

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 30 1979

DATE ENTERED

JUL 22 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

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7 - DESCRIPTION

Chamberlain-Hunt Academy Historic District

Chamberlain-Hunt Academy is situated on the Church Street hill that rises south from the edge of the Market Street-Suburb Saint Mary Historic District. The main campus is set back 500 feet from Mississippi Highway 61 (the designation of Church Street at this point). Landscaped grounds are planted in live oak, magnolia, and pecan trees.

Redus (no. 288), McComb (no. 289), and Guthrie (no. 290) halls, facing west and sharing a common facade line, are the focal points of the campus. The three brick structures are connected by a colonnade and flanked on the south side by a frame structure, the Old President's House (no. 291), and Gage Dormitory (no. 292).

The three earliest buildings, McComb, Guthrie, and the Old President's House, were constructed in 1900 in the Queen Anne, Georgian Revival, and Colonial Revival styles, respectively. Redus, built in 1924 and lacking the quality of form and detail of the other three structures, contributes to the overall scale of the ensemble and creates a balance between McComb and Guthrie. Gage, constructed in 1947 southeast of Guthrie by the firm of N.W. Overstreet and Associates of Jackson, is a notable example of the late Art Moderne style as applied to an institutional building.

A 1924 fire and subsequent renovation greatly compromised the architectural integrity of McComb Hall through the loss of its prominent bell tower, turret, and multigable roof form. Redus, McComb, Guthrie, and Gage are in fair condition. Repair and restoration of the facades of these buildings is planned.

Inventory of Buildings in District:

288. Redus Hall. Two-story three-bay hip-roof brick dormitory. One-story frame colonnade along facade with Composite columns supporting an entablature. Paired columns flank central entrance. Colonial Revival. Major significance. 1924.

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289. McComb Hall. Two-story flat-roof brick administration and library building. Three-bay inset entrance porch articulated by elliptical archways and buttresses. Facade enlivened by curved and projecting window bays, continuous masonry water table and flat window arches along first floor. Queen Anne. Major significance. 1900 (altered 1924).
290. Guthrie Hall. Three-and-a-half-story hip-roof dormitory with projecting crossgable extension on rear (east) facade. Prominent modillioned cornice, flat window arches, quoins. Georgian Revival. Major significance. 1900.
291. Old President's House. Two-and-half-story hip-roof frame residence with projecting gabled extension on east side. Curved front porch (partially enclosed) carried by Composite columns. Gabled dormer with modified Palladian window. Queen Anne with Neo-Classical details. Major significance. 1900.
292. Gage Dormitory. Three-story three-bay rectangular structure with metal casement windows. Contributing significance. 1947.

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8 - SIGNIFICANCE

Chamberlain-Hunt Academy Historic District

Chamberlain-Hunt Academy, celebrating in 1979 its centennial year of operation at Port Gibson, figures prominently in the history of private educational institutions in Mississippi. The present secondary-school campus facility, constructed in 1900, is as well an important component of the architectural resources of Port Gibson.

The beginning of Chamberlain-Hunt Academy is traceable to the organization of Oakland College at Alcorn by Jeremiah Chamberlain (the first president of the college) and David Hunt (the founder) in 1828. A charter was granted the new school in 1831, under affiliation with the Presbytery of Mississippi (J. W. Kennedy, "Historical Sketch of Chamberlain-Hunt Academy, Southern Association Quarterly, Nov. 1938, p. 1). The school flourished until the Civil War disrupted the local economy and decimated the college population. The property was sold to the State of Mississippi in 1871, and Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, a state school for Negroes, was founded in its place. The Trustees of Oakland College selected Port Gibson, located fifteen miles northeast of Alcorn, as the site for a military academy for boys. Dr. J. W. Kerr was elected first president of the academy in 1878, and the Brashear Academy building in Port Gibson was acquired for use as classrooms (Kennedy, p. 2). Opening of the school was delayed until 1879, however, because of a yellow fever epidemic.

In 1900 the school acquired ninety acres of land along the southern boundary of Port Gibson for the construction of its present campus. The campus retains its cohesiveness of plan. Grounds between the campus and Church Street and playing fields to the south provide well-defined visual boundaries for the nominated ten-acre tract, contrasting with the residential subdivision and hospital to the north, forested areas to the west and south, and relatively new (1956) gymnasium and three one-story classroom buildings (ca. 1975) located east of the proposed district on the school grounds. Architectural integrity of the subject buildings is largely intact. Repair and restoration of these structures and the interconnecting colonnade will enhance the striking visual impression of the ensemble.

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HISTORIC RESOURCES OF PORT GIBSON
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10 - GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Chamberlain-Hunt Academy Historic District

UTM References:

Zone 15

I	Easting	690220	K	Easting	690420
	Northing	3536080		Northing	3536010
J	Easting	690180	L	Easting	690360
	Northing	3535930		Northing	3535800

Verbal Boundary Description:

The Chamberlain-Hunt Academy Historic District is a quadrilateral comprising approximately ten acres. District boundaries correspond with the boundary line outlined on the Chamberlain-Hunt Academy map (3).