

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Maury</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Rattle and Snap**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Rattle and Snap**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Andrew Jackson Highway, Route 43**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**near Columbia**

STATE <b>Tennessee</b>	CODE	COUNTY: <b>Maury</b>	CODE
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Pork <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**O. M. Babcock**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Rattle and Snap, Route 1**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Columbia</b>	STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>	CODE
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Maury County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Columbia</b>	STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>	CODE
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Historic American Buildings Survey**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1936**     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Library of Congress**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Washington</b>	STATE: <b>D.C.</b>	CODE
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DATE

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rattle and Snap is a large, L-shaped two-story brick house with a shallow hipped roof of standing seam tin. The main section of the house is almost square with a long narrow service wing behind it. The plan of the house is typical of many of the major house in middle Tennessee. The front wall of the centrally placed hall is placed back from the principal plane of the front elevation, creating a recessed entrance and a space for a balcony above the front door. The rectangular hall is divided by a two column "screen" into the entrance hall and behind the "screen", and to the right of it, the cross hall with the stairs. To the right of the entrance hall is a square reception room, presently the dining room, and to the left is the splendid double parlor divided by a two column "screen" similar to the one in the hall. Beyond the entrance hall is the original double dining room whose space could be divided in half by large sliding doors. This room is now kept divided, one-half is the present kitchen, the other half the library.

On the second floor are five bedrooms leading off to the upper hall and two smaller rooms in the wing.

The decoration of the entrance hall and the double parlor is especially noteworthy. The hall has an elaborate pierced plaster work cornice carried on finely carved foliated modillions. The "screen" columns are fluted and carry Tower of the Winds Corinthian capitals. The doorways have boldly detailed architraves suggestive of the designs of Minard Lafever. The 52' long double parlor has an equally elaborate plaster cornice. The white marble mantels are replacements. The French windows in this room open by sliding back into recesses within the wall. The door hardware is plated silver. The main house has four interior end chimneys, and one interior chimney. The south side or rear elevation of Rattle and Snap has a two story L-shaped verandah. The roof on this elevation alone has dormer windows. The west elevation has a very restrained simple Greek Revival appearance. The corners of the house have engaged Corinthian pilasters which support a simple entablature. The windows have six over six pane double hung sash. The central feature of this elevation is the tetrastyle one-story entrance porch in the Tower of the Winds order which gives access to the cross hall. The east elevation is similar except that the porch is an exquisite example of delicate cast iron work.

The north or main front of Rattle and Snap is the architectural tour-de-force that gives the house its outstanding distinction. This elevation is stuccoed. The three-bay recessed entrance vestibule has a cast iron balcony at the second floor level. On either side of the doors on both the first and second floor are tall, narrow windows with semicircular glazed transoms. On either side of the recessed entrance are the single bays of the parlor on the east and the dining room on the west. Flanking these French windows are two-story engaged pilasters at the corners of the building. Across almost the entire north front is a monumental two-story Corinthian portico. Eight columns wide, the portico has the central four columns advanced forward of the rest forming a central pedimented accent that corresponds to the recessed entrance bays behind it. The corner columns supporting the advanced shallow pediment have another column behind them in line with the rest of

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**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1845

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rattle and Snap was built by George Knox Polk in 1845 near Columbia, Tennessee. Mr. Polk was a cousin of the eleventh President of the United States, James K. Polk. Though the architect for Rattle and Snap is not known, this large two-story brick house with its magnificent ten columned Corinthian portico has come to be regarded as one of the most distinguished examples of the late Greek Revival style in America.

The first years of the Greek Revival style in America were marked by a certain severity of style and sparseness of decoration epitomized by the early work of Robert Mills. This simplicity was reinforced by the rational influence of the European Neo-Classical architects such Sir John Soane and Claude-Nicholas Ledoux. As the 19th century advanced, the strong pull of the romantic movement tempered the Greek Revival style and by the 1840's it was competing with the Gothic Revival and the Italianate for public favor. A cross-pollination took place. The archeological correctness of earlier Greek Revival buildings were left behind and a certain devil-may-care freedom was taken with Greek Revival architectural forms. Rattle and Snap exemplifies this trend. The design and proportions of the portico, though Greek Revival in origin, were arranged in a completely mid-19th century romantic manner never contemplated by the ancients.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gifford A. Cochran, Grandeur in Tennessee, (New York, 1946);

Tennessee, American Guide Series, (New York, 1939);

Roberta S. Brandeu, ed., History of Homes and Gardens of Tennessee (Nashville, Tennessee, 1936).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NW	35°	34'	11"	87°	9'	44"		
NE	35°	34'	11"	87°	8'	39"		
SE	35°	33'	05"	87°	8'	39"		
SW	35°	33'	05"	87°	9'	44"		

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 519 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

W. Brown Morton III, Architect

ORGANIZATION

N.P.S., O.A.H.P., Historic Sites Survey

DATE

8/19/71

STREET AND NUMBER:

801 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE

D.C.

