

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 25 1979
DATE ENTERED	JAN 11 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

GREY COLUMNS

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

399 OLD MONTGOMERY ROAD

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

TUSKEGEE

VICINITY OF

STATE

ALABAMA

CODE
01

COUNTY
MACON

CODE
08Z

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

75 Spring Street, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Atlanta

VICINITY OF

Georgia 30303

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

MACON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

TUSKEGEE

STATE

ALABAMA

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

DATE

1934 and 1978

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

CITY, TOWN

WASHINGTON

STATE

DISTRICT OF Columbia

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Grey Columns is a large, late Greek Revival plantation house, embodying most of the characteristics of high-style Greek Revival with some Italianate-style details. The house consists of two basic sections--a large, virtually square main section built from 1854 through 1857 and a smaller, rear wing constructed ca. 1920. Originally, the house was the center of a 5,000 acre cotton plantation. The farmland of the plantation has since reverted to other uses. The original outbuildings of the plantation, notably the slave quarters and support buildings for the plantation house, have disappeared, leaving only archaeological evidence behind. In the 1920's the grounds were modified with the construction of a graveled drive, three-car garage, lily pond, and fountain. Other than these alterations, the grounds, which are included in the nominated property, present a general appearance not unlike their original state. A heavily wooded ravine, once part of the original plantation, has been excluded from the nomination as it bears virtually no resemblance to its historic state and does not contribute to the appearance of the grounds.

The original portion of the house is a two-story T-shaped building with a full Doric colonnade filling out the remaining three sides of the T into a square form. The roof is a shallow hip roof covered with asphalt shingle roofing. The historic roofing was standing seam metal. At the peak of the roof is an octagonal cupola with a hip roof and lightning rod on top of it. The main roof is pierced by six brick chimneys covered with stucco painted a cream color, two plumbing vent pipes, and two square metal ventilators. The chimneys were original unstuccoed and unpainted. The vent pipes were added around 1920 and 1950, respectively. The ventilators were probably installed around 1920. Both the main roof and the cupola roof have wide wood eaves with sawn Italianate-style brackets. There are eight metal downspouts (two on each side) running from the gutter to the ground. The downspouts facing the portico run outside the face of the columns. Two downspouts run down the south and west walls of the cupola.

The portico has a concrete floor with square, red tile inlay dating from the 1920's. The original floor was probably wood. The ceiling of the portico is plastered with wood lath and is painted with a series of primitive trompe l'oeil panels of twentieth century origin. These replaced an earlier series of panels. On each side of the portico are short flights of steps rising from the ground. The northwest and southeast steps are brick masonry faced with concrete and the northeast (front) steps are faced with white marble. In the northeast base wall of the portico are a series of elaborate cast iron vent grilles.

The main walls of the house are of brick masonry construction. The exterior faces of the walls are faced with stucco scored to imitate ashlar masonry. The Doric columns are built of brick masonry cylinders with stucco facing providing architectural fluting and capitals. All stucco work is painted a beige color with the "stone" joints being picked out in white paint. The windows consist of two basic types. Those facing the portico floor have nine-over-nine double-hung sash extending to the floor level. The remainder have six-over-six double-hung sash. The windows have wood shutters, some have been temporarily removed for repair, with louvers, now painted and inoperable. Each window has a cast iron sill and an elaborate cast iron lintel with anthemion and acroteria.

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CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

The cupola windows lack the cast iron lintels and sills. All exterior trim, unless otherwise noted, is painted dark brown. The cupola walls were painted dark brown into the early twentieth century, after which they have been painted cream to match the lower walls.

There are four doorways leading to the main section. The northeast (front) wall has two doorways. The lower doorway is relatively fancy, having sidelights and transom, and is flanked by two wood Corinthian columns painted cream, supporting wood modillions for the balcony. The balcony has a cast iron railing. Opening onto the balcony during the historic period was a door flanked by two sidelights and having a transom. This door was replaced by a stuccoed frame wall flanked by two narrow doors and having a pressed, frosted glass transom when the adjacent room was converted for use as a bathroom, probably around 1920. The remaining two exterior doorways are found at the southwest ends of the side porticos. They are relatively simple, having only four-panel wood doors in masonry openings. Originally, there was also a rear (southwest) doorway having sidelights and transom. The door was replaced and the wooden stoop and steps removed around 1920 when the rear addition was constructed.

