

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 10 1976

DATE ENTERED AUG 13 1976

**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

\* \* Donelson House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

2 1/2 miles SW

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Duncan

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

 VICINITY OF

Second

STATE

Mississippi

CODE

28

COUNTY

Bolivar

CODE

011

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER UNOCCUPIED

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mrs. E. M. Yates

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Shelby

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Chancery Clerk

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Bolivar County Courthouse, West District

CITY, TOWN

Rosedale

STATE

Mississippi

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_FEDERAL \_\_STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Andrew Jackson Donelson House is a deteriorated wooden structure located on the east bank of the Hushpuckena Creek two and one-half miles southwest of Duncan, Bolivar County, Mississippi. Although thoroughly vernacular in construction, the Donelson House features some unusual details and, in spite of its modest size and remote location, some surprisingly sophisticated Greek Revival woodwork.

The one-story structure is arranged in an L-shaped plan containing three principal chambers, two passages, and broad verandas. Covered with tin over wood sheathing, the gable roof forms a hip at the meeting of the structure's two arms. Three single-flue chimneys, two of which are exposed at the gable ends, remain extant. Clapboarding is used to cover a structural system of dressed and chinked logs on the exterior, while the interior is finished with flush boards and plaster.

The east, or principal elevation, is divided into five bays, with the entrance placed on the center axis. A double-leaf door with fielded panels is flanked by sidelights and transom treated with sham muntins. Windows are double hung with six-over-six lights and are surrounded by architraves treated with molded backbands that spring from miniature plinths and corner blocks. Sheltering the east elevation is a seven-bay veranda which retains several original simple square columns with rudimentary capitals and bases.

The veranda continues along the side or south elevation, which is distinguished by a well-proportioned Greek Revival frontispiece containing a double-leaf door--only a portion of which is original--sidelights, and a transom. The architrave is battered and eared and raised slightly on axis to suggest a pediment. A single double-hung window flanks the frontispiece on the east, and two similar windows flank it on the west. Each is hung in a simple architrave enriched with mitered backband. Although the profiles and joining of the molding differ on the south and east elevations, they are thought to be of a single building phase.

The rear elevations are fronted by verandas which were partially enclosed on the west in c. 1910 to house a single narrow chamber. Of the three doorways opening onto the rear verandas, two are contained in substantial frontispieces which mirror those on the front and side elevations and repeat exactly their designs and details.

The interior of the Donelson House is a straightforward arrangement of space dictated by the limitations of log construction and the need for proper ventilation. A central passage connects the front and rear verandas and is flanked by a dining room on the south and a sitting room on the north. Another passage and chamber occupy the space remaining behind the dining room. The rooms are constructed as separate units, sharing only a common roof, with four large frontispieces functioning as screens between the independent structures in what would otherwise be a "dog trot" plan.

Interior trim is limited to the woodwork of doors, windows, mantels, and baseboards. Typical doors are four paneled with deep ogee-and-bead

# 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 type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Donelson House is believed to be the oldest extant structure in Bolivar County, Mississippi, and is a locally significant example of vernacular construction techniques and provincial Greek Revival design. In addition, it is the only residence in the state associated with Andrew Jackson Donelson (1799-1871), a prominent soldier, lawyer, politician, diplomat, and nephew of President Jackson.

Donelson, a native of Tennessee, was engaged in Delta cotton production as early as the 1840s (Tennessee Historical Magazine 33:159). His first appearance as a buyer of land in Bolivar County is on January 8, 1857, when A. M. Boyd conveyed 1,579 acres along the Hushpuckena Creek to Donelson, who paid \$46,358 for the property. Included in the purchase was lot eight of Section twenty-three, containing the site of what is now known as the Donelson House (Bolivar County, Deed Book F, p. 53). Because of incomplete or vague tax and land records, it is impossible to assign a specific date to the Donelson House. Its Greek Revival trim, found on doors, architraves, and frontispieces, would suggest the period of the 1850s, but whether or not the trim is contemporary with the basic log structure is impossible to determine. In any case, the Donelson House as it now stands is a valuable document illustrating a typical vernacular plantation residence of the 1850s.

By the time Donelson purchased his Bolivar County plantation in 1857, he had reached the end of a colorful, but disappointing, career. As the nephew and namesake of Andrew Jackson, his public and private lives were from the beginning closely tied to the President's. Born on August 25, 1799, Donelson was left fatherless at an early age and was brought to "The Hermitage" to live with Andrew and Rachel Donelson Jackson. In 1822, Donelson graduated from West Point and during the Seminole Campaign was appointed aide-de-camp to General Jackson. After leaving the military, he studied law at Transylvania University and became Jackson's private secretary during most of his presidential administration (1829-1837). Donelson's first wife, Emily, served as White House hostess until her death in 1836. Upon his uncle's retirement, Donelson returned to Nashville to practice law, but in 1844 was appointed by President Tyler as charge d'affaires for the purpose of negotiating an annexation with the newly independent Republic of Texas. His public service was continued by President Polk, who appointed him minister to Prussia in 1846. Donelson returned to the United States in 1849 and two years later became editor of the Washington Union. Forced by sectional issues to split with the Democratic party, Donelson later became deeply involved in the nativist movement. His public career ended abruptly in 1856 as a result of his unsuccessful bid for the vice-presidency on the Know-Nothing ticket headed by Millard Fillmore. Shortly after Buchanan and Breckinridge were elected,

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bassett, John Spencer, ed. Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. 7 vols.  
Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35.

