

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties. Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bivings-Converse House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 1 Douglas Street not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Glendale vicinity X  
state South Carolina code SC county Spartanburg code 083  
zip code 29346

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility 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 X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally.  
(\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 4/19/95  
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall 5/26/95  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Entered in the  
National Register

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

N/A

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: Single Dwelling

#### Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE

Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid 19th Century: Roman Revival

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick/Stone: Large Ashlar Block

roof Asphalt

walls Wood: Weatherboard

other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1836  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1836-ca. 1900  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- 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

Name of repository: Converse College, Spartanburg, S.C.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>17</u>	<u>423600</u>	<u>3866820</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martin E. Meek, w/assistance from J. Tracy Power, NR Specialist, S.C. SHPO  
organization Thomas Campbell Meek Architects, Inc. date 1 March 1995  
street & number 162 E. Main Street, P.O. Box 3028 telephone (803) 583-1456  
city or town Spartanburg state SC zip code 29306

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Richard T. Hines  
street & number 430 N. St. Asaph Street telephone (202) 393-0720  
city or town Alexandria state VA zip code 22314

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

APR 24 1995

Section 7

Page 5

Bivings-Converse House

name of property

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISIONS Spartanburg County, South Carolina

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

county and State

The Bivings-Converse House is a Roman Revival two-and-one-half-story frame mansion in the present town of Glendale, in eastern Spartanburg County. The house, built ca. 1836, sits on a narrow plot of land immediately adjacent to the Bivingsville Mill--later the Glendale Mill, and near the banks of Lawson's Fork of the Pacolet River. It has a gabled roof and distinguished and imposing front and rear porches with impressive fluted Roman Doric columns. The original floor plan of the house was rectangular in layout. The roof, originally finished with wood shingles, is now covered with conventional asphalt shingles to provide for weatherization. The house has a center-hall floor plan with nine fireplaces. The exterior walls are finished with weatherboard and the interior walls are the original horsehair and plaster. The house has five bedrooms upstairs, with one-and-one-half bathrooms and closets added in the 1920s. It sits on a full basement, level-walled with massive granite stones from the nearby river. Portions of the foundation, constructed of brick, have been plastered and scored to resemble large ashlar blocks. The basement runs the length and width of the house; its original wooden floor was removed in the 1970s due to termite damage. The house was altered ca. 1890 by the addition of two Victorian bays and a kitchen wing, alterations with significance in their own right.

The Bivings-Converse House is now (1995) vacant and has been vandalized. There is moisture damage in some of the second floor rooms due to leaks in the roof which occurred prior to the installation of a new roof in 1992. The foundation of the house is being undermined by water runoff and some areas of the house have settled, causing cracks in the interior plaster walls as a result. The chimneys have been removed above the roof line due to extensive water damage and the threat of their collapse.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 6

Bivings-Converse House  
name of property  
Spartanburg County, South Carolina  
county and State

The Bivings-Converse House is significant as an excellent vernacular example of mid-19th century Roman Revival residential architecture with late-19th century alterations and for its association with Dr. James Bivings (1787-1869), prominent local textile pioneer, and Dexter Edgar Converse (1829-1899), industrialist, textile entrepreneur, and founder of Converse College.

The house is adjacent to one of the earliest manufacturing centers in the South Carolina upcountry. Dr. James Bivings, who moved to South Carolina from Lincolnton, North Carolina, established one of the earliest cotton mills in South Carolina here on Lawton's Fork of the Pacolet River in 1831. The Bivingsville Cotton Factory boasted 1200 spindles and 24 looms, and a mill community, also called Bivingsville, soon grew up around the mill. Though the Bivingsville Cotton Factory prospered for over twenty years, it eventually went into bankruptcy and was sold in 1856. Dr. Bivings sold this house overlooking the mill about the same time.<sup>1</sup>

