

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

APR 12 1991

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 Robinson, Judge Elisha, House  
other names/site number Montgomery House, Ritchie House, Roses and Lace Country Inn

2. Location

street & number Hwy. 231 South  not for publication  
city, town Ashville  vicinity  
state Alabama code AL county St. Clair code 115 zip code 35953

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>        </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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  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.  See continuation sheet.  
[Signature] 4-5-91  
Signature of certifying official Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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 and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Entered in the National Register  
[Signature] 5/13/91  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper          Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brickwalls wood

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roof Alphaltother 

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

Situated on eleven wooded acres and facing west, the Judge Robinson House (James Montgomery House) in Ashville is a two-story, frame late Queen Anne (c. 1890) residence with a brick pier foundation (-filled in with brick across the front and sides-) and a cross gable roof that features steeply pitched overlapping front gables and a decorative cornice. The house is irregularly shaped with cutaway bay windows, balconies, and a small projecting side porch. There is a one-story wraparound porch with square paneled columns, square balustrades, dentil cornice, louvered shutters on the west side, a beaded pine ceiling, and a tongue and groove pine floor. Most of the long rectangular windows have one-over-one sash panes and single fixed panes with stained glass. The exterior is richly decorative and includes various shingle patterns, sunbursts, diagonal panels, and overhangs in the gable ends. The balconies have spindle work trim, bands of shingles and elaborate cutout brackets.

On the interior, most of the original woodwork is still intact including beaded pine wainscoting and chair rails in the upstairs and downstairs halls, and 12 inch wide baseboards. Most of the walls and ceilings are plaster. Three of the six mantels have ornate mirrored overmantels. Many of the interior doors have bull's-eye corner blocks. The bedroom doors have transoms and the parlor and dining rooms off the foyer have large double pocket doors. The stairway has two landings with simple, four-sided balusters. Other design elements include solid brass doorknobs and hinges with ornate designs.

The Judge Robinson House has retained its original integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The basic shape, form and plan of the dwelling have been retained as well as much of its fenestration and decorative elements that distinguish it as a Queen Anne residence (porches, bay windows, balconies, shingles, sunbursts, panels, and brackets). Many interior features are also intact including original woodwork, six mantels, door and window moldings, the staircase, and solid brass hardware. The only significant change includes a breezeway (construction date unknown) between the kitchen and main house. Two bathrooms (located upstairs and downstairs) were added in the 1920s.

Also located on the property is a noncontributing one-a-half story frame garage.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1890  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1890  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**CRITERION C (ARCHITECTURE):**

Eligible under Criterion C (Architecture), the Judge Robinson House (also known as the Montgomery/Ritchie House) is significant as a fine and intact local example of the Queen Anne style. The house, with its characteristic Queen Anne decorative detailing, is an unusual building in rural Ashville and St. Clair County. Its exterior is richly decorative and includes various shingle patterns, sunbursts, diagonal panels, and overhangs in the gable ends. The balconies have spindle work trim, bands of shingles, and elaborate cutout brackets. On the interior, much of the original woodwork has been retained including solid brass hardware, beaded pine wainscoting and chair rails in the upstairs and downstairs halls, 12 inch wide baseboards, six fire-place mantels, interior door and window surrounds (-some have bull's-eye corner blocks-), and large double pocket doors in the parlor and dining rooms off the foyer.

**HISTORICAL SUMMARY:**

The house was constructed in 1890 by Elisha J. Robinson, a probate judge for St. Clair County. Judge Robinson sold the house to Judge John W. Inzer's daughter and her husband, Mr. James Montgomery. Their daughter, Mildred Montgomery Ritchie, lived in the house until her death in 1986. The house is currently owned by the Ashville Development Company.

**QUEEN ANNE STYLE:**

The Judge Robinson House, Ashville, is an intact and representative example of the Queen Anne style, one of the most popular architectural styles in the United States during the late nineteenth century.