The rear addition consists of a full first floor above a raised basement. At the second floor level is a smaller, glazed sleeping porch. At the southwest wall there is a small, enclosed porch reached by a flight of concrete steps from the northwest. The roof of the one-story section is a gable form enclosed within a parapet wall. It is covered with asphalt shingles, as is the truncated hip roof of the upper sleeping porch. The sleeping porch roof has wide wood eaves painted dark brown. Two stuccoed brick masonry chimneys rise from the southwest wall of the sleeping porch. The brick masonry walls of the addition are covered with stucco scored to resemble ashlar masonry. The stucco is unpainted in contrast with that of the main portion.

At the intersection of the southeast addition wall and the southwest wall of the main section is a badly deteriorated greenhouse constructed in the 1950's. It has low, red brick masonry walls, a blue-green corrugated fiberglass gable roof, a french door flanked by two sidelights on its southeast side, and a window wall of two-over-two double-hung sash along its southwest elevation.

The windows of the addition are of numerous types. The most prominent consist of pairs of eight-light casement sash below four-light transom sash arranged either singly or in groupings. These are on the sleeping porch and the southeast side of the first floor. Nine-over-nine double-hung sash with exterior screens are on the northwest elevation and the northwest end of the southwest elevation of the first floor. There are six-light fixed sash at the southwest ends of the northwest and southeast walls. At the northeast end of the southeast wall is a pair of badly deteriorated cast iron Roman-style fixed sash. There is also a cast iron coal chute painted black at the southeast end of the southwest wall.

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CONTINUATION SHEET 2

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 3

All exterior trim of the addition is painted white, unless otherwise noted. The main floor to the addition is found in the center of the northwest wall at grade. A secondary door opens from the porch. Single doorways provide access to the storage areas below the porch. With the addition of the wing a second-floor window in the southwest wall of the main house was removed and converted into a bedroom closet. Thus, a stuccoed, frame box protrudes from the wall surface directly northeast of the southeast wall of the sleeping porch.

The interior of the main section has a simple plan consisting of basically nine major rooms on each floor with three rooms on either side of a center hallway divided into three sections. Each of the side rooms has a fireplace with a total of twelve fireplaces in the original section of the building. With exceptions, as noted, the walls are of brick masonry which has a smooth plaster coat painted in various colors. All of these rooms, except the bathrooms, closets, and the front upstairs hall, have large molded plaster cornices. The rooms of the first floor each contain elaborate molded plaster Italianate-style rosettes in the center of their ceilings, except for the northwest parlor.

With the exception of the west bedroom, the flooring is narrow hardwood, dating from the 1920's. The floors of the first floor halls are laid in a herringbone pattern with the remainder of the rooms having straight flooring. The west bedroom has a wide board floor dating from the original construction. This type of flooring underlies all of the other floors, as well. The south bedroom and front bathrooms were installed in the 1920's and the west parlor and west bedroom bathrooms were added during the 1950's. The center and rear halls contain U-shaped wooden stairs with open center wells. These stairs share a common landing having a brick wall separating them with a door and transom. The stairs are virtually identical to each other with the major exception that the rear stair contains sawn brackets applied to its stringer. Between the entry hall and the front first floor stair hall is a pair of wood Doric columns connected by a molded plaster arch. On the flanking walls are pilasters. The columns and arch are painted gray. The pilasters are painted white.

The fireplaces of the first floor, except for that in the dining room contain white marble hearths and mantels dating from the original construction. The mantels of the north, northwest, and west parlors are quite plain and the mantels of the east and southeast parlors are carved. The dining room fireplace has a large, elaborate cast cement Renaissance-style mantel installed when the fireplace was rebuilt in the 1920's. The fireplaces of the second floor contain marble hearths and wood mantels. The north and east bedroom mantels are Colonial Revival-style with pairs of Roman Doric columns supporting the mantel shelf. The southeast, south, and northwest bedroom fireplaces are original, having simple Greek Revival mantels. The west bedroom has a Tudor-style mantel which is also original.

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CONTINUATION SHEET 3

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 4

The doors of the interior fall into two major categories. Almost all of the single-hung doors are original four-panel doors. Fifteen-light french doors from the 1920's are found in the five large openings between the first floor parlors and in the doorways opening into the addition hall, breakfast room, and sleeping porch. Door and window casings are all wood with ancons eared, Greek Revival style. Baseboards are wood and a typical Greek Revival molding style. Attached to almost all the baseboards is a small strip of wood which is either varnished or painted black, depending on its location. In the dining room is a molded wood plate rail from the 1920's. All interior woodwork, except as noted, is painted white. Above the second floor and beneath the roof is a large, square, open attic. The attic is finished only in the area immediately southeast of the stair and landing going to the cupola. Otherwise, the framing of the roof and of the second-floor ceilings is exposed.

