



# Perry Hall (The Mahler Farm) Historic Structures Report

Draft, June 15, 2015



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Prepared for the City of Montevallo  
and the Montevallo Historic Preservation Commission

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**Contents**

**Summary Information ..... 4**

**Part 1. Historical Background and Context ..... 5**

    Early History (Prior to 1834) .....5

    Perry Hall (1836-1946).....6

    Physical Description .....14

        Siteplan .....17

        First Floor Plan .....18

        Second Floor Plan .....19

        Basement Pan.....20

        Roof Plan .....21

        Photographs .....22

**Part 2. Developmental History ..... 51**

**Part 3. Condition Assessment and Recommendations ..... 58**

    Historic Preservation Objectives.....58

    Structural Observations .....59

    Condition Assessment .....59

    General Maintenance Recommendations .....70

    Historic Preservation Recommendations .....74

    Code Compliance .....76

**Author Qualification Statement ..... 78**

**Appendices ..... 79**

Perry Hall (The Mahler Farm)  
Montevallo, Shelby County, Alabama

**Summary Information**

Location: 2679 Montevallo Road (Alabama Highway 119)

Date of Construction: 1834, remodeled 1946-1951  
UTM: 16 / 514610 E / 3665147 N  
Lat/Lon: 33° 07' 29.7" N, 86° 50' 36.2" W  
Township 22 S, Range 3W 15, Section 15

Present Owner: City of Montevallo

Historic Use: Farmhouse

Present Use: Not in use

Significance: Constructed circa 1834 for the family of Sion "Jacob" Perry, Perry Hall has important historical associations with the Perry family and with the early developmental history of Shelby County. One of the early settlers of the region, Perry became a prominent planter during the antebellum period. The house and farmstead also have historical and architectural significance as a result of their ownership by the family of John August Mahler (1899-1984) from 1946 until 2013. During the Mahler's ownership, Perry Hall was substantially remodeled from 1946 to 1951 and the house retains architectural integrity from that period. This remodeling has significance as a representative example of a private historic preservation effort in the immediate post World-War II era.

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## Historical Background and Context

The history of Perry Hall dates to its construction by Sion “Jacob” Perry, III (1805-1886), an early pioneer in this region of Alabama, who built the house circa 1834. While the house has important historical associations with the Perry family and with the developmental history of Shelby County, it has architectural integrity from a major remodeling by the family of John August Mahler (1899-1984) in 1946-1951. Much of the overall form of the house was retained in the remodeling, however, the only visible surviving historic fabric from the original house includes some window sash and entrance elements. While the remodeling compromised the architectural integrity of the original house, it has significance in its own right as a representative example of a private historic preservation effort of the immediate post World-War II era.

### Early History (Prior to 1834)

The early history of what would become the Perry Hall property remains clouded by time. The property was originally part of two tracts that were patented in 1823. Rhoda Marony, acting as an assignee of John Person, obtained the patent for the west half of the northwest quarter section of section 15, township 22 south, range 3 west on June 2, 1823.<sup>1</sup> She also obtained the patent for the east half of the quarter section on that same date. Marony is recorded living in Shelby County as early as 1819.<sup>2</sup> Marony sold the property, excepting a small parcel that she transferred to Shoal Creek Baptist Church, to Edward King on November 7, 1826 for \$2,050.<sup>3</sup> King appears to have been a land speculator, as there are dozens of real estate transactions listed in the deed index for this period. A search of the reverse indices failed to uncover recordings for transfers occurring after this sale through its acquisition by Perry.

It is uncertain when settlement occurred on the property, but the presence of the much-vandalized remains of a family cemetery along the north property may indicate that it was settled prior to 1826. One well preserved marker remains for Elizabeth Teague Lawler (born in North Carolina in 1774) who died in Montevallo on March 26, 1826. She was the daughter of Isaac Teague and his wife Mary and the husband of Levi Lawler (1767-1836).<sup>4</sup> Levi and Elizabeth were married about 1789 in Randolph County, North Carolina but appear to have relocated to Rutherford County, Tennessee about 1800. Levi had relocated to Talladega County by the time of his death in 1836.<sup>5</sup> The markers for both Levi, who is buried in the Mardisville Cemetery in Talladega County and Elizabeth were placed at an unknown date by their grandson Levi Welbourne Lawler (1816-1892), a wealthy planter who owned a 3,000-acre estate south of Talladega.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, Patents, accession #AL0650\_\_232, document #717 and document 716, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/>.

<sup>2</sup> Columbiana, AL, Shelby County Probate Office, Index to Will Book 1818-1841, p. 26, records that “Rhoda Marony was appointed guardian of Emily Moore, bastard child of Polly Marony.”

<sup>3</sup> Deed book A-E, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.findagrave.com>, Levi Lawler, Elizabeth Teague Lawler; Elizabeth’s marker is still visible in the cemetery on the site.

<sup>5</sup> John D. Anderson, Jr., “Descendants of John Teague,” [http://www.megjohn.info/genealogy/John\\_Teague\\_1635\\_Descendants.pdf](http://www.megjohn.info/genealogy/John_Teague_1635_Descendants.pdf)



Grave marker for Elizabeth Teague Lawler in the family cemetery at Perry Hall

**Perry Hall (1836-1946)**

Sion “Jacob” Perry, III (1804-1886), was born in Rutherford County, Tennessee on January 6, 1805 and was the grandson of Sion Jacob Perry, I, an Irish immigrant who settled in North Carolina and who fought in the Revolutionary War before relocating to Tennessee. Jacob Perry and his friend William Moore migrated to Alabama in 1824 and settled near present-day Montevallo. Jacob soon married Sarah McLeroy (1807-1854), the sister of another planter who owned land nearby. In 1834, Perry purchased land that includes the present site and, according to family tradition, constructed the present house shortly thereafter.<sup>6</sup> The house is not indicated on LaTourrette’s 1837 map of Alabama and West Florida, but that map appears to only indicate certain landmark properties.<sup>7</sup>

Jacob Perry was elected Justice of the Peace for Shelby County by 1845. According to his diaries, his responsibilities included holding summary court, overseeing the county home for the aged, issuing peace and other warrants, supervising highway maintenance, and performing marriages.<sup>8</sup>

The 1850 census records Jacob Perry (age 45) living in Shelby County with his wife Sarah (age 43), three sons, and seven daughters. The enumeration lists the value of Jacob’s real estate at \$2,500. The slave schedule for that year lists the following slaves for Jacob Perry: eight males, ranging in age from six to twenty, and four females, ranging in age from nine to thirty-eight. The agriculture census for that year breaks down Perry’s farm as follows: land valued at \$2,500 including 183 acres of improved land and 429 acres of unimproved land; \$400 worth of farm implements and machinery; livestock valued at \$1,161 including six horses, three asses, fourteen milch cows, four working oxen, fourteen other cattle, six sheep, and eighty swine; crop production including one hundred bushels of wheat, 1,800 bushels of corn, two hundred bushels of wheat, eleven bales of ginned cotton, fifty bushels



<sup>6</sup> Thomas E. de Shazo, Maj. Gen., U. S. Army, Ret., History of Sion Jacob Perry Family in Shelby County, Alabama (Alexandria, Virginia: by the author, 1973), copy in the author’s collection original from which copies were made by others is located in the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

<sup>7</sup> LaTourrette’s 1837 map of Alabama and West Florida, available at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/19980/19980-h/19980-h.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

of peas and beans, 100 bushels of sweet potatoes, and two hundred pounds of butter; \$30 worth of home made manufacturing products; and \$65 worth of animals slaughtered.

Sarah Perry died in 1854. In 1858, Jacob married Elizabeth Harris, the widow of Joseph Harris (ca. 1811-before 1880).



*Perry Hall as it appeared in 1946*

The 1860 census lists Perry and his wife Elizabeth living with twelve children, including three of Elizabeth's children from her former marriage. Perry listed the value of his land at \$6,000 and his personal Property at \$20,000. Perry's son William, age 26, is listed as a Methodist Preacher with personal property valued at \$3,500, a son S.F. is listed as a farmer with personal property valued at \$750, and Elizabeth's children are listed with \$3,000 in personal property each. Jacob Perry owned sixteen slaves including: eleven males, ranging in age between one and thirty, and six females, ranging in age from seventeen to forty-five. William G. Perry is listed as owning four slaves of his own. The agriculture census for that year breaks down Perry's farm as follows: land valued at \$6,000 including 300 acres of improved land and 500 acres of unimproved land; \$700 worth of farm implements and machinery; livestock valued at \$2,500 including seven horses, five asses, ten milch cows, four working oxen, thirty-five other cattle, twenty-five sheep, and fifty swine; and crop production including three hundred bushels of wheat, 2,200 bushels of corn, thirty ginned cotton bales, seventy-five pounds of wool, fifty bushels of peas, twenty-five bushels of Irish potatoes, four hundred bushels of sweet potatoes, 250 pounds of butter, and fifteen tons of hay; and orchard products valued at \$50. By contrast, the average value of the 160 farms in the Montevallo post office census area was \$1,729. 149 of the farms were the size of Jacob's or smaller and eleven were larger with the largest being the farm of Daniel W. Prentice valued at \$25,000.

A History of Sion Jacob Perry Family in Shelby County, Alabama, written by Thomas E. de Shazo, and based principally on a letter by Jacob's daughter Mary Perry Davis, contains the following account of the farm based on diaries and records that had been kept by Jacob:

The Perry Hall plantation expanded and prospered. The number of slaves were increased to twelve. At several points in his diary, Jacob noted that he had twelve plows going in his cotton fields that day. He kept books on farm costs and production. From 1840 to 1850, his net profits ran from \$5,000 to

\$8,000 per year. During the 1850s, they were higher, and in 1859 and 1860 they were \$16,000 for each year.<sup>9</sup>

De Shazo continued:

There were orchards and vineyards, vegetable gardens,...poultry and dairy barns and hog farms. Quarters for slaves were comfortably built and well located. These were standing into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and well into the memory of the writer and his generation. There were large barns for the work of animals and storage buildings for machinery and produce. A dam was built on Shoal Creek and a mill race and water powered cotton gin constructed, together with a sawmill and woodworking shop. Cane fields and horse power mills produced syrup and sugar. Slaves developed talent to operate this machinery, and as Jacob notes repeatedly in his diary, Perry Hall was nearly self-sufficient.

