

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED AUG 25 1978  
DATE ENTERED NOV 8 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Liberty Hill Historic District  
AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER A village located on S. C. Highway #97,  
20 miles N. of Camden  
CITY, TOWN Liberty Hill  
STATE South Carolina  
VICINITY OF #5  
COUNTY Kershaw  
CODE 045  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT #5  
CODE 055

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Multiple ownership -- see continuation sheet  
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN  
VICINITY OF  
STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Kershaw County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER  
Broad Street  
CITY, TOWN Camden  
STATE South Carolina

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina

DATE  
1973 (update)  
\_FEDERAL  STATE \_COUNTY \_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS South Carolina Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN Columbia  
STATE South Carolina

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Liberty Hill is a small rural community located upon a plateau in Kershaw County, South Carolina. It consists primarily of mid-19th Century and early 20th Century residences, but also has a post office, small store, and a late 19th Century church. The majority of the houses are located upon large tracts of land, set back from the road.

Buildings and structures contributing to the character of the district include:

1. James Belton Cureton House: 1½ story, clapboard. Said to be one of oldest structures in Liberty Hill (although it has been moved and rebuilt). One-story piazza extending across the front; simple balustrades and columns.
2. Hay House: (ca. 1903-1914). Simple one-story structure (later additions consist of a room and porch). Small structure, typical of early 20th Century construction.
3. Joseph Cunningham House: (ca. 1830). A large two-story clapboard structure with hip roof and one-story piazza. Although enlarged during mid-19th Century, it retains elegant proportions. Several outbuildings.
5. Post Office: Small one-story structure. Originally built as store. Typical of late 19th/early 20th Century construction.
6. Norman S. Richards House: (ca. 1895). Said to be the first home built in Liberty Hill after War Between the States. Small, one-story clapboard structure. Childhood home of James P. Richards, United States Congressman.
7. Henry Brown House: (ca. 1840-1842). 1½ story clapboard structure. Features large double door with transom and flanking sidelights. Interior features wide hall on first floor and spiral staircase. Exterior has been altered.
8. Alfred C. Cureton House: (ca. 1906). Replaced family's former home which burned during War Between the States. One-story clapboard structure. Features brackets on columns and turned balusters.
10. John Brown House: (ca. 1835-42). Two-story clapboard structure with raised basement. Double piazza features Chinese Chippendale balustrades; pediment caps the two-story columns. Double doors with transom and sidelights open onto both piazzas. Facade altered somewhat by ca. 1926 renovation. Impressive hilltop setting.
11. Cool Spring (Ingleside): (ca. 1830s). Two-story clapboard structure with double piazzas, lower level of which extends length of the lower level and down each side. Pediment caps the upper piazza. Both stories have double front doors with transom and sidelights.

(continued)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A small rural community located on a high plateau in Kershaw County, South Carolina, Liberty Hill visually and historically reflects both the life-style and the architecture of the pre-Civil War period as well as that of the later turn-of-the-century.

The town's history begins as early as ca. 1813 when, according to town lore, Peter Garlick's store (location unknown) was a gathering place for surrounding farmers. Soon, impressive structures were built by planters in the area. Remaining from the 1830s are Cool Spring and the Joseph Cunningham House. The majority of the town's antebellum buildings, however, were built ca. 1840-1850. During this period Liberty Hill was a very wealthy community. According to the biography, written by his son, of Reverend John Gardiner Richards, who became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in 1858:

the community was one of the wealthiest in the entire state. It was a community of large farmers and every land owner was wealthy and owned many slaves. Mr. Richards used to say in late life he had traveled a great deal and had extensive experience, but he had never seen such real elegance as was at Liberty Hill, when he came there in 1858.<sup>1</sup>

However, the final days of the War Between the States ended that prosperity. An account written by an eye-witness records the destruction which occurred as Union forces and foragers marched through Liberty Hill in February 1865:

What an awful feeling to come so close to hundreds of Yankees who are burning and destroying everything on the face of the land! ... We are starving here; having nothing left to eat but sorghum molasses and black shorts bread.<sup>2</sup>

(continued)

<sup>1</sup> John Gardiner Richards, Biography of Rev. John Gardiner Richards, (n.p., n.d.), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Thomas Taylor, et. al., ed. Women of the Confederacy (Columbia: The State Company, 1903), p. 2.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971. Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971, p. 1606.

