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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name WILSEY, MILES V., HOUSE
other names/site number WILSEY-KIMBALL HOUSE; KIMBALL, CHARLES W., HOUSE

2. Location

street & number 137 Hudson Rd.
city, town Fitzgerald (X) vicinity of
county Ben Hill **code** GA 017
state Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 31750

(n/a) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

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

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing

Noncontributing

buildings	2	2
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	2	2

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of previous listing: n/a

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Richard Colee 1-17-01
Signature of certifying official Date

for W. Ray Luce, Director, Historic Preservation Division
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register Mrs J M. Way 2/23/01

() determined eligible for the National Register _____

() determined not eligible for the National Register _____

() removed from the National Register _____

() other, explain: _____

() see continuation sheet

for _____
Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

unknown

Materials:

foundation	brick
walls	wood frame
roof	asphalt shingle
other	n/a

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:

The Miles V. Wilsey House, built around 1900, is a vernacular, one-story with finished attic, wood-frame house covered with wood siding. The house has original board-and-batten siding on the lower exterior floor and original decorative fish-scale shingles in the upstairs gable ends. The house has two separate front doors with transoms and no central hall. There is a cellar under the kitchen. There are porches on three sides, all with turned posts. There are transoms over doors and paired windows with one-over-one lights. Tall, steep gables lead up to an area at the center of the pyramidal roof which resembles a widow's walk, but has no railing. There are two red brick chimneys, one with decorative brick work. Tall, narrow sash-type windows with one-over-one lights are characteristics of the gable ends. The downstairs portion of the house contains four principal rooms in the major portion of the house (living room, parlor or study, guest bedroom, and dining room) and several smaller rooms in a rear shed (kitchen, utility room, bathroom and enclosed sun porch). The upstairs contains three bedrooms all with large walk-in closets. Interior walls are the original lath and plaster. Original wood floors, paneled doors, and windows remain. Doors and windows throughout the house are surrounded by decorative milled woodwork with bull's-eye corner blocks. Some original lighting fixtures and all the original fireplace mantels survive. The house is surrounded by relatively flat, producing crop fields and wooded areas. Immediately surrounding the house, however, are mature pecan trees, large old shrubs, and grass lawns. Fruit trees and grape vines are also located near the house. There are three outbuildings. A shallow well behind the house is protected by a historic cast-concrete block storage building. A non-historic concrete block tobacco barn and a tractor barn are on the property. The property is in a rural setting, surrounded by cropland and forests, on the outskirts of Fitzgerald, a small city and the county seat of Ben Hill

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7--Description

County. Changes included the enclosure of a porch in the 1950s which has since been removed. During the 1970s, the kitchen and bathroom were remodeled and some ceilings and walls were paneled at that time.

FULL DESCRIPTION:

The Miles V. Wilsey House has its original board and batten siding on the lower floor and original fish-scale shingles in the upstairs gable ends which form bedrooms. The house has two separate front doors with transoms. It also has a cellar built under the kitchen.

The exterior of the house is clad on three sides with generous front porches. The house is constructed of a wood frame covered with wood siding. Decorative fish-scale shingles can be found in the gable ends. The front porch is supported with turned posts. Transoms over doors and paired windows with one-over-one lights are common features of this house. Tall, steep gables lead up to an area at the center of the roof which resembles a widow's walk, but it has no railing. Two red brick chimneys, one with decorative brick work, protrude from the gables of the roof. Tall, narrow sash type windows with one-over-one lights are characteristics of the gable ends.

The downstairs portion of the house contains a living room, parlor or study, guest bedroom, dining room, kitchen, utility room, bathroom and enclosed sun porch. The upstairs contains three bedrooms all with large walk-in closets. The upstairs also contains a small room located just off the top of the stairs. The owner does not know what this room was used for, but thinks that it might have been some mechanical room because of a flue located in the chimney which passes through this room.

