

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

## SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 07000747

Date Listed: July 19, 2007

Property Name: Lacy Homestead

County: Lauderdale

State: Mississippi

none  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for* Daniel J. Vician  
Signature of the Keeper

July 19, 2007  
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8. Statement of Significance  
Criterion A is hereby removed.

This change was made in consultation with and approved by the National Register staff of the Mississippi SHPO.

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

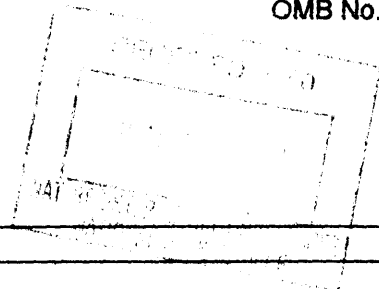
### DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1787

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

OMB No. 1024-0018



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. Name of Property**

Historic name: Lacy Homestead  
Other names/site number: Lacy, William Austin House

**2. Location**

Street & number: [REDACTED] not for publication   
City or town: [REDACTED] vicinity   
State: Mississippi code: MS County: Lauderdale code: 75 zip code: 39364

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Kenneth H. P. Devel JUNE 13 2007  
Signature of certifying official Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
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):

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
Daniel J. V. [Signature] 7/19/07

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**5. Classification**

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**Ownership of Property:** Private

**Number of Resources within Property:**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

**Category of Property:** Building

	Contributing	Noncontributing
1		1 buildings sites
		0 structures objects
1		1 Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register** None

N/A

N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

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**Historic Functions:**

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

**Current Functions:**

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification(s):**

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS

**Materials:**

foundation: BRICK (piers)  
roof: METAL  
walls: WEATHERBOARD  
other:

**Narrative Description:**

See Continuation Sheets

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Applicable National Register Criteria**

- 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.

**Areas of Significance**

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1902-1921

**Significant Dates**

1902

**Criteria Considerations:**

Property is:

- 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.

**Significant Person(s)**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation(s)**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

LACY, WILLIAM AUSTIN-builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance:** See continuation sheets.

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography** See continuation sheet.**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- 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:

University of Kentucky- College of Design  
Library

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property: 26.33

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	C	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
B	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	D	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description** See continuation sheet.

**Boundary Justification:** See continuation sheet.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title: Summer Chandler, Architectural Historian

organization: Prewitt & Associates, Inc.

street & number: 2105 Donley Drive, Suite 400

city or town: Austin

state: TX

date: 04/09/07

telephone: 512-459-3349 ex. 220

zip code: 78758-4513

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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(s)**

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name: Lacy Homeplace Trust, Trustee Thomas Lacy / local contact: Betty Ann Lacy

street & number: 256 Briarwood Blvd

city or town: Meridian

state: MS

telephone: [REDACTED]

zip code: 39305

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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**Lacy Homestead  
Lauderdale County, Mississippi**

**Narrative Description**

**Contributing Resource - Main House, single-family dwelling**

The one story, central passage, double-pile, wood-frame Lacy House was constructed between 1902-03. One of only two central passage, Georgian cottage farmhouses built within the "Little Georgia" community, the house displays characteristics of vernacular housing of both the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Prior to modifications, the Lacy House was symmetrical in plan with two bedrooms flanking either side of a central hall for four bedrooms total. Although the Lacy House was later modified, closing off part of the central passage and a room added to the southwest side of the house, it was with warm climate in mind that the house was originally constructed. The house was designed for the easy flow of air throughout and convenience to accommodate the busy farm life of the family.<sup>1</sup> It is also similar to the dogtrot plan houses that were being built in the community 10-15 years earlier, in that the central passage allowed air to circulate easily through the house.

The balloon-framed Lacy House was covered with clapboard siding attached using cut nails; the structure is raised on brick pillars. The wood used for the construction of the house is locally milled yellow pine; the lumber was cut into standardized dimensions. William Austin Lacy's lumber came from his own sawmill.<sup>2</sup>

A porch extends across the entire length of the front façade and faces north. The simple porch has no railing and six wooden support posts. The porch floor is made up of butted wooden planks. At one time there was a similar, but smaller porch, running across the back of the house. When an additional room was added to the rear corner of the house, another porch was constructed to run along side this new room; it was accessed from the door at the rear of the central hall and the back room door. Approximately six years ago, this porch was replaced; the new porch is of the same shape, design, and material as the older porch. It was replaced due to rot and instability causing risk to those using the porch.

The roof of the main house is hip shaped with two front cross gables. The original roofing material of the house was wooden shakes; subsequent layers of asphalt shingles were added and covered the shakes. In the 1970s, the roofline of the house was altered slightly when it was re-roofed and the top of two original chimneys were removed.<sup>3</sup> In 2006, the roofing material was again replaced. This time, a pressed metal, seamed roofing material was chosen and is a more appropriate roofing material than the previous asphalt shingles. During this recent re-roofing, the roofline was not altered in any way.

