

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DEC 13 1979

DATE ENTERED

OCT 15 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES - COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Old Mastic House
AND/OR COMMON

(William Floyd Estate)

William Floyd Estate

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

20 Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Mastic Beach

STATE

New York

VICINITY OF
CODE

36

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

COUNTY

Suffolk

CODE

103

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, North Atlantic Region

STREET & NUMBER

15 State Street

CITY, TOWN

Boston, Mass.

VICINITY OF

STATE

Mass.

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Suffolk County

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Riverhead

STATE

New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Mastic Acres Unit One, Peter J. Weele, Surveyor

DATE

7/31/75

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Office of the Clerk of Suffolk County

CITY, TOWN

Riverhead

STATE

New York

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Originally consisting of thousands of acres, the William Floyd Estate is located on Mastic Neck (Brookhaven Town), the largest of six large necks of land that form the peninsula of Mastic in southeast Long Island, New York. The estate, a detached unit of Fire Island NS, presently consists of 611 acres of land with a two-story frame structure and ten outbuildings. Some 200 acres bordering Moriches Bay are in salt marsh, the remainder is in open fields and second growth timber. The house, built in the late 1720's, is the birthplace of General William Floyd (1734-1821), a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and his descendants.

"Old Mastic," as the house was called by the family, stands nearly a mile back from Narrow Bay and faces south across a broad, open expanse of lawn toward the bay, Fire Island and the Atlantic. A large, open "pathway" leads from it to open water. In the other directions, randomly placed bushes and trees of various sizes surround the house.

The first Floyds settled on Long Island in the 1650's and owned land on Mastic Neck about 1674. A deed hanging on the wall in the Floyd House indicates that the property on which it stands was acquired by the Floyd family in 1718. Many of the land features evident then are still found today. Bordering the shoreline were miles of salt meadow cut here and there by creeks rising as fresh springs on higher ground, and broadening out as they reached the bay to receive the backwash from its brackish waters. Back of the salt meadow was found the fertile parts of the estate, and here the Floyds cleared the land and separated different lots for cultivation and pastures. To the north stretched acres of woodland which they found fit only for cordwood and timber. A very isolated area during colonial times, Mastic until recently remained distant from the nearest highway and was approachable only from the north by dirt roads winding through old forests. A section of the South Country Road (Route 27), established ca. 1733, ran through the northern part of the Floyd property. From it several dirt roads led south to Mastic land. However, it is not possible to determine which Mastic roads used today follow eighteenth century alignments. A system of dirt roads leading to the fields and pastures provided communication between the different parts of the estate. According to tradition, existing paths, roads and trails in the neighborhood of the house, including the main entrance road, follow more or less late eighteenth and early nineteenth century alignments.

One of the most striking features of the Mastic estate today is the extensive physical remnants of hedges and ditches that mark the original boundaries of the fields; most fields bear their old distinctive names by which they have been known since the place was first cultivated. Some farm fences on Long Island were made of timber, but the use of ditches and hedges as fencing was very common, especially at the Floyd estate.

Both the main farm roads and the fields and pastures, together with the extent of the forest, are clearly shown in the survey map of 1911. This is an excellent base map that illustrates the continuity of land use by different generations of the Floyd family.

The William Floyd House today is a 25-room frame structure built in several stages that span two-and-a-half centuries. Thus, the building is a mixture of architectural styles from Georgian to Colonial Revival characteristic of various periods of American history. It is clapboarded, with occasional shingling, and painted white.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1724 BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Floyd Estate lies primarily in its long association (1734-1801) with General William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Because the house has remained in one family for 250 years, many things have survived that normally would have disappeared. Clear evidence of family use remains in many places.

William Floyd was born in "Old Mastic" on December 17, 1734. The land on which the house stands is part of a tract purchased from the Indians in 1692 and sold to the first Floyd in 1718. It descended to Nicoll Floyd, a wealthy landowner of Welsh ancestry and father of William, who built the oldest part of the present house in the 1720's. William's education apparently consisted only of informal instruction at home.

