

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCERS use only  
received FEB 23 1982  
date entered APR 7 1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic China Grove Plantation

and/or common same as above

**2. Location**

12 mi. S of Natchez

street & number twelve miles south of Natchez east of U.S. Highway 61 NA not for publication

city, town Natchez *m.c.*  vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Mississippi code 28 county Adams code 1

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>NA</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mr. and Mrs. A. V. Davis

street & number P. O. Box 614

city, town Natchez NA vicinity of state Mississippi 39120

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Chancery Clerk  
Adams County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Natchez state Mississippi 39120

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title NA has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>NA</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Entered on the eastern side of U. S. Highway 61 South, about twelve miles south of Natchez, China Grove is situated on an eminence overlooking Second Creek and a plantation of 228 acres. The vernacular, one-and-a-half story, frame plantation dwelling is set upon brick foundation piers. The gable roof features a wide overhang that embraces the three, outside-end chimneys, two of which are located on the northerly elevation and one on the southerly elevation of the house. The westerly facade of the house is fronted by a gallery supported by unmolded box columns which were once linked by an unsophisticated railing composed of three horizontal boards, now missing but to be replaced during restoration. In the centermost bays of the four-bay facade are transomed doorways filled with unmolded, four-panel doors that are flanked by almost floor-length windows filled with nine-over-nine, double-hung sash and closed by original shutter blinds. The interior plan is a single-pile plan, two rooms across, with no central passage that also features small "cabinet" rooms flanking a recessed rear gallery. The interior surfaces of the exterior walls were originally plastered, but the partition walls are constructed of matched boards. All interior door and window surrounds are plain and unmolded with mitered corners, the four-panel doors are unmolded, and the bases are beaded with two fascia. The two major rooms feature a molded chair rail and ceilings with exposed beams that were never plastered. All original wooden pilastered mantel pieces have survived. Much of the original decorative scheme is also intact with a wainscoting achieved by paint in one "cabinet" room and a baseboard effect achieved by paint on wall sections of "cabinet" rooms and the recessed rear gallery where no baseboard was installed. The stairway to the second story is entered from the rear gallery through a board-and-batten door and runs in a steep, straight flight in a westerly direction to terminate in one of two, unfinished rooms. The property contains one nineteenth-century outbuilding which is a small, gabled roof tenant house with board-and-batten siding and front gallery.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) black history
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates N/A c. 1850

Builder/Architect N/A

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

China Grove derives its primary significance from its rarity as the Southern plantation residence of a black family who rose from a position as valued and esteemed slaves to become prosperous citizens of the post-Civil War South. The vernacular form and details, some of them unique and others strongly associated with black architecture, combine with the outstanding integrity to give the building architectural significance as well. In 1854, white planter James Railey purchased China Grove Plantation which adjoined Railey's own Oakland Plantation (Adams County Chancery Court Box 181). In 1861, Railey specified in his will that his slaves August and Sarah and their children were to be exempted from the settlement of his other property and, that at the death of his wife, they were to become the property of his brother who "will treat them with kindness, and give them all the comfort they require" (Will Book D:153). In James Railey's probate papers is an inventory of his estate that lists August and Sarah Mazique and their seven children with their ages and a monetary value assigned to each (Probate Box 126). Stylistically, the China Grove residence dates from 1850 to 1870 and was probably constructed not long after Railey acquired the plantation in 1854. The vernacular quality of the house and its proximity to the plantation gin indicate that it was probably constructed for and/or by August Mazique, who could possibly have served as Railey's plantation overseer. In 1869, August Mazique purchased China Grove at public auction after the Railey heirs lost the property in a chancery court suit (Deed Book QQ:232 and RR:148). After purchasing China Grove, the Mazique family prospered to the extent, that by the end of the nineteenth century, they were among the largest landowners in the southwestern section of Adams County. August Mazique's son Alexander eventually purchased Oakland Plantation, the home of his former master James Railey. In 1883, after the death of August Mazique, the 628-acre China Grove Plantation was partitioned by family members with the present 228-acre tract being allotted to widow Sarah and son Otey (Deed Book YY:110). This dower portion remained the residence of members of the Mazique family until 1980, when it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. A. V. Davis. Mr. and Mrs. Davis are to be commended for their sympathetic restoration of this exceedingly rare example of a former slave's plantation residence. The architectural integrity and the integrity of setting are outstanding, and China Grove may possibly be the only intact plantation with a history of black ownership in the state of Mississippi.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Adams County. Office of Chancery Clerk. Deed Books QQ, RR, YY.

Adams County. Office of Chancery Clerk. Chancery Court Box 181.

Adams County. Office of Chancery Clerk. Probate Box 126.

(see continuation sheet)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 228 acres

Quadrangle name Kingston, Mississippi-Louisiana

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

### UMT References

A 

1	5	6	5	4	5	5	0	3	4	7	7	1	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B 

1	5	6	5	4	6	4	0	4	3	7	5	8	8	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

C 

1	5	6	5	3	2	6	0	3	4	7	6	0	3	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

D 

1	5	6	5	3	4	4	0	3	4	7	7	2	5	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

