

Trip Report For December 6-7, 1995
Patrick McIntyre, Survey and Registration

Wednesday, December 6

1. Owen Residence, Heflin, Cleburne County

Directions: Intersection of Burnes and Evans Streets

Contact: Bubs Hopper: 818-840-7554

The Owen House is a two-story rambling Victorian home that features minimal gingerbread decoration, including cutwork column brackets on the porches, and decorated gables. The home's interior is simple, with plain window and door surrounds, and a typical nonsymmetrical room arrangement. There are at least three simple mantels in the downstairs rooms of the same design (see photos). A quarter-turn staircase with simple newel post and plain square balusters leads to the second floor, which has at least two bedrooms. Most exterior doors have plain glass inserts surrounded by colored lights (see photos). The house is unoccupied and at the time of my visit the door was already wide open. There has been some vandalism in the form of broken windows and damaged furniture (and no doubt also theft). The overall condition of this home was fair to poor, and it can be classified as dilapidated. Recent damage from Hurricane Opal has accelerated the problem, as several trees have fallen on the home. There is a gaping hole in the roof and rain pours into one of the second story rooms, resulting in a rotten floor in that area. There are three outbuildings on the property, including a frame board-and-batten clad storage shed, a frame chicken house, and a frame garage. The structure contributes to the integrity of the neighborhood, which has homes dating from circa 1880 to 1940. A well-maintained Country Queen Anne home is across the street, as is a 1930s one-story brick home.

2. Choccolocco School, Choccolocco, Calhoun County

Directions:

Contact: Georgia Calhoun: 205-236-2497

The school is a ^{1 1/2} two-story, frame structure in good condition. The wood siding has been replaced in recent years with comparable material, and the first floor interior has been re-done for a community center, with paneling on the walls and vinyl covering the floor. The upstairs is reached by a staircase on the southwest corner of the first floor. It is unaltered and has the original flushboard walls and wooden floors exposed. Mrs. Georgia Calhoun escorted me through the building and then accompanied me on a brief tour of the Choccolocco area.

2/9/96 & 2/16/96

Phoned Georgia Calhoun (205-236-2497) re: Choccolocco School

Address of property: 21 Prospect Lane, Choccolocco, Al 36254

Acreage of property: approx. one acre., school faces NW

Property owner: New Prospect Baptist Church

address same as above

Other structures on property: New Prospect Baptist Church original church is approx 141 yrs old; built by Levi and Greff Borders (slaves who constructed several plantation homes)--(see AR Listing for Dr. Calhoun-Barnwell House, Anniston, Calhoun Co., listed 3/24/95, built by Border brothers)--new structure dates from c. 1985.

Original school dates from c.1856, located in Brush Arbor in Downing's mill (at Choccolocco); school met at night 2 or 3 months of the year.

c. 1858 one-room school built at Borders Town, approx 2 mi from present site, on RR.

1876--present structure built (1858 structure burned) by Mr. Brock Smith. He was a white Quaker from Virginia who built several schools for black children (another--located at White Plains in same county--has since burned). Mrs. Calhoun is currently doing research on Smith.

Children came to school from surrounding areas, some as far away as five miles (White Plains, Upper & Lower Borders, D'Armanville, Davistown--check spelling on these).

School only included grades K-6. During later years, and probably earlier, K was taught in attic room and 1-6 in single room on ground floor.

Civic groups, such as a Masonic Lodge and a Mutual Aid Society (all black), often used the upstairs room for evening meetings.

c. 1905--county training school made education beyond 6th grade available to blacks, but it was located some distance from Choccolocco. Students often boarded with families nearby or traveled many miles, sometimes on bicycle or foot.

c.1923--new training school built.

c.1943--school buses available for blacks who attended training school.

1951--new school constructed which operated until desegregation in 1960s.

1876 structure vacant from 1951 until around 1980 when Choccolocco Heritage Festival was organized to prevent its deterioration. This group succeeded in raising enough funds to maintain the structure. Among its contributions was \$4000 from Budwiser. Today it functions as a community center for monthly Heritage meetings, an annual heritage Christmas party, and various other community activities.

