United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only received SEP 1 9 1979 NOV | 9 1979 date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Nam	е							
historic	Chambersea							
and/or common	General Thomas Jefferson Chambers House							
2. Loca	tion							
street & number	Corner of Wa	ashingto	on and Ci	ummings St	treets		not for	publication
city, town	Anahuac		vi	cinity of	congressional	district	9	
state	Texas	code	048	county	Chambers		C	ode 071
3. Clas	sificatio	n						
Category district X building(s) structure site object	OwnershipX_ public private both Public Acquisiti in process being consid		Accessib	upied n progress le	Present Us agriculte commer educatio entertain governn industris military	ure cial onal nment nent	X parl priv relig	ate residence gious entific esportation
name	er of Pro		· y					(
street & number	P. O. Box 9	39						
city, town	Anahuac		vi	cinity of		state	Texas	
5. Loca	tion of L	.ega	l Des	cripti	on			APX (12 mg
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc.	Chambe	rs Count	y Courtho	use	436		
street & number		Office	of the	County Cl	erk, P. O. Bo	ox 728		
city, town	-130/1-21-1	Anahua	С,			state	Texas	
6. Repr	esentati	ion i	n Exi	sting	Surveys			
title HABS; His	toric Sites I	nventor	у	has this pro	perty been deter	mined ele	gible?	yes _ <u>%</u> no
date 1936; 7	7/21/70				X federal	X state	ecou	inty local
depository for su	rvey records Lib	rary of	Congres	s; Texas	Historical Co	ommissio	on	
city, town Was	shington; Aust	in				state [).C.; Tex	cas

7. Description

Condition excellent	deteriorated	Check one unaltered	Check one X original sité	
X good	ruins	_X_ altered	moved date	<u> </u>
fair	unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

General Chambers employed a basic two level Greek Revival style of architecture in designing his home, and borrowed elements reflecting a Louisiana influence which contributes greatly to the overall charm of the house.

The simple structure consists of four rooms; two rooms on each level. A double exterior gallery along the north elevation had lattice screening at both ends on the second level and only on the west end of the first level, as well as the second level west end of the south porch. It appears that not only is this lattice element decorative, but it serves to filter hot western sun on the open porches. The unique circular stair on the exterior north porch connects the two levels of the house. Exterior siding is cypress applied to the pine frame in a vertical manner as board and batten. A wood shingled gable roof extends beyond the wall plate and wraps around the corner to form a generous overhang. Construction details indicate that this overhang, though original, was an additional feature uncommon to the standard Greek Revival patterns. Windows are typical six-over-six light double hung sashes. Each window has a pair of operable wood shutters.

When Chambersea functioned as a self-sufficient homestead the grounds included several outbuildings. The outbuildings no longer remain though present archeological surveys are concluding facts about them.

The interior presently consists of one central partition dividing each floor. A paneled effect was achieved with vertical board and batten treatment, but there is some question as to whether these interior partitions are original. Moldings around windows, doors, and base indicate the owners desired a high degree of finish. Recent archeological findings have uncovered a stone foundation on the eastern end of the house, believed to be the location of the earliest fireplace.

The earliest photos show that the house has undergone a significant reduction in size. It is logical to assume that the larger version, with 3 more bays and an enclosed extension, was the original form. Horizontal siding covered the star window during the same period (c.1890-95). At an unknown date between 1910 and 1936 the eastern section was removed; this smaller version of the house was documented by HABS in 1936. The size reduction does not alter the house' significance. Its grace and proportions are equally notable in the altered condition. Since 1935 only minor changes were made, including the enclosure of the rear lower level porch for use as restrooms. The chimney was not replaced.

" at le al l'in a sur

isva: thur of the last truck until in the

A qualified architect has inspected the site and made recommendations for restoration under the Texas Historical Foundation's Visiting Specialist Program. Further work will take these findings into account.

8. Significance

1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 _X 1800–1899	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture X architecture art commerce communications	X community planning landscape architecture — conservation law — economics literature — education military — engineering music	_ science _ sculpture _ social/ humanitarian _ theater transportation
Specific dates	1845	Builder/Architect General Thomas Jefferson C	hambers

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Chambersea, once the homestead of General Thomas Jefferson Chambers and his family, was constructed in 1845, an early wood frame house fashioned after Greek Revival principles of symmetry, and decorated with architectural elements often found in Louisiana Greek Revival forms. The homestead, while in operation as such from 1840-1865, was a self-sustaining plantation including the growth of fine livestock and cotton for clothing. Design and construction was authored by General Chambers who intended to manifest in the physical appearance of the house features which were significant of his "beloved Texas." This attitude is most notable in the circular window of the west eave bearing a five-pointed star, (the Texas emblem) and by the siting of the house where several waterways meet a bay off of the Gulf of Mexico. The owner and his family, who originally occupied the house, are of great significance for active participation in establishing early legal land rights for colonists settling in Texas.

