

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Winter Place  
other names/site number Winter House; Thorington House

2. Location

street & number 454 S. Goldthwaite St (NW corner Goldthwaite and Mildred Sts.) not for publication N/A  
city or town Montgomery vicinity N/A  
state Alabama code AL county Montgomery code 101 zip code 36104

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] April 11, 2006  
Signature of certifying official Date

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 for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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):

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Edson H. Beall 5-31-06

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Property Name Winter Place  
County and State Montgomery, Alabama

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)	Category of Property (Check only one box.)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>5</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>5</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

Vacant/Not in Use

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Italianate  
Late Victorian/Second Empire

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation brick

Roof wood

Walls stucco

Other brick

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

Property Name Winter Place  
County and State Montgomery, Alabama

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**8. Statement of Significance**  
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**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

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

**Period of Significance** c.1860 - 70

**Significant Dates** c. 1860; c. 1870

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** N/A

**Architect/Builder** N/A

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**  
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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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
- Name of repository \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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**Acreage of Property** approx 1.5

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	564380	3581590	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**  
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name/title Hank Johnson, Intern (w/Melanie Betz, AHC)  
organization Alabama Historical Commission date: November 10, 2005  
street & number 468 S. Perry Street telephone: 334/242-3184  
city or town Montgomery state Alabama zip code 36130

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**Additional Documentation**  
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
**Property Owner**  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Craig Drescher  
street & number 543 Clay St. telephone 294-3690  
city or town Montgomery state AL zip code 36104

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1  
(Description)

Name of Property: Winter Place  
County and State: Montgomery, Alabama

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Situating on a large wooded lot at the corner of South Goldthwaite and Mildred Streets, Winter Place (also known as the Winter-Thorington Homes) in Montgomery, Alabama, is a complex comprised of two dwellings connected by a one-story, five-bay passageway. These stucco-over-brick houses, each resting on a brick foundation, are characterized by Italianate and Second Empire stylistic elements. Three brick dependencies, originally used as slave dwellings, are located behind the houses (all contributing resources). All of the structures have retained a high level of integrity despite deterioration. A brick wall once surrounded the property although only a small section along the southern edge is still visible. Winter Place is located in an area that at one time was one of the city's most desirable and prosperous neighborhoods during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Only a handful of the early structures survive today including the McBryde-Screws-Tyson House, a two-story, frame Greek Revival dwelling constructed around 1854, and the ca.1887 Carpenter Gothic-style Episcopal Church of the Holy Comforter.

**South House**

When it was first constructed during the late 1850's, the south house probably resembled a symmetrical Italianate dwelling that was fashionable during the time. However, family lore has it that the house was remodeled around 1870 in order to transform it into an asymmetrical Italian Villa-style house. The front façade was expanded with a corner tower crowned by a Mansard roof. This roof displays circular windows, wooden fish-scale shingles, and paired brackets beneath its overhanging eaves. Family lore suggests that this projecting portion of the house and the house's tower represent a post-bellum addition.<sup>1</sup>

Fenestration on the first level of the east (front) side of the south house includes 4/4 sash double-hung (floor to ceiling) rectangular windows and one 6/6 double-hung window is positioned centrally on the northern half of the house's east facade. On the first floor of the south facade of the house, rectangular 4/4 double-hung windows are located on either side of the southeastern-most room's chimney. Below, a pair of windows corresponding in position to these windows beneath the house's southeastern-most room. Elsewhere on the first floor of the south facade, one small double-hung window is also situated at the eastern end of the ell and south house. The eastern-most room on the first floor of the north facade is lit by two windows, and each of the three rooms in the house's ell is lit on its north facade by a single window.

Second-story fenestration includes round-headed casement windows with moveable-louver exterior shutters. Four casement windows are also located on both the north and south facades of the house's second story. The casement portion of these windows contains four panes, while rounded lights above the casements are variously divided into two and four panes. The northern section of the house's east or front facade is one bay in width and 2 stories in height. A three room ell is appended to the west side of the house. While the easternmost room of the ell is one and one half stories in height and is original to the house, the two western rooms are one story in height and were added to the house during the twentieth century. The west wall and portions of the north wall of the westernmost room of the house's ell are constructed of wood with wood siding rather than brick.

The central roof is broken by four interior brick chimneys: one is located on the southern wall of the house's southern most room; one is located on the western wall of a central room on the south side of the house; one is located on the western wall of a central room on the north side of the house; and one is located along the western wall in the largest room of the ell on the house's rear or west side.

<sup>1</sup> Recollection of Winter Thorington, 5 August 2005.

