

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 8 1975

DATE ENTERED AUG 22 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Veranda House

AND/OR COMMON

The Curlee House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

711 Jackson Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Corinth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi

CODE
28COUNTY
AlcornCODE
003**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☐ YES: RESTRICTED
☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☒ MUSEUM
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Corinth

STREET & NUMBER

Robinette Street

CITY, TOWN

Corinth

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of Chancery Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

Alcorn County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Corinth

STATE

Mississippi

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Survey of Historic Sites

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

___EXCELLENT

XGOOD

___FAIR

___DETERIORATED

___RUINS

___UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

___UNALTERED

XALTERED

CHECK ONE

XORIGINAL SITE

___MOVED DATE_____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the northwest corner of Jackson and Childs streets in Corinth, Mississippi, the Curlee House is a significant example of Greek Revival architecture modified and adapted to a domestic scale. Although the name of the architect has not survived, the excellent proportions and unified composition of the design clearly indicate that the house was the product of a single, well-trained man. Standing on a foundation of brick piers, the house is three bays wide, one story high, and surrounded on three sides by a narrow veranda. The exterior walls are finished with white stucco applied to lath on frame and scored to imitate ashlar masonry. Physical evidence indicates that the stucco was painted a straw color at an early date to cover what seems to have been a totally unconvincing example of marbleizing. The veranda, which is slightly let-out on each elevation to form small porticoes, is composed of slender chamfered columns on pedestals supporting a full entablature detailed with delicate water-leaf carvings below the frieze and simple starlike designs on the cornice. A narrow parapet wall is placed above the entablature to screen the structure's low-pitched roof. Large, full-length windows, placed symmetrically on each elevation, are hung in substantial eared architraves which are ornamented with applied rosettes and which support a shallow cornice. Each window opening retains its original set of louvered blinds. Recessed behind an opening which repeats the exact details and dimensions of the windows, is the entrance to the Curlee House. It is contained in a substantial frontispiece designed with pilasters that separate the door from narrow, flanking sidelights, and is capped by a large, seven-light transom. Alterations to the exterior of the house have been limited to the replacement of two pairs of octagonal chimneys with lower, more conventional stacks, the removal of simple, sawn antefixes from the parapet wall, and the construction of a frame addition to the rear elevation in the early 1930s.

The plan of the Curlee House is based on the traditional double-pile formula, with a broad central passage separating the drawing and dining rooms on the south side from two chambers currently furnished as a library and bedroom on the north. Two simple plaster chandelier medallions and a chair rail with panel-like moldings applied to the dado below are used to emphasize the entrance hall. As the "best room," the drawing room received special treatment by being housed in a sixteen-foot-nine-inch cube and by the use of giant pilasters, with egg and dart molding on the capitals, to frame the door, mantel, and windows. The pilasters visually support an ambitious entablature with an architrave carved with a delicate water-leaf design, a frieze ornamented with an elaborate guilloche, and a cornice of deeply undercut acanthus leaves which twist around a center rod. Because of the attention given to the room's proportion and architectural program, the drawing room at the Curlee House is considered to be among the finest of the period in Mississippi. Other major interior features include wooden mantels designed with simple paneled pilasters supporting uncarved friezes and shelves; deep, well-proportioned cornices with rosettes applied to the friezes which run beneath; and the battered and eared architraves surrounding six paneled doors.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Association with locally prominent families |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

1857

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Curlee House is a significant example of domestic Greek Revival architecture and, because of its association with locally prominent families and several important Civil War figures, is among the most historic structures in Alcorn County. Construction of the house was begun in about 1857 by a surveyor named Hamilton Mask. With his brother-in-law, Houston Mitchell, Mask had established the town of Corinth in 1855, a few miles below the Tennessee state line at the junction of the Mobile and Ohio and the Memphis and Charleston railroads. Mask, who later served two terms (1866, 1872) as mayor of Corinth, sold the property to Burnett B. Wilkerson for \$7,000 in 1860. Later that same year the title passed to William Simonton, who retained ownership for the next twelve years.

During the Civil War, Simonton's residence served as headquarters for both Confederate and Federal generals during their occupations of Corinth. With its defeat at the Battle of Shiloh (April 6, 1862), the Confederate army under P. G. T. Beauregard retreated twenty miles south to Corinth, where General Braxton Bragg took up residence in Simonton's house. General Earl Van Dorn, whose army had come from Arkansas to join Beauregard at Corinth, later occupied the house with Bragg. The Federal army of General Henry W. Halleck pursued the retreating Confederates so slowly that by the time it had reached Corinth on May 30, 1862, Generals Beauregard, Bragg, and Van Dorn had quietly withdrawn farther south with their men. Thus, the Federal army occupied Corinth without a fight and Simonton's residence once again served as a commander's headquarters, this time for General Halleck. The 15,000-man Union army continued to camp at Corinth until October 3, 1862, when the city was attacked by Confederate Generals Van Dorn and Sterling Price. Although unsuccessful in their attempts to secure Corinth for themselves, the Confederates forced the Federals to pursue their retreat, thus leaving the city unoccupied. By October 5, 1862, Simonton's house was returned to civilian use.

Reflecting the deteriorated economic condition brought about by civil war and reconstruction, the property was sold for \$4,000 in 1872. Three years later, the house and lot were purchased for \$2,000 by William P. Curlee (1833-1878), a locally prominent lawyer and jurist. A native of Tipton County, Tennessee, Curlee graduated in 1856 from Union University at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and took his law degree at Lebanon Law School in 1858. After serving in various regiments of the Confederate army, Curlee settled in Tishomingo County, Mississippi, where on October 20, 1865, he was elected judge of the probate court. When Alcorn County was carved out of Tishomingo in 1870, Curlee moved permanently to the new county seat at Corinth, where he practiced law until his death in 1878. In 1882, Curlee's widow, Mary Boone Curlee, sold the property.

After a succession of owners and subdivisions, the house was purchased in 1921 by Shelby Hammond Curlee, who by 1938 had succeeded in acquiring all the original family property. S. H. Curlee had established a woolen mill in Corinth in 1896 which, when

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Alcorn County, Mississippi. Chancery Clerk. Deed books, W. 3, BB. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Microfilm.

Cockrell, Monroe F., ed. The Lost Account of the Battle of Corinth and Court-Martial of Gen. Van Dorn. Jackson, Tennessee: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1955.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY One

UTM REFERENCES

361
A 16 389075 38166900
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

UTM OK
1K
B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

William C. Allen, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 571

CITY OR TOWN

Jackson, Miss.

DATE

May, 1975

TELEPHONE

(601) 354-6218

STATE

Mississippi

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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:

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Edward R. Hilliard

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE June 12, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Robert M. Gentry
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

8/22/75

ATTEST:

DATE AUG 20 1975

W. M. Gentry
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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moved to St. Louis in 1905, became the famous Curlee Clothing Company. His sister, Eleanor Katherine Curlee, occupied the house from 1925 until her death in 1944. It was during her residence that the house was modernized with a rear addition containing a kitchen, bedroom, and bath and with a brick wall built to replace a simple picket fence surrounding the property. The property is now maintained by the Corinth Library Commission, which was deeded the house by S. H. Curlee IV in a series of gifts from 1960 to 1963. Today the house is operated as a museum and open regularly to the public.

Despite additions made to the structure, the Curlee House is significant for the quality and integrity of its architectural fabric. The design is notable for the skillful handling of abstract proportion, the knowledgeable and restrained reference to Greek Revival motifs, and the clear, uncluttered delineation of individual parts. Because there exists a detailed pen and ink drawing and an excellent photograph of the house, both made during the Civil War, it is not difficult to assess or appreciate the significant degree of preservation which the Curlee House enjoys. With a few minor exceptions, the house stands today just as it did when completed in 1857.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

Corinth (Miss.) Herald, "Historical Edition," December 15, 1903.

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Statewide Survey File. Alcorn County. Curlee House.

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Subject File. William Peyton Curlee.

Mississippi. Secretary of State. Register of Commissions, 1865-1869, 1871-1874. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Record Group 28, vols. 4, 5.



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HISTORIC

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AND/OR COMMON

The Curlee House

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Corinth

___ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Alcorn

STATE

Mississippi

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Library of Congress

DATE OF PHOTO 1862

NEGATIVE FILED AT copy negative: Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Ms.

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
view of the south and east elevations

PHOTO NO. 1 of 2



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COUNTY

Alcorn

STATE

Mississippi

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Miss. Dept. of Archives & History

DATE OF PHOTO February, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Miss. Dept. of Archives & History, P. O. Box 571, Jackson, Ms. 39205

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

View of front elevation

PHOTO NO.

2 of 2