

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 in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	1	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
4	1	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/processing

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

COMMERCE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals:

Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Brick

walls: Brick

Wood

roof: Synthetic

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Earle R. Taylor House and Peach Packing Shed are located at 1001 Locust Hill Road in Greer, South Carolina. There are four contributing resources: the house, garage, peach packing shed, and the office. The 1939 Colonial Revival style house sits on a small hill with a rolling pasture to the east of the house. The immediate setting of the house includes mature magnolia and maple trees. A busy highway separates the house from the ca. 1925 peach packing shed and ca. 1935 office. The packing shed sits on a triangular parcel of land with a small asphalt parking lot.

Narrative Description

MAIN HOUSE (1939)

The 1939 Colonial Revival house has a brick foundation and walls. The main block of the house is two stories with an enclosed porch on the east end of the house and an enclosed carport on the west end. The symmetrical facade has a main entrance in the center and two pair of six-over-six windows on the first floor. The second floor has a pair of six-over-six windows directly above the ones on the first floor and over the door surround is a pair of smaller six-over-six windows. A small porch with an open pediment with elliptical arched ceiling, supported by two fluted Doric order columns with responds frames the residence's main entrance. The front entrance includes a six panel wood door with four-pane sidelights and an elliptical arched, sunburst transom that spans the door and sidelights. The east wing of the house is a one story sun porch with gable end. A fifteen- light window with five-pane sidelights is located in the center of the porch. Originally, this was an open covered porch, but in the 1990s the owners of the home enclosed it, adding the windows. The west wing of the house was originally a carport that was enclosed and converted to a master bedroom around 1948. A six-over-six window is located on the right of this room and a smaller six-over-six window is located to the left of this window.

The west end of the house is one story and has a gable end roof. There are two six-over-six windows centered on the end of the wing. A small arch window is located over the center of these two windows. The main block of the house on this end has one six-over-six window located on the first floor in the dining room and on the second floor there is one six-over-six window on the left side and a smaller six-over-six window on the right side. A small arch vent is located in the center of the gable.

The east end of the house is also one story and has a gable end roof. There is a triple fifteen pane window centered in the gable of this facade. An arched window is centered above this triple window in the gable. On the main block of the house there are small four over four windows located on each side of the brick chimney which is located in the center of the gable. On each side of the chimney there are two quarter round vents located near to the roof line of the gable.

The north elevation of the house is not as symmetrical as the rest of the home. The sunroom area has a fifteen light window with five-pane sidelights in the center of the end wing. The first floor of the main block of the house beginning on the right has a small one-over-one window, then a single six-over-six window, a double six-over-six window and then another single one-over-one window. The second story of the main block of the

house beginning on the right has a single six-over-six window slightly to the right of the window below it on the first floor. There is a single six-over-six window directly over the one of the first floor, then a small six-over-six window, then a six-over-six window over the window on the first floor. The carport enclosure has a single door with a six pane window in it. A small stoop with metal railing serves this door and has three steps to ground level. To the left of this door is a six-over-six window.

The interior of the house has remained mostly intact. The front door of the house opens to a foyer with a winding staircase that leads to the second floor. A dining room is to the right (west) and a large living room to the left (east). The sun porch is accessed from the living room. Southwest of the stair is a breakfast area and kitchen. The original kitchen cabinets were updated in the late 1970s. A short hall leading to the new master bedroom (originally a carport) has a bath off the right side of this hall. Upstairs are three bedrooms, one large room on the left (southeast) side of the home and two smaller bedrooms on the right (northwest) side. Every room upstairs has an original Colonial Revival mantel in it. Original mantels are also in the first floor living and dining rooms.

GARAGE (1949)

To the rear (southwest) of the main house is a frame garage. It is a rectangular shaped building with gable ends. A shed roof has been added to the north elevation of the garage, facing the rear of the house. Two garage doors are on the southeast end of the building and a single-leaf pedestrian entrance is located at the west end of the shed addition on the north elevation.

PEACH PACKING SHED (ca. 1925)

Built ca. 1925, the peach packing shed is located on a triangular parcel of land just across Locust Hill Road from and to the north of the main house. Measuring approximately 111' x 57', it is an open wood-framed two story gable-front building with one story shed-roofed wings on each side, wood siding, and a metal roof. It has a block foundation. On the right (southeast) side of the shed is a small office that was added in the 1940s. This building is a smaller rectangular form with gable ends. Across the front of the shed and office is a continuous covered porch with open rafter tails. Two one-over-one windows are located in the upper gable front of the peach shed.

The left (west) elevation's upper section has four window openings located along that side. The first level shed roof on this elevation has a four-bay loading dock located at center. A four-pane window is located to the right (south) of this loading dock and to the left (north) is an enclosed area the same depth as the loading dock that contains two small four-pane windows.

