NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

RECEIVED 55001773

AUG 22 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Oaks

other names/site number The Cooler House

2. Location

street & number On unpaved road .3 miles W of SC Sec Rd 165 ☐ not for publication

city, town St Helena Island ☐ vicinity

state South Carolina code 045 county Beaufort code 013 zip code 29920

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property: Contributing	Noncontributing	
☒ private	☒ building(s)	1		buildings
☐ public-local	☐ district			sites
☐ public-State	☐ site			structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure			objects
	☐ object	1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic Resources of St. Helena Island, c1740-c1935

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Mary W. Edmonds — 8/11/88
Signature of certifying official — Date

for George L. Vogt, State Historic Preservation Officer, SC Department of Archives & History
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Helen Byers — Registered 10/6/88

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/Single Dwelling	Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
Other/I-House	foundation Brick walls Wood/Weatherboard roof Asbestos other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

This residence conforms to the property type "Residential Buildings and Complexes" and to the property subtype "I-House." The basic core of the house is characteristic of this vernacular form. A common practice in this area of South Carolina was to expand the I-house at the rear by a rectangular section, parallel with the I-house section but longer, so that it extends beyond the end walls of the I-house portion. The original two-story porch was damaged by a storm in 1893. The pilaster entrance surround and denticulated porch frieze evidence some architectural sophistication. An enclosed porch and sundeck were added to the rear of the house in 1983. Unfortunately, the only portion of the house that retains its exterior wall material is the first floor of the primary facade. The second floor of this facade is covered with asbestos siding. Synthetic siding covers the remaining walls. The house does retain its integrity of form, massing, scale and location, and significant architectural detail remains intact on the primary facade.

☐ See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

[X] nationally [ ] statewide [ ] locally

Applicable National Register Criteria [X] A [X] B [ ] C [ ] D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) [ ] A [ ] B [ ] C [ ] D [ ] E [ ] F [ ] G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Ethnic Heritage: Black	1862-1864	
Education		
Military		

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
Towne, Laura M.

Architect/Builder
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The house at the Oaks is significant for its association with the military occupation of St. Helena during the Civil War and with the establishment of Penn School, the first school for freedmen in the United States. The house was built c. 1855 by John Jeremiah Theus Pope and Mary Frampton Townsend Pope. With the Federal occupation of the island in November 1861, the owners left the island and the plantation was confiscated. Edward L. Pierce, one of the leaders of the Port Royal Experiment, chose the Oaks as his headquarters because it was the first plantation to be reached on St. Helena by boat from Beaufort. The Oaks remained St. Helena headquarters throughout the war and was the center for military and agricultural activities on the island. On June 18, 1862, Ellen Murray, who had ten days earlier arrived from Pennsylvania, opened a school for freedmen in a back room of the house. She was helped by her close friend Laura M. Towne, also from the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association. Murray and Towne came not only to teach the freedmen but to help them adjust to their freedom in all aspects of their lives. On the first day of school there were nine pupils, all adults, but by September the class had grown to include children and was too large for its small room. The school was then moved to Brick Church near the center of the island. Main supplies were sent to the Oaks to be sorted and repacked for distribution to other plantations and then to the freedmen on the island. The house also served as a hotel for military personnel from Port Royal, superintendents, and teachers. Misses Murray and Towne lived at the Oaks until 1864.(1)

Although no archaeological survey has been conducted at the Oaks, the early and extensive occupation, limited amount of landscape disturbing activities, and historically and architecturally significant activities at the Oaks suggest that the site has the potential to yield valuable archaeological data.

[X] See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

[x] See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- [x] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: S. C. Dept. of Archives and History, Columbia, S. C.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 2.4 acres

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	535740	3583440
B			
C			
D			

[ ] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nomination is shown as the black line on the accompanying Beaufort County Tax Map, St. Helena Sheet # 15, Parcel 36A, drawn at a scale of 1" = 400'.

[ ] See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the historic house and its immediate setting.

[ ] See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title E. Thomas Sims, Survey Historian/Sherry Piland, NR Architectural Historian

organization SC Department of Archives and History date 15 February 1988

street & number 1430 Senate St, PO Box 11669 telephone (803) 734-8608

city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29211

NOTES

(1) Edith M. Dabbs, Sea Island Diary: A History of St. Helena Island (Spartanburg: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1983), pp. 130, 139, 157-160.

The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of property: The Oaks Plantation (Historic Resources of St. Helena Island, c. 1740-c. 1935 multiple property listing)
Location of property: Beaufort County, South Carolina
Photographer: South Carolina Department of Archives and History Staff
Location of negative: South Carolina Department of Archives and History

Additional information for each photograph follows:

1. The Oaks Plantation House
   August 1987
   Oblique, view facing southwest

2. The Oaks Plantation House
   August 1987
   Rear (creek) elevation.
   View facing north.