

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 16 1996

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Gorman, J.A., Dr., House

other names/site number The Hanging Cottage; The Hanging Rock Cottage; Cantrell House

2. Location

street & number Lookout Street not for publication N/A
city or town Mentone vicinity N/A
state Alabama code AL county DeKalb code 049 zip code 35984

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] 12/18/95
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: Elson A. Beall]
Entered in the
National Register

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

2/16/96
Date of Action

USDI/NPS Registration Form

Property Name Gorman, J.A., Dr., House

County and State DeKalb County, Alabama

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>1</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>1</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.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>
<u>Health Care</u>	<u>Hospital</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

USDI/NPS Registration Form

Property Name Gorman, J.A., Dr., House
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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
roof Asbestos
walls Weatherboard
other Log

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

8. Statement of Significance

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 1917-1922

Significant Dates N/A

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

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain significance on continuation sheet/s.)

USDI/NPS Registration Form

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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 3/4 acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	629000	3826940	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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gregory Frith (current owner) and AHC Reviewer

organization N/A date March 4, 1995

street & number 700 Merit Springs telephone (205) 546-7430

city or town Gadsden state AL zip code 35901

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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 Gregory Frith
street & number 700 Merit Springs telephone (205) 546-7430
city or town Gadsden state AL zip code 35901

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 6

Dr. J.A. Gorman House
DeKalb County, Alabama

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AGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Dr. J. A. Gorman House, more commonly known as the Hanging Cottage, is a rustic bungalow located on the brow of Lookout Mountain that overlooks Railroad Valley and Sand Mountain. The bungalow, consistent with the design principles for this architectural style, blends well with its natural surroundings. Its many windows and wide verandahs invite the outdoors in, blurring the distinction between exterior and interior spaces. Because the Gorman House is so well situated within its wooded setting, it is believed that the landscaping of the property has not been altered much over time. Both the house and its setting retain a high degree of integrity.

The house is a large, 17 room, two-and-one-half story, wood frame building on a stone foundation that literally hangs over the edge of Lookout Mountain. It is supported on the brow side by a rock wall that is 22 feet high at its highest point. The house has a side-gabled roof with shed-roofed dormers.

The foundation is constructed of stone and varies in height from less than a foot (on the lee side) to 22 feet (on the brow side). There are no ventilators as such, except for natural cracks in the rock wall that have occurred. There is also a small wooden door leading into the dirt cellar that is kept shut at all times.

The interior framing is heart pine throughout the house, and in most rooms is flushboard.

The exterior of the house is mostly clad in weatherboard, but board and batten and novelty board are also utilized. There is no special treatment to the boards other than being painted.

A large, integral, 12-foot wide, L-shaped porch extends along the brow side of the home and also wraps around the north elevation. Support is provided by original log timbers (debarked and stained) that extend around the entire porch. The porch is approximately 65 feet long along the brow, and 30 feet long on the north end of the house.

On the middle floor there are eight windows and two doors on the front and sides of the home.

There is one chimney in the home, made of hand-cut, rectangular stone. The local name for the stone is "moss-rock." The chimney extends up through the two-and-one-half stories of the house but is open only on the second story. A wood-burning stove has been inserted in this opening (an Ashley stove). It is located on the main floor of the living room.

The fireplace mantel is one large stone, rectangular in shape. It is approximately 5 feet across, 12 inches deep, and four feet thick. It was obviously a major job to position this stone when the fireplace was being constructed.

There are three doors in the house, one in front, one in back, and one on the north end. They are each handmade with heart pine, and fastened with hand-wrought iron. They are all single doors, and are extremely sturdy.

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Dr. J.A. Gorman House
DeKalb County, Alabama

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Windows throughout the home are the same in general design. There are 55 of them on exterior walls. Each was handmade at the time of installation. There is also a commercially made storm window over each original window. These were added later, approximately 1980. Panes are installed in the original windows by old fashioned glazing. Interior doors are similar to exterior doors in that they are made from 7-9 inch strips of heart pine, placed horizontally, and fastened with hand-wrought iron.

When the owner purchased the home in 1985, a large percentage of the windows, both interior and exterior, had mostly broken panes. As the windows had been handmade, he had to specifically measure each pane prior to having glass cut. This was a major undertaking, as he had to: (a) take specific measurements; (b) learn to glaze; (c) remove all storm windows (some in very precarious locations); and (d) replace the newly cut panes in exactly the same locations. Upstairs windows, when opened, were held in place from above, with handmade "fishhook" looking catches.

There are no chairrails in the home. Baseboards are actually 1" x 4" pieces of pine board. There is also no original wallpaper or sheetrock.

The floors are also heart pine, made of 4-inch-wide boards. They were originally waxed but have since been covered with polyurethane.

Door locks and handles are metal, as are the hinges. Door knobs are a mixture of glass and metal. They are all original.

Lighting fixtures in three of the bedrooms are original and appear to be made of decorative porcelain. The upstairs had no original lighting, as there had been no electricity there. Since then, external wiring has allowed the addition of floor lamps. Except for the fireplace, there was no original heating system. Gas heat has since been added.

A bathroom extension was added to the south end of the home in approximately 1940. A small utility porch was also added to the north end of the house, along with a small wooden deck at about the same time. Additional decks on the property, but not attached to the home, have been added in the 1980s.

