



Historic Sites Survey

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The one-and-one-half story wood frame house is raised on brick piers and is covered with a front gable roof. The facade gable is pierced by paired eight-over-eight double-hung windows flanked by narrower four-over-four windows. A three bay projecting porch extends across the full width of the facade. The pierced segmental-arched frieze of the porch is supported by paired columns resting on single brick piers. The main entrance is framed by the narrow center porch bay.

ALTERATIONS:

1920's - 1930's addition of bungalowid features.

OUTBUILDINGS:

None extant

LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

On a small lot in a residential heighborhood with large bushes and pecan trees.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: The Thomas Isaac Keys House is historically significant as the home of the first black postmaster of Ocean Springs. Keys, a merchant, was a staunch Republican and was first appointed in 1889 during the administration of Benjamin Harrison. He subsequently served during the McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt and Taft administrations. The last quarter of the nineteenth century was a period of cooperation between the predominantly white Democratic Party and black Republicans in Mississippi. In exchange for black concessions on local and state levels, white Democratic representatives in Washington directed Federal patronage towards blacks during Republican administrations. (Willie D. Halsell, "Republican Factionalism in Mississippi, 1882 - 1884." Journal of Southern History, vol VII, No. 1, February 1941.) Keys' tenure as postmaster ended in 1911. He remained politically active, however, serving as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio in 1924.(continued)

NAME: Thomas Isaac Keys House

STREET NO: 1017 DeSoto Avenue

TOWN/VIC: Ocean Springs

COUNTY: Jackson

BLOCK/LOT:

PRESENT OWNER: Ruth K. Johnson

ADDRESS P.O. Drawer S, Ocean Springs, MS 39564

PRESENT USE: Residence

FORMER USE: Residence

DATE: 1910 - 1911

STYLE: Vernacular with bungalowid alterations.

ARCH/BUILDER:

SOURCE OF DATE: Ocean Springs-1892 by Regina B. Hines, 1979.

ENVIRONMENT: Residential

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

NEIGHBORHOOD

LOCAL X

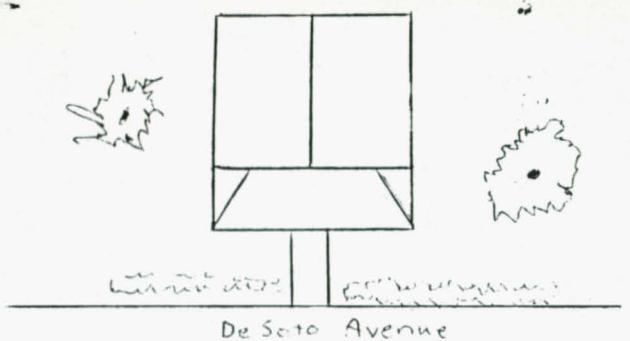
STATE

NATIONAL

PHOTOS

NEG. # 1662 - 26A, 27A

SITE OR AREA PLAN WITH NORTH ARROW AND SHAPE OF STRUCTURE:



CONTINUATION:

Statement of Significance continued

(Regina B. Hines. Ocean Springs, 1982. [Pascagoula: Lewis Printing Services, 1979], pp. 71-74). The property has remained in the Keys family which has continued the family tradition of public service.

PHYSICAL CONDITION:

Fair

THREATS:

Increased commercialization of the neighborhood.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Lot 4 and 17B, Block 139 p. 1 of the City of Ocean Springs Plat, Revised 1983, adopted by the Board of Aldermen.

ACREAGE: less than one acre

UTM REF:

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FORM PREPARED BY:

DATE

Brian Berggren

May 15, 1986



Thomas Isaac Keys House, 1017 DeSoto Street

Facade, view to north

Individual nomination

Ocean Springs, Jackson County, Mississippi

Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History

Brian Berggren

November 1985