Form 10-300 (Rev. 6-72)

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Ш ш S UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Arkansas

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7.	DESCRIPTION								
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	CONDITION		(Check Or	ne)			(Che	ck One)	
		⊠ Alte	red	☐ Unaltered		1,41	Moved	Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Matthew Rainey House was originally a two-storey central hall plan with two rooms on each side. It is of rectivilinear shape with gable roof. Brick interior chimneys rise above the ridge line. A one-storey portico with second storey porch graces the front entry. Heavy boxed columns with simple capitals carry the portico roof.

A provincial style best characterizes the Rainey House. Its weatherboard siding, symmetrical fenestration, green louver shutters and lack of ornamentation reflect a local building form adaptive to both the environmental requirements of the area and the building technology available. A wide, unadorned entablature continuous across the front and rear of the house, window trim with corner blocks, and a small portico entry are the only evidence of the application of a period style to the house. A door with flanking sidelights and transom light dominates the portico entry.

The interiors of the Rainey House maintain the simple refinement of the exteriors. Trim about all fenestration is fluted with corner blocks. The walls are plastered over handsplit lathe and covered with wallpaper. The original pine plank flooring is still present.

In 1910 the Rainey House was moved about 300 yards from from its original site to its present location. It now stands on the edge of the four acre lot on which it was originally centered; therefore, the setting has not been seriously altered.

One-storey additions have been made across the rear of the original structure. On the southwest the kitchen facilities were joined to the house with a covered passageway, and a bedroom was added on the northwest. The area between the kitchen and bedroom was made into a porch and was enclosed just after the house was moved. These additions are architecturally in keeping with the original building. The structure is in need of repairs from water damage caused by poor downspouts and a leaky roof.



SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as A	ppropriate)		
☐ Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☐ 18th Century	20th Century
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SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable	and Known) C. 1	.852	
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Chec.	k One or More as Appropr	iate)	
Abor iginal	☐ Education	Political	Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	Engineering	Religion/Phi-	○ Other (Specify)
☐ Historic	☐ Industry	losophy	local landmark
☐ Agriculture	Invention	Science	
	Landscape	Sculpture	
☐ Art	Architecture	Social/Human-	
☐ Commerce	Literature	itarian	
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Conservation	☐ Music	Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Matthew F. Rainey House is a well preserved example of provincial Arkansas architecture of the mid-nineteenth century. The simple lines of this two storey frame residence are expressive of the unpretentious lifestyle prevalent in frontier Arkansas. Built by the city's first resident, the Rainey House has stood as an El Dorado landmark for over one hundred years.

Like many early nineteenth century Americans, Matthew Rainey moved west. He was born in Virginia and moved with his parents to Georgia. In 1820 he moved to Green County, Alabama, and made it his home for about twenty years. While living in Alabama Rainey served as president of the state's first agricultural society, sheriff of his home county, and a representative to the State Legislature. Yet, in the midst of this seeming success, adversity set in. Rainey lost all his money, his property, and even his family home through security debts for several friends. When this misfortune occurred, Rainey moved again. His final westward journey took him to Union County, Arkansas, where the financial and political success of his Alabama years were repeated.

Legend has it that Rainey stopped in Union County because his wagon broke down there. Whatever the reason, it was a wise or lucky decision on Rainey's part. In 1843 county commissioners selected the area around Rainey's cabin as the best spot on which to establish a new and more centrally located county seat. On December 2, 1843, Matthew Rainey deeded 160 acres of land to Union County, retaining a four acre tract where he then resided in a cabin, and upon which he planned to build a house.

During the next ten years Rainey once again became a politically active Democrat. In April, 1851, he presided over the Democratic State Convention in Little Rock, and during the next year was frequently mentioned as a gubernatorial candidate. Instead, he was elected to the State Senate from Union County in the summer of 1853.

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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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COUNTY	
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(Number all entries)

8. Significance (Continued - Page 2)

Rainey's financial success also returned to him in Arkansas, for in August, 1853, he was able to pledge \$5,000.00 to build a railroad from Camden, Arkansas, south through El Dorado, and on to the state line. By that time his new house, planned ten years before, was probably completed.

On September 16, 1853, Matthew Rainey died. The residence which bears his name, planned in 1843, and completed by 1853, still stands in El Dorado today as an ever present reminder of the city's first citizen. It is the oldest house in the community and one of the most important historic sites in the county.

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Rainey House, Union County, Arkanses east Jacade, viewed from the east

FORM 10-301 A

UNITE ATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with shot

1. NAME COMMON		
Matthew Rainey House	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS) NOV 6 1974
2. LOCATION		1000
STATE Arkansas STREET AND NUMBER	COUNTY Union	TOWN El Dorado
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3. PHOTO REFERENCE	DATE	
3. PHOTO REFERENCE PHOTO CREDIT Robert Dunn	1974	NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic
510 North Jackson 3. PHOTO REFERENCE PHOTO CREDIT Robert Dunn 4. IDENTIFICATION DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

#145





Rainey Heuse El Dorado, Unión County, Arkansas Interior shot from rear of central hall

> FORM 10-301 A (6/72)

UNITED ES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type	e all entries - attach to or en close wit	h photograph)
1. NAME		. 0 1-0
Matthew Rainey House	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
2. LOCATION		19/4
Arkansas	COUNTY Union	El Dorado
STREET AND NUMBER		
510 North Jackson		
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Robert Dunn	1974	Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
4. IDENTIFICATION		5
Interior shot from rea	above entrance.	RECEIVED RECEIVED SEP 25 1974
PROPERTY OF	THE NATIONAL REGISTER	Sep 25 BINAL SO NATIONAL REGISTER CO

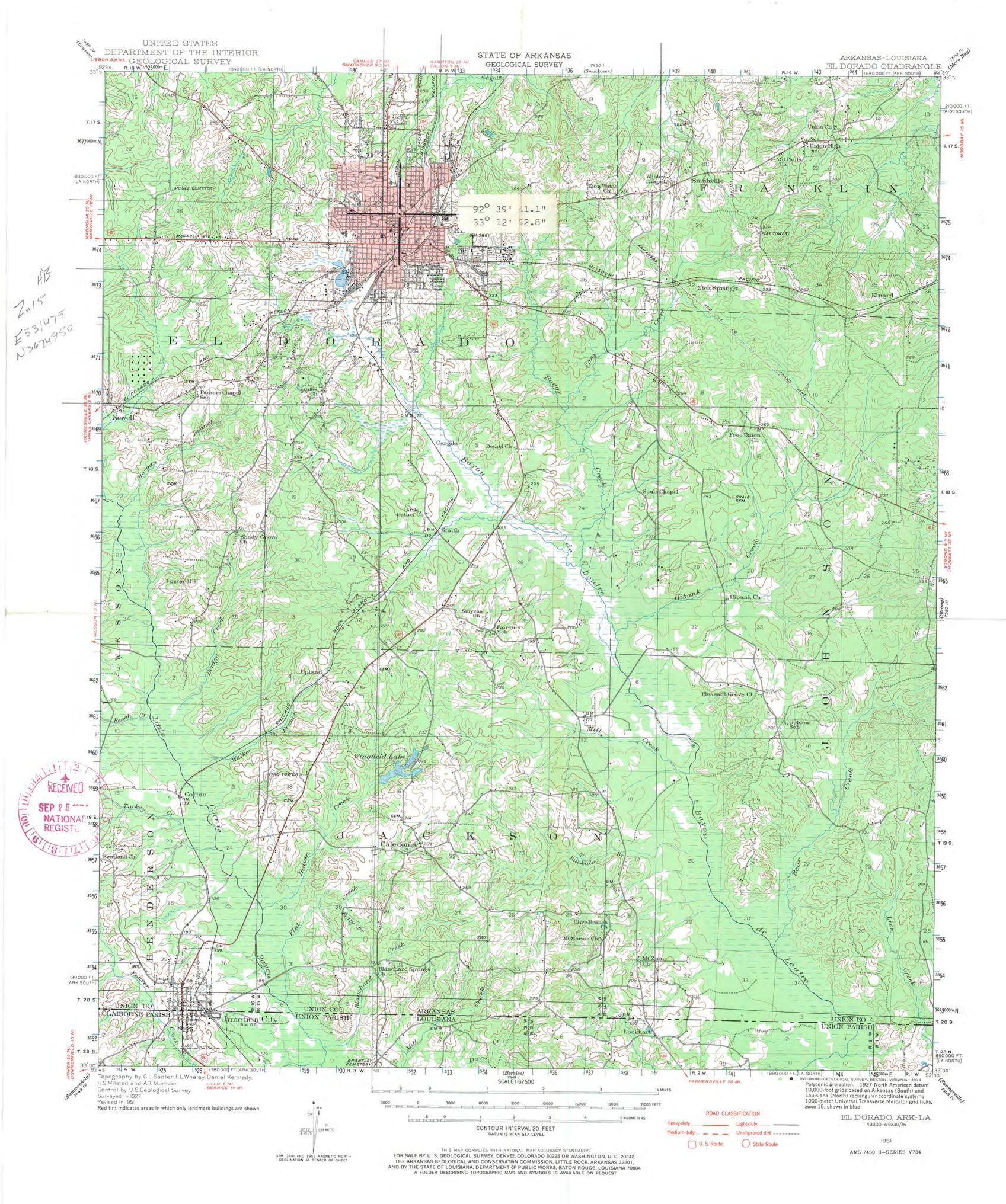
GPO 932-009

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. NAME		
СОММОН	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Matthew Rainey Hous	е	NOV 6 1974
2. LOCATION		
Arkansas	COUNTY Union	El Dorado
510 North Jackson S 3. MAP REFERENCE	treet	
SOURCE	DATE	SCALE
U.S.G.S. Series	1951	1:62500
REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDAR	RIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH	ARROW:



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ARKANSAS

Date Entered NOV 6 1974

Name

Location

Rainey, Matthew, House

El Dorado Union County

Also Notified

Hon. J.W. Fulbright Hon. John J. McClellan Hon. Ray Thornton, Jr.

Regional Director, Southwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer Mr. William E. Henderson, Director Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism State Capitol-Room 149 Little Rock, Arkansas 72201