

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRA use only
received OCT 22 1980
date entered NOV 24 1980

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Laurietta

and/or common Laurietta

2. Location

S of Fayette off MS 33

street & number East of State Highway 33 about one mile south of the junction of Highway 33 with U.S. Highway 61 via an unmarked county road referred to locally as the Old McNair Road not for publication

city, town Fayette vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Mississippi code 28 county Jefferson code 063

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Cecil Gill Smith

street & number 208 Linton Avenue

city, town Natchez vicinity of state Mississippi 39120

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Chancery Clerk/Jefferson Co. Courthouse

street & number P. O. Box 145

city, town Fayette state Mississippi

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title _____ has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal state county local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located about one mile south of the intersection of U.S. Highway 61 and State Highway 33 in the southern outskirts of Fayette, Mississippi, Laurietta Plantation is entered from Highway 33 via an unmarked county road. Situated in a 680-acre plantation of wooded and cultivated rolling land, Laurietta is a Federal-Style, one-and-a-half story, frame plantation dwelling set upon brick foundation piers. One outside-end brick chimney is located at each gable end of the house. The gabled roof is pierced by two gabled dormers on the front slope; the original dormers on the rear slope were removed when an addition was added to the rear of the house. The dormers contain six-over-six, double-hung sash and are enframed by molded pilasters. The second-story windows located in the gable-end walls also contain six-over-six, double-hung sash. The northerly, six-bay facade is fronted by a gallery located under the broken slope of the roof. The gallery is supported by heavy, turned columns with molded capitals and bases that are echoed on the ends of the front wall by pilasters. The columns and pilasters were originally linked by a railing of rectangular-sectioned balusters with molded handrail. A section of the original gallery railing is located beneath the gallery floor.

The facade of the house and the gallery ceiling are composed of wide, matched, beaded boards, and the facade also features a dado of molded panels and a molded baseboard with two fasciae. The window surrounds have two fasciae with architrave trim, and all first-story windows contain twelve-over-twelve, double-hung sash. The two entrance doorways, each located in the center bay of each three-bay half of the facade, are symmetrically molded with semi-circular fanlights and central tablets. Each doorway contains a single-leaf, eight-paneled and molded door, and all interior, first-story doors match the entrance doors except an earlier style Federal molding is found on the interior doors.

The floor plan of the interior of the house is basically a single-pile plan with rear cabinet rooms and no central passage. All interior walls are composed of wide, matched, beaded boards. The two formal front rooms are identical in size but are differently trimmed. The eastern front room features a Federal-Style mantel piece with flanking colonettes, broad frieze with center tablet containing a molded sunburst, end tablets faced by fully round urns, now missing, and a molded-edge shelf with multiple bed moldings. The door and window surrounds have two fasciae and architrave trim, and a molded-panel dado encircles the room. Although the western front room does not have a molded-panel dado, it achieves the same formality from its more elaborately trimmed doors and windows. Windows are set over molded panels and the door and window surrounds are symmetrically molded with bull's-eye corner blocks. One window on the western elevation of the room was converted into a door early in the 20th century. The mantel piece in the western front room is a Federal-Style mantel piece with molded shelf, multiple bed moldings, wide frieze with central tablet, and gouged carving. The baseboards in both front rooms have two fasciae and are molded. An unusual and outstanding architectural feature of the front rooms are the fanlighted doorways located in the southern wall of each room.

The rear cabinet rooms are different in size and reflect the detailing of their adjacent front rooms. The western cabinet room has symmetrically molded door and window surrounds with corner blocks. The eastern cabinet room, which is considerably smaller, has architrave surrounds and chair molding, and the matched, beaded boards of the walls, which run horizontally throughout the house, have been run in a vertical direction from beneath the chair molding to the baseboard to create a dado effect. Baseboards in both cabinet rooms are unmolded with two fasciae.

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The staircase is located within the recessed rear gallery area between the cabinet rooms. The staircase runs in a straight, single flight from south to north along the western wall of the recessed porch. The staircase, which features a simply turned newel post and rectangular-sectioned balusters, is open until it hits the southern wall of the front section of the house, at which point it becomes enclosed until it terminates in a small passage with original under-the-eave closet. The two upstairs bedrooms are unheated and feature architrave door and window surrounds, beaded bases, and six-paneled and molded doors. The original second-story doors have been reused to enclose the ends of a long, wide gallery-hallway, which was formed when a rear addition was added to the house.

