

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| |
|--------------------------|
| STATE: Texas |
| COUNTY: Walker |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| ENTRY DATE |

1. NAME

COMMON:
Sam Houston House; "Woodland"

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Sam Houston House; "Woodland"

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Avenue L--Sam Houston State University

CITY OR TOWN:
Huntsville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
No. 2

STATE: **Texas** CODE: _____ COUNTY: **Walker** CODE: _____

Charles Wilson, Representative

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate) | | | |
| <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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input 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: **State of Texas, % Dr. Elliot T. Bowers, President, Sam Houston State University**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Huntsville** STATE: **Texas** CODE: _____

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Walker County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Huntsville** STATE: **Texas** CODE: _____

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
None

DATE OF SURVEY: _____ Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ CODE: _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE

COUNTY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One) | | | | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
| | (Check One) | | | (Check One) | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built by Sam Houston in 1847, "Woodland" was occupied by him and his wife until 1859 when he was deposed as Governor of the State of Texas. Houston exchanged part of his property at Raven Hill for "Woodland" which, in 1847, was no more than a small log cabin with a chimney of mud and sticks.* That year Houston added an open hallway and a second log room to the end of the hallway or "dog-trot." A porch was built across the front. Above the two front rooms was a loft, probably for the house servants until the quarters were finished. Plank doors and flat nails detailed the Houston House at first but later siding was added. Painted white today, originally the weather-boarding was probably whitewashed.

The house was further enlarged the following spring. The loft was converted into two bedrooms separated by a grilled breezeway. A steep enclosed staircase was added from the lower to the upper hallway. At this time the front seems to have become the back: two windowless rooms were partitioned at opposite ends of the garden porch, leaving between them a loggia for summer dining. The open back of the hall was embellished by the addition of a pediment and portico of four square columns.

Two one-room, gabled, square log outbuildings stand on the grounds. One, a kitchen, is a reconstruction; the other, merely restored, served as Houston's law office. "Woodlands" is owned by the State of Texas and open to the public.

The boundaries are co-terminus with the State park and include "Woodlands" with its outbuildings, the so-called "Steamboat House" to which Houston retired and died and the land of the State park. The Sam Houston Memorial and the "War and Peace" museums are non-historic features. The inclusion of all parkland is essential to the protective screening of the houses and their setting reminiscent of the historic 170-acre estate maintained by Houston.

*William Seale, Sam Houston's Wife--A Biography of Margaret Lea Houston (Norman, Oklahoma: 1970), p.

4. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1847-1859**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

"Woodland" was the residence of Sam Houston from 1847 to 1859, a most eventful period in the life of one of America's mythic heroes. This "bang up place," as Houston called it, was the statesman's house and law office during his two terms as United States Senator and where he lived when elected Governor of Texas in 1859.

As the victor of San Jacinto, Houston fathered Texas independence. Overwhelmingly elected first President of the Republic in 1836, he served in that capacity again from 1841 to 1844 gaining international recognition for Texas and leading the Republic into union with the United States, an act which enlarged the country by one-third of its present land mass.

"Woodland," this typical Texas hill country cottage of clapboard over logs, was his refuge from the political confrontations raging in Washington and Austin fanned by extremist and contrary visions of secession and abolitionism. A staunch unionist, he was the only southern Senator to support all the compromise measures of 1850. Through the decade of the 1850s, he tried vainly but courageously to stem the inexorable tide of secession. As Governor, in 1861 he refused to recognize the authority of the State's secession convention and was deposed.

Biography

Samuel Houston, soldier, frontier hero and statesman of Texas, was born in 1793 near Lexington, Virginia. After his father's death, the family moved to Maryville, Tennessee, near the coveted lands of the Cherokee. Houston spent much of his youth with the Indians learning their language and customs and developing a deep sympathy for their character. He had very little formal education and in 1813 volunteered for service in the war against Britain. He served under Andrew Jackson at Horseshoe Bend.

In 1818, Houston resigned from the army to study and practice law in Tennessee. He served two terms in Congress before he was elected Governor of Tennessee (1827). Two years later, when his bride of a

(Continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Day, Donald and Ulloni, Harry Herbert, ed. The Autobiography of Sam Houston (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press), 1954.

Friend, Llerena, Sam Houston: The Great Designer (Austin: University of Texas Press), 1954.

James, Marquis, The Raven: A Biography of Sam Houston (Dunwoody, Georgia: Norman S. Berg), 1949.

(Continued)

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 | 30 ° 42 , 57 " | 95 ° 33 , 14 " | | ° , " | ° , " | |
| NE | 30 ° 42 , 57 " | 95 ° 33 , 05 " | | | | |
| SE | 30 ° 42 , 51 " | 95 ° 33 , 04 " | | | | |
| SW | 30 ° 42 , 50 " | 95 ° 33 , 15 " | | | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **15 acres**

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 |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Benjamin Levy, Senior Historian, assisting Betty McSwain, trainee

ORGANIZATION: **Division of Historic and Architectural Surveys, National Park Service** DATE: **11/7/73**

STREET AND NUMBER:
1100 L Street NW

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE:

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 _____

Title _____

Date _____

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

8. Significance (page 1) Sam Houston House (Woodland)

few months left him, he resigned his office and went to Indian country (Oklahoma), where he established a trading post called the Wigwam. Like other traders, he was advisor to the Indians, making yearly trips to Washington to plead their cause. By 1833 he was in Texas.

Houston had little to do with the preliminaries of the Texas revolution, though he watched the struggle closely. He was a member of the convention which established a provisional government in Texas and sent Stephen Austin to Mexico to secure statehood. When Texas declared independence in 1836, Houston was present at that convention. With his commanding presence (he stood 6' 2") and capacity to arouse confidence and enthusiasm, he was promptly made commander of the local volunteers and then of the Texas regular army. After the fall of the Alamo, Houston retreated before Santa Ana amid much criticism. However, he redeemed himself briefly a few weeks later when he surprised a superior Mexican army at San Jacinto and killed or captured the entire force while Santa Ana was taken prisoner.

In 1836, Houston was elected President of the new Republic and his 2-year term was comparatively uneventful. He succeeded in obtaining recognition from Britain, France, and the United States, though he really wanted annexation by the United States.

When he was re-elected in 1841, the national debt was nearly 7 million dollars, the Indians were in an ugly mood and Mexico showed signs of renewing the war. When he retired from office in 1844, Texas was relatively prosperous and annexation was fairly certain. In 1846 he represented the new State of Texas in the Senate, where he served for nearly 14 years.

Houston was a lonely figure among his southern colleagues. He was a strong believer in the Union and Indian rights and he was the only southern Senator to vote for all the compromise measures of 1850. In 1859 he was elected Governor of Texas on a platform of preserving the Union and tried to prevent the State's secession. When secession was accepted by a large popular vote, he believed that it did not necessarily mean adherence to the Confederacy. He considered Texas an independent republic again and refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Confederate Government. He was deposed.

Houston refused the aid of Union soldiers to reestablish his lost authority and retired quietly to Huntsville, where he died 3 weeks after the fall of Vicksburg.

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9. Bibliography (page 1) Sam Houston House (Woodland)

Seale, William, Sam Houston's Wife: A Biography of Margaret Lea Houston
(Norman: University of Oklahoma Press), 1970.