

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Dr. Robert Battey House

and/or common Battey House

**2. Location**

street & number 725 East Second Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Rome

N/A vicinity of

congressional district 7th - Larry McDonald

state Georgia

code 013

county Floyd

code 115

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Ernest J. Rudert and Company, C.P.A. (Edward H. and Robert E. Rudert)

street & number 725 East Second Street

city, town Rome

N/A vicinity of

state Georgia 30161

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Floyd County Courthouse

city, town Rome

state Georgia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Historic Structures Field Survey:  
Floyd County, Georgia

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1977

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta

state Georgia

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved    date 1974

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Dr. Robert Battey House, built in 1851, is a Gothic Revival cottage located on a corner lot in a late-nineteenth-century residential area just south of the Etowah River in Rome, Georgia.

The Battey house is one and a half stories high and L-shaped in plan. A one-story ell, dating from about 1870, projects from the rear of the house, and a recently reconstructed L-shaped front porch is fitted into the angle between the two main wings of the house. The roof over the main house consists of two steeply pitched intersecting gables. The structure of the house consists of a heavy timber frame resting on a brick foundation. This timber frame is sheathed with vertical board-and-batten siding. Double-hung sash windows are paired under wood drip moldings on the first floor and in the southeast gable of the second floor. A bay window projects from the ground-floor level of the southeast wing. Two dormer windows on the northwest side of the house, a dormer window to the rear, and a small hooded rectangular window in the southeast gable complete the fenestration. The main cornices are boxed with soffit and fascia boards and are returned at the gables. Single sawn brackets are evenly spaced under the eaves. A wood watertable molding runs around the base of the house just above the foundation.

The interior of the Battey house has been altered during recent rehabilitation, but still maintains its essential arrangement and details. The plan of the house is organized around an original central hall at the intersection of the gabled wings. This hall contains an original semicircular stairway with a walnut railing. To the left (northwest) of the hall are three rooms; to the right (southeast) is one room; and to the rear (northeast) is the ell with its several rooms. Upstairs spaces are similarly arranged. The walls throughout the house were originally plastered on hand-split lath but are now sheetrocked and painted or papered. Original paneled wainscoting is found in the hallway, in the bay window, and under the paired sash windows. Doorways and windows are surrounded by original filleted walnut moldings intersecting at patera blocks. Fireplaces, which are not functional, incorporate original walnut mantels. The original plaster ceilings, torn out before rehabilitation began, have been replaced by dropped acoustical panels.

The Battey house is situated on a corner lot. The front yard is informally landscaped with lawn, shrubbery, sidewalks, and several large historic deciduous trees. Part of the rear yard has been paved for a parking lot. Late-nineteenth-century residences on informally landscaped lots surround the Battey house. Several of these houses, like the Battey house, have been converted recently to commercial uses.

The Battey house was originally built on a corner lot at the intersection of First Avenue and East Fourth Street, in a mid- to late-nineteenth-century

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Description

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residential neighborhood, several block northwest of its current location. In 1974, the house was moved from its original setting to its current location by the Rome Area Heritage Foundation and the Floyd-Polk-Chattooga Medical Society Auxiliary to prevent its demolition for new commercial development. When plans to convert the house into a medical museum did not materialize, the Rome Area Heritage Foundation put the property up for sale, and early in 1979 it was purchased for commercial rehabilitation by the current owner-occupant.

During the summer and fall of 1979, the current property owner rehabilitated the Battey house for commercial use. This rehabilitation was carried out according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. On April 10, 1980, the Acting Keeper of the National Register issued a preliminary certification of significance for the Battey house, and on April 29, 1980, Technical Preservation Services certified the rehabilitation. The exterior of the main house was preserved virtually in its original condition; the only changes involved a new asphalt shingle roof, a new window added in the center of the northwest ground-floor wall, and a rear second-story fire escape. The porch had been reconstructed along its original lines before rehabilitation occurred. The interior of the house had been largely gutted before rehabilitation; new sheetrocked portions and a dropped ceiling were installed, and surviving millwork, including window and doorway surrounds, mantels, and the stairway, was preserved. The rear ell was extended approximately ten feet and the space within reorganized into offices.

The nominated property coincides with the current legal description of the property to which the house was moved in 1974. This property constitutes an intact city lot in a late-nineteenth-century residential neighborhood.

Photographs

The Historic Preservation Section has determined that the photographs taken in September, 1980 still provide an accurate view of the property. No significant changes have been made since this date.

## 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) medicine

**Specific dates** 1851 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Dr. Robert Battey house is architecturally significant as a relatively rare example of the antebellum Gothic Revival style of residential architecture in Georgia and historically significant as the home of Dr. Robert Battey, a pioneer in the field of modern gynecological medicine.

