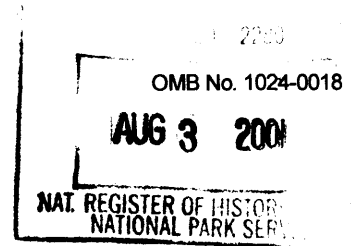


915



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name West Darien Historic District  
other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number Bounded by 8th Street, U.S. Highway 17, Darien River, and Cathead Creek  
city, town Darien (N/A) vicinity of  
county McIntosh code GA 191  
state Georgia code GA zip code 31305

(N/A) not for publication

**3. Classification**

**Ownership of Property:**

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

**Category of Property:**

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

**Number of Resources within Property:**

Noncontributing

Contributing

buildings	143	85
sites	8	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	151	85

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Richard Coover  
Signature of certifying official

7-20-01  
Date

for W. Ray Luce, Division Director and  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

9/17/01

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

---

## 6. Function or Use

---

### Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling  
DOMESTIC: hotel  
COMMERCE/TRADE: business  
COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution  
COMMERCE/TRADE: department store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant  
COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse  
RELIGION: religious facility

### Current Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
COMMERCE/TRADE: business  
COMMERCE/TRADE: professional  
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store  
RELIGION: religious facility

---

## 7. Description

---

### Architectural Classification:

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival  
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Bungalow/Craftsman

### Materials:

<b>foundation</b>	BRICK
<b>walls</b>	WOOD: weatherboard OTHER: tabby
<b>roof</b>	METAL ASPHALT
<b>other</b>	N/A

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

Darien is located approximately 70 miles south of Savannah on the northern bank of the Altamaha River and is bordered on the east by the Atlantic Ocean. It is the county seat of McIntosh County and the largest community in the largely rural county. Located on a bluff north of the Darien River, the West Darien Historic District consists of prehistoric and historic archaeological sites and intact, contiguous historic residential, commercial, and community landmark buildings constructed from the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

late 19th to the early 20th century on the west side of the city of Darien. The district is bounded on the east by U.S. 17, on the south by the Darien River, on the west by Cathead Creek, and on the north by nonhistoric development. On the east side of U.S. 17 is the National Register-listed (March 14, 1985) Vernon Square-Columbus Square Historic District encompassing two mid-19<sup>th</sup>- to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential wards.

### Summary description

The streets are laid out on a gridiron pattern based on the 1806 Darien plan (see Attachment 1), although there is only one extant building dating from the first half of the 19th century because the town was burned in 1863 by Union troops. The district contains three distinct areas of historic resources: the commercial area, along Broad Street and U.S. 17; the white residential area, north and west of the commercial district; and Mentionville, an African-American neighborhood situated on the high bluffs of Cat Head Creek along River Road in the northern part of the district. The pre-1930s commercial buildings within the district are one- to two-stories, attached and freestanding, load-bearing masonry buildings with multiple storefronts, display windows, false parapets, and few or no stylistic elements. Some of the buildings have a stucco veneer and others have the understated decorative brickwork common in the 20th-century commercial style. After 1930, the commercial buildings are freestanding, concrete-block or wood-frame buildings with only one storefront. The residential area of the district has several house types with both one- and two-story houses constructed mostly of wood. The house types represented are Georgian cottage, Georgian house, I-house, front-gable and side-gable bungalow, and side-gable cottage. Although minimal, the stylistic influences within the district are Colonial Revival and Craftsman. In the Mentionville neighborhood, the houses are more modest and situated on smaller lots. The house types found here are front-gable bungalow, shotgun, hall-parlor, and central hall. The churches within the district include the Darien First Presbyterian Church (c.1900) and the St. John's Baptist Church (c.1920). The district is situated on sandy, flat coastal terrain with mature oaks with Spanish moss, pines, magnolia, and maple trees, and other indigenous plants and shrubs. Natural and geographic features include a pronounced river bluff and surrounding marshlands. The prehistoric archaeological sites are mostly middens located along Cathead Creek and date from the Deptford and Late Swift Creek occupations. The historic archeological sites described in this nomination are located in the Cathead Creek area, along Second Street, and the waterfront area. Investigations of historic archaeological sites in the district have yielded information on a timber-industry river landing, evidence of a sawmill landing, antebellum plantations later developed into a postbellum African-American neighborhood, and a 19<sup>th</sup>-century waterfront tavern.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

#### Description of Environment

The coastal area of McIntosh County is bordered by a sand ridge which measures 4.8 to 8.0 kilometers (3 to 5 miles) in width and 6 to 12 meters (20 to 40 feet) in height. The land is nearly level and is characterized by the slow-moving Altamaha River which develops a wide, swampy floodplain and tidal marshes as it flows toward the Atlantic Ocean. The Altamaha River is the southernmost river on the Atlantic Seaboard to originate in the Piedmont and is formed by the confluence of the Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers upstate in Georgia. Underlying Darien at the depth of approximately 183 meters (600 feet) is a limestone artesian aquifer with slowly permeable clay beds above and below the water.

Darien's coastal climate is moderated by the Atlantic Ocean with average temperature from 70 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and an average of 55 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter. Light freezes in the winter are common but temperatures below 20 degrees Fahrenheit are rare. The average annual precipitation is 50 inches with the majority of rainfall occurring in the summer.

The soils in the Darien area are of the Galestown series. All archaeological resources found were in Galestown fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes, which is the major soil type in Darien. The soils in the McIntosh County area are generally characterized by poor drainage but productive for crops with adequate drainage methods. The virgin forests of slash pines, longleaf pine, loblolly pine, cypress, oak, hickory, and other hardwoods were depleted from the numerous sawmilling, logging, and naval stores industries during the historic period. Second-growth stands were also used for these industries and the lowland forests today are characterized by poor-quality hardwoods.

The woodlands and swamps provide habitats for various native fauna including whitetail deer, turkeys, squirrels, raccoons, opossums, and the like. The marshes provided nesting areas for a variety of marshland birds including wood ducks, marsh hens, gallinules, and various non-game birds. Darien's river and coastal waters are an important source of estuary and marine resources including crabs, shrimp, fish, and oysters. Commercial harvesting of marine resources continues to be an important part of Darien's economy.

A low bluff just north of the Darien River forms the natural setting for Darien and the prehistoric occupations which preceded it. North of Darien is level land with low, north-south trending ridges interspersed with swamplands. South of Darien are the Darien and Altamaha rivers and a broad expanse of tidal marsh.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

#### General Layout and Plan

The general character of the district is that of a late 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century concentration of residential and commercial buildings that make up the western section of a small, yet significant, 19<sup>th</sup>-century coastal town. The grid plan of the district was surveyed in 1806, yet practically all the historic structural resources date from after the Civil War due to the fact that the town was set on fire and destroyed in 1863 by Union forces (see Attachment 2). With one antebellum exception, the oldest extant residential and commercial resources in the district were built during the New South era (1870-1910), which coincided with the town's return to prosperity as the second largest exporting port for timber on the southeastern coast (see Attachment 3). Sawmills were located on both Cathead Creek and the Darien River, each of which form the western and southern borders of the district, respectively. Additionally, wharfs and warehouses lined the river bluff in front of Broad Street. This era of opportunity and wealth is reflected in the fine frame cottages and hotels as well as the numerous stores and warehouses that were built during this boom period. The more recent historic resources, which are much more utilitarian in nature, were built during a second period of development (1910-1940s) which reflects a period of transition from the declining timber industry to the establishment of a more diversified economic base made up of a number of smaller industries such as shrimping and fishing, tourism, and automobile-related services.

The relationship of the pattern of land subdivision to the natural terrain can be described as a grid plan superimposed on an irregular land area, giving the plan a slightly inverted effect (not quite north-south, east-west). In those sections of the district that border marshlands and creeks, the grid system is abandoned and is replaced with irregular shaped lots.

The streets are laid out in a grid pattern that was surveyed in 1806 by Thomas McCall. The lots are rectangular in shape, and the number of lots per block varies. One major square, Bayard Square, encompasses one whole block bounded by 4<sup>th</sup>, Clark, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Jackson streets and was reserved for public use, although it has been the site of the First Presbyterian Church since 1876. Bayard Square has remained informal in character since its development, unlike the more formal, planned squares of Savannah. The placement of buildings on lots within the district is haphazard; there is no established setback, many of the buildings are not centered on their respective lots, and some buildings are situated on more than one lot. Density of development is moderate throughout the district, although the distribution of buildings is slightly heavier near the river bluff (along First, Second, and Broad streets). Streets throughout the district retain their historic narrow width, without curbing or shoulders, and blend seamlessly into the informal, minimally landscaped yards that characterize the residential area of the district.

U.S. Highway 17, which serves as the eastern boundary of the district, is a major thoroughfare that

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

cuts through the grid plan of the city on a northeast then northwest course. Widening of the highway and nonhistoric commercial development along its length separate the West Darien Historic District from the Vernon Square-Columbus Square Historic District (National Register listed March 14, 1985). The area on the eastern side of U.S. Highway is the original section of Darien that was formed in 1767 and patterned after Oglethorpe's plan for Savannah. The eastern area of town is more closely associated with the Colonial period, while the western section (the West Darien Historic District) is associated with Darien's period of expansion that occurred after the end of Revolutionary War. Although nearly the entire stock of historic resources in Darien date from 1870 to 1910 following the burning of the town in 1863, the western section of town was rebuilt slightly later than the eastern part, and the residential structures in this section tend to be grander in style and scale. The U.S. Highway 17 bridge at the southern city limits is the northernmost bridge in a more than three-mile long causeway that spans the Darien, Butler, Altamaha, and South Altamaha Rivers (photograph 3). The bridge was constructed in 1944 and is an early example of a long-span continuous-cantilever deck girder bridge. Although not included in the West Darien Historic District, the bridge is considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and was documented by the Georgia Department of Transportation in the Georgia Historic Bridge Survey (1995).

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AND RESOURCES

Numerous prehistoric and historic archaeological investigations have occurred in the general Darien area from late 19<sup>th</sup> century prehistoric mound excavations to present day. Two of these archaeological investigations occurred within the boundaries of the West Darien Historic District: Garrow and Seabury in 1978; and Dickinson, Wayne, and Melendez in 1983. Documented archaeological sites are concentrated along the edges of the bluffs along Cathead Creek and the Darien River.

#### **Garrow and Seabury Investigation (1978)**

NOTE: The following description is summarized from the report: Patrick H. Garrow and Patricia M. Seabury, Earth Systems Division, SSI, Marietta, Georgia. "Archaeological Monitoring Waterworks Improvement Project, Darien, Georgia, project number ES-902, June 15, 1978." On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

In 1978, a waterworks improvements project for the city of Darien was undertaken to provide a water system throughout the city. The project area included almost all the city streets. Due to the high probability of prehistoric and historic archaeological resources, an archaeologist was required to be

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

on site at all times to monitor the construction and document all prehistoric and historic finds. However, archaeological excavations and investigations of found sites were not within the scope of the project. Patrick H. Garrow, principal investigator, and Patricia M. Seabury, project archaeologist, of Earth Systems Division SSI of Marietta, Georgia, were the project archaeologists. Although the project area included the entire city, only archaeological resources found within the West Darien Historic District boundaries will be discussed in this nomination.

The methodology for the project consisted of using a backhoe and trenchliner to construct a water line trench along existing city streets with dimensions of approximately 80 centimeters (31.5 inches) in width and 1.3 meters (4.27 feet) in depth. A backhoe and road grader were used to refill the trench after placement of the water pipes. Dirt removed for the trench was continually examined for cultural remains and trench walls and floors were periodically checked for any evidence of archaeological resources. An archaeological site was defined as an area of undisturbed primary deposition with one or more stratigraphic zones and associated artifacts. Artifacts from a defined archaeological site were recovered and trench walls were scraped clean with a trowel, stratigraphic zones outlined, and scaled, detailed maps were drawn, photographs were taken, and *in situ* artifacts removed. Artifacts within recently disturbed fill without any discernible archaeological features, having no archaeological significance, were simply recovered.

Five archaeological sites within the historic district boundaries were recorded. Since excavation was beyond the scope of the project, an attempt was made to delineate the extent of the archaeological sites for future investigations and protection. Most sites were evident in the trench wall along the existing paved streets which suggests that the sites continue beneath the street; testing was performed on the opposite side of the street in such cases. Testing was executed with probes, shovel pits, and trenches to the depth below the deepest stratigraphic zone of each site. The five sites are described below with Georgia State Site number and project name and number.

#### 09MC201 Davis Site (x12)

The Davis site along Cathead Creek is a large dump site dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Located at the corner of Houston and Second streets, the site extends approximately 50 feet north and 40 feet east along the water line trench. Artifacts from this site include several c.1900 torpedo bottles, 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramics, a locally produced salt-glazed stoneware storage jar with shell particles evident in the paste, cast machinery parts, and a large metal safe. The extent of the site is westerly to Cathead Creek along the banks.

#### 09MC202 White Site (x22)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

The White site is a portion of a late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century drainage system used by the city of Darien. Located 65 feet south of Broad Street on the east side of Scriven Street is a U-shaped laid brick structure evident on both sides of the trench walls. A decomposing wood section is evident in the center fill and could be the remnant of a drainage cover. Fill in the structure contained clear glass fragments and an unidentifiable late historic ceramic sherd. No historical documentation was available to provide an exact date of construction, but long-time residents confirm that the drainage system had a wood cover and believe it was built in the late 1800s and used until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 09MC214 Houston Site (x23)

The Houston site is a possible historic shell midden or oyster dump station. Located 32 feet south of the northwest corner of the intersection of Houston and Third streets, the midden is evident only on the south wall of the water line trench and is composed of oyster shell. One historic glass fragment, possibly a wine bottle, was found *in situ*. In the disturbed fill above the midden, a 19<sup>th</sup> century mottled slip decorated stoneware sherd was found. No historical documentation was found to confirm the date of the midden.

#### 09MC248 Sawyer Site (x24)

The Sawyer site is a large shell midden dating from 700-900 A.D. Located 184 feet west of the northwest corner of Houston and Third streets, the midden was evident on both sides of the trench and extends north and south of the trench. The site is composed predominately of oyster shell. One prehistoric sherd was recovered. The sherd was identified as a Kelvin Complicated Stamped-type and dates from 700-900 A.D. The Sawyer site is contemporaneous and in proximity to the Rodgers site (below).

#### 09MC249 Rogers Site (x25)

The Rogers site is a small bowl-shaped shell midden dating from 700-900 A.D. Located 150 feet west from the southwest corner of Houston and Fourth streets, the site is composed of oyster and clam shells. Three prehistoric sherds from the same vessel were found and identified as Kelvin Plain dating from 700-900 A.D. The Rogers and Sawyer sites are contemporaneous and located in proximity to each other.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

#### Archaeological Sensitive Areas

From the archaeological monitoring of the water line construction, areas within the historic district boundary were designated as archaeologically sensitive due to their potential to yield cultural resources. These areas were defined on the basis of geographical and resource advantages including elevated land surfaces, proximity to marine and forest environs, and suitability for defense and mobility; known historical events occurring in the area; and known archaeological resources. Within the historic district boundary, the Sumner Area was designated as archaeologically sensitive due to its geographical attributes and presence of two Kelvin-phase shell middens—the Sawyer (x24) and Rogers (x25) sites. The Houston site (x23) is isolated from the shell concentration and is on the periphery of the area. The Sumner area is approximately 0.013 square miles and is located along the high bluff along Cathead Creek at the west end of Third and Fourth streets. The area is suitable for prehistoric habitation as a high bluff along the creek before its confluence with the Darien River, providing a visual overlook of the marshes and travel on the Altamaha River. The Sawyer and Rogers sites date from the coastal Kelvin Phase 700-900 A.D. Along with previous finds at the nearby Fort King George Historical site (east of the district), the sites represent the earliest recorded occupations along the Darien waterfront. Although within a residential neighborhood, the Sumner area is largely undisturbed, and there are undeveloped areas within the Sumner area and along Cathead Creek.

Based on the findings of the Garrow and Seabury investigations, the Darien Archaeological District was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on December 1, 1981 (see Attachment 4). The area of the determined-eligible archaeological district within the West Darien Historic District boundaries is indicated by a dashed line on attachment 4.

#### **Dickinson, Wayne, and Melendez Investigation (1983)**

The results of the water line construction project in 1978 and the delineation of the National Register-eligible archaeological district were used to develop the scope of the survey conducted by Water and Air Research, Inc., prior to the construction of a central sewer system in the city of Darien in the fall of 1983. Surveyed areas included previously identified archaeologically sensitive locations and areas not included in the 1978 project. It was determined that installation of the sewer lines would impact National Register-eligible cultural resources, and research goals were developed to guide mitigation of the federally funded project. The project was conducted by Martin F. Dickinson, principal investigator, Lucy B. Wayne, project archaeologist, and Marisol J. Melendez, co-author. Out of 38,400 feet of sewer easement surveyed, 17,170 feet produced archaeological materials, and the locations were assessed in terms of their significance according to National Register Criteria.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

Areas recommended for future study were identified and are considered National Register-eligible on their own merits as well as contributing to the determined-eligible Darien Archaeological District and the nominated West Darien Historic District. Although five areas in Darien were identified in the project study, only those within the boundaries of the West Darien Historic District will be discussed in this nomination (see Attachment 5). Georgia State Site numbers and project-assigned site numbers and names are used throughout this section.

