

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 97001647

Date Listed: 2/2/98

Almand--O'Kelley-Walker House  
Property Name

Rockdale      GEORGIA  
County          State

N/A  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Ms J M. W. [Signature]*  
Signature of the Keeper

2/26/98  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

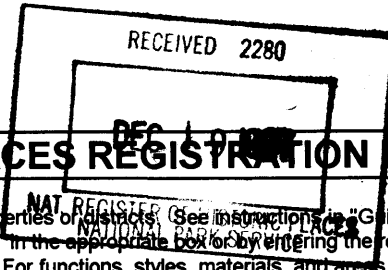
Section No. 8

This nomination is amended to end the period of significance in 1921, with the death of T. D. O'Kelley. There is insufficient information to justify significance for association with O'Kelley's descendants who lived in the house.

This change was confirmed with the Georgia SHPO.

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DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



# 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 functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name **ALMAND-O'KELLEY-WALKER HOUSE**  
other names/site number **House of Seven Gables**

## 2. Location

street & number **981 Green St.**  
city, town **Conyers** (N/A) vicinity of  
county **Rockdale** code **GA 247**  
state **Georgia** code **GA** zip code **30201**

(N/A) not for publication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	0
sites	0	0
structures	2	0
objects	0	0
total	5	0

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.

Mark R. Edwards \_\_\_\_\_ Date 12/03/97

Mark R. Edwards  
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 Me Q M. W. 2/2/98

( ) 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

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

### Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/hotel

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

OTHER: Folk Victorian

### Materials:

<b>foundation</b>	brick
<b>walls</b>	wood frame
<b>roof</b>	metal
<b>other</b>	N/A

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Almand-O'Kelley-Walker House is a one-story, Folk Victorian-style, frame house. The house retains its four original chimneys with six original fireplaces as well as brick piers. There is open brickwork between the piers. The roof-line includes seven gables and there are decorative, sawn brackets in the gable end eaves and on the chamfered wrap-around porch supports. There is a shingle and tin roof. The plan includes a central hall flanked by three rooms on each side with two additional rooms added. Each original room has a fireplace and mantel. There are five exterior doors. The original heart pine flooring, 13' ceilings, plaster walls, false transoms, picture moldings, and chair rails all remain. There is a well underneath the back porch near the bathroom. The grounds include three historic outbuildings: two buildings, a garden shed and a storage shed, both created in the 1920s from parts of older barns, and one structure, a chicken coop. There are also extensive plantings dating from the 1930s and 1940s, if not earlier, of magnolias, pecan trees, and azaleas, among others. The house is on the southeast side of Conyers, only 100' southwest of the railroad tracks, the central business district and the cemetery, in an area that is mostly commercial.

Changes to the house are described herein through an interview with some of the last family members to live in the house: It seems to be agreed in the Walker family that the hallway originally extended to the front entrance. This is supported by ceiling shadows in the living room of a wall. There was also a doorway between the living room and bedroom. Mayor Charles C. Walker indicates that the wall was removed, french doors added and the bedroom passage was closed before his parents' marriage, he estimates around 1910. Also around this time, he believes the back bedroom (bedroom no. 3) and outer bathroom were added to accommodate Mrs. Dollie O'Kelley's mother. In recent years the bath was reconfigured to be entered from bedroom no. 3 rather than from

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**Section 7--Description**

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the porch, thus making a bed and breakfast suite. The family room and porch were also extended outward and a doorway from the kitchen to the porch closed off in order to add plumbing but the date is undetermined. It is assumed that the porch had stairs outside this kitchen door at one time. The interior bath was added in the 1940's. All of these changes have been done in keeping with the tenor of the house. Ongoing at this writing is restoration of the dining room/library with the addition of book cases and china cabinets as well as the rebuilding of the east side porch.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**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  
SOCIAL HISTORY

**Period of Significance:**

ca.1870-1947

**Significant Dates:**

ca.1870

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

Unknown

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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#### **Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Almand-O'Kelley-Walker House is significant in architecture because it is a good and very intact example of a Reconstruction-era Folk Victorian-style Cottage with a large amount of original exterior and interior materials surviving. Among these are the wrap-around porch and its chamfered columns with decorative brackets, as well as decorative brackets in the end gables and at the roof line. On the interior there are six original fireplaces, four original chimneys, and original floors, high ceilings and plaster walls. The original room configuration survives also.

As defined in Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in their Landscaped Settings (1991), Folk Victorian houses were built all over Georgia and in very large numbers. They were simple folk house forms, or house types, with Victorian-era decorative detailing applied to them. The detailing was generally taken from the elaborate styles that were popular during the mid to late 19th century, such as the Queen Anne or Italianate. Features from these styles were borrowed and added onto such places as porches and roof gables. This satisfied the desire to have some hint of stylistic detailing on what was otherwise an unadorned traditional house form. The Folk Victorian style is actually more a way of decorating a house than a precise stylistic category. However, the Folk Victorian house is so common and widespread that it demands a category of its own. The style was very common in all parts of the state, both urban and rural, from the 1870s to the 1910s. The basis for a Folk Victorian house is a folk house type, such as a gabled ell, central hallway, or I-house. Decorative details are added to the house on the porch, in the gables, and around the window and door openings. These details are usually turned or jigsawed woodwork such as brackets, spindle work, turned porch posts, and other bric-a-brac and gingerbread. This type of elaborately turned and applied ornament is also referred to as Eastlake detailing.

The house is also significant in social history for having been built at the exact time Rockdale County was formed and Conyers became a county seat, thus increasing its population and the opportunity for civic roles of its citizens. The owners of this house during the historic period were all involved in various activities of significance to the community. The first owner, John Henry Almand (1846-1918), who lived in the house in the 1870s, was a merchant, treasurer of the first Board of Education, and later county commissioner and organizer of the Conyers Institute School, as well as founder of the Bank of Rockdale. The second owner, who was also the builder of the house, John Floyd Almand (1848-1918), a cousin of John H. Almand, lived here after John H. Almand's ownership until 1884. He was later best-known as a Primitive Baptist Minister. The house was owned by the O'Kelley family and their descendants from 1884 until 1992. T. D. O'Kelley (1856-1921) organized the Bank of Rockdale, was a teacher and later the county Commissioner of Education (1894-1907), newspaper owner and editor, and Conyers Postmaster (1918-1921). His second wife, Mrs. Clyde Bloodworth O'Kelley, organized the local chapter of the Children of the Confederacy in this house in 1905. His

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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daughter, Kate, grew up here, married in 1924 to Carl Walker, and the house remained in their family until 1992. Kate's son, Charles C. Walker, who also grew up here, has been Mayor of Conyers from 1978 through 1997.

### National Register Criteria

This nomination meets National Register criterion A because it was the home of three different citizens, most notably T. D. O'Kelley and his descendants, who were active in the civic, educational, and cultural affairs of Conyers, a county seat city. Mrs. O'Kelley was herself active in founding a local patriotic organization. The house meets National Register criterion C because it is a very good, intact example of a Folk Victorian cottage that retains almost all of its original chimneys, fireplaces, floors, chair rail, and other interior details, as well as its setting and mature landscaping and exterior finishes as well.

### Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

### Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance runs from the building of the house, ca. 1870, until the end of the historic era (1947) because the house was continuously used by the same family for several generations during this time.

### Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

There are 3 contributing buildings: the main house and two outbuildings, the garden shed and the storage shed. There are two contributing structures, a chicken coop, and the well under the back porch.



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#### **Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

The Almand-O'Kelley-Walker House was built in the City of Conyers in 1870. At the time, ca. 1870, when the house was built, the City of Conyers was changing from a mere railway station to the county seat. While the original parent county (Newton) had been settled since the early 1820s, Conyers was created when the railroad came through in the 1840s, but had been only a small town until after the new county of Rockdale was created in 1870. During Reconstruction (1865-1877) the population of Conyers jumped from 300 to 2,000. There were forty stores, a hotel, good schools, one college, seven churches, ten or so lawyers and equally as many doctors. Rockdale County was established in 1870, and Conyers was, and is, the only city within that county. The area was predominantly agricultural growing cotton corn and wheat. Conyers was growing as a business district near the train station to supply farmers with their needs instead of their going into Atlanta.

The house today, as originally, is just east of the downtown commercial area, government area, and just south of the railroad tracks. It is presumed that John H. Almand, who at that time owned a dry goods store, had the house built on one of his many city lots due to its proximity to the town. However, his wife was afraid to live so far "in the country" due to hobos [an earlier version of semi-homeless people] approaching the house for food. There were many houses built on this side of the railroad before and during this time, so it could be considered that the house was built in a "developing area".

The following is a biographical dramatis personae of the various people who were owners, builders and residents of this house:

#### **John Henry Almand (1/4/1846-7/29/1918)**

Mr. John Henry Almand purchased the land on which to build the home in approximately 1870. John H. was the grandson of Thomas and Nancy Almand, early pioneers of Rockdale County. John H. Almand was a merchant of dry goods in the town of Conyers, the organizer and President of the Bank of Rockdale County (est. 1891), and later Rockdale County Commissioner (1907-1909), the commission having been created in 1902, Treasurer of the Board of Education, organizer and Board Member of the Conyers Institute School, Federal Food Administrator for Rockdale County and the owner of large amounts of real estate in Rockdale County which it appears he bought and sold readily, as well as farmed. He was also one of the organizers of the Millstead Manufacturing Company, incorporated in 1908. He and his family lived in the home for a few years until moving into a home he had built closer in town.

