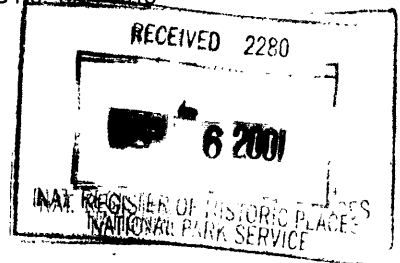


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Griffin-Christopher House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 208 Ann Street not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Pickens vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state South Carolina code SC county Pickens code 077 zip code 29671

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide x locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 8/27/01  
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Dept. of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register Entered in the National Register Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 10/21/01  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Griffin-Christopher House  
Name of Property

Pickens County, South Carolina  
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register  
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: DOMESTIC

Subcategory: single dwelling

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: DOMESTIC

Subcategory: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
other: Folk Victorian I-House

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation brick  
walls weatherboard  
roof metal  
other brick, wood

Narrative Description  
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Griffin-Christopher House  
Name of Property

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1887 - 1930  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1887  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository:  
S.C. Dept. of Archives & History

Griffin-Christopher House  
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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17 343854	3861436	3	17 343920	3861431
2	17 343905	3861461	4	17 343866	3861403

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Morton Johnson  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 10 July 2001  
street & number 145 Garden Springs Road telephone 803-776-4342  
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29209

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Ann Brown  
street & number 208 Ann Street telephone 864-878-6233  
city or town Pickens state SC zip code 29671

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). **Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
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**Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 5 Griffin-Christopher House  
Name of Property  
Pickens County, South Carolina  
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The Griffin-Christopher house is a two-story, three-bay, side-gabled, frame, Folk Victorian I-house with a two-story rear wing creating an L-shaped plan. The two-tiered full-height front and side porches with generous amounts of jig-saw cut wood trim are its key defining features, and most clearly characterize this house as Folk Victorian. The house is located along an early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential street in the town of Pickens, in the Appalachian foothills of South Carolina.

The side-gabled roof is v-crimp metal, with the exception of the one-story rear addition which is covered with asphalt shingles. A small front-facing gable centered in the roof above the front doors adds vertical emphasis to the front entry. The gable is made of wide flushboards with a centered arch panel. There is a drop pendant in the north-facing side gable, and a drop pendant and bracket in the south-facing side gable. There are three brick chimneys, two rising from the center and one in the rear wing.

The walls are covered by weatherboard siding. The wood windows are double-hung with 6-over-6 top and bottom sashes. Narrow two-paneled double front doors open onto the first and second-story front porches. The doors are surrounded by rectangular sidelights and transoms, and are protected by narrow double screen doors. The foundation piers are cement-covered brick with concrete block infill. Underneath the house is a crawl space of varying heights.

The 32'-wide, 7'-deep two-story, full-height front porch is centered on the 40' width of the house. Matching jig-saw cut trim creates the balustrades and forms a frieze at ceiling height on both the front and side porches. The second-story front porch posts are chamfered, while the first story porch posts, probably replacements, are squared off. The design of the corner blocks located at the porch posts at ceiling height suggest a Maltese cross motif. The 18'-deep, 35'-wide dimensions of the two-tiered full-height side porch create two generously-proportioned outdoor rooms. All porch floors and ceilings are wood.

The 2,454 square foot interior of the house is simply adorned with heart-pine floors, plaster walls, and relatively plain mantels and fireplace surrounds. The double front doors open onto a narrow hallway containing the curved stairway. These doors retain original hardware. A rear door leads from the front hallway to the rear porch. Doors to the right and left of the hallway lead to the front rooms. From the left front room, doors lead into the rear wing, through the dining room, then into the kitchen, and finally to the rear bedroom addition. At the top of the stairway the upper hallway opens onto the rear porch as well as the front porch. Doors on the right and left open into the two front rooms. As with the first floor plan, from the left front upper bedroom, a door opens into a second bedroom, which is also accessible from the rear porch. The third room at the back of the rear wing is accessible only through a door opening onto the porch.

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The house faces west-southwest onto Ann Street, a block and a half north of Main Street and downtown Pickens. A sidewalk and rough-cut granite retaining wall, which extends the length of the block, separates the front lawn from Ann Street. Concrete steps lead from the sidewalk to a concrete walk that bisects the front lawn before reaching the porch steps. A one-lane asphalt driveway extends along the northern property line. In the rear the lot slopes gently away from the house. The house is framed by mature trees and shrubbery. The house is in fair to good condition, with some deterioration of the porches and siding. At the southeastern corner of the house is the old well, no longer in use and covered by brick. There are no outbuildings on the property.

Historic photos and the Sanborn fire insurance maps reveal some alterations to the house and its surroundings since it was completed in the late 1880s.<sup>1</sup> The landscape around the house has changed from agricultural to residential, reflecting the growth of the town of Pickens. Although only a block from Main Street, the earliest photos and Sanborn maps show the house surrounded by fields. In first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the land was subdivided into lots and gradually houses were built along Ann Street, primarily in the bungalow style.

The basic form and Folk Victorian character has remained unchanged, although the house has seen minor alterations. Early photographs indicate that the roof was covered with wooden shakes, which have been replaced or covered with the metal roof. The spaces between the brick piers were originally filled by bricks in an open lattice pattern.

Between 1911 and 1924 a side entry porch along the north elevation was built. It was removed some time after 1930, but changes in the wood siding still show the location of this entry. A side door now opens off the kitchen. Also between 1911 and 1924 a one-room one-story rear addition was added at the end of the rear wing. Between 1911 and 1924 a small one-story outbuilding in the northeast portion of the lot was built, but it is no longer extant.<sup>2</sup> In the 1930s a bathroom was added by closing in the covered walkway between this one-room addition and the kitchen.<sup>3</sup>

Early photographs show the porches covered with vines. An early photograph also shows a different pattern of decorative trim at the top of the porches. An earlier front circular drive has been replaced by the front walk and sidewalk.

<sup>1</sup> "Pickens, Pickens County, S.C.," Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1894, 1901, 1906, 1911, 1924, 1930 (New York: Sanborn Map Company).

<sup>2</sup> "Pickens, Pickens County, S.C." Sanborn Maps, 1911, 1924, 1930.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Ann C. Brown, owner, Griffin-Christopher House, Pickens, S.C., 13 November 2000.

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Griffin-Christopher House  
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The Griffin-Christopher House is significant under Criterion C as an example of Folk Victorian architecture from the 1880s, with its generous use of jig-saw cut trim on the front and side full-height two-tiered porches. The construction of the house is associated with the Elihu H. Griffin, Sr. family, particularly with his son John Calhoun Griffin. Since 1920 it has been the residence of three generations of the Newton A. Christopher family.

Virginia and Lee McAlester define as Folk Victorian vernacular house forms, such as gable front, hall and parlor or I-house, built between ca. 1870-1910 that have porches with spindlework or jig-saw cut trim.<sup>4</sup> The Griffin-Christopher House clearly illustrates this definition. In form, the main section is an I-house, three bays wide, two-stories tall and one-room deep. A large rear addition extending from the left side of the house creates an L-shaped plan. I-houses were a common folk housing form in the South and Midwest. To this basic house form two-tiered full-height porches with jig-saw cut trim were placed on the front and side. Porches such as these are common on Folk Victorian houses in the South.

The site, and traditionally the house, have been connected with Elihu Holby Griffin, Sr. (1801-1874) and his family, particularly his wife Ann (1810-1906), and his son John Calhoun Griffin (1851-1890).<sup>5</sup> The Griffin family settled in the area that is now Pickens County in the late 1790s, when William Griffin moved from Chatham County, North Carolina to the Pendleton District of South Carolina.<sup>6</sup> Through a series of transactions, Elihu H. Griffin, Sr. acquired over a thousand acres of land, including the site of the Griffin-Christopher House in 1859.<sup>7</sup> In May 1868 he sold 94 acres of land to the State of South Carolina for part of the new county seat of the Pickens County, created in 1868 when Pickens District was split into Pickens County and Oconee County.<sup>8</sup> The site of the Griffin-Christopher house is adjacent to those 94 acres. There is also a local tradition that Elihu H. Griffin, Sr. donated land for the courthouse square. While this has been commemorated by a marker on the Pickens County Courthouse grounds, no supporting documentary evidence has been found. Two street names, Griffin Street and Ann Street, are also reminders of the ownership of the property during Pickens' formative years.

Elihu H. Griffin, Sr. died in 1874, and according to his will of 1870, left to his wife Ann "my homestead wherein I now live". He stipulated that upon her death the property would be sold and equally divided among his heirs.<sup>9</sup> Apparently one of his unmarried sons, John Calhoun Griffin, lived in the home with his mother. He owned flour and corn mills on Wolfe Creek, a general store on Main Street in

<sup>4</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), pp. 309-310.

<sup>5</sup> Nancy Sue Griffin Lovvorn, *The Griffin Family* (Southside, Alabama: n.p., 1995), pp. 28-30.

<sup>6</sup> Lovvorn, pp. 10-11.

<sup>7</sup> Plat dated 18 September 1906, Pickens County Register of Mesne Conveyance, Pickens County Courthouse, Pickens, S.C.

<sup>8</sup> Pickens County Deed Record Book A-2, page 117.

<sup>9</sup> Will of Elihu H. Griffin, Pickens County Courthouse, Pickens, S.C.

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Pickens, a cotton gin, and a sawmill. He was also the successful bidder when a contract was let for lumber to build the new Clemson College in 1890.<sup>10</sup>

Family and local tradition has said that J.C. Griffin added onto and remodeled the home of his parents, Ann and Elihu H. Griffin, Sr. The decorative detailing is of the Victorian era, but it is possible that some portions of an earlier house on the site may remain. A grandson of Elihu, Sr. stated that his uncle "remodeled the exterior of the house in the 1880s", and the 1906 obituary of Ann Griffin reported that she had lived in the same place since the town was "laid off".<sup>11</sup> On 25 August 1887, *The Pickens Sentinel* reported that "the workmen have commenced to build a handsome dwelling for Mr. J.C. Griffin", and on 2 February 1888 that "Mr. J.C. Griffin has his fine residence about finished."<sup>12</sup> It is interesting to speculate if and how much of the lumber J.C. Griffin might have milled for this house. Unfortunately J.C. Griffin did not enjoy his "fine residence" for long, as he was killed on 31 May 1890 by an employee of his saw mill.<sup>13</sup>

The house was purchased by Newton A. Christopher in 1920 and has remained in his family for three generations. Mr. Christopher and his family had first moved to Pickens about 1898. It is under the ownership of the Christopher family that the minor alterations that have given the house its current appearance took place. A side entry porch (added sometime after 1911) was removed after 1930. In the 1930s a bathroom was added by closing in the covered walkway between the rear one-story addition and the kitchen.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Lovvorn, pp. 30-31.

<sup>11</sup> John William Griffin, "Elihu H. Griffin," unpublished biographical sketch in the possession of Ann C. Brown, Griffin-Christopher House, Pickens, S.C.; "Death of Mrs. Ann Griffin," *The Pickens Sentinel*, 7 March 1906.

<sup>12</sup> *Pickens Sentinel* (Pickens, S.C.), 25 August 1887 and 2 February 1888, reprinted in Peggy Burton Rich and Marion Ard Whitehurst, *The Pickens Sentinel: Volume I*, (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books Inc., 1994), pp. 273, 300.

<sup>13</sup> *Pickens Sentinel* (Pickens, S.C.), 5 June 1890, reprinted in Peggy Burton Rich and Marion Ard Whitehurst, *The Pickens Sentinel: Volume I*, (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books Inc., 1994) p. 364.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Ann C. Brown, November 13, 2000.



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Griffin-Christopher House  
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**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

**INTERVIEW**

Johnson, Elizabeth Morton, interview with Ann C. Brown, Griffin-Christopher House, Pickens, S.C.,  
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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line marked "Griffin-Christopher House" on the accompanying copy of the Pickens County Tax Map, Map G10-13-0160, Lot 16.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The nominated property is restricted to the historic house and its immediate setting.

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property: Griffin-Christopher House  
Location of Property: 208 Ann Street  
Pickens, Pickens County, S.C.

Name of Photographer: John Poulos  
Date of Photographs: 30 May 1998  
Location of Original Negatives: John Poulos, 105 Syracuse Rd., Easley, S.C. 29642

1. Facade
2. Facade left oblique
3. Facade right oblique
4. Left elevation
5. Right elevation
6. Rear elevation
7. Entrance hall
8. Entrance stair
9. Main parlor mantel