Dexter Edgar Converse, a native New Englander who moved to Spartanburg District in 1855 from North Carolina at the age of 26 and immediately went to work for the Bivingsville Cotton Factory, was mill superintendent when it failed. He soon became a partner in John Bomar and Company, the firm that acquired the mill after bankruptcy proceedings, and Converse and his wife Helen Twichell Converse purchased and occupied Dr. Biving's former house sometime after 1859.<sup>2</sup> Historian Lillian A. Kibler has described the Bivings-Converse House about this time as

a beautiful two-storied house, with porticoes and four tall white columns across both front and rear. Set in a grove of large oak, sweetgum, and cedar trees on a high hill, it overlooked the quaint little village of Bivingsville with its neat white cottages and innumerable green trees.<sup>3</sup>

Converse served briefly in the Confederate States Army but was discharged in December 1861 so that he could operate the Bivingsville Cotton Factory, which was considered vital to the Confederate war effort. John Bomar and Company became D.E. Converse and Company after Bomar's death in 1868 and

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<sup>1</sup>Lillian Adele Kibler, The History of Converse College, 1889-1971 (Spartanburg: Converse College, 1973), pp. 6-7; Deed Book W, Pages 19-20, Deed Book X, Page 218, and Deed Book Z, Pages 314-15, Spartanburg County Register of Mesne Conveyance, Spartanburg, S.C.; Carolina Spartan (Spartanburg, S.C.), 23 September 1869.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 4-13, 20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 20-21.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   7  

Bivings-Converse House  
name of property  
Spartanburg County, South Carolina  
county and State

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the sale of Bomar's interests to Converse and his brother-in-law Albert Twichell in 1870.

In 1889, when Dexter and Helen Converse's daughter Marie Alberta Converse (1875-1907) was approaching college age, the Converses considered sending her to Washington or New York for her education but were persuaded not to leave the area by a group of Spartanburg County citizens who proposed establishing a female college in Spartanburg--the school that became Converse College. Dexter Converse, who added two Victorian bays and a kitchen wing to this house, built a new house in Spartanburg in 1890 to serve as his primary residence so that he could be nearer to his business interests and to his daughter Marie, who entered Converse College that year.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 23, 28-30, 50.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page   8  

Bivings-Converse House  
name of property  
Spartanburg County, South Carolina  
county and State

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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Carolina Spartan (Spartanburg, S.C.), 23 September 1869.

Spartanburg County Register of Mesne Conveyance, Spartanburg, S.C.  
Deed Books W, X, and Z

Kibler, Lillian Adele. The History of Converse College, 1889-1971.  
Spartanburg: Converse College, 1973.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 9

Bivings-Converse House  
name of property  
Spartanburg County, South Carolina  
county and State

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All that lot or parcel of land in Spartanburg, State of South Carolina, in Glendale Mills Village, known as Lot No. 200 on plat entitled "Property of Glendale Mills, Inc.," dated May 1958 and revised August 1958, made by Dalton & Reeves Engineers, recorded in Plat Book 37, at Page 44, R.M.C. Office for Spartanburg County. Said lot is located on Douglas Street and Glendale Avenue.

Beginning at a point at the southwestern side of the junction of Douglas Street and Glendale Avenue, proceed North 62 degrees 0 minutes West for a distance of 70.2' along the southern side of Glendale Avenue. Then proceed North 81 degrees 27 minutes West along the southern side of Glendale Avenue for a distance of 64'. Then proceed South 30 degrees 03 minutes West for a distance of 231.2'. Then proceed South 85 degrees 36 minutes East along the northern side of Douglas Street for a distance of 109.8'. Then proceed North 80 degrees 01 minutes East along the northern side of Douglas Street for a distance of 59'. Then proceed North 25 degrees 09 minutes East along Douglas Street for a distance of 173' terminating at the starting point at the intersection of Glendale Avenue and Douglas Street.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