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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#### **John Floyd Almand (4/23/1848-2/24/1918)**

John Floyd Almand was a cousin to John H. Almond, and was actually the builder of the house in 1870. He later lived in the house for several years after John H. Almand moved to town. John F. Almand was an elder and later the pastor (1891-1924) of the Bald Rock Primitive Baptist Church which was located two blocks from the house, and is one of the earliest churches formed in Conyers. He lived in the house until 1884 when he chose to move further out in the county and farm. The house was then sold to Mr. T.D. O'Kelley, a close friend of John H. Almand .

#### **Thomas Dean O'Kelley (9/4/1856-5/20/1921)**

Originally from Gwinnett County, Mr. O'Kelley purchased the home in 1884 with his wife Dollie Smith O'Kelley. Mr. O'Kelley was a prominent figure in the community. A graduate of Emory College at Oxford, he received his Masters degree at Vanderbilt University. He was an organizer of the Bank of Rockdale with John H. Almand and served there as cashier. Co-Principal of the Conyers Male and Female Academy (est. 1871) with R.A. Guinn, a prominent local educator, it was in this school that the first court session of Rockdale County was held. He started the Oakland Seminary, was Rockdale County Commissioner of Education (1894-1907), owned and operated the Conyers Weekly Banner (1904-1907) where he was editor and contributing writer, often drawing on his travels of Europe for stories of entertainment and education. He was also County Surveyor (1887-1921) and Conyers Postmaster (1918-1921). He had seven children, 3 of whom died (2 in infancy, 1 at aged 15) and two wives. The street behind the property is O'Kelly Street, named for him. This street runs from the home, past the location of the Academy at the corner of O'Kelly and Oakland (named for his school).

#### **Mrs. Dollie Smith O'Kelley (3/4/1860-2/11/1896)**

A local citizen of Conyers, she married T. D. O'Kelley on 12/13/1883. They both had been teachers at the Conyers Male and Female Academy. Mrs. O'Kelley was very instrumental in the development of the Conyers Presbyterian Church, donating land and raising money for construction of the church. She was an artist and a teacher of art. A member of the Ladies Aid Society, Mrs. Dollie O'Kelley was an active and prominent member of Conyers society. Mrs. O'Kelley died in childbirth, leaving infant twins who died days apart three months later.

#### **Mrs. Clyde Bloodworth Green O'Kelley**

She married T.D. O'Kelley in 1899. She was the widow of a Mr. Green; Green Street may have been named for him. She and Mr. O'Kelley had one child who died at age fifteen. She organized and was the directress of the O. K. Chapter of the Children of the Confederacy, the planning and subsequent meetings of which were held in the home. After the death of their child, Mrs. O'Kelley purchased 1/4 acre of the house property from her husband and had a small home built there where she lived until her death. That smaller property went to the two children from her first marriage and has yet to be repurchased into the original plot of land.

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#### **Kate O'Kelley Walker**

Daughter of T.D. and Dollie O'Kelley, she was born in the home and lived there with her father until his death. Married on April 24, 1924 to Carl Walker, a postal worker and brother to her sister-in-law, they purchased the home from her brothers in 1929. They had three children all of whom were born in the home. She and Mr. Walker lived there until their deaths.

#### **Charles C. Walker**

Son of Kate O'Kelley Walker and Carl Walker, Charles C. Walker was born in the home and lived there until his marriage. He is the owner and President of Walco Packaging Company. He has served as Mayor of Conyers from 1978 until 1997

The Walker family owned the house until 1992 when they sold the house to the current owners, William C. Adams and his wife, Lauri Gay Martin. The latter couple have restored the house and live there with their son, Elijah. They also use part of the house as a bed and breakfast using the Walker family's name for the house, the House of Seven Gables, as the name for their establishment

[Excerpt from A History of Rockdale County (1978), with adjustments]

Thomas Dean O'Kelley, son of Dr. Francis C. and Sarah Delilah O'Kelley, was born September 4, 1856 in Gwinnett County, Georgia. At the outbreak of the War Between the States, his father entered the Confederate Army, Company B, 42nd Georgia Volunteer Infantry in March 1862. This left his wife and two small boys to run the farm.

