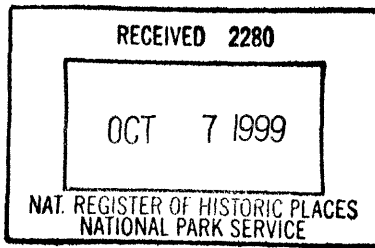


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



1303

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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 any 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 Grayson House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 2300 DeSiard Street NA not for publication

city or town Monroe NA vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Ouachita code 073 zip code 71201

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jonathan Fricker September 27, 1999
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

State or 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 this 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): _____

Patrick Andrus Signature of Keeper 11/17/99 Date of Action

Grayson House
Name of property

Ouachita Parish, Louisiana
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> — </u>	buildings
<u> — </u>	<u> — </u>	sites
<u> — </u>	<u> — </u>	structures
<u> — </u>	<u> — </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

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

 NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Domestic

Sub. Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Vacant

Sub. Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

 Queen Anne Revival

 Eastlake

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other _____

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" next to 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.
X 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

NA

(Mark "X" next to all that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

education

ethnic heritage: black

Period of Significance

1912-1937

Significant Dates

1931-37

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Grayson, Emma Blanche

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

NA

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Grayson House
Name of property

Ouachita Parish, Louisiana
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than an acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 15 584800 3597580

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

___ 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 National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date August 1999

street & number P.O. Box 44247 telephone (225) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Rena L. Hester

street & number P. O. Box 74240 telephone 225-774-2637

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70807

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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The Grayson House (c.1905) is a one story Queen Anne/Eastlake house located on a busy four-lane street in a modest African American neighborhood in the City of Monroe. The wood frame residence is sheathed in beveled weatherboards. Because the house has received relatively few alterations since construction (particularly on the exterior), it easily conveys the period of its association with African American educator Emma Grayson.

The house's Queen Anne influence can be seen in its massing. The main block has a fairly steep hip roof with a small hip roof dormer. Projecting from the main block, to one side of the facade, is a polygonal bay under a gable end roof. Solid wood brackets in a curving design accent the corner cuts of the bay, and a diamond shaped window is located in the gable peak. An Eastlake porch under its own roof begins at the bay, sweeps across the front, and then curves around the corner for two bays. The porch features turned columns with decorative brackets and the original balustrade. Windows are generally four over four and appear singly or in pairs. The window on the front face of the polygonal bay has one large lower pane and a large upper pane divided decoratively by glazing bars.

The floorplan of the original portion of the house is organized around a fairly wide central hall with a dining room at its rear. Two rooms are located to the north of the hall/dining room range and three rooms to the south. The front room to the south is a small one in the polygonal bay; it is accessed from the porch with its own door.

The house is plainly finished on the interior, featuring raised panel doors with simple board frames. Apparently the walls were originally covered with paper; most rooms are now sheetrocked or paneled.

Alterations since construction:

(1) An old photo reveals that the polygonal bay's gable originally featured Eastlake ornamentation in its peak.

(2) The side portion of the wraparound porch has been screened. The porch details are still there (columns, brackets, balustrade), and the screening will be removed in an upcoming restoration project.

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(3) Documentary and architectural evidence indicate that the rear elevation originally had a shallow inset porch at its center. This has been engulfed in a one room deep addition across the rear.

(4) The old photo also shows two chimneys which are no longer present. The house was originally heated with stoves (since removed).

(5) As noted above, most interior walls are now sheetrocked or paneled. Also, there has been some furring out of walls to create closets.

Assessment of Integrity

Because alterations to the principal views of the house have been minimal, there is no question that 2300 DeSiard would be immediately recognizable to someone from the historic period (as can be seen by comparing historic and current photos).

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The Grayson House is of local educational significance because of its association with African-American educator Emma Blanche Grayson. For several years in the 1930s (1931-1937) Miss Grayson, as a Jeanes supervisor, played a critical leadership role in improving elementary school education for African-Americans in rural LaSalle and Richland parishes.

Miss Grayson's career as a Jeanes supervisor must be viewed within its historic context for a full appreciation of its importance. After Reconstruction, when white Democrats regained control of Louisiana, retrenchment was the watchword of the day. Funding for public education in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries was insufficient for even a single school system, let alone the dual system mandated by segregation. In short, white schools received little funding and schools for blacks even less. The situation was at its worst in rural areas.

