

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered OCT 11 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic

and/or common ^{ADP} Duanesburg ^{TR} ~~Multiple Resource Area: Boss Jones Thematic Resources~~

2. Location

7 + 1 D & E

street & number See Individual Inventory Forms _____ not for publication

city, town _____ vicinity of

state _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

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"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	NA in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	NA being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name See Inventory Forms

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. See Cover Form

street & number

city, town _____ state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title See Cover Form has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes _____ no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>NA</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Boss Jones Thematic Resources consist of eight farmhouses (each with contributing outbuildings) built between ca. 1850 and ca. 1860 by the locally prominent master carpenter, Alexander Delos "Boss" Jones. The properties included in the thematic group were identified and classified as a part of the comprehensive inventory of historic resources in the town of Duanesburg conducted in 1979 by the Schenectady County Planning Department. Based on the research of Warren and Henry C. Liddle, amateur historians of considerable local renown, eleven properties were identified as the work of Boss Jones. Their research included on-site inspections and interviews with local residents, including descendants of both Boss Jones and the original owners of the Jones-built houses. Two of the structures attributed to Boss Jones are not located within the boundaries of the multiple resource area and are thus excluded from this nomination. They are the Fayette-Peck House (c.1852) in Montgomery County and the Bouck Octagon House (c.1850s) in Schoharie County. Of the nine properties located in Duanesburg, sufficient information on eight of the properties was available to determine that they meet the National Register criteria for eligibility; the ninth property (the Alexander "Swamp Alex" Liddle House) will not be considered until additional information can be obtained. Thus, eight properties attributed to Boss Jones are being included in the Boss Jones Thematic Resources, a component of the Duanesburg Multiple Resource Area nomination. Six of the farmhouses are concentrated in the vicinity of McGuire School Road in the center of the western section of town; the other two are the southeast quadrant of the town.

All of the farmhouses are executed in wood and are generally clapboard sided. Most exhibit stylistic features associated with the mature Greek Revival style such as pedimented gable ends, giant pedimented porticos, full entablatures, broad corner boards, trabeated entrances and recessed doors with pilasters, sidelights and transom lights. Although there are similarities between the Boss Jones houses and Duanesburg's other Greek Revival style farmhouses, the Boss Jones houses are generally slightly more sophisticated, more fully developed adaptations of the style. A variety of forms is represented; one is the two-story, three-bay, gable-front form, often flanked by one to one and one-half story wings. Examples of this form include the Alexander "Sandy" Liddle House (ca. 1850), the Robert Liddle Farmhouse (ca. 1850) and the Ladd Farmhouse (ca. 1850s). Less common are the temple-front and octagon forms. The Avery Farmhouse (ca. 1850s) is one of two temple-fronts in Duanesburg. (The other temple-front structure is located in the Quaker Street Historic District, Building #0073.) The octagon mode is represented by the Jenkins Octagon House and the Shute Octagon House, both dating from the 1850s. There are two five-bay, center-hall structures in the thematic group; both are later works of Boss Jones which reflect the influence of the Italianate style. They are the George W. Howard House (ca.1850s) and the Boss Jones House (ca.1860). Although essentially Greek Revival style dwellings, the hipped roofs of the farmhouses reflect the influence of the Italianate style. The George W. Howard House, with its prominent cupola and

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input 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 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. 1850-c. 1860 **Builder/Architect** Alexander Delos "Boss" Jones

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Boss Jones Thematic Resources include eight architecturally significant farmhouses built between ca.1850 and ca.1860 by Alexander Delos "Boss" Jones, Duanesburg's most skilled and most prolific mid-nineteenth century master carpenter. The development of the Greek Revival style in Duanesburg culminates in the works of Boss Jones; his farmhouses are the town's best, most fully developed interpretations of the style. Although similar to numerous other mid-nineteenth century Greek Revival style farmhouses in the multiple resource area nomination, the Boss Jones houses are generally more sophisticated and more mature manifestations of the period and style. Their friezes are broader, cornice returns more exaggerated, moldings more deeply carved than most others of the period and style in Duanesburg. Jones's buildings also manifest such innovations in Duanesburg architecture as cupolas, board-and-batten siding, and stacked plank construction.

Alexander Delos "Boss" Jones was born in 1818, probably in Columbia County. As a young man he first settled in Schoharie County and later moved to the crossroads hamlet of Bramans Corners. He met Mary Liddle, one of the eleven children of Robert Liddle (namesake and grandson of Robert Liddle, a pioneer settler of the neighboring Schenectady County town of Princetown), and married her in 1848. For the first decade of their marriage, they resided in the hamlet of Eatons Corners where Jones farmed and operated a carpentry shop powered by Bowmans Creek. During this period Jones established himself as a skilled builder of houses and barns. Although no clear chronology of his construction career is available, Jones is believed to have been most active during the sixth decade of the nineteenth century. Among the first houses constructed by Jones were probably those for his in-laws: his father-in-law Robert Liddle (Robert Liddle farmhouse) and his brother-in-law Alexander "Sandy" Liddle. Other farmhouses soon followed, including the Ladd Farmhouse for Charles Ladd, the Avery Farmhouse for his daughter Mary Elizabeth Jones Avery, the Shute Octagon House for J. Shute (from whom Jones purchased land on which to erect his own house), the Jenkins Octagon House for Nathaniel Jenkins, a prominent member of the Society of Friends, and the George W. Howard House.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Duanesburg Multiple Resource Area: Boss Jones Thematic
Continuation sheet Resources, Schenectady Co. Item number 7