Interior walls are the original lath and plaster. Floors are the original wood and remain uncovered. Original doors and windows are contained throughout the house.

Doors and windows throughout the house are surrounded by decorative milled woodwork with bull's-eye corner blocks. The interior woodwork resembles that which was found in other houses during the Victorian period. The doors are paneled with the longer panels at the top and the shorter panels at the bottom. The windows have access panels at each side which allows access to repair the counterweights which operate the windows. Interior doors also have transoms above. Some rooms of the house appear to contain their original lighting fixtures. The original fireplace mantels are still in place. They resemble others found in Victorian era homes.

The structural system of the house is made up of large wooden beams supported by masonry piers. An unusual structural feature of this house is that the walls upstairs are not located over the load-bearing walls on the first floor. They are located in the middle of what would be the ceilings of the downstairs rooms.

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Section 7--Description

The house contains the original wiring system with some modifications added over time. The original wiring is the type where two separate wires are run side by side and separated by ceramic insulators. Fireplaces have been kept open over the years but are not now the main source of heat.

The house lot of 1.4 acres is surrounded by relatively flat, crop-producing fields and wooded areas. Immediately surrounding the house, however, are mature pecan trees, large, old shrubs and grass lawns. Fruit trees and grape vines are also located near the house.

A shallow well behind the house is protected by a historic cast-concrete block storage building. Currently, the building is used for lawn equipment storage. A non-historic tobacco barn is located away from the north side of the house. It appears to have been constructed c.1950 of concrete block. Also on this side of the house is located a non-historic tractor barn which is currently being used as a shop and garage.

The owner is unaware of any known archaeological sites on his property but has unearthed some old farm tools and medicine bottles while planting shrubs on the property. He also says that he has found old horseshoes in the dirt in the barn.

The property is in a rural setting with not much surrounding except cropland and forests. The house was built on the property in 1900 and is surrounded with the crop fields. The property is accessed by a dirt road which separates the house from a pecan orchard.

In the 1950s, part of the south porch was enclosed. The current owner is now in the process of removing this enclosure. During the 1970s, the owner notes that the kitchen and bathroom were remodeled. He says that some ceilings and some walls were paneled at that time.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance:

c.1900

Significant Dates:

c. 1900 (construction date of the house)

Significant Person(s):

n/a

Cultural Affiliation:

n/a

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

unknown

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Wilsey House is significant in architecture because it is a good example of an unusual vernacular type farmhouse built in South Georgia around the turn of the century. With its four-room first-floor plan, square massing, and a nearly pyramidal roof, the house is a good example of the relatively rare "pyramid cottage" type of vernacular house in Georgia as defined in the statewide historic house context, Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses and their Landscaped Settings (1991). Only 2% of the historic houses surveyed in the state are pyramid cottage types. Most date from this period and are found equally in towns and the country. Its tall cross gables are an unusual variation of the type, probably reflecting the need to use the space under the main roof for bedrooms rather than just an attic. It retains all of its original mantels, doors, windows, interior woodwork, chimneys, and other details, as well as its very unusual board-and-batten exterior siding. Its original porches, built to take advantage of the climate, also remain.

This house was built by a Northerner who came South as part of the growing Civil War veterans colony that made up the town and surroundings of Fitzgerald. While many veterans built houses within the city of Fitzgerald, others built individual homes outside the city's limits. This house and the original 30 acres became a cotton and corn farm complex. The land was originally purchased with the intention of farming and the house and outbuildings were later built for the farmer to live in and to use for farm purposes. The farm has been established for almost one-hundred years and the house has been a part of the farm for approximately ninety years. The house was built c.1900 by Miles V. Wilsey (1835-1925) of Posey County, Indiana, who had come south to Fitzgerald as part of its creation in the summer of 1895 as a colony by Civil War veterans from both North and South. The founder was P. H. Fitzgerald, the editor of the American Tribune of Indianapolis. Wilsey and his family did not live here long, returning to Indiana. In 1902 the property was sold to C. W. Kimball (1859-1937), who owned an orange grove somewhere near Leesburg, Florida, and moved to this area after a hard winter freeze killed his crops. In 1902, he purchased the newly completed house and acreage from Wilsey. In 1919, as a result of bad health problems, Mr. Kimball sold the property, including the house, to David E. Dickson who, as a "prominent farmer," died there in 1935. At Dickson's widow's death, the house acreage were sold in 1944. The significance of Fitzgerald's unique founding has previously been recognized in the National Register nominations for Fitzgerald, the Fitzgerald Commercial Historic District (NR 1992) and the South Main-South Lee St. Historic District (NR 1989).