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The south house has three porches including a one-story, L-shaped porch supported by 8 columns, surrounds the northern half of the house's east facade. A separate 1-story porch, supported by 4 columns covers approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the width of the southern half of the house's east facade. An additional 1-story porch, supported by 5 columns, is situated on the house's south facade. At its eastern end, this porch terminates at the western wall of the house's southeastern-most room, which projects outwards from the rest of the structure. The porches rest on brick foundations and have wooden flooring and metal-clad wooden roofing. Their diamond-patterned balustrades are wooden, as are their chamfered columnettes and the saw-work arched brackets between the columnettes. Brick staircases lead to doorways on the northern and southern sides of the house's ell.

The round-headed, wooden double front door faces east, is located beneath the house's tower, and contains six molded panels; each door contains, from top to bottom, an elliptical panel, a shield-shaped panel, and a hexagonal panel. This door provides access to the house's vestibule, and a pair of double doors located on the house's north facade lead into the same vestibule. Access to the porch on the house's south side is provided by an eight-paned casement window; this window is flanked by full-length, four-pane sidelights. Exterior doorways are also located on the north and south sides of the house's asymmetrical rear ell. On the west side of the house, an exterior door provides access to a small room abutting the passage that links the North and South Houses.

The east, south, and north facades of the South House are embellished with decorative stucco elements. Vertical strips of stucco are situated at the sides and center of the southern half of the house's east facade, and a stucco string course runs immediately beneath the eaves of its mansard roof. The house's tower windows are located in indentations established by a stucco string course that intersects the vertical strips of stucco situated at the tower's corners. The central portion of the tower's string course is embellished with a course of raised stucco dentils. The northern half of the house's east facade is decorated with corbelled belt and string courses, and the southern facade of the house is also embellished with a corbelled belt course. The west or rear face of the house is not covered in stucco and is unadorned.

The floorplan of the South House is asymmetrical with spacious rooms and thirteen feet ceilings. The house's east or front doorway leads to a vestibule with a stair hall located immediately behind it. The front parlor, which is located on the south side of the vestibule, projects southward from the rest of the structure. (As noted above, family tradition suggests that the southeastern-most room, vestibule and front porches, along with the second-story rooms above these spaces, represent a post-bellum addition to the house.<sup>2</sup>) A stair hall is located immediately behind the vestibule and is separated by a doorway surmounted by a transom; the stair hall is flanked on its south and north sides by rooms of equal size. The southernmost of these two rooms (the so-called "rear parlor") is connected to the "front parlor" by a pair of pocket doors. Doors located in the western walls of both the "rear parlor" and the stair hall connect these rooms to a small cross-hall. Small rooms are located at both the southern and northern ends of this cross hall; the northernmost of these rooms abuts the passageway linking the North and South Houses of Winter Place and provides exterior access through a door on the west facade of the house. The cross hall connects the main body of the house with a three-room ell; the ell consists of one large room with two smaller rooms located behind. The largest of the three rooms was used as a dining room. The easternmost of the two smaller rooms was used as a breakfast room, while the western room was used as a kitchen; both rooms were added to the house early in the twentieth century.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

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Name of Property: Winter Place

County and State: Montgomery County, Alabama

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A single-turn staircase connects the first and second floor of the house. Circa 1960, the house's current owner erected a wall and a doorway at the top of the staircase. Like the first floor of the house, the second floor consists of a stair hall and four main rooms, which were historically used as bedrooms. All rooms save that over the rear ell have fireplaces.

Significant decorative elements in the South House include grained metal mantles dating from circa 1870 and brass chandeliers, apparently original to the house, in the main rooms on its first floor. Simple woodwork surrounds the doorways, and most doors contain four fielded panels. The floors are heart pine, four inches in width; rooms are outfitted with baseboards and, in some cases, with chair-rails. During a 1960 renovation, the present owner papered the house's first floor rooms with wallcoverings based on historic patterns and covered the walls in the southeastern-most room on the second floor with pine paneling. Though the South House remains structurally sound, it has suffered considerable damage from a series of hurricanes. Water damage is visible in the house's interior, and portions of the building are covered by vegetation.

**Enclosed Brick Passageway (c. 1870)**

The North and South Houses at Winter Place are connected by an enclosed brick passageway. The east or front facade of the passageway is covered in stucco; pilasters, topped with simple square capitals, are located in the center and at either end of the passageway. Two parallel courses of decorative corbelling, identical to those found on both the North and South Houses, run across the passageway above its windows. The west facade of the passageway is not covered in stucco. A porch supported by five fluted piers extends across the west facade, and a stairway beneath the porch provides access to the North House's basement. Two round-headed windows are located on the east front of the passage, while four round-headed, shuttered windows are located on the passage's west front. A centrally positioned door surmounted by a semi-elliptical transom is located on the west facade of the passageway.

