

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 7 1978

DATE ENTERED MAY 5 1978

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

Stevens-Buchanan House

AND/OR COMMON

Buchanan House

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

505 College Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Brandon

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Mississippi

CODE

28

COUNTY

Rankin

CODE

121

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Miss Margaret Buchanan

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 405

CITY, TOWN

Brandon

VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi 39042

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Chancery Clerk
Rankin County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 126

CITY, TOWN

Brandon

STATE

Mississippi 39042

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Statewide Survey of Historic Sites

DATE

1973

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi 39205

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT ☐ DETERIORATED
☒ GOOD ☐ RUINS
☐ FAIR ☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Stevens-Buchanan House, situated on an eight-acre lot at the southwest corner of College and Jasper streets in Brandon, Mississippi, is a two-story frame structure surrounded by a host of original support structures and numerous planted specimen trees. Constructed at a time when the dominant and long-lived tradition of the Greek Revival was being increasingly challenged by the popular Italianate mode, the house is a picturesque and whimsical blend of the two idioms.

The nearly square five-bay by four-bay residence stands on a foundation of brick piers and is sheathed with plain clapboards and covered by a hip roof. The facade features a richly detailed single-bay, double-tiered portico flanked by flat-roofed galleries, all of which shelter one area set in flush siding. The galleries and portico are a fanciful play of the traditional classical vocabulary, the paneled rectangular columns carrying a stylized entablature with dentils and coupled brackets set above each column. The same highly decorative scheme is employed at the eaves. A railing with vase-shaped turned balusters encloses the second level of the portico. Although it suggests a trace of the Italianate influence, the frontispiece is decidedly the purest Greek Revival feature of the facade, with pilasters carrying a shallow pediment set over a transom. The latter extends full-length above double-leaf, two-panel doors and the sidelights. The rectangular door panels are filled with oval panels, which are repeated in the sidelight panels. Each window on the three primary elevations has a low pedimented cornice over a plain architrave. Openings flanking the entrance bay are full-length, nine-over-six, while all others are oversized six-over-six. Operable louvered blinds with their original hardware and self-locking mechanism are set at each window. A single-story shed-roofed gallery with cabinets stretches across the east, or rear, elevation. Openings from each cabinet onto the gallery as well as into the adjoining room give each file of rooms direct access to the outside.

In contrast to the more "up-to-date" exterior, the conservative character of the interior is epitomized by the simple, chaste Greek Revival woodwork. With the exception of Italianate-styled cast-iron mantels in the southern file of rooms, the interior detailing is a carpenter's interpretation of the Grecian style. Doors and windows are surrounded by battered and eared peaked architraves with unmolded backbands. The same scheme is used for the mantels in the northern rooms, where the pediment serves as a short overmantel piece. Rolled molding plaster cornices grace the hall and three major first-floor rooms, and the front rooms and hall have bold geometrically patterned plasterwork ceilings. The original plaster of the walls survives unpatched, unpapered, and in some instances unpainted. Its remarkable state of preservation testifies to the sound construction of the house in an area known for its shifting soil.

The interior arrangement of the house follows the popular central hall, double-pile plan. On the first level the southern file of rooms, the parlor and dining room, are linked by sliding double-leaf doors and have interior end chimneys, while the northern rooms, a bed chamber and adjoining nursery, share a common interior chimney. The wide central hall is divided into a separate entrance hall and a rear stairhall housing a broad, massive dog-leg staircase. With the exception of the central hall partition and fireplaces in the northern rooms, the second level repeats the plan of the first. A simple pine ladder set in the hall provides access to the unfloored attic. Electric wiring was unobtrusively installed in 1936, and plumbing has been introduced to the rear gallery section only, leaving the main block of the house undisturbed.

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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1869

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Standing virtually unaltered on spacious, casually planted grounds that give the property the picturesque informality typical of the Victorian era, the Stevens-Buchanan House is complimented by a significant assemblage of original or early outbuildings, including two lattice gazebos, two cisterns (one retaining its charcoal filtering device), a kitchen/cook's quarters, a smokehouse, a privy, and a chimney marking the location of the groundskeeper's cottage that burned. Although the house was constructed after the Civil War, its conservative styling continued the regionally popular antebellum tradition of combining the Grecian and Italianate modes, to the exclusion of the more current styles. The structure is thus a very late example of the Greek Revival style. In addition to its architectural importance, the house is significant as the birthplace and lifelong home of Susan Blue Buchanan, the first female to be admitted to practice law before the Supreme Court of the State of Mississippi.

