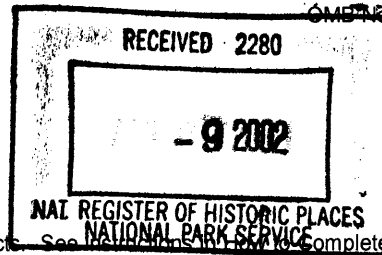


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See 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 Socastee Historic District

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number west side of SC State Rd 544, extending 1/2 mi. N of the Intracoastal Waterway  not for publication

city or town Socastee  vicinity

state South Carolina code SC county Horry code 051 zip code 29575

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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 4/8/02  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Dept. of Archives & History  
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 certifying official/Title Date

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Elson H. Boall  
Signature of the Keeper

5.22.02  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		buildings
1		sites
1		structures
		objects
5		total

**Name of related multiple property listings**

(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)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE/department store

TRANSPORTATION/bridge

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

VACANT/NOT IN USE

TRANSPORTATION/bridge

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Massed-plan side gabled

OTHER/Front-gable Commercial

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick pier, timber pier

walls WOOD/weatherboard

roof composition shingle

other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Commerce
- Architecture
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1881-1936

**Significant Dates**

1881, 1905, 1908, 1935-36

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Prince, Robert M., Sr.  
Tidewater Construction Corporation

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

**Name of Repository**

Horry County Historical Society, Conway, SC  
# \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 4 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	684590	3729280
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	17	684800	3729040

3	17	684920	3729000
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	17	684720	3729360

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 Bruce G. Harvey/Historian

organization Brockington and Associates, Inc. date 6/14/99

street & number 1051-F Johnnie Dodds Blvd. telephone 843.881.3128

city or town Mt. Pleasant state SC zip code 29464

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple Property Owners (see continuation sheets)

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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 amend 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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Description**

The Socastee Historic District is located on the west side of SC State Road 544 in Horry County, South Carolina. The district extends for approximately one-half mile north of the Intracoastal Waterway, on the west side of the street. This is a rural, inland portion of Horry County, which lies on the Atlantic Ocean. This district includes five contributing resources, including two houses, a store, a pecan grove, and the bridge that crosses the Intracoastal Waterway. The buildings and the pecan grove all relate to the Cooper and Sarvis families, and represent the early twentieth century. The bridge was constructed in the 1930s and was part of the development of the Intracoastal Waterway in South Carolina in the early twentieth century.

The Socastee Historic District includes the following contributing properties:

1. **Socastee Intracoastal Waterway Bridge (1936).** SC State Road 544 at the Intracoastal Waterway: A swing-span, Warren through-truss type bridge with rigid joints. It measures 217 feet in length, and approximately 24 feet wide. Sources differ on the contractor responsible for building the bridge. According to a pamphlet printed for the opening of the Waterway in Socastee in 1936, the Socastee Bridge was built by the Tidewater Construction Corporation.<sup>1</sup> According to a 1981 South Carolina Highway Department Survey, however, the bridge contains a plate bearing the name of Virginia Bridge & Iron Company.<sup>2</sup> The bridge was completed in 1935, and marked the completion of the Intracoastal Waterway in South Carolina. As a result, the opening celebration for the Waterway was held in Socastee in April, 1936. The bridge is in good condition and retains integrity.
2. **Thomas B. Cooper House (1908).** SC State Road 544, immediately northwest of the Intracoastal Waterway: a two-story massed-plan side gabled house. It was built in 1908 by Robert M. Prince, Sr., who lived nearby on Peachtree Road (CR 611).<sup>3</sup> It is unknown if he built other houses in the area. The front section of the house is one room deep and has a side gable roof. A cross gable section, one room wide and original to the house, extends to the rear left of the house. The roof has modern composition shingles, and features pent roofed pedimented side gables. The house has three brick chimneys; two are exterior chimneys at each gable end, and the third is in the rear extension, rising through the peak of the cross gable roof. The house is clad in weatherboard siding. The façade has three bays with a one-story porch. The first floor features a central single door with transom and side lights, and flanking 2/2 double hung sash windows; the second floor has three 2/2 double hung sash windows. Each window is flanked by wooden plank shutters. The porch has a flat roof,

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<sup>1</sup> "Intracoastal Waterway; Particularly from the Cape Fear River to the Savannah River," Opening Celebration, Socastee Bridge, April 11, 1936, n.p.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolf E. Elling and Gayland B. Witherspoon, "Metal Truss Highway Bridge Inventory," for South Carolina Department of Highways and Public Transportation, December 1981.

<sup>3</sup> Francis Prather, personal communication, Socastee, SC, 7/24/98.

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supported by six evenly spaced square wooden piers, with a turned balustrade. The top of each pier is decorated with flanking scroll-sawn brackets. The house rests on a brick pier foundation.

The interior of the house is generally reflected on the exterior. The central front door enters into a central hallway with one room on each side of the central hall. The rear extension of the house is composed of three rooms, lined up behind the front parlor on the left. The central hallway originally opened directly onto an L-shaped rear porch which was formed by the intersection of the front side gable section and the rear extension; an external staircase on the rear wall of the front side gable section originally provided access to the second story.

The house has seen two important alterations. The first alteration was in 1935, when the owners enclosed the section of the rear porch which ran along the rear of the side gabled section. The staircase which originally ran along the rear wall was reoriented to be a two stage staircase, now at the rear of the center hallway. The second alteration affected the front porch. The original façade of the house featured a two-tiered porch, each tier with a turned baluster railing. In 1970 the second tier of the front porch was removed due to deterioration, leaving the turned baluster railing; the railing was removed shortly thereafter, leaving the porch in its present state.<sup>4</sup>

3. **Thomas B. Cooper Store (1905).** SC State Road 544, northwest of the Thomas B. Cooper House: A one-and-one-half story, narrow front gable building, built in 1905. It is a simple rectangle in outline, with a one-story hip roof porch on the front. The roof is clad in V-crimp metal, part of it apparently original. The front gable features a pent roofed pediment, while the side and ranking eaves are boxed. The walls are clad in weatherboard siding, from which the original paint has disappeared. The façade of the building is symmetrical with three bays. The central bay is a narrow set of double-leaf wood paneled doors, flanked by single windows. The windows feature external paneled shutters, which are kept closed by a single diagonal iron bar. In the gable above the front door is a narrow louvered window. The building extends approximately 80 feet in depth. The rear of the building has the same configuration as the front façade, a narrow central double-leaf door flanked by single windows, covered with paneled shutters. The store rests on pyramidal timber pylon foundations, while the porch rests on a cinder block pier foundation.

The interior of the store is an open and largely unarticulated space finished in beaded board paneling. Each of the side walls is lined with shelves that rise above cupboards. The shelves are divided by vertical members which end in carved brackets which support a narrow projecting cornice. At the rear of the right side, against the back wall, is an enclosed post office space. The space is articulated by a wooden paneled counter

<sup>4</sup> Francis Prather, personal communication, Socastee, SC, 7/24/98.

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approximately four feet high, surmounted by a wire screen approximately three feet tall. A narrow staircase along the rear wall on the left side leads up to a half-story loft space which runs the length of the building.

The store is in apparently original condition. Sections of the original raised seam metal roof have been replaced, and the porch was repaired after being struck by a car. Other than these minor changes, however, the store's interior and exterior are largely as they were left when the store was closed in 1932. The historic pecan grove near the intersection of SC Route 544 and County Road 611, which lies immediately behind the store, also contributes to the significance of the historic district.

4. **Samuel S. Sarvis House (1881).** SC State Road 544, northwest of the Thomas B. Cooper Store: A massed plan side-gabled house that fronts on CR 611 at the intersection with SC 544. Samuel Sarvis (1843-1931), a Confederate veteran from near Bucksville in Horry County, built the house in 1881 shortly before being married. Sarvis was a merchant and store owner in Socastee as a partner in the firm of Dusenbury and Sarvis, and was the postmaster for the Socastee post office in 1896. The house is a one-and-one-half story massed plan side gable form, and is comprised of two sections. The principal front section has a side gable roof clad in composition shingles, and has wide overhanging eaves. The façade has three bays; the central door is surrounded by side lights and a transom. This central entrance is flanked by single 6/6 double hung sash windows, each with working louvered shutters. The windows and the door are surmounted by peaked lintels. There is a full-façade front porch with a hip roof, supported by four evenly spaced square wooden posts, with a lattice rail. The walls of the house are board and batten, though the battens appear to be 2 x 4 strips. There are two interior brick chimneys in the front section, one on each side of the center of the house. Each of these features a corbelled cap and rises on the edge of the roof line. There is one other interior brick chimney in the rear of the house, supplying the kitchen.

The interior of the front section of the house, like that of the Cooper House, is generally discernable from the exterior. The central front door opens to a wide central hallway. There are two rooms on each side of the central hallway; all four of the rooms have doors which can be closed against the hallway. The two chimneys arise from between the two rooms on each side of the hallway, giving a fireplace in each room. Each fireplace has a simple wooden fire surround and mantel. At the rear of the central hallway is a door with sidelights and transom, matching the front door.

A one-story cross gabled ell extends from the rear right of the building. In the original configuration, this section was composed of an L-shaped open porch area which started at the right side of the building behind the principal front section, extended along the rear of the main block beyond the central hallway, then turned back to the rear of the house. This L-shaped porch provided access to the dining room and kitchen, which were

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were contiguous with the rest of the house, and the kitchen and dining room were clearly part of the structure of the original floor plan. In addition, there is a simple plank pass-through door between the kitchen and dining room. The roof and walls are accessible from the main part of the house only by crossing the porch. A single door opens into the dining room, while the kitchen is accessible from the dining room and from a pantry, which also opens onto the porch.

The Sarvis House shows good to excellent integrity. The only significant alteration has been the enclosure of the section of the rear porch which extends from the right side of the house behind the front section across to the left side of the house; the other section of the rear porch remains open. The section behind the rear right room has been converted to a bathroom, while the remainder of that section of the rear porch is now a sitting room. The window which originally opened from the rear right room onto the rear porch has been enclosed, though the window frame has been retained to show its original location. The house was electrified in 1983, when the current owners acquired it. Otherwise the house is in its original condition, including most of the panes in the six-over-six windows, the floor boards, the interior and exterior doors, chimneys and mantles, and interior fixtures. In addition, several original landscape features remain. These include a magnolia tree which predates the house in the front yard, and a peach and several crabapple trees in the side and rear yards which Samuel Sarvis planted.



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**Significance**

The Socastee Historic District, comprised of a metal swing bridge, two houses, one store, and a pecan grove, represents the early twentieth century creation of the community of Socastee. It has local significance under National Register Criterion A as an intact example of the development of communities in the South Carolina upper coastal region surrounding the newly emergent small commercial enterprises in the decades following the Civil War. The community came into being in the 1870s and 1880s; its current form shows to what it had evolved by 1935. This is one of the few intact examples of such communities, with a store and surrounding houses, in Lowcountry South Carolina that has not had significant intrusions or alterations. The district meets National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture as containing particularly good examples of three types of vernacular architecture which were prevalent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in South Carolina: a modified I-house, a massed-plan side gabled house, and a front gable frame commercial building.

Socastee was located along the Socastee Swamp, and the bridge at Socastee was one of the two principal bridges in the County before the new Galivant's Ferry bridge was built in 1902.<sup>1</sup> The main commercial access in the area, however, was at the Peachtree Landing on the Waccamaw River, approximately three miles away. Peachtree was settled shortly before the Civil War by Ulric A. DeLettre, the son of a French immigrant. DeLettre planned to start a rice plantation, but the Civil War intervened. As the rice industry declined sharply after the Civil War, finally coming to an end by the early twentieth century, DeLettre turned to trade, and started a mercantile business as well as a turpentine distillery.<sup>2</sup> An 1875 plat showing two acres in a bend in the Socastee Creek along the road between Peach Tree and Socastee Bridge, prepared for Mrs. C.G. DeLettre on behalf of her daughter Juliette, indicates a "tar kiln" close to Socastee Creek, near the Socastee Historic District.<sup>3</sup> The Socastee community relied upon Peachtree Landing through the early twentieth century for access to a wide range of commercial goods.

Socastee was a center for turpentine activities, given the trees in the area and the access to markets via the Peachtree Landing. In part as a result, the community was also a commercial center for the surrounding area. At least as early as 1873, when Samuel S. Sarvis and J.E. Dusenbury opened a store in the area, there was a turpentine distillery with three stills, along with a cotton gin, grist mill, and cooper shop.<sup>4</sup> By the late

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<sup>1</sup>Utterback, *Architectural and Historical Survey of Horry County*, 8.

<sup>2</sup>Annette Pollard, "Peach Tree," *The Independent Republic Quarterly* 12 (Summer 1978), 36.

<sup>3</sup>Horry County Deed Book (HCDB) T:309.

<sup>4</sup>Ivey M. Turbeville, "Socastee," *The Independent Republic Quarterly* 12 (Summer 1978), 5-7.

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nineteenth century the important Horry County firm of Burroughs and Collins had a turpentine operation along the Peachtree Ferry Road.<sup>5</sup> The Burroughs and Collins Company, under the primary leadership of Franklin G. Burroughs, had lumber and turpentine camps throughout Horry County in the 1870s and 1880s, and operated a string of stores which serviced these camps. Burroughs and Collins closed its still in Socastee in 1901, but as late as 1912, after Burroughs and Collins had phased out most of their naval stores operations, the company still owned 3,685 acres in Socastee.<sup>6</sup>

Burroughs and Collins often built company stores adjacent to their lumber and turpentine camps in the late nineteenth century; after the camps closed, however, rural stores were “reverting to what [they] had been before the 1880s. For small merchants there was still a living to be had, and with the addition of a post office, a good living.”<sup>7</sup> Thomas B. Cooper built a store adjacent to Burroughs and Collins land in Socastee in 1905, and was named postmaster for Socastee in 1908. The combination of store owner and postmaster was a tradition in Socastee, as in most other small towns. E. Van Dusenbury was Socastee’s first postmaster in the late nineteenth century, with a post office in the rear of his store on the east side of what is now Highway 544. When the store was moved to the corner of Highway 544 and the Peachtree Road, Samuel S. Sarvis became the postmaster; his commission is dated 1896. Sarvis, a native of Bucksville in Horry County and a Civil War veteran, was a business partner with Dusenbury in the firm of Sarvis & Dusenbury. Sarvis then sold his interest in the store to J.S. Turbeville, who was a partner in the firm of Turbeville & Dusenbury.<sup>8</sup> T.B. Cooper was appointed postmaster for Socastee in 1908, and operated the post office out of the rear of his store. The counter and wire cage remain in the store building.

Small crossroads stores, such as the one in Socastee, came to play increasingly important roles in southern society and economy after the Civil War. They had significance on both on a broadly regional scale and on an intensely local scale. The small country stores served as part of the solution to the continuation of southern agriculture and commerce in the wake of the devastation wrought by the Civil War. The War brought to southerners both rich and poor the loss of buildings, equipment, and human life, and the debasement of the currency in the former Confederate South. Small, emergent stores supplied by wholesale merchants provided not just equipment and supplies but, just as importantly, a source of credit. This credit allowed farmers, many

<sup>5</sup>Frances Prather, personal communication, Socastee, SC, 7/24/98

<sup>6</sup>Horry County Treasurers’ Tax Duplicate Book, 1914. Ms. on file at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC; Mrs. Julian B. Cooper, “Socastee,” in Clarke C. Willcox, *Musings of a Hermit: With Historical Sketches of the Waccamaw Neck* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1967), 129).

<sup>7</sup>Bedford, *The Independent Republic*, 114.

<sup>8</sup>Turbeville, “Socastee;” Jane Ammons, personal communication, Socastee, SC, 17 September 1998.

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of whom did not own their own land or equipment, the chance to get a crop in the ground and to get by until (hopefully) the crops came in. One scholar has noted that the crop lien, which allowed a merchant to use a growing crop as collateral for a loan rather than land beginning in the late 1860s, was initially seen as a benefit to farmers.<sup>9</sup> In this sense merchants, located at the community store, were in direct contact with the farmers in the surrounding region.

The crop lien system soon turned less beneficial to farmers as the combination of merchant abuses and crop failures mounted. However, small crossroads country stores were a vital part of the rebuilding of the southern economy after the War. As Thomas Clark, a leading historian of southern stores, has noted, "These crossroads emporiums of cheap merchandise rapidly became symbolic of the creation of a new southern economic system from the wreckage of the old. Perhaps no other southern institution more nearly embodied so much of the intimate story of the New South."<sup>10</sup> While many contemporary observers and later historians have criticized southern merchants and store owners for enforcing the region's dependence on cotton, these merchants clearly provided much-needed sources of credit for farmers with little else.

Country stores had more than economic and commercial significance after the Civil War. They were also vital parts of the powerful social and geographical changes sweeping the South through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One recent scholar has observed that the small southern country store "appears to have been the chief community organizer and builder, particularly in the old plantation and biracial areas..."<sup>11</sup> The dispersal of families with the demise of the plantation geography gave an impetus for new communities to emerge. Stores, providing "a bewildering variety of items" to farmers in the immediately surrounding area, served as one of several institutions around which a community might grow.<sup>12</sup> The South Carolina Lowcountry is filled with towns that emerged around stores, churches, courthouses, and schools in the late nineteenth century; few of them retain their turn-of-the century character. While many of these communities, like Socastee, had antebellum roots, it is clear that the nature of these communities had changed in the decades after the Civil War.

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<sup>9</sup>Jacqueline P. Bull, "The General Merchant in the Economic History of the New South," *Journal of Southern History* (February 1952): 38.

<sup>10</sup>Thomas D. Clark, *Pills, Petticoats and Plows: The Southern Country Store* (Indianapolis, IN: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1944), 22.

<sup>11</sup>Edgar T. Thompson, "Country Store," in Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1989), 16.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

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Once established, rural stores served as a social center for the surrounding area. Sarah Page Chestnut Cooper, wife of Thomas B. Cooper and a local historian, caught this situation well in an article about the Cooper Store. "The old-time country store," she noted, "was many things to many people: a place of business where everyday necessities were bought, a place to meet friends, play checkers around the pot-bellied stove, tell and listen to tall tales (especially those of the hunters and fishermen), and discuss political problems."<sup>13</sup> The Cooper Store, like most country stores, stocked a wide range of goods for sale to area residents. The shelves that remain, approximately six feet tall and running nearly the entire 80-foot length of the each side of the store, and the counters with storage space below the shelves, hint at the extent of goods and supplies that the store could provide. Customers could purchase on a regular basis such items as clothing, shoes, thread, hats, groceries, farm equipment, fertilizer and seeds, kitchen wares, and medicines. In addition Cooper was able to acquire such specialty items as a "Victor Talking Machine," which he ordered in 1906, and violin strings, such as he recorded in a 1913 account book.<sup>14</sup>

Cooper built his store in 1905. Two years later, in early 1907, Cooper incorporated the business as the T.B. Cooper Company. Thomas Cooper and his son, Grant Cooper, were the two shareholders in the company; Grant Cooper married Frances Sarvis, the daughter of Thomas Cooper's commercial predecessor, Samuel Sarvis.<sup>15</sup> In 1908 Cooper was appointed postmaster for the Socastee Post Office; the metal screen and the counter that formed the Post Office survive in the Cooper Store.<sup>16</sup> His business apparently went well. In 1915 he received permission from the Horry County Commissioners to build a public warehouse at Peachtree landing on the Waccamaw, some three miles from the store.<sup>17</sup> With this facility Cooper could more efficiently acquire quantities of goods and house them on his own, directly at the landing. Tax records also testify to the growth of his business. Cooper was not listed as paying taxes on any property in 1905. By 1908 he paid taxes on two buildings, along with 122 acres; these buildings were apparently the store and his house, which he built in 1908. Sometime between 1908 and 1910 he either built or acquired two more buildings; he paid taxes on four buildings from 1910 until sometime before 1921, when he paid taxes on seven buildings.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Sarah Page Chestnut Cooper, "The Country Store," *The Independent Republic Quarterly* (October 1968), 30.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 30-32; receipt for talking machine, Ms. in private collection, Socastee, SC.

<sup>15</sup>Ms. in private collection, Socastee, SC; Jane Ammons, personal communication, Socastee, SC, 17 September 1998.

<sup>16</sup>Ms. in private collection, Socastee, SC.

<sup>17</sup>Ms. in private collection, Socastee, SC.

<sup>18</sup>Horry County Treasurers' Tax Duplicate Books, Mss. on file at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC.

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Store owners built their houses close to their stores. Samuel Sarvis built his house in 1881, shortly before he was to be married. It is located on its original site at the corner of Peachtree Road (CR 611) and SC 544, near the likely site of the Dusenbury and Sarvis store, and retains its original configuration with only minor alterations. Likewise, Thomas Cooper's house, built by the local builder Robert Prince, was adjacent to his store, and was built in 1908. It too survives with relatively few alterations.

Cooper was also buying land in the area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He bought land both in Socastee and on the east side of the Waccamaw along Middle Swamp in 1891, and 369 acres near Turbeville in 1895. He bought other land in Socastee in 1900.<sup>19</sup> In addition, he acquired land in Socastee Township between 1908 and 1912; tax records indicate that he owned 122 acres in 1908, 342 acres in 1910, and 375 acres in 1912, before dropping back to approximately 200 acres between 1914 and 1921.<sup>20</sup> The available records, however, do not indicate from whom Cooper purchased the land for his house and store.

Among the buildings that Cooper owned was a combination grist mill and cotton gin; a sawmill was located nearby. The gin and mill was located across the street from the store and the house. Available photographs show it to be a tall, two-story side gabled building. The gin and the mill were run only on Saturdays. It was a steam powered mill, using a wood fire for heat. While farmers were having their corn ground to order, they would go across the street to the store to purchase supplies and socialize.<sup>21</sup> The mill building was torn down in 1948 to make way for the house now on the lot, built for the current owner of the Cooper house and store. The store, meanwhile, was closed in 1932. The goods were removed, but the building remains much as it had during its heyday, from 1907 until 1932.

Thomas Cooper's store closed just as the Socastee community was being opened even further to the outside world. While the store provided the local residents with access to goods from the rest of the nation, Socastee as a physical entity remained an isolated place. In 1932, however, public funds were approved for completion of the final segment of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway in South Carolina, between the Little River and Winyah Bay. This involved dredging approximately 34 miles, much of it across high land between Little River and Socastee Creek. The work also involved building three bridges; in addition to the Socastee

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<sup>19</sup>Horry County Deed Books DD:98; CC:19; LL:266.

<sup>20</sup>Horry County Treasurer's Tax Duplicate Books.

<sup>21</sup>Frances Prather, personal communication, Socastee, South Carolina, 24 July 1998; Sarah Page Chestnut Cooper, "A Country Grist Mill," in *The Independent Republic Quarterly*, October 1968, 32-33.

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Bridge which is part of this historic district, there were bridges on US 17 over Little River, and the Atlantic Coast Line railroad and Pine Island County Highway between Myrtle Beach and Conway.<sup>22</sup>

The Socastee community had long been associated with a bridge over the Socastee Creek. Before the opening of the Galivant's Ferry bridge in 1902, the Socastee Bridge was one of Horry County's two principal bridges, along with the Kingston Lake Bridge.<sup>23</sup> Like other river and creek crossings in South Carolina, the Socastee Bridge fostered a natural transportation and commercial stop along the highway. The connection between the Socastee Bridge and the Socastee community continued after the completion of the Waterway bridge, as the first operator of the bridge boarded at the Thomas B. Cooper House.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> "Intracoastal Waterway; Particularly from the Cape Fear River to the Savannah River," Opening Celebration, Socastee Bridge, April 11, 1936, n.p.

<sup>23</sup> Utterback, "Architectural and Historic Survey, Horry County, South Carolina," 8.

<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Frances Prather, personal communication, Socastee, South Carolina, 7/24/98.

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**Boundary Description**

The Socastee Historic District comprises three buildings which lie in a row along the west side of old SC 544, and the swing bridge over the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway at old SC 544. The district commences at the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, and extends northwards a distance of 0.2 miles. The district includes the bridge and the three buildings described in detail in this nomination, the pecan grove at the southwest corner of old SC 544 and CR 611, and the magnolia tree on the property of the Samuel Sarvis House. The boundary of the district is shown as the black line marked "Socastee Historic District" on the accompanying Horry County Tax Map 179.

**Boundary Justification**

The Cooper House and Store and the Sarvis House are the three buildings which remain from the Socastee community and commercial center of the early twentieth century. The swing bridge is included in the district boundary due to the Waterway's connection with the growth of the Socastee community.



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**Photographs**

Name of Property: Socastee Historic District  
Location of Property: SC Route 544, Socastee, Horry County, SC  
Name of Photographer/Organization: Bruce G. Harvey, Brockington and Associates, Inc.  
Date of Photographs: June, 1999  
Location of Original Negatives: Brockington and Associates, Inc.  
1051-F Johnnie Dodds Blvd.  
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

1. Cooper House: façade
2. Cooper House: NW elevation
3. Cooper House: SE oblique
4. Thomas Cooper Store: SE oblique
5. Thomas Cooper Store: interior, shelving
6. Thomas Cooper Store: interior, post office
7. Thomas Cooper Store: foundation detail
8. Sarvis House: SE oblique
9. Sarvis House: SW oblique
10. Sarvis House: NE oblique
11. Sarvis House: front entrance detail
12. Intracoastal Waterway Bridge: looking NE, bridge closed
13. Intracoastal Waterway Bridge: looking NE, bridge open
14. Intracoastal Waterway Bridge: looking NW, structure detail
15. Intracoastal Waterway Bridge: bridge plate detail
16. Pecan Grove, looking southwest

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**Property Owners**

Thomas B. Cooper House. Thomas B. Cooper Store, and pecan grove:

Frances C. Prather  
6011 Highway 544  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29588  
843.236.7096

Samuel S. Sarvis House:

Jane Sarvis Ammons  
4210 Peachtree Road  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29588  
843.903.5063

Waterway Bridge:

South Carolina Department of Transportation  
955 Park Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803.737.2314

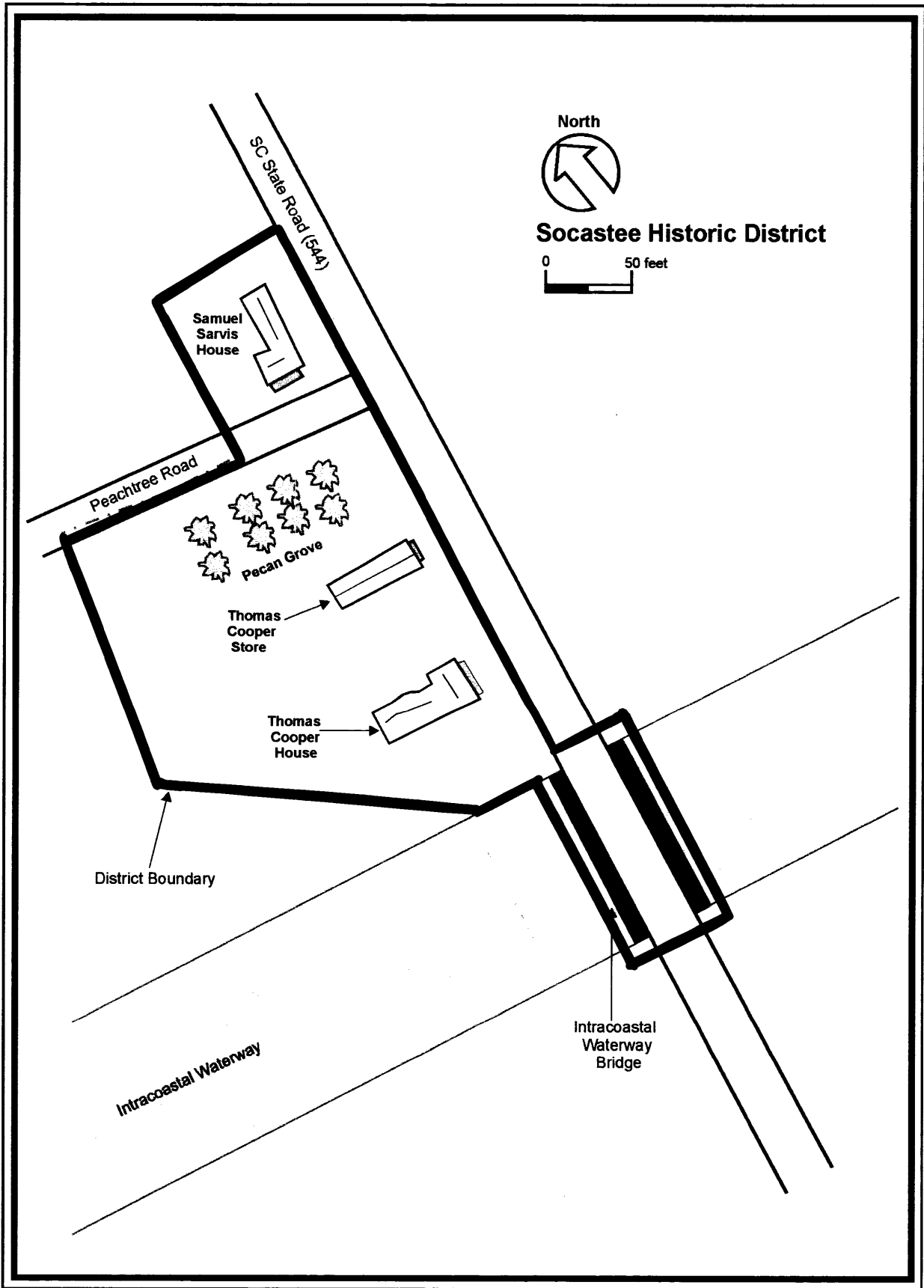


Figure 2. Plan of Socastee Historic District.