CODE

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Rattle and Snap

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7. Description

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the portico. This makes ten columns in all. The fluted shafts are of wood and the elaborate Corinthian capitals are made of sectional pieces of cast iron. The column bases are stone. The simple entablature of the portico is carried around the east and west elevations.

Rattle and Snap is dramatically sited three quarters of the way up a steeply sloping hillside, on axis with the entrance drive.

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History:

A detailed history of Rattle and Snap has so far never been undertaken. Available secondary sources are in agreement that Rattle and Snap was constructed by George Polk in 1845 and that it was the last of a series of large houses to be built in the Columbia vicinity by the Polk family. In 1867 the house was purchased by Joseph L. Granbery whose family owned the property until ca. 1920. They called the house Oakwood Hall. The house is presently owned by Mr. O. M. Babcock, Jr., who has undertaken a careful restoration of the house.

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Rattle and Snap Farm property description:

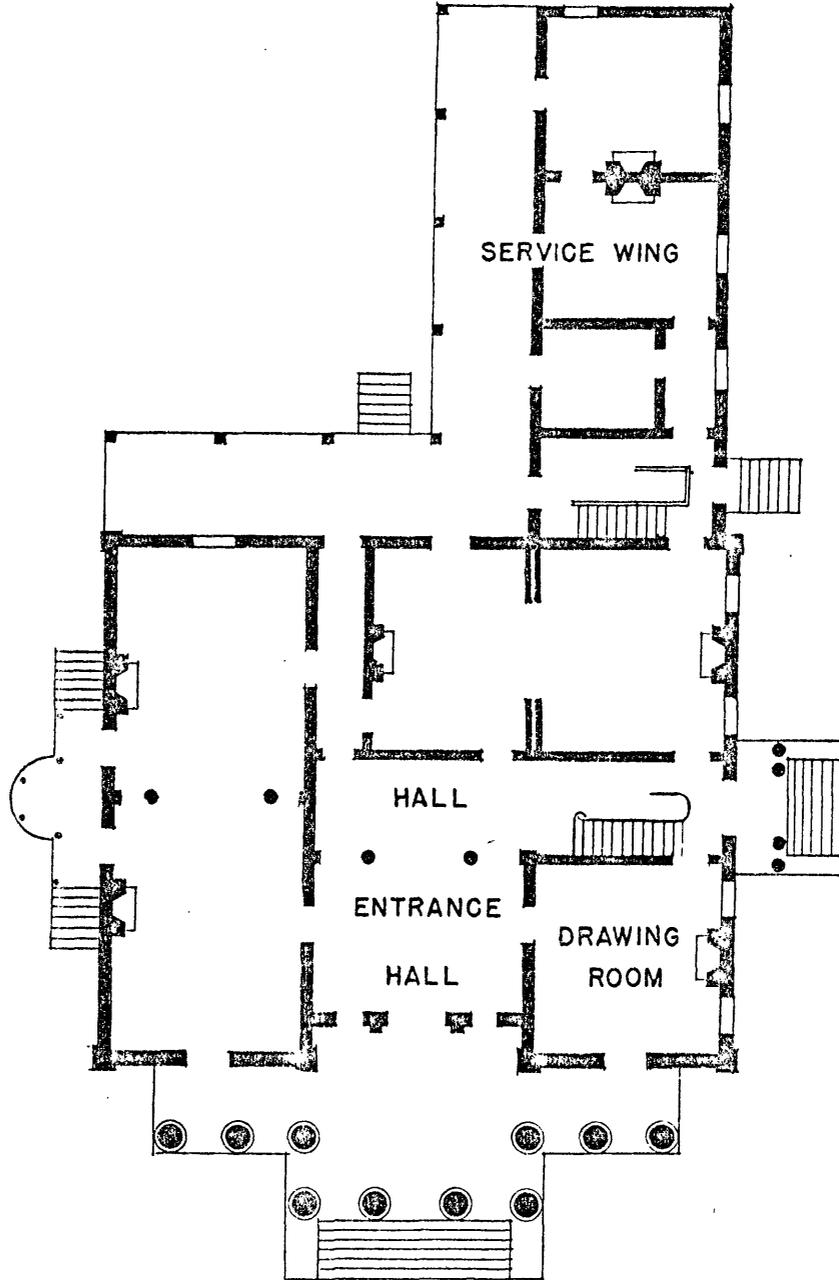
Boundary as follows; beginning at a point in the Columbia-Mt. Pleasant Turnpike being known as Jackson Highway at the north corner of a tract of land of 23.32 acres conveyed by Ridley and Dale to J. M. Hamilton by deed recorded in Book 209, Page 429 of Register's Office of Maury County, Tennessee running; thence south 20-1/2° east 35.53 chains to a post; thence north 75° east 1/2 chain to a post; thence south 9° west 39.74 chains to a stake, thence south 89-1/2° east 25.31 chains to a cut rock known as one of the four corners; thence with Napier and the middle of the road south 3° 35' west 30.17 chains to a stake, Brown's corner; thence with Brown north 89° west 68 chains to an iron rod, Mrs. Cecil's corner; thence with her line north 3° 35' east 30.17 chains to a stake, Mrs. Hawes corner; thence with her line north 26-1/2° west 40.54 chains to a stake in the said Columbia-Mt. Pleasant; thence with said pike north 57-3/4° east 60.20 chains to the beginning containing 520 acres more or less.

