

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

received APR 2 1985

date entered MAY 2 1985

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

## 1. Name

historic Sweetwater Inn

and/or common Same

## 2. Location

street & number Off GA 17 on the Old Milledgeville Rd. (Wire Rd.)  
near Usry Pond

N/A not for publication

city, town Thomson x vicinity of

state Georgia code 013 county McDuffie code 189

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

## 4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Albert H. Dallas; Dallas, Holloway and Fowler

street & number P. O. Box 1150

city, town Thomson N/A vicinity of state Georgia 30824

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number McDuffie County Courthouse

city, town Thomson state Georgia

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1976  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 Sweetwater Inn is a two-story, frame, beaded weatherboarded Plantation Plain style house with original end chimneys and a one-story porch. On the interior there is a central hall and a single room on each side on both floors. The mantels are locally crafted, Federal-style pieces and have plain, wide boards with simple fretwork under the shelf. There are plain, wide-boarded wainscoting and wide-boarded walls. The stairway to the attic is boxed in. Changes to the structure include the recent removal of several later attached rooms, brick steps, brick infill between the underpinnings, and various treatments throughout the structure due to tenants. The building no longer has any historic outbuildings nearby, but there are modern outbuildings, a modern dwelling, and a restored mill pond nearby. It sits adjacent to a major county road in a stand of tall trees. The area is still used for farming or farm-related activities and the setting appears almost unchanged from what it might have originally been.

## 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Before 1826 Builder/Architect Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sweetwater Inn is significant in architecture, commerce and transportation. It is significant in architecture as a good example of the use of the Plantation Plain style of architecture for an inn or stagecoach stop. Although the structure appears to be just a dwelling house, it is known to have been used very early, if not from its original construction, as a roadside "boarding house." It retains its original Federal mantels, wide plank wainscoting, wall boards, floors, shed porch, and end chimneys, all in keeping with the style. Its rural setting is also an important feature. In commerce/transportation it is significant for being used as early as 1826 as a boarding house or inn along one of the major traffic arteries of early 19th century Georgia. It later housed the "Sweetwater" post office. Eventually it became just the residence of whomever was operating the nearby Sweetwater Mills and farm. Another interesting feature of its history is that several of its owners over many years were locally significant Baptist ministers.

These areas of significance support property eligibility under the National Register Criteria A, B, and C.

### Historical Narrative

The structure known as the "Sweetwater Inn" can be documented to have existed as early as July, 1826 when the new owner of the Sweetwater Mills Tract, John C. Holcombe, offered for sale in the August 2, 1826, August Chronicle: "his FARM lying in the counties of Warren and Columbia, on both sides of Sweet Water Creek commonly known by the name of the Sweet Water Mills. On the premises is a comfortable two-story Dwelling, calculated for a Boarding House, with all necessary outbuildings a SAW and GRIST MILL; also a Cotton Gin, all propelled by water, and the running gear of the whole entirely new; a Store HOUSE; etc"... And 700 acres of land..."

This "bargain" included the furniture for the boarding house where apparently the Rev. James Holcombe was in residence, for the owner lived in Augusta, Georgia, where he was a cotton factor and commission merchant.

The history of the building before Mr. Holcombe's 1825 purchase of the land that had been sold as the estate of Isaiah Tucker (1761–1821), a Virginia native, is not known. It appears from the frequent sale of the property that the "boarding house" or inn and its adjacent farm and mills and gin was prime real estate. Holcombe sold it and the 438-acre mill tract for \$6,000 in 1826 to Thomas W. Shivers, who quickly disposed of it in 1829 to James Shivers, who sold it in 1830 to John Fontaine. After two 1837 sales, it was in the hands of Rev. William P. Steed (d. 1862), a noted Baptist minister, who after ten years sold it to Rev. Aaron Adkins (d. 1865). It remained in the Adkins family (although reduced to fifty acres, it still contained a gin, a sawmill, and blacksmith shop) off and on until the Civil War era when by 1871 it became the property of Samuel Story. When Story sold it in 1880, the property associated with the house had been reduced to eight acres but included a mill pond, mill house, dwelling houses,

(Continued)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Jones, Dorothy M. and Carlton Shuford, "Sweetwater Inn." National Register Nomination Form, September, 1981. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources. The authors also supplied additional supplemental research and source material including a history of the title to the property, (Continued)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 1 3/4 acres

Quadrangle name Thomson East, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	7
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 Zone 

