #**

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.11 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 285880 Northing 3510780

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the property includes the current legal boundary and all property between the legal boundary and the curb on West Central Avenue and South Gordon Street. The boundary is indicated on the attached site plan with a heavy black line.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the property is based on the current legal description and also includes the property between the legal boundary and the curb on West Central Avenue and South Gordon Street.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Holly L. Anderson, Survey and Register Unit Program Assistant
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth Street
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** April 20, 2000

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) (x) not applicable

name/title
organization
street and number
city or town state zip code
telephone

- consultant**
- regional development center preservation planner**
- other:**

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Photographs

Name of Property: Dorminy-Massee House
City or Vicinity: Fitzgerald
County: Ben Hill
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: October 1997

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 20: Main facade; photographer facing south.
- 2 of 20: Main facade and west facade; photographer facing southeast.
- 3 of 20: West facade; photographer facing northeast.
- 4 of 20: East facade; photographer facing west.
- 5 of 20: Main facade and east facade; photographer facing southwest.
- 6 of 20: Main entrance and porch; photographer facing southeast.
- 7 of 20: Bay window on west facade; photographer facing south.
- 8 of 20: Porch on main facade and east facade; photographer facing southeast.
- 9 of 20: East facade; photographer facing west.
- 10 of 20: Interior, first floor, central hall; photographer facing north.
- 11 of 20: Interior, first floor, entry, stairway; photographer facing southeast.
- 12 of 20: Interior, first floor, dining room; photographer facing southwest.
- 13 of 20: Interior, first floor, parlor; photographer facing west.
- 14 of 20: Interior, second floor, east bedroom; photographer facing southeast.
- 15 of 20: Interior, second floor, west bedroom; photographer facing southwest.

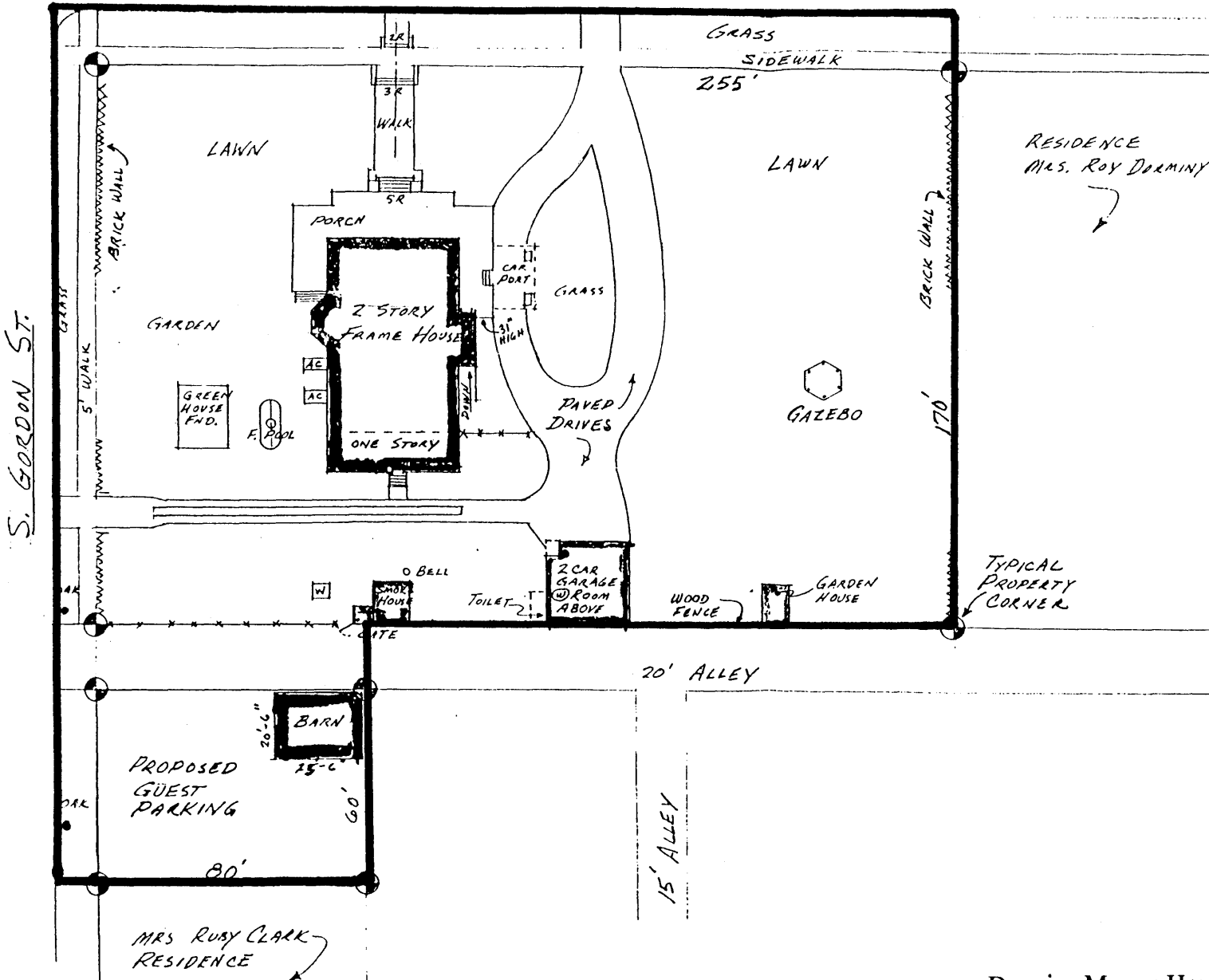
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

