

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 26 1993
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex

and or common Searcy State Hospital

2. Location

street & number Coy Smith Highway 1/2 mile W of State Hwy 43 NA not for publication

city, town X vicinity of Mount Vernon congressional district 1

state Alabama code 01 county Mobile code 097

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input 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	Public Acquisition	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Hospital

4. Owner of Property

name Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

street & number 200 Interstate Drive

city, town Montgomery NA vicinity of state Alabama

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mobile County Courthouse

street & number 109 Government Street

city, town Mobile state Alabama 36602

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic American Building Survey Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? X yes X no

date 1935 1970-present X federal X state county local

depository for survey records Library of Congress Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Washington, D.C. Montgomery state D.C. Alabama

7. 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

The Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex is located in the northeastern part of Mobile County near the present day City of Mount Vernon. The 34-building complex, which consists of 19 buildings and structures (including 2 buildings encapsulated in the c. 1920 Administration building) associated with 19th century military history and 20 buildings constructed or severely remodeled during the 20th century for the hospital, is on the south side of Coy Smith Highway just west of Highway 43. Situated at the summit of the tallest hill in the area with ravines on several sides, the site remains relatively free of encroaching structures.

The site is located at the top of a flattened and buttressed hill. The inner core of buildings arch around the parade ground with the main arsenal building at the flat end. These structures date from the 1830s except for the kitchen/mess hall which is from c. 1880. Surrounding the complex is a c. 1830-1840's brick wall about twelve feet high and a mile long. At one end the wall crosses a deep ravine which cuts into the site, resulting in the unique horseshoe shape. Between the inner core and surrounding perimeter wall, buildings of later vintage are scattered; several are located in the ravine, while others are situated along the drive that leads from the east gate to the crest of the hill. The two c. 1835 structures at the gate have been joined and incorporated into the 1901 administration building. The remaining structures within the boundaries of the nominated area line the drive from the highway to the administration building.

Mount Vernon has been in almost continuous use since 1830, except for the five years between 1895 and 1900. The buildings in the complex, therefore, comprise a variety of architectural styles of primarily three major periods: plain, simple buildings, as well as Greek Revival examples from the initial building phase (Mt. Vernon Arsenal - 1830-1840), Neo-Classical constructions from the early hospital period (Searcy Hospital - 1901-1937), and several mid- and late-20th-century buildings. Though the styles vary, the predominant building material in the complex is brick. The early buildings and structures (except the wall) have been whitewashed over the original ochre, and those from the 1930s and later remain unpainted.

The complex is composed of 37 enumerated buildings, structures and objects; 28 contribute and 9 do not. The majority of resources within the complex are enclosed within the horseshoe-shaped wall, and the others line the drive outside the east gate. The initial building period began c.1830 with most of the structures completed by 1836. During that first decade, 23 major buildings, a picket fence, the retaining wall, and the brick perimeter wall were constructed. At least 14 of the 23 buildings were brick; and of these, 12 brick buildings (including the encapsulated guardhouse and dispensary) remain. Also a small fence section and the majority of the brick perimeter and retaining walls are standing.

The second building period comprised the post-war Federal occupation period (1865-1894). Although 13 buildings were erected during this time, only one brick and five frame buildings (one heavily modified) have survived. The third building phase occurred with the change in function of the complex to an early 20th-century mental

(see continuation sheet)

8. 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 type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input 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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Racial Segregation

Specific dates c.1830–1937 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The MVA/SHC has had a long and complex history with documented uses as an 19th century arsenal (c. 1830–c.1870), a late 19th century barracks and prisoner of war camp (1873–1894) and finally as an early 20th century mental health hospital for blacks (1900–1969). The complex is significant for its associations with the earliest formal movement to produce permanent national military defense facilities; the state's earliest military operations related to the secession movement; the late 19th century social movement to repatriate, assimilate and provide humane treatment for Native American prisoners of war; the early 20th century establishment of a separate hospital facility to provide custodial care for black mental patients in Alabama; and the discovery of Italian pellagra in the United States.

CRITERION A:

MILITARY HISTORY (Period of Significance 1830–1894)

The Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex is significant for its contribution to the early settlement of Alabama through its presence as a major military supply center. Constructed in the 1830s, the arsenal served as the primary supply facility of military goods and equipment for Alabama and West Florida. Additionally, it provided an important military presence in an area relatively unpopulated by white settlers and which had been the site of considerable unrest by Native Americans less than 20 years earlier.

The complex is also significant for its associations with the state's earliest military operations related to the succession movement. On January 4, 1861, MVA and the Mobile Bay forts (Ft. Morgan and Ft. Gaines) were seized by order of Alabama Governor Andrew Barry Moore. Convinced that the state would secede, Moore explained to President Buchanan that "he seized the forts before the Federal government prepared to hold them, in order that hostilities might be avoided and secession accomplished in peace." Mt. Vernon was officially declared a Confederate arsenal by an act authorizing the Ordinance Bureau on March 2, 1862 and retained Confederate occupation until the end of the war in 1865.

SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN (Period of Significance 1887–94)

The complex is significant for its associations with the late 19th century social movement to reform and provide humane treatment for Native Americans. During the late 19th century MVA was abandoned as an arsenal and became the barracks headquarters for the 2nd Regiment of Infantry. In this its last function as a federal garrison, the MVA barracks became the administering headquarters for Apache Village (1887–1894). Outraged by reports of deception by the War Department during the peace treaty

(see continuation sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 36

Quadrangle name Mount Vernon, AL

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	4	0	2	2	7	0	3	4	3	9	6	3	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

1	6	4	0	2	2	7	0	3	4	3	9	5	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

1	6	4	0	2	0	0	0	3	4	3	9	5	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

1	6	4	0	1	9	7	0	3	4	3	9	5	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

1	6	4	0	1	9	7	0	3	4	3	9	4	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

1	6	4	0	1	8	8	0	3	4	3	9	3	8	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

1	6	4	0	1	7	4	0	3	4	3	9	4	8	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

1	6	4	0	1	6	9	0	3	4	3	9	5	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

 continued

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

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

state	NA	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Devereaux Bemis, Architectural Historian

organization Mobile Historic Development Commission date October 26, 1987

street & number P. O. Box 1827 telephone 205 438-7281

city or town Mobile state Alabama 36633

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.

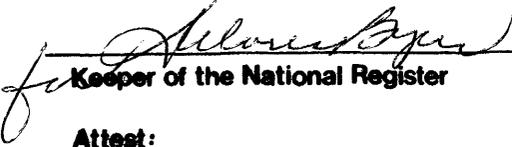
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date April 20, 1988

For NPS use only

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


Keeper of the National Register

date 5-26-88

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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health hospital medical facility. This first hospital building period dates from 1901 to 1937. During this phase approximately 14 masonry and frame buildings were constructed within the perimeter wall and three frame residences were built outside the wall. In addition, modifications were made to a number of buildings in order to utilize the complex for its new role. In all, 11 structures remain which can be attributed to this period. The fourth building period dates from 1937 to the present: seven major structures are from this era.

The complex and its buildings are in their original locations and have retained their rural setting. The horseshoe-shaped plan is still evident. Most of the later buildings either sit back from the inner circle of 1830s structures, or have been situated along the entrance drive of the complex, thereby creating a processional feeling to the entrance.

Although later buildings have been added to the complex their placement generally frame the entrance way to the complex or, they have been situated outside of the inner circle of buildings in the complex. Further, the addition of these buildings has gained significance as early 20th-century building concepts employed to facilitate the changing needs of the complex, and their addition is intimately associated with the continuing historical development of the resource.

Of the 14 arsenals authorized by Congress in 1828, only the Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex and the Kennebec Arsenal in Maine have survived as complexes because they were transferred to and remained the property of single owners. All other arsenals documented from that period have either been destroyed or severely compromised or encroached upon.

A comparative study has yielded evidence indicating that the typical arsenal plan of the period consisted of a parade ground surrounded by the major structures of the complex with the arsenal building serving as the focus. This type plan is also evident at other early arsenals/armories which are contemporaries of Mount Vernon and retain a substantial number of early 19th century buildings, such as the one at Springfield, MA, and as well at the Kennebec Arsenal in ME and the recently closed Frankford Arsenal in PA. While the Benicia Arsenal in California and the San Antonio Arsenal in Texas have several 1850s buildings, most of the buildings in these complexes date from the 1870's and 1880's.

The 1895 acquisition of the Mount Vernon Barracks by the State of Alabama required alternative strategies to adapt it for reuse as a mental health hospital. The larger structures were easily converted to the open plan used in mental health facilities throughout the country during the period. With an appropriation of only \$25,000, the complex was renovated over a period of two years. The first patients and staff occupied Mount Vernon in 1902.

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A detailed analysis of the architectural evolution of the complex buildings and structures appears in the Appendix to the Historical Summary.

INVENTORY

Contributing:

1. Arsenal: c. 1835; located at the flat end of the parade ground. Three stories; brick; low hip roof, five-story crenellated tower on east side; nine bay west; east had porches added in the 1870s on second and third floors, partially infilled by 1917, and presently enclosed on all three floors, an entrance stair tower has also been added; the south side is one bay and the north is three bays; the modifications are of such materials and workmanship that make them obvious and of minimum impact. Built as arsenal; used as barracks (1865-1895); converted to dormitory wards (1901-present).
2. Commanding Officer's Quarters: c. 1835; located on the parade ground toward south gate. Two stories, brick, hip roof, four bays and a two-story enclosed front porch. Stair tower added to west and two-story addition to east in 1970s roughly provide the structure with the original T-shape form c. 1835. Built as commanding officer's quarters; converted to hospital wards (1900); presently serves as patients' library.
3. Carpenter Shop: c. 1835; at the west side of the parade ground. One story, stuccoed brick, hip roof, six bays and shed roofed wraparound porch (c. 1870). 1920s rubble concrete addition off rear. Built as carpenter shop; converted to officer's quarters (1865-1895); served as wards post-1900. Now occupied by Rehabilitation Services as the work activity center.
4. Blacksmith Shop: c. 1835; located at the parade ground to the rear of the complex. One-story, brick, hip roof, six bays (one enclosed), shed porch (c. 1870) enclosed at either end c. 1960 and a rear addition. Designed as blacksmith shop; changed to officer's quarters (1865-1895); used originally by hospital as the operating building; now used by the rehabilitation, evaluation and assessment program.
5. Barracks: c. 1835; situated at the back of the parade ground. Two-story, brick, hip roof, five bays and a semi-hexagonal stair tower at the rear; recessed porch enclosed on second floor in the 1960s. Served as enlisted men's barracks, converted to officer's quarters (1865-1895), occupied by the white nurses (post-1900). Now used for staff development activities.

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6. Armourer's Shop: c. 1835; at the parade ground toward the west gate; one-story; brick hip roof; five bays; wraparound porch (1870s) enclosed on west end (1950s); rear addition 1920s; built as shop for armourers' changed to saddler's shop and served as storehouse and commissary after the Civil War; initially used by the hospital as the supervisor's cottage; today serves as the dental clinic.
7. Armourer's Shop: c. 1835; sited at the north end of the parade ground; one-story; brick; hip roof; five bays; wraparound porch (1870s) partially enclosed and screened (1950s); large rear addition (1920s); built as armourer's shop; later (1865-1895) used as the quartermaster's storehouse; used by the hospital as geriatric wards, it is now substantially unoccupied.
8. Subaltern's Quarters: c. 1835; located at the east entrance of the parade ground; two-story brick; hip roof; wraparound recessed porch with deck, partially enclosed 1950s and 1970s; built as subaltern's quarters; served as the doctors quarters (1865-1895); used as dining room and ward by hospital; is now the residence of visiting doctors.
9. Office: c. 1835; opposite the arsenal at the head of the ravine; one-story; brick; hip roof; one bay; small bay porch; rear porch removed 1960s; decorative bargeboard; built and used as an office until 1895; initially served as a dining room for the hospital; presently central supply and pharmacy.
10. Laboratory: c. 1835; sited on the lane to the south gate; one-story; brick; gable roof; Greek Revival recessed porch; used originally as a laboratory for ordnance, its later Federal use is unknown; the hospital converted it to and still uses it as the morgue.
11. Guardhouse: c. 1835; located at the east gate of the complex; one-story; brick; gable roof; recessed, full-length porch removed when incorporated into administration building; built as guardhouse; now part of the administration building (see Inv. #23).
12. Dispensary: c. 1835; sited opposite the guardhouse at the east gate of the complex; one-story; brick; gable roof; probable recessed, full-length porch removed when incorporated into administration building; built as dispensary; now part of the administration building (see Inv. #23).
13. Wall: c. 1836; surrounds main part of the complex; brick; concrete cap; approximately 12 feet high one-mile long; several gaps and repairs 1930, 1970s and 1980s.
14. Retaining Wall: c. 1830; surrounds and buttresses the crest of the hill and the lower lane at the head of the ravine.

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15. Fence: c. 1835; located at east entrance to parade ground; wood; vertical uprights pierce horizontal members; only known extant example of the heavy picket typically used in 19th c. military installations throughout the country.
16. Kitchen/Mess Hall: c. 1877; next to the arsenal at the east entrance to the parade ground; brick; one-story; two bays; hip roof; corbeled cornice; built as a kitchen and mess hall for the enlisted men; the hospital uses it as the recreation center.
- 17,18,19. Cottages: c. 1878; lining the north side of the main entrance drive; lapped siding with early board and batten additions; one-story; gable roof; two bays; recessed porch; decorative barge and eave boards removed in the twentieth century; used for housing for married soldiers and non-commissioned officers; the hospital used them as employee residences but one has been converted for data processing.
20. Kitchen/Medical Records: c. 1910; sited at the head of the ravine at the east entrance to the parade ground; one-story; brick; gable roof; one bay; large rear section removed after 1935 and rear wall rebuilt; originally built as the patients' kitchen and dining facility, it is now the depository for medical records.
21. Employee Residence: c. 1905; south side of main drive outside the gates of the complex; one-story; drop siding; gable roof; three bays; wraparound to the right porch; lower gabled rear kitchen wing with addition and enclosed porch; it has always been used as a residence.
22. Unit Six: c. 1920; north end of complex near the wall; two-story; stuccoed, probably rubble concrete construction; hip roof; fifteen bays; two-story with deck, full-length, front gallery of concrete with iron post supports; built as a ward, it is currently unoccupied.
23. Administration Building: c. 1920; located at the east entrance gate in the wall; two-story frame center section; one-and-a-half-story brick side wings (c. 1835); cross gable roof; three bays; two-story front portico with monumental Tuscan columns and later enclosed second story; rear balustraded frame additions to early brick sections; basements beneath brick wings.
24. Residence/Transitional Services: c. 1930; north side of the main drive outside the wall; one-story; drop siding; gable roof; three bays; full-length recessed front porch; built as a residence; currently used by transitional services.
25. Employee Housing: c. 1930; north side of entrance drive near gate to the complex; one-story; drop siding; gable roof; four bays; full-length, recessed porch.

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26. Hospital/Director's Residence / Public Information Office: c. 1880; remodeled 1926; south side of main drive; two stories; lapped siding; gable roof with cross gabled portico and pavilions; five bays; monumental Tuscan columns on brick plinths centered on full-length tile porch; small two-story pavilions near end; projecting, detached one-story gable on right; rear addition; rear enclosed porch; built as the post hospital; converted by the mental health department to the director's residence; assigned to the public information department by the Bartlett administration.
- a. Hospital Steward's Quarters: c. 1880; one-story; lapped siding; gable roof; seven bays; full-length hipped porch; scalloped barge and end boards; now serves as visitor's quarters.
- b. Cook's house: 1920s; one-story; drop siding; gable roof; one bay; one room, small, full-length, engaged porch; currently unoccupied.
27. Unit 2: 1932; inside east gate of wall, south side of drive; three stories; brick; complex roof; five bays; H-shaped with central front and rear pavilions; front centered portico gabled on monumental Tuscan columns raised on brick plinths; end cross gabled front pavilions; left side has attached monumental Tuscan pilasters and cross gable imitating the front central portico; built as the men's ward; currently, substantially unoccupied.
28. Carpenter Shop/Engineering & Maintenance: c. 1930; located in the ravine; one-story on basement; brick; gable roof; five bays; centered, cross gable porch with Tuscan columns; gabled basement entrance with Tuscan colonettes on left side; used as the carpenter shop; now occupied by engineering and maintenance.
- Noncontributing:
29. Laundry: c. 1930; located in the ravine; one-story with basement; brick; gabled roof; facade compromised by large addition probably from the 1950s; built for and still the laundry.
30. Storehouse/Carpenter Shop: 19th and 20th centuries; abuts wall at south gate; one-story; frame; cross gabled; irregular facade; building has always served some type of storehouse or maintenance function and has been added to several times through the years; now used as the carpenter shop.
- 31., 32. Hospital for Men and Hospital for Women: c. 1950; sited across the parade ground from each other and each behind and between its respective 1830s inner circle buildings; two stories on basement; brick, primarily shiners; complex roof; T-shaped with central and end pavilions; built for and currently used as dormitories for patients.

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33. Security and Fire Building: 1960s; to the north of the drive just inside the east gate of the wall; one-story; brick; flat roof; functional in design and form.
34. Department of Rehabilitative Services: 1960s; on the crest of the hill toward the back; one-story; concrete block construction; flat roof; ten-bay front with full-length, uncovered, parapeted porch.
35. Clothing Warehouse: 1970s; at the head of the ravine toward the south gate; one-story on basement; concrete block construction; flat roof; loading docks; stuccoed entablature and water table.
36. Chapel: 1975; south of the parade ground toward the south gate; one-story; stuccoed; gable roof with steeple; lower cross gabled wings on rear; ornate front and entrance uses classical vocabulary; Baumhauer and McCluskey, architects.
37. Unit 1: 1980s; inside the east gate on the north side of the drive; three stories; brick; complex roof; attached one-story wing on front; attached three-story rear service tower; serves as ward space for patients.

Contributing - 28*

Noncontributing - 9

*(Inventory nos. 11, 12 and 23 are counted as one building)

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negotiations for surrender and by the severe conditions for imprisonment for the Native Americans, Indian Rights groups called for repatriation of all Apache Scouts. By 1887, the widely publicized plight of the POWs in the Florida camps prompted the removal of the 354 prisoners of war at Fort Marion to Mount Vernon where Apache Village was established. In 1888 the remaining 46 POWs, referred to as the "select party" which included Apache chiefs Natchez and Mangus, the celebrated Geronimo and their warriors were also transferred to Mount Vernon marking the first reunion of Geronimo, his Chiricahua Apaches and their Warm Springs relatives since their incarceration.

The complex is also significant for its associations with the early efforts to assimilate Native Americans. The issue of policy reform and social assimilation regarding Native Americans peaked during the closing decades of the 19th century with the surrender of Geronimo and the Apache leaders in 1886. In response to the outcry of sentiment by Indian rights groups, experimental methods, designed to socially condition and culturally assimilate Native American Indians were attempted at Mount Vernon during the late 19th century. Precedented by Lt. Richard H. Pratt in his effort to educate POWs at Fort Marion, FL during the mid-to-late 1870s, the first attempt to formally establish a military troop comprised of POW Native Americans was accomplished at Mount Vernon under the command of Lieutenant William W. Wotherspoon. The Mount Vernon Barracks Company I of the 12th Infantry was formed May 1891, and 47 Native Americans at the post enlisted along with additional recruits transferred to Mount Vernon from the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona. Company I remained at Mount Vernon until October 1894 when the POWs were transferred to Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

RACIAL SEGREGATION (Period of Significance 1900-37)

The complex is significant for its associations with the establishment of a separate hospital facility to provide custodial care for black mental patients in Alabama. On December 11, 1900, the General Assembly of the State Legislature approved the establishment of a mental hospital at Mount Vernon to relieve the overcrowded conditions at Bryce Hospital in Tuscaloosa. In 1902, 318 black patients and 25 employees were transported to the Mount Vernon Barracks establishing the state's first mental health facility for blacks. Originally called the Mount Vernon Hospital and changed in 1919 to Searcy Hospital, the facility continued to serve blacks, exclusively, until 1969 when the facility was ordered to desegregate following the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

SCIENCE (MENTAL HEALTH AND MEDICINE) (Period of Significance 1906-07)

The complex is significant for its associations with the discovery of Italian pellagra in the United States. In 1906, at a meeting of the Alabama State Insane Hospital's Board of Trustees, Superintendent Dr. James T. Searcy expressed great concern about a mysterious epidemic which was plaguing the Mount Vernon patients.

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Searcy's son, Dr. George H. Searcy of Tuscaloosa, identified the disease as Italian pellagra from symptoms diagnosed in the patients of Dr. E. L. McCafferty, Sr., Assistant Superintendent at Mount Vernon (1908-1946). Generally associated with diets deficient in niacin and protein, the disease caused disorders of the gastrointestinal or central nervous systems, or caused dermatitis. Symptoms of Italian pellagra were identified and studied throughout the region with the assistance of a report published by Searcy in the "Journal of the American Medical Associations" (1907) detailing the symptoms and therapeutic measures. According the Dr. E.J. Wood in A Treatise on Pellagra (1912), the Mount Vernon epidemic inspired "the first scientific work on the disease in the U.S."

