

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 28 1986

date entered SEP 11 1986

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

1. Name

historic

400 + 5700

Historic Resources of Hartwell, Georgia  
and or common (partial inventory: historic and architectural properties)

2. Location

street & number Within the city limits of Hartwell

N/A not for publication

city, town Hartwell

N/A vicinity of

state Georgia

code 013

county Hart

code 147

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple owners

street & number

city, town

\_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Hart County Courthouse

city, town Hartwell

state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

See Continuation Sheet.

Historic Structures Field Survey:

title Hart County

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1977

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records  
Historic Preservation Section  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta

state Georgia

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURAL AND MANMADE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE HARTWELL MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA

Hartwell is the county seat of Hart County. It is located in the northeast corner of the state in the Piedmont region. It has a population of approximately 5,000. The historic resources of the Hartwell multiple resource area are within the present city limits. These limits are currently established in the shape of a circle extending one mile in all directions from the county courthouse. This circular boundary has been altered on the north, west, and southwest with the annexation of new residential developments, and on the southeast with the inclusion of recent commercial developments.

The overall layout of the community radiates from the original gridiron plan which is located in the center of the city. This original street plan is traversed and joined by four major roads. These major thoroughfares include U.S. Highway 29 and State Routes 51, 172, and 77. U.S. Highway 29, which is the route to Athens, Georgia, enters the city limits on the southwest. This highway passes through the town center and exits the city boundaries on the east and leads to Anderson, South Carolina. State Route 51 enters the city from the northwest and provides a connection with Interstate Highway 85, which is located approximately 12 miles north of the city. State Route 51 joins U.S. Highway 29, and after a few blocks, 51 turns north and exits the city limits. This northern segment of 51 ends at Lake Hartwell. State Route 172 enters the city from the south and terminates at the gridiron plan. State Route 77, which enters the city from the southeast, connects with the original gridiron street plan of the city and exits to the west following the identical route of State Route 51. The Hartwell Railroad, which provides a spur connection to Bowersville, Georgia, and Southern Railroad Services, extends from the west side of the city into the central business district. The rail line ends at this point and a warehousing district, known as Depot Street, has developed at its terminus.

The original gridiron plan of Hartwell is located on a plateau which extends to the northeast, southeast, and southwest. Uses within the community form fairly distinct groupings. Retail and commercial establishments dominate the town square with mixed retail, commercial, and residential uses located along the east-west segment of U.S. Highway 29. Residential neighborhoods are clustered around the town center and are urban in character. Residential development, which extends along major and minor arteries, becomes more rural in character near the fringes of the city boundaries.

Industrial uses are located along State Route 51 and the Hartwell Railroad spur in the western section of the city. There is one industrial plant adjoining the town center on the south and another plant at the southern edge of the city on State Route 172. Recent commercial mall-type development has occurred at two locations in the city. There is a row of retail and commercial stores with a large parking area at the junction of U.S. Highway 29 and State Route 51, and a more recent commercial mall at the southeastern edge of the city on State Route 77.

[continued]

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet      Representation in  
Existing Surveys

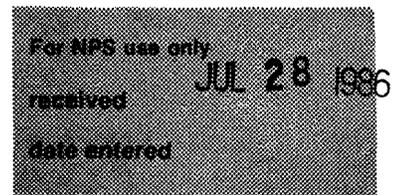
Item number      6

Page      2

The Hart County Jail in the Hartwell multiple resource area was individually listed in the National Register on September 13, 1985. It is included here for information purposes only, not for re-listing. See survey-inventory form # 26.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Description

Item number 7

Page 2

The four historic districts are clustered in the center of the community. These districts include the Hartwell Commercial Historic District, the Witham Cotton Mills Historic District, the Benson Street-Forest Avenue Residential Historic District, and the Franklin Street-College Avenue Residential Historic District. The Hartwell Commercial Historic District comprises the public square and surrounding retail establishment as well as wholesale businesses and historic industrial uses to the south on Depot Street. The Witham Cotton Mills Historic District encompasses 25 acres of sloping land to the south of the town center. This area is dominated by modest frame, Victorian mill cottages and a few brick Bungalow structures. The Benson Street-Forest Avenue Residential Historic District is situated to the southeast of the town center and includes a collection of late 19th- and early 20th-century residences. The Franklin Street-College Avenue Residential Historic District, to the east of the town center, is another residential neighborhood with a larger representation of 20th-century architecture.

Individual historic buildings are disbursed throughout the resource area with a large number of historic dwellings situated on Athens Street. There is one historic city farmstead individually identified within the resource area. This property, with a residence, numerous outbuildings, and approximately four acres of remaining land, is located to the north of the town center on Forest Avenue. The resource area also contains a historic county jail (previously listed in the National Register), a historic school, a historic church, and a historic gas station.

To the northeast of the town center is an area named "Rome," which was historically and is presently the center of Hartwell's black community. New development and major alterations to many historic buildings in the area preclude the nomination of any of Rome as a historic district. Two historic houses located in Rome are among the individually nominated properties in the Hartwell multiple resource area.

