

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

DEC 13 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Towles Farmstead

other names/site number Goshen Plantation, Plainsfield

2. Location

street & number 4595 Towles Road; 4611 Towles Road  
city or town Meggett  
state South Carolina code SC county Charleston  
zip code \_\_\_\_\_

not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
vicinity X  
code 019

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally X statewide \_\_\_\_\_ locally.  
(\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 12/7/93  
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History,  
Columbia, S.C.

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

Gregory M. Ruppel 1/24/94

GR Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>  </u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	structures
<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	objects
<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC  
DOMESTIC  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE  
    
    
  

Sub: Single Dwelling  
Secondary Structure  
Agricultural Field  
Agricultural Outbuilding  
    
    
  

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC  
DOMESTIC  
    
    
    
    
  

Sub: Single Dwelling  
Secondary Structure  
    
    
    
    
  

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)  
Neo-Classical Revival  
Colonial Revival  
    
  

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation Brick  
roof Asphalt  
walls Weatherboard  
    
other Terra Cotta  
Stucco  
  

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Agriculture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1903

1910

1930

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Period of Significance**

1903-1943

**Architect/Builder**

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Charleston County Planning Department

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of Property 14.8 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	17	576345	3620630	3	17	576220	3620100
2	17	576160	3620620	4	17	576440	3620140
See continuation sheet.							

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joseph H. Heard, Spencer A. Tolley

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 2 March 1993

street & number P.O. Box 20893 telephone (803) 723-6739

city or town Charleston state SC zip code 29413

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for s and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Charles A. & Shirley C. Golden/William R. & Wilma C. Williams

street & number 4585 Towles Road/4611 Towles Road telephone (803) 889-8650/889-3101

city or town Meggett state SC zip code 29449

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Towles Farmstead  
name of property  
Charleston County, South Carolina  
county and State

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The Towles Farmstead contains two principal residences, the older of which is a one-story, frame house constructed ca. 1903, with characteristic Neo-classical Revival and Bungalow features. The house has a square core shape and a low-pitched, bell-cast hip roof which extends over a wraparound porch on the east, north, and south elevations. The walls are finished with weatherboard and the roof is clad with composition shingles. Two chimneys which rise from the rear (west) slope are of stuccoed brick with corbeled caps, and the foundation is of stuccoed masonry. The full-facade porch faces east to Towles Road and features Tuscan columns and square balusters. A 1 x 3 bay section of the porch at the southern facade is enclosed behind the columns and balustrade. The rear wing at the western facade is a ca. 1930 enclosure of the former rear portico. This addition extends about ten feet outside the original structure. Most windows are either single or paired with vertical two-over-two double-hung sash.

The second residence is a two-story frame house constructed in 1930, with characteristic Colonial Revival and Italian Renaissance features. The house has a rectangular core shape with one-story wings at the side elevations and a clay tile-clad roof, with carved wooden brackets at the roof of the main body, and a projecting entrance porch supported by two slender Tuscan columns. The walls are finished with weatherboard, the foundation is brick, and the brick exterior chimney at the left rear features a corbeled cap. The windows are six-over-one double-hung sash and have operable shutters, with the exception of the paired and triple casement windows with transoms at the wings at either side of the front facade.

Both houses feature a variety of contributing utility outbuildings. Those associated with the ca. 1903 house are a storage building, a cook's house, garage for farm equipment, shallow well pumphouse, a gasoline pumphouse, and an artesian well pumphouse. Those associated with the 1930 house are two one-story frame utility buildings, a garage, and a carport. The larger of the two utility buildings served as the office for Frank J. Towles' farming business. These properties within the Towles Farmstead are in excellent condition, and have had little alteration since their construction. All have weatherboard siding with wood frame construction; the roofing materials were originally standing seam metal; however, several of the original roofs have been replaced with corrugated tin metal. These were built as functional and utilitarian buildings, and in this respect are without the decorative details present on the dwelling houses within the historic farmstead.

The Towles Farmstead is bounded on the southern and western boundaries by marsh and the waters of the Wadmalaw Sound segment of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. The terrain is flat, rising just above sea level. A major feature of the farmstead is the constructed landscape element of a pecan orchard extending from Towles Road to the edge of high ground at the western boundary of the farmstead. The farmstead also includes an ornamental garden leading to the entrance of the ca. 1903 house with numerous mature camellias and azaleas. The farmstead also features landscape elements common to the region including

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live oak, pine, magnolia and palmetto trees. Two cedars have also been planted close to Wadmalaw Sound behind the ca. 1903 house.