The house was built by James Richardson Stevens shortly after his marriage in 1868 to wealthy Martha L. Patton of Huntsville, Alabama (Personal Interview, Mary M. Shoemaker with Mrs. C. L. Neil, August 30, 1977). Born in North Carolina in 1834, Stevens was listed in the 1860 census as a merchant residing in a Brandon boarding house (Population Schedule, 1860). On May 4, 1861, he was commissioned a third lieutenant in the Confederate infantry and was captured when Vicksburg fell in July, 1863. He resigned for health reasons with the rank of major on December 17, 1863. Stevens continued his mercantile activities in Brandon after the war and his marriage to Miss Patton. Tradition holds that her money made possible the building of their gracious home. In 1873, when the Stevenses returned to Martha's hometown of Huntsville, Alabama, they sold the house to James's brother Will and his wife, Emmie A. Stevens, who occupied it intermittently. Margaret Gunn, James's and Will's considerably younger half sister, married attorney William Buchanan in 1880, and they purchased the property in 1881 (Deedbook 35, pp. 253-255).

Susan Blue, the oldest of the ten children of Margaret and William Buchanan, served as her father's secretary and read law with him and his partner, J. R. East. After her father's death in 1912, she continued studying with East. Although she never attended law school, on December 18, 1916, Susan Blue Buchanan became the first female attorney to be sworn in to practice law before the Supreme Court of Mississippi (Supreme Court Minute Book T, p. 280). Specializing in land abstracts, Miss Buchanan compiled an invaluable reference book of Rankin County plats that is still used and known as the "Susie Blue Book."

The Stevens-Buchanan House is presently owned by Margaret Richardson Buchanan, the seventh child of Margaret and William Buchanan. Because Margaret Gunn Buchanan was the child of the second marriage of her mother, Susan Stevens Gunn (the mother of James Richardson Stevens, builder of the house), the property has been owned by only two generations of the same family during its entire 109-year history. It stands much as it appeared when occupied by Mr. and Mrs. William Buchanan and the latter's

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mississippi. Supreme Court. Minute Book T.

Personal Interview. Mary M. Shoemaker with Mrs. C. L. Neil, greatniece of James Richardson Stevens, August 30, 1977.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8.6

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 218420 3573950
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Begin at the Intersection of College Street and Jasper Street and run South, along the East line of College Street, 433 feet; thence East, 700 feet; thence North, 141.5 feet; thence East, 250 feet; thence North, 292 feet to the South line of Jasper Street; thence West, along the South line of Jasper Street, 949.5 feet to the point of beginning. The above described property being situated in the NE1/4 of the NE1/4, Section 21 and the NW1/4 of the NW1/4, Section 22, Township 5 North, Range 3 East, Town of Brandon, Rankin County, Mississippi, and containing 8.6 acres.

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

Mary McCahon Shoemaker, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 571

CITY OR TOWN

Jackson

DATE

September, 1977

TELEPHONE

(601) 354-6218

STATE

Mississippi 39205

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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. Williams

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

March 1, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Nathaniel Cole

DATE

5/5/78

DATE

3-14-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 7 1978
DATE ENTERED	MAY 5 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 - 9 PAGE 1

7 - DESCRIPTION

Flanking the front galleries and most picturesque among the surviving out-buildings are the octagonal gazebos with lattice siding and sand floors. The one to the north serves as a summer house, while the southern one shelters a cistern. The board-and-batten smoke house and the two-bay kitchen/cook's quarters are placed on axis about fifteen yards behind the rear gallery. A privy is secluded on the downgrade to the rear of the kitchen.

8 - SIGNIFICANCE

elderly mother, Mrs. Susan Stevens Gunn, and most of its furnishings date from the Gunn-Buchanan marriage in 1880. In a remarkably sound and pristine state of preservation, the house has required virtually no restoration, having been sensitively and painstakingly maintained by the family.

9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Rankin County, Mississippi. Chancery Clerk. Deed Books 35, 77. Will Book 2. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Microfilm.

United States. Bureau of the Census. Population Schedules, Rankin County, Mississippi, 1860, 1850.