Bolivar County, Mississippi. Chancery Clerk. Deed Books, F, H, U.  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Microfilm.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 635

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1,5</u>	<u>7,0,5</u>	<u>9,0,0</u>	<u>3,7</u>	<u>6,8</u>	<u>5,0,0</u>	B	<u>1,5</u>	<u>7,0,5</u>	<u>9,0,0</u>	<u>3,7</u>	<u>6,5</u>	<u>7,0,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING
C	<u>1,5</u>	<u>7,0,4</u>	<u>1,7,5</u>	<u>3,7</u>	<u>6,5</u>	<u>7,0,0</u>	D	<u>1,5</u>	<u>7,0,4</u>	<u>1,2,5</u>	<u>3,7</u>	<u>6,8</u>	<u>5,0,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 11, 12, and 13 in Section 13; Lots 1, 8, and 15 in Section 23, except Church Lot near the northeast corner of Lot 1 occupied by New St. Paul Church; the West Half of Section 24, except cemetery Lot described as follows: Beginning at a point 934 feet East of the Northwest Corner of said Section 24, thence run East 628.3 feet, thence run South 104 feet, thence run West 628.3 feet, thence run North 104 feet to the Point of Beginning; the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 24

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

William C. Allen, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

DATE

May 3, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 571

TELEPHONE

601-354-6218

CITY OR TOWN

Jackson, Mississippi

STATE

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL    

STATE X

LOCAL    

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Elmer R. Hilliard

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

June 4, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

William C. Allen  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

8/13/76

ATTEST:  
Charles A. ...  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8-13-76

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE one

moldings and are surrounded by wide architraves with the unusual backband that springs from small plinths and corner blocks. Window architraves, which are continued below the sill, are treated in a similar fashion. The one mantel that can be identified as original is currently located in the rear chamber, detached from the chimney. It is a simple pilastered design with a three-part frieze and a large cavetto supporting a plain shelf. In spite of its deteriorated state, the Donelson House retains most of its original woodwork which, remarkably enough, is fairly well preserved.

8. Donelson retired to private life to resume his law and planting activities (Dictionary of American Biography 5:363-4 The National Cyclopedia of American Biography 7:489).

Like most planters, Donelson resided on his plantation only seasonally, leaving overseers to conduct the day to day activities during most of the year. By 1868, however, Donelson had become a permanent citizen of Bolivar County (Population Schedules, Bolivar County, 1870; Tax Roll, Bolivar County, 1868) and he continued to live there until his death on June 26, 1871. The Hinds County Gazette chronicled the event simply: "He had been unwell for several days at his plantation in Bolivar County, Mississippi and repaired to Memphis for medical attendance. The immediate cause of death was congestion of the bowels."

After many years of neglect, the Donelson House has reached the final stages of deterioration. Its preservation has only recently become a matter of local concern, and the current owners are willing to encourage a public restoration program.

9. Jackson, Miss. Semi-Weekly Clarion, June 30, 1871.

Jackson, Allen, ed. Dictionary of American Biography. 20 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928.

Mississippi. Auditor. Real and Personal Tax Rolls, Bolivar County, 1864, 1868. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Microfilm.

Raymond, Miss. Hinds County Gazette, July 6, 1871.

Sillers, Florence W., comp. History of Bolivar County, Mississippi. Jackson, Miss.: Hederman Brothers, 1948.

Sioussat, St. George L. "Selected Letters, 1844-1845, from Donelson Papers, with Introduction and Notes by the Editor." Tennessee Historical Magazine 3:134-62.

