

PH002 3108

STATE:
Georgia
COUNTY:
Chatham
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE
APR 26 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON:
Wormsloe Plantation

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Isle of Hope and Long Island

CITY OR TOWN: **Metropolitan Savannah vicinity** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: **1st. Bo Ginn**

STATE: **Georgia** CODE: **13** COUNTY: **Chatham** CODE: **051**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
 a. **Wormsloe Foundation, Craig Barrow, President**
 b. **State of Georgia, Department of Natural Resources (in process)**

STREET AND NUMBER:
 a. **Wormsloe, Isle of Hope**
 b. **Trinity-Washington Building**

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE
 a. **Savannah** **Georgia** **13**
 b. **Atlanta**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Chatham County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
Wright Square

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE
Savannah **Georgia** **13**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Georgia Heritage Trust

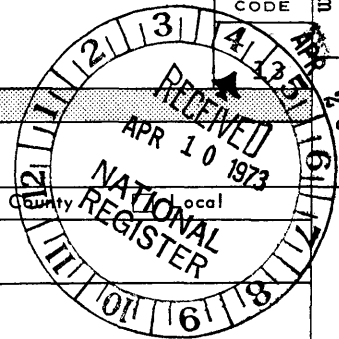
DATE OF SURVEY: **1972** Federal State Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Department of Natural Resources

STREET AND NUMBER:
Trinity-Washington Building

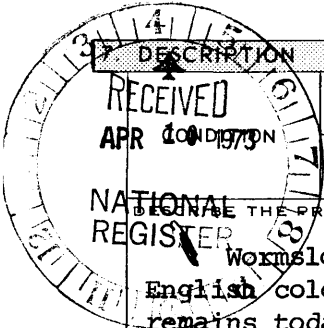
CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE
Atlanta **Georgia** **13**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: Georgia
COUNTY: Chatham
ENTRY NUMBER: _____
DATE: _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY



DESCRIPTION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

RECORD THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Wormsloe Plantation was established by Noble Jones, one of the original English colonists four years after the settling of Savannah; it probably remains today much as it did in the days of its founder. It is located on a sandy peninsula that is covered with forests and surrounded by coastal marsh and rivers. The land was not cultivated extensively and although timber has been cut, it remains in a natural state. The state of Georgia is negotiating to get a major portion of this unspoiled estate.

The plantation also contains the tabby remains of a "fortified house" built by its original owner, Noble Jones; a later house with extensive gardens; and a Confederate earthwork. There is a mile long drive bordered by enormous oaks.

The land, 750 acres, is located on the Isle of Hope within metropolitan Savannah. A smaller tract, the 72-acre Long Island just across the Isle of Hope River, is part of the estate also. Noble Jones leased 500 acres from James Oglethorpe in 1736, then developed this land into a country estate, 10 miles from his house in Savannah town. This was not a plantation in the tradition of extensive agriculture, but more of an experimental farm. Jones did not specialize in the typical crops of the day -- Indian corn, potatoes, various melons -- but grew fruits and vegetables. The two other families on the island did plant more traditional crops.

The Georgia Gazette of July 11, 1765, noted:

"Numbers of people from this place have gone within these eight days past to the plantation of the Hon. Noble Jones, Esq. a few miles from town, to see an Agave plant, now in blossom there, which is said to be 27 and a half feet high, and had 33 branches, which contain a vast number of blossoms."

John Bartram wrote in his Diary of a Journey through the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida:

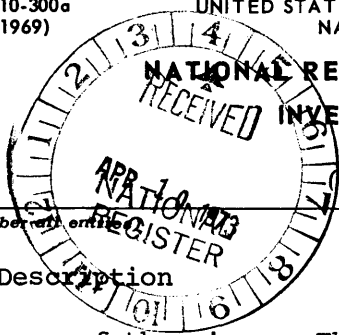
"...We then rode to a gentlemans house which was delightfully located on a large tide salt creek where ye oysters is as thick as thay can ly within a stones cast of his house and he hath & is making great improvements in fruites which it is properly adapted for..."

Adapting to a new environment was difficult for the English settlers, many of whom specialized in trades, but Noble Jones seemed to thrive on challenges. A carpenter as well as a doctor, he built a house with a tabby and brick base and enclosed the house with an eight-foot high wall with bastions at each corner. Since he was in charge of the official scout boat, the estate was a stopping place for visitors from Savannah to Fort Frederica. Jones also was ranger for the province and decreed that no one could cut a cypress or live oak without a permit.

