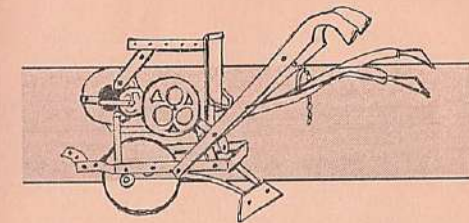


WARTHEN GEORGIA 31094

National Register Historic Places
1997



Georgia's Oldest Log Jail



This widely-used cotton duster was invented by Walter H. Franks for the boll weevil in 1920, patented in 1923. With it, one man and one mule sprayed calcium arsenate over 4 rows of cotton at once. Franks, a Washington County native, lived in Warthen.



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Brown House Museum 912-552-1965
Genealogical Museum 912-552-6965
website: <http://www.poller.com/washington/washington.htm>

Warthen's dispersed settlement reflects its rural origins. On the north side of SR 15 is a distinct religious-educational section comprised of former school, #3, two churches, #4, #5, two cemeteries and an early 20th century residential neighborhood.



Warthen, Georgia got its name from a store at the crossroads of local and regional roads. Located centrally in original Washington County, the first courts were held here from 1787 to 1798 (see historic marker, SR 15.) Several log structures date from that

period, #1, #2, #15, and most notably, #25, the Old Warthen Jail, which is believed to have held Aaron Burr overnight in 1807.

Some 60 years later, Confederate President Jefferson Davis, escaping before the Union Army, visited Warthen in May, 1865. His party bought food for \$2 in gold and camped just south of town (see historic marker, SR 15.)

The rise and decline of Warthen followed patterns of agriculture and transportation. From 1900 to 1920 Warthen enjoyed its greatest prosperity. A building boom took place: brick commercial structures were erected; an attractive passenger depot was built, and a hotel opened. Businesses included two banks, a telephone exchange, a drug store, a blacksmith, a cotton gin, and a cotton warehouse. Three doctors lived and practiced here.

Modest vernacular homes, some with tall pyramid roofs, are intermingled with more ambitious, 2-storied dwellings. Some of the houses had carbide gas illumination. Residents made this gas in the yards and piped it to the fixtures, #9, #28, #30.

Historic commercial structures begin on the west side of SR 15. The mostly brick stores, #17 to #23, flank now sleepy Warthen Lane. From the old Train Depot, #24, Hooks' Dairy, one of the largest in the county, shipped butter and milk to important cities.

Magnolias and other trees shelter the Warthen family cemetery, #22, whose iron gates open off the old street. Old Warthen Jail stands sentinel between business and residential areas.

Large trees and a parklike expanse grace the homes on this side, #26 to #31. These homes reflect early 20th century architectural



Beginning in the early '20's the boll weevil doomed the economic success, and in a few years, the railroad discontinued. SR 15 was moved and paved. Reminders of these transportation corridors remain in quiet sandy lanes.

styles popular in most small American towns of the day. At the southern-most end is a notable mid-19th century home.

Warthen was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.

1. Warthen-Burgamy, before 1800. Enormous chimney dominates small log house covered with clapboards. Columbus Warthen made a record 5 bales cotton per acre on this farm in the 1870's.

2. Hooks' Cabin, before 1800. Hopewell Hooks occupied before establishing Hooks' Dairy a few miles east. Prophet's room at porch; hewn logs covered clapboards; unusual roof at chimney.

3. Warthen Community Center, 1904. Bethlehem Academy—one



of earliest schools chartered in county; arched front door surrounded by coffered panel; originally two-storied school building. Replaced earlier structure that burned; today, the community center.

4. Bethlehem Baptist Church, 1890. This structure, built in time to celebrate congregation's centennial; replaced church destroyed by windstorm. Pleasingly asymmetrical with steeple and tower; triangular design above windows compliments steeply pitched roof. Cemetery contains graves of one War of 1812 veteran and several Confederate veterans.

5. Warthen United Methodist Church, 1886. Thomas Warthen gave land and had this church built so his wife would have a place to worship. Originally two doors opened from a broad porch. Stained glass windows are a recent memorial to Mr. and Mrs. Bolden Cobb.

6. May-Hamilton, date unknown. Entry captures the eye with lights (windows) overhead and on sides.

7. Bethlehem Baptist Pastorium, c. 1900. Tall pyramid roof dominates this comfortable, roomy home.

8. Burgamy-Turner, c. 1900. Once this house, built by Jim Burgamy, had a wrap-around porch.

9. Duggan Bateman, 1905. T.R. Duggan, farmer and store owner, built this house where school teachers boarded. Carbide gas was



made in the yard for interior lighting.

10. Harrison-Cobb-Brown, 1903. Twin scalloped gables with fish scale shingles; broad porch supported by craftsman posts. A bridge over the Ogeechee River was named for Mr. Cobb. Now home of Cobb's granddaughter, Della Brown, and family.

11. Akridge-Cordry, date unknown. Symmetrical prophets' rooms

suggest an early history. Mr. Whaite, occupant around 1900, was a dog trainer.

12. Turner-May, date unknown. Jewell Turner, Sr. lived here. Hubert May, Warthen's barber c. 1940-1960, and his family have owned and occupied it since c. 1942; out-buildings.

