

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

THEME: The Arts and Science

SUBTHEME: Literature

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

 SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS
1 NAME

HISTORIC The Paul Laurence Dunbar House

AND/OR COMMON

The Paul Laurence Dunbar House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 219 North Summit Street

CITY, TOWN

Dayton

VICINITY OF

 — NOT FOR PUBLICATION
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd

STATE

Ohio

CODE

39

COUNTY

Montgomery

CODE

113

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Ohio Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

17th at Interstate 71

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

VICINITY OF

STATE

Ohio

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Ohio Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

17th at Interstate 71

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

STATE

Ohio

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Ohio Landmark Survey

DATE

1971

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Ohio Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

STATE

Ohio

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Paul Laurence Dunbar House, 219 North Summit Street, Dayton, Ohio, is a modest two-story red brick building with nine rooms. The house has a lean-to porch supported with wrought iron columns. Green shutters adorn all the windows of the house.

Entering from the southwest one steps into the Reception Hall. Here are located various editions of Dunbar's works. There is also an unusual mahogany dresser with a rear fold-down bed. To the east of this room is the front parlor. All furnishings are of Dunbar family provenance and the family Bible sits on a small stand. The room has modest proportions and appears quite intimate and warm. The other rooms of the first floor are not particularly furnished and are used as office space for the administrator of the property. The only interior modifications appear in the modernization of the kitchen and the bath.

On the second floor, at the top of the stairwell is the poets library and study, dubbed by him the "loafing holt." Here is located a limited collection of the authors original manuscripts as well as the desk and typewriter on which he worked. There is also a day bed on which Dunbar slept. There is a bedroom west of the study which is furnished and open. Mr. Dunbar's suits hang in the closet and a bicycle given him by the Wright Brothers sits against the wall. The other bedrooms on the floor are closed. At the end of the hall is a small room used for storage.

Adjacent to the house is an old barn which was part of the original property.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1903-1936

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Paul Laurence Dunbar holds the distinction of being the first black poet to receive national acclaim since the efforts of Phyllis Wheatly. His poetic use of the Negro dialect to convey both the joys and sorrows of an oppressed people during a period termed "The Nadir," is only matched by the lyric lines of Langston Hughes. Dunbar's life is typical of the black artist, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, who were forced, because of economic necessity, to write the kind of material that could be readily digested by white patrons. Dunbar's efforts, though at times criticized, remain as beautiful now as when written and can be credited with aiding in the quest for a new level of consciousness on the part of black folk.

BIOGRAPHY

Paul Laurence Dunbar was the son of former slaves, a father who had run away to Canada and who had honorably served in the Union Army during the Civil War, and a mother who had fled bondage in Kentucky. Dunbar was born in 1872. He received his total education in the public schools of Dayton where at a very early age he demonstrated his talents as a writer. After having composed a number of poems, his teacher, recognizing both his talents and potentials, encouraged him to write. The only black student at Steel High School, Dunbar was elected to the presidency of the literary society and served as the editor of the monthly student publication in his senior year, 1890-91.

After graduating, Dunbar was employed in a variety of typically Negro jobs of the period, e.g. elevator operator, dishwasher, etc. Dunbar wrote in his spare time. Discouraged and despondent, Dunbar returned to Dayton where his first book, Oak and Ivy, a collection of his poems, was published. He was then befriended by two men from Dayton, Charles Thatcher and Dr. Henry A. Tobey, Superintendent of the State Hospital, who together sponsored his second book, Majors and Minors, in 1895. This work came to the attention of William Dean Howells, who devoted a full and glowing page of Harper's Weekly to a review of it.

A period of great popular acclaim began at this point, and his third book, Lyrics of Lowly Life, was published by Dodd, Mead and Company of New York City, with an introduction by Howells. It remains his best-known collection in spite of his prolific production of verse, four novels, stories, sketches, and a one act musical sketch, in the few remaining months of his life.

(Continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Brawley, Benjamin, The Negro in Literature and Art, New York: AMS Press, 1971.
 Cromwell, John W., The Negro in American History, New York: Basic Afro-American Reprint Library, 1969.
Dictionary of American Biography.
 Wiggins, Lida Keck, The Life and Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar, Naperville, Illinois: J. L., Nichols Company.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 6	7, 3, 8, 2, 6, 0	4, 4, 0, 4, 1, 2, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Dunbar House sits on the west side of North Summit Street on two lots. These lots are located in the center of the block. The property is described in the deed recorded December 29, 1936, Montgomery County Deed Book 798, page 200 as follows: Being Lot numbered Twelve Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Eight (12488) and Lot numbered Twelve Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Nine (12449) of the consecutive numbers of lots on the revised plat of the city of Dayton, Ohio.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Joseph S. Mendinghall, Historian, (original form prepared by S. S. Bradford)

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

5-12-75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE OF Ohio Dec 29, 1962

NATIONAL

STATE

Designated: _____ date

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Joseph S. Mendinghall
 May 31, 1977 date

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/7/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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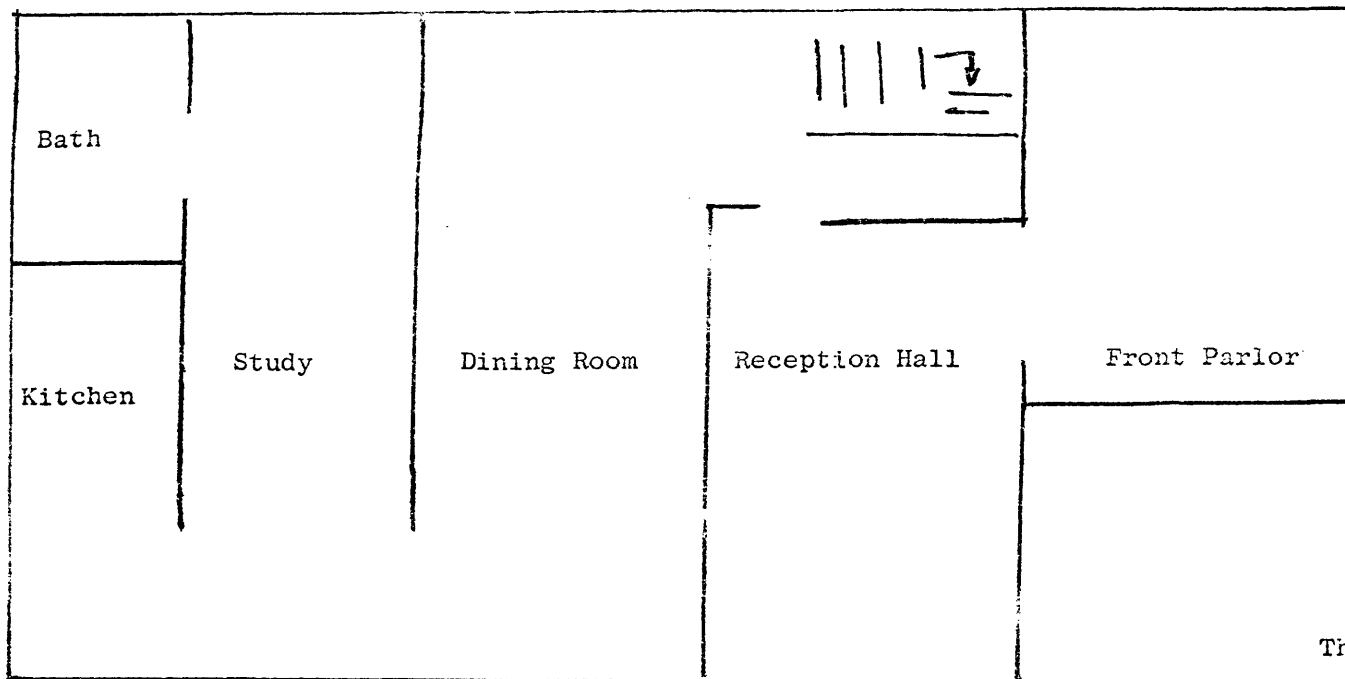
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

