

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received JUN 18 1984

date entered JUL 19 1984

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

1. Name

historic Lowry, William House

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 405 East Madison Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Athens N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county McMinn code 107

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

4. Owner of Property

name Rebecca M. Jurgens

street & number 405 East Madison Avenue

city, town Athens N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37303

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. McMinn County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Athens state Tennessee 37303

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Constructed in the 1820's, the William Lowry House is a two-story frame residence located on a hill overlooking the McMinn County seat of Athens, Tennessee (pop. 11,896). The gable-roofed building is a simple Federal style structure with a 1930's two-story, square-pillared portico without a balcony. The interior is relatively unaltered with original Federal mantels, doors, staircase, and other woodwork. Despite the later portico, which the current owner plans to remove, the house retains its architectural integrity to a high degree.

Facing roughly south, the William Lowry House is situated on a corner lot surrounded by maple trees in a primarily residential section one block from downtown Athens. The house is in a curve of East Madison Avenue with the rest of the 213.3 by 139.1 foot parcel containing a small guest house with carport, a 1970's addition.

The five-bay south (front) facade is covered in original clapboards four inches to the weather and finished in simple corner boards and sitting on a limestone foundation. The 1930's two-story wooden pillared porch sits on a flagstone base. A central glass-paned door is encased by transom and sidelights. The double-hung sash windows are symmetrical with two nine-over-nine windows on either side of the door matched by five slightly narrower nine-over-nine windows in the second story. The lower level has the original louvered shutters with red buttermilk paint still evident.

The identical east and west (side) elevations each have an exterior, set-back chimney centrally placed between two nine-over-nine windows on each story. The north (rear) elevation has an original one-story ell at the western corner of the facade, while near the eastern corner is a 1930's one-story, shallow projecting bay. On the rear second story are three nine-over-nine windows on the western half of the facade; there are no second-story windows above the ell.

The gable-roofed ell has clapboard siding and a central, interior chimney. The west elevation of the ell has four, double-hung six-over-nine windows, which are partially obscured by large boxwoods. The north side has a double window with four-over-four lights. In the 1930's a porch along the east side of the ell was extended and enclosed.

Important interior features include: a central hall flanked by one room on either side; horizontal wainscoting of wide random-width pine; walls in kitchen, and ceilings of hall, kitchen, and dining room and floors in random-width pine. Of the six fireplaces three have mantels that are of Federal influence having fluted pilasters and molding. The three remaining fireplaces being in the kitchen and upstairs bedrooms are simply constructed of pine. The newel post and turned balusters of the staircase are walnut.

A small guest house and carport eighteen feet off the northeast end of the main house was constructed in the 1970's. It has a gabled roof covered with composition shingles, is one bay wide one room deep and has one small bath; covered in clapboards it is in keeping with the main house.

8. Significance

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"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input 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"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1820's **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The William Lowry House is nominated under National Register criteria B and C for its local significance to McMinn County and Athens through its connection with early settlers of the county and its architectural distinction. Dating from the 1820's, the large frame house is noteworthy in part for its association with prominent persons in the area of McMinn County during the nineteenth century. The building is a fine example of the Federal style of architecture in East Tennessee and is one of the few remaining homes of this type in the McMinn County vicinity. The William Lowry House is the oldest remaining residence in the town of Athens.

On November 9, 1820, in Knoxville, William Lowry (1785-1854) purchased four quarter sections of land in the Hiwassee District, being the northwest, northeast, southwest and southeast quarters of Section 27, Township 4, Range 1 west of the Meridian. The southwest quarter was the one on which he built the nominated house. He paid \$2.00 an acre for the northwest and southeast quarters, \$7.25 an acre for the southwest quarter, and \$8.00 an acre for the northeast quarter. When a site was being chosen for the McMinn County seat, William Lowry traded 29 acres of his southwest quarter to the county commissioners in order to have the town located on his property. On May 1, 1832, Lowry sold the commissioners an additional 31 acres for \$5,000.

William Lowry was married to Polly McGhee Lowry and was prominent in the early affairs of the county being Chairman of the County Court at one time and Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court from the time it was organized in the county in 1844 until 1854. He had a large farm operation, a mill, and was also in the trading and merchandising business.

In 1860 Alexander Cleage, another prominent settler, acquired the farm and house for \$20,150. The Civil War practically bankrupted Cleage and the property was sold after his death in behalf of his creditors.

The property then was sold to Capt. J.E. Raht, C.L. Rice and Wilberforce Gettys, all very prominent men in this area. Wilberforce Gettys was a descendant of the Gettys of Pennsylvania for whom the township of Gettysburg was named. There is record of C.L. Rice and his wife Margretta(Senter) repairing the front porch and roof, painting, kalsomining and papering the interior. This was between 1877 and 1883.