More recent residential developments in subdivision-type layouts of small lots and ranch-style homes are located near the city's edge on the southwest, southeast, and northwest. A residential development with more spacious lots is located on the eastern edge of the city. These developments, as well as later commercial centers, have resulted in the extension of the one-mile circular boundary. Lake Hartwell, which was created from the Savannah River in the early 1960s by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, lies outside the municipal boundaries but is in close proximity to the city at the northwest edge.

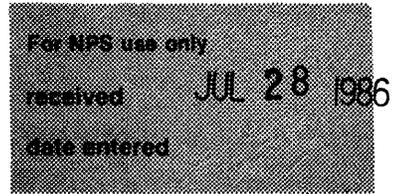
**CHOICE OF THE MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA,  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS, AND INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES**

The multiple resource area was designated as the current corporate limits of the city of Hartwell. These city limits include a representative example of the types of architectural and historic resources found in the Hartwell vicinity. The city limits also represent a clearly defined area under the jurisdiction of a single

[continued]

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet      Description      Item number 7      Page 3

---

government. The relation between the corporate limits and the multiple resource area should facilitate preservation activities in this area. The City of Hartwell has a zoning ordinance which might be updated to reflect the historic properties identified in this nomination.

Four historic districts have been selected on the basis of intact areas of consistent historical development which meet National Register criteria. These districts include the Hartwell Commercial Historic District, the Benson Street-Forest Avenue Residential Historic District, the Franklin Street-College Avenue Residential Historic District, and the Witham Cotton Mills Historic District. These districts have been established separately, since each district represents a distinct historical development and distinct architectural styles and types.

Extensive new commercial and residential development in Hartwell necessitates the individual listing of a number of properties that have been isolated from other historic structures. These individually nominated properties have been selected based on the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. There are 28 individually nominated properties in the multiple resource area, including the previously nominated county jail.

METHODOLOGY

This nomination was initiated by the Hartwell Older Homes Preservation Society. The Hartwell Older Homes Preservation Society is comprised of historic house owners in Hartwell who are interested in preserving the historic qualities of the community. A number of the Society's members were interested in the individual listing of their properties in the National Register of Historic Places. It was suggested that the Society consider a multiple resource approach since the properties were scattered throughout the community. The Society agreed to this approach since it would further the overall goals of the organization. The Society obtained approval of the project by the city and county governments which allowed the preservation planner at Georgia Mountains Area Planning and Development Commission to assist.

A windshield survey was carried out by the planner. Historic properties were identified and forms were distributed to a team of volunteers within the Society. The volunteers carried out research on the various sites. From this data, potential districts and individual listings were identified. A site visit was made by State Historic Preservation Office staff, and the potential districts and individual listings were refined. A public meeting was held in October, 1982, at the Hartwell City Hall to discuss the proposed nomination and solicit additional information. A member of the Hartwell City Council who resides in the black community was present and supplied additional assistance in evaluating the black historic resources. On the basis of the volunteer research, site visits, and additional research by the preservation planner, a draft nomination form was prepared by the planner and was presented to the State Historic Preservation Office in July, 1983. Additional

[continued]

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received JUL 28 1986  
date entered

Continuation sheet      Description      Item number 7      Page 4

---

information necessary to determine the eligibility of some properties and to upgrade the document to National Register standards was then gathered. A second site visit was made by State Historic Preservation Office staff in February, 1984. A public information meeting conducted by State Historic Preservation Office staff was held in Hartwell on June 11, 1985. The nomination was presented to and approved by the Georgia National Register Review Board at its July, 1985, meeting. The final forms have been prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office staff and are being submitted to Washington at this time.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				<input type="checkbox"/> social history
<b>Specific dates</b> 1854-1941	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Multiple		

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The historic resources of Hartwell consist of four historic districts and 28 individual properties. These districts and properties comprise approximately 175 of the more than 2,000 acres within the city limits. The four historic districts consist of late 19th- and early 20th-century commercial brick buildings and a railroad depot in the center of town; two collections of late 19th- and early 20th-century houses, one centered along Benson Street and Forest Avenue, the other along Franklin Street and College Avenue; and a collection of late 19th- and 20th-century mill housing associated with the Witham (Hartwell) Cotton Mill. The 28 individual properties, all dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, include outlying residences, small Victorian cottages and large Victorian Eclectic dwellings, several large Neo-classical houses, a number of houses built or remodeled in the Craftsman style, a very few Revival-style houses, a church, a school, a county jail, an early electric power generating facility, and a gas station. Taken together, these historic districts, and properties, with their historical associations, constitute a nearly complete and well preserved record of the history of Hartwell. The creation of the town in 1854 as the county seat of recently organized Hart County, the subsequent development of a government and commercial center for the surrounding countryside, the establishment of residential neighborhoods and outlying farmsteads, the 1879 establishment of the Hartwell Railroad which enhanced the developing commercial center, the emergence of local industries based on agricultural products, primarily cotton, the organization of local institutions such as churches, fraternal lodges, civic clubs, and schools, the introduction of the automobile, the decline of cotton, and the Depression are all represented through these historic districts and individual properties. In terms of National Register areas of significance, the historic resources of Hartwell are significant in community planning and development, architecture, landscape architecture, commerce, industry, agriculture, transportation, education, and social history. They meet National Register Criteria A, B, and C.