CRITERION C - ARCHITECTURE (Period of Significance 1830-1935)

The structures at Mount Vernon span the entire lifetime of the complex from 1830 to the present. The earliest structures (1830-1840) are excellent examples of a Federal building program with several of the earliest structures, including the perimeter wall, showing substantial integrity: the small portion of remaining fence is the only known extant example of the military's heavy picket. Though none of the early frame buildings survive, 14 of the original brick structures remain in various states of repair.

Of lesser impact was the post Civil War construction period (1865-1894) which has left a legacy of one brick building and the earliest surviving frame structures at the complex, all built to serve the needs of the enlisted men. They represent the continued commitment of the Federal Government to the area.

The final group of significant buildings date from the early period of State control (1900-1935). During this period a number of the early structures were modified to accommodate the needs of the hospital. A new and continuous building campaign was also begun. The newer structures exemplify early twentieth century awareness of the importance of designing imposing buildings. The major structures--the Administration Building, Unit Two, and the Director's Residence--use the monumental orders of the Neo-Classic. Even the Carpenter Shop incorporates heavy Tuscan columns across the facade.

Units Two and Six, also from this building period, are based on the Kirkbride plan which mandated ward facilities for patient interaction. This had been the nationally accepted plan since the mid-nineteenth century when it was first used at the State Insane Hospital in Tuscaloosa. Therefore, these two buildings are significant as examples of a type, and are also significant as direct heirs of the plan developed for the facility in Tuscaloosa. In addition, the three frame structures represent the importation of vernacular domestic architecture into a state institutional setting.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The history of the Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex is long and important to the area and to the nation as a whole. As an arsenal it is associated with the country's earliest formal movement to produce permanent national military defense facilities, partly as a reaction to the War of 1812. One of less than 20 early Congressionally authorized defense complexes, the buildings at Mount Vernon have unfortunately been compromised by its subsequent use as a mental hospital.

This, however, does not affect the importance of the complex as the State's oldest Federal military establishment. It compares favorably with Forts Morgan and Gaines as excellent examples of Federal military brick construction in the State. The proximity of these facilities to each other emphasizes their strategic importance to the State.

Searcy Hospital was second in importance in the Alabama mental health system only to the asylum at Tuscaloosa. It was the primary hospital for mentally disturbed blacks in Alabama until the late 1960s. As such it stands alone in the State in the care and treatment of blacks suffering mental problems.

INTEGRITY

As has been stated and as can be seen from the descriptions and photographs included in this nomination, a number of alterations, some substantial, have occurred to the early buildings at the Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex. However, many of these changes are the result of additions and are not from the destruction of original fabric. Should the hospital desire, a restoration effort over time could return many of the structures to their original or near-original condition.

However, it must be recognized at this time that many of the nineteenth century structures have been compromised by the hospital in adapting them for patient care. Conversely, the early twentieth century structures were built by the hospital and, therefore, substantially retain their integrity.

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CRITERION B:

William W. Wotherspoon: Wotherspoon was born in Washington, D.C. November 16, 1850. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1870. While serving in the Navy he was offered the Legion of Honor by the French government for heroism. In 1873 he transferred to the United States Army and was made a second lieutenant by President Grant. He served in the American West and participated in several Indian campaigns. From 1889-1894 he commanded Company I of the 12th Infantry at Mount Vernon Barracks in Alabama. Company I was an all Indian troop consisting of many Apache prisoners of war and other Indians brought from the West to complete the company. Lt. Wotherspoon faced the unhappy prospect of assimilating the Indians into the white man's army. However, he accomplished the feat, and, by making the medicine man Geronimo Justice of the Peace and through other actions, secured the cooperation of the leaders of the insurgents. This facilitated the process, improving the public relations status of the prisoners. The position brought Wotherspoon to the direct attention of Redfield Proctor, Secretary of War, who was personally involved in the Apache problem. Wotherspoon continued his distinguished military career serving as professor of military science at the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, instructor at the general staff college at Fort Leavenworth, first director and founder of the war college, chief of staff of the occupation forces in Cuba, and commander of the Department of the Gulf. Eventually, he became assistant chief of staff from which position he was made Chief of Staff, a post he retained until his retirement. Though his career was long and distinguished, Wotherspoon was always associated with his work with the Apaches at Mount Vernon.

Emit Luther McCafferty: Dr. McCafferty was born in 1878 in Carrolton, Pickens County, Alabama. He attended public schools and college at Southern University at Greensboro. McCafferty's medical training began at the old Medical College in Mobile, and his education was completed at Emory University in Atlanta. From 1906-1907 he was Senior Physician in charge of the facility at Mount Vernon, and in 1908 was made Assistant Superintendent of the mental health department in Alabama responsible for Searcy Hospital. E. L. McCafferty spent virtually his entire adult life serving the needs of mental health at Searcy. In 1939 Dr. McCafferty was cited by the Alabama Medical Association for his contribution to finding the cause of and a cure for Pellagra, the disease responsible for the confinement of many of the Negro patients at Mount Vernon. He remained in charge of Searcy Hospital until his death in 1946, and was a recognized authority in the field of mental illness.

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HISTORICAL SUMMARY

In 1799 Fort Stoddart was established in the vicinity of the present day town of Mount Vernon, Alabama. It served a dual purpose of protecting the settlers from Indians and providing a U. S. military presence just thirty miles north of Spanish Mobile. In 1804 it was considered the most important post in Alabama: it served as a port of entry and as a seat of a court of admiralty. A year later Congress designated the area part of the Bigbee revenue district.

This designation led to the double taxation of the settlers on imports, once by the Spanish and then again by the United States. The double taxation caused problems with area settlers who planned to correct the situation by capturing Mobile. Since the U. S. and Spain were on friendly terms, the Federal government was compelled to keep its citizens under control. Therefore, the U.S. sent additional forces to the area to prevent an incident.

It was during the first part of the nineteenth century that the Mount Vernon Cantonment was established, consisting of a series of log cabins located southwest of Fort Stoddert. In the War of 1812, it was used by General Andrew Jackson while preparing for the defense of Mobile, which had been taken from the Spanish earlier in the War. In the Creek Indian Wars (1813-1814), the cantonment served as a general rendezvous area for the army.

In 1828 Congress authorized the building of an arsenal in Alabama. In 1829, Walter Smith, a lieutenant of Ordnance on detached duty, reported on a proposed site. He declared Mount Vernon, which was the name of the hill on which the earlier cantonment had been located, to be the most appropriate site in the vicinity for the arsenal. It was Lieutenant Smith who suggested the leveling and widening of the summit. He also described how the buildings should be placed. This report was written in a manner suggesting he was modifying an existing plan to fit the site rather than designing a totally new plan.

Using the natural terrain with the modifications made at the summit, Smith showed his concern for the aesthetics of the arsenal by suggesting a curved wall at the head of the ravine "which will give to the whole a front in good taste".(1) He also suggested parterres, fruit and ornamental trees, vines, meadows and pastures which, had they been planted, would have created an idyllic and serene setting.

The Arsenal operated under federal control until January 4, 1861 when it was captured by forces from Mobile sympathetic to the Southern cause. After the war it was returned to Federal control and used to garrison the occupying U.S. troops.

Modifications occurred due to the change in designation of Mount Vernon Arsenal to Mount Vernon Barracks on June 25, 1873. The post maintained this designation for

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the duration of its military history. On April 28, 1887, the major use of the post was radically altered. At 8:30 a.m., 354 Apache Indian prisoners of war arrived at Mount Vernon Barracks. On May 13, 1888 another 46 Apache prisoners arrived at Mount Vernon. In this group were the leaders of the Apache insurgents, including Geronimo, Natchez (son of Cochise), and Loco.

Shelter for the Indians was provided by the construction of a village built outside the wall surrounding the Barracks. The prisoners were relatively free to move about during the day, but were required to be back in the village by sundown. There was a minor, yet constant, fluctuation of the prison population. Indians were often transferred to and from Mount Vernon (a number were sent to Carlisle School in Pennsylvania) and the high birth rate offset the equally high death rate. This high death rate, caused by a malarial type illness, was attributed to the village's location. Therefore, it was demolished and a second village was constructed nearby.

In May 1891 in an experiment to assimilate the Apache into white society, the army formed at Mount Vernon Barracks Company I of the 12th Infantry. Forty-seven Indians at the post enlisted and additional Indians were recruited from the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona and transferred to Mount Vernon. They were commanded by 1st Lieutenant (later Captain) W. W. Wotherspoon and were quartered outside the Barracks near the Indian village.

The relocation of the village on the grounds of the Mt. Vernon Barracks did not noticeably reduce the death rate among the Indians. Even the Indian soldiers were affected and a dozen were buried in the National Cemetery in Mobile. It was this high death rate which won sympathy for the Indians and was responsible for them being transferred to Oklahoma. In October 1894 the majority of the Indian prisoners, Company I and various ancillary personnel, e.g., the interpreter George Wratten, the hospital steward, etc., were transferred to Fort Sill in the Oklahoma Territory. The Indian village was dismantled and sent by train with them. Unfortunately, the train caught fire in New Orleans and most of the buildings were lost. The Indians reached Fort Sill where they remained prisoners until 1914.

Of the remaining Indians, one prisoner was transferred to Fort Sam Houston in Texas and the rest were sent to the reservation at San Carlos, Arizona in November 1894. With the departure of the Indians, Mount Vernon Barracks was no longer needed by the military. On December 4, 1894, two weeks after the last of the Apache prisoners left, the Mount Vernon Barracks was abandoned.

On March 1, 1895, the United States Congress approved the transfer of the Barracks with the entire reservation of over 1600 acres to the State of Alabama. However, it was not until December 11, 1900 that the General Assembly of Alabama approved the use of the facility as a mental hospital. The new hospital was to relieve Bryce Hospital, the state insane facility, and Graystone, its accompanying

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farm complex, of their overcrowding by establishing a mental institution specifically for black patients.

