NPS Form 10-900
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received OCT 22 1987
date entered NOV 20

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

1. Name

historic James C. Self House

and/or common Self House

2. Location

street & number 595 North Mathis Street N/A not for publication

city, town Greenwood X vicinity of

state South Carolina code 045 county Greenwood code 047

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	X private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	N/A in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	N/A being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name James C. Self, Jr., and Linda C. Self

street & number Post Office Box 1017

city, town Greenwood N/A vicinity of state South Carolina 29648

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Greenwood County Courthouse

street & number 528 Monument Street

city, town Greenwood state South Carolina 29646

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1987 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records South Carolina Department of Archives and History

city, town Columbia state South Carolina 29211-1669

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	X unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located at the intersection of Mathis Road (S-24-108) and the Calhoun Highway (SC 72) near the City of Greenwood, the James C. Self House is a two-story, brick veneer residence built in the neoclassical style. The house was designed by Greenwood architect Thomas W. Cothran and constructed 1917-18 as a residence for James C. and Lura M. Self. Minor modifications made in subsequent years by members of the Self family, in whose possession the house has remained without interruption, have not adversely affected the building's architectural integrity from the period of its construction.

Exterior Description

The James C. Self House is a two-story, brick veneer residence with a green Spanish tile, hip roof. It rests on a brick foundation faced with rock face granite blocks. There is a partial basement and an attic. The exterior walls are composed of textured brick laid in stretcher bond. Most of the windows are double-hung, with six-over-six lights and louvered shutters. The windows have concrete sills and flat arches with keystones. Three interior end brick chimneys and one brick flue, all with corbelled caps, pierce the roof.

The five-bay facade (east elevation) is symmetrical, with central entrances on each story. The first-story entrance has a single door with beveled glass sidelights, recessed within an architrave framed by four fluted pilasters. The second story entrance opens onto a small balcony that is supported by four acanthus leaf consoles and has a square-picketed balustrade with simple pedestals. This entrance has double doors, sidelights, corner lights, and transom, all recessed within an architrave featuring two fluted pilasters.

The facade is dominated by a colossal Ionic portico that projects from the three central bays. The portico has four fluted Ionic columns (and two corresponding pilasters) with Scamozzi capitals and rosette ornamentation. The entablature has a plain architrave and frieze, and a cornice with dentil molding and acanthus leaf brackets. The portico is surmounted by a balustraded parapet, composed of turned posts and panelled pedestals, which engages the front slope of the roof. Centrally located behind the portico is a gabled dormer that has a Palladian window, boxed cornice with returns, and an acroterion.

The porch has a tile floor, which extends to form terraces to the north and south. The terraces have balustrades with turned posts and brick pedestals, and intersect with single-story porches on the north and south elevations. The north porch extends to form a porte-cochere; the south porch has been enclosed with glass to form a sun room. Both porches and the porte-cochere feature grouped, fluted, Doric columns; turned balustrades; balustraded parapets; and dentil molding. The portico, terraces, porches, and porte-cochere have granite steps and granite trim.

Two, large, two-story wings extend from the rear of the house. Other notable exterior features include a single-story, polygonal bay window on the south elevation, a gabled dormer on the south roof slope (similar to the dormer on the facade), and a granite water table. The roof has a wide overhang with dentil molding and acanthus leaf brackets. There have been no additions to the house.

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8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400–1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500–1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600–1699	X architecture	education	military	social/humanitarian
1700–1799	art	engineering	music	theater
1800–1899	commerce	exploration/settlement	philosophy	transportation
X 1900–	communications	X industry	politics/government	other (specify)
		invention		

Specific dates 1917-18 **Builder/Architect** Thomas W. Cothran

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The James C. Self House, located at 595 North Mathis Street near the City of Greenwood, South Carolina, is significant for its association with textile magnate and philanthropist James C. Self. In addition, the neoclassical style mansion is architecturally significant as one of the more ambitious residential projects of Thomas W. Cothran, a prominent local architect of the early twentieth century. Begun in 1917, the house was constructed as a residence for Mr. and Mrs. James C. Self and reportedly took about a year to complete.

Additional Information

The Self House is prominently located on the old Mathews or Mathis Road (now known as Mathis Street), one of the area's earliest public roads. It was built on the site of the homeplace of George B. Bailey (1857-1925).[1]

In 1917, James Cuthbert Self (1876-1955) purchased the Bailey homeplace, which consisted of sixteen acres, and began construction of his house. He purchased an adjoining ten acres at the same time from Mr. W. Allie Williams. The 7.89 acres that remain in the home tract are included in this nomination.[2]

Plans for the house were prepared by Greenwood architect Thomas W. Cothran. The contractor reportedly was Charles L. Rounds of Clinton.[3] A completion date has not been documented, but family tradition holds that the house took a year to build. The Selfs were living in the house at the time of the birth of their son in 1919.[4] The house is a manifestation of Mr. Self's wealth--a visible symbol of his status and commercial success.