[continued]

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property N/A

Quadrangle name Hartwell, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References N/A (See district and individual property presentations for UTM references.)

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

D 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

E 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

F 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

G 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The multiple-resources area is the city of Hartwell. See Section 7 for elaboration.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title a) Dale Jaeger, Sybil Bowers  
b) Carolyn Brooks

organization a) Georgia Mountains Area Planning & Development Commission  
b) Historic Preservation Section, date June 23, 1986  
Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources a) 404/535-5480

street & number a) P.O. Box 1720 b) 205 Butler St. telephone b) 404/656-2840

city or town a) Gainesville b) Atlanta state Georgia

# 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 7/24/86  
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date

For NPS use only

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

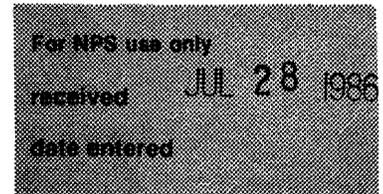
Amy Schlager date 9/11/86  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet      Significance      Item number 8      Page 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE  
HARTWELL MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA DURING THE PERIODS IT ACHIEVED SIGNIFICANCE  
AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE HARTWELL MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA

Period 1. (pre-1856) The Hartwell multiple resource area was part of the Cherokee Nation before white settlement in the mid-1700s. Little is known about the appearance of this area during Cherokee habitation, but it is assumed that it was dominated by the natural landscape. The Indians relinquished their lands to the state through various treaties and, in turn, the state gave these lands, through a land lottery system, to veterans of the Revolutionary War. The Treaty of 1773 and the Treaty of 1783 provided the lands which formed Franklin County in 1784 and Elbert County in 1790. Portions of these two counties were used to create Hart County in 1853.

Following these treaties and the Revolutionary War, this territory was opened for colonization. Settlers, primarily from Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina of English, Scotch Irish, and Welsh descent, moved into the area, obtained title to the land, and began clearing the land for homesites and cultivation, in many instances with the help of their slaves. The first settlements were made adjacent to major waterways, the Savannah and Tugalo rivers and smaller creeks, to take advantage of the rich bottomland, the most suitable area for farming. Some of these settlers built magnificent homes among their plantation holdings, and several of these structures survive into the present in remote sections of the county. The less desirable back country was thinly settled, and more modest residences were built. All of these early structures were undoubtedly frame and log, which utilized the available materials. According to Historical Investigations of the Richard B. Russell Multiple Resource Area (The History Group, Inc., 1981), the disposal of surplus farm products became a problem as the population increased. "To minimize the difficulties and expense arising from the primitive transportation system (pole boats on the Savannah River and wagons to markets in Augusta, Athens, Atlanta, and Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina), farmers experimented with lightweight staples--tobacco, hemp, and flax. Tobacco became the main staple crop in 1799, but due to its inferior grade it was quickly abandoned in the early 1800's. Following a diversified farm economy which produced corn, wheat, and grain for cattle, sheep and hogs, cotton began to be grown reaching a high point for the antebellum period in 1850."

Period 2. (1854-1878) On December 7, 1853, Hart County, named for Revolutionary War heroine Nancy Hart, was created by Act of the Georgia Legislature. This Act provided for the election of five justices of the Inferior Court, who were instructed to "select and locate a site for public buildings in said new county, to purchase a tract of land for location of the county site, to divide same into lots and sell each at public sale for the benefit of said new county...." A local controversy ensued over the location of the county seat. One group favored the central point of the county identified through the survey while another group wanted an area known as "The

[continued]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JUL 28 1986

date entered

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

Page 3

Center of the World," a former Cherokee Indian assembly ground. The group wanting the county seat located at "The Center of the World" filed a quo warranto proceeding against the justices of the Inferior Court and hired Thomas R. Cobb, an attorney from Athens, to represent them. The judges hired Howell Cobb, a brother of Thomas R. Cobb, also of Athens, as their lawyer, and after a legal battle, the question was decided in favor of the present location at the center of the county.

On May 12, 1854, the justices of the Inferior Court purchased 100 acres of land from the heirs of James Vickery. The multiple resource area appears to have been unsettled, natural land prior to the establishment of the town. The History of Hart County recounts a notation on an 1889 map which stated, "The place selected for the location of this town was a prominent deer stand...." A physical feature of the town is that it was planned along a ridge line separating the watersheds of Lightwood Log Creek from those of Big Cedar Creek. John A. Cameron, County Surveyor, and F. B. Hodges, a later county surveyor, are credited with the layout of the town, which was divided into squares, streets, and 139 lots. A central public square was established and the four adjoining streets were 80 feet wide; an account from the Hartwell Sun of September 24, 1881, states that the street widths were patterned after Madison, Georgia. According to the article, "two Legislature members from Hart County visited Madison while measures were pending for the new county. The town presented such a lovely appearance with its broad streets that they measured their width" and suggested this design feature in the new town. The street names have several derivations: Carolina, Franklin, and Elberts streets, the direction the streets led to South Carolina, Franklin County, and Elbert, Georgia; Johnson, Carter, Richardson, Webb, and Chandler streets, for judges of the Inferior Court; Hodges, for F. B. Hodges, a surveyor of the town plan; and Howell Street, in honor of Howell Cobb, the attorney who assisted the judges in settling the location controversy of the town.