**North House (c. 1860)**

Crowned with a low-pitched hipped roof, the North House is rectangular in shape, with a one-story, one-room ell extending from its west or rear façade. Rectangular in shape, the north house is two-stories in height with a raised basement. A one-story, one room ell abuts the structure on its west or rear facade. A dry moat, and an underground tunnel, entered from the western end of the moat, extends northward from the house. The house's very low-pitched roof, which is covered in decking, was at one time surmounted by a centrally positioned cupola with a Mansard roof. The roof is broken by four interior chimneys: one rises from the western wall of the house's rear ell, and, in the house's main section, chimneys are positioned on the western wall of the northwest room, the northern wall of the northeast room, and the western wall of the small southeastern-most room.

Three porches, two of which have been lost, were once attached to the house. The one-story wooden porch that extended across the central and eastern portions of the house's east facade has been replaced by a concrete stairway with iron banisters. A one-story wooden porch was also situated on the house's south facade, extending approximately three-quarters of the distance from the passageway that links the North and South Houses of Winter Place to the house's east or front facade. A still-extant one-story screen porch resting on a brick foundation abuts the north side of the house's ell.

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The apertures on the first floor of the North House's east facade are asymmetrically arranged. A double front door, currently boarded over, is situated south of the center of the facade and is flanked by asymmetrically positioned 6/6 double-hung windows. Fenestration on the second floor of the east facade consists of four symmetrically situated, 6/6 double-hung windows. Both the first and second stories of the house's north facade are lit by four symmetrically arranged, 6/6 double-hung windows, as is the second story of the south facade. The western half of the first story of the house's south facade is lit by two 6/6 double-hung windows, while a double door is situated at the south facade's eastern end. The upper story of the house's west facade is windowless, while fenestration on the attached ell consists of two windows on its west or rear face, one window on its north face, and one window on its south face. A door on the ell's north side provides exterior communication, and a door located on the south side of the ell provides access to the passageway linking the North and South Houses. Access between the dry moat and the raised basement is provided by a door situated immediately beneath the front door on the house's first story; fenestration in the basement consists of a single 6/6 double hung window on the front or east facade, as well as four symmetrically positioned 6/6 double hung windows on the basement's north facade. Many of the windows still retain moveable-louver exterior shutters.

A number of decorative elements rendered in stucco are located on the east, south, and north facades of the North House. The walls of the raised basement are scored in simulation of ashlar. A corbelled belt course separates the first and second stories of the house, and a similar corbelled motif decorates the house's chimneys. Raised vertical strips of stucco are situated at the center and corners of the facades on the first and second floors, breaking the belt course and defining two main sections of each facade in which apertures are situated. A molded stucco string course is situated under the eaves and connects jointlessly with the vertical strips of stucco situated at the center and sides of the facades. Because they are bounded by a belt course, vertical strips of stucco and (on the second floor), a string course, the areas of the facades in which apertures are situated appear slightly recessed. On the first story of the house, the windows are surmounted by rectangular stucco window crowns with central keystones. Although the house's west or rear facade is not covered in stucco, raised areas of brick establish vertical and horizontal divisions similar to those created by stucco on the other facades of the house.

The main section of the North House is two rooms in width and two rooms in depth; a one room, one story ell is appended to the southwest side of the house. Because the house was used for some years as an apartment complex, no doors connect the two east rooms on the first floor of the house to the first floor's western rooms and ell. The large southeasternmost quadrant of the house, which is equal in size to the three other rooms in the main section of the house, has been divided into three smaller spaces: the northern half of this quadrant is a hallway, the southeastern quarter of the quadrant is a vestibule with an exterior door, and the northeastern quarter of the quadrant contains a staircase. Like the eastern rooms of the house, the house's western room and rear ell have been grouped together to form an apartment. An exterior access door is located on the northern side of the ell. The second floor of the house contains five rooms; two rooms are located on the north side of the structure, while the south side consists of a central stair-hall flanked by two rooms. The house's raised basement contains three rooms, three fireplaces, and three wells. The North House is currently uninhabited. The building has suffered extensive damage from a series of hurricanes and is no longer structurally sound. The new owner plans to stabilize this building while restoring the South House.

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**Three Dependencies**

According to the owner's recollection, the three existing dependencies currently situated behind the North and South Houses were once part of a constellation of seven outbuildings.<sup>3</sup> Built during the 1850s, the three remaining brick, hipped-roof outbuildings exhibit a relatively sophisticated level of detailing. Their exterior walls are decorated with a corbelled string course and their doors are heavily moulded and, in some cases, surmounted by transoms. The southernmost dependency has been converted into a garage; 2 pairs of large wooden doors are situated on its south side. The central dependency contains two rooms and a fireplace with a simple mantelpiece. The third dependency is situated west of the north house and also contains two rooms and a fireplace. A number of slaves lived on the property before emancipation, and some continued to live in the houses behind Winter Place following the Civil War.