The rear elevation of the shed has only one door located at the northwest side of the two story portion of the shed.

The right (east) elevation of the shed has the same four window openings located on the side of the upper story as with the left (west) side. A wide opening in the right (north) end of this elevation leads to the interior of the peach shed.

OFFICE (ca. 1935)

The front of the office building has a single door in the center of the facade, flanked by a pair of six-over-six windows. The right (southeast) elevation of the office has a paired one-over-one window in the center of the gable. Four steps lead from the southeast end of the office's porch.

NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING

COLD STORAGE BUILDING (ca. 1975)

Located immediately to the north of the office, this metal building was added to the peach packing shed in the 1970s and is considered non-contributing. It was used to keep peaches fresh for a longer period or until they could be packed.

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)

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Agriculture
- Architecture
-
-
-

Period of Significance

ca. 1925-1962

Significant Dates

- ca. 1925
- ca. 1935
- ca. 1939

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Keating, Thomas

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance includes the approximate construction date of the oldest contributing building (peach shed, ca. 1925) and ends in 1962, or fifty years prior to the year it is being nominated. The Earle R. Taylor House and Peach Packing Shed were in continuous use and operation by the Taylor family for its peach growing business during this period.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The Earle R. Taylor House and Peach Packing Shed are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their association with the early development of peach growing in Greer, South Carolina, and under Criterion C for their architecture which includes an excellent example of the work of local architect Thomas Keating and a rare example of an intact upstate peach packing shed. The Taylor family was one of the first in the area to plant and grow peaches. The house is significant as an example of a Colonial Revival house built in 1939 and designed by local architect Thomas Keating. Moldings and fireplaces are original to the home and are fine examples of the Colonial Revival style.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

AGRICULTURE

It is believed that peaches were first introduced in the Americas by the Spanish. Native Americans cultivated and preserved peaches and Henry William Ravenel of Aiken, South Carolina, is credited with being the first to produce and export South Carolina commercially peaches in the 1850s. By 1887, some 3,941 bushels of South Carolina peaches were sold commercially. At the start of the twenty first century, peaches were the most widely grown commercial fruit crop in South Carolina comprising more than 17,000 acres in the state and with an estimated annual farm value of between thirty and forty million dollars.¹

Peach growing in Piedmont South Carolina took hold as a result of “favorable soil, plentiful rainfall, and good climatic conditions”.² The area around Greer, a small town on the border between Greenville and Spartanburg counties, became a center of peach cultivation in the state. J. Verne Smith of Greer was a pioneer in the establishment of peach orchards in the Piedmont region of South Carolina, planting his first orchard in 1901.³ His orchard was east of downtown Greer, and in 1915 he had 5,000 trees that brought him \$15,000.⁴

Another early Greer peach producer was James P. Taylor. Taylor’s orchard started just before the turn of the twentieth century, and he shipped his first boxcar of peaches in 1912.⁵ Earle R. Taylor, son of James P. Taylor, started his peach operation in 1917. An apprentice of Verne Smith, the younger Taylor was shipping peaches to northern markets in 1920 by rail.⁶

By the time the Taylor orchard started, peach farming was expanding in Piedmont South Carolina. In the Gramling area of Spartanburg County, there were thirty-nine commercial orchards representing a total of 700 acres.⁷

¹ Mike Corbin, *Family Trees: The Peach Culture of the Piedmont* (Spartanburg, SC: Hub City Writers Project, 1998); Desmond R. Layne, “Peaches”, in Walter Edgar, ed., *The South Carolina Encyclopedia* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 707; Nancy Rhyne, *Tales from the South Carolina Upstate, Where the Cotton & Peaches Grow* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2007), 71.

² Ray Belcher and Joadia P. Hiatt, *Greer, From Cotton Town to Industrial Center*, (Charleston, SC, Arcadia Publishing, the Making of America Series, 2003), p. 102.

³ Corbin, 56.

⁴ Rhyne, 71.

⁵ Belcher and Hiatt, 102.

⁶ Belcher and Hiatt, 103.

⁷ *South Carolina, A Handbook*, (Columbia, SC, The Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Industries and Clemson College, 1927), 159.