Profits from the fields furnished and decorated Perry Hall in fine style. It was customary to purchase these items in Europe and bring them through Mobile.<sup>10</sup>

When the Civil War started, three of Jacob's sons, William, Jack, and Joe Harris (stepson), joined the Confederate Army and were assigned to the 44<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry Regiment. Jacob Perry sent one of his slaves named Bill along with his three sons as a servant. According to Jacob's diaries: "Bill made a notable name for himself. He was reputed to be the best chicken thief in the army. He provided pork, wild game and fish to supplement the rations."<sup>11</sup> In March 1865, Wilson's Calvary raided Montevallo and, according to family tradition:

A cavalry detachment hunting food and forage appeared at Perry Hall. Mounted troopers dashed through the flower gardens decapitating chickens with sabers. As the young officer attempted to search the house, Joseph Harris' young wife stood on the steps and threatened to box his ears. He made a dignified retreat.<sup>12</sup>

is recorded in the 1870 census living with his wife Elizabeth, four children, one white and one black farm worker, and two black domestic servants.

The effects of the war on Jacob Perry's fortunes can be seen in the 1870 census. He is recorded living with his wife Elizabeth, four children, one white and one black farm worker, and two black domestic servants with real estate valued at \$2,200. The agricultural census listed: 175 acres of improved land, 550 acres woodland, and 175 acres of other unimproved land; \$200 worth of implements; livestock valued at \$1,250 including one horse, five mules and asses, four milch cows, no oxen, twelve sheep, and thirty swine; and

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<sup>9</sup> de Shazo, "History of Sion Jacob Perry Family

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

crop production including two hundred bushels of winter wheat, twenty bushels of rye, 800 bushels of corn, and 100 bushels of oats. Total wages paid that year by the farm were \$750. The average value of the 65 farms in the Montevallo post office census area that year was \$680, with Jacob's being among the six largest. The largest farm was valued at \$6,000, three other larger farms were valued at \$3,000 apiece, and one was valued at \$2,700.

DeShazo's account of the years immediately after the war

With the land producing no profit, but steady loss, by 1870 there was not money to pay the wages of the workers or increased land taxes which the Carpetbag regime had imposed. To avoid forced sale of the land for delinquent taxes, Jacob made a loan in 1870 from a bank in Scotland at high interest rate. The repayment of this modest loan of \$1,200 became a hopeless burden on Perry Hall. Year after year only carrying the charges could be met. In 1876, military government ended and gradually the corrupt Carpetbaggers were dismissed from county offices and recovery slowly commenced in spite of economic bondage of cartel fixed prices of cotton.<sup>13</sup>

Jacob is listed in the 1880 census as a 75-year old widower living with his son Martin, three daughters, and a boarder who worked on the farm. The agricultural census recorded the total value of the farmland and buildings at \$4,000 including 120 acres of improved land and 350 acres woodland, and 120 acres of other unimproved land.

According to DeShazo: "By 1886, the loan was repaid and at long last, financial distress started to ease. Jacob's ledger showed that he paid, over a period of sixteen years, a total of \$12,800 for a \$1,200 loan."<sup>14</sup> Jacob Perry died on December 16, of that year and is buried in the Moore's Crossroads Cemetery alongside his first wife Sarah McLeroy Perry. Sion Jason "Jack" Perry (1836-1902) inherited Perry Hall.

Jack Perry married Martha Harris (1844-1886) and the couple had six children. The 1900 census records Sion J. Perry living in the house with his son Charles, his two unmarried sisters, Amelia and Johannah, and William Wells, a boarder. After Jack's death in April 1902, his sisters remained in the house for a time, but the land was rented to tenant farmers. By 1905, the family began to sell the property to others in a series of transactions that reduced the farm to its present 167-acre size.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Mahler Farm (1946-2013)**

John August Mahler (1899-1984) was born on April 22, 1899 and was raised in Forest Park, Illinois. During World War I, Mahler enlisted in the Army on October 14, 1918 but,

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<sup>13</sup> DeSazo, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Deeds for property on the east side of the highway include: Deed Book 33, p. 208, July 22, 1905 W.S. Perry, Charles Perry, Mary Lee West, Thos. Perry, George Deshazo surviving heirs of Martha Perry et al to George Deshazo, \$1; Deed Book 33, p. 210, 1905 May 10, Geo. Desazo & wife to James H. Mauldin, \$2,000. The deed transferring the subject property has not been located.

with the end of the war, was released on December 11 of that year.<sup>16</sup> The 1920 census lists John living in Forest Park with his parents, Johann and Marie Mahler, German immigrants. John listed no occupation on either his 1918 World War I draft registration or the 1920 census. Mahler graduated from college and became a teacher in the Calumet township public schools. It was there that he met his future wife, Elizabeth Datzman (1897-1986), also a teacher. John and Elizabeth were married on January 23, 1923 in Benton County, Indiana.<sup>17</sup>

The couple is recorded in the 1925 city directory for Gary, Indiana at 2625 Monroe Street, with John listed as a teacher. The census taker for the 1930 census appears to have been confused, as the entry for 2625 Monroe Street lists John Mahler (age 80), who was born in Illinois and was a principal at a public school, as the head of the household. Elizabeth (age 31) is listed as his wife of twenty-four years. John and Elizabeth's two daughters, Elizabeth (age 6) and Janice (age 5), and one son John (age 3-8/12), are also listed at the address along with a boarder. The 1940 census indicates that as of 1935, the Mahlers owned a house valued at \$3,500 and that John had completed college "to the 5<sup>th</sup> or a subsequent year."<sup>18</sup>

The Mahlers are still recorded in the Gary city directories through 1937 but relocated to Jefferson County, Alabama by 1939, where they resided at 712 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in Fairfield. Mahler listed his occupation as a shearman for the Tennessee Coal and Iron and Railroad Company. According to family tradition, the Mahlers relocated to Alabama to find higher paying work in the steel industry that was expanding due to the increase in the production of war materials in the build up toward World War II. The family is recorded in the 1940 census in Fairfield.

Mahler decided after World War II that he wanted to farm. According to the recollection of his family:

John wanted a farm. Daughter Elizabeth remembers her father saying about this time that if he was to ever have a farm it would have to be now. The Mahler family had spent pleasant summers on Elizabeth's parents' farm in central Indiana and John found he loved farming and working on a farm. Forty seven years old, he admitted he wasn't getting any younger. Daughters Elizabeth and Janice were independent now. Johnny would be able to help with a farm when he got home. It was now or never.<sup>19</sup>

The family recollection continues:

Also, John knew he had another source for help and even instruction. Elizabeth had grown up on a farm at Fowler, Benton County, Indiana.

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<sup>16</sup> Ancestry.com. *U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Ancestry.com. *Indiana, Select Marriages, 1780-1992* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 2014.

<sup>18</sup> Ancestry.com. *1940 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

<sup>19</sup> "Mahler Family-20<sup>th</sup> Century Pioneers," typescript in possession of the City of Montevallo, p. 1.

Benton County was and still is almost completely agricultural, which testifies to the deep fertile prairie soils that make the area part of the great midwestern American corn belt. Elizabeth knew a lot about farming from her growing up experience in Indiana and she loved the farming life.

The Mahlers began looking for a suitable property and, on August 1946, purchased the former Perry Hall property from Bessie Allen an unmarried woman and E.P. Allen and his wife Florence Troy Allen for \$4,000. The sale included 167 acres of the former plantation.<sup>20</sup>

The condition of Perry Hall and the farm itself had deteriorated as photos from the period substantiate. The family's recollections:

Elizabeth would have seen the stark contrast between the level, productive farms of her childhood and this eroded, worn out place. Here, the soils in the flatter portions were thin, the topsoil largely missing and the underlying dolomitic limestone bedrock exposed at places along the creek and in gullied areas of the fields. The hillsides were badly eroded and largely denuded of all vegetation, the result of the early 19th century slave based economy attempt to increase cotton production by clearing and cultivating ever more land, finally clearing even the steeper slopes which had been always protected by the virgin forest. Unprotected, the topsoil had washed first into Shoal Creek, then the Cahaba River and ultimately into Mobile Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Such land consuming cultivation had ceased only when the resulting gullies made further row crop cultivation impractical and unprofitable... In 1946 fences on the old place were largely down or nonexistent. Farm buildings were tumble-down. The only animals were a couple of horses pastured there by neighbors Peddie and Calvin Bearden. A sagging building at the rear of the house had served as kitchen. An open well along with a primitive windlass and bucket provided drinking water. There were no sanitary facilities, only a primitive privy. Alabama 119, the road in front of the house, was unpaved. Preparation for paving the road was underway, making the road impassable in wet weather. For many months there would be no vehicle access south to Montevallo via Alabama 119 as a new concrete bridge across the creek was being built. No electric service was available.<sup>21</sup>

The house was named Perry Hall. Over a century later when John and Elizabeth Mahler bought it and a 167 acre remnant of the Perry farm, Perry Hall showed a patrician graciousness in name only. The house, like the land itself, was worn out and in a state of decrepitude. Before the days of governmental incentives for preserving historic old buildings John Mahler made the gutsy decision to salvage the house even as he worked to build a viable farm. When he finished the major work, five or six years later, the house foot print was just about the only thing that remained the same. Betty

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<sup>20</sup> Columbiana, AL, Shelby County Judge of Probate, Deed Book 126, p. 38, August 01, 1946.

<sup>21</sup> Mahler Family-20<sup>th</sup> Century Pioneers," pp. 3-4.

Mahler, in talking about her father, said that she didn't know just where he got the self confidence and knowledge to do all the things that he did, that he just did them.

To make a viable farmstead John would have to build the fences and farm buildings, obtain the necessary agricultural equipment and animals and acquire the expertise for operating the equipment and managing the farm.

The extent of renovation to the Perry Hall house are also described:

To make the house livable, it would have to be completely rebuilt. The weathered siding would have to be replaced. All the house exterior trim for the walls, windows and roof must be rebuilt and the roof structure at the gable ends reconstructed so as to provide a roof overhang for the gabled ends. The windows and exterior doors, the house roofing and the front porch must be replaced or rebuilt. The ancient kitchen structure in rear would have to be rebuilt and repurposed. A garage was needed. The pillar foundations of the house would have to be replaced with modern continuous perimeter foundations. The two house chimneys and their fireplaces and hearths required rebuilding work. John determined that he would install central heating, which in turn required the construction of a basement for a furnace and coal storage and the installation of pipes and radiators for sending the heat throughout the house. A kitchen and bathrooms must be added inside the house along with the hot and cold water plumbing to supply them and a septic system to receive and treat the wastes. A pressure water supply would have to be developed and pump installed in the old open well or in a new well. Since the house had originally provided living space for 11 children, and in later years had been divided into at least two rental units, much of the interior space had to be redesigned and reconstructed. Two narrow staircases must be replaced with a single, architecturally appropriate staircase. The entire house must be wired for electricity and an electrical power distribution line would have to be run from Montevallo.

