OMB No. 1024-0018

### RECEIVED

### United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

FEB 23 1994

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORICAL ACES REGISTRATION FORM

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

1. Name of Property		
historic name Simkins, Modjeska Monteit	h, House	
other names/site number		
2. Location		
street & number 2025 Marion Street city or town Columbia state South Carolina code SC zip code 29201	county Richland	not for publication vicinity code _079
3. State/Federal Agency Certifica	tion	
As the designated authority under the National H this x nomination request for determinatio properties in the National Register of Historic in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property that this property be considered significant ( See continuation sheet for additional comme	n of eligibility meets the documentation of eligibility meets the procedural and prox meets does not meet the National nationally x statewide locally.  Daye  Historic Preservation Office of meet the National Register criteria.	on standards for registering ofessional requirements set forth al Register Criteria. I recommend
Signature of commenting or other official	Date	<del></del>
State or Federal agency and bureau		
4. National Park Service Certific	ation	
I, hereby certify that this property is:	Eden H. Beall	3/25/94 Entered in the National Register
other (explain):	N Signature of Keeper Da	ate of Action

### 5. Classification

publi publi Name of relat	es as apply) ate Lc-local Lc-State Lc-Federal	Category of Proper (Check only one box)  x building(s district site structure object  property listing t of a multiple property lis	)		ting buildings sites structures objects Total  ces previously
(	N/A		5-7		<u>,</u>
6. Function	n or Use				
	ctions (Enter co	ategories from instructions) S	ub:	Single Dwelling	
	tions (Enter ca	tegories from instructions) S	ub:	N/A	
7. Descrip	tion				
Architectura (Enter categories OTHER		(Enter found roof	categor lation OTHE WOOD	ries from instructions)  1 BRICK  CR: Composition shingle  1: weatherboard	
Narrative De		condition of the property or		r more continuation sheets.)	
8. Stateme	nt of Sign	ificance			
Applicable N (Mark "x" in one of the control of the	Property i contributi Property i Property e or method possesses distinguis Property h	s associated with even to the broad patts associated with the mbodies the distinct of construction or raigh artistic values hable entity whose of	vents cerns ne live cive of cepres s, or compor	ty for National Register listing)  that have made a significant of our history.  yes of persons significant in our characteristics of a type period sents the work of a master, or represents a significant and ments lack individual distinction to yield information important	1,

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)		
A owned by a religious institution or use removed from its original location.  C a birthplace or a grave.  D a cemetery.  E a reconstructed building, object,or st a commemorative property.  X G less than 50 years of age or achieved	ructure.	years.
Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)	Significant Dates N/A	
ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK	***************************************	
	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)	
	Simkins, Modjeska Montieth	
	Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Period of Significance 1932-1965		
	Architect/Builder Unknown	
Narrative Statement of Significance		
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets	3-)	
9. Major Bibliographical References		
Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on Previous documentation on file (NPS)  preliminary determination of individual listing (requested.  previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Redistance designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey recorded by Historic American Engineering Record  Primary Location of Additional Data  X State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency X Local government X University Other Name of repository: South Caroliniana Library	36 CFR 67) has been egister	
10. Geographical Data		
Acreage of Property0.2		
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)		
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting	Northing	
1 <u>17 496680 3763460 3</u>		
See continuation sheet.		
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)		

Boundary Justification

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

USDI/NPS	NRHP Registration Form
Simkins,	Modjeska Monteith, Hous
Richland	County, South Carolina

Dago	#	
rade	#	- 4

11. Form Prepared By		
name/title_Jill Hanson		
organization University of South Carolina	date_12	October 1993
street & number 1104 Gregg St., #2	telephone	(803) 256-3965
town_Columbia	state SC zip code 2	9201
Additional Documentation		
Submit the following items with the completed form:		
Continuation Sheets		
Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) ind A Sketch map for historic districts and presources.		
Photographs Representative black and white photograph	hs of the property.	
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any addit	ional items)	
Property Owner		
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)		
name		
street & number	telepho	one
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 to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 10.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORICAL REGISTER CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

Narrative Description

#### SUMMARY

The Modjeska Monteith Simkins House is a one-and-one-half story, wood frame, vernacular dwelling with an L-shaped plan, side-gable roof, and a front porch. The house exhibits characteristics of late 19th and 20th century revivals. The walls are finished with wooden weatherboard siding, and the foundation and chimneys are made of clay brick. The roof is covered with asphalt composition shingles. The house is located in what is currently a mixed commercial/residential area and what was historically a residential neighborhood in the city of Columbia. The house sits on a less-than-one-acre lot (50 feet wide by 172 feet deep) that fronts east onto Marion Street. A smaller outbuilding with similar construction, plan, and design sits in back of the main house. The property has been vacant since April 1992 and has therefore experienced some neglect, but the structure has had little alteration from its original form. Although oral tradition in the Simkins' family indicates a date of construction as early as the 1850s, the house and the smaller structure behind it were probably built between 1895 and 1919.