SCHOOL HISTORY

The first school in Hobson City, Alabama was organized by Professor C. E. Hanna in 1905, known as Hobson City and Oxford Academy. This school was located on the ball of the hill on the northeast side of Lincoln Street, housed in a two-story frame building with about seventy pupils. The first school had a five-month school term and was a one-teacher school with a salary of \$25 monthly or \$125 per year. In conjunction with the school was a boarding house located one block westward on Washington Street known as the Callahan Place. Mrs. Nellie Mae Wallatton Jelks, a local citizen, 85 years-old with good health and a sound mind, currently residing at 101 Jones Hill, Hobson City, said she remembers learning to read and write at an early age during that time, by attending a kindergarten operated by Mrs. Harriett Pierce, who was the wife of Mr. E. D. Pierce. Mrs. Jelks said she was about 4 or 5 years old at the time and not old enough to attend regular school on the Hill as they called it. Mrs. Jelks however, finished school in 1914 and recalls very clearly, girls coming from all over the county to board at the Callahan Place and attend school. Their family or parents would come over by wagon to bring food, clothing and visit on weekends.

The idea of a school in Hobson City was given birth shortly after July 20, 1899 following the Incorporation of The Town of Hobson City Alabama as a self-governing municipality.

The local leadership of Hobson City realized the need for an educational institution within its corporate limits and assigned a committee with the task of approaching Professor C. E. Hanna who operated a school in the White Plains-Choccolocco area. The committee was successful in bringing Professor Hanna to Hobson and they worked diligently in support of him and his plans to produce money and other necessities vital to the production and maintenance of the first school.

Professor Hanna had lots of ambition and a vision to provide suitable schooling to meet the educational needs of the community and surrounding areas. He was inspired by the life and works of George Washington Carver and Booker T. Washington. Those who knew Professor Hanna can recall his philosophy of life as well as his favorite sayings. He believed in Sunday School attendance, and religion involvement. He was a lover of Longfellow's poems and often said 'Cast down your bucket where you are' Be prepared - carry your umbrella at 'all times'.

Mrs. Roberta Whattleton Rowe, a life long citizen of 119 Huntly Street, Hobson City, Alabama, and a 1930 C.C.T.S. graduate, recalls with much delight, how Professor Hanna sponsored the first money-raising rally at New Hope Baptist Church. Mrs. Roberta was a contestant in the Rally and won an all expense paid trip to Tuskegee Institute for one week. This was very exciting to Mrs. Rowe who was 13 or 14 years old at the time. The purpose of the rally was to raise money to be matched from other sources and be used to construct a new school house.

In 1923, the Calhoun County Training School was erected on Park Avenue with Professor C. E. Hanna as principal, Mr. Arthur Wellborn, Calhoun County Board of Education chairman and Mr. S. B. Gibson, Superintendent. The local committeemen were:

E. D. Pierce	A. Roberison	Wiley Thompson
J. R. Ballard	B. B. Turner	Dr. C. E. Thomas
W. M. Bates	F. L. Morris	Dr. G. A. Rogers
R. W. Fisher	G. D. Wright	J. W. Welch
I. J. Jackson	G. Madison	Rev. E. Weir
W. S. Rivers	E. D. Rhodes	

The local churches of Hobson City played a significant role in the development of the school. The people of the town were devoutly religious and fully supported the church and all its programs and activities. One of the outstanding features for which the school received recognition from the state and county in early years was it's handcraft and manuel training projects, such as sewing classes, bicycle mechanics, brick making, etc. Citizens of the community took pride in sending their children to the Hobson City County Training School, which turned out a good number of graduates each year. Many of these students continued their studies at colleges and institutions of higher learning in this county.

