

**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 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 James Building
other names/site number Summerton Hardware, Summerton Hardware Company

2. Location

street & number 124-126 Main Street not for publication
city or town _____ vicinity _____
state South Carolina code SC county Clarendon code 027 zip code 29148

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Dept. of Archives and 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: | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): | | |

James Building
Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources)

| | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | <u>1</u> | <u> </u> | buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | structures |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | objects |
| | | <u>1</u> | <u>0</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)

Category: Commerce
Commerce

Subcategory: Business (Office)
Specialty Store (Hardware)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Vacant/Not In Use

Subcategory:

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19th & Early 20th Century
American Movements

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation Brick
walls Brick
roof Composite
other

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

James Building
Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina
County and State

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 in 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

Period of Significance

1905

Significant Dates

1905

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

James, Joseph Alston

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

(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:
Clarendon County Archives,
Manning, S.C.

James Building
 Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina
 County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Zone Easting Northing | Zone Easting Northing |
| 1 <u>17 560240 3718679</u> | 3 <u>17 000000 0000000</u> |
| 2 <u>17 000000 0000000</u> | 4 <u>17 000000 0000000</u> |

___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 Lissa Felzer, Preservation Consultant
 organization Felzer Consulting, Inc. date 29 October 2006
 street & number 1157 Oakcrest Drive telephone (843) 343-5501
 city or town Charleston state S.C. zip code 29412

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 historic districts 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 Scott's Branch 76 Foundation, c/o Ken Harvin
 street & number 10 South Duke Street telephone (803) 485-2001
 city or town Summerton state S.C. zip code 29148

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

James Building

Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina

County and State

SETTING:

The James Building, at 124-126 Main Street, is located on the south side of Main Street between South Duke Street and South Cantey Street in the town of Summerton, in lower Clarendon County, South Carolina. It is set within the town's small downtown area that is characterized largely by simple one story commercial storefronts. The James Building is the largest and most imposing commercial structure within the historic downtown.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The building is a two-story brick commercial building containing two distinct storefronts and interior spaces with single-story sections to the rear. Three narrow brick vertical piers divide the two segments of the building's street level facade. Each of the storefronts features a traditional configuration of central canted entrances with flanking display windows. While bulkheads consist of raised wooden panels and windows and doors are framed in wood, the structural elements of the facade's first level are decorative cast iron pilasters decorated with ornate raised vines and other motifs. The cast iron lintel feature raised cast iron rosettes that serve to disguise the anchor bolts securing the cast iron elements of the facade to the remainder of the building's facade and structure. The storefronts contain single plate glass display windows between the structural cast iron piers and each panel of the double-leaf entrances feature single glass panels over raised wood panels. Deep corresponding glass transoms complete the upper segments of each storefront. A single leaf entrance with corresponding glass transom is located at the extreme right of the easternmost storefront and slightly left of the facade's center, and accesses the stair to the second floor. While the lower facade is nearly symmetrical, the upper story is brick and contains seven single double-hung sash windows, with three located equidistantly apart over the easternmost storefront and the remaining four situated equidistantly apart over the westernmost storefront. The easternmost window on the upper facade contains a two-over-two light double-hung sash, while the central window of the eastern segment is boarded. The remaining five windows are one-over-one. Windows on either side elevation contain two-over-two, double-hung sash. Each window opening features a brick jack arch lintel. The uppermost part of the building's street facade is divided into three parts by four corbeled piers or pedestals, the two central piers extending higher to accommodate a central parapet containing a rectangular panel with the date "1905" incised into it. To either outer side of the central piers and raised parapet are brick slanted parapet braces or buttresses. The overall parapet and each pier are all capped with a brick corbeled coping.

A low-pitched truss roof is located behind the brick parapet of the facade and side elevations. The rear wall of the second story section of the building is clad with what appears to be V-crimp galvanized metal sheets. Only a single leaf door pierces this exterior wall treatment, near the easternmost corner. A one story brick section extends to the rear of the property - somewhat farther for the west side of the building than that on the east side. Attached to the rear of the western section is a concrete block modern addition.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 6

James Building

Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina

County and State

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

Many details remain of the original interior that speak to the workmanship that went into the construction of the building. The first floor is devoid of any ornamentation and is just two large open commercial spaces separated by a central stair accessible from the exterior [described above]. The stair is enclosed and features beaded board, tongue and groove paneling, and a chamfered newel post and turned balustrade on the second floor. The ceiling of the westernmost commercial space is an open light well at its center and is supported by simple wood columns, and features a beaded board, tongue and groove paneled frieze and metal balustrade at the second level.

The second floor contains two large open spaces that are one-room deep and coincide with the floor plan on the first level. The space on the east has a short tongue and groove wainscoting that consists of wide beaded board paneling and a simple chair rail. Wall surfaces above the wainscoting are plaster. The ceiling is constructed of beaded board, tongue and groove paneling as well. No baseboards or crown molding remain. The western space has a large rectangular central opening [light well] to the floor below and is surrounded by a later — likely not original -- railing. This space also has beaded board, tongue and groove wainscoting that rises only to window sill level. Walls are plaster and the ceiling is beaded board, tongue and groove paneling, just as in the other second level space. Additionally, there is a boxed cornice with denticulated crown molding remaining in a portion of the room.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Page 7

James Building

Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina

County and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The James Building, also known as Summerton Hardware or the Summerton Hardware Company, at 124-126 Main Street in Summerton, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion B for its association with Captain Joseph Alfred James (1866-1937), conductor on the Northwestern Railroad and longtime Summerton merchant, and under Criterion C as the best surviving intact example in Summerton of an early twentieth century commercial building with a cast-iron storefront.

This imposing two-story building is one the few remaining commercial buildings with a cast-iron storefront on Main Street, which at one time was lined with such buildings. Most, if not all, of those have been lost over time. An examination of the 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Summerton reveals that the James Building is the only remaining early twentieth two-story building on Main Street, explaining why the building under construction was referred to as “mammoth.”¹ The fact that the building housed the telephone exchange and a hardware store is also significant as the building would have been a central focus of the town in the early twentieth century.

ADDITIONAL HISTORY:

The property was purchased from the Summerton Merchantile Company on April 25, 1905 by Mary Evans James, wife of Joseph Alston James prior to the current structure being constructed on the lot.² Construction of the building began in May of 1905 according to a newspaper account that states, “The mammoth building to be erected for Captain Joe James is to be built of imitation stone . . . and the foundation is now being dug.”³ The building was originally intended to house two stores on the ground floor with an opera house and offices on the second floor.⁴ It does not appear that the opera house ever came to fruition. Construction was completed by November of that same year which is demonstrated by an advertisement for the Summerton Real Estate Agency which states, “ (James Building) . . . We are now in our new office, upstairs in this handsome two-story brick building. Two handsome stores on the first floor and spacious offices on the second. A building that makes old Summerton Marvel.”⁵ This newspaper advertisement indicates that the construction and design of the building was quite impressive to Summerton residents at the time. No information can be found regarding an architect or contractor involved in the construction. Early in its history the building housed a hardware store, the telephone exchange, and a grocery on the first floor.⁶ It is unknown how long the building was used for these purposes,

¹ There may have been other two-story structures built as early as this one, but according to the 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the majority of the buildings on the other side of the street previously burned in a fire.

² Deed Book Q-3, p. 344. Clarendon County Deed Office.

³ “Summerton News,” *The Manning Times*, May 17, 1905.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *The Manning Times*, November 15, 1905.

⁶ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Summerton*, 1916. No other source can be located to provide more information regarding the length of time that the hardware store and telephone exchange were in the building. There are no City Directories or similar source in Summerton.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

James Building
Name of Property
Clarendon County, South Carolina
County and State

but by 1947 the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Summerton indicates “paints” in one commercial space, and the generic symbol for store in the other.

Joseph Alston James was born July 6, 1866⁷ and descended from a prominent family, referred to as “pioneers of this country” by Samuel D. McGill in his *Reminiscences of Williamsburg County*.⁸ Dr. McGill writes that Captain James’ great-great grandfather was Major John James, Revolutionary War hero, and his great grandfather was Judge W.D. James. Captain James’ parents were Dr. Joseph Alston James and Sarah Baxter McCutchen.⁹ Dr. James was trained as a physician in Charleston, but practiced in Williamsburg County. Dr. James was also a surgeon in the Civil War, and is referred to as “a very popular physician.”¹⁰

Captain James married Mary Evans in 1890 and had eight children.¹¹ James was a conductor for the Wilson Mills Division of the Northwestern Railroad of South Carolina.¹² It is uncertain how long he held that position, but in 1905, newspaper advertisements for the Summerton Hardware Company list J. A. James as the Secretary-Treasurer of the company and subsequent U.S. Censuses of 1910 and 1920 list his occupation to be a merchant in hardware.¹³ Also, it is known that there were only two conductors for the Wilson Mills Division during its forty-six year lifetime—Captain Jim Bowen and Captain James. Additional information regarding the career of either conductor cannot be found, but it is known that James was the conductor from at least 1894 to 1900¹⁴ James died on April 17, 1937.¹⁵

Many secondary sources mention “Captain” or “Cap’n” James, all in a positive light. One such source states, “Cap’n James was not only a conductor but also made purchases and ran errands for those living along the Wilson Mills-to-Sumter Line.”¹⁶ This was not an uncommon practice for the conductor to do special favors for his passengers. One source relates that Sallie Anderson of Summerton approached the conductor asking him not to leave without her, but she had to go to the post office first. She came back a different way and sat in the train to read the newspaper. About a half an hour later a porter stuck his head in the train looking for her and stated, “Oh, the Cap’n jest want to know, kin he go now?”¹⁷ These stories help illustrate the importance of the train

⁷ “Evergreen Cemetery Records,” p. 516.

⁸ McGill, p.274-275.

⁹ Clarkson; and McGill, p.274-275.

¹⁰ McGill, p. 274.

¹¹ Clarkson.

¹² U.S. Federal Census, 1900; Johnson; and McGill, p. 274-275.

¹³ *The Manning Times*, nearly every edition in 1905 displays this advertisement for the hardware store. The Northwestern Railroad (formerly the Wilson and Summerton Railroad) was only chartered in 1888 according to Fetters book, *Logging Railroads of South Carolina*. It is possible that James could have been working for the railroad that early, but I was unable to find him in the 1890 census to confirm that.

¹⁴ Johnson; Dr. McGill refers to him as a “railroad man” in his manuscript of 1894 making it probable that he was a conductor then.

¹⁵ Clarkson. Unfortunately there was no obituary written in the *Manning Times* to give additional information about Captain James.

¹⁶ *Clarendon Cameos*.

¹⁷ Johnson.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

James Building

Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina

County and State

conductor to a small town such as Summerton. Another piece of evidence pointing to the influence and notoriety of the James family is the fact that the family home on Duke Street, purchased in 1904, has been sketched, toured, and written about several times in the late 20th century.¹⁸

The fact that the building housed the hardware store and the telephone exchange made the James building a central focus of the town—particularly the telephone exchange. An early newspaper account tells of the importance of the telephone to the town: “Manning and Summerton should have a direct telephone connection, for the convenience as well as for the sake of the business interests of the citizens of the respective towns.” The article goes on to complain that [in 1905] there was only a private telephone line between the two towns.¹⁹ It is unclear how soon after this newspaper account came out that the telephone exchange was in place, but definitely by 1916, which put Summerton ahead of the southeast technologically. In the 1880s and following decades, Bell Telephone Company concentrated outside the southeast so that the region had to rely on private, non-Bell franchise telephone exchanges. Consequently, in the 1920s, states in the Deep South, including South Carolina, had the least number of phones in the United States.²⁰ (In 1900 only three percent of all Americans had telephones, and that was mostly the elite.)²¹ By 1930 only twelve percent of homes in the Southeast had telephones, which was considerably less than other regions. For example, at that time forty-five of households in the rural Midwest had telephones.²² Given these statistics, it is somewhat surprising to see that a small rural town in South Carolina like Summerton would have a telephone exchange so early in the twentieth century.

¹⁸ *Clarendon Cameos*; and Elliott.

¹⁹ “Summerton News,” *The Manning Times*, October 18, 1905.

²⁰ Fischer, p. 92.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 144.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 10

James Building

Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina

County and State

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Advertisement. *The Manning Times*, November 15, 1905.

_____. *Clarendon Cameos*, "James Home," 1976. On file with Clarendon County Archives.

_____. "Evergreen Cemetery Records." Unpublished Manuscript. Clarendon County Archives.

_____. "Summerton News," *The Manning Times*, May 17, 1905.

_____. "Summerton News," *The Manning Times*, October 18, 1905.

Clarkson, Blanding D. "James Family of Wales, Ireland and the King's Tree Williamsburg District South Carolina: Descendants of John William James and Anne Wyndham." Unpublished Manuscript, 1990. On file with George James.

Elliott, Joseph C. "Summerton—the Summer Town," *Sandlapper Magazine*, August 1974.

Fetters Thomas. *Logging Railroads of South Carolina*. Heimburger House Publishing Company: Illinois, 1990.

Fischer, Claude. *America Calling: the Social History of the Telephone to 1940*. University of California Press: Los Angeles, 1992.

Johnson, Tom. "Fragments of Fallen Flags: Railroads of Clarendon County, South Carolina, 1886-1940." Unpublished Manuscript, unpaginated, 2003. Clarendon County Archives.

McGill, Samuel D., MD. "Narrative Reminiscences of Williamsburg County." Unpublished Manuscript, 1894. Clarendon County Archives.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Summerton, 1916.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Summerton, 1947.

U.S. Federal Census, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920.

Various deed books. Clarendon County Deed Office.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 11

James Building

Name of Property

Clarendon County, South Carolina

County and State

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line marked "James Building" on the accompanying Clarendon County Tax Map 78-14, Parcel 1, Lot 8, drawn at a scale of 1" = 100'.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundary of the nominated property is restricted to the historic building and the city lot on which it is located.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 12 James Building
Name of Property
Clarendon County, South Carolina
County and State

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

Name of Property: James Building
Location of Property: 124-126 Main Street
Summerton
Clarendon County, South Carolina

Name of Photographer: Christina Shedlock
Date of Photographs: June 2006
Location of Original Negatives: South Carolina Department of Archives and History

1. Facade in streetscape
2. Facade
3. Facade detail
4. Facade, east storefront
5. Facade, west storefront
6. Facade, west storefront detail
7. Rear elevation
8. First floor interior, west side
9. Stairwell
10. Second floor interior, east side
11. Second floor interior, east side
12. Second floor interior, west side
13. Second floor interior, west side, cornice detail