He built a wooden watch house which commanded the passageway through the...
(continued)

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

STATE	
Georgia	
COUNTY	
Chatham	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 26 1973



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number of entries)

7. Description

narrows of the river. This may have been on Pigeon Island, about a mile and a fourth from where Jones would build his tabby "fortified house" about 1739.

The fortified house deteriorated and in 1828, George Jones a grandson of Noble Jones, contracted for the construction of a two-story timber and shingled building, 40 by 20, on a basement of tabby. This house has been changed considerably over the years. In 1907, a library was constructed separate from the house to hold the increasing collection of maps, pamphlets and historical books.

Archeological excavations by Kelso on the c.1739 tabby ruins suggest that this fortified house contained five rooms downstairs and a half story above. A wattle and daube hut had been located on the same spot earlier. The house was 32' by 24', exactly double the floor space of the earliest Savannah houses. Several small rooms were added. The house, Kelso said, must have been more in the newer and roomier Georgian style, a feature common to tabby houses of contemporary Frederica. The floor plan is "strikingly similar to one example of the advanced St. Augustine plan houses of Florida." The catslide roof with dormers at the front was not uncommon for Georgia houses.

The least hypothetical feature of the original Wormsloe structure is the fort enclosure itself. About a quarter of the wall remains standing and most of the wall footings are in excellent condition. Based on the ruins still standing Kelso said "one can quite reasonably assume that the fort wall was 8' in height all around and that it had a 14' wide main entrance gate on the north curtain. The bastions probably had shooting platforms.

"The tabby plantation structure with its defenses is one of the few, if not the only remaining examples of fortified domestic architecture more typical of coastal Georgia than has been formerly recognized," Kelso said.

A Confederate earthwork for seven small guns was set up on the southwest side of the Isle of Hope, and Mrs. Craig Barrow of Wormsloe said the earthwork is in good condition.

The house that stands today has been changed considerably since Noble Jones' grandson had the original section built. It has become more of a reflection of its various owners than a representation of any one architectural style. The dates of many of the additions are as uncertain as the boundaries and appearance of the original section of the house. The house now has three stories over a raised basement. The most recent changes in this house are the addition of the eight-columned portico, the split sweeping steps, and removal of many Victorian additions. The house is surrounded by acres of gardens which have been developed through the years.

An arched gate marks the entrance to the magnificent avenue of oaks which leads to the existing house. The arch bears the inscription: 1733 Wormsloe 1913.

(continued)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Georgia	
COUNTY	Chatham	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	APR 26 1973	

(Number all entries)

7. Description

The state of Georgia is negotiating to get about 800 acres of the plantation. This will include the ruins of the first house. The Wormsloe Foundation will keep the existing house, library, gardens and entrance way.

8. Significance

Troops from both sides had been at Wormsloe during the Civil War. A defensive position was established on the island by Confederates, then the plantation was occupied by Union forces. The Official Records reported that on March 31, 1863, a siege train of seven guns was on the Isle of Hope, and on February 28, 1864, 40 cavalry helped repel the Federal attack on Whitemarsh Island nearby. In August, the complement stationed there was 176 men, three light and two heavy batteries. The Confederate forces withdrew December 19, 1864 and 100 Union troops occupied Fort Wimberley on December 23, 1864. Further investigation will be necessary to detail this aspect of Wormsloe's history.

Because of the extremely high cost of maintaining such a large estate, the family has agreed to relinquish its historic title for much of the property to the state of Georgia so the land can continue to be preserved as a natural and historic area. Title to the main gate, the main house, and library building will remain with the family while the original fort-like tabby house and about 800 acres, will go to the state.