3	6	4
---	---	---

 Easting 

6	1	9	1	0
---	---	---	---	---

 Northing 

3	6	9	1	8
---	---	---	---	---

1	1	6	1	0
---	---	---	---	---

B 

--	--	--

 Zone 

--	--	--

 Easting 

--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

C 

--	--	--

 Zone 

--	--	--

 Easting 

--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

D 

--	--	--

 Zone 

--	--	--

 Easting 

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 Northing

E 

--	--	--

 Zone 

--	--	--

 Easting 

--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

F 

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 Zone 

--	--	--

 Easting 

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 Northing

G 

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 Zone 

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 Easting 

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 Northing

H 

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 Zone 

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 Easting 

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 Northing

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is a rectangular tract of land with a boundary drawn fifty feet behind the house, forty feet west of the house to a modern fence, and (See Continuation Sheet)

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

Historic Preservation Section

organization Georgia Department of Natural Resources date 3/1/85

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

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 5/2/85

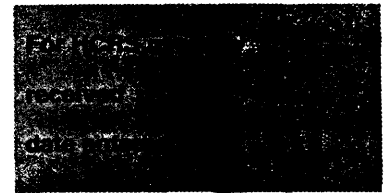
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

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8. SignificanceHistorical Narrative

and smokehouses. The new owner, Noel Humphrey, sold it in 1897 to Mrs. Jennie Usry. After the Usry family disposed of the Sweetwater Mills and Mill Pond, first by lease in 1918, and then by deed in 1919, to the Thomson Light and Water Company, they retained this structure until 1973.

The Holcombe and Tucker families were related by marriage and business, having run the "House of Holcombe and Tucker" in Augusta before 1821. John Holcombe was married to Nancy, a daughter of Isaiah Tucker. There is no known proof that the structure was built by either the Tuckers or the Holcombes or that the Tuckers ever lived at the site. It is also not known how many of the early owners actually lived at the site or how often it was leased to others to operate.

One curious fact about the property is that three of the legal owners were Baptist ministers: Rev. William P. Steed (d. 1862), Rev. Billington S. Blanchard (d. 1860), and Rev. Aaron Adkins (d. 1865).

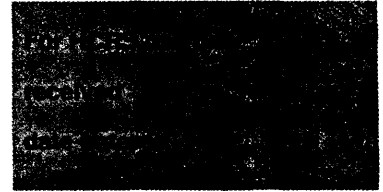
At some point, at least by the 1870s when Mr. Samuel Story lived here, the inn became a regular dwelling house and eventually became the only remaining structure of the once densely settled Sweetwater Mills Tract.

The road upon which the house sits was a stagecoach road, for the Augusta to Milledgeville and Augusta to Madison routes. The route was established by law in December, 1817. A post office was established at Sweetwater on December 21, 1826, apparently after the property was sold in the above cited advertisement.

Once the milling operation stopped, the Usry family used the house as their homeplace surrounded by their farm.

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Continuation sheet Major Bibliographical References  
Item Number

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9. Major Bibliographical References

interviews, historic photographs, and plats.

1880 Manufacturing Census, McDuffie County, Georgia entry for "?" (illegible) and Usry on Sweetwater Creek.

History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia. Atlanta: James P. Harrison and Company, 1881. (Sketches of Henry Holcombe Tucker and Henry Holcombe.)

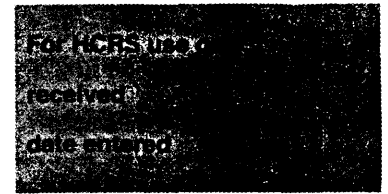
Sherwood, Adiel. A Gazetteer of the State of Georgia, 3rd. Ed., 1837.

Thomas, Kenneth H., Jr., additional research into tax digests, land grants, marriage and death records for the owners drawn from mostly published genealogical sources.

McCommons, Mrs. W. C. History of McDuffie County. Typescript copy at the Georgia Department of Archives and History. (This includes an early photograph and summary of the inn.)

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Continuation sheet Geographical Data

Item number 10.