Greer became a center of peach production in upstate South Carolina. "In September 1921, some 60 peach growers met at the J. Verne Smith Orchard. Greer Chamber of Commerce chairman H. W. Link welcomed them. From this meeting grew a marketing organization uniting Piedmont growers." This organization served as a model for the formation of the South Carolina Peach Growers Association in 1924. Earle R. Taylor, Sr. and Verne Smith were delegates from Greenville County to this organization.⁸

ARCHITECTURE

The Earle R. Taylor House is an excellent and intact example of the work of local architect Thomas Keating (1873-1948).⁹ He was in active practice from 1903 to as late as 1939. Around 1904 he entered professional practice with Leland P. Epton in Spartanburg and in 1905 was associated with Luther D. Proffitt in Spartanburg. Keating designed the Greer Baptist Church of 1905 in partnership with Proffitt. Keating left Spartanburg around 1906 and opened an architectural office in Greer, where he was working as late as 1915." He designed schools in Greer and Duncan, a Fire Department Engine House in Spartanburg and several residences in Spartanburg as well as his own home at 213 North Main Street in Greer in 1913.¹⁰ Keating was a native of New Jersey but resided in Greer for fifty years. He was for twenty five years manager of Thompson Hardware Company.¹¹ Keating also drafted plans for the McMurray House in Greer, also a Colonial Revival style home, located at 104 West Arlington Avenue in 1939, as well as several others along Main Street and Arlington Avenue.¹²

A number of the significant buildings in downtown Greer were designed by Keating, including the R. L. Merchant Building (200 Trade Street), the Reese Building (217 Trade Street), and the Belk-Kirkpatrick Building (104-106 Trade Street), as well as several residences in Greer.¹³

Peach Packing Shed Architecture

The Peach Shed at the Earle R. Taylor House is an intact and rare example of architecture associated with the early history of peach agriculture in the upstate of South Carolina. In the first half of the twentieth century the peach packing shed was generally a large open air wood framed structure with many diagonal braces to counteract the uplifting force of the wind on the large roof. Once the peaches were picked in the fields and loaded into bins they were then transported to the packing shed for processing. The bins were set on the packing shed floor and either by hand or fork lift the peach bins were placed into a "hydro-cooler" which drenched the fruit with chilled water to remove the field heat. The fruit then went from the bins to a conveyor line which moved the fruit to the washer and de-fuzzer. The next steps were to the dryer to remove the surface water and on to be waxed, where food quality wax is applied to keep the moisture in the fruit during shipping. From being waxed the fruit went to the grading line where it was measured for size and culls were removed. From the grading line the peaches went to the boxing area where the fruit was placed by hand into boxes for shipping or baskets for local sale. The shipping boxes were loaded onto a waiting truck in the early years or went into a cooler to await a truck pick up in the second half of the twentieth century.¹⁴

⁸ Belcher and Hiatt, 104.

⁹ Interview with Mr. & Mrs. Richard Taylor Jr. at their home – 10:30 AM November 11, 2010

¹⁰ John E. Wells and Robert Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects 1885-1935: A Biographical Dictionary* (Richmond, VA: New South Architectural Press, 1992), 90-91.

¹¹ *Spartanburg Herald*, 21 September 1948, 2.

¹² *Spartanburg Herald Journal*, 17 August 1995, B1.

¹³ <http://greerstation.com/greer-sc/historic-information/> National Register Nomination for the Greer Downtown Historic District

¹⁴ http://www.sctv.org/index.php/pee_dee_explorer/entry/peach_processing/

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

By 1898, Earle Taylor's father, James Pashcal Taylor (1867-1958) had moved to Greer and was the first man to plant 500 peach trees in the area.¹⁵ Other families soon followed including W. W. Burgess and J. Verne Smith, both of whom became very prominent peach growers of the area. Greer was truly "the peach center of the world" until around 1920 when Spartanburg surpassed Greer in production.¹⁶ Mr. Taylor began his farming life as a salesman for Stark Brothers Nursery in Louisiana, Mo., who specialized in apple and peach trees. In Greer in 1898, he started with two acres paying \$10 an acre for the land and increased his holding to 100 acres. Taylor said the first full carload of peaches ever shipped out of Greenville County was shipped from his orchard in 1912 from the old Burgess Station near Greer. His sons chipped in to help build up the Taylor's orchard and to sell the fruit at the market. Mr. Taylor recalled the boys took wagonloads of peaches to Greenville over muddy roads and sold them on the city streets at whatever price they could get. Growing up learning the peach farming business, it was only natural that Earle would take over his father's farm. He patented the name "Greer Brand" which is seen across the nation once the Jones brothers began to can peaches and tomatoes.

Earle R. Taylor lived in a wooden Victorian farm house on the property with a brother and his family when it was hit by lightning and destroyed. The house that stands today was built in 1939. At its peak, the 900 acre farm had 30,000 peach and apple trees on 300 acres, cotton fields and about 100 head of Angus cattle. By 1955, there were about 20,000 peach trees on the property. When the peach tree buds were destroyed by weather, the animals supplemented the family's payroll. During the 1950s, Earle Taylor began land development and developed the Belmont Heights subdivision in Greer. Earle Taylor Jr., known as Richard, purchased one of the first lots and lived there until his father's death in 1985 at which time he and his wife, Karolyn, moved into his father's former home.¹⁷

The Spartanburg Herald reported on August 13, 1950, the family of Earle Taylor of Greer is among those chosen for the Master Farm Family honors in South Carolina.

Earle R. Taylor was also involved in the Greer business community as director emeritus of the Bank of Greer and First Federal of South Carolina, Greer branch and as director of the Greer Chamber of Commerce. He was also an agricultural leader and served as county and state chairman of the Agriculture Committee of S. C., chairman of the Greenville County Market Commission, President of the Piedmont Peach Growers Cooperative, National Peach Council director, and president of the State Peach Council. Earle Taylor died November 23, 1985.¹⁸

Today the peach packing shed is rented by another farmer in the area, and Earle R. Taylor, Jr. and his wife Karolyn make their home in the Colonial Revival residence.

¹⁵ "First Man to Plant Peach Trees in Upper S.C.", *Greer Citizen*, 15 December 1976.

¹⁶ Greater Greer Chamber of Commerce, *Images of America, Greer* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000), 88.

¹⁷ Earle R. Taylor, Jr., and Karolyn Taylor, interview by authors, 11 November 2010; Associated Press, "Tri-State Peach Belt Damaged by Cold Wave", 24 March 1955.

¹⁸ Spartanburg *Herald-Journal*, 25 November 1985, B6.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Belcher, Ray and Joada P. Hiatt. *Greer, From Cotton Town to Industrial Center*. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2003.

Corbin, Mike. *Family Trees, The Peach Culture of the Piedmont*. Spartanburg, SC: The Hub City Writers Project, 1998.

Layne, Desmond R. "Peaches". In Walter Edgar, ed. *The South Carolina Encyclopedia*. Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2006.

Greater Greer Chamber of Commerce. *Images of America Greer*. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2000

Greer, SC *Citizen* Dec 15, 1976 "First Man to Plant Peach Trees in Upper S.C."

Earl Richard Taylor, Jr., and Karolyn Taylor. Interview by authors. 11 November 2010.

Rhyné, Nancy. *Tales from the South Carolina Upstate, Where the Cotton & Peaches Grow*. Charleston, The History Press, 2007.

South Carolina, A Handbook. The Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Industries and Clemson College, 1927.

Spartanburg, SC *Herald Journal* (sources cited in text)

Wells, John E. and Robert Dalton. *The South Carolina Architects, 1885-1935: A Biographical Dictionary*. Richmond, VA: New South Architectural Press, 1992.

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: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 9 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>17</u> Zone	<u>384758</u> Easting	<u>3867969</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary of the Earle R. Taylor House and Peach Packing Shed is shown as the heavy black line on the accompanying portion of a Greenville County Tax Map, at a scale of 1 inch equals 200 feet.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary of the nominated area includes the parcels owned by the Taylor family containing the contributing buildings and the acreage immediately surrounding the buildings.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martin E. Meek and Bill Cooper

organization Campbell Meek and Associates, Architects, Inc. date May 8, 2012

street & number 105 Parker Road telephone (864) 909-3373

city or town Enoree state SC zip code 29335

e-mail mmeek@meekarch.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Earle R. Taylor House and Peach Shed

City or Vicinity: Greer vicinity

County: Greenville

State: South Carolina

Photographer: Angie Crowley

Date Photographed: November 17, 2010 (except photos labeled as "Historic Photo")

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Photo Number	Description	View Looking
1	View of front yard of Taylor Residence	Southwest
2	Front Facade	Southwest
3	Front Door and Porch	Southwest
4	Front and left Facade	West
5	Left Facade	West
6	Back Facade	Northeast
7	Interior Stairway	Southwest
8	Dining Room	Southwest
9	Master Bedroom upstairs	Northeast
10	Garage	South
11	Historic Photo	Overhead
12	Historic Photo with Earle Taylor in foreground	Southwest
13	Historic Photo with Earle & his wife and Earl Jr.	Southwest
14	Historic Photo showing house, orchards and Peach Packing Shed	
15	Peach orchard with cow	
16	Taylor's Orchard workers in 1957	
17	Historic photo showing fertilizing machine in orchard	
18	Historic Photo of Taylor's Peach Packing Shed	
19	Left Side of Peach Packing Shed	Northeast
20	Front of Peach Packing Shed	North
21	Front of Peach Packing Shed	Northeast
22	Front of Peach Packing Shed	Northeast
23	Right Side of Packing Peach Shed	North
24	Right Side of Peach Shed and packing house	North

Earle R. Taylor House and Peach Packing Shed
Name of Property

Greenville County, South Carolina
County and State

Property Owner:

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

name Earle R. Taylor III, and Charles Taylor, et. al.

street & number P.O. Box 565

telephone (864) 877-3648

city or town Greer

state SC

zip code 29652

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.