In 1755, William inherited his father's estate and continued developing it quietly. By the end of the decade he had become a leading citizen within local landed circles. As a citizen of Brookhaven, he was elected Town Trustee in 1769, 1770 and 1771, and became a Colonel in the Suffolk County militia. Meanwhile, he served a short term in the Provincial Assembly of New York and then became a delegate to the First Continental Congress at Philadelphia in 1774. In the following year he was again elected a delegate to the Continental Congress and continued as a member until after that body adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 7, 1776.

As a member of the New York delegation, William served in a liaison capacity, keeping the Provincial Congress of New York informed about reconciliation, loyalists, Indian affairs, paper money, local military defense, aid to the Continental Army, and the money problems involved in military provisioning. He returned to Congress in the period 1779-89.

When the British made their first descent on Long Island, he headed a body of militia and drove them off. When the British occupied Long Island in 1776, his family had to flee northward across the sound and took refuge in Middletown, Connecticut. His wife died there in 1781. To make matters worse, the British used his home at Mastic for a barracks, and Loyalists plundered his lands and belongings. For seven years he neither saw his property, nor derived any benefit from it. When he brought his children back in 1783, he found the fields and timber stripped, the fences destroyed, and the house damaged.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The William Floyd Papers, deposited at Federal Hill NM; Cornelia Floyd Nichols, "Letters to my Great-great-Granddaughter (1934-1940)" and "As Told by the Attic Letters," 1952, typewritten reports; Ricardo Torres-Reyes, The William Floyd Estate...NPS, 1973

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 611

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	68,232,0	4,511,590,0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	
C	18	68,550,0	4,511,598,0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

B	18	68,356,0	4,511,611,0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	
D	18	68,348,0	4,511,350,0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Anne Booth, Architectural Historian

7/77

ORGANIZATION

North Atlantic Region

DATE

223-3778

STREET & NUMBER

15 State Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

STATE

Mass.

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Harry W. Jones *J. P. Hollander*

TITLE

for Federal Representative NPS

DATE

11/16/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Lynn A. Beebe

DATE

October 15, 1980

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Lynn A. Beebe

DATE

10/15/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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The main block of the Floyd House, seven bays wide by three bays deep, is a large two-story-plus-attic Georgian house with one-and-a-half story service wing at the east end and two other wings, one-and-a-half and two-stories respectively, projecting to the rear or north. Architectural evidence suggests that the eastern half of the main house was built first and then enlarged to the west in one or two steps. The first section was probably built ca. 1729, the date of the marriage of Nicoll Floyd and Tabitha Smith, William's parents. It appears to have been a substantial house measuring 25' x 30' with a full second story and attic. It probably contained three rooms on each floor. Such original framing as still exists in the first section indicates strong Connecticut (i.e., New England) influence. Except for the lack of a summer beam over the present dining room, the plan is similar to two-thirds of most eighteenth century Connecticut houses. Several elements of the planning of this first section indicate that it was intended as a manor house from its conception.

Not long after the first, or east, section of the Floyd House was built, the middle portion, including the stairway and east side of the present unusually wide center hall, was added to the west. The first and second parts together made a typical New England House plan with a symmetrical five-bay front facade and formed a consistent conceptual unit.

The west section of the main block of the house appears to have been added by William Floyd not long after he returned from the Revolutionary War giving the front facade its present total of seven bays. This period of construction also included a basement excavation under both first and second portions as well as a number of interior rearrangements such as the front door, stairs and various new mantles and fireplaces.

In 1790 William carried out further extensive construction work on the house according to receipts of purchases made. In the portrait of Floyd, painted by Ralph Earle ca. 1792, the present white house is clearly shown in the background with one-and-a-half story wings painted brown at each end. It is not unlikely that the west wing had been constructed in 1790. There is no information about when and why the west wing was removed. The east wing, four bays wide and three deep, remained and later, in the mid-nineteenth century, the one-and-a-half story rear (north) extension was added to it to serve as kitchen, larder, and servants' quarters.

The two-story rear extension from the center of the main block was added ca. 1897 by John Gelston Floyd, Jr., great-grandson of William. Both this and the earlier northeast extension have had a number of later, minor additions that partially obscure their general massing.

The front (south) entrance porch on the main block was probably added during an 1855 renovation of the house. Its roof is just slightly pitched and is supported by four square wooden columns with rather crude plinths and capitals.

