

PH 0020125

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	ALABAMA	
COUNTY:	BARBOUR	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
JAN 21 1974		

1. NAME

COMMON:

(Octagon House)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

Petty-Roberts-Beatty House

*use both names*

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

103 North Midway

CITY OR TOWN:

Clayton

STATE

Alabama

CODE

01

COUNTY:

Barbour

CODE

005

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Mrs. W. C. Beatty

STREET AND NUMBER:

103 North Midway

CITY OR TOWN:

Clayton

STATE:

Alabama

CODE

01

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:

Barbour County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Clayton

STATE

Alabama

CODE

01

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

None

DATE OF SURVEY:

Federal  State  County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

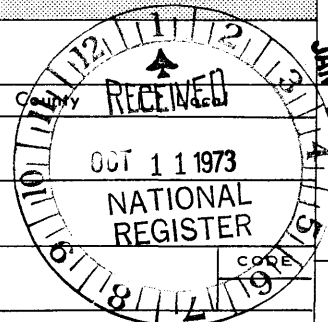
STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Octagon House in Clayton is a two-story structure with an octagonal cupola.

The house has eight equilateral sides. The exterior walls are one-foot thick. They were made by building a wooden frame and filling the frame with brick, stone, and mortar and removing the frame. This was the gravel wall that Orson Squire Fowler had written about in his book describing the benefits of octagonal structures.

On each of the main stories, there are four large rooms and four small triangular shaped rooms. Originally, a staircase in the center of the building rose from the basement to the cupola. The staircase was removed and the stairs built outside when the upstairs was converted into an apartment. There are three large rooms and two small rooms and a hallway in the basement. Three bedrooms, a parlor on the first floor, and four bedrooms on the second complete the arrangement of the rooms. At present there are self-contained apartments on each floor.

Originally, there was a small one-story porch encircling the house. This was removed and the present deeper two-story porch was built in the 1920's. The porch now extends across three walls on the first floor and across two walls on the second floor. On the first floor, 16 small wooden octagonally shaped columns on brick bases support the upper porch and roof. On the second floor, ten similar columns on wood bases support the roof. The second story is reached by an outside stairway that is U-shaped. The stairway has simple rectangular balusters which are identical to the balustrade on the second floor porch.

The house has plain wooden cornices and a flat roof. The projecting cornices are supported by elaborately carved modillions.

Above the flat roof there is an octagonally shaped cupola. On four sides there are windows and centered on the four other sides are chimneys. The cupola has a projecting cornice and a flat roof. The four chimneys rise several feet above the top of the roof.

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1861

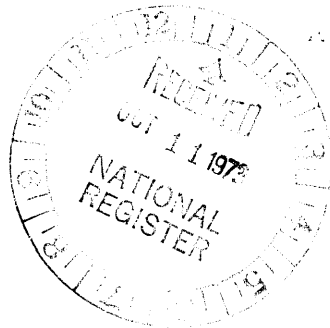
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |  |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |                                      |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The primary significance of the octagonal house in Clayton is its relative architectural uniqueness. Only two known examples of the octagonal mode of architecture have survived in Alabama. Most octagonal houses in the United States were built between 1848 and 1860 following the publication in 1848 of A Home for All or the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building, New Cheap, Convenient, Superior and Adapted to Rich and Poor by Orson Squire Fowler, a noted phrenologist and author of books on marriage and sexual science.

The octagonal house in Clayton was built by B. F. Petty in 1861. It is believed that Mr. Petty had seen a similar home in New York and modeled his home after it. Petty lived in this home until 1876 when he died, however, his family continued to live there until 1901 when they sold the house to Judge B. T. Roberts. The house was used as a headquarters for the Union forces after they captured Clayton in the Civil War. Following Judge Roberts' death, his son-in-law, W. C. Beatty, bought the house. His widow still lives in the house on the first floor. The second floor has been made into an apartment.



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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Barbour County Records, Courthouse, Clayton, Alabama  
 Fowler, O. S., A Home for All or the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building, New York: Fowler and Wells, 1854.  
 Manuscript Material in possessions of W. O. Carraway, Clayton, Alabama.  
 Rounds, R. M., Octagon Buildings in New York States, Cooperstown, N.Y., New York State Historical Association, 1954.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

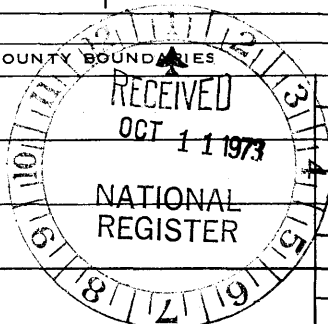
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		31 0 52 . 43 .	85 0 26 ' 58 "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

less than 1

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: Alabama Historical Commission DATE: October 2, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery, STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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:

National  State  Local

Name Milo B. Howard, Jr.

Title SPHO - Ala.

Date October 4, 1973

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

A. R. Mace  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 11/21/74

ATTEST:  
Ronald M. Greenberg  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 11/16/74