

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 18 1999

AHPP

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

Historic Name: Abrams House

Other Name/Site Number: PU4495

=====

2. Location

=====

Street & Number: 300 South Pulaski Street

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Little Rock

Vicinity: N/A

State: AR County: Pulaski

Code: AR 119

Zip Code: 72201

=====

3. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

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

Abrams House
Name of Property

Pulaski County, Arkansas
County and State

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. 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. See continuation sheet

Carolyn A. Slater
Signature of certifying official

1-7-99
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

5. 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):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Abrams House
Name of Property

Pulaski County, Arkansas
County and State

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling
Current : VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub: N/A

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

Colonial Revival

Materials: foundation Brick roof Other/Composition Shingles
walls Wood/Weatherboard other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

SUMMARY

The one-story, frame Abrams House is situated on a sloping lot at the southwest corner of Third and Pulaski Streets, in an area near the Arkansas State Capitol and MoPac Station that once was a railroad-oriented residential neighborhood. The house has an asymmetrical Queen Anne-style floorplan and modest Colonial Revival-style decorative details. The cross-gable plan and a wraparound porch take advantage of the corner site, allowing the house to face both streets. The main entrance's location at the juncture of the north and east facades further underscores the home's orientation to the corner of Third and Pulaski Streets.

ELABORATION

A frame house with weatherboard siding and a brick foundation, the Abrams House stands on a corner lot that slopes steeply downward from east to west, allowing the western half of the house to have a basement that is above grade level. The main block of the house has a hipped roof with lower cross gables, a plan that is well-suited to the corner site. One gabled bay projects east, toward Pulaski Street, and another projects north, toward Third Street. A porch runs between the two projecting bays, wrapping around the northeast corner of the house. Viewed from the corner,

the Abrams House presents similar facades to both Third and Pulaski Streets because of the cross-gable plan and wraparound porch. Further emphasizing the home's orientation to the corner, the main doorway is located on an angle at the juncture of the north and east facades. Another original door opens into the house at the west end of the porch, and a door that was added when the house was divided into apartments opens from the south end of the porch.

Behind the hipped roof of the main block of the Abrams House, a gabled ell extends to the west, giving the house more frontage along Third Street than Pulaski. To the south of the ell, a two-level, shed-roofed porch spans the rear (west) facade of the house, enclosing an exterior staircase that leads from the basement level to the ground floor. A doorway into the basement opens through the foundation of the ell on the north side of the house.

The Colonial Revival wraparound porch is the home's main decorative feature. The slightly pitched porch roof is supported by four Doric columns. Wide bands of trim under the eaves of the home's gable ends also suggest the Colonial Revival influence. The north and east gable ends are sheathed in beveled wooden siding that is cut in an unusual serpentine pattern.

The original windows of the Abrams House have one-over-one, double-hung sashes. One larger "picture window" is centered in the east-facing gabled bay, while two windows are paired in the north-facing gabled bay. Centered under the peak of both of these gable ends is a small square window. A south-facing gabled bay, located directly opposite the north bay, also has a pair of one-over-one, double-hung windows but no square window in its gable end.

The exterior of the Abrams House appears to have undergone only relatively minor alterations, including the addition of the door at the south end of the front porch and the possible modification of two windows in the rear facade of the house. In addition, the openings into the basement do not appear to be original.

The interior floorplan was altered when the Abrams House was converted into apartments in the 1930s. However, the original ceiling height of 11 ½ feet has not changed, and a number of interior features have survived. Most original four-panel doors are intact, including a pair of pocket doors between the rooms that originally were the parlor and dining room. Original door and window trim, incorporating corner and plinth blocks, exists throughout the house. Except for the pocket doors and doors that provide access to closets, transoms are part of all original doorways. Picture molding remains in the rooms that originally were the entry hall, parlor, dining room, and two bedrooms. The house appears originally to have had two mantels, one for a stove in the entry hall and one for a coal

Abrams House
Name of Property

Pulaski County, Arkansas
County and State

grate in the parlor. Both mantels are gone, but the tile hearth and surround for the coal grate are in place in the room that was the parlor.

The Abrams House has no ancillary structures.

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Transportation

Period(s) of Significance: 1904-1917

Significant Dates: 1904

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:

SUMMARY

Built in 1904 for the Charles W. Abrams family, the Colonial Revival cottage at 300 South Pulaski Street is one of a handful of survivors of the era when the streets immediately east and north of the Arkansas State Capitol were lined with modest homes occupied by employees of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern (later Missouri Pacific) Railway. The significance of the house is based on its association with this important

chapter in Little Rock's history, when the presence of a major railroad facility prompted development of a neighborhood, and on its modest but nearly unaltered Colonial Revival design.

ELABORATION

During the late 19th century, when the State Penitentiary stood on the site now occupied by the Arkansas State Capitol, a neighborhood of modest homes began developing along the streets in the vicinity of the penitentiary. It was not the penitentiary, however, that prompted the building of these houses. Rather, the neighborhood's development came on the heels of the construction in 1873 of Union Depot, located about three blocks north of the penitentiary. The depot, Little Rock's first railroad facility, represented jobs, and the neighborhood that grew up around it was populated by engineers, foremen, conductors, mechanics, and others who worked for the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railway.

Construction of modest homes in the vicinity of Union Depot--renamed "Union Station" when a new and larger building was erected in the 1920s--continued into the early 20th century. By the second decade of this century, about 300 dwellings, predominantly shotguns and cottages influenced by the Colonial Revival style, stood in the blocks surrounding the station. Also during the early 1900s, the new Arkansas State Capitol was built on the penitentiary site.

In 1904, Charles W. and Maggie Abrams became one of the railroad families who built a home near Union Depot. Charles Abrams was a foreman and master mechanic for the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railway. He and his wife raised three children--Charles, Jr.; Nellie; and Ann--at 300 South Pulaski Street before losing the home in 1917 as the result of a foreclosure action.

The modest nature of the neighborhood around Union Station and the limited resources of its residents are reflected in the history of the Abrams House. Not only did the Abrams family lose the house but two subsequent purchasers had similar problems. During the Depression, the house became the property of a building and loan association until it was sold in 1933 to a North Little Rock family that divided it into three rental units and owned it until 1998. During this period, the name of the train station changed again as mergers turned the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern into the Missouri Pacific--or MoPac--Railway.

The decline of the neighborhood around MoPac Station that began during the Depression accelerated after World War II, echoing the nationwide decline in railroad transportation. Railroad jobs were eliminated, and MoPac Station slowly shut down. Changes in zoning that encouraged commercial development, along with an ever-growing demand for state office space and parking, led during the 1950s and 1960s to the demolition of the vast

majority of houses that once comprised the neighborhood. Today, the Abrams House is one of just a few houses still standing in the blocks east of MoPac Station and the State Capitol. It is a scarce and largely unaltered representative of a major impact--development of a neighborhood of railroad workers--that railroad transportation had on Little Rock during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

Insurance Maps of Little Rock, Arkansas. Vol. II. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1939.

Insurance Maps of Little Rock, including Argenta and Pulaski Heights, Arkansas. Vol. I. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1913.

Little Rock, Arkansas. Capitol Zoning District Commission. "The Capitol Area Framework Master Plan, Update 1998."

Little Rock, Arkansas. Jameson Architects, P. A. "Abstract of Title to East 100 feet of Lot 12, in Block 333, City of Little Rock."

Little Rock City Directories: 1903-04 through 1951.

Roy, Hampton F. and Charles Witsell with Cheryl Griffith Nichols. *How We Lived: Little Rock As An American City.* Little Rock: August House, 1984.

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:

ABRAMS HOUSE
 LITTLE ROCK
 PULASKI CO., AR
 UTM REFERENCE:
 15/565440/3845120

LITTLE ROCK QUADRANGLE
 ARKANSAS
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

7532 1 SW
 W-ALMONT









