

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NR LISTED

MAY 28 1999

AHPP

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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Historic Name: Scipio A. Jones House

Other Name/Site Number: PU9832

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2. Location

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Street & Number: 1872 South Cross Street

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Little Rock

Vicinity: N/A

State: AR County: Pulaski

Code: 119 Zip Code: 72206

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Scipio A. Jones House  
Name of Property

Pulaski County, Arkansas  
County and State

Number of Resources within Property:

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

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

Name of related multiple property listing: Historically Black Properties in Little Rock's Dunbar School Neighborhood

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**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**  
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

Scipio A. Jones House  
Name of Property

Pulaski County, Arkansas  
County and State

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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**5. National Park Service Certification**

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
National Register
- \_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register
- \_\_\_\_\_ other (explain):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
of Action

Scipio A. Jones House  
Name of Property

Pulaski County, Arkansas  
County and State

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling

Current : DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification:

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials: foundation Brick roof Other/Tile  
walls Brick other Gables: Stucco  
Stucco Porch columns: Stone/Granite

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

**SUMMARY**

One of the Dunbar neighborhood's most richly-detailed Craftsman-style houses, particularly among those built originally for black residents, the Scipio A. Jones House is located on one lot at the northwest corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and Cross Streets. The variety and quality of materials used in the home's construction—brick, stucco, tile, granite—distinguish it from its neighbors and indicate that it was built for a person of more than average means.

**ELABORATION**

The main 1 ½-story section of the Scipio A. Jones House has a broadly-pitched, front-gabled roof with exposed rafter ends. Red tile covers this main roofline, as well as the hipped roofs of the front porch, a two-story rear section, and a one-story projecting bay in the rear (west) façade, all of which also have exposed rafter ends. Rather than the more typical knee braces, exposed beams are located under the eaves of the main roofline's front-facing "clipped" gable. A band of three casement windows is centered

in this gable end.

All of the first floor of the house is veneered in a buff-colored brick. The second level of the two-story rear section of the house is clad in stucco, as is the front-facing gable end.

Most of the home's original first-floor windows, many of them arranged in pairs or in groups of three, have four-over-one, double-hung sashes. The exceptions are two small casement windows that flank the brick chimney on the north side of the house. Bands of casement windows also are located in the south, west, and north facades of the second-story rear section, which probably originally enclosed a sleeping porch.

Four square columns of gray granite support the roof of the home's one-story, full-width front porch, forming three bays across the front (east) of the house. The one major alteration of the home's original exterior design has been the enclosure of the north and south bays of the porch. Bands of three aluminum, double-hung windows are located in the east walls of these enclosures, while the north and south ends each have a pair of aluminum, double-hung windows. The center bay, defined by a granite arch, remains open and frames the front entry, comprised of a multi-paned door flanked by sidelights.

A driveway across the rear (west) of the house originally led to a small garage that no longer stands.

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: B and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Ethnic Heritage/Black  
Architecture  
Law  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1928-1943

Significant Dates: 1928

Scipio A. Jones House  
Name of Property

Pulaski County, Arkansas  
County and State

Significant Person(s): Scipio A. Jones

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

SUMMARY

The Craftsman-style Scipio A. Jones House was built about 1928 for an African-American attorney who was one of the most prominent members of Little Rock's black community during the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, serving as well—because of the respect he earned as a lawyer and leader of the black community—as a bridge to Little Rock's white power structure. The home is significant for its association with Scipio A. Jones, as well as for its richly-detailed Craftsman design.

ELABORATION

When he died in 1943, Scipio Africanus Jones was described by a statewide newspaper, the *Arkansas Gazette*, as "one of Arkansas's best known Negroes and recognized throughout the United States as a leader for his race. . . ." He had practiced law in Little Rock for more than fifty years and was remembered especially for having secured the release of twelve black men convicted of murder following the Elaine (Arkansas) Race Riot of 1919.

Born into slavery in rural Arkansas in 1863, Scipio Jones moved to Little Rock about 1881 in order to further his education. He finished a "preparatory" course at Philander Smith College, then enrolled in North Little Rock's Shorter College, graduating with a bachelor's degree. He subsequently taught school while "reading law" in the office of three white attorneys. His long legal career began when he passed the bar examination in 1889, becoming one of Little Rock's first black lawyers.

The successful appeal that Jones brought on behalf of twelve men who had been tried and convicted of murder following the Elaine Race Riot resulted in his receiving national recognition during the 1920s. The riot had occurred in October 1919, when an attempt was made to organize black sharecroppers in the eastern Arkansas delta. Several whites and more

blacks were killed, leading to the arrests of over one hundred African Americans. Within a month, an all-white jury had convicted twelve black men of murder and sentenced them to death. The NAACP soon hired a white Little Rock attorney, George W. Murphy, to appeal the convictions. Murphy, in turn, asked Scipio Jones to assist him. When Murphy died unexpectedly less than a year later, Jones took the lead in the appeal, which reached the United States Supreme Court in 1923. Again, the NAACP hired a white attorney to handle the oral argument at the Supreme Court, but Jones is credited with having prepared the briefs on which the argument was based. Agreeing that errors had been made in the conduct of the original trials, the Supreme Court ordered the cases retried. Local white prosecutors apparently realized that their charges against the twelve black men would not hold up under close scrutiny, and by November of 1923 all of the men had been freed from prison.

Long before Jones attracted national attention, he was well-known locally as the attorney for several black fraternal organizations and as a powerful member of the Republican Party in Arkansas. He worked for years, not always successfully, to ensure that African Americans had a voice in party decisions. Despite white Republicans' growing support for segregation during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Jones held several responsible party positions, including serving as a delegate to the 1928 Republican National Convention.

During his more than sixty years in Little Rock, Jones had several residences, all but two of which now are gone. While he was single, he lived in two or three different locations. Following his marriage in 1896, Jones moved with his bride, Carrie, to 1808 Ringo Street in what now is the Dunbar School Neighborhood. Here, their only child—a daughter, Hazel—was born. Around the time of Carrie Jones' death in 1908, Scipio and Hazel Jones moved a few doors down the street to 1822 Ringo. Both of these Ringo Street residences were in the block where Dunbar High School later was built. In 1917, Scipio Jones married Miss Lillie Jackson. Their first home together, a frame Colonial Revival cottage, still stands at 1911 Pulaski Street. They lived at this address until 1928, when they moved to their new Craftsman-style home at 1872 Cross Street.

Although the house on Pulaski Street was Jones' residence during the period when he was representing the Elaine Race Riot defendants, the more substantial and stylish house at 1872 Cross Street represents the "fruit" of his career because it was made possible by the financial resources he accumulated during his many years as a lawyer. Jones' continued prominence during the latter years of his life is underscored by the appearance of his biography in the 1930-31 volume of *Who's Who in America*.

Both Scipio and Lillie Jones lived out their lives at 1872 Cross Street. Scipio Jones died in the home on March 28, 1943. Following Lillie Jones' death a few years later, the house was purchased by members of the family

that owns it today.

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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*Arkansas Democrat* (Little Rock). 8 April 1915.

*Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock). 29 March 1943.

Dillard, Tom. "Scipio A. Jones." *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 31 (Autumn 1972): 201-219.

*Insurance Maps of Little Rock, Arkansas*. Vol. 1. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1939.

Little Rock City Directories: 1886-1974.

Marquis, Albert Nelson. *Who's Who in America: A Biographical Dictionary of Notable Living Men and Women of the United States*. Vol. 16: 1930-31. Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Co., 1931.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

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