The Lacy House's main entrance contains a four-panel door with two light transom and three-light sidelights. Below each of the sidelights there are wooden panels; none of these windows open. These features give the doorway a much more massive appearance than any other doorway in the house and provide light to the hall.

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<sup>1</sup> Allen G. Noble. *Wood, Brick & Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape*, (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), pg. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Lacy, Betty Ann, daughter-in-law of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 5 January 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

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**Lacy Homestead  
Lauderdale County, Mississippi**

Typical for the period from the turn of the century until the mid-1930s, the windows of the house are four-over-four double-hung sash windows.<sup>4</sup> All of the window frames are original and contain the original glass. The windows are all of the same dimensions with the exception of the windows on the later addition. The windows of the addition are smaller, but they are the same style and look of the original windows.

Between 1903-1921, several modifications were made to the original plan including an additional room added to the rear southwest corner of the house. This room was divided into the kitchen and the dining room. Prior to moving the kitchen inside the house, the back of the hall served as the dining room; the kitchen was in a separate log structure located directly behind the back door.<sup>5</sup> With the addition of this room, the central passage was used only as a hallway. The central hallway again changed uses with a change in occupants in the 1960s. When Thomas Madison Lacy and his family occupied the house, they added a bathroom in the rear; folding doors (going only about 6 feet in height) are used to isolate that area.<sup>6</sup>

While room function has changed slightly over the years with the change in occupants, many rooms retain their original usage. The front, right room off the hall on the northeast corner is the parlor/bedroom. Directly across the hall from the parlor/bedroom is another bedroom. A doorway to the master bedroom also connects to this room. In the southeast corner of the house is the boys' bedroom and the master bedroom is located directly across from it on the southwest portion of the house. The kitchen/dining room is accessed from either the back porch or the master bedroom and is located on the southwest corner of the house.

Two internal chimneys that vented four fireplaces originally heated the house. All four bedrooms were heated; the fireplaces are centered on each room's inner wall. Three of the four bedrooms also had closets; the northwest bedroom does not have a closet. It was considered a luxury to have closets at that time and this house had more than any house in the community at that time. In comparison, the Hardin-Culpepper House, built almost 20 years after the Lacy House, had only one closet and the Culpepper and Hardin houses, built a few years earlier, had none at all. All of these houses in the community were built between 1880 and 1925.

The decorative finishes of the various rooms reflect a hierarchy of use. The finer decorative features were reserved for the rooms most likely viewed by visitors. The walls in the central hall are paneled with beaded wood; panels are vertical below the chair rail and horizontal above the chair rail. The hallway flooring is butted wooden planks like the rest of the house. The walls have a natural wood finish and have never been painted; a commonality for the rest of the house as well.

The northeast corner room or parlor/bedroom is the room that received the most decorative treatment. The walls and ceilings are covered with beadboard. The fireplace mantle in this room is much more ornate than the other mantles; it shares the same basic shape as the other mantles, but includes a diamond design that runs across the front. All the mantles were painted providing a stark contrast to the

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<sup>4</sup> Jan Jennings and Herbert Gottfried. *American Vernacular Interior Architecture: 1870-1940*, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1988), pg. 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> Culpepper, Edith, cousin of William Austin Lacy, and Lorene Lacy McElroy, daughter of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 28 August 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Lacy, Betty Ann, daughter-in-law of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 5 January 2001.

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**Lacy Homestead  
Lauderdale County, Mississippi**

surrounding unpainted walls. A small closet door is located left of the fireplace. This room functioned as both a parlor and a bedroom. It was the room where visitors were received in and therefore received the most formal woodwork. Even though it was the parlor and had a sitting couch, there have always been one or two beds in the room to provide sleeping quarters for the large Lacy family.<sup>7</sup>

The front or northwest bedroom served strictly as a bedroom. Although many of the children slept in the room at one time or another, they were all female. The boys were generally assigned to the southeast corner bedroom. The room's location at the front of the house resulted in a level of decorative treatment between the parlor/bedroom and the other rooms. It features beadboard paneling; however, the mantle is not as ornate as the mantle located in the parlor/bedroom.

The bedroom on the southeast corner of the house was the "boys' bedroom." This room is simply decorated. The walls and flooring are covered with butted horizontal wooden boards. The fireplace mantel is plain but with simple decorative elements utilizing top panels and pilasters on each side. A special feature of this room is the quilting rings hanging from the ceiling of the room. These rings allowed a quilt to be lowered, worked on, and then raised at night, so as not to disturb the primary function of the room.

The master bedroom is located in the southwest portion of the house. There are three doorways in the room leading to the front bedroom, the hall/bathroom, and the dining room. Before the addition of the dining room and kitchen to the back of the house, one of the doors would have led directly outside. The fireplace mantle inside the master bedroom is plain and painted black. There is evidence that there was an effort made to add ornate woodwork in the room. Beaded wood paneling covers most of the walls, stopping 3-4 feet short of the ceiling. The plain wood sheathing is exposed in this top section of the wall. Once the most public rooms were covered in the beaded wood paneling, the master bedroom walls were then paneled until the beaded paneling made in that saw milling run had been consumed. Since the beaded paneling was not a normal run for the sawmill, it would have been costly to make a second special mill run of the beaded wood.<sup>8</sup> Beyond these features, this room resembles the other bedrooms.

The kitchen/dining room was added to the southwest corner of the Lacy House around 1920. Originally, the space between the kitchen and the dining room was broken up with a wall and connected by a doorway. In the 1970s, when Thomas Madison Lacy and family were occupying the house, a large opening was cut in the wall to connect the two rooms.<sup>9</sup> The walls and floors of these rooms are covered in butted wooden boards. The addition features windows that are smaller in dimension than the windows in the original part of the house.

For most of the house's history, the availability of utilities has been limited. A sink with running water was added to the kitchen sometime in the 1930s or early 1940s. Modern plumbing was not added to the house until the 1970s, when the tub and toilet were placed at the end of the hall. Just prior to World War II, electricity was installed in the home. This allowed for an electric stove, refrigerator, and other kitchen appliances to be added in the kitchen. Prior to an electric stove, the family was using a wood burning stove. Electricity naturally also brought light. In the case of the Lacy House, this meant that each room

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<sup>7</sup> McElroy, Lorene Lacy, daughter of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 5 January 2001.

<sup>8</sup> Lacy, Betty Ann, daughter-in-law of William Austin Lacy, and Lorene Lacy McElroy, daughter of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 5 January 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Lacy, Betty Ann, daughter-in-law of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 5 January 2001.



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**Lacy Homestead  
Lauderdale County, Mississippi**

was fitted with a single bulb hanging in the center of the room. This is still the primary lighting used today. It was also in the 1930s or 1940s that the family got telephone service, the only household in the community at that time with such a luxury. The neighbors often came to the home to use the telephone service.

**Non-contributing Resource –Barn**

The transverse barn is of modern balloon-frame construction. It was built, during the 1970s, out of southern yellow pine. The floor plan of the barn consists of a long narrow corridor with two gable end entrances. A loft stretches the entire length of this large interior space. It is currently completely filled with lumber. The pressed metal roof has overhanging eaves and creates shed extensions on either side. The extensions have three small cribs. At present, these cribs contain small amounts of hay.

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**Lacy Homestead  
Lauderdale County, Mississippi**

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

**Criterion A: Lacy Homestead's significance as it relates to the broad patterns of local history**

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Lauderdale County was unique as a transportation hub, agricultural region, and timber producer within the state. The Lacy homestead is a representative example of each's influence within its local community, "Little Georgia". The land on which the Lacy homestead is located was once owned by the railroad. Though the railroad would not end up passing through the property, it is an example of how there was an expectation for the county to be linked to the expansion of the railroad system after the Civil War. The Lacy homestead is also an example of both the agricultural and timber goods being produced in Lauderdale County at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While most in the 'Little Georgia' community were simply making a living through the farming of cotton and other crops, the Lacy family expanded beyond that and took part in the timber boom that was going on in Lauderdale and other counties within Mississippi. The location of William Austin Lacy's saw mill is still remembered by those that were raised in the community. Oral tradition also passes down the knowledge that the lumber from William Austin Lacy's mills supplied residential and communal buildings in the area. In addition, a previous study of the community's extant structures shows that the lumber used in their construction in whole or in part matches known lumber from William Austin Lacy's mill.

The Lacy Homestead is the best extant, historic property that represents the evolution and development of the "Little Georgia" community and its architecture. It continues to reflect the community's past and the significance of the Lacy family within it. Also, the homestead is an example of the community's relationship with the county, state, and region as a whole.

*Historical & Regional Development  
Introduction*

The regional setting and historical development of Lauderdale County, Mississippi, gives insight into the settlement of the "Little Georgia" community and the importance of the Lacy Homestead within it. While Lauderdale County was and still is one of the most prosperous counties in the state of Mississippi, most of the county remains rural just as it was in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Agriculture, including farm and timber products, played an important role in the life of county residents and in the economy of the region. The early settlers cleared land to raise crops and built homes from what were then virgin timber resources. Because of the rural nature of the area, early settlers often remained isolated from one another except for the close-knit associations in small communities such as "Little Georgia." With rich farmland and virgin timber forests, the community rarely needed outside resources for day-to-day life. An examination of the Lacy Homestead and its single-family dwelling reveals the county's rural isolation mirrored in its daily life at the turn of the twentieth century.