Page 2

bracketed frieze, more clearly embodies the Italianate style. While there are numerous examples of essentially Greek Revival style dwellings with Italianate features located in village settings (particularly in the Delanson and Quaker Street Historic Districts), the only other rural farmhouse which clearly manifests the Italianate style is the Becker Farmhouse, an individual component of the multiple resource area nomination.

Most of the Boss Jones houses occupy large farms and have a variety of contributing outbuildings associated with them.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

OCT 11 1984

Duanesburg Multiple Resource Area: Boss Jones Thematic
Continuation sheet Resources, Schenectady Co. Item number 8

Page 2

The parcel of land on which the Boss Jones House is sited was one of two farm lots owned by the Shute family. Shute had acquired lots 245 and 246 from Nathan Allen ca. 1788. In the late 1850s Jones acquired lot 245, and, while living in the wagon house on the property, began construction of his farmhouse. Facts about Boss Jones's life after the 1850s are not known.

Many of Boss Jones's houses conform to traditional vernacular forms and configurations seen throughout the town. As are many of Duanesburg's Greek Revival style farmhouses, nearly half of Jones's houses are three-bay side or center-hall structures with their gable ends oriented towards the street; many are flanked by side wings. Examples of this form include the Alexander "Sandy" Liddle House, the Robert Liddle Farmhouse, and the Ladd Farmhouse; all are representative examples of Greek Revival style residential architecture. Distinctive attributes exhibited by these farmhouses include pedimented gable ends or exaggerated cornice returns, giant porticos, wide entablatures and corner pilasters, and trabeated entrances with deeply recessed doorways surrounded by sidelights, transom lights and pilasters.

A form not commonly found in Duanesburg is the mature temple-front: the Avery Farmhouse is one of only two extant examples of this type in the town. The remarkably intact structure is distinguished by its giant pedimented portico. The other temple-front structure is Building #0073 in the Quaker Street Historic District.

Boss Jones also introduced the octagon style in Duanesburg. The Jenkins Octagon and the Shute Octagon are representative examples of the style and the only extant examples of their type in the county. Both display distinctive Greek Revival style detailing, including broad friezes and corner boards and trabeated entrances with sidelights, pilasters and transom lights.

Two of Boss Jones's houses are among the town's three extant rural structures which incorporate features of the Italianate style. The Boss Jones House and the George W. Howard House are representative examples of late Greek Revival/early Italianate style residential architecture. Distinctive Italianate style features introduced by Jones include the cupola surmounting the hipped roof and the bracketed frieze of the George W. Howard House. The hipped roof and board-and-batten siding (recently obscured by aluminum siding) of the Boss Jones House are also attributes more commonly associated with the more picturesque styles of the Victorian era. Both farmhouses, however, continue to reflect the persistence of the mid-nineteenth century vernacular Greek Revival style - both exhibit wide friezes, broad corner pilasters and trabeated entrances. (The third manifestation of the Italianate style is the Becker Farmhouse, ca. 1850s, an individual property which, like the Howard House, is a more recognizable, fully developed interpretation

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Duanesburg Multiple Resource Area: Boss Jones Thematic
Continuation sheet Resources, Schenectady Cqtem number 8

For NPS use only

received

date entered

OCT 11 1991

Page 3

of the period and style.)

Several of the Boss Jones houses are significant for their innovative construction technique as seen, for example, in the stacked plank construction of the Jenkins Octagon House, the Shute Octagon House and Boss Jones's own house. Although most of his houses are believed to utilize conventional heavy timber framing, additional research may identify other stacked plank houses in this group.

Many of the properties included in the Boss Jones Thematic Resources include architecturally significant collections of farm-related outbuildings. The outbuildings on his own farm, particularly the large, triple-entrance, cruciform barn, attest to his skill and sophistication as a master builder within the vernacular tradition.

In addition to their architectural significance, the properties in the thematic group are important as an identified and documented collection of the works of Duanesburg's most prominent master carpenter. The group is significant for its potential to yield valuable information about a master builder's role in, and influence on, local vernacular traditions. In the context of much of New York State's historic rural architecture - most of which was anonomously built by obscure lcoal craftsmen - the Boss Jones houses represent a rare case in which the builder and his products are relatively well-documented.

Together the eight properties included in the Boss Jones Thematic Resources represent the most fully developed, most sophisticated examples of the Greek Revival style as well as being an important source of information on master builders in a rural, vernacular setting. For additional information on each individual component, see the enclosed inventory forms.