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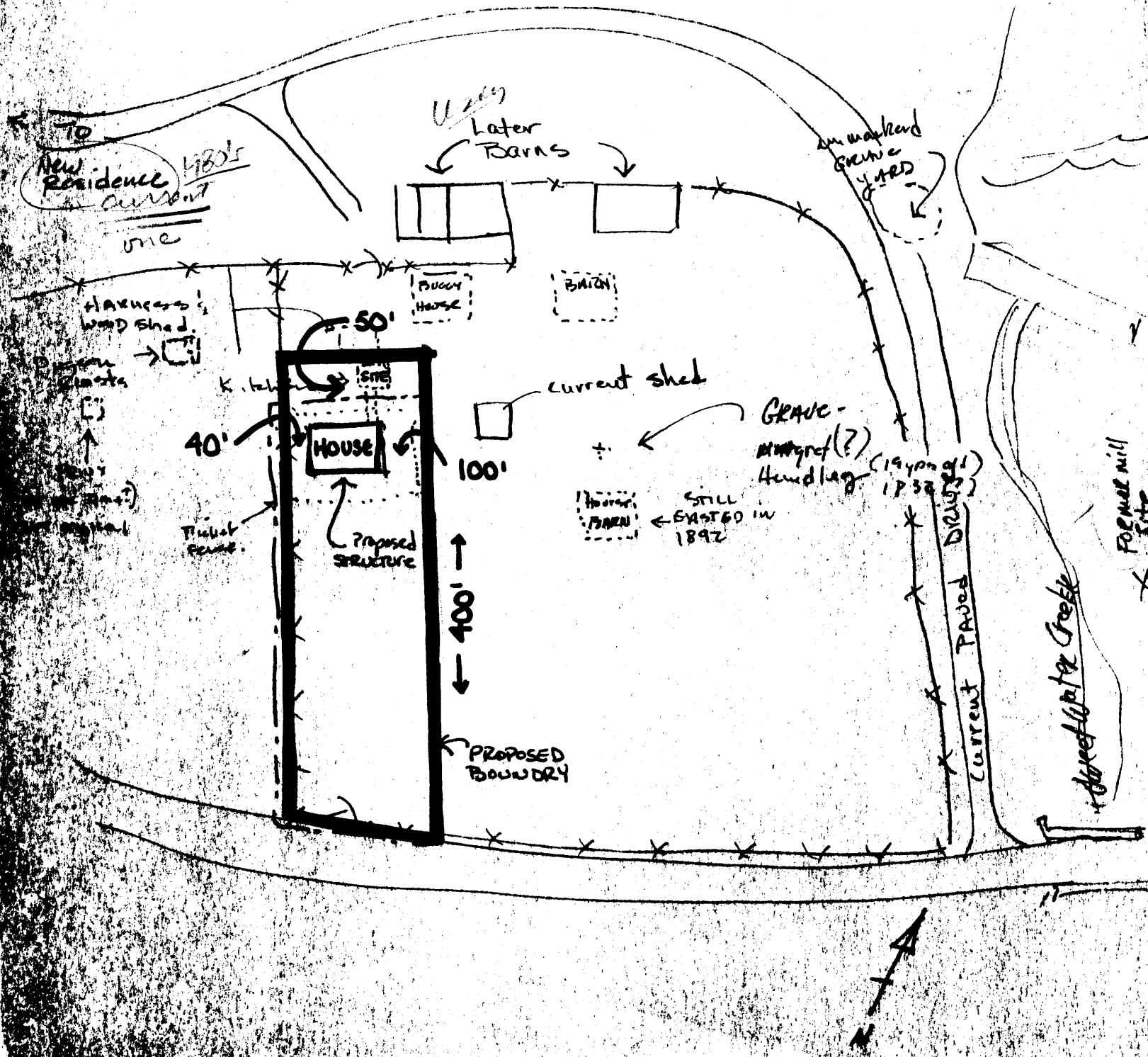
10. Geographical Data

Verbal boundary description and justification

100 feet east including the stand of trees and driveway, then running 400 feet from the rear line to the highway. This boundary is the portion of the owner's land at this location that is most closely associated with the house and includes the site of the former detached kitchen.

SKETCH MAP

The Sweetwater Inn  
 near Thomson, McDuffie County, Georgia  
 Scale: none, dimensions as marked  
 Source: drawn by owners  
 Date: c. 1980  
 Key: The nominated property is indicated  
 by a heavy black line.

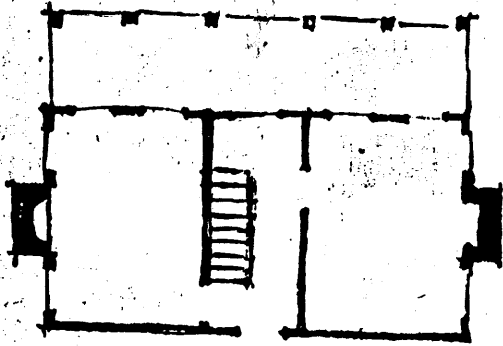




FLOORPLANS

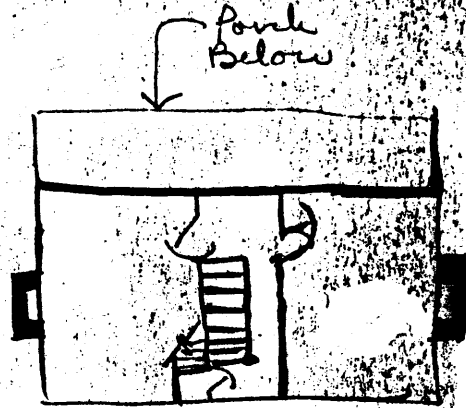
The Sweetwater Inn  
near Thomson, McDuffie County, Georgia  
Scale: not to scale  
Source: Drawn by Carlton L. Shuford  
Date: c. 1981

Key: Floorplans of the main floor (left)  
and the second floor (right) as  
they currently exist.



PRESENT

Downstairs



Upstairs