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**Lacy Homestead  
Lauderdale County, Mississippi**

*Growth of Lauderdale County, Mississippi*

Lauderdale County is one of the most prosperous and populous counties in Mississippi. The county was established on December 23, 1833, and named after Col. James Lauderdale, a veteran of the War of 1812. The new county was bounded by Kemper County on the north, Sumter County, Alabama on the east, Clarke County on the south, and Newton County on the west.<sup>10</sup>

The original county seat was located in the town of Marion, but Meridian would quickly surpass it as the most important city in the county. In 1854, Meridian received its name due to its location as a junction point for several railway lines. With the rapid growth and increasing importance of Meridian, the county seat was moved there in 1870. It remains the most important railroad junction in the eastern half of the state. Numerous railroads, including the Mobile & Ohio, New Orleans & North Eastern, Alabama & Vicksburg, Alabama Great Southern, and the St. Louis & San Francisco, run through Meridian.<sup>11</sup> However, the majority of Lauderdale County is rural with the exception of Meridian. As its name implies, Meridian was the center of the county's economy. During the timber boom of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Meridian served as the major railroad center for lumber distribution.<sup>12</sup>

The production of farm products including cotton, corn, sugar cane, oats, peas, potatoes, and various other vegetables and fruits flourished in Lauderdale County.<sup>13</sup> The farms of Lauderdale County benefited from the county's transportation facilities and railroad junction in Meridian. Numerous farm-to-market roads crisscrossed the county, allowing the transportation of goods, but at the cost of time and extended effort because of the roads' poor conditions. A situation made easier in the decades after 1920 when automobiles and truck marketing finally made an impact on the community.

In addition to farming, the timber industry has played an important part in the economic stability of Lauderdale County. Lauderdale and other neighboring counties relied heavily on the virgin timber of the area. However, this virgin timber supply began to run out in the mid- to late 1920s. In combination with the economic depression of the 1930s, this dwindling timber supply, major soil erosion, and falling cotton prices resulted in an economically distressed population. The timber industry did not bounce back until the 1950s with the introduction of modern systems of forest management.<sup>14</sup>

In many ways, however, life in rural Lauderdale County went on much as always. Most families continued to rely on farming even during the timber boom. The people were used to getting by and not much else. To this day, as oral interviews confirm, these areas look much like they did during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century or earlier.

Beyond Meridian, small rural towns and communities such as Toomsuba, Kewanee, Alamucha, and Whynot characterize the majority of the county. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, some communities had a store or post office, but most lacked even these basic services. Kewanee and Toomsuba contained small railroad depots used mostly for commercial or governmental (mail) purposes.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> History of Lauderdale County. *History of Lauderdale County, MS*, (<http://www.rootsweb.com/~mslauder/histor.html>), pg. 1.

<sup>11</sup> History of Lauderdale County, pg. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Federal Writers' Project, pg. 228.

<sup>13</sup> History of Lauderdale County, pg. 1.

<sup>14</sup> History of Lauderdale County, pg. 1.

<sup>15</sup> McElroy, Lorene Lacy, daughter of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Cuba, Alabama, 28 September 2000.

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**Lacy Homestead  
Lauderdale County, Mississippi**

The county as a whole was prosperous because of Meridian's regional significance, but those living in Meridian and its urban area had a much different lifestyle from those living out in the county.

Until the advent of the automobile many communities in Lauderdale County relied on locally produced goods, including food and construction materials. Small stores provided bulk items and general merchandise that could not be obtained in a community's area. It was not until around the 1930s that residents began to travel by car to Meridian for shopping and services. This signaled the end of many of the small grocer/general merchandise establishments of the county's rural communities.<sup>16</sup>

*Settlement and growth of "Little Georgia"*

The settlement period for the community that would become "Little Georgia" began in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Sometime during the 1830s and 1840s the Hardin, Culpepper, and Yarborough families arrived in Lauderdale County. While there is no documentation to confirm that the families traveled together by wagon train, this is a possibility. Oral tradition holds that the Culpeppers, Hardins, Yarboroughs, and other community families moved to Mississippi at the same time; census records generally support the timing of the move, lending validity to the oral tradition.