The Mahlers operated the farm until John gradually retired in the mid to late 1960s. "As the years went by, Betty, Jan, and Johnny came to live and work at home as John and Elizabeth got older. Johnny took over more and more of the farm activities and under his direction the farm became a beef cattle and hay operation."<sup>22</sup> Shoals Creek Farm, Inc. was incorporated in November 1968 with John Mahler and his three children listed as incorporators and the farm was transferred to its ownership.

John Mahler died in October 1984 and Elizabeth Mahler died in January 1986.<sup>23</sup> Her family has written:

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> Ancestry.com. *U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2011.

These yankee transplants from Indiana had taken the faded and tattered relic of an old southern house and moribund farm and rebuilt them into a unique homestead. Respecting the history of the house, they let it stand while completely redesigning and reconstructing it for their needs. The resulting homestead became their lifelong home. It stands a testament to their creativity, energy, and practical building skills.<sup>24</sup>

Janice Mahler passed away in June 2003 and her brother John Datzman Mahler (born 1926) died on August 13, 2013.<sup>25</sup> On November 22, 2013, Elizabeth (“Betty”) Mahler, serving as president of Shoals Creek Farm, Inc. transferred ownership of the property to the City of Montevallo.<sup>26</sup>

As the oldest child, Betty said she never expected to be the last survivor of the family. She said that she and Johnny had never discussed what was to be done with the homestead. Now with limited mobility herself, she realized that she couldn’t stay at the homeplace alone. Thursday, August 8, 2013, returning from the burial service for Johnny, she went by Montevallo City Hall, called Mayor Hollie Cost out of a meeting and told her that she wanted to explore the possibility of giving some land to the city.

On November 22, 2013 Betty signed a deed giving all properties included in the Mahler farm to the City of Montevallo. Covenants made a part of the deed specify that a major portion of the land, “shall be retained by Grantee for the purpose of establishing a city park to be enjoyed by Grantee’s citizens, with said park to be named ‘Shoal Creek Park.’” The covenants also specify that “Grantee shall preserve the old Mahler home place which is situated upon the premises, for the purpose of enjoyment and usage by the Grantee and its citizens.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Mahler Family-20<sup>th</sup> Century Pioneers,” pp. 20.

<sup>25</sup> “John Datzman Mahler” <http://obits.al.com/obituaries/birmingham/obituary>

<sup>26</sup> Deed Book 255, p. 625, November 22, 2013.

<sup>27</sup> “Mahler Family-20<sup>th</sup> Century Pioneers”.

## Physical Description

The current Perry Hall property is a 167-acre parcel. Montevallo Road (Alabama Highway 119) essentially bisects Section 15 in a diagonal line from southwest to northeast. The larger portion of the property is located to the northwest of the highway and is bounded by the highway and the north and west section lines. The farmstead is located north of the center of this portion of the property. The remainder of the parcel is located east of Highway 119 and is bounded by the highway to the west, Shoal Creek to the south, and the east and north section lines.

The topography of the site is generally flat with some low undulating surfaces and small outcroppings of rock. Shoal Creek constrains the farmstead and enters the west portion of the property at its midpoint before meandering in a generally northwesterly direction before curving back eastward and then northward where it exists the property in its northeast quadrant. The house is located toward the midpoint of the property and is surrounded by a grassed lawn with numerous mature trees and shrubs. A fence line to the northwest of the house separates the yard from the remaining farm buildings that are clustered to the northwest along a farm lane that passes by the south side of the house and extends to the northwest. Pasture land slopes down to the southwest from the lane to the creek, surrounds the farm outbuildings, and extends in a northeasterly direction to the property lines. With the exception of a wooded area at the northwest corner of the property and wooded areas that bound the creek, the remainder of the western portion of the site is open pastureland that is divided by fence lines. The land east of the highway is also open pastureland. A buffer of cedar trees lines the highway and the northern and eastern property lines.

Perry Hall is a two-story frame dwelling with a side gable composition shingle roof with a slightly extended rear gable and exterior end stuccoed brick chimneys off center at each side elevation and one interior stuccoed brick flue at its rear slope. The house faces south-southeast (hereinafter for descriptive purposes south) and has a rectangular core that is five bays wide and three bays deep. A small service building located to the north of the west side of the rear of the house and separated from the house by a breezeway is also rectangular and has a one by two bay core with a rear facing gable composition shingle roof. An extension to the service building houses a two-car garage. A less than full facade flat-roofed porch supported by paired wood pillars is centered at the façade and has a concrete deck. Simple wood railing surrounds the porch roof. A full-width recessed porch is located along the west elevation of the rear service building under an extended eave supported by wood posts and has a concrete deck. The roof of the rear service building extends to the rear elevation of the main house. A shed stoop extends from its east side across the adjacent rear entrance bay. The stoop has a simple metal railing, a concrete deck, and is supported by square wood posts.

The principal entrance is located in the center bay of the south façade and has a transom and sidelights. Two single wood nine-over-nine light double hung sash windows flank the entrance to either side. Similar window openings at the outer bays of the upper level have nine-over-six sash. A smaller central window above the entrance, with six-over-six light sash, is slightly narrower and its lintel height is lower than those at the outer bays. The façade is clad with cementitious shingle siding and has a simple wooden boxed cornice. An

applied metal gutter drains to downspouts at either side of the façade. A concrete block foundation is now obscured by metal skirting.

The west elevation is finished similar to the façade. Single windows at the first and second floor levels, similar to those at the façade, flank the exterior chimney at the south end of the elevation. A triple six-over-six window is located at the north end of the first floor with a similar double window centered above it at the second floor. The east elevation is similar to the west elevation except that it has a double window at the first floor instead of a triple window. Finishes and fenestration at the rear elevation is similar to that of the façade except that second story windows are in lower openings with six-over-six light sash.

The interior plan of the first floor of main house includes a central stair hall that is flanked to the east by a large parlor at the front of the house and a smaller sitting room to the rear. A dining room flanks the stair hall to the west at the front of the house with a kitchen to its rear. Small bathrooms have been partitioned at the front and rear ends of the second floor stair hall. Larger bedrooms flank the stair hall along the front of the house and are separated from narrower bedrooms along the rear of the house by intermediate closets. An open staircase rises along the west wall of the hallway and has a molded wood handrail supported by tapered balusters that terminates in a scroll atop a rounded bottom step. Carpeting was later applied over the formerly exposed wood steps and painted risers. A modern accessibility chair on a rail has been added along the west wall of the stair. Ceilings are typically finished with acoustical tiles, walls are typically finishes with plaster or sheetrock, and floors are typically finished narrow strip wood flooring except at the kitchen and bathrooms that are finished with vinyl floor coverings. The first floor stair hall, parlor, and dining room retain molded wood cornices. Windows and doors have plain wood surrounds and plain wood baseboards are typical. Entrance doors are vertical board cedar doors. Interior doors are typically finished hollow core doors.

The house has a small basement under its northwest corner that houses a furnace and the electrical feed to the house. The basement has concrete block walls and a concrete floor. A single foundation window at its west end provides natural light. The basement is accessed by an open stairwell along the rear of the house just to the east of the kitchen door. A simple metal railing enclosed the north and east sides of the well opening. Stairs are concrete and descend to a small concrete floor onto which a door from the basement opens.

The rear service building has a single off-center entrance at its south wall with a wood board and batter door. A similar entrance is located in the southern bay of the west elevation and is flanked to the north by a single wood six-over-eight light window. Similar windows are set within each bay of the east elevation. The interior is a single open room with a concrete floor, sheet metal wainscoting, and sheetrock upper walls and ceiling. The garage extension is slightly wider to the east than the service building. It contains two open garage bays separated at the west wall by a pipe column.

## Outbuildings

In addition to the attached rear service building, Perry Hall retains four contributing agricultural outbuildings, one noncontributing agricultural outbuilding, and the remnants of a small family cemetery.

Animal Barn. The southernmost animal barn is a one-story frame building with a front gable composition shingle roof with cross gables. The building is clad with V-crimped metal siding.

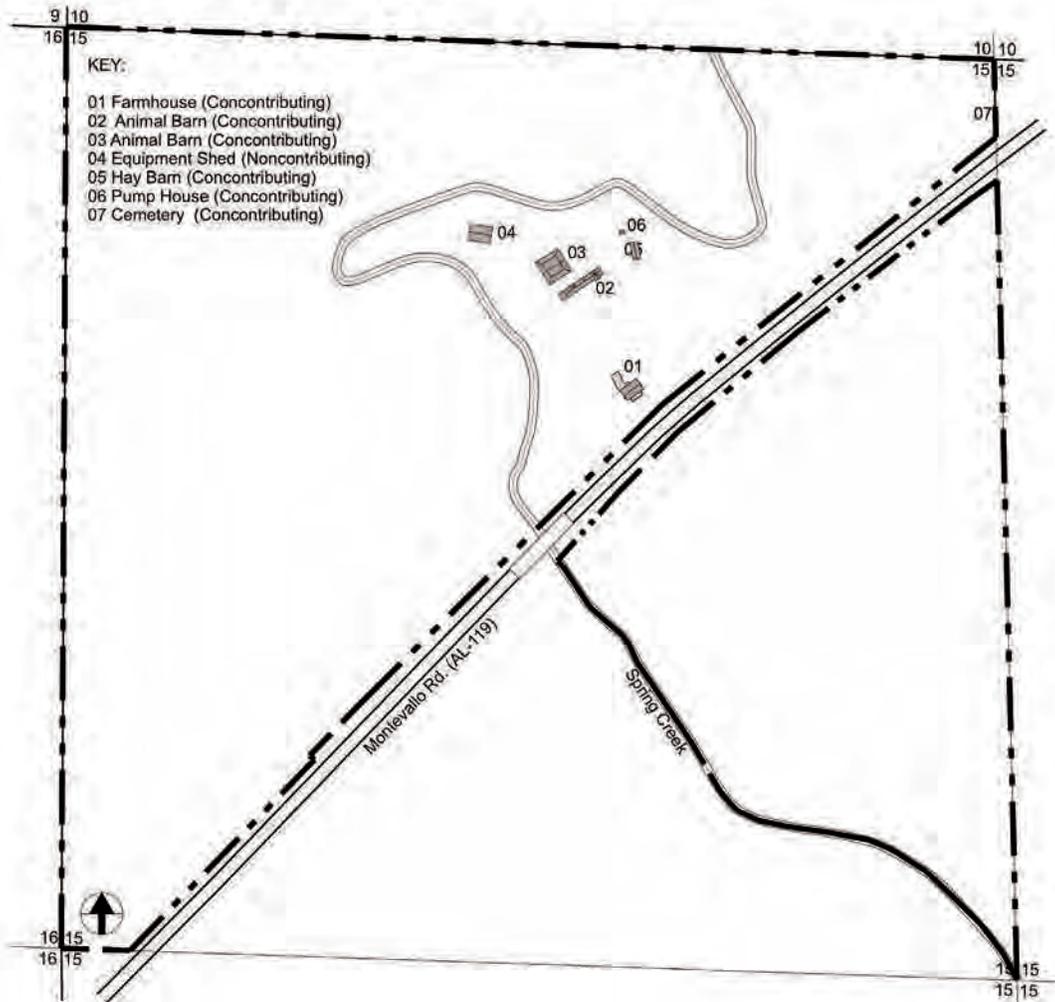
Animal Barn. The northernmost animal barn is a one-story frame building with a gable roof that is surrounded by outsheds. The building is clad with V-crimped metal siding.

