

PH0662011

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 1 1978  
DATE ENTERED APR 19 1979

## 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

Carson Mounds (22-Co-505) (includes Montgomery Site: 22-Co-518)

AND/OR COMMON

### 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

[REDACTED]

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

### 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"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

### 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John Pelegrin and Carson Pelegrin

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Stovall

VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi 38672

### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Chancery Clerk  
Coahoma County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

First Street

CITY, TOWN

Clarksdale

STATE

Mississippi 38614

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Survey of Archaeological Sites

DATE

1968

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi 39205

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" 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

The Carson Mounds site, consisting of five large mounds and an associated village area. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The mounds, illustrated in 1894 by Thomas (p. 254, Plate XI) as a-e (see attached photocopy), are relatively intact except for minor alterations to the summits of two, on which houses have been built. The present location of the home of John Pelegrin is Mound c, and the home of Carson Pelegrin, his son, is on Mound a. The original Carson mansion probably stood atop Mound d (Thomas 1894:258, Plate XIII). Only a few small rises in surrounding fields indicate the presence originally of over eighty-five mounds of various sizes (Thomas 1894:254, Plate XI). Most of the area is in cultivation, and it is not known whether deep plowing has destroyed village areas or burials. Deeply buried undisturbed portions may remain, since sites in this area often have occupational zones covered by river alluvium.

The Carson Mounds were visited around 1884 by Col. P. W. Norris and later by W. H. Holmes, whose description of the site is given by Thomas (1894:253-55).

The general plan of these works is shown in Pl. XI. In the northwest is an enclosure surrounded by an earthen wall and a ditch. [REDACTED]

The enclosure fronts west for a distance of 738 feet on a cypress swamp, probably an open bayou or one channel of the Mississippi when these works were constructed. It is in the form of a parallelogram, the wall on three sides measuring 1,173 feet long, and embracing an area of about 5 acres. This wall is from 15 to 30 feet wide at the base, and from 3 to 5 feet high. [REDACTED]

Within this area, a little northwest [southwest] of the center, is a circular mound (a), 192 feet in diameter at the base, 15 feet high, and 66 feet across the nearly flat top. There appears to have been originally a platform some 5 or 6 feet high, on which the mound proper was built. Several excavations made in the top and on the sides showed that it was composed of earth from the bottom land, probably obtained from the excavation near the southeast corner of the enclosure. A number of fire-beds, of burnt clay were found near the summit and at different elevations throughout the mound. Charcoal, ashes, and fragments of pottery and stone were also discovered, but no bones. It is probable, therefore, that these spots mark the sites of houses.

Some slight elevations noticed within the enclosure were not explored but are shown on the plate.

Just outside of the southwest [southeast] corner is an artificial excavation about 100 feet in diameter, but now partially filled and converted into a bog.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Carson Mounds site lies both in its historical value as one of the possible sites of the villages of Quizquiz, visited by DeSoto in 1541, and in its prehistoric context as a large Mississippi Period ceremonial complex, settlement, and cemetery.

Phillips, Ford, and Griffin (1951:372-73) hint that the site might be one of the Quizquiz towns, because ceramics collected there indicate that it could have been occupied in 1541. Although acknowledging that it deserves attention as a possible Quizquiz town, they admittedly fail to give it due consideration since to do so would conflict with the Sunflower Landing theory of DeSoto's river crossing, toward which they lean.

The most recent--and from an archaeological standpoint the most convincing--study of the DeSoto route [redacted] that by Brain, Toth, and Rodriguez-Buckingham (1974). The Montgomery portion of the site is mentioned therein as the possible Quizquiz town because of its fortification and its situation on the bank of the old river channel. Moreover, most of the ceramic collections studied have come from this portion of the site, and these, according to Brain, "show a full complement of all the ceramic markers used to define a DeSoto date line" (1974:261). Other sites in the general area have yielded similar ceramics and appear to be the neighboring towns described in some of the DeSoto narratives.

These towns, including Carson, might be linked with the Tunica of historic times, says Brain, since Swanton (1911:317) states that Chickasaw and Choctaw traditions place the "Tunica oldfields" in the vicinity of Friars Point. [redacted]

There were earlier occupations on the site. Phillips (1970:940), in determining some of the various prehistoric culture phases there, considers Montgomery and Carson together. He has determined from ceramic collections that the Carson Mounds site was inhabited during the following phases (1970:444-47): Dorr Phase of the Marksville Period; Coahoma Phase of the Baytown Period; Peabody Phase of the Coles Creek Period; and Parchman Phase of the Mississippi Period. On portions of the site, potential exists for settlement studies of these occupations, especially under the remains of mounds and possibly under deposits of alluvium.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Beaudoin, Kenneth L.

1952 The Carson site. Tennessee Archaeologist. Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 10-14.

Brain, Jeffrey P., Alan Toth, and Antonio Rodriguez-Buckingham

1974 Ethnohistoric archaeology and the DeSoto entrada into the Lower Mississippi Valley. Conference on Historic Site Archaeology, Papers 7:260-62.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY [REDACTED]

UTM REFERENCES

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the site may be defined as the outer limits of the surface distribution of artifactual material - *as indicated on the enclosed quadrang map by yellow shading.*

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John M. Connaway, Archaeologist

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

DATE

September, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 36

TELEPHONE

(601) 354-6218

CITY OR TOWN

Clarksdale

STATE

Mississippi 38614

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Elbert B. Hilliard*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

January 30, 1978

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *[Signature]* DATE 9.11.79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE 9/19/79

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7 - DESCRIPTION

Mound b, shown in detail in Pl.XII, is double. There are at the bottom indications of an oval platform, probably 10 feet high, with a length of 240 feet at the base. On this, two truncated cones, which occupy the entire length, but not the entire width of the platform, rise jointly for 18 feet, and above the union rise separately 8 feet higher. The entire height of the mound from the natural surface of the land is therefore 36 feet. The cones are level on top, the one being 42 feet in diameter at this point and the other 48. On this mound, [REDACTED] stands a thrifty black oak, 5 feet in diameter.

Little excavating was done in this mound and nothing of interest found, except the ever present fire-beds of burnt clay, stone chips, and fragments of pottery.

Mound c is oval and rounded on top, 210 feet long, 150 broad at the base, and 16 feet high. This mound and several smaller ones near it are so nearly masses of fire-beds, burnt clay, fragments of stone and pottery, together with more or less charcoal and ashes, as to indicate clearly that they are the sites of ancient dwellings thus elevated by accumulation of material during long continued occupancy.

Mound d, Pl.XIII, the finest of the group, is roughly pentangular and very symmetrical, level on the top, 25 feet high (including the platform). 310 feet in diameter at the base, and 210 feet across the top. Besides the broad, sloping platform, 5 feet high, on which the mound rests, there is near by, almost adjoining, a small mound which, as in many other groups, forms a kind of appendage to the large one. This is about 100 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 8 feet high, rounded on top.

Not only are beds of hard burned clay (the fragments of which show the casts of cane and grass running through it) abundant upon the surface and sides of the mound, but are also found in the wells and cisterns and in other excavations made in digging cellars and for the foundations of buildings. It is evident from this that it was used as a dwelling place or as a location for a temple or some other public building.

Mound e is double and similar in almost every respect to b. The platform is 5 feet high and 120 by 80 feet on top. Near the top of one cone is a red oak tree, 4 feet in diameter, and near the top of the other a black oak, 6 feet in diameter. In the depression between the two cones a partially decayed skeleton was found in digging a grave for a person now interred there. This skeleton was under a bed of burnt clay, and other similar beds are found near the surface of the sides and summit.

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7 - DESCRIPTION

Mound f is oval, rounded on top, 150 feet long by 75 feet wide and between 5 and 6 feet high, differing but little from several others not shown on the plat. A thorough examination of this mound revealed the fact that from base to summit it was composed of burnt clay, mud, or alluvial earth in irregular layers formed of lumps or little masses burned to a brick red or actually melted into slag. Much of the top of this mound is a deposit resembling mud or clay plastering, from which the sustaining canes and timbers had been burned out, leaving their casts. It seems evident, therefore, that mud-walled and perhaps partitioned dwellings, stood here which were destroyed by fire.

The places from which a part at least of the dirt was taken that was used to form the mounds are shown by the unevenness of the surface of the ground immediately around them. But there are several excavations which must have furnished a large portion of the material for this purpose. They are still so deep as to form swamps, bogs, or open ponds, some of the last being well stocked with fish.