The cupola is a large, octagonal room with flushboard walls covered with a thick, hard cream-colored paint. The floor is of wide boards similar to that found in the west bedroom. The baseboard and windows are painted white. The windows have, or once had, 1920's screens over their lower sash. The ceiling is of flushboard siding in an octagonal pattern. Below the first floor and portico is an unfinished crawl space area.

There are three floors inside the addition. The main floor contains four rooms: a hall, breakfast room, kitchen, and pantry. There are ceramic tile floors in the pantry and breakfast room, marble herringbone tile floor in the kitchen, and a concrete floor painted brown in the hall. The walls are plastered and painted except for the breakfast room which has wood paneling and the kitchen which has a white tile wainscoting on its lower walls. The ceilings are plastered and painted white except the kitchen which has an acoustical tile ceiling. The casement windows have, or had, interior screens. The doors are generally either single-panel doors or fifteen-light french doors, with some exceptions, notably the door from the hall to the breakfast room which has a fixed leaded-glass sash above a single wood panel. The basement is divided into several rooms and crawlspaces. The sleeping porch is divided in half by a frame partition wall running southwest-northwest. The interior of the sleeping porch has plastered walls painted blue, an acoustical tile ceiling painted aqua, and a hardwood floor. Trimwork is painted blue, except for the baseboard which is painted white. There are interior wood screens for most of the windows of the sleeping porch.

The existing landscaping of the grounds surrounding Grey Columns reflects the English landscape style that was popular in the south in the pre and post Civil War period. The landscaping of the grounds evolved and changed during the 120 years that the property was owned by the Varner family. The enclosed landscape plan showing existing conditions reflects the present appearance of the approximate 6 acres surrounding the house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

1854-1857

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

William Varner

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Grey Columns is an excellent example of a late Greek Revival plantation house with some Italianate style details. In a city in which many antebellum mansions survive, Grey Columns is, by far, the most magnificent. In grandeur, Grey Columns ranks among the finest surviving plantation houses in the South. Despite the additions and alterations made to it in the years following original construction, Grey Columns retains much of its original appearance. As a social statement, Grey Columns reflects much concerning the social structure of antebellum Southern culture. It is regrettable that all of the outbuildings and surrounding farmland has since disappeared, leaving the mansion house to stand in solitary splendor. Nevertheless, by itself, the house reflects much of the means and lifestyle of the antebellum aristocracy in the South.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arbogast, David; Ates, D.; Platt, J., "Historic Structure Report, Grey Columns, "National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1979; Pryce, Edward, Historic Landscape Report, Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, prepared by Williams-Russell and Associate, under contract with National Park Service, 1978.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	16	621750	35181250	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the land surrounding Grey Columns is that area that is presently landscaped or in lawn and enclosed on the north and east by a 4 foot high ornamental iron fence, on the south and southwest by the existing tree line and on the west and northwest by a wire fence. See enclosed Plan of existing landscaping at Grey Columns.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
DAVID ARBOGAST/HISTORICAL ARCHITECT

ORGANIZATION
National Park Service, Denver Service Center

DATE
April 16, 1979

STREET & NUMBER
755 Parfet Street

TELEPHONE
303-234-6080

CITY OR TOWN
Denver

STATE
Colorado

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES NO NONE

Chilo B. Howard, Jr.
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is see letter dated 10/19/79 National State Local

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE see letter dated 10/19/79
 TITLE Fed. Rep. Signature DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Carol D. Shull
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION DATE 1-11-80

ATTEST: *Walt A. Bami*
 DATE 1/10/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Grey Columns, 399 Old Montgomery Road
Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
Tuskegee, Alabama

OCT 25 1979

Macon County
Northeast Elevation - Main House
National Park Service, DSC, 1978



Grey Columns, 399 Old Montgomery Road
Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
Tuskegee, Alabama

Macon County OCT 25 1978

Northwest Elevation - Wing

National Park Service, DSC, 1978



Grey Columns, 399 Old Montgomery Road
Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
Tuskegee, Alabama
Macon County
Northwest Elevation - Main House
OCT 25 1979