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

National Register Criteria

The Wilsey House meets National Register Criterion C because it is a good example of an unusual type of vernacular, wood-frame, farmhouse. Its four-room, square massing, with nearly pyramidal shaped roof, is an unusual variation of the "pyramid cottage." It retains almost all of its original materials, mantels, doors, woodwork, and an unusual board-and-batten siding.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

n/a

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance is just the construction date of the house, c.1900.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

Contributing: main house; well-house/storage building (2 contributing buildings).

Non-contributing: tobacco barn and tractor barn (2 non-contributing buildings).

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate) .

The Miles V. Wilsey House is located in Ben Hill County, Georgia, near the town of Fitzgerald. This town was conceived after the Civil War (1861-1865) as a refuge for Union and Confederate veterans to live in harmony. Settlement in the community began in 1895 after a several year campaign for such a settlement by P. H. Fitzgerald, editor of the American Tribune of Indianapolis, Indiana. The settlement of the town of Fitzgerald was rapid, with many states being represented. By August 1895, there were 2500 people in the town with 60% being Midwesterners. The mixture of Union and Confederate veterans brought on many discussions of the Civil War. It had been Mr. Fitzgerald's goal that the new "colony" would be self-sufficient and a place where the bitterness of the Civil War would be forgotten. To assist in the self-sufficiency, lots of five, ten, and twenty acres each were established along the colony's perimeter. These tracts were farmed to provide food for the colony.

This house is a surviving example of one built out from the town by a Union Civil War veteran.

The lot this house is on, Land Lot 282, is found on the map of the town established by the American Tribune Soldier's Colony Company in 1895. The company acquired 50,000 acres, with additional purchases doubling the acreage.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

In 1896, Mr. Miles V. Wilsey (1835-1925), a Union Civil War Veteran from Posey County, Indiana purchased, from A. Y/Z. Farrell and her husband, James A. Farrell, the land where he would establish a farm and build a house for \$375. He initially purchased 30 acres and later bought additional acres for \$50 per five acre tracts. The original purchase deed of February 27, 1896, indicated that the parcel bordered on "colony land." Mrs. Farrell (Ferrell) had owned the land only a short time before this sale. (Irwin Co., GA, Deed Book J, p. 400; Book H, p. 96-1892).

Mr. Wilsey, one of the many Civil War veterans, north and south, who came to the new town of Fitzgerald, did not live in his new house very long. One story is that he built it for a son, who decided he did not want to live there. Owning the land for only six years, Wilsey then sold it. He died in 1925, at age 90, his wife Sophia having died in 1922. They were both buried in Posey County, Indiana, the same county in which they were married in 1856. It is not clear how long they actually lived in Georgia. (Based on interview of Charles Kimball, Jr.) Wilsey did own other property in Fitzgerald, so it would seem he came down at least for a short while. The other land was bought directly from the American Tribune Soldier Colony Company on December 27, 1895, with the deed being signed by P. H. Fitzgerald himself. This land was in the town of Fitzgerald.

