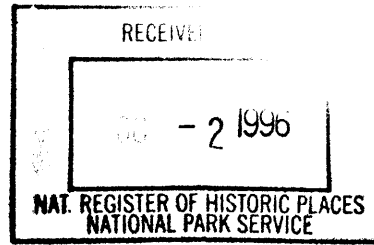


1267

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rea, Dr. Robert W., House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1034 Church Street N/A not for publication

city or town Wesson N/A vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Copiah code 29 zip code 39191

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility 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 does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Edson H. Boal 24 Sept 1996
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer
State : Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Edson H. Boal 11-1-96
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
**Entered in the
National Register**

Rea, Dr. Robert W., House
Name of Property

Copiah County, Mississippi
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Historic and Architectural Resources of Copiah
County, Mississippi

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Health Care: medical business/office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Italianate

Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other 5 wooden porches

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1874

Significant Dates

1874

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Rea, Rilla Oliver/architect

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 2.0 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	7 4 6 6 1 0	3 5 0 9 9 7 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Henry F. (Hank) Smith (edited by Brenda R. Crook/Architectural Historian, MDAH)

organization N/A date 25 May 1996

street & number P.O. Box 408 telephone 601/643-5992

city or town Wesson state MS zip code 39191

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Henry F. Smith

street & number P.O. Box 408 telephone 601/643-5992

city or town Wesson state MS zip code 39191

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Rea, Dr. Robert W., House
Wesson, Copiah County, Mississippi

Section number 7 Page 1

7. DESCRIPTION

A landmark in the town of Wesson, Mississippi, the Dr. Robert W. Rea House is located on the southeast corner of South Main and Church streets. Situated on an entire city block overlooking downtown Wesson, the house is surrounded by beautiful magnolia, palm, oak, azalea, crepe myrtle, dogwood and other indigenous trees and flowering shrubs, most of which were planted by Dr. Rea. A brick sidewalk laid in the herringbone pattern leads from Church Street to the main (north) facade.

The one-story, frame house is constructed in a combination of the Greek Revival, Italianate, and Gothic Revival styles. The house is crowned by a complex gable roof that is pierced by four massive brick chimneys with corbelled caps. Ornate brackets with drop pendants trim the gables and eaves of all but the rear elevation. Jigsawn gable ornaments and ogee-arched ventilators also appear in the gables. Constructed entirely of cypress, the house rests upon brick foundation piers, which are in-filled with brick. The outside walls are finished with lapped weatherboards, while the walls protected by porches and the gables on all but the rear elevation are finished with horizontal tongue-in-groove flush board.

The main (north) facade has a full-width, undercut gallery that features box columns with molded capitals, a jigsawn balustrade, and a wooden deck. The roof of this facade is pierced by a central gable trimmed with brackets and a jigsawn gable ornament, and in the gable is an ogee-arched ventilator and flush-board siding. The central entrance is a single-leaf, panelled and glazed door topped by a single-light transom and framed by four-light sidelights over molded panels. The frontispiece is composed of pilasters supporting a full entablature. At the side of the door is a white glass knob that, when pulled and then released, sounds a loud gong to alert the occupants of a visitor. To each side of the central entrance are two floor-length (11'0"), six-over-nine, double-hung windows. Each of the windows have screen doors and louvered blinds.

Additional porches appear on the north ends of both side elevations. These porches have wooden decks, jigsawn balustrades, box columns with molded capitals, and flat roofs trimmed with brackets. Two floor-length, six-over-nine windows open onto the porch on the east elevation. The porch on the west elevation is L-shaped and has three floor-length windows and two doors opening onto it. Other windows throughout the house are six-over-six, double-hung sash protected by louvered blinds.

The house interior is a central hall, double-pile plan, with a western ell and two rear ells, creating a U-shaped rear elevation. The central hall is 8' by 40' in size and is finished with 1'1" baseboards, wainscoting, molded plaster cornices and ceiling medallions, and a plaster arch. The

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Rea, Dr. Robert W., House
Wesson, Copiah County, Mississippi**

Section number 7 Page 2

arch is supported by ornate plaster consoles and is decorated with plaster rosettes and an oil lamp hanger. At each end of the hall are identical entrances composed of single-leaf, panelled and glazed doors framed by sidelights and a transom. Each of the doorways leading from the hall into the four main rooms contains a panelled door topped by a massive one-light transom.

The interior contains a total of seventeen rooms and three hallways. There are six bedrooms, four bathrooms, a dining room, living room, formal parlor, kitchen, a large pantry (presently being used as an additional kitchen), laundry room, a sun room, one large interior hall, two small interior halls, and seven closets, which are rarely found in houses of this era.

Significant interior features include seven mantelpieces with Tudor-arched openings framed by pilasters, cypress flooring, plastered walls, 12'6" ceilings, molded baseboards (1'1" height), thirty-six windows (most with original glass), large transoms above all doors, plaster ceiling molding, three large plaster ceiling medallions, and white glass door knobs and brass hardware on all doors.

Located in the yard at the rear of the house is a one-story, frame, side-gabled, two-by-one-bay, "saddlebag" form building. This building originally was used as a servants quarters, but today serves as an office and guest bedroom. The roof is clad in standing seam metal and is pierced by a central interior chimney, and in the eaves are decorative brackets. On the north elevation are two single-leaf doors. Each of the two rooms has a fireplace, and a bathroom has been added between the rooms. Contained in the building are many artifacts of the Mississippi Mills and the Rea and Oliver families. This building is a contributing element.