#### **EXTERIOR**

The main house is an L-shaped structure with one-and-one-half stories and a side-gable roof. The foundation was originally brick piers, but the space between the piers has been in-filled with brick. The house is covered with what appears to be its original wooden weatherboard siding. Wooden details are prominent features of the porches and windows. Ironwork bars were added to the windows in the 1960s and some wooden porch railings have been replaced by iron. The roof of the house is a lateral gable covered with asphalt composition shingles. Three interior brick chimneys feature modest corbelling at the top.

### Eastern Elevation

The first story features an east-facing front facade with five bays made up of four windows and a single center door. A shed-roof, one-story porch extends across the middle three bays. The windows on the facade feature double-hung, six-over-six sash. The door is made of wood panels and has a transom and sidelights. The porch features chamfered posts with turned baluster railings. Original wooden railings on the steps to the porch have been replaced by cast iron.

#### Southern Elevation

The southern side of the house features four windows on the first story and one window in the half-story attic with six-over-six, double-hung sash. A ribbon of windows on the southern side of the L-shaped extension is also present with six-over-six, double-hung sash.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Modjeska Monteith Simkins, Interview by Jacquelyn Hall, 28-31 July 1976, transcript, Southern Oral History Program Collection, Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Deed Book X, p. 594, Register of Mesne Conveyance, Richland County Judicial Center, Columbia, South Carolina; Sanborn Map Company, Insurance Map of Columbia, Richland County, South Carolina, 1919.

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### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

### Western Elevation

The western side of the house features the L-shaped extension. Features of the extension include a fixed sash double window consisting of one window with six panes and one window with four panes of glass, a back porch under the main roof line with two rear entrance doors, and one window with six-over-six, double-hung sash. A mid-twentieth century shed-roof bathroom addition is also present on the rear side of the house and represents the only significant alteration to the house.

#### Northern Elevation

The northern side features four windows on the first story and one window in the half-story attic with six-over-six, double-hung sash. The rear L-shaped extension is on the northern side and features grouped windows with six panes of glass in each window and a double window with six panes of glass in each window.

#### INTERIOR

The interior plan of the house is a double pile center hall plan, with the rear extension kitchen creating an L-shape. The front of the house features a bedroom and living room separated by a front hall. The middle section of the house features two bedrooms separated by a back hall. Each of these four main rooms has a fireplace and wooden floorboards. New wooden floors were installed by Modjeska Simkins' husband, Andrew Simkins, in the mid-twentieth century. A kitchen extension creates the L-shape of the house. A mid-twentieth century shed-roof bathroom addition is the only other room in the house. The upper half-story is used as attic storage.

#### CONCLUSION

The Modjeska Monteith Simkins house is a simple, vernacular dwelling that reflects the style and size of a late-nineteenth century southern residence. The most significant alteration to the house is the mid-twentieth century bathroom addition in the rear. Other alterations include the addition of modest ironwork railings, iron window bars, and new wooden flooring. Despite some neglect experienced since the death of the owner, the house has retained its overall historical integrity. There is also a contributing frame, weatherboard, three-room, one-story, lateral gable, L-shaped dwelling at the rear of the property that appears contemporary in construction date with the primary dwelling. Tradition holds that Ms. Simkins used this as a guest house for visiting civil-rights workers.

 $<sup>^3</sup>$ Modjeska Monteith Simkins, Interview by Jacquelyn Hall, 28-31 July 1976.

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### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

#### Summary

The house located at 2025 Marion Street is significant for its association with the life and work of Modjeska Monteith Simkins, a leader in African-American public health reform and the civil rights movement in South Carolina from 1931 to her death in 1992 and for its association with the civil rights movement, an event that has made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history. Contextually, the areas of significance for the property are black ethnic heritage, social history, and health/medicine. Although the property is over ninety years old, it has achieved exceptional significance within the last fifty years as the home and work place of Simkins during the period of significance from 1932 to 1965. Simkins' state and local work formed parts of the nationally significant movements in public health reform and civil rights.

### Property History

Modjeska Simkins bought the house at 2025 Marion Street in 1932. Although oral family tradition describes the house as being built before the Civil War, the architecture of the house suggests that it was constructed circa 1900. The builder and architect of the house are unknown. After the Simkins family moved into the house, Modjeska's husband, Andrew Simkins, replaced the pine floors. Other changes made to the house include a midtwentieth century shed-roof bathroom addition and iron bars added to the windows of the house in the 1960s for burglary protection. Except for these changes, the house retains its original features and appears much as it did during the period of significance from 1932 to 1965. Throughout her career as a social reformer and civil rights activist, Modjeska Simkins used the house as a residence, a lodging for civil rights associates, an office, and a meeting place. Local and national civil rights leaders held conferences in the house, wrote lawsuits, and used the house as lodging while working in the city. Guests of Simkins, including Thurgood Marshall, stayed in her house when hotels in the city were closed to blacks. The house also became the target of a shooting by those opposed to the work of Simkins and other civil rights leaders.

### Historic Context

Throughout her life, Modjeska Simkins worked for social reform. Born in Columbia in 1899, she attended elementary school, high school, and college at Benedict College and received a bachelor of arts degree in 1921. The same year, she began her reform career as a teacher at Booker T. Washington High School. Since public schools in Columbia did not

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Deed Book DK, p. 438, Register of Mesne Conveyance, Richland County Judicial Center, Columbia, South Carolina; Modjeska Monteith Simkins, Interview by Jacquelyn Hall, 28-31 July 1976, Southern Oral History Program Collection, Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Papers of Modjeska Simkins, Political Collection, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina. Barbara Woods Aba-Mecha, "Black Woman Activist in Twentieth Century South Carolina: Modjeska Monteith Simkins" (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1978), 170-212.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

allow married women to teach, she was asked to resign from her teaching position when she married Andrew Simkins in 1929.5

In 1931, Simkins continued her commitment to social reform by entering the field of public health as the Director of Negro Work for the South Carolina Anti-tuberculosis Association. For decades prior to the 1930s, southern racism and poverty had created an alarming increase in deaths among blacks due to tuberculosis, pellagra, venereal diseases, and other illnesses. In response, individual reformers and corporate sponsors worked to correct many of the failings of the public healthcare system in the South. In 1931 corporate grant funding enabled the South Carolina Anti-tuberculosis Association to hire Modjeska Simkins. With the Anti-tuberculosis position she became South Carolina's only full-time, statewide black public health worker. This period of her life is significant because it was the position with the South Carolina Anti-tuberculosis Association that took Simkins into statewide reform work. It was also during this period that Simkins moved with her family into the house at 2025 Marion Street. Although originally hired to battle tuberculosis among the state's black residents, Simkins expanded her role with the Association to include prevention of venereal disease, pellagra, infant and maternal mortality, and insanitation. Simkins accomplished these goals through education and nursing programs. By creating alliances with influential white and black groups and raising funds to support these programs she made a substantial impact on the health of blacks in the state. In her first year as Director of Negro Work she raised just over \$1000. However, by the end of her tenure she raised over \$14,000 in one year. In 1942 Simkins lost her position with the Anti-tuberculosis Association partly due to her increasing involvement with the South Carolina National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Modjeska Simkins became involved with the work of the NAACP after her mother, Rachel Monteith, joined the Columbia branch of the organization founded in 1917. The national NAACP had been formed in 1909 as a biracial group that sought legal correction of racial discrimination and disfranchisement, and during the 1920s and 1930s the NAACP became the leader in the national movement for black civil rights. In the South, Jim Crow laws established after the Civil War and Reconstruction created poll taxes and literacy tests for voting and segregated public facilities. Local branches of the NAACP created nationwide support among blacks for the civil rights movement in order to eliminate Jim Crow laws and promote racial equality. The South Carolina NAACP was formed in 1939 by local NAACP branches at Columbia and Cheraw. At that time, Simkins was the chair of the Columbia NAACP conference's program committee and a member of the executive board for the local body. Simkins became one of the founders of the state organization when she was elected to the first executive board and became the first chair of the state programs committee. In 1941 she was elected secretary of the state conference.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Aba-Mecha, "Black Woman Activist in Twentieth Century South Carolina," 86-87; Jessie Carney Smith, ed., Notable Black American Women (Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1991), 1012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Edward H. Beardsley, A History of Neglect: Health Care for Blacks and Mill Workers in the Twentieth-Century South (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 108-113; Aba-Mecha, "Black Woman Activist in Twentieth Century South Carolina," 97-133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Mary Beth Norton, et al, <u>A People and a Nation: A History of the United States</u>, Third Edition, Volume II: Since 1865 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), 490 and 621; Aba-Mecha, "Black Woman Activist in Twentieth Century South Carolina," 156-167.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

Simkins' work with the South Carolina NAACP is significant because in her position as state secretary she was the only woman to serve as an officer. During her tenure in the volunteer position of state secretary from 1941 to 1957 her work helped the state move towards racial equality. From 1943 to 1945 she was instrumental in gaining teacher approval and support for teacher salary equalization lawsuits in Sumter and Columbia, South Carolina. In the 1940s the NAACP created the South Carolina Citizens Committee to provide teachers and other state employees a means to support civil rights action without the threat of dismissal from their jobs that membership in the NAACP would have entailed. Simkins was elected reporter for this Citizens Committee and became the only female officer for that group as well. In her official work with both the NAACP and the Citizens Committee, she wrote correspondence, gained support through news articles written for the Associated Negro Press, was the only woman to cover a state-wide speaking circuit, raised funds, provided personal financial support, and educated blacks about voting. It was through this reform activity that she used her home at 2025 Marion Street to provide lodging and meeting space for NAACP lawyers, including Thurgood Marshall.

Perhaps her most significant work took place in 1950 with the South Carolina federal district court case of <u>Briggs v. Elliott</u>. Working with the Reverend J. A. DeLaine, president of the Clarendon County NAACP, Simkins helped write the declaration for the school lawsuit that asked for equalization of black Clarendon county schools with white schools. The Clarendon county case was eventually reworked to become one of several individual cases set up to directly challenge the "separate but equal" doctrine in the Supreme Court case of <u>Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka in 1954</u>. Significantly, Simkins and DeLaine worked on the declaration for the original case in the living room of her house.

In 1957 Simkins was not nominated for reelection to the post of state secretary of the South Carolina NAACP. At this time she turned her attention to the activities of the Richland County Citizens Committee (RCCC), founded in 1956 as an affiliate of the South Carolina Citizens Committee. Through her position as public relations director for this organization she hoped to integrate public schools and universities and reform living conditions for black mental health patients in the state. In 1965 Simkins' career reached its peak when publicity generated by the RCCC led to improved conditions in black mental hospitals. In the same year the Columbia School Board surrendered to pressure from Simkins and the RCCC to admit black students to all-white public schools for the first time. 10

Because her activism was at times controversial, her life and home became targets. An unknown person shot at the house at 2025 Marion Street during her work with civil rights in the state. Like many civil rights workers, she was accused of subversive activities and communism. As a result she was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the House Un-American Activities Committee.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Aba-Mecha, "Black Woman Activist in Twentieth Century South Carolina," 170-212.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>In 1957 Simkins was not nominated to resume her position as state secretary of the NAACP and she went back to work full-time as public relations director for the black-owned Victory Savings Bank in Columbia, South Carolina. Aba-Mecha, "Black Woman Activist in Twentieth Century South Carolina," 230-233.

<sup>10</sup>Smith, Notable Black American Women, 1013.

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### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

The exceptional significance of Modjeska Simkins is illustrated by the honors awarded her and the manner in which her death was commemorated. In 1981 she was honored by a coalition of civil rights groups including the Columbia NAACP, the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Council of Negro Women, and the Urban League. The coalition established an endowment in her name to provide income for activists working for the causes of the underprivileged. The "matriarch of civil rights activists in South Carolina" was an outspoken advocate for African-Americans and the significance of her work was evidenced by the hundreds of people who attended a memorial service following her death on April 5, 1992. The legacy of Modjeska Simkins was explained by U.S. District Judge Matthew J. Perry at the time of her death when he stated that "she probably will be remembered as a woman who challenged everyone. She challenged the white political leadership of the state to do what was fair and equitable among all people and she challenged black citizens to stand up and demand their rightful place in the state and the nation."

Modjeska Simkins' commitment to social reform and public health work for African-Americans took place within the last fifty years and her significance as part of the national civil rights movement is indisputable. Histories of the civil rights movement have shown that the national movement had its origins and functioned most successfully at the local level. In order to produce change on the national level, leaders such as Simkins helped organize followers who sought to battle segregation, discrimination, and disfranchisement legislation as they existed at the community and state levels. By holding leadership positions in the state NAACP, the South Carolina Citizens Committee, and the Richland County Citizens Committee, she functioned beyond the traditional roles assigned to women in the civil rights movement. Like Fannie Lou Hamer of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and Septima Clark of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Simkins was able to serve in leadership positions that were traditionally unavailable to women in the civil rights movement and already at least one scholarly biography is in preparation on her life. In order to preserve the legacy of the national movement, local leaders such as Simkins should be recognized by honoring the places associated with their lives and work. 12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>Will Lester, "Modjeska: A Veteran in the Fight for Civil and Human Rights," <u>State</u> 28 June 1981, 1E and 4E; Charles H. Wickenberg, Jr. "Simkins Leaves Legacy of Civil Rights Victories," <u>State</u> 6 April 1992, 1A and 5A; Lee Bandy, "Simkins' Spirit Lives, Mourners Say," State 10 April 1992, 1A and 8A.

<sup>12</sup>Aba-Mecha, "Black Woman Activist in Twentieth Century South Carolina,"; Beardsley, A History of Neglect; Vicki L. Crawford, Jacqueline Anne Rouse, and Barbara Woods, eds. Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers, 1941-1965 (Brooklyn, New York: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1990).

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- Wickenberg, Charles H., Jr. "Simkins Leaves Legacy of Civil Rights Victories." The State (Columbia, South Carolina), 6 April 1992, 1A and 5A.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 8

Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

Verbal Boundary Description

Tax Map Reference Number 09016 Map Block Lot 9016-10-09

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire lot at 2025 Marion Street measuring 50 feet by 172 feet and found on Richland County Tax Map Reference Number 09016. This is the same lot on which the house was situated during ownership by Modjeska Monteith Simkins.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Simkins, Modjeska Montieth, House name of property Richland County, South Carolina county and State

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

Name of Property: Modjeska Monteith Simkins House Location: 2025 Marion Street

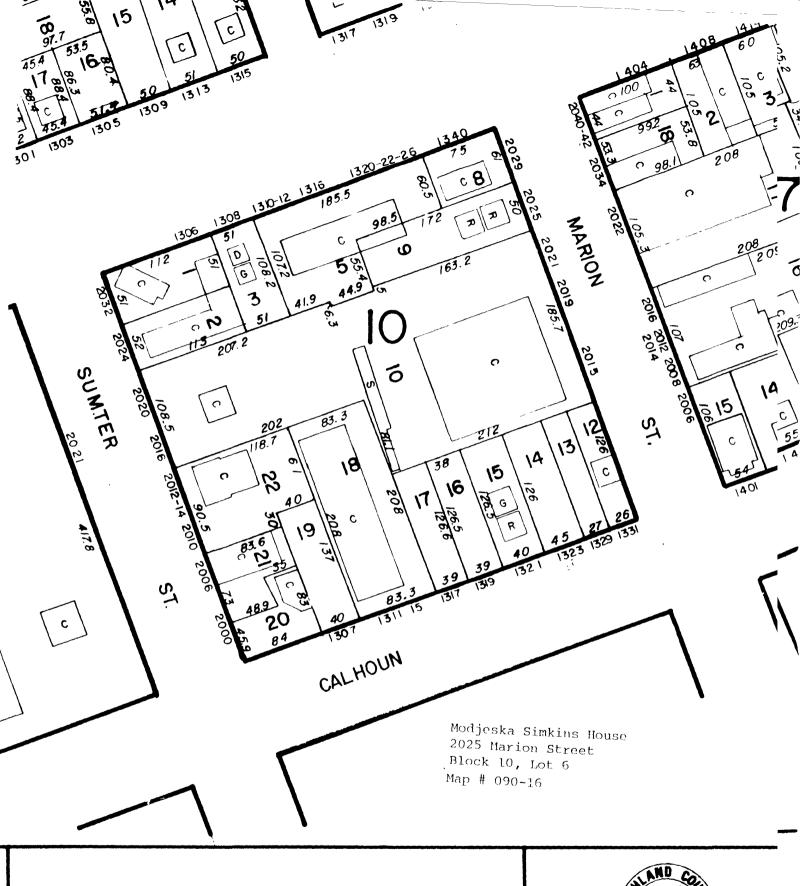
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

County: Richland

Name of Photographer: Jill K. Hanson, Columbia, SC

Location of Original Negatives: Jill K. Hanson, Columbia, SC Date of Photographs: April 1993

- 1. Eastern (principal) facade
- Southern elevation 2.
- Western elevation with shed-roof bathroom addition 3.
- Northern elevation 4.
- 5. Outbuilding



# PROPERTY TAX MAP RICHLAND COUNTY

**SOUTH CAROLINA** 



THIS MAP OR PHOTO SOLD BY THE RICHLA'RD COUNTY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE THE BOARD ALE ASSESSMENT CONTROL RESERVES THE ISE CLUSIVE RIGHT TO SELL AND NO RESALE PERPODUCTIONS FOR RESALE PURPOSE PERMITTED