The land will come to Georgia as part of Heritage Trust, a new state program designed to obtain and preserve historical and natural areas. Wormsloe, started when the colony was in its third year by a man who had a sense of tradition and a love of nature and maintained by the succeeding generations in this same manner, probably meets the aims of Heritage Trust better than any land in the state.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

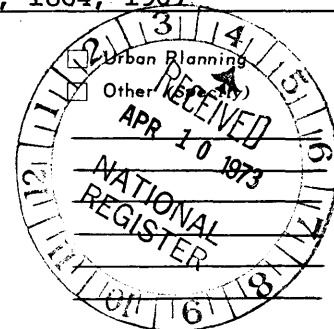
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1733; 1737; 1828; 1863; 1864; 1907

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wormsloe Plantation, established by an original English colonist and still owned by the same family over 200 years later, reflects the two facets of its first owner: a feeling for tradition and an acute appreciation for a new potential. Noble Jones was one of 114 colonists who came to coastal Georgia, exotic and untamed, by English standards, and he was one in the minority who adapted and prospered in the new environment. He was a man of many talents and the five generations who followed him were active in matters of medicine, state and history.

Wormsloe was not a working plantation. It was a country estate, in the English sense. The name is reminiscent of English names and is found in Wales, where Noble Jones had roots. The property, overlooking the Isle of Hope narrows, at that time commanded importance in the water route between Savannah and Fort Frederica, to the south. Here at his estate, Jones experimented with growing new plants; he fiercely protected virgin cypress and oak trees; consequently, he looked inland for agriculture land and his country estate was little altered, by him or the succeeding generations.

As a surveyor, he laid out new roads in a land new to Europeans; he took part in governmental affairs of the new colony to the point of overextending himself. His son, Noble Wimberly Jones, was also an activist, who joined the movement to establish a government independent of England while his father remained a loyal colonist. Both were physicians-builders-politicians.

As the generations changed, professional interests changed. Noble Wimberly Jones was a speaker of the emerging state's House of Assembly and also a doctor. His son, George, became a doctor but politics was his first interest. He was concerned with inland transportation, first a canal, which was not practical, then a railroad, which was. George moved to Wormsloe and in 1828 hired someone to build a new house. This house, altered and enlarged to meet changing needs and tastes, remains today.

George's son, George Frederick Tilghman Jones, was trained to be a doctor but was as much an individualist as his great-grandfather. To avoid being confused with a relative also called George Jones, George F. T. Jones eventually improvised on his grandmother's maiden name and adopted the name DeRenne. He became a publisher and serious collector of historical books. His son, Wymberley Jones DeRenne, continued this tradition, built a handsome library building in 1907 and developed a first rate library with emphasis on Civil War materials.

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

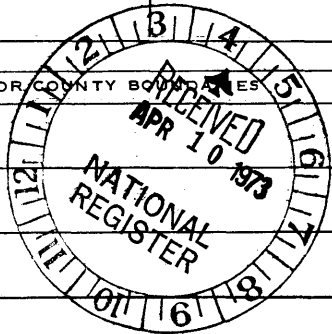
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Coulter, E. Merton, Wormsloe: Two Centuries of a Georgia Family, Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1955
 Kelso, William M., Captain Jones' Wormsloe, A historical, archaeological, and architectural study of an eighteenth century plantation site near Savannah Georgia. A Dissertation for Ph.D. at Emory University 1971.
 Mitchell, William R., Jr., Consultation, 1973.
 Stevens, Carole A., prepared initial draft of N.R. form, 1973.
War of the Rebellion, The, Vol. 6, 14 and 35.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	31° 58' 52"	81° 05' 00"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	31° 58' 52"	81° 03' 27"				
SE	31° 56' 56"	81° 03' 27"				
SW	31° 56' 56"	81° 05' 00"				
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 822 acres						
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES						
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY		CODE		
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE		
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE		
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE		

NO UTM
CX



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Marilyn J. Pennington, Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION: **Georgia Historical Commission** DATE: **April 6, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
116 Mitchell Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Atlanta** STATE: **Georgia** CODE: **13**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Mary Gregory Jewett
 Title State Liaison Officer
 Date April 6, 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert M. Utley
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 4/26/73

ATTEST:
W. Pennington
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 4 20 73