Bradford, William R. Twenty-one Governors of South Carolina. Printing authorized by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina [1954], pp. 31-32. (continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 434 acres

UTM REFERENCES Liberty Hill Quad 1:24,000

A	1,7	51,870,0	3,81,540,0	B	1,7	51,842,0	3,81,306,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,7	51,748,0	3,81,306,0	D	1,7	51,748,0	3,81,540,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Historic Preservation Staff

ORGANIZATION

S. C. Department of Archives and History

DATE

May 12, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

1430 Senate Street

TELEPHONE

(803) 758-5816

CITY OR TOWN

Columbia

STATE

South Carolina

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Charles E. Lee*

TITLE Charles E. Lee, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

8/18/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Sharon R. Hunter*  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11-8-78

ATTEST:

*Marcella Shuford*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11-7-78

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED	71
DATE ENTERED	NOV 6 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE one

PROPERTY/OWNER

1. James B. Cureton House  
Mrs. T.P. McCrae  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
2. Hay House  
Mrs. Clara Kaylor  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
3. Joseph Cunningham House  
Misses Betty and Margaret Richards  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
4. Small 20th Century House  
Norman Richards Estate  
c/o Mrs. Don Smith  
Cameron, S. C. 29030
5. Post Office  
U.S. Postal Service  
United States Government
6. Norman S. Richards House  
Ms. Righton Richards  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
7. Henry Brown House  
Mr. John DeLoach, Sr.  
1305 Lyttleton Street  
Camden, S.C. 29020
8. Alfred Cureton House  
Mr. John DeLoach, Jr.  
1801 Lyttleton Street  
Camden, S.C. 29020
9. Clapboard structure  
Johnnie James  
R.F.D. # 5  
Great Falls, S.C. 29055
10. John Brown House  
Robert Jones Estate  
c/o Ms. Jenny Jones  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
11. Cool Spring (Ingleside)  
Mr. Howard Berry  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
12. Dixon House  
W.E. Cunningham Estate  
c/o M.B. Cunningham  
132 Holly Drive  
Hartsville, S.C. 29550
13. Matheson House  
Mrs. John Croxton, Sr.  
Kershaw, S.C. 29067
14. J.H. Clements House  
Mrs. J.H. Clements  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
15. Second Presbyterian Church  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
- 15a. cement block structure  
Second Presbyterian Church  
Liberty Hill, S.C.
- 16-18 First Presbyterian Church  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074
19. R.J. Wardlaw House  
Mr. R.J. Wardlaw  
Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

11/11

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE two

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>20. R. J. Wardlaw Store<br/>Mr. R.J. Wardlaw<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>21. R.C. Jones House<br/>Mrs. Carolyn Richards<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>22. Presbyterian Manse<br/>Mr. Jim Kaylor<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>23. Dr. James P. Richards Estate<br/>Ms. Lizzie Richards<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>24. 20th Century Structure<br/>Mrs. W.C. Wardlaw<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>25. Dr. Robert Johnson's Office<br/>Mrs. W.C. Wardlaw<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>26. 20th Century Structure<br/>Mrs. David Knotts<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C.</p> <p>27. Look-Out Tower<br/>U.S. Forestry Service<br/>c/o Mrs. David Knotts<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>28. 20th Century Structure<br/>Mr. R.J. Wardlaw<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> | <p>29. 20th Century Structure<br/>Mr. Jimmy Wardlaw<br/>1713 Brook Drive<br/>Camden, S.C. 29020</p> <p>30. 20th Century Structure<br/>Mr. Jimmy Wardlaw<br/>1713 Brook Drive<br/>Camden, S.C. 29020</p> <p>31. C.D. Cunningham Estate<br/>c/o Mrs. Frank Eskridge<br/>718 Kershaw Street<br/>Cheraw, S.C. 29520</p> <p>32. Grange Hall<br/>Mr. W.J. Higgins<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>33. McDow House<br/>Mr. Jesse W. Sublett<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>34. Selwyn Cunningham House<br/>Mr. David Singleton<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> <p>35. The Columns<br/>Mr. John A. Thompson<br/>Liberty Hill, S.C. 29074</p> |
|---|--|

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RECEIVED

NOV 20 1978

DATE ENTERED

NOV 20 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE three

12. Original William Dixon House: Small, one-story clapboard structure with porch. An early 19th Century structure, it has been moved and rebuilt (extensively altered). In poor condition.
13. Matheson House: (ca. 1853). One-story raised cottage. A small portico, capped by pediment features four columns extending to ground. Structure has recently been renovated, and basement level, which originally had not been completed, was made into apartments. Two separate, single door entrances, each having transom.
15. Second Presbyterian Church: early 20th Century, clapboard. In fair condition.
16. First Presbyterian Church cemetery
17. First Presbyterian Church: (1880). Features a small open belfry and wooden siding which is laid in a "novelty" pattern.
19. R. J. Wardlaw Residence: early 20th Century. Old Liberty Hill School, converted into modern residence.
20. R. J. Wardlaw Store: Typical of commercial structures of the early 1900s. One-story with gable roof. Features stepped parapet across front facade.
21. Robert Charlton Jones House: One-story, clapboard. Early 20th Century.
22. Presbyterian Manse: (ca. 1850). Greek Revival cottage, similar to other cottages in Liberty Hill. Features small portico with four fluted columns supporting a pediment. 1½ stories. Has double door with transom and sidelights and flanking 9/9 windows with sidelights.
23. Dr. James P. Richards House: (ca. 1897). Replaced an earlier structure which burned. One-story clapboard structure with porches.
25. Dr. Robert Johnson's office: (ca. 1847). Small, one-room clapboard structure. Built as an office for Dr. Robert Johnson. Featuring a porch supported by two non-original columns, it has a fireplace, two windows, and a single entrance door with transom.
31. C. D. Cunningham Estate: Original house burned during War Between the States. Present structure consists of original cook's and carriage driver's houses, joined together with several additions (ca. 1925). Remaining from original estate is tree-lined drive and stone wall.

(continued)

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DATE ENTERED NOV 8 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE four

32. The Grange Hall: late 19th Century structure used for meetings of the local chapter of the National Fraternal Farmers Association. Now a private residence.
33. McDow House: (ca. 1856). Greek Revival raised cottage. 1½ stories. Has basement of four rooms. 1928 wing on north side contains kitchen and breakfast area. Avenue of oaks and elms leads to structure.
34. Selwyn Cunningham House: Greek Revival raised cottage. Said to have originally been school house. Similar to other raised cottages in Liberty Hill, especially double sash windows with mullions. Entrance features double door with sidelights and transom.
35. The Columns: (ca. 1850-1854). 2½ story Greek Revival clapboard structure set upon raised basement. Features one-story portico with Doric columns and simple balustrades. One double sash window with mullion and shutters in gable end of roof. Other windows are also double sash with mullion and shutters. Interior features semicircular staircase.

Additional structures not contributing to character of historic district:

4. Small 20th century house, clapboard
9. Small clapboard structure, very poor condition
14. J. H. Clements House: (ca. 1929) one-story
- 15a. Cement block structure (intrusion)
18. First Presbyterian Church Building: one-story white clapboard. 20th Century.
24. Ca. 1950 modern brick house
26. Small ca. 1950 house
27. Look-out tower
28. Ca. 1940 house
29. Ca. 1941 house, clapboard
30. One-story house, asbestos shingles



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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE five

According to a later account (1878), the town experienced a "period of darkness, of gloom, of despondency"<sup>3</sup> after the war. Nevertheless, Liberty Hill did eventually reassert itself. In 1880 a new Presbyterian Church was built and between 1895 and 1910 the town witnessed a surge of new construction.

Since that time, a number of outstanding South Carolinians have claimed Liberty Hill as their home. Both Governor John G. Richards (1864-1941) and United States Congressman James P. Richards (1894- ) were natives of Liberty Hill. "The Columns" was the family home of Dr. Patterson Wardlaw--Dean of the University of South Carolina's School of Education and for whom the school is now named.

Architecture: Liberty Hill appears to have changed very little since the beginning of the 20th Century. Some new construction has taken place, but the community basically remains a blend of mid-19th and early 20th Century residential architecture. There are several imposing Greek Revival structures, including "the Columns" (35), Cool Spring (11), and the John Brown House (10). There are also several Greek Revival cottages, such as the Matheson (13), Selwyn Cunningham (34), and McDow (33) Houses. (A feature common to many of these structures is double sash windows with mullions and shutters.) Liberty Hill's Presbyterian Church (17) is an excellent example of 1880s architecture, its siding being laid in a "novelty" pattern, while the Joseph Cunningham House (3) is one of the earliest structures (ca. 1830) and one of the most imposing. The later, turn-of-the century residences are primarily one-story, simple clapboard cottages.

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<sup>3</sup>South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, S. C., Richards Family Papers, Church History, p. 12.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE six

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South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Census of 1850, Kershaw District, pp. 90-91; Agriculture Census of 1850, Kershaw District, p. [6].

South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Kershaw County Wills, Vol. 3-A, pp. 129-144.

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DATE ENTERED	NOV 8 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 7

The boundaries of the nominated property begin at a point on Highway 522, approximately 2300' east of its intersection with Highway 97; thence proceed approximately 257' to the north; thence proceed approximately 3052' to the west; thence proceed approximately 1800' to the south; thence approximately 660' to the southwest; thence approximately 1650' to the south-southwest; thence proceed approximately 1825' to the south; thence approximately 600' to the southwest; thence approximately 500' to the southeast; thence proceed approximately 1850' in a southerly direction; thence proceed approximately 2237' to the east; thence approximately 2400' in a northeasterly direction; thence approximately 2310' in a northwestwardly direction; thence approximately 82' in a westernly direction; thence approximately 2062' to the north; thence approximately 917' in a northwestwardly direction to Highway 522; thence proceed east approximately 1500' along Highway 522 to the point of beginning. These boundaries have been delineated on the Liberty Hill U.S. Topographic Map. Property lines have been followed when practical, but the boundaries have been drawn to primarily include those properties which give the district its character.