Even though the town of Hartwell was not incorporated until 1856, development appears to have started with the creation of the county. It was in this period that the first permanent signs of a community were visible. Following the donation of seven lots for government, religious, and educational purposes, an auction was held on July 6 and September 5, 1854, to dispose of the remaining 132 lots. The first buildings were constructed around the square or in proximity and were mixed commercial and residential uses. The square occupied the high point along the ridge line which sloped slightly to form the plateau where the nucleus of the community developed. The courthouse, a two-story frame building situated on Lot 1 at the north-eastern side of the square, was the first building completed. John B. Benson, one of the founding fathers, was instrumental in other development. He is credited with building the first residence, a structure of "pine logs, split in halves, close fitted and chinked;" the first store, a frame building on the southwest corner of the square; and additional residences and commercial buildings. A two-story frame jail on Lot 6 and several frame hotels were other early buildings in the town. During this period, it appears the majority of structures were of wood, but there were

[continued]

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received JUL 28 1986

date entered

Continuation sheet    Significance    Item number 8    Page 4

several structures of brick, including an antebellum brick commercial structure built by I. N. Reeder on the square and a two-story brick courthouse, built on the public square in 1856 as a replacement for the original frame structure.

The immediate growth of the community in the late 1850s is evident in the early expansion of the town. The original town limits set at 400 yards in each direction from the town square at incorporation in 1856 were expanded two years later to one-half mile. Development was halted by the Civil War, but no war-related destruction occurred in Hartwell, and the 1870s was a period of slow recovery. The 1870 town population was 154, with 123 white and 31 black citizens. By the end of the 1870s, the county-seat town had evolved to include residences, commercial enterprises, and permanent buildings for educational, religious, and government functions.

Period 3. (1879-1925) This period can best be described as the "boom" phase in Hartwell's development. The highlights of this era include: the establishment of the Hartwell Railroad, changes in agricultural practices which strengthened the cotton economy and resulted in the creation of cotton-related businesses and industries, the development of distinct residential neighborhoods, the growth of the town center, and various public improvements by the local government.

The establishment of the Hartwell Railroad in 1879 signaled an end to the primitive transportation systems of pole boats and wagons and provided a direct connection to national markets. The line which ran from Hartwell to Bowersville joined there with the Elbert Airline Railroad, which connected with Atlanta, Washington, and New York via Toccoa, Georgia. The Hartwell rail line which had its terminus point south of the town center was a catalyst for development of the Depot Street area. Changes in the agricultural system, including the introduction and popularization of fertilizers, the solution of labor problems through a share-crop arrangement, and the solution of credit problems through a crop-lien system, allowed a resurgence of "King Cotton" to a degree never attained before. Hartwell became a "one crop town." Depot Street evolved as the local "cotton yard," and the brick warehouses were built to house the buyers, feed stores, and other related enterprises. Seed-oil mills, ginning houses, and, in 1894, a cotton mill were added. A wood-framed passenger depot replaced an earlier depot with storage needs met by the surrounding warehouses. The development of Depot Street also spurred new development around the square and in the community, illustrated by an article in the Hartwell Sun from 1897, which noted: "Nothing can avert it, a building boom has struck Hartwell. During the Summer the Methodists will build a handsome brick church edifice on Howell Street; A. R. McCurry and A. F. Brown will put up store houses on southside of public square; D. A. Perritte will erect the brick store on Depot Street; Joe Williams will put two brick stores on eastside public square; Matheson Bradley and Company will erect a brick store adjoining their handsome business house and so it goes! Let'er roll!!!!"

It was during this period that the existing historic character of the central

[continued]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JUL 28 1986

date entered

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

Page 5

business district evolved. More substantial and fireproof brick buildings were constructed. Two-story brick retail buildings were constructed around the square occupying entire blocks to the east and south with frame residential dwellings continuing to occupy the north and west sides. Less desirable retail uses, such as livery stables, evolved on the edges of the town center, primarily situated at the northwest edge of the public square. The Depot Street section, which became the wholesale trade area, was characterized by large, one-story warehouses lining the rail line to the south with access to both street and rail. Industrial-type structures of wood and brick were built to the south and west of Depot Street to house cotton-related industries.

The growth of the commercial center and the subdivision of several large tracts of land resulted in the development of residential neighborhoods. Prior to the 1890s, residential growth for Hartwell's white citizens appears to have been centered around the core of the community. Its most desirable land for residential development, the extension of the plateau to the southeast and southwest, was still held in large parcels by a few landowners. The area to the northeast of town, which was also situated on the plateau, became the "Rome" community. According to local newspaper accounts, S. W. Peek selected this area as the place to begin his nursery grounds. By 1882, there was a demand for building lots in this area, prompting Peek to move the operation to 100 acres along the Elbert Road, formerly owned by F. B. Hodges. An 1883 newspaper account describes Rome as "our colored suburb," which documents the beginning of the existing black community. One can surmise that the black population gravitated to this desirable land and created a new market for the land. Land ownership for Hartwell's blacks was a new option following the former restrictions of slavery. Prior to this time, it appears that Hartwell's blacks were rather transient, occupying several areas in the community before settling in Rome. This conclusion is exemplified by the beginning of the Baptist brush arbor at Tanyard Branch in the southern section of Hartwell in 1862, which was moved to a location near Rome on Maple Street to their permanent location in Rome on Richardson Street. Little is known about the appearance of Rome during this period. Few structures survive intact. From the remaining structures, it does appear that Rome was characterized by frame dwellings situated on open farmland. Other churches were established in the black community, and two of these religious groups were responsible for the creation of schools for the black population. One school was held in the Methodist parsonage for St. Luke's Methodist Church, while another known as the Savannah River School was established on the northeast edge of the multiple resource area and included a three-story brick classroom and dormitory building and several frame dwellings.

