

Form 10-300
(July 1969)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Charleston	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 1572	DATE MAR 7 1973

1. NAME				
COMMON: Bleak Hall Plantation Outbuildings				
AND/OR HISTORIC:				
2. LOCATION On SC Hwy 174, .75 miles south from Edisto Island Post Office; turn				
STREET AND NUMBER: left on dirt road and continue 1.3 miles; turn left and				
continue 1.75 miles; turn left, outbuildings 100 yds. down dirt road.				
CITY OR TOWN: Edisto Island vicinity				
STATE South Carolina		CODE 45	COUNTY: Charleston	
			CODE 019	
3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____				
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Religious _____				
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific _____				
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY				
OWNER'S NAME: John Meyer				
STREET AND NUMBER: Bleak Hall Plantation				
CITY OR TOWN: Edisto Island vicinity		STATE: South Carolina		CODE 45
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION				
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Register of Mesne Conveyance				
STREET AND NUMBER: Charleston County Courthouse				
CITY OR TOWN: Charleston		STATE: South Carolina		CODE 45
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS				
TITLE OF SURVEY: South Carolina Preliminary Survey of Historic Places				
DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local				
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: South Carolina Department of Archives and History				
STREET AND NUMBER: 1430 Senate Street P. O. Box 11,188 Capitol Station 29211				
CITY OR TOWN: Columbia		STATE: South Carolina		CODE 45

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Just prior to his marriage in 1798, Daniel Townsend began construction of Bleak Hall Plantation on Edisto Island. Today three outbuildings, probably constructed in the 1840s by Daniel Townsend's son, John Townsend, are all that remain of the plantation.

The most prominent of these three outbuildings is the ice house, a rectangular wooden story-and-a-half building erected close to the ground on a partial basement of tabby construction. The southern and northern facades are identical, with flush boarding through the first floor and clapboard in the gable. Two vertical-plank doors, one at ground level and one in the gable, are flanked by a permanent wooden ladder. The lower door is flanked by two narrow, vertical-plank shutters covering paneless windows which extend above the lower door level. Two barge boards of circular design, one the reverse of the other, adorn the eaves of the high gable roof, which is covered with cypress shingles and slightly flared at the bottom. The barge boards are connected at regular intervals with short wooden strips. At the gable peaks and at the peak of the dormer are three-level wooden spires which extend through the roof and terminate in pendants.

The western and eastern facades consist of flush-boarded walls with mock intersecting tracery windows and a mock door of the same design. Boarding within the mock bays is vertical. Exposed rafters just below the eaves accent a dentil-designed board extending across the facade. A high triangular dormer with two pointed windows of twelve lights each is centrally located in the roof. Directly in front of the dormer windows is a small balcony with supports in a double diamond design. The design of the dormer barge boards repeats that of the gables proper.

The ice house is pegged and the walls insulated with sawdust. The partial basement consists of three walls of tabby construction with charcoal insulation. The interior ceiling has a beaded design. A new floor was installed around 1965.

A second outbuilding, a rectangular equipment shed, is of tabby construction with a high wooden gable roof covered with cypress shingles. Modern sliding doors have been placed under the gable of the southern facade. On the northern facade, a permanent wooden ladder extends from the ground to the large vertical-plank door in the clapboard gable. The gable eaves are covered with barge boards with downward sloping dentil design, and boards with serrated decoration extend beneath the eaves of the eastern and western facades. At each gable peak is a three-level wooden spire that extends through the roof and terminates in a pendant.

The third outbuilding, a cubicle of tabby construction, was probably used as a smokehouse. The single entrance is a vertical-plank door. The slightly bellcast hipped roof is covered with cypress shingles and topped by a three-level wooden spire. Below the eaves all around the structure is a board with large serrated dentil decoration.

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian

☐ 16th Century

☐ 18th Century

☐ 20th Century

☐ 15th Century

☐ 17th Century

☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) c. 1840

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal

☐ Education

☒ Political

☐ Prehistoric

☐ Engineering

☐ Religion/Phi-

☐ Historic

☐ Industry

losophy

☒ Agriculture

☐ Invention

☐ Science

☒ Architecture

☐ Landscape

☐ Sculpture

☐ Art

Architecture

☐ Social/Human-

☐ Commerce

☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications

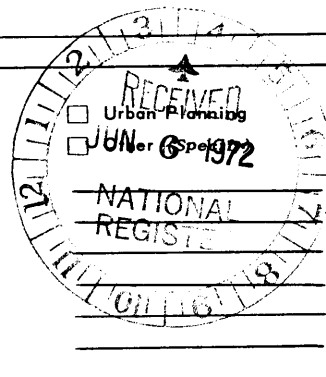
☐ Military

☐ Theater

☐ Conservation

☐ Music

☐ Transportation



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Agricultural Significance: John Townsend was born at Bleak Hall in October of 1799, the first son of Daniel Townsend and Hepzibah Jenkins. Inheriting Bleak Hall from his father, John Townsend became well known as an advanced agriculturalist. He was one of the largest planters of sea island cotton in the state and won many prizes for its quality and length. Bleak Hall cotton was highly valued in Belgium and France for making lace. Not only the cotton, but the Bleak Hall gardens were renowned. John Townsend employed a Japanese gardner to lay out and care for the elaborate and exotic gardens. Remains of these gardens surround the outbuildings in this nomination.

Architectural Significance: Though the main house of Bleak Hall Plantation was destroyed by fire, the three remaining outbuildings are excellent representatives of the gothic revival architecture utilized in the construction of this plantation. Particularly noteworthy is the structure and design of the perfectly preserved ice house with its mock tracery windows and door and the high gabled roof with triangular dormer.

Political Significance: John Townsend was known not only as an agriculturalist, but also as a political leader. He served in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1822 to 1826 and 1828 to 1832, and the South Carolina Senate from 1850 to 1858. He was a delegate to the Secession Convention of 1860-62, and signed the Ordinance of Secession which ushered in the Civil War. John Townsend also served as magistrate, commissioner of roads, commissioner of free schools, justice of the peace, and justice of quorum. He died at Bleak Hall in 1881 and was buried in Edisto Island Presbyterian Churchyard.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Graydon, Nell S. Tales of Edisto. Columbia, S. C.: The R. L. Bryan, Co., 1955, pp. 7-24.

Reynolds, E. B., and J. R. Faunt. Biographical Directory of The Senate of South Carolina. Columbia, S. C.: The South Carolina Archives Department, 1964, p. 323.

The South Carolina Historical and Geneological Magazine, Vol. XX (1919), p. 240.

Will of Daniel Townsend, dated March 7, 1833. Charleston Wills, Vol. 42, p. 442, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N 32° 33' 10.4"	W 80° 14' 03.1"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Wright Caughman Historical Preservation Assistant	
ORGANIZATION South Carolina Department of Archives & History	DATE May 9, 1972
STREET AND NUMBER: 1430 Senate Street P. O. Box 11,188 Capitol Station 29211	
CITY OR TOWN: Columbia	STATE South Carolina
	CODE 45

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

Name

Charles S. Lee

Title Director, S.C. Department of Archives and History

Date

May 24, 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

3/7/73

ATTEST:

W. S. Smith
Keeper of The National Register

Date

3.5.73

SEE INSTRUCTIONS