

ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE

Nomination Form

added 2-6-98

1. Name

historic Log Cabin School House
and/or common

2. Location one mile north of Toxey, turn east side of AL Highway 17, building located on north side of street & number Route 1, Box 11E County Road 14.

city, town Toxey ---vicinity of Bogaloosa Creek Bridge on Hwy 17
state Alabama county Choctaw zip 36921

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| name | Crawford L. Thompson | Les Thompson, Jr. (son) |
| street & number | Route 1, Box 11E, Highway 17 N | 5301 Westbard Circle, Condo 238 |
| city, town | Toxey, AL 36921 | Bethesda, MD 20816 |
| | 334-843-5502 | |

5. Floor plan & site plan. Use space below to sketch floor plan and site plan or attach additional sheet.

6. Description (See attached instructions for specific guidelines.)

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved date: shortly after 1976

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

The Log Cabin School House is currently situated on a 160-acre parcel of land at the northeast outskirts of the rural Choctaw County community of Toxey, on the north side of Choctaw County Road 14, approximately 600 feet east of its junction with Alabama Highway 17. It was removed approximately ten miles southeast of its original location (on the north side of Choctaw County Road 18, just over one mile west of the community of Needham) a few years after Ezell Whittington purchased it as a part of the Broadhead estate on October 13, 1976. The building, both currently and originally, faces a generally southerly direction, though the angle of exposure was juxtaposed slightly westward in its relocation.

The building is a rectangular log and clapboard siding structure featuring an extended double pen-type plan. The spraddle-roof front and rear extensions are composed of a porch across the front and an eastern room/western porch on the rear. An exterior stone chimney dating from c.1910 is located on the western end. Materials indicate that the structure probably was constructed as a single pen spraddle roof log cabin, with the second clapboard pen and rear shed room dating from a later period. (The owner discusses the presence of chains attached to the foundation to hold the "lean-to" room in place). Exterior doors are located on the front and rear of the log pen and on the front of the clapboard pen. Interior doors connect the two main rooms, as well as the main and rear rooms of the clapboard section. At one time an exterior door led from the west side of the rear shed room to the rear porch, but this was enclosed when the structure was rebuilt following storm damage during the early 1980s. Window openings appear on the gable end of the clapboard section, one in each room. Doors and window coverings are made of simple vertical boards. On the interior, the log pen (void of chinking) features board and batten wall covering and wide floor and ceiling boards. The clapboard walls of the second pen are exposed on the interior. In the log section, the ceiling serves as flooring for a loft room, accessible by climbing the logs which are exposed on the interior of the clapboard pen. On the clapboard section, the roof is exposed to the interior. The roof is covered with tin and was replaced following a c.1980 storm.

The structure measures approximately 29'x31', comprised of a log pen (18'x15'), a clapboard pen (10'x15'), a front porch (29'x8'), a back porch (18'x8'), and a rear shed room (10'x8'). Current owners believe that the large log pen was used as a girls' classroom, the smaller clapboard room as a boys' classroom, and the rear shed room as a cloak room, with these rooms serving a dual function as dormitories. Other buildings in the original complex would have included a kitchen & dining facility, a house for the teacher & family, and possibly a cabin for the few slaves which Howse owned.

Local historians have done extensive oral and geneological research that yields a possible date of construction at least as early as 1850, when the building appears to have been one of three or four structures comprising a school complex operated by Professor Buckner Lawrence Howse. The documentation points to the existence of the school prior to 1855, when it closed upon the removal of the instructor to Pushmata, Mississippi. Much of the original fabric of the structure remains intact, though damage from tornadoes in 1934 and c.1980 resulted in replacement of the roof and portions of the horizontal board walls. When the building was threatened with demolition in the late 1970s, it was removed to its present location when efforts to save it at its original site failed. At the time, it was the only structure remaining from the school complex. Relocation of the structure was done by the Reed Moving Company of Washington County, with the building being lifted onto a truck for removal. The current owners have attempted to recreate the ambiance of the school complex in maintaining a

rural setting similar to the original, in situating a second building on the property in the relative position that the kitchen/dining building would have been located, and in utilizing the structure as a historic museum.

Other buildings on the current site, include the recreated kitchen which was constructed nearby in the 1930s out of materials taken from two antebellum buildings, the George Washington Skinner House and Store. The house was damaged during a recent fire, and acquired and relocated by C.L. Thompson in an effort to recreate the historic kitchen structure. Northeast of the kitchen is the Thompson home (known as the Jesse Jackson, III, homeplace), which contains the core of a clapboard extended dogtrot constructed around 1900 out of materials salvaged from the Calvin and Oliver Oats homes. It was originally located a half-mile east of the present site. In 1925, it was moved to its present site to place it in closer proximity to the artesian well which had appeared in 1923 (claimed to be the first in the county) and flowed steadily until recent years.

7. Significance (See attached instructions for specific guidelines.)

| 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"/> 1600-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input checked="" 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"/> other (specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | |

Specific dates c. 1850 Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph).