With the expansion of the town limits to one mile in all directions from the square in 1889, the town began to grow in all directions. Many of its new citizens were county residents relocating to be near schools. The frame residential developments which had been clustered near the town center were joined to the more isolated farms at the city's edge by infill construction. This construction resulted in the

[continued]

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received JUL 28 1986  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

Page 6

creation of fine avenues along Benson, Franklin, Howell, and Athens streets.

Following the death of J. B. Benson in 1892, the lands to the southeast were available for development. An estate sale of 33 lots appears to have been the beginning for this concentrated neighborhood. The newspaper in 1892 comments that "improvements" are expected in this section of town. The evolution of this neighborhood appears to have joined the earlier plain-styled frame residential structures near the town center with more remote frame farmsteads at the edge of the city. The former country road leading to Elberton (Benson Street) became an urban avenue of fine homes lined with large, rambling, two-story frame dwellings in Victorian-eclectic design. The houses were situated on large spacious lots with the planting of pecan trees on Peek's Nursery grounds and throughout the neighborhood. As the neighborhood grew, more modest Craftsman-style dwellings were added, and the growth resulted in the decrease of lot sizes. The neighborhood appears to have been Hartwell's most prominent, including residents of statewide importance such as legislators and judges. Howell Street and sections of Franklin to the north appear to have developed with similar style houses to Benson Street. In this west section of the city, lot sizes were more uniform since this area had been a part of the original town plan. Athens Street developed as an expansion of the growth on Howell on former estate lands of F. B. Hodges and Townsend. The neighborhood was a blend of Victorian and later Craftsman-style homes on spacious lots. This area was also a connection between the city and the county and was referred to as Hartwell's "western suburbs." Franklin Street, to the west of the city, appears to have developed around the turn of the century on former farmland. It was the last tract to be converted to residential use in close proximity to the downtown area. Houses in this area began as Victorian Eclectic homes sharing qualities with Benson and Howell. In the early 1900s, the former spacious lots were divided for Bungalow-type dwellings.

The Temple family, a family of builders in Hartwell, played a major role in this period of rapid residential development of the 1890s-1925. John Roland Temple (1849-1918) established a sawmill and became a designer and builder of houses. His son, John William (Will) Temple (1869-1958), and, in turn, Will's seven sons were all involved in the family's design, building, and building-supplies business that enormously influenced Hartwell's historic built environment. Many of the Victorian Eclectic and Craftsman-style houses in Hartwell were built by the Temples, and many other Victorian houses were "modernized" by the Temples with up-to-date Craftsman-style porches and other exterior detailing. Although the majority of their historic work appears to have been done by 1925, the family continued to be very active in the building business in Hartwell into the 1950s. Luther Temple, one of two sons of Will professionally trained as an architect, designed the 1930 A. M. Best House and the 1939 school gymnasium.

The 1890s was the beginning for Hartwell's mill community. The cotton mill, which was completed in 1894, was described in the Hartwell Sun as "assuming huge proportions and giving that end of town a 'business look.'" An 1894 newspaper notation refers to

[continued]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received JUL 28 1986  
date entered

Continuation sheet      Significance      Item number 8      Page 7

this section as "milltown," which implies that the residential construction had also been started. The appearance of this area was of a large brick industrial structure situated on a hill with the modest mill cottages sited on sloping land below the mill. The one-story frame dwellings with front and rear porches were sited at uniform setbacks lining former country roads. The mill village was separated from the Benson Street neighborhood by a stream. Later, brick dwellings were added to the village, and a frame church and schoolhouse were situated at the bottom of the hill.

All of the commercial, residential, and industrial growth of this period was complemented by numerous public improvements. The loss of the county courthouse in 1900 by fire resulted in the construction of a new edifice in 1901. This two-story brick structure of Romanesque design by a prominent Atlanta architect, J. W. Golucke, became a major focal point on the square and was encircled by elms and water oaks. (This building was also destroyed by fire.) A new county jail, also of brick, was built to the northwest of the downtown area in the 1890s in a location between commercial and residential areas. In 1901, legislation provided for a water-and-sewer system and electric streetlights. The public school system was established in 1906, and, in 1923, street paving was begun. The 1920s saw the beginning of the end to the area's prosperity as a cotton center. The community population reached a high point in 1920 with 2,323 inhabitants.