**Archeological Component**

Although no archaeological survey of the nominated parcel has yet been undertaken, potentially informative subsurface remains are likely present.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

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Name of Property: Winter Place  
County and State: Montgomery County, Alabama

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**Statement of Significance**

Winter Place (also known as the Winter-Thorington House) is significant under Criterion C, architecture, as a notable example of the Italianate and Second Empire styles in Alabama. Constructed shortly before the Civil War, the two houses comprising the Winter Place complex joined a substantial cadre of Alabama structures built in the Italianate style. Italianate architecture was, in fact, so popular in antebellum Montgomery that a newspaper reporter who visited the city in 1861 remarked that almost every house in the Confederate capitol appeared to have been constructed “in the style of the Italian villa.”<sup>4</sup> However, very few of Montgomery’s Italianate buildings have survived, leaving Winter Place a rare example of a once-widespread style. Finished in the Second Empire style some years after the Civil War, Winter Place is additionally important as one of only several surviving examples of Second Empire-inspired domestic architecture in Alabama. The period of significance extends from the approximate date of construction (c. 1860) to the approximate date when the south house was remodeled in the Second Empire style (c. 1870).

**Architectural Context**

The architecture of Winter Place, an amalgamation of the Italianate and Second Empire styles, offers a unique demonstration of shifting architectural tastes in middle and late nineteenth-century America. An outgrowth of the English Picturesque movement, the Italianate style drew inspiration both from vernacular Italian farmhouses and from such Italian Renaissance buildings as the circa 1517-1589 Palazzo Farnese in Rome, designed by Michaelangelo Buonarroti and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger.<sup>5</sup> The style enjoyed enormous popularity in Britain and the United States during the middle decades of the nineteenth century; significant examples of the Italianate style in Britain include Queen Victoria’s Osborne House (1845-1851) on the Isle of Wight, a multi-towered, palazzo-inspired structure designed by Thomas Cubitt (1788-1855) and Prince Albert (1819-1861).<sup>6</sup> Though Italianate houses in the United States tended to be based more heavily upon rural Italian vernacular architecture than upon urban models of the palazzo type, elements derived from both prototypes appeared in American examples of the style.<sup>7</sup> Architectural Historians Virginia and Lee McAlester have differentiated six primary subtypes of Italianate houses in America: the simple hipped roof type, the centered gable type, the asymmetrical type, the towered type (in which the tower is often situated at the intersection of the principal section and wing of an L-shaped house), the front-gabled roof type, and the flat-roofed town house type.<sup>8</sup> Italianate houses are characterized by low-pitched roofs resting on brackets, and their fenestration typically consists of narrow windows, which often terminate at the top in rounded arches.<sup>9</sup> While the earliest examples of Italianate architecture in the United States date from 1830s, the style reached the peak of its popularity in America after 1850. The prominence achieved by the Italianate style may be largely attributed to the wide circulation of such pattern books as Andrew Jackson Downing’s (1815-1852) *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) and Samuel Sloan’s (1815-1884) *The Model Architect* (1852-1853).<sup>10</sup>

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4 Quoted in Robert Gamble, *Historic Architecture in Alabama: A Guide to Styles and Types* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1990), 93.

5 Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 212, and James Stevens Curl, *The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 339.

6 James Stevens Curl, *Victorian Architecture* (Newton Abbot and London: David & Charles, 1990), 88.

7 McAlester and McAlester, 212-213.

8 Ibid, 211.

9 Ibid.

10 Gamble, Ibid.

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As Architectural Historian Robert Gamble points out, the Italianate style, “with its connotations of a warm and sunny landscape[,...]was touted as being peculiarly suited to the South.”<sup>11</sup> Southerners also had practical reasons for adopting the style: Gamble explains that Southerners found the overhanging eaves and verandas typical of Italianate architecture to be highly appropriate to the climate of their region.<sup>12</sup> In light of the perceived affinity between the Italianate style and the climate of the South, it is perhaps unsurprising that Samuel Sloan, a Philadelphia architect who did much to popularize the Italianate style in the United States, counted numerous wealthy Southerners among his clients.<sup>13</sup> A considerable number of buildings in antebellum Alabama are credited or attributed to Sloan: the circa 1851 mansion he designed for Joseph S. P. Winter, the Montgomery businessman who subsequently built Winter Place, may be the earliest example of Italianate domestic architecture in Alabama.<sup>14</sup> Other important Italianate houses in Montgomery include the circa 1860 Garrett-Hatchett House, a symmetrical structure probably designed by Sloan or his partner John Stewart, as well as the now-demolished Seibels-Ball-Lanier House, an asymmetrical towered villa built in the 1850s and possibly designed by Sloan or Stewart.<sup>15</sup> During the 1850s, the newly fashionable Italianate style was also applied to earlier structures. In 1855, after financial reverses compelled Joseph Winter to move from his Sloan-designed villa to the Federal-style, clapboard Fleming Freeman House (circa 1835), Winter added a number of Italianate features to the Freeman House (following the outbreak of the Civil War, the Freeman house served as the Executive Mansion of the Confederacy.)<sup>16</sup> Significant Italianate structures elsewhere in Alabama include such houses as Ten Oaks (circa 1855) in Jacksonville, a symmetrical residence with a centrally-positioned tower based on a design from Sloan’s book *The Model Architect*, and the towered, asymmetrical Kenworthy Hall (circa 1855) near Marion, which was designed either by New York architect Richard Upjohn (1802-1878) or by his son, Richard M. Upjohn (1828-1903).<sup>17</sup> Sloan’s expansive Alabama Hospital for the Insane in Tuscaloosa (now Bryce Hospital, circa 1853) demonstrates that Antebellum Alabamians found the Italianate style suitable not only for domestic architecture but also for large institutional projects.<sup>18</sup>

