

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Abbeville	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70-4-41-0020 0002	DATE 4/3/70

**1. NAME**

COMMON: The Burt (Stark) House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
306 North Main and Greenville Sts.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Abbeville

STATE South Carolina	CODE 41	COUNTY: Abbeville	CODE 01
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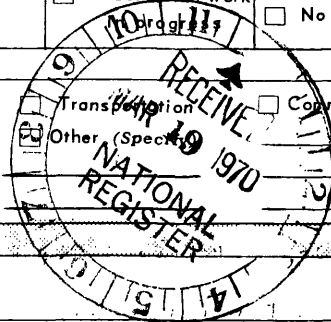
**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered 	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No 

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_



**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mrs. Mary Stark Davis

STREET AND NUMBER:  
306 North Main & Greenville Sts.

CITY OR TOWN: Abbeville	STATE: South Carolina	CODE 41
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Abbeville County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Clerk of Court

CITY OR TOWN: Abbeville (approx. 3½ acres)	STATE: South Carolina	CODE 41
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
South Carolina: A Guide to the Palmetto State

DATE OF SURVEY: 1941  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
South Carolina Department of Archives and History (partial)

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1430 Senate Street

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia	STATE: South Carolina	CODE 41
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Two-story white frame structure with lap-siding, designed by architect David Lesley and built about ~~1850~~, exact date unknown. Four square columns support a pedimented front portico, two stories high and extending across central section of house. Ornamental supports are entablature features. Beneath pediment is small second-story balcony with wooden latticework. A floor-length window opens onto main portico on either side of front door, original shutters on these and all windows. In addition to the imposing front entrance, two simpler entrances with piazzas open on each side of house. The corners of the house are accented by pilasters. Square chimneys have paneled sides. Of the original separate buildings -- which included carriage house, smokehouse, well house, cow barn, milk house and kitchen -- only the kitchen remains. This building, with its large brick fireplace and iron crane for cooking-utensils, is in good condition.

Characterizing the interior are high ceilings and spacious rooms. The main entrance is a central great hall with an Adam fanlight. A drawing room opens on each side. In antebellum times, the wide double doors to each of these rooms permitted use of the entire front area as a ballroom.

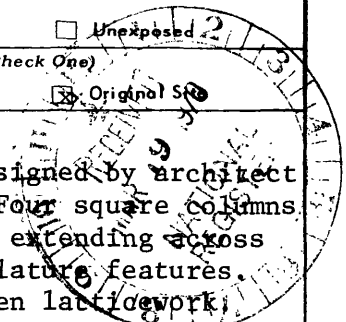
Craft characteristics of the builder show up consistently in the wood trim, design of doors and other architecture features. All floors -- wide boards of heart pine -- are original, as are the simply-carved mantels. The two drawing rooms and the dining room feature central ceiling medallions and original crystal chandeliers. The drawing room doors are fitted with heavy silver hinges imported from England. At the rear of the central hall, a narrow-railed staircase rises to a broad landing.

The house is completely furnished with Southern antiques of the antebellum era. These include furniture, silver, crystal, rugs, miniatures and family portraits in elaborately carved gold-leaf frames. Also in gold leaf are floor-to-ceiling pier mirrors and window valances. A first-floor bedroom and four upstairs bedrooms are completely furnished in the early 19-century mode. Marble-topped dressers, hand-carved chests and tester beds with hand-made coverings are typical. The desk of the home's first owner stands in the upstairs hall. Much of the charm and value of the house lies in the authenticity and charm of its furnishings.

The gardens were designed originally by an English landscaper named Johnson. The narrow entrance driveway, originally a carriage road, circles before the front steps. Here an old dismount stone still stands. Remaining from the original landscaping, boxwood-bordered walks extend from the broad piazzas at the side and rear of the house. The house and grounds are shaded by tall oaks, magnolias, cedars. Plantings include oleanders, wygelia, wistaria, other old-fashioned shrubs and flowers.

The house is in excellent condition, both the interior and exterior almost completely unchanged from the original.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

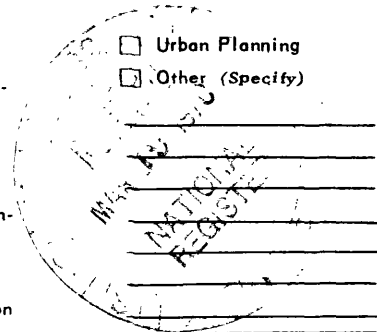
- |                                        |                                       |                                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

May 2, 1865

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                                  |                                                            |                                               |                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                             |                                               | _____                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |                                                            |                                               | _____                                               |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Burt House has its chief historic significance as the location of Jefferson Davis's last Council of War.