In 1942, fire destroyed The Calhoun County Training School and it was re-erected in 1943, Professor C. E. Hanna, principal; Mr. Marvin Watson, board chairman; Mr. C. J. Allen, superintendent; and C. A. Paul, contractor.

Professor Hanna retired in 1946 and Mr. Charles Bell became principal, followed by Professor Melvin Wright, Professor C. M. Mitchell and in 1967-68 Professor James A. Dunn, who still serves as principal, became principal. In 1970-71, the courts ordered Calhoun County Training School paired with Oxford High School and C.C.T.S. was reduced to grades 1 through three.

Over the years C.C.T.S. had reached a peak enrollment of 875 students, 32 teachers, 1 vocational counselor, 2 coaches with a complete athletic and sports program, school gym and lighted football field band director and marching band, music director and large choir and music program an assortment of vocational and academic courses, an outstanding lunchroom program and many other meaningful educational tools. Through the years C.C.T.S. has been about the business of mind and body preparations for the world of work thereby providing its students with the tools to attain success and rewarding levels of accomplishments.

PROFESSOR HANNA MAKES APPEAL FOR FUNDS

C. EDGAR HANNA, Principal
 Graduate, American Correspondence Normal, Dansville, N.Y., 1906; Student, Lexington Correspondence College, Lexington, Ky., 1910, 1911, 1912; Principal of Schools, Rabbit Town, White Plains, Oconee, Ashville, Cropwell, Hobson City, Jacksonville, 1897-1921; Teacher, Corona Normal and Industrial Institute, Corona, Alabama, 1922; Founder, Clahoun County Training School, Hobson City, Alabama, 1923; Teacher's First Grade Certificate; Summer School Certificate, Tuskegee Institute, 1924; Student, Junior College, State Normal School, 1925—



Hobson City School

Whereas, we have an offer of \$2900, provided we raise \$2500 for the erection of a County Training School; we hereby issue the following appeal:

1. To the local organizations for a donation on or by December 31st, namely:

New Hope Baptist Church	\$25 00
" " " Sunday School	15 00
" " " B. Y. P. U.	10 00
" " " Woman's Missionary Society	10 00
" " " Choir	5 00
Rising Star M. F. Church	25 00
" " " Sunday School	15 00
" " " Epworth League	5 00
" " " Ever Busy Club	5 00
" " " Ladies Aid	5 00
" " " Woman's Missionary Society	10 00
" " " Jewel Club	5 00
" " " Choir	5 00
Welcome Chapel C. M. E. Church	25 00
" " " Sunday School	15 00
" " " Epworth League	5 00
" " " Woman's Missionary Society	10 00
" " " Golden Rod (Club)	5 00
" " " Willing Workers	5 00
" " " Choir	5 00
Saints Church	10 00
Mosaic Templars	10 00
Mosaic Chamber	10 00
Masons, Pride of Hobson City	10 00
Town of Hobson	75 00
Base Ball Team	5 00
Total	\$325 00

2. We appeal to each man and woman, boy or girl, of the immediate district, for one day's earning of each month. Said amount to be subscribed and paid over to any of the authorized local workers, or it may be paid by the donor in the monthly meetings on each Fourth Sunday afternoon.

3. We further appeal to the Colored citizens of Anniston and Calhoun County at large for their moral and financial support.

We further extend our appeal to any and all public spirited persons for aid in the establishment of an institution that will fit and prepare the Negro youths of Northeast Alabama for life's work.

Building material, such as shingles, nails, lumber, brick, lime, windows, doors, etc., will be accepted and given a monetary value.

C. E. HANNA, Principal.
 MISS ELSIE HARVEY, Asst.
 REV. H. T. HAM, Field Agt.

COMMITTEE—E. D. Pierce, G. Madison, B. B. Turner, T. Flowers, R. W. Fisher, E. Brown, G. D. Wright, A. Roberson, F. L. Morris, W. M. Bates, J. L. Wattleton, Rev. F. Weir.

