

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Alabama	
COUNTY: Marengo	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	7-28-70

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Bluff Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Bluff Hall

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
405 North Commissioners Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
Demopolis

STATE: Alabama      CODE: 01      COUNTY: Marengo      CODE: 091

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Period house</u>
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments <u>Restoration &amp; furnishing in progress.</u>

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Marengo County Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:  
405 North Commissioners Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Demopolis      STATE: Alabama      CODE: 01

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Marengo County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
101 East Cort's Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Linden      STATE: Alabama      CODE: 01

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
The Library of Congress, Identifying No. ALA 46-DEMO, 3

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D. C.      CODE: 08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Alabama

COUNTY: Marengo

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

**DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The first part of the building was constructed in 1832. This portion now forms the front of the home and faces east. The columns and west wing were added in the late 1840's, forming the overall house. The trim was probably added at the same time as the west wing and columns. On the exterior the overall house has not been altered, with the exception of the roof, originally covered with wooden shingles but now covered with permanent asbestos composition tiles.

The building is constructed of a combination of materials. Six thick massive square columns, brick covered with plaster, form the facade. The house is L shaped. Exterior and interior walls are of brick. Exterior walls on the front covered with plaster, all exterior walls painted white. The north half of the back wing is constructed of wood, with jalousied galleries upstairs and downstairs. Present physical appearance is same as original using all available data to restore building to its original overall condition.

On the interior of the house, the chief ornaments are the Corinthian columns in the drawing room; plaster medallion, egg and dart molding with border of grapes and grape leaves in the dining room; and several marble mantles--one of Italian black marble. The kitchen contains a plantation fireplace with a double flue.

On the interior, changes made in previous years have been removed and building restored to its original condition. All plumbing has been removed, walls replastered where necessary. Downstairs floors taken up, new sills and supports installed, floors relaid and refinished. Interior of entire house with exception of two upstairs bedrooms, cross hall, and galleries repainted. Central heating and air conditioning has been installed in the front three downstairs rooms.

Portico on south side removed to allow for restoration of original carriage entrance.

None of the original gates and fencing remain, none of the original outbuildings remain. Building foundations still visible. Archaeologist presently making his recommendation toward future work and restoration.

None of the original furnishings remain.

Owner plans to make Bluff Hall a period house and local museum, furnishing the entire house in authentic furniture.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1832--late 1840's

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |   |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | <u>Located on White</u>                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | <u>Bluff, landing site</u>                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | <u>of Bonapartist</u>                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | <u>exiles from Tombig-</u>                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | <u>bee River in 1817.</u>                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |                                      |   |   |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Bluff Hall is one of Alabama's oldest, largest and most impressive Greek Revival river mansions. The mansion is located on the landing site of the Bonapartist exiles and was the residence of F. S. Lyon, a prominent lawyer, planter, State bank manager and Confederate congressman.

ARCHITECTURE: Bluff Hall is both typical and unique of the era. The facade shows the influence of the Greek Revival style. The six columns are not slender and narrowly spaced, instead they are thick, massive and somewhat squat in relation to the rest of the building. The front view is fortress-like in its strength and severity. This severity, however, is softened by the graceful main entrance doorway and the second floor doorway, which leads out to an overhanging balcony with wrought iron railing, the same railing that closes in each side of the porch, and runs between the six columns. The main entrance has side panels and a fanlight transom; the second floor doorway side panels and fanlight transom are a near copy of the main entrance pattern, except for square tops and quadruple panes instead of curving tops and simple panes. The floor plan and mixture of building materials partially account for the unique appearance of Bluff Hall. A view from the southeast presents an entirely different shape from the one offered from the northeast, because the south side of the building shows very little similarity to the north side, though the facade gives the appearance that the two sides are symmetrical. Even the roof lines are different. The combination of brick, plaster stucco, and wood also enhances the architectural interest of the building. The north half of the back wing is constructed of wood, the south of brick.

