

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 17 1984  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Historic Resources of Latta M.R.A.  
(Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties)

and/or common

2. Location

*2 dist. + 1 ind. prop.*

street & number Town Limits of Latta, South Carolina NA not for publication

city, town Latta NA vicinity of

state South Carolina code 045 county Dillon code 033

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 type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> NA in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> NA being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: library; meeting hall

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership (see individual inventory forms)

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dillon County Courthouse

street & number Main Street

city, town Dillon state South Carolina 29536

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title South Carolina Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records South Carolina Department of Archives and History

city, town Columbia state South Carolina 29211

# 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The multiple resource nomination for the Historic Resources of Latta consists of one individual property and two historic districts (Latta Historic District #1, fifty-five properties; Latta Historic District #2, twelve properties) of local historic and architectural significance which are located within the city limits of Latta, South Carolina. The properties, which are the first in Latta to be listed on the National Register, include commercial, public, residential, and religious buildings constructed between ca. 1890 and 1930. Viewed as a unit, these properties reflect the early historical and architectural development of the town of Latta.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

The town of Latta (present population approximately 1,804) is located in southwestern Dillon County. The surrounding area is primarily agricultural. There are no industries inside the city limits. Latta is located on a major north-south rail line. The most prominent historic resources of Latta are residential and religious properties.

The founding of Latta, ca. 1888, was the result of a plan for a straight north-south railroad route from Wilson, North Carolina, through Fayetteville, North Carolina, to the town of Pee Dee, South Carolina. Two stations were planned in what is now Dillon County. The main station was to be located within the present city limits of Dillon, and a loading station was to be built seven miles to the south in the area which became Latta. Latta was a planned town. Robert J. Latta from York, South Carolina, who was the right-of-way surveyor for the railroad, designed the street plan for the town. The railroad in turn named the freight station "Latta." By 1900 the town had a population of approximately 467.<sup>1</sup>

The major period of growth for Latta was during the early twentieth century when Latta became a major tobacco market in the Pee Dee Region. By 1910 the population of Latta had increased to 1,358. Although there are no extant resources directly associated with the tobacco industry, many of the residences, churches, and public buildings included in the nomination were constructed during this relatively prosperous time.

The properties included in the Historic Resources of Latta are representative of varying trends in Victorian era vernacular architecture including Queen Anne, neoclassical, and Georgian Revival. In addition there are fine examples of bungalows and late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century cottages. Most of the buildings are frame although there are a few brick residences which date from the early twentieth century. All residential streets are lined with large oak trees. The house lots are large and have well-established plantings and yards, all of which contribute to the character of the community. Most of the commercial, public, and religious buildings are masonry and date from the early twentieth century. Approximately ninety-three percent of the properties are residences; the remainder are public, religious, and commercial buildings.

Latta Historic Districts #1 and #2 represent the two most intact concentrations of significant properties in the town of Latta. The McMillan House is being nominated individually because its outstanding architecture within the context of Latta meets the criteria for individual listing and because it is not located near enough to either district to be included within their boundaries.

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Survey Methodology:

The present nomination is the product of a comprehensive architectural and historical survey conducted by the Survey staff of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History with some assistance from the Regional Historic Preservation Planner at the Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments. The team's goal was to identify and evaluate properties of significant architectural and historical value. The field work to locate, record, and map properties of value was conducted in 1982. This field survey was supplemented by archival and library research, personal interviews with property owners and local historians and research in county land and tax records. Resources examined included historic house data, published histories, manuscript histories and state and local records.

Criteria utilized in both the preliminary survey and the development of the National Register nomination included:

1. historical significance within the context of the town of Latta.
2. architectural merit.
3. effect of alterations and impairment of original fabric.

Data collection procedures included:

1. definition of the study area limits based on a reconnaissance survey conducted by the survey team.
2. identification of buildings by style, owner, date, and location on individual survey forms and town maps.
3. recording of individual buildings and neighborhood streetscapes with photographs.
4. evaluation of buildings to determine classification as pivotal, contributing, or noncontributing.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history

**Specific dates** ca. 1890–1930      **Builder/Architect** NA

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The multiple resource nomination for the Historic Resources of Latta includes two historic districts (Latta Historic District #1, fifty-five properties; Latta Historic District #2, twelve properties) and one individual property which are of historical and architectural significance to the town of Latta. These are the first properties in Latta to be listed on the National Register. Built between 1890 and 1930, these properties reflect the founding and early historical and architectural development of the residential sections of Latta, which resulted from the town's role as a railroad freight station and tobacco market. This relatively intact collection of properties constitutes an excellent illustration of a small town whose founding and growth were generated by railroad expansion.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Latta was established in 1888 as a freight station on the newly constructed rail line between Wilson, North Carolina, and Pee Dee, South Carolina. The town was named in honor of Robert Latta, who surveyed the railroad right-of-way and drew a street plan for the proposed freight station community. Latta was chartered by the state in 1890.<sup>3</sup>