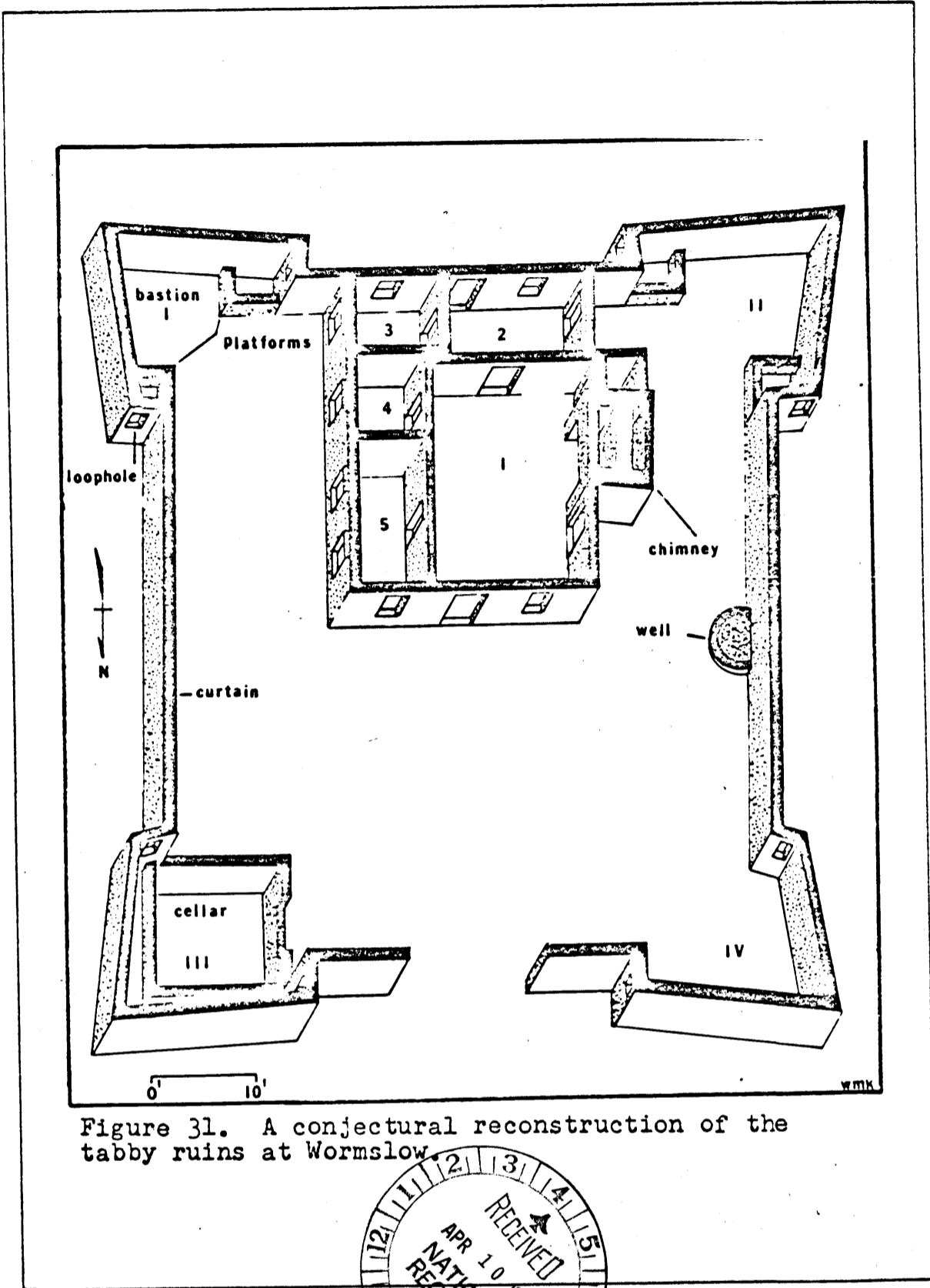
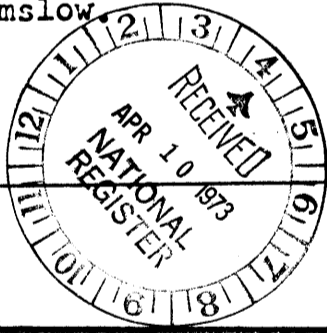


Figure 31. A conjectural reconstruction of the tabby ruins at Wormsloe.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME		
COMMON Wormsloe Plantation	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS) APR 26 1973
2. LOCATION		
STATE Georgia	COUNTY Chatham	TOWN Metropolitan Savannah
STREET AND NUMBER Isle of Hope and Long Island		
3. PHOTO REFERENCE		
PHOTO CREDIT William M. Kelso Captain Jones' Wormslow	DATE 1971	NEGATIVE FILED AT

4. IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
Conjectural reconstruction of the tabby ruins at Wormslow

