

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 20 1980  
DATE ENTERED APR 2 1980

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 Isom Place

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1003 Jefferson Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Oxford VICINITY OF First CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Mississippi CODE 028 COUNTY Lafayette CODE 071

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mrs. H. D. Worthy (Opal M.)

STREET & NUMBER 1003 Jefferson Avenue

CITY, TOWN Oxford VICINITY OF STATE Mississippi 38655

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the Chancery Clerk  
Lafayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Town Square

CITY, TOWN Oxford STATE Mississippi 38655

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Statewide Survey of Historic Sites

DATE 1978 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Mississippi Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN Jackson STATE Mississippi

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" 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		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located one block north of Oxford's courthouse square, the Isom Place occupies a flat tree-shaded mid-block site that falls off sharply to the southwest. Facing south, the house is approximately in the center of casually landscaped grounds containing several mature trees.

The two-story frame house is basically vernacular in style and reflects several periods of construction in its architectural details. The major elements of the Isom Place appear to have been built at four different times (see accompanying plan). In order of construction, there is the original two-story central block, a one-and-a-half-story rear wing, a two-story side addition to the original block, and a one-story rear addition in the west angle of the rear wing and central block.

Dating the various construction phases of the Isom Place has been very difficult and is consequently somewhat tentative; there are no known extant nineteenth-century descriptions, drawings, or photographs of the house. Also lacking are copies of Oxford newspapers from 1865 to 1883 or any collection of the original owner's papers. The construction dates for the house are therefore based on architectural details, events in the life of the Isom Family, and the reminiscences of the original owner's granddaughter. The two-story central section of the Isom Place was probably built between 1840, when Isom, the original owner, was married, and 1862, when the house is said to have been occupied by Union soldiers. On each floor there is a central hall flanked by single rooms. There is an exterior chimney at each gable end, the one on the east side now enclosed by a building addition.

Structural verification of a pre-Civil War date is limited to the interior, since the back of this original block has been covered by additions and the front fenestration probably dates from after the Civil War. On the interior some Greek Revival doors, mantels, and mouldings suggest a pre-Civil War date, as do the ten-foot ceilings, which are much lower than those in the rest of the house.

Again relying on architectural details, the one-and-a-half-story rear wing was likely built in the 1870s, when the Isom family was large and before the death of the original owner's wife, in 1883. The wing consists of two rooms sharing an interior chimney and both opening onto a common side hall, which contains a reverse stair to the second floor of the main block. This section is the only part of the house with a basement. The ceilings are approximately fourteen feet high, and all the doors have transoms.

The two-story side addition was built onto the east end of the main block sometime between 1894 and 1900 according to the granddaughter of the original owner. The bay window, the gable treatment, and other architectural features support that date. This section was originally simply one room on each level with an outside stair to the second floor. However, sometime before 1960 a small room was added to the north side of each story.

The most recent major section of the Isom Place is probably the one-story rear addition in the west angle of the rear wing and central block. This section originally consisted of a single, large room one step above the floor level of the rest of the house, but one end has now been made into a small room and there is a lean-to section across one side. A ca. 1918 photo of the Isom Place shows the addition, which was possibly not built long before the picture was made, judging from the addition's current doors and other architectural features.

# 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" 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 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

Isom Place was constructed by Thomas Dudley Isom, the first white settler at the present site of Oxford, Mississippi, who came to the area from Tennessee in 1835 as the nineteen-year-old agent of an Indian trading company. After completing medical training in Philadelphia, Isom returned to Oxford in 1839 to practice medicine and between 1840 and 1865 built the earliest section of the current Isom Place. As a prominent citizen of the region, he was sent to the Mississippi secession convention, where he argued against separation from the Union. During the Civil War, however, Isom served as a military surgeon in Virginia with the 17th Mississippi regiment and later opened a military hospital on the University of Mississippi campus for the victims of the Battle of Shiloh. After the war Isom continued his medical practice and became one of the most prominent and progressive physician in northern Mississippi in his use of new drugs and surgical techniques.

Throughout his life Isom was an important supporter of the University of Mississippi, which was chartered at Oxford in 1844. He had suggested the name "Oxford" for the town when it was incorporated in 1837 in the hope that a university would someday be located there. One of his nine children, Sarah McGehee Isom, in 1885 became the first woman named to the University faculty.

Following Isom's death in 1902, the house was sold several times and many minor additions were made before it was bought by Dr. and Mrs. H. D. Worthy in 1960 and returned to its ca. 1918 appearance.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"The Isom Place," Oxford Eagle, April 16, 1964, p. 3.

James, Susie. "Pioneer's Cabin Graces Pilgrimage," Oxford Eagle, April 14, 1977, sec. B, p. 11.

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre  
UTM REFERENCES

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

A | 1,6 | 2,6,8,3,1,0 | 3,8,0,5,7,6,0 |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | |  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D | | | | | | | | |

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Deed Book 178, p. 390; Isom Place is located on a rectangular lot approximately 132 feet by 228 feet lying on the north side of Jefferson Avenue between North Ninth and Eleventh streets; the house is the second building from the northwest corner of North Eleventh and Jefferson; the house is situated in the center of the property, which is all that remains of T. D. Isom's larger city lot.

## 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

Lloyd Ostby, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

DATE

November, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 571

TELEPHONE

(601) 354-7326

CITY OR TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi 39205

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

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

*Elmer R. Hilliard*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

February 11, 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*W. Ray Juce*

DATE

*4/2/80*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Carol A. Durbie*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

*3/28/80*

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

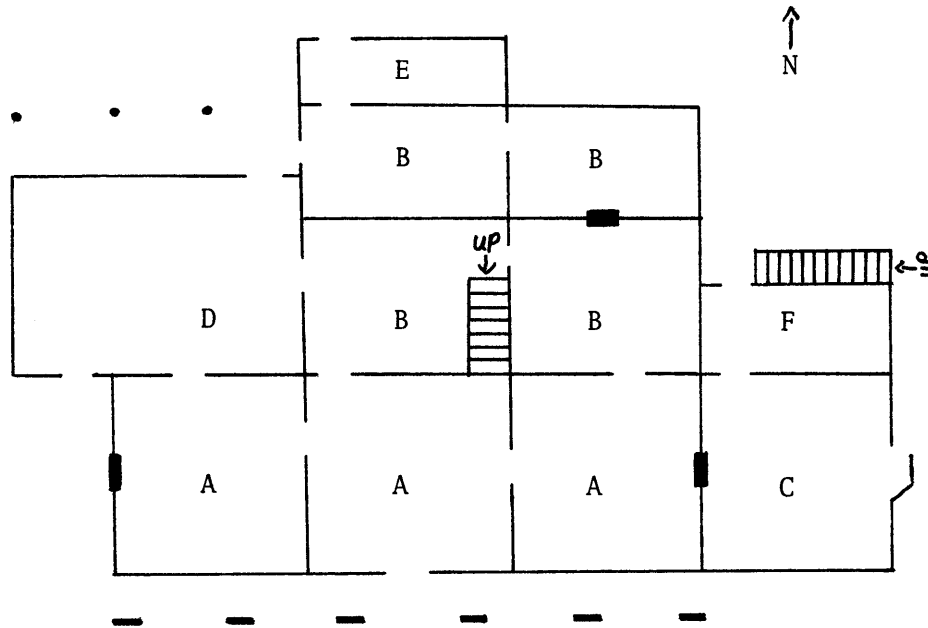
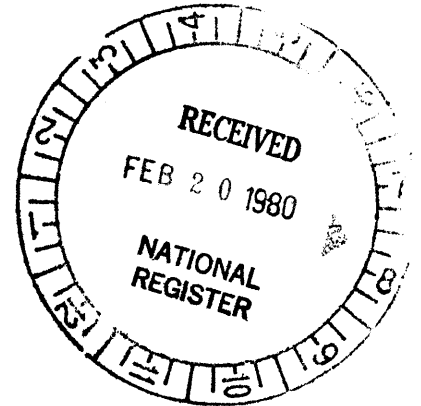
Tate, Mrs. Bryan. "Oxford Historic Home," Oxford Eagle, Feb. 21, 1963, sec. 5, p. 1.

Worthy, Opal M., owner of the Isom Place. Interviewed on several occasions by Lloyd Ostby, architectural historian, at Oxford, Miss., July-September, 1979.

ISOM PLACE SKETCH MAP

Construction dates

- A - Between 1840 and 1862
- B - 1870's
- C - Between 1894 and 1900
- D - Early 20th century
- E - Early 20th century
- F - Mid-20th century



Building not drawn to scale



View from southwest; on left is Section D  
on Sketch Map, in center Section A  
Isom Place *Lafayette Co*  
Oxford, Mississippi

Lloyd Ostby, Mississippi Department of  
Archives and History

September, 1979

Photo 2 of 5

APR 2 1980

FEB 20 1980





View from south; in center is Section A on  
Sketch Map, on left Section C  
Isom Place *Lafayette Co.*  
Oxford, Mississippi

Lloyd Ostby, Mississippi Department of  
Archives and History

September, 1979

Photo 1 of 5

APR 2 1980

FEB 20 1980



View from north; on left is Section B on  
Sketch Map, center foreground Section E,  
on right Section D

Isom Place

*Lafayette Co.*

Oxford, Mississippi

Lloyd Ostby, Mississippi Department of  
Archives and History

September, 1979

APR 2 1980

Photo 3 of 5

FEB 20 1980



View from north; on left is Section F on  
Sketch Map, on right Section B

Isom Place

*Lafayette Co.*

Oxford, Mississippi

Lloyd Ostby, Mississippi Department of  
Archives and History

September, 1979

Photo 4 of 5

APR 2 1980

FEB 20 1980



View from northeast; on left is Section C  
on Sketch Map, center Section F, on right  
Section B

Isom Place

*Lafayette Co.*

Oxford, Mississippi

APR 2 1980

Lloyd Ostby, Mississippi Department of  
Archives and History

September, 1979

Photo 5 of 5

FEB 20 1980