RECEIVED

MAR 30 1995

Ala. Historical Commission

CHOCOLOCCO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

for

BLACK CHILDREN

The School had it beginning along with the Church a few years after 1856 according to information acquired through talking, asking questions and hearing those talk who lived in the Community at that time and who witnessed this history.

The School was discussed at the Corn Shucking just as the Church was. The Brush Harbor used for the Church was also used for the school at Downings mill. School lasted from two or three months out of a year and they went at night.

The children, men and women carried their meals in a tin bucket, shoe boxes and anything they could find to hold their mostly syrup biscuits.

The entire book supply was one Blue Book Speller, Ms. Chapple, the teacher would give his class one word each day, this was a very slow process but he taught it thoroughly.

Mrs. Ella Cunningham who told this story was a student in this school. She lived to be one hundred four years old. She said they would spell all words by syllables. Baker was Ba-ker. There was one word Constantinople. This was one of their Friday activities. Long words about three per week and shorter one each day - it was in a sing-song style - I stan you, tie I tie you, pull I pull then pronounced costantinople.

After some years in the ^{Brush Arbor} Black Harbor the school moved to Borders Town

about two miles from it's present site. By this time people had started making and owning homes close to the railroad.

Mr. Brock Smith from Virginia bought the property on which the old school and church now stand. This building was built in 1876 and school was held in this building until 1951. This School housed k-6 grades.

This school now beaten with age still stands but has sent many successful men and women in all walks of life throughout the world.

Some of the Teachers who taught in this building are:

Chap Chapple

Prof. S. E. Moses

Edith Bell

C. E. Hannah

Mrs. Wreen

Lila Westfield

Mary T. Jenkins

Clarissa D. Pitts

Lillie Powell Lee

Ivey Smedley

Dennie Alexander Brooks

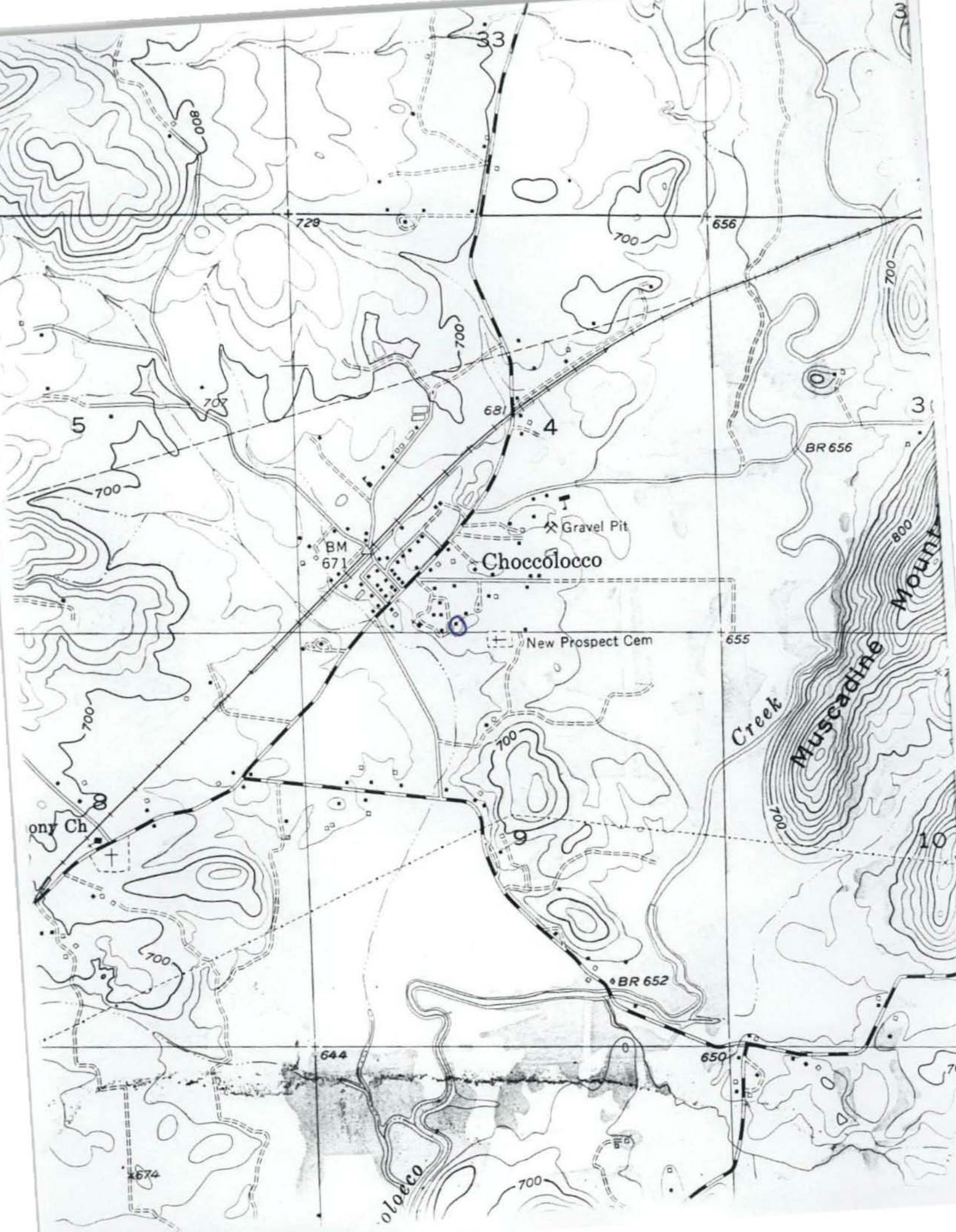
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Sorry we do not have dates.

