

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fort Johnston

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Moore Street

not for publication

city, town Southport,

vicinity

state North Carolina code 37

county Brunswick

code 019

zip code 28461

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

_____ buildings

_____ sites

_____ structures

_____ objects

_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Southport Historic District

Number of contributing resources previously

listed in the National Register _____

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Defense
Military facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Defense
Military facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Federal (?)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, English garden wall bond
walls Brick
roof Asbestos shingle
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Fort Johnston National Register Historic Site is located in Southport, North Carolina on a 4.78 acre tract of land which is under the jurisdiction of MOTSU. It is used for family housing by the Army and includes the Garrison house (ca 1800), two duplex brick apartments (mid 20th century), a USO building (ca 1940), two Historic Monuments and a tennis court. The site was originally nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. It also became part of the larger Southport National Register Historic District when the latter was established in 1980. The 1974 registration form was re-written to incorporate the additional information provided here. It is also necessary to call attention to the potential for the presence of buried archeological remains associated with the fort but not considered in the 1974 site nomination nor on the 1980 Southport Historic District NR form.

The two 20th century apartments and the USO building are listed as non-contributing elements to the Southport Historic District. The apartments are currently used by the Army for family housing and the USO building is leased by the Southport Lions Club. The two historic monuments on the property are located along Bay Street facing the Cape Fear River. One of these was erected in 1910 by the North Carolina Society of Colonial Dames of America in memory of military action in 1776. The other monument was dedicated in 1938 in memory of action in 1812 and was erected by the Society of United States Daughters of 1812. Both attest to the historical significance of the site.

The Garrison house is the only standing structure remaining from Fort and dates to the Federal period.

The Garrison house currently serves as housing for the MOTSU Commander. It was constructed ca 1804-1809 out of brick and includes a two story three-bay central block flanked on either side by single story wings. The overall dimensions are 103 ft by 22 ft. Originally, the entrance consisted of a two tiered portico which faced the Cape Fear River to the southeast. Eight fireplaces fed into four interior chimneys, four located in the main block and two each in the two wings. The foundation is constructed of red brick in English garden bond and a denticulated brick cornice was built into the upper sections of the exterior walls.

In 1986, a study was conducted of the Garrison House which detailed the following modifications to the building (Mariani and Associates 1986):

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1

Description (cont'd)

The building was significantly modified during 1950's when it was renovated. Changes to the original design include the re-framing of the roof over the main block which has altered the roof angle slightly. Asbestos roof shingles replaced a standing seam metal roof. The earlier entrance portico was replaced with a two-story pedimented portico supported by four square columns. A balcony with a metal railing was also added. The windows and doors were substantially altered, the original segmented arches were removed and patched with orange brick. The foundation and exterior brick has been extensively sand-blasted increasing the porosity of the brick and accelerating deterioration. The mortar has been repointed with various modern materials. Four chimneys were demolished and replaced with simplified chimney stacks. The chimneys on the wings were replaced with smaller ones and the corbelled caps were replaced with simple masonry caps of rowlock coursing. The denticulated brick cornice has been partially covered with rain gutter and eave. On the interior, all structures and finishes of the main block and the west wing were demolished and replaced with new materials utilizing a new floor plan. The east wing retains two original fireplaces and a door and casing.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Military
Archeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal

Period of Significance

Colonial
Revolutionary
Civil War

Significant Dates

1745-1775
1794-1809
1861-1865

Cultural Affiliation

Euro-American

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

When the original National Register nomination form was completed in 1974, the historic significance of the Garrison House was stressed over its' architectural significance. The site meets the requirements for eligibility under criteria A, that is, the site is associated with events of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of local and national history. This point remains unchanged, however to date, the archeological significance of Fort Johnston has not been considered. Archeological remains, if present, would provide substantial contributing elements to the present National Register site and would add to its significance under criteria D which states that the site is likely to yield (archeological) information important in history.

Fort Johnston was the first fort authorized in North Carolina and was built to protect the early British colonies from Spanish and French attack. The fort went through two major constructions (Colonial and post-Revolutionary) and perhaps as many as six discrete occupation periods. The town of Smithville (now known as Southport) developed around the fort shortly after the Revolution and the history of the town is directly tied to the presence of the fort. The associated events of the two wars and the importance of the fort to local historical development increase the significance of the site.