The only remaining evidence of the agricultural history of this farm within the historic farmstead is the extensive pecan orchard. This orchard was planted ca. 1910 by Frank E. Towles to complement the variety of crops grown on the Towles Farm. Several hundred pecan trees were originally planted. Dozens were removed in 1930 to clear the space where the 1930 house was to be built. The pecan trees, planted ca. 1910, were heavily damaged by Hurricane Gracie in 1959. In a post-hurricane survey of the orchard, 184 trees were identified, of which seventy-three had been destroyed. The pecan orchard presently includes ninety-one trees.

The structures within the Towles Farmstead include a carport (ca. 1930), which is contributing, a later carport, a well, and a gazebo and greenhouse, all non-contributing. Architecturally, these structures, with the exception of the greenhouse, are in keeping with the buildings within the historic farmstead. As this is the case, they are significant aesthetically, while they do not contribute architecturally or historically to the farmstead.

The two contributing sites within the historic farmstead are the ornamental garden, and the pecan orchard. The ornamental garden is an important landscape element of the farmstead. It serves as an aesthetic bridge between the open field containing the pecan orchard and the perimeter of the ca. 1903 house. The pecan orchard is a contributing element within the context of the agricultural purpose it served in the farm's heyday, and also aesthetically as it serves as a link and buffer between the ca. 1903 house and the 1930 house.

Properties within the boundaries of the Towles Farmstead include the following (letter designations are keyed to the accompanying site plan):

- A. Frank J. Towles House (1930): Contributing Building
- B. Frank J. Towles Farm Office (ca. 1930): Contributing Building
- C. Storage Building (ca. 1930): Contributing Building
- D. Garage (ca. 1930): Contributing Building
- E. Carport (ca. 1930): Contributing Structure
- F. Storage Shed: Non-Contributing Building
- G. Gasoline Pumphouse: Contributing Building
- H. Ornamental Garden (ca. 1901): Contributing Site

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- I. Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903): Contributing Building
- J. Shallow Well Pumphouse (ca. 1903): Contributing Building
- K. Artesian Well Pumphouse (ca. 1901): Contributing Building
- L. Carport: Non-Contributing Structure
- M. Storage Building: Contributing Building
- N. Garage/Farm Equipment Storage Building (ca. 1903): Contributing Building
- O. Gazebo: Non-Contributing Structure
- P. Cook's House: Contributing Building
- Q. Greenhouse: Non-Contributing Structure
- R. Pecan Orchard (ca. 1910): Contributing Site

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The Towles Farmstead is significant as a relatively intact example of an agricultural complex including two early twentieth-century residences illustrating the changing architectural influences of the period, for its association with the vegetable truck farm industry of Charleston County, and for its association with Frank E. and Frank J. Towles, the father and son who managed the farmstead for over seventy years.

The Towles Farmstead, located in an area still known as Goshen and on a portion of what is believed to have been Plainsfield, one of a number of working plantations in Charleston and Colleton counties belonging to Joseph Blake (1700-1751) and his son William Blake (1739-1803) during the colonial period, is the core area that is significant to a vegetable truck farm which had its period of production from 1880 to 1975. During this time, the farm was among the largest and most productive vegetable truck farms in the region, covering 400 acres of land. The farm was owned and managed beginning in 1903 by Frank E. Towles, and after 1935 by his son, Frank J. Towles. Within the farmstead are two structures which served as the residences of the Towles family. The ca. 1903 house was the residence of Frank E. Towles and family; the 1930 house, adjacent to the earlier house, was built for Frank E. Towles' son, Frank J. Towles.

The association of Frank E. and Frank J. Towles' farm, within the town of Meggett, South Carolina is significant. In 1892, a new rail line was run south of Charleston from Ravenel to Yorges Island, and during the next few years additional spur lines were created. These spur lines linked the neighboring farm communities of Meggett and Ravenel at Gibson, Church Flats, and Toogoodoo Creeks to the railroad. With these critical links, the vegetable truck farms were able to send daily vegetable shipments filling several hundred cars via the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line railroads in refrigerated ice box cars to points north and south.

The Towles Farm had three yearly growth cycles with crops including spring, fall, and winter cabbage, Irish potatoes, turnips, corn, string and soy beans, lettuce, pecans, and other vegetables. In fact, these truck farms made Meggett, South Carolina a world leader in the production of cabbage and potatoes. The location of the Towles Farm was advantageous because it had the link via Towles Road and Church Flats Road to the railroad spurs in Meggett.