Sponsored

In Memory of Parent, Merdith & Carrie Kennedy

By Trudy Kennedy Braford



CHOCOLOCCO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
for Black Children
21 Prospect Lane
Chocolocco, Calhoun County

SUMMARY

The Chocolocco Elementary School for Black Children is a 1.5 story one-room frame schoolhouse constructed in 1876 in the rural community of Chocolocco. It faces west on approximately one acre of property. Also located on the property is the New Prospect Baptist Church, a structure dating from around 1985 which replaced an antebellum structure located on the site. The school continued to operate until 1951, when a new structure was erected nearby. The earlier school remained vacant for a number of years, though occasionally used as a church annex. Around 1980, local residents organized the Chocolocco Heritage Festival in a effort to save the school from deterioration. Successful in its endeavor, this group has maintained the structure for its own use as well as for community activities.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The structure is eligible for listing on the Alabama Register under Criteria A and C. As a school for blacks, it depicts the type of facility and education available to blacks in rural Alabama from the Reconstruction era to the 1950's. Since its condition has been maintained, it is a good example of a building type which is rapidly disappearing.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The building is believed to have been constructed by Brock Smith, a white Quaker from Virginia, who came to Alabama to promote education for blacks. He also is believed to have been responsible for construction of a similar school in the Calhoun County community of White Plains, though this structure is no longer standing.

The school served children and adults from Chocolocco and surrounding communities as far away as five miles. Grades one through six were taught in the downstairs room, and Kindergarten was offered upstairs. In the evening, the upstairs was also used by civic groups such as a black Masonic group and a Mutual Aid Society.

According to local historian Georgia Calhoun, the Chocolocco School for Blacks dates from around 1856, when school was held in a brush arbor at Downing's Mill in Chocolocco. Classes were held at night, following the day's work. In 1858, a one-room school was constructed at Border's Town, approximately two miles from the present site. When fire destroyed the structure, the 1876 school was built.

Education beyond the sixth grade level was not available to blacks in Calhoun County until around 1905, when the county training school was built. As this was located some distance from Chocolocco and other parts of the county, students often boarded with families nearby or travelled many miles to get to school. By 1923, a new training school had been constructed, and by 1943, buses were available for transportation. A new elementary school was built in 1951, and by the 1960's desegregation opened all county schools to black students.