To prepare the Mount Vernon Barracks for use as a hospital, the State appropriated \$25,000 for renovation. In his 1902 report to the Board of Trustees, Dr. James Searcy, the superintendent of Bryce and therefore of all public mental health endeavors in Alabama, stated that he had found the buildings at the Barracks dilapidated and that much of the valuable timber and movable property had been destroyed. Windows, doors and security safeguards were made by the employees and patients at Bryce Hospital in Tuscaloosa and shipped to Mount Vernon. A kitchen, laundry, and heating and lighting plant were constructed to prepare the hospital for the influx of patients. In May 1902, 318 black patients and 25 employees, including one doctor and one intern, left Tuscaloosa by special train for Mount Vernon.

In 1907, Dr. E. L. McCafferty was made an assistant superintendent and placed in charge of the hospital at Searcy. It was Dr. McCafferty working with Dr. George Searcy, the son of Dr. James Searcy, who assembled the data on the cases of pellagra at Mount Vernon. Pellagra, a vitamin deficiency that often resulted in death, was responsible for a number of cases of mental illness at Searcy. The first identification of pellagra was at Searcy and it was subsequently identified throughout the region.

In 1946 Dr. McCafferty died after serving 43 years as director. He was succeeded by Dr. Harry S. Rowe. It was during Dr. Rowe's tenure that several major buildings were erected. In the 1940s the Hospital for Men and the Hospital for Women were constructed. The parade ground was occupied by the 1950s cafeteria which has recently been demolished for a recreation facility. A building placed in the north section of the wall was later removed.

Dr. Rowe continued to serve as director until his retirement in 1970 when Dr. Jaime E. Condom was named director. It was Dr. Condom who established the administrative staffing at Searcy as it was separated from Bryce and given greater autonomy. He was responsible for the transition of the institution from a custodial facility to a full service treatment hospital, and oversaw the desegregation of the hospital which began in 1969.

During Dr. Condom's tenure at Searcy, a new building campaign was begun. Several structures were erected outside the wall and the E. L. McCafferty Chapel was built by the Friends of Searcy near the south gate. Dr. Condom was the last director to reside in the old hospital building which now serves as the Public Information Office.

Terry Bartlett is the current administrator. He has been responsible for completing the work to have the hospital certified. He has had built the new Unit 1 and several structures outside the wall. During his stewardship the hospital and the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation have made a commitment to historic preservation.

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APPENDIX

Located in the National Archives is a series of descriptions for buildings to be constructed at Mount Vernon. The dates on the papers range from January 10, 1829, to August 17, 1830, overlapping the survey of the area (completed February 6, 1830) and the approval of the reservation of the land by President Andrew Jackson (March 10, 1830). The data, therefore, suggests that a set of general plans was formulated for all arsenals of this period and simply modified to individual sites. This is further evidenced by the plan for the magazines for fixed ammunition at Mount Vernon dated June 22nd, 1829; the caption beneath the plan reads in part: "Section... of magazines..., similar to those forwarded to the Arsenals at St. Louis and Augusta... Drawings of the same were furnished Maj. Alex Thompson at Fort Gratish".(2) In 1840 Captain W. A. Thoonton prepared a report with detailed descriptions and plans of the buildings and a plan of the site. In these, it is evident that the buildings are complete and closely follow the plans of 1829-1830.

The antebellum records available provide a description of the Arsenal. The ground at the site was on two major levels. The primary level was the upper one which consisted of the summit which had been flattened and extended. A retaining wall surrounded most of this area. From the upper plain the ground gently sloped away on three sides to form the lower secondary level. On the front was a rather precipitous drop to the secondary level which held an avenue between the south and east gates. Below this avenue a ravine intruded from the southeast resulting in the unique horseshoe shape of the site.

The retaining wall acted as the exterior barrier to the summit. Atop and within this wall was a picket fence which along with many of the main group of buildings served as an inner barrier. Central to the complex was the three-story arsenal building with wing gun sheds to either side. On the opposite side of the arsenal building from the parade ground was the public office set at the retaining wall. To the left of the arsenal was the commanding officer's quarters with separate kitchen and connecting porch. To the right of the arsenal building was the subaltern's quarters with separate kitchen. To the west of these, facing the parade ground were two buildings designed as the armourers' shops. Opposite the parade ground from the arsenal was the soldiers' barracks with the kitchen outside the retaining wall to the rear. Continuing around the circle towards the commanding officer's quarters were the shops for the blacksmith and carpenter.

Outside the retaining wall was a large expanse of land with additional buildings. All the buildings and structures at the Arsenal, except the magazines, were surrounded by a brick wall approximately 12 feet high and a mile long. The magazines were located outside the south gate.

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The east gate served as the main entrance to the Arsenal with roads leading to Mobile and the bluff at Fort Stoddert. Just inside the gates were two proposed buildings--one to be a guardhouse, the other to be the sutler's store. To the north of the entrance near the wall were two buildings that served as quarters for the armourers. Moving west from the main gate and just outside the interior picket fence was the sutler's old quarters. To the north between the retaining wall and the brick enclosing wall was the sutler's old store. At the north angle of the wall was the road to St. Stephens and a proposed guardhouse. At the very back of the post and to the south were two plots of cultivated ground each with a nearby gun shed for field carriages. Southwest of the second and smaller section of cultivated ground were the corn crib, barnyard and public stables. Adjacent to the commanding officer's quarters, outside the retaining wall, but inside and abutting the exterior wall, was a walled garden, formal in design, with the master carpenter's quarters and a garden cellar outside the garden gate. The south gate road led to the magazines removed from the vicinity, but just inside the wall were several structures. Abutting the wall to the west was the gun shed for casemate carriages, and a proposed guardhouse was to be built to the east. Facing the road and on either side were two laboratory buildings (four in all) and behind those on the west were two large lumber sheds.

From the number of gun sheds present on the map of the site, it is plausible to assume that gun carriages were assembled at the Arsenal. Also, from a reference in the description, it is known that lead balls were cast here. The Arsenal dealt in powder and small arms, probably acting as a center for distribution and repair.

The next information about the Arsenal is derived from a map which appears to pre-date the Civil War. On it, the changes that had occurred throughout the site are shown. The wing gun sheds of the arsenal, the gun sheds for the field carriages and for the casemate carriages were dismantled or used for storage, as were the old lumber sheds. The farm buildings were removed and the new farm site was relocated closer to the back wall. The subaltern's quarters were converted to the surgeon's quarters and the old sutler's buildings were removed. Of the proposed brick guardhouses, only the one at the west gate was built. There was a building constructed at the site of the proposed sutler's store but its function is listed as a dispensary and storeroom. In the ravine inside the wall, a bath house was built near the spring instead of the proposed brick cellar. Outside the west gate three buildings were erected: one served as a hospital, and the other two were quarters for married soldiers.

The original plan of the site is still evident. The central parade ground remains the focus of the early structures which surround it. The majority of the newer buildings either flank the drives as they were initially laid out or have been placed behind the early buildings. The only exception is the 1950s cafeteria which has recently been demolished.

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FIRST FEDERAL PERIOD: 1812-1861
INITIAL BUILDING PERIOD
1829-1840

ARSENAL
(1)(C)

The largest building constructed in the 1830s was the arsenal which was used to warehouse arms. Three stories high and constructed of brick (common bond), it originally had a balustraded parapet surrounding the low hip roof. The entrance was oriented toward the parade ground and consisted of a centrally placed double arched door with an iron balcony above. The fenestration of the front facade was four evenly spaced bays on the first and second floors on either side of the entrance and balcony, and nine bays along the third floor. The first floor bays were grated and had interior folding blinds, while the second and third floors had casement windows.

At each end of the arsenal was an attached gun shed open in the rear and large enough to contain ten field carriages each. The end walls of the arsenal had only one window on the second and third floors. At the rear was a centrally located five-story crenellated, semi-hexagonal stair tower. The fenestration was four evenly spaced bays to either side of the stair tower, with the first floor being open and grated with interior folding blinds and casement windows in the second and third floors similar to the arrangement on the front.

The stairway tower contained four flights leading to the fifth level. At this level a winding exterior iron stair led from a window/door and extended over the building's roof to the roof of the tower. A tackle was placed in the tower to hoist stores into the rooms and evidence of the pulley system remains.

The ground floor had a brick pavement and was unfinished except for the square, brick columns with timber caps which supported the upper floor. The second floor was finished by tongue and groove pine boards painted white. The third floor was without any extra finish.

The gun sheds to either side were removed prior to the Civil War. Following the war the arsenal building was converted to the enlisted men's barracks. At that time there were, no doubt, interior modifications and it was probably in this same period that the galleries were added to the front. The first floor was used as a kitchen/mess hall while the upper floors were living quarters for the enlisted men.

After the State Department of Mental Health acquired the site, the porches were enclosed; and after the 1972 Federal Court ruling that forbade dormitory type rooms, the interior was divided into small rooms and the walls and piers encased in paneling.

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The first two flights of the staircase were removed and an elevator installed. Two windows have been added to the first floor on the southwest end and two to each floor on the opposite end. A stairway/entrance pavilion is sited on the southeast facade on the right. The main entrance is now on the first floor of the enclosed front porch.

Presently, the rear has a fire escape and does not appear to be regularly used. Of the nine bays symmetrically placed on the rear, three at the far northwest have been enclosed. The windows are either 6/6 with added bars or fixed steel. The central door is modern and new doors replace the windows at the first and third floor southwest bays. The old doorway has a segmental relieving arch of one stretcher and two headers.

On the front of the building today, the shed roofed galleries to the left of the tower are enclosed and those to the right have an open work screen wall on the second and third floors. The tower windows are now sash on the first and second floors with casements on each of the remaining levels; they have segmental arches except those on the fifth floor where the windows are arched. Each level is accented by a brick string course with a double course dividing the fifth story and the crenellation. The roof line is capped with brick and concrete coursing. The ceilings have been lowered and the floors covered with vinyl tile. Doors lead from the enclosed galleries into the building. It now serves as a men's dormitory.

Despite the modifications made over time, most of the building's original materials remain, and the nineteenth century form is still evident. (Photographs 1, 13, 14, 18, 21 & 22. Contact Sheets: 1/20-23; 2/24-31; 3/8-9; 7/27-35; 8/2-7 & 9/1-4.)

COMMANDING OFFICER'S QUARTERS (2)(C)

The commanding officer's quarters were located southwest of the arsenal on the parade ground. As originally built, the two-story structure was brick (common bond) with wide galleries on three sides supported by square brick piers and the whole covered by a slate pyramidal roof truncated by a raised, louvered vent.

The galleries and floors were of wood, and the ground floor was quite plain except for marble mantles. The ceilings inside and out were plastered. The windows were casements: the first story's were four panes wide and four panes high (16 x 16); those in the second floor were four panes wide, seven panes high (28 x 28) and opened onto the galleries.