Hubert Culpepper, father of William Luther Culpepper, was born in 1834 in Jackson County, Georgia. Hubert's father, Joseph Culpepper III, came to Sumter County, Alabama, with his three brothers sometime between 1834 and 1840. By 1840, Joseph Culpepper III was listed in the Alabama census. Likewise, James Harden was listed as a resident of Jackson County, Georgia, in the 1830 census.<sup>17</sup> By the 1840 census, he was listed as a resident of Lauderdale County, Mississippi.<sup>18</sup> U. S. Land Bureau records show that on September 1, 1846, James Harden purchased lots 1,2,7, and 8 of Section 26, Township 6N, and Range 18E from the federal government.<sup>19</sup> In November 1859, he purchased lots 3,5, and 6.<sup>20</sup> These documents verify that the Culpepper and Harden families moved from Jackson County, Georgia, to Lauderdale County, Mississippi and Sumter County, Alabama, between 1830 and 1840. While not a formally named community or town, the area became known as "Little Georgia" but its residents. A strong sense of the past and family characterize the close knit community.

The Lacy family, in contrast to the Harden and Culpepper families, made a more gradual move from Virginia to the area that became "Little Georgia." The family was well established in Virginia in 1800 and those members that left were likely seeking new land to be farmed. Austin Lacy, a veteran of the War of

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<sup>16</sup> Culpepper, Edith, cousin of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 28 August 2000.

<sup>17</sup> United States Census. Jackson County, Georgia 1830, pg. 338.

<sup>18</sup> United State Census. Lauderdale County, Mississippi, 1840, pg. 49.

<sup>19</sup> Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, (<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/PatentSearch/Detail.asp?Accession=MS0750%5F%5F%2E306&Index=1&QryID=38221%2E75&DetailTab=1>), pg. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, (<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/PatentSearch/Detail.asp?Accession=MS0860%5F%5F%2E221&Index=1&QryID=38339.13&DetailTab=1>), pg. 1.

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1812, and his family moved to St. Helena Parish, Louisiana, by 1816.<sup>21</sup> The reason for Austin Lacy's move to Alabama, or later to Mississippi is unknown, but he might well have followed other family members or simply been searching for better farming land. Census records indicate that by 1830 he was residing in Marengo County, Alabama, and by 1840 moved to Kemper County, Mississippi.<sup>22</sup> Due to changing county lines during this time period, it is important to note that many documents that refer to people or places in Marengo County now are in present day Sumter County, which lies next to Lauderdale County. In fact, oral tradition within the families that settled "Little Georgia" indicates some of the original settlers actually thought they were settling in Alabama because of the community's close proximity to the state line.

In 1835, 1836, and 1837, Austin Lacy is listed in poll tax records for Kemper County, Mississippi. During this period, he went from owning two slaves to six then eight, suggesting that his wealth was also increasing quickly.<sup>23</sup> Austin's grandson, Stephen F. Lacy, was most likely the first Lacy to actually reside in the "Little Georgia" community. Stephen purchased approximately 410 acres in Lauderdale County from the government in 1841.<sup>24</sup> The location of his home is still remembered by those who grew up within the community. He would later die in the Siege of Vicksburg and his wife and son, William Austin Lacy, inherited his property.<sup>25</sup>

The Culpeppers, Hardins, and Lacys were all farming families. There are no extant indications of what crops the families were raising, but given the location and general time period, they were most likely cotton farmers. Edith Culpepper, a descendent and the last occupant of the Hardin-Culpepper House, stated that during her lifetime (1921-2001) the families were farming cotton as a means of support.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Hazel Potter Lawler. *The Stephen Lacy Family of Goochland County, Virginia*, (Fredericksburg: Hazel Potter Lawler, 1981), pg.75.

<sup>22</sup> Lawler, pg. 75.

<sup>23</sup> Lawler, pg. 76.

<sup>24</sup> Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records, Certificates 14366-7, 14373, and 26341 (<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/PatentSearch/Detail.asp?Accession=MS1120%5F%5F%2E166&Index=24&QryID=40139.92&DetailTab=1>), pg. 1.

<sup>25</sup> National Park Service. "Confederate Soldiers at Cedar Hill Cemetery-L Soldiers Rest", ([http://www.nps.gov/archive/vick/city\\_cem/chill\\_1.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archive/vick/city_cem/chill_1.htm)).

<sup>26</sup> Culpepper, Edith, cousin of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 16 July 2000.

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**Key to Figure 2:**

- 1) Spinks Shamburger Hardin House
- 2) William Austin Lacy House
- 3) Alfred Mickens Culpepper House
- 4) James Madison Hardin House
- 5) Malachi Jones Culpepper House
- 6) John R. Culpepper House
- 7) James (Jim) Thomas Culpepper House
- 8) Rueben Thorton Culpepper House
- 9) George Jackson Brewster House
- 10) Sidney Brewster House
- 11) Joseph Yarbrough Hardin House
- 12) James Hardin House
- 13) Joel Culpepper House
- 14) Martin Hugh Hardin House
- 15) Berry Robinson House
- 16) T. H. Goodwyn House

As Figure 2 illustrates, the "Little Georgia" community at one time flourished and consisted of numerous dwellings. It is also evident that many within the community were related by marriage or blood or both. Except for four houses, one of which is the Lacy House, these houses have long disappeared from the landscape. The only trace of them exists in the memories of those who once inhabited the community. Often only the placement and owner are known, but there is no recollection of the actual house.