During all the excavations made and digging done by the present proprietors, who have made all the improvements there are on the plantation, but few skeletons have been unearthed and no whole vessels of pottery found. Still, it is possible that more extensive explorations of the small mounds may reveal these, but the owner will not allow them to be disturbed.

The solid material of which the mounds are composed, together with their numerous fire beds or patches of burnt clay, are so well calculated to withstand the erosion of the elements in a region but little subject to frosts, that the lapse of time has had but little effect upon their appearance. Still, the rounding off of the parts not protected by fire-beds, the boggy character of the excavations, and the considerable accumulation of soil upon the works suggest that the town of the mound-builders located here was upon the bank of the Mississippi when this river flowed in its ancient channel, but was abandoned when it changed its bed.

Calvin Brown (1926:108-113) summarized Thomas's description, but provided no additional data. Peabody Museum's Lower Valley Survey (Phillips, Ford, and Griffin 1951:51) in 1940-47 recorded the mound group as three separate sites: Carson Group (15-N-8)--Thomas's Mounds c-f area; Stovall (15-N-7)--Thomas's Mound b area; and Montgomery (15-N-6)--Thomas's Mound a area. By this time most of the smaller mounds mentioned by Thomas had been destroyed by agricultural practices. Carson was described as a "village site with large platform mound [d], large double conical mound [e] and small mound"; Stovall as a "large double conical mound [b]"; and Montgomery as a "village site with large rectangular platform mound [a] and small mound" (1951: 51).

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7 - DESCRIPTION

Phillips, Ford, and Griffin indicate that Montgomery was primarily a Mississippi Period occupation, as was Stovall, but that Stovall was also occupied as far back as early Baytown (1951:51). They were apparently uncertain of the temporal placement of Carson. Most of the collections made at that time were evidently from Montgomery. Other than variations in the amounts of surface collections made in the three areas, Phillips, Ford, and Griffin give no particular reason for dividing the Carson Mounds into three separate sites. Phillips (1970:940) later placed the Carson site, which he identified as 15-N-6, in the Parchman Phase.

In 1951 the Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society undertook a brief excavation in the area of Thomas's earthen enclosure (Thomas:Plate XI), the area designated as Montgomery by Phillips, Ford, and Griffin. Kenneth Beaudoin, a member of the society, indicates that at this time there still remained "ten or twelve large, flat-topped mounds and many smaller ones" (1952:10). He records the dimensions of Mound d as 68 feet by 78 feet along the base (cf. Thomas, 310 feet at the base), 48 feet by 56 feet at the summit (cf. Thomas, 210 feet across the top), and 20 feet high (cf. Thomas, 25 feet high). According to Beaudoin, the old Carson mansion, which had burned some years before, had stood on this mound. His preliminary report, however, indicates that the mound to which he was referring here is Mound a, whose measurements coincide more closely. Since Thomas's Plate XI shows the Carson mansion on Mound d, there is obviously some discrepancy between the two accounts.

Beaudoin's preliminary report refers to remaining evidence of [REDACTED] the enclosure (his Feature #2), in the form of a slight ridge which could be seen at a few points on the site. He also reported a number of burned house floors and burials, indicating a large settlement and cemetery.

The 1940 Work Projects Administration survey found six large mounds and several smaller ones. The largest mound was 310 feet in diameter and 25 feet high; others varied from 5 feet to 18 feet in height.

9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brown, Calvin S.  
1926 Archaeology of Mississippi. Mississippi Geological Survey, University, Mississippi.

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9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Phillips, Philip

1970 Archaeological survey in the Lower Yazoo Basin, Mississippi, 1949-1955.  
Harvard University, Peabody Museum, Papers 60:940, Figs. 444-47.

Phillips, Philip, James A. Ford, and James B. Griffin

1951 Archaeological survey in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley, 1940-1947.  
Harvard University, Peabody Museum, Papers 25:51, 371-73.

Thomas, Cyrus

1894 Report on the Mound Explorations of the Bureau of Ethnology. In Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology. Washington, D.C.

Swanton, John R.

1911 Indian tribes of the Lower Mississippi Valley and adjacent coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 43.

Work Projects Administration

1940 Indian mounds and sites in Mississippi. Vol. 1.