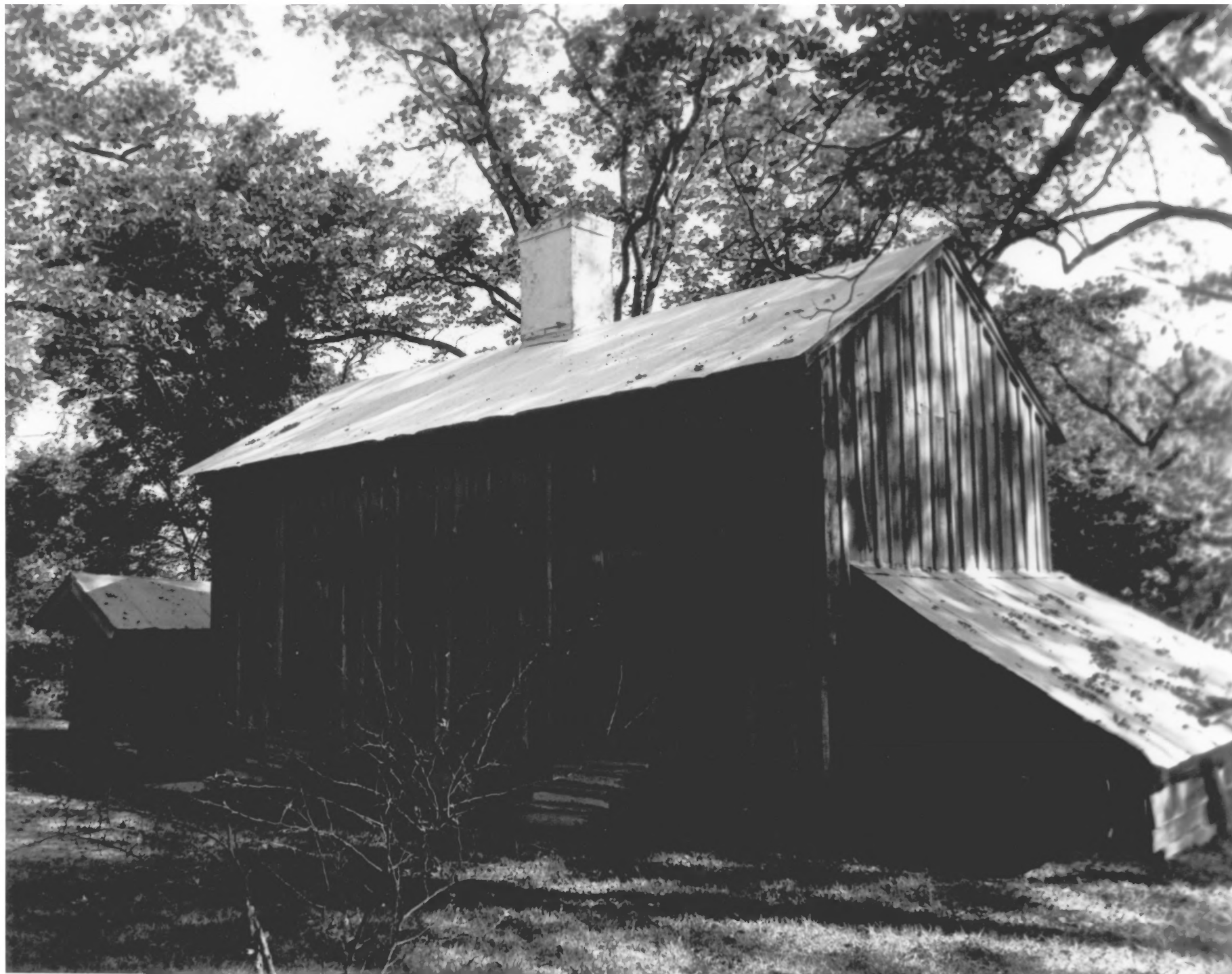


PHOTO NO. 3⁹⁻³ STEVENS-BUCHANAN HOUSE
Brandon, Rankin County, Mississippi
Mary McCahon Shoemaker
September, 1977

Mississippi Department of Archives
and History

Kitchen/cook's quarters and smokehouse
directly east of the main house

MAY 5 1978

MAR 7 1978



PHOTO NO. 1³- STEVENS-BUCHANAN HOUSE
Brandon, Rankin County, Mississippi
Mary McCahon Shoemaker
September, 1977
Mississippi Department of Archives
and History
General view from the southwest

MAY 5 1978

MAR 7 1978



13

PHOTO NO. 2 - STEVENS-BUCHANAN HOUSE
Brandon, Rankin County, Mississippi
Mary McCahon Shoemaker
September, 1977
Mississippi Department of Archives
and History
General view of the front from the
northwest

MAY 5 1978

MAR 7 1978