In 1892, Charles William Kimball (1859-1937) and his brother owned an orange grove somewhere near Leesburg, Florida. His wife was Ruth Kimball (died 1944). The families remained in Illinois while the brothers worked in Florida. After a hard winter freeze killed Mr. Kimball's crop sometime between 1892 and 1902, he sold out his business and moved to Fitzgerald, Georgia, because of the colonizing of Fitzgerald. At that point in time, his family joined him in Fitzgerald. He bought a lot in the city on Pine St. for \$75 and later bought additional lots for \$50 each from the American Tribune Soldiers Colony Company. In 1902, he (in his wife Ruth's name) purchased for \$1800 the newly-completed house and 30 acres from Mr. M. V. Wilsey. He then moved from town to the farm house and farmed the land and raised a family.

The Kimball descendants recall Mr. Kimball selling milk from the dairy cows on the property and the marriage of one of the daughters in the living room of the house. The house is located less than a mile from the Fitzgerald Cotton Mill. They raised cotton and corn on the place until the boll weevil hit around 1920. Afterwards, the farm owners raised tobacco, corn and peanuts.

In 1919, as a result of bad health problems, Mr. Kimball sold the property, including the house, to Mr. D. E. Dickson for \$14,300 including the 30 acres. The Kimballs moved to Daytona, Florida, where he died. He and his wife were buried in Pana, Illinois. Mr. David E. Dickson, who was born in 1858, came from Warren County, Kentucky, and died December 23, 1935. His widow, Inez Collis Dickson (1860-1953) sold the house and acreage in 1944 to Mr. C. W. H. Smith for \$6,500. The Dickson are both buried in Fitzgerald.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

During his tenure as owner, Mr. Dickson's page one obituary reflects that he was considered a "highly-regarded and prominent farmer" who had moved there c.1920 from Kentucky. Mr. Smith farmed the land for several years, but became sick with consumption (tuberculosis) in 1948. His son, C. W. Smith, Jr. took over the operation of the farm in 1948 and purchased the farm. It was in this year that the south porch was enclosed to make an isolated room for the sick father.

C. W. Smith, Sr. recovered from consumption and continued to live and run the farm with his wife until he died in 1979. His wife continued to live in the house until 1992 when she died. In 1994, the current owners, Dean and Linda Arnett, bought the house and the surrounding yard only, a total of 1.4 acres, for \$25,000. The surrounding remaining acreage of the original thirty acres remains in the Smith family and is rented out for crop production. The Arnetts use the house as their residence.

NOTE ON ADDITIONAL RESEARCH:

After the National Register nomination was first submitted in March, 1999, and additional information was requested regarding Mr. Wilsey's role in Georgia, further research was conducted in Indiana and other sources. When Mr. Wilsey died in July, 1925, his death made the front page of the local newspaper in Mount Vernon, Indiana (The Western Star, July 16, 1925). He was aged 90 and had drawn a veterans' pension for some years. The town celebrated his 90th birthday with a party only a few months earlier. In the recounting of his life, mention was made that he had cast his first vote in the election of 1860 for Abraham Lincoln, had been a devout Methodist, and was a traveling representative of the Singer Sewing Machine Company until his retirement.

Neither the obituary nor his Civil War pension found at the National Archives (S-C-285268) provided any information about his Georgia land purchase, house, or the fact that he and his son Harry Lincoln Wilsey (and perhaps their families) had lived in Georgia ever so briefly, as reflected by their listing in the Irwin County tax digests for 1896 through 1900. The fact that the son, Harry, paid a poll tax indicates that he was a resident of Georgia. Miles V. Wilsey, born in 1835, would have been too old to have paid such a tax under Georgia law and thus exempt. Further research in the deeds of Irwin and Ben Hill counties, Georgia, the two counties in which the house lot was located, indicated that Mr. Wilsey had bought land from a local citizen who had not chosen to sell to Mr. Fitzgerald and the company that purchased so much of the land from which the Fitzgerald community was developed. No doubt other local property owners like them chose to make their own arrangements with many of the incoming veterans. As the City of Fitzgerald and the local Blue and Gray Museum organize and index their records more information about the role of Miles V. Wilsey in the Fitzgerald area may yet turn up.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Draft Historic Property Information Form, dated May 19, 1995, written by the owner, Dean Arnett, on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Additional information also supplied by Mr. Arnett.