NOTE: The following description is summarized from the report: Martin F. Dickinson, Lucy B. Wayne, and Marisol J. Melendez, Water and Air Research, Inc., Gainesville, Florida. "Cultural Resource Impact Mitigation for the Darien, Georgia Sewer System Project, March 1986." On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

#### Summary description of the archaeological areas identified in the 1983 study

Located in the vicinity of West, Fourth, Houston, and Elbert streets, the Cathead Creek Archaeological Area (Georgia State Site number 09MC360) (project numbers D-1, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, and FM-B lines) is a large multicomponent site comprised of a shell midden and prehistoric and historic cultural deposits. Prehistoric occupation is evidenced by the presence of Deptford and Late Swift Creek ceramics. Evidence of historic occupation as early as 1838 was found, and an 1869 map of the area shows a group of small farms with associated fences and outbuildings. An early 20<sup>th</sup>-century timber-industry landing also is believed to have been located in the area. The archaeological resources in this area are largely undisturbed due to the low-density residential nature of the area, limited filling along Cathead Creek, and limited utility disturbance.

The area identified as the Historic Darien Archaeological Area researched for the sewer system project within the West Darien Historic District boundaries includes the Second Street site (Georgia State Site number 09MC361) between Jackson and Second streets. The Second Street site is located along the rear of an early house site according to archival data and early 19<sup>th</sup>-century deposits were recovered during the survey.

The Waterfront District (Georgia State Site number 09MC367) (project numbers E-1 and FM-C lines) includes the 1810-1830 tabby ruins located on the top of the bluff and at river level along Darien's waterfront. Serving the timber and shipping industries, the tabby buildings historically housed warehouses, shops, and taverns according to archival data. The area was also the location of a lumber mill and the Magnolia Hotel.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

#### Project goals

The main project goal of the 1983 investigation was to salvage data that would be destroyed during the sewer system construction and provide guidance for future decisions related to preservation, interpretation, and/or research in the area. Due to the nature of the mitigation project, only limited portions of the sites could be studied. The prehistoric sites were approached as examples of nonbarrier island sites and examined within the context of models of settlement/economic systems, and the historic sites were examined within the context of an antebellum coastal port city. Specific research questions and data-collection methodologies were formulated for each site. The project methodology focused on: an assessment of the nature of the deposits, identification of the recovered material, correlation of midden or features with specific structures, and publication of the results for future researchers to use.

#### Methodology

Background research included using environmental data to define the research area and document changes in the environment through time. Major sources consulted included sea level studies, marine resource studies, maps, 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century descriptions of the area, aerial photography, soil surveys, and vegetation studies. Previous cultural resource studies in the area and other archaeological investigations in the Georgia coastal area were consulted for guidance on research problems, comparative data, and regional and local cultural history. Other resources consulted included maps, photographs, local and regional histories, public records, newspapers, and oral histories.

Field research in the investigated area followed the new sewer line construction route. It was limited to a two-meter-wide ditch with minor surface damage in an eight-meter wide corridor. In areas where intensive survey had documented a thin layer of recently deposited or altered soil, a light road grader was used to remove the soil to the undisturbed substrata under the direct supervision of the project archaeologists. Final exposure of the surface plane was done by hand. Site plans for each site were drawn. Individual test units were established in multiples of one meter, and all units were excavated in arbitrary 10 cm levels based on an arbitrary datum point tied to a temporary benchmark. Features and column samples were taken as total samples for possible fine screening in the lab. Column samples ranged from 25 x 25 cm to 1 x 1 meter samples. All other excavations were screened through ¼-inch mesh in the field. Cultural and faunal material were labeled as to location and retained for analysis.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

#### Laboratory and Analysis Methods

Laboratory procedures included washing, sorting, and cataloging all the recovered cultural material. All the work was completed at Water and Air Research, Inc., (WAR) in Gainesville, Florida. Five categories of field sample bags were analyzed:

1. Regular field samples—matrix, nonfeature material, surface scrapes, surface collection, trenches, or profile cleaning. These were screened with ¼-inch screen and washed.
2. Feature field samples—material collected as a total sample from a designated feature. These were not screened in the field, but were dry-screened through a ¼-inch mesh for artifacts. Soil was retained for possible future analysis.
3. Column samples—taken as a total sample in the field and not screened. Only one column sample from the Cathead Creek site was completely processed; others are stored at WAR.
4. Burials—after removal in the field, human remains were analyzed by Karen Burns, forensic anthropologist, at the Florida State Museum in Gainesville, Florida.
5. Radiocarbon samples—were analyzed at Beta Analytic in Miami, Florida.

Samples were sorted according to material. Artifacts were catalogued using a group/class/type classification system. Aboriginal artifacts were categorized by ceramics, lithics, and utilized fauna. Historic artifacts were categorized by eight groups (kitchen, architecture, arms, furniture, clothing, personal, tobacco pipe, and activities), 42 classes, and 56 ceramic types.

#### Description of Archaeological Sites Investigated in 1983

The sites are designated by Georgia State Site number, site name, and project number. Excavation units are designated by sewer line number and then unit number (example: E-1#1 refers to Unit 1 on the E-1 sewer line. Only sites within the West Darien Historic District boundary are discussed in this nomination.

#### 09MC360 - Cathead Creek Site

The Cathead Creek site (sewer lines C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, D-1, and FM-C) is a large, multicomponent site on the northwest side of the district. The area is on a bluff at the junction of Cathead Creek and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

the Darien River. Evidence of prehistoric occupation includes an extensive shell midden on West Street adjacent to a small spring and the existence of Deptford/Wilmington period ceramics. The area was occupied in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as indicated by foundations of a tabby house built prior to 1838 that are beneath the current Maudlin House. After the Civil War, a number of small farms were located in the area. A late 19<sup>th</sup> century landing related to the timber industry was located at the end of Fourth Street. Artifacts relating to these historic occupations were recovered throughout the area.

For the project, the Cathead Creek site was divided into three sub-areas generally corresponding to the location of sewer lines along Fourth, Houston, and West streets.

Unit C-1#1 – Originally a 1 x 1-meter unit, it was expanded to a 2 x 2-meter unit with the discovery of a large pit-shaped feature (feature 1). Feature 1 consisted of a large circular pit of dark yellowish brown sand with sherds and charcoal about 50 cm in diameter. Possibly a storage pit, charcoal from Levels 3 and 4 radiocarbon-dated to 200 B.C. +/- 50, placing the feature within the Deptford period of occupation. The matrix of Unit 1 consisted of fairly uniform sand of a dark yellowish brown grading to yellowish brown. The matrix contained aboriginal ceramics (75.5 percent), lithics (3.4 percent), historic ceramics (1.7 percent), glass (wine, miscellaneous bottle and window) (3.7 percent), cut nails (4.7 percent), miscellaneous architectural elements (10.4 percent), and one fishing weight (0.3 percent). All historic artifacts of the kitchen group came from Level 1; the rest came from Levels 1 to 4. Historic ceramics consisted of three plain whiteware, one slip glazed stoneware, and one miscellaneous stoneware. The aboriginal ceramics from the matrix consisted of three Deptford cluster, two Wilmington cluster, two Swift Creek, two cord marked cluster, six complicated stamped cluster, one other red film, 120 indeterminate cluster, and 88 small sherds.

Unit C-1#2 – A 1 x 1-meter unit encompassing a concentration of oyster shell and historic and prehistoric remains. The matrix of Unit 2 consisted of two distinct layers: layer A (0 to 8 cm below datum) was a midden layer consisting of dark brown sand with oyster shell and a mixture of historic and prehistoric artifacts, and layer B (8 to 40 cm below datum) consisted of yellowish brown sand containing only aboriginal artifacts. The recovered artifacts are interpreted as midden deposition related to the occupation evidenced by Unit 1, Feature 1.

Unit C-1#3 – A 1 x 1-meter unit excavated down to 40 cm below datum. Thirty-one sherds and three flakes were recovered from the unit. As with Unit 2, this deposit represents the midden refuse associated with occupation of this portion of the Cathead Creek site.

Unit C-2#1 – A 1 x 1-meter unit excavated to 40 cm below datum that encompassed a posthole and small shell concentration. The matrix consisted of dark yellowish brown sand grading to yellowish brown sand, and the artifacts were predominately aboriginal. The artifacts consisted of 22 sherds,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

three flakes, one broken point, one cut nail in Level 2, and three miscellaneous metal in Level 3. The sherds were identified as two complicated stamped cluster, one cord marked cluster, one other red film cluster, four indeterminate cluster, and 14 small sherds.

**Unit C-2#2** – A 1 x 2-meter unit excavated to 60 cm below datum that encompassed two small concentrations of shell and exposed sherds. Artifacts were 97.4 percent from the aboriginal group: 180 sherds and five lithics. The matrix consisted of two layers: Layer A (0 to 48 cm below datum) consisted of dark brown to dark yellowish brown sand with oyster shell and artifacts, and Layer B (48 to 60 cm below datum) consisted of brownish yellow to dark yellowish brown sands with very few artifacts. Ceramics for Layer A consisted of: one Deptford cluster, one check stamped cluster, three cord marked cluster, six complicated stamped cluster, 47 indeterminate cluster, and 101 small sherds. Human teeth were recovered from Levels 1 and 2, Layer A. Layer B had 20 sherds: 13 small sherds, six indeterminate cluster, and one check stamped cluster. Layer A appears to be an individual household midden.

**Unit C-2#3** – A 1 x 1-meter unit encompassing a feature (Feature 1) of crushed shell. Human remains were exposed as part of Feature 1 and the unit was expanded to a 2 x 2-meter unit. The unit was excavated to 30 cm below datum for the matrix and 40 cm below datum for Feature 2, a shell concentration. The matrix consisted of dark yellowish brown sand grading to brownish yellow sand with depth. Level 1 contained a large amount of oyster shell. Aboriginal ceramics included one complicated stamped cluster, six indeterminate cluster, and 11 small sherds. The unit had two large features, one burial and two postholes. Feature 1 consisted of a large amount of oyster shell, aboriginal sherds, and human remains. Faunal material for Feature 1 included: Crassostrea virginica, Geukensia demissa, Tagelus plebeius, Polymesoda caroliniana (cf), cf Mercenaria campechensis, cf Melongenidae, Kinosternidae, large mammal (30 fragments), unidentified bone (cf aves/mammal), and unidentified mammal. Artifacts for Feature 1 consisted of 11 aboriginal sherds: five indeterminate cluster and six small sherds.

Burial 2 was contained within Feature 1. Faunal material recovered in association with the burial included: Crassostrea virginica, Tagelus plebeius, Geukensia demissa, land snail, unidentified bone and shell, Polymesoda caroliniana, and one human incisor. There were four aboriginal sherds associated with Burial 2: one plain/fine sand and three small sherds. The burial consisted of incomplete remains of one adult and one newborn infant or term fetus. Location of the body elements in a relatively small area may be consistent with a flexed burial. Recovery of only partial remains is probably a result of historic period disturbance of the area and poor preservation.

Feature 2 consisted of a concentration of oyster shell and artifacts in a dark yellowish brown matrix

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

and extended 0 to 50 cm below datum. Fauna associated with the feature included: Crassostrea virginica, cf Geukensia demissa, Tagelus plebius, unidentified shell (cf Chione cancellata), aves/mammal, and unidentified shell. The feature also contained ceramics from the St. Simons, Deptford, complicated stamped, and indeterminate clusters.

Two historic postholes were found. Posthole #1, located 4 cm below datum, measured 16 x 36 cm and contained a large amount of brick and glass. Posthole #2, located 10 cm below datum and extended 34 cm below datum, consisted of a round stain of dark brown sand with artifacts and a small amount of oyster shell. Both postholes area associated with fence lines which once extended along Houston Street.

Unit C-2#4 – A 1 x 1-meter unit encompassing an area of dark stain and mottled sand. The matrix for Level 1 consisted of dark brown sand mottled with a very dark grayish brown sand in the west half and yellowish brown sand in the east half. Levels 1 to 3 contained small amounts of oyster shell. The only artifact recovered was a flake from Level 3. The unit appeared to have been placed in the area of an old dirt road bed.

Unit C-2#5 – A 1 x 1-meter unit excavated to 50 cm below datum. The matrix consisted of yellowish brown sand. Feature 1, Level 2 consisted of dark yellowish brown sand with sherds and charcoal and extended 50 cm below datum. Three fiber/sand-tempered sherds (St. Simons cluster) were recovered from 20 cm below datum: one simple stamped and two cross stamped. Artifacts recovered from the matrix included: 12 aboriginal sherds, two flakes, two miscellaneous bottle glass, and one miscellaneous metal. Most of the artifacts came from Level 1.

Unit C-3#1 – A 1 x 2-meter unit in an area of sherd and shell scatter. Level 1 had miscellaneous bottle and glass and one lead shot, and Level 3 had one flake. Aboriginal sherds recovered were identified as four Deptford cluster, eight Wilmington/Savannah cluster, eight complicated stamped cluster, 36 indeterminate cluster, and 95 small sherds.

Unit FM-B#1 – A 1 x 2-meter unit excavated to 30 cm below datum in an area of sherd concentration. Sherds consisted of one Irene punctuate/sand temper, 18 indeterminate cluster, and nine small sherds.

The D-1 line along West Street contained a deep, extensive shell midden with evidence of both prehistoric and 19<sup>th</sup> century historic occupations. The midden within the sewer corridor was covered with thick roadfill consisting of clays, sand, and limestone. A unit at the site of the antebellum Dr. James Troup home as well as a late 19<sup>th</sup> century timber landing was hand excavated with permission



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

of the property owners.

**Unit D-1#1** – A 1 x 1-meter unit excavated to 228 cm below datum and expanded another 1 x 2 meters to facilitate removal of a human burial. The stratigraphy consisted of five main layers: Stratum A—historic midden, Stratum B—prehistoric midden, Stratum C-1—prehistoric, nonshell midden, and Stratum C-2—nonshell midden, prehistoric burial level.

Stratum A, the historic midden (58 to 98 cm below datum), consisted of black soil with dense historic refuse dating to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The layer contained a large amount of oyster shell, brick, tabby, and artifacts. A mean ceramic date of 1820.7 was obtained from 247 ceramic sherds. The dominant types of ceramics were transfer printed pearlware, plain whiteware, plain pearlware, and plain creamware. Other abundant historic artifacts were cut nails and miscellaneous bottle glass. Stratum A also contained a large number of aboriginal ceramics, assigned to the small sherds, indeterminate, complicated stamped, check stamped, cord marked, and Swift Creek clusters.

Stratum B, the prehistoric shell midden (98 to 148 cm below datum), consisted of very dark grayish brown sand with a large amount of oyster shell, aboriginal ceramics, and a few historic artifacts. Historic ceramic types resemble those of Stratum A. Ninety-seven percent of the artifacts recovered were aboriginal sherds including Deptford, check stamped, complicated stamped, and Swift Creek clusters.

Stratum B-1 consisted of Levels 6 to 9 (108 to 148 cm below datum) and was comprised of very dark grayish brown sand with oyster shells. Oyster shell recovered from these four 1 x 1-meter levels totaled 164.9 kilograms. The artifacts are all aboriginal with the exception of one piece of metal and one cut nail. The major aboriginal ceramic clusters are check stamped, complicated stamped, and Deptford. One Irene Filfot sherd was recovered.

Stratum C-1, the prehistoric nonshell midden layer, extended 148 to 178 cm below datum and consisted of dark brown sand mottled with brown sand with small amounts of oyster shell. Aboriginal sherds belonged to the cord marked, check stamped, complicated stamped, Deptford, and Swift Creek clusters. Feature 2 was a charcoal deposit with shell within Stratum C-1. It extended from 139 to 179 cm below datum and was approximately 75 cm in width. The feature was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 1110 +/- 100. This date placed the feature within the Savannah period, and the feature appears to have been a hearth.

The burial level (Stratum C-2) extended from 178 to 198 cm below datum and consisted of yellowish brown sand with scattered oyster shell and a human burial. Artifacts were 100 percent aboriginal

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

ceramics grouped into complicated stamped, cord marked, and Swift Creek clusters. Burial 1 was encountered at 184 cm below datum and is of a 25 to 30-year old female, buried face down with hands extended along the sides. The burial was associated with a Deptford sherd, and radiocarbon dated to A.D. 900 +/- 80. No burial pit was evident around the remains.

Unit D-1#3 – A 1 x 1-meter unit at the northeast end of West Street. Stratigraphy for the unit consisted of three main layers.

Stratum A was historic midden from 0 to 20 cm below datum. This stratum consisted of a very dark grayish brown sandy loam containing whole and fragmented oyster shell with historic and aboriginal artifacts. Artifacts consisted primarily of aboriginal sherds (84 percent) with examples of Deptford, check stamped, and complicated stamped clusters. Historic material represented 16 percent of the assemblage. Two historic ceramic sherds were recovered, plain pearlware and blue hand painted pearlware. The largest classes of historic artifacts are miscellaneous bottle glass and construction hardware.

Stratum B, prehistoric midden (20 to 60 cm below datum), consisted of yellowish brown sand with dark grayish brown sand. Aboriginal ceramics were identified as of the Swift Creek, complicated stamped, and Deptford clusters. Nine flakes were also recovered.

Stratum C extended to 110 cm below datum and consisted of Feature 1. Feature 1 materials were 100 percent aboriginal with one complicated stamped sherd and unusually large, well preserved (whole) oyster shell halves (Levels 4 to 6). Based on the Swift Creek sherds in Stratum A and the complicated stamped sherd in Feature 1, the feature is thought to be a Swift Creek period storage pit.

Unit D-1#4 – A 1 x 1-meter unit at the southeast end of West Street. The stratigraphy consisted of two main layers: an oyster midden (50 cm below datum), and a nonmidden layer (50 to 80 cm below datum). Due to the disturbance caused by two water pipelines running north-south through the unit, there were historical materials mixed in all levels of the midden. The midden soil consisted on very dark gray sand with a large amount of oyster shell. Levels 3 and 4 had an average of 35 kilograms of oyster shell per level. This dropped to 6.8 kilograms of shell for Level 5.

The artifacts from the midden layer were 77 percent aboriginal. The midden layer had 15 flakes and ceramics of the complicated stamped, Swift Creek, check stamped clusters. The dominant classes of historic artifacts were miscellaneous bottle glass and cut nails with limited amounts of wine bottle and window glass. Only three historic sherds were recovered: blue hand painted pearlware, plain

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

whiteware and hand painted whiteware.

The nonmidden layer extended from 50 to 80 cm below datum. It consisted of yellowish brown sand with very little shell and a small amount of aboriginal artifacts including small sherds and flakes. No features were identified in Unit 4. The deposition of this unit is typical of shell midden areas of D-1 line is historic material, primarily antebellum types, mixed with prehistoric in the upper levels.

Units D-1#5 and #5B—A 1 X 1-meter unit expanded 1 X 1-meters to the north to facilitate the removal of Feature 1. The stratigraphy consisted of two main layers and one sublayer: Layer A – historic midden – consisted of black sand with crushed shell containing historic and aboriginal artifacts; Layer A-1 – prehistoric midden – consisted of crushed oyster shell, whole oyster shell, and aboriginal artifacts; and Layer B – consisted of yellowish brown sand with small amounts of shell, bone, and artifacts and two features.

The historic midden contained a large amount of crushed oyster shell with a high percentage of historic artifacts. The historic material decreased with depth ranging from 89 to 82 percent for Level 1 down to 30 percent for Level 4 of Unit #5 and 25 percent for Level 3 of Unit 5B. Main classes of historic artifacts were pharmaceutical glass (13.8 percent), cut nails, miscellaneous bottle glass, and ceramics. The pharmaceutical glass appears to date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century and seems to be the result of a localized dumping incident, as it does not appear in such high numbers in other units of the site. The midden also contained a number of furniture hardware items. The dominant ceramics were plain and transfer printed whiteware. A mean ceramic date of 1840.3 was obtained from 43 fragments. The midden also contained a high percentage of aboriginal ceramics. Ceramics of the complicated stamped, Deptford, and Swift Creek clusters were identified.

The prehistoric midden (Levels 4 and 5 of Unit 5B) showed an increase in the amount of oyster shell, particularly large whole oyster shell, bone, and aboriginal remains (97 percent of the artifacts). Historic artifacts recovered were one transfer printed pearlware, two miscellaneous bottle glass, two cut nails, one construction hardware, and six miscellaneous architecture. Aboriginal artifacts consisted of 199 sherds, four flakes, and one bead. Ceramics were from the check stamped, complicated stamped, Swift Creek, and Deptford clusters.

Layer B (40 cm to 120 cm below datum in Unit 5) is the matrix surrounding the excavated features and contained nine artifacts: one transfer printed whiteware, one miscellaneous bottle glass, one pipe stem, and five unidentifiable aboriginal sherds. Feature 1 is a large storage pit (40 cm to 140 cm below datum) and consisted of dark yellowish brown sand with large whole oyster shells. The feature was radiocarbon dated to A.D. 500 +/- 100 (Swift Creek period). Feature 3 is a small pit and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

consisted of a concentration of oyster with dark brown matrix (50 cm to 80 cm below datum). Artifacts recovered included oyster shell, bone, one Swift Creek sherd, and one bone tool, which was a long bone fragment that had been hardened and sharpened to a point.

Based on the results of these investigations, the Cathead Creek archaeological site can be characterized as follows. The D-1 portion of the Cathead Creek site clearly represents a Late Swift Creek (A.D. 500 – 950) occupation (based on ceramics, lithic artifacts, and radiocarbon dates), probably overlaying an earlier Deptford (500 B.C. – A.D. 550) site. The site contains extensive shell middens, probable storage pits, a hearth, and at least one burial. There is a possibility that the burial may have been in a low mound prior to historic occupation of the site. The deep midden deposit in profile appears to result from filling of a large depression. This depression could be interpreted as a natural feature such as a slough running to Cathead Creek. However, if there was a mound on the site, the depression may have been a borrow pit.

The faunal evidence for the site indicates year-round occupation based on the exploitation of estuarine and marsh resources, probably through the use of nets or traps. These exploitative methods imply a reasonable degree of social organization for the cultural group.

The historic material at the D-1 site probably results both from occupation of the site and from fill deposition used for leveling or recontouring. Historic material dated primarily to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the exception of the pharmaceutical bottle deposit recovered from D-1#5. The even disposition of the upper midden layers in the trench profile indicates that the midden may have been deliberately spread throughout the site during the historic period. This resulted in a mixing of historic artifacts with the predominately prehistoric midden. The relatively small size of the sherds recovered at D-1 also substantiates extensive disturbance of the midden. The recovery of scattered historic artifacts from lower levels of the site is probably the result of bioturbation.

The nearby sites on Houston and Fourth streets probably represent scattered prehistoric individual dwellings from intermittent occupations through time. These dwellings were probably closely related to the dense D-1 site. These sites also evidence storage pits and burials. Ceramics and radiocarbon dating indicate primarily Deptford/Swift Creek occupation.

### 09MC361 Second Street Site (D-6)

The Second Street site is located on the D-6 sewer line on the south side of Second Street between Jackson and Scriven Streets. The site falls on the northeast end of a house lot shown on the 1869 USGS map of Darien. The initial survey recovered 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century artifacts including ceramics,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

glass, cut nails, a brass lamp part, and an 1854 3-cent piece. Excavations of two 1 x 1-meter units showed a dense midden of dark brown sand about 20 cm deep with an underlying stratum of dark yellowish brown sand which contained aboriginal artifacts.

The midden layer consisted of a dense layer of oyster shell, bone, brick, slate, and mortar intermixed with numerous artifacts. The refuse is largely made up of artifacts from the kitchen group. The largest class of artifacts is historic ceramics. Other kitchen-group artifacts recovered are miscellaneous glass, wine bottle glass, glassware, and pharmaceutical bottle glass. The second largest group of artifacts is the architecture group, which includes cut nails, window glass, wrought nails, construction hardware, door lock, wire nails, and miscellaneous scrap metal. The next largest group of artifacts is the tobacco pipe group, with a total of 102 fragments.

The historic ceramics are mainly from the second and third quarters of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The largest type of ceramics are transfer-printed and plain whitewares, followed by plain and transfer-printed pearlwares. Of the 18<sup>th</sup> century types represented, slip decorated earthenwares are the most common. There were also fragments of delftware. The presence of these two types may indicate a mid- to late-18<sup>th</sup> century utilization of the area for refuse dumping.

The underlying stratum (18 to 22 cm below datum) contained aboriginal ceramics and lithics. Lithics recovered included 25 flakes and one Jackson point. Jackson points are associated with the Deptford period, 500 to 200 B.C. Ceramics recovered included four St. Simons plain and one Deptford simple stamped. The aboriginal remains represent marginal or intermittent occupation of the area related to the larger sites at Cathead Creek immediately to the west or Darien's Lower Bluff further to the east (outside the West Darien Historic District).

### 09MC367 Waterfront Site

The Darien Waterfront site along the FM-C and E-1 sewer lines encompasses the area of the city which was once a thriving commercial district. The lower waterfront area contains the tabby ruins of the former warehouses, shops, and taverns that once lined the river. Although the site extends along the waterfront, only the portions of the site within the West Darien Historic District boundary will be discussed in this nomination (see Attachment 6).

Scriven Street (FM-C line) – A trench was cut from Broad Street down the east side of Scriven Street. The trench was placed in an area which contained a surface drainage ditch as well as a storm sewer and phone and water lines. The water line survey had previously encountered the brick storm sewer (Garrow and Seabury 1978). No additional features were located, and the area

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

appeared to be highly disturbed by the prior construction project.

**Unit E-1#4** – A 2 X 2-meter unit in an area of mixed fill which slopes south towards the river. Levels 1 to 7 consisted of mixed old and modern artifacts, gravel, mixed rubble, and brick. An 1829 dime and a decorated post-1850 pipestem with the name “Peter Dorni” on it were recovered from Level 6, mixed with modern materials. Upon reaching the base of Level 6, the matrix changed to tan mottled sand, indicating the bottom of the fill layers. At the base of Level 7, a large wood board was found. The matrix was separated into different areas within each level (see Attachment 7)

Area A consisted of dark brown sand extending to 100 cm below datum. Artifacts recovered from Level 8 and 9 (70 to 90 cm below datum) consisted of 54 percent kitchen group, 41 percent architecture group, and five percent tobacco group.

Area B consisted of very dark grayish brown sand with gravel associated with a large wood beam. The wood beam may be associated with the 1912 railroad bridge which used to cross the river at this point. Pilings for the bridge were discovered in the trench dug the length of the waterfront area. Area B extended from Level 7 (70 cm below datum) to Level 18 (180 cm below datum). Artifacts recovered for Area B consisted mostly of items from the kitchen group (53.2 percent) and the architecture group (39.7 percent).

Area C consisted of brown sand at times mottled with dark grayish brown and yellowish brown sands extending down to 120 cm below datum. Artifacts recovered for Levels 8 and 9 consisted mainly of cut nails, miscellaneous, and wine bottles, four buttons, and two fragments each of historic ceramic and window glass.

Area D consisted of brown to yellowish brown sand and extended down to 180 cm below datum. Artifacts for levels 10, 11, and 12 belonged mainly to the kitchen group (50.7 percent) with a considerable number of architecture group (20.5 percent), and tobacco group (13.5 percent). The levels have the highest percentage of tobacco group on the waterfront and a high percentage of wine bottles and ceramics which may indicate that the structure was a tavern. Artifacts for levels 13 to 18 consisted of kitchen group (57.5 percent), architecture group (19.2 percent), aboriginal sherds (12.9 percent), tobacco group (5.6 percent), furniture hardware (2.8 percent), arms group (1.0 percent), clothing (0.2 percent), and personal (0.2 percent). The identifiable aboriginal sherds fell into the St. Simons, Deptford, check stamped, and San Marcos clusters.

Area E occurred in Level 8 only. It consisted of dark grayish brown sand and contained one cut nail.

Area F consisted of yellowish brown sand with gravel and extended from 130 cm to 190 cm below

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

datum. Artifacts recovered were mainly from the architecture group (52.0 percent) and the kitchen group (38.2 percent).

Area G was a sterile layer of white sand (190 cm below datum).

From the excavations, Unit E-1#4 appears to contain three identifiable depositions: (1) recent fill, possibly relating to bridge construction; (2) a beam and associated material relating to the railroad bridge; (3) a deposit of 19<sup>th</sup> century artifacts which may relate to the structure shown on early maps of the area. The ceramics indicated an early 19<sup>th</sup> century time frame (creamware and pearlwares) which may relate them to antebellum waterfront structures. The high percentages of ceramics, wine bottle, and tobacco artifacts argues the presence of a tavern at this location. However, in 1806 the lot was described as having a storehouse 36 x 18 feet in size (Columbia Museum and Savannah Advertiser 1806), approximately the same size as the structure on the 1885 Sanborn map.

Unit E-1#5 – A 50 x 111-cm unit placed over a brick pier exposed on the east balk of the trench. The top of the pier measured 30 x 61 cm and the overall height was 40 cm.

Layer 1 (94 to 100 cm below datum) consisted of yellowish brown sand on the south portion of the artifact and contained very few artifacts.

Layer 2 (100 to 128 cm below datum) consisted of dark brown soil on the south and east portions of the unit with a high concentration of oyster shell from the tabby (6 kilograms), tabby (290 kilograms), mortar (160 grams), brick (80 grams), and artifacts. Artifacts were mostly of the architecture (54 percent) and kitchen groups (42.0 percent).

Layer 3 (128 to 146 cm below datum) consisted of yellowish brown sand on the south and east portions of the unit with 582 grams of oyster shell, 390 grams of brick, and 143 grams of mortar. The majority of artifacts (80.9 percent) belonged to the architecture group and only 12.3 percent to the kitchen group, as opposed to Layers 1 and 2. The largest artifact type was window glass, which made up 65.2 percent of all the artifacts. A 1768 British guinea was recovered from this level.

No builder's trench was noticeable. It is assumed that the brick pier was built directly on the existing ground surface. An identical brick pier was located three meters to the south. These piers correspond in location with the structure shown on the 1885 Sanborn map. The early dates of the recovered artifacts indicate an antebellum occupation. Based on the similarity of artifacts and proximity to Unit E-1#4, the earlier occupation may have been a tavern during the antebellum period.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

General collection - Surface and backdirt collections were also made at the Waterfront site. These collections were "grab" samples biased towards the more visible or unusual objects. The trench sample adjacent to Units E-1#4 and #5 consisted of 1,102 artifacts, 91.3 percent of which were from the kitchen category. The ceramics consisted of 27.1 percent pearlware (primarily hand painted or transfer printed) and 41.7 percent stoneware (primarily salt glazed jug or crock). The collection also contained 118 wine and 71 miscellaneous bottle fragments (17.2 percent) and 38 clay tobacco pipe fragments (3.4 percent). This particular combination of artifacts suggests a tavern or refuse disposal from such an activity area.

### ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

The West Darien Historic District was surveyed for extant historic buildings and structures as part of a "windshield" survey of McIntosh County in 1975 by Van Jones Martin. The 1975 survey documented 19 properties within the West Darien Historic District. The district area was resurveyed in 1989 by William Chapman and Betty Ausherman Chapman using Georgia's revised historic resources survey methods and computerized database. The 1989 survey was conducted according to standard field survey methods prescribed by the state historic preservation office which provided partial funding. The 1989 survey documented approximately 114 properties within the proposed West Darien Historic District boundary. The initial National Register district boundaries were established on the basis of the 1989 survey by historic preservation consultant Robert Ciucevich of Quatrefoil Consulting, who prepared the draft National Register nomination. The proposed district area was field checked, the boundary adjusted, and properties classified as contributing or noncontributing by the Historic Preservation Division staff. The proposed boundary of the district and contributing and noncontributing properties are indicated on the attached tax maps.

#### Commercial Buildings

The area of the district located along West Broad Street and at its intersection with Scriven Street, as well as along U.S. 17 and a portion of First Street, is the traditional commercial section of the city. The intersection of Broad and Scriven was the site of commercial activity relating to the city's first boom days as a major cotton and rice port between 1810 and 1845. Wharfs and cotton warehouses lined River Street with warehouses, stores, and offices being located along Broad Street. This area was also the main commercial site during Darien's second boom as a major timber exporting port, with the San Savilla Union Saw Mill being located immediately next to the wharfs (to the west). Hotels, boarding houses, mercantile stores, and other businesses were also established on First Street and what was to become U.S. 17 (see Attachment 8).

Today the waterfront is largely undeveloped, with only a few warehouses and fishing piers located



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

along the Darien River (photograph 1). These warehouses and piers are undocumented and the date of their construction is not known; therefore, they are classified as non-contributing at this time.

Also located along the river are the ruins of tabby warehouses constructed c.1810-1845; they represent Darien's role as an antebellum cotton and rice port. Tabby, a mixture of shell, lime, sand, and water, has been described as the first concrete material made in the United States. Tabby was used in St. Augustine by the Spanish as early as 1580, and the few remaining examples of tabby construction are found in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. The tabby ruins are significant as a rare example of the indigenous use of materials in building construction during Georgia's early settlement period (photographs 2 and 3). Also significant is the Strain Building, located north of the tabby ruins, fronting Broad Street at the corner of Broad and Scriven streets (photograph 4). The Strain Building is a cotton warehouse built c.1813-1815 and is the only remaining commercial building that survived the 1863 burning of the town during the Civil War. The two-story tabby building has a stucco-veneer scored to resemble quoins at the corners. It features a front-gable roof with a simple parapet. Next to the Strain Building is the Old Darien Bank (c.1880), a stuccoed, one-story building with two-over-two double-hung windows and a center doorway.

With the exception of the antebellum cotton warehouse, the commercial buildings in the district were built during the New South era from 1870 to 1910. They are simple, one- and two-story buildings of brick construction, consisting of individual or multiple storefronts, having stucco exteriors, and low, sloping roofs behind a parapet. Very few of these buildings exhibit any stylistic elements. Good examples of these type buildings are the Old Darien Bank (c.1880), the c.1880 two-story former Clark's Drugstore (photograph 6, center), and the c.1870 200 block of Broad Street (photograph 5, far left). Smaller stores and offices of this period were of frame construction and are best represented by the Tidewater Commissioner's Office (c.1870s) located on First Street.

Early 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial buildings in the district are generally one-story brick structures with a single storefront and parapet roofs. Good examples of these type buildings are 107-109 First Street (c.1920s) and 111 First Street (c.1920's, addition c.1944) (photograph 9, right). Most of the commercial buildings from the 1930s and 1940s are of concrete block or frame construction, are free standing, and contain only one storefront. Examples of 1930s and 1940s commercial buildings include the I.T. Stewart Store (c.1930) located at 200 Broad Street and the dentist's office (c.1940) located at 202 Broad Street (photograph 5, center and right). Historic commercial buildings along U.S. Highway 17 reflect the importance of this thoroughfare as a major route to Florida and serve to illustrate the role the highway played in establishing Darien as a rest stop and tourist destination in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. One example is the c.1880 Old Darien Hotel which was remodeled in the 1920s and 1940s and now serves as a block of storefronts along U.S. 17 (photograph 7). Another example is the one-story front-gable frame former Thompson's Café located at the northwest corner

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

of Sixth Street and U.S. Highway 17. Built c.1900, the building was converted into a cafe in the 1930s.

### Residential Buildings

A majority of the buildings within the district are houses that were built during the New South era (1870-1910) when Darien's economy prospered with increased shipping and the development of the timber trade. Most of the residences dating from this period are characterized as simple, frame Georgian-type cottages having pier foundations. Other house types representative of this time period found in the district are gabled ell cottage, Georgian house, and I-house. As a whole, the 1870 to 1910 period houses are uniform in scale, medium in size, and of balloon-frame construction. These residences exhibit minimal stylistic references, most of which are classically inspired elements such as side lights, transoms, gable returns, window and door surrounds, and corner boards.

Larger houses of this period are typically two-story, Georgian-type houses. These residences share many of the same characteristics as their smaller counterparts, while exhibiting other features such as double verandahs and floor length windows. A good example of a large Georgian house is the c.1870 Bluestein House located at 106 First Street (photograph 8). The frame house features a double veranda with chamfered square posts on brick piers on the first floor and chamfered square posts with a balustrade on the second floor. The front entrance features a transom and sidelights.

An example of a c.1870s I-house is located at 104 Second Street. The house is known as the Oglethorpe Inn/Thomas-Cane-Jackson House and features a double veranda with square posts and cornice with cornice returns. The first floor entrance features door surround with pilasters and sidelights.

An example of a Georgian cottage in the district is the c.1870 Raymond Clancy house located at 210 First Street (photograph 11). The frame house features sidelights and six-over-six windows. Another example of an 1870s Georgian cottage is the Gale House located at 402 Second Street. The house features a full-width shed porch with square posts, a transom and side lights, and window surrounds.

The c.1870 Todd-Grubbs-Sunderhaus House located on the southwest corner of Third and Jackson streets is a representative example of a gabled ell cottage found within the district (photograph 19). The house features a wrap porch with hipped roof, square posts and balustrade, paired windows, and a transom and sidelights.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

Most of the houses built during the early 20th century, or post-timber era of Darien's development (1910-1940s), are smaller and more utilitarian in nature. Most were built for working-class families who were engaged in the then-fledgling shrimping and fishing industries and in what remained of the timber industry. The majority of houses dating from this period are front- and side-gable bungalows having massed plans and exhibiting Craftsman features, such as knee braces, brick piers with battered wood columns on porches, and exposed rafter ends, or Colonial Revival features such as classical columns, pedimented entrances, and paired windows with surrounds.

The William Bolin House (c.1930s, 306 Elbert Street) and the dwelling at 406 Jackson St. (c.1930s) are good examples of front-gable bungalows with Craftsman-style elements. The William Bolin House features a front-gable, partial-width front porch with square posts on brick piers, exposed rafters, knee braces, and Craftsman-style windows. The front-gable bungalow located at 406 Jackson Street features a front-gable porch with square posts on brick piers and exposed rafters. A series of houses built for rental housing in the 1920s, located on the 200 block of Third Street, also features Craftsman-style elements (photograph 20). The three identical front-gable bungalows feature front-gable, partial-width porches with square posts on brick piers, paired windows, and exposed rafters. Another representative example of a Craftsman-style bungalow is the front-gable bungalow on the 300 block of Fourth Street (photograph 24).

A representative example of Colonial Revival-style residential resources is the Hackel-Brannon-Stebbins House on the southwest corner of Second Street and U.S. Highway 17 (photograph 12). The c.1920, one-story, frame, Georgian-type cottage features a pedimented front portico with a cornice and paired square posts. An example of a side-gable cottage with Colonial Revival elements is located at 204 Second Street. The house features paired six-over-six windows, a front-gable front entrance with a cornice and cornice returns, simple columns, and a simple door surround with fanlight.

Most of the noncontributing resources located within the district date from the 1970s and 1980s. Most are residential one-story, brick, ranch-style houses, simple frame houses with poured concrete foundations, and single-wide mobile homes. The most recent residential noncontributing buildings, those dating from the late 1980s to the present, are mainly modular type houses and double-wide trailers. A fair number of buildings listed as being non-contributing within the district are actually historic buildings that have lost a great deal of integrity due to extensive alterations and/or additions.

### Community Landmarks

Two community landmark buildings are located within the district. The Darien First Presbyterian

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

Church, located at 304 Third Street (photograph 21), is the second Presbyterian church on this site. The building was constructed in 1900 to replace the 1876 wood church that burned in 1899. The church is constructed of tabby and was designed by the Atlanta architectural firm of George W. Laine. The gable-front church features Gothic Revival elements including buttresses, pointed-arch windows, and arcaded entrance, and a prominent, buttressed corner tower with an open belfry and slate, double-pitched conical roof. Two additions were made to the rear of the church—the first in 1963 and the second in 1975.

The St. John's Baptist Church is located on the northeast corner of Jackson and Sixth streets (photograph 32). The church was built c.1920 by the African-American community. The frame, front-gable church features a square corner tower topped by a belfry with louvered vents. The church also features a shed-roof porch with square posts on brick piers and paired stained-glass windows. A front-gable, frame community room was added to the north side of the church c.1950.

### African-American Residential Resources

Mentionville is an African-American neighborhood situated on the bluffs of Cathead Creek along Old River Road, just north of the location of the former Upper Mill sawmill (not extant). The neighborhood is bordered by Fifth St. on the south and Clark St. on the east and was named for a family of sawmill workers, the Mentions, who settled in the area during the 19th century. This neighborhood, although not identified as Mentionville but rather as the Old River Road section of Darien, was the subject of a federal writers project during the 1930s and was included in the book Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies Among the Georgia Coastal Negroes, Georgia Writers' Project, Work Projects Administration (1940). Although the Mentionville area contains a number of noncontributing resources, particularly along Old River Road, these are mostly small, modern residential buildings that have replaced historic residential buildings and do not detract from the historic character of the area. The remaining intact, historic residential buildings represent the importance of this African-American neighborhood in Darien's history and represent common house types found in African-American neighborhoods throughout Georgia.

The houses in the Mentionville section of the district are as simple, one-story, frame cottages with clapboard siding and pier foundations. House types exhibited in this section of the district include hall-parlor, shotgun, double shotgun, bungalow, and central hall.

An example of a c.1880 hall-parlor cottage is located at 604 Houston Street. The house features a shed-roof porch with square posts. Another example of a hall-parlor cottage is located at 507 Sixth Street (photograph 31, center). The house has a later ell addition but retains its hall-parlor form with

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

hipped-roof porch and square posts.

A representative example of a shotgun house is located at the intersection of Houston and Fifth Street at 505 Houston Street (photograph 26). The house retains its shotgun form, six-over-six windows, and front porch with turned posts. Located at 407 Seventh Street, the Charlie Mitchell House is a c.1938 double shotgun house (photograph 34). The house retains its hipped-roof porch, exposed rafters, and two paneled front doors. Another example of a double shotgun house is located at 909 Old River Road and features a hipped-roof porch and six-over-six windows (photograph 37).

An example of a front-gable bungalow in the Mentionville area is located at 405 Eighth Street (photograph 35). The house features a hipped-roof porch with square posts and paired windows.

A central hall cottage is located at 509 Sixth Street (photograph 31, third from the left). The c.1880 cottage features sidelights, transom, and paneled door surround, and a shed-roof porch with square posts on small brick piers, exposed rafters, and scrollwork brackets.

Typical of African-American neighborhoods in Georgia, a neighborhood store is located at 807 Houston Street (photograph 36). The c.1930 frame store has a front gable roof and two-over-two windows.

### Landscaping

The district is on sandy, flat coastal terrain. Natural landmarks and geographic features include a very pronounced river bluff and surrounding marshlands framed by the Darien River on the south and Cathead Creek on the west (photograph 13). Large, majestic oaks are scattered throughout the district and line some of the streets. Pine, magnolia, and maple trees as well as indigenous coastal shrubs and plants can also be found throughout the district.

The streetscapes throughout the district are informal. Although the district is comprised mostly of a grid plan, the streets tend to meander around large oak trees along and in the center of some of the streets and along river and marsh boundaries (photograph 14). The streets are devoid of sidewalks and curbs (except along U.S. 17) and have an informal quality rather than stark right angles that are associated with a grid town plan (photograph 14). In general, the streets retain their historic narrow width and are without modern curbing or other improvements (photograph 16). Some streets remain unpaved (photograph 15). Many old oaks line several of the streets. Large oaks and pecan trees are found on residential lots throughout the district. Because building placement throughout the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 7

---

district varies, there is no characteristic treatment of front, side, or back yards, although most properties tend to have a front yard with a very small side and back yard. Most front yards have very informal plantings with side yards generally utilized for the storage of automobiles, boats, and equipment such as shrimp nets. Bounded by 4<sup>th</sup>, Clark, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Jackson streets, Bayard Square, the only public square provided in the 1806 grid plan by Thomas McCall, is very informal, having no formal landscape scheme and only a few large oak trees throughout (photograph 21). Numerous open areas exist throughout the district and are comprised mostly of vacant lots overgrown with indigenous flora.

---

**8. Statement of Significance**

---

**Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:**

nationally       statewide       locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A       B       C       D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**  N/A

A    B    C    D    E    F    G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

Archaeology: prehistoric  
Archaeology: historic  
Architecture  
Community Planning and Development  
Commerce  
Ethnic heritage: black

**Period of Significance:**

500-950 A.D.  
c.1810-1951

**Significant Dates:**

N/A

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

Late Swift Creek  
Deptford  
Anglo-American

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

Laine, George W.--architect

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

#### **Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The West Darien Historic District encompasses the intact archaeological resources from the prehistoric occupation along Cathead Creek, historic archaeological resources in the Mentionville area and along the waterfront, and historic residential and commercial development in Darien west of present day U.S. Highway 17.

#### Prehistoric Archaeology

The West Darien Historic District is significant in terms of prehistoric archaeology under National Register Criterion D because it has yielded important information and has the potential to yield further information about coastal settlement patterns of the Late Swift Creek and Deptford cultures in Georgia (500-900 A.D.). Although the archaeological investigations in the West Darien Historic District were conducted as a result of mitigation for the impacts of federally funded water and sewer projects upon cultural resources and hence were limited geographically to correspond to the area of the water and sewer lines, the investigations helped answer important questions about the aboriginal occupation of the Darien area.

First and foremost, the two archaeological campaigns demonstrated that prehistoric archaeological resources are present in Darien's West Darien Historic District and that they retain sufficient physical integrity to constitute "sites" with the potential to yield information about the prehistoric past.

Second, these prehistoric sites were expected to yield and did in fact yield information relevant to important research questions, and they are expected to have the potential to yield additional information upon further investigation.

The objective of investigating the prehistoric sites was to recover data which would facilitate comparisons with sites of the same time periods located in the nearby coastal/estuarine environment. Subsistence data from features, column samples, and test units could provide information on diet within the mainland/estuarine/upland zones and include data on seasonality of occupation. The data allows for testing of models regarding settlement, social organization, and economics. An assumption can be made that the abundance and variety of resources in the Darien area would provide year-round occupation rather than seasonal. It was anticipated that year-round occupation would be reflected in subsistence remains and site features. The methodology included surface stripping, shovel cleaning, and hand excavation of test units in midden and nonmidden areas.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

It was anticipated that the Cathead Creek area would provide excellent data on Deptford/Swift Creek occupation of the freshwater delta area. Recent work on Swift Creek sites at Kings Bay had led to the hypothesis that such sites represent the movement of inland cultural traditions down major rivers to the coast rather than the evolution of a coastal group. Information from the Cathead Creek site should provide additional evidence on Swift Creek occupations in coastal Georgia and further the understanding of Deptford occupations in coastal Georgia and of the transition from the Deptford to the Wilmington period.

The point of land on the bluff above Cathead Creek next to a spring and the Darien River represents an excellent location for prehistoric occupation. It afforded access to major transportation routes and the six different ecosystems for resource exploitation. At the same time, the height of the bluff coupled with the sandy soils, provided a well-drained habitation site. Fresh water was readily available from the springs flowing into Cathead Creek. The archaeological material provides evidence that this location was repeatedly selected for occupation throughout both the prehistoric and historic periods. Based on the units excavated in the Houston Street portion of the Cathead Creek area, the artifacts recovered appear to represent scattered occupation sites, possibly from individual dwellings. This portion of the site probably dates primarily to the Deptford period based on the identified ceramics.

The archaeological investigations of the Cathead Creek area resulted in the identification of a fairly large Deptford/Late Swift Creek site. The Dickinson, Wayne, and Melendez report states that while Deptford sites are well documented on the Georgia coast the Swift Creek occupation is less well known. From previous archaeological investigations (DesJean et. al. 1985a), Swift Creek sites appear to be primarily confined to delta areas of the Altamaha and Santilla rivers. These two rivers are the major connections to the interior and Piedmont areas of Georgia where the Swift Creek culture was centered. The type site for this period is in Bibb County (Macon, Georgia) on a tributary of the Ocmulgee River. It is believed that the coastal sites represent a migration of Swift Creek populations and/or material goods down the rivers. The first well-documented Swift Creek site on the coast was the Evelyn Mound site, which lies 3.5 miles across the Altamaha River delta south of Darien. The site was investigated by Preston Holder in 1938. Like the Cathead Creek site, Evelyn lies on a bluff overlooking the Altamaha marshes. Recent studies at Kings Bay, Georgia, have documented a Swift Creek occupation for that area. The zooarchaeological and archaeological data analyses indicated a sedentary year-round occupation during the Middle to Late Swift Creek period. The presence of nonlocal lithics and Weeden Island ceramics was interpreted as evidence of contact with inland and Gulf peoples. Little or no evidence was found for association with contemporaneous coastal cultures. These characteristics, in conjunction with the lack of evidence for the evolution of Swift Creek ceramics in the coastal traditions, and the presence of bell-shaped pits, suggest a population migration from inland areas. The location of the Cathead Creek site in an ecotonal

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

situation allowing exploitation of six ecosystems would have led to year-round occupation of the site, much like at Kings Bay. Further excavation of this site should provide additional data on the Swift Creek occupation of the Georgia coast. In addition, this site might increase our understanding of Deptford/Wilmington occupation (Dickinson, Wayne, and Melendez).

Additionally, the recovery of ceramics datable to the Deptford, Wilmington/Savannah, and Swift Creek periods confirm the repeated long-term nature of human occupation at Cathead Creek. Given the relatively undisturbed nature of the Cathead Creek area and the extent of the site, further archaeological investigations could yield additional information on the transition of cultures in the Darien area.

#### Historic Archaeology (non-aboriginal)

The West Darien Historic District is significant in terms of historic archaeology (non-aboriginal), under National Register Criterion D, because it has yielded important information and has the potential to yield further information about commercial and domestic sites in Darien, characteristics of 19<sup>th</sup>-century antebellum and postbellum residential and commercial occupation of Darien, and information about the development and use of Darien's waterfront.

Again, the two archaeological campaigns have demonstrated that historic archaeological resources are present in the West Darien Historic District and that they are retain sufficient physical integrity to yield information about Darien's history and development, particularly along the waterfront and in the sawmill-related community of Mentionville near Cathead Creek.

Historic period site research focused on comparing commercial and domestic sites within Darien, comparing Darien sites to urban sites in the larger cities of Brunswick and Savannah, Georgia, and comparing Darien sites with rural sites of the same periods. It was anticipated that artifact patterns of commercial sites would differ from domestic sites within Darien. The possibility of identifiable socioeconomic differences in domestic historic sites was another aspect of the research. The survey data provided the hypothesis that artifacts would primarily correspond to and reflect the 19<sup>th</sup> century antebellum plantations, shipping, and postbellum timber industries in Darien. Another hypothesis was that refuse disposal would reflect a shift from earlier single structure refuse pits to later community dumps and/or surface disposal. It was anticipated that domestic historic sites would be more similar to rural sites of the same period rather than large urban areas since Darien is a relatively small, nucleated, urban area.

With regard to the Cathead Creek and Mentionville neighborhood, archaeology done to date has located a timber-industry river landing, uncovered evidence of the local sawmill site, and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

documented the antebellum plantation origins of what later became an African-American neighborhood.

Further archaeological investigation will likely yield additional information about the sawmill site (extent of site, activities on site) and about the development of the area from one or more antebellum plantations on the outskirts of Darien into a late 19<sup>th</sup>- to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century African-American neighborhood.

Of special interest here are the facts that the sawmill and this area was owned by an African-American, Henry Todd, described as a "free man of color," and that the sawmill community was settled to a large degree by a single African-American family, the Mentions. Absent other historical documentation, archaeology could produce useful information regarding these two unusual aspects of Darien's history.

With regard to the waterfront, limited archaeology already has documented the likely presence of an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century tavern, roughly corresponding to the mapped but otherwise undocumented location of a reported waterfront tavern.

This also documents some degree of diversity among waterfront buildings; they were not all warehouses.

Given the relatively limited scope of archaeological investigations in this area and the unusual lack of subsequent nonhistoric development, it is clear that additional archaeological investigations would produce extremely useful information on the types of buildings and commercial activities which once existed on Darien's waterfront. The lack of postbellum development on the Darien waterfront has provided a relatively undisturbed antebellum waterfront context for future research.

### Architecture and Commerce

The West Darien Historic District is significant in terms of architecture, under National Register Criterion C, for its intact, historic, one- to two-story commercial buildings, its community landmark buildings, and the variety of intact residential house types and styles which are representative of late-19<sup>th</sup>- and early- to mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century architecture in Georgia. With one antebellum exception, the extant architectural resources in Darien date from two distinct periods. The first period was the rebuilding of Darien after the Civil War due to the growth of the city as a major exporting and processing center for timber. The second period is associated with the development of the shrimping and fishing industries from 1910 through the 1940s. Historic properties from the 1930s and 1940s also reflect the origins of automobile tourism in Darien.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

The district is significant in architecture and commerce for its good, intact examples of commercial buildings built throughout its period of development. Located along the Darien waterfront, the tabby ruins are significant as a rare example of the indigenous use of tabby in building construction during Georgia's early settlement period. Also significant is the Strain Building, located north of the tabby ruins, fronting Broad Street at the corner of Broad and Scriven streets. The Strain Building is a cotton warehouse built c.1813-1815 and is the only remaining commercial building that survived the 1863 burning of the town during the Civil War. It also is the only intact antebellum tabby commercial building in Darien and one of a relatively small number of antebellum tabby buildings on the Georgia coast. The district is also significant for its collection of commercial buildings built during the New South era from 1870 to 1910. The commercial buildings constructed during this time are one- and two-story stuccoed buildings with parapet roofs and are representative of the types of commercial buildings constructed the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Georgia's small coastal communities. The district also contains good examples of commercial buildings built in the 1930s and 1940s. The 1930s and 1940s commercial buildings are generally one-story with minimal stylistic details. The early 19<sup>th</sup>-century commercial buildings represent Darien's importance as a center for cotton factors and shipping. The late-19<sup>th</sup>-century commercial buildings represent the rebuilding of Darien after the Civil War and Darien's prosperity as a center for the timber industry. The relatively few commercial resources from 1930s and 1940s represent the declining prosperity of Darien as the timber industry declined due to overcutting and the beginning of a growing tourist industry. Commercial buildings such as the Thompson's Café catered to tourists traveling to Florida and were constructed along U.S. Highway 17.

The district is significant in architecture for its good, intact examples of community landmark buildings. Located within the residential section of the district, the Darien First Presbyterian Church was constructed in 1900. The architectural firm of George W. Laine of Atlanta employed the use of Georgia's indigenous coastal tabby construction for the Gothic Revival design. The church represents a late use of tabby construction, as there are very few examples of 20<sup>th</sup>-century tabby buildings in Georgia (two are located within the Jekyll Island Historic District in Glynn County and the tabby St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church located in Darien's Vernon Square-Columbus Square Historic District was constructed in 1876). St. John's Baptist Church is a good example of an African-American church and was built c.1920. The front-gable church features a square corner tower topped by a belfry, a typical design for rural and small-town African-American churches as documented in the statewide historic context Historic Black Resources: A Handbook for the Identification, Documentation, and Evaluation of Historic African-American Properties in Georgia (1984).

The West Darien Historic District is significant in architecture for its good examples of late-19<sup>th</sup>- to

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

early 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential resources for the most part typical of small towns in Georgia. The district contains good examples of house types identified as important Georgia types in the statewide historic context Georgia's Living Places: Historical Houses in Their Landscaped Setting (1991). Common house types found in the district include Georgian cottage, gabled ell cottage, bungalow, side gable cottage, shotgun, double shotgun, central hall, hall-parlor, I-house, and Georgian house. Residential resources within the district generally have few stylistic details; those that do have simple classically inspired, Craftsman, or Colonial Revival elements.

#### Community Planning and Development

The West Darien Historic District is significant in terms of community planning and development for its intact 1806 gridiron plan laid out by Thomas McCall. The plan was a derivative of General James Oglethorpe's Savannah plan. The grid plan was superimposed upon an irregular land area so the streets run slightly off of north-south and east-west. Due to the bluffs and marshlands along Cathead Creek, the lots in this area are irregularly shaped. The only surviving public square in the district is Bayard Square, which retains its historic informal character and is the site of the First Presbyterian Church. The two surviving intact wards with squares from the 1806 Darien plan are located across U.S. Highway 17 in the National Register-listed Vernon Square-Columbus Square Historic District. The district retains its historic sections including the shipping- and commercial-related building located along the waterfront reflecting 19<sup>th</sup> century water transportation, additional commercial development along U.S. Highway 17 reflecting the influence upon the community's plan of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century coastal highway, and the rest of the district comprised of residential resources with the African-American Mentionville neighborhood located along Old River Road near the location of the former saw mills, removed somewhat from the historic white neighborhoods as is typical of most small-town planning and development in Georgia.

#### Ethnic Heritage: Black

The West Darien Historic District is significant in terms of ethnic heritage: black for the Mentionville neighborhood which contains good, intact examples of vernacular house forms and development patterns common to African-American neighborhoods in Georgia. This area was documented by the 1930s Federal Writers Project and is included in the book Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies Among the Georgia Coastal Negroes, Georgia Writers' Project, Work Projects Administration (1940). The house types in the Mentionville area of Darien including shotgun, double shotgun, central hall and hall-parlor are commonly associated with African-American communities in Georgia. The neighborhood store and the St. John's Baptist Church are significant resources associated with Darien's African-American population. The Mentionville area fits the patterns of development as described in Carole Merritt's Historic Black Resources: A Handbook for the Identification,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

#### Documentation, and Evaluation of Historic African-American Properties in Georgia.

##### **National Register Criteria**

The West Darien Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under National Register Criterion A for its associations with the economic development of Darien's industries over time including cotton, timber production and shipping, shrimping and fishing, and early automobile tourism along U.S. Highway 17. The district is also eligible under Criterion A for its intact 1806 grid plan which represents an early planned town along Georgia's coast. The district is eligible under Criterion A for its intact resources associated with Darien's African-American population.

The West Darien Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C for its good and intact examples of residential, commercial, and community landmark types and styles.

The district is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion D for the information already yielded through archaeological investigations for cultural resource mitigation and for high potential to yield additional information about the year-round prehistoric occupation of the Cathead Creek area, the historic occupation and commercial use of waterfront area, and the sawmill in the Mentionville neighborhood.

##### **Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

N/A

##### **Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance for prehistoric archaeology begins with the occupation of Darien by the Deptford and Late Swift Creek cultures in 500 A.D. based on radiocarbon dating of artifacts recovered and ends with 950 A.D., the period of transition from Deptford to Wilmington period on the Georgia coast. The prehistoric artifacts found during the archaeological investigations described in this nomination are primarily from this time period. The period of significance for the historic resources begins with the date of construction of the c.1810 tabby warehouses (now in ruins) and ends with the end of the historic period, 1951.

##### **Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The contributing buildings, sites, landscape features, and plan within the district date from the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

district's period of significance and retain their historic integrity. The noncontributing resources have either lost their historic physical integrity through alterations or disturbance or were built after 1951 (buildings) and therefore are outside the period of significance.

#### **Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

**Note: The following chronology of prehistory is an excerpt from Martin F. Dickinson, Lucy B. Wayne, and Marisol J. Melendez, Water and Air Research, Inc., Gainesville, Florida. "Cultural Resource Impact Mitigation for the Darien, Georgia Sewer System Project, March 1986." On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

Although human utilization or habitation of the Georgia coast may have begun during the Paleo-Indian period, only isolated fluted points provide evidence of these early hunter-gatherers in this area. The first significant occupation of the Georgia coast occurred during the Late Archaic period approximately 4,000 years ago. The Indians settled along the margins of partially flooded back barrier swamp and marsh areas, and along tidal creeks (Howard et. al. 1980). At this time, the aboriginal groups were producing fired clay pottery with vegetal fiber inclusions as a temper. These first ceramics in the New World, designated the Sapelo period, were of slab construction with little or no decoration. The Sapelo sites are characterized by ring-shaped shell middens, a lack of lithic artifacts, and a lack of a developed burial complex. The sites reflect a marsh-lagoon exploitation (Smith et. al. 1981).

Beginning at approximately 1700 B.C., with the St. Simons period, large, nonring middens began to appear on the mainland and islands of the Georgia coast. The ceramics continued to be fiber tempered with the addition of incised and punctuated surface decoration. By the end of the St. Simons period (c.1150 B.C.), there were three categories of sites: (1) the ring or crescent shaped shell middens, (2) linear/amorphous shell middens, and (3) nonshell sites (Smith et. al. 1981). The latter type of site is believed to represent seasonal extraction sites for hunting and hickory nut gathering (DesJean and Saunders 1984).

Archaeological studies of Late Archaic sites have produced evidence of insubstantial shelter-type structures of posts with brush or mat covers, frequently placed directly on the middens. The tool kit consisted of a limited range of bone and shell items with a few lithics obtained by trade with inland groups. Village sites were concentrated along the marshes, with small camp sites more widely dispersed (Howard et. al. 1980).

The Woodland period on the Georgia coast displays variations between the different estuaries.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

However, the general chronological scheme begins with the Refuge phase at approximately 1150 B.C. Refuge can be divided into three subphases: Refuge I represents a surface style continuum from the preceding St. Simons period with simple stamping, incising, and punctuating of ceramics. However, the temper changed to sand or sand and grit inclusions and the stronger coil construction replaced slab forms. Refuge II coincides with a rise in sea level between 1000 and 400 B.C. Surface decoration for this phase is dominated by simple stamping. Refuge III is transitional to the following Deptford period. The ceramics are frequently indistinguishable, with simple stamping and plain ceramics augmented by Deptford Check Stamped and Linear Check Stamped styles.

Some sites from the Refuge period begin to show the use of freshwater shellfish species and perhaps an increase in the importance of hunting. However, coastal middens are also known. There is also evidence for burial in pits with grave goods during this period. It is assumed that social organization continued at the band level with dispersion into family units for most of the year (Howard et. al. 1980).

DePratter places an interim ceramic period between Refuge and Deptford, which is designated as Oemler. This relatively brief period (550-750 B.C.) is characterized by the presence of Refuge Plain and Simple Stamped ceramics along with Oemler Stamped and Complicated Stamped types (DePratter and Howard 1977). It should be noted that Cook believes that both Refuge and Oemler are indigenous to the Savannah River basin and do not extend to the Altamaha River. He sees a continuum from St. Simons into the Deptford period for the Altamaha area (Seabury and Garrow 1978).

The Deptford period begins at approximately 500 B.C. and can be divided into three phases. Deptford I is characterized by the continuations of Refuge Simple Stamped ceramics plus the appearance of Deptford Check Stamped, Linear Check Stamped, Plain and Dentate Stamped types. Deptford II (A.D. 50-450) still has the Refuge Simple Stamped forms, as well as Deptford Bold Check Stamped, Complicated Stamped, Cord Marked and Plain types. Deptford III (A.D. 450-550) shows a resurgence of Deptford Check Stamp, as well as the continued appearance of Deptford Complicated Stamped, Cord Marked and Plain types (DePratter and Howard 1977).

Variants of the Deptford culture have been recognized throughout a large portion of the southeast, ranging for the coastal Gulf of Mexico area, across north Florida and south Georgia, and up the Atlantic coast as far north as North Carolina. The Deptford period reflects the continued development of the coastal population, rather than an influx of new peoples. Cultural change was slow on the Atlantic Coast due to the relative geographic isolation and the lack of good horticultural land. These factors reduced intercultural contact and change in the technological adaptations to the environment (Milanich 1973). The appearance of sand burial mounds during this period implies a



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

higher level of social organization and, perhaps, a population increase.

Georgia coastal Deptford sites are located within the live oak strand adjacent to the salt marsh. This area represents a major ecotone between the Pine Barren and coastal ecosystems. Smaller sites are located away from the coasts immediately adjacent to the rivers. These small sites probably represent seasonal camps for the exploitation of upland and riverine resources. Milanich has demonstrated that sites probably consisted of a kin group of 30 to 50 people in five nuclear dwellings. The subsistence pattern practiced was central-based nomadism centered on exploitation of marsh, lagoon, tidal stream, and terrestrial resources (Milanich 1973; Smith et al. 1981).

During the period from A.D. 300 to 700, there was apparently an intrusion of aspects of the inland Swift Creek culture into coastal Georgia. This Swift Creek intrusion overlaps both the Deptford period and the later Wilmington period. At the present time, Swift Creek sites have been identified in the vicinity of the delta areas of the Altamaha and Satilla Rivers (Williams 1968; DesJean et al. 1985a). It is believed that these sites may represent a migration of Swift Creek populations and/or material goods down these rivers from the inland area of Georgia. Sites having extensive Swift Creek materials are rare in other areas of coastal Georgia and their presence in the Altamaha estuarine system remain a question worthy of further study.

The distinctive Swift Creek ceramics are characterized by complicated stamping with sand and grit temper. Rim forms include scalloped, smoothed or rounded, and large folded types. Sites at Kings Bay, Georgia do not appear to have evidence of a correlation between temporal period and rim form. There does not appear to be a domination of bold, single elements in the complicated stamps of late Swift Creek ceramics. Small amounts of Deptford Bold Check Stamp, Weeden Island Incised and Punctuated, and Carrabelle Incised ceramics are often found in association with the Swift Creek ceramics. Unlike other coastal sites, Swift Creek sites frequently have lithic artifacts, which, based on the lack of lithic resources on the coast, supports their inland relationship. Worked bone and shell are also common (DesJean et al. 1985a).

Three Swift Creek site types have been identified elsewhere in the southeast: (1) horseshoe or annular-shaped shell middens in the inland river valleys, (2) similar middens within a few hundred meters of the coast in northwest Florida, and (3) linear shell middens along bays of the Gulf shore. The first two sites generally have associated burial mounds. Swift Creek sites are also characterized by the presence of bell-shaped pits, a feature which is not common to other Georgia coastal sites (DesJean et al. 1985a).

Subsistence data from the Kings Bay Swift Creek sites indicated a heavy reliance on estuarine resources from shallow tidal creeks and near-shore habitats. Species identified indicate the use of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

nets or traps, implying a more complex social organization (DesJean et al. 1985a).

At the close of the Deptford period on the Georgia coast (A.D. 550), there appears to be an emergence of localized variation in the cultural patterns. Larson has suggested that each major river along the coastal plain served as a link to specific inland groups (Larson 1958a). Coupled with the ethnographic documentation for the use of rivers as cultural boundaries by southeastern Indians, this pattern leads to identifiable differences between each estuary on the coast (Martinez 1975).

In terms of regional coastal chronology, the Wilmington period (A.D. 550-950) is considered to follow Deptford in Georgia. However, Late Swift Creek sites are contemporaneous with early Wilmington sites. Cook has also called the period from A.D. 500 to 900 Kelvin, which he describes as transitional between Deptford and Wilmington. He believes that there is an overlap of Kelvin and Wilmington in the Darien area (Seabury and Garrow 1978). However, based on his description of complicated stamped ceramics, we would suspect that his Kelvin group is a local variation of Swift Creek aspects rather than a distinct period.

The Wilmington period is generally viewed as a gradual evolution out of the Deptford tradition (Milanich 1976). Ceramics are dominated by cord marking and ground sherd temper. Sites are found in the inland river valleys and swamps with camps along the coast. Sites include low sand burial mounds. Two basic site types are known: marsh edge shell midden and upland oak forest nonmidden sites (Smith et. al. 1981; CRM 1979). Subsistence was based on seasonal exploitation of marsh, estuaries, and terrestrial resources, possibly supplemented by horticulture (CRM 1979; Smith et. al 1981). Social organization probably continued to be small, seminomadic bands (Smith et. al. 1981).

At the end of the Wilmington period, a localized variation identified by Joseph Caldwell as St. Catherines appears (Thomas and Larsen 1979). Dating from A.D. 950 to 1125, St. Catherines ceramics are distinguished by the small size of their sherd/clay temper and the use of net marking and burnished surface decoration. Sites shift from the marsh edge to the hammocks with larger settlements on the barrier islands. There also appears to be increased burial ceremonialism at this time (Saffer 1979) although it is not yet proven. St. Catherines sites have not been confirmed on the lower Georgia coast, and may represent a localized transition from Wilmington to the following Savannah period.

The Savannah period (A.D. 1125-1275) represents the largest, most complex occupation on the Georgia coast (Smith et. al. 1981). There is evidence of increased population size, more highly developed social organization, the appearance of cultigens, and the appearance of middle Mississippian influences in the archaeological record. Ceramics continuity can be seen in the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

continuation of cord marking. However, there is also change with the reappearance of check and complicated stamping.

Four types of sites have been identified for the Savannah period: sites with platform mound ceremonial centers, sites with burial mounds, large village sites, and small seasonal camps sites (Smith et. al. 1981). Village sites are characterized by palisades and wattle-and-daub house construction (CRM 1979). Crook describes "a ranked society which was nucleated in strategically located towns during the summer and procured estuarine fish" (Crook 1978: 266). During the fall, winter, and spring, settlement was dispersed to exploit other resources (Crook 1978).

Late in the Irene/Pine Harbor period (A.D. 1275-1525) the aboriginal population began to experience sporadic contact with European explorers. The population for this period has been ethnographically identified with the Guale Indians. Sites show the influence of the inland Lamar cultural group with the appearance of mortuary buildings, council houses and ceremonial objects reflecting Southern Cult iconography (CRM 1979). Ceramics are classified as Irene Complicated Stamped, Filfot Stamped, Incised, Plain, and Burnished Plain. Pine Harbor is Larson's designation for the variation of Irene which appears in the vicinity of the Altamaha River estuary. This variation is distinguished by the appearance of McIntosh Incised ceramics in addition to the Irene types (Larson 1958a). Sites consist of haphazardly scattered low shell middens along the tidal waters in association with low sand burial mounds. Subsistence was based on corn-bean-squash horticulture and exploitation of estuarine resources (Smith et. al. 1981).

The period of full contact with Europeans on the Georgia coast is known as Altamaha/Sutherland Bluff (A.D. 1525-1675). The settlement pattern consisted of Spanish missions with associated villages on the barrier islands, and towns along the major rivers and mainland coast. Sites lack the shell midden deposits of the previous period, with the shell now unevenly scattered throughout the site. The reduced amount of shell plus an increase in the size of cultivated fields indicated a greater reliance on horticulture as opposed to hunting/gathering (Smith et. al. 1981). Under the influence of the Spanish missionaries, burial mounds and Southern Cult influences are no longer present. The material assemblage is characterized by San Marcos ceramics and the appearance of Spanish artifacts, principally majolica and olive jars. San Marcos ceramics are sand and grit tempered with stamped surface treatments. Ceramic shapes reflect the influence of European contact with the appearance of plate forms and pedestal bases.

By the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, European-introduced disease, internal warfare, and raids by South Carolinians under Col. James Moore had decimated the native population of coastal Georgia. The few remaining Indians withdrew inland or to Florida, leaving the coast open to European settlement.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

It should be noted that the south Georgia coastal area has been considered a transitional zone between the Georgia coast cultural traditions and those of the St. Johns area of coastal Florida (Smith et. al. 1981). Based on the recent Darien survey (Dickinson and Wayne 1984), there is little evidence of St. Johns material in the Altamaha basin.

**NOTE: The following historical narrative is based largely on material prepared by historic preservation consultant Robert Ciucevich, Savannah, Georgia. "West Darien Historic District," Historic District Information Form, April 1997. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

#### English Settlement Period 1721-1800)

The English arrived at the mouth of the Altamaha River in 1721. This first contact consisted of a foot detachment of the King's Independent Company of Foot, under the command of Col. John Barnwell. Fort King George, consisting of outworks and a blockhouse, was constructed in several separate campaigns between 1721 and 1727, as English defenses were consolidated at Port Royal (leaving a small detachment apparently at the fort). The site of Fort King George is located east of the center of Darien. Fort King George was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on December 9, 1971. The site of the fort is now a Georgia State Historic Site, and the blockhouse was reconstructed in 1988.

Beginning in 1733, however, with the formal English colonization of Georgia by General James Oglethorpe, plans for a more permanent settlement were put forth. As with Ebenezer (later New Ebenezer) to the north, the site of Fort King George was chosen as a military "warning station" for potential invasions by Spanish troops that might attack the new major settlement at Savannah. Plans for the new town, called New Inverness, after the origins of many of the new military settlers, were supervised in 1736 directly by James Oglethorpe, the founder of the new Georgia colony. The new town consisted of a single Savannah-like ward, centering on a town square. The new settlers consisted of a group of Highland Scots, including McIntoshs, Mohrs, Mackays, Morrisons, and McDonalds.

The community was short-lived, however. The English victory over Spanish forces at the Battle of Bloody Marsh on St. Simons Island in 1742 had made the presence of a military settlement less necessary. Some early settlers stayed on, however, and a number of plantations were developed at both the north and south ends of what was to become McIntosh County.

New English colonial advances were made in the 1760s as a result of British victories in Canada and the Treaty of 1763. New Inverness, which had largely been abandoned, was refounded in 1767.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

Lachlan McIntosh, a descendent of one of the area's first settlers, carried out a new survey, roughly following Oglethorpe's original plan, though with an increased number of squares. The new city, renamed Darien, would become an increasingly important shipping center as well as an administrative center for nearby plantations after the American Revolution. The two surviving 1767 squares, located east of the West Darien Historic District, were listed in the National Register of Historic Places on March 14, 1985 as the Vernon Square-Columbus Square Historic District.

#### The Plantation Era and the Civil War (1800-1863)

The early 19th century represented a period of economic growth and increasing stability for Darien and surrounding plantations. Darien was incorporated as a town by an act of the legislature in 1816 and officially recognized as a city in 1818. In 1819, it became the seat of newly established McIntosh County.

Much of the prosperity of the town resulted from plantation development in the vicinity. The Altamaha delta proved a perfect area for rice production, and during the late 18th and 19th centuries, much of the tidal marshlands was drained and laid out into rice plots. Plantations such as Broughton, south of the city and owned by Henry Laurens, president of the Continental Congress, and Butler Plantation, at the edge of Darien, were important coastal rice plantations. By the early 19th century, when Butler Plantation was owned by Pierce Butler, the famous Philadelphia banker and husband of Fanny Kemble, the plantation consisted of 1500 acres of rice land, with a slave force of 600. The character of Darien and plantation life is recorded in detail in Fanny Kemble's diary, which provides rare insights into the nature of town and plantation economics.

The development of plantations throughout McIntosh County coincided with the further development of Darien. Increasingly, Darien became an important shipping and administrative center. With the growing importance of cotton to the region's economy, Darien became a center for cotton factors and shipping. It is estimated that by the 1830s one third of Georgia's cotton was shipped from Darien. Darien was an important center for finance - the Bank of Darien was chartered in 1818 - and for commercial life in generally. A number of wholesale and retail businesses were established along the banks of the Altamaha, as Darien began to fulfill it's earlier plan. Tabby foundation ruins along the river bluff, the remnants of a once-thriving factor's walk, date from this era in Darien's history; some of these ruins, along with a c.1815 cotton warehouse, are present in the West Darien Historic District.

While the town suffered a number of fires and the effects of a severe hurricane in 1824, it became increasingly important as a cultural and commercial center in the region. Several private schools were founded, a number of hotels were built, and a newspaper, the Darien Gazette, was established.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

Darien became an important residential city as well, though many of the more prosperous merchants and planters preferred to build their summer houses in areas north of Darien, along the less mosquito-ridden salt marshes, including "The Ridge," listed in the National Register on April 18, 1985.

The Civil War brought an abrupt end to Darien's early 19<sup>th</sup>-century prosperity. The Union blockade halted shipping from Darien. In June 1863, much of the town was destroyed by fire set by federal troops from nearby St. Simons Island; much of what remained was further damaged a month later by followers of the messianic Mansfield French, otherwise known as "the White Jesus." Many of the plantations were abandoned by slaves, many of whom sought work with the occupying Union army.

#### Reconstruction (1865-1877)

In the period after the Civil War, Darien and other parts of the county became primarily black settlement areas. The few houses not destroyed were occupied by leading members of the black community, and newer houses, mainly following vernacular traditions, were built to replace damaged or destroyed properties. Many of these homes were balloon-frame buildings of the hall-parlor type.

The only commercial building in Darien that survived the devastation of the Civil War is the Strain-White Building, located on Broad Street. This two-story, front gable building of brick and marble construction with a stucco exterior attests to the former prosperity of the town and the importance of the river as a commercial thoroughfare. Other buildings along the riverfront, built in the period from 1812-1824, were destroyed by federal troops; only their tabby foundations remain.

#### New South Era (1870s-1910s)

In the early 1870s, many of the previous white property owners returned, reclaiming both town and plantation properties. As the 1870s progressed, the county began to enjoy a new prosperity as a result of the increased shipping and growing involvement in the timber trade. A naval stores industry developed in the inland parts of the county producing turpentine and pitch, and a number of lumber mills were established in Darien and other parts of the county. The Altamaha River became an important conduit for felled timber on its way to be milled.

The San Savilla Union Sawmill, which was located west of the Strain White Wharf, and the Upper Mill, which was located on Cathead Creek, provided many jobs for the local populace, and a mill and a mill village of sorts sprang up near the Upper Mill. The area, named Mentionville after a family of timber workers who lived in the area during the 19th century, is one of Darien's oldest and most distinctive African-American neighborhoods. It is included in the West Darien Historic District. The

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

Upper Mill Cemetery, located north of the neighborhood and separated from it by modern development including a large school, contains the graves of many prominent Darien citizens, both black and white, including Henry Todd, a "free man of color" who was the owner of the San Savilla Sawmill.

New fortunes resulted from the timber industry, and, in fact, many of the buildings in present-day Darien (and the West Darien Historic District), as in other communities in the county, date from this period. Darien, because of the timber trade and other industries, became increasingly important for shipping throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Ship pilots, who were extremely well paid, built large houses in Darien, on the islands, and especially on the Ridge, near the Meridian dock, north of Darien. Timber merchants built larger houses in Darien and also continued the antebellum tradition of summer homes north of Darien along less mosquito-infested salt marshes. Many of these historic homes are included in the previously listed Vernon Square-Columbus Square Historic District.

Darien grew considerably during the 1870s and 1880s. A fire company was established in 1874, and a new county courthouse was built in 1872. A county jail followed in the 1890s, along with repairs to the earlier fire station and police department. Old businesses, most of them destroyed in the 1860s, were resurrected, often on the same foundations (though two major sections of the town along the waterfront were never reoccupied and remain in ruins today). Commercial buildings were most often of brick construction and some were covered in stucco. Sanborn fire insurance maps prepared for the town in 1885 show rapid development and rebuilding. Most of the houses in Darien, in fact, date from this relatively late period of development.

In the West Darien Historic District, the vast majority of the buildings derive from vernacular forms. Working-class families in the Upper Mill area often lived in modest vernacular homes of the central hall, shotgun, and earlier hall-parlor types, and homes of these types continued to be built into the early 20th century. A shotgun cottage at 505 Houston Street, a central hall at 507 Sixth Street, and a hall-parlor at 604 Houston Street serve as examples of the types of houses available to the average worker. Those who were economically more advantaged lived in the larger Georgian cottages, Georgian houses, or I-houses. Most of these larger homes had minimal stylistic elements, however, and carried out the general tradition of coastal housing. Greek Revival elements, in the form of transoms, sidelights, corner boards, and gable returns can be found throughout the district, as well as a few examples of such Folk Victorian elements as barge boards and tracery. Fine examples of one-and-a-half story Georgian cottages are exhibited in the Gale House at 402 2nd Street and the Raymond Clancy House at 210 First Street, and of two story Georgian houses and I-houses in the Bluestein House on First Street and the Oglethorpe Inn at 104 Second Street.

Elsewhere in the county, newer towns, such as Eulonia and Townsend, grew up largely in response

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

to the timber industry and increased shipping. Rail connections were made to Brunswick on the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia line. A local connector came to Darien in 1899.

#### The Early 20th Century (1900-1945)

The early 20th century witnessed changes in McIntosh County's economy. The timber industry declined as a result of overcutting. Cotton production also fell off—particularly after the late 1910s with the damaging onslaught of the boll weevil.

The main counterforce to economic decline was the small shrimping and fishing industry, which had begun to establish itself during the 1890s. By the 1900-1910 period, this industry had expanded considerably, bringing new prosperity to the county. Darien became an important center for shrimping. In the meantime, agricultural land was allowed to go dormant, eventually providing trees for the late (and still active) pulp industry.

The early 20th century also witnessed the beginning of a growing vacation industry. Small vacation cottages and hunting and fishing camps were constructed throughout the county. Paved highways, beginning in 1926, helped promote the county as an attractive place for hunters and sport fishermen. By the 1930s, the county was also an important stopping-off place for the increasing number of automobiles tourists and seasonal residents heading to Florida.

Like every other county in Georgia, McIntosh County experienced little real growth in the 1930s. There were a number of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) projects in the area, mainly forest products, though no buildings related to CCC work still exist in the county. McIntosh County was also the focus of a federal writers project, resulting in the publication of the popular Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies Among the Georgia Coastal Negroes, Georgia Writers' Project, Work Projects Administration (1940). The federal writers interviewed ex-slaves and described African-American life along the Old River Road and in the "backwoods" of the county. Among those interviewed was Auntie Jane Lewis, a 115-year-old former slave who lived along River Road and whose home, though drastically altered, still survives in the West Darien Historic District. According to local historian Doris Raab, who was cited in the McIntosh County Historic Resources Survey Report, Auntie Jane Lewis worked at an establishment located along Old River Road called the Stockade, where ex-slaves were exhibited. In 1938-1939, Henry Ford built Ms. Lewis a house on his estate in Richmond Hill. However, she preferred to live in her house in Darien, which was also built by Ford and was formerly located near the original Todd School.

In the early 1940s, McIntosh County became the scene of military activity, mostly at the north end of the county. Harris Neck and Townsend both became Army Air Corp training facilities, and other



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

parts of the county, especially Darien, benefited from other war-related employment along the coast; Brunswick for example, had a major ship building facility.

Wartime benefits were short-lived. The shrimping and fishing industry continued to provide employment, and Darien continued as a locally important commercial and governmental center. U.S. 17 also continued to serve as one of the most important automobile routes to Florida. As a result, a growing number of service stations, motels, and cabin courts were established along the route throughout the county.

The vast majority of houses built throughout the period were massed plan front- and side-gable bungalows of various sizes that exhibit mostly Craftsman elements such as tapered columns on brick piers, knee braces, and exposed rafter ends. The bungalow became the most common house type for the African-American community and for the remaining loggers, shrimpers, and fishermen in the 20th century. Good examples of early 20th century bungalows in the West Darien Historic District are the front-gable houses at 306 Elbert and 406 Jackson streets, and the side-gable house at 204 2nd Street.

#### Recent Developments

There has been little dramatic change in McIntosh County's fortunes since the 1940s. Timber continues to be grown, but now mostly for pulp. There is virtually no commercial cotton in the county and very little agriculture generally. Seafood remains an important local industry.

Interstate 95 has become the major north-south thoroughfare through the county and has thus diverted most of the traveling public away from U.S. 17. However, the development of a shopping mall at the Darien interchange on I-95 has provided an economic boost for the county and Darien in terms of jobs and increased revenue. Historic preservation, beautification, heritage tourism, and eco-tourism have become important focuses of Darien's public policy.

---

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

---

- Chapman, William and Betty Ausherman. McIntosh County Historic Resources Survey. 1990. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Ciucevich, Robert A. "West Darien Historic District", Historic District Information Form, April 1997. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Dickinson, Martin F., Lucy B. Wayne, and Marisol J. Melendez, Water and Air Research, Inc., Gainesville, Florida. "Cultural Resource Impact Mitigation for the Darien, Georgia Sewer System Project, March 1986." On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Garrow, Patrick H. and Patricia M. Seabury, Earth Systems Division, SSI, Marietta, Georgia. "Archaeological Monitoring Waterworks Improvement Project, Darien, Georgia, project number ES-902, June 15, 1978." On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division. Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings. 1991.
- King, Spencer B. Darien: The Death and Rebirth of a Southern Town. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1981.
- Lewis, Bessie. They Called Their Town Darien. Darien, GA: Darien News, 1975.
- Merritt, Carole. Historic Black Resources: A Handbook for the Identification, Documentation, and Evaluation of Historic African-American Properties in Georgia. Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division. 1984.
- Moore, Eunice. Interview with Robert A. Ciucevich. March 1997.
- Sullivan, Buddy. Early Days on the Georgia Tidewater: The Story of McIntosh County and Sapelo. Darien, GA: McIntosh Board of Commissioners, 1990.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 9--Major Bibliographic References**

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): ( ) N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued  
date issued:**
- previously listed in the National Register**
- previously determined eligible by the National Register Darien Archaeological District,  
Darien, McIntosh County, November 23, 1981**
- 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, Specify Repository:**

**Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):**

Mc-D-49 - Mc-D-53  
 Mc-D-55 - Mc-D-61  
 Mc-D-63 - Mc-D-70  
 Mc-D-72 - Mc-D-74  
 Mc-D-76 - Mc-D-83  
 Mc-D-85 - Mc-D-93  
 Mc-D-96 - Mc-D-102  
 Mc-D-104 - Mc-D-105  
 Mc-D-124  
 Mc-D-127  
 Mc-D-134  
 Mc-D-137 - Mc-D-138  
 Mc-D-150 - Mc-D-152  
 Mc-D-161 - Mc-D-167  
 Mc-D-170 - Mc-D-171  
 Mc-D-181 - Mc-D-184  
 Mc-D-186 - Mc-D-189

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 9--Major Bibliographic References**

---

- Mc-D-193
- Mc-D-201 - Mc-D-203
- Mc-D-209
- Mc-D-211
- Mc-D-213
- Mc-D-215 - Mc-D-216
- Mc-D-218
- Mc-D-221
- Mc-D-225 - Mc-D-226
- Mc-D-228
- Mc-D-230 - Mc-D-232
- Mc-D-234 - Mc-D-240
- Mc-D-243 - Mc-D-251
- Mc-D-259 - Mc-D-261
- Mc-D-263 - Mc-D-265

**Georgia Archaeological Sites File Number**

- 09MC201 (Davis Site)
- 09MC202 (White Site)
- 09MC214 (Houston Site)
- 09MC248 (Sawyer Site)
- 09MC249 (Rogers Site)
- 09MC360 (Cathead Creek Archaeological Area)
- 09MC361 (Second Street Site)
- 09MC367 (Waterfront District)

---

## 10. Geographical Data

---

**Acreage of Property**      Approximately 94 acres.

### UTM References

A)	Zone 17	Easting 458340	Northing 3471520
B)	Zone 17	Easting 458560	Northing 3471160
C)	Zone 17	Easting 458700	Northing 3471040
D)	Zone 17	Easting 458680	Northing 3470520
E)	Zone 17	Easting 458520	Northing 3470240
F)	Zone 17	Easting 458180	Northing 3470600
G)	Zone 17	Easting 458100	Northing 3470900
H)	Zone 17	Easting 458320	Northing 3471080

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the West Darien Historic District is indicated on the attached tax maps with a heavy black line, drawn to scale.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the intact, contiguous, and historic and archaeological resources to the west of U.S. Highway U.S. 17.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Gretchen B. Kinnard/National Register Coordinator  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**street & number** 156 Trinity Avenue, SW, Suite 101  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** July 18, 2001

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Patrick H. Garrow and Patricia M. Seabury  
**organization** Earth Systems Division, SSI  
**street and number** 525 Webb Industrial Drive  
**city or town** Marietta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30062  
**telephone** (770)424-6200

(X) consultant

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Martin F. Dickinson, Lucy B. Wayne, and Marisol J. Melendez  
**organization** Water and Air Research, Inc.  
**street and number**  
**city or town** Gainesville **state** Florida **zip code**  
**telephone**

(X) consultant

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Robert A. Ciucevich  
**organization** Quatrefoil Consulting  
**street and number** 1240 East Victory Drive #4  
**city or town** Savannah **state** Georgia **zip code** 31404  
**telephone** (912) 233-8655

(X) consultant

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Photographs**

---

**Name of Property:** West Darien Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Darien  
**County:** McIntosh  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** December 1997

**Description of Photograph(s):**

- 1 of 37: View of Darien River and south end of the historic district from the U.S. Highway 17 bridge; photographer facing northwest.
- 2 of 37: View of tabby warehouse ruins between Darien River and Broad Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 3 of 37: View of tabby ruins and Darien River; photographer facing southeast.
- 4 of 37: Strain-White Building, southeast corner of Broad and Scriven streets; photographer facing southeast.
- 5 of 37: 200 block of Broad Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 6 of 37: 100 block of Broad Street; photographer facing northeast.
- 7 of 37: West side of Walton Street/U.S. Highway 17 between Broad and First Streets; photographer facing northwest.
- 8 of 37: Bluestein House, 106 First Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 9 of 37: 100 block of First Street; photographer facing southeast.
- 10 of 37: 107 Scriven Street (southwest corner of Scriven and First streets); photographer facing southwest.
- 11 of 37: Raymond Clancy House, 210 First Street; photographer facing northeast.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Photographs

---

- 12 of 37: Hackel-Brannon-Stebbins House, southwest corner of Second Street and U.S. Highway 17; photographer facing north.
- 13 of 37: Landscape view along Cathead Creek from Second Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 14 of 37: View along 500 block of Second Street; photographer facing east.
- 15 of 37: 400 block of Second Street; photographer facing east.
- 16 of 37: Northeast corner of Second and Clark streets; photographer facing northeast.
- 17 of 37: Edenfield House and Guest Cottage, 609 Third Street; photographer facing southeast.
- 18 of 37: Kenan-Fox House, 311 Third Street; photographer facing southeast.
- 19 of 37: Todd-Grubbs-Sunderhaus House, southwest corner of Third and Jackson streets; photographer facing southwest.
- 20 of 37: 200 block of Third Street; photographer facing northeast.
- 21 of 37: Darien First Presbyterian Church, west side of Jackson Street between Third and Fourth streets; photographer facing northwest.
- 22 of 37: 606 Fourth Street; photographer facing north.
- 23 of 37: 406 Fourth Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 24 of 37: 300 block of Fourth street; photographer facing east.
- 25 of 37: 501 Scriven Street; photographer facing southwest.
- 26 of 37: 505 Houston Street; photographer facing southwest.
- 27 of 37: 500 block of Fifth Street; photographer facing east.
- 28 of 37: 506 Clark Street; photographer facing northeast.



