

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

HB no UTR

STATE: <b>Mississippi</b>
COUNTY: <b>Bolivar</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>JUL 24 1974</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Alligator Mounds**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

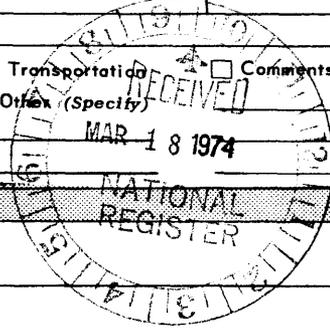
STREET AND NUMBER: [REDACTED]

CITY OR TOWN: [REDACTED] CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: [REDACTED] CODE: COUNTY: [REDACTED] CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments



**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**J. N. Dunn, Sr.**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Alligator** STATE: **Mississippi** CODE: **28**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Bolivar County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Cleveland** STATE: **Mississippi** CODE: **28**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Mississippi Archaeological Survey**

DATE OF SURVEY:                     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Mississippi Department of Archives and History**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Box 571**

CITY OR TOWN: **Jackson** STATE: **Mississippi** CODE: **28**

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Alligator Site at one time included five mounds and a village area (see map). At the time of Philip Phillips', James A Ford's, and James B. Griffin's survey in 1941, mound A was fifteen feet high and had a visible ramp. Mound B was rectangular and twelve feet high, while mound D was spread by cultivation and only a little over three feet high. The archaeologists make no mention of the dimensions of mounds C and E.

In 1941, a stratigraphic cut was made by Mott Davis and Griffin through mound D (cut A on map). From their analysis of the stratigraphy, it was apparent that the mound was built during the Mississippian Period over an earlier Middle Baytown Period village area. This conclusion was further supported by the stratigraphy in cut B, between mounds B and D (see map). Here a sharp break was noted in pottery types, with an almost pure Mississippian Period deposit overlying the Baytown deposit and no transition in between. This indicated a two-component site. It was referred to as a "small ceremonial center" by Phillips, Ford, and Griffin (1951:32). A re-evaluation by Phillips (1970) shows it to include components of the Marks-ville, Baytown, Coles Creek, and Mississippian Periods.

At the present time, only remnants of four mounds remain. Mound A is still about fifteen feet high by two-hundred feet long, but a twenty foot wide trench was cut

It is covered with trees and brush and has not been significantly altered since the trench was cut. Mound B remains essentially the same, measuring about twelve feet high by one-hundred and twenty-five feet long. There are three small potholes in it and some slight erosion, but it too is covered with vegetation and is thus protected. Mound C is barely visible, evidently having suffered from much cultivation and erosion. Mound D is still visible as an elevation, is still about three feet high, but is being cultivated and is eroding away. It measures about sixty to eighty feet in diameter. Mound E is completely destroyed and the area around it has apparently been land-leveled.

Several areas of concentrated daub can be seen on and around mound D, as well as between there and mound B. These represent house sites and the large size of some of the chunks of daub indicate they have only recently been plowed up. There could possibly be some undisturbed house remains beneath mound D; however, present cultivation practices will probably soon destroy the remains.

The original extent of the site is not known, but judging from the Phillips, Ford, and Griffin map, its minimum size could be estimated at about twenty acres. Much of the village remains have been scattered by cultivation and land-leveling. The plaza was estimated by Phillips, Ford, and Griffin to have been about 450 feet long and oriented toward the southeast.

It is thought that Dr. Charles Peabody may have done excavation work at the site in 1918, since Brown (1926:94) states that he investigated a mound group a "short distance south of Alligator." He collected some sherds, stone artifacts, and bone awls from the first mound. The second mound was approximately 5.75 feet high. There were three others, the largest of which was "a rectangular domiciliary mound about 17 feet high." Peabody never published a report on the excavations there.

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                      |   |  |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | osophy                                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture            | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Alligator Site presently consists of four mounds a [REDACTED] (Phillips, Ford & Griffin, 1951:260). One significant aspect of the site lies in its relatively good state of preservation, [REDACTED]

Except for this alteration and the loss of Mound E, the site does not appear to have been altered significantly since Griffin and Davis excavated there in 1941. A summary of this excavation appears in Phillips, Ford & Griffin (1951:260-265). Included is a discussion of a portion of house wall trench with post-molds found in Cut A, Mound D, at a depth of from 3.2 to 5.2 feet (Phillips, Ford, & Griffin, 1951:261-263). Since the trench was first noted at the level where the mound began to cover the earlier village site, it is not certain as to which construction it belonged. However, the fact that the house was there in an undisturbed stratum is significant, since at that depth it is still probably untouched by plowing and could afford much needed information about house construction during the period before Mound D was completed.

