

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 17 1977
DATE ENTERED	SEP 22 1977

**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

Legare.- Morgan House

AND/OR COMMON

Morgan Cottage, Legare House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

241 Lauren Street, S.W.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Aiken

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3

VICINITY OF

STATE

South Carolina

CODE

045

COUNTY

Aiken

CODE

003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mrs. Catherine Morgan Arbuthnott

STREET & NUMBER

241 Laurens Street, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Aiken

STATE

South Carolina 21801

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Aiken County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Park Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Aiken

STATE

South Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina

DATE

1973 (update)

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

South Carolina Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN

Columbia

STATE

South Carolina

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Legare House is a small, one-story clapboard structure located in Aiken, South Carolina. The oldest portion of the structure--consisting of three rooms--was probably built before 1837 as evidenced by a deed of that time which conveys the property "consisting of Houses and Lot...."¹ Located to the left is a wing consisting of two rooms. This wing was built ca. 1850 by James Mathewes Legare as a studio. Originally a separate building, it was later moved to adjoin the house. Around 1900 to 1910 a balancing wing was added to the right side of the structure. Recently other alterations and additions have been made to the rear: the porch was enclosed and an addition was made to the left side.

The front facade is defined by a projecting central section flanked by balancing wings. This central section is the original configuration of the house and is distinguished by large 6/6 windows, clapboard siding, a gabled roof, exterior chimneys with corbeled caps, and a pedimented portico. The front door is presently of singular configuration, but was probably altered ca. 1900 when the north wing was added. The porch was apparently altered at the same time. The wings on either side of this projecting bay each have two windows along the front. All of these windows--except those of the original studio--are 6/6 with louvered shutters. Those of the studio are 4/8 and open as French doors.

The rear elevation reveals further alterations which have been made. A porch which apparently ran the length of the structure has been enclosed, and a wing, which extends perpendicular to the porch, has been added to the left end of the structure.

Interior: The oldest portion of the structure consists of a dining room, parlor, and another large room (now used as a studio apartment). To the right is a wing consisting of a kitchen and hall which was added ca. 1900 to 1910. To the left is the wing consisting of two rooms, originally constructed as a separate studio. In this studio there are several examples of the artwork of James M. Legare. There are three panel paintings and a decorative molding over the fireplace made of plastic cotton--a hard, synthetic material Legare patented.

All of these rooms (except the kitchen area) have heart pine floors and plaster walls. The ceilings are approximately twelve feet high and have simple cornices. The mantels are simple.

Located at the rear of the structure are the enclosed porch and recent addition.

Surroundings: The property consists of approximately two acres. Located to the rear are a stable and a later structure which have been converted into apartments.

¹ South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Barnwell County Deeds, Book V, p. 447.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Legare House is a small clapboard structure located in Aiken, South Carolina, the oldest portion of which was probably built ca. 1835. Between ca. 1850 and 1859 it was the home of James Mathewes Legare--noted artist, poet, and inventor.

In 1837 Thomas Legare, Sr., of Charleston purchased the property "consisting of Houses and Lot" on Laurens Street in Aiken, South Carolina.¹ Legare owned the property until his death, at which time it was inherited by his children. In 1847 Solomon Legare, his son, purchased full rights to the property from his siblings. Three years later he gave it in trust to Mary Legare, wife of John D. Legare of Charleston. It was this family (and primarily James M. Legare) for whom the structure became recognized.

It was in the field of literature that James M. Legare (1823-1859) was most widely known. In 1848 he published Orta Undis, and Other Poems, and he contributed both poetry and prose to periodicals. In 1850 the editors of Graham's Magazine wrote: "We hope soon to lay before our readers a series of articles from his pen, which place Mr. Legare in the front of the contributors to Graham."² Legare's work also appeared in the Knickerbocker Magazine, a nationally-read periodical; and he was a contributing author to the Knickerbocker Gallery, an 1855 tribute to the magazine's editor.