Here, at the home of his personal friend, Major Armistead Burt, President Davis and his official company stopped overnight, May 2, 1865. The stop was one of many made by the evacuating Confederate government following General Lee's withdrawal from Petersburg, Virginia, and the ensuing Confederate surrender at Appomattox, April 9, 1865. Accompanying Davis from Richmond were members of the Confederate cabinet, his personal staff and departmental attaches. They were attended by Confederate Cavalry.

By the time the party reached Abbeville, two of the Cabinet had resigned, the military situation appeared hopeless, and the hope of President Davis to reach Mississippi and re-vitalize Confederate forces appeared equally hopeless.

Attending the Burt House Council of War, in addition to the one cabinet officer not serving as a general, were President Davis, Gen. Ferguson of Mississippi, Generals Dibrell and Vaughan of Tennessee, Col. W.C.P. Breckinridge and Gen. Basil Duke of Kentucky, Gen. John C. Breckinridge, cavalry commander, and Gen. Bragg, senior General of the Army (Lee, Johnston and Beauregard having surrendered).

Here was made the decision to "abandon all hope of effecting any other purpose than Mr. Davis's escape to the west."

It was this final meeting of Confederate leaders which gives substance to Abbeville's claim of being the "Grave of the Confederacy" as well as its "Birthplace" (because of its historic Secession Hill site). As the setting for the final Council of War, the Burt House itself has become a historic landmark.

The Burt House is also considered extremely valuable as an example of antebellum mansion architecture and atmosphere. Both its exterior and interior appearance typify the period known popularly as the "Old South."

Built by Armistead Burt, following his move from Pendleton to Abbeville and his marriage to Martha Calhoun - both in 1828, the house has remained in the same family ever since. Present owner and occupant is Burt's great-great niece, Mrs. Mary Stark Davis. Burt himself was a distinguished Abbeville lawyer who served in both the United States and Confederate Congresses.

It is especially important that the house achieve National Register status at this time since Mrs. Davis plans a bequest that, at her death, the house and all its furnishings shall become the property of the Abbeville County Historic Preservation Commission. The property must be maintained as a historic house and may be used as the Commission deems best.

cont....

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Columbia, S.C. Department of Archives and History. "Jefferson Davis's Route from Richmond, Virginia to Irwinville, Georgia, April 2 - May 10, 1865" (by Nora Marshall Davis).  
 WPA. South Carolina: A Guide to the Palmetto State. Oxford University Press, New York, 1941.  
 Davis, Jefferson, Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, Vol II. War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Vol. XLVI, Part III, Washington, 1895.  
 Julien and Milling, Beneath So Kind a Sky. University of S.C. Press, Columbia, 1958.

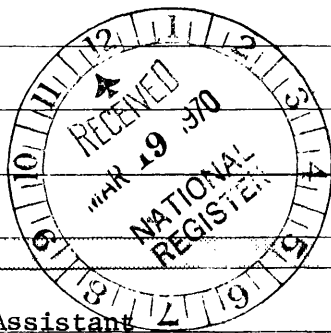
**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		34°	10'	51 7/8"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		82°	22'	58 1/2"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 3 1/2

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. James W. Fant, Historic Resources Assistant

ORGANIZATION: South Carolina Department of Archives and History DATE: 3/13/70

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 11188, Capitol Station, 1430 Senate Street

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: 41

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

National  State  Local

Name: Charles E. Lee  
 Charles E. Lee  
 Title: S.C. Dept. of Archives & History  
 Director  
 Date: March 13, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Gurnsey  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: APR 4 1970

ATTEST: William G. Smutney  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: MAR 27 1970

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

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COUNTY Abbeville	
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70-4-41- <del>0020</del>	4/3/70

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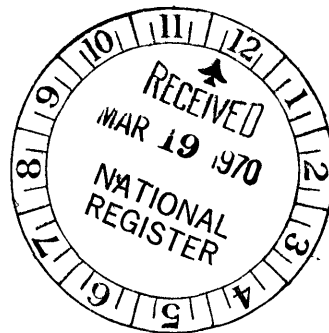
(Number all entries)

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Resources Division, South Carolina Department  
of Archives and History: South Carolina Survey of  
Historic Places.

September, 1969

South Carolina Department of Archives and History  
1430 Senate Street  
Columbia, South Carolina



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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
South Carolina	
COUNTY	
Abbeville	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
70.4.41. <del>000</del>	4/3/70

0002

(Number all entries)

8. Significance - Continued

The Burt House is already a historic shrine, its importance increased by its location in South Carolina's importantly historic Abbeville district, and in Abbeville town, a spot of great charm that retains a number of other important historic landmarks.