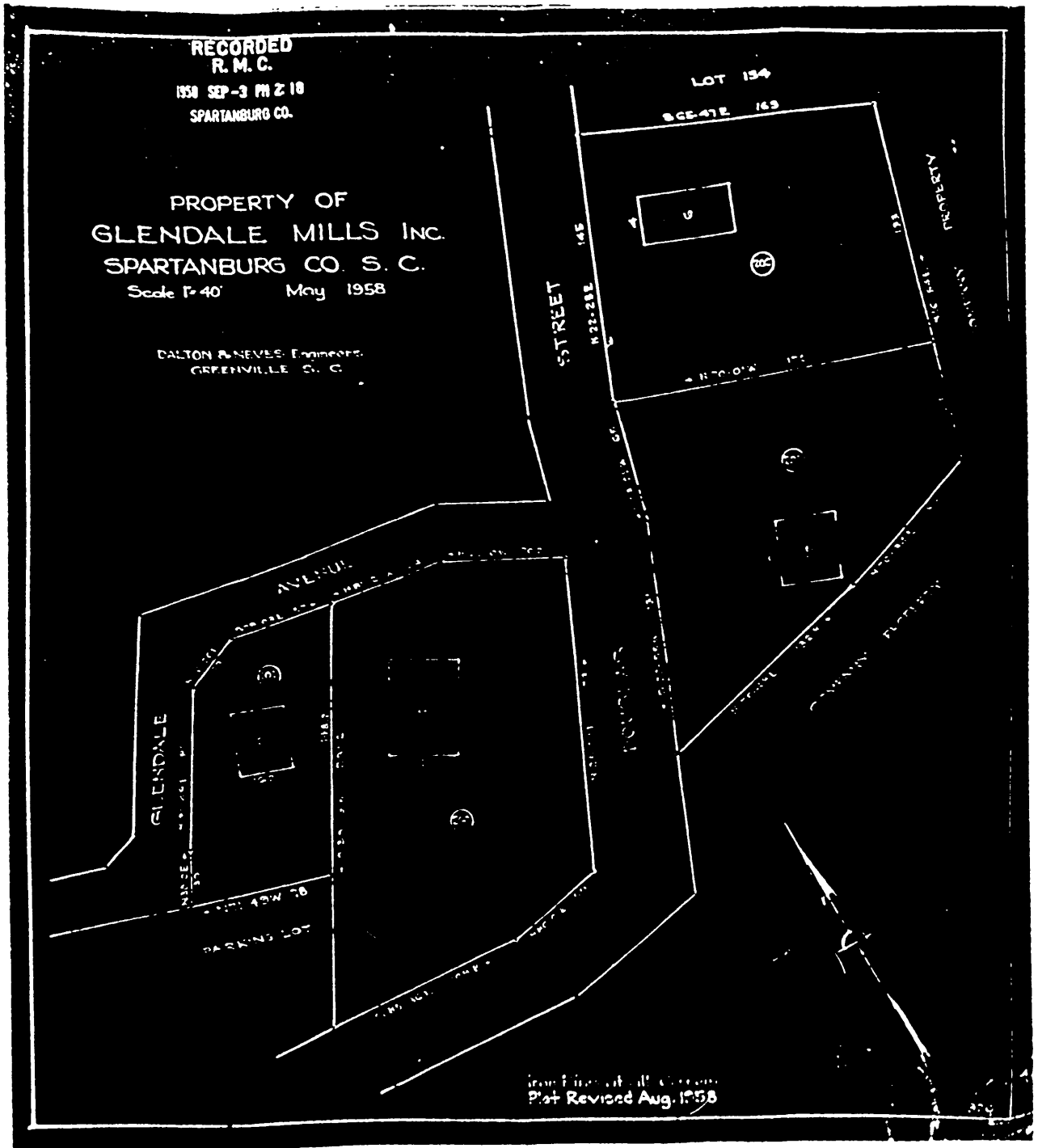
The nominated property is restricted to the house and its immediate setting.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Bivings/Converse House  
name of property  
Spartanburg, South Carolina  
county and State

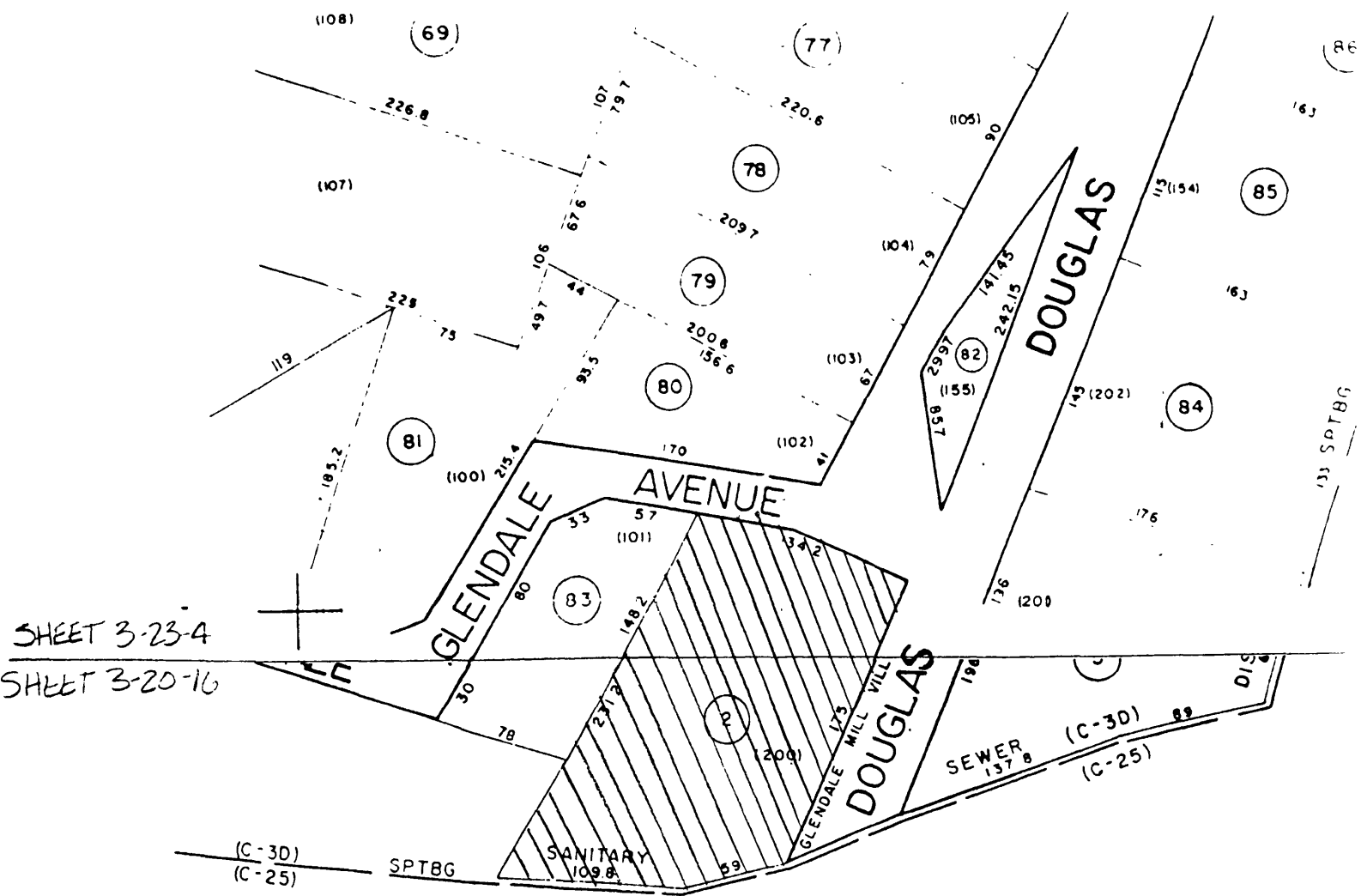


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Bivings/Converse House  
name of property  
Spartanburg, South Carolina  
county and State



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section PHOTOGRAPHS Page 10

Bivings-Converse House  
name of property  
Spartanburg County, South Carolina  
county and State

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property: Bivings-Converse House  
Location of Property: 1 Douglas Avenue, Glendale  
Spartanburg County, South Carolina

Name of Photographer: Bryan P. Fleener  
Thomas Campbell Meek Architects, Inc.,  
Spartanburg, S.C.

Date of Photograph: 22 January 1994

Location of Negatives: S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia

1. North side at front of house
2. Northeast corner at front of house
3. East side of house
4. Southeast corner at rear of house
5. South side/rear of house
6. Southwest corner at rear of house