

NR Listed 3/31/95

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

historic name: N/A

other name/site number: Pioneer House (preferred) / JO0073

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2. Location

street & number: S. of AR Hwy. 123; W. of Johnson Co. Hospital

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Clarksville

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: Johnson code: AR 071 zip code: 72830

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3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**  
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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. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Cathryn A. Slater \_\_\_\_\_ 2-9-95  
Signature of certifying official Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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**5. National Park Service Certification**  
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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): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

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**6. Function or Use**  
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Historic: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Current : Vacant/Not in Use Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description  
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Architectural Classification:

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: Plain Traditional

Materials: foundation Stone roof Metal  
walls Logs other Stone, Brick  
Weatherboard

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance  
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: c. 1850 - c. 1875

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreeage of Property: 1.012

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>459500</u>	<u>3924280</u>	B	___	___	___
C	___	___	___	D	___	___	___

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section Four, Township Nine North, Range Twenty-three West, more particularly described as commencing at the Southwest corner of said NW/4 SE/4, thence North 00 deg. 26 min. 00 sec. West 830 feet, thence East 200.0 feet to the point of beginning of the tract herein conveyed, thence East 90.0 feet, thence North 00 deg. 26 min. 00 sec. West 490.0 feet to a point on the Northerly boundary of said NW/4 SE/4, thence West 90.0 feet, thence South 00 deg. 26 min. 00 sec. East 490.0 feet to the point of beginning, containing 1.012 acres, more or less.

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity including the house and the remains of a stone well/milk house.

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11. Form Prepared By  
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Name/Title: Patrick Zollner, Architectural Historian  
Robin Baldwin, Survey Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: February 9, 1995

Street & Number: 323 Center, 1600 Tower Bldg. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

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## Summary

Located on Poplar Street (Highway 64) in the community of Clarksville in Johnson County, the Pioneer House is a one-and-a-half story log and frame structure which rests upon a continuous stone foundation and is covered by a corrugated metal-sheathed gable roof. A stone chimney is found on the exterior of the east elevation, and an interior brick chimney is located on the western gable end, though only the brick cap is visible from the exterior. The interior condition is deteriorated due to past neglect, but remains structurally sound and has excellent restoration potential. The remains of a stone well and milk house are located to the southwest of the main structure and are historically associated with the Pioneer House.

## Elaboration

The Pioneer House is a rectangular-plan, log and frame structure that rests upon a dry-laid stone foundation and is covered by a corrugated metal-covered gable roof. All exterior walls are covered in weatherboard siding. The log portion at the eastern end of the structure is constructed of half-hewn southern yellow pine wall logs that are joined with half dovetail corner notches and covered by weatherboard siding. The timbers, visible from the interior, measure approximately sixteen by five inches, and were hewn on the interior and exterior faces only, leaving the bark on the top and bottom. Chinking material found between the logs includes sandstone cobbles, split boards, and mortar. The top wall logs in the eastern and western walls, and the sills found beneath the windows in the northern and southern elevations are oak. The western side of the structure is of frame construction. An exterior chimney of native field stone is found on the eastern wall. An interior brick chimney is located against the western wall of the frame addition. All window glass has been lost, and the openings are boarded up.

The northern, or front, elevation has a three-quarter length porch with a one-story shed shingle roof supported by five wood posts. Under the porch roof to the eastern side of the front elevation there is one window followed by a single-leaf entrance. At the far western end of the porch roof overhang is a second entrance which has been boarded over. Two window openings are found on the fourth quarter, or western end of the front facade. One boarded door-size opening is found on the southern end of the western elevation. The southern or rear elevation of the structure currently has two boarded entrances on the western side, one boarded window opening slightly to the east of center, and one single-leaf entrance on the far eastern end. The eastern elevation is dominated by a large native stone chimney.

The interior space of the Pioneer House is divided into four rooms. The eastern room of the log portion has entrances on the north and south walls. The log construction is exposed on all walls.

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A fireplace is located in the center of the eastern wall. A classically designed mantle with recessed panels is present but not attached. It was noted in a 1980 report on the property by consultant Charles A. Phillips, that the house originally possessed three mantels. These were unfortunately damaged by vandals about 1975. The western room of the log portion was once used as a small dining room and holds the remains of a staircase which led to the upper level of the house. The western wall of this second room was once the exterior wall of the log construction. It now acts as a divider between the log portion and the frame portion of the structure. The eastern room of the frame portion has dimensions similar to the western room of the log portion. The western room of the frame portion contains a large brick fireplace and interior chimney.

The original plan for this farmhouse consisted of one 16 feet by 22 feet log room with a loft above, heated by a large stone fireplace. Over the years, the structure was adapted numerous times to fill the functional needs of its many different owners. The ceiling was raised about thirty inches with a frame extension of the side walls and a new roof was installed, the exterior chimney was also raised at this time. This most likely occurred at the time of construction of a two-room frame addition on the western elevation. A frame constructed ell on was built onto the western addition, possibly at the same time as the other expansions. A possible date for the construction of all three projects is 1875, based on owner financial records. Other changes include the installation of weatherboard siding over the log walls on the exterior and the replacement of the original shingle roof with the current corrugated metal. Alterations since the historic period are largely confined to the unfortunate removal of the c. 1875 ell addition by the Johnson Historical Society upon the ill-advised recommendation of this office to restore the structure to the original log building.

Interior changes over the years include the division of the single large room into several smaller sections and the construction of a staircase and landing to the upper level.

Also included in the nomination are the remains of a stone well and milk house, which occupy a site to the southwest of the main structure.

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### Summary

The Pioneer House is a good example of an early nineteenth century single-room log residence that was expanded over time with frame additions. As one of the oldest remaining structures from the antebellum period in Johnson County, the Pioneer House is locally significant under Criterion C for its quality of log construction.

### Elaboration

The original builder of the Pioneer House is not known for certain. Early records indicate that the land was purchased from the United States government in 1839 by Leonard Sooter from Tennessee. Local tradition holds that the home was built by individuals from a group of Cherokee Indians who had settled in the vicinity under a land grant issued in 1812. The land was retaken by the federal government in 1828 when the Cherokees were granted a parcel of land in Oklahoma. Some of the Cherokee residents remained in the Johnson County area as late as 1832. Because this story could not be substantiated through historical and architectural information, a tree ring dating of the log portion was requested in 1982 by the owners at that time, the Johnson County Historical Society, in conjunction with the Department of Parks and Tourism. The dendrochronological study, conducted by David Stahle of the University of Arkansas, concluded that the logs used in the construction were cut at various times in 1849 and 1850 and that the structure was likely erected in the spring of 1850 by craftsmen of European descent.

The ownership history of the property is extensive. The Pioneer House changed hands over twenty-five times according to abstract records. Some of the principle figures in the history of the property include Leonard Sooter's widow, who deeded the property to her granddaughter Lucinda Rogers in 1841 for \$50. In 1847, Lucinda Rogers sold the farm for \$100 to Littleberry and Martha Robinson, who in turn sold the property to Edward McConnell in 1849. Arthur Davis purchased the property a year later for \$128. In 1874, after a flurry of legal activities, C. A. Davis acquired full title to the property. He sold it less than a month later to R. B. and Sarah Lankford. It is assumed that most of the additions and remodeling of the house took place under the Lankfords because they took out two separate mortgages on the property, one for \$275.00 and a second for \$400.00.

The Lankfords sold their improved home in December 1876 to Liston G. and Mary Townsend, who then sold it in the summer of 1877 to Archibald and Emma McKennon. The McKennons deeded the property to Calvin and Sallie White in 1879, and it remained in the White family until 1904 when it was purchased by John and Rebecca Reed. In 1908, the Reeds sold the house to James and Virginia May McCoy, who then sold it in 1911 to Enos and Julia Foulke. Four more



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families owned the house between that time and 1945 when it was purchased by descendants of the original White family, J. T. and Ruth (Blackburn) White, grandparents of the present owner, Barbara Fry. Because the builder and first owner of the house is not definitely known and because the list of owners of the house is quite lengthy, the property is being listed under its common name, the Pioneer House.

The Pioneer House could be described as a portrayal of the evolution of an early single-room log structure into a much larger, late nineteenth century weatherboard-clad farmhouse. Unfortunately, the property cannot be recognized for its ability to interpret this evolution due to the ill-advised removal of the c. 1870's ell addition. Nevertheless, the Pioneer House is one of the oldest documented log structures in Clarksville and Johnson County and reflects a skillful use of the half-hewn, half-dovetail notch construction technique. As such, it is being nominated under Criteria C with local significance.

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## **Bibliography**

"Tree-Ring Dating of the Pioneer House, Clarksville, Arkansas" by David W. Stahle, 2/26/82.

"Pioneer House" Report prepared for the Johnson County Historical Society, by Charles A. Phillips, 4/29/80.

Interview with and correspondence from Barbara Fry, June 1994.

Pioneer House  
Clarksville, Johnson Co., Ark.  
UTM: 15/459500/3924280