The Log Cabin School House is eligible for listing on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage under Criterion A in the area of education. It is the only remaining evidence of a three-building school complex constructed in the Bogaloosa community of Choctaw County prior to 1855 by early educator Buckner Lawrence House, who is believed to have been the county's earliest headmaster. Threatened with demolition in the late 1970s, it was removed approximately ten miles to its present site at the outskirts of the community of Toxey. Current owners have attempted to recreate the ambiance of the original setting and to utilize the property as a local historical society headquarters and museum.

Historical Summary:

The history of the Log Cabin School House has been traced through its association with Buckner Lawrence House (Howse/Hawse/Haus), who is believed to have operated the school in the early 1850s, and with the Bonner and Jackson families, who settled in the Bogaloosa area in the 1830s. Census records, military records, genealogies, oral histories and correspondence have been used to document the existence of the school during the antebellum period.

Buckner Lawrence Howse was born June 18, 1826, in North Carolina (probably Oslow County), the son of James H. and Mary W. Howse. As a child he came to Autauga County, Alabama, with his family in the 1830s, as indicated by records of the settlement of his father's estate following his death in 1836. His mother was remarried in 1839 to James H. Owen, in Autaugaville, Autauga County, Alabama. In 1842, according to tradition, she died from poisonous snakebites incurred during a wagon ride to church when a wheel threw a snake into the wagon. Buckner and his brother William were then raised by their mother's family, with James H. Owen of Sumter County, Alabama, serving as guardian. Records from 1842 indicate that tuition was paid to a private tutor for the education of his brother William, and it may be assumed that Buckner had received a similar education. The next record of B.L. House comes from his enlistment during the Mexican War as a volunteer in and Captain Daniel Gibbs' Company, Colonel Jones M. Withers' 1st Regiment of Alabama Volunteers, mustered at Mobile on May 27, 1846. Though he was officially discharged on June 17, 1846, he is believed to have proceeded with his company to Mexico for a two-year duration.

Following the Mexican War, around 1850, family members recall Buckner House's residence in Choctaw County (it having been created in 1847 out of portions of Sumter and Washington Counties), first as a headmaster at the Bogaloosa School, and later schools at Pushmataha (in NW Choctaw County), Isney (in SW Choctaw County), and Pierce's Springs in Clark County, Mississippi. On March 14, 1850, he married Charlotte Jane Graham, near Butler, Choctaw County, Alabama. Six of his seven children were born in Choctaw County between 1852 and 1870. Also in 1850, his name appears in Tompkinsville, Alabama, on the Tombigbee River (near Pennington, in NE Choctaw County) as a member of Masonic Lodge #61. Though his name is not listed in the 1850 census,

local historians report that many families known to have resided in the county at the time were not found in the record. Descendants of his students and family members have recorded oral histories which place House as a resident of the Bogaloosa community (present-day Needham) in central Choctaw County and as "Professor" of the "Log Cabin School" during the early 1850s.

By 1856, House is believed to have left Bogaloosa for Pushmata, where he continued his work as an educator. He was listed in the 1860 federal census as a resident of Pushmataha, age 32, a school teacher. Other records placing him in this area include his listing as the clerk of the Concord Baptist Church, Choctaw County, Alabama, from July 1859-October 1861, and again from November 1864-October 1865. [The church is still extant--on Alabama Highway 10, in the Pushmataha vicinity]. There are no records of service in the Civil War, nor is there a listing in the 1870 federal census of Alabama or Mississippi. In the 1880 census records, he is listed as a resident of Clark County, Mississippi, age 54, school teacher. House died of tuberculosis May 23, 1883, in Citronelle, Mobile County, Alabama.

The existence of the school is also documented through the oral histories of the Bonner, Martin, Jackson, and Broadhead families who were among the earliest settlers of Choctaw County. During the early years of the 19th century (some records indicate as early as 1807), Jordan Bonner and Andrew Martin came separately from Georgia to what is now Choctaw and Clarke Counties where they lived until their respective deaths in 1841 and 1846. Their offspring, Seaborn Bonner and Mary Martin were married on December 21, 1837. Three of their children--Jordan (b. 1838), Matilda (b. 1839), and Harriett (b. 1840)--were students of Professor House at the Log Cabin School at Bogaloosa. Another child, Elizabeth (b. 1847), was unable to attend the school, as it had closed before she was of school age. Several students are believed to have followed Professor House to his new academy, as he was considered to be such an excellent educator.

In 1856, Matilda Bonner married Alex Jackson, whose father Jesse Jackson acquired the school property around 1860, after Professor House had moved to Pushmataha. Following the death of Jesse Jackson in 1871, his children Robert and Jenny inherited the property. In 1897, 112 acres of the parcel were sold to W.R. Broadhead, while 8 acres east of the "branch" (on which a dogtrot cabin was located) were retained by Robert Jackson. Descendants of the Jackson and Broadhead families recall many stories about the "Log Cabin School" and, even into the 1920s, remember the books which were stored in the loft. The Broadhead family owned the property until 1973, when it was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Ezell Whittington (Mrs. Whittington was a grandchild of Broadhead). When the log school was threatened with demolition in the late 1970s, the great-great-grandson of Jesse Jackson (Crawford L. Thompson), purchased the building and moved it approximately 15 miles southeast to Toxey. At the time of the relocation, the cabin was in a state of decay, with the chimney collapsed and the roof deteriorated.