The pair of houses that constitute Winter Place, then, were constructed at a period when the Italianate style figured centrally in American architectural taste and by a family with a clearly demonstrated interest in Italianate architecture. The houses of Winter Place reflect the Italianate aesthetic in both their overall design and their various decorative elements. The asymmetrical South House conforms to a typical configuration of the Italianate villa in which a tower is situated at the location where a wing intersects the main section of a house. The South House’s tower, according to Historian Jeffrey Benton, “may originally have been intended to resemble Samuel Sloan’s tower on the Winters’ Madison Avenue villa [the circa 1851 Joseph S. Winter House].”<sup>19</sup> Also Italianate in character are the rounded upper terminations of the South House’s windows and the slender colonettes that support its porches. The North House of the complex is more nearly rectangular in shape with a typically Italianate hipped roof, and, in an arrangement also characteristic of the Italianate style, a now-lost cupola was once situated in the center of the North House’s roof.

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11 Ibid, 92.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid, 93 and Curl (1999), 618.

14 Gamble, Ibid.

15 Ibid, 93 and 98.

16 Jeffrey C. Benton, *A Sense of Place: Montgomery’s Architectural Heritage* (Montgomery, AL: River City Publishing, 2001), 91.

17 Gamble, 97-98.

18 Ibid, 100.

19 Benton, 92.

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Despite their obvious indebtedness to the ideal of the Italian villa popular in mid-nineteenth-century America, the houses that make up Winter Place should not be considered "pure" essays in the Italianate style. Begun around 1858, the houses were not completed until after the Civil War, by which time national tastes in architecture had shifted in the direction of the Second Empire Style.<sup>20</sup> This style, which reached the height of its popularity in the United States between 1860 and 1880, is so named because it drew inspiration from the stylistic tendencies that characterized French architecture during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-1870).<sup>21</sup> Second Empire architecture shares numerous characteristics with the Italianate aesthetic, including the use of overhanging eaves with brackets beneath them, and both styles treat doors, windows, and porches in a similar fashion.<sup>22</sup> Second Empire buildings (or such "hybrid" buildings as Winter Place) may, however, be readily distinguished from purely Italianate structures because they are invariably crowned with French-inspired Mansard roofs.<sup>23</sup> Despite the prominence of the Second Empire style in the Northeast and Midwest, relatively few Second Empire buildings were constructed in the South.<sup>24</sup> Among the rare examples of mansard-roofed, Second Empire structures erected in Alabama are Montgomery's now-demolished LeGrand Building (1871) and Decatur's William Moseley House, a two-and-one-half-story clapboard residence dating from circa 1885.<sup>25</sup>

Because of the rarity of Second Empire buildings in Alabama, Winter Place occupies a position of significance among surviving nineteenth-century structures in the state by virtue of its reflection of a number of Second-Empire stylistic characteristics. Samuel Sloan, the Philadelphia architect who played a seminal role in bringing the Italianate style to Alabama during the 1850s, designed a number of Second Empire-style houses in Pennsylvania and New Jersey between 1865 and 1870.<sup>26</sup> According to historian Jeffrey Benton, Sloan may be responsible for the Second-Empire adjustments to Winter Place's original Italianate design.<sup>27</sup> At Winter Place, the Second Empire style is most apparent in the complex's south house, which is along with its attached tower, covered by a mansard roof. Second Empire-style houses frequently employed colored or patterned roofing materials, and the roof of the south house at Winter Place is covered by fish-scale shingles.<sup>28</sup> The dormer windows set in the South House's mansard roof and the circular lights in its tower also reflect Second Empire stylistic tendencies. Though the north house is more strongly Italianate in character than its southern neighbor, it once was surmounted by a cupola with a convex-shaped mansard roof. The eaves of both the south and north houses at Winter Place rest on paired brackets, which are characteristic of both the Italianate and Second Empire styles, but the rather shallow overhang of the south house's eave is more typical of the Second Empire style than is the broad eave overhang seen at the northernmost house.