A car/storage building is located on the southwest corner of the property on the site of a mule barn that was torn down in the 1930s. Some time in the 1930s the existing car/storage building was constructed using the cypress lumber from the old mule barn. A noncontributing resource, the building is a three-car shed with two storage rooms added on, and measures approximately 33'x33'.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Rea, Dr. Robert W., House
Wesson, Copiah County, Mississippi**

Section number 8 Page 3

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1874, the Dr. Robert W. Rea House derives its significance from its architectural character (Criterion C), being a good example of transitional architecture and representing the change in popular taste from the Greek Revival style to the picturesque Italianate and Gothic Revival styles. The town of Wesson is distinguished by a number of early post-bellum cottages that display transitional Greek Revival features along with more eclectic Victorian design elements. Many of these houses have side-gabled roofs with intersecting cross gables, and on the main facades these cross gables are either centrally located or are on one or both ends. Those houses with central gables typically have full-width, recessed galleries with box columns, and the Dr. Robert W. Rea House is an example of this type. Many of Wesson's transitional cottages have jigsawn balustrades on the porches, and a few feature Italianate brackets in the friezes. The Dr. Rea House is distinguished from the other Wesson examples in that it is constructed in a variety of three styles: Greek Revival, Italianate, and Gothic Revival. In fact, there are few known Mississippi examples of residences built in a combination of these three styles. (The associated historic contexts developed in the MPS cover document entitled "Historic and Architectural Resources of Copiah County, Mississippi" and represented by this property are "Copiah County's Development from the Post-Bellum Period to the End of World War II, 1966-1945" and "Development of Copiah County's Towns, 1823-1945.")

In the mid-nineteenth century, American architecture was undergoing a transition from the classical to the picturesque. In Mississippi, drawing from the popular styles of the day, houses of a conventional Greek Revival form sometimes incorporated romantic Gothic and Italianate ornamentation. Other known extant Mississippi houses displaying a combination of these three styles include the Jenkins H. Welch House near Hazlehurst in Copiah County; the Dampeer House in Crystal Springs, also in Copiah County; White Arches, Shadowlawn and Colonnade in Columbus; the Old Homestead in Aberdeen; the Parker House in Canton; and the R.W. Chandler House in Okolona.

While the form of the Rea House and much of its character is that of the classical Greek Revival mode, brackets in the Italianate style and jigsawn balusters, ogee-arched ventilators, and mantelpieces with Tudor-arched openings in the Gothic mode adorn the house. The interior has many fine features, such as a decorative plaster arch and wainscoting in the central hallway, richly molded plaster cornices and ceiling medallions, and wide baseboards.

The Rea House was built by Captain and Mrs. William Oliver as a wedding gift for their daughter, Rilla, and Dr. Robert W. Rea, who were married in December 1874. The house was designed by Rilla Oliver Rea, who was a gifted artist. As discussed in the MPS cover document

**United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Rea, Dr. Robert W., House
Wesson, Copiah County, Mississippi**

Section number 8 Page 4

(pages E-29 through E-31), Captain Oliver was a major stockholder, General Manager, Secretary and Treasurer of Wesson's Mississippi Mills from 1871 until his death in 1891. Dr. Rea was a medical practitioner in Wesson and in the surrounding area for some forty years. Dr. Rea practiced medicine from this house, where all of his medical books still remain. In addition to practicing medicine, Rea owned about seventeen hundred acres of good timbered and tillable land, all of which he acquired by his own efforts. He was a member of the A.F.&A.M., and he and his family were members of the Wesson Presbyterian Church.

In 1874 or 1875, the Rea House was furnished with very fine furniture, much of which remains in the house. Progress has been made in returning some original pieces of furniture that had been removed. The home is presently occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Henry F. (Hank) Smith, he being the great-grandson of the late Dr. and Mrs. Robert W. Rea.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Rea, Dr. Robert W., House
Wesson, Copiah County, Mississippi**

Section number 9-10 Page 5

9. Major Bibliographical References

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi, Vol. II. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891.

Blanton, Danny. "Wesson Homes on Bus Tour." The Daily Leader (Brookhaven, MS), June 16, 1989.

Hamilton, Nancy. "Wesson was Incorporated during the Civil War." The Daily Leader (Brookhaven), Jun3 16, 1989.

Phillips, Charles W., descendant of Robert W. Rea. Interviewed by Henry F. Smith at Wesson, Mississippi, on January 10, 1995.

Smith, Rilla A. "Rea House built more than 100 Years Ago: Beautiful Landmark in Wesson." The Daily Leader (Brookhaven), December 15, 1976.

Smith, Rilla Anderson, descendant of Robert W. Rea. Interviewed by Henry F. Smith at Wesson, Mississippi, on January 10, 1995.

Williams, Evelyn, in collaboration with Mrs. Paul Little. "Wesson." The Wesson Enterprise, June 5, 1964.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description: Lot 1, Block E, accoring to the Plat of the City of Wesson, Mississippi.

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes the two acres historically associated with the house and owned by the present property owners.

**United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Rea, Dr. Robert W., House
Wesson, Copiah County, Mississippi**

Section number Photos Page 6

Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

- (1) Dr. Robert W. Rea House
- (2) Wesson, Copiah County, Mississippi
- (3) Henry F. (Hank) Smith
- (4) January 1996
- (5) Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Photo 1 of 10--(6) Facade (north elevation), view to south

Photo 2 of 10--(6) East elevation, view to west

Photo 3 of 10--(6) West elevation, view to east

Photo 4 of 10--(6) South elevation, view to north

Photo 5 of 10--(6) Servants Quarters, facade (north elevation), view to south

Photo 6 of 10--(6) Detail of east elevation, view to west

Photo 7 of 10--(6) Hall, view to north

Photo 8 of 10--(6) East bedroom, view to northeast

Photo 9 of 10--(6) Parlor, south view

Photo 10 of 10--(6) West bedroom, view to northeast

