

Selma  
U.S. Highway 61 North  
Washington vicinity  
Adams County  
Mississippi

HABS No. MS-198

HABS  
MISS,  
1-WASH.V,  
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SELMA

HABS No. MS-198

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I-WASH.V,  
5-

Location: United States Highway 61 North ,  
Washington vicinity, Adams County  
Mississippi

Present Owner: Mrs. Elizabeth Hearon Abbott, Selma  
Plantation, Washington, Mississippi  
39190

Present Occupant and Use: Residence, Mrs. Elizabeth H. Abbott

Significance: Selma Plantation was the birthplace  
of Gerard Brandon, first native of  
Mississippi to serve as governor.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: ca. 1788
2. Architect: Unknown
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a partial and incomplete chain of title to the land on which Selma plantation now stands. Reference is made to Deed and Wills books of Adams County, Mississippi.

1805	April 29, 1805. A claim was entered by Gerard Brandon for the subject site in Section 24 of T 7 N, R 2 W under Certificate No. A-73, a claim based on a Spanish patent of 600 f (Spanish acres) granted to William Brocus on February 29, 1788.
1823	May 1, 1823, Probate. WB 1/294. Sarah Brandon and others from Gerard Brandon.
1831	April 18, 1831. BD EE/565. Gerard Brandon and James Brandon from Chauncy Pettibone and wife, heirs of Sarah Brandon.
1846	January 9, 1846. DB FF/484. Margaret Smith from James C. Brandon and Gerald Brandon and wife, Charlotte, convey a tract on the waters of St. Catherine Creek - 600 arpents, Spanish grant to William Brocus.
1856	March 24, 1856. Probate WB 3/54. Mary Clair Phillips, wife of Richard Phillips, and other grandchildren, equally, from Margaret Smith, conveys "Selma" and the household furniture.

- 1870 March 1870. Probate. WB 3/386. William J Phillips from Laura A. Phillips, second wife of Richard W. Phillips, wills her property to his son (her step-son).
- 1875 March 1, 1875. DB UU/420. James W. Chamberlain from William J Phillips: conveys 640 acres, known as "Selma Plantation" on or near the Fayette road, about 9 miles east of Natchez, being the same plantation on which Richard Phillips now resides.
- 1893 January 25, 1893. DB 3I/81. Caleb Z. Stowers from Anna M. Chamberlain, et al, widow, and other heirs: convey 648 acres near the Fayette road ...
- 1899 February 23, 1899. DB 3Q/246. Adolph Jacobs from Caleb Zebulon Stowers: conveys several tracts including (item 3) Selma Plantation - 648 acres.
- 1914 May 26, 1914. DB 4E/211. C. H. Markham from Adolph Jacobs: conveys a tract on Fayette public road and the YMV Railroad, known as "Selma" 648 acres, except 1 acre belonging to S.D. Cobb.
- 1919 January 2, 1919. DB 4G/73. H. Graham Morris from C. H. Markham: conveys "Selma Plantation" with all buildings.
- 1928 October 25, 1928. DB 4M/589. Louis Fry from G. H. Brandon, substitute Trustee, on default of deed of trust from H. Graham Morris and wife Elodie L. conveys "Selma" 648 acres.
- 1928 November 10, 1928. DB 4N/289. Mrs. Meta P Hightower from Louis Fry: conveys " Selma"
- 1932 December 5, 1932. DB 4R/39. Walter P Abbott from Mrs. Meta P. Hightower and George B. Hightower, her husband, conveys "Selma" except a parcel of land, the "old Brandon burying ground and the public road, formerly the Natchez and Fayette road, now Highway 61.
- 1960 April 30, 1960. DB 8Y/489. George William Abbott and Elizabeth, his wife: from Walter P. Abbott and Mary, his wife: conveys Selma except Brandon family burying ground, 4 acres along the Natchez Trace, and 132 acres to the State of Mississippi
- 1961 October 12, 1961. WB 19/568. Elizabeth Hearon Abbott from George William Abbott: to my wife, all my property real, personal and mixed.

4. Original plans and construction: The plan of Selma closely followed the typical form of early Mississippi plantation architecture. This form had been fully developed by the late eighteenth century. Three rooms in a single pile arrangement occupy the front portion of the house. An open loggia with stairs, flanked by small cabinets, occupies the remaining area to the rear.
5. Alterations and additions: The loggia was enclosed and a narrow range of rooms were added to the rear of the house ca. 1900.

B. Historical Context

Selma Plantation was the birthplace of Gerard C. Brandon (1788-1850), the first native of Mississippi to serve as governor of the state. The residence was constructed in ca. 1788 by Brandon's father, who had served in the REvolutionary War under Francis Marion before moving to the natchez region.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The story and a half plantation house with its full length, undercut gallery demonstrates the typical form of early Mississippi plantation architecture.
2. Condition of fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The one and a half story, rectangular house has seven bays.
2. Foundations: Brick
3. Walls: The principal facade is finished with flush siding, tinted white. The side elevations are clapboard, painted white.
4. Structural system: Wood frame construction
5. Porches: The undercut gallery extends the full width of the facade. The rear porch is screened.
6. Chimneys: There is one square interior chimney and 1 end butressed chimney.
7. Openings: The elliptical fan light of the entrance doorway spans the sidelights. The original rear doorway was paneled and topped by a three pane transom. The windows are double hung with nine over six glazing. The shutters are louvered.

8. Roof: The gabled roof is covered with asbestos shingles. The cornice is unornamented. Two simple dormers are placed on the main and rear elevations. Glazing is six over six.

B. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Beyond the undercut gallery there are three rooms in a single pile arrangement. The center room opens onto a rear loggia flanked by cabinets. At the time it was enclosed, ca. 1900, the rear loggia was extended and several rooms were added to the rear of the house.
2. Stairways: Located in the now-enclosed loggia, the two simple staircases are each designed with square newels and balusters. Each is composed of a landing which separates the straight flight of steps below from the steep winders above.
3. Flooring: Wood
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls and ceilings are finished with plaster in the original section. Some ceilings in the remodeled areas have narrow beaded ceiling boards dating from ca. 1900.
5. Doorways and doors: The six panel doors are hung in doorways decorated by architraves composed of a wide, beaded fascia surrounded by a molded backband.
6. Decorative features: Simple mantels are designed with colonettes replace the original mantels.

D. Site:

The house is located on a rise of land which commands a broad view of the surrounding flat land.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Subject file. Gerard C. Brandon.

Rowland, Dunbar. Mississippi: Comprising Sketches of Counties, Towns, Events, Institutions, and Persons. Arranged in Cyclopedic Form. 3 vols. Atlanta: Southern Historical Publishing. 1907, p 287.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project coordinated by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Elbert R. Hilliard, Director. Data compiled by William C. Allen, Architectural Historian. 1974

Edited by Marion K Schlefer, Historic American Buildings Survey, Washington, D.C. 20240