

**Dallas Landmark Commission
Landmark Nomination Form**

1. Name: Ahab Bowen

historic: Ahab Bowen

and/or common: Ahab Bowen

date: December 5, 2001

2. Location

address: 2614 Boll St. Dallas TX, 75204

location/neighborhood: Uptown, Vineyards/Quadrangle

block : 955

lot: 7

land survey: John Grigsby Survey

tract size: 6,405 square feet

3. Current Zoning

current zoning: HC20

4. Classification

Category

district
 building(s)
 structure
 site
 object

Ownership

public
 private
 both

Public

Acquisition

in progress
 being considered
 not applicable

Status

occupied
 unoccupied
 work in progress

Accessibility

yes:restricted
 yes:unrestricted
 no

Present Use

agricultural
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment
 government
 industrial
 military

museum
 park
 residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other. specify

5. Ownership

Current Owner: Michael Longcrier

Contact: Michael Longcrier

Phone: 214-720-1874

Address: 2614 Boll St. **City:** Dallas **State:** Texas **Zip:** 75204

6. Form Preparation

Date: December 5, 2001

Name & Title: Jennie Magann, Program Manager

Organization: Preservation Dallas

Contact: Dwayne Jones, Executive Director

Phone: 214-821-3290

7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Alexander Survey (citywide) local state national National Register
H.P.L. Survey (CBD) A B C D X Recorded TX Historic Ldmk.
Oak Cliff TX Archaeological Ldmk
Victorian Survey: X
Dallas Historic Resources Survey, Phase: I X high medium low

For Office Use Only

Date Rec'd: Survey Verified: Y N by: Field Check by: Petitions Needed: Y N
Nomination: Archaeological Site Structure(s) Structure & Site District

8. Historic Ownership

original owner: Ahab Bowen
significant later owner(s): Michael Longcrier (1976-present(2002))

9. Construction Dates

original: 1874
alterations/additions: (c.1900, again 1976)

10. Architect

original construction: Unknown
alterations/additions:

11. Site Features

natural:
urban design: prominent corner lot, terraced three feet above street grade

12. Physical Description

Condition, check one:
___ excellent ___ deteriorated ___ unaltered ___ Check one:
___ x good ___ ruins ___ altered ___ x original site
___ fair ___ unexposed ___ moved(date ___)

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc). Elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

The Ahab Bowen house is a vernacular dwelling of the mid-Victorian period. Altered (c.1900, again 1976) to its present appearance, the house features a modest plan. 2614 Boll Street rests three feet above street grade on a yard covered in grass. The house faces south. There are deciduous and evergreen trees in the yard, but not obscuring the view of the house. The structure is setback approximately 15 ft from the sidewalk. A concrete sidewalk allows

access to the front porch. A privacy fence encloses the parking in the rear of the house. A steep driveway placed to the east allows for rear access and parking to this now commercial building. The house is located one block east of McKinney on the corner of Howland and Boll. Property dimensions describe an approximate rectangle with 61' of frontage along Boll St. (one point called Culberson Ave.) and 105' siding on Howland Street.

General Characteristics

The surrounding area developed during the 1880s - 1890s. The residences of the period were one-story cottages or two-story residences made of brick or stone. The surviving buildings are surrounded by commercial and modern multi-family buildings dating from the 20th century. The original parcel, part of the J. Grigsby Survey, included 60 acres and was purchased by Ahab Bowen in 1867. Bowen, a farmer and feed dealer, had many land holdings in the surrounding area now known as Uptown or the Quadrangle/Vineyard area.

Exterior

This vernacular dwelling is constructed on a pier and beam foundation with a simple trellis skirt to enclose the crawl space. The original structure is a two-room house with a rear ell addition. The side gabled, hipped roof is covered in composition shingle. There is an off-centered front porch (extended from a simple stoop c.1976) with a shed roof that covers 2/3rds of the principal facade. An interior chimney protrudes approximately one ft above the roofline. Asbestos siding was removed from the exterior and the original wide board siding common to the Victorian period has been repaired. The additions are of matched siding. (During the restoration, all siding was removed and numbered carefully for appropriate replacement, square nails (in keeping with the original nails used) were used to reapply the boards).

The original color of the house was determined from paint traces found on the siding. The body of the house is a rich avocado green. the accent pieces and molding are a dark forest green and the window sashes and doors are burgundy.

Rhythmic fenestration on the south facing north façade of the house is A-A-B-A, there are two windows on the east side of the original structure and three windows on the west side. All windows on the building are 1/1. Lintel cappings dress the original windows. The front door is a paneled and carved Victorian door with sidelights and a glass transom.

The front porch (extended from a simple stoop c.1976) is constructed of wood with a cutout wooden balustrade. Chamfered columns are placed rhythmically along the balustrade.

The existing porch was rebuilt along the basic lines that were visible on the house siding, approximating the roof pitch and original dimensions. The balustrade trim design was derived from the pedimented bargeboard at the roof apex. This ornament design was doubled and inverted to form the cutout railing detail and resembles an inverted tulip. Ginger bread detailing along the porch line and eaves has been restored. (Small portions of ornamentation were replaced as necessary, but to the original specifications.)

