

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

**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 Weems House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 1155 Springhill Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Mobile N/A vicinity of congressional district 01

state Alabama code 01 county Mobile code 097

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Doctor's office</u>

4. Owner of Property

name Dr. Phillip A. Snodgrass

street & number 1155 Springhill Avenue

city, town Mobile N/A vicinity of state Alabama

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mobile County Courthouse, Probate Court

street & number 109 Government Street

city, town Mobile state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970-present federal state county local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Included within the Old Dauphin Way Preservation Neighborhood, 1155 Springhill Avenue is located on the south side of the street in the block bounded by Springhill Avenue on the north, Herndon Avenue on the west, Old Shell Road on the south, and Hallett Street on the East.

The one story frame dwelling, built in 1870 by Louis H. Weems, is sited on a long, narrow, terraced lot. In plan, the Weems House was originally composed of a rectangular block with a separate kitchen house at the rear connected by a one story gallery. In the late 1800s an east wing was added and by 1925 the kitchen house had been eliminated. The house presently consists of the original rectangular block, the added east wing and a small addition on the rear of the wing.

The main block has a gable roof with the ridge running perpendicular to the street. A cross gable covers the east wing which has a small intersecting hip over a semi-octagonal projecting bay window. A box cornice is used throughout the building. A pronounced dentil table beneath the cornice can be found on the facade and front portions of both sides of the building.

The main portion of the house has a full width front porch which is three bays wide. Four evenly spaced square columns with simple capitals and narrow square bases delineate the bays. The balustrade is Victorian in design with turned balusters, molded handrail and square cut bottom rail. Against the porch wall are square Tuscan pilasters following the design of the columns. The entablature is supported by the columns and a pronounced dentil molding is placed at the top of the entablature rather than at the juncture between frieze and architrave. The dentil molding continues up the rake of the gable.

The facade of the house is sheathed in flush siding while the remainder of the building is sided in clapboarding. The right hand entrance rather than a symmetrical plan is not the norm for a classically inspired building.

The entrance door is classically designed with panelled pilasters that rise the full height of the door through the transom. The transom is divided into three lights. Six light sidelights extend the full height of the opening.

The semi-octagonal bay window on the east addition has been converted into a second entrance door. On the front of the bay there is a 15 light door with a four light double transom above and very thin 2/3 lights on the side angles of the bay. With the exception of the porch windows which are floor length 6/9 light wood sash, the remaining windows are 6/6 light.

The Weems House is raised on high brick foundation piers, some of which are infilled with lattice and some of which have decorative concrete block infilling.

Although some modifications have taken place over the years including the insertion of concrete block infilling and the installation of concrete steps, the original integrity of the building remains intact.

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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates 1870 **Builder/Architect** Lewis H. Weems

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

ARCHITECTURE:

The Weems House is an architecturally significant building to the Mobile area. It is a good example of the sympathetic reuse in the 1870s of elements from the Greek Revival style prevalent in Mobile during the period from the 1830s to the 1850s. In this instance, the dignity and proportions of the Greek Revival are maintained. Typical of the Greek Revival is the integration of the front porch into the overall building design. The pedimented gable which faces the street is similar to numerous other examples in the city including the Beal Cottage at 205 N. Conception Street and Oakleigh Mansion at 300 Oakleigh Place. While older sources are utilized, there is an amplification of the earlier vocabulary, placing this example apart from true Greek Revival houses. The dentil molding that extends along the rakes of the front pediment and the placement of the dentil molding at the upper edge of the entablature is contrary to Greek Revival dictates. The main entrance door is classically inspired with its Doric pilasters which rise through the transom separating transom from sidelights. Also of note is the sympathetic addition of the side wing with its semi-octagonal projecting window. It is well integrated with the dentil table continued under the cornice line.

Interior window and door framing has been retained in the original portion of the building and in the side wing. They appear to be of pine and have elaborately molded backbands. Fireplaces have simple detailing with pilasters supporting a plain mantle shelf.

INTEGRITY:

Although modifications in the design have taken place over the years--primarily in the Victorian balustrade addition, concrete steps and patterned concrete block foundation infilling--the original integrity of the building has been retained. The Weems House is located on a street that, in the late nineteenth century, was one of only a few east-west routes from the city's downtown. It provides a visual link to the Springhill Avenue of the late 1880s despite the fact that many of the buildings surrounding it have either succumbed to commercial encroachment or are threatened by it.

* * * * *

Lewis Weems was in partnership with Benjamin Weems and John C. O'Connell in the wholesale grocery business. Their business was located at 47-49 North Front and 48-50 North Commerce Streets. An 1870 advertisement for the firm found in the city directory indicates they were wholesalers of bacon, lard, oats, bran, flour and hay.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Deed Books from 1806 to 1938; Tax Records from 1869 to 1893; City Directories from 1870 to 1883; City Atlas of 1878, Plate N; 1904 Sanborn Map, Plates 27 & 29; 1924 Sanborn Map, Plate 225; 1955 Sanborn Map, Plate 225.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .34 acres

Quadrangle name Mobile

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 33, Square 26 of the Price Tract, 194 ft. west of the southeast corner of Herndon and Springhill Avenue, 66 ft. x. 225 ft.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title (Ellen Mertins, Alabama Historical Commission)
Anne Bantens, Architectural Historian; Robin Lang, Researcher

organization Mobile Historic Development Comm. date March 22, 1982

street & number P. O. Box 1827 telephone (205) 438-7133

city or town Mobile state Alabama

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

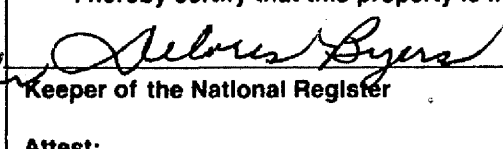
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

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 

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 9-2-82

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	Entered in the National Register date <u>10/7/82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Lewis Weems purchased the lot on which this house stands in May of 1870 and resold it to the Mobile Building and Loan Association in July of the same year. The sale price of \$750 was the same for both transactions. The actual construction of the dwelling appears to have been undertaken by the Mobile Building and Loan Association who is assessed on the house and lot. Lewis Weems must have rented from the association and was the building's first resident.

The building now serves as a doctor's office.