

Jesse Weems was born near Mt. Vernon, Virginia. His grandfather, Mason Lock Weems, immortalized the Weems name by pastoring George Washington's church and writing the first life of Washington. Trained as an engineer, Weems came to Quincy with the Northern Cross Railway and is credited with building the Quincy and Palmyra road. At the time his house was built, he was conductor on the Wabash line, a post he held for almost thirty years.

Architect Harvey Chatten designed the Weems House at the beginning of his rise to pre-eminence among Quincy architects. By 1885 he had freed himself from the Franco-Italianate influence of his mentor, Robert Bunce, and begun to develop a distinctive eclectic manner of his own. Its chief vehicle was the Queen Anne style, expressed in the Weems design in a relatively subdued state.

Multiple overlapping gables, easy to draw but a challenge for the builder, were one of Chatten's fortes. The Weems house got two splendid early examples of this, the triple gable on the west side and the projecting porch pediment embraced by the main gable in the front. The front gables are enlivened by sawn wood sunbursts. Another common early Chatten device was incorporation of elements of the Stick Style, one of the precursors of full-blown Queen Anne. In the Weems house this can be seen in the bracketing and the trim marking the breaks between first and second story and the second story and the attic.

The interior of the house has been modified in recent times. One modification, the expansion of the living room into the front porch, brought with it the house's most prominent feature from street view, a multipane picture window.