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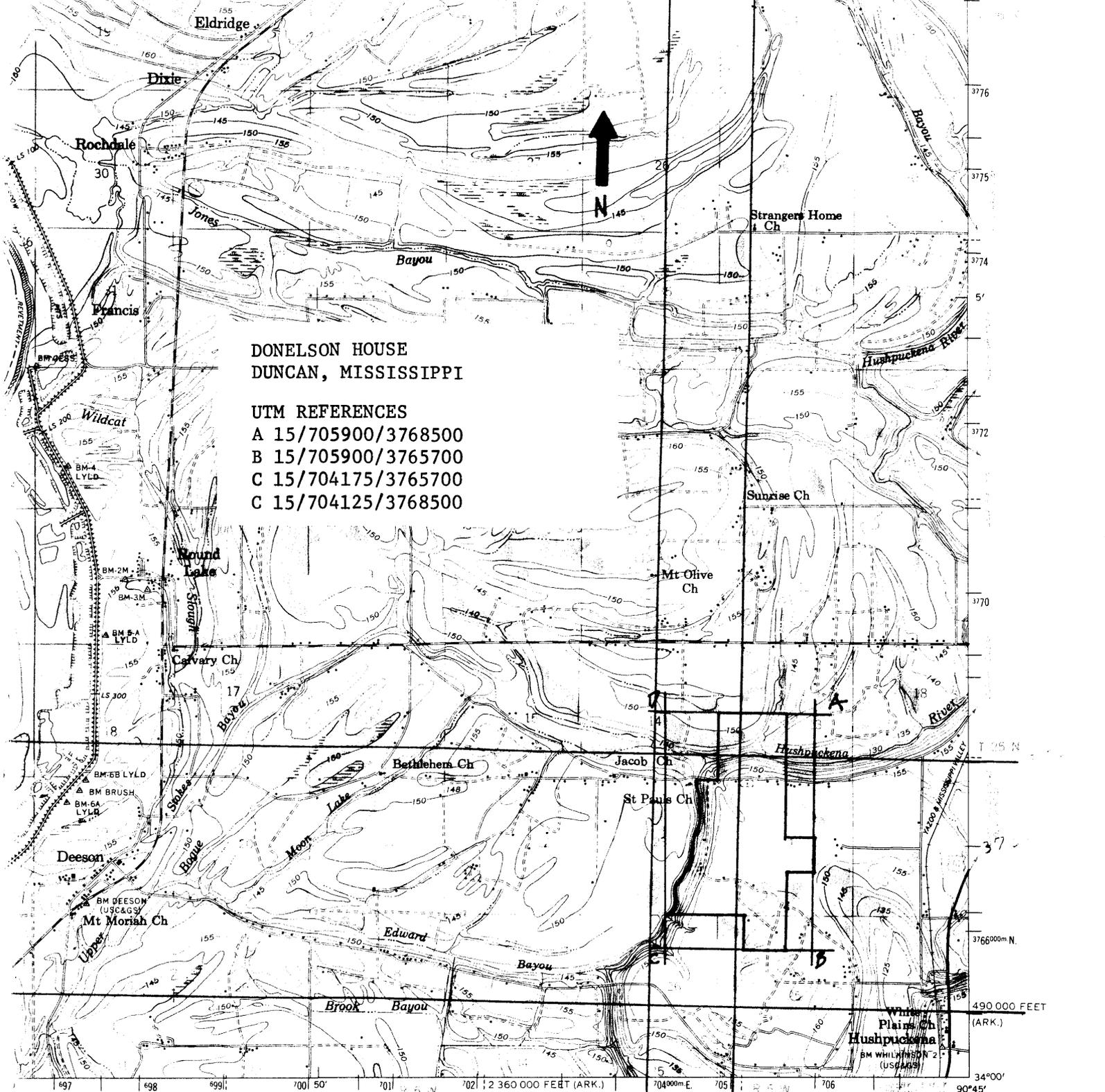
ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE two

The National Cyclopedia of American Biography. Vol. 7. New York: James T. White and Co., 1897.

United States. Bureau of the Census. Population Schedules, Bolivar County, Mississippi, 1970.

10. and the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 25, subject to easements and rights of way of record; containing 635 acres, more or less, all in Township 25 North, Range 6 West, of the Second Judicial District of Bolivar County, Mississippi.

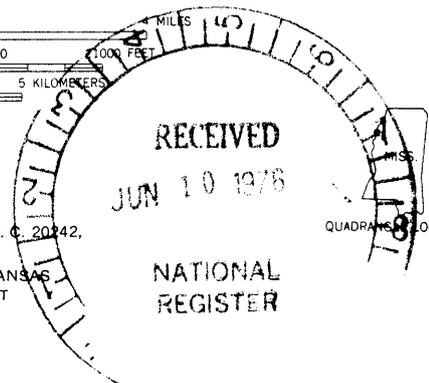


DONELSON HOUSE  
DUNCAN, MISSISSIPPI

UTM REFERENCES  
 A 15/705900/3768500  
 B 15/705900/3765700  
 C 15/704175/3765700  
 C 15/704125/3768500



MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242,  
 VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI,  
 COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS  
 AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt

U. S. Route      State Route

Distance on Mississippi River above Head of Passes are shown at 5 mile intervals

MELLWOOD, MISS.-ARK.  
 N3400—W9045/15

1961

AMS 7852 III—SERIES V743

(MOUND BAYOU)