The William Lowry House is the oldest residence remaining in Athens and a locally important example of the Federal style. The exterior of the building retains its original siding, fenestration, and chimneys. The interior is especially noteworthy for its fine Federal wainscotting, mantels, and other woodwork. The only significant modification to the building has been the addition of the present portico in the 1930's, prior to which there was a one-story, one-bay porch. The current owner is now considering removing the portico so that the building will be closer to its original appearance.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Boyer, Reba. Chancery Court Records of McMinn County. Athens, Tennessee 1980

McMinn County Chapter APTA. Pilgrimage information sheet on William Lowry House, 1974.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Athens, Tn.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	7	1	8	8	0	0	3	9	2	4	7	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is bounded on the west and south by East Madison Avenue, and on the north and east by adjoining property lines. The parcel includes only the remaining land historically associated with the William Lowry House.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca M. Jurgens

organization N/A

date 03-27-84

street & number 405 East Madison Avenue

telephone 615-744-9533

city or town Athens

state Tennessee 37303

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Boyer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 6/8/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

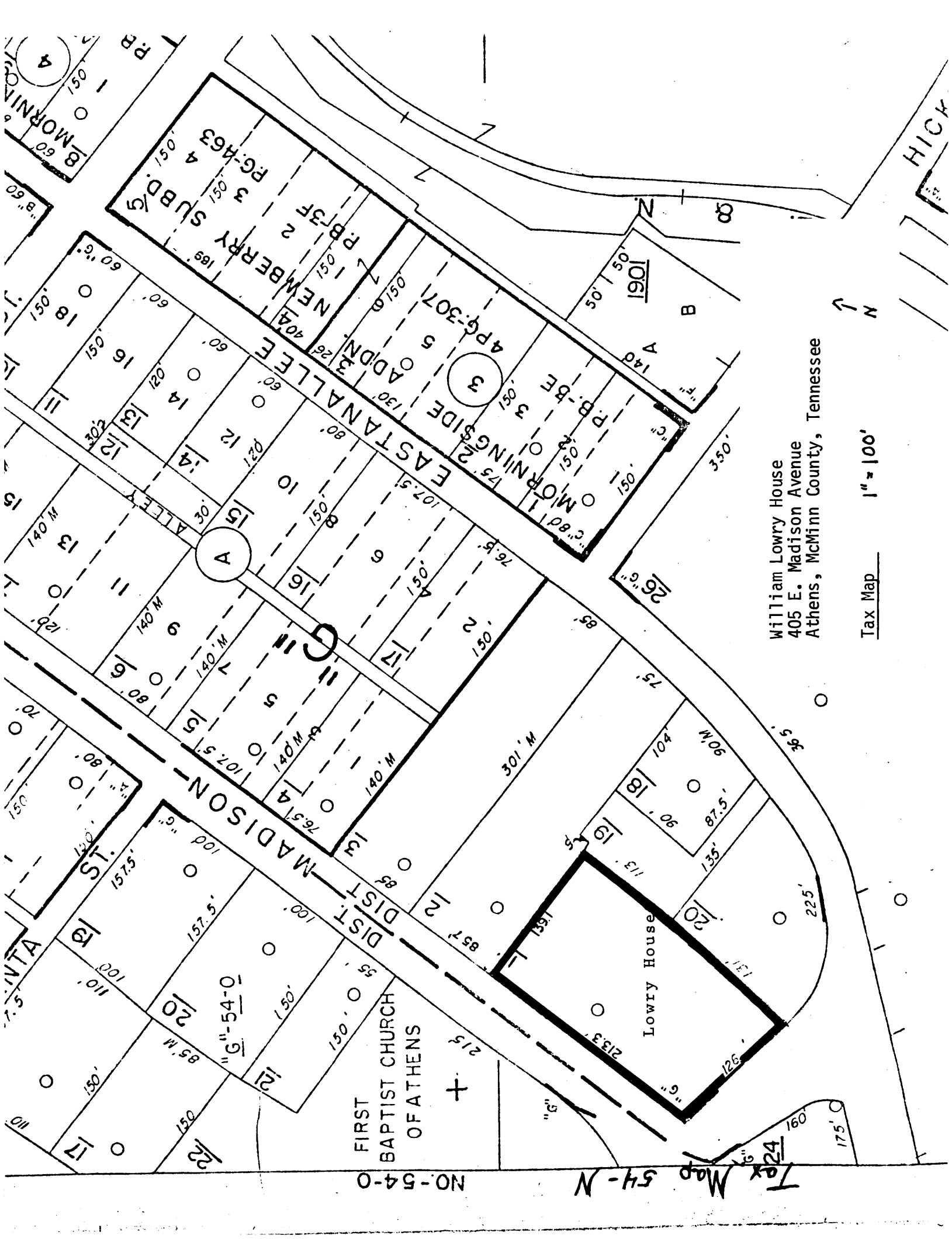
date 7/19/84

for Rebecca M. Jurgens
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



NO-54-0
Map 54-N
Tax Map 24

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ATHENS

Lowry House

William Lowry House
405 E. Madison Avenue
Athens, McMinn County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 100'

