

STATE:

Arkansas

COUNTY:

White

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

NOV 20 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME					
COMMON: Black House					
AND/OR HISTORIC: Benjamin Clayton Black House <i>use this</i>					
2. LOCATION					
STREET AND NUMBER: 300 East Race Street					
CITY OR TOWN: Searcy			CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Second		
STATE Arkansas		CODE 05	COUNTY: White		CODE 145
3. CLASSIFICATION					
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment		<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify)		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY					
OWNER'S NAME: Miss Lorena Black					
STREET AND NUMBER: 300 East Race Street					
CITY OR TOWN: Searcy			STATE: Arkansas		CODE 05
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION					
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: White County Courthouse					
STREET AND NUMBER: Courthouse Square					
CITY OR TOWN: Searcy			STATE: Arkansas		CODE 05
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS					
TITLE OF SURVEY:					
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local					
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:					
STREET AND NUMBER:					
CITY OR TOWN:			STATE:		CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

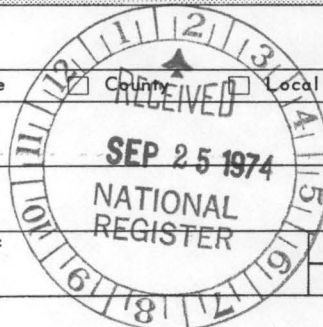
STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY



NOV 20 1974

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

☒ Altered ☐ Unaltered

(Check One)

☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Black House stands as one of the earlier examples of Victorian architecture remaining in Arkahsas. Originally built as a one-storey, two-room structure with common fire-place, it underwent extensive modifications about 1872 that resulted in the present day form. New rooms were added to the first floor and a complete second floor was built. The present plan is essentially a central hall with stairway, two rooms on one side and a single room on the other. The central hall extends to the rear of the house, connecting to the semi-detached kitchen facilities.

The essence of the Black House's architectural merit rests with the ornamental woodwork detailing. All window trim is identical, with common features of triangle pediment with centered clover-leaf medallion, paired scroll brackets of delicate scale, dentils, and chamfered edge pilasters straddling the window opening. The window openings extend to floor level on both storeys.

A two-storey veranda dominates the entry facade and is the most significant feature of the Black House. The same details of the windows are mirrored in every manner and the entablature of the house is continuous about the veranda. Paired chamfered posts in a three-bay setting carry the second storey porch floor, while single matching posts in a seven bay setting carry the porch roof. Ornamental latticework between the posts creates an arcade effect. The cloverleaf pattern appears in the latticework as it does in the windows.

The ornateness of the exterior prevails on the interior details in the form of elaborate moulded trim and a large baseboard. Fireplaces are framed by fluted pilasters, a plain frieze, and simple mantel shelf. Door hinges are representative of the most ornate of the Victorian period.

The Black House is located in a well landscaped corner of a four lot property estate with a carriage and stable shelter located to the rear of the house. It has been continually occupied since 1875, and remains in an excellent state of repairs.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1870's

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☒ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry

losophy

☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art

Architecture

☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Just before the Civil War began a small two-room structure was built on a corner lot in the heart of Searcy, Arkansas. In 1866 four adjoining lots, including the one on which the small structure stood, were purchased by Captain Benjamin Clayton Black, CSA. In March, 1866, Captain Black and his wife, the former Molly Rosamond Jones, were married. According to a grandson, it was their honeymoon trip to New Orleans which influenced the Blacks on the architectural style of their future home.

For several years the Blacks lived in the pre-war two-room structure, but in 1872 they began the enlargement that has made their family residence a Searcy landmark. By 1874 the two-storey white clapboard house was finished; however, eight years later some of the six original porches were rebuilt, and some of the interior walls were replastered.

Captain Black gained local fame for his service to the Confederacy during the Civil War. He enlisted at age 18, but after a long illness in Kentucky he was discharged. After returning to Searcy to rest and recuperate, he re-enlisted by joining a Confederate cavalry company. After Federal troops captured the State Capitol, young Black was commissioned to raise a company, of which he was elected captain. His company was attached to the 48th Arkansas cavalry regiment, and was actively engaged for the remainder of the war. In March, 1865, Captain Black and his troops surrendered at Searcy.

Following the war, Captain Black entered into business at Searcy and became active in local politics. He served as chairman of the Democratic Central Committee for both the county and congressional districts, and was elected for several terms to the office of Mayor of Searcy and Sheriff of White County. After serving as Searcy postmaster in the late 1880's, Captain Black returned to the mercantile business. During the last decade of the 19th century he served a six-year term on the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Black, Lorena. Personal interview at Black House, Searcy, Arkansas, June 24, 1974.
 Hill, Richard. Personal papers concerning Black House.
 Reynolds, John Hough, and Thomas, David Yancey. History of the University of Arkansas. Fayetteville, Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 1910.
 Woods, Stephen E. "The Development of Arkansas Railroads." Arkansas Historical Quarterly, VII (Summer, 1948).