Equipment Shed. The equipment shed is a modern one story pole shed with a front-facing gable composition shingle roof V-crimped metal siding.

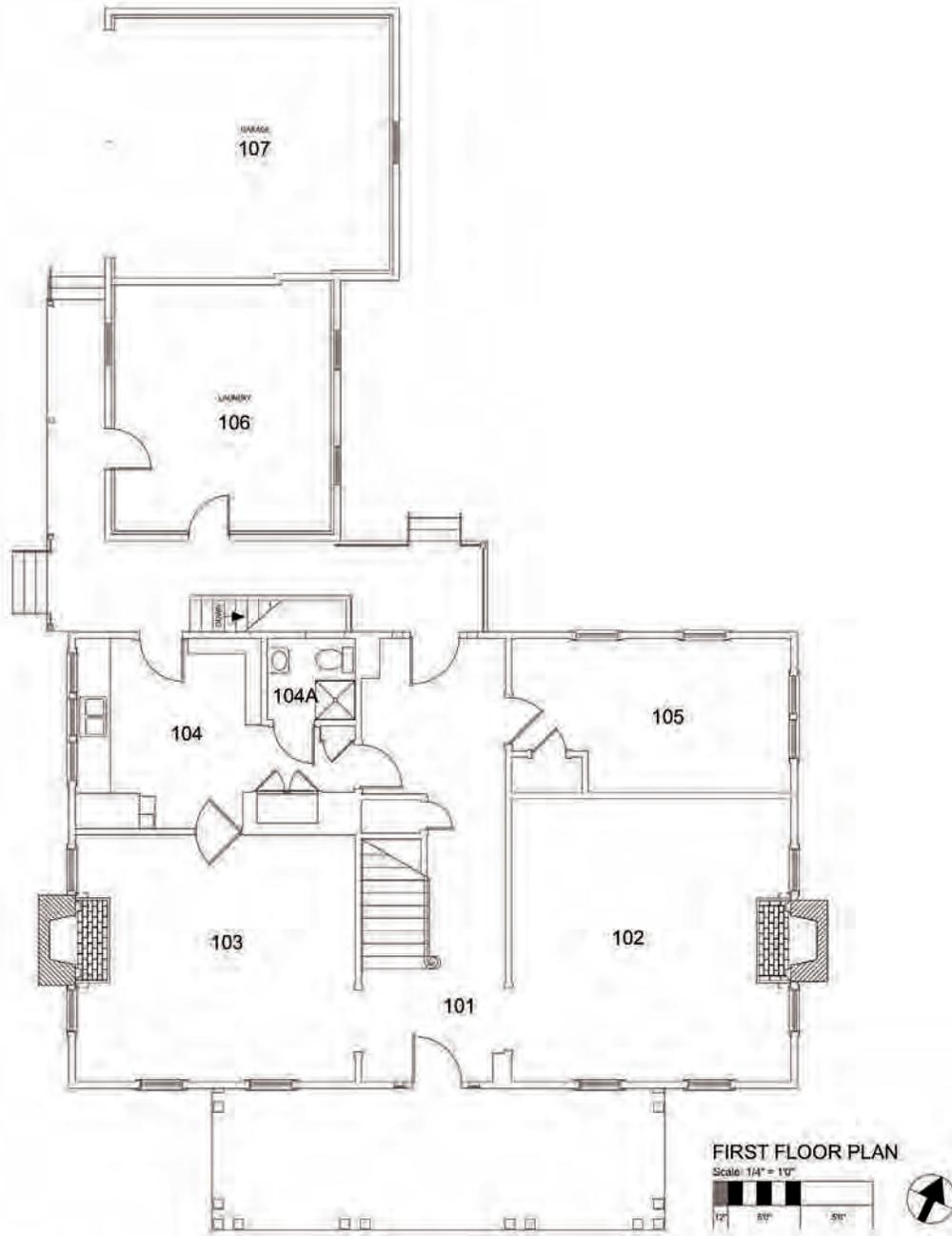
Hay Barn. The equipment shed is a one story frame building with a side gable composition shingle roof. The building is clad with V-crimped metal siding,

Pump House. The pump house is a one story concrete block building with a front-facing gable composition shingle roof.

