

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**DATA SHEET**

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
 RECEIVED APR 28 1975  
 DATE ENTERED SEP 18 1975

**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

AND/OR COMMON

Tombee Plantation

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Southwest end, St. Helena's Isl. near Land's End

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Frognore

VICINITY OF

One

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

South Carolina

045

Beaufort

013

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

James A. Williams

STREET & NUMBER

429 Bull Street

CITY, TOWN

Savannah

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Georgia 31401

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Beaufort County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 1031

CITY, TOWN

Beaufort

STATE

South Carolina

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

#### Exterior

Tombee Plantation house is a two-story clapboard structure set on a high tabby foundation. Probably built ca. 1790-1800, Tombee was constructed in a T shape, allowing each room to have window exposure on three sides. Windows are 9/9. Structure has gable roof. Front portico is single story with 4 square columns and balustrade. There are two exterior end chimneys; south chimney was rebuilt during restoration (1972) to match north chimney. Rear facade has two-story balustraded porch with six square columns on each floor. Doors on each floor of rear facade have transom with semi-circular fanlight inset. Before restoration (1972) rear porch had deteriorated; was rebuilt upon the tabby foundation. (The front of Tombee was historically the side facing the marsh. For modern convenience, the front is now the side facing the road.)

#### Interior

There are three rooms to each floor. Walls and overmantel in the parlor are feather-grained. Floors are of heart pine. Wainscoting remains throughout the structure. Two bathrooms and a kitchen were incorporated into Tombee during restoration. Dining area does not have electricity. Hurricane bracing located in corners of house.

#### Surroundings

There are plans to construct a bridge from St. Helena to St. Phillip's Island. The bridge will be located approximately 3300 feet from Tombee. At present, Tombee is located in an undisturbed area with marshlands behind the house. No intrusion is now evident anywhere within visual range of the house.

# 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1800

BUILDER/ARCHITECT-----

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Tombee Plantation is one of the few surviving antebellum plantation houses remaining on St. Helena Island. The structure retains much of its original interior detailing and is an example of the smaller plantation house which once existed on the sea islands in Beaufort County.

Tombee stands as an example of the Beaufort-style house characterized by square posts supporting a two-story porch and with the tabby foundations previously found in this area.

Early deeds and records related to Tombee cannot be located. Much of the history is therefore based on local tradition. According to a map (ca. 1937) of St. Helena Island by Arthur Christenson, the land of Tom B. Chaplin coincides with the present location of Tombee Plantation.

It is believed that this structure was built in the late 18th Century, possibly by Thomas Chaplin (1747-1835?) who is recorded in a 1790 census as owning 65 slaves on St. Helena Island. The first Chaplins are found planting on St. Helena in 1725 and remained a prominent family on the island until the beginning of the War Between the States.

Thomas Benjamin Chaplin (1822-1890) left a 780-page journal with entries from 1845 to 1857 (there is one entry after the war: January 1, 1886). These daily entries give an insight into life on a sea island plantation. Chaplin's plantation is believed to be Tombee. The main crop on this plantation was Sea Island cotton and the staples of corn, potatoes, and peas.

Tombee Plantation was divided into tracts during the days of the "Port Royal Experiment" in 1862. It remained in the hands of descendants of freed slaves until 1971.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Chaplin, Thomas B. Diary (1845-1857). Ms. South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

Dabbs, Edith M. Face of an Island. Columbia, S. C.: R. L. Bryan Co., 1970.

Fripp, William. Chaplin Family Tree. South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston South Carolina (continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 14 acres

UTM REFERENCES

660			660			370		
A	1, 7	5, 3, 5, 6, 8, 0	3, 4, 7, 4, 6, 4, 0	B	1, 7	5, 3, 5, 6, 8, 0	3, 5, 7, 4, 4, 0, 0	
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	
C	1, 7	5, 3, 5, 1, 8, 0	3, 5, 7, 4, 3, 8, 0	D	1, 7	5, 3, 5, 1, 8, 0	3, 5, 7, 4, 6, 4, 0	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Present-day Tombee Plantation bounded on north by a road; on east by road separating said property from property now or formerly belonging to Fred Chaplin, Richard Freeman, Jr., and Emma Chaplin number 2; on the south by marshes of Station Creek; on the west by marshes of Station Creek and a tract of land said to belong to Margaret T. Rodgers, et al, formerly belonging to Rivers.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Cynthia D. Cole/Mary Ann Eaddy, Historic Preservation Division February 25, 1975

ORGANIZATION

DATE

South Carolina Department of Archives and History 803/758-5816

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P. O. Box 11669 Capitol Station (1430 Senate St.) Columbia, South Carolina 29211

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

# 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Charles E. Lee  
TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 2/27/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: [Signature]  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 9/18/95

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE SEP 16 1975

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

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Johnson, Guion Griffis, Ph. D. A Social History of the Sea Islands. UNC Press, 1930 (reprinted by Negro Universities Press, 1969).

Rose, Willie Lee. Rehearsal for Reconstruction. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1964.

Williams, James A. Interview (1975) conducted by Cynthia D. Cole.