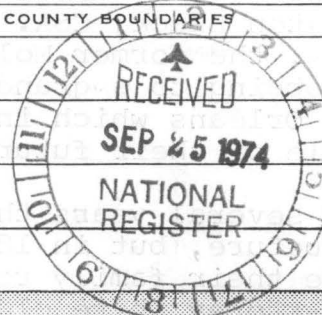
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 0 0	0 0 0		35 15 3.6	91 44 0.6	
NE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SW	0 0 0	0 0 0				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



UTM
15/615210
3902410
CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Anthony S. Riddle, Architect and Dianna Kirk, Historian	
ORGANIZATION Arkansas Historic Preservation Program	DATE 9-10-74
STREET AND NUMBER: Plaza West, Suite 1030, McKinley and Lee Streets	
CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock	STATE Arkansas
	CODE 05

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

Name William E. Henderson

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date September 10, 1974

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 11/30/74

ATTEST:
Keeper of The National Register

Date 11-13-74

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY White	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE NOV 20 1974

(Number all entries)

Significance (Continued - Page 2)

Captain Black's civic-mindedness was further evidenced by his efforts to have the county's first railroad routed through Searcy; however, he was unsuccessful in diminishing the fears of his fellow townsmen that the railroad would bring an undesirable rough element to the community. When the railroad passed through White County east of Searcy, a determined Captain Black built a wooden track with two horse drawn cars running from Searcy to the main track at Kensett.

Eleven children were born to Benjamin and Molly Black, and the only remaining child now lives in the family home. After her mother's death in the mid-1940's, Miss Lorena Black returned to live in the house where she was born. The house has been preserved because of its sentimental value and architectural significance to both the Black family and the entire Searcy community.

As one of the earliest Victorian residences in Arkansas, the Black House became a landmark in the Searcy community. The two-storey veranda with its detailed ornamental woodwork is the most striking feature of this two-storey white frame house. The elaborately detailed exterior is continued to a lesser extent in the interior. Located just a few blocks from the town square, the Black House stands as an ever present reminder of Searcy's past.



PROPERTY Black House ~~XXXXXX~~ CO. STATE Arkansas 74000505

WORKING NUMBER 9.25.74.1502

TECH REVIEW

PHOTOS 3

MAPS 1

CONTROL REVIEW

HISTORIAN

*Arkansas has shown a definite improvement
in the quality of their forms — ACCEPT Hulsand*
10/4/74

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

*Accept
Shovich
10/4/74*

ARCHEOLOGIST

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

*Accept
Calk
10/17/74*

BRANCH CHIEF

*Accept
Hunt
11.12.74*

KEEPER

*Wm
11/13*

National Register Write-up 1-9-75

Send-back _____

Federal Register entry 2-4-75

Re-submit _____

Entered _____

NOV 20 1974



Black House

White Co., Arkansas

detail of doorknob and plate

1083

PROPERTY OF

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

1. NAME

COMMON

Black House

AND/OR HISTORIC

NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)

NOV 20 1974

2. LOCATION

STATE

Arkansas

COUNTY

White

TOWN

Searcy

STREET AND NUMBER

300 East Race

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Robert Dunn

DATE

1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Detail of doorknob and plate



1 of 3



Black House

Searcy, White Co., Arkansas
detail of stairway bannister

FORM 10-301 A
(6/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

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

1. NAME		
COMMON Black House	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS) NOV 20 1974
2. LOCATION		
STATE Arkansas	COUNTY White	TOWN Searcy
STREET AND NUMBER 300 East Race		
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT Robert Dunn	DATE 1974	NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
4. IDENTIFICATION		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		

Detail of stairway bannister.

2 of 3



GPO 932-009

2 of 3
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Black House

White County, Arkansas

South facade and west elevation,
viewed from the southwest

3

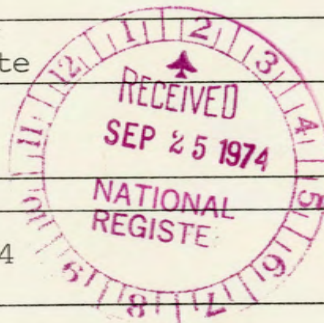
FORM 10-301 A
(6/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

1. NAME		
COMMON Black House	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS) NOV 20 1974
2. LOCATION		
STATE Arkansas	COUNTY White	TOWN Searcy
STREET AND NUMBER 300 East Race		
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT Robert Dunn	DATE 1974	NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
4. IDENTIFICATION		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		



South facade and west elevation, viewed from the southwest

393

GPO 932-009

393

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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

1. NAME		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE <i>(Assigned by NPS)</i>
Black House		NOV 20 1974
2. LOCATION		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Arkansas	White	Searcy
STREET AND NUMBER		
300 East Race		
3. MAP REFERENCE		
SOURCE	DATE	SCALE
USGS 7.5 Minute Series Judsonia Quadrangle	1965	1:24000

REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW;





UTM GRID AND 1965 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

ARKANSAS

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

JUDSONIA, ARK.
SW/4 BALD KNOB 15' QUADRANGLE
N3515—W9137.5/7.5

1965
AMS 7654 | SW—SERIES V884

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ARKANSAS

NOV 20 1974

Date Entered

Name

Location

Lakeport Plantation

Shives vicinity
Chicot County

Benjamin Clayton,
Black House

Searcy
White County

Also Notified

Hon. J. W. Fulbright	State Historic Preservation Officer
Hon. John L. McClellan	Mr. William E. Henderson, Director
Hon. Ray Thornton, Jr.	Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism
Hon. Wilbur D. Mills	State Capitol - Room 149
	Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Regional Director, Southwest	
Region	