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The principal roofs of the Floyd House are all gabled and wood shingled. In the central block, two large rectangular brick chimneys project from the gable ridge. An older, narrower brick chimney is at the eastern end of the gable ridge of the east wing, while each of the rear extensions also has a brick chimney. There are three frame dormers with simple wood triangular pediments on the south roof plane of the east wing. The sides of these dormers are clapboarded and their gable roofs are covered with the wooden shingles with which the entire roof was covered ca. 1962. These three dormers are probably mid-nineteenth century additions, but a firm date of construction could only be ascertained by a detailed investigation of the fabric itself. The northeast kitchen extension has three frame dormers, probably recent, with low pitched roofs.

The deep projecting cornices of the main block and the wing (all with unusually long returns) are each composed of a wide plain bed mold, two-part undecorated corona, and two-part undecorated crown mold. The raking cornice of the main block is similar and the overhang is also extremely deep. The cornices are mid-nineteenth century additions. The cornices of the remaining portions of the structure--if in fact they can be referred to as cornices--are plain wooden boards.

The windows of the front (south) facade are 12/12 double-hung sash and each has a pair of wooden shutters, three-paneled on the first floor and louvered on the second. There is considerable variation in the number of lights in the windows on the other facades. Shutters, where they exist, continue to be paneled wood on the first floor and louvered on the second floor on the remaining facades.

The main block of the Floyd House is essentially central-hall in plan; this hall, however, is approximately 14' 4" wide and is, in effect, a large living room. A Dutch door, in tow halves and supported by large iron strap hinges, opens into this hall. The stair is located against the right, or east, wall. To the left of the hall is a large parlor and behind this, a smaller office. To the right of the hall is a large dining room with "gun room" and pantry behind. The dining room ceiling has exposed beams. The floor boards are of various widths. Upstairs there are seven bedrooms. The rear of the central hall opens into the two-story north extension that was probably added to the main house ca. 1897. Access to the one-and-a-half story east wing is through the front southeast dining room, and access to the north-east "old kitchen" extension is through the main block's northeast pantry.

To the north of the main house--and separated from it by the remains of a vertical board fence approximately 5' to 6' high--are the remains of an extensive manor or farm community. It is impossible to determine the exact number of outbuildings that existed during any given date of William Floyd's ownership of the estate. No doubt some buildings were moved from one site to another. However, the location of the buildings and their use during the days of Floyd were probably about the same as those of the second half of the nineteenth century. During this latter century, there were

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at least fourteen auxiliary buildings north of the house that formed a veritable settlement. Most of them were located within a board fence that bound them roughly into a circle. A gate northeast of the fence gave access to the buildings and the house. Remains of this gate are found at the present time north of the house on the main entrance road.

The outbuildings that remain are of frame construction and have shingled roofs. Siding ranges from simple flush boarding to rough clapboards. The buildings are painted red, with one exception.

The existing outbuildings are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Caretaker's Workshop | 6. Storage Crib |
| 2. Carriage House | 7. Old Shop (formerly Grain House) |
| 3. Wood Shed | 8. Barn |
| 4. Corn Crib | 9. New Barn |
| 5. Ice House | 10. Old Sheep Barn |

Existing records do not provide information about the original construction dates of these ten buildings. Nos. 2 and 3 seem to have been built after 1911¹; No. 5, added during the second half of the nineteenth century, is built on the location of an old blacksmith shop; Nos. 4 through 10 are in part original structures or at least are built on the site of original structures erected perhaps during the first half of the eighteenth century.

East of the house a trail leads to the Floyd family graveyard next to the orchard. In a corner of the orchard stands a row of simple white wooden crosses, each bearing a single name of a slave.

¹They are not shown on the Survey Map by Nicoll Floyd 2nd and W. E. Baker Jr., 1911.

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The pumphouse, about 6' x 4' x 5' with wood siding painted red, was built early in the twentieth century to contain the source of the first running water to enter the main house. It was moved several times as the location of the pump was changed. It is now just southwest of the Old Shop. A brick incinerator, about 4'x5'x3' also dates to the early twentieth century; it was rebuilt and nearly covered with cement in the 1940's. It is located northwest of the Old Shop. Both buildings reinforce the theme of continuity by helping to illustrate the evolution of utility systems.