James C. Self was known for his philanthropy, particularly to the Greenwood area. His interests were varied, but his primary concern was health care. After the Greenwood Hospital was severely damaged by a tornado in 1944, Mr. Self announced that the Self Foundation would build a modern facility for the community. The large, 179-bed Self Memorial Hospital (named for Mr. Self's father and brother, both of whom were doctors) admitted its first patient in 1951. Through expansions and modernizations, it has become a regional health care facility for the Upper Savannah River area.[5]

Mr. Self also was interested in the religious life of the community. This concern is perhaps best exemplified by the Callie Self Memorial Baptist Church, which he had built in 1940-41 to replace the South Greenwood (formerly Grendel Mill No. 2) Baptist Church. The church (named in memory of Mr. Self's mother) is prominently located on South Main Street near the City limits. Numerous other churches and religious organizations have benefitted from the Foundation established by Mr. Self.[6]

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9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 7.89

Quadrangle name Greenwood

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	391125	3784097
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The boundary of the James C. Self House nomination is shown by the heavy black line on the accompanying Greenwood County Tax Map #99-02, which is drawn at a scale of 1 inch equalling 100 feet. The nominated property includes the house, historic outbuildings, landscaping, and other significant features associated with the property.

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John C. Blythe, Jr. Edited by the State Historic Preservation Office Staff

organization Upper Savannah Council of Governments date June 4, 1987

street & number Post Office Box 1366 telephone (803) 229-6627

city or town Greenwood state South Carolina 29648-1366

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Christie Z. Fand, Deputy SHPO

title George L. Vogt
State Historic Preservation Officer date 10/13/87

For NPS use only

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

[signature] date 11-20-87

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1983 O - 419-311

Interior Description

Features prominent throughout the house include hardwood floors, crown molding, six-panel doors with mitered trim and solid transoms, original brass hardware, and many original chandeliers. The first story has six primary rooms, sun room, enclosed rear porch, two baths, and wide main hall. A vestibule at the front entrance opens into the L-shaped main hall, which features panelled wainscoting, picture molding, and pocket doors leading to the living room, library, and formal dining room. The main staircase, located at the rear of the hall, has turned balusters, a curved newel, and a window seat on the landing. The living room, on the right of the hall, features panelled wainscoting and an Adamesque mantel. Across the hall are the library and billiard room. The library has a marble mantel salvaged from an old building that dates from the mid-nineteenth century. The library walls were covered with a burled walnut veneer ca. 1977. French doors with transoms provide access to the sun room. The formal dining room at the rear of the hall features built-in china cabinets, panelled wainscoting, and an elaborate mantel with urn and Greek fret ornamentation. Located off the formal dining room and billiard room (former family dining room) is the present kitchen/breakfast area. This large room was created ca. 1970 by redesigning the original butler's pantry and breakfast room area. The original kitchen is now used as a utility room, but retains its significant architectural features, most notably the brick fireplace.

The second story has four bedrooms, trunk room, sitting room, sleeping porch, work room, four baths, and large stair hall. Notable ornamentation includes panelled wainscoting in the stair hall; a mantel with Doric columns and dentil molding in Mrs. Self's bedroom; a mantel with scroll, acanthus leaf, dentil, and bunched reed ornamentation in what is now the master bedroom; and a chair rail in Mr. Self's bedroom. Wallpaper in the bedrooms originally occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Self is believed to be original. The baths retain many of their original features, including a marble shower stall, tile floors and wainscoting, and plumbing fixtures. A bath, closet, and rear hall were redesigned ca. 1970 to provide more closet and bathroom space for what is now the master bedroom.

With the exception of alterations made for modern conveniences, the interior of the Self House remains largely unchanged from the time of its construction. In addition to the renovations noted previously, an elevator between the front vestibule and the upstairs sitting room was installed prior to 1970. The elevator was carefully located and concealed to preserve significant interior spaces and details.

Surroundings and Outbuildings

Located to the rear of the house are the smokehouse/ wellhouse and the garage. Both buildings are contemporary to the house and have granite foundations, brick walls, and green tile roofs. The garage has bays for three vehicles and has two small rooms on the south end. The smokehouse/wellhouse has a pyramidal roof with cannonball finial and recessed porch accented by segmental arches. To the southwest of the Self House is a small, frame building known as the boys playhouse. It dates from the early twentieth

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century and has a gable roof with exposed rafters, shiplap siding, brick foundation and chimney, and three-bay facade. The centrally-located entrance features a semicircular-arched door and gabled hood. To the northwest of the Self House, adjacent to the garage, is a small, frame building constructed ca. 1979 as the girls playhouse.

The Self House is located atop a knoll on a 7.89 acre tract near the western limits of the City of Greenwood. It faces Mathis Street, and the Calhoun Highway (SC 72) bounds the property on the north. A semicircular driveway, paved in brick and lined with magnolias, leads to the house. Both entrances to the drive are flanked by brick pillars. A patio and formal garden are located on the south side of the house. The large lawn is landscaped and well-maintained. A tennis court is located to the north of the house. The property is bounded on the south and west by the Lodge Grounds subdivision and the golf course of the Greenwood Country Club.

