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### **Historic Clinton office moved for renovations**

History was on the move in Clinton this week due to efforts to preserve and restore one of the original buildings of the historic city. The building that was the former law office of Richard Johnson, thought to have been constructed between 1830-40, was moved Jan. 26 and joined the Pine Ridge School House on the Holsenback property on Pulaski Street owned by the Old Clinton Historical Society.

OCHS member Johnny Mack Nickles was on hand to watch as the building was put on wheels and hooked to the trucks that would maneuver it from its home on Madison Street in Clinton. The law office was moved by Hugh Braswell of Swainsboro, who also moved the Pine Ridge School House, assisted by Fish Brothers House Movers of Eastman.

Nickles said the process of moving the law office actually started in December when a new floor and foundation had to be placed under the building. He said a porch and other additions added to the building over the years were removed, and only the original structure was moved.

Nickles said OCHS had been talking about moving the building for several years, but it became necessary to do it now before it deteriorated further and collapsed. "The floor had rotted and it was becoming an eyesore," he said. Nickles said the historical society voted at its December meeting to move the building, but restoration of the law office has been a long-range project.

OCHS member Wayne Bowden took pictures and videos of the move. He said, after the building is in its new location, it would be jacked up and covered. Then the campaign would begin to secure grants in order to restore it. The law office was on the property of and owned by Robert and Shirley Billue, who donated the building to OCHS.

The Pine Ridge School House was moved to Pulaski Street in November of 2000 and restored with half of the building put back as the school building looked in 1889. The second half of the building was made into a museum to display artifacts from the era. According to an article in *The Jones County News*, the school was restored as authentically as possible with half of the original floor used inside the building. The remaining usable wood was put to use as shutters for the windows. The restoration took more than a year, and the official dedication was held in 2002.

*Thanks to author Debbie Lurie-Smith for permission to post this article.*