POLITICAL: Francis Strother Lyon, first master of Bluff Hall, prominent 19th century lawyer and cotton grower, served as a State Senator and as a member of the Congress of the United States and the Congress of the Confederacy. In 1846 the legislature passed an act to regulate the affairs of the State banks and provide for the payment of State bonds. F. S. Lyon was appointed Commissioner and Trustee to execute the law. He was pro hac vice the State of Alabama. The State bank and its branches were liquidated, the State debt reduced by millions, and the State saved from a financial crisis by the diligent efforts of Mr. Lyon.

LOCATION: Bluff Hall is located high on White Bluff (Ecor Blanc) where the band of Bonapartist exiles landed from the Rombigbee River in 1817.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Baldwin, Joseph G. Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi (1853). New York: Hill and Wang, 1957.

Carmer, Carl. Stars Fell on Alabama. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1934.

Curry, J.L.M., LL.D. Hon. Francis Strother Lyon as Commissioner and Trustee of Alabama. New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1889.

James, E. T., ed. Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Scribner & Sons, 1964.

McMillan, Dr. Malcolm C. The Land Called Alabama. Austin: Steck-Vaughn Company, 1968.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		32	30	55
SE	° ' "	° ' "		87	50	23
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
All in Alabama	01	Marengo	091
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director, Alabama Historical Commission & W.H. Britton, Pres., Marengo County Historical Society.

ORGANIZATION: Alabama Historical Commission DATE: June 2, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER: 305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Haldwin, Joseph G. Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi (1853). New York: Hill and Wang, 1957.

Carrer, Carl. Stars Fell on Alabama. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1934.

Curry, J.L.M., LL.D. Hon. Francis Strother Lyon as Commissioner and Trustee of Alabama. New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1889.

Curry, J.L.M., LL.D. Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Scribner & Sons, 1964.

McMILLIN, Dr. Malcolm C. The Land Called Alabama. Austin: Steck-Vaughn Company, 1968.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE PROPERTY						LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
						32	30	55	87	50	23

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION: **01**

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Alabama	01	Marengo	091
	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director, Alabama Historical Commission & W.H. Britton, Pres., Marengo County Historical Society.

ORGANIZATION: Alabama Historical Commission DATE: June 2, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER: 405 South Lawrence Street

CITY: Montgomery STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>I hereby designate State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665) to nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been determined to conform to the criteria and procedures set forth in the National Park Service. The recommended type of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><u>Phil B. Howard, Jr.</u> Chairman, Ala. Historical Comm. Title: <u>State Liaison Officer</u></p> <p>Date: <u>June 3, 1970</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Ernest Allen Caswell</u> Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: <u>JUL 28 1970</u></p> <p>ATTEST</p> <p><u>W. Warner Floyd</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: <u>JUL 1 1970</u></p>

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Alabama	
COUNTY Marengo	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

BLUFF HALL

8. SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

Since its purchase in 1967 by the Historical Society the mansion has gradually been restored by the efforts of the Society and with the help and aid of all the citizens of Demopolis and financial assistance by Lyon family descendants. Each one takes pride in the fact that the mansion has been saved from complete deterioration and destruction.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (CONTINUED)

Owen, Marie Bankhead. LL.D. The Story of Alabama, Vols II & III. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1949.