While progress was made for white schools in the early twentieth century (particularly the teens and twenties), black schools remained on the whole woefully inadequate (poorer buildings, shorter school terms, untrained teachers, etc.). Those public schools that existed were more often than not part of a public-private system wherein the state contributed a little funding, with local sources providing the building (typically a church or lodge hall) and other necessities.

Because of the dire need, educating Southern blacks became the focus of various Northern philanthropies. The most well-known of these is the Rosenwald fund, established in 1914 by Sears tycoon Julius Rosenwald to build schools throughout the rural South. At the height of the program in the 1920s, there were 400-500 Rosenwald schools in Louisiana.

However, providing better physical facilities addressed only part of the problem. The Jeanes program had as its goal the overall improvement of rural black elementary education through supervisors assigned to a given locale. The fund was established in 1908 by Philadelphia Quaker Anna T. Jeanes and was modeled on the work of Virginia Randolph, an African-American country teacher in Virginia. By 1914, there were 118 Jeanes teachers in 119 counties in the South. Eventually the program was extended overseas to places such as the Virgin Islands, Latin America and Africa. In 1937 the Jeanes Fund (or the Negro Rural School Fund as it was also called) merged with various other similar philanthropic foundations to form the Southern Education Foundation. The Jeanes program reached its height in the 1940s and early '50s.

Jeanes supervisors, or Jeanes teachers as they were often called, were not classroom teachers. Instead, they supervised and taught teachers in their jurisdiction and fulfilled a host of other needs, including raising funds for schools, starting public health programs, coordinating

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special events such as the yearly Achievement Day (an important celebration in black schools throughout the South), etc. Hired by the local school board using Jeanes funds, they reported to the superintendent. And, in fact, they were sometimes referred to as "black superintendents." Unlike the teachers with whom they worked, Jeanes supervisors (typically unmarried females) were required to have a college degree. Previously they had been teachers or principals. Then they received additional training once they became Jeanes supervisors. For example, in 1934 Southern University in Baton Rouge held a special course for Jeanes teachers in Louisiana.

Miss Grayson's career as a Jeanes teacher in Louisiana was from at least January 1931 (when she is documented as being in LaSalle Parish) to mid-1937 (when she became a Jeanes supervisor in the Virgin Islands). Born in 1910, she was educated at Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas. An August 1937 letter from the Southern Education Foundation, in reference to her upcoming trip to the Virgin Islands, refers to her seven years as a Jeanes teacher in Louisiana, four in Richland Parish and three in LaSalle Parish. During this period her parents home at 2300 DeSiard in Monroe was her "home address," although she actually lived, of course, in the various communities where she worked. (Richland Parish is adjacent to the parish where Monroe is located and LaSalle is in the same region.)

While generally the work of one Jeanes teacher was similar to that of another, there is at least one report from Miss Grayson detailing her specific work. Filed in 1934, the report is from Richland Parish, where she worked with thirty-four schools. At that time only sixteen of the state's sixty-four parishes had Jeanes supervisors (which does not mean 16 teachers because one individual may have had two parishes). Almost all were in the northern part of the state, presumably because of the role of the Catholic church in education in southern Louisiana.

Miss Grayson first notes that despite a "financial situation" that might mean shorter school terms, the "interest and enthusiasm" of her teachers is a "mark of improvement." The main objective of a Jeanes teacher, classroom supervision, she explains, was given serious attention through monthly institutes, group conferences, extension classes, reading circles and discussions after classroom supervision. Five schools were selected as model schools, and poorer or inexperienced teachers visited them for insight and assistance. Other progress which Miss Grayson reported upon was collecting books to be placed in her schools, the creation and nurturing of PTAs, Negro History Week and Negro Health Week, and efforts to extend the school term. In reference to the latter, she noted that "our children in the little country schools might have five and some six months training."