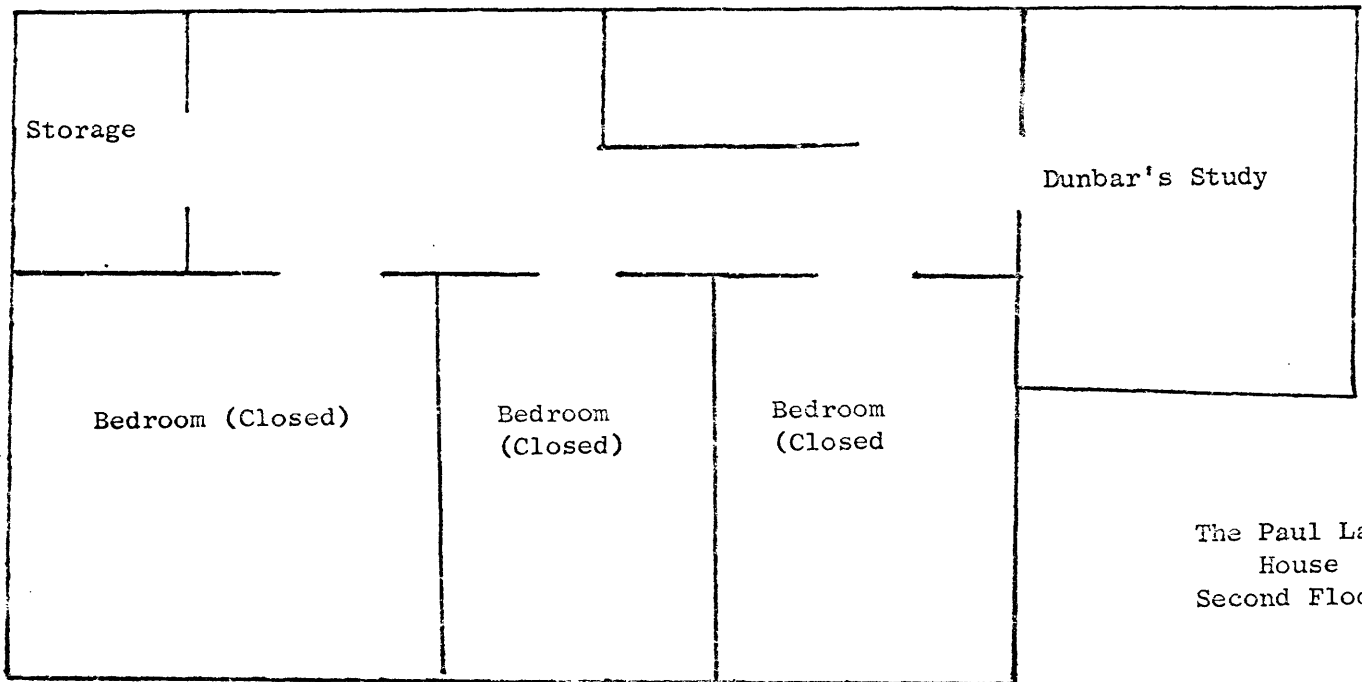
He lectured widely in the United States and England, but without notable success. In 1897-98 he was employed in Washington, D.C., at the Library of Congress. In 1897 Dunbar married Alice Ruth Moore, and author and teacher, of New Orleans and New York.

The marriage was not a lasting success. Dunbar again returned to Dayton in 1903 with the additional burden of a broken heart compounded with failing health. He purchased for his mother the house at 219 North Summit Street where they both lived the remaining years of their lives. He died in 1906 and she in 1934. The State of Ohio purchased the property, furnishings and personal belongings from her estate and turned them over to the Ohio Historical Society to be used as a State Memorial and museum.



The Paul Laurence Dunbar
House
First Floor





The Paul Laurence Dunbar
House
Second Floor