0081

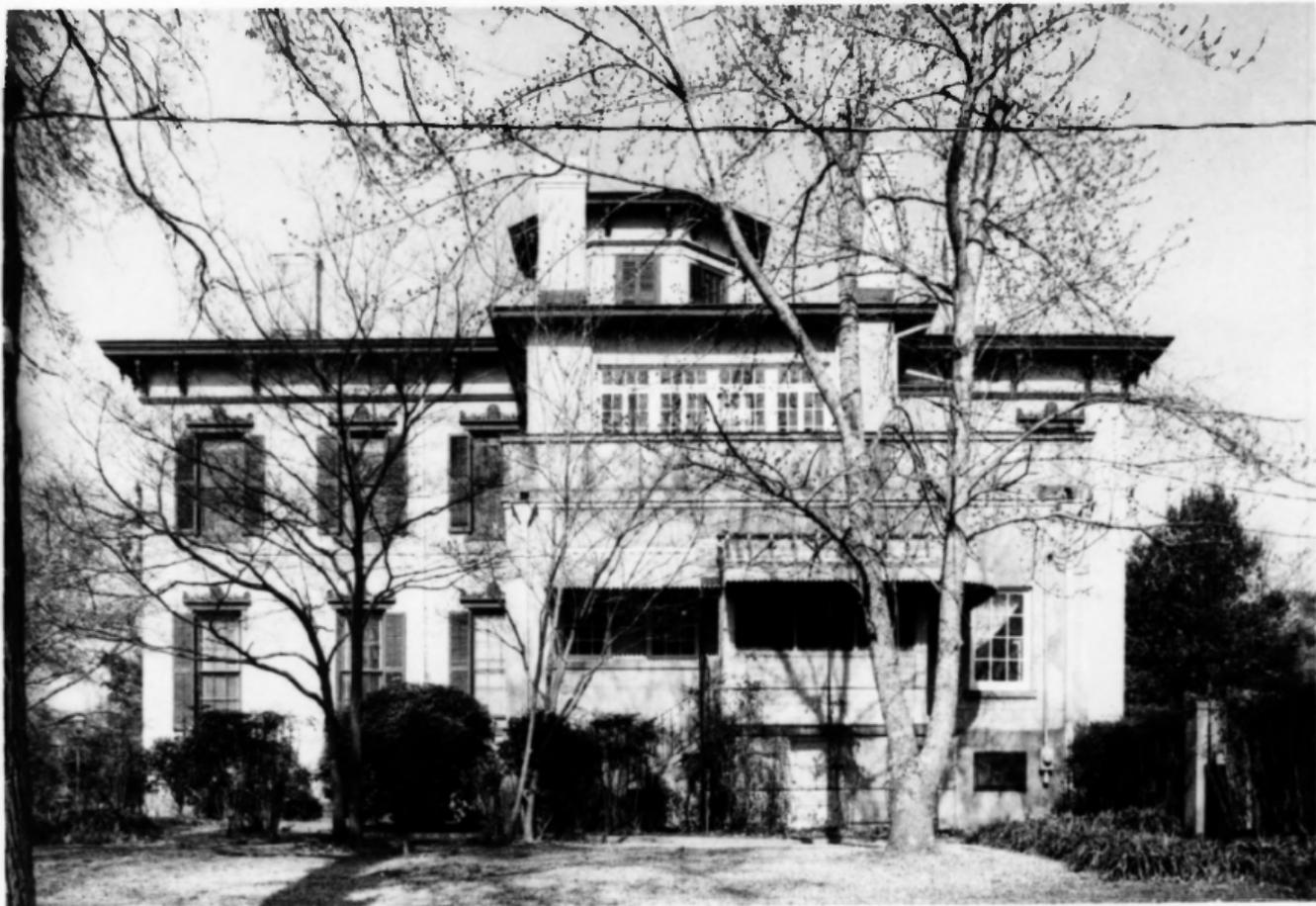


Grey Columns, 399 Old Montgomery Road
Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
Tuskegee, Alabama

MACON COUNTY
107 25 1979

Southeast Elevation - Main House
National Park Service, DSC, 1978

0001



Grey Columns, 399 Old Montgomery Road
Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
Tuskegee, Alabama

MacCormack OCT 25 1979
Southwest Elevation - Main House and Wing

7850



Grey Columns, 399 Old Montgomery Road
Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
Tuskegee, Alabama

Macon County
Southeast Elevation - Wing **OCT 25 1979**
National Park Service, DSC, 1978

7890