

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Riverside

and/or common Prather Residence

**2. Location**

N of Toccoa on SR 3

street & number Route 3, Prather Bridge Road N/A not for publication

city, town Toccoa vic vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 9th Ed Jenkins

state Georgia code 013 county Stephens code 257

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Owners (See Attached Sheet)

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

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Stephens County Courthouse

city, town Toccoa state Georgia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Historic Structures Field Survey: Stephens County, Georgia has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1977  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input 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			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Riverside consists of a two-story Greek Revival plantation house built around 1857 on the four over four central hall room arrangement as well as an earlier log structure built about 1830, several outbuildings, remains of others, and the remains of formal gardens.

The portion of the property west of State Highway 184 and Yonah Dam Road is wooded with gently rolling topography. Much of the area is former farmland and is now occupied by stages of pine succession. The Greek Revival structure is located in this area of the property. It is sited on a knoll, directly west of the road junction, with the topography sloping away from the house in all directions. The house is situated on a high elevation with a breathtaking view of the valley leading toward the Tugaloo River. Once all this property was part of the same plantation. Although some modern structures have crept into the nearby area, the view and setting have been retained.

The Greek Revival antebellum residence is a two-story frame, rectangular structure (44' x 38') built on a central hall plan. A monumental portico wraps around three sides of the structure and is supported by simple, square columns of wood. These columns are set on concrete foundations added in the 1940's. Two brick chimneys rise from within the high hipped roof. At the front entrance there is a trabeated doorway with a cranberry stained glass transom. Directly above this entrance, the second story doorway is framed by sidelights and the balcony is bordered with an elongated pattern of fretwork. Windows on the first floor are 9/9 and on the second floor 6/6 with dark green blinds.

The interior consists of four rooms on each floor separated by a central hall. The front parlors on the first floor include plastered walls and ceilings with crown mouldings and transitional Federal-Greek Revival style mantel pieces. Most of the fireplaces are in working order and many of the original furnishings remain. The dining room ceiling is unplastered although the mantel matches the one in the parlor. The stairs leading to the second floor are directly inside the front entrance in the central hall. They have an original but simple railing. The rear door or back entrance to the central hall also has sidelights on the sides and on top and the doors are a pair of slim four panel doors with original locks. The rooms on the second floor have more simple mantels, plastered walls, wooden moldings and unplastered plank ceilings. The rooms are connected to each other by pairs of slim, single panel doors. Alterations to the structure include the addition of a bath in the 1940's at the rear of the second floor central hallway, the enclosure of the north corner of the porch in the creation of a room on the first story, the addition of a room on the southwest corner of the first story, and the addition of porches in the central portion of the rear facade. An unusual feature of the residence is the labeling of Roman Numerals on the structural members in the attic. It is not known whether this labeling implies that the structure was moved or prefabricated on the site or at another location.

A formal garden in a circular design is located to the front of the structure. Planting beds, edged in flat rocks, are centered within the circle and create a wheel arrangement. Tamped earth between the beds forms a system of walking paths. The beds are

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now sparsely planted in contrast to the lush vegetation that appeared in a photograph from the 1920's. The formal garden is located at the same elevation of the house. The sloping topography in the direction of State Highway 184 forms a series of terraces. One terrace appears to have been a carriage path that allowed visitors to enter the residence through the formal garden. Today the driveway used by family is located to the south of the structure and leads to the rear of the house. A family cemetery to the north of the structure is an additional landscape feature. The cemetery is located in a grove of evergreen trees and the granite monuments are surrounded by vinca ground cover.

Extant outbuildings include a historic one story frame smokehouse located to the rear of the main house. It is the only outbuilding which survives intact. This plain style structure has heart-shaped cutwork running across the front facade, slightly below the roofline. The doorway to the smoke house appears to have been altered and today resembles a garage with its wide opening swing doors. The former location of the kitchen is to the north of the smokehouse. The kitchen burned in the late 1960's and its former site is documented by portions of the stone foundation.

A dirt road which has its beginning directly south of the smokehouse passes former horse stables, now in a deteriorated state, and terminates at the ruins of a former tenant cottage. The foundation of this structure is visible above the surface, as well as the remains of a former well, now covered with a large piece of tin.

