

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Registration Form**

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Odom, Addie L. and A.T., House
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 194 CR 1040
CITY OR TOWN: Burkeville ☒ **VICINITY** ☐ **NOT FOR PUBLICATION**
STATE: Texas **CODE:** TX **COUNTY:** Newton **CODE:** 349 **ZIP CODE:** 75932

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official / Title State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the 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
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ other, explain
☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. CLASSIFICATION
OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY

contributing	noncontributing	
3	1	buildings
0	0	sites
1	1	structures
0	0	objects
4	2	total

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE
HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling, Secondary Structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: Processing, Outbuilding, Animal Facility

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling; NOT IN USE

7. DESCRIPTION
ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th and Early 20th C. American Movements: Bungalow/Craftsman

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION BRICK, CONCRETE
 WALLS WOOD
 ROOF ASPHALT
 OTHER

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-7)

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

<input type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input type="checkbox"/>	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS: NA

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Ethnic Heritage: Black

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1922-1962

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1922

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: Alvah Troga (A.T.) Odom

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: NA

ARCHITECT / BUILDER: Alvah Troga Odom, Builder

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-8 through 8-25)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheets 9-26 through 9-30)

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- ☐ 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:
- Texas Historical Commission, Austin

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF PROPERTY:** 6.76 acres

UTM REFERENCES	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
	15	432534	3426456

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Tract 37, John M. Jordan Survey, A-247; Newton County, Texas.**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:** The nominated property contains all the land historically associated with the Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead.**11. FORM PREPARED BY****NAME / TITLE:** Diane E. Williams, Architectural Historian**ORGANIZATION:** for the Odom Heirs Partnership**DATE:** October 7, 2011**STREET & NUMBER:** P.O. Box 32332**TELEPHONE:** 505-795-7960**CITY OR TOWN:** Santa Fe**STATE:** NM**ZIP CODE:** 87594**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION****CONTINUATION SHEETS****MAPS****PHOTOGRAPHS****ADDITIONAL ITEMS****PROPERTY OWNER****NAME:** Odom Heirs Partnership c/o Elzie Odom**STREET & NUMBER:** 1019 Bryon Lane**TELEPHONE:** 817 265-8804**CITY OR TOWN:** Arlington**STATE:** Texas**ZIP CODE:** 76012

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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Description

Built in 1922, the Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead is a vernacular, central hall plan dwelling with Craftsman influences. Located on Tract 37 of the John M. Jordan Survey, A-247, in Newton County, Texas, the house was built by Alvah Troga (A.T.) Odom for himself and his family. The one-story wood dwelling faces northwest and is about 400 feet south of the intersection of CR 1040 (County Road) and FM 1415 (Farm to Market Road) within the rural community of Shankleville, Texas. In addition to the dwelling, the property retains a number of historic-era outbuildings and structures: a smokehouse, chicken house, barn and large storage building, wire fencing, a metal clothesline and a relocated concrete water cistern. The house incorporates a symmetrical facade with a partial width attached porch resting on a concrete block foundation and supported by metal porch posts. The homestead is surrounded by cultivated farmland and dense woodland, and its size, massing and craftsmanship attest to the carpentry skill of its builder-owner and his socio-economic position. The building retains a moderately high degree of exterior integrity, with exterior changes limited to the front porch, front façade windows, two windows on the east facade and the construction of a compatible, small, rear addition and screened porch and an incompatible wood deck. The house is the only surviving example of its plan type in Shankleville.

Geographical Setting

Shankleville is one of ten freedmen's communities in Newton County, currently home to about 30 families. The community is grouped into the larger census for Newton County and no population figures are available. It is about three miles southwest of Wiergate, about six miles southwest of Burkeville (**Map 1**) and about 18 miles northeast of Newton, the county seat. The surrounding East Texas topography consists of densely timbered, rolling hills composed of sandy soils. Intermittent and all-season creeks water the area before draining into the Sabine River at the east boundary of the county. An incompatibly altered mid-20th century church is east of the homestead at the intersection of County Road 1040 and F.M. 1415. A fenced yard encircles the house and beyond the yard are cultivated fields to the north and east, and woodland to the south. A wood frame, wood sided smokehouse, a clothes line and a relocated concrete water cistern are within the fenced yard. Beyond the yard is a chicken house, a barn and a large storage shed. Demolition of a vehicle storage barn, a cow pen, a hog pen, the well house and the outhouse that were originally present on the property have occurred over time. About a quarter of a mile northwest of the house is the Jim Shankle Cemetery, which is visible across a hayfield from the front of the homestead property.¹ Clear Creek, an all-season creek, forms the south boundary of the property. No historic district survives in Shankleville due to extensive demolition and/or remodeling of historic-era dwellings, the loss of the 19th century grist mill, cotton gin, syrup mill, three school buildings and the construction of brick, wood and synthetic sided infill dwellings throughout the community.

The Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead

The Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead faces northwest onto County Road 1040 and was built in 1922 by carpenter-contractor A.T. Odom for himself and his family using lumber salvaged from his late parents' abandoned home located about a mile to the west. A.T. Odom was a carpenter, building contractor, farmer, teacher and community leader. The house uses a modest central hall plan and features Craftsman influenced detailing in the exposed rafter ends and front porch vents. Occupying a 6.76 acre parcel on the south side of County Road 1040 near its current terminus (**Figure 1**), the house sits on brick piers and concrete block piers and is constructed of wood framing with dropped bevel wood siding. A

¹ Because of the high water table in the Shankleville area, the community's cemeteries feature raised concrete crypts similar to those used in New Orleans and other areas of southern Louisiana.

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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

ca. 1970s corrugated fiberglass skirt encloses a portion of the foundation. The symmetrical primary facade (see **Photo 1**) features an attached, front gabled roof porch. A pediment with three, non-historic, horizontal slat vents pierce the porch gable. The porch has a ca. 1970s concrete deck and steps and the gabled roof is supported by metal posts that replaced the original peeled log posts. The ceiling is the original wood planking. A curved concrete step that appears to date from the historic period provides access from the porch into the dwelling. Two wooden porch swings suspended by chain from the porch ceiling flank the front entry door. A metal pipe rail that appears to date from the historic period is installed on the west side of the concrete steps that lead to the porch.

Windows on the front façade are 4/4 horizontal aluminum frame types detailed with non-functional wood shutters. These windows are replacement types installed about 1970 within enlarged openings. The shutters also were installed about 1970. Entry into the dwelling is through what appears to be the original wood and glass panel door that is topped by a ca. 1970s aluminum frame screen door. Two sets of original 4/4 wood frame double hung sash type windows pierce the west façade (**Photo 2**). These windows retain their original wood frame and wire mesh screens. A small window air conditioning unit is installed in the lower sash of two of these windows. A small addition that contains the kitchen is located at the southwest corner of the dwelling. It features a 2/2 wood frame double hung sash window on the west façade and two small 1/1 wood frame double hung wood sash windows on the south façade (**Photo 3**). Adjacent to this addition is a screened porch sheathed with shiplap and board and batten siding. Adjacent to the screened porch on the east is an incompatible, non-historic wood deck built in the 1990s (**Photo 4**). The south elevation of the original house section is pierced by a 1/1 wood frame double hung wood sash window and a 3/1 wood frame double hung wood sash window. The east elevation features a 4/4 wood frame double hung wood sash window and two 2/2 aluminum frame double hung sash replacement windows within the original window openings. A red brick chimney is between the two aluminum frame windows. A hipped roof covered with composition shingling tops the original portion of the house and connects with another composition shingled, hipped-roof section that encloses the rear kitchen and screened porch addition. Exposed rafter ends detail the shallow over-hanging roof eaves. Unadorned flat boards serve as end boards on the corners of the house and flat board molding details the windows. The rear kitchen and sleeping porch addition, added in 1945, is compatible in materials, design and scale with the original house. The rear deck is incompatible with the original dwelling and was built in the 1990s. Neither of these additions is visible from the front of the dwelling. Only one historic photograph showing a portion of the house was located (**Figure 2**).

The dwelling is placed near the center of the long, narrow 6.76 acre parcel at the south edge of CR 1040 (Property Site Plan, **Figure 3**). Elevated several feet above street grade, the house is surrounded by a yard containing the front gabled roof, vertical board-sheathed smokehouse (**Contributing, Photo 5**). Topped with a corrugated metal roof, the building is in fair condition, but needs repair to ensure its survival. Surrounded by vegetation, the wood sided chicken house (**Contributing, Photo 6**) has a corrugated metal shed roof and is sheathed with vertical wood planks. To the west of the house, outside the yard fencing is the barn (**Noncontributing, Photo 7**). This gable and shed roof building is virtually invisible within the dense woods that have engulfed it. The exterior is a combination of wood planking and plywood or chipboard panels. The interior retains the original wood frame construction. The yard is enclosed by a wire fence installed about 1955 to replace the original wood picket fence (see **Photo 1**). An outhouse and a well house also were originally within the fenced yard. They were demolished at an unknown date as were a vehicle storage barn, the cow pen and the hog pen. To the west of the house is a large storage shed (**Contributing, Photo 8**). Called Noah's Ark, its gabled roof is covered with corrugated metal sheeting and the siding is a combination of plywood and chipboard sheeting. A concrete walk leads to the front porch steps. Landscaping includes lawn, shrubs, and mature native and non-native shrubs. Crepe myrtle trees on the property were planted by Harriet Shankle Odom and her husband Joseph Odom, who were the grandparents of A.T. Odom. Outside the yard fencing are a 70-year old sweet gum tree and a 98-year old sycamore planted by Addie Odom. The woodland surrounding the house and yard includes native trees and shrubs such as black

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walnut, pecan, juniper, wild grapevine and blackberries. Exterior alterations are limited to the reconstruction of the front porch with non-historic materials, construction of the small, historic-era, compatible rear addition and the incompatible rear deck addition, and the replacement of the original front façade windows and the replacement of two original windows on the east facade. Minor exterior repairs to the wood siding and paint are needed. The house is in good condition. **(Photo 9)** shows the house in its setting with the 98-year old sycamore to the left of the dwelling.

Inside, the house retains much of its original historic fabric and its original and historic-era spatial arrangements. The original part of the house appears to have contained four rooms and an entry hall **(Figure 4)**. Original double, 15-light French doors are located between the entry hall and the dining room. The room with the fireplace originally served as winter sleeping quarters, and the room on the west side of the house was a living area. The room that now serves as the dining room originally was the kitchen and eating area. The bedroom to the rear of the fireplace room was always a bedroom and was the quarters for Addie's mother who lived with the Odoms in her last years. In 1945 the kitchen and screened porch addition were constructed on the rear of the house. The bedroom on the east side of the dwelling was modified in 1945 to provide space for a bathroom. **Figure 5** shows the current floor plan with its five rooms, entry hall **(Photo 10)** and a bath. The original plank walls are covered with sheetrock and the rooms that originally had an exterior wall include a plate for the rafters. This plate now gives the appearance of unadorned crown molding. The floors retain the original oak planking and in the kitchen and bathroom floors are covered with vinyl flooring. The fireplace has a concrete hearth. The closet door in the west side bedroom is built of vertical planks. Window moldings are flat board types and some interior doors are five-panel solid wood types, while others are hollow core replacements. The bedroom floors are carpeted. The kitchen was remodeled in the 1990s and the bathroom retains its ca. 1945 fixtures and ca. 1970s cabinets.

Summary of Physical Condition and Integrity

Built in 1922, the Odom Homestead is a rare example of an early 20th century dwelling in Shankleville, and is larger and grander than most contemporary dwellings in the community. It features Craftsman influences in the exposed rafter ends and the horizontal slat porch gable vents. Exterior alterations are limited to the reconstruction of the front porch with non-historic materials, construction of the small, historic-era, compatible rear addition and the incompatible rear deck addition, the replacement of the original front façade windows and the replacement of two original windows on the east side with aluminum frame types. The house's exterior and interior character-defining elements — plan form, craftsmanship, detailing, window materials and fenestration patterns — are maintained in good condition and retain a moderately high level of integrity. The property's associated smokehouse, chicken house, storage building (Noah's Ark), clothesline (not counted individually) and wire fencing (not counted individually) retain a moderate level of integrity and are considered contributing to the property. The noncontributing barn has been altered on the exterior. A concrete water cistern (moved within the property boundaries) is also classified as a noncontributing structure.