Further supporting evidence of Legare's reputation as a writer is found in his correspondence with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. In 1849 Legare wrote Longfellow who responded: "Let me assure you, I already knew you. I have long possessed and highly prized your volume of Poems, so full of tenderness and 'the dew of youth.'"³

Other tributes to Legare's work were to come posthumously. After Legare's death, William Gilmore Simms wrote his family requesting biographical data for a sketch he intended to write. (An 1861 article in the Charleston Mercury--a portion of which is devoted to Legare's life--is attributed to Simms.)

In 1906 several of Legare's poems appeared in An American Anthology, edited by Edmund Clarence Stedman; while Jay B. Hubbell's 1954 edition of The South in American Literature⁴ claims "James Mathewes Legare was one of the best Southern poets of his time...." Several of Legare's poems also appear in A Tricentennial Anthology of
(continued)

1. S. C. Department of Archives and History, Barnwell County Deeds, Book V, p. 447.

2. Curtis Carroll Davis, That Ambitious Mr. Legare (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), p. 94, taken from Editor's Table, Graham's Magazine, XXXVI (June 1850), 418.

3. Davis, p. 54.

4. Jay B. Hubbell, The South in American Literature (Durham: Duke University Press, 1954), p. 559.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Calhoun, R. J., and Guilds, J.C., eds. A Tricentennial Anthology of South Carolina Literature 1670-1970. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971.

Davis, Curtis Carroll. That Ambitious Mr. Legare. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	17	432710	37131020
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

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 (Leslie Garnett and Susan Dudley, Lower Savannah Regional Council of Government)

NAME / TITLE

Kappy McNulty

ORGANIZATION

South Carolina Department of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 11,669 Capitol Station

CITY OR TOWN

Columbia

DATE

August 25, 1976

TELEPHONE

803-758-5816

STATE

South Carolina

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

Charles E. Lee

TITLE Charles E. Lee
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

12-6-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles E. Lee
 DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: *Anthony Cole*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9.22.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9.22.77

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE ONE

South Carolina Literature 1670-1970.

Legare was also an imaginative inventor and artist. One of his inventions, plastic cotton, could be molded into furniture, frames and decorative moldings. (Legare received two patents on his inventions) Unfortunately, failing health prevented him from pursuing these developments.

Legare's paintings were primarily of landscape and genre scenes. In 1856 he entered examples of both his inventions and art in the Institute Fair in Charleston. Here Legare was awarded a gold medal for his plastic cotton, while several of his paintings were also recognized. The News and Courier commended Legare's paintings and noted of one: "'Kids in the Cornfield,' a rural scene, by the same artist, is regarded by practiced eyes as exquisite in conception and well delineated."⁵

Located in the rooms which were originally Legare's studio are examples of both his painting and inventions. Two painted panels flank the folding entrance door, while a third is on an adjoining wall. Depictions of landscape and animals, these paintings have darkened over the years. Above the fireplace is a decorative molding made of "plastic cotton," the hard, plastic-type material which he invented. In the hall there is also a book shelf of plastic cotton which Legare made.

Legare died in 1859. In 1870 his family sold the property on Laurens Street to Thomas C. Morgan. Descendants of Mr. Morgan continue to occupy the structure today.

5. "Walk Around the Gallery of Paintings," Charleston News and Courier, November 26, 1856, p. 1.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE TWO

Hubbell, Jay B. The South in American Literature 1607-1900. Durham: Duke University Press, 1954.

"Legare, James Matthews [sic]. National Cyclopedia of American Biography, Vol. XII. New York: James T. White, 1904.

Teague, Elizabeth C. "James Mathewes Legare-Poet-Artist-Scientist. South Carolina Magazine, May 1954, pp. 12-13.

"The Institute Fair." Charleston News and Courier, November 26, 1856, p. 1, col. 1.

"Plastic-Cotton Furniture: A Local Product." Charleston News and Courier, June 28, 1971.

"Report of Premiums and Awards by the Board of Directors of the South Carolina Institute." Charleston News and Courier, December 5, 1856, p. 1, col. 3.

"Walk Around the Gallery of Paintings." Charleston News and Courier, November 26, 1856, p. 1, col. 2.

South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Barnwell County Deeds. Vol. V, p. 446.

Barnwell County Deeds, Vol. DD, pp. 296-297.

Barnwell County Deeds. Vol. YY, p. 69.

South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Charleston Wills. Book 43, pp. 469-472.