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20 Ibid.

21 McAlester and McAlester, 242.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Gamble, 118-121.

26 Benton, 92.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid, and McAlester and McAlester, 242.

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A number of recent publications have considered the historical and architectural significance of the Winter Place complex. In 2001, Historian Jeffrey Benton included a chapter on Winter Place in his book *A Sense of Place: Montgomery's Architectural Heritage*. The next year, Winter Place was the only Alabama building discussed in Caroline Seebohm's and Peter Woloszynski's collection of photographs and essays entitled *Under Live Oaks: The Last Great Houses of the Old South*. Seebohm and Woloszynski's chapter on Winter Place contains commentary on the history and current condition of Winter Place along with 15 photographs of both houses and their surroundings, constituting the most comprehensive photographic record of Winter Place yet published.<sup>29</sup> In recognition of both the architectural significance and rapidly deteriorating condition of Winter Place, the complex was one of nine historic properties included on the 2004 "Places in Peril" list published by the Alabama Historical Commission and the Alabama Preservation Alliance.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Caroline Seebohm and Peter Woloszynski, *Under Live Oaks: The Last Great Houses of the Old South* (New York: Clarkson Potter Publishers, 2002) pg. 274-287.

<sup>30</sup> Melanie Betz Gregory, "Places in Peril: Alabama's Endangered Historic Landmarks for 2004," *Alabama Heritage* 74, Fall 2004, 33-41.

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### Historical Summary

Joseph S. P. Winter, the builder of Winter Place, was the son and business partner of industrialist and financier John Gano Winter. Born in New York City in 1799, the elder Winter settled in Augusta, Georgia prior to 1821, when records indicate that his son was born in the city. While living in Georgia, John Winter became president of the Bank of Saint Mary's, a financial concern with branches in Augusta, Macon, and Columbus. Joseph Winter arrived in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1844, where a branch of the Bank of St. Mary's had been established. In 1845, Joseph Winter married Mary Elizabeth Gindrat, daughter of Montgomery cotton broker, banker, and merchant John Gindrat. Three children were born to Joseph and Mary Elizabeth Winter: John Gindrat (c.1845-1904), Lucy (1848-1920), and Sallie Gindrat (1851-1935).

John and Joseph Winter inaugurated and managed a diverse portfolio of commercial enterprises in Montgomery during the 1840s and 1850s. Perhaps the most significant of these endeavors was the Winter Iron Works, a firm that achieved international recognition in 1853 when a Winter-manufactured a steam engine was awarded a silver medal at the Crystal Palace World's Fair in New York. Joseph Winter founded a banking house, J.S. Winter and Company, in Montgomery and was an incorporator of the Montgomery Gas Light Company. In addition to their manufacturing, banking, and utility concerns, the Winters owned property in Coosa County, Alabama, in connection with their interests in the Central Plank Toll Road, an ultimately unsuccessful venture which was to have provided a link between the Alabama and Tennessee rivers. The Winter Family's impact on Montgomery's built environment was at least as significant as their effect on the city's economy. Circa 1851, Joseph Winter built a Samuel Sloan-designed Italianate villa on the northwest corner of Madison Avenue and North Perry Street. This house, which was razed in 1919, may be the earliest example of Italianate domestic architecture in Alabama.

After the National Panic of 1854, financial reverses forced the Winters to sell their Madison Avenue villa, and they subsequently purchased a Federal-style clapboard house at 301 Bibb Street. The Winters remodeled the house on Bibb Street in the Italianate style around 1855; in 1861, this house was leased by the Confederate Government to be used as a residence for Jefferson Davis and his family. Another Italianate structure owned by the Winter family, the so-called Winter Building on Dexter Avenue, achieved notoriety in the opening days of the Civil War: it was from this building, which housed the Montgomery office of the Southern Telegraph Company, that the telegram authorizing Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard to fire on Fort Sumter was dispatched.

On September 6, 1851, Joseph S. Winter purchased the property on which Winter Place is currently situated from George and Mildred Holcombe. Bounded by Root (now Goldthwaite) Street, Mildred Street, and Mobile Street, the so-called Holcombe lot was triangular in shape and consisted of 7 acres; the 1854-1856 Journal of J. S. Winter and Company lists the property's value at \$5000. The Winter family eventually sold the bulk of the Holcombe lot, and numerous houses, as well as the Episcopal Church of the Holy Comforter, were built on the former property. At some point late in the 1850s, Joseph Winter began construction on the pair of Italianate houses that now comprise Winter Place. Joseph Winter may have built two houses with the intention of eventually conveying one dwelling to his son, John Gindrat Winter, who was approximately fifteen when construction began. The Montgomery City directories suggest that the houses were not occupied in 1860 because Joseph Winter was still listed as a boarder at the Madison House, a local hotel. As directories were not published between 1861 and 1865, the earliest directory listing the Winter family as residents of Winter Place was issued in 1866; however, it is likely that members of the family had settled in the houses some years earlier. Family tradition indicates that the

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houses were given their present appearance (Second Empire stylistic elements) during a post-bellum remodeling.

