

ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE NOMINATION FORM

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY - DATE ADDED:

1. NAME

Historic: Pushmataha Historic District
and/or Common: Push

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Intersection of State Highway 10 and County Road 30
City, Town: Pushmataha ---Vicinity of: 10 miles west of Butler
State: AL County: Choctaw Zip: -

3. CLASSIFICATION

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> In process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> Being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name: Various Telephone: () -
Street & Number:
City or Town: State: Zip: -
Email Address:

5. FLOOR PLAN & SITE PLAN

(Attach sketched floor plan and/or site plan.)

6. DESCRIPTION

(See attached instructions for specific guidelines on completing the description.)

CONDITION

Excellent Deteriorated
 Good Ruins
 Fair Unexposed

CHECK ONE

Unaltered
 Altered

CHECK ONE

Original Site
 Moved Date Moved

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.

Pushmataha started as a small planter community, located just beyond the Black Belt, in what was first the southern-most part of Sumter County, until the legislature formed Choctaw County in 1847 from the southernmost part of Sumter County and the northern parts of Washington County. Pushmataha was made a post office in 1852. It was, and remains, a widely-spread and loosely organized group of buildings, now largely from the early decades of the 20th century. The central part of the community is arranged across a wide green lawn, framed by the community building, the Methodist church, parsonage, store and medical office.

Inventory:

1. Curry-Ford House (c. 1850) -Highway 10 and County Road 30 - A large, 5-bay I house with a one-story shed porch supported by six square columns. The entrance, although simply detailed, has excellent proportions with two long once-paneled doors, sidelights and transom. The chimneys have been removed and the foundation enclosed. Outbuildings include a barn and utility shed to the rear of the property. Ancient cedars frame the front elevation. **Contributing**
2. Martin House (c. 1950) Old Mobile Road - A white, shingled, mass -plan cottage with a shed roof porch, carport on the left and wing on the right. It is said to have an older house as its core. Wood windows vary from vertical 2/2 to 8/8. **Contributing**
3. J.C. Ford House (c. 1900) Old Mobile Road - A five-bay gable roof house with a large central dormer and a dog-eared shed porch running the full width of the front. Original square and turned porch columns have been modified on brick bungalow bases. The house has aluminum siding. **Contributing**
4. Old Post Office (c. 1852, moved recently) Old Mobile Road - The Post Office, moved in recent times to this site and with a large new inappropriate front porch, partially complete. This building was once a part of the ensemble around the Methodist Church. In poor condition. **Not Contributing**
5. Gilder House (c. 1890), Old Mobile Road - Although deteriorated, the board-and-batten, dogtrot Gilder House is the only house of its type in Pushmataha. Five bays across the front, with tall vertical windows, the house has a shed porch roof, but no porch floor and a large concrete block grill

built under the porch. Missing siding on the left corner shows braced-frame construction. Stone chimneys are built with small, brick-sized local rock, the right one collapsed, the left one in good condition. This house is not beyond rehabilitation. **Contributing**

6. Pushmataha Community Building (c. 1920), County Road 30 - This small building has a central door on a gable front, and a row of five 6/6 windows along the north and south sides. Foundation piers are trapezoidal concrete piers with no underpinning. The siding is wood clapboard. It is said to have been constructed with salvage from the remains of the 1850's Masonic Lodge. **Contributing**

7. Pushmataha United Methodist Church (c. 1910), County Road 30 - A late Carpenter-gothic derived building with clapboard siding, gable front, and an off-set, recessed tower to the left. The gable front has a large, tripartied window of translucent glass, and double hung sashes which are topped by triangular, fixed-glass transoms. Together, they form the representation of a traditional gothic window. The entrance is through the tower, topped with a similar transom to the windows, and them by an unusual octagon roof, octagon clear glass lantern, and a pointed steeple. The side elevations have five bays, similarly styled double-hung windows and the triangular transom. **Contributing**

8. Old Methodist Church Parsonage (c. 1910), County Road 30 - A one-story house in a cross-gable bungalow form, presenting a large gable to the front which covers a full-width porch with battered square columns on brick bases. Novelty siding and wood windows complete the composition. A high, narrow horizontal window in the gable provides attic ventilation. The large, 2-bay garage to the right appears to be contemporary with the house, and has been connected to the house with an addition. **Contributing.**

