

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received AUG 7 1984

date entered SEP 7 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Cunningham-Coleman House

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Southeast of Wadley, Georgia, on an unnumbered dirt road three miles east of U.S. Highway 1 N/A not for publication

city, town Wadley vic, X vicinity of

state Georgia code 013 county Jefferson code 163

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"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. David Gambrell

street & number 3820 Castlegate Drive, N.W.

city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity of state Georgia 30327

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Jefferson County Courthouse

city, town Louisville state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes xx no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Cunningham-Coleman House is a raised, weatherboarded, Greek Revival style Sand Hills cottage, situated parallel to a dirt road and facing pine stands, swamp lands, and cultivated fields. The house's two-over-four, central-hall plan conforms to the Sand Hills cottage type which proliferated in coastal and piedmont Georgia during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. The house is built around a balloon frame resting on four-foot-high brick piers, which were recently stuccoed. The house's most pronounced architectural feature is a recessed, full front facade verandah in a plain, hexastyle Doric order reached by a wide stair.

The house contains mortise-and-tenon joinery in its original portions. It has simple, yet bold, exterior decoration in keeping with Greek Revival standards. It has a boxed cornice and a narrow, blind frieze. The entrance features trabeated sidelights and transom, all of which open, framed by simple, Doric pilasters. A four-panel door is centered in the trabeated entrance. The entire entrance is surmounted by a flat, wide entablature supported by flat, Doric pilasters. The rear entrance is similar. The windows are six-over-six with operable, louvered shutters.

On the interior, the house has a central hall with two rooms on each side downstairs and one on each side upstairs. On the lower floor, the front rooms are larger than the rear ones. Recently, a kitchen was built into the northwest room on the first floor, and bathrooms in the northeast room and the second-floor landing. The symmetrical interior chimneys, one on either side of the central hall, originally heated all six rooms. The central hall also served as a natural ventilation passage.

The walls are plastered and each room has an original mantel. Crown molding exists in the first-floor rooms. The stair features a tall, narrow, urn-shaped newel and an unusual curved baseboard. The window sills are pulvinated, which, along with other details, indicates that an older, perhaps Federal-period trained builder was involved with this house. There are closets on the first floor with two-panel doors.

The house was once surrounded by outbuildings and had an attached kitchen ell. All of these are now gone. The house is in a very isolated location.

The archaeological potential of the site rests in the known existence of outbuildings, some close to the house, others further away off the nominated property. Also, a number of Indian arrowheads have been found on the property. No archaeology has been conducted at the site, however, so this potential is unevaluated.

The house faces south with a few mature cedar trees shading the front facade. Most of the nominated property is cleared and planted in grass. It

[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/ 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates ca. 1830s **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Cunningham-Coleman House is significant in architecture and local history. In architecture, the house is significant as a fine example of a Sand Hills cottage with Greek Revival detailing in a rural setting. It is raised, for ventilation, and has a two-over-four floor plan with a very wide central hall, which was again used for ventilation as well as circulation. Greek Revival details include the columned front porch, use of pilasters to mark the front entrance, boxed cornice, and the trabeated front entrance with its sidelights and transom. The windows have small pediments on the exterior, as do those on the interior of the first floor. One unusual architectural feature found in the house is that the sidelights and transom open for ventilation and appear to be original. The stairway also contains a very unusual curved baseboard at its first turn. The house is significant in agriculture and local history as the center of a representative middle-sized, antebellum cotton plantation run by the Marshall-Daniel(s) families, and for the post-bellum role William Armstrong Cunningham of Maryland played in the local area after purchasing the farm in 1869. The nearby area became known as "Cunningham Corner(s)" for him and his family. After his death in 1892, his widow sold the farm and house in 1895 to John C. Coleman (1844–1923) of adjacent Emanuel County, who was prominent as a merchant, realtor, and public official. These areas of significance justify eligibility in terms of National Register criteria A, B, and C.

Historical Narrative

The history of the land on which the Cunningham-Coleman House rests is well documented despite the loss of the county's antebellum deeds. This is due to the current owner's possession of all the original deeds from the 1784 land grants to the 1860s.

First appearing in land records as a 287½-acre land grant in 1784, the property was owned by James Meriwether from 1785/87 until his death around 1832. When Benjamin Green purchased the house site and 1,730 acres in 1832 at Meriwether's estate sale, he paid \$1,000 for it. This low price would indicate that no dwelling of quality was present. Green kept the land for only four years, selling it in December, 1836, to William Marshall for \$4,000 for the 1,730 acres plus an additional 800 acres. Again, the price, although much higher, does not necessarily indicate that a house of quality was present. The rise in price could be for the value of the additional 800 acres.

[continued]

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property four acres

Quadrangle name Coleman's Lake, GA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	7	3	7	4	0	7	0	3	6	3	4	7	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is a small portion of what is owned at this location and is just that portion directly associated with the house and the adjacent yard. There are no property boundaries or natural features to use as a boundary. Thus, the four acres are centered on the house and form a square approximately 425 feet on a side oriented to the compass points.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

Historic Preservation Section

organization Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

date June 13, 1984

street & number 270 Washington Street, S.W.

telephone (404) 656-2840

city or town Atlanta

state Georgia 30334

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

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/19/84

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 9/7/84

Melores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

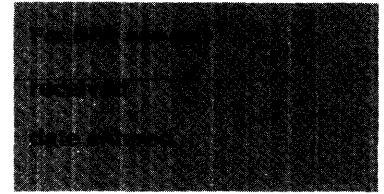
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
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7. Description

has open views of the surrounding farm land on the west, a swamp and a creek to the south and east. The area is known as "Cunningham Corners" due to the ownership from 1869 to 1895 by William A. Cunningham and family.