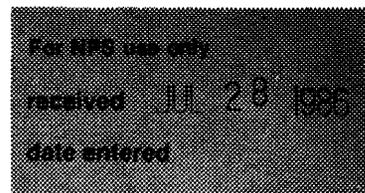
Period 4. (1925-1941) This period can be described as the depression era in Hartwell's history, during which very little new construction occurred. The spread of the boll weevil, a severe drought in 1925, and competitive cotton markets in other parts of the United States signaled an end to the cotton economy. Statistics showing the production of cotton from 14,845 bales from Hart County in 1924 to 7,391 bales in 1925 and 7,351 bales in 1926 illustrate the local impact. The city also lost 275 citizens between 1920 and 1930, which was the first decrease in population in the history of the town. Migration of blacks to northern cities began. During this period, small land holdings gave way to larger ones, tenancy all but ended, and crop diversification began. In some instances, part-time farming was carried out as a transition to industrial jobs. The federal government created programs to stimulate the depressed economy. A seed loan program was established to help the farmer, and the Work Project's Administration (WPA) helped put people to work. The WPA resulted in the construction of the school gymnasium, a large brick building, and a brick community house of domestic design blending with its residential neighborhood. The earlier church-sponsored schools in Rome were consolidated to form the Hartwell Training School, which was constructed on former farmland. A frame dwelling was built to house the rural students who came to the school following elementary training at county schools. This practice was identical to the educational system for whites which provided high school training in the city.

Period 5. (1941-ca. 1980) After a complete building hiatus during World War II, new construction boomed during the late 1940s and 1950s. The economy both locally

[continued]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet    Significance    Item number 8    Page 8

and nationally experienced a great diversification and upswing. Agricultural land was decreased with the inundation of Lake Hartwell in the early 1960s, so the economy evolved to more of an industrial base. An industrial park outside the resource area was built, and the former rail line which served passenger and cargo needs became exclusively cargo. Several new industries relocated to Hartwell, and Hart County and increased the number of industrial jobs. The town square evolved to include commercial dwellings on its west and north side. The 1901 courthouse was lost to fire during this period and was replaced with a one-story stucco structure, although the courthouse square with its early 20th-century landscaping remained. A few outlying commercial areas have developed during this period along major roads.

The black and white schools were consolidated into one system. The old Hartwell High School became Hartwell Elementary School, and the former training school, which was housed in a 1950s structure, became the Hart County Junior High School. A new high school was built in the 1960s in the southeast section of the resource area as the city and county high school.

The development of residential subdivisions in the outlying areas of Hartwell began in the late 1940s and 1950s and has continued until today. Many of these subdivisions, typically consisting of brick ranch houses, have been incorporated into the city by annexation. Within the intown residential areas designated as historic districts, there has been relatively little new construction with the exception of a few modest wood-framed houses that were built in the side yards of some of the large Victorian houses. Only in Rome, the black neighborhood, has a non-historic subdivision been built in a historic area.

Period 6. (ca. 1980-present) The last five years in Hartwell have been characterized by a growing awareness of historic preservation values. This awareness and interest is reflected by the local effort to do the research necessary for the multiple resource nomination, by the development of a downtown revitalization plan, and by a grant obtained from the State Historic Preservation Office to prepare design guidelines for the development of the city's Depot Street area in a sensitive manner.

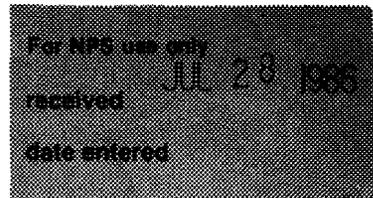
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Community Planning and Development. The Hartwell multiple resource area documents the growth and development of Hartwell from its establishment in 1854 through its years of greatest growth around the turn of the century and up to the present. Its original plan and pattern of development provide an excellent example of how county seats in northeast Georgia were planned and developed. Hartwell's central location in Hart County, the selection of a high point of ground for the courthouse square, the gridiron plan with the courthouse square as its focal point, and the organization of original town lots with the smallest lots clustered around the square and the largest on the town periphery are all typical 19th-century Georgia planning

[continued]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet    Significance    Item number 8    Page 9

features found in towns laid out as county seats.

The later development of the town is manifested by the steady growth of a commercial area clustered around the courthouse square, the arrival of the railroad, and the subsequent development of an associated warehouse district along Depot Street, the incremental development of late 19th- and early 20th-century residential areas away from the center of town, and the construction of a mill and adjoining mill village. These developmental catalysts, such as the railroad and the mill, and commercial and residential growth patterns, document typical late 19th- and early 20th-century patterns of development in small northeast Georgia towns.

Politics and Government. The Hartwell multiple resource area illustrates the role politics and government played in the creation of many of Georgia's cities. Hartwell was incorporated in 1856, but development began as early as 1854, just after the creation of Hart County. The naming of the central spot in the new county as the site for the county seat prompted the development of Hartwell. The city has been the site for such public structures as county courthouses, county jails, and a county farm. A historic county jail survives to document one of the many services provided by the government; the historic landscaped county courthouse square also documents the presence of county government in the community. Hartwell is representative of many Georgia communities whose reason for creation and subsequent development is based on its original designation as a county seat.