There were two rooms on each floor with an interior double fireplace. At the northwest corner was a second story room attached to the gallery. It was frame and used as a servant's quarters. The first floor of this and the adjoining gallery held a staircase. On the same gallery at the north corner was an attached two-story

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pyramidal roofed structure. It had two small provision rooms on the first floor and a sleeping room on the second. There was an interior chimney. On the opposite gallery on the southeast side of the building was an exterior stair which wound around the corner to the side facing the arsenal.

Leading from the raised attached building was a small covered porch attached to the full width porch on the semi-detached kitchen. The kitchen was two bays by one bay, and one and a half stories. It had two rooms, a central double chimney and a gable roof.

This small group remained intact through the Federal period and was not substantially altered until the hospital acquired the property. The galleries have since been infilled; the kitchen with connecting porches and the rooms attached to the gallery have been removed. There is an addition on the right at the back and another on the left to serve as a stair tower, both built by the hospital.

The interior has been opened and dropped ceilings have been installed. Several of the original doorways with paneled jambs and doors survive. The windows have been changed through time to 6/6 and 3/1, but two of the original casements are extant. The original form of the core of the building has been retained. It is now used as a library and crafts center for the patients. (Photographs: 2, 17 & 23. Contact sheets: 1/24-26; 5/26-35 & 12/8-12.)

CARPENTER SHOP
(3)(C)

The building located facing the parade ground just west of the old commanding officer's quarters is identified on the 1840 map as the blacksmith shop and on the other antebellum map as the carpenter shop. Since the earlier map shows the chimneys expected on the blacksmith shop to be on another building, it appears that the two buildings were confused on the map from 1840 and this building was, in fact, the carpenter shop.

Rectangular in plan and covered by a hip roof, it is constructed of brick laid in common bond. This one-story structure had three front bays with a central door, two side bays and four rear bays (the same arrangement as the armourer's shops). It was one large open room with the central door large enough to accommodate a fully assembled gun carriage.

After the Civil War the building was used as officer's quarters. During that period it was divided into several rooms; the facade was changed to six bays; and a detached rear wing was added as was the wraparound front porch. A fence enclosed the yard from the midpoints of each side of the building to the retaining wall behind the building.

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Currently the building has five front bays with a door left of center; the one right of center which has been enclosed; and the walls have been stuccoed. The windows are 6/6 with some steel framed and slightly arched. There is a shed covered, full length, wraparound slab porch with chamfered, rectangular posts on small, stuccoed brick imposts. To the rear is a large early twentieth century hipped, eleven-bay, rubble concrete extension, and this has a large four-bay by one-bay addition on the northwest side. The building retains its original form and the rear addition has relatively little impact on the integrity of the complex. (Photographs: 3, 17, 25, 26 & 28. Contact sheets: 1/34-35; 5/18-25 & 12/14-16.)

Blacksmith Shop
(4)(C)

The building on the inner circle facing the parade ground just south of the old barracks building is identified on the 1840 map as the carpenter shop, and on the other antebellum map as the blacksmith shop. The 1840 map shows a number of chimneys in this building which one would expect and indeed sees on the plans for the blacksmith shop. Therefore, evidence indicates that the blacksmith and the carpenter shops are misidentified on the 1840 map.

The blacksmith shop, a one-story, brick (common bond) building with a hip roof, had three front bays, two side bays and, unlike the other one-story buildings on the parade ground, only three bays on the rear. The doorway was oversized to accommodate a fully assembled gun carriage. The shop was designed to hold four complete work areas consisting of anvil blocks, bellows and furnace hearths with accompanying chimneys which inclined toward the adjacent walls allowing the chimneys above the roofline to be supported by the walls. The floor of the smith shop was dirt, though plans of 1830 specified brick.

After the Civil War the building was used as officer's quarters. By this time it had been divided into several rooms, had a detached rear wing and porches on the front and halfway down each side. A fence extended from the sides to the retaining wall.

Currently the structure shows evidence of six front bays from the late nineteenth century of which one has been enclosed. The wraparound porch has been infilled on the left side and extended and enclosed on the right. The porch is a shed covered slab with chamfered posts on small, stuccoed, brick imposts. Two posts have been replaced and two have chamfered brackets. The porch rafters are curved on the ends, notched onto the front supports, pierce the fascia board and rest on supports bolted to the wall. The new door which is left of center has a three-light transom; the door right of center has been enclosed. These doorways along with the porch probably date from the nineteenth century when the building was used as officer's quarters. The rear has a gabled frame addition on brick piers. The original form of the building is still evident and the modifications are of minor importance.

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The building is now used for the Rehabilitation, Evaluation and Assessment Program. The interior is still divided into several rooms, but these are now paneled and the ceiling has been dropped. (Photographs: 17, 25 & 26. Contact sheets: 2/1-2, 5/12-17 & 12/17-18.)

BARRACKS
(5)(C)

The two-story, brick (common bond) building located at the back of the inner circle was constructed as barracks for the enlisted men. The core of the building was T-shaped consisting of four rooms and a central hall on each floor with a rear semi-hexagonal tower. Front galleries on both floors wrapped around each side to the rear room giving the overall building a square shape with a central, rear, semi-hexagonal, four-level stair tower, which extends above the roofline to form a complete hexagon.

Each of the rooms had two doors--one opening into the center passage and the other onto the gallery. The windows (two in the front rooms and three in the rear rooms) were 20 x 20 casements. The windows of the tower were arched with stationary glass in the top. Incorporated in the stair tower were five runs of stairs leading to the two floors and an upper platform.

The central doorway was arched and had a folding door with a louvred vent above to allow circulation into the central passageway. The rear had "a strong door made in the usual manner".(3) The second story gallery's central doorway was also arched. There were two double interior chimneys and the ground floor gallery and passageway were paved with brick. There were copper gutters on the roofs and copper drain pipes. The picket fence met this building at the halfway mark where the galleries joined the rear T; this was unlike the rest of the buildings which intersected the fence at their rear walls.

The building continued to be used as barracks for enlisted personnel until after the Civil War, at which time, the enlisted men were moved to the arsenal building and officers were billeted here. The kitchen wing to the rear, which was maintained through this period, was a one-story brick building, 45 by 23 feet, and doubled as the post bakery. It was removed in the early part of this century.

The barracks is currently used as the Staff Development Center. The entire upper gallery has been enclosed as have the side bays on the left and one bay on the right on the first floor. Doubled, paneled doors are in the front doorway and a large contemporary door is on the rear. An exterior fire escape has been added to the right side. Also, the interior spaces have been somewhat altered; the walls have been paneled, carpeting has been laid and the ceilings have been lowered. Most of these interior changes have been cosmetic or casual in nature and could easily be removed.

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The rather elegant tower stair remains in excellent condition. The barracks retains most of its original character, and though changes have occurred through its one and a half centuries, the building's 1830s appearance is still obvious. (Photographs: 4, 17 & 24. Contact sheets: 2/4-12 & 5/5-11.)

ARMOURER'S SHOP
(6)(C)

The building toward the rear of the inner circle (third in from the entrance through the picket fence) was one of two structures used as an armourer's shop. It faced the parade ground and was three bays wide with a central door. Built as one large room, it had two bays on each side and four bays on the rear.

Within twenty-five years of being built, the structure was used as the saddler's shop and after the Civil War as the storehouse for the commissary. At that time there was an interior partition and a small addition to the rear on the right. The wrap-around porch was also added sometime in the late Federal period. The hospital used this as a supervisor's cottage in the first hospital period. It was during this time that the earlier rear addition was replaced with a newer rear addition.

The front is now five bays plus a sixth bay on the left where the porch has been infilled. The door, probably from the late nineteenth century, is fairly elaborate: two arched lights over two panels, all with decorative mouldings; three-light sidelights over large moulded panels; six-light full transom, and a decorative door lintel beneath the transom. The full-length, wraparound, shed roofed, slab porch has chamfered posts on small, stuccoed, brick piers. The rafters are notched and have curved ends. There is a shed addition to the rear. The front shows evidence that the increase from three to five bays may have been quite early; it was probably modified in the 1870s. The building is now used as the dental clinic and the interior has been broken into many small spaces with lowered ceilings. The structure has maintained its basic nineteenth century form. (Photographs: 18, 25 & 26. Contact sheets: 2/13-15; 4/32-35; 5/1-4 & 12/21-22.)

ARMOURER'S SHOP
(7)(C)

Facing the parade ground to the west of the subaltern's quarters was a second armourer's shop. This one-story, rectangular structure had a hip roof and was constructed of brick (common bond). There were three bays on the front with a central door, two bays on each side and four on the rear. The building was originally one large room. Used as a workshop, it was probably quite plain with little or no ornamentation. At the end of the nineteenth century it was used as the quartermaster's storehouse and had two small rooms located in opposite corners. The porch also dates from the second federal period and by 1935 the building had acquired a large rear addition.

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The front is now five bays and the original casements have been replaced by 6/6 wood sash or steel frame windows. The centrally located door has moulded panels: two tall arched panels over a single horizontal panel over twin vertical panels. The two-light sidelights are over a panel and there is a four-light full transom. The door has a simple moulded lintel and there is a flat, segmental brick arch above the doorway. This elaborate door dates from the late nineteenth century.

The structure has a full-length, wraparound, parapeted and screened shed porch with frame infill on the left. The porch roof is on rafters that have curved ends and are notched to rest on porch beams supported on chamfered posts.

There are several large additions to the rear constructed by the hospital. Bridged to the main building by a small connector, they have little impact on the integrity of the original structure. The 1830 section retains its open plan except for a small entrance vestibule, and the building essentially maintains its nineteenth century form. (Photographs: 18, 25 & 26. Contact sheets: 2/16-17; 4/24-31 & 12/23-26.)

SUBALTERN'S QUARTERS
(8)(C)

The subaltern's quarters lies northwest of the arsenal and is the first building inside the picket fence. It was the twin of the commanding officer's quarters except for the two small structures attached to the rear of the commanding officer's quarters.

A two-story, brick (common bond) building, the subaltern's quarters originally had galleries on three sides. There were two rooms on each floor and a double interior fireplace. It was covered by a pyramidal roof truncated by a raised louvered vent at the apex. The slate roof and second-story gallery were supported on square brick piers.

The ground floor was paved with brick both inside and on the porch which had curb stones edging the spaces between the piers. The second floor was reached by an exterior stair that wound around the corner of the building. The double leaf casement windows on the second story extended to the floor to allow access to the gallery. The doors faced the arsenal building and had paneled jambs; the second-story door also had a three-light transom. To the northwest was a detached kitchen of one and a half stories, 30 by 14 feet, with a central double fireplace.

