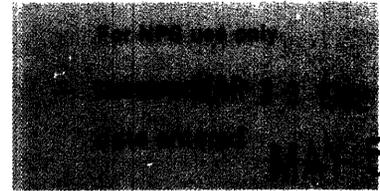


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



1982

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

1. Name

historic Santee Canal

and/or common

2. Location

street & number See Continuation Sheet N/A not for publication

city, town Moncks Corner, SC vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state South Carolina code 045 county Berkeley code 015

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: abandoned

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership (See Continuation Sheet)

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Berkeley County Register of Mesne Conveyance

street & number Main Street

city, town Moncks Corner state South Carolina 29461

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1979 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 Santee Canal runs through central Berkeley County, South Carolina. It is presently divided into two sections by Lake Moultrie. The southernmost section is located approximately two miles northeast of Moncks Corner and the northernmost section is located approximately three and one-half miles southwest of Pineville. Constructed between 1793 and 1800 under the direction of Col. John Christian Senf, the canal was designed to connect the Santee and Cooper Rivers, shortening the time for market products to reach Charleston from the inland Santee basin and to provide a safe, direct inland route.

The canal route was twenty-two miles long, beginning two miles below Greenwood Swamp on the Santee River and entering the Cooper River at Stoney Landing, approximately two miles east of Moncks Corner. The canal was thirty-five feet wide at the top and five and one-half feet deep, sloping to a bottom width of twenty feet. Water depth was four feet, enabling the passage of boats fifty-four feet long and nine feet wide, weighing twenty-two tons. There were tow paths ten feet wide on both sides of the canal. The Santee Canal had a total of ten locks, two double locks and eight single locks, which were ten feet wide and sixty feet long. With the exception of a wooden tidal lock, all the locks were made of brick and stone. The locks enabled the canal traffic to negotiate a rise of thirty-four feet from the Santee River to the canal summit and a descent of sixty-nine feet to the Cooper River. In addition to the canal itself, there were several warehouses, keepers' houses, and other ancillary buildings along the route.

The design of the Santee Canal proved faulty during the droughts of 1817, 1818, and 1819. Water for the northern section of the canal, around the summit, was supplied by artificial reservoirs which failed during extreme drought. Steam engines were then employed to pump water into the canal from the Santee River, but without success. Although water was eventually restored by rainfall, the Santee Canal was never the financial success it was projected to be. The completion of the South Carolina Railroad to Columbia in 1840 and to Camden by 1853 resulted in the abandonment of the canal by the Santee Canal Company ca. 1855 and its subsequent disuse.

Although the Santee Canal was later examined for possible reopening in 1881, restoration was found to be financially unfeasible. In 1942, the massive Santee-Cooper hydroelectric project resulted in the creation of Lakes Marion and Moultrie, which inundated a major central portion of the old canal. Today, the remains of the Santee Canal are visible in two sections: the lower (southern) section from Stoney Landing on the Cooper River, paralleling the tail race of Lake Moultrie, to the edge of the lake (1.6 miles); and the upper (northern) section from Lake Moultrie, two miles southwest of Pineville, to the Santee River (4.5 miles). All of the associated outbuildings, turning basins, lock bridges and the wooden lock have been destroyed. Modern intrusions to the southern section of the canal route include the crossing of U.S. Highway 52, the crossing of a small secondary road to the Dock Restaurant on the tailrace canal, the bridge of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, and several transmission line rights-of-way. The northern section of the canal route is crossed by S.C. Highway 45, several small dirt roads, and a major transmission line right-of-way. Today the northern section of the route provides the best evidence of the appearance of the original Santee Canal. Several brick-walled locks near the Santee River have survived, although they are severely deteriorated. A steam engine, used to pump water from the Santee River into the canal, has also survived, in a deteriorated state. The tow paths are visible for large parts of the canal. Water is still present in the canal along the first mile of the route north of Lake Moultrie. The remains of the canal are overgrown with vegetation and are rapidly deteriorating.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1793-1800 **Builder/Architect** Col. John Christian Senf

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Santee Canal, situated along a twenty-two mile stretch of central Berkeley County, South Carolina, was constructed between 1793 and 1800 under the direction of Col. John Christian Senf, South Carolina State Engineer. Conceived to provide a shorter, safer water route from inland South Carolina to Charleston, the canal was one of the earliest important canals in the United States and perhaps the earliest major internal improvement project in the state. The Santee Canal, though plagued by problems throughout its active life, was of vital importance to South Carolina's economy and possesses significance in the areas of commerce, transportation, and engineering.