Property	Type	Status
Dwelling	Building	C
Smokehouse	Building	C
Chicken house	Structure	C
Barn	Building	NC
Water cistern	Structure	NC
Large storage building	Building	C

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Statement of Significance

Carpenter Alvah Troga (A.T.) Odom built the Odom House in 1922 for his family, and the one-story Craftsman influenced dwelling stands as a rare, intact example of early 20th-century housing in the African-American community of Shankleville, Texas. The Craftsman influenced dwelling is larger than homes typically occupied by community members in the 1920s, and reflects the economic standing, familiarity with regional domestic forms, and the design and construction skills of A.T. Odom. Encompassing 6.76 acres, the land was originally part of a 42-acre parcel acquired in the late 19th century by A.T. Odom's great-grandfather, and community founder, James (Jim) Shankle. A. T. and Addie L. Odom attained a high level of personal achievement and with their skills and service made significant contributions to Shankleville institutions and community life during the restrictive Jim Crow era. For these reasons, the Addie L. and A. T. Odom Homestead is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion B in the area Ethnic Heritage: Black, within a period of significance extending from 1922 to 1962.

Newton County

Newton County, the easternmost county in Texas, was formed in 1846 from Jasper County, with Burkeville as the county seat. In 1853, over the objections of Burkeville residents, the town of Newton was platted and became the county seat. Bounded on the east by the Sabine River, Newton County was the site of several ferry crossings including Columbia and Loftin. These operated before, during and after the Republic of Texas period providing access from Louisiana for settlers, traveling merchants and herds of cattle. Between 1846 and 1865 Newton County developed a plantation economy as well as a growing lumber industry. In 1850, the county had five water powered mills, with two additional mills associated with the plantation and lumbering activities of David R. Wingate and his brother-in-law Alfred Farr. Wingate and Farr migrated with their slaves to Newton County in 1852 from the Pearl River area of Mississippi and settled on Big Cow Creek, northwest of what is now Shankleville. In 1859, Wingate had 73 slaves and Farr 67 slaves. Using the labor of their slaves, the men raised corn, cotton, and sweet potatoes, among other crops. Logging remained important in the area following the Civil War and its economic impact grew during the following decades. Farr built a water-powered sawmill and cotton gin on Big Cow Creek and this operation reportedly cut lumber until the Wiergate mill opened in 1917. A grist mill operated until 1935 (Block, 1994:189-190). Descendants of some of Farr and Wingate's slaves still live in Farrsville, located a few miles west of Shankleville in Newton County. By 1860 county settlers were growing corn and potatoes and raising cattle, hogs, sheep and horses. Cotton also was an important crop.

Newton County voters supported secession and about 400 county men served the Confederacy during the Civil War. Reconstruction reportedly had little impact in Newton County due to the efforts of the commissioner's court to control the economic impacts of the war's end. Agriculture remained important to the county's economy from 1880 to 1930 and the number of farms "...nearly doubled during the fifty-year period" and corn, cotton, cattle and hogs were primary farm and ranch products. The county's extensive timberlands brought operations owned by lumber giants A.J. Peavy, Henry Lutchter and John Henry Kirby to the area. By 1929, 1,383 of the county's 1,461 industrial workers were employed in the lumber industry. Newton County also enjoyed steady population growth during this period. County residents grew in number from 4,359 people in 1880 to 7,282 residents in 1900. The population continued to grow during the following 30 years, reaching 12,395 people in 1930. African-Americans comprised one-third of the county population and the county was home to 10 freedmen's communities. In 1897 a line of the Texarkana and Fort Smith Railway arrived in the county and in 1905 the Orange and Northwestern Railway reached Newton, bringing economic and population growth, but, lumbering and timber products remained primary industries. Among the timber related businesses were basket manufacturing, turpentine production, tool handles and furniture (THC Marker Files: Town of Newton).

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The town of Wiergate, located about three miles northeast of Shankleville, was named for R. W. Wier and John W. Gates. In 1936 it had a population of 1,200 people, most of whom were employed in some capacity at the Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company. Served by a shortline railroad that connected the community and its mill to the Orange and Northwestern Railway at Newton, Wiergate was the site of one of the largest sawmill operations in East Texas (Block 1994:190). Built in 1917 by R. W. Wier, an experienced Houston lumberman under contract to the Lutchter and Moore lumber heirs (THC Marker Files "Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company"), the mill could process between 175,000 and 200,000 board feet of lumber daily. After the 4Cs mill in Houston County was dismantled about 1920, the Wiergate mill became the largest mill west of the Mississippi (Block 1994:190). The Wiergate mill included large sheds and storage yards, a mill pond, a hotel for visiting officials, an ice house, a water works and a light plant. The town was organized into five sections: mill, planer and lumber yards; a business district with a general store, depot, community hall and stores; and three neighborhoods, one for Caucasian workers, called White Town, one for African-American workers, called Darkey Town, and one for Mexican workers, called Mexico (CAH a1, THC Marker Files: Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company). In all, the town had about 550 homes, and some residents owned their dwellings (Block 1194:217). A natatorium, or swimming pool, was present, but probably was open to Caucasian residents only. The African-American neighborhood included a community hall, reading room and lounge and a game room where residents could enjoy games of dominoes or checkers (CAH a1). Several churches offered services for town residents (Block 1994:217). A turpentine camp was adjacent to the town (CAH a1). The mill closed December 25, 1942 and in 1943 the facilities, including the residences, were sold for salvage to the Saltz Machinery and Supply Company, an Arkansas firm.

The Great Depression and the exhaustion of the county's timber stands resulted in significant hardship during the 1930s, driving many residents to relief rolls. In 1940 more than 10 percent of the total county workforce was employed in public works programs and another 6.6 percent were unemployed. Industrial output fell 37 percent between 1930 and 1940, when the peak population reached 13,700 people. Thereafter, the population began to decline and many county residents began commuting to jobs in industrial plants in Beaumont and Orange. The African-American population declined from 40 percent in 1940 to a little more than 24 percent in 1980, a result of migration to large cities for better economic and educational opportunities. Educational levels of the general population also changed. In 1940 slightly more than 10 percent of county residents had completed four years of high school. By 1980, that number had risen to more than 45 percent, and about four percent had completed four years of college. Since the 1950s, the population has grown, reaching 10,372 people in 1960. The 1990 county population was 13,569 people (*Handbook of Texas Online*: "Newton County").

For African-Americans, who comprised a significant portion of the county's population in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, education was hampered by segregation and limited funds. Following emancipation, African-Americans sought educational opportunities but found few schools available to them. The Freedmen's Bureau, created by the Federal government following the Civil War built "...several schools in the state that offered day and night classes, and several church societies also built schools for African-American students. But the state created a segregated public education system..." (Texas Historical Commission 2010:12) that was underfunded and provided only limited access to books, library facilities and educational facilities. The segregated system resulted in a lack of up-to-date teaching materials, books, adequate school buildings, and limited opportunities for African-American students. To address the need for facilities of higher education, African-American churches built a number of colleges in Texas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and these served the needs of many students wanting to become teachers or to enter other professions. Desegregation began in some Texas school districts immediately after the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling, but educational segregation in the state continued into the 1970s (Texas Historical Commission 2010:12).

Churches played an important role in the life of emancipated African-Americans, and as freedmen's settlements were founded and African-Americans migrated to Euro-American towns and rural farming areas, churches were organized by

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African-Americans. Prior to emancipation, African-Americans developed distinct "...patterns of worship..." (*Handbook of Texas Online*, "African-American Churches") that merged Christian concepts with African rituals remembered or passed down through families. Many plantation owners provided opportunities for their slaves to attend church services, usually in the afternoon after the white services were finished. In some churches, Euro-Americans and African-Americans attended services together. In 1860, white Methodist and Baptist churches included more than 8,000 congregants and the Presbyterian and Protestant Episcopal (Episcopalian) churches recognized African-Americans as full members. Despite their incorporation into Euro-American churches, which were controlled by the white membership, these churches typically segregated African-Americans to certain pews. Further, African-Americans were not permitted to serve as preachers. Slaves, apparently, and understandably, preferred worshipping in their own churches, when their white owners permitted them to establish them. There they could reflect on supportive Christian teachings such as freedom and equality and enjoy dance and music as part of the service (*Handbook of Texas Online*, "African-American Churches").

After emancipation, African-Americans formed Baptist and Methodist churches, usually with the aid of Northern missionaries. Most African-American Texans became Baptists, partially because of the informal organization of the service that allowed singing, dancing, shouting and "vocal interaction" with the preachers (*Handbook of Texas Online*, "African-American Churches"). Baptist organization was "essentially congregational," with local churches organized into district associations and state conventions. During slavery, African-Americans who worshiped in Methodist churches were affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Chaplains representing three Northern Methodist denominations served with the Union Army in Texas and ministered to African-American troops and civilians. Following the war, some freedmen and freedwomen became Methodists through the work of missionaries who represented the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church (ME), a white controlled denomination. The ME Church sought African American members (*Handbook of Texas Online*, "African-American Churches"), but in 1870, African-American members of the ME Church were able to form the Colored (sic) Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, which is now renamed the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Shankleville citizens formed a Baptist Church—Mt. Hope Baptist Church, a Colored Methodist Episcopal Church—Mt. Zion CME Church—and a congregation of the Church of God. Although A. T. Odom was a practicing Methodist, when he married Addie Lewis, who was a Baptist, he moved his membership to the Mt. Hope Baptist Church, and became a Deacon and leading member of that church.

The Shankleville Community

Shankleville was settled beginning about 1867, when freedmen Stephen McBride and James (Jim) Shankle began buying land in the John M. Jordan Survey, Abstract 247, and in other surveys in Newton County (**Figure 6**). Shankleville became one of 10 freedmen's settlements established in Newton County following the Civil War. Other freedmen's communities in the county are: Biloxi, Cedar Grove, Galloway, Huff Creek, Indian Hill, Jamestown, Liberty, Pleasant Hill, and St. John. Much of the Shankle, as well as the Odom lands are within the Jordan Survey.

Shankleville began as a rural community where African-Americans could live and farm their own land away from the violence of white supremacist activities, the strictures of segregation, and the economic enslavement of sharecropping or working for less than subsistence wages as domestic servants and in other menial jobs. "Black landowners in freedmen's settlements had a greater measure of protection from direct white aggression.... Freedmen's settlements were black enclaves that kept to themselves and until the end of Jim Crow few whites wished—or dared—to live there" (Sitton 2005:178). Shankleville, like all Southern "settlements" and Freedmen's communities, was a "dispersed community...places unplatted and unincorporated, individually unified only by church and school and the residents'

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collective belief that a community existed” (*Handbook of Texas Online*: “Freedmen’s Settlements”). Some Freedmen’s communities began as squatter settlements before residents bought or preempted land. Other communities were formed under the leadership of church congregations and their ministers. In other places, groups of siblings were community founders. At Shankleville, a single family—the related McBride and Shankle clan—had unusual financial resources that they used to purchase land, which fostered the development of the community (*Handbook of Texas Online*: “Freedmen’s Settlements”). At its peak, Shankleville is thought to have housed about 75 families (A. White interview, 9-24-2011).² Today it is home to about 30 families (Clay Papers, c9).

Like most settlement communities, Shankleville never established a business district. There was little demand for stores since most residents lacked money to buy manufactured goods or food stuffs and most were self-sufficient, growing virtually all their own food and providing meat for the table from hunting, fishing and the small numbers of chickens, hogs and cattle they raised. However, the community had a grist mill, sawmill, syrup mill, blacksmith shop and cotton gin, all owned by Stephen McBride. McBride is described as a generous man, who bought shoes for community children when he bought shoes for himself and his family. Lillie Shankle White, a great-great grand-daughter of Jim and Winnie Shankle, grew up near A.T. and Addie Odom, who were her cousins. She remembers that by the 1930s, the community grist mill and cotton mill had closed (Lillie White interview, 9-25-2011). Shankleville developed through the labor and resourcefulness of its residents. With little need for outside help, Shankleville residents developed a strong sense of independence and willingness to help each other. Although living conditions were difficult for many people and families typically occupied small dwellings, life was satisfying and largely stable, and as Elzie Odom, Sr., son of A.T. and Addie, remembers, there were no race problems.

