

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

AUG 14 1998

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

132

Ala. Historical Commission

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: McKee, J. P., Lustron House

Other Names/Site Number: McKee, J. P., Lustron House

2. Location

Street & Number: 519 College Avenue Not for Publication: N/A

City or Town: Jackson Vicinity: N/A

State: Alabama Code: AL County: Clarke Code: 025

Zip Code: 36545

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] Alabama Historical Commission  
Signature of certifying official (State Historic Preservation Office) 1/20/00  
State or Federal agency and bureau Date

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

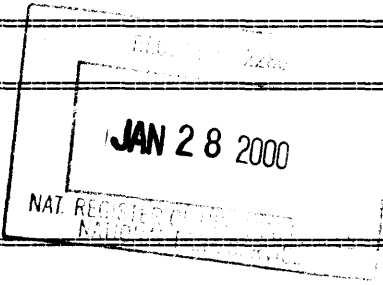
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official State or Federal agency and bureau Date

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:)

for Edson H. Beall 2/24/00  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action



J.P. McKee Lustron House  
Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

Lustron Houses In Alabama

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category:  
DOMESTIC

Subcategory:  
Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category:  
DOMESTIC

Subcategory:  
Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Lustron House

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>Concrete</u>
roof	<u>Metal: Steel</u>
walls	<u>Metal: Steel</u>
other	<u>Metal: Steel, Glass</u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(See Continuation Sheet Section 7 Page 1)

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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.) N/A

- 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  
Engineering

Period of Significance

1949

Significant Dates

1949Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above): N/ACultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder:

Koch, Carl and Associates (Architect)Lustron Corporation (Builder)Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)  
(See Continuation Sheet Section 8 Page 3)

J.P. McKee Lustron House  
Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama  
County and State

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A

- 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: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

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

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
116	415000	34870303			
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.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Gene A. Ford, Architectural Historian; Susan Enzweiler, AHC Historian; Trina Binkley, AHC Reviewer

Organization: The University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Services Date: September 9, 1997

Street & Number: 13075 Moundville Archaeological Park Telephone: (205) 348-7774

City or Town: Moundville State: Alabama Zip Code: 35474

J.P. McKee Lustron House

Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama

County and State

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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)

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Property Owner

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

Name: Michael Blount

Street & Number: 513 College Avenue Telephone: (205) 752-5763

City or Town: Jackson State: Alabama Zip Code: 36545

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NPS Form 10-900-a  
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

J.P. McKee Lustron House  
Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama  
County and State

The J. P. McKee Lustron House, located in Jackson, Clarke County, Alabama, is a one story, metal, prefabricated house. Built in 1949, the J. P. McKee House features a metal side gable roof. Exterior siding consists of 2 ft. square porcelain enamelled metal panels. Two aluminum frame windows, which coincide with a bedroom and the living room, respectively, punctuate the front facade of the house. A portion of the front facade and adjoining side wall are inset forming a porch with an engaged roof. A single metal post supports the roof on the porch. There is a downspout attached to the porch support. A metal and glass panel door and an aluminum frame window pierce the south side of the all metal house. Fenestration on the rear facade includes three aluminum frame windows and a metal and glass panel door. Three aluminum frame windows punctuate the north side of the prefabricated home. The home rests on a concrete foundation. Inside, the Lustron features metal wall and ceiling panels and built in cabinets, shelves, and a vanity. The J. P. McKee Lustron House, a fine example of the two bedroom Westchester model (one of nine in Alabama), retains a high degree of integrity and is in excellent condition.

The J. P. McKee Lustron House is situated on a 55 ft x 142 ft lot in a neighborhood that features bungalows, Victorians, and a number of post WWII cottages. The Westchester model measures 31 ft x 35 ft and resembles the quintessential ranch house with its low profile, side gable roof, and sleek rectangular configuration. A scattering of foliage embellishes the associated yard.

A side gable roof of metal panels crowns the Lustron House. The panels are fashioned to imitate the look of ceramic tiles. Painted brown, the porcelain enamelled metal panels are bolted to metal roof trusses. Vertical metal panels cover the gable ends. Attached to the roof and extending along the entire front facade is a metal gutter. A downspout conducts rain water from the gutter to the ground below.

The exterior skin of the J. P. McKee Lustron House consists of porcelain enamelled panels. Painted yellow, the panels measure 2 ft square. The yellow finish of the exterior is not factory produced. Rather it is an ill fated attempt to change the original color of the house from gray to yellow. The yellow paint is peeling. The owner intends to return to the original gray finish.

Two windows constitute the fenestration of the front facade. Measuring 6 ft x 8 ft, these windows feature a large, fixed, central, plate glass window flanked on either side by a four-light casement window. The frames are constructed of aluminum. The south most of the two slightly projects beyond the wall much like a bay window.

The southeast corner of the J. P. McKee House is recessed, creating a 12 ft x 5 ft inset porch. Supporting the end of the engaged roof over the porch is a metal post to which the factory issue downspout is attached. A metal and glass panel door is located at the northeast corner of the porch; the door leads to the living room.

