

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**
PH0150410 DATA SHEET  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 21 1975

DATE ENTERED

JUN 5 1975

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

HISTORIC

Houston Jail

AND/OR COMMON

Houston Jail**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1.8 miles south of U.S. 278 on County Rd. 63/ off U.S. 278 on SR 63 next to Houston Post Office

CITY, TOWN

Houston

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

IV

STATE

Alabama

CODE

01

COUNTY

Winston

CODE

133**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY** DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT**OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION** IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS** OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE** YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO**PRESENT USE** AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER: none**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Isaiah Marshall Alford

STREET &amp; NUMBER

General Delivery

CITY, TOWN

Houston

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alabama35572**4 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Winston County Courthouse (in Beat 6, School District)

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Double Springs

STATE

Alabama**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic Sites Survey of Marion and Winston Counties, Alabama

DATE

July 1972 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDSMuscle Shoals Council of Local Government (P.O. Box 2358)

CITY, TOWN

Muscle Shoals

STATE

Alabama35660

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Houston Jail has changed very little since it was constructed and remains on its original site. Board and batten siding was added over the square-cut log structure at some later date and about one-half of this remains. The building is twenty feet square with a gable style roof and it is divided into two rooms by an interlocking log wall. Around 1933 the jail was converted into a residence for the poor; it was probably about this time that the wooden split-shake roof was replaced with the galvanized metal one and the west and south window openings enlarged. The oak and pine square-notched wall logs were hand-hewn and measure 10" by 12". Interior log walls are covered with boards secured approximately every inch from floor to ceiling with 2½" nails to prevent prisoners from sawing their way out. The ceilings are 10" by 10" logs and the floors have planks (added at some later date) over the 10" by 6" logs to form a solid log ceiling and floor. The small window opening on the front is original and still has the meshed iron bars to discourage escape, while the bars are missing from the original rear windows of each room. The present front door is a replacement for one constructed of three layers of 1½" planks laid at angles to each other. A hole 5" in diameter and cut at a 45 degree angle downward to the outside remains in the back wall of each room, or cell and served as a necessary.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899        | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input checked="" 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 c. 1868

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Houston Jail is the only known surviving log jail in Alabama and the only remaining public building in the old county seat of Houston in Winston County.

Houston was the name of the first county seat of what was originally Hancock County; its name was derived from a family who lived near there. In 1858 the county name was changed to honor Alabama's first native born governor, John Anthony Winston; at this time the county seat was moved to the present site of Houston and the name retained for the new seat of government. "New" Houston remained the county seat until 1884, when it was removed to Double Springs.

The exact building date of the jail is unknown, but research documents that a Winston County grand jury which met in 1867 reported the need for both a courthouse and a jail. The Acts of Alabama, 1865-1866 empowered the County of Winston to levy a tax for the building of a courthouse and a jail. The courthouse, long since destroyed, was built in 1868 and it is assumed that the jail was built soon after. The contractor, or builder, is unknown due to the loss of county records in a later fire, but two similar jails (now non-existent) were constructed contemporary with this one in Fayette County (Hartsook Prison) and Marion County (Stamford Prison).

With the loss of political power the population dwindled and today Houston is a small unincorporated village.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Colton, Victor W. Historic Sites Survey of Marion and Winston Counties, Alabama.  
 Privately Printed: Muscle Shoals Council of Local Governments and Office of  
 Tributary Area Development, 1972, pp. 23-24.

Dodd, Donald B. and Wynelle S. Winston: An Antebellum and Civil War History of a  
 Hill County of Northwest Alabama. Birmingham: Oxmoor Press, 1972, p.73.

(continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre

UTM OK  
HL

UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |                   |                   |
|---|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| A | 1 6  | 4 7 1 6 2 1 4 1 0 | 3 7 1 7 7 6 6 1 0 |
|   | ZONE | EASTING           | NORTHING          |
| C |      |                   |                   |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| B |      |         |          |
|   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| D |      |         |          |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Jackson R. Stell, Historic Resources Coordinator II

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

DATE

May 8, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

725 Monroe Street

TELEPHONE

832-6621

CITY OR TOWN

Montgomery

STATE

Alabama

# 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Miss B. Howard, Jr.*

TITLE

SHPD Alabama

DATE

May 12, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*AK M... ..*

DATE

6/5/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*W. J. ... ..*

DATE

JUN 3 1975

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

Moulton Advertiser. Moulton, Alabama. May 11, 1867, p. 4.

Northwest Alabamian. "Hill History," Haleyville, Alabama, March 11, 1971, pp. 1, 10,  
March 14, 1971, p. 8.

Thompson, Wesley S. The Free State of Winston. Winfield: Pareil Press, 1968,  
pp. 101, 102, 137, 139, 141.