*The Lacy Homestead and the Family's Role in the Community*

As discussed earlier, Lauderdale County was unique as an agricultural region and timber producer within the state. The Lacy Homestead is a representative example of each's influence within the local community at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It also illustrates how a locale lumber producer, like William Austin Lacy, impacted the community by supplying materials necessary for the built environment. The Lacy Homestead is also a tangible example of "Little Georgia's" past of subsistence farming and small-scale lumber production. In addition, the homestead is representative of the slow development of the community as a whole. It exemplifies the unhurried transition the community made from being isolated and inward focused to that of a community that interacts with the outside world.

Deeper understanding of the Lacy Homestead's role in the history of the community is tied to its architecture. It shows how community architectural history and development is best understood through the remains of its built environment and has significance through Criterion A and C.

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**Criterion C: Embodies the type of architectural forms found locally for the period**

*Introduction*

The "Georgian cottage" house type or double-pile, like that of the Lacy House, will be examined, as will early landscapes such as the swept yard. The architecture of the Lacy Homestead embodies 19<sup>th</sup> Century floor plans and use of space with the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century revival style.

*Architectural Knowledge Base in Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Georgia*

As people move to and settle new areas and landscapes, they take with them previously held ideas and traditions. Information is passed from one generation to the next and includes such things as religion, farming techniques, and general life styles. These ideas and traditions also encompass architectural plans, types, styles, and building techniques. Some individuals strictly follow the older architectural traditions, while others branch out and add their own newly acquired aesthetics or methods to a community's architectural body of knowledge.

The people that settled "Little Georgia" came from and brought architectural traditions from early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Georgia. It was in Georgia that they inherited previous generations' perspectives on shelter and functionality surrounding farming life. While there were many architectural styles and types practiced in Georgia at the time, the buildings that influenced those who would later move to Mississippi were vernacular house plans or types. House types or plans are defined by overall forms, outlines, and general layouts of interiors/exterior spaces, rather than decoration and ornamentation. Vernacular architecture, simply, is architecture without architects.<sup>27</sup> It is from this overall context that the "Little Georgia" community evolved.

Scholars have studied the state of Georgia, its historical landscapes, and architecture for some time.

Until recently, the historical landscapes have been studied and examined far more than the actual architecture. This has gradually changed, in recent years, through the research efforts of the University of Georgia and the Historic Preservation Section of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.<sup>28</sup>

During the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were seven house types found in northern Georgia that can be seen to have influenced the built environment of the "Little Georgia" community. These house types, single pen, hall-parlor, double pen, dogtrot, saddlebag, central hall house, and double-pile, "Georgian cottage", are not isolated to northern Georgia and were built throughout numerous regions of the country. They can be built with a variety of materials when adapting them for locally available resources. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were also being built as fully formed types and in stages.<sup>29</sup>

The Lacy House's construction and floorplan were based on the knowledge available about the double-pile, "Georgian cottage". Not to be confused with Georgian high style, the "Georgian Cottage" is a term that reflects layouts and floor plans rather than an overall decorative style. It is loosely associated with

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<sup>27</sup> Fleming, John, Hugh Honour, and Nikolaus Pevsner. *Penguin Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*, (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 1998), pg. 606.

<sup>28</sup> Historic Preservation Section Georgia Department of Natural Resources, pg. 1-37.

<sup>29</sup> Jakle, John A., Robert W. Bastian, and Douglas K. Meyer. *Common Houses in America's Small Towns: The Atlantic Seaboard to the Mississippi Valley*. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989), pg. 107.

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the 18<sup>th</sup> century English Georgian high style architecture and draws on the symmetrical layouts of that period. The floor plan consists of a center passage with two rooms on each side. This gives the house a somewhat square shape. The roof is generally hipped, but a few gable roofs were built. Between the pairs of rooms, interior chimneys are shared to heat all of the rooms. The type had continued popularity, but most houses of this type were constructed between 1850 and 1890.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, the Lacy House, built in 1902, was an expression of the community's conservative acceptance of new architectural trends and use of familial labor and past knowledge for construction. This is in keeping with its overall built environment.

