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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JAN 25 1994

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A)*. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Smyth, Benjamin Franklin, House

other names/site number Smyth House

2. Location

street & number 207 Smyth Road N/A  not for publication

city or town Louisville N/A  vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Winston code 159 zip code 39339

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Kenneth H. P. Pool January 21, 1994  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper for Entered in the National Register Date of Action 2/25/94

Smyth, Benjamin Franklin, House  
Name of Property

Winston County, Mississippi  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
1	2	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Single Dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Single-Pen Log House

Other: Hall-and-Parlor House

foundation Sandstone

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Chimney: brick

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Exploration and Settlement

**Period of Significance**

1840-1865

**Significant Dates**

1840

c. 1845

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Smyth, Benjamin Franklin (attributed)

Smyth, Samuel Washington (attributed)

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Smyth, Benjamin Franklin, House  
Name of Property

Winston County, Mississippi  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 18.75 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	306750	3664010
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	16	306720	3663720

3	16	306270	3663710
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	16	306270	3663880

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title B.J. Kelleghan (edited by Brenda R. Crook, Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History, Jackson)

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date October 12, 1993

street & number 207 Smyth Road, Route 2, Box 388 telephone 601/773-8725

city or town Louisville state MS zip code 39337

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mrs. Catherine M. Smyth

street & number 207 Smyth Road, Route 2, Box 388 telephone 601/773-8725

city or town Louisville state MS zip code 39337

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

Located on its original site one-and-one-half miles southwest of downtown Louisville, the Smyth House is situated approximately 350 feet south of Smyth Road and directly northeast of Lake Tiak O'Khata, a man-made lake. The house is separated from the road by a board fence, and oak trees, perhaps 130 years old, stand by the entrance gates. The Smyth House was built in several distinct stages. The original structure is a single-pen, seventeen-foot square, log building constructed in 1840. Circa 1845, the log house was enlarged by the addition of a frame seventeen-foot square room to the south, two shed rooms to the rear, and a front gallery. Apparently at this time the single-pen log house was encased in clapboard and the roof was raised, increasing the height of the original sleeping loft to seven-and-one-half feet. In 1879 a rear kitchen ell was added, replacing a detached log kitchen. With the addition of the ell, the roof of the shed rooms was changed to a gable roof. This configuration remained relatively unchanged until the 1970s when the following additions were made: a bedroom wing to the northeastern corner of the house, a carport to the rear, and a porch to the south elevation (see accompanying floor plan).

The house rests on sandstone foundation piers, and in both of the side gables is an exterior end, shouldered, brick chimney. The chimney on the south elevation is original, while the chimney on the north elevation was replaced in the 1920s. Windows throughout the house were also replaced in the 1920s with three-over-one, double-hung sash. The main (west) facade is highlighted by a full-width gallery featuring a wooden deck, plain balustrade, and box columns supporting a shed roof. This gallery was reconstructed in 1970 on the basis of an early twentieth century photograph of the house. The main facade has four bays: the central two bays contain single-leaf, four-panel doors while the outer bays contain paired three-over-one, double-hung sash windows.

On the western end of the south elevation, to each side of the chimney, is a three-over-one, double-hung window protected by louvered shutters, while on the eastern end is the ell, which is dominated by a gallery having a brick foundation and deck, plain balustrade, and box columns supporting a shed roof. This gallery was added in 1972 and mimics the gallery of the main elevation. The window openings of the north elevation contain three-over-one,

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double-hung sash on the lower level, and two original four-over-four, double-hung sash in the upper half story. These windows are protected by louvered shutters. Two polygonal bay windows are in the east elevation of the 1974 addition.

The interior of the log portion of the house features exposed log walls and the original ceiling of 12-inch hand-planed boards and exposed beams. Thin wall board had been applied over the log walls in the early twentieth century, but in October 1993 the log walls were exposed and painted white, as original paint traces indicated. The original mantel was replaced in the 1920s with a brick mantel, which was subsequently replaced in 1993 with a simple mantel more appropriate to the character of the 1840 log room. At the southwest corner of the room is the original open-string staircase accessed by a short open flight with winders. The stair continues in a single straight flight along the southern wall to terminate in the sleeping loft, accessed through an original board-and-batten door. A window opening in the south wall of the sleeping loft retains its original board-and-batten shutter.

