

# DATA SHEET

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: Alabama	
COUNTY: St. Clair	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 26 1976

### 1. NAME

COMMON:  
St. Clair Springs

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Blue Grass Sulphur Springs, Cornelia and St. Clair Springs

### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
AL Highway 23

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Clair Springs Congressional District IV

STATE Alabama	CODE 01	COUNTY: St. Clair	CODE 115
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### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input 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"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Residents of St. Clair Springs

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Highway 23

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Clair Springs

STATE:  
Alabama

CODE:  
01

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
St. Clair County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Ashville Court Square

CITY OR TOWN:  
Ashville

STATE:  
Alabama

CODE:  
01

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
none

DATE OF SURVEY:  
 Federal  State  County  Local

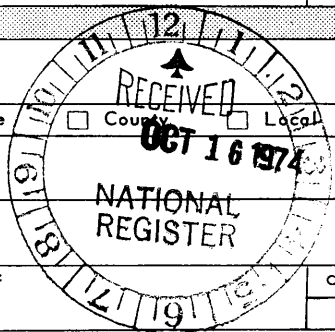
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
\_\_\_\_\_

STREET AND NUMBER:  
\_\_\_\_\_

CITY OR TOWN:  
\_\_\_\_\_

STATE:  
\_\_\_\_\_

CODE:  
\_\_\_\_\_



STATE:  
COUNTY:  
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

 Excellent
  Good
  Fair
  Deteriorated
  Ruins
  Unexposed

(Check One)

 Altered
  Unaltered

(Check One)

 Moved
  Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Clair Springs is located approximately two miles east of Springville and approximately thirteen miles southwest of Ashville, the county seat. Most of the 21 structures in the district are on Highway 23 which runs along the northern base of Jones Mountain, making the homes on the south side of the highway on a slope. There are two other streets in the district; they both enter the highway from the south. The western road is a dead end and the eastern road is two miles long connecting the highway with county road 174.

The five small springs are located within the spring yard on the northern side of the highway and the Big Spring is located directly across the highway.

The structures which remain are primarily Victorian and all are constructed of wood.

A list and description of the structures follows:

1. THE LOGS - 1932  
Owner: Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Riley  
One and one-half story log structure overlooking the big spring, was constructed of logs from the Wilrock Plantation.
2. ROSSER HOUSE - 1945  
Owner: Ruth Rosser  
One story frame structure with gabled roof, and a gabled roof porch on the eastern (front) elevation. The present owner once operated the St. Clair Springs Hotel.
3. THORNBURG STORE - C. 1900  
Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Odell Thornburg  
One story frame structure with gabled roof and simple trim; it formerly housed the post office and at present is the only store in the town.
4. RATLIFF HOUSE - c. 1900  
Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Brown  
One story frame structure with a porch on the north and east elevations, and stick-style influences.
5. LOVETT HOME - 1889  
Owner: S. M. Roper  
One-story frame structure with one end-exterior and end interior chimney; has been altered.
6. BRADY COTTAGE - prior to 1890  
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Brooks  
One story, white frame cottage with gingerbread trim on the front porch.
7. DR. F. E. PERKINS HOUSE - 1896  
Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Hooper D. Ray  
Raised frame cottage with restrained Victorian elements. Perkins was a dentist.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**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)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Resort</u>
<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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

St. Clair Springs is a late 19th century resort town which has changed very little in appearance since the turn of the century. The town consists of 18 structures which date from the mid 19th century to the turn of the century with the majority of the structures dating from the 1880's.

In 1832 Marion Thomason purchased land in the area and by 1845 people from Huntsville, Jacksonville, Talladega, and Blountsville, as well as those from the neighboring city of Ashville, were coming to camp in tents near the mineral waters of the sulphur springs.

Some time prior to the Civil War, Mr. Thomason built a four-room tavern for the accommodation of guests at the springs. Following the war, his brother, a mineralogist, took over the springs and the acreage surrounding them.

In the 1870's guests were beginning to come to the springs in large numbers seeking rest, water treatment and haven from the malaria and yellow fever epidemics. About 1875 a small hotel and seven cottages were constructed near the springs by Ryland Randolph on the Thomason property. The hotel, known as the St. Clair Springs Hotel, was managed by Thomason and attracted a devoted following.

By the early 80's the resort was well established and in 1888 St. Clair Springs was listed on state maps as Cornelia. At this time Mr. Francis M. Godwin, a son-in-law of Thomason, took over the operation of the hotel and a number of private homes were built. Many of the owners rented rooms and took in boarders during the summer months. Each of the houses had water rights for a certain number of guests.