Frank E. Towles, in partnership with H.L. Cox, acquired the property now known as Towles Farmstead in 1903. He acquired full ownership of the farm and assumed its management in 1906. Towles managed the production of the Towles Farm as well as several other farms in St. Paul's Parish. His importance in the area of agriculture is evidenced by his election as Director of the South Carolina Produce Association. Frank E. Towles managed the Towles Farm until his death in 1935.



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From 1935 to 1965, the farm was owned and managed by Frank J. Towles. Prior to assuming control of production at Towles Farm, he was the field manager for the Farm Credit Administration and field supervisor for the Production Credit Corporation. This period of management saw significant changes in the local and national economy with the Depression, and the subsequent need for new agricultural and management techniques. Frank J. Towles's management experience was important in the continuation of the farm's prosperity.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

Personal Correspondence and Records, Frank J. Towles, Meggett, S.C., 1935 - 1965.

Farm Records, Frank J. Towles, Meggett, S.C., 1935 - 1965.

Deeds and Plats, Charleston County Register of Mesne Conveyance Office, Charleston, S.C., 1906 - 1992.

Deeds and Plats, Colleton County Courthouse, Walterboro, S.C., 1870 - 1903.

Interview with Addie Messervy Bair, Meggett, S.C., 1 March 1993.

Interview with William Allston (former caretaker of Towles Farm and long-time resident in ca. 1903 Frank E. Towles House), Meggett, S.C., 4 March 1993.

Interview with Frances Towles Apperson (daughter of Frank J. Towles), Greenville, S.C., 3 March 1993.

Interviews with Edith Joyce Towles Cave (niece of Frank J. Towles), Meggett and Mount Pleasant, S.C., 4 and 31 March 1993.

Interview with Eunice Towles Dawson (daughter of Frank J. Towles), Charleston, S.C., 2 April 1993.

Interview with Lorena Knisley (retired Meggett High School teacher), Meggett, S.C., 15 May 1993.

Interview with Julius P. Thompson (local farmer who worked Towles Farm for many years), Meggett, S.C., 4 March 1993.

News and Courier (Charleston, S.C.), 3 June 1912; 22 December 1954; 7 and 8 March 1956.

Dr. George C. Rogers, Jr., Department of History, University of South Carolina, to Andrew W. Chandler, S.C. Department of Archives and History, 18 June 1993.

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Secondary Sources:

Edgar, Walter B. and N. Louise Bailey, eds. Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Vol. II: The Commons House of Assembly, 1692-1775. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1977, pp. 81-83.

South Carolina (Special Limited Edition), Vols. I & II. (Chicago & New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1920).

Preservation Consultants, Inc. Charleston County Historical and Architectural Survey. Charleston: Preservation Consultants, 1992.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Towles Farmstead is shown as the bold dark line on the accompanying Charleston County Tax Map # 223-0-0, encompassing lots numbered 8, 9, 50, 60, and drawn at a scale of 1"=400'.

Boundary Justification

The Towles Farmstead's boundaries include two primary residential structures, the outbuildings, fields, and pecan orchard that have historically been a part of the Towles Farm.

The parcels of land within the original farm boundary, but beyond the northern boundary of the historic farmstead, are excluded due to the subdivision of these parcels and the subsequent intrusion of a noncontributing building (built 1954) on this parcel.

The eastern boundary of the historic farmstead is established by Towles Road, which corresponds to the original farm boundary line. The southern boundary of the historic farmstead is established by the edge of highland at Wadmalaw Sound.

