

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 21 1985

date entered

APR 18 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The Ridge

and/or common

2. Location

street & number See Continuation Sheet N/A not for publication

city, town The Ridge N/A vicinity of

state Georgia code 013 county McIntosh code 191

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple owners (fewer than 50)

street & number

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

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number McIntosh County Courthouse

city, town Darien state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1975  federal  state  county  local

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

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

## 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered

altered

**Check one**

original site

moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Ridge historic district is the historic core of a small 19th-century coastal residential community. It is situated on a low, flat, sandy ridge between tidewater marsh to the east and swampland to the west. Houses in the district are randomly arranged along both sides of the Old Shell Road which runs northeast-southwest through the community; in the northern reach of the district, a cluster of houses is set back from the road and oriented toward the marsh. Lots range widely in size. Historic buildings in the district range from the mid-19th through the early 20th century in date, with the majority constructed in the last two decades of the 19th century. They range in size from one- and one-and-a-half-story cottages to two-story houses. Some of the larger houses are accompanied by historic outbuildings. One wood-framed general store is located near the center of the district. Construction materials found in the district include wood for framing, sheathing and detailing, brick for piers and chimneys, and some metal and tile roofs. Many of the earliest houses are one-and-a-half-story cottages with symmetrical plans, central doorways, and steep gable roofs punctuated by dormers. Later houses feature Victorian, asymmetrical T-shaped or L-shaped plans. One- or two-story porches, many detailed with elaborate sawn and turned millwork, are a prominent feature on nearly all the houses. Architectural styles represented include late Greek Revival, Italianate, Eastlake, and Victorian Eclectic.

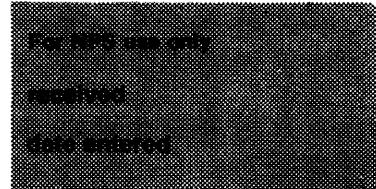
Landscaping is an important feature of the district. Large live oaks, pine trees, and palmettos are scattered throughout yards in the district and, in places, line the Old Shell Road. Flowering shrubbery in individual yards, a few picket fences remaining from earlier days when the yards of all the houses were fenced in, and the geographic form of the ridge itself are other significant landscaping features. The district includes a relatively high number of mostly small, non-contributing structures. It also includes the sites of several churches, a school, and a large house, now destroyed.

Boundary

The boundary of The Ridge is defined on the east and west by the natural features that surround it. To the east of the district is salt marsh; to the west are swamp and forest. To the north and south, the boundary is determined by concentrations of non-historic development.

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Continuation sheet Location

Item number 2

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2. Location

The Ridge is located in McIntosh County, Georgia, along either side of the Old Shell Road (Route 99). It is in the middle of a small coastal community of the same name (sometimes known as Ridgeville) that is approximately three miles north-east of Darien.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
			Local history

**Specific dates** Mid-19th – early 20th centuries  
**Builder/Architect** Multiple

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ridge historic district is historically significant as one of Georgia's few intact examples of a 19th-century residential coastal community developed to provide a refuge from the intolerable summer conditions of a nearby city. Its setting, its architecture, and its associations with important individuals in its and nearby Darien's history support National Register eligibility under National Register Criteria A, B, and C. The district is significant in terms of community planning and development, architecture, landscape architecture, and commerce and local history.

### Community Planning and Development

The Ridge is an important example of a community that developed in response to the peculiar geographic and climatic conditions of the Georgia coast. Its location on a ridge overlooking salt-water marshes provided salt air and a sea breeze that together offered some respite from the insects and intolerable heat of summer experienced in Georgia's riverfront cities such as Savannah and Darien. The Ridge, just three miles north of Darien, began to develop in some form before the Civil War. However, there are only one or two (if any) structures believed to remain from that period. The development of the settlement as it exists today began in the 1870s as construction in the area resumed following the War. Development reached a high point in the 1880s and 1890s as neighboring Darien experienced a period of great expansion and prosperity due to its emergence as an important timber port. During this period, lumber company owners, river pilots, professionals, and retired planters began to build summer homes at The Ridge. The 1885 construction of the Shell Road and the 1895 arrival of a railroad from Darien facilitated travel between the two communities and encouraged the use of some of The Ridge's houses year-round. A precipitous decline in Darien's timber industry after 1900 resulted in a parallel decline in house construction at The Ridge. Only a very few historic houses were built after this date.