The Sheep barn burned July, 1979.

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After the war, Floyd sat for several terms in the State senate, attended the state constitutional convention of 1801, supported the Federal Constitution, won election in 1788 as a Representative in the First Congress, served as presidential elector on four occasions, and became a major general in the New York militia. His second wife, whom he married in 1784, bore him two daughters.

About this time, Floyd acquired an interest in western lands. The year of his marriage he purchased a tract in central New York at the headwaters of the Mohawk River in the environs of present Rome; he supplemented this three years later by obtaining a State grant of more than 10,000 acres in the area. He spent most of his summers visiting and developing the acreage.

In 1803, in his late sixties, at a time when most men possess lesser ambitions, Floyd deeded his Long Island home and farm to his son Nicoll and set out with the rest of his family to make a new life on the frontier. During the first year, he built a home at present Westernville, N.Y. There he succumbed, at the age of 86 in 1821, and was buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery.

Although the General William Floyd House has few decorative details that themselves give the structure great distinction, the building as a whole has many pleasing architectural features and provides a unique visual history of the continuous development of a rural eighteenth century manor house that has remained in the possession of the original family. The additions and alterations that have been made are, in general, easily identifiable and indicate a marked respect and concern for the fabric as it existed up to that point. There were never any of the usual spatial or financial constraints in the succession of Floyd families which cause most owners to remodel in overlapping layers. Clear survivals of all periods are evident. A portion of the original shingled exterior wall survives in the attic protected for over two hundred years by the first addition. Fine hardware of all periods survives. One window of the ca. 1720 period remains and several interior doors, one of which has had only three coats of paint in two and a half centuries. Exterior wall finishes survive for most periods protected by the many additions added over them. Early wallpapers remain behind cabinets and in salvaged fragments found in the attic.

No room in the house, except two store rooms, is bare of furnishings. Among the major pieces associated with William Floyd are a table inherited from his father, his own cradle, two Windsor chairs that he probably bought while in Congress, two beds, and a sofa, writing desk, secretary, and side chairs all in the Chippendale style. The smaller pieces include two of his snuffboxes, a portable desk, a musket, a personalized winebottle, a traveling liquor cabinet, numerous pieces of household equipment and farm tools, certificates and receipts detailing his business and political affairs, and a number of books and pamphlets with his signature, including a family Bible. A portrait of Floyd, painted by Ralph Earl in 1792, belongs to the site. It is being

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001 15 30

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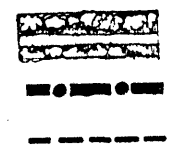
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displayed at Independence NHP in Philadelphia until the house is ready to be opened to the public. The remainder of the collection reflects the continuous occupancy of the estate by William Floyd's descendants until 1975. The furniture is of various 19th-century styles, and the furnishings reflect the evolution of family life and household economy in the 19th and 20th centuries.



