

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Gravel Hill Plantation
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3954 Augusta Stage Coach Road not for publication
city or town Garnett Vicinity
state South Carolina code SC county Hampton code 049

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Signature of certifying official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date
Elizabeth M. Johnson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- Ownership options: private (checked), public - Local, public - State, public - Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- Category options: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing and 5 rows: building(s), district, site, structure, object, 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)

- Historic Functions: Domestic/Single Dwelling, Domestic/Secondary Structure, Domestic/Camp, Recreation and Culture/Outdoor Recreation

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

- Current Functions: Domestic/Single Dwelling, Domestic/Secondary Structure, Domestic/Camp, Recreation and Culture/Outdoor Recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architectural Classification: Shingle Style/Rustic Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

- Materials: foundation: Brick, walls: Wood/Shingle, roof: Asphalt, other: Brick, Tin

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

Gravel Hill Plantation, as proposed for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, is the twenty-acre core of a large hunting plantation in the Garnett vicinity of rural Hampton County, South Carolina, that includes eleven historic buildings, nine of them designed and built ca. 1910 by Robert Palmer Huntington (1869-1949), owner and retired architect of New York. The site plan and setting are critical to the historic and current architectural character of Gravel Hill.¹ The site features nine historic buildings, built as the center of a hunting preserve. The complex—three residential buildings, a kitchen and dining facility, ice house, stables and ancillary service buildings—represents the Rustic, or Adirondack Style, a variant of the more well-known Shingle Style. Two additional historic buildings, a corncrib and a tenant's house, are vernacular in construction and presumably date from the months in 1909-10 when this Rustic Style complex was being planned and built by Robert Palmer Huntington.

Narrative Description

Viewed as a group or constellation, the Rustic Style historic buildings form three sides of a trapezoid set among mature, spreading live oaks. These oaks mark the location of an earlier house site, and beyond this core of oaks and buildings, a pine forest frames the site as a whole. [For a description of the antebellum John Goldwire Lawton House that preceded the Rustic Style buildings on the site, see Appendix I.]

Two major residential buildings and the kitchen and dining building form the southeastern side of the trapezoid. The major dwelling consists of a central block flanked by dormitory wings. The principal feature of the central block is a vaulted sitting room with cypress wainscot, a large fireplace and rustic mantel supported by cypress knees, large windows and glazed French doors opening onto porches to the east and west. The wings contain six bedrooms and four bathrooms. Throughout the complex, with few exceptions, the bedrooms each have their own fireplaces and exterior entries. At the western end of the major residential building, a covered breezeway leads to a separate building containing the kitchen, pantries, and a dining room, similar in detail to the vaulted sitting room.

Moving clockwise around the site plan, along the southwest edge of the trapezoid, are several identical service buildings sited in a row like slave dwellings in antebellum South Carolina. The service building nearest to the kitchen contains two rooms designed to hold block ice. These rooms provided refrigeration for a third room containing meat lockers and hooks for game. Continuing clockwise, next to the icehouse is a laundry, and beyond the laundry is a workshop and storage building. A simple, rectangular residence for employees completes the southwest side of the trapezoid.

¹ See accompanying photographs, U.S.G.S. Topographical Map, Hampton County Tax Map, and Gravel Hill Plantation Site Plan. Acknowledgments: Lawton Clarke O'Cain first pointed out the historical significance of Gravel Hill, and she brought the site to the attention of Rodger E. Stroup, Director of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History 1997-2009. The owners, Steve and Connie Tobias, have supported both extensive research and the meticulous restoration of the historic buildings. Marvin McArthur Bowers and William Allan Rozar led the craftsmen. Joe I. Chapman, Plantation Manager, coordinated everything and provided the on-site leadership that made the project possible. Others who have contributed are recognized in the footnotes and bibliography.

Continuing clockwise along the northwest edge of the trapezoid, there is a small building which historically contained the carbide gas apparatus used to illuminate the residential buildings. Adjacent the carbide building is a residence, traditionally called the manager's house, and beyond that, a paddock and stable. Completing the northwest side of the trapezoid are the corncrib, a barn, and an historic tenant house. In this area there are several non-historic structures (equipment sheds and a kennel), but the live oaks, barn and stable largely screen these from view.

The original site plan and the historic buildings are physically and visually intact. The forest that surrounds the site reinforces the impact of this historic setting; consequently, the complex looks much as it did when these Rustic Style buildings were constructed ca. 1910. These buildings contribute to the historic and architectural character and significance of Gravel Hill Plantation:

- 1. Main House (ca. 1910):** A one-story residence; the Main House is connected to the Kitchen and Dining Room by an open breezeway. Visually these connected units appear as one building, for both are in the Rustic Style. The Main House and attached Kitchen and Dining Room are elevated on brick piers. All exterior walls are sheathed with weathered, unpainted cypress shingles; all windows (excepting one non-historic aluminum framed window in the master bedroom) are historic, diamond paned casement windows; all exterior doors are historic Dutch doors, or, in the living room, diamond paned, glazed French doors. Exterior trim, including porch posts and railings and brackets beneath the eaves, is historic and is made of cypress logs, often with remnants of bark intact. The low-pitched roof is covered with dark, grey asphalt shingles, installed ca. 1970.

