

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED
FEB 6 1976
JUN 17 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

* * * Governor Robert Patton Home

AND/OR COMMON

Sweetwater Plantation

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Intersection of Sweetwater
(Old Hough Road) and Florence Blvd.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Florence

VICINITY OF

5

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alabama

01

Lauderdale

077

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

X NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John D. Weeden Estate (Elizabeth Weeden Minton)

STREET & NUMBER

115 1/2 East Tennessee Street

CITY, TOWN

Florence

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alabama

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lauderdale County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

South Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Florence

STATE

Alabama

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

HABS

DATE

1935

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Sweetwater Plantation, which was completed in 1835 as the home of a wealthy planter, is a two-story brick structure of late Georgian massing and influence. One of the few early buildings in the Florence vicinity which has retained its original porches, Sweetwater is noted for its simplicity of design, its unusual end-wall chimneys and its bracketed cornice.

The house is located on the outskirts of the City of Florence and much of the original 4,000 acre plantation has been sold for subdivisions. The original gardens were elaborate and were the finest in the area. At present a mussell shell drive leads from the main gate to the house. Boxwood hedge imported from England borders the front walk and leads to a small boarded circular walk around a fountain. Two large magnolia trees obscure the facade of the house.

The structure is rectangular in plan, measuring approximately 62 feet by 48 feet, with the main entrance located on the long side. The welded tin roof is hipped and the slightly overhanging cornice is supported on the facade with small console brackets with molded trim beneath. The facade is further distinguished from the remaining elevations by the treatment of the brick, which here is laid in Flemish Bond. The remaining walls are of common bond. A central one-story portico has four tapered box columns supporting an entablature which is surmounted with a balustrade. Stucco and pilasters under the portico set the entrance apart. The double-leaf door with eight recessed panels is topped with a transom and flanked by sidelights with a leaded design alternating circles with ovals. The trim is fluted with corner blocks. All windows of the building are 12/12 double hung, with fluted trim, corner blocks, flat arches and shutters.

Two end-wall chimneys are located on both the south and north elevations. Three second floor windows are located between the chimneys on the south where a small pedimented portico is flanked by two windows. Entrance beneath the portico is a single door topped with a rectangular transom.

A single story shed-roof porch supported by tapered square columns runs the length of the rear of the house. In the early 1900's the northern quarter of the porch was bricked in and extended to provide for a kitchen. Originally, three single doors opened onto the porch.

The interior is divided by a central hall measuring 16 feet by 48 feet and a double run stair with landing is located on the rear wall. Four large rooms are located on each floor and each of the rooms contains carrara marble mantels consisting of Ionic columns supporting a simple entablature. A small side hall originally opened onto the side portico, but has been altered and at present the side door opens directly onto a flight of stairs leading to the second floor. Interior walls are of plaster and originally were papered. Shreds of the original border paper remain in the front hall. Interior door and window trim is fluted with corner blocks and most doors have eight recessed panels. Floors and ceilings are intact. The major alterations to the house have been the addition of the kitchen, and the alteration to the side entrance and stair hall to allow for bathrooms on the second floor.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 6 1976
DATE ENTERED	JUN 17 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

To the east of the main house is a small one-story, gabled roof, brick and frame structure originally used as a kitchen. Frame additions were made to the structure sometime during the early 20th Century.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

1835

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sweetwater Plantation is one of the finer late Georgian houses in North Alabama and is most noted as the home of Robert Miller Patton, the first elected governor of Alabama after the collapse of the Confederacy. Patton's governorship was terminated with the end of the presidential era of Reconstruction.

Robert M. Patton was born in Virginia in 1809 and as a child moved with his family to Huntsville, Alabama where he attended Green Academy. As a young man Patton operated what is believed to be one of the first cotton gins in Alabama and was founder of the Bell Cotton Factory, one of the earliest textile mills in the state. In 1829, Patton moved to Florence where in 1832, he was elected to the State Legislature from Lauderdale County. In the same year he married Jane Brahan and shortly thereafter acquired control over the vast Sweetwater Plantation at the death of his father-in-law, John Brahan.

Brahan had served as a general in the War of 1812 with Andrew Jackson and in 1818 moved to Huntsville where he was appointed commissioner of public lands by Jackson. Brahan acquired a 4,000 acre plantation along Sweetwater Creek near Florence and shortly before his death began construction of the main house. The structure was completed by Patton in 1835.

A prominent Whig, Patton served in one or the other of the houses of the legislature almost continuously from 1837 to the outbreak of the Civil War, and was president of the Senate several times, holding that office at the outbreak of hostilities. He served as a member of the 1860 Charleston Convention and the State Convention which passed the secession ordinance. Although, he opposed secession he gave strong support to the Confederacy throughout the War.

In 1865, Patton represented Lauderdale County in the State Constitutional Convention and in November ran for Governor defeating Col. M.J. Bulger and Judge William R. Smith. His administration was conducted under difficulties arising out of the conflicting sentiments of the people of the state and the hostile legislation of congress. His main concern was to stabilize the fiscal condition of the state government.

In March of 1867, Congress passed the reconstruction acts and Patton was displaced by Wager Swaine. After his displacement, Patton involved himself in the building of railroads in the south and in the rebuilding of the University of Alabama. He organized an association of eastern capitalist to connect Chattanooga, Mobile and New Orleans by rail and served as President of the road from Chattanooga to Meridian. He also served as a trustee of several Colleges and Universities, including Missouri State University, the University of Alabama, Florence State, Normal College and the Florence Synodical Female College.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Garrett, Jill K., A History of Lauderdale County, Alabama, Columbia, Tn., 1964.
Historic Muscle Shoals: A Guide to Places of Historical Interest, Tennessee Valley
 Historical Society, 1962.
 McDonald Papers, William L., General Brahan File.
 McDonald Papers, William L., Weeden File.
 Munger, Rose McDavid, Patton and Allied Families, Birmingham, Alabama, 1958.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8.84 acres, more or less
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	4,4,1	0,8,0	3,8	5,3	4,8,0	B	1,6	4,4,1	0,8,0	3,8	5,3	5,8,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			
C	1,6	4,4,1	4,0,0	3,8	5,3	5,8,0	D	1,6	4,4,1	4,0,0	3,8	5,3	4,8,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			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

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

DATE

February 2, 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Miss B. Howard Jr.

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

February 2, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. Munter

DATE

6/17/76

Acting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Charles Adams

DATE

6-16-76

Acting KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 6 1976

DATE ENTERED JUN 17 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

*couldn't have been
in 1855. E.D.D.*

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

At his death in 1855, his home passed to his daughter, Martha Patton Weeden. It has remained in the Weeden Family possession since that time, and is presently owned by the estate of J.D. Weeden.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 6 1976
DATE ENTERED	JUN 17 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

Owen, Thomas McAdory, Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 volumes, Chicago, 1921.
Summersell, Charles G., Alabama, Montgomery, Alabama, 1970.