A window opening is cut into the south wall of the prefabricated house. It is fitted with a window similar in design to those of the front facade. The window coincides with the dining room.

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Section 7 Page 2

J.P. McKee Lustron House  
Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama  
County and State

Fenestration on the rear facade of the Lustron House consists of four openings. The kitchen window opening measures 4 ft square and is fitted with a six light casement window, which is covered by a piece of plywood. An air conditioning unit has been installed in the window. A doorway is fitted with a metal and glass panel door similar in design to that of the front door. The door leads to the utility room and kitchen. A 4 ft x 2 ft, three light casement serves as the bathroom window. The bedroom window is like those of the front facade.

Four rectangular windows pierce the north wall of the Lustron House. Constructed of a single light, these windows resemble those of the south wall of the E. L. Newman Lustron House in Sheffield, Alabama, suggesting that they are an alternate Lustron window design.

The interior of the Lustron House appears much as it did when it was erected in 1949. For the most part, the ceiling and wall panels have not been covered or replaced with sheetrock, wood paneling, or other nonoriginal material. The one exception is in the living room. Wood paneling has been affixed to one of the walls in this room (Blount 1997). While the wood panels are not a Lustron stock material, they represent a minor concession with respects to the original look of the all metal house. Emitting from the porcelain enamelled panels is a lustrous sheen that glows as much as the day the panels were removed from the Lustron Corporation plant ovens in Columbus, Ohio. Throughout the interior, there is indoor/outdoor, mohair, or tight and short napped carpet. While the carpet is not a Lustron stock material, it is a minor concession with respects to the original look of the all metal house.

Intact in the interior of the house is an array of built in creature comforts. The living room features a built in book shelf and a complimentary cabinet. The wall divider between the dining room and kitchen has space saving metal cabinets, drawers, and shelves. Metal cabinets line the walls of the kitchen. The original furnace located in the utility room was replaced with another unit (Blount 1997). The master bedroom retains its built in vanity and closets. Metal closets are also featured in the second bedroom.

#### Archaeological Component

Although no formal archaeological survey has been conducted, there is the potential for subsurface remains.

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Section 8 Page 3

J.P. McKee Lustron House  
Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama  
County and State

Significance

The J. P. McKee House meets the standards established by Criterion C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and falls under the "Lustron Houses in Alabama" MPS. The Lustron House is significant in the areas of architecture and engineering for its associations with the prefabricated housing industry and nation wide housing shortage immediately following World War II. The J. P. McKee Lustron House rates as an outstanding example of the component part technology and all steel construction that the Lustron Corporation utilized in the manufacture of its prefabricated houses from 1946 to 1950. The prefabricated house is the sum total of a critically acclaimed engineering process that included a state of the art factory, production line, storage and distribution system, and marketing strategy. Additionally, the Lustron House embodies the distinct characteristics of post World War II architecture, such as an overall design that was at once contemporary and historic, durability, easy maintenance, and built in creature comforts. It is historically linked with McKee Construction Co., Inc., the dealer of Lustron Houses in Jackson, Alabama, which played a critical role in sales and dissemination of information. As one of only eleven extant Lustrons in the state of Alabama, the J. P. McKee House is part of a small yet significant group of houses that represent the development of prefabricated housing in the state. As Lustron promotional information boasted, the J. P. McKee House has retained a high degree of its original appearance through its history and is likely to do so for the next half century as well.

Historical Summary

The J. P. McKee House is one of eleven extant Lustron Houses in Alabama. The Lustron House was marketed by McKee Construction Co., Inc. in Jackson, Alabama. McKee Construction Co., Inc. owned the Lustron distribution rights for Jackson (Lustron Corporation 1950). The J. P. McKee Lustron House is one of two Lustrons to be built in Jackson.

Once the partnership of McKee Construction Co., Inc. and the Lustron Corporation was struck, an advertisement campaign began in March, 1949. The first advertisement promoting the many benefits of a prefabricated Lustron House appeared in the March 3, 1949 edition of *The Clarke County Democrat*. The ad announced the appointment of McKee Construction Co., Inc. as a new builder of Lustron Houses. It featured a photograph and floor plan of the Lustron House and promoted its many virtues. On April 14, 1949 another advertisement ran in *The Clarke County Democrat*. It announced a week long open house for a demonstration model. Actually, the open house applied to two Lustrons that the McKee Construction Co., Inc. erected in Jackson (McKee 1997). Both houses were furnished by Woodson Furniture Co. of Jackson. J. P. McKee, the head of McKee Construction Co., Inc., purchased the lots, which are diagonally adjacent each other, for both Lustrons from C. T. (Curtis) McCorquodale (McKee 1997).

J. P. McKee maintained ownership of the Lustron House on College Street for two years. The first occupants of the prefabricated metal house were Dr. and Mrs. Charlie May (McKee 1997). McKee conveyed the Lustron House and associated lot to L. B. Neighbors on May 25, 1951 (Quit Claim Deed 1951). According to the Alabama Property Record Card (APRC) associated with the Lustron House, the house was the property of Roger C. Gunter in 1992. Michael Blount, the current owner, purchased the house on November 7, 1992 and utilizes the house as rental property.



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Sections 9,10 Page 4

J.P. McKee Lustron House  
Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama  
County and State

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Bibliography

Alabama Property Record Card. Document maintained on file at the Clarke County Courthouse, Grove Hill, Alabama.

Blount, Michael. Phone Interview. February 3, 1997.

*The Clarke County Democrat*. Lustron Advertisement. March 3, 1949.  
Lustron Advertisement. April 14, 1949.

Deed Book 356, Page 193. Deed Document maintained on file at the Clarke County Courthouse, Grove Hill, Alabama.

Lustron Corporation. Dealer Performance Record. Columbus. 1950.

McKee, Mrs. Willie Margaret (widow of J. P. McKee head of McKee Construction Co., Inc.). Phone Interview. 1997.

Quit Claim Deed. Deed Document maintained on file at the Clarke County Courthouse, Grove Hill, Alabama. May 25, 1951.

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the J. P. McKee Lustron House is demarcated in Figure 2, which is derived from Clarke County Tax Map #42-03-05-4-002.

Boundary Justification

The delineated boundaries include the house and lot historically associated with the Lustron House located at 519 College Avenue, Jackson, Alabama.

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Section Photographs Page 5

J.P. McKee Lustron House  
Name of Property

Clarke County, Alabama  
County and State

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Photographs

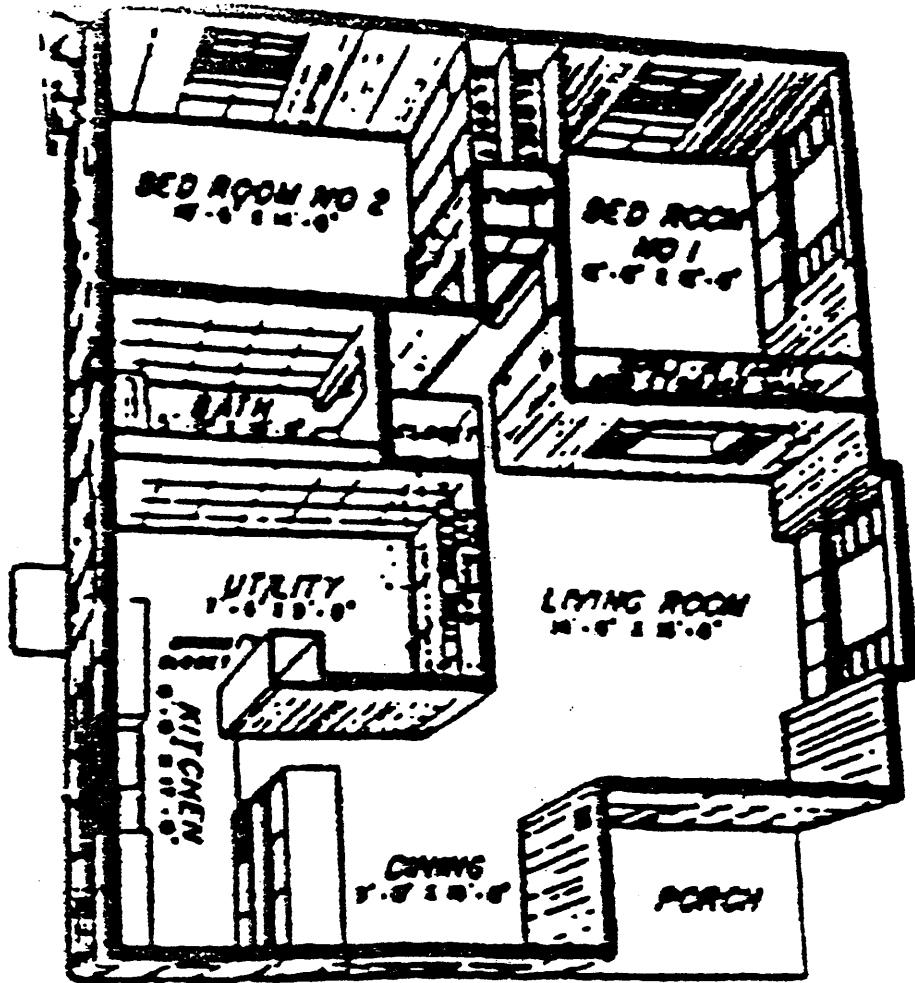
J. P. McKee Lustron House  
Jackson, Clarke County, Alabama

Photos By: Gene A. Ford  
Office of Archaeological Services  
Moundville, Alabama 35474

Negatives: Alabama Historical Commission  
468 South Perry Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

Date: December 26, 1996

1. Front Elevation.
2. Front and South Elevations.
3. Rear Elevation.
4. Front and North Elevations.
5. Detail of North Elevation.



Floor plan,  
Westchester two-bedroom  
model.

Figure 1.  
J. P. MCKEE LUSTRON HOUSE, CLARKE COUNTY, ALABAMA