The Main House contains seventeen rooms and two closets. Like the hub of a wheel the octagonal living room serves as the center of the interior plan. Two wings containing bedrooms and bathrooms extend – one to the east and the other to the northwest – from the living room. The breezeway leading to the dining room and kitchen extends southward from the eastern bedroom wing. Interior wall treatments and fittings are (excepting the kitchen and master bedroom as noted below) historic and intact. Interior wall surfaces consist of a varnished, vertically boarded wainscot below the chair rail and, in most of the rooms, horizontal, square edged match board on the upper wall surface from the chair rail to the ceiling. The ceilings are made of varnished bead board or match board. The historic Rustic Style trim is intact throughout the interior; cypress logs are used for door and window trim and for mantel pieces in each bedroom, the living room and dining room. The historic wall surfaces of the master bedroom and the kitchen were removed ca. 1970. (The restoration plan for these two rooms, as for all work undertaken on each building at Gravel Hill, has been guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, by consultation with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office [SHPO] and by the historic character of intact interiors throughout Gravel Hill.)

- 2. Guest House (ca. 1910):** In materials, design and condition the Guest House resembles the Main House. The Guest House is a Rustic Style, one-story building elevated on brick piers. Its exterior is sheathed with cypress shingles. The eaves are supported by cypress log brackets; a fret-work lattice made of cypress logs creates a shadow pattern in the South gable of the Guest House, and cypress logs are used for porch posts, railings and door and window trim. As with the Main House, the Guest House has diamond paned casement windows. The Guest House contains three bedrooms, a sitting room, a bathroom, a kitchen, and a small entry or foyer. The floors, walls, doors and ceilings of these rooms are historic; their varnished wainscot, chair rail and match board walls replicate those found in the Main House. The ca. 1970 kitchen is non-historic, as are the ca. 1950 brick steps and platform that serve as an entry on the south façade.

3. **Ice House (ca. 1910):** Three small service buildings are sited in a row adjacent the kitchen of the Main House. The service building closest to the kitchen (approximately twenty yards away) is the Ice House. It is intact and is a rare example of its type. A Rustic Style, one-story building with a gable roof, it is elevated on brick piers; the exterior walls of the Ice House are sheathed with cypress shingles, and it has cypress log brackets beneath its eaves and one diamond paned window on either side of the central entrance on its gabled north façade. Immediately inside the central entry are four insulated lockers fitted with hooks for hanging game. Behind the meat lockers are two rooms with insulated, tin-lined walls; block ice stored in these rooms cooled the interior of the building. The original roof of the Ice House was replaced by a tin gable roof ca. 1970.
4. **Laundry (ca. 1910):** the second of the three service buildings adjacent the kitchen of the Main House. The exterior of the Laundry is historic; it is intact and replicates the exterior of the Ice House described previously. The interior of the Laundry is non-historic. The original roof of the Laundry was replaced by a tin gable roof ca. 1970.
5. **Storage and Shop Building (ca. 1910):** The third of the three service buildings adjacent the kitchen of the Main House. The exterior of the Storage and Shop Building is historic; it is intact and replicates the exterior of both the Ice House and the Laundry described previously. The interior of the Shop Building is non-historic. The original roof of the Storage and Shop Building was replaced by a tin gable roof ca. 1970.
6. **Gate House (ca. 1910):** Near the entrance drive into the property is this lateral gabled, linear building with a low-pitched roof clad with V-crimp tin or metal sheets. Set on a more modern decorative block foundation, this building is clad with cypress shingles and features a shed roof front porch supported by thin square posts and is centered along at least three fourths of the building's facade. Brick steps access the porch and the central entrance that is flanked by four windows. Two central brick chimneys, evenly spaced within the building and located between rooms, rise from the roof's ridgeline. A shed roof extension, with a slightly flatter pitched roof, stretches along the rear elevation and provides a flared eave to the rear slope. The building contains diamond-pane casement windows. A diagonal lattice-clad porch (modern addition) extends at the southwest corner of the building.
7. **Carbide House (ca. 1910):** This building was not designed in the Rustic Style. It is the only original building in the Gravel Hill complex constructed using clapboards to sheathe its exterior walls. Like the other small service buildings or sheds, the Carbide House is a one-story building with a gable roof. It was built to contain the apparatus that produced flammable carbide gas used to light the residential buildings. The Carbide House has a Dutch door on its southeast façade. The upper section of this door consists of a frame containing thirty-five small square panes of glass. There is a pair of similar frames, each also containing thirty-five panes of glass, mounted in the northwest or rear elevation. There are no interior partitions. The original brick piers and wooden sills and floor of the Carbide House were replaced by a concrete slab ca. 1970, and the carbide gas equipment was removed, but with these exceptions, the building is historic and intact.
8. **Manager's House (ca. 1910):** A one-story Rustic Style building with cypress shingles as siding, this house is raised on brick piers. In material, plan and construction it resembles the Main House and Guest House. The windows in the Manager's House, however, are not the diamond paned casement

windows found throughout the Main House and Guest House. Instead, the Manager's House has double-hung, sliding sash windows, and each sash contains sixteen small square panes of glass. The screen porch on the north façade has posts and rails made of cypress logs with remnants of the bark intact. Historic, but perhaps not original, red paint is intact on the exterior trim, including door and window frames and sashes. The interior of the Manager's House resembles the Main House and Guest House. There is a brick-faced fireplace in each of the three bedrooms and sitting room. The mantels are all made from rough-hewn slabs of cypress and are supported by cypress logs. The interior walls consist of varnished, vertically boarded wainscot below the chair rail and varnished, horizontal, squared edged match board above the chair rail. The ceilings are bead board or match board. The kitchen and bathroom counters, fixtures and appliances are non-historic.

9. **Stable (ca. 1910):** A Rustic Style building with cypress shingle siding. Its major windows are the same Colonial Revival, small square-paned, red painted sashes (sixteen-over-sixteen panes) used at the Manager's House. The Stable ground plan resembles the letter T: the long, vertical leg of the T plan contains large stalls or loose boxes; the top cross bar of the T contains an office for the groom to the left, a carriage storage area in the center, and tack rooms for equipment storage to the right. Notable exterior details include cypress log posts and railings on the porch of the groom's office, open ventilation beneath the eaves of the wing containing the stalls, and oval windows in the gable ends of the "top bar."
10. **Corn Crib (ca. 1910):** This vernacular, agricultural building is raised on brick piers and built of hewn and notched logs. Its original roof, probably made of cypress shingles, was replaced with a tin roof ca. 1970, but with this exception the Corn Crib is historically intact.
11. **Wood Shed (ca. 1910):** Large lateral gable structure adjacent the Stable, Corn Crib and Barn, with open post construction, partial enclosure, vertical and horizontal lattice in the gable ends. The structure's roof is clad with V-crimp tin and/or metal.
12. **Barn (ca. 1910):** The Barn is a two-story Rustic Style building. It is rectangular in plan with a gable roof. The cypress shingles on its exterior walls and the cypress log brackets beneath its eaves match the other Rustic Style buildings at Gravel Hill. The main façade (western) of the Barn is spanned by a double door for carriages; above this entrance a large, fixed window frame containing sixty small square panes of glass provides light for the second floor loft. Open lean-to sheds on both sides of the barn provide storage areas for equipment. The original roof, probably made of cypress shingles, was replaced with a tin roof ca. 1970, and a rear entrance has been boarded over with clapboards, but with these two exceptions the barn is historically intact.
13. **Tenant House (ca. 1910)** This vernacular building appears to have been assembled, or put together, by moving and connecting two earlier log cabins with a hyphen, then extending a wing or ell from the northeast side of the hyphen. The logs composing the exterior walls have always been exposed to the weather; there is no evidence that this building has ever been painted or sealed in any way. The tenant House has double-hung sash windows, each sash having rectangular panes, typically six over six. The exterior trim, window frames and doors, have the same red paint that is found on the trim of both the Manager's House and the Stable. The original cypress shingle roof was replaced by a tin roof ca. 1970, but with this exception the historic fabric of the building is intact.

Name of Property

County and State

- 14. Non-Historic Equipment Shed (after 1970):** Located just to the west of the Barn, it is a linear wood post and frame structure; non-contributing to the historic and architectural character of the plantation.

- 15. Non-Historic Equipment Shed (after 1970):** Located southwest of the Tenant House, it is a linear wood post and frame structure; non-contributing to the historic and architectural character of the plantation.

Name of Property

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)

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.

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1910

Significant Dates

ca. 1910

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Huntington, Robert Palmer

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

Gravel Hill Plantation is eligible for listing in the National Register at the state level of significance under Criterion C for Architecture, as a rare and fully-realized example in South Carolina of the Adirondack or Rustic Style and the only known extant design south of the state of New York by architect Robert Palmer Huntington (1869-1949).

The plantation is also historically significant as an example of the hunting plantation phenomenon in the South Carolina lowcountry from the end of the Civil War to World War II, in which wealthy Northerners (often referred to by South Carolinians as “rich Yankees”) acquired, and in many cases consolidated, historic plantations to create large recreational preserves and seasonal residences.

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

Architecture

The Oxford English dictionary defines “rustic” as “of or pertaining to the country as opposed to the town” and “to rusticate” as “to stay in the country, to assume rural manners; to live a country life.” The materials and forms of the Rustic Style were intended to convey values and beliefs that prompted educated, urban people to vacation in remote, unspoiled natural settings.

The Rustic Style developed in the latter half of the nineteenth century in New York, Massachusetts and Maine as the economic, urban elite began to acquire camps and hunting and fishing preserves in the Adirondack Mountains and the Berkshires. Hallmarks of the style include the use of unpainted wooden shingles to sheathe the exterior walls, informal, asymmetrical ground plans, extended, overhanging eaves supported by brackets, deeply shadowed porches with posts and railings made of tree trunks (typically eastern white cedar in New England, but cypress at Gravel Hill) with the bark intact. The style was promoted in part by the new, national self-consciousness associated with the Centennial Celebration of 1876. Not surprisingly, the Rustic Style is famous for having rejected ornamental trim derived from foreign traditions. As an alternative source of ornament, Rustic Style designers consciously alluded to early American log cabins, thus celebrating moral and physical benefits then associated with direct contact with nature.²

The Rustic style originated in New England and was brought south by wealthy northerners who transformed many South Carolina plantations into hunting preserves during the period ca. 1880-1930.

Ten of the historic buildings at Gravel Hill are pure, intact examples of the Adirondack or Rustic Style. These buildings are sheathed with unpainted cypress shingles. They have extended eaves supported by brackets. The Guest House, Main House, Kitchen and Dining Building, Stable and Manager’s House all have porches with tree trunk posts and railings. Throughout the Gravel Hill complex, cypress with the bark intact is used to trim windows and doors; cypress knees and logs are used to support mantels. Dutch doors and casement, diamond

² See Craig Gilborn, *Adirondack Camps: Homes Away from Home, 1850-1950* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), and John M. Bryan, *Maine Cottages, Fred L. Savage and the Architecture of Mount Desert, Maine* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005).

paned windows, characteristic of the Rustic and Shingle Styles in New England, are also found throughout Gravel Hill.

Sophisticated architects often designed simple looking Rustic Style buildings for cosmopolitan clients. For example, John Russell Pope, who created the dignified Classical façade of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. for Andrew Mellon, also designed the Rustic Style Kamp Kill Kare (1915-1917) in the Adirondacks. Robert Robertson, who designed a Tudor Revival Style mansion at Shelburne Farms for Dr. and Mrs. William Seward Webb (she was George Washington Vanderbilt's sister), also designed their Rustic Style Forest Lodge at Nehasane, not far from Kamp Kill Kare. Another Adirondack camp, Wild Air (1895), is tentatively attributed to William R. Mead. Mead's famous partner, Stanford White, designed two Rustic Style buildings (ca. 1897) at Restigouche, a Canadian fishing camp.³

According to local—and purely verbal—tradition, Stanford White is said to have designed the Rustic Style buildings at Gravel Hill.⁴ No documents confirm this attribution, but we do know that Charles Follin McKim, a partner in the New York architectural firm McKim, Mead and White, was a member of Pineland, a hunting preserve adjacent to Gravel Hill, and McKim is known to have visited Pineland before Gravel Hill was built..

Convincing documentary evidence, however, indicates the Rustic Style buildings at Gravel Hill were designed about 1910 by the plantation's new owner, Robert Palmer Huntington.

Huntington was an architect. After graduating from Yale University in 1891 he entered the office of J.P. Morgan, working there until 1895. He then joined the architectural firm of Francis L.V. Hoppin (1867-1941) and Terence A. Koen (1858-1923). Huntington became a full partner in 1902, and they practiced together until he retired in 1908. The firm was based in Manhattan and is remembered for police stations, fire stations and dignified town houses in the Beaux Arts Style. Both Hoppin and Koen had worked as draftsmen for McKim, Mead and White, and Hoppin had been admitted to the Ecole des Beaux Arts, although he may not have studied there. Hoppin and Koen are known to have designed several large residences in the winter colony of Aiken, South Carolina, namely, Sandhurst (ca. 1902) for W.H. Sands; Hopelands (ca. 1902) for C. Oliver Iselin of New York; the F.S. Taylor Residence (ca. 1902); and Whitehall or Barnard Villa (1912) for W.H. Barnard of New York. The first three of these were carried out while Huntington was with Hoppin and Koen.

Huntington was also independently wealthy. He was a member of the Knickerbocker and the New York Yacht Clubs. He owned 300 acres on the Hudson River at Staatsburg, New York; here he designed and built his residence, Hopeland House, a thirty-five room Tudor Revival mansion. His daughter married Vincent Astor whose family owned an adjoining estate. The *New York Times* noted in 1914 that Huntington imported hounds from England, and hunted on horseback behind his pack, the "Hopeland Harriers." His lifestyle was typical of the wealthy northerners who bought plantations and created hunting preserves in South Carolina during the

³ At the Restigouche Salmon Club on the Matadedia and Restigouche Rivers, Gaspé Peninsula, Quebec, White designed the Harmony Lodge in 1895; in 1897 he designed Kedgewick Lodge there for William K. Vanderbilt. Paul R. Baker, *Stanny: The Gilded Life of Stanford White* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), pp. 124-125.

⁴ Stanford White visited Charleston with his wife in 1885, but there is nothing to indicate that he hunted on this trip; Baker, pp. 121-122. The only published suggestion that he may have designed something in South Carolina is a passing reference by Chlotilde R. Martin some fifty years later. Writing about Whitehall, she comments, "Herbert L. Pratt, who owns this property, has built handsome gates at the entrance and keeps green grass always growing beneath the trees. Stanford White once visited Whitehall for the purpose of getting ideas for its restoration." *Charleston News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), March 15, 1936.

period ca. 1880-1930, and also personifies the sophisticated, Northern architects who brought the Adirondack or Rustic Style to the South.

Developmental History/Additional Historic Context Information

In 1931 Chlotilde R. Martin wrote a series of some fifty articles for the Charleston *News and Courier* about plantations that had been converted into hunting preserves. She interviewed Huntington, and quoted him as saying that he had “been coming to South Carolina for thirty years and had owned Gravel Hill for twenty-one of those years.” Describing Gravel Hill, Martin says “this house is unique in appearance and arrangement. Mr. Huntington, who is a retired architect, designed it himself, after a home which he has in the Adirondack Mountains.”⁵

Assuming Huntington first came to South Carolina at the turn of the century, we do not know where he stayed or hunted before buying Gravel Hill. But Martin notes he was a member and later president of the Palachucola Club. She also says he designed a Shingle Style clubhouse there after the original facility burned in 1916.

The earliest hunting club in the area, according to Martin, was “Pineland, Mother of Hunting Clubs . . . the oldest hunting club in South Carolina” and was founded “about 1877.”⁶ Pineland’s clubhouse, which predated both Palachucola and Gravel Hill, and was designed in the Rustic Style. Martin describes it as being “fashioned of brown cypress shingles with its accompanying cabins built of logs. . . . The main part of the clubhouse has a wide porch supported by cypress trunks. . . . All the walls are of pine with hand made panelings.”⁷ The caption on an early twentieth century postcard of Pineland reads “photo c. 1912 . . . built between 1870 and 1872 on land purchased from J.L. Lawton by seven prominent New England industrialists. . . . It was chartered . . . as South Carolina’s first organized hunt club [and] featured a cedar shake roof and exterior siding of Vale Royal Eastern White Cedar shingles shipped down from Massachusetts.”⁸

⁵ Chlotilde R. Martin, “Gravel Hill, R.P. Huntington Home, Retired Architect Fashions Hampton County House After His Summer Dwelling in Adirondack Mountains – Prefers Grounds of Clean White Sand,” *News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), April 5, 1931, reprinted in full in Robert B. Cuthbert and Stephen G. Hoffius., eds., *Northern Money, Southern Land: The Lowcountry Plantation Sketches of Chlotilde R. Martin* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), pp. 184-88. Huntington’s recollection as quoted by Martin indicates a date of construction no earlier than 1909, but the earliest known photograph of Gravel Hill is a postcard with a caption saying ““The Huntington residence near Garnett, S.C. (Photoprint, 3 7/16” x 5 7/16”; ca. 1912.) A landmark which survives as one of the region’s emblems of the post-Civil War investment of Northern capital in Southern Carolina for recreational purposes, the hunting lodge identified here as the Huntington Residence was built by this prominent New York family between 1903 and 1906. . . .” Howard Woody and Thomas Johnson, *South Carolina Postcards, Volume II: Southern Carolina, Beaufort to Barnwell*, Postcard History Series (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 1998). Huntington acquired the property in 1909; see Hampton County Deeds, Deed Book D19, Page 50, Hampton County Courthouse, Hampton, S.C. Cora H. Richardson and Mattie R. Chisolm to Robert P. Huntington, January 30, 1909. Huntington’s recollection and the 1909 deed both suggest the date “ca. 1910” rather than the earlier date claimed by Woody and Johnson.

⁶ In a subsequent article, Martin says Pineland was founded in 1887. David Bornes, who purchased Pineland in 1971, says that the original shingles were eastern white cedar rather than cypress.

⁷ Martin, *News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), February 22, 1931.

⁸ Woody and Johnson, p. 67.

Name of Property

County and State

Members of Pineland subsequently formed the nearby Okeetee Club. In 1894, according to Martin, they built a “clubhouse fashioned by cypress shingles, stained brown with its many wide porches supported by the brown cypress trunks, presenting a rustic appearance.” The Rustic Style used at Pineland clearly started a trend, for in addition to spawning Okeetee, Martin says the success of Pineland also prompted August Belmont, Sidney Ripley and Charles Havemeyer to establish the Palachucola Club where Huntington would eventually design yet another Rustic Style facility.⁹

Martin’s articles focus on the owners of the hunting preserves, not on the architectural style they preferred. Nonetheless, in addition to Rustic Style buildings at Pineland, Okeetee, Gravel Hill and Palachucola, she notes the use of exterior shingles at Strawberry Hill (1906) in Jasper County, at the Paul and Dalton Preserve (date unknown) in Colleton County, at Hamilton Ridge (ca. 1908) in Hampton County, at Mepkin (1912) in Berkeley County, and at the Hurley estate on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County (prior to 1918). As is clear from these examples, the Adirondack or Rustic Style at Gravel Hill clearly was part of a larger architectural phenomenon in South Carolina.

Conclusion

Architecturally, Gravel Hill is a rare, intact example of the Rustic Style in South Carolina. This style was often used by wealthy northerners who established some one hundred and ten hunting preserves encompassing approximately 350,000 acres of the South Carolina coastal plain during the period ca. 1880-1940.¹⁰ These investors were sometimes called a “second Yankee invasion,” and they often built settings resembling vacation camps they had built or owned in the Adirondacks, the Berkshires and Maine.

Secondly, the rustic camps were often designed by accomplished architects, and Gravel Hill is no exception. Circumstantial evidence, corroborated by the interview quoted above, suggests that the Rustic Style complex was designed by Robert Palmer Huntington, a New York architect, for his own use ca. 1910.¹¹

Finally, the conversion of plantations into hunting preserves was a significant historical trend. In addition to the introduction of the Rustic Style, this trend entailed important social, economic and environmental consequences: many black agricultural workers were displaced and moved away; new wealth came to the South Carolina lowcountry, and vast areas of forest and marshland were protected as natural habitat at a time when no public programs existed to do so. Gravel Hill embodies each of these themes.

⁹ Martin, “Pineland, Mother of Hunting Clubs,” *News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), February 1, 1931 and May 31, 1931.

¹⁰ Daniel J. Vivian, a Ph.D. candidate at The Johns Hopkins University, is currently writing a dissertation focusing on the conversion of plantations into hunting preserves. His study, “The Leisure Plantations of the South Carolina Lowcountry, 1900-1940,” will be the first broad, scholarly analysis of the subject. A brief description of his work is attached as Appendix II.

¹¹ Hampton County Deeds, Deed Book D-19, Page 50. Cora H. Richardson and Mattie R. Chisolm to Robert Palmer Huntington, January 30, 1909.

Appendix I: The Original Gravel Hill Plantation (The John Goldwire Lawton House), ca. 1855-1865

One of the Rustic Style buildings—we do not know which one—is built on the site of a Classical Revival antebellum home burned by Gen. William T. Sherman’s Federal troops in early 1865.

John Goldwire Lawton (1823-1870) purchased Gravel Hill on June 4, 1853. Between 1855 and 1861, according to a memoir written by his daughter, Agnes King Lawton Tison (1855-1947), he built “a two story house above a brick basement. The front porch had fluted colonial columns and a cement floor. One entered a large, wide center hall; on the walls were painted murals of the four seasons: a woman with a hood over her head for winter, a lady standing with a sheaf of rice in her hand for autumn, on the other side of the hall a bouquet of roses representing summer and a representation for spring which I cannot recall. The paintings were done by a famous artist from the north. . . . The fireplaces were all finished in red, white, blue, black and yellow tiles imported from England. Many years after the house was burned by Sherman’s men, the estate was bought by Mr. Huntington who retained the name Gravel Hill for it. In digging through the debris to lay foundations for a new house, his workmen found several of those tiles and gave them to my brother who shared them with me. I am leaving them to my granddaughters.”¹²

Appendix II: Summary of the Conversion of South Carolina Plantations into Hunting Clubs and Preserves, ca. 1880-1930, by Daniel J. Vivian¹³

I [have] probably 95% of my data in hand, and the revised numbers aren’t going to be substantially different. . .

My database currently lists 112 properties – which is to say northern-owned shooting plantations. I believe there are a couple of duplicates I need to weed out (plantations that went by two names at different times, but are really the same place), and a couple others I’m going to take out now that I’ve refined my criteria as to what qualifies as a “plantation.”

With this in mind, I think it is safe to say that there were about 100 places like Gravel Hill created in the period between 1900 and 1940. Some were grander than others, some were sprawling estates, while others were comparatively small, but all qualified as “plantations” that served as winter homes and hunting retreats. I draw distinctions between hunting clubs, individually-owned hunting preserves, and “shooting plantations.” The clubs are places like Okeetee, Pineland, the Santee Gun Club, etc.—collectively owned and operated hunting clubs, usually set up on a corporate basis, where members held ownership shares. These places begin to be established by wealthy northern sportsmen in the low country soon after the end of Reconstruction, and continue to proliferate into the 1930s. Joe [Chapman] is roughly correct in using 1885 as an approximate starting date. A lot of these places have rustic, shingle-style clubhouses, in much the same mode as Gravel Hill—as you noted, it’s the transfer of what northerners conceive as leisure architecture to the South.

¹² Robert E.H. Peeples, ed. “Memoirs of Agnes King Lawton Tison.” *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina* 85 (1980), 30-31.

¹³ Daniel J. Vivian, e-mail to John M. Bryan, December 10, 2008.

Name of Property

County and State

While the hunting club took shape, individual sportsmen began buying lands for their own use. Often these places were undeveloped—no buildings, no facilities, just land reserved for hunting. The major shift comes around the turn of the century when sportsmen begin (1) buying old plantations and remaking them in grand style, and (2) creating new “plantations,” with architecture intended to impress. Gravel Hill is an early example of the second type. . . . Figuring out how much land the northerners’ “shooting plantations” occupied is a tricky issue. I am not especially confident in my numbers, but they’re the best anyone’s come up with. You’d have to do extensive deed research to get anything better. I have been able to get approximate figures for 83 of the estimated 100 or so plantations that were created. I can confidently say that these plantations totaled no less than 338,000 acres. With the other 25 or so, it is pretty safe to assume that northern-owned plantations occupied at least 345,000 acres, and probably more.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Baker, Paul R. *Stanny: The Gilded Life of Stanford White*. New York: The Free Press, 1989.

Bryan, John M. *Maine Cottages: Fred L. Savage and the Development of Mount Desert, Maine*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005.

Casada, Jim. "Old Time Hunt Clubs." *South Carolina Wildlife* (November-December 1991), 42-48.

Cuthbert, Robert B., and Stephen G. Hoffius, eds. *Northern Money, Southern Land: The Lowcountry Plantation Sketches of Chlotilde R. Martin*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009.

Gilborn, Craig. *Adirondack Camps: Homes Away from Home, 1850-1950*. Syracuse: The Adirondack Museum and Syracuse University Press, 2000.

McKim, Mead, and White. *Monograph of the Works of McKim, Mead and White, 1879-1915*. New York: B. Blom, 1973; Reprint edition, New York : Arno Press, 1977.

Martin, Chlotilde R. "Gravel Hill, R.P. Huntington Home, Retired Architect Fashions Hampton County House After His Summer Dwelling in Adirondack Mountains—Prefers Grounds of Clean White Sand." *News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), April 5, 1931.

Martin, Chlotilde R. "Okeetee Club, 42,000-acre Preserve." *News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), May 3, 1931.

Martin, Chlotilde R. "Pineland, Mother of Hunting Clubs." *News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), February 1, 1931.

Moore, Charles. *Life and Times of Charles Follen McKim*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1929; Reprint edition, New York: DaCapo, 1970.

Peeples, Robert E.H., ed. "Memoirs of Agnes King Lawton Tison." *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina* 85 (1980), 30-43.

Rogers, George C., Jr. *The History of Georgetown County, South Carolina*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970; Reprint edition, Spartanburg, S.C.: The Reprint Company, 1990.

Roth, Leland M. *McKim, Mead and White, Architects*. New York: Harper and Row, 1983.

Tibbetts, John H. "The Bird Chase." *Coastal Heritage* 15 (Spring 2001), 3-13.

Vivian, Daniel J. "Leisure Plantations in the South Carolina Lowcountry, 1900-1940." Ph.D. dissertation in progress, The Johns Hopkins University.

Name of Property

County and State

Vivian, Daniel J., e-mail to John M. Bryan, December 10, 2008.

White, Samuel G., and Elizabeth White. *McKim, Mead and White: The Masterworks*. New York: Rizzoli, 2003.

Woody, Howard, and Thomas Johnson. *South Carolina Postcards, Volume II: Southern Carolina, Beaufort to Barnwell*. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 1998.

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

S.C. Dept. of Archives & History;

Name of repository: **University of South Carolina**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 20 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17 472249 3611461
Zone Easting Northing

3 17 472112 3610741
Zone Easting Northing

2 17 472513 3611070
Zone Easting Northing

4 17 471859 3611136
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line marked "Gravel Hill Plantation," on the accompanying Hampton County Plat, dated April 6, 2006, and drawn at an original scale of 1" = 200'.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property is restricted to the historic Gravel Hill Plantation complex, consisting of the main house and ten (10) additional contributing historic resources and three (3) modern noncontributing resources, and their immediate setting.

Gravel Hill Plantation

Hampton County, South Carolina

Name of Property

County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John M. Bryan

organization _____ date 6 November 2009

street & number 433 Barnwell Street telephone (803) 394-1333

city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29205

e-mail john@johnmbryan.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: Gravel Hill Plantation

City or Vicinity: Garnett vicinity

County: Hampton County **State:** South Carolina

Photographers and Date Photographed:

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| (A) Andrew W. Chandler | South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office | 25 September 2006 |
| (B) Kim M. Robinson | South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office | 5 February 2008, 10 December 2008 |
| (C) Hunter Clarkson | Alt-Lee Photography, Columbia, S.C. | 10 April 2009 |

(NOTE: Bold Letter After Caption Identifies Photographer and Date of Photograph.)

Number of Photograph, Description, and Photographer/Date ID:

- 1 of 34: Setting of Live Oaks **(B)**
- 2 of 34: Main House, View from Southeast **(B)**
- 3 of 34: Main House **(A)**
- 4 of 34: Main House, Porch Detail **(A)**
- 5 of 34: Main House, Porch Window Detail **(B)**

Name of Property

County and State

Photographs, Continued

- 6 of 34: Main House, Porch (A)
- 7 of 34: Main House, Breezeway (A)
- 8 of 34: Main House, Kitchen Wing (B)
- 9 of 34: Main House, Living Room (C)
- 10 of 34: Main House, Living Room Window (A)
- 11 of 34: Main House, Living Room Ceiling (A)
- 12 of 34: Main House, Living Room Doors (C)
- 13 of 34: Main House, Living Room Dutch Doors (C)
- 14 of 34: Main House, Dining Room (C)
- 15 of 34: Main House, Dining Room Mantel (C)
- 16 of 34: Main House, Dining Room Mantel Detail (C)
- 17 of 34: Main House, Bedroom (C)
- 18 of 34: Main House, Bedroom (C)
- 19 of 34: Main House, Bedroom Mantel (A)
- 20 of 34: Main House, Bedroom Dormer (C)
- 21 of 34: Guest House (C)
- 22 of 34: Guest House, End View (B)
- 23 of 34: Ice House (Left) and Laundry (Right) (B)
- 24 of 34: Manager's House (A)
- 25 of 34: Manager's House, End View (C)
- 26 of 34: Stable (C)
- 27 of 34: Stable, Detail (B)
- 28 of 34: Stable, Rear (A)
- 29 of 34: Stable, Window (B)
- 30 of 34: Stable, Window, Interior View (A)
- 31 of 34: Stable, Stalls (A)
- 32 of 34: Corn Crib (A)
- 33 of 34: Barn (Left) and Noncontributing Shed (Right) (C)
- 34 of 34: Tenant House (C)

Gravel Hill Plantation

Hampton County, South Carolina

Name of Property

County and State

Property Owner

name/title Mr. and Mrs. Stephen C. Tobias

street & number 789 South Villier Court

telephone (757) 486-3109

city or town Virginia Beach

state VA

zip code 23452

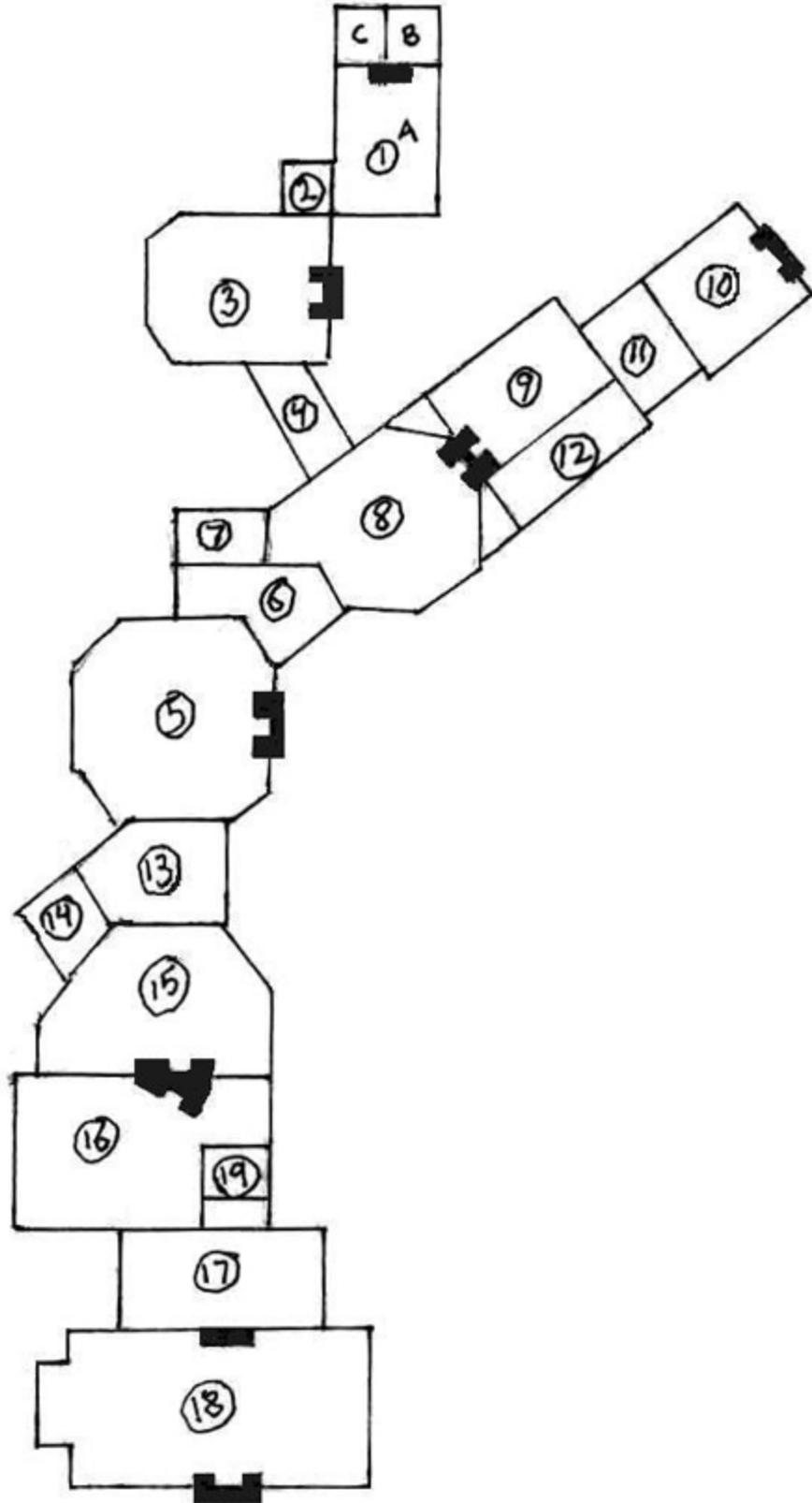
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

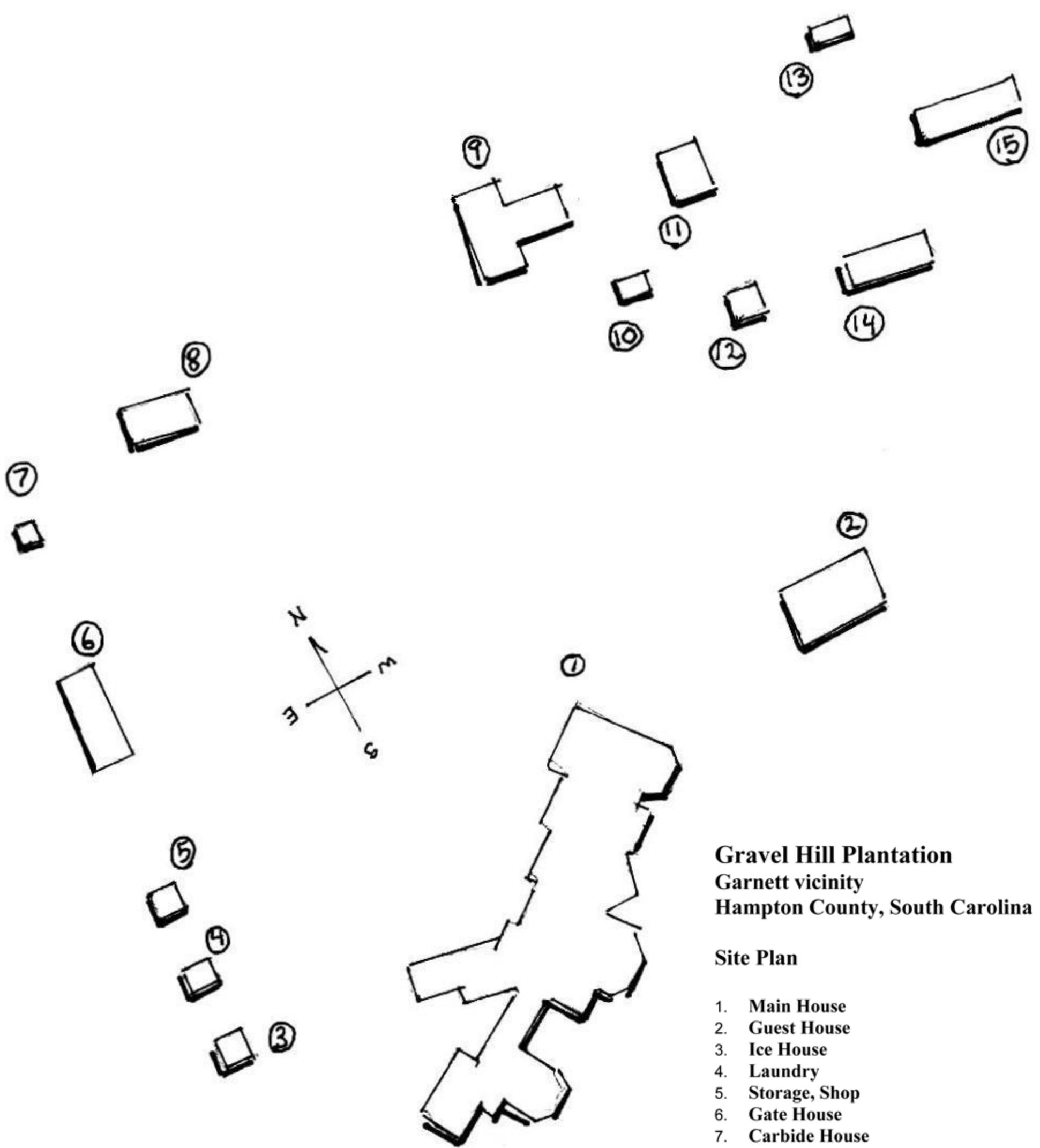
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Gravel Hill Plantation
Garnett vicinity
Hampton County, South Carolina

Main House Floor Plan

1. **Kitchen**
2. **Butler's Pantry**
3. **Dining Room**
4. **Breezeway**
5. **Living Room**
6. **Entry Foyer**
7. **Closet**
8. **Bedroom**
9. **Bedroom**
10. **Bedroom**
11. **Bathroom**
12. **Bathroom**
13. **Entry Foyer**
14. **Fitted Closet**
15. **Bedroom**
16. **Bedroom**
17. **Bedroom**
18. **Master Bedroom**
19. **Bathroom**





**Gravel Hill Plantation
Garnett vicinity
Hampton County, South Carolina**

Site Plan

1. Main House
2. Guest House
3. Ice House
4. Laundry
5. Storage, Shop
6. Gate House
7. Carbide House
8. Manager's House
9. Stable
10. Corn Crib
11. Wood Shed
12. Barn
13. Tenant House
14. Non-Historic Equipment Shed
15. Non-Historic Equipment Shed