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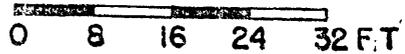
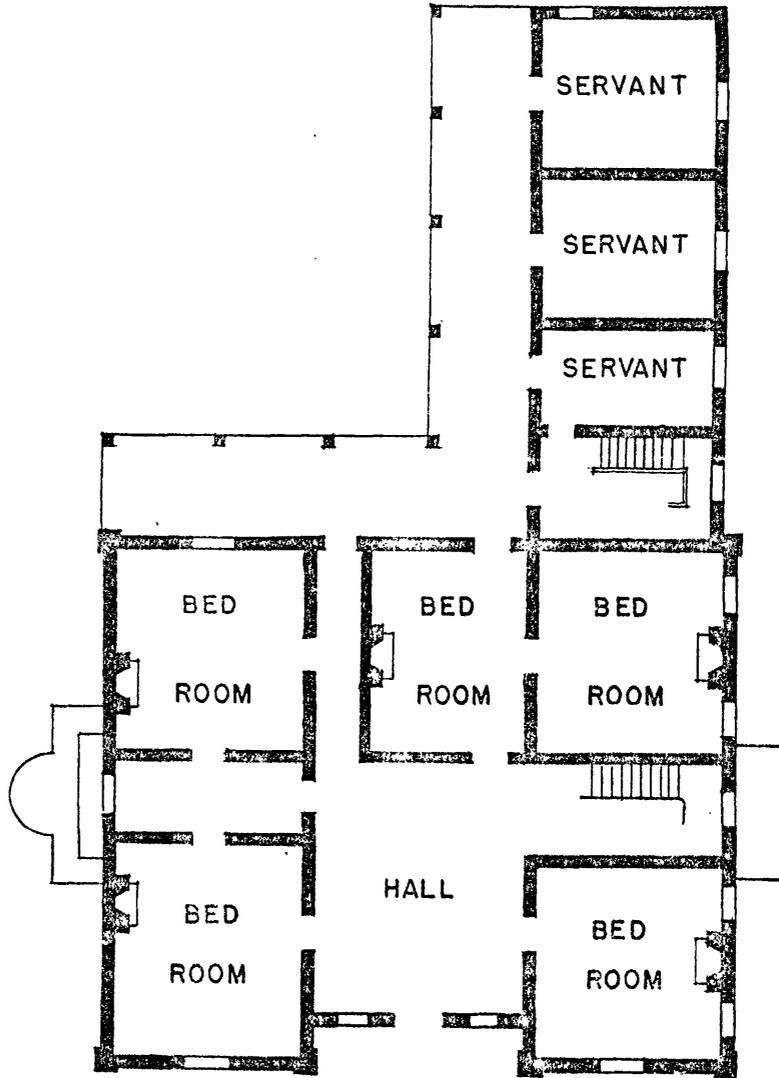
**Rattle and Snap**  
First Floor Plan

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**Rattle and Snap**  
Second Floor Plan

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Rattle and Snap front elevation