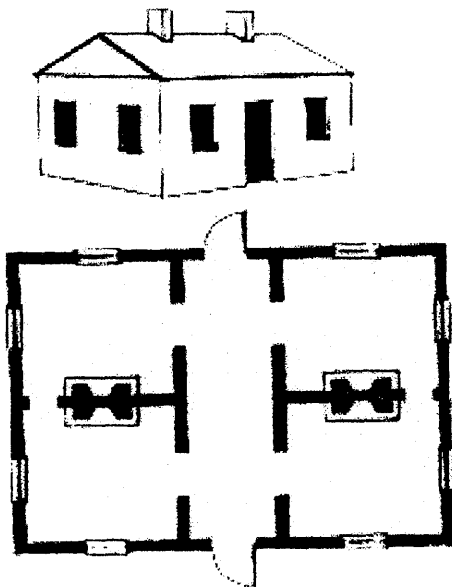


Figure 3: "Georgian cottage" Floorplan  
Georgia SHPO, *Georgia's Living Places:  
Historic Houses in Their Landscaped  
Settings*, I-27.

*Landscapes*

There were two types of residential landscapes that would likely have been familiar to those living in early 19<sup>th</sup> century, north Georgia, where the settlers of the "Little Georgia" community in Mississippi originated, and would later influence the Lacy Homestead. These landscapes are defined as the landscape of work and the swept yard. Each of these landscape types represented different functions.

The "landscape of work" was one of Georgia's earliest and most fundamental landscapes. It was also a very common landscape. As its name implies, this landscape type revolved around labor and the functionality of a rural, agricultural setting. It focused on the practical and was about the everyday life of a farm.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Jakle, pg. I-26-7.

<sup>31</sup> Georgia Historic Preservation Section, pg. I-39.



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Major components include a farmhouse, outbuildings, outdoor activity areas, a well, a small "kitchen garden" in a side or rear yard, agricultural fields and woodlots, and sometimes a small grove of fruit or nut trees. Everything is arranged according to a simple, practical, but not always rigid geometry. . There is often a straight path, unpaved, through the front yard from the road to the front door; this path frequently "extends" through the central hallway of the farmhouse to a rear porch and the back yard. Porches, both front and rear, and trees in the front and back yards provide shade for the house and outdoor activities.<sup>32</sup>

The second landscape type found in early Georgia was the "swept yard." This landscape is the merging of "the landscape of work" and the "ornamental yard." It is also a landscape that is a particularly Southern form of residential landscape. The swept yard merges elements of a work environment with the aesthetics of the picturesque ornamental.<sup>33</sup>

As its name implies, the swept yard encompassed a dirt yard swept free of all ground cover. The front yard was the mostly likely to be swept, but in some cases it might continue along side the dwelling and in the rear. This often left a layer of sand. The formal swept yard included geometric patterns defining paths and planting beds. Other variations were arranged with trees and shrubbery and surrounded by walls, fences, walks, and terraces.<sup>34</sup>

Just why swept yards were popular is unclear to historians. Some believe that grass was considered a weed and indicated poor housekeeping. Others are of the mind that it was thought to discourage rodents and other pests from residing near the house.<sup>35</sup> Richard Westmacott reasoned that the swept yard is a West African tradition that transplanted itself in the United States with slavery.<sup>36</sup> However, he notes that the swept yard is not exclusive to African Americans, but thinks whites abandoned it more quickly because they could purchase lawnmowers at an earlier time.<sup>37</sup> For these and other reasons, the swept yard continued in popularity until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and both it and landscape of work were a part of the Lacy Homestead landscape. While neither landscape is fully practiced today, there is still visual evidence of both.

*Significance of the Lacy House in the context of local architectural patterns*

The Lacy House within "Little Georgia" is a link to a community of people who lived and worked there before and after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Lacy House embodies turn of the century architecture in the community and at the same time contrasts architecture being built in surrounding areas and the nation, such as bungalows, cottages, and houses in the revival high styles. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of dwellings found within that community at that time.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pg. I-39.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pg. I-40-42.

<sup>34</sup> Georgia Historic Preservation Section, pg. I-41-2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pg. I-41-2.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Westmacoot. *African-American Gardens and Yards in the Rural South*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), pg. 79-80.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pg. 105-107.

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The floor plan and room uses link it to the other extant, early houses left in the community of which there are only four, including the Lacy House. Between 1880 and 1925, the "Little Georgia" community in Lauderdale County, Mississippi was going through a period of slow architectural growth that was taking itself away from the earliest architectural forms, like that of the single pen and dogtrot. At the same time, the community was lagging behind other areas when it comes to overall architectural development. For example, single pens, dogtrots, and the use of timber framing or combination framing was still in use right before the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This conservative use of architectural form and space is what distinguishes it from other surrounding communities.