HISTORIC PATHS
 ESTATE BOUNDARY
 HISTORIC CORE

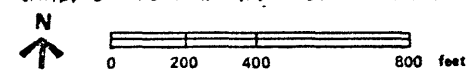


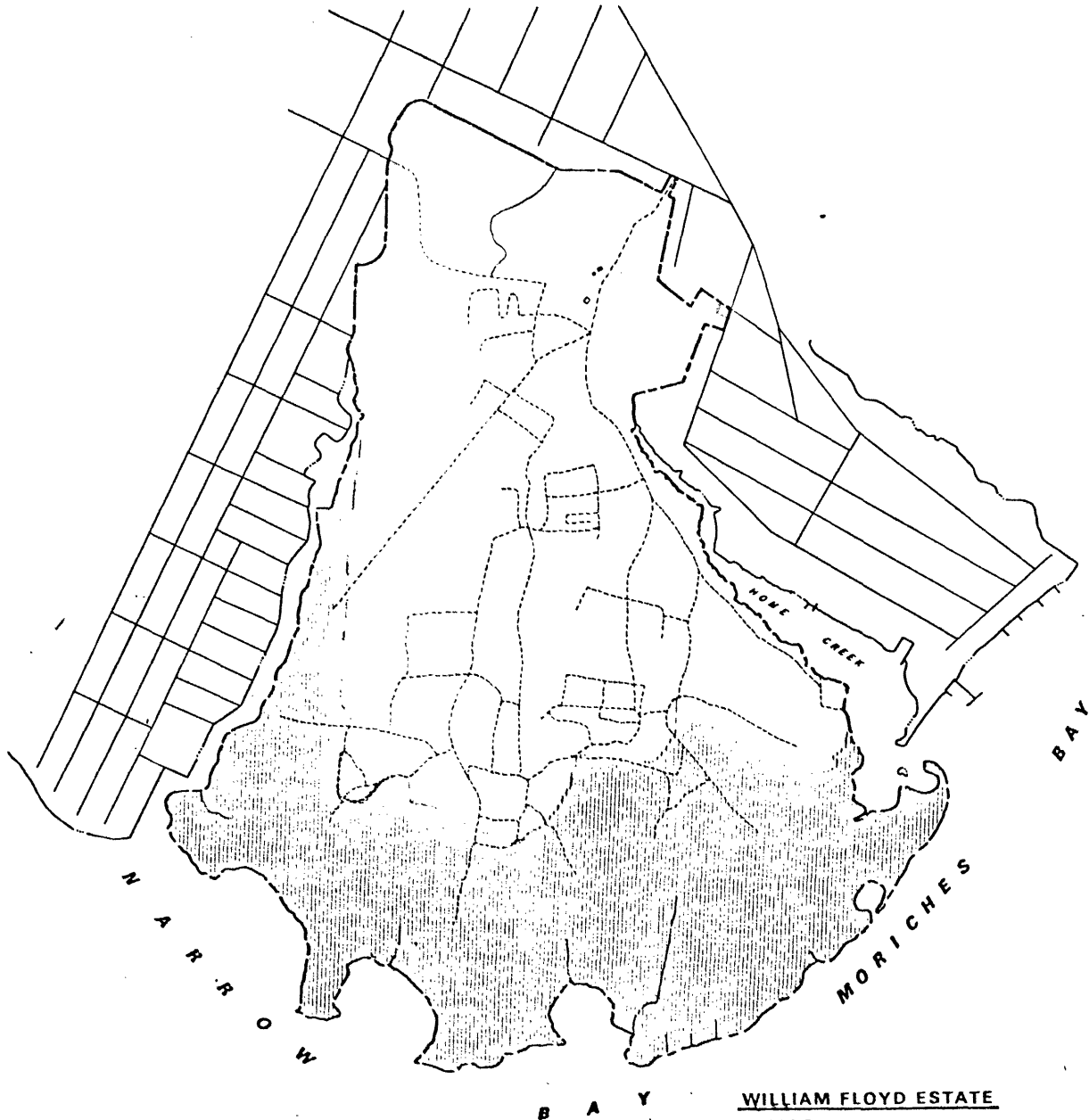
- EXISTING BUILDINGS
- 1 Caretaker's Workshop
 - 2 Carriage House
 - 3 Woodshed
 - 4 Corncrib
 - 5 Ice House
 - 6 Storage Crib
 - 7 Old Shop (formerly grain house)
 - 8 Barn
 - 9 New Barn
 - 10 Old Sheep Barn

- SITES OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS
- A Storage Crib
 - B Hog Pen
 - C Goose House
 - D Unidentified Building (ca. 1790)
 - E Old Wagon House
 - F Calf Barn
 - G Unidentified
 - H Barn Building
 - I Sheep Shearing Sheds
 - J Robinson Barn
 - K Original Horse Barn
 - L Smoke House
 - M Overseer's House

EXISTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS/SITES

WILLIAM FLOYD ESTATE
 FIRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL FIRE



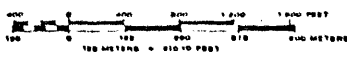


LEGEND

- CLASS I A  ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION/PRIMITIVE ZONE
- CLASS II  HISTORIC ZONE

WILLIAM FLOYD ESTATE

- USES
- HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION
 - ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (DAY USE)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Figure 4
SEGMENT 7

Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities

Fire Island National Seashore

NEW YORK

PIPER ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE
PIPE ISLAND ESTUARY

- UTM references
A 18-682320-4515900
B 18-683560-4516110
C 18-685500-4515980
D 18-683480-4513500