Early in its history the building served as the surgeon's quarters and it remained intact at least until 1875. However by 1875, it was used as officer's quarters and the galleries on one side (the west) had been enclosed. The 1935 map indicates that the kitchen wing had been removed and a dining room attached to that side; this has since been removed.

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Currently, the building is infrequently used as quarters for visiting doctors. The core of the first floor is now one large room and the second floor has partition walls for offices. The interior has been carpeted and paneled and the ceilings have been dropped. The west galleries remain enclosed as are one and a half bays of the east galleries. However, many windows and doors are intact and retain their original surrounds and transoms.

These original internal elements and the obviousness of the external infill minimize the effect of the changes. The building still embodies its 1830s feel in both form and fabric. (Photographs 5 & 18. Contact sheets: 1/2-8; 4/17-30 & 12/1-4.)

OFFICE
(9)(C)

Across from the tower of the arsenal, at the head of the ravine, the office for the post was located on the upper edge of the retaining wall. It had pedimented porticos on the front and rear supported by Tuscan columns that may have been boxed. The office was divided into two rooms with a central double fireplace. There were three exterior doors in each room, one on either side of the room and one in each end of the building, as well as an interior door connecting the two rooms. Above each end door was a window.

The southeast porch extended past the retaining wall and was supported on high brick piers which rose from the lower lane that connects the two main gates. This porch was reached by a lateral staircase set to the side of the building and which ran along the retaining wall. The columns supporting the pediment were on high impost blocks necessitated by the porch deck being lower than the main floor of the building. The northwest porch was at ground level and, therefore, did not require the complicated support arrangement or the balustrade of that on the southeast porch. After the Civil War, the front (NW) porch was replaced by a rectangular, hipped roofed, glazed bay with a door on the left and triple hung sash windows (2/2/2) on the front and right. The bay has a simple cornice on a flat base with a paneled frieze and curved dentils. The door is now reached by way of a slab stoop covered by a flat roof on iron poles.

The rear entrance, now enclosed, had three sidelights over a panel, a broken five-light transom and rectangular Tuscan pilasters. The elaborate back porch has been removed.

Each of the gable ends has a decorative fascia and bargeboard with a gable peak drop. The original gable windows have diamond panes and may be fixed. The rafters above the brick (common bond) walls are exposed and there is an L-shape, drop siding, flat roofed addition on the right.

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The interior retains some fine woodwork including a ceiling medallion and the doorways into the side addition. The central chimney has been removed, but the nineteenth century character of the building is still evident. It was used continuously as an office until the early hospital period when it may have been converted to the staff dining room. The structure is currently used as the central supply and pharmacy building. (Photographs: 6, 15 & 27. Contact sheets: 1/12,17-19; 6/1-6 & 12/6-7.)

LABORATORY
(10)(C)

The small Greek Revival building, sited between the inner circle and the south gate, was used as a laboratory. It was built as a one-story, brick (common bond) structure with a full length recessed porch. The roof was shingled and Tuscan posts supported the front pediment. The front was three bays with a central door; the sides were two bays and the rear was blind. The interior had a furnace for casting leaden balls.

The late-nineteenth-century map identifies the building as the bakery but this may be incorrect as the Surgeon General's report of May 1, 1875, identifies the building behind the small tower building (Barracks) as the post bakery. Also photographs that had to have been made within 20 years of the Surgeon General's report identifies a frame building as the bakery. Today the hospital uses the structure as a morgue.

Currently, the porch roof is supported on boxed columns with bases and mouldings but without capitals. The paneled central door has a two-light transom; it and the windows (6/6) have flat segmental arches over them. The rear elevation has a broken pediment and a lunette vent in the gable. The one-room interior now has tile running halfway up each wall and houses equipment for the morgue. (Photograph: 7. Contact sheets: 1/28-30; 6/16-20 & 12/13.)

GUARDHOUSE and DISPENSARY
(11 & 12) (C)

The 1840 map of the Mount Vernon Arsenal shows two proposed buildings at the east gate. The one to the north was to serve as (a) a guardhouse and that to the south was to be (b) the sutler's store. However, the other antebellum map identifies them as the (a) guardhouse and (b) dispensary.

In any event, they were to be of brick with hipped roofs and there was to be a cross hipped wing on the store (b). However, there is no evidence of the wing either on the late-nineteenth-century map or on the building today and the orientation of the buildings has been changed from that originally proposed.

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An early photograph of the guardhouse (a) shows a recessed, full length pedimented porch with round Tuscan Doric columns and a double flight of stairs leading to the attic space. The attic gable had two single sash 10-light casement windows. The sides were two bays wide and the front had four irregular bays. It is assumed that the dispensary, building (b), was similar but this has not been verified. Both retain their original basements which had brick floors (large sections of these have survived). There is also evidence that each basement had a fireplace and two other chimneys serving the upper floors.

A problem arises in discussing these two buildings in that they have both been encased in the current administration building which dates from the hospital period. (For further information see the administration building in the hospital period section.) (Photograph: 16)

THE WALL (13)(C)

The plans for the Arsenal at Mount Vernon called for the building of a wall around the entire complex. This wall constructed of brick rises from twelve to sixteen feet high and forms a horseshoe-shaped barrier around the area. It was capped with copper and had three primary gates: the east gate was the main gate and is now where the administration building is sited; the south gate which led to the magazines located outside the wall and the west gate which opened on the road to St. Stephens. The wall was also intermittently pierced for drainage by small arched openings.

Through the years, the wall has been damaged in several areas and has been repaired. Several sections have also been removed. A structure was placed in a section of the north wall during the early hospital period but was removed several years ago creating a gap. When Unit 2 was built (see early hospital period) it took the part of the wall which went to the ravine. There was damage to the wall near the south gate but it has been repaired. Recently a part of the wall on the northwest cracked and was pushed over for safety reasons; it has been repaired using a concrete block core with original brick facing salvaged from the demolished section. Another large section to the rear has been removed for a new dormitory under construction (1987). Of the original mile length of wall constructed, much is intact and it remains a dominant feature of the site. (Photograph: 29. Contact sheets: 3/20; 7/1-21 & 8/35.)

RETAINING WALL and FENCE (14 & 15)(C)

Mount Vernon Arsenal was built at the crest of a hill. In order to provide adequate space for the complex, the hill was leveled and expanded and a retaining wall was constructed. This was built of brick and surrounds the crest with its inner core

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of buildings. It varies in size from being barely visible on the sides to over twelve feet high at the ravine. There is a second retaining wall at the ravine supporting the lower roadway.

Within the Arsenal was a picket fence which surrounded the inner part of the complex. It was wood, probably cypress, consisting of two horizontal sections pierced by round uprights with conical tops. The wood uprights were on a low brick parapet wall and fence sections were separated by brick piers also on the brick parapet wall. The fence circled the parade ground and abutted the buildings. At the ravine it rested on the lower wall encompassing the roadway. There were also two elaborate gates located at each entrance; they were near the two two-story residences at each side of the central core of buildings. Today only one small section of fence remains between the subaltern's quarters and the kitchen/medical records building. (Photograph: 28. Contact sheets: 1/1,13; 7/13-15 & 9/22-26.)

CIVIL WAR ERA
AND
SECOND FEDERAL PERIOD
1861-1895

During the Civil War the Arsenal was captured by the Southern forces from the City of Mobile. Later during the Federal reoccupation, though the original buildings remained, their functions were altered. The arsenal became the barracks, and the barracks and surgeon's quarters as well as the blacksmith and carpenter shops became officer quarters. It was at the time of their conversion that porches were added to the second and third floors of the rear of the arsenal/barracks and to the recycled blacksmith and carpenter shops. The armourers' shops were used as the quartermaster storehouse and the commissary storehouse. The farm buildings were slightly altered but remained in the same location. Northeast of the arsenal/barracks a brick mess hall and kitchen was constructed for the enlisted men. Also, four new buildings, three cottages and a hospital (see first hospital period), were added outside the east gate.

KITCHEN/MESS HALL
(16)(C)

When the enlisted men were moved from the small tower barracks to the arsenal it was necessary to provide cooking and dining facilities for them. Originally, these were located on the ground floor of the old arsenal building. However, after the 1875 Surgeon General's recommendation, a separate building was constructed. Built alongside the new barracks (old arsenal), it was a long brick building four bays by six bays with a gable roof running toward the barracks (arsenal).

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It is one story, brick (common bond) with the main entrances today being two doors on the northwest and another door in the southernmost bay of the southeast side. The left door on the front is double with an enclosed transom; the door on the right is single with no transom and the side door is single with an enclosed transom. The windows are 6/6 with brick sills and segmental arches. There is a corbeled cornice. The interior is one large room with a raised stage at the southwest end. The hospital now uses the structure as a recreation facility for patients. Essentially, the building exists today as it was built in the nineteenth century. (Photographs: 18 & 22. Contact sheets: 1/14-15; 6/7-12; 8/8-12; 9/5-9 & 12/27-28.)

COTTAGES
(17, 18 & 19)(C)

After the Civil War, the antebellum trend of placing residences outside the wall, along the east drive was continued. Two new sites were developed for use and an earlier building location was reused. Originally, the area outside the wall was occupied by married soldiers and their families, but later it housed the non-commissioned officers. Two buildings are now used as residences for the hospital staff and one is used as the data processing center.

Built as shotguns, the three structures are frame with lapped siding. The foundations are brick piers and have later brick infill. Early board and batten additions were made to the sides of each building and the buildings now have board and batten additions to the rear as well. Each has a gable roof to the front extending over a recessed porch and supported on two slender tapered posts; early photographs show three supporting posts. These same photographs show scalloped barge and eave boards which have since been removed. The simple paneled doors are located to the right and the windows are wood 6/6 except those in data processing (the shotgun nearest the wall, i.e., the second building east of the east gate) which are aluminum. The three structures were probably built in the late 1870s and closely resemble their original appearance. (Photographs: 8 & 19. Contact sheets: 3/22-23,26,29,30; 10/25-28,29-35 & 11/1-4.)

