QUIETDALE
(William and Caroline Robinson Residence)
401 Quietdale Drive Northeast
Huntsville
Madison County
Alabama

Captions written by Linda Bayer Allen, April 2018.

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Renee Bieretz, photographer, March 2012

AL-1000-1 Front facade of Quietdale, viewed from the south. Originally the center of a 55-acre tract located north of Huntsville, Quietdale with its symmetrical facade and four side chimneys continues the neoclassic tradition, but the picturesque veranda with its subtle arches and slim, bracketed columns presages the romantic styles that soon would become dominant.

AL-1000-2 The front and side facades viewed from the southeast show the double-pile main block and shallow chimney stacks that disappear into the eaves. A corner of the massive slave quarters, barely visible at the rear, illustrates the close proximity of the two structures. The house was once set amid a lush landscape of bushes, spring bulbs, and mature trees.

AL-1000-3 The rear porches on the east and north elevations have had alterations to the banisters, columns, stairs, doors, and windows over the years. The detailing of the rear is plain as this is a functional space, tightly connected with the kitchen and quarters-just visible behind the tree. The end of the porch to the far right was enclosed for a utility room, presumably when the kitchen was moved into the house, but this addition has now been demolished and the porch restored. The stairway to the second porch level was relocated from the main interior hall at an unknown date; it has now been replaced by a spiral stair.
AL-1000-4 The long west wall of the slave quarters is a double-porch from which access was gained to all six chambers, three per floor, with the one closest to the house being the kitchen. Originally there would have been a walkway, possibly covered, to connect the kitchen and house, but no hint of it remains; the two are now joined by a new brick patio running from one porch to the other, a connection made feasible by the removal of the utility room addition and restoration of the porch. The center doorway on the first level of the dependency has been changed to a window, and a window was removed when the stair on the north end was modified. On the north wall is a small gabled entry over steps to a large cellar. This six-bay, two-story frame structure is an extraordinarily rare, antebellum survivor.

AL-1000-5 The west elevation viewed from the northwest reveals the size of the house: seven bays deep with a second veranda nearly identical in design and size to that on the front. Access to it is from a side hall perpendicular to the central hall; at the time of this photo, there were no steps to the yard, but a set of brick steps are now in place. The tall chimneys lean toward the roof because excess moisture on their exterior faces cause the mortar to swell more on that side; brackets help secure the chimneys which have been rebuilt above the eaves. The six windows on the north end are those in the ell. To the left is another corner of the quarters.

AL-1000-6 This view of the six-bay east wall and the north wall of the slave quarters illustrates the even arrangements of the windows. Unlike those in the house, these windows are nine-over-six; they are exceptionally large for a dependency, and it has been suggested that they might have been recycled from an older structure. The northernmost one has been removed and could be that on the north wall behind the cellar entry. The kitchen chimney is visible as is the brick foundation and one federal-style wooden foundation vent at the near corner.

AL-1000-7 This detail of the front veranda seen from the southwest combines curvilinear brackets with shallow Tudoresque arches that spring from slightly tapered octagonal columns. Some sections of the ornate, floral plasterwork survive on the ceiling.