Changes to the house stem from its 1982 restoration. During this work, the house was made habitable by adding a modern kitchen, bathrooms, plumbing, heating, insulation, and a new porch. A rear porch was added, wood was replaced and replastered on the inside. The brick piers were stuccoed. All this work was done under the auspices of a trained restoration architect.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Byrne, Mrs. Anne. "Cunningham-Gambrell House," Historic Property Information Form, July 1, 1983. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. This was based on original deeds in the owner's possession, courthouse research, and early tax digests.

Additional research, other than that cited in the Historical Narrative, includes:

Will of William A. Cunningham. On file in Probate Court, Jefferson County, Georgia, and the Register of Wills for Baltimore City, Maryland.

Howell, Clark (ed.). History of Georgia, four volumes. Atlanta/Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1926. [Note: Volume 4 contains biographical sketch of John C. Coleman.]

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Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

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William Marshall was a fairly young man when he purchased the large tract. He was probably about thirty years of age, for his wife was aged twenty-seven. It is presumed he built the house during the period 1837-39, since he wrote his will in 1839 and died shortly thereafter. His widow, the former Ann Perry, married James L. Daniel(s) around 1841. They were living there in 1850. By 1860, with Mr. Daniel(s) dead, Ann was recorded in the agriculture census as owning a plantation of 1,530 acres, of which 400 were cleared. From her farm/plantation, she produced 1,000 bushels of corn and sixteen bales of ginned cotton. She also grew wheat and rye and raised pigs and sheep, the latter producing twenty pounds of wool.

The Southern Christian Advocate, the leading Methodist newspaper of the day, announced on December 19, 1861, the death of "Sister Ann Daniel" on October 19, 1861. She had been born in 1809 in adjacent Burke County, Georgia. Mrs. Daniel(s), in her will, left bequests, including slaves and books from her library, to her stepdaughter, Nancy C. Donavan, and others. Under the terms of her will, the plantation was to be sold.

The Augusta Chronicle of November 28, 1862, announced plans for the "Executor's Sale." The house and plantation, to be sold at the Market House in Louisville, the county seat, in January, 1863, was described as follows:

1360 acres of land belonging to said estate. Said body of land lies within one mile of No. 10½ Central Railroad. It is good farming land, with about 400 acres under fence and and in a good state of cultivation. On the premises is a good dwelling house with 6 rooms, cookhouse, negro house(s), gin house and packing screw, and all other necessary buildings.

The land was purchased for \$18,303 by William A. Stokes of Jefferson County, who resold it very shortly to Andrew J. Lane of Hancock County, who, after the Civil War, sold it on April 28, 1869, for \$8,200, to William Armstrong Cunningham of Baltimore, Maryland. The change in valuation may reflect post-bellum economics or the change in currency.

It is not yet known why Mr. Cunningham was in Georgia. In the 1870 census, he is shown as aged thirty-four, a Maryland native, with the occupation of "merchant, retail variety store." His wife, Mary L., age thirty-three, and daughter, Nancy, age nine, were also Maryland natives, indicating they were living in Maryland during the Civil War when the daughter was born.

Cunningham ran a store in the community of Bostick, also called No. 10½, on the nearby Central Railroad (later Central of Georgia Railroad). The town,

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long since gone from the Georgia map, existed by 1860 and into the 1880s. County records indicate that Cunningham received a license to sell "spirituous liquors" at his store in Bostick. Very little is known about the community or its residents, but it was the closest community to this house and was thus a logistically logical place for Mr. Cunningham to operate a store. Cunningham apparently lived in the house and ran his store until 1873-74, when he no longer paid a poll tax, indicating a non-resident status, since he was under sixty-five. The 1878-79 Gazetteer lists him as a farmer/planter "out of Wadley," a larger town several miles west of the house. He is not in the area in the 1880 census, and he died on December 20, 1892, a resident of Baltimore, Maryland.

On March 23, 1895, Mary L. Cunningham, widow, of Baltimore, Maryland, sold the 1,360-acre farm for \$3,500 to John C. Coleman of adjacent Emanuel County.

John C. Coleman (1844-1923), a native and lifelong resident of Emanuel County, was a Civil War veteran who became a merchant in 1876 when he began running a store. His good business sense eventually led to his branching out into real estate so that at his death it was said that "eventually he became the wealthiest man and largest landowner in Emanuel County" where he had more than 30,000 acres, as well as valuable property in Savannah and elsewhere. He also served as ordinary and clerk of the Superior Court for Emanuel County. After his death in 1923, the "Cunningham Place" went to his granddaughter, Mattie Moring Mitchell Flanders, at whose death in 1942 it went first to her husband, William Henry Flanders, and then to their daughter, Luck Flanders (Mrs. David Gambrell), the present owner. Thus, the property has been in the same family, that of the Colemans, since it was purchased in 1895, longer than any other ownership in its history. It was restored in 1982 and is now rented by Mrs. Gambrell.

CUNNINGHAM-COLEMAN HOUSE
Near Wadley, Jefferson County, Georgia

FLOOR PLAN

Scale: Not to scale

Date: ca. 1982

Source: Plans for restoration by architect

Key: This is the first floor only.