E 

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F 

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G 

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing										

**Verbal boundary description and justification** See attached map of Partition of China Grove Plantation. The nominated property is shown as lot 3, outlined in red, consisting of 228 acres. The 228-acre tract has been intact since 1883, the integrity of setting is outstanding, and China Grove may possibly be the only intact black-owned plantation in Mississippi.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Warren Miller/Research Consultant

organization Historic Natchez Foundation

date November 10, 1981

street & number P. O. Box 1761

telephone (601) 442-9786

city or town Natchez

state Mississippi 39120

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Robert J. Bailey*

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date February 11, 1982

### For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*William H. Brackman*  
Keeper of the National Register

date 4.7.82

Attest: *Ann Doherty*  
Chief of Registration

date 4/7/82

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

FEB 23 1982

DATE ENTERED

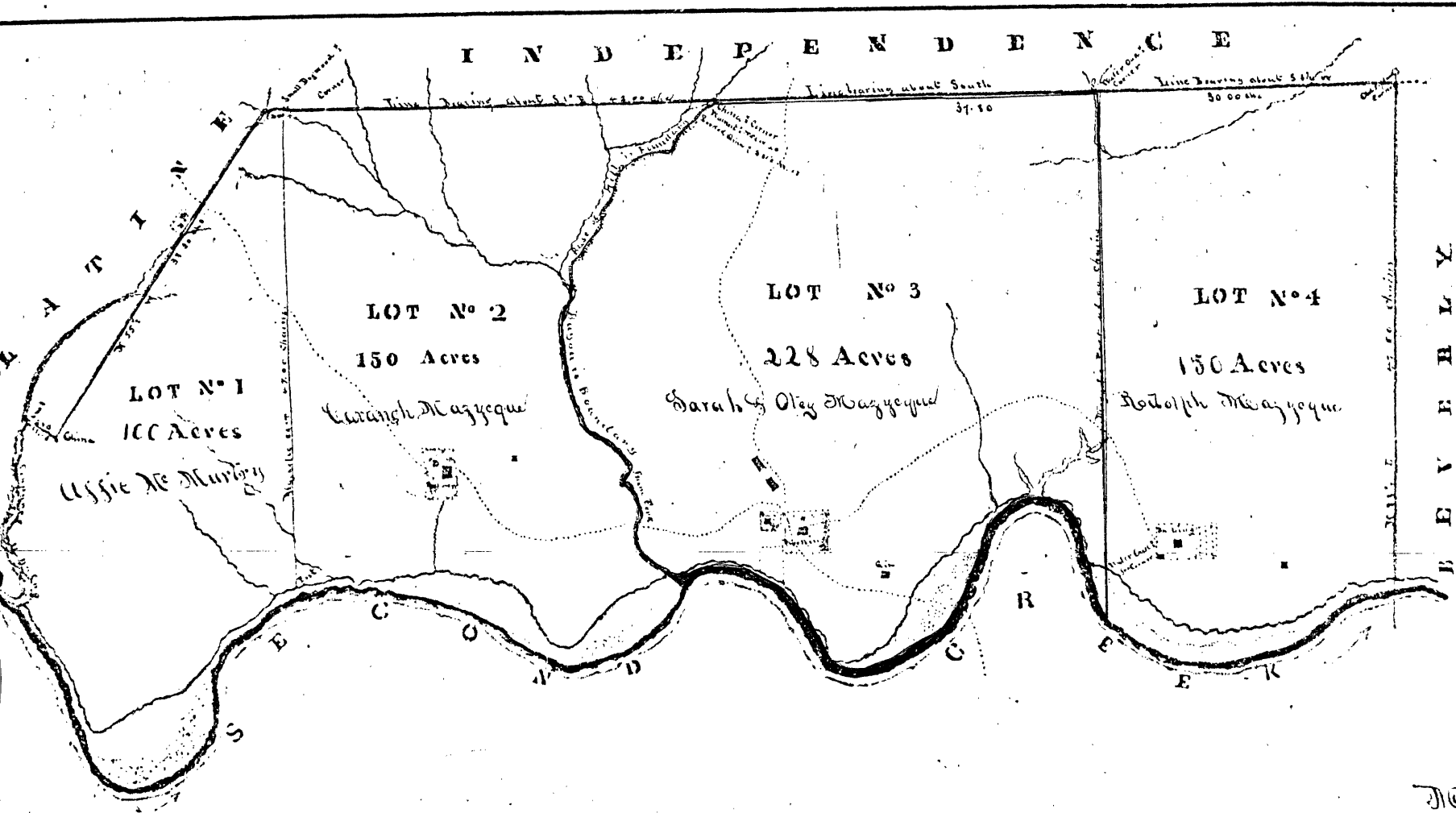
APR 27 1982

China Grove Plantation  
Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Adams County. Office of Chancery Clerk. Will Book 3.



CHINA GROVE PLANTATION  
Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

Map of  
Partition - of  
**China Grove**  
Plantation  
625 Acres.

RECEIVED  
FEB 29 1882  
NATIONAL  
REGISTER

7 1882

Surveyed in January 1883  
by  
Chas. W. Balle C.E.

Filed for record in my Office this  
5th day of February A.D. 1882 at 11  
o'clock a.m.  
G. W. Foster, Clerk

Recorded February 5<sup>th</sup> 1882.



CHINA GROVE

Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

Looking northerly, the southerly elevation of China Grove (during restoration) showing the setting of the house.

Mary W. Miller, Historic Natchez Foundation,  
January 1982

Photo 1 of 4

FEB 23 1982





CHINA GROVE

Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

Looking northeasterly, the westerly facade  
and the southerly elevation of China Grove  
during restoration.

Mary W. Miller, Historic Natchez Foundation,  
January 1982

Photo 2 of 4

FEB 23 1982



CHINA GROVE

Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

Looking southwesterly, the northerly elevation of China Grove (during restoration) showing the two, outside-end chimneys.

Mary W. Miller, Historic Natchez Foundation,  
January 1982

Photo 3 of 4

FEB 23 1982



# CHINA GROVE

Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

Looking southerly, the mantel piece of the southerly front room of China Grove during restoration. The mantel piece has been repaired and will be repainted black; the bricks will be blackened as they were originally.

FEB 23 1982

Mary W. Miller, Historic Natchez Foundation,  
January 1982

Photo 4 of 4