Toward the turn of the century violence marred the annual picnic when a quarrel resulted in the shooting and death of a young man and the popularity of the hotel diminished until it finally closed in 1902.

In that same year Emanuel Lesser, proprietor of the Metropolitan Hotel in Birmingham built the St. Clair Inn. An experienced hotel man, Lesser began attracting crowds with weekly dances and entertainment from as far away as Mobile and Pensacola.

The popularity of the resort continued well into the 1920's and when the St. Clair Inn burned in 1925 attempts were made to establish another hotel.

With the exception of one store, constructed in 1900, the town is entirely residential, and most of the homes are maintained by permanent residents, who plan to restore the springs and their surroundings.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1. Crow, M.L.T., History of St. Clair County. Huntsville: Strode Publishers, 1973.
2. Personal interview: Mrs. Hooper Ray  
St. Clair Springs
3. Personal interview: Mrs. Carolynne Scott  
St. Clair Springs
4. Sulzby, James F., Jr. Historic Alabama Hotels and Resorts.  
University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1960.

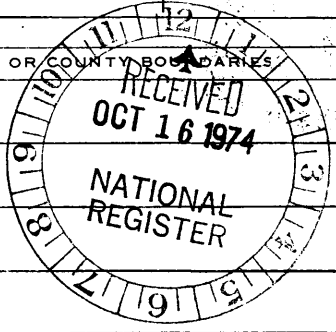
**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	33° 46' 02"	86° 24' 34"	UTM on map	°	"	
NE	33° 46' 02"	86° 24' 01"		°	"	
SE	33° 45' 39"	86° 24' 01"		°	"	
SW	33° 45' 39"	86° 24' 34"		°	"	

APPROXIMATE ACRAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **76 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**W. Warner Floyd**

ORGANIZATION: **Alabama Historical Commission**      DATE: **10-7-74**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**725 Monroe Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Montgomery**      STATE: **Alabama**      CODE: **01**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION      NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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 Milo B. Howard, Jr.

Title SAPO Ala.

Date Oct. 9, 1974

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

*Acting*  
James F. [Signature]  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 4/26/98

ATTEST:

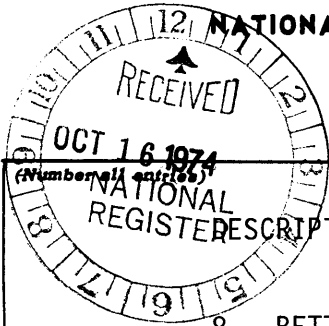
Charles [Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date 4.23.76

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

(Continuation Sheet)



DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)

8. BETTY MONTGOMERY HOUSE - 1886  
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Karl Scott  
One story frame Victorian cottage raised on brick piers; L-shaped with the gable-end ell extending on the facade. A porch extends across the facade.
9. GILLISON HOUSE - 1921  
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Karl Scott  
One story frame structure.
10. CAPTAIN SIMMONS HOUSE - prior to 1900  
Owners: A. E. and Judy Littlefield  
One story frame structure with gabled roof and two entrances on the gable end facade. A front porch was blown away in the tornado of 1973.
11. TALLEY HOUSE - 1875  
Owner: E. W. Riley  
One story board and batten structure, uninhabited and surrounded by under brush.
12. ALLEN-SMITH HOUSE - 1888  
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. James W. Smith  
One story frame structure with an ell extending the width of the front porch.
13. COOKEY-RODGERS HOUSE - mid 19th Century  
Owner: Mrs. Mary Rodgers  
One story log structure with weatherboarding on the sides and rear; the oldest structure in the district.
14. FORT-RATHBURN HOUSE - 1894  
Owner: Robert Earl Rathburn  
Two story, white frame, Victorian structure; a two-story porch extends 3/4 around the house.  
Constructed by a retired railroad engineer, it was one of the most popular guest homes.
15. FOX HOUSE - 1891  
Owner: O. T. Jones  
One story board and batten structure painted green; like many of the houses in the district it has a gable-end ell projecting from the front facade.

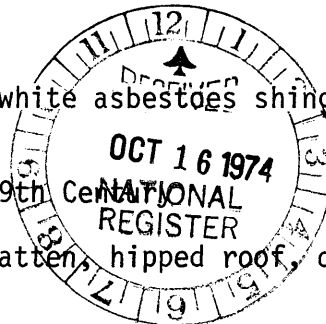
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Alabama
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(Number all entries)