The circa 1845 parlor and dining room have plain moldings with caps on the door and window facings, which very likely were added in this century. The walls of these two rooms were originally finished with wide horizontal boards, but these have been covered with gypsum board. Pine floors are replacements, as are the two-panel interior doors and the mantelpiece in the parlor, which dates to 1970. Additions made to the house in the 1970s were designed to respect the character of the original house and do not significantly detract from it.

Behind the house is a gazebo built in 1993 and a shed built about 1974.

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### 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Benjamin Franklin Smyth House is locally significant in the area of exploration and settlement (Criterion A), dating from the early period of settlement in Winston County. The Smyth House is one of the very few identifiable historic properties in the county to survive from the antebellum period. The period of significance begins in 1840, the year the original single-pen log portion of the house is believed to have been constructed, and ends in 1865, the year the Civil War came to a close. The Civil War signalled the end of prosperity and early settlement in the county, as reflected in the drop in the county's population from 9,811 in 1860 to 8,984 in 1870.

#### History of the County

The land on which Winston County was settled was originally part of the Choctaw Indian lands which stretched across Mississippi and Alabama. As white settlement increased in Mississippi in the early 1800s, the Choctaws ceded or sold large tracts of their territory. They first ceded the central and southern areas of the state, and by 1830 there were 19,000 Choctaw Indians concentrated in the north central section of Mississippi. The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was negotiated in 1830, by which the Choctaw Nation in Mississippi was liquidated. By its terms, the Choctaws surrendered their remaining Mississippi lands and prepared to move west to reservations. Those Choctaws who preferred to remain in the state received allotments and became subject, as individuals, to Mississippi law. Winston County was one of seventeen counties organized in 1833 as part of the Choctaw Cession of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek.

The surveying of the lands of Winston County into sections, townships, and ranges was completed in 1833. Louisville, the county seat, was laid out in lots in 1834 in the center of the county around a number of springs. The town was located on Robinson Road, the major route from Columbus to Jackson and the southwest section of the state. Both the county and county seat, which was incorporated in 1836, were named in honor of Colonel Louis Winston, a surveyor and military commander in Mississippi's territorial days.

The Land Act of 1820 established the minimum amount of land which settlers could purchase at 80 acres for \$1.25 per acre. Land sold so rapidly that the Columbus land office was overwhelmed with

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speculators and buyers. The land in the region was particularly appealing to farmers because it offered new fertile soil to meet the insatiable demand for cotton. Settlers came in large numbers from Alabama, the Carolinas, Georgia, Tennessee and Virginia (Cockrell, "Winston County's First Fifty Years").

The following data charts Winston County's population growth and decline in the historic period from 1840 to 1870:

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black &amp; Other</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
1840	4,650	3,061	1,589	1,589
1850	7,956	5,178	2,778	2,768
1860	9,811	5,583	4,228	4,223
1870	8,984	5,572	3,412	--

The days of prosperity for the county ended with the War Between the States. Winston County sent several units totalling 1,620 soldiers to fight for the Confederacy. Of this number 465 lost their lives. During the war, Union troops occupied Louisville at least twice. Benjamin H. Grierson's troops raided the town on April 22, 1863, as part of a raiding party to destroy railroads in eastern Mississippi. Smyth family tradition is that Grierson made his headquarters on the front lawn of the Smyth House during his brief stopover in Louisville. The second occupation of Louisville was by General William T. Sherman's troops after their devastation of land between Jackson and Meridian. Although the Union troops took almost anything available in the way of livestock and valuables, they did not burn any homes or public buildings in this area (Cockrell, "Winston County's First Fifty Years"). The early period of settlement in Winston County ended with the Civil War, as is evidenced by the drop in population from 9,811 in 1860 to 8,984 in 1870.

### Smyth House

John Brown Smyth, his four sons, and a few slaves moved into Winston County around 1838, while the women and children remained in west Alabama, a stopover point on their migration from South Carolina. Smyth's sons were Samuel Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Oliver Hazzard Perry, and William Henry. The close friends with



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whom the Smyths travelled and settled, some in Winston County and some at College Hill near Oxford, Mississippi, were linked by their Presbyterian faith and Scotch-Irish ancestry. After selecting a homesite in Mississippi, the Smyth men camped in tents until a log house could be erected, following which patches of land were cleared and crops started (WPA).