Additional Information: As early as 1773 construction of a canal connecting the Santee and Cooper Rivers to shorten the trip from inland South Carolina to Charleston and eliminate passage through the dangerous lower Santee and the ocean was discussed. A survey conducted in 1775 by Henry Mouzon, Jr., shows five possible routes for such a waterway.¹ In 1786 the Company for the Inland Navigation from Santee to Cooper River was chartered to initiate construction of such a canal. Among the major stockholders were prominent South Carolina citizens including John Rutledge, Thomas Sumter, Francis Marion, Henry Laurens, Jr., Nathaniel Russell, and Dr. David Ramsey.²

Construction did not actually begin until 1793 under the direction of Col. John Christian Senf, state engineer.³ Senf reportedly was a captured Hessian soldier who offered his services to the new republic.⁴ Senf discarded all previous surveys for the canal and suggested a route through higher ground, which was adopted for construction under Senf's supervision.⁵ The canal, hand fashioned by slaves from neighboring plantations, was twenty-two miles long, thirty-five feet wide and five-and-one-half feet deep with four feet of water. There were two double and eight single locks to negotiate a rise of thirty-four feet from the Santee River to the canal summit and a descent of sixty-nine feet to the Cooper River. Seven years were required to complete the project, which far exceeded its projected budget, reportedly due to Senf's inflated ego and determination to direct and oversee every detail of the work.⁶

In 1800 the canal was fully opened to water traffic, and in spite of its failure to turn a profit for its investors, it played an important role in commercial transportation until the 1850s. After completion the canal frequently had to be closed to clear away debris, or because there was insufficient water to raise the canal level at the summit to the proper depth.⁷ At one time steam engines were installed to pump water into the canal; however, the pumps failed after a brief trial run.⁸ The completion of the South Carolina Railroad to Columbia in 1840 and to Camden by 1853 effectively removed the demand for the canal other than for local freight activity.⁹ In 1855 the Santee Canal Company requested permission from the legislature to surrender their charter. In that same year the Board of Directors resolved to charge a toll of \$200 for passage through the canal; however, if the company were not held liable for damage, boats could pass through free of charge.¹⁰ As late as 1881 a proposal was made to repair and reopen the canal. The cost of basic structural repair was examined as were several methods for correcting the chronic lack of water at the summit during dry periods. It was determined that while the

Continued

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date entered

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Lower Section: Two miles northeast of Moncks Corner paralleling the tailrace canal which runs from Lake Moultrie to the Cooper River.

Upper Section: Three and one-half miles southwest of Pineville from Lake Moultrie to the Santee River.

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date entered

Continuation sheet 2

Item number 4

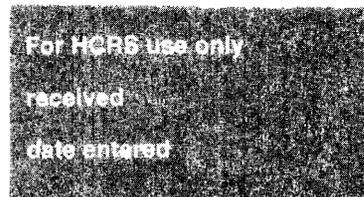
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South Carolina Public Service Authority
Highway 17-A
Moncks Corner, S.C. 29461

Oakland Hunt Club
Pineville, S.C. 29468

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canal was a fine concept and an engineering feat in its day, the same problems which plagued it in its heyday and contributed to its disuse were still present.

Commerce/Transportation: Although the Santee Canal was a financial failure for its investors, it was one of the earliest and most successful attempts to improve transportation in the state. Originally intended as a delivery route for food stuffs, the advent of successful cotton production made the canal more useful for transporting cotton bales. In 1830, during its most prosperous period, 720 boats arrived in Charleston bearing about 70,000 bales of cotton.¹²

Engineering: Despite design defects and judgment errors in location, the Santee Canal was considered an engineering marvel in its day. One of the earliest major canals constructed in the United States, the Santee Canal was considered to be as well built as any other existing waterway.¹³ For reasons of his own Col. John Senf, who directed the project, rejected all previously surveyed locations for the canal and devised a new route through a ridge which necessitated a rise of thirty-four feet from the Santee River to the canal's summit and a descent of sixty-nine feet to the Cooper. An elaborate system of artificial reservoirs, basins, waste-weirs, and flood-gates was devised to feed the canal; however, even these could not supply sufficient water during prolonged and severe drought. During the years 1817, 1818, and 1819 the canal was completely closed because whole stretches were dry. A brief attempt to pump in water with steam engines ended in disaster.¹⁴

Totally hand fashioned with ten stone, brick, and wooden locks, the canal was a masterly piece of workmanship.¹⁵ Although today even those portions not inundated by Lake Moultrie are in a severe state of deterioration, the magnitude of the project and the careful craftsmanship are still evident.

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Continuation sheet 4 Item number 9 Page 1

- Columbia, S.C. South Caroliniana Library. Memorial of the President, Directors, and Stockholders of the "Company for the Inland Navigation from Santee to Cooper River," n.d.
- Hahn, Capt. Thomas F., Shank, William H., Trout, Dr. William E., III, eds. The Best From "American Canals." York, Pa.: The American Canal Society, Inc., 1980.
- McCord, David J., ed. Statutes at Large of South Carolina. 10 vols. Columbia, S.C.: A. S. Johnston, 1840.
- Mills, Robert. "Inland Navigation Plan for A Great Canal Between Charleston and Columbia and for Connecting Our Waters With Those of the Western Country," in Kohn, David and Glenn, Bess, eds. Internal Improvement in South Carolina, 1817-1828. Washington, D.C.: Privately Printed, 1938.
- Orvin, Maxwell Clayton. Historic Berkeley County. Charleston, S.C.: Comprint, 1973.
- Porcher, Frederick A. The History of the Santee Canal (1875). Charleston, S.C.: South Carolina Historical Society, 1903; reprint ed., Moncks Corner, S.C.: South Carolina Public Service Authority, 1950.
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- Stoney, Samuel Gaillard, ed. "Memoirs of Frederick Adolphus Porcher." South Carolina Historical Magazine. 44 (April 1943): 65-80.
- United States Congress. House. Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, to the Secretary of War, for the year 1881. Executive Document 1, 47th Congress, 1st Session, 1881.
- Wallace, David Duncan. The History of South Carolina. 4 vols. New York: American Historical Society, 1934.
- Webber, Mabel L., ed. "Col. Senf's Account of the Santee Canal." South Carolina Historical Magazine 28 (January 1927): 8-21 and 29 (April 1927): 112-131.

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UTM coordinates:

- Eadytown, S.C., quadrangle
- A. 17/580108/3702030
 - B. 17/580570/3701890
 - C. 17/581000/3701970
 - D. 17/581303/3701020
- Pineville, S.C., quadrangle:
- E. 17/581650/3700540
 - F. 17/581910/3699828
 - G. 17/582322/3699610
 - H. 17/584165/3698170
 - I. 17/585060/3697260
 - J. 17/585393/3696600
 - K. 17/585560/3695670
- Cordesville, S.C., quadrangle:
- L. 17/594160/3677850
 - M. 17/594340/3677690
 - N. 17/595545/3674280
 - O. 17/595710/3674120

Boundary description and justification:

The nominated property is shown as the red line on the accompanying USGS topographical maps, designated Eadytown, S.C.; Pineville, S.C.; and Cordesville, S.C., each drawn at a scale of 1 inch = 2000 feet. This boundary includes those parts of the Santee Canal which have not been inundated by the waters of Lake Moultrie. The nominated property includes the remaining locks, the canal itself, and the towpaths on either side of the canal, with a general width of fifty feet along the length of the canal.

Santee Canal
Footnotes

¹Frederick A. Porcher, The History of the Santee Canal (Charleston, S.C.: South Carolina Historical Society, 1903; reprint ed., Moncks Corner, S.C.: South Carolina Public Service Authority, 1950), n.p.; Maxwell Clayton Orvin, Historic Berkeley County (Charleston, S.C.: Comprint, 1973), pp. 149-150.

²David J. McCord, ed., Statutes at Large of South Carolina, 10 vols. (Columbia, S.C.: A. S. Johnston, 1840), 7: 541-543; Orvin, pp. 149-150; Porcher.

³Mabel L. Webber, ed., "Col. Senf's Account of the Santee Canal," South Carolina Historical Magazine 28 (January 1927): 10; Porcher.

⁴Beatrice St. Julien Ravenel, Architects of Charleston (Charleston, S.C.: Carolina Art Association, 1945), p. 87; David Duncan Wallace, The History of South Carolina, 4 vols. (New York: American Historical Society, 1934), 2: 399; Samuel Gaillard Stoney, ed., "Memoirs of Frederick Adolphus Porcher," South Carolina Historical Magazine, 44 (April 1943): 69.

⁵Stoney, p. 70; Orvin, p. 150; Mabel L. Webber, ed., "Col. Senf's Account of the Santee Canal," SCHM 29 (April 1927): 125-126.

⁶Webber, January 1927, p. 9, 10 and April 1927, p. 119; U. S. Congress, House, Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, to the Secretary of War, for the year 1881, Executive Document 1, 47th Congress, 1st session, 1881; Stoney, p. 69; Porcher.

⁷Stoney, p. 69; Porcher; Robert Mills, "Inland Navigation Plan for A Great Canal Between Charleston and Columbia and for Connecting Our Waters With Those of the Western Country," in David Kohn and Bess Glenn, eds., Internal Improvement in South Carolina, 1817-1828 (Washington, D.C.: Privately Printed, 1938), pp. 257-258; Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers; Orvin, p. 152.

⁸Orvin, pp. 152-153; Stoney, p. 71; Porcher; Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers.

⁹Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers; Porcher; Stoney, p. 71; Orvin, pp. 153-154.

¹⁰Orvin, pp. 153-154; Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers; Memorial of the President, Directors, and Stockholders of the "Company for the Inland Navigation from Santee to Cooper River," n.d., South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina.

¹¹Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers.

¹²Orvin, pp. 150-52; Stoney, pp. 60-61; Porcher.

¹³Kohn and Glenn, p. 257; Capt. Thomas F. Hahn, William H. Shand, Dr. William E. Trout III, eds. The Best From "American Canals" (York, Pa.: The American Canal Society, Inc., 1980), p. 3.

Santee Canal
Footnotes

¹⁴Porcher; Report From the Chief of Engineers; Orvin, pp. 150-153; Stoney, pp. 68-70.

¹⁵Kohn and Glenn, pp. 257; Porcher.