

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Allen House (c.1848) is a frame Greek Revival dogtrot located in a semi-forested setting outside the small town of Keachi. Although there has been a move, a turn-of-the-century rear wing, and some in-kind replacement, the house easily retains those features which contribute to its significance as a Greek Revival dogtrot within Louisiana.

In 1969 the Allen House was moved some ten miles from its original location just inside Caddo Parish to its present location in DeSoto Parish. The move was necessary in order to save the house from demolition by neglect. The property upon which it was located was a tree farm with no resident owner or caretaker. The house was in bad repair and had become a haven for transients. The owner of the property was concerned about the house's future and sold it to the present owner on condition that it be moved. It was cut in half down the middle of the dogtrot corridor and moved to its present rural setting, which is very similar to the original. The house originally faced north-northwest. Now it faces west. The Allen House is significant on the state level, so the move has not affected its National Register eligibility.

The house is a single story open dogtrot, two rooms deep with a fairly shallow pitched roof. Walls exposed to the weather are clapboarded, while sheltered walls are sheathed in tongue and groove flush boarding. Interior walls also feature flush boarding. The five bay front gallery features a full entablature and Doric posts with molded capitals complete with necking. Both of the principal rooms have Greek Revival aedicule style mantels with molding matching the front gallery. The present six over six windows are in-kind replacements.

Alterations:

- (1) In about 1900 a single room kitchen wing was appended to the rear.
- (2) When the house was moved, the two chimneys had to be rebuilt.
- (3) When the present owner acquired the property and moved it, the two corner columns were rotted beyond repair. The present ones are in-kind replacements.
- (4) The window frames were also missing and/or in poor repair. The present ones are in-kind replacements based upon what was left.
- (5) When the present owner moved the house in 1969, only a portion of the balustrade was remaining. The present one is an in-kind replacement. (It is not known if the balustrade there in 1969 was original or not.)

Assessment of Integrity:

In the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office, none of the above changes has significantly compromised the architectural integrity of the Allen House. It is still obviously an open dogtrot house in the Greek Revival style. The replacement of the two columns is not a serious problem because it was done in-kind.

Significant Dates	c.1848
Architect/Builder	Unknown
Criterion C	

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

The Allen House is of state level significance in the area of architecture as an outstanding manifestation of the Upland South Culture. It is important as a very rare example of a styled dogtrot, in this case, Greek Revival.

Upland South was one of the dominant cultural groups in Louisiana, representing in many places the pioneer phase of settlement. The Uplanders first appeared in Louisiana in the 1790s, and by the 1850s, they dominated in both the northern part of the state as well as in the eight parishes in

southern Louisiana known as the Florida Parishes. After the Civil War they pioneered settlement in the western part of the state as well.

One of the architectural hallmarks of the Upland South Culture was the dogtrot house; indeed, it was the largest house type associated with the culture and in many ways the symbol of agricultural attainment. But despite its high status among the Uplanders, the average dogtrot was an unpretentious house with no architectural treatment whatever. The Allen House is a rare exception to this, being a dogtrot house with full-blown Greek Revival styling, including a classical gallery with a full entablature and aedicule style mantels. Survey data and staff knowledge of the state indicates that there are only about a half dozen comparable examples in Louisiana. Virtually all of these are in the northwestern part of the state. Although the Uplanders settled in much of Louisiana, the Northwest is the only area where their building tradition was strong enough to develop high style aspirations. This created a generation of "half-breed" houses. The Allen House is a very good example of this, being both a handsome Greek Revival residence and a dogtrot house.

Major Bibliographical References

Conveyance Records, Caddo Parish Courthouse.

Historic Structures Survey, Claiborne, DeSoto and Webster Parishes. Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.