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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Joseph S. Dunham House on Broadway Street in Van Buren, Arkansas, is a twostorey structure of wood construction. Built c. 1870, the house is ell-shaped with one-storey enclosures on the rear elevation.

Architecturally, the Dumham House is reflective of the Victorian-Gothic style in its arched windows, gabled bays and ornamentation. The house is topped by a gable roof supported by decorative brackets. Steeply gabled bays are featured on the second-storey of the facade. The appearance of the house gives an overall impression of well-balanced symmetry.

The most interesting features of the Dunham House are displayed on the facade. A wide one-storey porch spans the width of the facade. This porch is supported by six slender spiral posts topped with delicate ornamental brackets. Pilasters similar to the spiral porch posts further decorate the facade. A decorative, wrought-iron creating forms a deck on top of the flat-roofed porch. On the second-storey level a large center bay with a steeply gabled-roof is flanked by two smaller but identical bays. These bays feature decorative bargeboard set into each gable end. In contrast to the steep gables of these bays are their round arched windows. The large center bay features paired windows with a semi-polygon-shaped window head. Shutters enhance the windows in the bays.

A paneled entry door with paired, octagonal-shaped lites in the transom is entered directly under the large central bay. Above the door is a dentiled cornice supported by brackets. The entry is flanked by tall slender windows, two on each side. These windows are double-hung four-over-four-lite and are topped with a cornice supported by decorative brackets.

The north elevation of the Dunham House is marked by a three-sided bay on the first-storey level. The bay is flat-roofed and topped with wrought-iron cresting. Decorative paired brackets flanking the center section support the roof. Single brackets support the roof on the side sections of the bay. The cornice is marked with dentil work. Paired windows on the second-storey level above the three-sided bay are arched and topped by a semi-polygon-shaped window head.

The south elevation features a one-storey rectangular-shaped projection. This projection features a flat roof supported by paired decorative brackets on the outside corners. Wrought-iron creating surrounds the roof, forming a deck, as on the facade. Paired arched windows on the second-storey level, identical to those on the north elevation, are also topped by a semi-polygon-shaped window head.

The Dunham House remained totally unaltered until 1932, when it was remodeled for living purposes. During this remodeling a one-storey porch on the north clevation was screened-in. A large porch on the rear elevation was enclosed and divided into a dining room, kitchen, bedroom and sleeping porch.

The interior plan of the Dunham House is a large central hall with two rooms

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on each side downstairs and two rooms off each side of a center hall upstairs. A steep, curved stairway rises from the center hall to the second storey. Decorative features on the stairway include ornamental brackets located on the ends of the riser. A round, panelled newel post and turned balusters further enhance the decorative effect.

The Dunham House rests on a corner lot on one of Van Buren's busiest streets. Still in very good condition, the Dunham House has retained its original exterior appearance.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SIGNIFICANCE

The Joseph Starr Dunham House in Van Buren, Arkansas, is a two-storey structure of wood construction. Built c. 1870 the main significance of the house lies in the area of architecture. It presents characteristics of the Victorian-Gothic style of architecture in the utilization of arched windows, gabled bays and ornamentation. The facade of the Dunham House best illustrates its architectural uniqueness. A wide one-storey porch is supported by spiral posts topped with delicate brackets. Wrought-iron cresting surrounds the top of the porch. A large center bay flanked by identical smaller bays is located on the second-storey level of the facade. These bays feature steep gables, decorative brackets and round-arched windows. The house is also an important local landmark in its association with Joseph Starr Dunham, who established the <u>Van Buren Press</u> in 1859.

Joseph Starr Dunham was born in Connecticut in 1823, the son of William H. and Francis Starr Dunham. At the age of thirteen Dunham began apprenticeship to the printer's trade. William D. Starr, an uncle to Dunham, had been established in the printing business in Middletown, Connecticut, for a number of years and took a special effort to instill his knowledge in his young nephew.

In 1859 Dunham left Connecticut and started westward. In Ohio he purchased enough materials to set up a printing office. By the end of 1859 Dunham had settled in Van Buren, Arkansas, and established the <u>Van Buren Press</u>. This newspaper was strongly reflective of the effect the Reconstruction Era had on Van Buren. Dunham was a strong Democrat in defiance to the Reconstruction policies, and his newspaper was conducted on strict Democratic principles. Dunham was the sole proprietor of the <u>Van Buren Press</u> for the duration of the paper's existence, with the exception of a few years when his son assisted him in the management of the newspaper. Dunham developed into a strong writer, and this, coupled with his knowledge of printing, led him to be considered a leading journalist in northwestern Arkansas.

Joseph S. Dunham married Mary C. Ward of Middletown, Connecticut, in 1846. The Dunhams had four children, one of whom married Phillip Drennen Scott. Scott was the son of a prominent merchant in Van Buren and a grandson of John Drennen, a co-founder of the city.

Joseph S. Dunham lived in the house until his death in 1911. The house has never been out of the family and, at the present time, is owned by a greatgranddaughter of J.S. Dunham. The Dunham House stands as a local landmark to the city of Van Buren as a part of the history of the city.

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