It is quite probable that other areas of the site also contain midden and village remains still buried deeply enough to remain intact. This is indicated by Cut B, made approximately half way between Mounds B and D. Here Griffin found dark midden as deep as 3.6 feet and encountered the corner of a house floor at about 2 feet (Phillips, Ford, & Griffin, 1951:263). The excavations tend to support the theory stratigraphically that the site contains a Mississippian component overlying an earlier Baytown component with no perceptible sign of transition in between (Phillips, Ford, & Griffin, 1951:264). Thus, the site could afford a chance for future studies of these cultures in stratigraphic sequence.

Phillips, in a 1970 publication, divides the components of the site into four phases associated with various cultural periods. His re-evaluation is based primarily on analysis of potsherd collections from the site. The earliest phase, Dorr, is regarded as early Marksville Period. However, Phillips says the lack of Withers Fabric-impressed pottery at Alligator indicates this component may be post-Dorr or late Marksville, (Phillips, 1970:890-891). The Baytown Period at the site is represented by a pottery assemblage associated with the Coahoma Phase, defined by Phillips as "the main representative of Baytown Culture in the upper-Sunflower region, beginning sometime before the end of the Marksville Period and continuing through the

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Brown, Calvin S. Archeology of Mississippi, Mississippi Geological Survey, 1926.  
Final Report of the U. S. DeSoto Expedition Commission. Washington, 1939.  
 Phillips, Philip, James A. Ford and James B. Griffin. Archaeological Survey in the Lower Mississippi [redacted] 1940-1947. Papers of the Peabody Museum, Vol. XXV, Cambridge, 1951.  
 Phillips, Philip. Archaeological Survey [redacted] Mississippi 1949-1955. Papers of the Peabody Museum, Vol. 60, Cambridge, 1970.

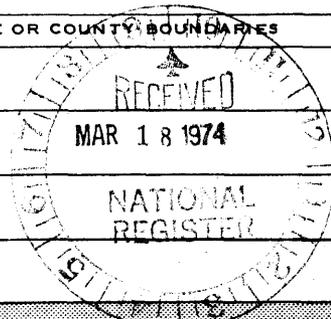
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds [redacted]	Degrees Minutes Seconds [redacted]	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NE	[redacted]	[redacted]	°	'	"	
SE	[redacted]	[redacted]				
SW	[redacted]	[redacted]				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **20 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**John Connaway, Survey Archaeologist**

ORGANIZATION: **Mississippi Department of Archives and History**      DATE: **Feb. 28, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P. O. Box 571**

CITY OR TOWN: **Jackson**      STATE: **Mississippi**      CODE: **28**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National     State     Local

Name Albert R. Hilliard

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date March 12, 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

AK [Signature]  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7/24/74

ATTEST:

[Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 7-24-74

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8. entire Baytown period" (Phillips, 1970:905). Following this, a brief Coles Creek-related period at the site has been classified as Peabody Phase. Most of the criteria for this phase, however, are open to question, and more studies will be necessary to determine its true character. The last cultural phase at the site is the Hushpuckena-Oliver, with its Mississippian period pottery complex, and probably represents the time when the mounds were constructed.

The DeSoto expedition crossed the Mississippi River in June, 1541. If the crossing was made [redacted]

[redacted] It was indeed mentioned by Swanton in the U. S. DeSoto Commission's "Final Report" as a possibility (1939:248), and Phillips, Ford, and Griffin investigated the site with this in mind. They found that dating the upper component was questionable, and they were uncertain as to whether the site had been occupied during or after 1541 (1951:370). The physical character of the site, they stated, conforms very well with descriptions of the Quizqui main village, [redacted]

[redacted] most of the villages of this tribe were nearer to the River (1951:370-371). It is possible that Alligator was the first Quizqui village encountered by DeSoto, but the role played by the site in the DeSoto expedition is still debatable. However, there is the possibility that future investigations at the site could turn up more concrete evidence of a visit by the DeSoto expedition.

