

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUN 28 1984  
date entered AUG 3 1984

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

1. Name

historic Properties Related to the Production of Bright, Flue-Cured Tobacco <sup>in</sup> Marion and Dillon Counties

and/or common

2. Location

street & number See Individual Inventory Forms NA not for publication

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

state South Carolina code 045 county Marion, Dillon code 067, 033

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership (See Individual Inventory Forms)

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

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

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dillon County Courthouse Marion County Courthouse

street & number Main Street Main Street

city, town Dillon, SC 29536 state Marion, SC 29571

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title South Carolina Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982-1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records South Carolina Department of Archives and History

city, town Columbia state South Carolina 29211

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good 8 S WJL	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

The nomination for Properties Related to the Production of Bright, Flue-Cured Tobacco in Marion and Dillon Counties includes eight buildings constructed between ca. 1900 and ca. 1945. These consist of three barns associated with the curing of tobacco, three warehouses associated with the marketing of tobacco, and two redrying plants associated with the redrying of the leaves.

The properties included in this nomination represent the traditional methods of curing, marketing, and redrying tobacco in this region. For the most part these methods were used from the introduction of Bright tobacco in Marion County ca. 1895 until the 1950s and 1960s.

After the tobacco leaves were cropped (harvested), they were transported from the field to nearby tobacco barns to be cured. Barns for flue-curing tobacco were first built in the 1890s; the basic design did not change until the 1960s with the introduction of the bulk tobacco barn, which is generally a prefabricated metal building. Traditional barns were constructed of wood, either log, hewn timber, or frame with weatherboard or board-and-batten siding; all barns had dirt floors. The barns were always square to rectangular in shape, usually with gable roofs of varying pitch. The size of the barns ranged from sixteen by sixteen feet to twenty by twenty-four feet; the average size was approximately sixteen by twenty feet. The height of the barns (from the ground to the rafter ends) ranged from twelve to twenty feet; most barns were fourteen to sixteen feet in height. Sheds were attached to one, two, three, or four sides of the barn.

Each barn had one or two fireboxes which supplied the heat for curing. This heat was carried in metal flues through the lower part of the interior of the barn, hence the name flue-cured.



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The interior space was divided into four-foot wide sections (called "rooms") by rows of horizontal poles called tier poles. The average barn contained five "rooms." The tier poles were arranged in vertical intervals of twenty-four inches with the bottom poles about six feet above the ground. This height was necessary to give clearance for the heating flues

The shed(s) attached to the side(s) of the barns provided shade and shelter for workers stringing tobacco leaves on sticks in preparation for curing. These sticks were then hung across the poles in the barns.

The object of curing was to remove water from the leaf and to force certain biological changes. There were three stages in the curing process. First was the yellowing stage during which the temperature was gradually raised until the leaf was 105° to 110° F. When the leaf had yellowed, the temperature was raised to 130° to 135° F for the leaf drying stage. The third or last stage was the killing out or the drying out of the stem; during this stage the temperature range was 160° to 170° F. Approximately 247<sub>1</sub> man hours were required to harvest and cure one acre of tobacco by traditional methods.

Until the 1950s wood or coal was burned in firebox(es) to generate heat for curing the tobacco. The temperature was controlled by adding more fuel or by ventilation. Although thermometers were available, most curing decisions were based on the farmer's judgment. The only basic change in curing methods between ca. 1895 and the late 1960s was in the method of fueling the barns. Oil and gas, which enabled better temperature regulation, replaced coal as a fuel in the 1950s.

The selling of tobacco has remained fairly constant since the construction of the first auction warehouse in Mullins ca. 1895. The warehouses were large buildings, some occupying entire blocks. The first warehouses were frame; however, many of these were gradually replaced by brick buildings.<sup>2</sup> The farmer brought his tobacco to the warehouse where it was auctioned to buyers from the major tobacco companies. In return for a percentage of the farmer's profit, the owner of the warehouse certified the weight of the tobacco, provided the auctioneer, distributed the payment checks to the farmers, and delivered the tobacco to the buyers.<sup>3</sup>

The next steps in the processing of tobacco were the removal of the stems and further drying of the leaves. In the early years of the tobacco industry in Marion and Dillon Counties, these processes were generally carried out in the local area.<sup>4</sup> Today, however, since there is only one redrying plant (redrying plants were called stemmeries or prizeries in early publications) operating in the two counties, much of the tobacco is shipped elsewhere for processing. The redrying plants were often smaller buildings than the warehouses and varied widely in shape and size. Like the warehouses, many of the earliest redrying plants were frame but were gradually replaced by brick buildings. The redrying plant's main purpose was to insure that the tobacco contained a uniform amount of moisture so that it would not rot or become too dry and brittle. After redrying, a uniform amount of moisture, ranging from 15 to 18 percent, was reintroduced into the tobacco, depending upon the needs or preferences of the purchasing company.<sup>5</sup>

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Survey Methodology:

The survey which provided the basis for this nomination was conducted by Edwin P. Rogers, Jr., Historic Preservation Planner for the Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments. This survey was based on research of published sources and period maps, interviews, and field work. In 1982 three warehouses and two redrying plants in Mullins which were at least fifty years old were photographed, described, and mapped. No historic warehouses or redrying plants remain in the towns of Dillon, Marion, or Latta. In 1982-83 a reconnaissance survey was made of every public road in Marion and Dillon Counties to identify, map, and evaluate traditional tobacco barns remaining in the two counties.