Transportation. The Hartwell multiple resource area illustrates how modes of transportation have influenced the development of communities in Georgia. The naming of some of the original main streets in town (Franklin, Elbert, and Carolina streets leading respectively to Franklin County, Elbert County, and South Carolina) indicates the importance of road transportation to nearby settlements in the community's early history. In later years, these main routes in and out of town became important avenues along which much historic residential development occurred. The railroad, which opened in 1879, was the critical catalyst for town development. Its terminus just south of the original town center prompted development of this area, known appropriately as Depot Street. Development on Depot Street, which consisted of wholesale and industrial businesses, expanded to join the original town center, and today these areas comprise the historic commercial district. The multiple resource area also illustrates changes in transportation history from wagons to automobiles. Several of the brick buildings in the town center reflect their original use as livery stables with wide arched doorways. There is also one historic service station, which reflects the rise of the automobile in the early 20th century.

Commerce. The Hartwell multiple resource area is significant in terms of commerce because its downtown area has served as the commercial center for the county since its creation in 1854; it remains a viable business district into the present. Retail, wholesale, and industrial uses, serving both domestic and agricultural needs,

[continued]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet    Significance    Item number 8    Page 10

were historically provided in the downtown area. Banks, stores, livery stables, business offices, public buildings, agricultural buyers, suppliers, and industries, and cotton warehouses predominated. These activities housed originally in frame structures have evolved to occupy the wealth of one- and two-story brick buildings found in the commercial center today.

Industry. The Hartwell multiple resource area is significant in terms of industry because the town center contains several early industries, and the surviving mill village documents the town's most important historic industry, the Witham Cotton Mills. These industries, which were all cotton-related, reflect the agricultural economy of the area and show how the late 19th-century "New South" philosophy affected small towns in Georgia. These industries illustrate how local business leaders attempted to benefit by providing a local industrial use for the area's agricultural products. These industries strengthened the commercial role of this county-seat community.

Agriculture. The Hartwell multiple resource area is historically important as the agricultural center of the surrounding countryside. With the establishment of the railroad in the late 1800s, the use of wagons and pole boats on the Savannah River for the shipping of agricultural products ended. Depot Street in the town center became the area's "cotton yard," and cotton-related industries and businesses evolved. The resource area also contains a sampling of small city farmsteads and represents the small-scale production of crops. These farmsteads also illustrate the twin vocations of many of Hartwell's citizens who operated farms while owning and managing businesses in town. There are also several residences in the resource area which housed farmers who worked large tracts in the county.

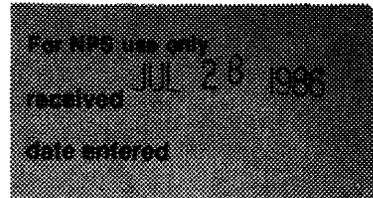
Education. The Hartwell multiple resource area is significant in terms of education for the presence of two historic school buildings that document the role of education for white children in Hartwell. The 1934 Hartwell Elementary School (until 1956, the Hartwell City School serving all grades) and the 1939 gymnasium are the last remaining historic school structures in Hartwell. They are located on the site which, since 1888, has served as the location of Hartwell's school facilities for white children. Unfortunately, all historic school buildings associated with Hartwell's black community have been demolished.

Architecture. The Hartwell multiple resource area is architecturally significant for its wide variety of building types, styles, materials, and construction techniques which are typical of Georgia's small towns of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Types of buildings in the resource area include commercial, residential, and institutional structures—nearly the full range of building types found in small Georgia communities. Styles represented include the Greek Revival, Victorian Eclectic (including buildings with Queen Anne and Gothic Revival detailing), Neoclassical, Craftsman/Bungalow, Early 20th Century Commercial, and English Cottage—the

[continued]

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet    Significance    Item number 8    Page 11

styles found most frequently in small-town Georgia buildings dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Most of these designs are vernacular or small-town interpretations of prevailing national styles. A wide variety of characteristic historic building materials is found in the multiple resource area; these building materials include wood, brick, stone, cast iron, pressed metal, plate glass, and plaster. Construction techniques are limited to the usual wood-frame and loadbearing brick masonry. The dominant architectural quality of the multiple resource area is that of the Victorian Eclectic style, reflecting the prevailing style during Hartwell's major period of growth.

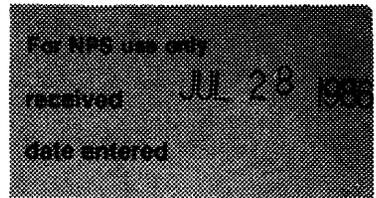
Of great significance in Hartwell's architectural history is the contribution to the town's built environment made by three generations of a family of builders and building-supplies dealers--the Temple family. Over a period of 50 years, from the 1890s to 1940, a great many of the town's residences were either built and/or modernized in the Victorian Eclectic style and later the Craftsman/Bungalow style by John Roland Temple, his son, Will Temple, or one of Will's sons. In addition, Leila Ross Wilburn, a noted architect from Atlanta, is credited with the design of at least two of the houses built by the Temples.

Landscape Architecture. The Hartwell multiple resource area is significant because the historic landscape features create a distinct community character and because landscape architectural considerations were used in the original layout of the town and in the siting of later buildings. The public square, which was planned as the major focal point of the original town plan, was situated at a high point in the proposed town location. This siting allowed the town center and early residential neighborhoods to develop on a high plateau. The public square retains its characteristic historic qualities through the presence of turn-of-the-century elm trees and water oaks. Landscape features of the residential neighborhoods include informally landscaped yards which create a park-like impression along major streets and are typical of turn-of-the-century landscape design. Groves of historic pecan trees throughout the multiple resource area, especially the concentration of pecan trees on the former Peek Nursery grounds on Benson Street, are a unifying element in the entire resource area.

Social History. In terms of social history, the Hartwell multiple resource area is significant for its associations with a wide spectrum of Hartwell's citizens, both black and white, who individually and collectively contributed to the community's history. Mayors, local businessmen, doctors, teachers, farmers, and builders are among the prominent local individuals who lived in historic houses in the residential districts or in individually listed houses. In addition, the working-class people who lived in the mill village and some of the smaller houses in the other districts together helped to give Hartwell its historic character.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9

Page 2

Baker, John William. The History of Hart County. Montgomery, Ala.: Herff Jones Year-books, 1933, 1961.

Georgia Mountains Area Planning and Development Commission. Hartwell Community Sketch Plan, 1973.

"Historical Sketch of Hartwell and Hart County," the Hartwell Sun (Trade and Illustrated Issue), September 19, 1902.

The History Group. Historical Investigations of the Richard B. Russell Multiple Resource Area. Atlanta, Ga.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1981.

Jaeger, Dale. "Historic Resources of Hartwell, Georgia: Multiple Resource Information Form," 1983. On file at Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta.

Various articles in the Hartwell Sun.

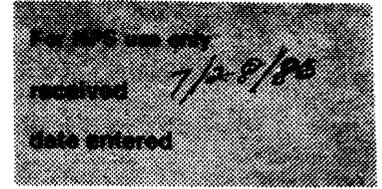
Various courthouse records (deeds, wills, Superior Court minutes) in the Hart County Courthouse, Hartwell, Georgia.

Interviews with Harold Thornton, Hartwell, Georgia, 1983; Madora Walker, Hartwell, Georgia, 1983.

Research assistance provided by Mrs. Curran Cashion, Hartwell, Georgia.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 4

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Hartwell MRA  
State Hart County, GEORGIA

cover A Schlaegel 9/11/86

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Benson Street--Forest Avenue Residential Historic District

for Keeper  
Attest

Melores Byrum 9/11/86

2. Franklin Street--College Avenue Residential Historic District

Substantive Review  
Keeper  
Attest

A Schlaegel 9/11/86

3. Hartwell Commercial Historic District

Substantive Review  
Keeper  
Attest

A Schlaegel 9/11/86

4. Withman Cotton Mills Village Historic District

Entered in the National Register  
for Keeper  
Attest

Melores Byrum 9/11/86

5. Adams--Matheson House

Substantive Review  
Keeper  
Attest

Melores Byrum 9/11/86

6. Best, Allie M., House

Substantive Review  
Keeper  
Attest

A Schlaegel 9/11/86

7. Candler--Linder House

Entered in the National Register  
for Keeper  
Attest

Melores Byrum 9/11/86

8. Fortson, H.E., House

Entered in the National Register  
for Keeper  
Attest

Melores Byrum 9/11/86

9. Franklin Light and Power Company Steam Generating Station

Entered in the National Register  
for Keeper  
Attest

Melores Byrum 9/11/86

10. Gulley--Vickery--Blackwell House

for Keeper  
Attest

Melores Byrum 9/11/86

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 4

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Hartwell MRA  
State Hart County, GEORGIA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Hartwell City School

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

12. Hartwell Methodist Episcopal  
Church, South

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

13. Horton--Vickery House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

14. Jones, J. Pearl, House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

15. Kendrick--Matheson House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

16. Kidd, Charles I., House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

17. Linder, Roscoe Conklin, House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

18. McCurry--Kidd House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

19. McMullan--Vickery Farm

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

20. Meredith, Dr. Owen, House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byers* 9/11/86

Attest

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received 7/28/86  
date entered \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 3 of 4

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Hartwell MRA  
State Hart County, GEORGIA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Saul, Meyer, House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

22. Morrison, Jackson, House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

23. Pure Oil Service Station

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

24. Satterfield, Emory Edward,  
House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

25. Skelton, Alexander Stephens,  
House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Ann Schlegel 9/11/86

Attest

26. Teasley--Holland House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

27. Teasley, Ralph, House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

28. Teasley, Thomas William,  
House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

29. Temple-Skelton House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

30. Temple, John Roland, House

Entered in the  
National Register

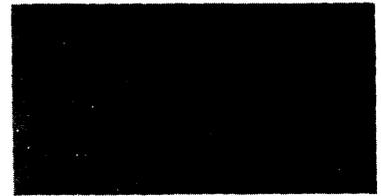
*for*  
Keeper

Melvin Byers 9/11/86

Attest

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 4 of 4

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Hartwell MRA  
State Hart County, GEORGIA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Underwood, John, House

Entered in the  
National Register

*for*  
Keeper

*Delores Byer 8/11/86*

Attest

32.

Keeper

Attest

33.

Keeper

Attest

34.

Keeper

Attest

35.

Keeper

Attest

36.

Keeper

Attest

37.

Keeper

Attest

38.

Keeper

Attest

39.

Keeper

Attest

40.

Keeper

Attest