### Architecture

In terms of architecture, The Ridge is significant for its fine collection of historic house types and styles that represent the work of local builders and craftsmen. A few of the earliest houses (mid-19th century) are important examples in The Ridge of the coastal cottage. Typically one-and-a-half-story and with a symmetrical plan, this type of house has a gabled roof, often with front dormers. It has a high foundation and a prominent front porch to catch the ocean breezes and provide shade. The majority of the houses in the district are good examples of one- and two-story Victorian asymmetrical house plans. Styles represented include local interpretations of the Greek Revival (very late examples) and the Italianate, in addition to many examples of the Victorian Eclectic. A number of the later houses have porches elaborately

(Continued)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Potterfield, Ty. "Historic District Information Form; The Ridge," 1983. On file at Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approximately 125 acres

Quadrangle name Ridgeville, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A	<u>17</u>	<u>4612400</u>	<u>3474360</u>	B	<u>17</u>	<u>461340</u>	<u>34736120</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>17</u>	<u>4610000</u>	<u>3474000</u>	D	<u>17</u>	<u>461260</u>	<u>3474400</u>
E	<u>17</u>	<u>461780</u>	<u>3474700</u>	F			
G				H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The boundary, outlined with a heavy black line on the enclosed maps, is described and justified in Section 7.

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

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carolyn Brook, National Register Researcher  
 organization Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources date 3/5/85  
 street & number 270 Washington Street, SW telephone 404/656-2840  
 city or town Atlanta state Georgia 30334

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon  
 title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 3/14/85

### For NPS use only

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

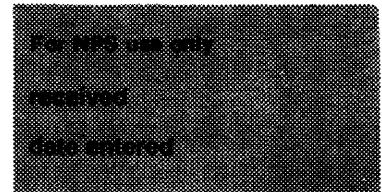
Entered in the National Register date 4-18-85

Delores Byers  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet    Significance