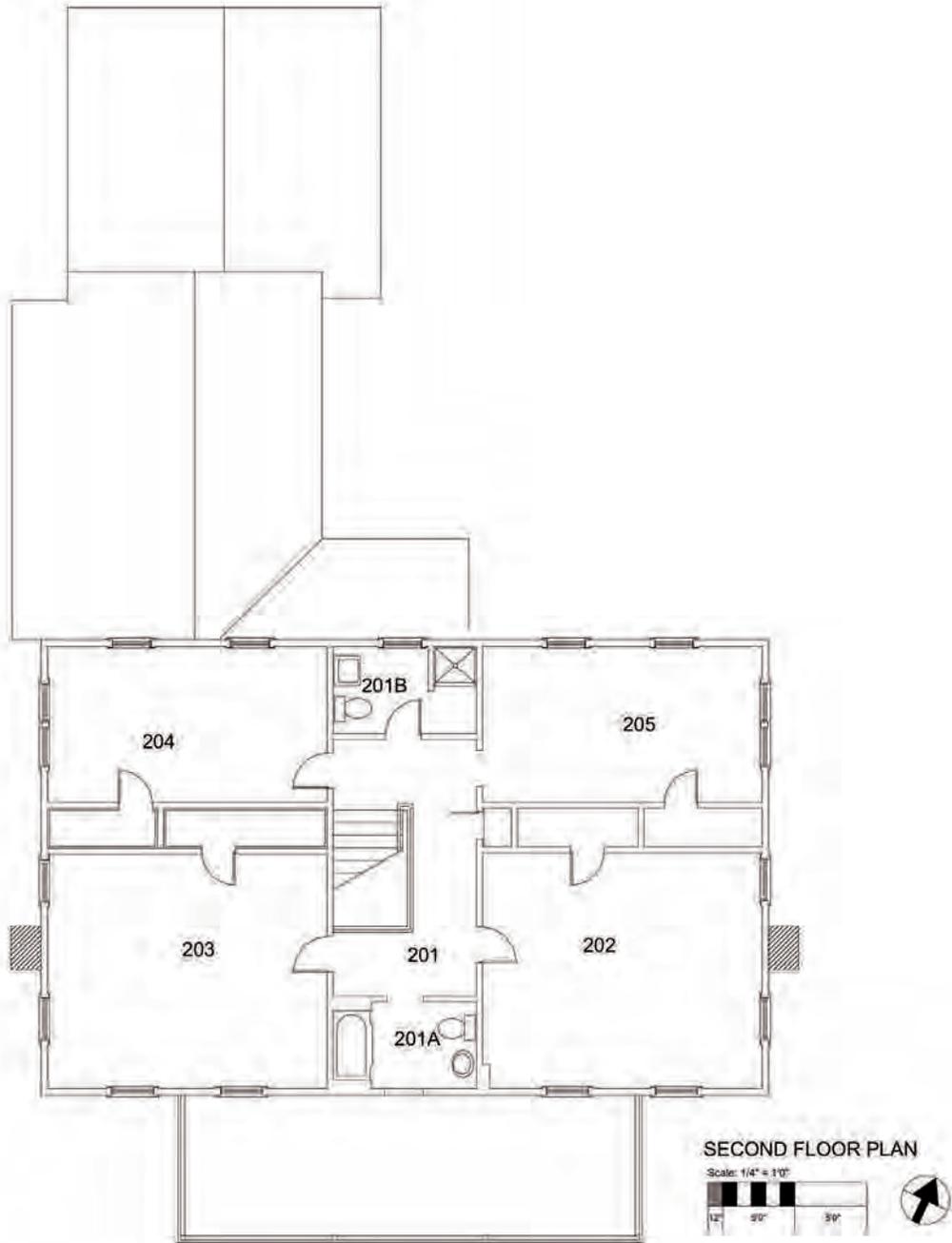
# Siteplan



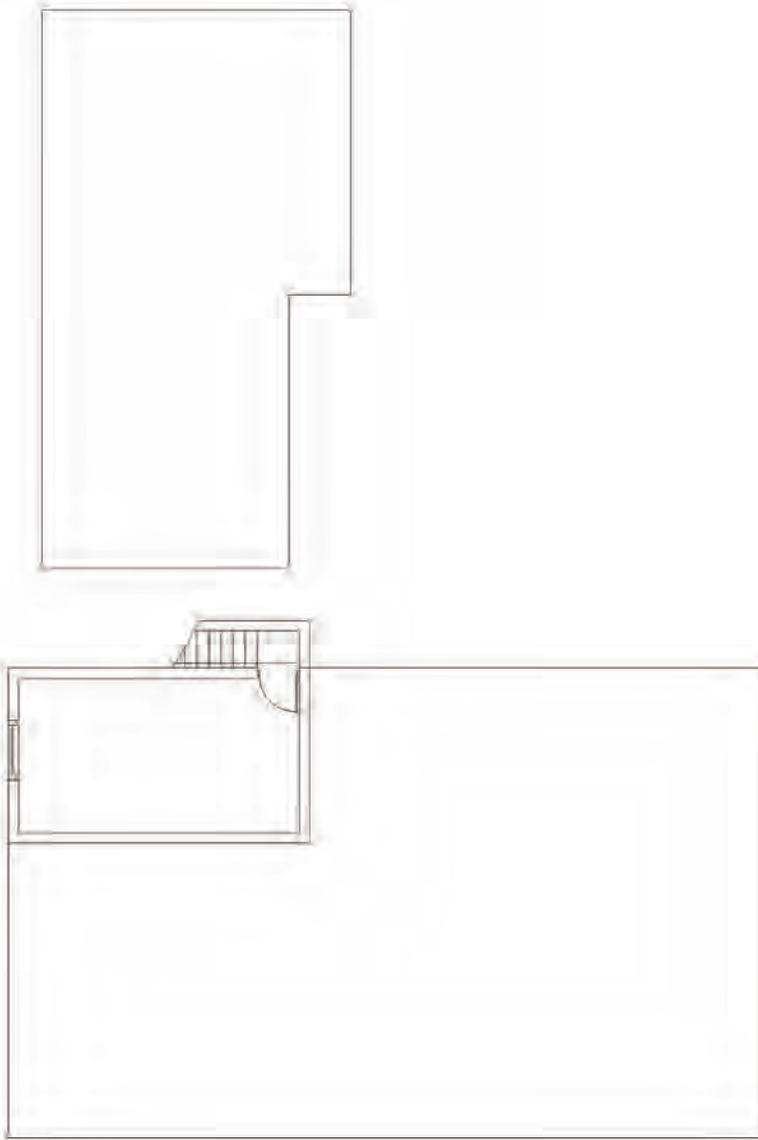
First Floor Plan



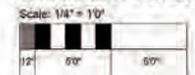
Second Floor Plan



Basement Plan



**BASEMENT PLAN**



Roof Plan

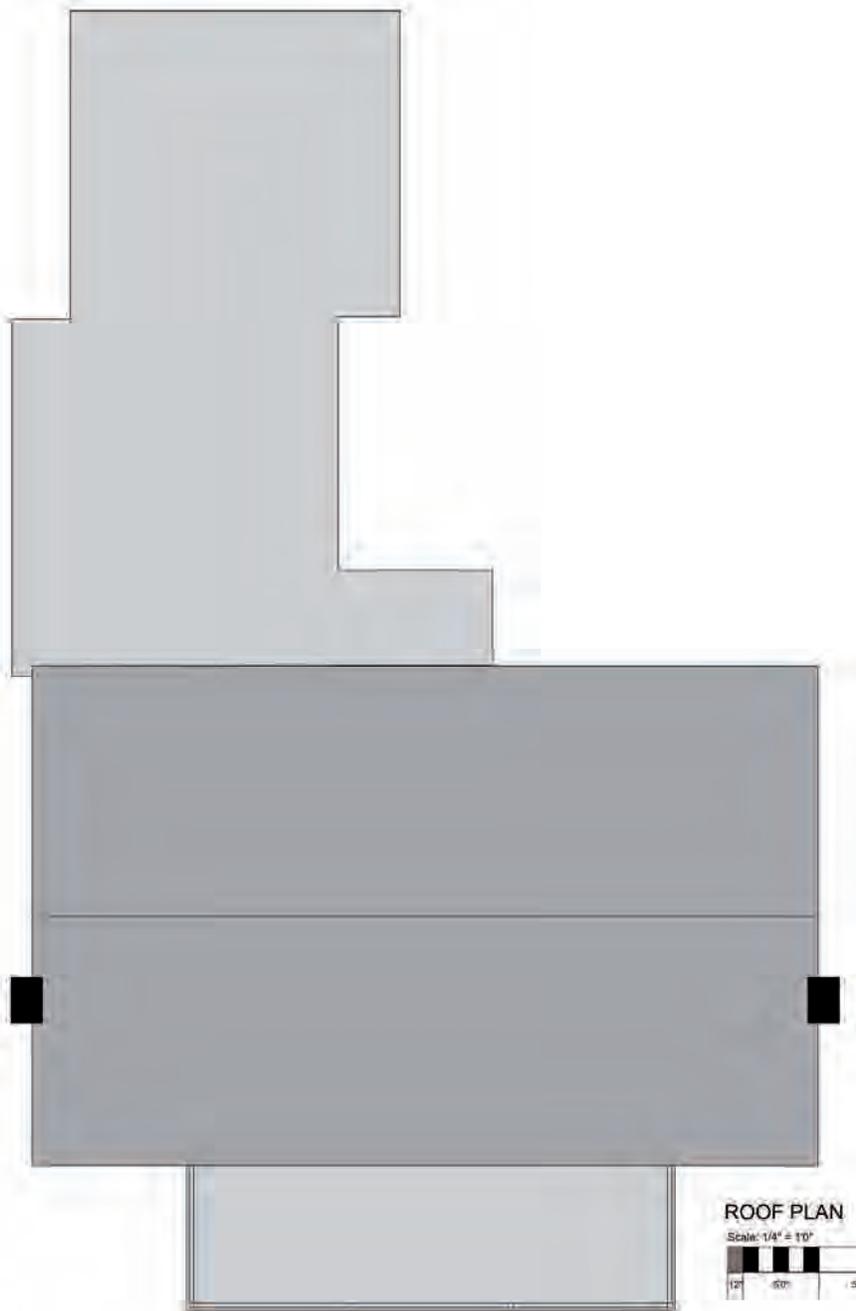




Photo 1. South Façade, Camera Facing Northwest.



Photo 2. South Façade (Right) and West Elevation (Right), Camera Facing North.



Photo 3. West (Right) and North (Left) Elevations, Camera Facing Southeast.



Photo 4. East Elevation of Service Wing, Camera Facing West.



Photo 5. East (Left) and North (Right) Elevations, Camera Facing South.



Photos 6-7. Right: Detail of South Entrance; Left: Detail of Typical Historic Window.



Photos 8-9. Right: Detail of North Entrance; Left: View at Breezeway, Camera Facing Northeast.



Photo 10. Detail of Stairs to Basement.



Photo 11. Interior, First Floor, Room 101, Stair Hall, Camera Facing West.



Photo 12. Interior, First Floor, Room 101, Stair Hall, Camera Facing South.

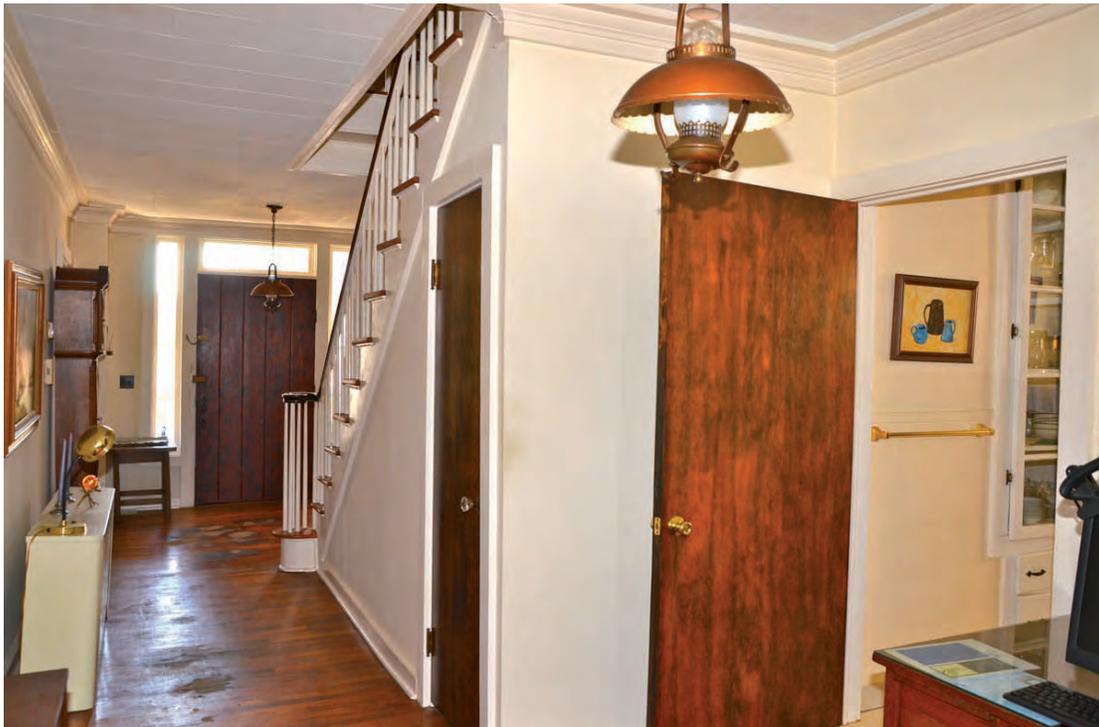


Photo 13. Interior, First Floor, Room 101, Stair Hall, Camera Facing South.



Photo 14. Interior, First Floor, Room 101, Stair Hall, Camera Facing West.



Photo 15. Interior, First Floor, Room 102, Parlor, Camera Facing North.



Photo 16. Interior, First Floor, Room 102, Parlor, Camera Facing South.



Photo 17. Interior, First Floor, Room 103, Dining Room, Camera Facing West.



Photo 18. Interior, First Floor, Room 103, Dining Room, Camera Facing East.



Photo 19. Interior, First Floor, Room 103, Dining Room, Detail of Mantelpiece.



Photo 20. Interior, First Floor, Room 104, Kitchen, Camera Facing East.



Photo 21. Interior, First Floor, Room 104, Kitchen, Camera Facing West.



Photos 22-23. Interior, First Floor, Room 104, Kitchen; Right: Detail of Door; Left: Camera Facing North .



Photo 24. . Interior, First Floor, Room 104A, Bathroom, Camera Facing Northwest.



Photo 25. Interior, First Floor, Room 105,, Camera Facing Northeast.



Photo 26. Interior, Second Floor, Room 201, Stair Hall, Camera Facing Southeast.