- 16. CORNELIA COTTAGE - 1850  
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Jackson, Jr.  
One story rectangular frame structure with a pair of single doors flanked by side lights serving as the entrance; the gabled roof has an overhang supported by six columnettes which serves as the roof of the porch.
- 17. BLOUNT COTTAGE - 1876  
Owners: Violet Wolford Jackson and Mr. F. M. Jackson, Jr.  
One story frame structure with front ell.
- 18. MERRILL COTTAGE - 1875  
Owner: James B. Merril  
One story frame, with two front entrances and a gabled dormer.
- 19. GOODWIN-McCARTY HOUSE - 1887  
Owners: Mr. and Mrs. James D. McCarty  
One story frame house with gabled roof and an end-exterior rock chimney.
- 20. KEITH HOUSE - 1849  
Owners: Roderick and Rhonda Jean Brown  
One story frame with two front entrances, a gabled roof and end-exterior stone chimney.
- 21. RODGERS HOUSE - 1898  
Owner: Miss Ozella Rodgers  
Two story log house with gabled roof and two end-exterior stone chimneys.
- 22. CHAMBERS HOUSE - 1953  
Owner: Mrs. Chambers  
One-story frame, with white asbestos shingles, gabled portico.
- 23. OWENS-COPELAND - late 19th Century  
Owner: E. W. Riley  
One-story, board and batten, hipped roof, deteriorated condition.



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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

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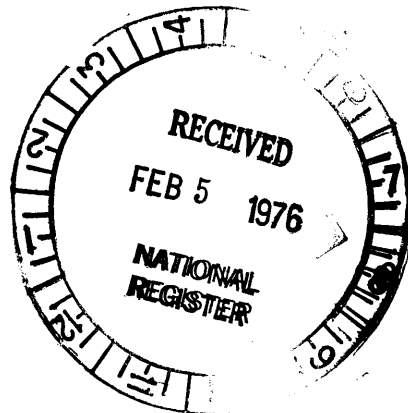
Addendum Sheet, Number 8, Significance.

The collection of late 19th Century buildings located within the boundaries of the St. Clair Springs District are strongly associated with the town's history as one of the state's most fashionable resorts and several of the structures are fine examples of small and unpretentious 'Victorian' cottages. While the three hotels which sequentially served the town did much to publicize the springs and draw visitors, the major attraction was the springs whose curative powers were widely assumed.

The majority of the houses were built as summer cottages and the owners took in boarders as a large majority of the guests of the resort chose to take accommodations in private homes, which assured them of a quiet and homelike atmosphere. The springs were used exclusively for drinking and each spring was posted with a description of the medical qualities and prescription for specific complaints. The springs were covered with pavillions and most of the daily social life revolved around them. All property owners in St. Clair Springs have access to the springs in their deeds and each owner was allowed water rights for a number of guests.

At one point an attempt was made to bottle waters and sell them and a small bottling plant was located next to the post office, but the venture proved unprofitable.

There are 23 structures located within the district boundaries and all are marked on the enclosed sketch map.



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

(Continuation Sheet)

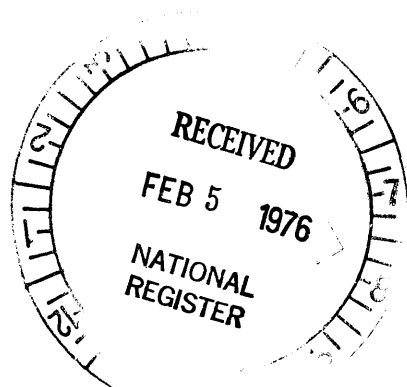
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(Number all entries)

Addendum Sheet, Number 2, Verbal description of property boundaries.

The point of beginning of St. Clair Springs Historical District boundary line being where said line crosses the south boundary line of Section 35, Township 14 South, Range 2 East, said point being approximately 950 feet east of southwest corner of said Section 35; thence continue in a southwesterly direction for a distance of 750 feet, more or less; thence in a southeasterly direction for a distance of 425 feet, more or less; thence in a northeasterly direction for 275 feet, more or less; thence in a southeasterly direction for a distance of 275 feet more or less; thence south for a distance of 525 feet, more or less; thence east for a distance of 360 feet more or less; thence in a northeasterly direction for 500 feet more or less; thence east for a distance of 550 feet, more or less; thence south for a distance of 500 feet, more or less; thence east for a distance of 475 feet, more or less; thence north for a distance of 400 feet, more or less; thence east for a distance of 600 feet, more or less; thence north for a distance of 350 feet, more or less; thence west for a distance of 150 feet, more or less; thence north for a distance of 200 feet, more or less; thence west for a distance of 800 feet, more or less; thence north for a distance of 150 feet, more or less; thence west for a distance of 425 feet, more or less; thence north for a distance of 1150 feet, more or less; thence in a northwesterly direction for 1300 feet, more or less; thence in a southwesterly direction for a distance of 1000 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning.