Butler, Sherri, reporter. "Farmhouse Preserves Flavor of Community's Rural Past," The Herald-Leader, Fitzgerald, Georgia, May 1, 1996, based on interviews with Dean Arnett and others. The article was used to seek more information about the owners of the house from the public.

Raflo, Lisa. "Fitzgerald Commercial Historic District," National Register of Historic Places nomination, listed April 28, 1992. Copy on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued:
- 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, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.4 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 288570 Northing 3512860

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated parcel is shown on the enclosed plat map dated 1994.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is all that the present owners own at this location and all that still remains associated with the house lot. It contains the house, the one surviving historic outbuilding, and the yard. It is surrounded by open agricultural fields formerly but no longer associated with the house.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 156 Trinity Ave. SW, Suite 101
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** January 10, 2001

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) () not applicable

name/title Mr. Dean Arnett
organization n/a
street and number 137 Hudson Rd.
city or town Fitzgerald **state** GA **zip code** 31750
telephone 912-424-9688

() consultant
() regional development center preservation planner
(X) other: owner

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

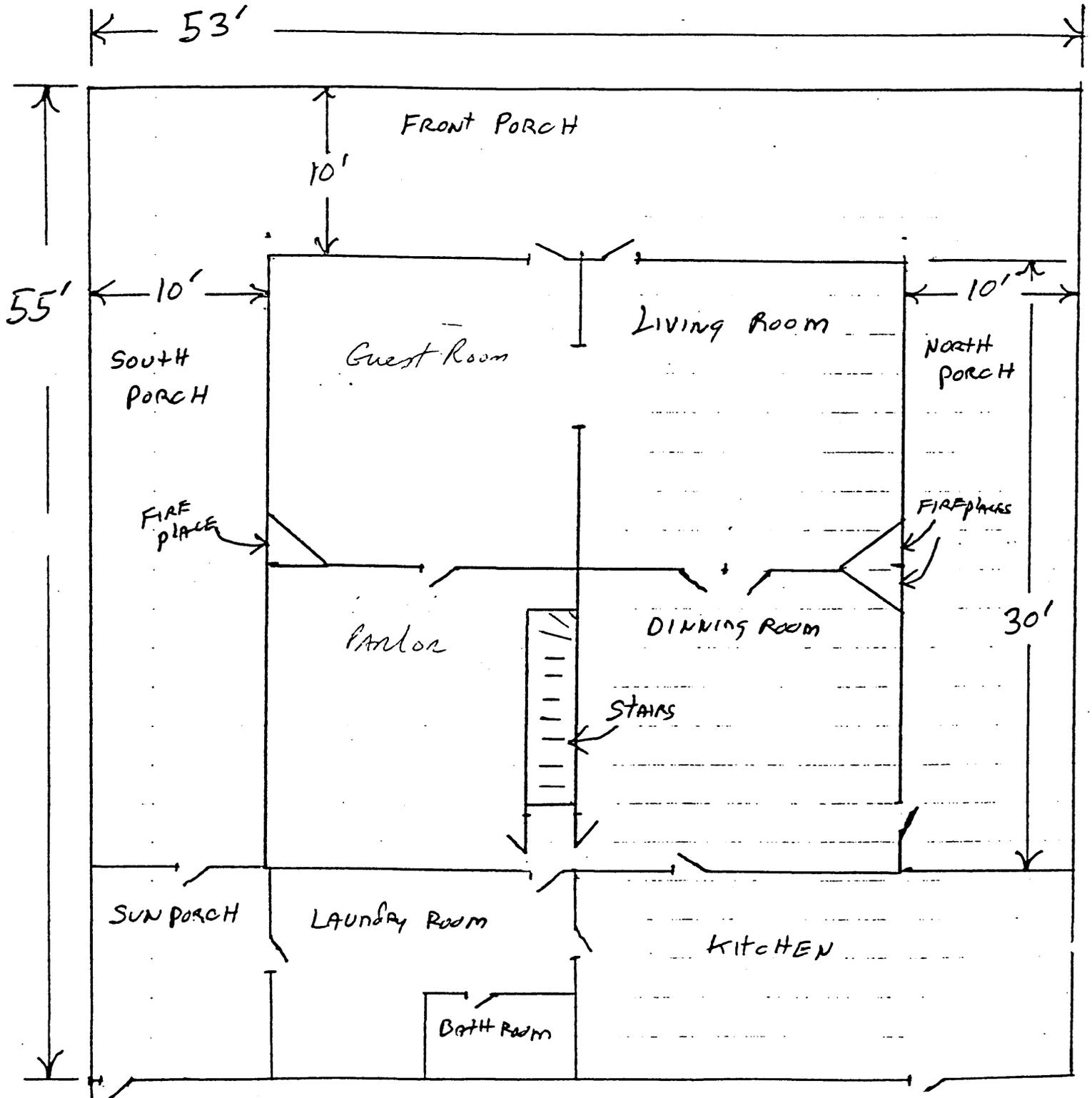
Photographs

Name of Property: Miles V. Wilsey House
City or Vicinity: Fitzgerald
County: Ben Hill
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: April, 1998

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 12: Front facade; photographer facing southeast.
- 2 of 12: Front facade, directly at twin front doors; photographer facing east.
- 3 of 12: Front and side facades; photographer facing northeast.
- 4 of 12: Rear (east) facade and north facade; photographer facing southwest.
- 5 of 12: Rear (east) facade and well-house; photographer facing northwest.
- 6 of 12: Outbuildings, well-house on right, tobacco barn in center, tractor barn on left; photographer facing northeast.
- 7 of 12: Interior, first floor, twin front doors; photographer facing southwest.
- 8 of 12: Interior, first floor, guest room looking into the parlor/study; photographer facing east.
- 9 of 12: Interior, first floor, living room looking into the dining room; photographer facing northeast.
- 10 of 12: Interior, first floor, stairway looking into dining room; photographer facing northwest.
- 11 of 12: Interior, second floor, stair hall looking toward the heater room; photographer facing north.
- 12 of 12: Interior, second floor, back bedroom; photographer facing southwest.