Since it was impossible to establish a date of construction for most of the barns, many barns constructed in the 1940s and 1950s as well as those that were at least fifty years old were undoubtedly included in the survey. For the most part, no records have been kept by land owners and the lands have often changed hands. Furthermore, the method and style of construction of tobacco barns remained constant from the late 1890s until the 1960s. For example, hewn timber barns with wood shingled roofs were constructed ~~in the 1940s~~. Barns were ~~eliminated from the survey if~~ they were constructed with concrete blocks or had block foundations or if there was no evidence of a firebox. Lack of a firebox indicated that the barns were heated by fuel oil or gas, which were not used as heating fuels until the 1950s. One hundred and ninety-one barns were identified. These included 107 log barns, 31 hewn timber barns, 40 frame barns with weatherboard siding, and 13 frame barns with board-and-batten siding.

The warehouses and redrying plants in Mullins that were surveyed in 1982 are essentially intact. They were included in this nomination to illustrate important aspects of the production of tobacco in Marion and Dillon Counties between ca. 1895 and ca. 1935. The three barns included in this nomination were the most intact of the barns surveyed. They best illustrate the method of construction and function of wood or coal-fired tobacco barns built in Marion and Dillon Counties between ca. 1895 and the 1950s.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** ca. 1905 - 1942      **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The nomination for Properties Related to the Production of Bright, Flue-Cured Tobacco in Marion and Dillon Counties includes eight buildings in the two counties that were associated with the processing and marketing of tobacco between ca. 1900 and ca. 1945. Tobacco has played a major role in the development of Marion and Dillon Counties (Dillon County was formed from a portion of Marion County in 1910) in general and the town of Mullins in particular. Although many other properties associated with the production of tobacco during this period remain in the two counties, the properties included in this nomination were the most intact resources identified. These properties are best able to illustrate the various steps in the traditional methods of curing, marketing, and redrying tobacco.

Agriculture/Commerce/Industry:

Tobacco was grown in South Carolina as early as the 1670s, but by 1700 rice had become the main staple of the colony and tobacco was virtually abandoned as a major money crop. Between 1750 and 1825 tobacco became an important crop in South Carolina after its introduction into the Piedmont area of the state, reputedly by immigrants from Virginia and Pennsylvania. By 1825, however, tobacco had been replaced by cotton as the main cash crop of the Piedmont area.<sup>8</sup>

The modern cultivation of tobacco in South Carolina began in the late nineteenth century. The Bright variety of tobacco had been developed in the 1860s in North Carolina and its cultivation was introduced into the Pee Dee section of South Carolina in the 1880s or 1890s. By this time cotton was the main staple crop in South Carolina and production far exceeded demand. Tobacco provided an alternative crop for Pee Dee farmers. Bright tobacco, which was flue-cured in barns rather than air-dried like earlier varieties, was grown on sandy, loamy soil like that of the Pee Dee. In addition, it brought a higher price than other varieties.<sup>9</sup>

There are conflicting accounts about who first grew Bright tobacco as a cash crop in the Pee Dee region.<sup>10</sup> Marion County's first successful commercial tobacco farmer is generally believed to be W. H. "Buck" Daniel, who grew eight acres of tobacco ca. 1895. Daniel's tobacco brought less than premium prices in North Carolina, which led to the construction of the Planters Warehouse (no longer standing) and a redrying plant in Mullins to market and process local tobacco crops. The warehouse's first year of operation was unsuccessful; however, its second year proved successful, and cultivation of tobacco in Marion County spread rapidly.<sup>11</sup>

By 1900, 7,336 acres of tobacco were harvested in Marion County.<sup>12</sup> The town of Mullins, which contained four redrying plants and three warehouses, reported sales of 4,000,000 pounds, making it the largest tobacco market in the state. The plants in Mullins employed four to five hundred people.<sup>13</sup> The effect of the tobacco industry on the town was dramatic. In 1890, Mullins had a population of 282. By 1900, the population was over 800 and by 1901, it was over 1,000.<sup>14</sup> In 1901 Marion County historian W. W. Sellers wrote, "People are emigrating to Mullins from all parts, houses (dwellings) are not to be had."<sup>15</sup>

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property See Individual Inventory Forms

Quadrangle name See Individual Inventory Forms

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

### UTM References

A              
Zone Easting Northing

B              
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Individual Inventory Forms

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

state NA code county NA code

state NA code county NA code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edwin P. Rogers, Jr., Historic Preservation Planner

Edited by Mary W. Edmonds  
S.C. Department of Archives  
and History

organization Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments date

street & number P.O. Box 5719 telephone (803) 669-3138

city or town Florence state South Carolina 29502

# 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

title Charles E. Lee  
State Historic Preservation Officer

date 6/12/84

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

*See Continuation sheet for listing* date  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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By 1919 the number of acres planted in tobacco had increased greatly. In that year Marion and Dillon Counties had a combined tobacco acreage of 18,989.<sup>16</sup> In 1920 there were three warehouses in Dillon, two in Latta, and three in the town of Marion. Mullins, with four warehouses and sales of 8,884,936 pounds,<sup>17</sup> was the principal market in the two counties and the second largest market in the state.<sup>18</sup> In 1924 Mullins contained seven warehouses and four redrying plants.