The sites of a former shingle mill and cotton gin are located in the southern portion of the property. The shingle mill was demolished and the cotton gin was moved to a location near the City of Toccoa. Today there is no surface evidence of either structure. Both are believed to have been located near the bed of a small branch.

Also on the nominated property is the original Prather Log Cabin. It is situated to the west of Yonah Dam Road at the northern corner of the property. It was built around 1830 and was moved to its present location in 1860. The structure is a one and one half story plain style residence sheathed in weatherboard with a single remaining end chimney that has crumbled below the roof line and a shed porch that runs across the front facade.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The Historic Preservation Section has determined that the photographs taken in November, 1981 still represent the character and appearance of the property. No significant changes have been made since that date.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

**Specific dates** 1830, 1857      **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

"Riverside" is significant in architecture, landscape architecture, and local history. In architecture it is significant as a fine example of an up-country antebellum Greek Revival plantation home with its characteristic columned porch. The property's architectural significance is also signified by the log house built c. 1830, when the Prather family first arrived, that shows the early frontier architecture of this region. The landscape architectural significance is derived from the formal gardens so rarely surviving from the antebellum period in Georgia, but seen here, although with a minimum of surviving planting, in much their original format with adjoining terraces cascading down toward the river from which the plantation took its name. This area of significance is also typified by the location of the main house on the highest elevation of the property. The house is significant in local history for the role the Prather family played in local activities, as cotton planters through both the good and bad times of that form of agriculture. It is also believed that General Robert Toombs visited here on his celebrated escape from the Yankees in 1865. The Prathers also intermarried with the Jarrett family, owners of nearby Traveler's Rest, and thus the latter descendants carried on the role in local activities of both families, as when James D. Prather was a state senator in 1911-12 and his wife was principal of the local elementary school. These areas of significance support property eligibility under National Register criteria A, B and C.

Architecturally, the original Prather residence and the present home illustrate the evolution of styles from the plain design of the log house to the formal Greek Revival design of the present residence. Structures in the area built at approximately the same time and built as part of similar scale plantations are more modest in design. This structure, believed built in 1857, contains structural members within the attic labeled with Roman Numerals. This unusual building technique implies that the structure was either moved or a prefabricated design. If prefabricated, the structure may have been built on site or the materials could have been shipped from another location. It is a fine example of local adaptation of the Greek Revival style in Georgia's up-country. Its columns, doorways and mantels all reflect elements of the style.

In landscape architectural terms, the Greek Revival residence is sited on a knoll overlooking the former floodplain lands. The topography slopes in all direction from the structure, giving it a dominant location. This sloping topography has been developed into a series of terraces to the front of the structure. The terrace closest to the house contains a formal landscape element - a garden of circular design dating from the 1850's. The planting beds within the circular form create an wheel design and illustrate the evolution from the simple circular and rectangular beds of earlier formal gardens. The beds are bordered by flat rocks, indigenous to the area. This surviving garden is a good illustration of formal garden styles of the antebellum period and is a unique feature within the Georgia Mountains region as well as the rest of the state.

(CONTINUED)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Attached Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 130 Acres

Quadrangle name Tugaloo Lake, S.C.-GA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

**UMT References**

A	1 7	2 8 9 6 6 0	3 8 3 5 3 6 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 7	2 9 0 7 7 0	3 8 3 5 7 0 0
E			
G			

B	1 7	2 9 0 4 6 0	3 8 3 5 7 9 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 7	2 9 0 3 6 0	3 8 3 4 8 4 0
F			
H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property includes the property on the east and west sides of Georgia Highway 184 that is still owned by the Prather family and two adjacent parcels that are owned by others but contain outbuildings or access to them. This property contains all the known historic resources associated with the Riverside plantation. It is marked on the enclosed sketch/tax map.

