

PH 0665592

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED
MAR 27 1978
SEP 18 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

**

Stephenson House

AND/OR COMMON

same

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Cobb Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Oakman

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alabama

CODE

01

COUNTY

Walker

CODE

127 ✓

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

___DISTRICT

___PUBLIC

___OCCUPIED

___AGRICULTURE

___MUSEUM

XBUILDING(S)

XPRIVATE

XUNOCCUPIED

___COMMERCIAL

___PARK

___STRUCTURE

___BOTH

XWORK IN PROGRESS

___EDUCATIONAL

___PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

___ENTERTAINMENT

___RELIGIOUS

___OBJECT

___IN PROCESS

___YES: RESTRICTED

___GOVERNMENT

___SCIENTIFIC

___BEING CONSIDERED

XYES: UNRESTRICTED

___INDUSTRIAL

___TRANSPORTATION

___NO

___MILITARY

___OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Hugh Watson Stephenson, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER

Stephenson Drugs, P. O. Box F

CITY, TOWN

Darrish

STATE

Alabama

VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Walker County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Second Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Jasper

STATE

Alabama

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___FEDERAL ___STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

The Stephenson House, built in 1887, remains as one of the oldest landmarks in the community of Oakman, Alabama. As commonly done in the late-19th century, local craftsmen constructed it according to a plan purchased from a professional architect. It is typical of houses of this style, but its Queen Anne and Eastlake details distinguish it as one of the finest Victorian period homes in the area.

The house is a 1½-story wood-frame structure with a steeply-pitched combination gabled and hipped roof. While the lower half of the facade is covered with beaded panelled siding, the two gabled dormers and the polygonal turret are decorated with various shingle patterns and angled boards. Eastlake influences is depicted by the intricate bargeboard and porch trim. Across the front is a wide veranda which follows the contours of a bay window extending from the north side of the facade. A variety of windows appear throughout the house, mostly 4/4 double hung sashes and four-paned casements. Surrounding the large pane of the center window of the bay are smaller stained glass panes, with a stained glass transom above. Fanlights appear above the windows of the large front gable and the side dormers. Entrance is through a single-leaf door, with a large glass panel in the upper portion and four carved panels below. The sill of the glass panel is intricately carved, and the original doorbell still remains in the center panel. Crowning the door is a large single-paned transom. There are two interior chimneys, with an additional smaller interior chimney on the rear.

As on the facade, the variety of dormers and roof lines is apparent on the rear and side elevations. The walls are faced with weatherboarding, except for the various shingle patterns used on the faces of the dormers. An L-shaped porch on the southeast corner extends along the walls of the kitchen and master bedroom, and a side porch on the north houses the well.

The interior features a central hall plan, with a dog-leg stair and a kitchen at the end of the hall. Most elaborate of the rooms is a octagonal parlor which has the large bay window and an ornately carved oak mantel enhanced by a bevelled mirror and cast iron fireplace screen. Except for the dining room mantel, which is carved oak, the four remaining fireplaces have mahogany mantels, these being located in the library, master bedroom, and two of the upstairs bedrooms. Two of these feature bevelled mirrors and carved columns. All of the interior doors have six panels and are decorated with carved surrounds. The floorboards and baseboards are very wide, and the ceilings are high. Original wallpaper covers the pine walls, but it is in a very deteriorated state. Notable hardware includes white porcelain and copper door knobs. Except for the replacement around 1950, of the original wood-shingle roof with a composition-shingle one, virtually no alterations have been made on the house. In the early twentieth century, electric lighting was added, though no plumbing, heating, or cooling systems have been installed.

ok 1. Facing west, the house is situated on three acres of land about a block from the town. All of the outbuildings remain, including an adjoining carriage house and coal shed at the southeast corner of the house, a silo at the northeast corner, and a smoke house on the north. The wrought iron fence which originally surrounded the front yard has been refurbished. Stone walkways lead to the front entrance and outbuildings, and a creek flows through the northeast corner of the property. Included in the plans to restore the house to a livable condition are the replacement of the deteriorated porch and kitchen floors and the sheetrocking of the interior walls.