Through the 1920s and 1930s tobacco continued to play an important role in the development of Marion and Dillon Counties. For example, in 1929, 24,785 acres of tobacco were grown in the two counties.<sup>19</sup> In 1937 the Mullins Enterprise reported,

Mullins is a tobacco town!

Mullins' nine operating tobacco warehouses, half dozen steam plants for rehandling and exporting tobacco [redrying plants], her saw mills and furniture factories, her weekly newspaper with its circulation of over 2,000-- these and many other small enterprises that make up the busy life of this continually growing town, she owes to her most abundant crop-- tobacco.<sup>20</sup>

With 37, 471, 319 pounds sold during the 1938 season, Mullins was the largest tobacco market in the state.<sup>21</sup>

Today Marion and Dillon Counties continue to have economies based on agriculture with tobacco as the largest cash crop. Mullins is the last remaining tobacco market in the two counties and ranks first in the state in sales.<sup>22</sup>

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FOOTNOTES

1

S. N. Hawks, Principles of Flue-Cured Tobacco Production (Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 1970), pp. 183-98.

2

Sanborn Map Company, Insurance Maps of Mullins, South Carolina, 1903, 1908, 1913, 1924, 1930.

3

Linda Marie Pett, "Changing Spatial Patterns of Tobacco Production in South Carolina" (Master's thesis, University of South Carolina, 1976), pp. 49-50.

4

Sanborn Map Company, 1903, 1908, 1913, 1924, 1930.

5

Interview with Randy Barnes, Mullins Leaf Tobacco Company, Mullins, South Carolina, 19 March 1984.

6

Sanborn Map Company, 1903, 1908, 1913, 1924, 1930.

7

Interview with Dr. C. H. Rogers, Retired Vice-President of Coker's Pedigreed Seed Company and tobacco breeding consultant, Mullins, South Carolina, 2 March 1984.

8

Pett, pp. 14-25.

9

Ibid., pp. 25-29.

10

Ibid., pp. 25-26; Mullins (SC) Enterprise, 26 August 1937; South Carolina's Tobacco Heritage (Washington, D.C.: Tobacco Institute, n.d.), p. 8.

11

Mullins Enterprise, 26 August 1937.

12

U. S., Census Office, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Agriculture, 2:571.

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13

W. W. Sellers, A History of Marion County, South Carolina, From Its Earliest Times to the Present, 1901 (Columbia, South Carolina: R. L. Bryan Co., 1902), p. 555.

14

Ibid.; U. S., Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Abstract with Supplement for South Carolina, p. 578.

15

Sellers, p. 555.

16

U. S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920: Agriculture, 6: 286-89.

17

Tobacco Report: Statistics for the Production and Marketing of Tobacco in South Carolina in 1920 (n.p.: South Carolina Department of Agriculture, Commerce, and Industries, 1921), pp. 24, 25.

18

Sanborn Map Company, 1924.

19

U. S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Agriculture, 2: 480-81.

20

Mullins Enterprise, 26 August 1937.

21

South Carolina 1938 Tobacco Report (n.p.: South Carolina Department of Agriculture, Commerce, and Industries, n.d.), pp. 10-11 ; Sanborn Map Company, 1930.

22

Interview with Melvin Rogers, Columbia, South Carolina, 17 October 1983.

23

Sanborn Map Company, 1903, 1908; Mullins Centennial Commission, The City of Mullins Centennial Celebration, 1972.

24

Sanborn Map Company, 1924; Mullins Centennial Commission.

25

Sanborn Map Company, 1930; Mullins Enterprise, 26 August 1937; Mullins Centennial Commission.

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26

Sanborn Map Company, 1908, 1913.

27

Sanborn Map Company, 1924, 1930; Book A-28, pp. 262, 550 and Book A-173, p. 268,  
Marion County Deeds, Marion County Courthouse, Marion, S.C.; Mullins Centennial Commission.

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Flue-Cured Tobacco Production Properties Thematic Resources  
State Dillon and Marion Counties, SOUTH CAROLINA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Old Brick Warehouse

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 8/3/84

Attest

2. Buchan, A. H., Company Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 8/3/84

Attest

3. Dew Barn

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 8/3/84

Attest

4. Imperial Tobacco Company  
Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 8/3/84

Attest

5. Liberty Warehouse

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 8/3/84

Attest

6. Meekins Barn

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 8/3/84

Attest

7. Neal and Dixon's Warehouse

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper Melrose Byers 8/3/84

Attest

8. Smith Barn

Exemptive review

Keeper Return 8/3

Attest Patrick Anderson 12/3/84

9.

Approved  
Entered in  
National Register

Keeper [Signature] 12/4/84

Attest

10.

Keeper

Attest

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