A peculiar gabled-roof addition spans the total width of the rear of the house and appears to date to the early 20th century. According to a descendant of a former owner (Everette Truly, interviewed by Mary Warren Miller, historian, The Historic Natchez Foundation, at Natchez, Ms., July 12, 1980), this addition was originally recessed and attached to a gable-end side of the main house to create an addition that was one room wide and three rooms deep. About 1935, this side addition was moved to the rear of the house, attached by means of a wide, gallery-hallway, and became a rear addition that was three rooms wide and one room deep. The ends of the gallery-like hallway have been enclosed by reusing the second-story doors from the main house with a hodge-podge arrangement of sidelights and panels. The interior trim of the addition is plain and unmolded, the doors are paneled but not molded, the windows contain twelve-over-twelve sash which are not necessarily original to the window openings, and no fireplace chambers ever existed. On the eastern side of the rear addition near its junction with the main house is a porte cochere that was added about 1935.

Directly behind the southwest corner of the rear of the house is a small, gabled-roof, frame building that once served as a pump house. Directly to the rear and located about 150 feet to the south is a log barn with gabled roof and shed additions.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Ca. 1825

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

A rare surviving example of vernacular Federal architecture, Laurietta is one of the most architecturally significant residences of rural Jefferson County. This outstanding architectural significance is based on the high degree of interior and exterior finish, the unusual architectural features, and the integrity of the house and its setting. The wooded mantel pieces, particularly the one located in the eastern front room; the paneled dado of the front wall and eastern front room; and the four, fanlighted doorways rank among the most well executed Federal details of the area. Unusual among its architectural features are the dado effect created in the eastern cabinet room by running the matched, beaded wall boards vertically from chair railing to baseboard; its interior use of a fanlighted doorway with single-leaf door, its unusual variation in interior trim in the two front rooms; and the manner in which the rear cabinet rooms relate more closely in architectural trim to the adjacent front rooms than to each other. The vernacular quality of the house is derived principally from exterior proportion. The turned columns of the front gallery are exceptionally thick, and the dormers are oddly perched on the front slope of the roof. The integrity of the house is remarkable, despite the obvious changes wrought by the mid-1930's addition. All mantel pieces, doors, and most of the original hardware survive. Situated within a 680-acre plantation of rolling, wooded and cultivated land, the setting of the house is picturesque and serene.

Laurietta was probably constructed not long after 1825, although the house stylistically dates from 1810 to 1830. Family tradition maintains that the house was constructed for Walter Sillers, and he purchased the first section of Laurietta Plantation in 1825 (Jefferson County Deed Book B:106-7). The use of mortise rather than box locks and the molding which is applied to the panels of the entrance doors further indicates a late 1820's date of construction. Walter Sillers came to Mississippi from North Carolina in the early 19th century and became a prominent Jefferson County planter (Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi [Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891], I, p. 615). Walter Sillers's daughter Susan, who married wealthy Jefferson County planter Jesse Darden, wrote a plantation diary that gives one of the most complete accounts of life on a southern plantation during the mid-19th century. After Walter Sillers died in 1843, Laurietta was sold to John P. Darden, cousin of Susan Sillers Darden's husband Jesse. The Darden family owned Laurietta for three generations, and John P. Darden's son Thomas L. Darden, Sr. served in the state legislature in the late 19th century (Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi [Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1891], I, 617).

In 1935, Laurietta was purchased by Jeff Truly (Jefferson County Deed Book 4g:351), grandfather of the present owner C. Gill Smith. The Sillers, Darden, and Truly families are all inter-related and were among the prosperous early settlers of Jefferson County. At present, the plantation is leased for cattle raising and soy bean growing, and the plantation house is occupied by tenant/caretakers.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891.

Jefferson County, Mississippi. Chancery Clerk. Deed Books B, 4G.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 8.26 acres

Quadrangle name Fayette

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

A

1	5	6	8	1	8	0	0	3	5	0	6	2	8	5
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property forms a four-sided figure with right angle corners and equal sides of 600 feet each with the center being the center point of the roof ridge of the house. The sides of the figure are parallel to the walls of the house.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Warren Miller Historian

organization Historic Natchez Foundation date July 16, 1980

street & number P. O. Box 1761 telephone (601) 442-2500

city or town Natchez state Mississippi 39120

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Robert B. Hilliard

title State Historic Preservation Officer date October 2, 1980

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

James W. Ray Juce
Keeper of the National Register date 11/29/80

Attest:

W. D. Dehn

date

11/21/80

Chief of Registration