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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Stephenson House, long-time residence of one of Walker County's most noted physicians and civic leaders, remains among the oldest landmarks associated with the early history of Oakman, Alabama. Built according to plans acquired from a New Orleans architect, it is one of the community's earliest distinguished examples of the Victorian style. The Queen Anne and Eastlake details gave the house a fanciful beauty which was depicted on local postcards around the turn of the century. Today it remains virtually unaltered since its construction in 1887.

Dr. Hugh Watson Stephenson built the home when he moved to Oakman in 1887, and it has remained in his family since that time. While practicing medicine, Dr. Stephenson served three generations of patients in south Walker County, and he worked as the only general physician in the area until the 1940's. At one time he was reported to be the oldest practicing physician in Alabama, having been active in his work until just before his death at age 88. During his 62-year career, he was recognized on the local and state levels for his devoted medical service.

Born in 1854 in St. Charles, Arkansas, Stephenson moved to his grandfather's home in Lawrence County, Alabama, following the death of his parents around 1858. After receiving his M.D. degree in 1880 from the Mobile Medical College, he practiced medicine in Lawrence County for four years. Then from 1847-87, he did post graduate study at Tulane University, and while in New Orleans he purchased an architect's plan to be used when he returned to Alabama. Upon his return, he hired a builder to construct the home on a parcel of land he owned in the Walker County community of Day's Gap, later called Oakman. Neither the architect's nor the builder's name is known, and the house plan has been lost in a fire.

The area around the south Walker County Oakman community had been settled as early as the 1820's, and there was a Post Office established near the town site by 1860. However, the community did not flourish until two events in the mid-1880's spurred its growth: the Georgian Pacific Railroad (later Southern) opened the county's first rail terminus in 1844 at Oakman, and the nearby Coal Valley Mine, put into operation by T.J. Dunn & Company, initiated the development of the area's coal-rich properties.

Stephenson moved to Oakman during this boom period, and he soon became well-known as one of its leading citizens as well as a fine physician. In civic matters, he is remembered as the promoter of the first telephone line in south Walker County, connecting Oakman to Jasper in 1895. Also, in 1908 he was responsible for the construction of the first two-story brick building in the town, occupied by a dentist and drug store below and housing his office above. Furthermore, Stephenson was active politically, serving several times on the Oakman City Council and being elected in 1915 to represent Walker County in the State Legislature. He was prominent in his own profession, too, serving as President of the Walker County Medical Society in 1930.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Moore, Albert Burton. History of Alabama and Her People, Vol. II. Chicago & New York: American Historical Society, Inc., 1927.
- Owen, Thomas McAdory. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography. Vol. IV. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.15 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Oakman

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 | 464080 | 3730420

B | |

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the northeast corner of the intersection of U.S. Highway 69 and Cobb Street, and proceeding in an easterly direction for 200 feet; thence in a northerly direction for 300 feet; thence in a westerly direction for 100 feet; thence in a southerly direction for 100 feet;

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director and Sally Moore

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

STREET & NUMBER

725 Monroe Street

CITY OR TOWN

Montgomery

DATE

March 15, 1978

TELEPHONE

(205) 832-6621

STATE

Alabama 36130

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Miss B. Howard, Jr.

TITLE SHPO Alabama

DATE March 17, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

R. B. Retting

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: William Lebovich

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 9/18/78

DATE Sept 13, 1978

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After Stephenson's death in 1942, the house passed into his estate, and it has not been occupied since that time. It is in fair condition and bears virtually no alteration. Dr. Stephenson's great-grandson, Hugh Watson Stephenson, Jr., has begun restoration of the house.

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Stephenson, Hugh Watson, Jr. Information submitted for proposed nomination,
Nov., 1977.

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thence in a westerly direction for 100 feet; thence in a southerly direction for 200 feet to the point of beginning.