FIRST HOSPITAL PERIOD
1901-1935

With the acquisition of Mount Vernon by the State of Alabama for use as a mental hospital, there was a radical shift in building use and a new construction program was undertaken. Early in the hospital period changes were made to the buildings. The entrance gate was enclosed as the administration building incorporated the guardhouse and the dispensary into its structure. A large ward was built toward the rear of the complex which is now the unoccupied Unit 6. A number of other structures that were erected have since been demolished, including Unit 1. Surviving from the early

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hospital years are several buildings constructed outside the walls: two simplified bungalows flank a group of earlier shotguns (all of these served as residences for hospital staff) and an employee residence was sited just outside the entrance markers. The late-nineteenth-century post hospital was converted into the director's home and subsequently remodeled after the 1926 hurricane. The largest of the buildings which remain from the early hospital period is Unit 2. Built without special appropriation and on designs supplied by the superintendent, it was located within the wall and complemented Unit 1 which has been replaced. Two buildings were also established in the ravine: the carpenter shop (engineering and maintenance) and the laundry.

KITCHEN/MEDICAL RECORDS
(20) (C)

One of the earliest buildings constructed for the hospital was the kitchen which was located between the office and the subaltern's quarters. Irregularly shaped and built of brick (common bond), it must have served the major part of the facility. Sometime after 1935 a section of the structure was removed; the building is now long and rectangular. It has its major entrance centered on the northeast end and several secondary entrances unevenly spaced along the side (NW) facing the street. The side facing the retaining wall (SE) is newer than the other side and a section at the southwest end appears to date from a later period than the rest of the building. The windows and doors on either of the long sides are unevenly spaced. In plan it has a central longitudinal hall with rooms to either side. The interior currently has dropped ceilings, and the floors have been carpeted. The building is now used for processing and maintaining medical records. (Contact sheet: 1/9-11, 16.)

EMPLOYEE RESIDENCE
(21) (C)

Located about 150 yards from the highway is the main entrance to Searcy marked by a pair of free standing obelisk-like piers. Off the drive just outside the entrance is a house used as an employee residence.

The building is one story with a rather wide and high pitched gable. It rests on a brick wall foundation which is considerably higher in the rear than in the front due to the slope of the site. Constructed with drop siding it has a full-length, wrap-around, attached porch with turned posts and sawn brackets. This is the only elaboration on an otherwise plain house except for the rafter ends, each of which has a swallow tail cut. The door is right of center creating an asymmetrical facade which may indicate another door was originally left of center. At the back of the house is a lower gabled rear wing with a shed addition on one side and an enclosed porch on the other.

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Despite some minor remodeling, it appears to have been a simple four-room plan with a rear kitchen wing. A section of two interior walls has been removed to give the rooms a more open feeling. In addition, the ceiling has been lowered. The structure dates from about 1905 and retains most of its integrity. (Photograph: 9. Contact sheets: 3/27-28 & 11/10-16.)

UNIT 6
(22) (C)

Originally Wards 9 and 10, this large two-story building with a basement was constructed behind the old armourer's shops below the retaining wall, near and perpendicular to the main brick wall. It has a low hipped roof. The walls are stuccoed and are probably of rubble concrete construction.

The rectangular plan has fifteen bays on the front and five on the side with windows of 10/10 or stationary 20 light, all with a slight arch. The front has two concrete galleries running the length of the building with iron rails on the first floor, iron post supports, and chain link mesh on the upper gallery. The door is right of center on each floor. A three-light transom is present over the second floor door and an enclosed transom is over the first floor door. There are doors on either end and several bays are enclosed.

The interior was designed as wards and as such the floor plan is open except for supports and utility spaces along the exterior walls. The basement floor is divided into a number of rooms. The building is not currently being used but is structurally sound and is being maintained. It appears to have had very few significant changes and today maintains its original form. (Contact sheets: 2/18-19, 8/25-28, 9/18-21 & 12/19-20.)

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
(23) (C)

The main drive into Searcy leads to the Administration Building located at the wall. The central section is situated between two 1840 buildings, the guardhouse and the dispensary. The older parts are brick and one and a half stories while the newer middle section is two-story frame.

The vented gable roof extends past the recessed portico and is supported on four monumental Tuscan columns rising the full two stories. A full-length, second-story porch has been enclosed. The central double doors are multi-paned with four light-sidelights and a broken transom; they are flanked by triple windows.

The older brick wings have lower cross gabled roofs with brick dogtooth cornices. Four windows, each of which has a segmental arch of one and a half stretchers, is

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present on the front of each wing. The right wing has an original casement window, three steel nine-light windows and an added 6/6 sash, while the left wing has four 6/6 sash windows. The rear of each wing has a flat roofed, drop sided addition with decorative roof balustrade.

There appears to be a later two-story rear section added to the central two-story part of the building. Above the rear door is a flat balustraded deck that serves only as a covering for the stoop. Flanking the rear doorway are five-light sidelights. The door is recessed behind the sidelights and has a five-light transom and flanking twelve-light windows. The first and second floor windows are irregularly spaced and there is a recessed entrance into the right wing. The ends of the wings have parapeted gable roofs. There are some interior modernizations within the working spaces; however, these are cover-ups and partition walls rather than substantive changes. (Photograph: 10. Contact sheets: 3/10, 32, 4/1-10 & 12/33-35.)

RESIDENCE/TRANSITIONAL SERVICES
(24) (C)

The building used for transitional services is located just outside the east gate on the north side of the drive. In appearance it is a simple, one-story bungalow with drop siding. The French doors are centered and are flanked by double windows. The full-length recessed porch is screened with the main gable supported on high brick piers at either end of the porch, and half piers of brick accent the central entranceway. The sides are three bays and the brick pier foundation has brick infill. There is a lower gabled carport on the rear supported by brick piers with a parapet wall between the piers. Off the rear to one side is a drop-sided garage. The structure is on the site of an earlier two-story building. It was probably built as an employee residence by the hospital around 1930 and is essentially unchanged. (Contact sheets: 3/24, 31 & 10/21-24.)

EMPLOYEE HOUSING
(25) (C)

Located on the north side of the entrance drive, the structure farthest from the wall serves as employee housing. The drop-sided house rests on brick piers that have been infilled. The roof is gabled. There is a full-length, recessed, screened porch with tall brick divided piers at each end and two half piers flanking the centered porch steps. The four-bay front has a door to either side of center. The side was two bays but has had a third bay added to the rear under a lower gable. This third bay, in turn, has two added utility appendages.

Tradition holds that this building served as the commissary during the latter part of the Federal period. However, stylistically it appears to be from the late 1920s or early 1930s. Therefore, a circa date of 1930 would seem appropriate. The building

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is typical of a simplified bungalow of the period. Rear additions to the structure are in keeping with its twentieth-century style and do not adversely impact on the building's integrity. (Contact sheets: 3/24-25 & 11/5-9.)

HOSPITAL
DIRECTOR'S RESIDENCE
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(26) (C)

In a Surgeon General's report from 1875, it was recommended that a new hospital be constructed at Mount Vernon Barracks. This apparently was done fairly soon after the report was issued. The hospital was located outside the east gate on the main drive. It was a two-story frame building with galleries on both floors surrounding the structure. The gallery supports were simple posts with brackets. There was an exterior lateral stair on the rear from the first to the balustraded second-story gallery. The hipped roof was truncated by a large raised louvred vent.

The building was converted to the director's residence when the State acquired the complex. It retained its basic appearance until 1926 when a storm tore off the roof and allowed rain to pour into the building for three days.

After the storm Mrs. E. L. McCafferty, the wife of the director, had the house remodeled. Currently, the facade of the two-story building has a full-length tile deck which is partially covered by an extended cross gabled portico. The Neo-Classic portico is centrally located on the facade and its roof is supported by a pair of two-story Tuscan columns raised on brick piers. The five-bay facade consists of a three-bay central block and cross gabled pavilions at either end. The windows are 6/6 and most are double. There is a triple window over the entrance with an inaccessible balustraded deck. The entrance is centered on the facade with four-light sidelights and an eight-light full transom.

The sides of the building are irregular. The left side is three bays on the first floor and two on the second. The first floor has twin 6/6/ windows with a wood awning, and a set of French doors with a six-light transom and a concrete and brick stoop. This entrance is protected by a large projecting gable on battered columns on high brick piers.

The rear has a centered, two-story, shed roofed addition with an enclosed first story porch. The addition's windows are 3/1 and those of the enclosed porch are 6/6/6. The windows in the end bays of the house are 6/6.

With the radical change to the exterior, there were also modifications to the interior. A staircase was built inside and the first floor wall between the front and rear center rooms was removed. The second story was also changed from the rooms

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reached by an exterior gallery to a longitudinal hall plan. The building is currently used as the Public Information Office. Recognizing that the earlier hospital building has disappeared in the remodeling, the structure must be dated 1926. As a building from the late 1920s, the structure is in excellent condition and its integrity is almost completely intact.

Outbuildings:

Aside from the two-car garage and circular screened patio there are several other structures associated with this building.

The most prominent outbuilding is the hospital steward's quarters now used as a guest house. It is located between the old hospital and the wall and set slightly back. It is frame, raised on high brick piers with brick wall infill and sits on a sloping site. There is a full-length, hipped porch with screening studs and an enclosed section at the right. The front is seven bays and the ends are one bay. The building retains the scalloped barge and eave boards of the type that once decorated the cottages across the drive. It dates from the 1880s.

To the rear of the old hospital is a small, one-room, rectangular, drop-sided building constructed as a house for the director's cook. It has a gable roof and sits on a brick and concrete pier foundation. There is a full-length porch with an engaged shed roof. The building has a door on the front and one side, and a window in the rear and on the other side. It was probably built in the late 1910s and is presently unoccupied.

To the rear of the main building is a fenced area with a triple dog house that served as a kennel for the director's hunting dogs.

The property shows signs of having been well landscaped with some aspects of a formal type of garden. There is also a concrete reflecting pool in the terraced back yard. (Photographs: 11 & 20. Contact sheets: 3/33-35 & 11/18-35.)

UNIT 2
(27) (C)

Set inside the main gate in the south part of the wall and west of the stockade is Unit 2. Built in 1932 without state appropriations and on plans and specifications supplied by the Superintendent, it is a three-story, brick (common bond) H-shaped structure with central front and rear pavilions. The front, central pavilion is gabled and has a portico with four monumental Tuscan columns raised on brick plinths.

The central door is doubled, multi-paned with eight-light sidelights and a broken transom. The two center windows of each pavilion are larger in size than the other

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windows but all are 6/6. Each of the three pavilions (the center and two ends) has a decorative circular vent and decorative quoining. The eaves are supported by double brackets.

The east side near the gate has applied columns supporting a wide gable duplicating the front central pavilion. These are placed asymmetrically on the wall with one bay toward the front and six bays between the attached columns and the rear. The perimeter wall intersects the building at the basement level and the section of the wall where Unit 2 is located was removed.