### Architectural Significance

The Battey house is architecturally significant as a fine example of the mid-nineteenth-century Gothic Revival cottage. The exterior of the house features nearly every important characteristic of the Gothic Revival style. These features include the irregular massing of the house, its pronounced vertical proportions and steep gable roofs, board-and-batten siding with molded battens, bracketed cornices, a bay window, and drip moldings over the paired sash windows. The interior, although altered through recent rehabilitation, preserves the original asymmetric floor plan, the semicircular stairway, and much of the original walnut woodwork. The reconstructed front porch maintains the character and appearance of the original.

The Battey house is clearly patterned after the Romantic designs of Andrew Jackson Downing, America's foremost landscape gardener and a leading architectural critic at the middle of the nineteenth century. The designer of the house, or the source of the design, and the builder have not been identified, however. Downing's published works were circulated in Georgia at mid-century, of course, and Downing's architectural aesthetic and rural ethic were championed in the 1850s by the Southern Cultivator, published in Augusta, Georgia, by Dennis Redmond.

The Battey house is also a relatively rare and well-executed antebellum example of Downing's Gothic Revival or Bracketed style in Georgia. Georgia's antebellum residential architecture is characterized by plain-style or Greek Revival traditions; picturesque or eclectic designs are unusual until much later in the nineteenth century. Of interest is the fact that Gothic Revival designs seem to have been more popular in cities and towns in north Georgia (like Rome) than in the Greek Revival-dominated plantation belt across middle and south Georgia.

[continued]

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1/3 acre app.

Quadrangle name Rome South, Ga.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Boundary is described by a heavy black line on the attached "property/sketch" map and is justified in Section 7 of this form.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
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state		code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Cloues, Architectural Historian

Historic Preservation Section

organization Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources date December 11, 1980

street & number 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone (404) 656-2840

city or town Atlanta state Georgia

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service,

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon

Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4/21/82

### For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 6/17/82

Shelous Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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The architectural integrity of the Battey house, especially the exterior, has not been compromised by the structure's recent relocation and rehabilitation. Relocation, in fact, saved the structure from demolition, and rehabilitation has preserved the original exterior features. The new site, an informally landscaped corner lot in a nineteenth-century residential neighborhood, is compatible with the original site and with the architectural design of the house.

Historic Significance

The Battey house is historically significant as the home of Dr. Robert Battey (1828-1895), a world-renowned pioneer in the field of gynecological medicine, famous for his development of procedures for "Battey's Operation," or the hysterectomy, in 1872. Although this historical association has been lessened somewhat by the recent relocation of the house, the house remains as the only surviving building in the Rome area associated with Dr. Battey.

Robert Battey was born in Augusta, Georgia. His early formal education was received at Richmond Academy in Augusta and Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. After traveling to Michigan, he moved to Rome, Georgia, in 1847, where he worked as a clerk in a local drugstore. By 1849 he owned his own successful drugstore business in Rome, and in 1851 he built his residence, not far from downtown. Between 1855 and 1857 he studied medicine and pharmacology at James C. Booth's School of Analytical Chemistry, the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, Jefferson Medical College, and the University of Pennsylvania, all located in Philadelphia. He then returned to Rome, where he continued his pharmaceutical business and practiced medicine. In 1858, he performed an operation for vesico-vaginal fistula, and as a result was invited to address the Obstetrical Society of London in 1859. During this time, he also served as the vice president of the American Pharmaceutical Association Convention in Boston.

The Civil War interrupted Battey's medical career. For four years he served as a medical officer and surgeon in the Confederate army. At the end of the war he returned to Rome where he founded the Martha Battey Hospital, named in honor of his wife and surgical assistant.

Battey's professional reputation rests largely upon what is known as "Battey's Operation," or the hysterectomy, which he described as "an operation for the removal of the normal human ovaries, with a view to establish at once the 'change of life,' for the effectual remedy of certain otherwise incurable maladies." Battey first performed this operation in Rome on August 17, 1872. During the next three years, he served as professor of obstetrics

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at the Atlanta Medical College and edited the Atlanta Medical and Surgical Journal. In 1876, he was elected president of the Georgia Medical Association. He continued his surgical inventions in Rome and Atlanta, developing a surgical treatment known as perineal cystotomy and introducing iodized phenol as a drug of value in gynecological operations. He served on numerous medical advisory boards and societies, and he published the results of his surgical experiments in leading regional medical periodicals. Although much of the reasoning upon which many of his operations was based has since been recognized as unsound, his pioneering investigations and surgical experiments contributed significantly to the development of modern gynecological medicine.