The community shared room-use characteristics from house to house. The Lacy House's form demonstrates the communal characteristics of space and is primarily a series of bedrooms. In all of the houses, a parlor-bedroom was located in the front of the structure off the central hallway. Each family made efforts to distinguish this space as public and yet private. Most remaining rooms within the houses were bedrooms with the exception of later modernization by the addition of a kitchen and/or dining room. Until the addition of a kitchen and/or dining room, eating took place in a separate cooking structure or in the hallway.<sup>38</sup> This is in keeping with far earlier house forms and room usage.

These factors draw the Lacy House together with the other extant dwellings and express community ties. These same factors, however, also separate this community from architectural developments being embraced in other surrounding communities and towns. For example, this separation is discerned when comparing the Lacy Homestead with dwellings in nearby Cuba, Alabama--a small town with more advantageous transportation routes. In Cuba between 1880 and 1920, a plethora of domestic architectural styles and types were being built. Building examples still exist and give the observer a glimpse of Victorian style architecture, the pyramidal roof cottage, the Greek revival style architecture, and the bungalow. In these houses, space and room-use were broken up into more specific purposes. This leads to issues of why the Lacy Homestead and "Little Georgia" were different.

*Cultural/Architectural Conservatism*

The Lacy Homestead embodies the conservative and communal living for those in "Little Georgia". Space was not personal as much as functional. The interior use of space in the house is centered on a family's sleeping arrangements. The original floor plan of the house suggests that the primary function of most rooms was a bedroom. Even the parlor, the most formal of spaces used for entertaining, doubled as sleeping quarters for one or several family members.

This differs from the separation of space and activities with the division of rooms in the bungalows, Victorian cottages, and farmhouses being built in less isolated parts of the nation. As early floor plans show at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many homes had a kitchen, dining room, closets, laundry room, living room, bathroom, and bedrooms. Each activity from food preparation to eating, to bathing, to sleeping was given a separate room within the house. Space was chopped up and designated with a specific function.

There are two main factors why the sleeping arrangements at the Lacy Homestead were the way they were. Perhaps the most obvious is the presence of a large family. William Austin Lacy's household

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<sup>38</sup> Culpepper, Edith, cousin of William Austin Lacy, and Lorene Lacy McElroy, daughter of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 28 September 2000.

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consisted of him, his wife, Estelle, their nine children, and one child from a previous marriage. It was not unusual for couples in the community to have a dozen or more children. With the increase of people, the space needed for sleeping was also increased. Often, there was a separation of household occupants by sex and age. In both the Lacy House and another community dwelling, the Hardin-Culpepper House, there was a bedroom set aside for male members of the household. In the case of the Lacy House, the women, with the exception of the wife/mother, were separated according to age.<sup>39</sup>

Another factor also affects the decision to designate more space for bedrooms. Like all elements of farm life, bedrooms were utilitarian spaces. Bedrooms held no more importance than other rooms. The exception was that they provided a place to sleep at the end of the day. Since most daily activities were performed outside the house, the house was a place that served as a place to eat and sleep at the end of a day of work. During the warmer months of the year, most socialization and other household activities like washing was conducted out on the porch. A parlor/bedroom would be used only during the few colder months of the year or some special occasion. Therefore, the parlor was used during most of the year as a bedroom; there was no real reason to create a separate space for the parlor. However, the parlor/bedrooms in the community were usually ornamented more than the other bedrooms.

Also, in the case of the Lacy House, the hallway originally functioned as a dining area until the later addition of a dining room and kitchen. Again, space was communal and not specialized in nature. Every space was used to full advantage and nothing went underutilized.

The Lacy Homestead is an excellent example of the slow development of architectural form that comes from geographical and familial isolation. In addition, its physical construction demonstrates the importance of past knowledge for building techniques and the importance of locally produced construction materials. The architecture of the Lacy Homestead exemplifies the history of the community prior to the introduction of widely accepted trends.

The Lacy Homestead is a tangible link to "Little Georgia's" architectural past and community history. It remains one of only a handful of extant domestic buildings from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century or earlier in the community. In addition, it retains most of its original materials and is the most unaltered and intact domestic building in "Little Georgia". The Lacy Homestead visually conveys the community's historic, rural agricultural lifestyle and landscape and its past architectural knowledge. For all of these reasons, the Lacy Homestead is an excellent candidate for the National Register of Historic Places.

(The text for this nomination was based on excerpts from "Architectural Conservatism in 'Little Georgia', Lauderdale County, Mississippi", a Master of Historic Preservation thesis by Summer J. Chandler.)

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<sup>39</sup> Culpepper, Edith, cousin of William Austin Lacy, and Lorene Lacy McElroy, daughter of William Austin Lacy. Interviewed by Summer Chandler, Toomsaba, Mississippi, 28 September 2000.

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