During the Civil War, the position of the Winter family in Montgomery was complicated by the fact that John Gano Winter had maintained close personal and business connections to his native New York; family lore suggests that John Gano Winter and (to perhaps a lesser degree) Joseph S.P. Winter were Unionist. (31) The elder Winter left Montgomery around 1863, taking his granddaughters Lucy Winter and Sallie Gindrat Winter to England via Apalachicola, Florida. Joseph S.P Winter, who apparently remained in Montgomery until about 1865, served as a member of the Montgomery City Council during the Civil War. Joseph Winter's son John Gindrat Winter fought for the Confederacy, serving as the Captain of an Infantry unit, and was eventually taken prisoner. At the conclusion of the Civil War, the Joseph Winter Family lived for several years in Brooklyn Heights, New York. This is also where John Gano Winter died in December, 1865. Joseph Winter, who had studied law in Montgomery in 1860, practiced in New York during the years immediately following the conclusion of the Civil War.

Joseph Winter and his family appear certainly to have returned to Alabama by March 1869, when the Montgomery Advertiser reports that "Joseph S. Winter, W. P. Chilton, and J. Gindrat Winter [Joseph Winter's son]...formed a new law firm in Montgomery." The next year, Joseph Winter was "appointed Solicitor for the county of Montgomery during the temporary reliefment of John G. Stokes, Esq." Like many southern families, the Winters experienced considerable financial losses during the years of the Civil War and the period of reconstruction. Census Records taken in 1860 list the value of Joseph Winter's real estate at \$40,000, while his wife (the daughter of local businessman John Gindrat) owned real estate valued at \$80,000 and personal property valued at \$60,000. In 1870, by contrast, Joseph Winter's real estate and personal property were each valued at \$25,000, while the values of his wife's real estate and personal property were not recorded. Joseph and Mary Elizabeth Winter lived in the southernmost house at Winter Place until their deaths in 1895 and 1896 respectively, while the complex's north house was occupied by John Gindrat Winter and his wife, Sarah Verdier Calhoun Winter. Sarah Calhoun Winter inherited the North House upon her husband's death in 1904; after leasing the house for some years, she sold it on 7 November 1945 to one Jacob N. Leibovici.

Sallie Gindrat Winter, who married Robert Dinning Thorington (1844-1882) in 1871, inherited the South House at Winter Place upon her mother's death in 1896. Sallie Thorington lived in the South House until her death in 1935, when the property was acquired by her daughter, Bessie May Thorington. Upon Bessie Thorington's death in 1948, her nephew, Joseph Winter Thorington, Jr. (1924--), inherited the house. Winter Thorington is the son and namesake of Joseph Winter Thorington, Sr. (son of Sallie Winter and Robert Dinning Thorington), a lawyer who at the time of his death was serving as Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Montgomery; Winter Thorington's mother Eunice, who died in childbirth, a the granddaughter of Confederate Admiral Raphael Semmes. On 10 January 1951, Winter Thorington purchased the North House and its surrounding lot from Jacob N. and Rosa N. Leibovici, and he subsequently divided both the North and South houses into apartments. Winter Place was used as an apartment complex until the mid 1990s, when the houses experienced severe damage during a series of hurricanes. Winter Thorington continues to own Winter Place, living in the complex's south house. In recent years, both houses have deteriorated considerably and are largely covered by vegetation. The Thorington family is working towards preserving the place in the future.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Lots 12, 13, 14 and 15 according to the Winter Plat recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 96, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Montgomery County, Alabama.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries of the Winter Place complex are contained within the legal description of the property as described above.