9. The Old Store (c. 1910) County Road 30 - Covered with corrugated galvanized metal, the store has a gable end with a central door and a 6/6 window to the right. Historic photos show a shed porch across the front. **Contributing**

10. Doctor's office (c. 1850) County Road 30 - The small medical office has a four-panel door centered on the front gable, and another door at the rear on the left-hand side and a window on the rear. **Contributing**

11. Brick Ranch-style house (c. 1965) County Road 30 - Two banks of compound windows, with the entrance under a simple gabled porch to the far right. **Not Contributing**

12. Hunting Camp (undetermined date) County Road 30 - A small wooden building with a shed front porch. **Not contributing**

13. Horn House (c. 1910) County Road 30 - Beautifully sited up a long, sweeping hill, this rectangular, 1-1/2 story house has a steeply pitched metal shed roof. A shed porch goes across the front of the house and wraps half-way down the east facade, and is screened on this bay. The large Tuscan-derived columns have cyma-curved ventilation cut in the bottom. The central door has one

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large light, is surrounded by sidelights and transom, and is set in a flush-boarded central bay separated from the rest of the flush boarded front porch by a narrow strip. The remainder of the house is clapboard. The basic plan of the house is a T, with the leg of the T going to the rear being two-story, and presumably providing access to the second floor of the main part of the house. A small wooden shed is set perpendicular to the rear of the house, with a door to the right on a central gable, wide eaves and half-screened walls on the long sides and is also flush-boarded. **Contributing**

14. Episcopal Cemetery and Church site - (c. 1850) - One of two large cemeteries in the community, the Episcopal Church cemetery was associated with Calvary Episcopal Church, a dark red board-and-batten church styled roughly after St. Andrews at Prairieville (NHL). The church was blown down in a tornado in 1916, but the cemetery has remained and has been associated most of its existence with the Methodist Church. The cemetery graves are organized in family groups, but lined up in neat rows facing east in the graveyard tradition. Most graves are post-bellum, and characterized by verses and motifs popular in Victorian times. **Contributing**

15. Bungalow - (c. 1920) Highway 10) - One-story with a gable end to the road and a gabled front porch and porte cochere to the left. Three bays with paired windows surrounding a single leaf door. Not occupied. **Contributing**

16. Bungalow - (c. 1920), Highway 10 - One-story bungalow with a gable front porch. Two square battered short columns rest on brick piers. Double 6/6 wood windows surround a central door. **Contributing**

17. Rehobeth Cemetery (1850 to present)- Associated with a Baptist congregation, the Rehobeth church lies on an unnamed dirt road that leaves Highway 10 to the right of the bungalow listed immediately above. The church building was moved to Mt. Jefferson about 30 years ago. Located on a rise, the graves turn their back on the entrance to the cemetery and worldly pursuits to face east and prepare for the second coming. **Contributing**

7. SIGNIFICANCE

(See attached instructions for specific guidelines on completing the significance.)

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE-CHECK AND EXPLAIN BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> funerary art	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> other
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	

SPECIFIC DATES: _____

BUILDER/ARCHITECT: _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Pushmataha is significant as a frontier settlement which provided opportunities for social, commercial, and religious interaction among those settling in the surrounding agrarian environment.

Pushmataha is located on State Route 10 in Choctaw County, about 20 miles west toward Mississippi from Butler, the county seat. The area was opened to settlement after the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek with the Choctaws in 1830. First a part of Sumter County, it was combined by the state legislature with part of Washington county to form Choctaw County on December 29, 1847. The town may have been formed as soon as 1835, but certainly was an established place before the post office was established on August 10, 1848. Settled largely by people from South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and other southern states, some families also came from other parts of Alabama to take advantage of the larger tracts of land available after Indian removal.