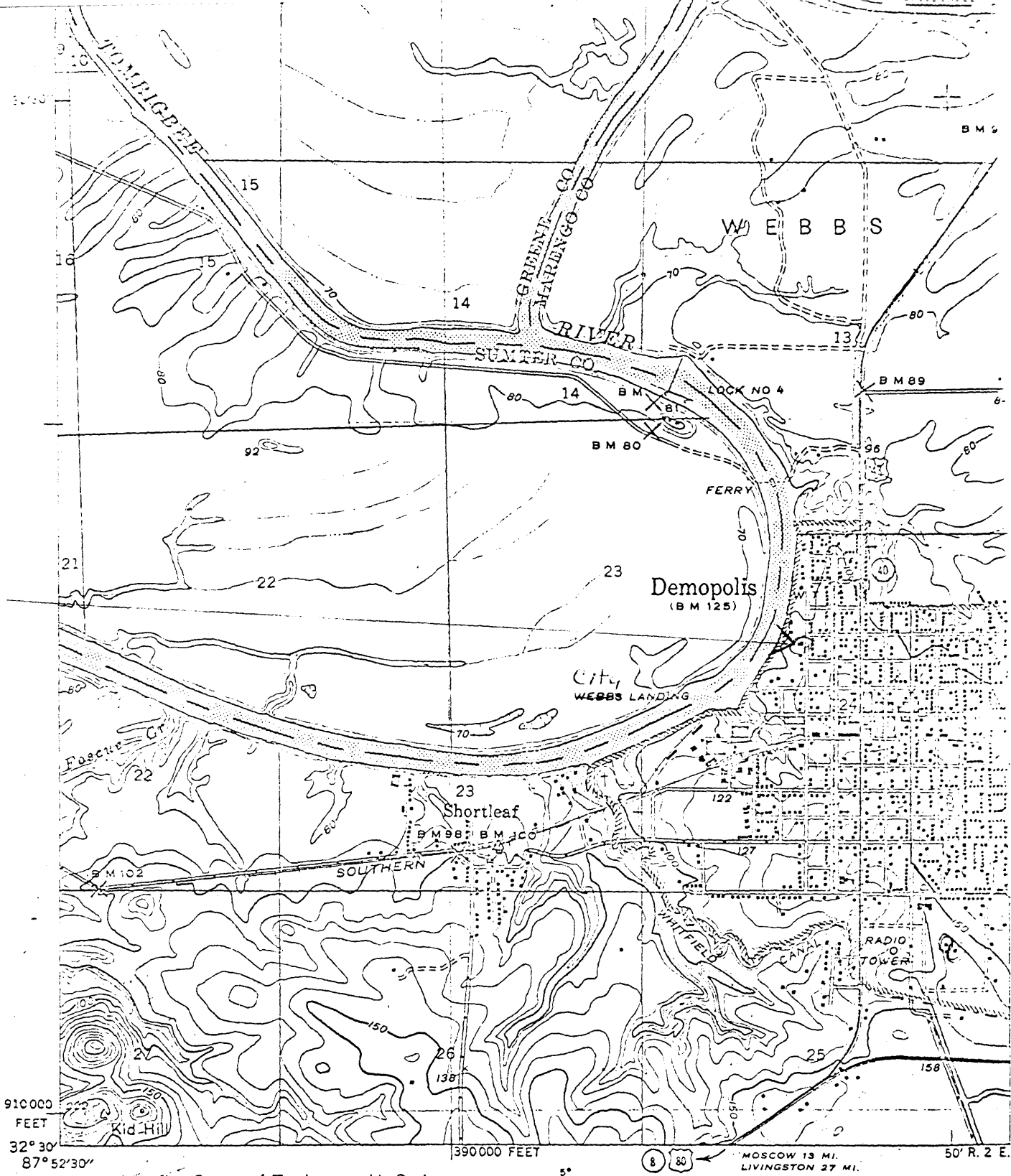
Owen, Thomas M. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 volumes. Chicago: J. S. Clark Publishing Company, 1921.

\_\_\_\_\_. William Strother of Virginia and His Descendants. Publications of the Southern History Association. Harrisburg: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1898.

Pickett, A. J. History of Alabama, 1851. Republished, Birmingham: Birmingham Book and Magazine Company, 1962.

Smith, Winston. Days of Exile. Tuscaloosa: W. B. Drake and Son, 1967.

BLUFF HALL

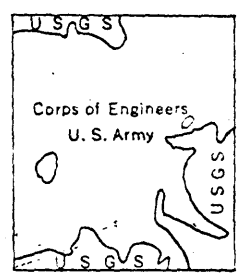


Mapped by the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army,  
and the Geological Survey  
1936-1937 and 1946

ROAD CLASSIFICATION 1947		U. S. Route (15)
Desirable hard surface	Dry weather roads	State Route (28)
heavy duty road	Loose surface graded	
Secondary hard surface	Unsurfaced, graded	
all weather road	Dirt road	
More than two lanes indicated along road with tick at point of change		2 LANE, 4 LANE

TRUE NORTH  
MAGNETIC NORTH

APPROXIMATE MEAN  
DECLINATION, 1946



MOSCOW 13 MI.  
LIVINGSTON 27 MI.