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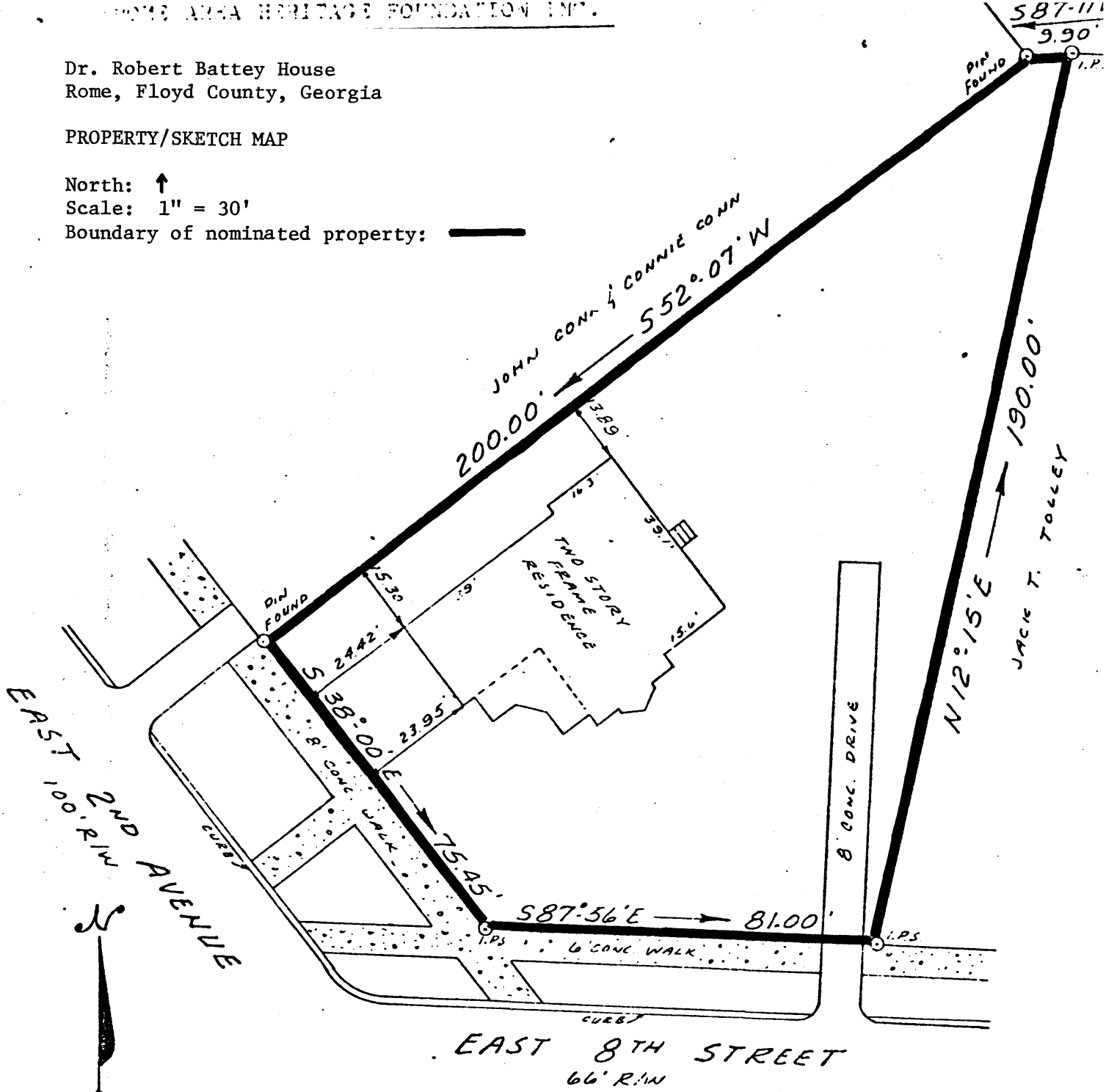
Dr. Robert Battey House  
Rome, Floyd County, Georgia

PROPERTY/SKETCH MAP

North: ↑

Scale: 1" = 30'

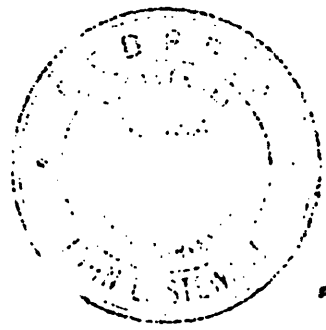
Boundary of nominated property: ———



N

MAGNETIC

SCALE 1" = 30'  
OCTOBER 2, 1978



This map was prepared by the undersigned in accordance with the standards and requirements of the International Standards and Requirements of the

John L. Stewart

SURVEY 1048