All of the above lying in and being a portion of Section 35, Township 14 South, Range 2 East and Section 2, Township 15 South, Range 2 East in St. Clair County, Alabama.





ST. CLAIR SPRINGS

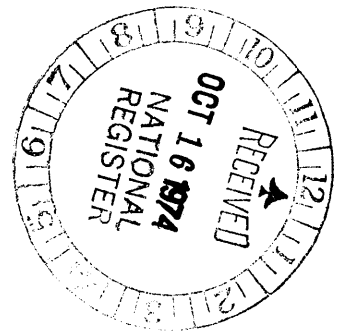
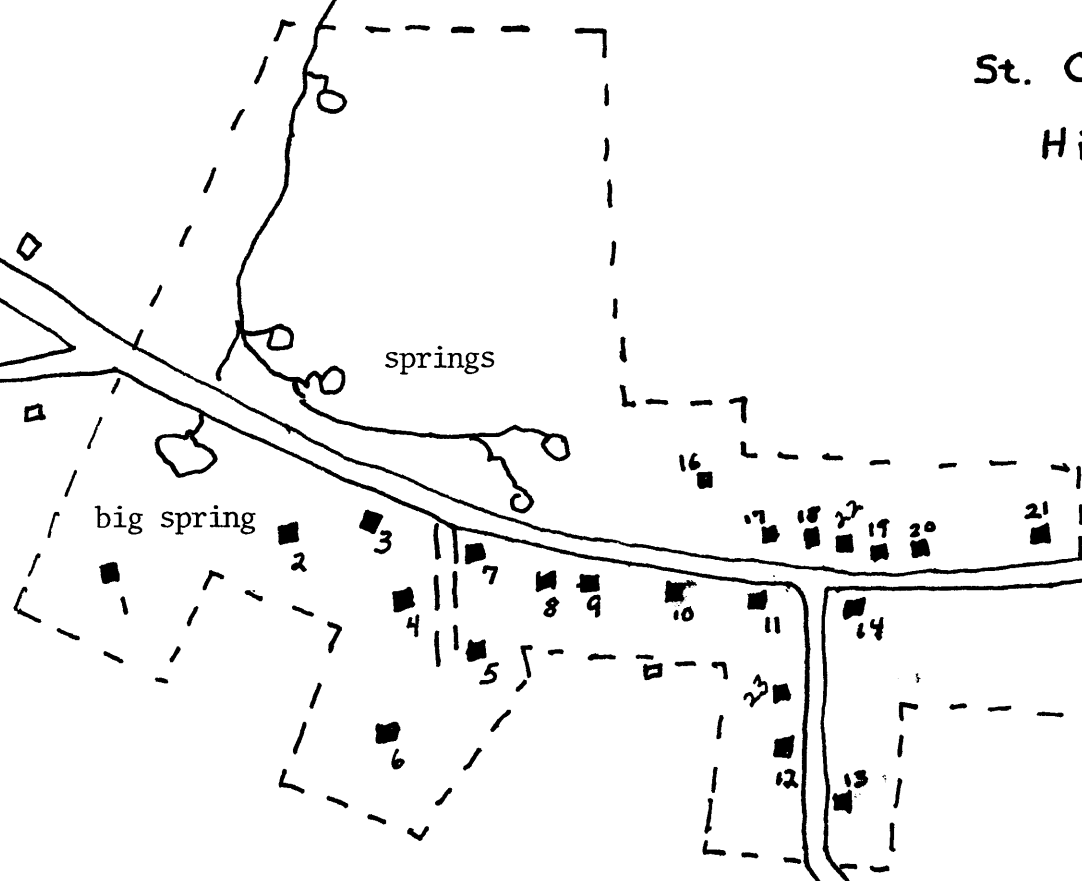
Lat. NW 33° 46' 02" 86 24' 34"  
NE 33° 46' 02" 86 24' 01"

Long. NW 33° 45' 39" 86 24' 01"  
NE 33° 45' 39" 86 24' 34"

St. Clair Springs  
Historic District

1. The Logs
2. Rosser House
3. Thornburg Store
4. Ratliff House
5. Lovett Home
6. Brady Cottage
7. Dr. F.E. Perkins House
8. Betty Montgomery House
9. Gillison House
10. Captain Simmons House
11. Talley House
12. Allen-Smith
13. Cookey-Rodgers House
14. Fort-Rathburn House
15. Fox House
16. Cornelia Cottage
17. Blount Cottage

18. Merrill Cottage
19. Goodwin-McCarty House
20. Keith House
21. Rodgers House
22. Chambers House
23. Owens-Copeland



jones MOUNTAIN