

52-15-C040-61

NR 1-21-74

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

COUNTY:	
Ouachita	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
—	—

1. NAME

COMMON:
POWELL-GODWIN-MAY HOUSE

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Benjamin T. Powell House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
305 California Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Camden

STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05 COUNTY: Ouachita CODE: 103

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC	
<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	Public Acquisition:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work In progress	Yes:
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mr. R. Paul May

STREET AND NUMBER:
305 California

CITY OR TOWN: Camden STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Ouachita County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
Camden

CITY OR TOWN: Camden STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969-1973 Federal State County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Arkansas History Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
300 West Markham Street

CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock STATE: Arkansas

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Congressional District Four

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Powell-Godwin-May House is a two-storey frame house, with unevenly spaced bays across the front. It has a gable roof. The porch roof is a gable extended from the main roof and ends in a Classic Revival pediment. This portico is supported by four round, slender fluted columns and pilasters. There is a gallery on both the first and second floors. Both of the galleries are accessible from the house. There is an ornamental iron railing between columns on both porches.

The foundation of the building is of handmade brick, with frame and siding of cypress. The iron grill work is reputed to have been installed at, or near, the original construction date. In the downstairs rooms the molding trim has been refinished to the natural wood. Door hinges on exterior and interior doors are original, but some of the doorknobs and plates have been replaced over the years. The walls are the original plaster over split lath with only minor repairs having been made. Fireplace mantels are original, as are all of the door and window moldings. The molding around doors and windows in some rooms is ten inches in width. A decorative plaster medallion in the entrance hall was reputedly made by itinerant Italian plasterers, although it is impossible to confirm the accuracy of this statement, or to pin-point the date. The newel post, spindles and the rail of the circular staircase are made of cherry, and the floors are of oak.

The main entrance on the first floor is a large single entry door with rectangular sidelights and transom. The door is void of any trim such as pilasters or entablature. There are shutters attached.

The access to the second floor gallery is a single entry door with rectangular sidelights and transom. The door is a glass panel type, three lights wide by five lights high. This door has neither pilasters or entablature and is without shutters.

The windows are double-hung sashes with six lights per sash. All of the windows are original except for a few which have been replaced with copies of the originals. The panes of the originals are of handmade glass. The shutters, and shutter hardware, are copies of the originals.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE Arkansas	
COUNTY	
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(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

7. Description Continued:

The house has box cornices, pilasters on the corners with fancy mold capitals. The entablature consists of a plain bead for the architrave, a plain frieze and concave molding for the cornice. The roof is covered with composition shingles, and there are two internal chimneys with corbelled caps extending from the roof.

The Powell-Godwin-May House was built in 1859, and since it displays many of the characteristics of the period, its appearance is probably not too vastly different today than when it was built.

The original roof would have been of cypress shingles, and the ornamental iron railing may be a post Civil War addition, with the original having been of wood. Gutters and downspouts, although they closely resemble original cornice molding are, most probably, later additions. Except for the noted minor alterations, the house is basically original.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Powell-Godwin-May House was built about 1859. by Benjamin T. Powell.

Architecturally, it displays the characteristics of the design and construction in vogue in Arkansas among the prosperous plantation owners. Perhaps even more significant is the fact that it is a representative type of the town houses which were being built, by those persons whose wealth was derived from the growing and selling of cotton.

The town of Camden was virtually created by cotton. It was the head of navigation on the Ouachita River and was in the heart of an area ideally suited for growing cotton. Its growth coincided with the cotton boom. In 1843-1844 Camden was still a small river village, but by the 1850's elaborate homes like the Powell-Godwin-May House were being built, and during the shipping time, cotton bales lined all the streets leading to the wharf. By 1860, Camden was the greatest cotton mart in southern Arkansas. The Powell-Godwin-May House survives as one example of the architecture developed in Arkansas during this period.

The Powell-Godwin-May House was intended to be innovative, but the only noteworthy innovation which now survives is the fact that it was apparently one of the first houses to be painted with the, then new, "steamboat paint".

When the Civil War started the house was occupied but still incomplete. In the spring of 1861 Benjamin Powell's eldest son, John Powell, joined the Confederate Army and went to war. While serving in the East he sent home some young cedar trees from Acquia Creek, where his unit was encamped. These cedar trees still grow in the yard of the home, but John Powell was killed at the Battle of Chickamauga and never returned

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home to see them.

In April of 1864, when Federal troops occupied Camden, General Rice established headquarters in the Powell Home and remained until Camden was evacuated.

The house was built by Benjamin T. Powell and passed on to his youngest son after Mr. Powell's death. Powell's son subsequently sold the property to Mr. Solomon Black, who, in 1888, sold the property to Mr. W. E. McRae. In the mid-nineteen twenties the house was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Carl Ramsey. It was then sold to Mr. Elbert Godwin and occupied by the Godwin family until 1962 when it was sold to Mr. R. Paul May.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arkansas Landmark Society Records, Arkansas History Commission, Little Rock, Arkansas.
 Unpublished Federal Writers Project, "Ouachita County", Place File, Arkansas History Commission, Little Rock, Arkansas.
 Camden Chamber of Commerce and the Ouachita County Historical Society, Historic Camden. (a brochure).
 U. S. Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States: 1850. Population.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	33°	34'	52.5"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	92°	49'	59.4"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Ed Baxter, Staff

ORGANIZATION: Historic Preservation Program DATE: July 16, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: 1023 West Third

CITY OR TOWN: Little Rock STATE: Arkansas CODE: 05

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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 _____

Title _____

Date _____

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



92° 49' 59.4"

33° 34' 52.5"