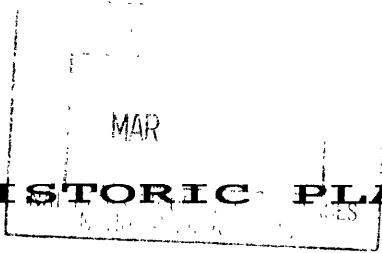


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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Ravenwood Plantation

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

2. Location

street & number S.C. Hwy. 64, .9 mi. E of S.C. Sec. Rd. 458 not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Neyles vicinity X  
state South Carolina code SC county Colleton code 029 zip code 29488

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally.  
(\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 3/11/97  
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

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

M. J. M. Way 5/11/97  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

for \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper 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)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 7            | 4               | buildings  |
|              |                 | sites      |
|              |                 | structures |
|              |                 | objects    |
| 7            | 4               | Total      |

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

N/A

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURE  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Sub: Agricultural Fields  
Irrigation Facilities  
Subsistence  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURE  
DOMESTIC  
DOMESTIC  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Sub: Subsistence  
Animal Facility  
Single Dwelling  
Secondary Structure  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A  
 roof N/A  
 walls N/A  
 other N/A

#### 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 prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1850  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1800-ca. 1860  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**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 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

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

Name of repository: Private Collection of Mrs. F.L. Burke, Walterboro, S.C.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Approximately 17 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

|   | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing       |
|---|------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------------|
| 1 | 17   | 540360  | 3632580  | 3    | 17      | 539000 3631460 |
| 2 | 17   | 540060  | 3631260  | 4    | 17      | 538500 3632820 |
| 5 | 17   | 540040  | 3632840  |      |         |                |

**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.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Mrs. Franklin L. Burke  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 1 June 1996  
street & number Route 1, Box 312 telephone (803) 893-2006  
city or town Walterboro state SC zip code 29488

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### Additional Documentation

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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

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

name Mr. and Mrs. Franklin L. Burke  
street & number Route 1, Box 312 telephone (803) 893-2006  
city or town Walterboro state SC zip code 29488

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section   7   Page   5  

Ravenwood Plantation

name of property

Colleton County, South Carolina

county and State

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Ravenwood Plantation is located approximately eight miles southeast of Walterboro and less than one mile west of Neyles, just off S.C. Hwy. 64 and astride Chessey Creek, an upper tributary of the Ashepoo River. Ravenwood is an approximately 325-acre tract containing historic inland ricefields and featuring intact and easily discernible canals, dikes, and a reserve. Two sets of three distinct fields each flank the east and west banks of Chessey Creek, with a reserve on the upper east side. These ricefields, which are small and feature low, narrow dikes in comparison to the usually-larger tidal ricefields common in Georgetown and other lowcountry South Carolina counties, are now in a tupelo cypress swamp in which water levels range from a few inches to two feet deep. The ricefields and associated agricultural features encompass nearly two-thirds of the acreage included in this nomination for Ravenwood Plantation.

The main house at Ravenwood, a two-story frame house built ca. 1840, has been extensively altered in the last eighty years, most notably by the addition of a monumental portico (ca. 1910), a bathroom and kitchen (ca. 1942), two large wings and a sunroom (ca. 1959), and the application of vinyl siding (ca. 1970). The main house and three outbuildings--a late nineteenth or early twentieth century tenant house, a twentieth century garage, and a twentieth century Delco house--are included in the boundaries of the nominated property but do not contribute to it, as the main house does not retain integrity from and the other three buildings do not date from the period of significance for the inland swamp rice culture at Ravenwood between ca. 1800 and ca. 1860.

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Ravenwood Plantation  
name of property  
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county and State

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The historic ricefields and associated agricultural features of Ravenwood Plantation are significant as exceptionally intact examples of resources associated with the inland rice culture of the South Carolina lowcountry, which flourished from the earliest years of the Carolina colony until the early-nineteenth century and in some areas persisted until the mid-nineteenth century. While the usually larger-scale, more spectacularly successful, and certainly better-known tidal ricefields which produced the rice known as "Carolina Gold" have gained more attention from historians, cultural geographers, and other scholars of South Carolina rice production, the inland ricefields are significant both in their own right and as a counterpoint to the tidal rice culture.

Rice became the most important staple crop in the Carolina colony as early as the 1720s, and it was produced primarily--though not exclusively--in inland swamps rather than tidal swamps before the American Revolution. This method of rice cultivation featured small ricefields carved out of cypress and hardwood swamps, preferably cypress swamps. The fields were irrigated by rivers and creeks or by impounded rainwater and runoff from adjacent higher areas constructed as reserve ponds, sometimes referred to as "backwaters". The inland swamp method also featured only one or two floodings per season, more to encourage the rice plants to grow than for any other reason, as compared with the tidal practice of periodically flooding and draining the fields to destroy insects and weeds harmful to the crop. The two major obstacles to the inland swamp rice culture were the unpredictability of the fresh water supply, dependent on a particular season's rainfall, and the danger of flash floods or freshets that might destroy the crop or break through the canals and dikes separating the ricefields. Other drawbacks of the system included the proliferation of insects, grass and other weeds in the ricefields, which required constant tending. The intensive labor required to maintain inland swamp ricefields effectively restricted their size, particularly when compared to tidal swamp ricefields. Individual ricefields were often called "quarters" or "squares," and the dikes or banks separating them were called "quarter banks."

While the shift from inland swamp rice cultivation to tidal swamp rice cultivation began as early as the 1750s in some areas of the lowcountry and as late as the 1850s in others, most successful rice planters had given up their inland fields in favor of tidal fields by the early years of the nineteenth century. There were significant differences between the inland swamp and tidal swamp

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Ravenwood Plantation

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rice cultures which caused this shift. Planters could grow more rice in larger fields with larger average yields with a steady and reliable source of water and with better control over flooding and draining offered by the tidal rivers and creeks. Water was added and removed several times during the growing season, which was shortened considerably by reducing the frequency of weeding, leading to an earlier harvest. Tidal swamp rice cultivation did require more labor than the inland swamp method, however, and such requirements led directly to the dramatic growth of slavery in colonial and antebellum South Carolina. As Duncan Clinch Heyward has written, "when an ample supply of slave labor could be obtained, the planting of rice on inland swamps was gradually abandoned and its cultivation transferred to the extensive and thickly timbered swamps which bordered the fresh-water tidal rivers."<sup>1</sup> Large numbers of slaves cleared the land, built the canals, dikes, and trunks, and cultivated and harvested the crop in fields of some five to six hundred acres each on the largest plantations, considerably larger than ricefields on inland swamp plantations.<sup>2</sup>

Ravenwood Plantation was an inland swamp rice plantation by ca. 1800, and its ricefields were some of the first built between the Eberson Causeway on Chessey Creek and the Ashepoo River to the south. The plantation was probably named for the Raven family, several members of which planted rice in Colleton County in the colonial and early national periods. Though the identity of the individual who established Ravenwood Plantation is unknown, early prominent members of the Raven family who owned plantations and slaves in St. Bartholomew's Parish included John Sr., (fl. 1715), John, Jr. (d. 1734), and John (1726-1764), all of whom served in the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly before the American Revolution. William Raven (d. ca. 1768) was perhaps a son of one of the John Ravens, and has been said by some local historians to have been the first owner of Ravenwood, and yet another John

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<sup>1</sup>Duncan Clinch Heyward, Seed from Madagascar, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937; reprint ed., Southern Classics Series, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Heyward, pp. 11-14, 18-22; Lewis Cecil Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860, Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication No. 430, 2 vols., repr. ed. (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter C. Smith, 1959), I: 277-284, II:721-22, 726-731; Richard D. Porcher, A Teacher's Field Guide to the Natural History of the Bluff Plantation Wildlife Sanctuary (New Orleans: The Kathleen O'Brien Foundation, 1985), pp. 13-16; Charles F. Kovacik and John S. Winberry, South Carolina: The Making of a Landscape, repr. ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), pp. 72-74.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section 8 Page 8

Ravenwood Plantation  
name of property  
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Raven (fl. 1815) was reported to be living in the vicinity of what is now Ravenwood in 1815. George Washington Oswald (1818-1882), the last owner of Ravenwood to plant rice, built the present main house ca. 1840, shortly before his marriage to Jane Stiles Rivers. The plantation, with 67 slaves, produced 33,730 lbs. of rice on 460 acres in 1850, along with five 400-lb. bales of ginned cotton, significant quantities of subsistence crops such as Indian corn, peas and beans, and sweet potatoes, and raising livestock. By 1860, though Oswald owned 106 slaves, many more than in 1850, he had abandoned both rice and cotton in favor of subsistence crops, raising livestock, and other farm products. During the Civil War Oswald served as an officer in the South Carolina militia in 1861-62 and represented St. Bartholomew's Parish in the South Carolina Senate in 1862-64.<sup>3</sup>

Sometime between 1865 and 1900 these ricefields were fenced in and utilized for grazing cattle until the 1940s. This practice, combined with natural irregular flooding, discouraged growth of the forest other than the tupelo cypress which still flourishes in the swamp. The vast majority of the acreage at Ravenwood has also remained in private hands and has not fallen victim to the massive timber operations which have been conducted in most of the inland swamps and have altered or destroyed the agricultural features there.

"Now one can find little trace of mansion, grove or garden to tell the tale of vanished glory," E.T.H. Shaffer observed in 1937, describing the inland swamp rice culture, "only low banks overgrown with mighty forest trees and traces of straight canals

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<sup>3</sup>Lucius G. Fishburne, "Plantation Notes, St. Bartholomew's Parish," unpublished typescript, Colleton County Library, Walterboro, S.C., pp. 37-39; Walter B. Edgar and N. Louise Bailey, Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Volume II: The Commons House of Assembly, 1692-1775 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1977), pp. 549-551; "Colleton County Historical Society Plantation Tour, May 5, 1970," unpublished typescript, Mrs. Franklin L. Burke, Walterboro, S.C.; Agricultural and Slave Schedules, Seventh (1850) Census, Colleton District, South Carolina; Agricultural and Slave Schedules, Eighth (1860) Census, Colleton District, South Carolina; N. Louise Bailey, et al, Biographical Directory of the South Carolina Senate 1776-1985 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1986), III:1214-15; Pauline M. Beckham, ed., "Sanders, Ford, Oswald and Campbell Family Records," South Carolina Historical Magazine 58 (1957); and Evelyn McDaniel Frazier Bryan, Colleton County, S.C.: A History of the First 160 Years, 1670-1830 (Jacksonville, Fla.: Florentine Press, 1993), p. 19.



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Ravenwood Plantation  
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through the returned swamp tangle."<sup>4</sup> The historic ricefields at Ravenwood Plantation are exceptionally intact examples of those features associated with the inland swamp rice culture.

The landscape at Ravenwood also suggests that the archaeological remains of plantation buildings and other structures are likely to exist and to contain sufficient integrity to be capable of yielding information about the operation of an inland swamp rice plantation from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries and perhaps about everyday life on such a plantation as well. It is also likely that such historic period archaeological sites might contribute further to the significance of Ravenwood Plantation. Future systematic archaeological investigations might determine the possible eligibility of the property for the National Register under Criterion D.

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<sup>4</sup>E.T.H. Shaffer, Carolina Gardens: The History, Romance and Tradition of Many Gardens of Two States Through More Than Two Centuries (New York: The Huntington Press, 1937; 3rd ed., The Devin-Adair Company, 1963), p. 8.

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Ravenwood Plantation  
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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the line marked "Ravenwood Plantation" on the accompanying U.S.G.S. Topographic Map for the Neyles Quadrangle, drawn at a scale of 1" = 24000'.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property is restricted to the historic agricultural features and the immediate vicinity of the main house.

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section PHOTOGRAPHS Page 12 Ravenwood Plantation  
name of property  
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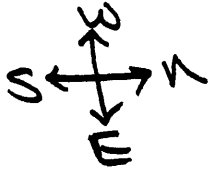
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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Name of Property:                  | Ravenwood Plantation                                     |
| Location of Property:              | Walterboro vicinity<br>Colleton County, South Carolina   |
| Name of Photographer:              | Mrs. Franklin L. Burke                                   |
| Date of Photographs:               | 26 February 1996   |
| Location of Original<br>Negatives: | S.C. Department of Archives &<br>History, Columbia, S.C. |

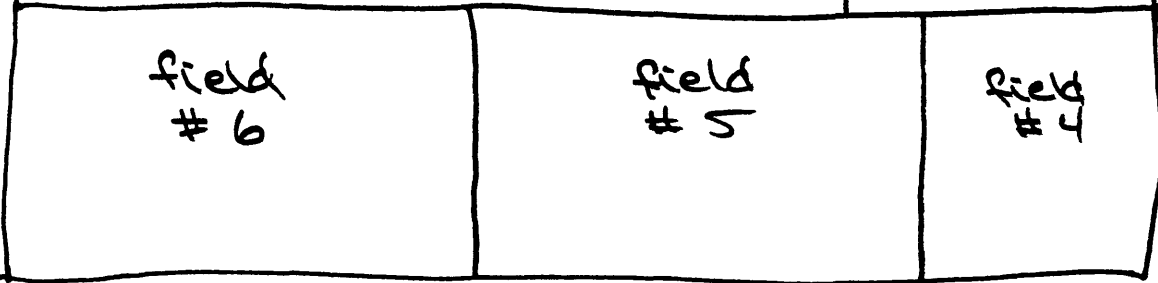
1. Main upstream dike looking south into ricefield # 1
2. Main upstream dike view from inside ricefield # 1
3. Main back dike looking south toward intersection of secondary dike dividing ricefields # 1 and # 2
4. Secondary dike dividing ricefields # 2 and # 3
5. Ricefield # 2 showing remains of "quarter" dike at left, main back dike at right
6. Canal, looking south between reserve pond and ricefields # 2 and # 3
7. A break in the dike caused by a spring "freshet"

Sketch Map: Inland Rice Fields  
Rawenwood Plantation  
Colleton County, South Carolina



County Rd. 458

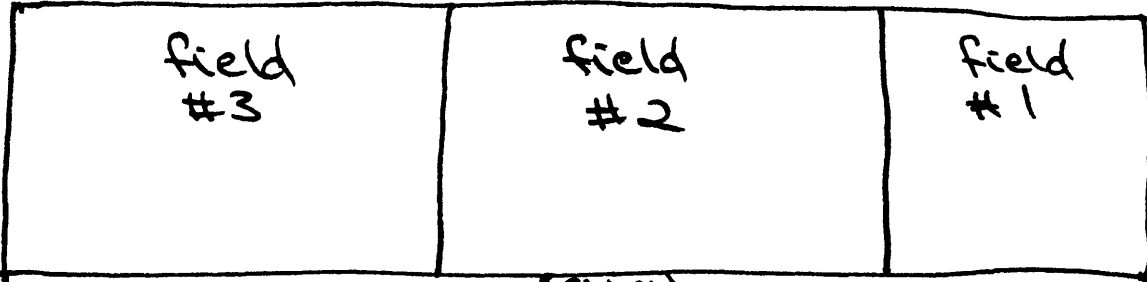
Reserve



Colleton Rd 41

S.C. 64 West

Chessy Creek



Elderson Rd Chesey

S.C. 64 East

canal  
Reserve

Plantation Lane

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 97000359

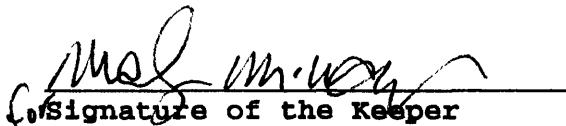
Date Listed: 5/1/97

Ravenwood Plantation  
Property Name

Colleton SOUTH CAROLINA  
County State

N/A  
Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

5/6/97  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 5:

This nomination is amended to show that it contains eight contributing sites, the six rice fields and the two reserves, as shown on the site map.

Section No. 10:

The nomination is also amended to show that the acreage is 325 acres, to correspond with the text and the map.

These changes have been confirmed with the South Carolina SHPO.

-----  
DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)