In 1840 a second single-pen log house with sleeping loft was constructed, with the earlier log house then being used as a kitchen (WPA). After John Brown Smyth's death in 1842, his son Benjamin (born 1815 in South Carolina, died 1882 in Louisville) inherited the property. It is believed that the 1840 log house was enlarged by the addition of a frame room to the south, two shed rooms to the rear, and a front gallery prior to Benjamin's marriage in 1845 to Margaret Tankersley of College Hill. Sylvester Smyth, son of Benjamin and Margaret, reported to WPA interviewers in 1938 that when he was born in the house in 1855, the house had already been enlarged to five rooms (four on the first floor plus one in the upper half story). Benjamin and his brother, Samuel, are believed to have collaborated on the building project. Samuel was responsible for building a number of structures in Louisville, as discussed below, and Benjamin was also skilled at carpentry. Benjamin was listed as a farmer in the 1850 U.S. Census, and the value of his real estate was given as \$1,720.

A county-wide survey of Winston County has not yet been conducted, but very few antebellum structures are believed to be extant. The Smyth House is one of only four antebellum buildings thus far identified in the county. The three other antebellum buildings were all constructed by Samuel Washington Smyth, and are as follows:

1. Old Masonic Hall, Louisville. Built in 1851, this austere Greek Revival building retains a good degree of integrity.
2. Foster-Fair House, Louisville. Built between 1842 and 1852. This "Carolina I-House" retains a good degree of integrity.
3. First Presbyterian Church, Louisville. Built in 1845. Originally a plain, square clapboard building with a square steeple, the building was substantially remodelled in 1920, with alterations including the removal of the steeple, the addition of a portico, and the addition of a brick veneer. N.W. Overstreet was the architect in charge of the remodelling. The windows were replaced in recent years.

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Although the Smyth House has been remodeled several times since the construction of the single-pen log house in 1840 and its subsequent enlargement circa 1845, the building retains sufficient integrity from its period of significance to qualify for listing in the National Register as a rare surviving building from the initial settlement of Louisville and Winston County. The house retains integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship and association. The house is owned and occupied by descendants of Benjamin Franklin Smyth.

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### 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Howell, Elmo. Mississippi Scenes. Memphis, Tennessee: 1992.

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Parkes, Nancy R. and Taunton, Louis. Winston County and Its People. Louisville, MS: The Winston County Genealogical and Historical Society, 1980.