Throughout his life, Mr. Self received numerous honors and awards from professional, civic, educational, and humanitarian organizations.[7] His wife, Lura Mathews Self (1889-1970) was active in many civic and patriotic organizations.[8] After Mr. Self's death in 1955, his widow continued to occupy the house for the remainder of her life. Their grandson and his wife acquired the house from her estate in 1971 and are the current owners.[9]

Architecture: The Self House is one of the best examples of the neoclassical style of architecture in the Greenwood area. Its setting, proportions, and ornamentation have been carefully preserved, making it one of the most imposing residences of its period and style in the Upper Savannah region. Many such residences were built in and around the city of Greenwood ca. 1910-25, but the Self House is among the larger and more elaborate of the houses that remain. It is unusual that construction of the house took place during the United States' participation in the First World War, a period when few private buildings of this scale were being erected.

The architect for the Self House was Thomas White Cothran (1874-1923), a Greenwood County native who was one of the most prolific architects in Greenwood from 1908 to 1923. During this period, he designed residences and commercial buildings for many of Greenwood's most prominent individuals. He also was architect for numerous railroad-related buildings and for the 1911 Willson Hall wing of the Lander College Old Main Building (listed in the National Register in 1984). Although the majority of Mr. Cothran's projects are in the Greenwood area, he also was associated with buildings in other parts of the state, including the YMCA building at Clemson College (now University).[10] The Self House is one of the best-preserved examples of Cothran's residential work.

Industry: James C. Self was one of the most prominent textile industrialists of the first half of the twentieth century. When he became president of the Greenwood Cotton Mill in 1908, the company was deeply in debt and on the verge of collapse. Through continual modernization and expansion, Mr. Self built the small company into a textile giant. A 1939 survey of textile industries in South Carolina showed that Mr. Self was president of five of the ten textile plants in Greenwood County. The five plants had an aggregate of 160,928 spindles and 3,860 looms, well over half of the total number in the county. By 1955, Greenwood Mills was reported to be one of the largest privately-owned textile empires in the world. The mill villages that Mr. Self had built, beginning in the 1920s, were model communities, with wide streets; brick veneer, tile-roofed houses; modern schools; and spacious churches. His position as an industry leader was affirmed by many colleagues and editorialists at the time of his death in 1955. By this time, Greenwood Mills included five large plants that employed approximately 6,000 workers.[11]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Greenwood (S. C.) Index, 5 April 1917, 13 September 1917; Index-Journal (Greenwood, S. C.), 25 August 1940; William Robertson, surveyor, [Map of] Abbeville District, South Carolina, 1820. Improved for [Robert] Mills' Atlas, 1825 (facsimile); Margaret Watson, Greenwood County Sketches: Old Roads and Early Families (Greenwood, S. C.: The Attic Press, 1970), pp. 64-65, 147.

[2]Deed book 27, pp. 443-444 and Plat book 19, p. 175, Office of Clerk of Court, Greenwood County Courthouse, Greenwood, S. C.; Greenwood Index, 5 April 1917; Index-Journal, 21 July 1955.

[3]Architectural plans for James C. Self House, Personal Files of James C. (Jr.) and Linda C. Self, Greenwood, S. C.; Greenwood Index, 13 September 1917; Index-Journal 9 February 1923.

[4]G. O. Robinson, The Character of Quality: The Story of Greenwood Mills, A Distinguished Name In Textiles (Columbia, S C.: R. L. Bryan, 1975 rev. ed.), p. 139; Interview with Linda C. Self, Greenwood, S. C., 26 March 1987.

[5]Index-Journal, 21 July 1955; Robinson, pp. 75-77.

[6]Index-Journal, 21 July 1955; Robinson, pp. 76, 78-79.

[7]Index-Journal, 21 July 1955.

[8]Index-Journal, 13 May 1970.

[9]Deed book 228, p. 172, Greenwood County Courthouse.

[10]Architectural plans; Greenwood Index, 6 April 1911, 1 June 1911, 13 September 1917; Index-Journal, 9 February 1923; Merchants Association and Board of Trade of Greenwood, S. C., Greenwood, South Carolina, The Gate City of the Piedmont (Greenwood, S. C.: The Index Publishing Co., [1910?]), p. 53.

[11]Index-Journal, 21 July 1955, 23 July 1955; Robinson, pp. 17-18, 26-27, 52, 55-61, 65-66; [United States], National Youth Administration for South Carolina, A Vocational Guidance Study of the Textile Industry in South Carolina, Columbia, S. C., 1939. (Typewritten.)

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Greenwood (S. C.) Index, 6 April 1911, 1 June 1911, 5 April 1917, 13 September 1917, 10 November 1917.

Greenwood, South Carolina. Personal Files of James C. (Jr.) and Linda C. Self.

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Merchants Association and Board of Trade of Greenwood, S. C. Greenwood, South Carolina, The Gate City of the Piedmont. Greenwood, S. C.: Index Publishing Co., [1910?].

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[United States]. National Youth Administration for South Carolina. A Vocational Guidance Study of the Textile Industry in South Carolina. Columbia, S. C., 1939. (Typewritten.)

Watson, Margaret. Greenwood County Sketches: Old Roads and Early Families. Greenwood, S. C.: The Attic Press, 1970.