Young Dean, age 9, secured his early schooling from itinerant teachers, since there were no public schools during this period, nor during the turbulent Reconstruction Days. Later, he was privileged to be a student at Emory College at Oxford, Georgia. He became proficient in languages, mathematics and science. He graduated in 1878. Pursuing his studies further after graduation, he was awarded his Master's Degree at Vanderbilt University. Having completed his formal education, he engaged in various literary pursuits, and was, for a while, junior professor at Emory College. He then returned to Conyers and served as co-principal of the Conyers Male and Female Academy with Professor R. A. Guinn, an eminent teacher for many years in the community. Prompted by a desire to raise the standard of education in the county, he opened Oakland Seminary. From this school came many of the county's most prominent citizens. Perhaps the greatest factor in his education was a tour of Europe in 1883 with Prof. H. A. Scomp, teacher of Greek at Oxford. What could be more beneficial to a scholar than to be shown the wonders of the old world, by an experienced traveler—a ready and willing source of information. The two things that impressed him most were a visit to the estate of Sir

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Walter Scott and going through the Catacombs of Rome. The pastor of the church there gave him a map of the Catacombs.

On December 13th, 1883, he married Miss Dollie Smith, a recent graduate of the Conyers Female College, then on College Avenue. She later taught with him. For 13 years, he was Commissioner of Education for Rockdale County Schools. He held this office as long as he could do so on his own merits, but when it was put into politics, he sought other means of livelihood. Because of the relatively small salary of school teachers at that time, and a growing family, he bought and operated the Conyers Weekly Banner for a number of years, always striving to make his paper a moral force in the community. He entered heartily in activities of the Georgia Press Association. He was a hard fighter for Democratic causes and principles. In 1896, February 11th, he lost his wife by death, leaving six children; two of whom died in infancy. In 1899, he married Mrs. Clyde [Bloodworth] Green. They had one daughter, Ruth Elizabeth, who died at the age of 15. He was a charter member of the Gleaner Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, organized in 1900. He was chosen patron and served in that capacity until January 1921. He was a devoted member of the Conyers Presbyterian Church, in which he cheerfully sacrificed convenience, time and possessions. He was a public servant in many capacities. During Wilson's administration, he became Postmaster in Conyers and served until his death May 20, 1921. His children were: Rev. William Francis O'Kelley, Paul Dean O'Kelley, Frederick Henry O'Kelley, Kate O'Kelley Walker, and Ruth Elizabeth O'Kelley.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Martin, Lauri Gay (owner). Draft Historic Property Information Form, "House of Seven Gables", September, 1993 with supplemental research information. Copy on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Ga. DNR, Atlanta, GA.

Barksdale, Margaret G., et al. A History of Rockdale County (Conyers, GA: 1978)

Almand Family Information from Mrs. Charles H. Rose (Ara Lee) of Decatur, GA, genealogist of the Almand Family.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) 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:
- 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):**

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreege of Property** approximately one acre

**UTM References**

A) Zone 16 Easting 776720 Northing 3728690

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is marked on the enclosed plat map.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property is all the current owners own at this location and all that has been associated with this town property.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

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

**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** November 25, 1997

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

**name/title** Lauri G. Martin

**organization** N/A

**street and number** 981 Green St.

**city or town** Conyers **state** GA **zip code** 30201

**telephone** (770) 760-1422

( ) **consultant**

( ) **regional development center preservation planner**

(X) **other: owner**

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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Photographs

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**Name of Property:** Almand-O'Kelley-Walker House  
**City or Vicinity:** Conyers  
**County:** Rockdale  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** June, 1997

**Description of Photograph(s):**

1 of 14: Front facade; photographer facing southwest.

2 of 14: Front facade, from side; photographer facing south.

3 of 14: West (Scott St. facade); photographer facing southeast.

4 of 14: Rear facade (back yard side); photographer facing northeast.

5 of 14: East facade (library/dining room gable end) with porch under restoration; photographer facing northwest.

6 of 14: Backyard looking toward rear facade of house; photographer facing northeast.

7 of 14: Backyard, two outbuildings (garden shed in foreground, storage shed in rear) on left and garden; photographer facing south.

8 of 14: Backyard, chicken coop; photographer facing south.

9 of 14: House, front door, with slight view of library/dining room before latest restoration; photographer facing northeast.

10 of 14: House, living room, with only original tile fireplace; photographer facing west.

11 of 14: House, dining room/library, before latest restoration undertaken; photographer facing southwest.

12 of 14: House, bedroom no. 2 (behind living room); photographer facing north.

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**Photographs**

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13 of 14: House, bedroom no. 3 (bed and breakfast suite), looking toward sitting room; photographer facing west.

14 of 14: House, rear door and central hall; photographer facing southwest.



Almond-O'Kalley-Walker House  
 Conyers, Rockdale County, Georgia  
 Scale: Not to scale.  
 Source: Drawn by owner  
 Date: 1994  
 Key: Room usages are marked directly  
 on the plan.

Floor Plan