The setting of the home contributes to its originality. Located on what may be the most scenic view on Lookout Mountain, the home literally sits "overhanging" the edge of the brow. The porch faces to the west with Sand Mountain visible across the valley. To the far right, facing northwest, is the Rising Fawn, Georgia area. To the far left, facing southwest, is the Valley Head/Fort Payne area. Literally, hundreds of square miles are visible to the eye. On a clear day, approximately 35 water towers can be counted on Sand Mountain, representing various communities and townships.

A large cistern, approximately 20 feet wide, 15 feet long, and 15 feet deep, is located under the northwest corner of the home. It is made of hand-cut stone and finished on the inside

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Dr. J.A. Gorman House
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with a semi-smooth concrete. Water was originally gathered in the cistern from large gutters on the roof (which have since rusted away and been removed). The water was used for bathing and washing clothes. Drinking water was secured from a hand-dug well on the front porch. The well is approximately 12 feet deep and has a constant supply of water. In fact, it has had good water even through local droughts.

The home is actually constructed on top of a massive rock formation. This rock actually extends into one of the rooms on the bottom floor. Here, when it rains, water seeps into the home, forms little "waterfalls," which then drain into a main drainage area formed with concrete. The water then runs out the other side of the house. This was obviously the old-fashioned means of "waterproofing."

There is a garage/storage shed located to the northeast of the home. It is believed to date from the 1920s. It is utilitarian in design with a gable roof.

ARCHAEOLOGY COMPONENT

Although no formal archaeological survey has been made of this property, the potential for subsurface remains may be high. Buried portions may contain significant information that may be useful in interpreting the entire property.

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Dr. J. A. Gorman House
DeKalb County, Alabama

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Dr. J. A. Gorman House or Hanging Cottage is an excellent interpretation of the bungalow style of architecture within the local context of Mentone. The property articulates the design principles of the bungalow movement most successfully. Built of wood and stone, the bungalow is nestled in a wooded setting on the brow of a hill. Its wide verandah and numerous, multi-light windows break down the barriers between indoor and outdoor spaces. This characteristic is a fundamental component of high style bungalow design. The Dr. J. A. Gorman House with its wood wall treatments, stone chimney, wide porch with log "columns" and exposed rafter ends retains a high degree of architectural integrity. Its aesthetic is enhanced by its location in a wooded setting on the brow of a mountain.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

In 1917, Dr. J. A. Gorman came to Valley Head via train from New Orleans. Dr. Gorman was reportedly the first dentist in the United States to use x-rays to fix cavities. When in Valley Head, Dr. Gorman took a horse and buggy trip to Mentone, an early twentieth century resort town. He walked to the current site of the home, was impressed with the view, and decided to have a home constructed there. The home took five years to build. Local residents were afraid the home would fall over the edge, as many predicted. Dr. Gorman used the home, primarily during the summers, until 1944. Dr. Gorman also founded Lookout Mountain Camp for boys in 1927-1928 on 150 acres next to Little River. Little River is east of the Gorman House and on the other side of Mentone. This camp is the second oldest Mentone summer camp. As late as 1994, the camp, known as the Ponderosa Bible Camp, was still being run by a grandson of Dr. Gorman.

On August 4, 1944, Dr. Gorman sold the home to Dr. W.T. Cantrell, a local physician. Dr. Cantrell practiced medicine in the home until 1979. Many local residents were actually born in the home, or at least received medical treatment there. Dr. Cantrell's family sold the home to Joe and Becky Kirby on November 9, 1979. The Kirbys lived there for a brief time, and then left. The home fell into serious disrepair from lack of maintenance. The present owner purchased it from the Kirbys on March 1, 1985.

Other homes were built in the general location during the 1920s, including one next door by Senator Miles Allgood, who represented Alabama in the U.S. Senate for many years. His two sons currently live on both sides of the property. (Senator Allgood is credited with starting TVA, during the Franklin Roosevelt era.)

The current owner spent two years, beginning in 1985, restoring the building. He did most of the work personally and made every effort to restore the home to its original condition. This included the use of Baty's local sawmill, where he was able to have lumber cut exactly as it was in 1920. Therefore, even on the roof, where several boards had decayed, he had new ones cut from rough lumber for replacement. No significant changes were made in the appearance of the home, except maybe for painting and other aesthetic improvements.

There are no current threats to the building.

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Dr. J. A. Gorman House
DeKalb County, Alabama

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Deed Record listed in the DeKalb County Courthouse.

"Lookout Mountain Camp," The DeKalb Legend, 1975-1976, p.36.

"Owners of the Hanging Cottage," The DeKalb Advertiser, April 7, 1994, pp.8-9.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Commencing at the Northeast corner of Lot #1 in Block #4 of the Signal Rock Park Subdivision in Mentone, Alabama, and running North 26 degrees 10' West 329.8 feet for a point of beginning; thence run North 54 degrees 35' West 117.0 feet to a point on the top of Bluff of Lookout Mountain; thence run North 46 degrees 50' East with said bluff 257.0 feet; thence run South 13 degrees 55' East 250.0 feet; thence run North 87 degrees 43' West 93.5 feet; thence run South 85 degrees 40' West 51.0 feet to the point of beginning.

The above described property lying in the NE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 28, Township 5 South, Range 10 East in the town of Mentone, DeKalb County, Alabama and being a part of Block NO. 6 of said Signal Rock Park Subdivision and containing 0.75 acre, more or less.

(Boundary described in Book of Records, Book 22, Page 711, DeKalb County Courthouse, Ft. Payne, Alabama.)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These are the boundaries currently associated with the property.