The first structure constructed at the site was built ca 1750 by the British. The Fort housed North Carolina's Last English Governor and was raised by the Patriots on 1775.

In 1794, the Fort was rebuilt on the same site by order of the U.S. War Department. Between 1794 and 1809, a brick officer's quarters, barracks, a guard house, a powder magazine and a simple concrete epaulment had been constructed at the site. An account of the early fort given in 1819 describes the fort as follows:

"... a small but regular Fort of strong cement or tapia walls, with four bastians encompassed with a ditch.... a gateway in the rear, a sally port and lower tier of guns in the front. A magazine, well and barracks were also built, and about 200 acres of land condemned, or wrested from the right of a subject, for the use of the King's Fort." (1819 anonymous).

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Significance (cont'd)

The Fort was abandoned by the Federals and occupied by the Confederates in 1861. It served as Confederate headquarters during the war and was part of the extensive defense system which kept the Cape Fear River open to blockade runners.

After the war the fort was irregularly garrisoned by Army personnel until it was abandoned in 1881. In 1901 it was reactivated as the Fort Johnston Engineer Reservation. In 1955, the land was transferred to MOTSU.

Mariani and Associates (1986) determined that the recent modifications to the Garrison House have been so extensive that the structure has lost its architectural integrity. However, the site retains its significance based on its historical context. It is included as a pivotal building in the Southport Historical District. The fort played a major role in Military history and in turn was a major factor in the development of the surrounding town of Smithville (now Southport). For these reasons, the site meets the requirements for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A (USDI 1986).

In addition to the historical significance of the site, there is a strong potential for the presence of archeological remains associated with the fort. The 1974 nomination does not describe this potential and to date this aspect has been given little or no consideration. Buried archeological remains could provide a valuable source of data not only related to the Garrison House but to other components of the fort as well. The 4.78 acre lot contains large open areas that have apparently not been disturbed by modern construction. The potential for buried remains associated with the 18th and 19th century forts is considered high. Foundations, wells, privies and other features can be expected, all of which can yield significant new data related to the forts history. The archeological component at the site, if present and intact, would also render the site eligible under criteria D (USDI 1986).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Ashe, Samuel

1972 Biographical History of North Carolina, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Bentley, Lt. Joseph H

1970 Fort Johnston in the History of the Lower Cape Fear. Military Ocean Terminal

Klein, Joel I., Randolph Taylor, William Gardner and Timothy Thompson

1987 Military Ocean Terminal, Sunny Point, North Carolina: Historic Preservation Plan, Ms on file, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, Wilmington, North Carolina

Lounsbury, Carl

1979 The Architecture of Southport. Southport, North Carolina. The Southport Historical Society.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 4.7 acres

UTM References not available

A
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

See continuation sheet

Latitude: 33° 55' 4"; Longitude: 78° 1' 00"

Verbal Boundary Description

The Fort Johnston National Register site boundaries North Carolina are as follows:

Beginning at a point at the southeast corner of the intersection of Davis Street and Moore Street on the inside (south edge) of Moore Street's south sidewalk;

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The present boundaries correspond to the Lot on which the Garrison House currently is situated and under jurisdiction of MOTSU. They do not include all of the area historically occupied by the Fort which was originally described as covering 200 acres. Much of this 200 acres is however apparently included in the larger Southport Historic District.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Randolph K. Taylor, Archeologist

organization Envirosphere Company

date December 15, 1987

street & number 160 Chubb Avenue

telephone 201-460-6042

city or town Lyndhurst

state New Jersey zip code 07071

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Major Bibliographical References (cont'd)

Mariani and Associates

1986 Study/Survey of Historically Significant Army Family Housing Quarters, Installation Report and Appendix. Ms. on file, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington Districk, North Carolina.

National Archives and Records Service, Record Group 92: Bound Volumes of Plans 1904-1905
National Archives and Reocrds Service, Record Group 94: Records of U.S. Army Commands

Sprunt, James

1916 Chronicles of the Lower Cape Fear, 1660-1916. Edwards and Broughton, Raleigh. North Carolina.

United States Department of Interior, National Park Service

1986 Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Form. National Register Bulletin 16.