8. Major Bibliographical References

Jackson, Alexander. "The Memorable Memoir of Alexander Jackson," n.p., n.d.

Roberts, Alma J. and Zeola Thompson. "The Old Boarding School," n.p., n.d.

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _area immediately surrounding building (less than one acre)___

Quadrangle name _____

Enclose map showing location of property. (city or county map, state highway department map, or USGS map)

attached.

10. Form Prepared By

Sally Moore (AHC) and _____

name/title Crawford L. Thompson

organization _____

date 2/6/98

street & number Route 1, Box 11E, Highway 17 N

telephone 334-843-5502

city or town Toxey

state AL

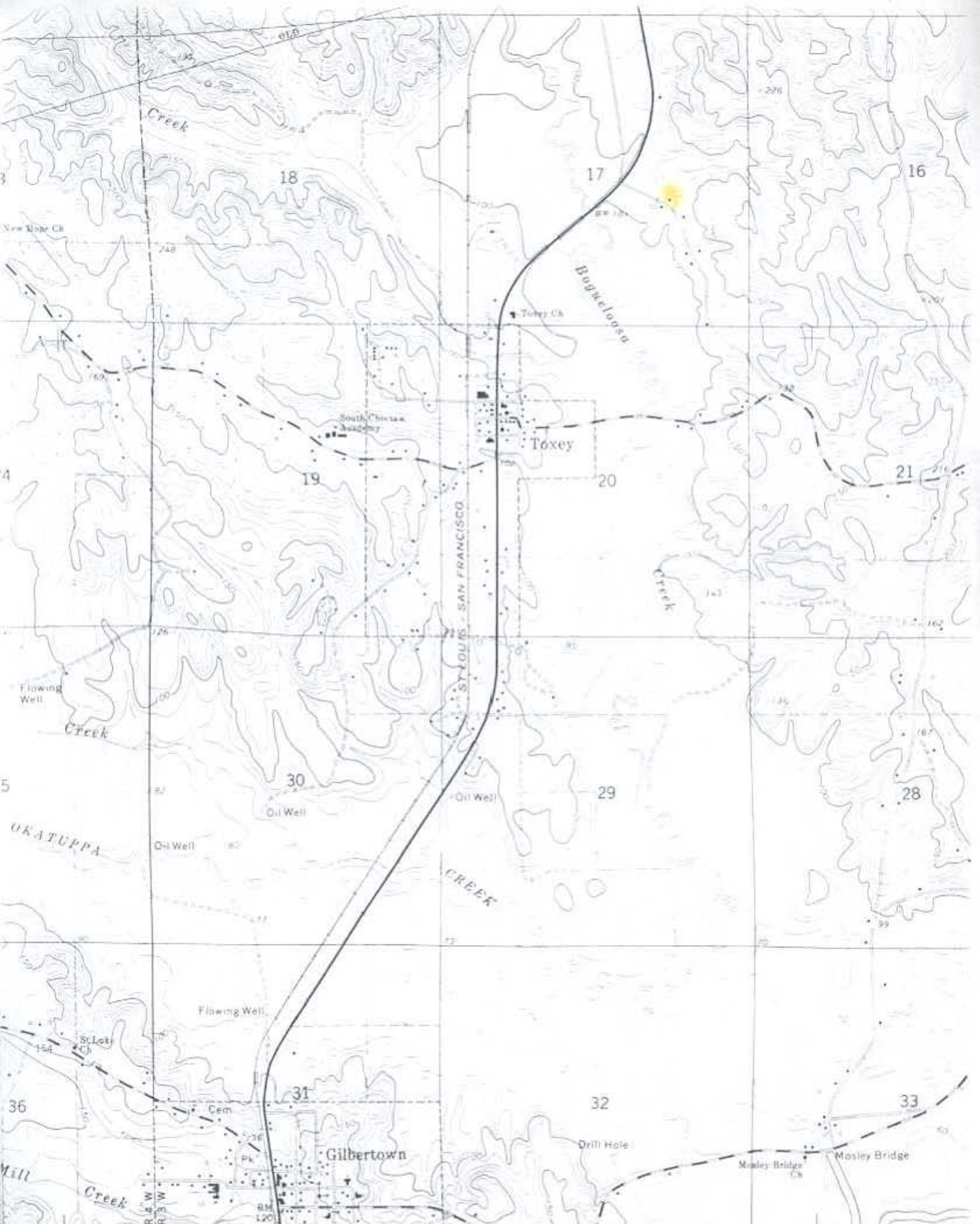
zip 36921

11. Please submit color slides of the property with this form.

Color slides are essential to the review process.

12. Please return ALABAMA REGISTER form and documentation to:

Alabama Register Coordinator
Alabama Historical Commission
468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900



20' 174

SILAS 9 MI
CHATAM 32 MI

ISILAS
31x7 IV SE
SCALE 1:24,000

1.3 MI. TO ALA 17

17'30" 178

Toxey, Ala. Quad