

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

Phillips Helena Arkansas
NR 9-9-74 H.A. Japen

STATE:

Arkansas

COUNTY:

Phillips

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

NR
LISTED:
9/9/74

1. NAME

COMMON:

Major James Alexander Tappan House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

727 Columbia Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Helena

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

First

STATE

Arkansas

CODE

05

COUNTY:

Phillips

CODE

107

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input 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 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 (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

Mrs. Moore Tappan

STREET AND NUMBER:

727 Columbia

CITY OR TOWN:

Helena

STATE:

AR

CODE

05

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Phillips County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Helena

STATE

AR

CODE

05

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Historic Helena and West Helena

DATE OF SURVEY: 1973 ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☒ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Phillips County Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Helena

STATE:

AR

CODE

05

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

DATE

COUNTY

ENTRY NUMBER

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

☐ Excellent☒ Good☐ Fair☐ Deteriorated☐ Ruins☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

☐ Altered☒ Unaltered

(Check One)

☐ Moved☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Major Tappan House was constructed approximately 1892. It is the typical Queen Anne style with a round corner tower with cap and finial, an inset balcony with low balustrade, a curved veranda with spindles and elegant slender columns, and oriels. An overall quaintness is apparent in the small scale of the bracketed cornice with decorative panels, and the use of scalloped shingles in a wide band between the first and second stories and on the corner tower. Slender proportioned window casements with simple trim are subordinate to the finer features of the exterior.

This refinement is carried to the interior with ornamental latticework in interior openings, symmetrically moulded trim with corner blocks about all fenestration, and elaborate fireplaces with overmantels of cherry-wood. Colorful tile is set about the fireplace openings. Of special note in the interior is the three run enclosed stairwell. The staircase of dark paneled woodwork, finely turned balusters, and intricately carved posts is accented by warm yellow light penetrating the side and transom tracery windows of the front entry.

In general, the Major Tappan House gives the appearance of being a complex shape with its numerous offset surfaces. However, it is essentially a central hall plan of two and one-half stories with a high hipped roof. The roof is penetrated by several dormers, two of which give the appearance of being oriels in that they pierce the soffit and are supported by elongated brackets at either side. The only alterations to the house have been a kitchen added to the rear and an enclosed porch along the entire back of the house.

The house is raised approximately four (4') feet above grade on a brick foundation on the front elevation, which increases to a full basement depth at the rear due to a sloping grade. There are two possible explanations for raising the house. Water drainage was a problem in early Helena, and an aboveground basement would have protected the rest of the house from possible water damage. It is suggested that the kitchen which is connected to the house by the enclosed porch, was originally located in the basement. The first explanation bears more credence than the latter.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

4. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian; ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1892

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The James A. Tappan House is representative of a wealthy Arkansas businessman's home at the turn of the century. This large Victorian structure was built about 1892 to house one of Helena's most prominent families. It stands today as a visible reminder of the Gilded Age in eastern Arkansas.

James Alexander Tappan (1847-1914) was born in Tennessee. At age 16 he joined the Confederate army, was promoted to major within two years and earned the Bronze Cross of Honor. Following the Civil War he became a civil engineer, and his work for a railroad brought him to Helena to survey the Arkansas Central Railway running from Helena to Clarendon. Major Tappan liked Helena and decided to settle there permanently.

Throughout his adult life Tappan tested his business abilities in many fields, and was successful in all. After completing his work with the railroad he took over the Helena Gas Company and added to it an ice house, purported to be the second ice house to open in the South.

In 1882 Major Tappan established the Tappan Coal Company, a business that is still a family operation today (1974). As the local representative of a Pittsburg dealer, Tappan sold coal to Mississippi River steamboats and packets which stopped at Helena to refuel. He also sold coal to homes and businesses in Helena and surrounding towns.

The Tappan Hardware Company was founded in 1888 and was one of Arkansas' largest at the time. Major Tappan was a stockholder in one Helena bank, and a director in another. He was also interested in agriculture and managed his own farm until his death.

SEE INS . UCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Arkansas	
Phillips	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (Continued - Page 2)

This versatile businessman was also popular in the community. In 1899 over two hundred Helena voters signed a petition asking that Major Tappan be a candidate for mayor. The Major acquiesced, and was elected without an opponent; however, he was most unhappy in his new and unsolicited role, and resigned the office after serving only six weeks.

In 1874 Major Tappan bought the property on Columbia Street. The house which now bears his name was built to replace a smaller residence which burned about 1890. Lyle Brothers, a highly regarded contracting firm in Helena, built this elegant residence.

Major Tappan's home is significant because it is a fine example of Victorian architecture in eastern Arkansas, and because it exemplifies the private residence of a successful Arkansas businessman at the turn of the century.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hollowell, Louise B. "Make Way for the Major." Phillips County Historical Quarterly, IX (September, 1969), pp. 15-22.

Kirkman, Dale. "James A. Tappan House." Unpublished Report for Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, Arkansas, February, 1974.

"Major James A. Tappan Home." Historic Helena and West Helena. Helena, Arkansas: Phillips County Chamber of Commerce, 1973.

19. 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 Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds		LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		34 31 47.5	90 35 31.5	
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one (1) acre

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:

Dianna Kirk, Research Historian; Anthony S. Riddle, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

DATE

March, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:

Suite 1030 - Plaza West Building

CITY OR TOWN:

Little Rock

STATE

AR

CODE

05

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

William E. Henderson

Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

June 11, 1974

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

9-9-74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME COMMON		AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Major James A. Tappan			
2. LOCATION House			
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN	
Arkansas	Phillips	Helena	
STREET AND NUMBER			

727 Columbia Street

3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT	DATE	NEGATIVE FILED AT
Robert Dunn	April 18, 1974	Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

East facade viewed from the southeast

GPO 932-009

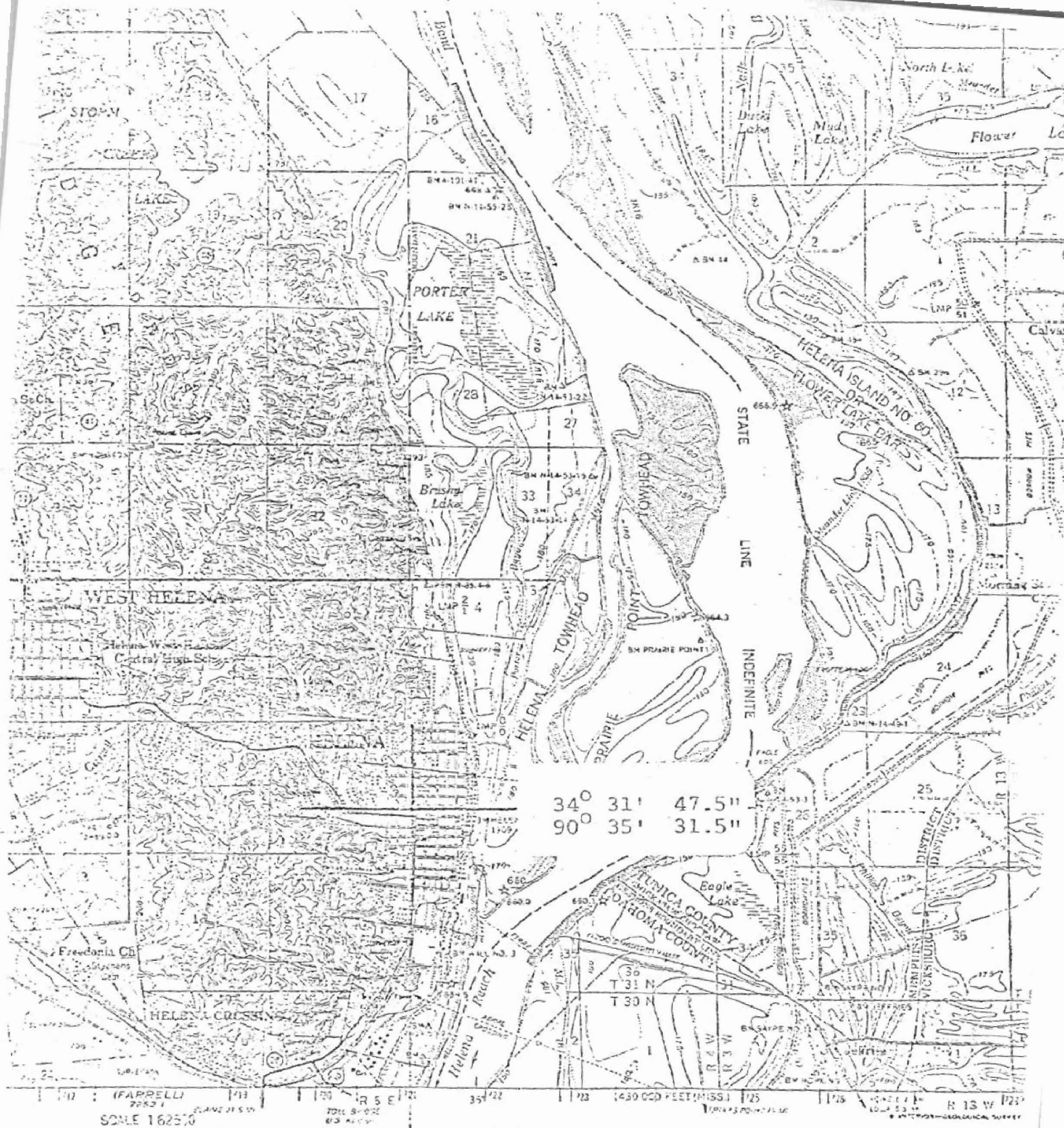
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. NAME COMMON		AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Major Tappan House			
2. LOCATION			
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN	
Arkansas	Phillips	Helena	
STREET AND NUMBER			
727 Columbia Street			
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE	DATE	SCALE	
U.S.G.S. Map, Latour, AR, 15 minutes	1961	1:62,500	

REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW





CONTOUR INTERVAL, 5 AND 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy duty ——— Light duty
Medium duty ——— Unimproved
○ State Route

THIS MAP WAS PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
NATIONAL BUREAU OF SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D.C. 20512
FEDERAL AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION, VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI
NO OTHER THIRD-PARTY MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST