

PH0035131

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Georgia  
 COUNTY: Chatham  
 FOR NPS USE ONLY  
 ENTRY DATE: DEC 11 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Savannah Victorian Historic District  
 AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

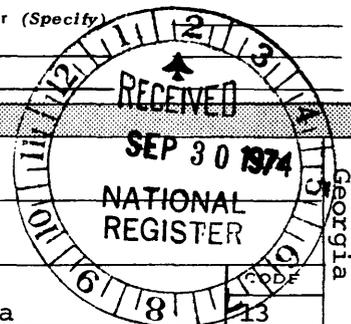
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Boundaries as shown on annexed map  
 CITY OR TOWN: Savannah CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First--Bo Ginn  
 STATE: Georgia CODE: 13 COUNTY: Chatham CODE: 051

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" 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"/> Comments <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Multiple public and private  
 STREET AND NUMBER: City of Savannah  
 CITY OR TOWN: Savannah STATE: Georgia



5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Chatham County Courthouse  
 STREET AND NUMBER: Bull Street at Wright Square  
 CITY OR TOWN: Savannah STATE: Georgia CODE: 13

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Victorian Area Survey  
 DATE OF SURVEY: 1974  Federal  State  County  Local  
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc.  
 STREET AND NUMBER: 119 Habersham Street  
 CITY OR TOWN: Savannah STATE: Georgia CODE: 13

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated
(Check One)		(Check One)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Savannah Victorian Historic District comprises an area of approximately 45 city blocks located just south of the city's original settlement, which is now incorporated in the Savannah Historic District. The area is bounded on the north by Gwinnett Street, on the south by Anderson Street, and on the west and east by the building lines just beyond Montgomery Street and Price Street respectively. The District is subdivided into seven wards, which are further divided into lots averaging 60 by 90 feet.

Part of the District was once a military parade ground. In 1861, land just south of an open space known as Forsyth Park in Savannah was dedicated for military purposes. This extension of Forsyth Park, covering the size of six city blocks, was known as the new Military Parade Ground. After the Civil War, when such a space was no longer needed, the ordinance was repealed; and in 1867, the parade ground was officially added to Forsyth Park and became known as the Park Extension. It was shortly after this time that the area around the Extension was opened as a residential district.

The addition to the Park was originally a sandlot; and although an effort was made to have the area landscaped, nothing was done, so that the Park remains unlandscaped as it was when first incorporated.

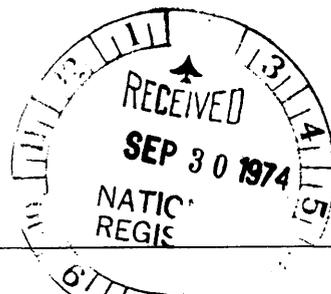
Today the District is characterized by shaded, tree-lined streets on a grid plan with wide brick sidewalks and picturesque houses lined up on narrow landscaped lots. The majority of the homes are in the Carpenter "Box" style popular during the 1870's and 1880's. Resembling a box embellished by lace-like wood designs, these homes were the work of a carpenter who both designed and built the houses. Generally of wood, these dwellings were often turned into fanciful "gingerbread" structures by skilled craftsmen-carpenters.

Other architectural styles represented in the neighborhood include examples of brick row houses with cast iron lintels from the 1870's and the High Victorian Queen Anne style from the late 1880's and 1890's. The latter style, which required the services of a trained architect, was thought to be much more sophisticated and modern than the rather quaint carpenter-designed houses.

The first homes in the neighborhood were built in the area west of the Park Extension. Today, this section is being encroached by commercial establishments to the west on Montgomery Street. The majority of the houses are two-storey frame boxes that were decorated with wood embellishments. The degree of decoration varies from house to house, some having very little elaboration.

(Continued)

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



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1870-1897

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br><u>History</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____   |
| <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Savannah Victorian Historic District contains an unusually high concentration of post-Civil War domestic architecture that includes examples from three different architectural styles prevalent in the 1870's, 1880's, and 1890's. The styles range from the Carpenter "Box" style to the Queen Anne style and include several fine brick townhouses scattered throughout the District.

The growth of the area became possible after the post Civil War extension of the street railways in Savannah, thereby allowing citizens to live farther away from their places of work. The post-Civil War expansion of Savannah drifted southward into the area incorporated in the Victorian District. The neighborhood was the first area opened up after the common land in Oglethorpe's original plan had been exhausted. (In Oglethorpe's plan, this new district had been designated as farm lots.) Wards and lots were laid out between 1868 and 1872, with the majority of building activity occurring in a 27 year period covering the years 1870 to 1897.

The Victorian District, Savannah's first suburb, contains many homes built by prominent architects. William Gibbons Preston, designer of the Cotton Exchange, built the house at 223 East Gwinnett Street. A. S. Eichburg designed the home at 803 Whitaker as well as the Telfair Hospital.

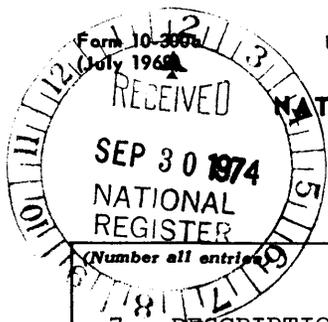
Also included in the area are many homes by the Home Building Company, a building and loan association that provided money for the average citizen to build a new dwelling. Many of these homes were based on the published plans of Shoppell, which featured modest picturesque cottages.

The majority of people who populated the District were hard-working, middle-class families with moderate incomes. Street railroads made new areas of less expensive land available to average families who previously had to live in crowded in-town conditions.

(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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7. DESCRIPTION (Continued--Savannah Victorian Historic District)

In addition to frame structures, brick homes are scattered throughout the area. Brick townhouses with dentil moulding, prevalent in downtown Savannah, found their way into the Victorian District. One of these houses is located at 117 West Park Avenue. It contains brick window lintels, a Greek Revival doorway, and excellent mantels and mouldings. Other brick structures include townhouses built in 1871 at 311-315 West Waldburg and a row at 210-220 West Bolton, built in 1872.

An exceptional home on the west side of the Park Extension is the red brick and terra cotta mansion at the corner of Whitaker and Gwinnett Streets. Built in the Queen Anne style by Atlanta architect A. S. Eichburg, the structure contains original frescoed walls, numerous examples of ceiling and dado stenciling, excellent millwork, and stained glass.

South of the Extension are six blocks in which domestic and commercial structures are located. Telfair Hospital stands facing the Extension. The hospital is an imposing Victorian structure built by architect A. S. Eichburg. Henry Street School is located near the hospital. The school was built in 1892 after the plans of Boston architect William Gibbons Preston. The structure is decorated with excellent terra cotta designs.

The two blocks bounded by Anderson Street, Henry Street, Whitaker Street, and Drayton Street are occupied by Southern Bell in the eastern block and the Hellenic Center in the western. In addition, there are several gas stations situated at street corners in the six blocks below the Extension. In spite of these intrusions, the grid plan has not been affected.

The east side of the Park Extension was populated later in the century. In addition to carpenter houses, there are many structures in the High Victorian Queen Anne Style. Designed by trained architects, these houses have fine detailing on both the exterior and interior. The majority of these homes are of wood, although there are several brick structures. One of these houses, on Whitaker Street, was built in the late 1890's and contains elaborate carving and outstanding stained glass. Many of these homes have turrets and an elaborate massing of forms.

East-west corridors of the District have less traffic and therefore contain fewer intrusions. North-south streets are heavy traffic carriers, and most of the encroachment has been along these avenues.

Today the District is populated by Blacks and is generally run down and in a poor state of repair. There have been several efforts made by individuals to restore homes and move into the neighborhood. The efforts of these people, while only a beginning, have been successful.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued--Savannah Victorian Historic District)

Several important Savannah names are associated with the area, including Dr. J. J. Waring, City Alderman (1866-69, 1877-79) and respected doctor who was considered a hero of the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1876. Waring originated the system which drained the swamplands east of the city, thereby removing the source of the dreaded disease.

Other names associated with the area include Colonel Charles H. Olmstead, Commander of the Confederate troops at Fort Pulaski. Olmstead lived at 305 East Gwinnett Street during the latter years of his life. Judge William Harden, of 223 East Gwinnett, a prominent lawyer and City Court judge, compiled and published a history of Savannah and South Georgia, still a very useful reference book. William Estill, Jr., whose family owned the Savannah Morning News, built the handsome Carpenter style house of 111 West Gwinnett Street.

The Victorian District represents an important phase in the growth of Savannah. It is indicative of an era, now vanished, and is typical of a late 19th century residential neighborhood. With a high concentration of Victorian structures, such as may never be built again, the area is a valid target for preservation and should be restored to its former status.



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Addition to  
SAVANNAH VICTORIAN DISTRICT

The Savannah Victorian District boundaries as set forth in the original nomination form were so specified as to round out the ward system, thus the reasoning for extending the district not just to Henry Street but to include both sides of Anderson Street as well. Within this area between Henry and Anderson Streets are two large pivotal points, the Anderson and Henry Street Schools of brick and terracotta. The Henry Street School was designed first by Preston, but completed by an Atlanta architect.

Within the district are approximately 450 buildings, over 425 of which are rated structures according to the Historic Savannah Foundation tabulation.

Elizabeth Z. Macgregor  
Architectural Historian  
Historic Preservation Section  
Department of Natural Resources  
270 Washington Street, S.W., Room 703C  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

November 15, 1974



Name Jackson O'Neal Lamb  
JACKSON O'NEAL LAMB  
Title State Historic Preservation Officer  
Date November 15, 1974