Shankleville also was the site of McBride College. Between 1883 and 1909, this private institution offered teacher training to African-American students. The school also functioned as a community center and the location of religious revival meetings. Social life and communication among residents also centered around the community’s churches. Shankleville’s Baptists began meeting in each other’s homes almost as soon as the community was established (Mt. Hope Baptist Church, a), and in 1870 Mt. Hope Baptist Church was organized with Elder W.C. Johnson as pastor. Brothers Simon Lewis, John Lewis (Addie’s father) and Gibson Fowler served as deacons and Brother Adam Bryant was church secretary (Clay Papers, c9). Members continued to meet in each other’s homes for a time and then in a small building near what is known as the community cemetery on the east side of what is now Farm to Market Road 1415, the paved, through-road that connects Shankleville with Texas Highway 63 and Texas Highway 87. The first Mt. Hope church was built in 1871. It measured 30x40 feet and is described as a wood “box house.” It had no ceiling but did include wood windows hinged to open out. The congregation rented this building. In 1885, the congregation decided to buy land and build their own church. They purchased three acres of land for \$5.00 per acre from T.R. Seastrunk, and built their first church on their own land. That building, in remodeled form, continues to serve the Mt. Hope congregation (Clay Papers, a2). At an unknown date, a congregation of the Colored [sic] Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.) Church formed in Shankleville. In time it built a church on what is now the corner of Farm Road 1415 and County Road 1040. It is located on what was Shankle-Odom land and is visible from the Odom Homestead. A third church—the Church of God—formed at an unknown time. All three churches continue to serve community residents and family members returning for reunions, the community homecoming, or short visits.

Church was typically a weekly activity with a monthly visit by the preacher or minister. Some congregations, or members within congregations, traveled to other churches on preaching Sundays to hear the sermons there. The congregation of

² Shankleville was incorporated into county-wide census records organized by precincts. No census records for the community itself have been located.

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Mt. Hope conducted baptisms in Clear Creek. At Mt. Hope Baptist, the church superintendent organized the Sunday meeting when no pastor was present. This typically was Sunday School for adults and children. A Wednesday evening prayer meeting also was held, and the women's Missionary Society met on Mondays. The missionary group aided community members in need. Church women went into the community bringing food, quilts and household items. They also identified those who were ill and those families needed assistance with nursing of the sick. The men at Mt. Hope also did search and rescue work, going into the woods to find lost children and adults. The women cooked so that when the lost were located there was nourishment for all. Other churches also participated in these efforts (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011).

Education was important to residents of Shankleville and to African-Americans in general, but access to schooling was limited, and until the 1964 Civil Rights Act, white and African American populations were segregated in all aspects of life. The challenges Shankleville residents faced in providing education for their children reflect the absence of equal rights for African-Americans. Prior to emancipation, few African-Americans were literate, despite the absence of state law prohibiting the education of slaves by their owners (Davis 1934: 24). Although some slaves were taught to read and write by their owners, most were designated for field labor, specialized skills such as harness making and blacksmithing, and domestic work. Following emancipation, educational facilities for African-Americans developed slowly, typically by Euro-American churches, missionary groups, and philanthropists who worked with the short-lived Freedmen's Bureau, a Federal agency created to assist African-Americans make the transition to freedom. By the 1870s, groups within the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches were working toward establishing schools for African-Americans.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a number of schools were built in Texas to train African-American teachers including the Bishop and Wiley colleges in Marshall, Tyler College and Butler College in Tyler, Mary Allen Junior College in Crockett, Paul Quinn College in Dallas (originally in Waco) and Prairie View Agricultural & Mechanical College (now Prairie View A&M) (Texas Historical Commission 2010:12), and others. But the challenge of finding funding and buildings for basic education remained. Between 1876 and 1905, Texas utilized a community system of schools for African American students. But the creation of schools was left to individual communities and the law did not require that a school be established. Funding for free public schools was limited, as private schools for Euro-American children were widely used and considered superior to the concept of free public schools, which were supported by taxes. Euro-Americans resisted the idea of supporting African-American schools with their taxes. Under the community system, taxes were not collected for schools, but the state did allocate funds for schools in each county. For each community school—also known as a common school—the county judge appointed a board of three local men as trustees to hold office for a year. Each school was reorganized annually based on the list of school age children in the community (Davis 1934:41). School terms were often short due to the need to keep children at home for chores and farm work, and student attendance was often very sporadic and limited. Scholastic achievement was hampered by the loose organization and intermittent attendance of the community school system. In addition, funding for books, desks and other supplies and equipment was limited and teachers' salaries were typically barely adequate to provide food. Finding a place to hold school was another challenge and many communities had no formal school building. Instead children were taught in rented cabins and other buildings not constructed for educational purposes, including barns and churches (Davis 1934:42-43; 50).

Although teacher salaries were low, many African-Americans were attracted to the profession and some communities developed schools to train teachers called normal schools. Shankleville's McBride College was one of these. The school was founded in 1883 and named for Stephen McBride, who provided the funds for its construction—and very likely for its operation. The school operated until about 1909 (THC Maker Files: "S. A. McBride"). Students had to pass a basic skills test prior to taking teaching courses. McBride could neither read nor write, but he understood the importance and value of

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education, and the school he founded is the first known local opportunity for education. Although the school building was gone by the mid-1940s and its location on the west side of FM 1415 about halfway between Highway 87 and the CME church on FM 1415 well back from the road (Elzie Odom interview 10-6-2011) is forgotten by all but the oldest community members, the school is an important reminder of the dedication of residents to education.

Following adoption of state legislation in 1893 that allowed for county school districts, the community (common school) system slowly phased out until it was abolished in 1909. However, a number of common schools continued to operate in Newton County into the 1940s, including the school at Shankleville. Under the county district system the number of schools increased (Davis 1934:51). In 1895, 104 high schools were operating in East Texas, but of these only seven were African-American facilities. However, by 1905, summer normal schools designed to provide on-going professional training for African-Americans already employed as teachers had been established in all but one East Texas congressional district (Davis 1934:50-51), bringing more support for and emphasis on the need for quality education. State legislation of 1905 called for local taxation to support schools for the education of all children, but since per capita income in most of East Texas at that time was low, little money was available through local taxation for schools, and even less for African-American schools since the earning power of African-American citizens was limited and taxation on their earnings negligible (Davis 1934:55). With limited resources many communities developed independent school districts so that the school taxation rate could be raised instead of being tied to a county-wide rate. It seems that African-American schools located in independent districts did not fare better than those in the common school system. Into the 1930s, obtaining supplies, books and adequate school houses remained a significant challenge for African-American schools (Davis 1934:53-56), and the only schools that operated in adequate buildings were those constructed by the Rosenwald Fund. These schools, however, often were poorly maintained due to the lack of funds, and for the same reason were insufficiently stocked with books, equipment and supplies (Davis 1934:56-59). Some communities built their own school buildings or rented space in churches, unused dwellings or barns. Despite state legislation in 1925 authorizing school consolidation, and subsequent legislation in 1928 on this issue, consolidation of numerous small local and independent districts was slow (Davis 1934:67-69).

By 1941 Newton County had two independent districts: Newton and Burkeville, and a number of common schools, including Enterprise School at Shankleville, which was designated as the school in District No. 9 (Hines 2002:505). However, in 1944, Enterprise School was disbanded and Shankleville was consolidated into the Burkeville district (Elzie Odom interview 10-6-2011). Students were assigned to the Wiergate Colored School, but no publically funded transportation was provided. To solve this problem, Addie and A.T. Odom utilized their personal pick-up truck as a bus to transport Shankleville students to the consolidated school at Wiergate (Elzie Odom interview 10-6-2011).

In Shankleville, education probably was first acquired in families when community members who could read and write instructed their children and those of neighbors. Local churches also may have provided early educational opportunities (Sitton 2005:83). Before 1900, Shankleville established a common school and named it Lone Star School. Addie Lewis began school there at the age of seven. Her future husband Alvah T. Odom also attended the school. The school burned a few years later, and its students took instruction in a small church on Clear Creek near the site of the burned school. This was likely Mt. Zion CME church. Addie continued in school at the church through the end of the seventh grade (Clay Papers, c4), but did not continue her education beyond that time. A.T. Odom dropped out in the sixth grade to raise his younger siblings following the death of his parents. He worked at a local sawmill, loading logs onto rail cars. The Lone Star School was eventually rebuilt as the Enterprise School and offered instruction through the end of the 11th grade. As an adult, A. T. Odom served with community residents Courtney Strahan and John Wesley Lewis (Addie's father) as school trustees. According to Elzie Odom, these men were given limited authority over the school's operations, with the big decisions about funding, supplies and facilities made by the Caucasian membership of the Newton County School

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Board. However, even with this limited authority, the trustees were the face of education in Shankleville. They recruited and hired teachers, including local resident Mickey Leland's grandmother Annie Simmons, who became a professor at Grambling State University. A. T. Odom built housing for Ms. Simmons and her husband, who also was a teacher at Enterprise School. The couple lived in the house from 1929 until 1944. Part of the lumber from the teachers' house was later recycled to build the bathroom and rear porch on the Odom homestead. In 1944, Shankleville's common school was consolidated with the common school in Wiergate in the Burkeville Independent School District. Thereafter, Shankleville children were assigned to the Colored School at Wiergate, which offered instruction through the 12th grade; all the books and desks were hand-me-downs (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011). Integration of the Burkeville Independent School District did not occur until 1969 (Hines 2002:155).

In the early years, residents built their own homes from logs they felled themselves or from sawn lumber they had milled at the McBride sawmill. After the 1917 construction of the Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company mill in Wiergate, Shankleville residents and other local people were allowed to take scrap lumber for use in construction. In addition, the Wiergate mill had an ice plant and the owner allowed local people to buy, or be given, ice to take home for food storage (Cecil Peacock interview, 9-25-2011). Cecil Peacock, a retired logger and pulpwood worker, remembers that the Wiergate mill improved local opportunities for employment and brought more people to Shankleville and more children to the local school. During the Depression many families moved away, and while food was not expensive, and most people grew their own, money was scarce (Lillie White interview, 9-25-2011). After the Wiergate mill closed in 1942 the area's major employer was gone. Mrs. White remembers the post-war period in Shankleville as little different from the late 1930s. After Mrs. White was widowed in the early 1950s, she married Anderson White, Jr. and the couple had nine children; they also raised her two children by her first husband. She remembers A.T. Odom sharing words of wisdom with her, "Don't worry about things you can't help." She remembers Addie Odom as a good example and a Christian woman (Lillie White interview, 9-25-2011).

Anderson White, Jr., grew up in Shankleville and worked as a carpenter, farmer, barber and concrete contractor. He built homes, developed a subdivision in Jasper and served as Newton County's first African-American county commissioner. Following school desegregation, he was one of the first African-American members of the Newton County School Board. In 1974 he joined the local water board in Burkeville and within a year had secured the board's approval for construction of a drinking water line to Shankleville. In the 1990s, he sponsored the paving of the Shankleville Road, now called F.M. 1415. Mr. White credits A.T. Odom's community leadership with showing him that he could achieve big goals. A.T. Odom influenced Mr. White to take on leadership roles in order to improve community life. While his wife Lillie is a Shankle descendant, Mr. White was related to Addie through the Lewis line. He remembers the Enterprise School, which he attended to the end of the 9th grade as having four classrooms, four or five teachers—most were women—and subjects including math, history, English, geography and spelling. The school also offered basketball, football and baseball and there were inter-scholastic sports competitions. Over time, the community changed with the loss of residents, the closure of the cotton gin, grist mill and other local institutions, but in the ways of individual values and community service, it has remained the same.

The Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead

The Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead is located within a 6.76 acre parcel (see **Figure 1**), that is one of seven parcels in a 1949 subdivision of a 42-acre tract. In February 1950, the Odom children and their spouses subdivided the 42 acres, which had been held in common since their father's death in 1909. Upon the death of A.T. Odom, his 6.76 acres passed to his widow, Addie, and their children. Upon her death, the property passed to the Odom children and grandchildren. In 2010, under the leadership of Lareatha Clay, one of Addie and A.T. Odom's granddaughters, the children and

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grandchildren of A.T. and Addie Odom formed a family partnership to manage the property and permit the unanimous support of its nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The property remains rural farmland and woodland. A portion of the property cultivated during A.T. and Addie Odom's lifetime has returned to woodland, and the chicken house, barn and storage building called Noah's Ark are largely engulfed with vegetation. The road that ran from the C.M.E. Church past the Odom Homestead to the Lewis and Shankle dwellings during the 19th and early 20th centuries now stops at the Odom Homestead. The remainder of the road is overgrown and largely impassible. The Odom family has plans to clear the road, clean the Clear Creek ford that the road traverses and reclaim the nearby spring where Jim and Winnie Shankle were reunited. The Mt. Zion C.M.E. Church remains in service at the corner of FM 1415, and the road that accesses the Odom Homestead (now named County Road 1040), can be faintly seen on the 1949 plat. Each parcel, except Lola Odom Lewis's property, backs to Clear Creek. The Odom heirs lease a portion of the land for the growing of hay, and rent the house to a local family. The Jim Shankle Cemetery, where many generations of Shankle, Odom and related families are buried, is visible across the hayfield northwest of the Odom dwelling. Dense woods frame the cemetery on the west and north sides, and the landscape seems to appear much as it probably did during the Odoms' lifetimes. On the east side of FM 1415, just opposite the entrance to the Jim Shankle Cemetery is Shankleville's community cemetery. The Enterprise School was located at the edge of this cemetery, but is no longer extant. Dwellings built in the 1960s through the 1980s are scattered along FM 1415. Few early 20th century buildings are present along the road, but many abandoned homes from the last century likely are slowly deteriorating in the woods.

The Odom Homestead continued in use as the family home until Addie's death in 1987. Children, grandchildren and great grand-children visited often (**Figure 7**). Following Addie's passing, the house hosted family homecomings (**Figure 8**). The dwelling is currently a rental property; the outbuildings are unused. The Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead includes a modest dwelling type built during the early 20th century that is based on a grand 18th century form constructed for or by white middle class and upper class residents in cities and towns, and on farms and plantations. The house is the only identified example of its type in Shankleville, although other similar dwellings may have existed, or still may be extant. The house may be a bit larger than many of its era in Shankleville, and it represents the skills and accomplishments of A.T. and Addie L. Odom. With its outbuildings—smokehouse, chicken house, barn and storage building—and its farmland, woodlands and creek, the property provides a rare surviving glimpse of the agrarian lifestyle of early-to-mid 20th century Shankleville residents and the dwelling occupied by a leading community family. **Figure 9** shows the homestead property in 1989.

Addie L. and A.T. Odom

A.T. Odom (1893-1979) was the son of James G. (Jimmie) Odom (1868-1909) and Roxie Brooks Odom (1873-ca. 1908). A.T. was the oldest of seven children and grew into a highly responsible man. In 1907 or 1908, his mother Roxie died from complications of childbirth, leaving infant twins and five other children. In 1909, Jimmie Odom died from a chill he contracted after cleaning a well. When his father died, A.T. left school to care for his younger siblings Leandus, Lola, Lula, and the twins, Jettie and Jimmie. In this he was aided by his sister Almada, who was the second oldest child. A.T. Odom and Addie Lewis were school sweethearts, but when he left school, the romance waned a bit. When A.T. broke a leg, and was confined at home, the romance between him and Addie was rekindled. Addie prepared a box of "beautifully presented" food to him and the romance became a courtship. He asked her father for permission to marry Addie and the request was granted. On December 25, 1915³, A.T. Odom married Addie Jane Lewis (1893-1987)⁴, daughter of John

³ Some sources say December 15, 1915, but Odom family records show the date as December 25.

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Wesley Lewis and Jessie Gatlin Lewis. Addie's childhood home was about a mile and a half west of the Odom homestead. Addie was one of 13 children: Ezell, Johnny, Eddie, Early, Porter, Wales, George, Charles, James, Hattie, Coella and Arvetta. Brother Ezell died at age 17 and sister Hattie in childbirth. Addie's mother was the daughter of Oliver and Mandy Gatlin. Addie's father was the son of Alexander and Mariah Lewis.

Following his marriage to Addie, the couple lived in A.T.'s childhood home. A.T. worked in the freedmen's community of Biloxi loading logs onto rail cars with hooked tongs (**Figure 10**). On the weekends he supervised the family farm, and in 1922 built the house he, Addie and their children would call home. After they moved into their new house, the couple continued to raise A.T.'s siblings along with their own young children. A.T. Odom was a direct descendant of James and Winnie Shankle through their daughter Harriet Shankle Odom.⁵ Addie Lewis was the descendant of early Shankleville families. Addie and A.T. had eight children: Harold, Sr. (b. 1917), S.T. (born 1918), James Eddie, also known as Mack (born 1919), Oletha (born 1921), Arzela (born 1923), Larutha (born 1926), Elzie (born 1929) and Lee (born 1931). In addition, another child, Levon, born April 12, 1924, passed away the same day (Clay Papers, c1), and Addie miscarried another child. The 1920 census includes A.T.'s siblings Lola, Jutie (Jettie) and Jimmie in the household. The couple is shown as owning their own home, which was A.T.'s childhood home. Neighbors were Ed and Genie Shankle and their six children, Frank and Manly Bryant and their children, Simon and Merrosi Lewie (Lewis) and their children, Linley and Mary Rogers and their children.

James and Winnie Brush Shankle, along with Stephen McBride are credited with being the founders of Shankleville. McBride and Shankle were early Newton County African-American landowners. McBride purchased 29 parcels of land in Newton County (THC Marker Files: S.A. McBride) that included perhaps as many as 4,000 acres. By 1870, Jim Shankle had acquired \$200 worth of real estate and \$125 in personal property. The lands and the vision of Shankle and McBride fostered the development of Shankleville, attracting numerous freedmen and their families to the community. Jim and Winnie Shankle lived in a small log cabin atop the hill overlooking the spring where they were reunited. Sometime before their daughter Harriet married Joseph Odom, the log cabin was remodeled into a "boxed wood house." Harriet and Joseph's son Jimmie built another boxed wood house about 200 yards away and this was the childhood home of A.T. Odom (Clay Papers, c1). The spring is not far from the Addie and A.T. Odom Homestead and near Clear Creek.

James (Jim) Shankle was born into slavery in Kentucky in 1811 and Winnie Brush was born into slavery in Tennessee in 1814. At an unknown date Winnie was moved to Mississippi. Several versions of her life story have been recorded including one in which she was the slave of a Mr. Rollins, a Mississippi plantation owner with whom she had a daughter Mary Jane Rollins and a son George Washington Rollins. She also had a child named Tobe Perkins. Her daughter Mary Jane Rollins, born in 1839 in Mississippi, married Stephen McBride. Before 1846, Winnie married Jim Shankle and within a short time was either sold to a Texas plantation owner, or her Mississippi owner moved to Texas. When Winnie was moved to Texas, Jim and Winnie were separated. Jim ran away to Texas to find her, traveling in the woods by night. He swam the Mississippi River and the Sabine River and walked about 400 miles in search of Winnie. Upon reaching Texas he began visiting East Texas plantations at night inquiring about Winnie. With a lead to her location, he hid in the woods near a spring and one day when Winnie was drawing water, Jim revealed his presence and they were reunited. Winnie began bringing food to Jim and after a while Winnie's owner either found out about Jim, or Winnie went to him for help. Winnie's owner made arrangements with Jim's Mississippi owner to purchase him (Jasper County Historical

⁴ The 1900 census shows the birthdate for Addie Lewis's as September 1892. However, census data is error prone, and in her reminiscences Addie gives her birthdate as September 22, 1893.

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Museum, b). The couple had six children: Harriet (ca. 1846), Emerline (ca. 1849), George (ca. 1852), John (ca. 1854), James Henry (ca. 1855) and Houston (ca. 1858).

After emancipation, Jim Shankle and his step-daughter's husband, Stephen McBride, began buying land in the John M. Jordan Survey and adjacent surveys in Newton County. By 1870 both men were well established farmers in the community called Shankleville. The 1870 agricultural census show Stephen McBride with 75 improved acres and 200 acres of woodland. James Shankle had 40 improved acres and 100 woodland acres. James Shankle is shown in the 1880 agricultural census as having 20 improved acres of land, six meadow acres, and 100 acres of woodland. His farm was valued at \$1,000, his farm implements at \$100, and his livestock at \$200. The value of his farm's produce was \$275. Stephen McBride owned 150 improved acres, 15 acres in meadow, and 1,000 acres of woodland. His farmland was valued at \$4,000, his implements at \$200, his livestock at \$600 and his farm produce at \$3,000. Nearby was Joseph Odom, who was born a slave in Jasper County about 1845. In 1880 Joseph Odom had 14 improved acres, \$5 in implements, and \$100 in livestock. His farm was valued at \$150, and his farm produce at \$200. Shankle and McBride both used African-American labor on their farms. All three men grew corn and oats. McBride had 73 acres in cotton, Shankle five acres in cotton and Odom four acres. All three men also grew potatoes. McBride grew tobacco. Odom harvested 20 cords of wood and Shankle cut 30 cords.

Winnie died in 1883 and Jim in 1888, but their children and grandchildren continued to live in Shankleville. Jim and Winnie's daughter Harriet married Joseph Odom. By 1880 Harriet and Joseph had five children: James, age 11, Gipson, age 9, Madora, age 7, Eli, age 6 and Leroy, age 2. Joseph was shown as working on a farm. Harriet and Joseph's son James married Roxie Brooks, the parents of A.T. Odom.

The children and grandchildren of A.T. and Addie Odom have attempted to identify the owner of the Texas plantation where Winnie and Jim Shankle were enslaved. The strongest possibility is Dr. David Forde, who lived near Burkeville in 1860 and owned 32 or 33 slaves between the ages of 52 and six months. The 1860 Newton County Slave Schedule includes an entry for David Forde showing men, women and children of the right ages to be Winnie, Jim and their children. Forde was the only area slave holder recorded in the 1860 Newton County census with a large enough slave population to include Jim and Winnie and their family (Lareatha Clay interview 9-25-2011). Family tradition relates that the plantation on which Winnie and Jim were enslaved was owned by a Methodist minister. Dr. Forde was such a minister (Wilson, n.d.:1).⁶

In the early 1930s, A.T. Odom left his job as a log loader and joined the carpentry crew of the Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company in Wiergate. His first job was flashing chimneys and flues with tin to prevent water leakage. He learned general carpentry work on a Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company crew that built and repaired company housing at the mill. He learned fast, became skilled and was promoted to carpentry foreman. He was the only African-American carpenter employed by the mill. By the mid-1930s Odom had established his own construction business (Clay Papers, c1).

Elzie Odom worked with his father in his construction business, building and repairing homes and churches. A.T. Odom worked for both African-American and Euro-American clients and was regarded as extremely honest and hardworking. Odom built houses in Newton, Wiergate, Shankleville, Orange, Port Arthur and Beaumont. He also built the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Jasper, and one of his largest projects was a weekend lake house for a white-owned bank. Among the

⁶ This information was initially communicated to Lareatha Clay by Jean Ann Ables-Flatt, the genealogist who did the research that enabled Larutha Odom Clay, Lareatha Clay and Mathia L. Clay to become the first African-Americans inducted into the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT).

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dwellings he built in Shankleville and the surrounding area were houses for Willie Pate Shankle, Walker Fowler, Trogie Shankle, Anderson White, Jr., James Ridgeway, Robert Allen, Isaac (Shubie) Hubbard, Fletcher Byerley, Curley Shankle, George Lewis, Henry Truvillion, Artie Brailsford, Tersie Brown, Wiley Lewis, Henry Harris, Anderson Harris, Will Strahan, Cecil Peacock and John Galloway (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011). Odom's daughter Larutha Odom Clay noted that the difference between A.T. Odom and the many other African-American men in Shankleville and the surrounding area with carpentry and construction skills was that because of his skills and earned reputation, A.T. Odom was in a position to set a price for his labor, while others accepted what the client was willing to offer (Larutha Odom Clay interview 9-25-2011). Clients came to A.T. Odom by word of mouth, but also as a result of the sign he had painted on his pick-up truck "A.T. Odom, Contractor."

In addition to his construction business, A.T. Odom was a carpentry teacher at the CCC camp near Newton. The unit assigned to that camp was designated Company #838 and was an African-American unit. However, the company commander, the other officers and the teachers were Caucasian. A.T. Odom was the only African-American teacher to work at this camp. The supervision of African-American enrollees by white officers and the instruction of the men by white teachers was standard CCC practice. A.T. Odom's position as a carpentry and woodworking teacher—a role of authority—was unusual and speaks of his skill and his character. The men of Company #838 built fire roads, fought fires, and made maps for the new county fire towers (Clay Papers, c8).⁷ At least two Shankleville men were enrollees in Company #838—Stephen McBride and Roy Jenkins. Mr. Jenkins was a relative of Addie's by marriage and Stephen McBride a descendant and name sake of one of Shankleville's founders.

Elzie Odom remembers that his father traveled to the camp two or three times weekly to teach classes and that he worked there for about two years. The camp closed in 1942 and the basketball uniforms used by the CCC enrollees were donated to the Enterprise School for their team. Enterprise students sold candy to buy basketballs and other equipment, and the uniforms—purple and gold with the numbers 838—were remade by removing some of the numbers on each jersey to create individual numbers for each team member. Jerseys were also altered with the addition of numbers made from other fabric as the 838 only provided numbers for two jerseys (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011). A lot of Shankleville residents were unemployed at this time, but Elzie Odom recalls that the family never missed a meal, and the children never missed school. A.T. always worked and there was always food on the table. In addition to teaching at the CCC camp, A.T. Odom also taught carpentry to all his sons and to boys in the National Defense Training program at the Enterprise and Wiergate schools. In 1945, the Newton County Commissioner's Court rescinded county claims on a portion of the old CCC-built fire road through the former CCC camp near Newton. This paved the way for the property to be sold to the Baptist Convention District No. 3, part of the General Baptist Convention of Texas, for use as the East Texas Baptist Encampment for Baptist youth from east and southeast Texas churches (Hines 2002:272-273). The property continues to be used in this fashion, and may include remodeled CCC-era buildings where A.T. Odom taught carpentry.

Both Addie and A. T. Odom were employed in Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) programs in Newton County. The Cade Building was built in 1940 at Burkeville to serve as a "sub-courthouse" for the northern portion of Newton County and to provide space for W.P.A. sewing rooms. Although the sewing program was discontinued in August 1940, the Cade Building was completed and put into use as a sub-courthouse. The W.P.A. was one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's make-work programs designed to provide relief jobs on a county-by-county basis for the unemployed.

⁷ The men in this camp may also have built some of the facilities at the E.O. Siecke State Forest (State Forest No. 1), located in western Newton County, just east of Kirbyville.

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W.P.A. projects were public works efforts that included construction of hospitals, city halls, public restrooms, street paving, flood control systems, school buildings, water works and other facilities intended to improve availability of basic services within communities.

The Cade Building alleviated a portion of the county's expense for renting space for the W.P.A. sponsored sewing activities, and provided a community building for the residents of Burkeville and the surrounding area. The land for the building was provided by Harriet Trotti Cade in April 1940. The building was constructed with W.P.A. funding and local labor paid with W.P.A. funds. Most of the lumber for the building, which was sheathed with native sandstone, was provided by the Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company. (Hines 2002:450-451). A.T. Odom, who was skilled in the installation of roof and chimney flashing, was employed to install the flashing on the brick flues of the building (Larutha Clay interview, 9-24-2011). The W.P.A. also sponsored a Newton County canning plant during the mid-to-late 1930s. This program was cancelled by the Commissioner's Court in August, 1940 following the Federal government's new requirement that the county pay \$5.00 per month for each worker in the plant. This amount was beyond the ability of the county to pay (Hines 2002:456). Addie Odom was employed as a supervisor at the canning plant in Liberty, working with African-American women employees of the plant. Apparently the W.P.A. also sponsored local mattress manufacturing. Addie was a contractor in this government sponsored endeavor, and she supervised other women in the making of the mattresses. Addie brought her skills in this type of work with her to the job as she had been making and teaching Shankleville women how to make cotton mattresses in her home (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011).

Shortly after building the family homestead in 1922, A.T. Odom constructed a small wood frame store measuring about 10x14 feet directly across the road from the Odom house. The building had a small porch and a couple of small windows. A barber chair was set up in the store. Addie operated the store, which sold staples such as flour, corn meal, rice, peanuts, castor oil, salt, pepper, candy, canned sardines, mackerel and salmon, and oil-packed sausage that was stored in a wooden barrel. A.T. Odom purchased these supplies from the Jasper Wholesale Grocery Co. in Jasper. The store served the entire Shankleville community. Residents came to visit with "Cousin Addie" and purchase supplies. Customers typically ran a credit tab and paid it monthly in cash. The store operated until about 1960 (**Figure 11**) (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011) and remained on the property until about 1962. At that time, A.T. Odom donated it to Mt. Hope Baptist Church for use as a Sunday School building and dining hall. The building was moved from the Odom homestead to the church by truck (Cecil Peacock interview, 9-25-2011). Eventually, the building was demolished.

The family farm provided nearly all of the Odoms' food. When they had a surplus, they shared it with community members in need. The Odoms raised peas, okra, greens, Irish and sweet potatoes, corn, tomatoes, onion, sugar cane, watermelon, cantaloupe, pears, purple hulled peas, collards, butter beans, turnips, turnip greens, collards and mustard greens (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011). The Odom farm produce was for family consumption, but in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the family also grew cucumbers, tomatoes, and string beans under a government sponsored project. Elzie Odom remembers accompanying A.T. Odom to Newton for delivery of these project crops and watching the county agent weigh and measure the produce and then pay his dad (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011).

The family also raised hogs, chickens, cattle and horses and grew a small amount of cotton, which was used to make mattresses. Nothing was wasted at the Odom homestead. Addie reinforced her commitment to thrift and good housekeeping practices in her children with the saying "a willful waste makes a woeful want." These were wise words for the Great Depression, and for any period. To put this philosophy into practice Addie set up different bins for food scraps. One was for the family dog, one for the hogs, and one for the chickens. The chickens' diet was supplemented with

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commercial feed and insects and plants they scratched in their yard. Corn was ground to feed the horses, the cattle and dairy cows ate peanut vines after the nuts were harvested and stored in the barn, which also held other farm produce. Addie cut her paper napkins in half in order to get the most use out of them. Although the Odoms did not raise sheep, goats or guinea hens, some community members did (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011). In the 1940s, Addie canned the farm's peas, cucumbers and string beans for family use, and the surplus was sold to the Del Dixi Canning Co. to supplement family income (Clay Papers, b1). The family also kept two or three milk cows for their own needs. The cows were named for the Odoms' daughters-in-law (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011). This was not meant disrespectfully, and seems to have been a source of good-natured family humor.

The Odom children worked in the family's fields before and after school. When Addie heard the last school bell in the morning, she sent her children to school. When she heard the dismissal bell, she walked onto the porch to watch her children file directly home from school. Following their return in the afternoon, the kids did their homework, then completed chores. If all the chores were completed before supper, Addie always had another task ready. Elzie Odom remembers a weed patch across the road from the house that Addie kept for "maintenance" when her children finished all their other work. There was no free time, everyone worked at a number of jobs during the day and remained outside (except for homework) until dark. When the children got too noisy, Addie would call out "Alright in there," and things would quiet down (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011). Eldest daughter Oletha, born about the time the family moved into the Odom homestead, became the first assistant cook, the "keeper of the house and its contents," and disciplinarian in the absence of her mother (Clay papers c9).

Following completion of homework and farm chores, supper was shared by the family, and bedtime came early. A.T. Odom always led the family in prayer at meal time and then each family member recited a Bible verse. When it was time to eat, Addie rang the dinner bell located on the back porch. Following supper, the girls cleaned the kitchen and depending on the season, the boys went fishing in Clear Creek. The Odom boys set up bated fishing poles earlier in the day and about 9 p.m. they checked them. They usually caught something—catfish—that was stored in the in-ground insulated ice box that A.T. Odom constructed near the house. After the arrival of electricity, the Odoms bought a freezer, and this was used to store fish as well as beef, pork and vegetables. The family milked their cows daily, and kept about six hogs at a time as well as a few steers. Chickens and a small number of ducks and turkeys provided eggs and meat (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011). The family smokehouse was used to cure ham and bacon and when not in use for that purpose was used to store preserves. Cattle were taken to a processing plant between Newton and Jasper (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011).

The Odoms had one of two or three sugar mills that operated in Shankleville in the 1930s and 1940s. Community members would bring their cane for pressing on the small horse-powered mill located in the side yard of the Odom house. The juice was then boiled into syrup. The Odoms offered this service to their community without charge, as did the owners of the other mills in Shankleville (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011).

The land around the Odom homestead parcel was owned by other Odom family members. It all was used as farm or timberland, and at times A.T. Odom cultivated portions of it. In 1950, the 42-acre James Odom tract was divided among A.T. Odom and his siblings, all but one of the seven parcels were 6.76 acres in size. Addie's family also farmed, and their land was a bit west of the Odom homestead on the road that fronts the homestead dwelling. Addie's father, John Wesley Lewis, had a large farm and John's brother Candis Lewis lived nearby and also farmed. The road to the Lewis property crossed Clear Creek at a ford. By 1942 or 1943 the road was no longer used, as no one lived beyond the Odom Homestead any longer. The road is now overgrown (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011).

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A.T. Odom was secretary of the King Tut Burial Association, a local organization that operated between the 1930s and the 1960s. The association collected dues from members to provide burial insurance (Harold Odom, Jr., Lareatha Clay, Larutha Odom Clay, Lillie White and Anderson White, Jr. interview, 9-24-2011). Odom partnered with Courtney Strahan, Simon Lewis, George King and Charlie King in this venture. Odom prepared an annual report for the organization and organized a barbecue to raise funds to supplement the burial fund to help those with not enough coverage and those who were not members. When the Coleman Mortuary began business in Jasper and other communities in the region, it acquired the King Tut association and all its records and policies.⁸

A.T. Odom was the community coffin maker. He built coffins from 1x12s and if the family of the deceased could afford to pay for the lumber, or had insurance, Odom charged for it. If not, he donated the lumber. He always donated his labor in making the coffins, and Addie performed the task of lining the coffins with black cloth and preparing the deceased for burial by washing and dressing the body. In these roles, they served as community undertakers, assisting their neighbors and friends in a time of sorrow and need. The Odoms also extended this service to people in neighboring communities. A.T. Odom also kept the cemetery records, and was the custodian of the burial tools. After he retired from carpentry, he remained active in community affairs including the Shankleville Homecoming, which he helped organize, and as a member of the Burkeville Independent School District Tax Board. He also continued his many church activities (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011). A.T. Odom provided much historical information on Jim and Winnie Shankle for the Shankleville Subject Marker awarded by the Texas Historical Commission in 1973. **Figure 12** shows A.T. and Addie Odom about 1966.

The education of their children was a primary goal of the Odoms. Not only did they ensure their children attended school, they instilled an understanding of the importance of education to achieving success in life. Addie made sure her children returned directly home from school and that all homework was completed. A. T. Odom lent his organizational and leadership skills to the Enterprise Common School District by serving as district secretary from 1929 to 1944. In addition to supervising her children in their homework and ensuring their school attendance, when the Enterprise School was consolidated in 1944 with the Burkeville Independent School District she drove her children and other Shankleville students to their new school at Wiergate. The Wiergate Colored School was too far for most Shankleville students to walk to, limiting access for them. To solve this problem, Addie Odom began operating a school bus using the family pickup truck. A.T. Odom used the truck for his construction business and it featured a sign on the doors that read "A.T. Odom, Contractor." Odom built wooden benches for the bed of the pickup and installed a hinged board across the open back end for safety. The word "STOP" was painted on the hinged board in large letters to warn other drivers. The "bus" held about 12 children. Elzie remembers a brief moment of relief when the news of school consolidation was announced. He thought he would finally have a little freedom from his mother's watchful eyes, and her supervision of her children going to and coming from the Enterprise School. But that relief was short-lived as Addie drove him, his siblings and other Shankleville children to and from the Wiergate school every day. Freedom didn't come for Elzie until he graduated from high school in 1945. Addie continued to drive the school bus until some time after her youngest child graduated (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011).

All of the Odom children graduated from high school, and each was first in their class. Following high school, Harold, Sr. enrolled at Prairie View Normal College and majored in agriculture to enhance his existing truck-farming and woodworking skills. He taught in the Bleakwood Community in Newton County and later in Cameron, Texas. He also served as county agricultural agent in several Texas counties and became a regent of Tarrant County Community College

⁸ Mr. Coleman is/was a descendant of Jim and Winnie Shankle.

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and the race-relations officer for the Tarrant County office of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Brother S.T. also attended Prairie View and majored in auto mechanics. He left school after a year and moved to Berkeley, California, where he became a railroad "red cap" and later a longshoreman. He ended his career as a supervisor within the organization of the Port of San Francisco. James graduated from high school next and attended Prairie View, majoring in carpentry and minoring in painting and interior design. He taught high school in Naples, Texas, for a year and then began using his design skills to create decorated vehicles, which he leased to the U.S. Postal Service. Following a 40-year career as a letter carrier he constructed and/or decorated several residences and a church parsonage. In 1945 Larutha and Elzie, Sr. enrolled at Prairie View. Larutha had delayed college for two years to attend the Madame C.J. Walker Beauty School in Dallas. After receiving her beautician's license she moved to Orange, Texas, and started a successful beauty shop with her sister Arzela who had attended Madame Walker's Beauty School at the same time as Larutha. Arzela provided laughs and jokes for the family, including herself, to enjoy (Clay papers c9). In time, Arzela moved to northern California and completed a course in key-punch, which led to a career in that field. She returned to Texas following her retirement. In 1945, Larutha enrolled at Prairie View paying her own way through college with money saved from her and Arzela's business called Ruth's Beauty Shop. In 1948 Larutha graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts in English. Elzie, Sr. interrupted his pre-med studies at Prairie View to fulfill dreams of community service, which included service as the first African-American on the school board in Orange, Texas, and as one of the first African-American postal inspectors. In the 1990s he was elected mayor of Arlington, Texas, and was the first African-American to hold this position. Daughter Oletha was the first beautician in the family and joined her husband in his barbershop, creating a beauty-barbershop combination. All the Odom children married and had families. In 1949, Larutha began her teaching career at Lincoln High School in Port Arthur. She went on to earn a Master of Arts in English at Prairie View and continued to teach high school students. Lee Edwin, the youngest Odom son, received a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Arts from Prairie View. He taught industrial arts at Lincoln High School in Port Arthur as well as electronics and wood working, and served as chair of the industrial arts department (Clay Papers, c1).

Religion and involvement in the life of Mt. Hope Baptist Church was an important part of Odom family life. Both Addie and A.T. participated in church activities through official leadership duties as well as through service to church and community members. A.T. Odom was the clerk of Mt. Hope Baptist Church for nearly 60 years, keeping all records for the church. He also served as superintendent of the Mt. Hope Sunday School, which included classes for children and adult members. He was choir director for Mt. Hope Baptist Church and taught shaped notes singing in churches in Newton and San Augustine and other adjacent counties. He led prayer meetings, and although he stuttered when he spoke, his family recalls that when he sang or prayed, his stutter disappeared (Lareatha Clay interview, 9-24-2011). A.T. Odom also served as President of the Sabine Valley Baptist Association's Sunday School Congress for 49 years. The Sabine Valley group was a regional church organization that served churches in Newton, Sabine, San Augustine and other area counties. Addie was also a tireless worker within the church, as well as within the Shankleville Community. In a memorial biography prepared for her funeral, she was described as the Mother of Mt. Hope Baptist Church who "...let her light shine as a teacher in Sunday School, Bible School and the Missionary Society" (Clay Papers, c6). Addie also served the Mt. Hope congregation for many years as a church counselor and as the President and President Emeritus of the Sabine Valley Baptist Association Women's Convention.

Theresa Peacock moved to Shankleville in 1954 when she married Cecil Peacock. A native of Jamestown, another freedmen's community in Newton County, Mrs. Peacock found Shankleville residents friendly and helpful to one another. Mrs. Peacock remembers the Shankleville women as motherly and helpful to younger women, and that they taught them childrearing and housekeeping skills. Adults looked out for each other's children and reported to each other on the children's behavior. Although she learned to make cold water soap from her mother using bacon fat and lye, Mrs. Peacock also learned to make hot water lye soap from Addie Odom as part of Mrs. Odom's work in the church missionary

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society. Mrs. Odom also taught cooking skills. A major component of the mission society's work was going into the community to clean homes and learn what supplies people needed. The mission group would purchase needed supplies and food and donate it to the families and individuals in need. The group even bought hospital gowns for those in need. These efforts were conducted in concert by the women of all three of Shankleville's churches until about 2000. Mrs. Peacock remembers this as one of the best things about living in Shankleville. "Everyone looked after each other" (Theresa Peacock interview, 9-25-2011).

In the late 1950s or early 1960s, Addie began writing a column on Shankleville for the Newton County News. Using her portable typewriter, she conveyed community news and achievements to the entire county (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011). Following in her footsteps, daughter Larutha Odom Clay began a running account of family events and accomplishments that she continued until 1987, when she turned over the project to another family member. That account keeps the activities, accomplishments and milestones of the Odom family alive for future generations and provided important information for this nomination.

While a student at Prairie View in the mid-1940s, Larutha Odom Clay described her family and their life together. She characterized her mother as loving and faithful and her father as providing comradeship and guidance, and both parents as giving of these things without thought of return (Clay Papers, b1). Elzie Odom remembers Shankleville as an interesting place with a special meaning for community members. It still holds a special meaning for those who grew up there and for their descendants. Elzie says that meaning comes from the sincerity of the residents and their commitment to each other. As an example, he remembers that the bell at Mt. Hope Church would toll to alert the community to a family in distress, and to different types of events such as a death, acute sickness, or a cow stuck in the creek. Each problem had a different ring pattern and residents responded to these emergencies by going to the church to learn who needed assistance. Elzie appreciates having grown up in Shankleville. His parents were a little better off financially than many other residents, but as a child he didn't know this because his parents never spoke of money in front of their children. Community members didn't display resentment toward his family about their more prosperous circumstances, probably—Elzie says—because his parents were helpful and generous (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011). Elzie remembers his father as a kind and thoughtful man who was considerate of others. When A.T. was dying, community members came to visit him in the hospital. Although this tired him, he understood that his visitors needed to say goodbye and he honored them by never asking anyone to leave (Elzie Odom interview, 10-6-2011).

A.T. Odom passed away in 1979, just a month short of his 86th birthday. At his death, Addie and A.T. Odom had been married 64 years, raised eight children of their own and fostered five of A.T. siblings. A.T. established a successful carpentry and building construction business that served both white and black clients and he and Addie operated a successful family farm and a small community grocery store. He participated in Depression-era relief work to supplement the family income, and served his community in leadership roles through volunteer work with the Enterprise School, the Mt. Hope Baptist Church, the King Tut Burial Society and as community coffin maker. Called Bigpapa by his family, he shared his skills and labor with his community whenever it was needed and assisted those in need through charitable works.

Addie Lewis Odom died in 1987 at the age of 93. Addie served her family, church and community through leadership at Mt. Hope Baptist Church, and by transporting Shankleville students to school in the family owned "bus." She served as community undertaker, and supplemented the family income through W.P.A. work. Called Cousin Addie by community members, and Bigmama by her family, she was devoted not only to her family but to helping others. She cooked and fed those who were ill and who had fallen on hard times, and shared her cooking, housekeeping and childrearing skills with her community. She organized a quilting club, and at 93 still gardened, quilted, made lye soap and did "artistic

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needlepoint” that she shared with Shankleville visitors. She was famous for her teacakes, which were shared at weddings, funerals, and community gatherings. They were also given to the Mt. Hope Sunday School every Valentine’s Day (Clay Papers, c6). At 92 she still drove her 1965 Ford Fairlane. Perhaps the most famous, and apt, of Addie’s sayings, was that she planned to “wear out, not rust out.” She was true to her words.

A.T. and Addie Odom did all this in the face of the restrictive laws of segregation of the Jim Crow era that characterized late 19th to mid-20th century America. The Odoms were unquestionably inspired by the strength and achievements of their forebears, sustained by their Christian faith, the values instilled in them by their parents, and their understanding of the needs of their community. They developed lasting relationships with their community and even though they are both deceased, their memories remain an important and respected part of the Shankleville story.

Justification of Significance

The Odom Homestead is significant for its associations with the contributions and leadership of A.T. Odom and Addie L. Odom to the Shankleville community. Through his construction business, A.T. Odom built numerous dwellings in Newton County, an African-American church in Jasper, Texas, and other buildings including a lake house getaway for a Euro-American owned bank. A.T. Odom was employed by the Wier Long Leaf Lumber Company in nearby Wiergate to construct housing for African-American millworkers, and he worked on the WPA built-Newton County Sub-Courthouse (known as the Cade Building) at Burkeville, served as the only African-American teacher for Civilian Conservation Corps Company #838, an African-American unit camped near Newton, Texas between 1939 and 1942⁹, and was a Deacon and Superintendent of the Mt. Hope Baptist Church for more than 60 years where he guided church programs and served as a mentor to male church members and youth. A.T. Odom also served as one of three trustees of the Enterprise School Board, a sub-group of the Newton County School Board, operated a small mercantile store on his farm for the community and served as coffin maker for area residents. Addie Jane Lewis Odom was primarily a housewife who found time to mentor community women through sharing of recipes, housekeeping practices and child rearing methods. She also taught community women the art of making cotton mattresses, served as a supervisor of the county WPA canning plant established for African-American women, drove community children to the Wiergate Colored School using the family’s pick-up truck as the school bus, functioned as the community undertaker, and beginning in the late 1950s or early 1960s writing a column about Shankleville for a Newton county newspaper. In addition, Addie Lewis Odom participated in the mission work of Mt. Hope Baptist Church’s, which provided meals, clothing, bedding and nursing assistance for community members in need.

As recognized leaders within Shankleville, the Odoms served in numerous ways that improved community and individual life. By example and discussion with individuals asking for guidance, the couple inspired neighbors to leadership, supported education for community children, and shared their skills, knowledge, dedication and the fruits of their labor with others. In these ways, they fostered pride in the community’s shared African-American heritage and supported their neighbors in attaining individual goals. Addie and A.T. Odom stepped out of the typical rural experience of African Americans in East Texas during the Jim Crow era, serving as examples of success through dedication to goals and values, and inspiring and assisting others in leadership roles in community institutions and activities. They gained the respect of family, neighbors and the larger community, and created a lasting legacy for their community, children and grandchildren.

Despite changes, the homestead property retains sufficient integrity to interpret its time and place and the activities and contributions of A.T. and Addie L. Odom. The Odom Homestead interprets the significant contributions and values of

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Addie and A.T. Odom, illuminates the achievements of a dedicated couple during the Jim Crow era, when discriminatory legislation and social customs worked together to restrict African American civil rights, education, self-realization and financial success, and highlights the often overlooked and invisible lives of African-American citizens. For these reasons the Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead is nominated to the National Register under Criterion B, Ethnic Heritage: Black (African-American) at the local level of significance. The property is worthy of preservation as a local landmark that through its residential and agricultural functions and long association with a leading, local African-American family expands understanding of the African-American experience between 1922 and 1962.

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- b) Floor Plan
- c) Property Information.

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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

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Odom House
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 a) Historic Photographs.

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 a) Maps

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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

a) Tobin Map, 1962.

Odom, Elzie, Sr.

a) Plat of Odom Homestead, 1949.

Williams, Diane E.

a) Photographs.

b) Floor plans.

c) Site Plan

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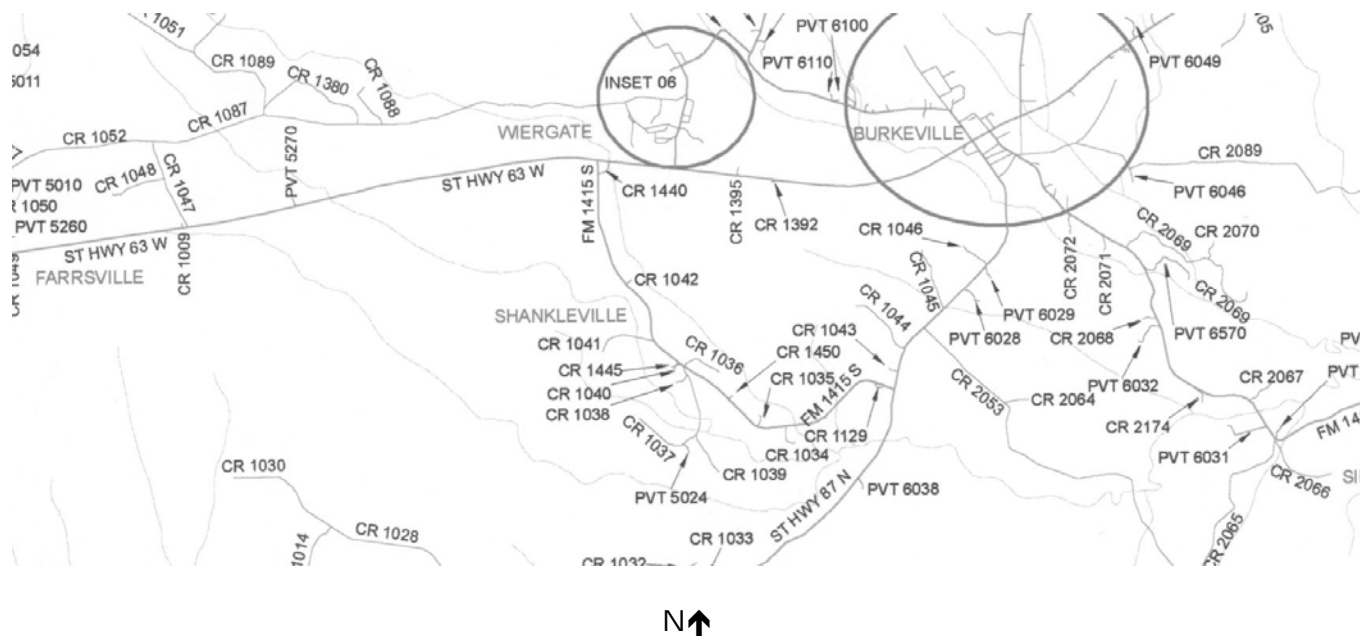
Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Map 1

Newton County Area Map (2009) ‘

No Scale

Source: Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG)



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Map 2

Shankleville (2009)

No Scale

Source: Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG)



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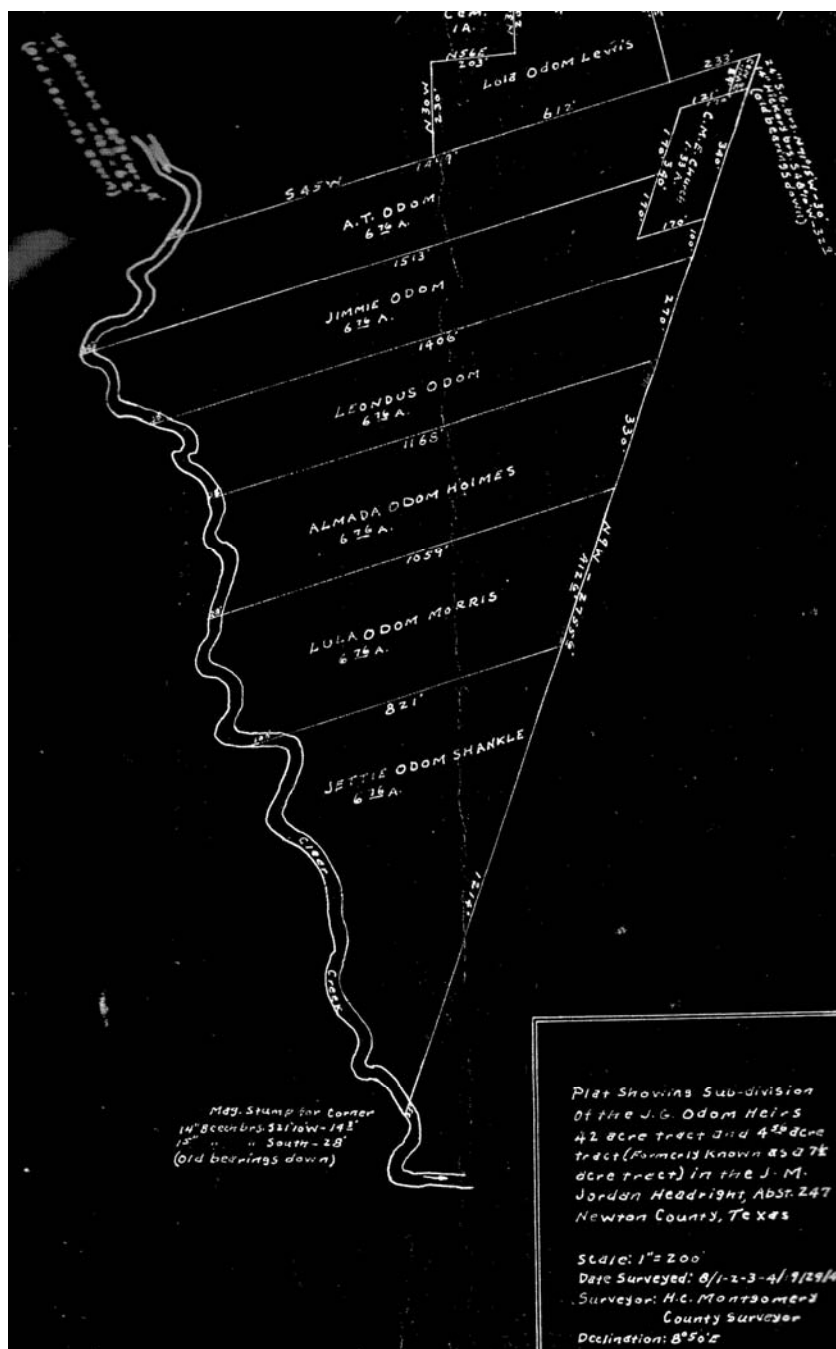
Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 1

Subdivision Plat of J.G. Odom Heirs 42-acre tract (1949)

Source: Elzie Odom, Sr.

No Scale



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 2.

Odom Homestead with Addie and Larutha in front of house, ca. 1931.
Source: Larutha Odom Clay



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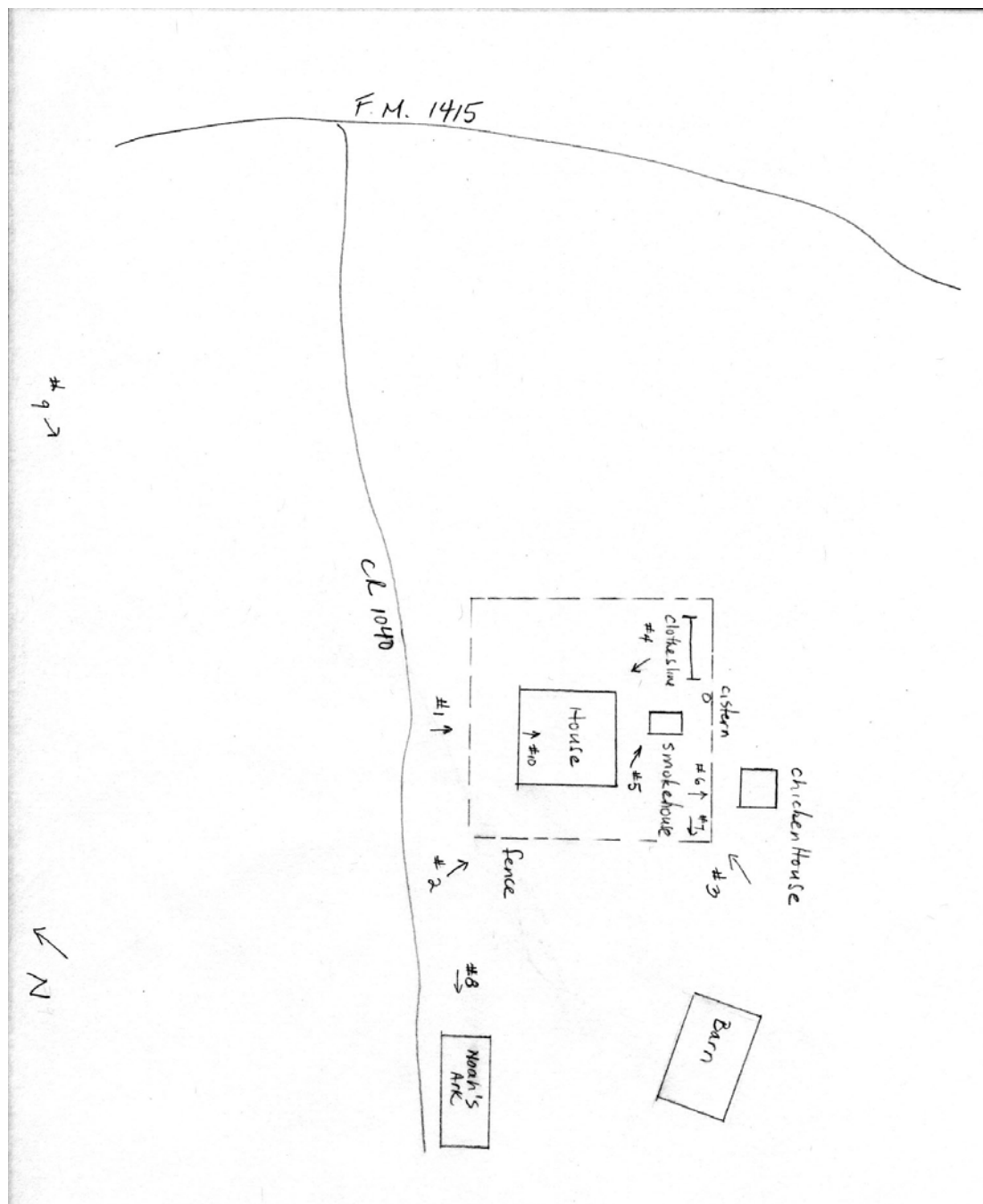
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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 3

Site Plan of Odom Homestead showing location and direction of current photographs.
Source: Diane Williams



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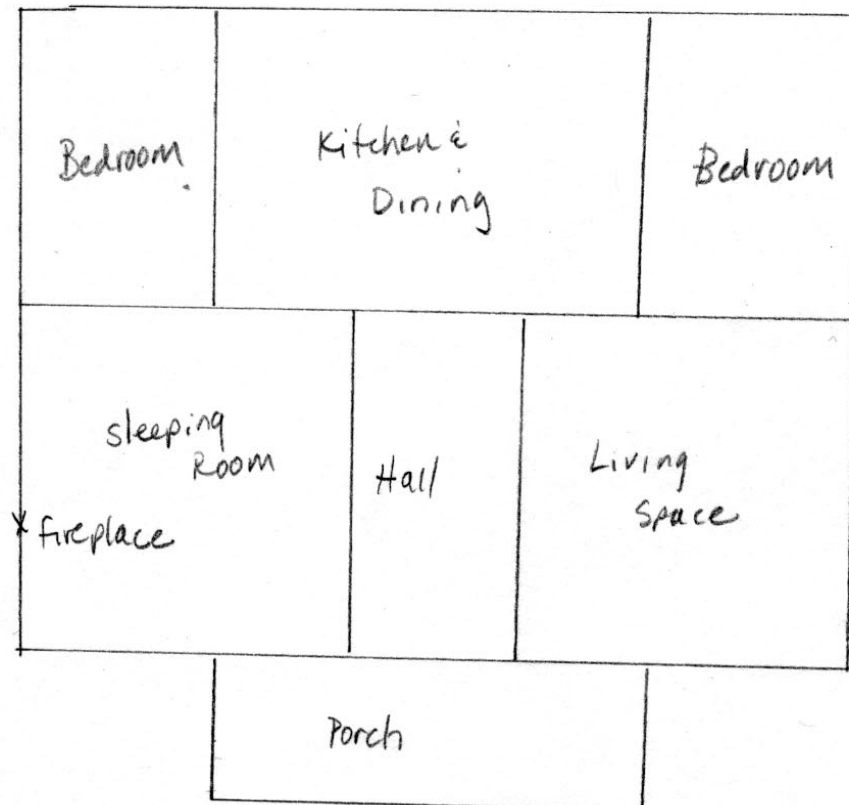
Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 4

Floor Plan of Odom Homestead, ca. 1922.