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title A) Dale Jaeger, Preservation Planner  
 B) Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr. Historian (Historic Preservation Section contact)  
 organization A) Georgia Mountains APDC  
 B) Historic Preservation Section, DNR date July 6, 1982  
 street & number A) P.O. Box 1720 A) 404 536-3431  
 B) 270 Washington Street, SW telephone B) 404 656-2840  
 city or town A) Gainesville  
 B) Atlanta state Georgia

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon  
 Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 8/5/82

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Romer Lee Prager</u>	date <u>9/21/82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Patrick Andrews</u>	date <u>9/16/82</u>
Chief of Registration	

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In local history, Riverside is significant due to its association with the Prather family, who have been residents of this area since the early 1800's. The first Prather to occupy this property, James Wallace, began farming the land, a livelihood continued by his descendants until the 1920's. The second Prather, Joseph Jeremiah Prather, was a Major in the Confederate Army and a friend of Robert Toombs. It is believed that Toombs visited Riverside in his escape from the Federal Troops in 1865 and an account of this visit appears in Pleasant A. Stovall's book, Robert Toombs: Statesman, Speaker, Soldier, Sage. The wife of Joseph Jeremiah, Sara Ann Jarrett Prather, was the daughter of Devereaux Jarrett, the former owner of Traveler's Rest or Jarrett Manor, a historic inn that is listed as a National Historic Landmark. Their son, James Devereaux, served as a State Senator from the 31st District in 1911-1912. His wife, Sarah Turnbull, was the principal of Riverside Elementary School, a community school. Joseph Turnbull Prather, son of Sarah Turnbull and James Devereaux, and his wife, Edna Tisdale, now occupy the family home.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

James Wallace Prather and his wife, Sarah Beale Prather, moved from Abbeville, South Carolina in the early 1800's and settled on the west side of the Tugaloo River. Purchasing approximately 1,000 acres, Prather farmed the land and built a log cabin for his family of seven children. In the 1850's, James Wallace Prather and his seventh child, Joseph Jeremiah Prather, built the present family residence, a two-story frame Greek Revival style structure. The residence was sited on a knoll overlooking the Tugaloo River and its adjoining floodplain and the property was appropriately named "Riverside".

Through most of its history, the Riverside has been a cotton plantation. A gin that presently stands near Toccoa was originally located within the property as well as a sawmill and blacksmith shop. Approximately 150 acres were used in the production of cotton and 150 additional acres were cultivated in corn, wheat, cane and other vegetables. Slaves were utilized in the farming operation prior to the Civil War and several former slave families remained at Riverside following the war. Today, the ruins of one tenant cottage is located to the southwest of the Prather residence. Cotton continued to be grown at Riverside until the market collapsed in the 1920's. Approximately 800 acres of the original plantation acreage was also sold at that time.

Much of the fertile floodplain land was inundated in the early 1960's by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the creation of Lake Hartwell. The construction of this lake had a direct effect on changing the economy of Stephens County from one of agriculture to one based on industries.

Riverside, which now encompasses approximately 130 acres, remains in the ownership of the Prather family. It is now used as a private residence for Joseph Turnbull Prather and his wife, Edna Tisdale Prather, the fourth generation of Prathers to occupy the property.

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HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Riverside is also significant in the area of historic archaeology. This significance is based on the present owners' knowledge of the location of various outbuildings that have stood on this plantation since its inception. These include the kitchen, horse stables, shingle mill and cotton gin. The location of two of these is shown on the enclosed "Sketch Map". It is also inferred from the definition of a plantation that slave quarters would have had to exist within reasonable distance of the main house and although their specific locations are not presently known, analysis of other similar antebellum plantations show these should be within the geographic range of the nominated property. Archaeological information about these former outbuildings could contribute to an understanding of the architectural, social, and economic history of this plantation. This information is unavailable elsewhere. No formal archaeological investigation has been performed at this location. This area of significance supports the property's eligibility under National Register Criteria D.

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Joseph Prather  
Route 3  
Prather Bridge Road  
Toccoa, GA 30557