Latta grew slowly but steadily its first few years. Businessmen and merchants including W.W. George, S.A. McMillan (McMillan House), D.M. Dew (HD1, #63), and J.L. Dew erected commercial buildings and residences and opened businesses in the new town. Robert Rose Bethea, a respected black businessman, owned and operated a store on Main Street and as the first postmaster for Latta operated the post office in his store. In 1895, Latta was connected by rail to Clio and in 1896 a tobacco warehouse under the management of J.W. Hudson was constructed, ushering in an era of prominence for Latta as one of the foremost tobacco markets in the state.<sup>4</sup>

In 1914, the Latta Library (HD1, #51) was constructed with a grant from the Carnegie Foundation and funds from a local tax levy. At the time it opened, it was the only public library in the county. It was designed by Wilson and Sompayrac, Architects, of Columbia, and was constructed on a lot donated by C.A. Bass. Rev. W.C. Allen was the key figure in negotiations to obtain funds from the Carnegie Foundation. In 1918, the town constructed an electric power plant and by 1924 had also built a municipal water system.<sup>5</sup>

As Latta became established, its citizens began to participate in county politics. James H. Manning (HD1, #1) served as the first senator from Dillon County after its formation in 1910. Members of the South Carolina House of Representatives from Latta included R. Julian Dew, Earle Rogers Ellerbe, Thomas W. Berry, and Frank Rogers Ellerbe (HD1, #16).<sup>6</sup>

Latta has continued to be a small but stable community which retains much of its early twentieth-century character.

**Architecture:**

The properties included in the Historic Resources of Latta nomination make up a fine

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Architecture (Continued):

collection of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century vernacular architecture. Notable examples of Queen Anne detailing occur in Latta Historic District #1 (#s 33, 42, 44) and Latta Historic District #2 (#14). Vernacular use of neoclassical details appears in Latta Historic District #1 (#s 1, 62, and 64). More sophisticated use of the neoclassical style is seen in Latta Historic District #1 (#s 16 and 70). Good local examples of early-twentieth-century bungalows include Latta Historic District #1 (#s 8, 12, 14 and 23) and Latta Historic District #2 (#12).

Current Preservation Projects:

There exists at present no legal mechanism for architectural and historical preservation in Latta. However, there is interest in preservation among the residents evidenced by inquiries received in response to publicity about the survey project. The majority of the residences in the districts are well-kept and the owners have generally maintained the architectural integrity of their property in the course of renovations and routine maintenance.

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FOOTNOTES

1

Durward T. Stokes, The History of Dillon County (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1978), pp. 122-5; W.W. Sellers, A History of Marion County (Columbia, South Carolina: R.L. Bryan Co., 1902), pp. 555-7.

2

Stokes, pp. 129-131; Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910: Abstract of the Census with Supplement for South Carolina (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 564.

3

Stokes, pp. 122-5; Certificate of Incorporation of the Town of Latta, South Carolina; Marion County Deed Book RR, pp. 338-9, Marion County Courthouse, Marion, South Carolina.

4

Stokes, pp. 129-131.

5

Stokes, pp. 200-201; W.C. Allen, "History of the Movement to Secure the Latta Library," 1914, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina. (Typewritten.)

6

Stokes, pp. 462-3; Emily Bellinger Reynolds and Joan Reynolds Faunt, eds., Biographical Directory of the Senate of the State of South Carolina, 1776-1964 (Columbia, South Carolina: R.L. Bryan Co., 1962), p. 261; Walter B. Edgar, ed., Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Vol. 1: Session Lists (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1974) pp. 504, 512, 516, 520.



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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Latta Multiple Resource Area  
State DILLON County, SOUTH CAROLINA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- |     |                               |                                     |               |                             |
|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.  | Latta Historic District No. 1 | Entered in the<br>National Register | for<br>Keeper | <u>Arlene Byers 5/17/84</u> |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 2.  | Latta Historic District No. 2 | Entered in the<br>National Register | for<br>Keeper | <u>Arlene Byers 5/17/84</u> |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 3.  | McMillan House                | National Register                   | for<br>Keeper | <u>Arlene Byers 5/17/84</u> |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 4.  |                               |                                     | Keeper        | _____                       |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 5.  |                               |                                     | Keeper        | _____                       |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 6.  |                               |                                     | Keeper        | _____                       |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 7.  |                               |                                     | Keeper        | _____                       |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 8.  |                               |                                     | Keeper        | _____                       |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 9.  |                               |                                     | Keeper        | _____                       |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |
| 10. |                               |                                     | Keeper        | _____                       |
|     |                               |                                     | Attest        | _____                       |