Source: Diane Williams

Not to Scale



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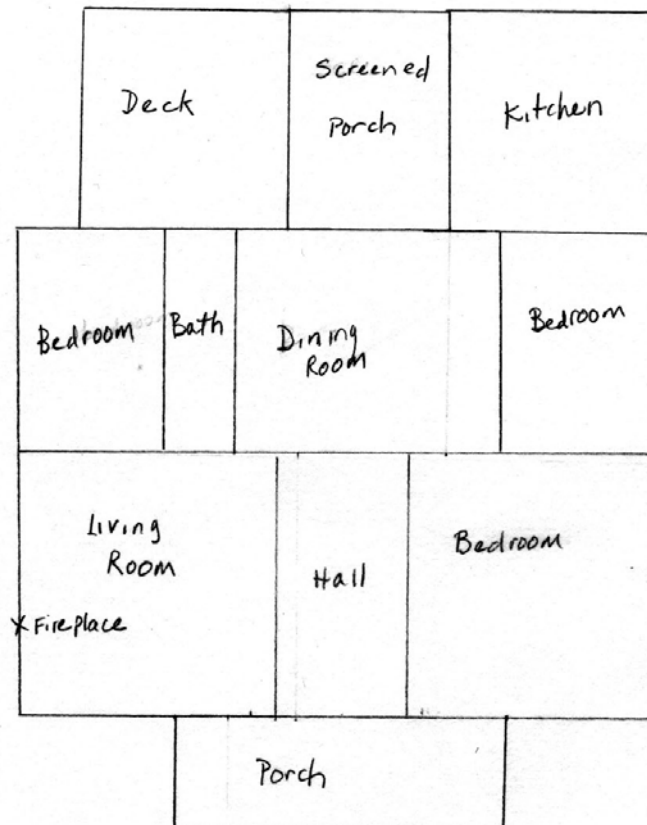
Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 5

Floor Plan of Odom Homestead, 2011.

Source: Diane Williams

Not to Scale



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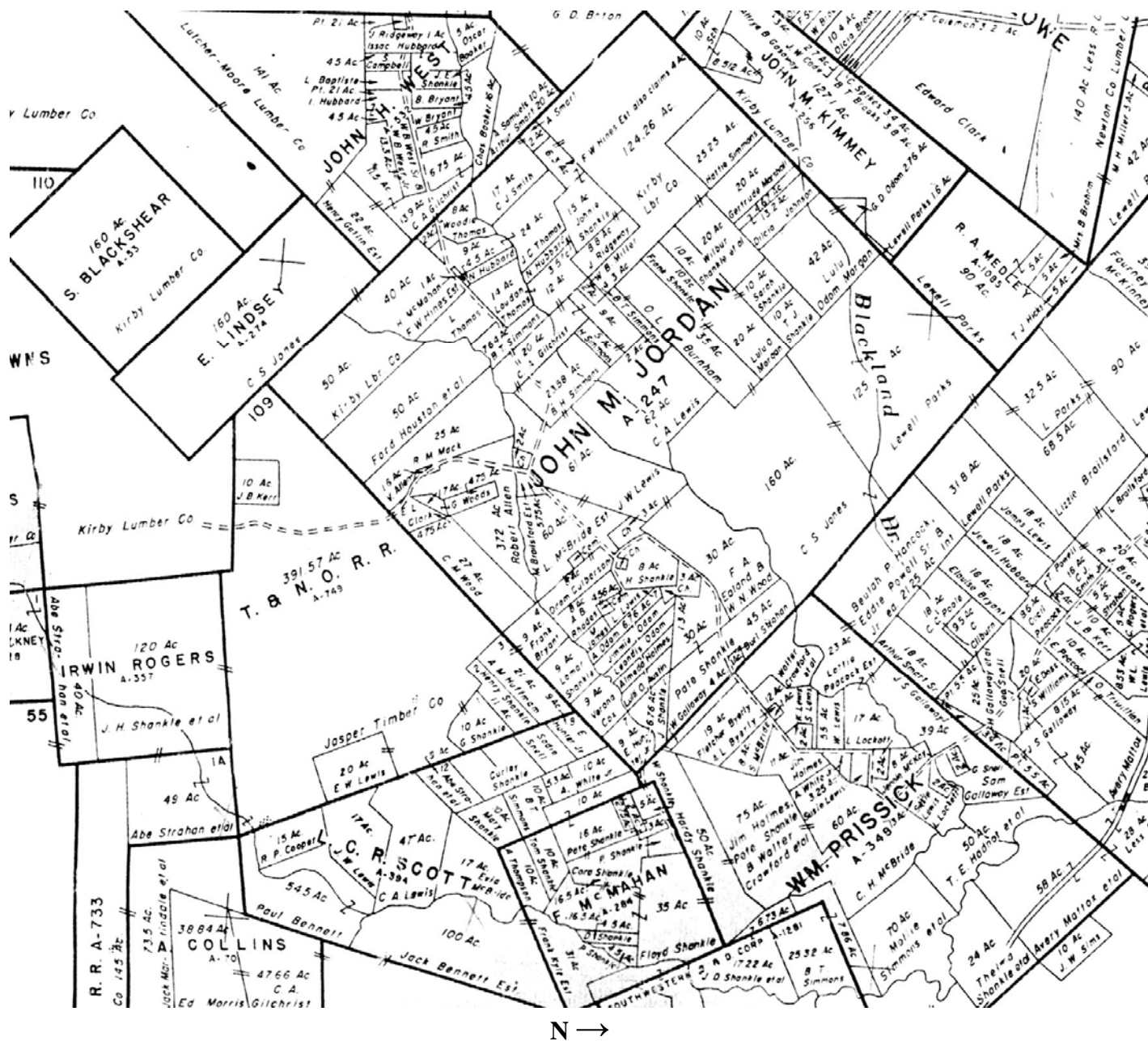
Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 6

John M. Jordan Survey, ca. 1962.

Source: Tobin Map, Newton County Clerk

Not to Scale



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 7

Plucking Chickens, with Addie seated on the left, ca. 1960s.
Source: Harold Odom, Jr.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 8

Family Reunion, Left to Right:

1st row, Addie and A.T. Odom

2nd row, Elzie, Larutha, Lee, Arzela;

3rd row, S.T., Oletha, Harold Sr., James, 1949.

Source: Larutha Odom Clay



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 9

Odom Homestead, ca. 1989.
Source: Lareatha Clay



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 10

A.T. Odom, ca. 1909.
Source: Larutha Odom Clay



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 11

A.T. Odom in front of Odom store with grandchildren, ca. 1960.
Source: Harold Odom, Jr.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Figure 12

A.T. and Addie Odom, ca. 1966.
Source: Lareatha Clay



Deacon A. T. Odom

1893 - 1979

Mrs. Harold Odom (Fort Worth)
Mr. James E. Odom (Burkeville)
Mrs. Arzela Odom Cole (Oakland, Calif.)
Mr. Elzie D. Odom (Arlington)

Mother Addie J. Odom

1893 - 1987

Mr. S. T. Odom (Berkeley, Calif)
Mrs. Oletha Odom Woods (Jasper)
Mrs. Larutha Odom Clay (Beaumont)
Mr. Lee Odom (Port Arthur)

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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

PHOTO INVENTORY

Addie L. and A.T. Odom Homestead
Shankleville, Newton County, Texas
Diane Elizabeth Williams, Photographer
September, 2011
Original Negatives on File with the Texas Historical Commission

Photo 1
Front Elevation (northwest), Odom Homestead, camera facing southeast.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 2

Side (West) Elevation, View of Odom Homestead, camera facing east southeast.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 3

Rear Elevation (south), View of Odom Homestead, camera facing northeast.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 4

Rear Elevation (south) and Side Elevation (East), View of Odom Homestead, camera facing west northwest.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 5

North and West Elevations, Smokehouse, Odom Homestead, camera facing southeast.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 6

North Elevation, Chicken House, Odom Homestead, camera facing southwest.



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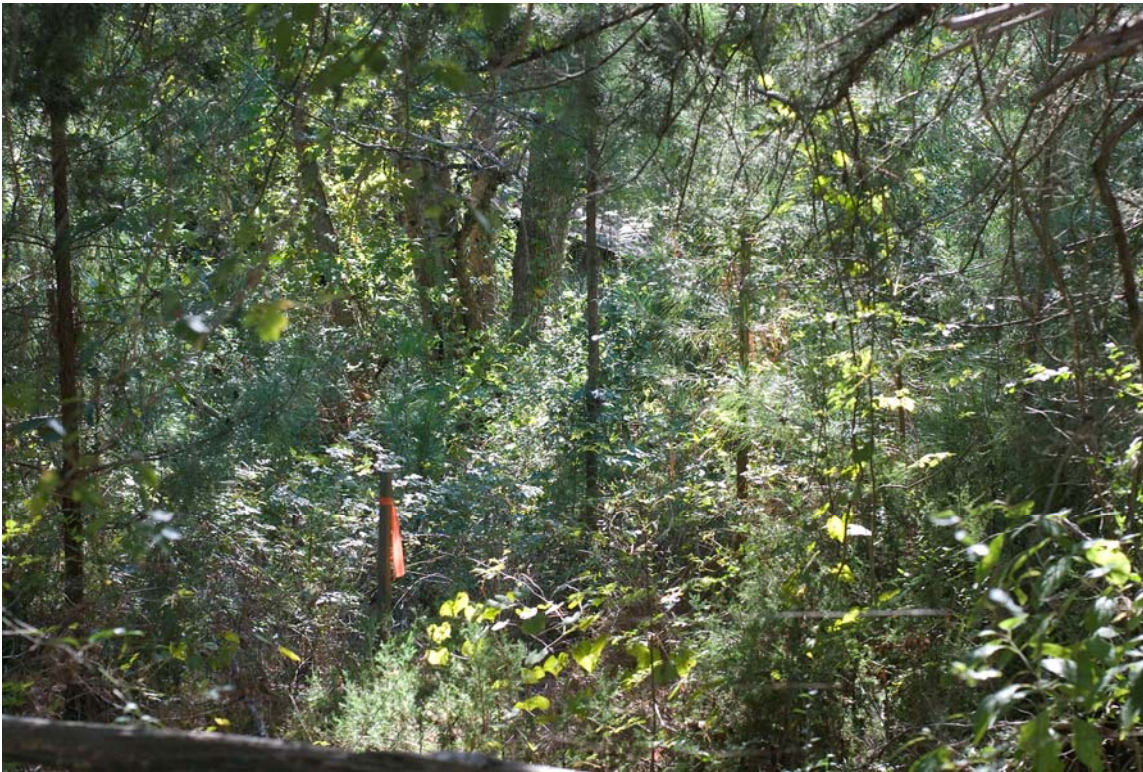
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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 7

View of Vicinity of Barn, Odom Homestead, camera facing west.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 8

Front Elevation, Noah's Ark, Odom Homestead, camera facing west.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 9

View of Odom Homestead and Setting, camera facing south southwest.



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Odom House
Burkeville vicinity, Newton County, Texas

Photo 10

View of French Doors, Entry Hall, Odom Homestead, camera facing south.