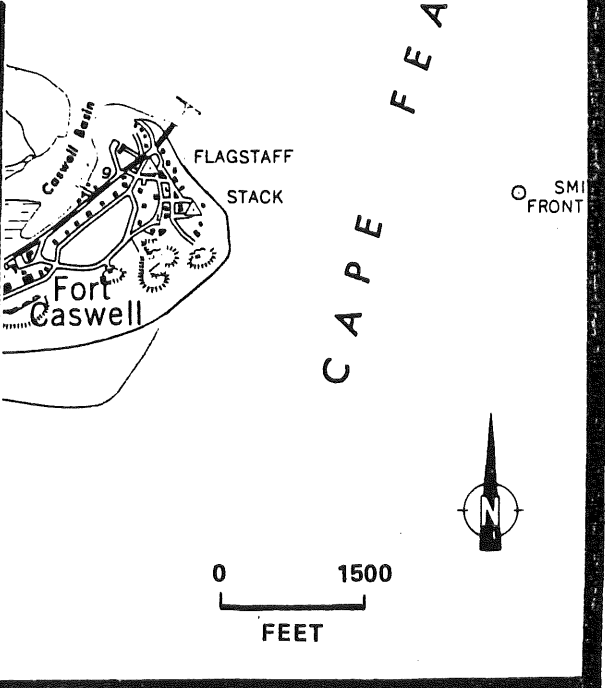
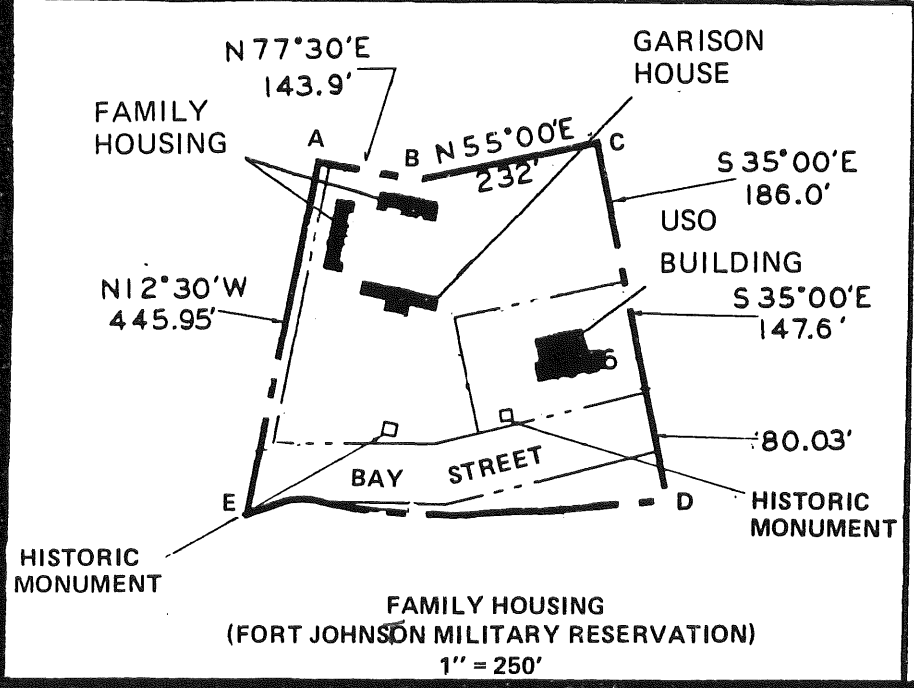
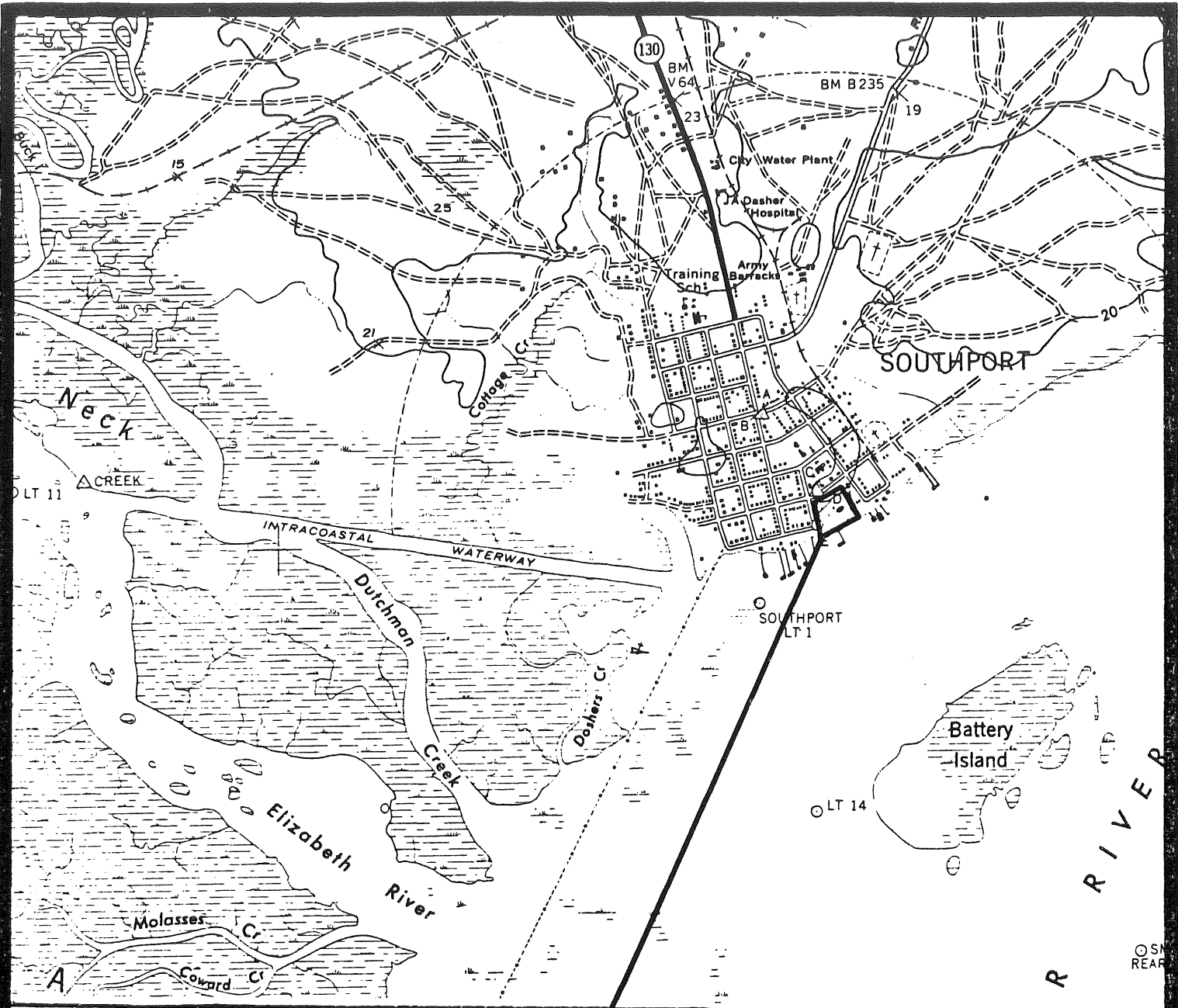
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description (cont'd)

- A-B Thence following an easterly course (N77°30'E) along the inside (south edge) of the same sidewalk for a distance of 143.9 feet;
- B-C Thence continuing along the same sidewalk along Moore Street following a north-easterly course (N55°00'E) for a distance of 232 feet;
- C-D Thence following a southerly course (S35°00'E) along the eastern edge of a gravel drive for a distance of 413 feet, more or less, crossing Bay Street to the shore of the Cape Fear River;
- D-E Thence following a westerly direction along the shore line of the Cape Fear River for a distance of 258 feet, more or less;
- E-A Thence in a northerly direction (N12°30'E), crossing Bay Street and following Davis Street for a distance of 445.95 feet to the point of beginning at the intersection of Davis Street and Moore Street.





0 11
FORT JOHNSTON
BUILT 1749-54 BURNED
BY BRITISH 1775. REBUILT
BY U.S. GOVERNMENT 1784-
1804. TODAY THE OFFICERS'
QUARTERS REMAIN.