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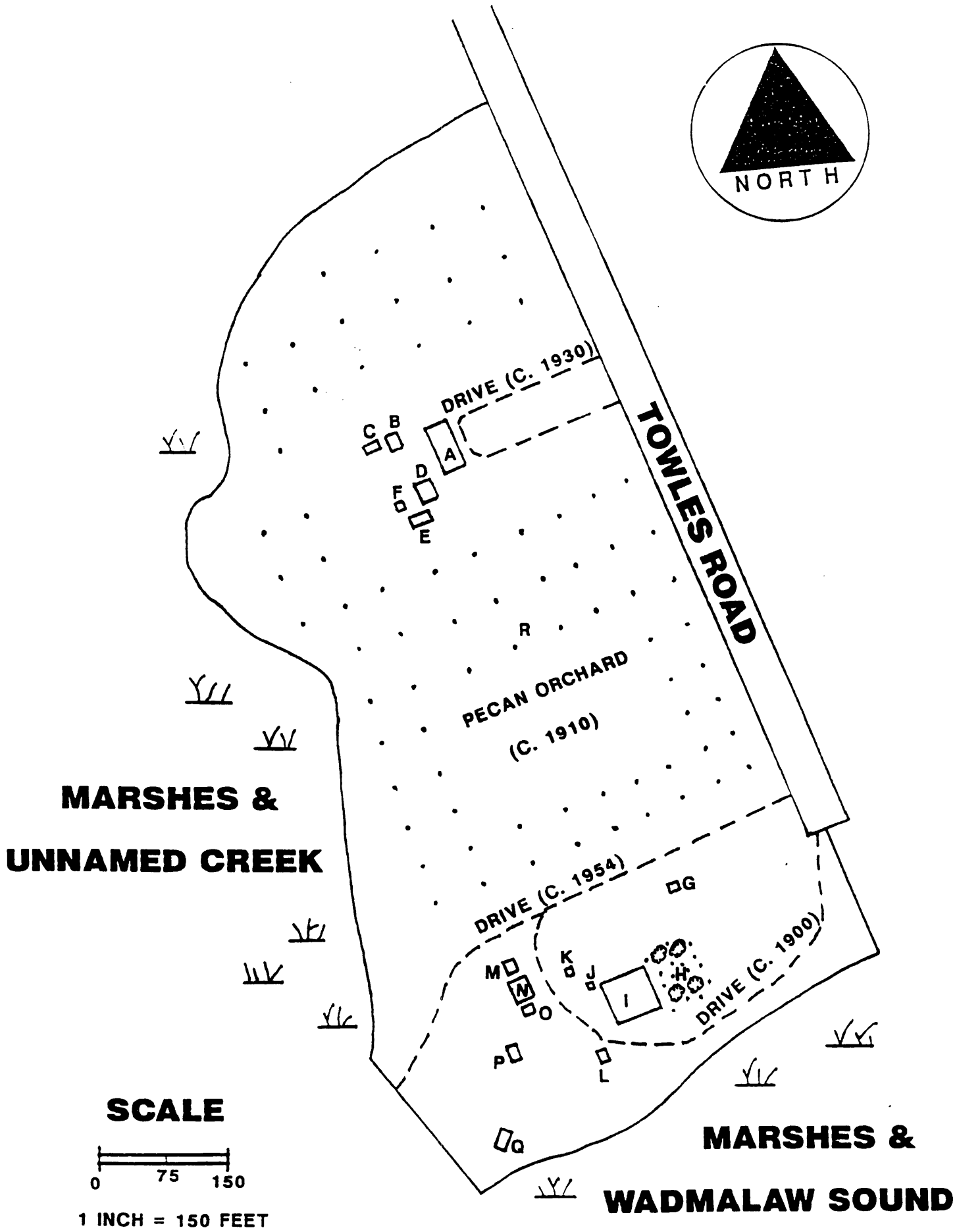
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The following information is the same for each photograph:

Name of Property: Towles Farmstead  
 County and State: Charleston, South Carolina  
 Name of Photographer: Julia C. Day, Charleston, S.C.  
 Date of Photographs: May 15, 1993  
 Location of Original Negatives: South Carolina Department of Archives and  
 History, Columbia, S.C.

1. Frank J. Towles House (1930), east facade
2. " " " " " , west (rear) elevation
3. From left to right: carport, garage, and Frank J. Towles House (1930), southwest oblique view
4. Storage shed, carport, and garage, Frank J. Towles House (1930), south elevation
5. Frank J. Towles Farm Office (ca. 1930), east facade
6. Storage Building and Frank J. Towles Farm Office (ca. 1930), south elevation
7. Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903), north elevation
8. " " " " " " , southwest elevation
9. " " " " " " , northwest oblique view
10. Cook's House, gazebo, garage, and storage building, Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903), east elevations
11. Cook's House, Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903), east facade
12. Pecan Storage Building, near Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903), northeast oblique view
13. Pecan Grove, with Artesian Well Pumphouse at center, near Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903), view from south
14. Artesian Well Pumphouse, in pecan grove near Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903), view from west
15. Gasoline Pumphouse, near Frank E. Towles House (ca. 1903), and Pecan Grove, between Frank E. Towles and Frank J. Towles house complexes, view from south

# TOWLES FARMSTEAD



**MARSHES &  
UNNAMED CREEK**

**SCALE**



1 INCH = 150 FEET

**MARSHES &**

**WADMALAW SOUND**