Dominating residential architecture from about 1885 to 1905, the "Queen Anne" seemed to evoke the Victorian Era more than any other architectural style that appeared in the United States during the late nineteenth century. The name "Queen Anne," as applied to late Victorian architecture, is one of the most confusing terms used for architectural styles because it has only the most tenuous links with the British

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property about 11 acres

UTM References

A 

1	6
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5	6	8	6	4	0
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3	7	4	3	9	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

1	6
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5	6	8	6	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	4	3	8	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	6
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5	6	8	9	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	4	3	9	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D 

1	6
---	---

5	6	8	9	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	7	4	3	8	4	0
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the property are contained within the legal description, as recorded in the city Assessor's Office, Ashville, St. Clair County, Alabama.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Melanie A. Betz/Cultural Resources Coordinator, and Gerald A. Sparks  
 organization Alabama Historical Commission date February 8, 1991  
 street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 205 242-3184  
 city or town Montgomery state Alabama zip code 36130

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monarch whose reign extended from 1702 to 1714. As it developed in Great Britain, and then later in the United States, the "Queen Anne style" was a distinctly Victorian innovation. (1)

The Queen Anne style was generally acknowledged to have its origins in England in the 1860s when a small group of avant-garde architects, seeking an aesthetically appealing alternative to the dominant High Victorian Gothic movement, began looking to the smaller-scale domestic architecture of the Tudor and Stuart eras (-including the Queen Anne period-) and to the informality composed farmhouses of the English countryside for their inspiration. (2) From these sources, such architects as Richard Norman Shaw and W.E. Nesfield were inspired to create designs which eventually evolved into the "Queen Anne" style. The style was introduced in America in the 1870s where it acquired elements of both the vernacular and the Colonial style but avoided any specific historical accuracy. (3) One of the earliest American exponents of the style, Henry Hudson Holly, introduced his interpretation in Harpers Monthly in 1877 and, in the next year, in a pattern book, Modern Dwellings. (4) The Queen Anne style quickly achieved great popularity in the United States, due in large part to the publicity it received in both pattern books as well as such publications as The American Architect and Building News, the nation's first architectural magazine. (5)

The characteristic large chimneys, irregular plan and silhouette, and textured surface treatment of the Queen Anne style were introduced in Shaw's English designs. The American interpretations of the style by Holly and subsequent proponents, such as George and Charles Palliser and Robert W. Shoppell, were more irregular than their English antecedents and aspired to a more exaggerated, artistic effect. Among those elements emphasized by the American Queen Anne were carved decorations in gable ends and over windows and, later, the tower and balcony. (6) Shingle-covered walls also came to be commonly used on American Queen Anne houses and formed the basis of a divergent development known as the "Shingle Style." However, the shingle-style variant on the Queen Anne never really became a clearly separate movement in Alabama. (7) Although contemptuous of what he termed "'the Queen Anne' fever," architect John Wellborn Root offered a contemporary description of the application of the elements which characterized the style. The Queen Anne house, Root explained, was

"adorned...with all sorts of 'ornamental' devices in woodwork---open work scrolls under and above its gables, jigsawed crestings in its ridges, and wonderful frostings and finials on its gables. The architraves about its windows were no longer content to be of simple boards, but were decorated by rosettes, star-shaped ornaments, and all directions...The verandas of these houses offered best opportunity for such display, and here jigsawed railings and curiously turned or chamfered fronts... (8)

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Originally introduced in the eastern states, the style quickly spread to other parts of the country. Despite the scorn of professional journals, the Queen Anne style was the dominant style of domestic building from the 1880s to approximately 1910. (9) In small towns, especially, the style was eagerly embraced by large sections of the American middle classes and was the enthusiastic choice of merchants and members of the professional establishment, such as physicians and bankers. In Alabama, the popularity of the Queen Anne style also coincided with a period of economic boom in the late 1880s and early 1890s. The Judge Robinson House embodied this prosperity, as well as the prominence of the original owner.

1 Richard Cawthon, "Victorian Queen Anne Architecture in Mississippi," unpublished manuscript, January 1991, page 1.

2 Cawthon, page 2.

3 Sadayoshi Omoto, "The Queen Anne Style and Architectural Criticism," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historian (March 23, 1964), page 29.

4 Omoto, pages 29 and 33.

5 Cawthon, page 2.

6 Omoto, pages 29 and 33.

7 Robert Gamble, The Alabama Catalog: Historic American Buildings Survey, A Guide to the Early Architecture of the State (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1987), page 123.

8 John Welborn Root, "The City House in the West," Scribner's Magazine (October 8, 1890), page 418.

9 Mark Girouard, Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement, 1860-1900 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pages 208-215.

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Cawthon, Richard, "Victorian Queen Anne Architecture in Mississippi,"  
unpublished manuscript, January 1991.

Crowe, Mattie Lou. The History of St. Clair County. n.d.

Gamble, Robert, The Alabama Catalog: Historic American Buildings Survey, A  
Guide to the Early Architecture of the State. (Tuscaloosa, Alabama:  
University of Alabama Press, 1987.

Girouard, Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement, 1860-1900. Oxford:  
Oxford University Press, 1977.

Omoto, Sadayoshi, "The Queen Anne Style and Architectural Criticism," Journal  
of the Society of Architectural Historian, March 23, 1964.

Root, John Welborn, "The City House in the West," Scribner's Magazine.  
October 8, 1890.

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Continuation SheetSection number 10 Page 1LEGAL DESCRIPTION FOR JUDGE ROBINSON HOUSE  
(ALSO KNOWN AS THE MONTGOMERY HOUSE OR THE RITCHIE HOUSE)

Begin at a point on the Westerly right-of-way line of U.S. Highway 231 and 411 at the intersection of the Southerly line of the Judge Robinson House (also known as the Montgomery/Ritchie House) property and the North line of the Lorene M. and R.E. Jones property, as recorded in Deed Book 144, Page 88, and run S 86° 58' 36" W along the North line of the Jones property and the Southerly line of the Judge Robinson House property a distance of 374.23 feet; thence deflect left and run S 4° 23' 35" E along the West line of the Jones property and Easterly line of the Judge Robinson House property a distance of 267.6 feet; thence deflect right and run S 82° 07' 49" W along an old fence which is the apparent possession line between the Judge Robinson House property and the E. Lonnergan property a distance of 610.0 feet; thence deflect right and run N 10° 10' 49" W along the apparent possession line between the Ashville Cemetery and the Judge Robinson House property a distance of 134.44 feet; thence deflect right and run N 86° 36' 06" E along an existing fence and hedgerow a distance of 828.34 feet; thence deflect left and run N 3° 11' 45" W along an existing hedgerow a distance of 40.73 feet; thence deflect right and run N 87° 57' E along an existing hedgerow a distance of 92.58 feet to a point on the Westerly right-of-way line of U.S. Highway 231 and 411; thence deflect right and run Southerly along the Westerly right-of-way line of U.S. 231 and 411 having a curve to the right a distance of 330.21 feet measured along the chord of said curve having a bearing of S 2° 14' 34" E to the point of beginning.

Said parcel of land being a portion of the NE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 and the SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4, Section 7, T-14-S, R-4-E, lying and being in Ashville, St. Clair County, Alabama, and containing 11.14 acres, more or less.



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The following information applies to all of the photographs:

- 1) Judge Elisha J. Robinson House
- 2) Hwy. 231 South, Ashville, Alabama (St. Clair County)
- 3) Gerald A. Sparks, Photographer
- 4) March 1991
- 5) Negatives: Alabama Historical Commission

- Photograph #1: Front Facade, Looking West
- Photograph #2: Front and Side Facades, Looking Northwest
- Photograph #3: View of Upstairs Balcony, Looking North
- Photograph #4: Side Facade, Looking South
- Photograph #5: View of Porch, Looking North
- Photograph #6: Rear Facade, Looking East
- Photograph #7: View of Backyard including Garage, Looking West
- Photograph #8: View of Garage, Looking West
- Photograph #9: Interior, View of Stained Glass Window
- Photograph #10: Interior, View of Etched and Stained Glass Window
- Photograph #11: Interior, View of Sitting Area in Bedroom
- Photograph #12: Interior, View of Bedroom
- Photograph #13: Interior, View of Entrance Hall
- Photograph #14: Interior, View of Bedroom
- Photograph #15: Interior, View of Bedroom