**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

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

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

### 1. NAME

**COMMON:**
Humber Site (22-Co-601)

**AND/OR HISTORIC:**

### 2. LOCATION

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**

**COUNTY:**

### 3. CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY (Check One)</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Building</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>In Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Structure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td></td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Being Considered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):**

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other (Specify) Comments

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

**OWNER'S NAME:**
J. F. Humber; Gary McWilliams; Chicago Mills; USG Levee

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**

**STATE:**

**STATE CODE:**

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:**
Coahoma County Court House

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**

**STATE:**

**STATE CODE:**

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE OF SURVEY:**

**DATE OF SURVEY:**

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**
Division of Historic Sites and Archaeology, Department of Archives & History

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**

**STATE:**

**STATE CODE:**

**ENTRY DATE**

**ENTRY NUMBER**

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**
The Humber Site (22-Co-601) represents the remains of a Late Mississippian Period village and cemetery complex. Nearly two-thirds of this site is presently under cultivation. In an effort to minimize the amount of plow-related alteration, the owners are plowing less deeply than they ordinarily would. Nevertheless, sheet erosion related to farming activities, in addition to past river flooding, has served to remove an estimated two to three feet of protective topsoil, thus exposing the midden on the higher ground to plow disturbance. On the west side of the levee and crossing over to Island 63, the site is for the most part overgrown. This section of the site has suffered the most disturbance of all. Even so, the very extensiveness of this site has served to insure that a representative portion yet remains sufficiently intact for excavation and meaningful analysis.

Judging from the reports of local informants and the data derived from recent excavations, the site originally had what must have been a main ballfield plaza flanked by several ceremonial mounds for temples and chiefs' houses. The excavation related to construction, however, also exposed the extensive cemetery which occupies the entire site. The quantities of whole ceramic vessels, including Avenue Polychrome, present at the site, brought the location to the attention of area-wide pothunters who vandalized the site for the next forty years. Even though the landowners have refused them permission to excavate during the last few years, many amateur archaeologists have persisted. It is not yet known if the site, or at least its main ceremonial area, was palisaded. The extensive village itself appears to have been dispersed and consisted of clusters of families or dwellings spread out along the ridge levee. Ongoing excavation indicates that houses were of wattle-and-daub and were somewhat oval to rectangular in shape. Much more excavation will be required before a complete appraisal of the site's original appearance can be offered.
The Humber Site (22-Co-601) is a Late Mississippian Period (ca. 1400-1700 A.D.) village and cemetery complex. Side from the impressive size of the site itself, it is notable that this site lies well within the corridor and time frame of the passage of the DeSoto expedition during its famous crossing of the Mississippi River in 1541 A.D. It is generally agreed that DeSoto stopped at nearby Clarksdale before moving west to cross the river. Even if DeSoto or any of his expedition did not ever see this site, it represents the florescence or apex of native American cultural achievement north of Mexico, as well as being a prime example of the Late Mississippian Interaction Sphere as manifest through the Southern Cult (a native American religious movement with strong Middle American overtones). Recent excavation has established that at least two native American populations are represented at the site. One, possibly the older of the two, is represented by primary, semiflexed burials of narrow-headed individuals with which no ceramic or lithic grave goods have yet been discovered. The other is characterized by secondary bundle burials of round-headed individuals usually accompanied by ceramic grave goods. It is possible that a period of contemporaneity between these two populations existed, but this period of coexistence has not yet been definitely demonstrated. Although over 200 of the bundle burials have been disturbed by pothunters seeking the ceramic vessels for which this site is famed, much of the extensive cemetery yet remains. Analysis of the remains of a population of this size will add much to our knowledge of native American peoples in this area. The occupants of this site were primarily farmers—the charred remains of corn, beans, a melon-like seed, and persimmon have been recovered. At least two basic types of house patterns appear to be represented, oval and rectangular. The excavation and analysis of the manner of construction, organization, and use of these will add much to our knowledge of the lifeways of these people. Trade items have been recovered and offer further clues to the workings of the Late Mississippian Period Interaction Sphere. Lastly, and that which has led to the extensive looting of this site, is the presence of numerous whole ceramic vessels of excellent quality and a variety of forms and techniques, not the least among which is the type known as Avenue Polychrome. These are ceremonial ceramics, and their analysis, along with that of everyday types, is perhaps one of the most significant features of the site.
Tesar, Louis Daniel and Donna L. Fichtner

### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
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<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
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<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approximate Acreage of Nominated Property: 200 acres

List all States and Counties for properties overlapping State or County boundaries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Form Prepared By:

**Name and Title:** Louis Daniel Tesar, Anthropologist/Curator

**Organization:** Cottonlandia Educational and Recreational Foundation, Inc.

**Street and Number:** Fld. Hqtrs., Rt. 3, Box 95

**City or Town:** Clarksdale

**State:** Mississippi

**Code:** 38614

**Date:** Feb. 11, 1975

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:** E. R. Williams

**Title:** State Historic Preservation Officer

**Date:** February 11, 1975

National Register Verification

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

**Signature:**

**Date:** 5/12/75

Attest:

**Signature:**

**Date:** 5/12/75