Early resident John Brown describes Pushmataha to his daughter Nancy Asbury, living in Texas by 1851, in a letter, "The country has undergone a considerable change since you left here, and there are strong efforts making benefits of the country generally. D. Hopkins has a steam saw and grist mill at Pushmataha," and there is "a fine meeting house and mason lodge, and a subscription out for a seminary. "

By 1851, Rehobeth Baptist Church and cemetery was established, and by 1858, Calvary Episcopal Church and cemetery was founded. The Methodist Church was well-established by 1850, originally a hundred yards or so west of town on what is now Highway 10. This building was given to the African-American members of the congregation after the Civil War, and the new building built in the town

center.

Society seems to have been interested in crops, politics, and revival meetings. Brown writes in 1852 to his children in Texas, "Corn can be engaged at 20 cents, fine crops of cotton will command ten cents. Ruffin (ed.: Samuel Ruffin, a close neighbor) sold his last two crops for ten. My crop of cotton this year is not very good ... if I could save it all I don't think I shall make more than 15 bales." And, "Send all of the strange kind of seeds of both flowers and other natives of that country, their names and instruction how to cultivate or raise them. Cotton seed, corn, beans, peas, etc."

As for politics, Brown writes in 1853, "I will begin with the canvas for the legislature of this state which come on the first Monday in August, and after a hard contest between Dr. Hopkins and Parson Woodard for Senate, Woodard was elected. J. Mours of Butler and Ed McCall for the legislature. McCall was elected, and for a Sheriff, Clem Watson elected, and a grateful man for tax collector."

Camp Meetings were popular events and the denomination of the preacher did not seem to make a great deal of difference to the local population. "Willis had a meeting at Pushmataha that held nearly 2 weeks, and he raked them in by the wagon loads." Kiziah Britt, a married daughter of John Brown, wrote to her sisters in Texas of the fervor of the meetings, "Oh, sister, I felt like if I had of had wings I could of flew to you all to tell the Good News." A site of Methodist camp meetings was near the intersection of current county roads 32 and 9, about 10 miles north east of Pushmataha.

Developed later than the rest of the Black Belt and adjacent counties, the poor times brought on by the Civil War were especially hard. "It is impossible to buy anything to eat or wear, and salt ain't to be had," says Rebecca James, a married daughter of John Brown, to her sister in Texas. The aftermath of the Civil War, with changes in the economy and the number of dependent families without heads of household, moving on west offered more prospects than staying in Choctaw County, where the production of cotton was never as profitable as in other parts of the south. A population decline began which continues to this day. The prosperous rural society would not recover for many years.

As the 19th century closed and the 20th century dawned, times again looked good for many rural Alabama counties. Cotton was again in high demand, and railroads promised an easier way to get raw materials, both crops and raw materials like wood, to markets. In Choctaw county, first the Alabama, Tennessee and Northern (now the Frisco) railway provided a north/south route which extended as far as Lisman, just 7 miles east of Pushmataha, by 1912. Later, the Meridian and Bigbee Railroad cut an east west route north of Pushmataha across the county and on to Selma, and eventually Montgomery. As evidenced by the building of the Methodist Church and a number of houses in the community, times grew prosperous again, although that prosperity was from ever-diversified sources. From antebellum times through to the 1920's, more than 90% of the people in the area around Pushmataha listed farm-related jobs as their source of support in the U.S. Census. In 1930, this number had declined to about 55%, with jobs in the lumber industry increasing to 25%. Other employment was varied, with the next largest two being the railroad at 8%, and truckers and teamsters at 5%.

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8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Letters of the John Brown family from the author's collection, copies publically available at the Choctaw County Public Library in Butler, Alabama .

Gay, Ann Harwell, Place Names in Choctaw County.

United States Federa Census, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1889, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930.

9. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of nominated property: _____
Quadrangle name: Lisman

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

10. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/title: Elizabeth Ann Brown and Ann Harwell Gay
Organization: Alabama Historical Commission and Choctaw County Historical Society

Street & Number: _____
City or Town: _____
Email Address: _____

Telephone: () - _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
-

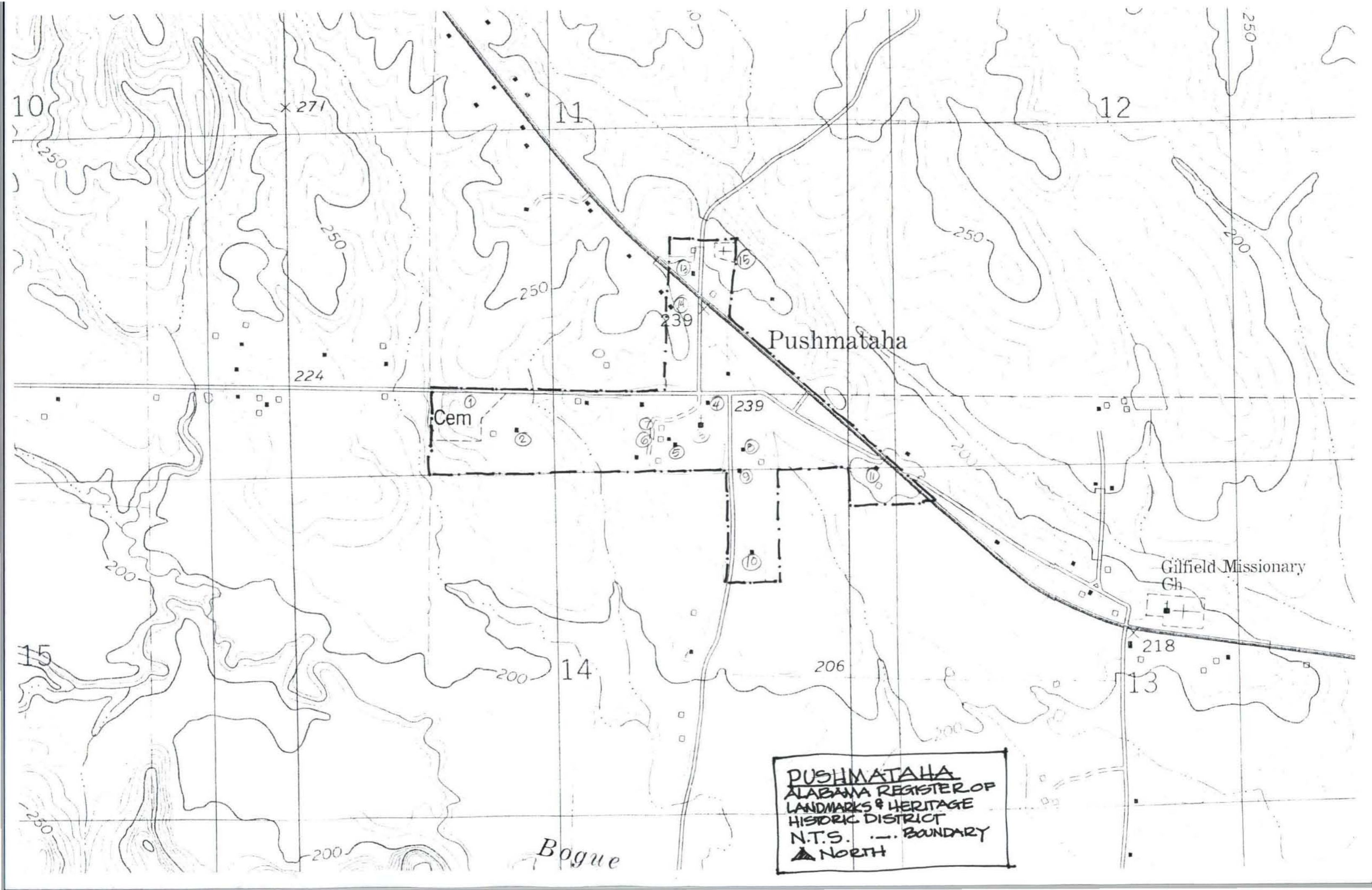
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11. PLEASE SUBMIT COLOR IMAGES OF THE PROPERTY WITH THIS FORM:

Images are essential to the review process. They can be 4x6 color prints or digital images on a CD. Please see the **■Instructions for Completing an AR Form■** for more details on images or contact the AHC at 334.230.2687.

12. PLEASE RETURN NOMINATION FORM AND DOCUMENTATION TO:

**ALABAMA REGISTER COORDINATOR
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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