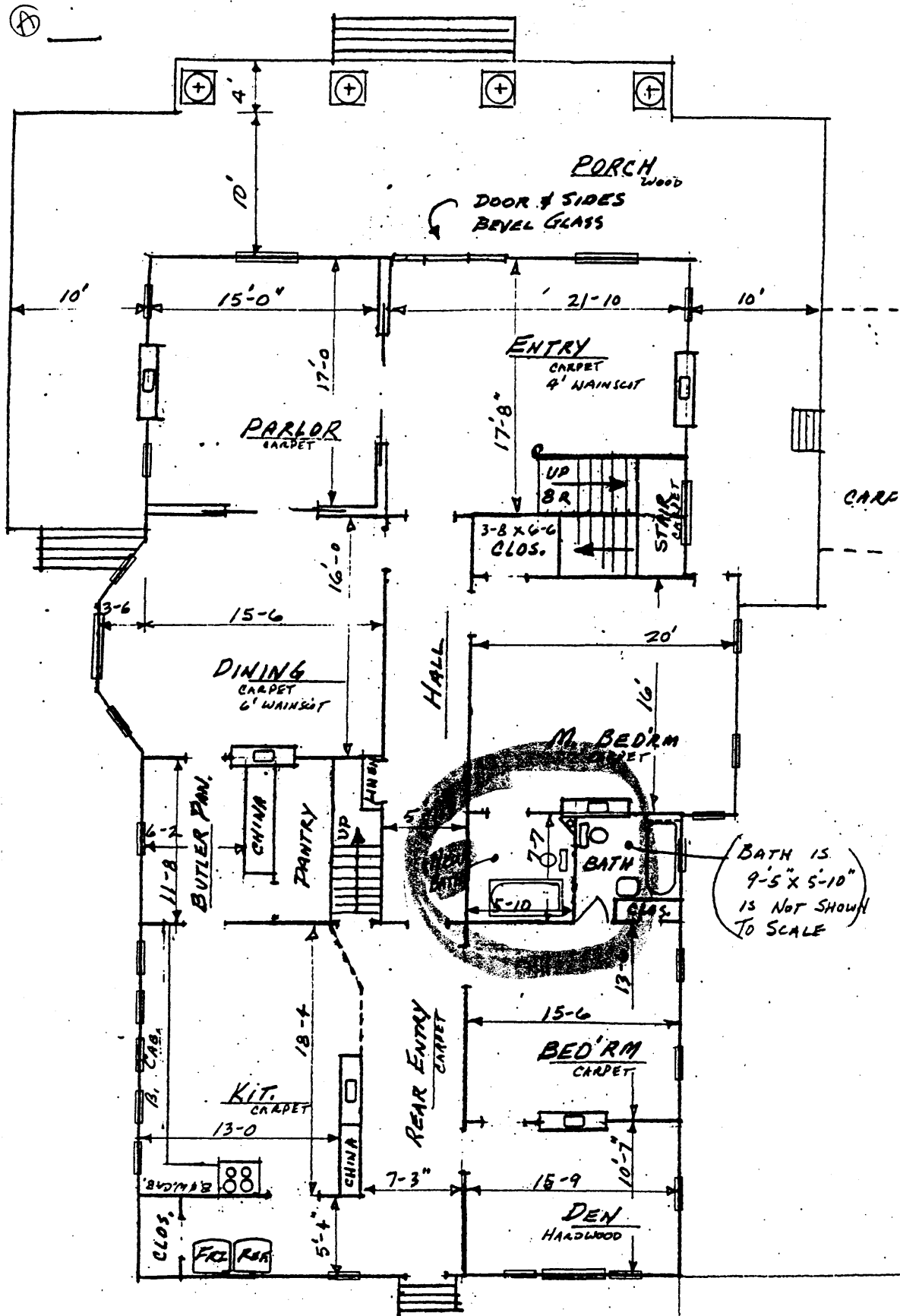
- 16 of 20: Interior, second floor, hall; photographer facing south.
- 17 of 20: Interior, second floor, southeast bedroom; photographer facing southeast.
- 18 of 20: Smokehouse, garage; photographer facing east.
- 19 of 20: Barn; photographer facing northeast.
- 20 of 20: Garden house; photographer facing southeast.

W. CENTRAL AVE.



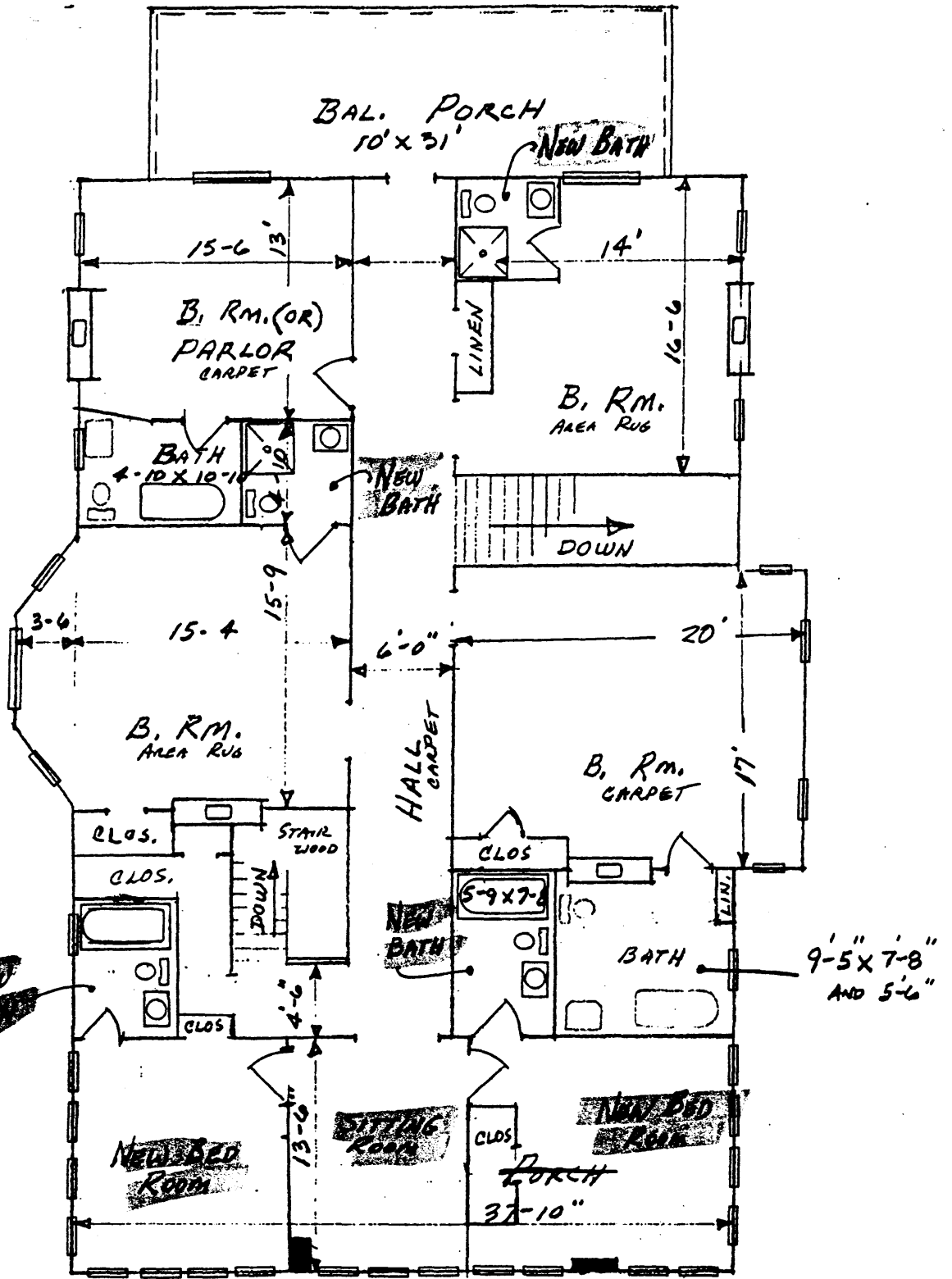
MASSEE PROPERTY
 CONSISTS OF TWO
 PARCELS AS SHOWN:
 255' X 170' (CENTRAL AVE.)
 80' X 60' (S. GORDON ST.)

Dorminy-Massee House
 Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County, Georgia
 Site Plan
 Scale: Not to Scale
 North: ↑



Dorminy-Massee House
 Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County, Georgia
 Floor Plan-First Floor
 Scale: Not to Scale
 North: ↑

GROUND FLOOR PLAN
DORMINY - MASSEE HOME



Dorminy-Massee House
 Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County, Georgia
 Floor Plan-Second Floor
 Scale: Not to Scale
 North: ↑

2ND FLOOR PLAN

FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR
 DIMENSIONS ARE SHOWN
 WALL TO WALL MEASURES.
 (WALL THICKNESS NOT INCLUDED)