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8.    Significance

Architecture

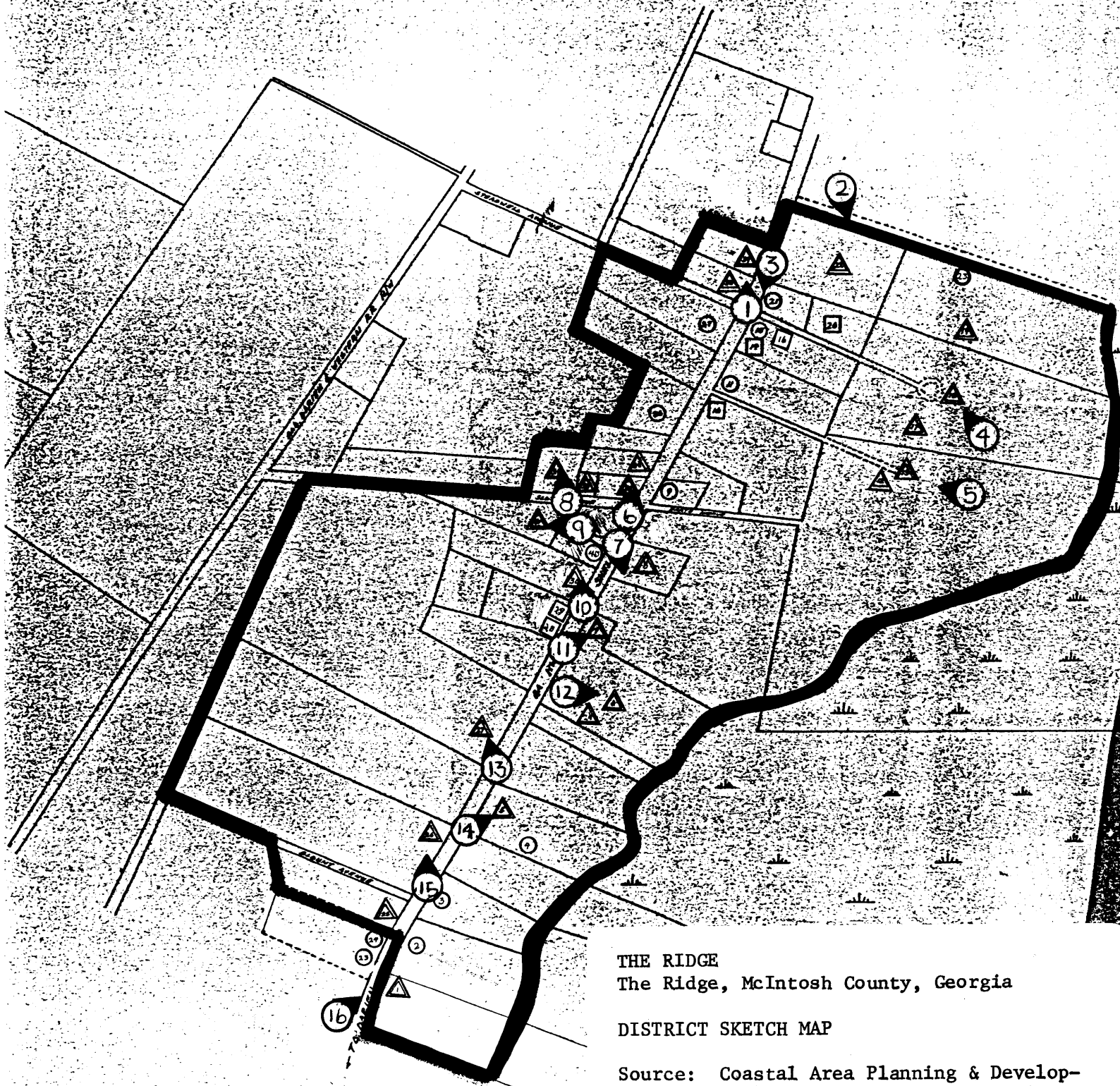
trimmed with Eastlake-inspired millwork. Of particular interest are two Italianate houses with roofline bracketing, symmetrically arranged front facades, and, in one instance, a hipped roof covered with clay tile. Two of the houses in The Ridge are documented to have been built by a resident contractor, T.A. Bailey, and a number of others have been attributed to him.

Landscape Architecture

In terms of landscape architecture, the district is significant for its siting on a ridge overlooking salt marshes and near the sea. It represents an attempt by the coastal settlers to search out a natural setting that would provide maximum relief from the area's intolerable summers. The Ridge, in its siting, is similar to several other seasonal communities along the Georgia coast. The area's native flora serves as an important landscaping element in the community. Very old live oaks, pine trees, and palmettos are scattered along the Old Shell Road and in individual yards. These trees, in addition to flowering shrubs, provide the rich yet informally landscaped setting that has historically been associated with the district. A few houses still retain picket fences. These document a time when this feature was ubiquitous in settlements such as The Ridge.

Commerce/Local History

In terms of commerce and local history, The Ridge is significant for containing the homes of a number of people associated with McIntosh County's important late 19th-century timber industry, the county's economic mainstay. A timber merchant, a timber inspector, and a number of Altamaha River pilots who guided log-laden ships out of nearby Darien's harbor are documented to have lived at The Ridge. In addition, a number of professionals, and retired planters lived in the community.



THE RIDGE  
 The Ridge, McIntosh County, Georgia

DISTRICT SKETCH MAP

Source: Coastal Area Planning & Development Planning Map

Date: October, 1983

Scale: 1":500'

North: ↑

District Boundary: **—————**

Contributing property: **▲**

Non-historic property: **△**

Intrusion: **□**

Photo direction and number: **②**