# Historic Sites Survey 3A

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Historic Sites Survey 3A	MAY 3 0 1279 MAY 3 12797 MAY 3 1279 MAY 3 1279 MAY 3
RCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:	NAME: Van Dorn House
Two-and-a-half-story gable-roof L-plan brick residence.	STREET NO: Van Dorn Drive (Marginal St. Extension)
	TOWN/VIC: Port Gibson
	COUNTY: Claiborne
	BLOCK/LOT: PRESENT OWNER: Board of Trustees ADDRESS PRESENT USE: PRESENT USE: PRESENT USE: PRESENT USE: State of Mississippi Department of Archives and History P.O. Box 571, Jackson 39205 FORMER USE:
·	DATE: ca. 1830
	STYLE: Federal
LTERATIONS:	ARCH/BUILDER: Peter Van Dorn
	SOURCE OF DATE: style
>UTBUILDINGS: Two-story flanking-gable brick kitchen dependency with double frame gallery (no longer extant) located approximately thirty feet southwest of house. ANDSCAPE FEATURES: Formerly landscaped grounds.	ENVIRONMENT: residential LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE NEIGHBORHOOD LOCAL STATE X NATIONAL
TATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:	PHOTOS
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.	
	NEG. #

### SITE OR AREA PLAN WITH NORTH ARROW AND SHAPE OF STRUCTURE:

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION:

#### deteriorated

THREATS:

#### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

per National Register listing

Lot measures approximately 200 feet square.

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## CONTINUATION:

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Form 10-300a (July 1969)

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

## **INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

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FOR NPS USE ON	LY
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries) REVISION TO VAN DORN HOUSE NOMINATION FORM ORIGINALLY SUBMITTED IN JANUARY, 1971, AND APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL REGISTER OFFICE IN JUNE, 1971.

Since the Van Dorn House's listing on the National Register of Historic Places in June, 1971, certain developments have necessitated a revision of the Van Dorn House nomination. The structure and 2.5 acres of land were reflected in the original nomination. However, in December, 1972, the Van Dorn House and 5.2 acres of land were donated to the State of Mississippi, Department of Archives and History. Further, a residential subdivision in the area has grown full bloom and is potentially threatening to the integrity of the historic property.

The Department of Archives and History therefore wishes to revise the original nomination by expanding the amount of nominated property from 2.5 acres to approximately twenty acres. The additional acreage is reflected on the attached U.S.G.S. quadrangle. The primary reason for this revision lies in the fact that 3.1 acres of property to the northeast of the Van Dorn House has been put up for sale by its owners, who have given the Department of Archives and History first option to purchase the property. The property in question would serve as a visual buffer against the residential subdivision. Because the Van Dorn House is scheduled for restoration and development utilizing National Register grant funds, it is the opinion of this Department that the historic integrity of the property should be preserved as far as is feasible. This view also appears consistent with the philosophy expressed repeatedly by the National Register office. The protection offered to a National Register property is also desired for the additional area reflected on the enclosed map.

The Department of Archives and History also wishes to expand the nominated acreage because additional historical research reveals clearly that this property originally made up a portion of the estate of Peter A. Vandorn, the original owner of the house.\*

\* Claiborne County, Chancery Court Records, Deedbook I, p. 86; ibid., p. 89; Deedbook G, p.275; Mississippi, State Land Office Records, original land patent survey plat, 1805.



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S E E	OWNER OF PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME: <u>Martha Brady</u> STREET AND NUMBER: <u>603 Church St</u> City or town: <u>Port Gibson</u> LOCATION OF LEGAL DESC COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF <u>Claiborne Cour</u> STREET AND NUMBER: <u>Main or Marke</u>	reet CRIPTION DEEDS, ETC: hty Courtho	William	STATE: M <b>1ss</b>	Lum) issippi 39		
6	Port Gibson REPRESENTATION IN EXIS TITLE OF SURVEY:	ING SURVEYS	Federal	STATE Miss	issippi	28 28 Local	3

7.	DESCRIPTION								
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Van Dorn House, which was probably built around 1830, is located on a hill at the outskirts of Port Gibson, Mississippi. Due to its location, it was commonly called "The Hill." This two-story house was built in the L-shaped plan of double brick of which the front and east sides were in the Flemish bond, while the back and west sides were bricked in the running bond. Originally, this house consisted of six rooms, not including the stair-hall, and more than thirty windows. At the top of these windows were venetian slats without glass, which helped control the air in the house. Also, the dimension of these windows remains constant both upstairs and downstairs, with 24 light windows per window.

At the front of the house was a large covered porch with colonial pillars and stationary seats. The doors of the front and back entrances were fanlighted with side lights. Both these entrances led into a stair-hall. The stair-hall is the only room in the house that has a ceiling of slightly ornate plaster. On the east side of the house were two small covered porticoes which led into separate rooms.

The style of the house is Georgian transitional with southern colonial. Along the outside of the house were paved walks, lined with jonquils, which led from the carriage-way to the front entrance and side porches. Also, to the north-east of the front porch is a large live oak, which was supposedly planted by Peter Vandorn and said to be one of the oldest live oaks in the area.

During the late 1880s, a one story brick utility porch and kitchen were added onto the south end of the house, thus giving the house an almost square look. Since the house has been unoccupied for almost fifteen years, the mantels, windows, floor, and stair-case have been mutilated by vandals. However, these mantels are still in fair condition in the house, except they are not in their original location. The original stair balustrade rail has been stored in a safe place by the present owner. Some of the plaster has fallen in, and is in need of repair. Although the glass in the windows has been broken, their frames, made of cypress wood, are in excellent shape.

On the exterior of the house, the porches have been removed as well as their pillars. The roof, although not the original, is made of tin and is in good shape. The brick is in excellent condition. All the windows have been boarded up for security purposes.

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EE INSTRUCTIONS

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PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	18th Century	20th Century
15th Century	17th Century	🙀 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicat	le and Known) ca. 18	30	Tizit
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Commerce	Literature	itarian	
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Conservation	Music	Transportation	

The Van Dorn House, located within 200 yards of the original Natchez Trace, was probably constructed around 1830 by Peter A. Vandorn. The Van Dorns were descendants of Baron Van Doorn who served as Lord Chancellor to the King of Holland in the sixteenth century.

Peter A. Vandorn was born in New Jersey in 1773. He studied for the ministry at Princeton; although, he never entered the clergy. After graduation from college, he moved to the Natchez-Port Gibson area; and, by the late 1810s had established himself in the Port Gibson community as a lawyer and merchant. In 1826, he purchased the land for his future home near Port Gibson from the estate of Samuel Gibson, for whom the town was named.

In 1810, the territorial governor appointed him as clerk of the Superior Court of Law and Equity for Claiborne In 1816, Peter was elected clerk of the House of County. Representatives of the Territory by the General Assembly. During the next year, he was elected by the first State Legislature to become the clerk of the House. In 1821, the State Legislature created an Orphan's Court, and appointed Vandorn as the first judge of probate for this court in Claiborne Also, in 1821 he was selected as one of the commis-County. sioners to help lay out the plans for the new capital city of Jackson, which resulted in his drafting the first map of Jackson. The map, dated April 22, 1822, is in the collections of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and is on exhibit in the State Historical Museum, Old Capitol Restoration, Jackson. Peter married Sophie Donelson Caffery, who was the niece of Rachel Caffery Jackson, the wife of Andrew Jackson.

Earl Van Dorn, the son of Peter A. Vandorn, was born near Port Gibson in 1820 and spent his early boyhood years at this family residence. At the age of eighteen he was appointed a cadet at the United States Military Academy, where he graduated in 1842. He participated in the Mexican War and Civil War, as well as seeing action in the Seminole War (1849-50), and Comanche battle, 1856.

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Form 10-300a	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR	STATE
(July 1969)	NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	Mississippi
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	INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM	Claiborne
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During the Mexican War, Van Dorn was wounded at Mexico City, but he won the brevets of captain and major for gallantry at Cerro Gordo and Churubusco. In recognition of his service in Mexico, Van Dorn was presented with a costly jewel-studded sword by the Legislature of the State of Mississippi, in 1860. This sword is now on exhibit at the Mississippi State Historical Museum, Old Capitol Restoration, Jackson, Mississippi.

In the Civil War, Major General Earl Van Dorn served for a time as commander of the Trans-Mississippi District and saw action in the battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas. He was then transferred east of the Mississippi River, where he participated in the early defense of Vicksburg against Federal attacks in mid 1862. He was defeated by General William Rosecrans, at Corinth in October, 1862, for which he was severely criticized. In December, 1862, Van Dorn won acclaim for his brilliant cavalry attack on Grant's forces and supply lines at Holly Springs, Mississippi. His raid at Holly Springs gave the Union army one of its most severe defeats in Mississippi, as well as proving that cavalry raids behind enemy lines could be effective in combatting larger, better-equipped commands. Van Dorn's military career was cut short when he was killed by a private citizen in Tennessee in May, 1863. General Van Dorn has been elected to the Hall of Fame of the State of Mississippi, and his portrait currently hangs in the State Historical Museum, Old Capitol Restoration, Jackson.

Since the death of Peter A. Vandorn in 1837, the Van Dorn residence has had many owners. From 1860-1870, it served as the Presbyterian Manse. After 1870, some additions were made on the house, and from about 1930 until the mid 1950s the house served as an apartment dwelling. At present, the house is unoccupied and is slowly deteriorating.

9. Conversation with Mr. John Montgomery, Historic Preservation Chairman, Mississippi Chapter, AIA, Jackson, Mississippi, January 5, 1971.

Deed Book I, 89-90. Chancery Clerk's office, Claiborne County Court House, Port Gibson, Mississippi.

Hartje, Robert G., Van Dorn, The Life and Times of a Confederate General. (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), 7-8, 267-268.

Form 10-30 (July 1969)		STATE
(3019 1707)	NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES	Mississippi county
		Claiborne
	INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM	FOR NPS USE ONLY
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	Collections, Mississippi Department of Jackson, Mississippi.	Archives and History,
Malon	e, Dumas (ed.), Dictionary of American	Biography. (New York:
	Charles Scribners' Sons, 1936), XIX, 1	85.
01cot	t, Deana J., <u>Historical Jottings of Po</u>	ort <u>Gibson</u> , <u>Mississippi</u> .
Rowla	(n.p., 1954), 79. nd, Dunbar, The Official and Statistic	al Register 1917.
	(Madison: Democrat Printing Co., 1917	), 338, 362.
Rowla	nd, Dunbar, <u>The Official and Statistic</u> <u>State of Mississippi</u> . (Nashville: Br	al Register of the
	1908), 177.	andon Frinting Co.,
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STATE

Mississippi County

Claiborne

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FOR NPS USE ONLY

<sup>1</sup>Form 10-301 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

#### PROPERTY MAP FORM

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AND/OR HISTORIC: "The Hill" 2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Van Dorn Drive (originally CITY OR TOWN:	y Marginal	Street Extension	South)
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VAN DORN HOUSE Port Gibson, Mississippi Jack A. Gold January, 1979 Mississippi Department of Archives and History View to west. Photo 3A //4 of 125

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S	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM (Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)		STATE <u>Mississippi</u> COUNTY <u>Claiborne</u> FOR NPS USE ONLY ENTRY NUMBER DATE MICON		
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0	COMMON: Van Dorn House		•		
	AND/OR HISTORIC: "The Hill"				
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM (Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)	STATE <u>Mississippi</u> COUNTY <u>Claiborne</u> FOR NPS USE ONLY ENTRY NUMBER DATE <u>DILEQUEDOG</u>	
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	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE Mississippi
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	PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM FOR NPS USE ONLY
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	South and southeast elevation, looking northwest.



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