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**Photographs**

Winter Place

Montgomery, Montgomery County, Alabama

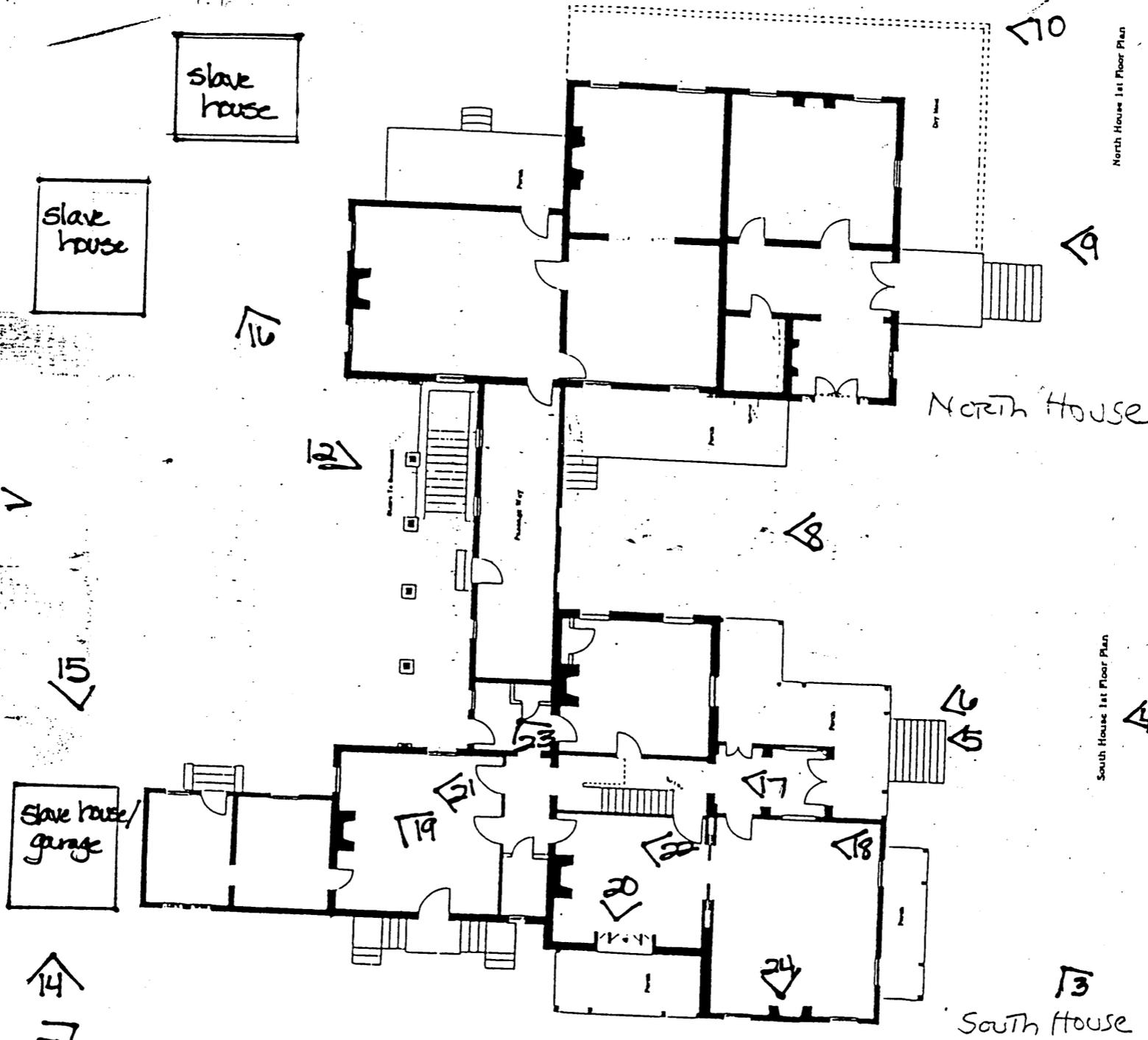
Christy Anderson, Alabama Historical Commission

January 23, 2006

Negatives on file at the Alabama Historical Commission, 468 S Perry Street, Montgomery, AL 36104

There are no interior photographs of the North House which is inaccessible for safety reasons. There are also no interior photos of the second floor of the South House, which is inhabited by Winter Thorington. Mr. Thorington, having lived in the South House for decades, has been a great collector of things over the years and the upper floors are inaccessible.

1. View from Goldthwaite Street looking west across front lawn at North (r) and South House (l)
2. South house (l), North house looking SW
3. South house (l), North house looking NW
4. South house, front façade, looking W
5. South house, front door (east elevation)
6. South house tower
7. South house additions, south elevation
8. Connector built between North and South houses, front (east) elevation
9. North house, front (east) elevation
10. North house, basement and first floor, north elevation, and slave house
11. Rear, North house (l) and South house, west elevation
12. Passageway between houses from rear, west elevation
13. Brick post/wall showing sidewalk pavers, Martha Street entrance, looking west
14. Slave dwelling/converted to early 20<sup>th</sup> c. garage, south elevation
15. Slave dwelling/garage, north and east elevations
16. Two slave dwellings, looking NW
17. South house interior, stair hall looking to rear of house
18. South house, front parlor interior
19. South house, rear parlor interior
20. South house, middle parlor interior
21. South house, rear parlor light fixture
22. South house, middle parlor
23. South house, rear hall window
24. South house interior, parlor mantel



North House 1st Floor Plan

South House 1st Floor Plan



Winter Place  
 Montgomery, AL  
 Not to scale