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Outside the realm of traditional school matters, Jeanes teachers were heavily involved in the communities in which they worked, and were often looked to as a leader, whatever the project might be – improving health and sanitation conditions, distributing food, developing Homemakers' Clubs, etc. In the above mentioned 1937 letter of introduction for the Virgin Islands the president of the Southern Education Foundation observed that as a Jeanes teacher, Miss Grayson's work "in improving homes has been outstanding, as she has succeeded in getting a number of the school communities to establish model plantation homes." He summarized that her role in the Virgin Islands would be "entirely that of the usual Jeanes Teacher, which will include supervision of rural schools, community organization and work with mothers and in fact anything that may contribute to the improvement of conditions among the people of the Island of St. Thomas." As one former Jeanes teacher explained, "they [Jeanes teachers] did whatever needed to be done, to the extent they were able to do it."

In summary, the leadership role of Jeanes teachers in improving elementary education for blacks in the rural South cannot be overestimated. In an era of dedicated but usually poorly trained teachers and "separate but unequal" attitudes and conditions, the chief, perhaps sole, person with the weighty responsibility of helping teachers improve instruction in rural elementary black schools was the Jeanes supervisor. The variety and intensity of their work, as outlined above, is indeed impressive. For example, Miss Grayson was responsible for two parishes -- Richland with 34 schools and LaSalle, with presumably a comparable number.

Other Properties Associated with Emma Grayson

Recognizing the work of Jeanes supervisors in the National Register of Historic Places using the requirements of Criterion B (association with a significant person) presents something of a problem because of the very nature of the work. Typically, in the case of a locally significant educator, one would nominate the school in question or the place where they lived while making their contributions. However, Jeanes supervisors were not associated with one particular school or one specific community. Their's was something of an itinerant job as they worked with various communities in their jurisdiction. It is not known where Miss Grayson actually resided in LaSalle and Richland parishes, but given the times and her unmarried status, it would have been typical for her to have boarded somewhere or stayed with friends or relatives. While she was not living at her parents' home in Monroe on a day-to-day basis while a Jeanes teacher, it was her only permanent address. The previously mentioned letter from the president of the Southern Education Foundation dated August 7, 1937 suggested that the respondent "write to Miss

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Grayson at her home address, which is 2300 De Siard Street, Monroe, Louisiana.” In short, there is no place that has a longer or more direct association with Miss Grayson during the historic period than 2300 DeSiard.

The property at 2300 DeSiard was purchased by Coleman L. Grayson, Emma Grayson’s father, in 1912, when she was two years old. Mr. Grayson worked at a lumber company, and he and his wife were able to send two daughters to teachers college. Emma Grayson’s sister, Annie Grayson Willis, lived in the house until her death in 1997.

Emma Grayson moved to Topeka, Kansas in 1945 (after her Jeanes stint in the Virgin Islands), became a rehabilitation therapist, married Fred Buckner in 1955, and died in Topeka in 1995 at the age of 85. Her family home has recently been purchased by Rena Hester, an African-American woman who grew up in the neighborhood. Ms. Hester plans to move her legal practice from Baton Rouge to the Grayson home.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for Register purposes spans from 1912, when the Grayson family moved into the house, until 1937. By late 1937 Miss Grayson was in the Virgin Islands working as a Jeanes teacher.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Smith, Alice Brown. *Forgotten Foundations: The Role of Jeanes Teachers in Black Education*.
New York, Vantage Press, 1997.

Historic photo of 2300 DeSiard Street, Monroe. Copy in National Register file, Louisiana
Division of Historic Preservation.

Letter dated August 7, 1937 from Arthur D. Wright, President, Southern Education Foundation,
Inc., to the Honorable Lawrence W. Cramer.

The Louisiana Colored Teachers' Journal. Various issues in the 1930s. The March 1934 issue is
subtitled "Rosenwald Day Program and Jeanes' Teachers Number." This very important
source, among other items, contains reports from Jeanes teachers, including Miss
Grayson.

Sanborn Insurance Company maps, Monroe, 1926, 1932.

Grayson House

Name of property

Ouachita Parish, Louisiana

County and State

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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Legal Boundary Description:

Lot 4 of Block 29 of W. R. Gordon's Subdivision of Blocks 27, 28, & 29 in Stubb Young's Bayou Addition to the City of Monroe, as per plat of said subdivision filed in Plat Book I, Page 14, Records of Ouachita Parish, LA, said Lot 4 measuring 65.38 feet wide by a depth of 150 feet.

Justification:

Boundaries follow the property lines of the lot historically associated with the house. They are also the current property lines.



Earliest photo of house. "undated"

GRAYSON HOUSE, OUACHITA PARISH, LOUISIANA