

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED APR 7 1975
DATE ENTERED APR 28 1975

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

The Junius R. Ward House

AND/OR COMMON

The Erwin House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Old Highway 1

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Erwin

X VICINITY OF Chatham

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Mississippi

CODE
28

COUNTY
Washington

CODE
151

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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. William J. Shutt

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chatham

VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Washington County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Greenville

STATE

Mississippi

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Erwin House is a modest wooden structure situated on the north side of Lake Washington at Erwin, Washington County, Mississippi. Typical of many small plantation houses built in the first half of the nineteenth century, the Erwin House is five bays wide and one-and-a-half stories high, with buttressed chimneys on the gabled ends. Standing on a foundation of brick piers, the house is constructed of dressed, half-notched logs covered with clapboarding. Since there remains no evidence of daubing and the notching was not cut to cast off water, it seems clear that the clapboard sheathing is original. The undercut gallery, which extends the full width of the principal block, is treated with simple piers supporting a plain narrow entablature. A pair of paneled pilasters and sections of the original molded cornice are survivals of a more sophisticated gallery treatment. The entrance to the Erwin House, flanked by rectangular sidelights and transom, is contained in a substantial frontispiece with large corner blocks and architraves of a pronounced Gothic profile. Similar treatment was also used around the windows, which symmetrically flank the frontispiece. Originally double hung with six-over-six glazing, they were extended to their current floor length height around 1910. The facade of the main block is emphasized further by the use of flush siding and a high baseboard under the gallery.

Although encumbered by additions, the plan of the Erwin House is a classic Mississippi type. The front, or south, half of the house is arranged according to the traditional single-pile formula with a central stair hall flanked by a large parlor and dining room on either side. Two small cabinets, with an open loggia between, occupy the rear section. Two low chambers without fireplaces are placed on the second floor. Shortly after the completion of the main house around 1830, a single room with a buttressed chimney was added to the west end. Since that time other additions have been attached, removed, and rebuilt, until the rear of the house has developed a disturbing incongruity. Spatial alterations to the original house were limited, however, to the enclosure of the loggia (c. 1910), and to an extension of a rear cabinet (c. 1925).

As in most vernacular structures of the period, the interior of the Erwin House is fitted with simple, yet finely joined, woodwork. Well-proportioned architraves with corner blocks are cut in a double cyma recta profile set between unmolded backbands. Identical mantels, with battered pilasters and paneled friezes, remain intact in each of the four original rooms. The open-newel stair, with its ramped banister and scrolled step-ends is the most ambitious and notable interior feature of the Erwin 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 checked="" 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

c. 1830

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located on Lake Washington at Erwin, Mississippi, the Erwin House is believed to be the oldest extant structure remaining in Washington County and one of the few properties in that area still maintained by descendants of the original grantee. Junius R. Ward (1802-1883), a native of Kentucky who was the first to settle at the head of the lake according to the Papers of the Washington County Historical Society, purchased the property on December 15, 1829, although the patent was delayed until September 1, 1831. In 1830, Ward began construction of the existing dwelling to replace a simple log structure located nearby. According to the 1831 tax records for Washington County, Ward owned an extensive amount of land and 42 slaves; in 1840 he owned 1,875 acres and 65 slaves. The 1850 census records indicate that he owned 750 acres of improved land and 1,200 acres of unimproved land, as well as livestock valued at \$5,400. During this period Ward served as one of eight commissioners of the Lake Washington and Deer Creek Railroad and Banking Company, which was incorporated in 1836. In 1877, title to the property was purchased by Matilda Erwin, Ward's daughter, and her husband, Johnson Erwin of nearby Mount Holly plantation. Their son Victor married Margaret Preston McNeily, the daughter of J. S. McNeily, who was editor of the Woodville Republican, the Greenville Times and the Vicksburg Herald, and who served as a member of the 1890 Mississippi Constitutional Convention. Although McNeily, who served in the 21st Mississippi infantry, C.S.A., apparently never exceeded the rank of private, he was widely known after the Civil War as "Captain" J. S. McNeily. McNeily was a frequent visitor to the Erwin House, where Mrs. Victor Erwin still lives with her daughter, Mrs. William Shutt.

The Erwin House is a valuable example of Mississippi vernacular architecture of the early nineteenth century. Although altered, the basic integrity of the structure has been assured through its continual ownership by one family.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

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