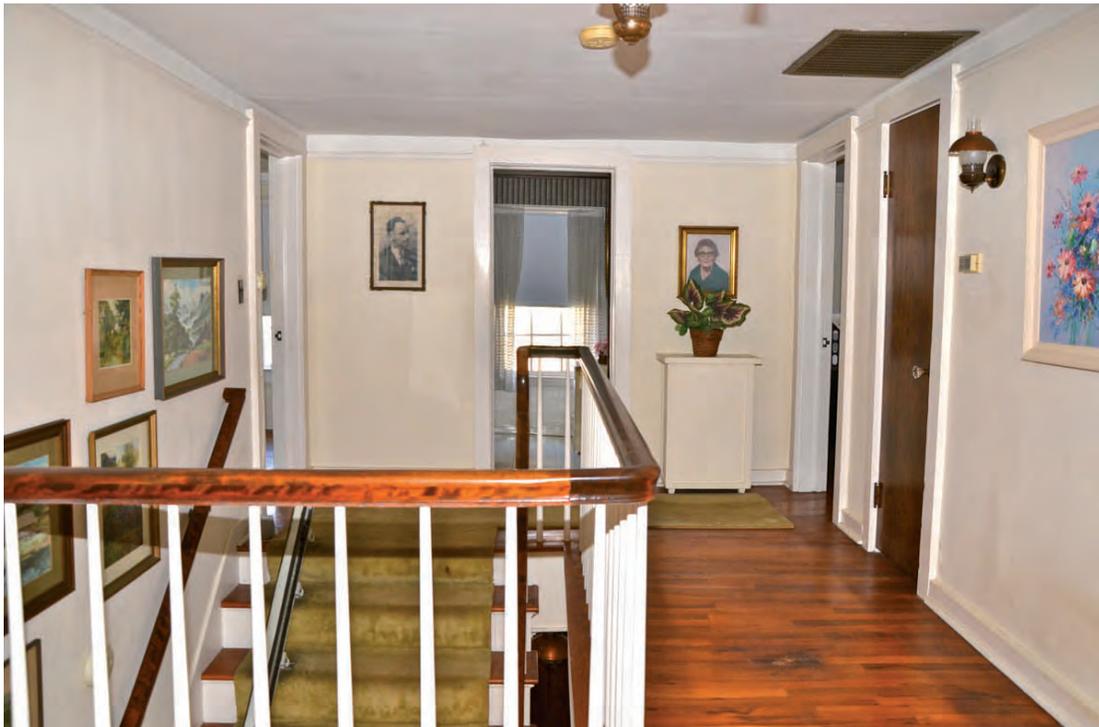


Photo 27. . Interior, Second Floor, Room 201, Stair Hall, Camera Facing Northwest.



Photo 28. Interior, Second Floor, Room 201A, Bathroom, Camera Facing East.



Photo 29. Interior, Second Floor, Room 202, Bedroom, Camera Facing Northeast.



Photo 30. Interior, Second Floor, Room 202, Bedroom, Camera Facing West.



Photo 31. Interior, Second Floor, Room 203, Bedroom, Camera Facing East.



Photo 32. Interior, Second Floor, Room 203, Bedroom, Camera Facing Southwest.



Photo 33. Interior, Second Floor, Room 204, Bedroom, Camera Facing West.



Photo 34. Interior, Second Floor, Room 205, Bedroom, Camera Facing North.



Photo 35. Interior, Attic, Camera Facing Southwest.



Photo 36. Interior, Attic, Camera Facing West.



Photo 37. Interior, Attic, Camera Facing Southwest; Note Rafter extensions.



Photo 38. Interior, Basement, Camera Facing Northeast.



Photo 39. Rear Service Building, Camera Facing Northwest.



Photo 40. Rear Service Building, Camera Facing Southeast.



Photo 41. Rear Service Building, Attic.



Photo 42. Site, Camera Facing North Toward the Farmhouse.



Photo 43. Site, Camera Facing Southeast Toward the Farmhouse.



Photo 44. Site, Camera Facing Southwest Toward the Farmhouse.



Photo 45. Site, Camera Facing Northwest Across Rear Yard Toward the Outbuildings.



Photo 46. Site, Camera Facing South Along Spring Creek.



Photo 47. Site, Camera Facing North Toward the Outbuildings



Photo 48. Site, Camera Facing Southwest Across the East Pasture.



Photo 49. Site, Animal Barn, Camera Facing Northeast.



Photo 50. Site, Animal Barn, Camera Facing East.



Photo 51. Site, Animal Barn, Camera Facing North.



Photo 52. Site, Equipment Shed, Camera Facing Northwest.



Photo 53. Site, Hay Barn, Camera Facing East.



Photo 54. Site, Pump House, Camera Facing West.

## Developmental History

### Perry Hall

The original house at Perry Hall is thought to date from circa 1834. Physical evidence that would corroborate this construction date and give evidence for the evolution of the house prior to 1946 is typically not visible due to later applied finishes and alterations that were made between 1946 and 1951. The original or early fabric that is visible within the attic and crawlspace is generally consistent with the 1834 construction date, as was the general form of the house as it existed prior to 1946 as documented in historic photographs. Nine-over-six and six-over-six light sash at the façade and the front and rear entrance transom and sidelight systems appear to have been retained in the 1946-1951 remodeling and are stylistically compatible with the circa 1834 date.

Photographs of the house taken by the Mahler family prior to the beginning and during the early stages of their 1946-1951 renovation project show the house as it existed in 1946. At that time, the house had a two-story, one bay deep core with a side gable roof with flanking exterior end chimneys. The rear slope of the roof was similar to that of the front slope and extended over a one-story, one bay deep extension along the entire rear of the core. A simple one-story gable portico was centered at the south façade and its roof obscured the center bay of the second floor where a bathroom window is now present. The historic windows and their sash are shown at the façade and side elevations of the core and exterior was clad with wood weatherboard siding. Without destructive exploration into wall and floor systems, it is difficult to determine any evolution that the house may have experienced before 1946. The extended rear gable at the roof is somewhat distinctive and may have represented a later loft expansion over a more typical attached rear shed extension. The width of the hallway also suggests the possibility that the house originally had an open dogtrot, although, in this period of the stylistic transition of the dogtrot form to the I-house form, either an open passage or a door system would have been common.

The 1946-1951 renovation by the Mahler family preserved the basic form of the core of the house, but extensively altered the rear of the house and its architectural details and finishes. Photographs taken in 1951 suggest that the intended design was a vernacular interpretation of the Colonial Revival style that was popular in the post-World War II period and that appears to have been a relatively common design approach to the rehabilitation of older houses at the time. On the exterior, the addition of the flat-roofed porch with a now missing vernacular Chippendale roof railing was the most stylistic design element added during the renovation.

The 1946-1951 renovation saw the rear portion of the house raised to two full stories and resulted in a change in the pitch of the rear slope of the roof. New rafter extensions were added to the roof system to accommodate this change. The exterior was clad with fiber-cement shingle siding. It is unknown whether or not the historic siding was removed and flush mounted prior to the application of some form of building wrap, although this was a common practice and there is evidence in the attic to suggest that this might have occurred. The existing eave finishes and boxed cornices were constructed during this time. Windows at the rear bays of the side elevations and at the rear elevation were installed

during the renovation as was the rear porch system. Four-inch wide concrete masonry units were added around the perimeter of the house as an underpinning beneath the sills at this time and were also used to construct the basement and the rear basement access stair well.

The interior of the house was completely altered in the 1946-1951 renovation and no pre-1946 fabric or finishes are visible other than the historic window sash and entrance systems. All interior ceiling, wall, and floor finishes are modern, as is the staircase system and all trim and doors.

Alterations to Perry Hall since 1951 appear to have been minimal and include the modification of the rail atop the front porch, the installation of carpeting and an accessibility chair at the interior staircase, and the addition of some modern cabinets at the kitchen.



Historic View #1. Farmhouse ca. 1946. Note: Side gable roof with exterior end chimneys, historic 9/6 and 9/9 light sash windows, gable portico, and weatherboard siding.



Historic View #2. Farmhouse ca. 1946. Note: Side gable roof with exterior end chimneys, historic 9/6 and 9/9 light sash windows, gable portico, and weatherboard siding



Historic View #3. Farmhouse ca. 1946. Note: Original roofline, chimneys, portico, window sash and weatherboard siding.



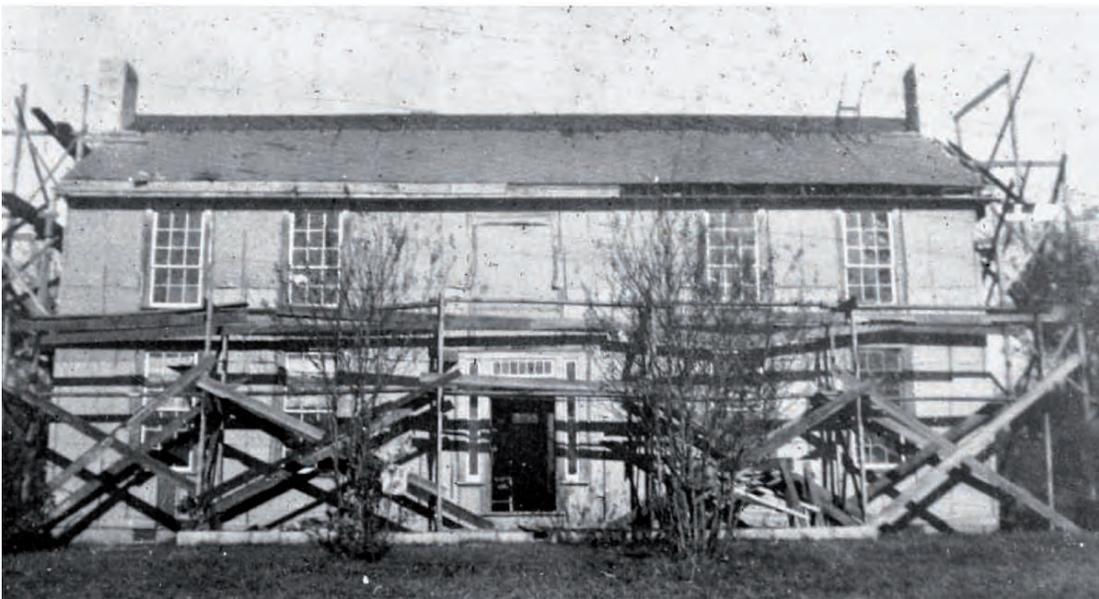
Historic View #4. Rear of Farmhouse, 1946. Note: The original rear roofline of the house (to the left) and the kitchen at right..



Historic View #5. Rear Kitchen, 1946.



Historic View #6. Rear Kitchen, 1946.



Historic View #7. Farmhouse ca. 1950. Note: Siding is being replaced, cornice is being rebuilt, and the entrance and window sash have been retained.