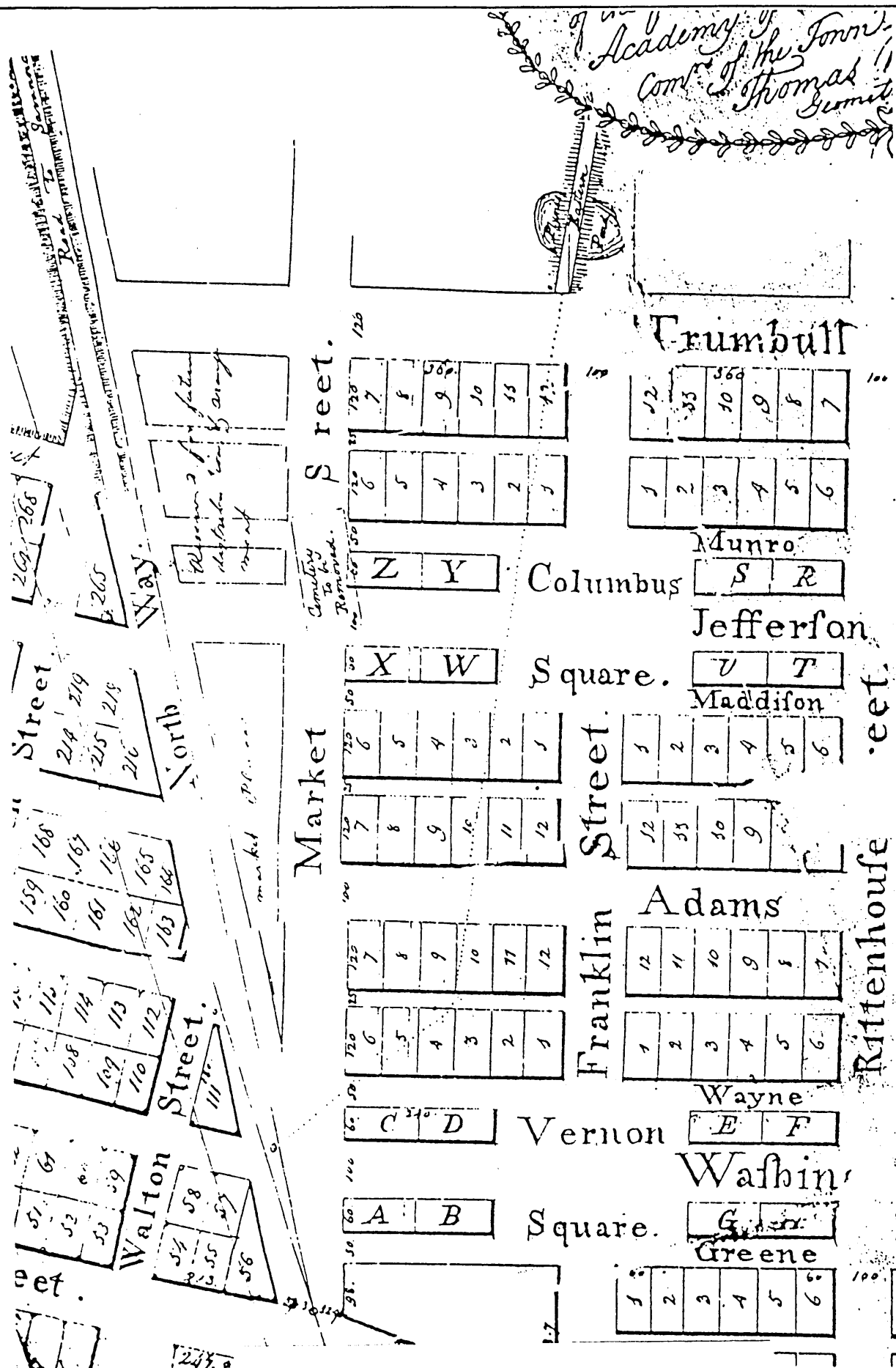
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Photographs**

---

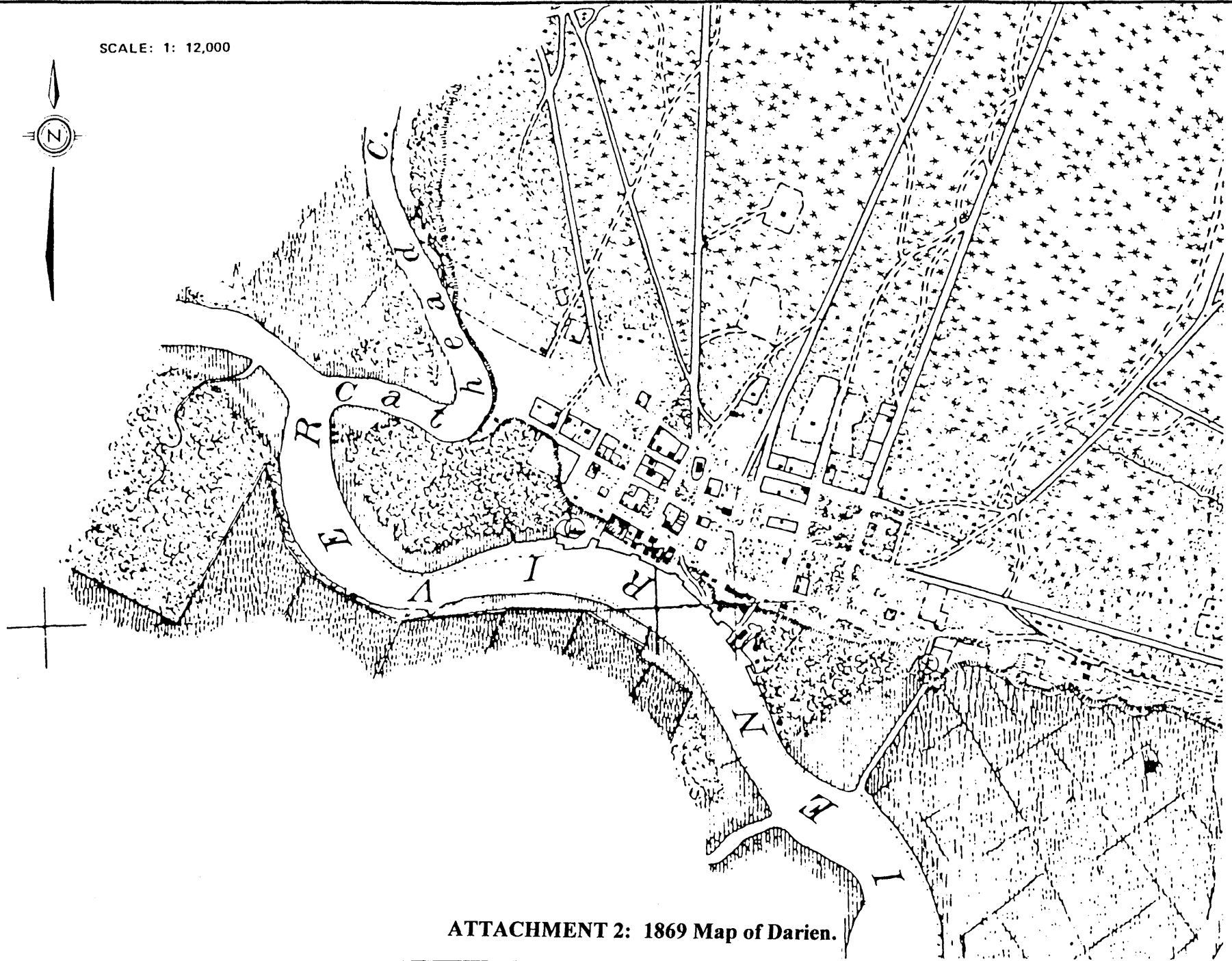
- 29 of 37: 300 block of Fifth Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 30 of 37: Walter Parks House, northwest corner of Sixth Street and U.S. Highway 17; photographer facing north.
- 31 of 37: 500 block of Sixth Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 32 of 37: St. John's Baptist Church, northeast corner of Sixth and Jackson streets; photographer facing northeast.
- 33 of 37: 502 Seventh Street; photographer facing southwest.
- 34 of 37: 400 block of Seventh Street; photographer facing west.
- 35 of 37: 405 Eighth Street; photographer facing southeast.
- 36 of 37: 807 Old River Road; photographer facing northwest.
- 37 of 37: 909 Old River Road; photographer facing north.



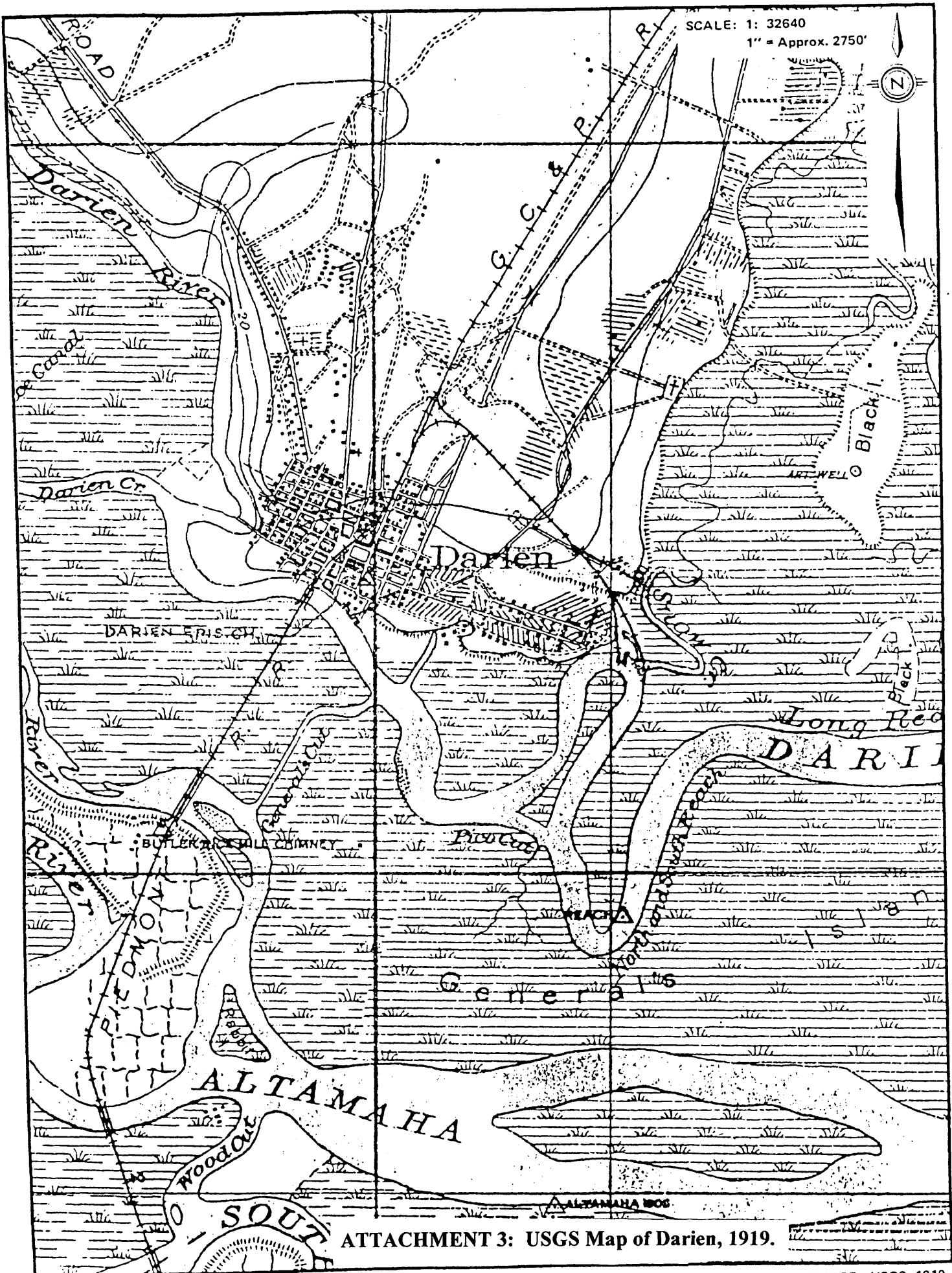
ATTACHMENT 1: McCall Map of Darien, 1806.

SCALE: 1" = 235'

SCALE: 1: 12,000



**ATTACHMENT 2: 1869 Map of Darien.**



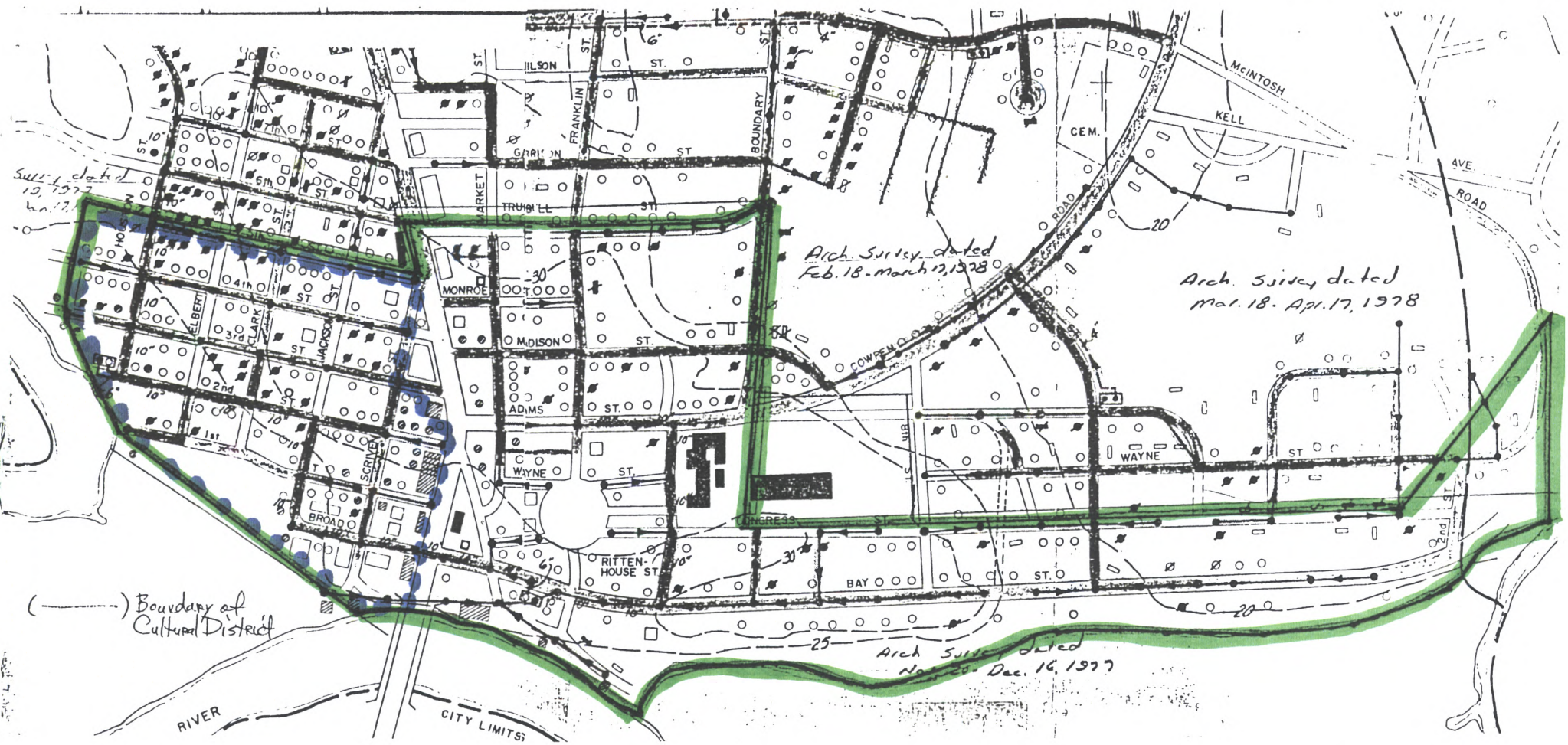
SCALE: 1" = Approx. 2750'



ATTACHMENT 3: USGS Map of Darien, 1919.

SOURCE: USGS, 1919.





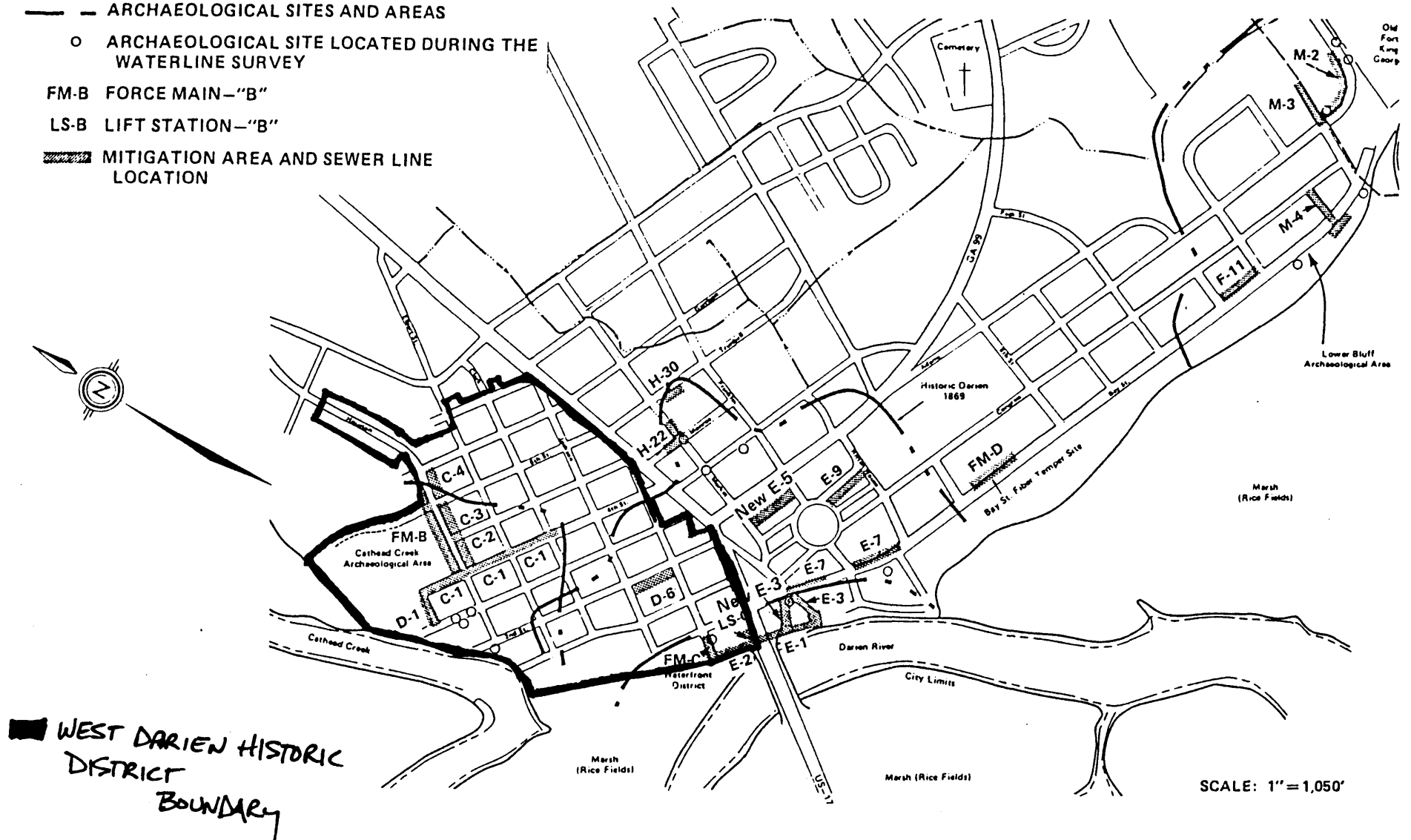
**ATTACHMENT 4: Darien Archaeological District.  
Darien, McIntosh County, Georgia.**

 Darien Archaeological Area.

 Area within West Darien Historic District boundary.

**LEGEND**

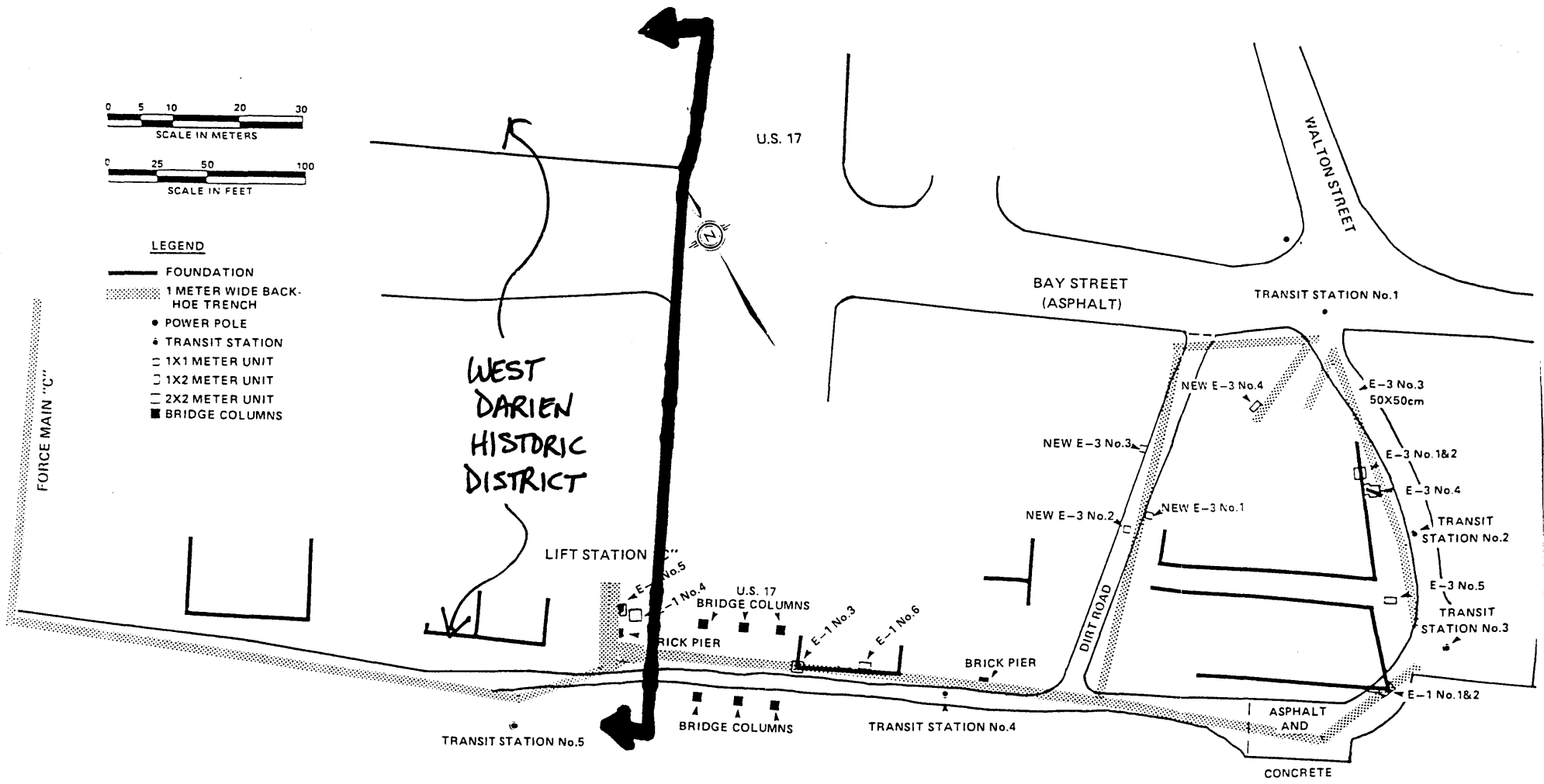
- — — — — ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND AREAS
- ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE LOCATED DURING THE WATERLINE SURVEY
- FM-B FORCE MAIN—"B"
- LS-B LIFT STATION—"B"
- ▨ MITIGATION AREA AND SEWER LINE LOCATION



Darien Sewer System Project Impact Mitigation Areas

WAR 1985.  
SOURCE: McCrary Engineering 1981.

**ATTACHMENT 5: Project Mitigation Areas. Dickinson, Wayne, and Melendez. "Cultural Resource Impact Mitigation for the Darien, Georgia Sewer System Project." Figure 5-45.**



Location of Backhoe Trench, Excavation Units, E-1/E-2, E-3, NEW E-3, LS-C, FM-C, Waterfront District, Darien, Georgia

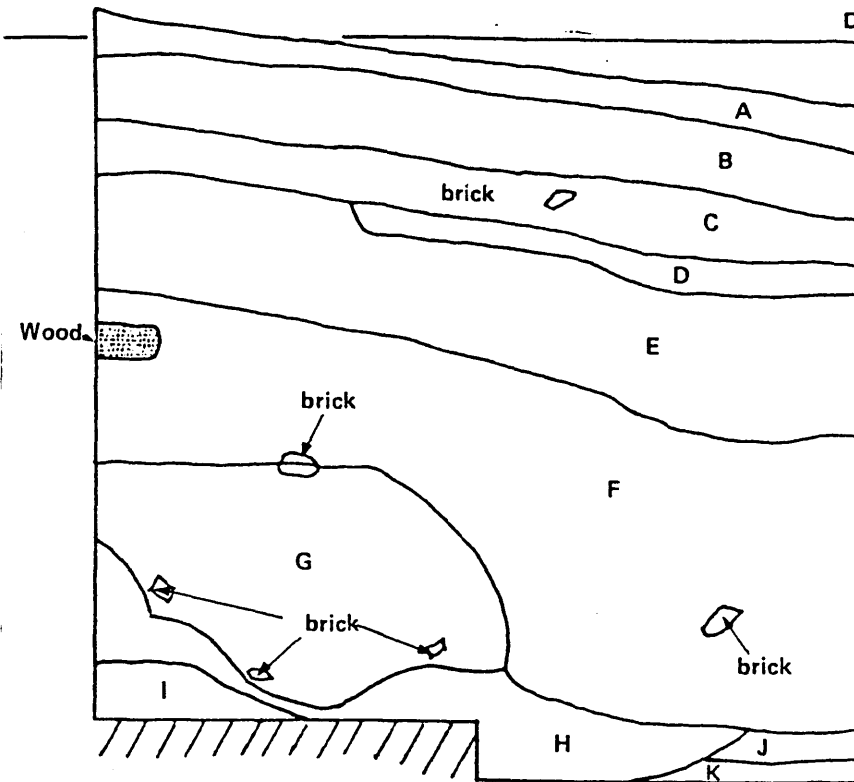
WAR 1985.  
SOURCE: McCrary Engineering 1981

**ATTACHMENT 6: Excavations along Darien Waterfront.**

Dickinson, Wayne, and Melendez. "Cultural Resource Impact Mitigation for the Darien, Georgia Sewer System Project."

Figure 5-45.

E-1 No.4  
 Profile East Balk  
 (0-195cm Below Datum)

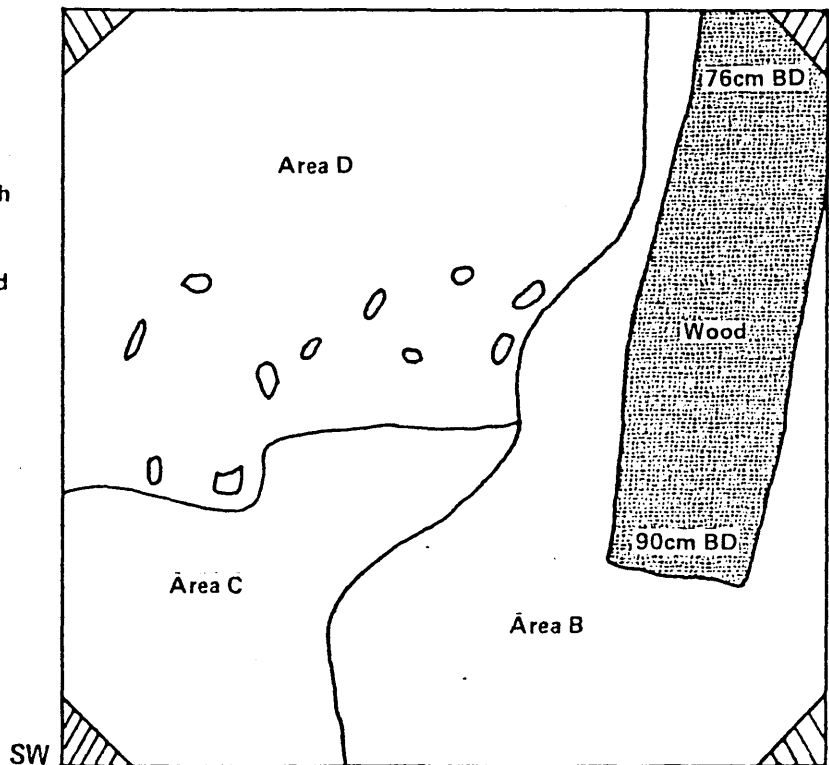


- KEY:
- A (10YR3/1) very dark gray sand
  - B (10YR4/2) dark grayish brown sand
  - C (10YR4/3) dark brown sand with gravel and brick
  - D (10YR4/4) dark yellowish brown sand
  - E Area A – (10YR4/3) dark brown sand
  - F Area B – (10YR3/2) very dark grayish brown and (10YR4/4) dark yellowish brown sand with gravel and brick
  - G Area F – (10YR5/4) yellowish brown sand with gravel and brick
  - H Area D – (10YR5/4) yellowish brown sand
  - I Area G – (2.5YR7/4) pale yellow sand
  - J (10YR5/4) yellowish brown sand
  - K (2.5YR7/4) pale yellow sand



E-1 No.4  
 Floor Plan for Level 10  
 (100cm Below Datum)

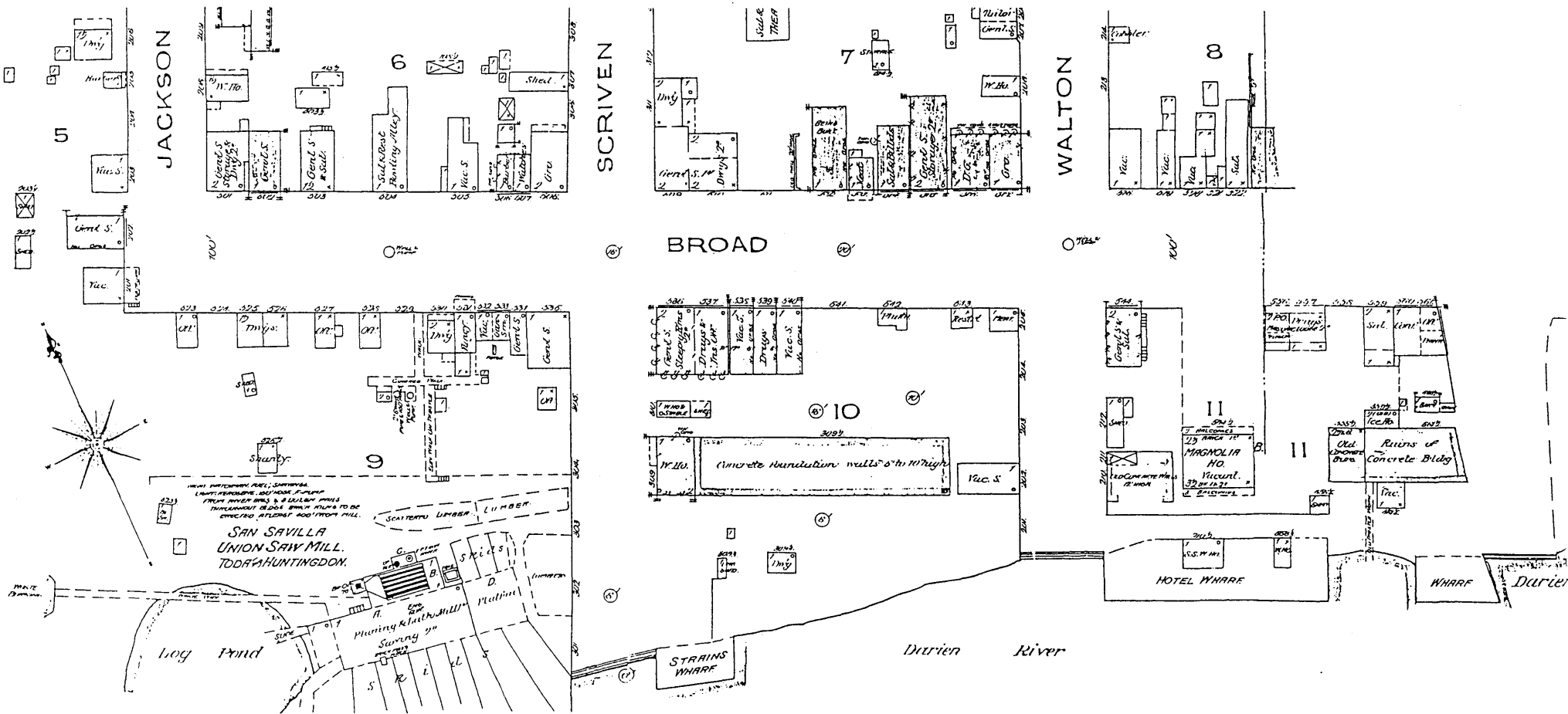
- KEY:
- Area B (10YR3/2) very dark grayish brown sand
  - Area C (10YR5/3) brown sand
  - Area D (10YR4/3) dark brown sand with brick bats



Profile, Plan, Unit E-1 No. 4, Waterfront Site, Darien, Georgia

WAR, 1985.





ATTACHMENT 8: 1885 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Darien Waterfront.

SCALE: 1" = 80 ft.  
1cm = 9.7m

SOURCE: Sanborn, 1885.