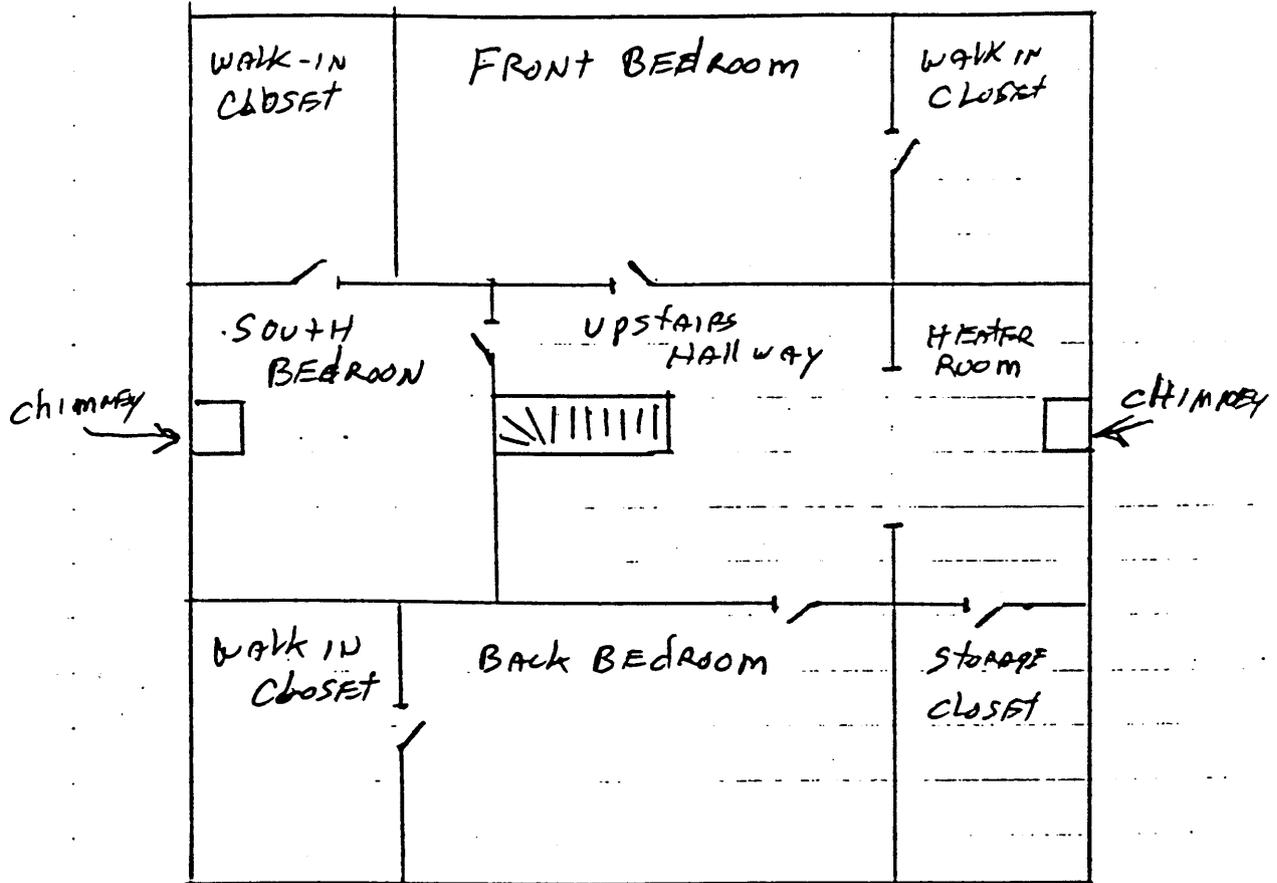
FLOOR PLAN OF DOWNSTAIRS (FIRST FLOOR)



Wilsey, Miles V., House
Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County, Georgia
First Floor Plan
Scale: Not to scale.
Source: Drawn by owners
Date: 1995

UPSTAIRS FLOOR PLAN (SECOND FLOOR)

— N —>



Wilsey, Miles V., House
Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County, Georgia
Second Floor Plan
Scale: Not to scale.
Source: Drawn by owners
Date: 1995

Wilsey, Miles V., House
Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County, Georgia
Site Plan/Plat Map

Scale: 1" = 50'

Source: Survey by James D. Weeks

Date: 1994

Key: The house and outbuildings are shown on the plat.

Harding
Road

POB Ext. E of Harding Rd &
E. R/W Hudson Rd

S. 01° 10' 20" E
2148.1'

S. 88° 54' 36" E 232.98'

TRACTOR
BARN

TOBACCO
BARN

1.44 Acres

Hudson Road (graded)

N. 01° 10' 20" W 265.29'

[Front of House]

DWELLING

SMOKE HOUSE
(WELL HOUSE)

S. 03° 29' 27" E 263.25'



N. 89° 32' 20" W 243.55'

Survey for Peggy S. Clemons
Land Lot # 282
Fourth Land District
Ben Hill County, Ga
Date; Sept. 22, 1994
Scale; 1" = 50'
Surveyed by James D. Weeks
Ga. Reg. Land Surveyor # 2111



In my opinion this plat is a
correct representation of
the land platted and has
been prepared in conform-
mity with the minimum
standards and require-
ments of law.