Form	10-300
(Rev.	6-72)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

1sT	ΑT	E:	

Mississippi

Adams

nuca

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

(Type all entries -	compl	ete appl	icable	sections)
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	Auburn						
	AND/OR HISTORIC:						
2.	LOCATION						
	STREET AND NUMBER:						
	Duncan Park	٢		CONGRESSION			
	Natchez				AL DISTRICT:		
	STATE		CODE	COUNTY:			ODE
	Mississippi		28	Adams			01
3.	CLASSIFICATION		R	4		I	_
	CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIB	
	District 🕅 Building	🕱 Public	Public Acquisit	ion:	🔀 Occupied	Yes:	
	🗋 Site 🗌 Structure	Private	🗌 In Prod		Unoccupied	X Restricte	
	🗌 Object	🔲 Both	📋 Being	Considered	Preservation work		ted
		<u> </u>			in progress	□ No	
	PRESENT USE (Check One or Mo	lore as Appropriate)			······································		
] Park		Transportation	Comments	·
		dustrial 🗌] Private Reside	ence	Other (Specify)		
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	Entertainment 🕅 Mus	•	_ Religious] Scientific				
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4	Entertainment Mus OWNER OF PROPERTY	JSEUM	v	of Alderma			
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4	City Hall	JSEUM	Scientific				
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7. DESCRIPTION								
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CONDITION	🗙 Excellent	🗌 Good	🗌 Fair	🗌 Det	eri ora ted	🗌 Ruins	Unexposed	
CONDITION		(Check O	ne)			(Che	ck One)	
	🗌 Alte	red	🕵 Unaltered			Moved	🙀 Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Auburn was first described by its designer and builder, Levi Weeks, in September 1812:

"The brick house I am building is just without the city line and is designed for the most magnificent building in the Territory. The body of this house is 60 by 45 feet with a portico of 31 feet projecting 12 feet supported by 4 Ionic columns with the Corinthian entablature, the ceiling vaulted, the house two stories with a geometrical staircase to ascend to the second story. This is the first house in the Territory on which was ever attempted any of the orders of Architecture. The site is one of those peculiar situations which combines all the delight of romance, the pleasure of rurality, and the approach of sublimity. I am the more particular in describing this seat not only to give you an idea of the progress of improvement but to inform you what you will hear with pleasure, that the owner of it is a Yankey, a native of our own state, Massachusetts, and is now in Boston on a visit. His name is Lyman Harding."

Judge Harding, first attorney general of Mississippi Territory and of the State, died in 1820. In March of that year Auburn was visited by the Benjamin Latrobes, en route to New Orleans; Mrs. Latrobe's impression was entirely favorable in contrast to her description of the town of Natchez as a "vile hole." Later in 1820 the estate was purchased by Dr. Stephen Duncan, who added the symmetrical wings.

Though possessing a fortune in land and slaves, Duncan worked actively in the American Colonization Society, an organization to free slaves and settle them in Africa. As secession approached he became increasingly outspoken in his Union sympathies and he returned to his native Pennsylvania after the Civil War began. In 1911 his descendants deeded Auburn to the city of Natchez. The house is now maintained by the Town and Country Garden Club; the surrounding property has become a municipal park and golf course.

The quality and variety of the original interior and exterior wood trim distinguishes Auburn. Although the pedimented interior doors and handsomely detailed mantels are Georgian in character and hardly pace-setting, the treatment of the sidelighted entrances at both levels appears inventive and unique. The principal contribution of Levi Weeks at Auburn is the two-story order of the portico which became a model for Natchez houses and has come to symbolize all southern plantation houses. Its use in domestic architecture here precedes similar porticoes at the University of Virginia and their application to Arlington (Virginia) and the White House in the 1820s.

ERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	📋 18th Century	20th Century
15th Century	17th Century	🔀 19th Century	
PECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicat	ole and Known) 1812		
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch	eck One or More as Appropri	ate)	
Abor iginal	Education	X Political	🔲 Urban Planning
Prehistoric	📋 Engineering	Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify)
🔲 Historic	Industry	losophy	
Agriculture	Invention	Science	
🔀 Architecture	Landscape	Sculpture	
Art	Architecture	Social/Human-	
Commerce	Literature	itarian	
Communications	Military	Theater	
Conservation	Music	Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Documented as the design of Levi Weeks, Auburn was, by his statement, the first house in Mississippi Territory to employ the orders of Architecture. The temple form of the portico was so early and so influential that Auburn must be regarded as one of the most important houses in the South. Although the interior detail is Georgian and no longer fashionable in 1812, the woodwork is so well detailed that it commands admiration.

Auburn had two owners of distinction. Judge Lyman Harding, the first owner, was the first Attorney General of Mississippi. After his death in 1820 the property was acquired by Dr. Stephen Duncan. Though possessing a fortune in slaves, Dr. Duncan favored emancipation, opposed secession, and refused to support the Confederacy.

SEE INSTRUCTION

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