General Chambers, son of Thomas and Mary Gore Chambers, was born in Virginia on April 3, 1802. Sometime after his father's death in 1815 Chambers moved to Kentucky with his family where he attended an academy taught by his brother for one year. He had additional schooling by Joshua Wordly. He taught school until he was admitted to the Bar in Kentucky and Alabama. Early in 1826 he went to Mexico where he studied the Spanish language and Mexican law. He was appointed Surveyor General of the State of Coahuila and Texas to accompany Juan Antonio Padilla in the establishment of a colonization system. On February 12, 1830 Chambers and Padilla recieved an empressario contract to introduce eight hundred families into Texas; however, the land granted to them lay in present Oklahoma and Kansas, so the contract was never fulfilled.

In February of 1834 Chambers was made State Attorney General of Coahuila and Texas and helped frame a judicial code for the state. In June of 1834 he was appointed Judge of the Court (Superior Judicial Court) but because of side orders precipitated by the removal of the Capitol from Saltillo to Monclova, it was impossible for him to organize the court and he was never able to assume the duties of the office. He recieved five leagues of land for his services as judge; other land granted to him totalled thirty leagues or approximately 137,268 acres and were surveyed in present Milam, Travis, Hays, Navarro, Ellis, Galveston, Liberty, Chambers, San Jacinto and Trinity Counties.

He took active part in the events leading up to the Texas Revolution. He proposed to the government that he use his land as security to raise men and arms for the Texas cause, and on January 7, 1836 the General Council commissioned him a "Major General of Reserves" and sent him to the United States to procure volunteers and munitions. He was given Bounty Certificate No. 41 for 1,280 acres as compensation for army service from January 9, 1836 to January 7, 1837. His diary, written during this time, is a complete record of his travels in connection with this commission.

In his report to Congress on June 3, 1837, Chambers stated that he had dispatched 1,915 volunteers to Texas, and had spent \$23,621 and had sold bonds amounting to \$9,035. Congress directed the auditor to settle the account and adopted resolution of thanks to Chambers. He later claimed rank as Commanding Major General of the Texas Army and engaged in a bitter newspaper dispute with David G. Burnet over that claim.

9. Major Bibliographical Re	
Library of Congress Division of Prints and Pho	
Handbook of Texas, Volume I; Walter Prescott W Chambers, William, "Sketch of the LIfe of Gene	ebb, p. 326-/ ral Thomas Jefferson Chambers of Texas (1853
Llerena Friend, The Life of Thomas Jefferson C	hambers, Thesis, University of Texas, 1928
Thomas Jefferson Chambers, Unpublished Diary,	1836-1837
10. Geographical Data	LITM NOT VEDICIED
Acreage of nominated property less than one	UIM NOT VENITIED
Acreage of nominated property less than one Quadrangle name Anahuac, Texas	Quadrangle scale 1:24,000
UMT References	
A 1,5 33,71,4,8 3,29,4380	B
Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
	F I I I I I I I I I
G l l l l l l l l l l l l l l l l l l l	the state of the s
Verbal boundary description and justification	SKIMES C
See continuation sheet.	SAN X SECTION AND ADDRESS OF THE PROPERTY OF T
e la livigilla i di propinsi di avaliamenti di propinsi di propins	flat
List all states and counties for properties overlapping	state or county boundaries
	unty code
3.3.0	and the second
state code co	unty code
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Lenora Brown Rickards, Research Asso	ciate
organization Texas Historical Commission	date August 17, 1979
street & number P. O. Box 12276	telephone 512-475-3095
city or town Austin	state Texas
12. State Historic Preserva	ation Officer Certification
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:	
national _X state loc	
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the M 665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the Natio according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Herit	lational Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89- nal Register and Pertify that it has been evaluated
State Historic Preservation Officer signature	July Tolme
title Texas State Historical Preservation Offi	cer date September 13, 1979
For HCRS use only	
I hereby cartify that this property is included in the Natio	
and be her	date //-/9-79
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: Bell Grovens	date 11/19/79 date 11/19/79
Chief of Registration	Tillet

Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 1 9 1979

NOV 1 9 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

In 1839 he established himself at Round Point in Liberty County, now Chambers County. There were several controversies over his claims to property in that area, namely by Charles Willcox and William M. Logan (1838). Both men publicly warned anyone from buying land in this area from General Chambers stating their beliefs that the league was unrightfully owned by Chambers. Another man, John O'Brian stated in 1842 his acquisition of the league purchased in public auction to specifically include the residence of General Chambers and the entire city of Anahuac.

It is thought that these land disputes led to the assassination of Chambers at his home in Anahuac (Chambersea) on March 15, 1865. He was first buried in a small cemetary near the home and later moved to Galveston by his widow.

General Chambers' destiny was hopelessly studded with legal entanglements when he died. His claims to land where the Capitol of Texas now stands had not been settled. It was 1925 before this claim was finally settled. To date, Chambers vs State of Texas is the longest standing land dispute case in the state's history.

The house was purchased by Chambers County as a park project in 1943. It was used as temporary offices for County Treasurer, and a temporary home for the county library collection. Occasional use of the house provided a meeting place for various civic groups. Presently it is used as a place for sorting archival records.

Restoration of the building is planned. However, existing size and material usage seems appropriate with minor changes to the enclosed back porch to create a more compatible architectural treatment.

FHR-8-300A (11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED SEP 1 9 1979
DATE ENTERED NOV 4 9 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

10 _{PAGE} 1

Verbal boundary description:

The nominated property is a rectangle, the north side of which measures 150' to the west along Cummings Street from the intersection of Cummings and Washington Avenue, the east side of which measures 105' to the south along Washington from that same intersection. The rectangle allows additional investigation of archeological remains, but excludes structures not connected historically with Chambersea.

Property Chambersea	
State JK (Chambers Working Number 9-19-79 2227	79002929
TECHNICAL Photos	CONTROL
Inly about 1/2 the house remains, but it retains the architecture. The original house, and many buch features remain. Place, but at least jointially designed by an a vay important histories the otate.	
ARCHITEC	TURAL HISTORIAN
	ARCHEOLOGIST
	OTHER
	HAER Inventory Review
RI	EVIEW UNIT CHIEF accept 3. Groven- 1/18/79
	BRANCH CHIEF
	KEEPER
National Register Write-up Federal Register Entry Send-back Re-submit	

United States Department of the Interior - Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service



Chambersea

Washington and Cummings Streets
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas
Photo courtesy of Chambers County
Historical Commission, 1979
Photo c. 1890-95.
Northwest oblique
Photo #1



Chambersea Washington and Cummings Streets Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas Photo courtesy of Chambers County Historical Commission, 1978

Northwest oblique Photo #276

00E NOV 19 1979



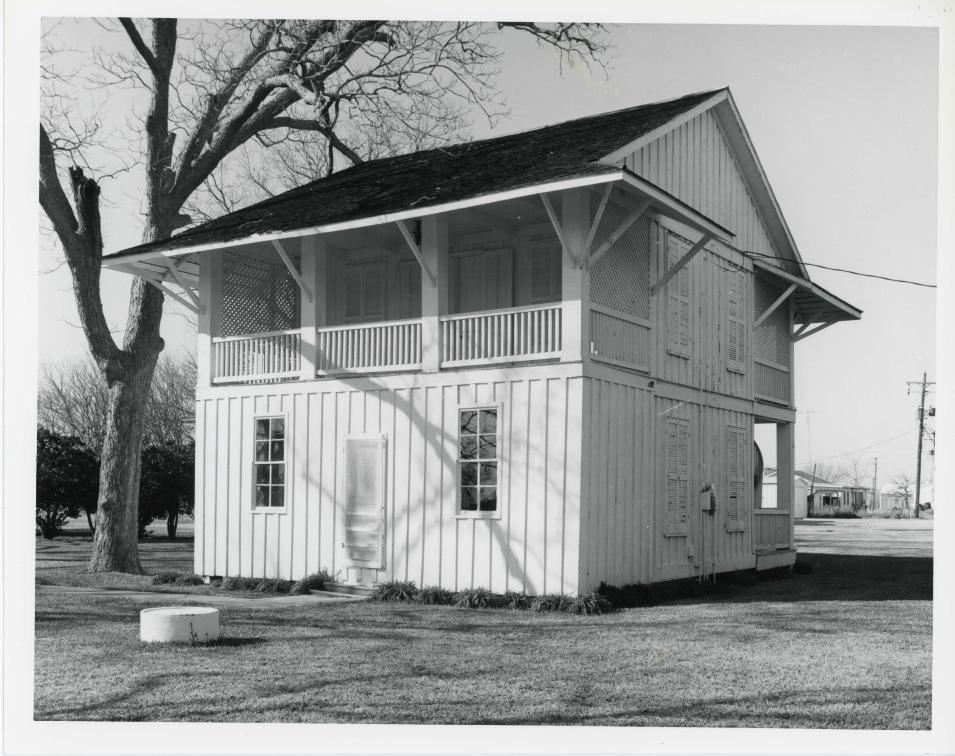
Chambersea
Washington and Cummings Streets
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas
Photo courtesy of Chambers County
Historical Commission, 1978

Southwest oblique

Photo #396

2008

MOV 1 9 1979



SWSF

Chambersea SEP 19 1979
Washington and Cummings Streets
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas
Photo courtesy of Chambers County
Historical Commission, 1978
Southeast oblique
Photo #4/6

NOV 1 9 1979



Chambersea
Washington and Cummings Streets
Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas
Photo courtesy of Chambers County
Historical Commission, 1978

South facade Photo #5%

NOV 1 9 1979



Chambersea Washington and Cummings Streets Anahuac, Chambers County, Texas Photo courtesy of Chambers County Historical Commission, 1978 Detail of east facade Photo #6 96 NOV 1 9 1979

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

TEXAS

STATE

Date Entered NOV | 9 | 979

Name

Location

Chambersea

Old Frio County Jail

Stillman, Charles, House

Anahuac

Chambers County

Pearsall Frio County

Brownsville Cameron County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen

Honorable John G. Tower Honorable Jack Brooks Honorable Abraham Kazen, Jr. Honorable E. (Kika) de la Garza

State Historic Preservation Officer Mr. Truett Latimer Executive Director Texas State Historical Commission P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station Austin, Texas 78711

NR

Byers/bjr

11/28/79