Historic View #8. Farmhouse ca. 1950. Note: Chimney and siding have been replaced, the roofline has been changed, and the porch is under construction.



Historic Views #9-10. Farmhouse ca. 1950. Note: Cornice being rebuilt, siding being replaced, and entrance and window sash retained.

## Outbuildings

The outbuildings were all built post 1946 and appear to be similar to their appearance as constructed, although, as utilitarian structures, there have been some functional modifications. No remnants were observed of any earlier structures.



Historic Views #11. Unidentified former outbuildings (no longer extant).

## Landscape

The basic form of the remnant portion of the former 800-acre Perry Hall farm appears to have changed very little over time. While farming practices changed over the site's history, the cleared acreage appears relatively consistent with that of historical accounts. Cropland was gradually replaced with pastureland and it appears from historic aerial photos that most of the existing fence lines and breaks were added in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Cemetery

The small family cemetery at the northern property line is barely identifiable as a cemetery. Other than one intact marker for Elizabeth Teague Lawler, the remaining markers are broken or buried in whole or part.

## Condition Assessment and Recommendations

### Historic Preservation Objectives

Perry Hall is a historically significant landmark for the Montevallo community and any and all work that occurs to it should be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix #1). These standards were developed by the National Park Service to guide rehabilitation projects and seek to preserve the character-defining elements of a historic resource while accommodating necessary modifications needed to meet current code requirements and to adapt the resource for a new use.

In general, the recommended approach for Perry Hall is one that would seek to restore the appearance of its primary exterior elevations and first floor interior spaces to their appearance at the time the 1946-1951 renovation was completed. While the house certainly has historical associations that reach further back in time, the 1946-1951 renovation has gained historical significance in its own right and is the appropriate period on which to base rehabilitation and interpretive work. Any attempt to bring back an earlier appearance would likely create a false sense of historic identity or would effectively be a reconstruction/reproduction.

Using the 1946-1951 period as the basis for future work has the following benefits: authenticity; cost effectiveness; and recognition and appreciation for the generosity of the Mahler family. Very little has changed about the appearance of the house from the 1946-1951 renovation. Conserving its current appearance and recreating the few architectural details that have been lost or altered over time is the most historically authentic approach to rehabilitating and interpreting the house. Altering the appearance of the house or attempting to recreate an earlier appearance would destroy significant historic fabric and features and is not recommended. Because the house is relatively intact from this period, maintaining and enhancing its historic fabric and features is the most cost-effective approach to the rehabilitation of the house. Other than maintenance and structural repairs that would be required no matter what approach or use is made of the building, maintaining its present appearance requires minimal additional work and the few details that have been lost or modified over time are relatively inexpensive to restore. Finally, rehabilitating the house as it appears now is an appropriate way to permanently recognize Mahler family's generous contribution to the city and their long-term commitment to the land on which they lived and farmed.

In planning a rehabilitation of the house, exterior work should focus on maintaining and enhancing its principal elevations. Any necessary changes (accessibility ramping, etc.) should be inconspicuous and located at the rear areas of the house. On the interior, the parlor, dining room, and first and second floor stair halls are the primary character-defining spaces and they should be retained and repaired as needed without alteration. Depending on the proposed use of the house, any modifications needed should be limited to secondary spaces, should be minimal in scope, and should be compatible with the historic character of the house.

Ideally, a use for the property will be found that will also retain and adaptively reuse the historic outbuildings to the rear of the house and that would maintain the spatial relationship between the house and the outbuildings.

### **Structural Observations**

The house is a wood framed structure that rests on a low stone pier foundation.

As is typical for historic home construction, framing sizes were determined by previous experience and conventional practice without consideration of deflections and the path of loads through the structure.

Visible rafters and joists for the main house span front to back except for the framing above the basement. Those joists span perpendicular to the direction of the other joists.

Rafter extensions for the higher roof appear to be functioning adequately and provide a clear load path though the lap splices are likely to be inadequate by today's standards.

When the rear addition was constructed a wood beam was installed in the attic to support ceiling joists and rafters above the center hall. The beam aligns with the original rear wall.

Four-inch wide concrete masonry units were added at the perimeter of the original structure and around the basement of the addition

### **Condition Assessment**

As is always the case with structural observations, the presence of furnishings and finishes obscures conditions that might allow for a more complete evaluation. In the case of Perry Hall, the overall immediate impression of its condition is that it is generally good with the exception of some observable evidence of deferred maintenance. However, the following conditions were observed that require further investigation and repair:

- The generally undulating and springy feel of the first floor flooring and the sloping character of the second floor;
- The presence of cracks related to settlement and/or deflection in many areas of the house;
- Termite damage was visible in the basement in the joists supporting the kitchen; remaining joists were not visible but termite damage might be a contributing cause to the undulating and springy condition at the first floor flooring;
- Dropped joists were visible below the first floor at the south wall;
- Metal roofing was added above the front porch and does not appear to have been adequately flashed at the house or perimeter;

- Installation of the pulldown attic stair interrupted the typical joists and contributes to cracks and deflection in the ceiling above the second floor center hall;
- The west wall of the basement contains significant cracks and has moved inward below the window.

The first four of these conditions are likely interrelated: the generally undulating and springy feel of the first floor flooring and the sloping character of the second floor; the presence of settlement and deflection cracks in many areas of the house; and termite damage that was visible in the basement in the joists supporting the kitchen. Evidence of repeated patching of some of the settlement and deflection cracks suggests that the underlying structural deficiency has been an ongoing issue for many years. An examination of the attic and roof system did not indicate any appreciable moisture penetration into the building. Accordingly, the suggested cause of the settlement and deflection appears to be in the foundation and framing systems.

Access to the crawl space under the house is limited, as the floor joists and sills are typically less than 18" above grade. Without the aid of specialized viewing equipment or the opening of more access points along the foundation, it was only possible to observe a small area under the house and to obtain a few photographs. What was immediately visible along the sill at the front (south) façade of the house was that a number of floor joists that have separated in whole or part from the sill. This condition would certainly account for some of the settlement and deflection cracks that are found throughout the interior and the undulating and spongy nature of the first floor flooring. Due to the limited access, it was not possible to assess the conditions under the house beyond the one access point at the west end of the south wall. However, the presence of settlement and deflection cracks and the springy nature of the floor throughout the house indicates that similar conditions may exist along the western sill line and that there may be other issues with the floor joists themselves.

Some termite-related damage was also observed within the basement at the southwest corner of the building. Again, due to the limited access available to the crawl space, it was not possible to fully assess whether or not additional termite damage was present in other areas. If such damage does exist, it would likely be a contributing actor to the generally undulating and springy feel of the first floor flooring and the sloping character of the second floor.

The crawlspace appeared to be relatively dry, so the underlying cause for the separation of the floor joists was not readily apparent. A contributing factor may be what appears to be the lack of a moisture barrier between the wooden sills and concrete masonry unit underpinning that was added during the 1946-1951 renovation. This condition should be further investigated as indicated below.

Recommendation. The conditions at the foundation require more detailed examination that is beyond the scope of this project. Because the conditions within the crawlspace appear to be responsible for the ongoing settlement and deflection of the floor systems and the resulting cracking at ceiling and wall finishes, fully identifying the extent of deficiencies present, developing a plan to correct them, and making the necessary repairs is of primary

importance before any restoration work or adaptive reuse of the house can be effectively implemented. Accordingly, it is recommended that a structural engineer be engaged to provide a detailed assessment of these conditions. Such work will require, at a minimum, the use of a light scope or mechanized device that will allow observation of the entire crawlspace. It is also likely that several access points will need to be opened within the perimeter concrete masonry unit underpinning. The removal of vents and/or the creation of other openings in the underpinning will require the use of a contractor or possibly a city work crew working with the guidance of the engineer. Once this level of observation is made possible, the engineer will be able to determine if the access is sufficient or whether or not there are areas that will need to be accessed by opening access holes in the interior flooring system. The latter is specialized work that will require care not to damage flooring and/or interior finishes.



Photo 55. Detail View of Sill at South Facade. Note: Floor joists have slipped away from the sill causing floor system to sag.



Photo 56. Detail View of Sill at South Facade. Note: hand-hewn sill now Resting directly on concrete masonry unit underpinning (1949/51)



Photo 57. Detail at Crawl Space. Note: Floor joists are supported by a mix of rock outcroppings and some irregularly spaced piers.



Photo 58. Detail at Crawl Space. Note: Floor joists are supported by a mix of rock outcroppings and some irregularly spaced piers.



Photo 59. Detail Termite Damage at Floor Joist in Basement.



Photo 60. View at Front Porch. Note: Settlement of indicated by compression fracture of cement-fiber shingles at pilaster.



Photo 61. View at Front Entrance. Note: Settlement of door sill and compression fracture of cement-fiber shingles at right corner.



Photo 62. Detail of Settlement Crack



Photo 63. Detail of Settlement Crack, Room 204



Photo 64. Detail of Settlement Cracks.

The metal roofing that was added in recent years above the front porch does not appear to have been adequately flashed at the house or perimeter. Paint failures at the ceiling of the porch and at the pilasters along the south elevation indicate moisture penetration through the ceiling and down the pilasters.

Recommendation. Some destructive exploratory work will be necessary to determine exactly how the new roofing was intended to be watertight along the front of the house. It is possible that there is some linkage between the floor joist failure at the foundation due to their corresponding location. Opening up some areas of the seam between the roofing and the house will both answer the question of the nature of this joint, but should also indicate if this joint had failed prior to the installation of the present roof. This evaluation and investigation should also be made by a structural engineer and may also require the use of a contractor or possibly a city work crew working with the guidance of the engineer.



Photo 65. Detail of Porch Ceiling. Note moisture-related damage.

The installation of the pulldown attic stair interrupted the typical joists and contributes to cracks and deflection in the ceiling above the second floor center hall.

Recommendation. The structural engineer should further evaluate this condition and prepare drawings and/or specifications for correcting the deficiency.

The west wall of the basement contains significant cracks and has moved inward below the window. This appears to be a long-term issue based on the undersized nature of the concrete masonry units used to construct the basement. The ground pressure outside the wall is gradually pushing it inward and it will likely eventually fail.

Recommendation. The structural engineer should further evaluate this condition and prepare drawings and/or specifications for correcting the deficiency.



Photo 66. Detail of West Wall at Basement. Note: cracking and wall being pushed out below window.



Photo 67. Detail of West Wall at Basement. Note: cracking and wall being pushed out below window.