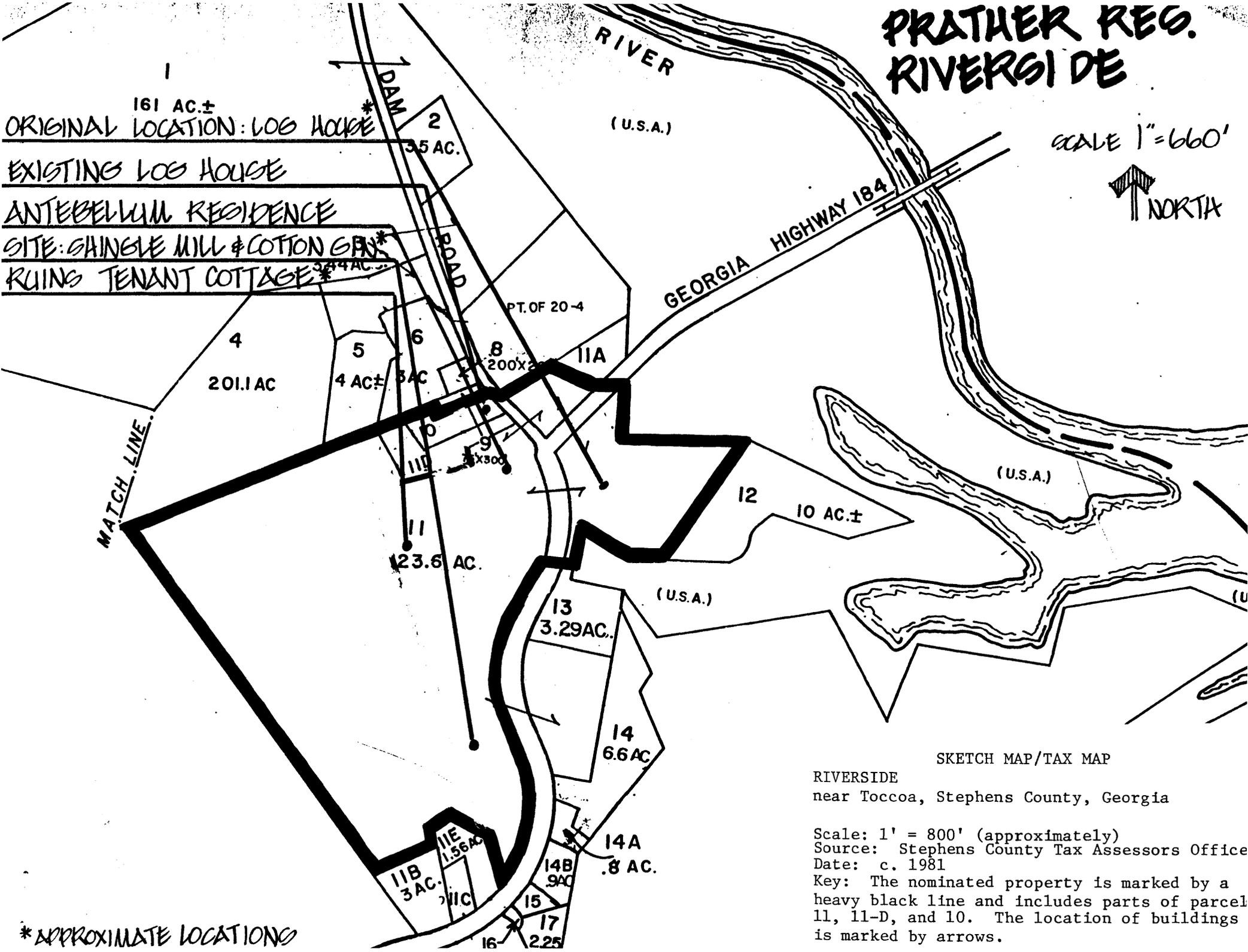
Mrs. Ruby Cleveland Littleton  
Route 1  
Mt. Airy, GA 30563

H. Donald and Gladys E. Tisdale  
Route 3  
Prather Bridge Road  
Toccoa, GA 30557



# PRATHER RES. RIVERSIDE

SCALE 1" = 660'



1  
161 AC.±  
ORIGINAL LOCATION: LOG HOUSE\*  
EXISTING LOG HOUSE  
ANTEBELLUM RESIDENCE  
SITE: SHINGLE MILL & COTTON GIN\*  
RUINS TENANT COTTAGE\*

2 3.5 AC.  
3 3 AC.  
4 20.1 AC.  
5 4 AC.±  
6 3 AC.  
7 200x200  
8 200x200  
9 200x300  
10  
11 23.6 AC.  
11A  
11B 3 AC.  
11C 1.56 AC.  
12 10 AC.±  
13 3.29 AC.  
14 6.6 AC.  
14A 8 AC.  
14B 9 AC.  
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SKETCH MAP/TAX MAP

RIVERSIDE  
near Toccoa, Stephens County, Georgia

Scale: 1' = 800' (approximately)  
Source: Stephens County Tax Assessors Office  
Date: c. 1981

Key: The nominated property is marked by a heavy black line and includes parts of parcel 11, 11-D, and 10. The location of buildings is marked by arrows.

\* APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS