

9#035117A

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED MAR 25 1976  
DATE ENTERED MAY 17 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Kirkwood  
AND/OR COMMON

Kirkwood

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

111 Kirkwood Drive

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Eutaw

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

7

STATE

Alabama

CODE

01

COUNTY

Greene

CODE

0103

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Roy Swayze

STREET & NUMBER

111 Kirkwood Drive

CITY, TOWN

Eutaw

STATE

Alabama

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Greene County Courthouse, Probate Office

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Eutaw

STATE

Alabama

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

HABS

DATE

1934

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C.

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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Kirkwood is a stately two and one-half story mansion built by Foster M. Kirksey between 1857-60 in the still popular Greek Revival style. A two-story veranda which extends across the main facade and around the west elevation dominates the classical house. Fluted free standing Ionic columns support the veranda and a deep Italianate bracketed cornice. To accommodate the change in porch width from front to side the columns are spaced unevenly at the corners.

The five-bay, main facade features eight shuttered full-length windows flanked by pilasters and central double doors on both stories. Although these doors lack transoms, they do bear wooden entablatures and the main entrance has colored glass sidelights in colors of amber, red and purple. The full-length balcony which horizontally divides the flushboard front and side elevations is still incomplete. The blockade of Southern ports in 1861 brought a halt to the import of such final details as the cast iron balcony railing.

The house follows an almost square plan measuring approximately 41 feet across the front and 53 feet deep. Almost as an afterthought a hipped-roof, rectangular, 28-foot wing was added to the house when it was in the final stages of construction. This extension created an L-shaped back porch that was enclosed on the north end for use as a pantry. The present owner converted it to a kitchen. Chamfered square posts support the remainder of the porch roof. A large dormer window projects from the wing roof on the east side close to the main portion of the house providing light for the back staircase.

Originally a 10 columned cupola or observatory similar to that at Rosemount in Forkland, Alabama crowned the low-hipped roof. The seventeen foot structure included exterior walkways on all four sides and enclosed a room ten feet wide and seventeen feet long. When the roof began to leak the Kirksey family removed it and lowered the roof leaving the base as a low-standing structure with clerestory windows. Four interior chimneys surround the cupola remnant and a fifth chimney is located on the north end of the wing.

The central hall plan was used in the interior of the house with double parlors on the east side, two bedrooms on the west, and four bedrooms on the second floor. The dining room, which is the only room with a wood mantel fireplace, was first located in the wing which is separated from the bedrooms by a stairwell. The main stairway in the central hall has walnut balusters and rails. The attic half-story under the cupola provided an excellent remote site for a gaming room and is reached by stairs on the second floor central hall.

Some of Kirkwood's finest features are found in the interior detailing. While eight of the ten rooms have white Carrara marble fireplace mantels, the most exceptional are those elaborately carved ones in the main parlors. Doors and windows are surmounted with wood entablatures supported by pilasters with egg and dart molding on the capitals. Door knobs are Sheffield silver plate. The interior woodwork received seven coats of paint initially and retains the same paint today. The southeast bedroom on the second floor retains the original stenciled floor, one of the few examples remaining in Alabama of this type of craftsmanship which sought to imitate parquetry through stenciling.

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Both the interior and exterior of Kirkwood are now being conscientiously restored by the present owner, who has sought the assistance of restoration expert, Edward Vason Jones and his staff of artisans. Structural restoration was the first priority and rotted foundation sills and timbers were replaced. The stucco on the chimney, column supports and the underside of the veranda roof was redone.

Although the house was never completed due to the war and Kirksey's subsequent reduction of fortune, the present owner plans to complete it, according to the builder's intentions. A drive and brick walkway were installed in 1975 using 1840 bricks. Plaster cornice and ceiling medallions were added in the parlors, entry hall and first floor guest bedroom. All of the millwork has been completed for the eventual restoration of the cupola. Fortunately most of the original elements from the cupola were in storage in the house and used as models.

Situated on an elevated plain on the west side of Eutaw, in Greene County, the house is now clearly visible for the first time in many years since the grounds have been extensively cleared.

# 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 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

1857-60

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Kirkwood is an excellent example of the persistent use of the Greek Revival style of architecture by the prosperous planter class of Alabama, especially in the Black Belt, despite the changing trends and influences in home building in the decade preceding the Civil War.

Foster M. Kirksey settled in Greene County in the late 1830's establishing a cotton plantation at Finches Ferry on the Black Warrior River. Although he considered himself a planter, he also operated an extensive business as a cotton broker and importer maintaining offices in Mobile and Eutaw, the Greene County seat. He was elected county sheriff in 1845, but did not move his residence to Eutaw until after his first wife's death in 1857.

Purchasing 97 acres on the western side of town, he planned a gracious mansion of a modified temple style overlooking a lake, bridge and curving driveway. Construction began that same year and Kirksey insisted on the finest materials and workmanship. Eight marble mantel pieces of Carrara marble were imported from Italy and white cedar trees arrived from California. An observatory cupola rose 17 feet above the roof line and was circled with a walkway and 10 fluted Ionic columns that matched those on the wide veranda. Egg and dart molding ornamented capitals of the columns on the outside and the pilasters on the interior of the house. Deep entablatures were used on the hall doors and over windows.

By 1859 the nearly completed Greek Revival home, the planter's symbol of prosperity, had become a landmark in Eutaw. Final touches were temporarily interrupted in 1860 by Kirksey's second marriage to Margaretta Liston, a second cousin to Mary Todd Lincoln, and the subsequent wedding trip. The couple returned later that year full of plans for completing the house and furnishing it, seemingly oblivious to the impending war. The cast iron grill work for the balcony, French mirrors and chandeliers were ordered from Europe but never arrived once the naval blockade of Southern ports was enforced.

Despite the loss of a considerable portion of his fortune with the economic collapse of the south, Kirksey was able to retain possession of Kirkwood, but was never able to complete it with the lavish details he had originally planned or to maintain it properly.

The house stayed in the family until 1961 when Mr. Clement Roebuck inherited it from Mrs. Jane Kirksey, the builder's daughter-in-law. Roebuck never occupied the house and it was virtually unchanged when the present owner, Mr. Roy Swayze purchased it in 1972. While all but 3 of the 97 acres had been sold by Jane Kirksey earlier, the purchase did include much of the original antebellum furniture, all of the family papers

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hammond, Ralph, Antebellum Mansions of Alabama, New York: Bonanza Books, 1951  
 pages 102-103.  
 Kirksey family records located at Kirkwood.  
 Interview with Roy Swayze, March 3, 1975.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.43 acres

UTM REFERENCES

Longitude: 87° 53' 44" Latitude: 32° 50' 46"

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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 Donna C. Hole

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

DATE

March 16, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

725 Monroe Street

TELEPHONE

(205) 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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Milo B. Howard, Jr.

TITLE

SHPO Ala

DATE

Mar 18, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

5/19/76

Acting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

[Signature]

DATE

5-13-76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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and parts of the dissembled cupola. The owner, with the assistance of restoration experts, is using all of these sources to completely restore Kirkwood as closely to Foster Kirksey's original goals as possible.