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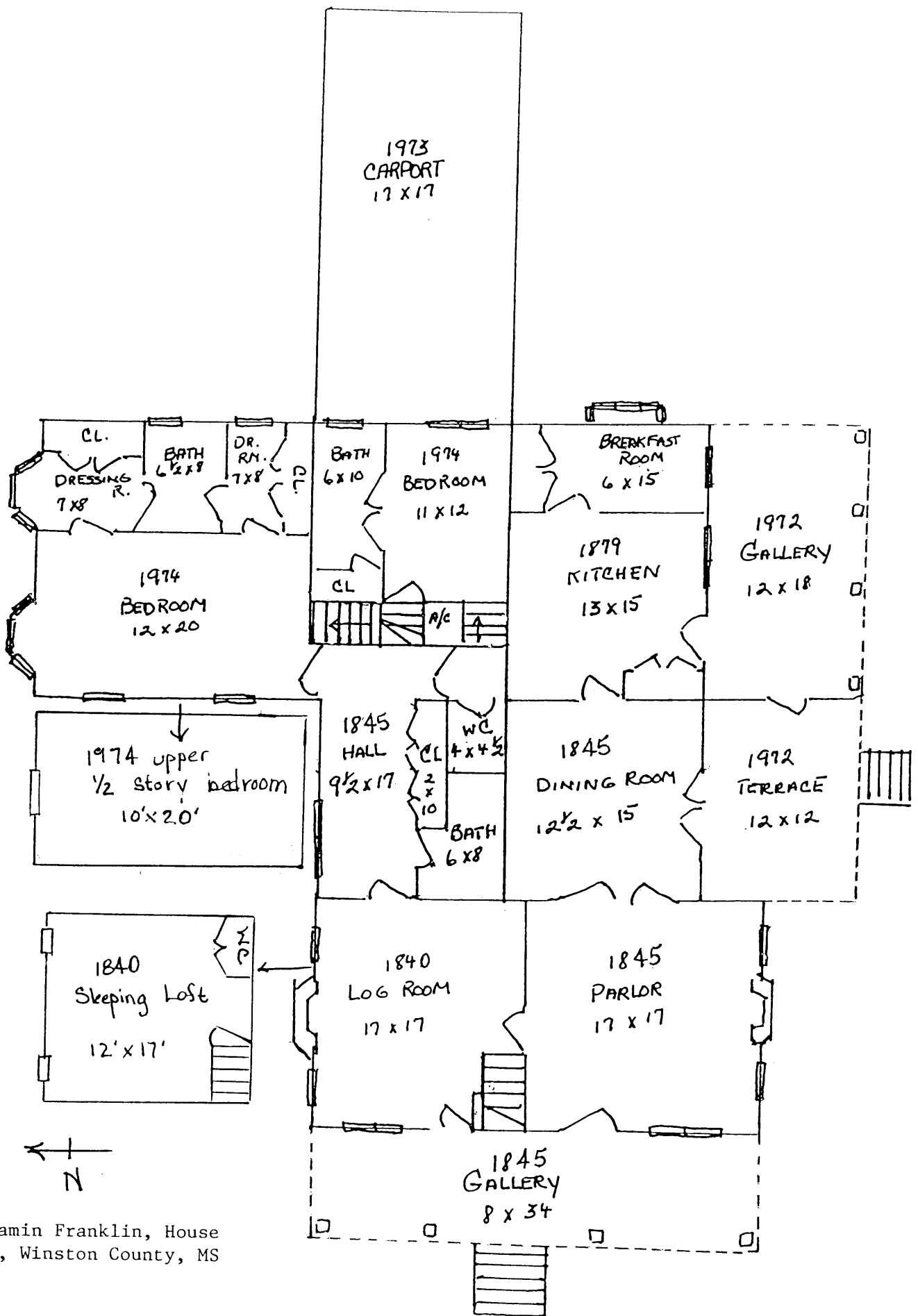
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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description: Commencing at the Northeast corner of the NE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Section 4, Township 14 North, Range 12 East, and run South 2 degrees 19 minutes West for 641.0 feet, thence South 72 degrees 30 minutes West for 1,408.2 feet to the point of intersection of the East line of W 1/2 of SW 1/4 of Section 4, Township 14 North, Range 12 East with the South right of way line of Smyth Road, said point being the point of beginning of the herein described plot; run thence South 72 degrees 30 minutes West for 1,014.2 feet along the South right of way line of Smyth Road, thence South 68 degrees 16 minutes West for 168 feet along said right of way line of said road, thence South 60 degrees 11 minutes West for 243 feet along said right of way line of said road, thence South 66 degrees 01 minutes West for 187 feet along said right of way line of said road, thence run South 45 degrees 52 minutes East for 76.4 feet, thence South 80 degrees 37 minutes East for 254 feet, thence South 22 degrees 0 minutes East for 154 feet, thence South 86 degrees 12 minutes East for 345 feet, thence North 47 degrees 35 minutes East for 65 feet, thence East for 130 feet, thence South 130 feet, thence East 582.3 feet to the East line of W 1/2 of SW 1/4 of Section 4, Township 14 North, Range 12 East, thence run along said land line North 2 degrees 21 minutes East for 911.1 feet to the point of beginning, being 18.75 acres, more or less, located in W 1/2 of SW 1/4 of Section 4, Township 14 North, Range 12 East and in SE 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 5, Township 14 North, Range 12 East, City of Louisville, Winston County, Mississippi. The above described property is described in Book 113, at page 51 of the records of Winston County, Mississippi.

Boundary Justification: Although the Smyth farm originally consisted of more than 500 acres, the 18.75 acres being nominated is that acreage owned by the present owners. The boundary includes the farmhouse--which sets back approximately 350 feet from the road--lawn, gardens and forest that have historically been part of the Smyth farm and currently constitutes the immediate setting. Additional acreage historically associated with the Smyth farm has been excluded because it now contains a man-made lake and resort buildings.



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