

(N/A) NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SOUTH CAROLINA INVENTORY FORM FOR HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND
INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES IN A MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION

NAME OF MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION: Edisto Island Multiple Resource Area

PREFERRED NAME OF PROPERTY: Oak Island

COMMON NAME OF PROPERTY: Same

LOCATION: Approximately 1 mile off Oak Island Road, on Westbank Creek, a tributary of the North Edisto River

CLASSIFICATION: BUILDING

OWNER: Parker E. Connor
P.O. Box 87
Edisto Island, S. C. 29438

DESCRIPTION

Oak Island is a two-and-one-half-story, rectangular-plan (with projecting two-story rear pavilion), central-hall, frame, weatherboard-clad residence that dates from ca. 1828-31. The gable-end roof (with slope to the front and rear) is pierced at the the rear slope by two, massive, interior chimneys with heavily corbelled caps and necking. The front slope has three, symmetrically-placed, gabled dormers with six-over-six lights. A one-story, six-bay, hipped-roof porch extends fully across the facade and wraps around the right elevation another five bays (the last two bays have been screened). Plain, wooden columns support the porch roof; there is a plain balustrade between the columns. The facade fenestration is symmetrically composed in an AABAA arrangement on the first story (A = a single, nine-over-nine, double-hung-sash window with molded surrounds and paneled shutters original to the house; B = a double-leaf door with six-light sidelights over panels, semi-elliptical fanlight with tracery and molded surrounds with bull's-eye cornerblocks and a keyblock in the arched surround). The second story fenestration is AABAA (A = a single, nine-over-nine, double-hung sash window with paneled shutters; B = a tripartite window with central, nine-over-nine, double-hung sash and five-light sidelights, molded surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks and paneled shutters. The gable ends are pedimented with a flushboard tympanum and two, quarter-round windows with fixed shutters. The left elevation features a semicircular, three-bay portico with plain wooden columns, single-leaf door with semi-elliptical fanlight with tracery and sidelights, and nine-over-nine windows. The right elevation features the wraparound

porch, single-leaf door, and nine-over-nine windows with paneled shutters. A projecting, two-story central pavilion dominates the rear elevation. The principal story has a three-bay, one-story, shed-roof porch with plain columns; a central, single-leaf door is flanked by single, nine-over-nine, double-hung-sash windows with paneled shutters. The second floor has single, nine-over-nine windows flanking a central, segmented-arched window with fan tracery and paneled shutters. The pavilion is surmounted by a wooden parapet, which features applied balconettes grouped over each of the three bays that define this elevation. The foundation of this house is brick piers with lattice-work infill and the roof is of standing seam metal. The interior has elaborately carved moldings, mantels, door surrounds and cornices. The plan of this house originally is thought to have had two entrances on the facade but at some time in the nineteenth century a central-hall plan with a single central door was effected. There are no remaining outbuildings or garden buildings extant.

SIGNIFICANCE

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture, Agriculture

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: L (FOR OFFICE USE ONLY)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Oak Island, built ca. 1828-31 by William Seabrook, Jr., is significant architecturally and agriculturally as a remaining example of the large antebellum plantation houses on Edisto Island associated with the wealth attained through the production of sea island cotton. Mr. Seabrook, son of the elder William Seabrook and half-brother of Carolina Lafayette Seabrook Hopkinson of Cassina Point, married Martha Edings, a sister of his stepmother, in 1828, and constructed this house, naming it for the grove of trees around it.(1)

In addition to the oaks, the lawns encircling the house in the antebellum period occupied acres, with camellias of every then known species, 1,500 varieties of roses, an apiary and a fish pond in the middle of which there was a latticed house covered with roses. Rustic bridges connected Oak Island with Cassina Point via an island in the creek separating the two plantations.(2) This park-like environment was in 1860, the year of William Seabrook, Jr.'s death, at the center of a 405-acre plantation, on which there belonged 174 slaves.(3)

Federal troops occupied this house and grounds during the Civil War and a number of photographs from that period survive.(4)

After William Seabrook, Jr.'s death in 1860, the house passed successively to John Edward Seabrook and E. Mitchell Seabrook, and presently is owned by the latter's grandson, remaining in the same family for nearly 158 years.(5)

ACREAGE: 8.1 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The nominated property is shown as the black line on the accompanying Charleston County Tax Map #87-0-0, Parcel 23, with an approximate scale of 1 inch equalling 400 feet. It includes the historic building (house) and its surrounding grounds making up the entire parcel.

QUAD NAME: Edisto Island, S. C.

QUAD Scale: 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCE POINT: 17/570260/3606360

OTHER INFORMATION:

FOOTNOTES

¹Nell S. Graydon, "The Seabrooks of Edisto", The State Magazine (October 26, 1952):4.

²Ibid.; Nell S. Graydon, Tales of Edisto (Columbia, S. C.: The R. L. Bryan Company, 1955), p. 38.

³Chalmers G. Davidson, The Last Foray, The South Carolina Planters of 1860: A Sociological Study (Columbia, S. C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), p. 248; Book Z-13, pp. 248-250, Charleston County Deeds, County Records on Microfilm, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S. C.

⁴Clara Childs Puckette, Edisto, A Sea Island Principality (Cleveland, Ohio: Seaforth Publications, 1978), pp. 30-33.

⁵Harriette Kershaw Leiding, Historic Houses of South Carolina (Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1921), pp. 218-19; Book Z-13, pp. 248-250, Charleston County Deeds, County Records on Microfilm, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S. C.