Photo 68. Detail of West Wall at Basement. Note: cracking and wall being pushed out below window.

## General Maintenance Recommendations

Gutters. It appears that gutters have become clogged resulting in water overflowing and causing paint failure on the cornice and wall surfaces below. The gutters should be cleaned immediately and inspected and/or cleaned periodically to prevent this condition. Downspout drainage should be directed away from the house particularly near the basement so that lateral earth pressures aren't increased in the area of the failing wall.



Photo 69. Detail of North Gutter. Note: Paint failure caused by clogged gutters.

General Paint Problems. There are a number of areas where caulking has failed at joints, especially around windows and at window sills. Moisture penetration has already resulted in the decay of some wood members. Caulking joints should be cleaned and re-caulked with a high grade caulking, primed, and spot painted. Damaged wood at sills and other areas should be repaired as needed either with appropriate restoration epoxy or wood, primed, and repainted. Please refer to Appendix 2, Preservation Brief #10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork.



Photo 70. Detail of Pillaster. Note: Paint failure caused splash back and roof flashing leakage.



Photo 71. Detail of Window. Note: Paint and caulking failure at lintel.



Photo 72. Detail of Eave. Note: Paint and caulking failure caused at chimney.



Photo 73. Detail of Porch. Note: Paint and caulking failure at corner.

First Floor Flooring. The first floor flooring was installed during the 1946-1951 renovation. In recent years it has been severely damaged by pet staining. The staining is extensive enough that it likely has soaked into the wood and the seams in the flooring and it may be impossible to remove without substantial replacement of the wood itself. An experienced wood flooring expert should be consulted to determine if the staining can be removed simply by refinishing the surfaces or whether or not wood replacement will be necessary. If wood replacement is necessary, it should match the existing and adjacent historic conditions in design, materials, and workmanship.



Photo 74. Detail of Flooring at Parlor (Room 103), Detail of Pet Staining.

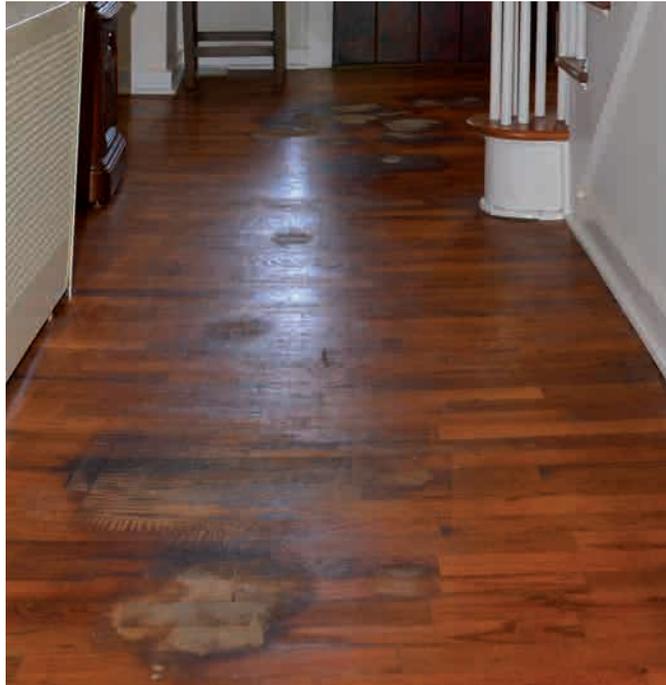


Photo 75. Detail of Flooring at Stair Hall (Room 101), Detail of Pet Staining

## Historic Preservation Recommendations

All rehabilitation work at Perry Hall should be in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and should seek to maintain and restore the appearance of the house to its 1951 appearance.

Front Porch Railing. Other than basic maintenance and repairs, the exterior retains its overall historic appearance. The one notable historic element that has been modified over time is the railing atop the front porch. Historic photographs indicate that it originally had a vernacular Chippendale design. Since this was a character defining element of the original design intent of the 1946-1951 remodeling, this feature should be restored based on historic photographs,



Photo 76. Detail of Roof Railing at Porch.



Photo 77. Detail of Roof Railing at Porch from 1951 Photo.

Cemetery. The small family cemetery of the site should be evaluated by a specialist in historic cemetery preservation who should develop a plan for documenting existing conditions and conserving what remains.



Photo 78. Cemetery, General View.



Photo 79. Cemetery, General View.

## Code Compliance

A detailed code evaluation is beyond the scope of this project and cannot be completed without a determination of the specific proposed use for the property. This is especially true when it comes to accessibility requirements, as the use will largely determine the extent to which the house will need to be compliant. That said, the following general discussion should frame the code compliance planning for the resource.

Use. The house should be used for a purpose that requires the most minimal alteration to meet code requirements. Since all standard building codes provide flexibility to building officials when working with historic buildings, planning for the use of the building should recognize this and seek design alternatives that will comply with code requirements in the least intrusive manner possible.

Life Safety. Due to its age, design and construction, Perry Hall likely does not comply with all modern life safety code requirements. Some aspects of the house cannot be modified to meet these standards. The interior staircase, for instance likely does not meet current standards but could not be modified because it is a major character-defining feature of the interior. Accordingly, code compliance should consider the historic character of the building and accommodate necessary changes in a manner that minimizes alterations to the appearance of significant historic fabric and features.

Fire Protection. With its old wooden framing system, the rehabilitation and use of Perry Hall should carefully consider and install appropriate fire protection systems. These systems should be designed in a manner that they have minimal visual impact on the historic character or fabric of the house. At a minimum, a monitored set of smoke detectors and other appropriate sensors should be installed. Depending on the proposed use, the local fire officials may also require a fire suppression system. Such systems can often be installed with minimal visual impact using pop-up sprinkler heads and other devices.

Energy Conservation. Planning for energy conservation should consider not only potential energy savings, but also the protection of Perry Hall's historic character and fabric. Please refer to Appendix #3, Preservation Brief #3, Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings.

Hazardous Materials Abatement. The house was clad with fiber-cement shingle siding during the 1946-1951 remodeling. Some forms of this siding were produced using asbestos fibers as reinforcement for the cement. Asbestos is a known carcinogen and its manufacture and use were banned in 1973. The resulting product is resistant to decay and is fire resistant. A sample of the siding should be evaluated for the presence of asbestos. There are small pieces that have broken along the concrete deck of the front porch that could be removed for this purpose. If the material does contain lead, it is not in a friable state and is therefore likely not hazardous if left in place. However, if the material does contain asbestos, any work with the material requiring cutting, repair, or removal and disposal should be handled by appropriate professionals licensed to work with asbestos. Where replacement shingles are required, appropriate matching fiber-cement shingles that are asbestos free should be used and are readily available. For more information, refer to STM

E2394 Standard Practice for Maintenance, Renovation and Repair of Installed Asbestos Cement Products.

Many of the paints produced before 1978 contained lead. The use of lead paint was banned in that year because it can present a health problem if the lead in the paint is ingested. Prior to any major rehabilitation work, the building and its immediate grounds should be evaluated by a qualified inspector to determine the extent of any lead paint usage and to complete a lead paint risk assessment. The painted surfaces in the house appear to be in generally good condition and simple repainting may be sufficient to mitigate the presence of any lead depending on the eventual use of the house. Please refer to Appendix #4, Preservation Brief #37, Appropriate Methods for Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing and visit the Environmental Protection Agency's website on lead paint: <http://www2.epa.gov/lead>.

Accessibility. As a publicly owned facility, Perry Hall must comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. While the design standards for ADA compliance recognize the need to preserve the character of historic resources, accessibility must be accommodated to the greatest extent practical. Planning for the eventual use of the house should consider accessibility up front, as certain uses will be more or less difficult to meet accessibility compliance. Please refer to Appendix #5, Preservation Brief #32, Making Historic Properties Accessible and visit the United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division website on the Americans with Disabilities Act: <http://www.ada.gov/>.

## Author Qualification Statements

### **David B. Schneider, Schneider Historic Preservation, LLC**

Schneider Historic Preservation, LLC provides a full range of historic preservation consulting services. The firm was established by David B. Schneider in 1999. Mr. Schneider's professional historic preservation career spans 34 years, during which time he has successfully completed a diverse range of projects for both private and public sector clients in fourteen states and one other country, specializing in community preservation planning, design review in historic districts, historic resource documentation, and the certification of projects for historic rehabilitation tax credits.

Compliance with 36 CFR 61

Mr. Schneider meets the requirements of Professional Qualifications A, History, and C, Architectural History:

A: Master of Arts Degree, History, Middle Tennessee State University, 1981; 32 years of professional experience in research, writing, and interpretation of local and regional history, including: 34 years as a full and part time historical consultant; 1 year as Director of the Berkeley County Historical Society Museum, a local history museum; 5 years as the Executive Director of the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County (PA); 4 years as Executive Director of the Historic Beaufort Foundation (SC); and 4 years as Executive Director/Senior Director for Preservation Services of the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation (two county-wide and one statewide non-profit historic preservation organizations).

C: Master of Arts Degree, History (primary emphasis in Historic Preservation), Middle Tennessee State University, 1981; 34 years of professional experience in historic preservation planning and administration including extensive experience with historic district surveys, registration, ordinances, and design review. In addition, Mr. Schneider has been involved with the rehabilitation of more than three hundred historic structures, including extensive rehabilitation design.

### **Lowell Christy, Christy/Cobb Consulting Engineers, Inc.**

Christy/Cobb is a certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) that provides evaluation, design and construction phase services for a wide range of industrial, municipal, commercial, educational and residential projects. The firm was founded in 1981 and has completed over 2,400 projects, functioning as either the prime design professional or as a consultant to contractors, engineers and architects. The company has significant experience in historic preservation, water and wastewater treatment facilities, excavation bracing and deep foundations. Some projects include the Structural Master Plan for Fort Morgan in Gulf Shores, the Georgas House Renovation at the University of Alabama, a Historic Site Assessment for the Joe Wheeler Plantation, the renovation of the Inland Water Supply and a new Control Building for the Cahaba Pump Station.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

Appendix 2: Preservation Brief #10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork

Appendix #3. Preservation Brief #3, Improving Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings

Appendix #4. Preservation Brief #37, Appropriate Methods for Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing

Appendix #5. Preservation Brief #32, Making Historic Properties Accessible and visit the United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division website on the Americans with Disabilities Act: <http://www.ada.gov/>.

Appendix 6: Preservation Brief #9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows

Appendix 7: Preservation Brief #24: Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings