

1188

# 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 Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation  
other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 2154 Georgia Highway 30 West  
city, town Americus (X) vicinity of  
county Sumter code 261  
state Georgia code GA zip code 31719

( ) not for publication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:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	8	2
sites	2	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	10	2

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.

*Robert Luce*

*8-31-04*

Signature of certifying official

Date

W. Ray Luce  
Historic Preservation Division Director  
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

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

*Daniel J. Wini* *10/27/04*

*fu*

Keeper of the National Register

Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

Dwelling: single family

Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding, agricultural field, animal facility

### Current Functions:

Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding, agricultural field, animal facility

Domestic: camp

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century: Greek Revival

### Materials:

<b>foundation</b>	Brick
<b>walls</b>	Wood: weatherboard
<b>roof</b>	Asphalt
<b>other</b>	Metal

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation, located in rural Sumter County, is an approximately 850-acre farm complex that includes the original Greek Revival-style main house, built in c.1836-1840, a large complex of outbuildings, farm fields, and a slave cemetery. The house and outbuildings are situated on a rise surrounded by agricultural fields. The main house and outbuilding complex is on the north side of Highway 30 West, which bisects the farm north and south.

The main house is a one-story, frame, Greek Revival-style dwelling raised on brick piers with a low-slung hip roof (photos 1-5). The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and the walls are clad in weatherboard. The two chimneys have been removed. Wood posts support the shed-roofed, full-width front porch. The original porch, which was probably designed in the Greek Revival style, was replaced by a folk Victorian-style porch by the 1940s, which was then replaced by the current porch. The five-bay façade and the interior plan are symmetrical, both characteristics of the Greek Revival style. In addition, the transom and sidelights and the two fluted-pilasters that flank the main entrance (indicating the appearance the original porch posts) are elements of the Greek Revival style.

A long, shed-roofed ell is located to the rear and entered from the center hall (photos 5-7). The roof is covered with sheet metal and the building is raised on brick piers. The plan features three spaces: a breezeway (photo 14) that connects the ell with the main house and two roughly equal-sized rooms that served as the dining room (photo 15) and, at the north end, the kitchen. Both rooms share are heated by a fireplace. The entrance to the dining room is finished with hand-planed boards and a Greek-Revival-style shouldered door surround.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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The Georgian floor plan, which is common to Greek Revival-style houses, features four principal rooms divided by a center hall (photo 8). The stout exterior betrays the high ceilings inside. Each room is lit by tall sash windows and heated by a fireplace (photos 11-13). The heavy, molded Greek-Revival-style mantels survive in the four principal rooms (photos 9, 11-13). The molded window and door surrounds also remain intact. A ceiling medallion is located in the southeast parlor (photo 10).

The outbuilding complex includes seven unpainted frame sheds that form an arc around the north and east sides of the main house. R.B. Gaston built most of the outbuildings in the 1920s during the period of tenant farming. These buildings include the chicken house (photo 20, background center), pump house (photo 20), "Big Barn" (photo 19, right), small barn (photo 19, left), three-bay crib barn called the "Gas House" (photo 17, left), three-bay barn called the "Concrete House" (photo 17 right), and the "Cook's House" (photo 18), which is the only surviving tenant dwelling. Although in poor condition, these outbuildings retain a high level of historic integrity. Outbuildings built by Robert Gaston that no longer survive include a commissary (photo 16) and six tenant along both sides of Georgia Highway 30 West (photo 22). A blacksmith shop was located on highway 30. Two nonhistoric tractor sheds are located east of the outbuildings (photo 21). Most of the outbuilding complex is shaded and a row of crepe myrtle separates the landscape of work from the formal front yard.

The formal front yard is symmetrically arranged on each side of the walk that leads from the highway to the front porch. Crepe myrtle line the front walk (photo 1). The yard includes exotic plants, such as crepe myrtles, cedars, a Japanese magnolia, and a cedar of Lebanon (photo 1), laid out in an axial plan. Cedar trees arranged in an arc indicate that a circular drive may have once existed (photos 2-3). White Oaks shade the house on the east (photo 5). Small-scale plantings include sweet shrub, banana shrub, Japanese magnolia, tea olive, narcissus, daffodils, and milk and wine lilies. The southern third of the farm is dedicated to open fields while the northern two-thirds is a mix of open fields and wood lots. The fields are planted in cotton, peanuts, and corn.

The slave cemetery is known from oral tradition. Located in the northwest corner of the property, the unmarked cemetery is overgrown in pine trees and thick underbrush. The size of the cemetery or the number of graves is not known. The brickyard is located in a depression in the southeast corner of the property (photo 23). Nothing except pieces of broken brick scattered across the site remain from the brick making operation.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**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):**

Agriculture  
Architecture  
Landscape Architecture  
Ethnic Heritage: Black

**Period of Significance:**

c.1836-1840 – 1954.

**Significant Dates:**

c.1836-1840 – Main house completed by John Teel.

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

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

N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Teel-Crawford-Gaston House is significant in the area of agriculture because its main house, outbuildings, cultivated fields, pasturelands, and wood lots, as identified in statewide agricultural context *Tilling the Earth: Georgia's, Historical Agricultural Heritage*, represent over one-hundred years of agricultural practice in Sumter County, Georgia. The farm represents two major periods in the history of Georgia agricultural, the plantation system and system of tenant farming. John Teel purchased the property in 1836 and built the main house by 1840. He established a plantation where, by 1850, he lived with his wife, nine children, and 16 slaves. In 1852, Teel sold the plantation to Shadrack and Lucina Crawford who, after the Civil War, turned the property from a plantation based on slave labor to a farm based on the tenant system. The Crawfords sold the Farm to Robert B. Gaston in 1918, who farmed there until his death in 1925. Gaston worked the land with mules and relied on the labor of tenant farmers. Gaston built the existing outbuilding complex to support the tenant-farm operation, most of which survives. James Monroe Gaston, Jr., Robert's grandson, continues to the farm the property.

In Sumter County, agriculture has historically represented a significant portion of the county's economy as it has throughout Georgia. However, development pressures and the decline of small, family farm operations have significantly reduced the number farms that have survived intact. The Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation is significant in the area of agriculture because it includes an intact farm complex with the main house, outbuildings, cultivated fields, woodlands, and pasture land that represent the practice of agriculture in south Georgia during the 19th and 20th centuries.

The farm is significant in the area architecture because the main house is an outstanding example of a Greek Revival Georgian-plan cottage. It features the basic characteristics of the Greek Revival style in Georgia, such as the low, cubic proportions and low-slung hip roof. Typical of the Greek Revival are the transom and sidelights and the full-width-porch. Two fluted-pilasters flank the main entrance indicating the appearance the original porch posts. The Georgian-plan plan, which is common to Greek Revival-style houses, features four principal rooms divided by a center hall. The stout exterior betrays the high ceilings inside. Each room is lit by tall sash windows and heated by a fireplace.

In Georgia, contrary to the popular image of the state, relatively few houses were built in the Greek Revival style and most were constructed in towns rather than on plantations in rural areas. By the 1840s, according to *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses and their Landscaped Settings*, Georgia was completely settled, and the Greek Revival, used from the 1840s to the 1860s, became the first architectural style to appear statewide. A statement of cultural independence, the Greek Revival was clear break with English and other European Renaissance traditions. The style was a romantic revival that drew directly from the original source, a sentimental imitation of the architecture of ancient Greece which provided a young nation with associations of Greek democracy. The Greek Revival, which is thought of as a national style, was used extensively throughout the United States at every level of society.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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The farm is significant in the area of landscape architecture because it includes many of the landscape components that defined Georgia farms in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Teel farm is framed by an ornamental yard in which the front lawn is planted with a variety exotic plants in a formal, axial arrangement and set apart from the adjacent landscape of work. The landscape of work, another significant landscape, includes the arrangement of outbuildings, animal pens, open work spaces and the unpaved lane that joins the outbuildings, the main house, and the fields, pasturelands, and wood lots that lay beyond. These landscapes were necessary to convey the social and economic status of the owner and, especially in period of tenant farming, to support the operation of the farm. The ornamental yard and the landscape of work are two major forms of historic landscapes in Georgia identified in *Georgia's Living Places*.

The farm is significant in the area of black ethnic heritage because the brickyard, main house, and slave cemetery represent the lives of the slaves who built and labored on the Teel and Crawford farms. These sites are the only surviving resources associated with a half century of slavery at the Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation. Brick-making facilities seldom involved the construction of permanent facilities but were usually erected near the building site. Raw materials, such as sand and clay, were brought to the site and the unfired bricks often formed the walls of the kiln. It is very rare to identify the site of a small-scale, project-specific brickyard. Slave cemeteries are another rare resource type because they were often located at the outskirts of the plantation with the graves identified with wood markers or other impermanent materials. Slave cemeteries often faded from the memory of transient slave populations and without upkeep, became overgrown and returned to forest. The slave cemetery at the Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation is typical with its unmarked graves located in thick underbrush.

**National Register Criteria**

A and C

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

N/A

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins with the construction of the main house in c.1836-1840 and ends in 1954 at the fifty-year end date because Gaston family continues to operate the farm.

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

The main house contributes to the significant of the plantation because it retains the features that define it as an early Greek Revival-style plantation house in Georgia: one-story height, frame construction, low-pitched pitched hip roof, Georgian plan with high ceilings and each room heated by a fireplace. The outbuildings represent a variety of functions and, although in poor condition, they

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8--Statement of Significance**

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retain a high level of historic integrity. The historic design, craftsmanship, and materials are evident. Some outbuildings have collapsed in recent years, such as the commissary, and do not contribute to the plantation. The two sites associated with the nomination, the brickyard and the slave cemetery, retain a high level of historic integrity and contribute to the significance of the plantation. Two sheds that were built in the 1980s are identified as the only noncontributing resources.

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

In the late 1820s, John Teel, a native of North Carolina, moved to southwest Georgia as white settlement of the area was underway. He married Mary (last name unknown) about 1830 and began a family, eventually having nine children. In 1836, Teel, also spelled Teil or Teal, purchased Land Lot 62 (202-1/2 acres) in northwest Sumter County. The low purchase price of \$300, or around \$1.50 an acre, suggests that no house existed on this property in 1836. Teel most likely built the house between c.1836-1840 to accommodate his growing family and at 40 years of age, he probably had the financial means to build a substantial house. The warranty deed dated December 5, 1852, states that the land was "known as the plantation whereon John Teel now resides," indicating that a house existed at the time it was sold.

Teel built the large, Greek Revival-style house with the labor of his slaves, who felled lumber on the property and burned brick near the house. When Teel sold the plantation to Shadrack and Lucina Crawford in 1852, he had acquired 730 acres and sixteen slaves.

The Crawfords purchased the plantation for \$5,000. Shadrack had been a private in the Sumter Volunteers of Americus, Georgia, during the Spanish American War. Shadrack married a wealthy widow named Lucina A. Holley on October 2, 1851. According to the deed dated December 15, 1852, Lucina Crawford purchased from John Teel 730-1/2 acres in the 26th District.

The Crawfords continued to farm the property for nearly half a century until their deaths in 1896. Hal Lawson inherited the house and furnishings, the original 730-1/2 acres, and an additional 14 acres that the Crawfords acquired in 1879. Lawson sold 355 acres of the property to his brother O.T. Lawson in 1917, who quickly sold it to the Oliver-McDonald Corporation of Plains, Georgia.

Robert Barker Gaston purchased the 355 acres from the Oliver-McDonald Corporation in 1918. Gaston, who was born in Alabama, farmed in Carroll and Monroe counties before he bought the Sumter County farm. In 1925, R.B. Gaston bought an additional 167 1/2 acres. He and Ida Gaston had eight children. After Gaston's death in 1925, the oldest of the eight, James Monroe Gaston, received the farm, which he operated until his death in 1992. James and Louesa's son, James Monroe Gaston, Jr., now farms the land and seasonally lets the house and property to hunters. The Gastons, who grew corn and cotton and raised cattle and hogs for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, built nearly all of the outbuildings in the decades before World War II, including three barns, a chicken house, cook's house, pump house, and gas house. Six tenant houses, a blacksmith shop, and a commissary have since been demolished. James Monroe Gaston, Jr., Robert's grandson, continues to the farm the property. He plants the fields in cotton, peanuts, and corn and seasonally lets the



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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Brock, Gretchen and Cherie Blizzard Prickett. Historic District Information Form. Teel-Crawford-Gaston Farm. On file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia, 1996.

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

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property**      Approximately 850 acres

### UTM References

A)	Zone 16	Easting 745780	Northing 3561580
B)	Zone 16	Easting 746990	Northing 3560240
C)	Zone 16	Easting 746530	Northing 3559140
D)	Zone 16	Easting 746070	Northing 3558460
E)	Zone 16	Easting 745100	Northing 3558450
F)	Zone 16	Easting 744880	Northing 3559270
G)	Zone 16	Easting 745050	Northing 3561580

### Verbal Boundary Description

The historic district boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map, which is drawn to scale.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the main house, outbuildings, cultivated fields, and pastures historically associated the Teel-Crawford-Gaston House.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Steven Moffson, Architectural Historian  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**mailing address** 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** August 15, 2004  
**e-mail** steven\_moffson@dnr.state.ga.us

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

**name/title** Gretchen Brock and Cherie Blizzard Prickett  
**organization** Middle Flint Regional Development Center  
**mailing address** 228 West Lamar Street  
**city or town** Americus **state** GA **zip code** 31709  
**telephone** (229) 931-2909  
**e-mail** N/A

- ( ) **property owner**  
( ) **consultant**  
( ) **regional development center preservation planner**  
(X) **other: Interns**

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** Nancy and James Gaston  
**organization (if applicable)**  
**mailing address** 2220 Georgia Highway 30 West  
**city or town** Americus **state** GA **zip code** 31719  
**e-mail (optional)** N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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**Name of Property:** Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation  
**City or Vicinity:** Americus vicinity  
**County:** Sumter  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** July 2003

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 23

1. Main house and formal yard, photographer facing north.
2. Main house formal yard, photographer facing north.
3. Main house and formal yard, photographer facing north.
4. Main house, photographer facing northeast.
5. Main house and ell, photographer facing west.
6. Main house and ell, photographer facing southwest.
7. Main house and ell, photographer facing southeast.
8. Main house, interior, center hall, photographer facing south.
9. Main house, interior, southwest parlor, photographer facing northeast.
10. Main house, interior, southwest parlor, medallion, photographer facing up.
11. Main house, interior, southeast parlor, photographer facing northeast.
12. Main house, interior, northeast bedroom, photographer facing southeast.
13. Main house, interior, northwest bedroom, photographer facing southwest.
14. Main house, interior, breezeway entrance to kitchen ell, photographer facing north.
15. Main house, interior, kitchen, photographer facing north.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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16. Outbuilding complex, Commissary ruins, photographer facing south.
17. Outbuilding complex, Gas House (left) and Concrete House, photographer facing north.
18. Outbuilding complex, Cook's House, photographer facing south.
19. Outbuilding complex, barn (right) and Big Barn, photographer facing west.
20. Outbuilding complex, chicken house (center) and pump house, photographer facing north.
21. Tractor sheds (nonhistoric), photographer facing west.
22. Tenant house ruins, photographer facing south.
23. Brickyard, photographer facing south.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)

# Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation Americus, Sumter County Georgia Site Plan—Main House and Outbuildings

No Scale

Extant



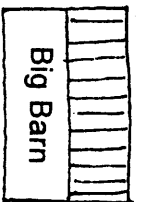
Demolished



Chicken House



Pump House

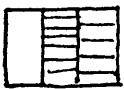


Big Barn

Tractor Sheds



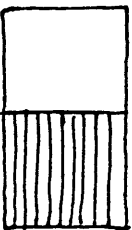
Barn



Cook's House



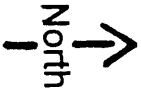
Gas House



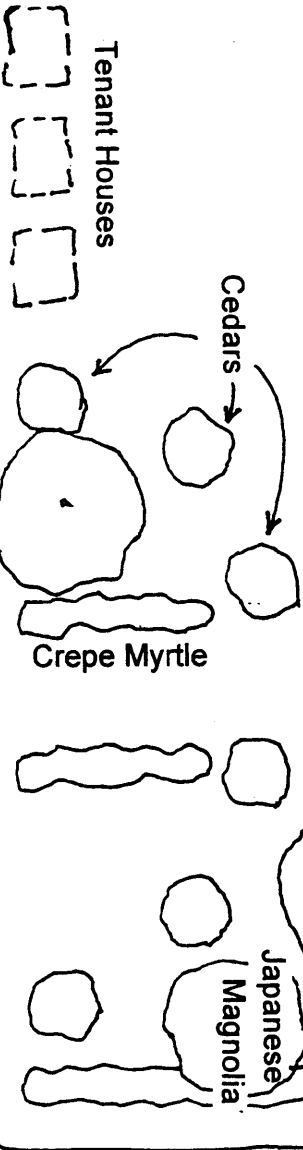
Concrete House



Commissary



North



Cedar of Lebanon

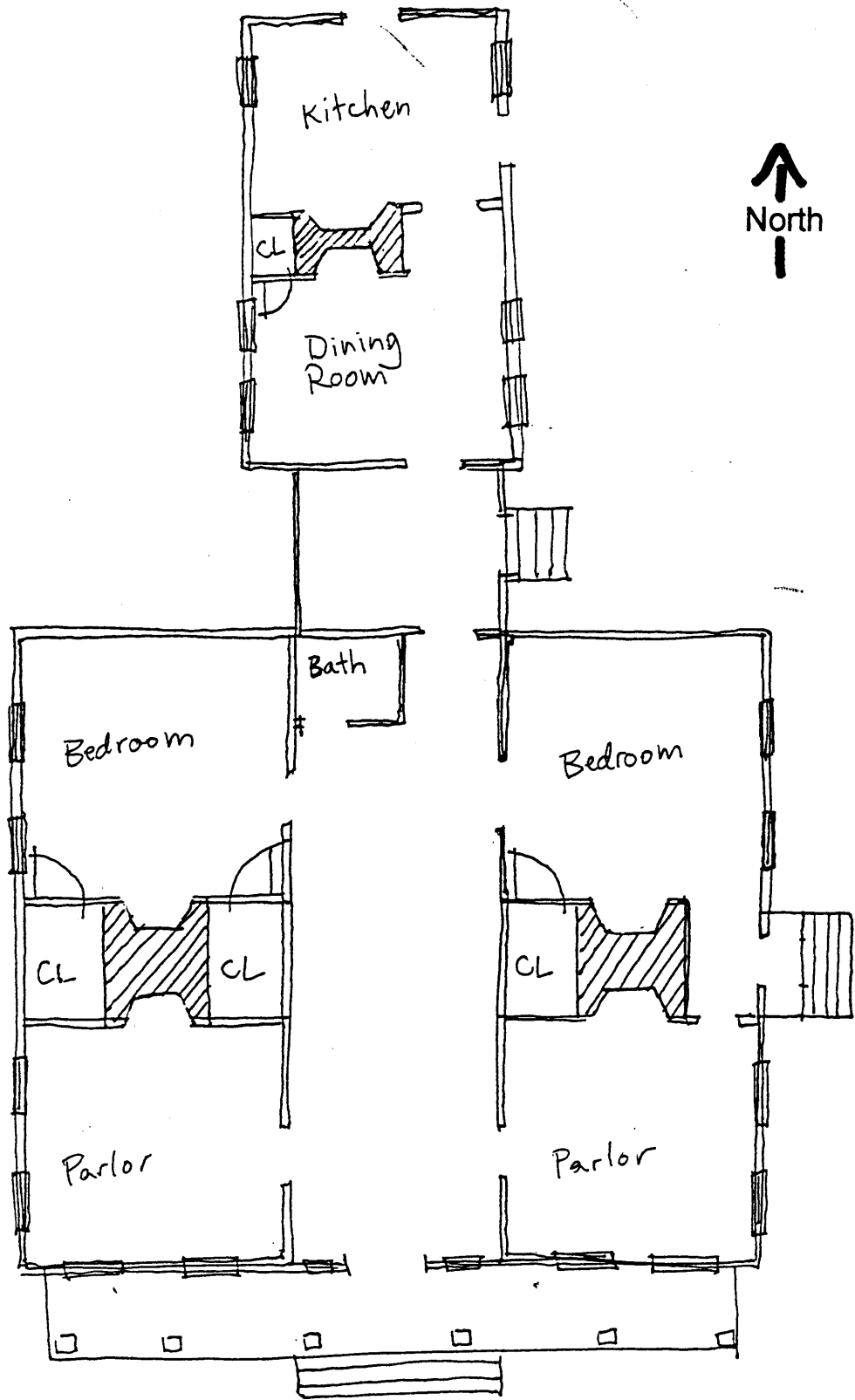
Tenant Houses

Georgia Highway 30 West

Blacksmith Shop

Tenant Houses





Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation  
Americus, Sumter County Georgia  
Floor Plan

No Scale

Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation  
Americus, Sumter County Georgia  
Sketch Map

National Register Boundary 

Approximate Scale: 1" = 650'



Slave Cemetery

LL66

LL67

LL62

Main House and  
Outbuilding Complex

GA Hwy 30

LL61

Brick Yard

LL35