13. Methodist Parsonage, 1886. Exaggerated steep gable roof dominates home built along with the church for its minister.



Privately owned since c. 1909

14. Garner-Plumley, c. 1935. Enchanting playhouse out back of this modest home.

15. Warthen-Turner, before 1800. Two old houses bolted together by Richard H. Warthen, said to have hosted Aaron Burr's military escort. (see #25) Warthen began Bethlehem Academy, boarding girls on one side, boys on the other, no connecting doors. 1953 remodeling removed broad front porch and half the left structure.

16. Franks-Tapley, c. 1920. Walter Franks lived here when he invented a cotton duster and a cotton stalk chopper, just two of his farming innovations which were in wide use over the region. Hip roof features small gable above porch.

17. Turner Store, 1908. Builder was Walter H. Franks. In 1928 J.J. Turner, Sr. purchased and operated a general merchandise business for 49 years. Hexagon paved sidewalk under porch. His son, Jewell, continues the business across SR 15.

18. Utopia-Brown Store, 1920's. Under covered porch, commercial structure bears columns of alternating rusticated stone and red brick. Utopia Drug Store was a popular hang-out for the young. Later it became Brown's Store.

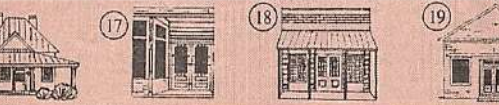
19. Branch-Turner-Archer Market. Respected black butcher Tom Archer operated a meat market in this brick shop with gable roof. John Branch, then Lewis Turner operated businesses earlier. Lost, 1999.



20. May's Row, c. 1916. Brick corbelling at top, cast iron doorways and transom lights over front windows distinguish these stores. Covered hexagon sidewalk at The Warthen Banking Company, later Mincey's Store. When widowed, Miss Bessie ran it alone until age 94. Second office from right was Dr. Ed T. May's, other stores included a restaurant and fish market.

21. Farmers & Merchant's Bank-Post Office, 1911. Cast iron store front; marble cornerstone identifies builder J. Chafin. Oscar Cummings, one of seven founders of local REA, moved the Post Office here about 1960. Vera Cummings, his wife, was postmaster for 38 years; he succeeded her. Restored, 1999.

22. Warthen Family Cemetery. Peaceful, Victorian retreat is final resting place for Warthen family, including community leaders such



as George D., Richard Lee and Macon Warthen. Earliest grave is Richard Warthen, d. 1861. Several marked Confederate graves.

23. Warthen's Store, early 1900's. As early as 1822, when Richard Warthen's mercantile and post office first gave the community its name—"Warthen's Store Post Office", all Warthen's stores occupied this site. There were several other stores also, although only this structure remains.

24. Augusta Southern Railroad Depot, 1886-1933. Narrow gauge line from Augusta joined rail network in Tennille and opened a vast market. Hooks Dairy shipped milk and butter. Remodeled as residence.

25. Old Warthen Jail, c. 1787. First county courts held in Warthen, 1787. Tradition says Aaron Burr confined overnight enroute to Richmond, VA trial for treason. Oldest log jail in Georgia today; hand hewn logs, wood shingle roof, vent above single door. Restored, 1998.

26. Warthen-Dudley, 1916. A craftsman bungalow built by J. Chafin for Thomas Warthen, partner in Warthen's Store.

27. Warthen-Jordan, 1906 or 1910. Stylish, 2-story Victorian home features tin-shingled porch with dentil molding at roof line. Warthen was partner in Warthen's Store. Restored 1999.

28. May-Turner, 1916. The "Hotel" always took boarders; built by J. Chafin for Dr. and Mrs. Ed T. May. Pipes for carbide gas



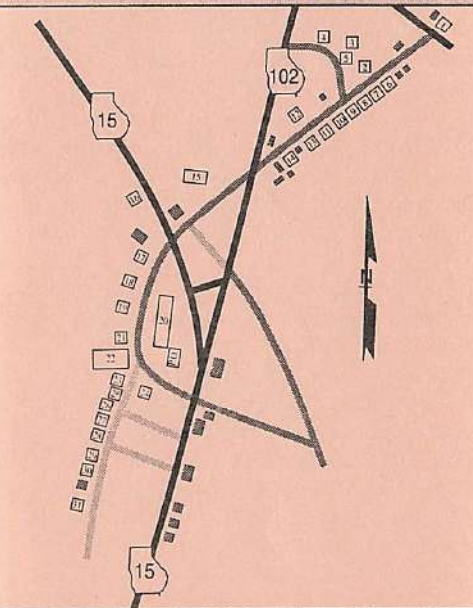
lighting remain in ceilings.

29. Brown-Andrews, before 1920. A pyramid roof characterizes this cottage, long the home of Lamar Brown, owner of Brown's Store.

30. Redding-Garner, c. 1890's. Twin chimneys and a steep roof top this home built for Dr. C.D. Redding, one of three practicing

doctors at Warthen's peak. Carbide gas lights; rock wall in front yard marks old road.

31. Warthen Davis, c. 1868. Vernacular home has off-center front door and square columns. Several out buildings remain. Macon Warthen I. built, giving his first wife a gold door key as betrothal gift. He was teacher, principal, school board member and earliest local historian.



Washington County Historical Society was incorporated in 1976 to preserve and share vanishing local heritage. Among its projects are a museum, genealogical research room, history and genealogy books, successful National Register listings.

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