

Robert Butler House  
3502 Old Bainbridge Rd.  
Tallahassee  
Leon County  
Florida

HABS No. FLA-157

HABS

FLA.

37-TALA

2-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## ROBERT BUTLER HOUSE

HABS  
FLA  
37-TALA  
2-

Location: Florida, Leon County, Tallahassee, 3502 Old  
Bainbridge Rd.

Present Owner: Millard F. Caldwell

Present Occupant: Millard F. Caldwell

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement  
of Significance: This structure was built c. 1826 by Robert Butler,  
Jackson's Quarter Master General, Florida's first  
Surveyor General, and Florida's first Grand Master  
of Masons. It is presently the home of Millard  
F. Caldwell, Governor of Florida, 1945-1949, and  
Justice, Supreme Court of Florida.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original owner: Robert Butler
2. Date of erection: Originally erected c. 1826, extensively altered prior to 1900.
3. Original plans, construction: Originally four square house, probably with separate kitchen, and porches and/or balcony at both floors on north (front) elevation.
4. Notes on alterations and additions: Kitchen ell added c. 1880, with back porch breezeway separating addition from main house. Alterations and additions, 1940-1957 include removal of partition separating stair hall from front room left, addition of west wing, bath room south east corner, enlargement of porch, and minor changes.
5. Sources: Millard F. Caldwell

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

## A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: a two-story wood frame structure with four columned portico with good front-entrance frontis-pieces;

2. Condition of Fabric: Excellent. Survey limited to early HABS  
portion of structure. FLA

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

37-TALA

2 -

1. Over-all dimensions: Approx. 34' x 40' (north front 2 stories high elevation) with 30' x 30' ell (including enclosed porch).
2. Foundations: Brick foundation walls and brick piers; hand hewn sills, mortised and tenoned joints with peg fasteners.
3. Wall construction: Wood frame covered with lapped horizontal siding, approx. 5" exposure, painted white, cut nails.
4. Portico, stoops: Two-story portico, gable roof, flush siding and 12 light window with wood louvered shutters in pediment; brick floor and steps, plaster ceiling, false balcony at second floor; four square paneled columns, wood bases. Side porch, shed roof, wood handrails.
5. Chimneys: Two brick chimneys with four flues each, corbelled brick caps.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Doorways first and second floor north front elevation similar: Head (21 lights) light, side (13 lights) lights; heavy wood entablature, pilasters; four panel door. East side doorway has head (three lights) light, four panel wood door.
  - b. Windows and shutters: 6 over 6 light double-hung windows, heavy sills, light frames; wood louvered shutters. Louvered openings in gable ends of house, with shutters.
7. Roof:
  - a. Shape and covering: Gable roof, composition shingles over wood shingles.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Heavy wood cornice and boxed eaves in front elevation. Flush eaves at gable ends. Metal gutters and downspouts.

C. Technical Description of Interior:

37-TALA.

1. Floor plans:

2.

- a. First floor: Central hall flanked by four rooms (original partition separating front room left from hall indicated in plaster ceiling and at wall), stair to second floor off hall and right rear room. Modern appendage through front right room. Bath room off left rear: access to ell and enclosed porch from hall.
  - b. Second floor: Similar to first. Stairway continues to full attic.
2. Stairway: Left hand L-shaped stairway to second floor with landing 5 risers from first floor. Turned and square newels. Square balusters, 2 per tread, molded rail.
  3. Flooring: Heart pine, 2" x 6"
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: Paper on plaster walls and ceiling. Plaster on rived lath. Partition construction of studs pegged into sill.
  5. Doorways and doors: Simple wood trim, corner blocks; four panel doors mortised and tenoned joints, peg fasteners.
  6. Trim: Beaded edges on considerable amounts of interior and exterior door and window trim. Fireplaces have simple Greek Revival mantel pieces.
  7. Hardware: Modern
  8. Lighting: Modern electric
  9. Heating: Fireplaces in each room. Modern space heaters. Unit air conditioners.

- D. Site: Faces north on Old Bainbridge Road, set in 1200 acres, informal landscape. Graveyard near by with oldest grave 1837. Outbuildings include a nut house for drying pecans and a commissary. Masonic monument to Robert Butler near by.

Prepared by F. Blair Reeves  
College of Architecture and Fine Arts  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, Florida  
February 1962