Interior

The original structure consisted of a front stoop leading into a central hall with rooms on either side. These front two rooms have 10' ceilings. A kitchen of 8'6" is located behind the north rooms and is part of the original structure. Two rear bedrooms of 11'6" and 9' respectively have been added to the structure. The interior of the original structure is painted ship lath with a stenciled ceiling appliqué. Although probably overly ornate for this simple country house originally, certainly the ornament is historically correct treatment for interiors of this period. The floors are of wide board planking. A simple brick hearth and mantelpiece is found in the north room.¹

Additions

Exterior siding, visible from the attic space on the western addition indicates that the rear addition was an entirely separate structure possibly used as a section house for the nearby railway system. This addition was probably made c.1900.

A shed roof addition has been constructed to the rear of the building (south façade, northeast corner) and is not readily visible from the street. On the east side of the building the original back porch was closed in for storage, two windows and a door trellis were salvaged from a house in Plano (although not appropriate to the approximate date of construction, they make a charming addition to an otherwise simple rear entry). The salvaged windows on the rear addition are framed in squares of multi-light colored glass. The back door is dressed with elaborate wooden latticework.

¹ THC Nomination form, Alan Mason 4/7/83 (Building description)

13. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

The Ahab Bowen house (c.1874), 2614 Boll Street, is located in the Uptown. Vineyard/Quadrangle area and is significant as one of the oldest buildings in the city. Approximately 30 years after John Neely Bryan's original log cabin, and possibly the oldest onsite structure in the City of Dallas. This structure is one of the few remaining folk Victorian dwellings remaining in Dallas. The home has been lovingly maintained and retains much of its integrity.

The Vineyard:

Bounded on the north by the Allen Street corridor, on the east by the McKinney Avenue corridor, on the south by the Maple Avenue corridor, and on the west by the M.K.T. Railroad, the Vineyard survives as a unique blend of residential and commercial structures. Originally lots 3 and 4 of the Grigsby League, the area's teeming wild fruit trees and grape vines and sandy soil attracted early settlers to this high west bank of Turtle Creek. One of the first, J. M., Cole (Cole Avenue) had extensive grape vineyards. Vine Street is named in honor of his vineyard and much of the neighborhood is still platted as "Cole's Vineyard Addition." The Bowen Family (Bowen Street) settled during the Civil War and raised peaches, apples and grapes.

The Vineyard's strategic location at the confluence of the roads to Maple Springs (Maple Avenue), Cedar Springs (Cedar Springs Avenue) and McKinney, Texas (McKinney Avenue), and its close proximity to the thriving county seat to the south, caused rapid development in the 1880s and 1890s. The late 1950s and early 1960s saw the renovation of many of these old homes into shops, galleries, and restaurants.²

Biographical History (as cited from the Texas Historical Commission Nomination):

Ahab Bowen was born on October 16, 1807, in Grainger County, Tennessee. He married Mary Lyon Easley (born May 12, 1812; died August 5, 1889) on March 22, 1835. The Bowen union produced nine children. The family moved to Bolivar, MO., in 1837, where they operated a stagecoach station for many years. In 1861 the Bowen's moved again, this time to Dallas.

The Dallas Herald of March 31, 1866 notes an A. Bowen at "Watt Caruth's old stand on the northeast corner of the public square." (p.2, col. 7). Several months later, another Herald advertisement asks,

² Reprinted from Intown Dallas (1977), permission of Preservation Dallas

Continuation Sheet

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Do you love your wife? The undersigned are now in receipt of a fine assortment of cooking stoves. . . procure you wife a stove at once, and she will greet you with smiles instead of a frown. (July 7, 1966, p.2, col. 7)

(The undersigned were Hill and Bowen. No first names were provided.)

On April 23, 1870, The Herald announced "William A. Hartje and Company have bought the stock of goods of Mr. A. Bowen on Main Street, next to the railroad corner and have added them to a large assortment of Dry Goods, Groceries, etc . . . (p.3, col.2). Bowen, at 62 years of age, began to concentrate more of his time on farming his land near McKinney Avenue. He had been farming his acreage prior to this date, however, as the following account from the Herald of March 16, 1868 attests:

Mr. A. Bowen, of this place, informs us that he and several of his neighbors have effectually (sic) protected their fruit trees from the caterpillars, by wrapping the tree with wool rolls, about two or three feet from the ground. In no instance has he seen this fail-the caterpillar will not or cannot pass over the wool.

The 1872-73 City Directory does not list Ahab Bowen, although there is an H. B. Bowen, dealer in general merchandise at the corner of Commerce and Houston Streets. H. B. Bowen boarded with Mrs. S. C. Akard (sic) a widow at Akard and Wood Streets. Ahab's eldest daughter Sarah would marry and Akard and live in a house on or near this site, the present location of the Dallas Federal Reserve Bank. The 1875 Directory lists A. Bowen as a merchant at 212 S. Houston and H. B. Bowen at 216 S. Houston. The 1883-84 City Directory lists Ahab Bowen as a fruit raiser, in 1887 a farmer, and in 1889 a feed dealer. In the 1887 edition H. B. Bowen shared their address as being on the west side of McKinney Rd. 1½ miles north of the courthouse. The 1894 City Directory lists Bowen's address as 434 McKinney at Boll, the home of son-in-law, James B. Franklin at 112 Thompson (2612 Boll). All of the aforementioned listings are in the immediate area of the Bowen house. Franklin managed the McNab Grocery (2701 McKinney) for a number of years. Ahab Bowen died on February 11, 1900, at the age of ninety-two. He is buried at Greenwood Cemetery in Dallas (lot 75, block 3).

Bowen's death in 1900' the house was no longer used as an owner occupied residence. Relatives of the owner lived in the house for a time before it became a rental property and then a series of commercial uses. It ultimately became a storage facility prior to its acquisition by the current owner in 1976. Michael Longcrier has restored the building, retaining, but rebuilding some of the additions to appropriately blend with the original. It now serves as a vintage clothing store.

Continuation Sheet

Item # _____

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Building Use History:

Circumstantial evidence suggests the structure was built c.1874, city records, sketchy at best during the period, were of no use as the house was located outside of the city limits at the date of its construction. The 1875 City Directory lists Bowen, but as a resident outside the city limits. No listing appears in the 1880-81 City Directory. The 1881-82 listing has Bowen living on the north side of McKinney Road one-half mile north of the city. By 1889 an A. Bowen, feed dealer appears residing on the northwest corner of McKinney at Boll. Bowen's great grandson, Walter Bowen, has related that Ahab did reside directly across McKinney Avenue prior to his occupying the present structure, but he could not provide an exact date for his move. Walter Bowen offered that his ancestor did build the farmhouse at Howland St. and Boll for his residence. From this it can be ascertained that the structure was built sometime during the 1872-1889 period and that Bowen had lived in the immediate vicinity prior to his moving to the house under study.³

A finer dating for the house may be provided by a clue in the structure itself. The country vernacular style was common during the latter years of the 19th century and does not, of itself, offer much insight. Perhaps the most helpful clue is to be found in the attic. A simple inscription of the names "Sedgwick and Elliott" appears in black ink across one of the supporting 2"X4" roof joists. Lawson and Edmondson's City Directory of 1873-74 lists a J. F. Sedgwick and J. E. Elliott lumber yard located on Pacific Street. No listing appears in the 1872 Directory. The 1875 edition lists a J. T. Elliott as a lumber dealer on Hawkins Street with the 1878 notation of James T. Elliott located on South Leonard—both locations in the Bowen neighborhood. The roof joists may have been left over remnant from the Sedgwick & Elliott partnership of 1873 or Bowen might have purchased it directly from Elliott several years later. It is an odd fact however, that there is only one joist so noted. Further, the names may have been plainly inscribed in the center of the support, suggesting at least that the names were written after placement in the roof infrastructure. The square nails and lack of any additional nail holes indicates that the joist was cut to fit the original building. Circumstantial at best, but this does indicate a very strong claim that the building was constructed in 1874 or shortly thereafter.⁴

³ Interview with Walter Bowen, interviewer, Alan Mason, 1-18-81 (THC nomination)

⁴ THC nomination form, Alan Mason, 4/7/83 (Biographical History, Ahab Bowen)

14. Bibliography

Walter Bowen. Interview, 1/18/81

Dallas Herald microfilms, Dallas Public Library

The Dallas City Directory

Jamie Ault Grady, Bowen's of Virginia & Texas, Vol. 2, Dallas Public Library, 1976.

Michael Longcrier, Interview, 12/05/01

Interview with Walter Bowen, interviewer, Alan Mason, 1-18-81.

Texas Historical Commission Nomination form prepared by Alan Mason 4/7/83.

15. Attachments

District or Site Map

Site Plan

Photos (historic & current)

Additional descriptive material

Footnotes

Other: _____

(Note: will be distributed at April 1, 2002 LC meeting).

17. Designation Criteria

History, heritage and culture: Represents the historical development, ethnic heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or country.

Historic event: Location of or association with the site of a significant historic event.

Significant persons: Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state, or country.

Architecture: Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, landscape design, method of construction, exceptional craftsmanship, architectural innovation, or contains details which represent folk or ethnic art.

Architect or master builder: Represents the work of an architect, designer or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state or country.

Historic context: Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation based on historic, cultural, or architectural characteristics.

Unique visual feature: Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source of pride or cultural significance.

Archeological: Archeological or paleontological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest.

National and state recognition: Eligible of or designated as a National Historic Landmark, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, State Archeological Landmark, American Civil Engineering Landmark, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic education: Represents an era of architectural, social, or economic history that allows an understanding of how the place or area was used by past generations.

Recommendation

The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date: March 6, 2002

Frances James

Co-Chair

Designation Committee

Victoria Clow

Co-Chair

Designation Committee