The three-story galleries on the rear running from the wings to the central pavilion have chain link fencing. A service tower has been added to the inside of the left wing and a service area added to the right wing. The rear gables also have decorative vents.

The roof is complex with cross gables and raised rectangular cupola-like vents at the ridge intersections. The rooms were originally open dormitory-type spaces. After 1972 a number of partition walls were built. The building is now vacant except for a small section used as the patients' canteen. Aside from the late partition walls primarily located on the first floor interior, the structure has substantially maintained its integrity. (Photograph: 12. Contact sheets: 3/12-13, 15, 19; 7/22 10/8, 15-20 & 12/29-32.)

CARPENTER SHOP
ENGINEERING & MAINTENANCE
(28) (C)

The carpenter shop, located in the side of the ravine and dated circa 1930, is now used by the engineering and maintenance department. Built of brick (common bond) it is one story on the front on a raised basement set in the ravine's side. The five-bay front has a central door and one right of center. There is a three-bay, attached, cross gabled porch centered on the front with four large Tuscan columns. Mechanicals have been placed under an attached flat roof at the basement level on the right side. The rear may have been open but is now enclosed in brick and frame and there are several sets of additions on the back extending into the ravine. The left side has a gabled basement entrance on Tuscan columns. The front, which was built to complement Unit 2 and the earlier Unit 1, retains its character and helps maintain the 1930s feel of this area of the complex. (Contact sheets: 3/14 & 10/14-14.)

LAUNDRY
(29) (NC)

Located in the ravine behind and to the side of Unit 2 is the laundry. Built during the early 1930s, it is brick (common bond) and one story on a basement set

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into the side of the ravine. The roof is gabled to the side and the facade has been compromised by an addition to the front and side and changes in the door and window placement. The windows are doubled, 6/6 with segmental relieving arches, and the double doors are of an industrial type not unexpected in this kind of building. It is still in use and is in fair condition. (Contact sheet: 3/17.)

STOREHOUSE/CARPENTER SHOP
(30) (NC)

Abutting the wall at the south gate is the carpenter shop. It is L-shape and is actually a series of structures built over time. The original structure is perpendicular to the wall; this is the section which abuts the wall next to the south gate. To the north is an attached cross gabled addition and to the north of this is a lower gabled addition. All sections are frame with irregularly placed windows and doors. (Contact sheets: 1/31 & 6/21/24.)

SECOND HOSPITAL PERIOD
1935 TO 1950's

Since the 1930s the hospital has continued to build structures as needed. The most important of these are the two late 1940's hospitals for the male and female patients and the 1980s Unit 1 dormitory. There have been several service-oriented structures and a chapel built within the complex.

HOSPITAL FOR MEN
HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN
(31 & 32) (NC)

These two brick buildings, primarily constructed of shiners, were erected in the late 1940s. They are T-shaped in plan with central and end pavilions on the front. They are two stories on the front with a basement which, due to the slope of the site, becomes a three-story rear. The rear wing has galleries on each side of the T. The roof is complex in design as a result of the plan. The entrances are located in the central pavilions and have double doors with sidelights and transoms. Windows are either three-light or four-light awning.

The buildings sit opposite each other across the parade ground with each behind and between its respective 1830s inner circle buildings. They are currently being used as dormitories. (Contact sheets: 1/33; 2/20-21; 4/21-23 & 10/4-7.)

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SECURITY AND FIRE BUILDING
(33) (NC)

This small one-story structure is set very near the wall at the east entrance. It is brick with a flat roof and functional in form. The entrances and windows are irregularly placed and there is a large garage door for use by the fire truck. It was probably built in the 1960s. (Contact sheets: 3/18 & 4/11-12.)

CONTEMPORARY HOSPITAL PERIOD
1960-Present

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
(34) (NC)

The concrete block building that serves as the Department of Rehabilitative Services is located near the retaining wall just south and west of the old barracks (staff development). The plan was adopted from one used at Bryce Hospital in Tuscaloosa. The building has a brick cornice and flat roof. There is a full-length concrete slab porch deck which is parapeted but has no roof. The windows are three part aluminum awnings and there are four irregularly spaced doors along the two-bay facade. The sides are one bay. There is a rear cement stoop and a loading ramp that is unusable due to its proximity to the retaining wall. Probably built in the 1960s, the structure is still used and is in good condition. (Contact Sheets: 2/3; 8/16-19 & 9/16-17.)

CLOTHING WAREHOUSE
(35) (NC)

The clothing warehouse is situated at the retaining wall southwest of the original office (central pharmacy and supply). Built of concrete block probably in the 1970s it presents a single story to the front and two stories to the rear. The doors are reached by a stoop raised for a loading dock. The front is seven bays with a stuccoed entablature and water table and stuccoed vertical members that divide the bays. The side is three bays. The windows are 1/4 aluminum. (Contact sheets: 1/27 & 6/13-15.)

CHAPEL
(36) (NC)

Built in 1975, the Searcy Chapel was designed by Baumhauer and McCluskey and sits within the perimeter wall below the retaining wall. The walls and foundation are stuccoed. The asphalt roof is gabled to the front with a tall steeple. The central double door is paneled. Above the door within the door frame is another large double panel giving a monumental effect to the doorway. Reeded pilasters with Corinthian capitals flank the door and hold a simple frieze divided from the plain architrave. A

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dentil moulding runs along the rake of the pediment and at the cornice. Cubic in massing, the facade is organized into three identically detailed, pedimented forms which emphasize the chapel's entry.

The corners and side bays are articulated by plain slightly protruding buttresses. Each side has six bays formed by the buttresses but only three are pierced by windows. At the rear of each side are lower cross gabled wings with attached, shed, concrete porches. The rear is blind but denticulated and pedimented. Small round vents under the cornice give an almost decorative appearance.

The steeple is comprised of a build-up of geometric shapes. A square base carries a taller rectangular base with Tuscan pilasters and tall arched vents. On this is an octagonal paneled lantern with an octagonal spire surmounted by a globe and cross. It is a well detailed building designed to fit the site. (Contact sheets: 1/32 & 7/23-26.)

UNIT 1
(37) (NC)

This contemporary structure replaces the late 1920s dormitory. It is three stories with metal secured windows and an attached one-story section. Irregular in plan, it is built of brick. Mechanicals are located on the roof and in the attached service tower. The elevations of the structure are irregular and lack any design focus. (Contact sheet: 3/11 & 4/13-16.)

Footnotes:

1 Drawing of "Magazine for fixed Ammunition, Mount Vernon Arsenal, Alabama." June 22, 1829. Washington, D.C.: National Archives. Record group no.77, Fortifications File.

2 Report of Lieutenant Walter Smith, dated Mount Vernon, March 16, 1829. Washington, D.C.: National Archives. Record group no. 77, Fortifications File.

3 "Explanatory Notes to Drawings of the Mount Vernon Arsenal, Alabama." June 18, 1840. W.A. Thoonton, Captain of Ordnance. Washington, D.C.: National Archives. Record group no. 77, Fortifications File.

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INTERVIEWS

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Alabama Historical Commission
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Mount Vernon, Alabama
January 23, 1987

Robert Goodsell
Alabama Historical Commission
Searcy Hospital
Mount Vernon, Alabama
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National Park Service

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Montgomery, Alabama
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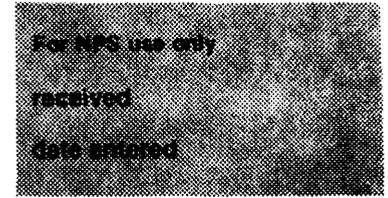
Robert Gamble
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January 23, 1987

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Mobile, Alabama
January 1986

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UTM References continued:

- I. 16/401660/3439630
- J. 16/401700/3439730
- K. 16/401780/3439780
- L. 16/401890/3439790
- M. 16/402060/3439680
- N. 16/402210/3439680

The Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex is located in the southeast corner of section 36 of township 2 north, range 1 west. It is on the south side of Coy Smith Highway and west of Highway 43. The complex includes the perimeter wall and those buildings within the wall. It also includes those buildings located to either side of the main drive from Coy Smith Highway to the east entrance, being 400' more or less north to south and extending east more or less 700' from the east gate of the hospital.

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APPENDIX VI

KEY TO MAPS

Included in the district nomination for the Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searcy Hospital Complex are a series of color-coded map overlays showing the development of the site. The accompanying keys emphasize a structure's first appearance by printing its historic/common name in boldface type. Also, each structure is identified on the map key as being either contributing (C) or non-contributing (NC) to the district.

1840 MAP

1. Arsenal (C)
2. Commanding Officer's Quarters (C)
3. Carpenter Shop (C)
4. Blacksmith Shop (C)
5. Barracks (C)
6. Armourer's Shop (C)
7. Armourer's Shop (C)
8. Subaltern's Quarters (C)
9. Office (C)
10. Laboratory (C)
11. Proposed Guardhouse (C)
12. Proposed Sutler's Store (Dispensary) (C)
13. Wall (C)
14. Fence (C)
15. Retaining Wall (C)

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CIRCA 1880 MAP

1. Arsenal (C)
2. Commanding Officer's Quarters (C)
3. Carpenter Shop (C)
4. Blacksmith Shop (C)
5. Barracks (C)
6. Armourer's Shop (C)
7. Armourer's Shop (C)
8. Subaltern's Quarters (C)
9. Office (C)
10. Laboratory (C)
11. Guardhouse (C)
12. Dispensary (C)
13. Wall (C)
14. Fence (C)
15. Retaining Wall (C)
16. Kitchen/Mess Hall (NC)
17. Cottage (C)
18. Cottage (C)
19. Cottage (C)

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1935 MAP

1. Arsenal (C)
2. Commanding Officer's Quarters (C)
3. Carpenter Shop (C)
4. Blacksmith Shop (C)
5. Barracks (C)
6. Armourer's Shop (C)
7. Armourer's Shop (C)
8. Subaltern's Quarters (C)
9. Office (C)
10. Laboratory (C)
11. Guardhouse (C)
12. Dispensary (C)
13. Wall (C)
14. Fence (C)
15. Retaining Wall (C)
16. Kitchen/Mess Hall (C)
17. Cottage (C)
18. Cottage (C)
19. Cottage (C)
20. Kitchen/Medical Records (NC)
21. Employee Residence (C)
22. Unit 6 (Wards #9 & #10) (C)
23. Administration Building (C)
24. Residence/Transitional Services (C)
25. Employee Housing (C)
26. Hospital/Director's Residence (C)
27. Unit 2 (C)
28. Carpenter Shop/Engineering and Maintenance (C)
29. Laundry (NC)
30. Storehouse/Carpenter Shop (NC)

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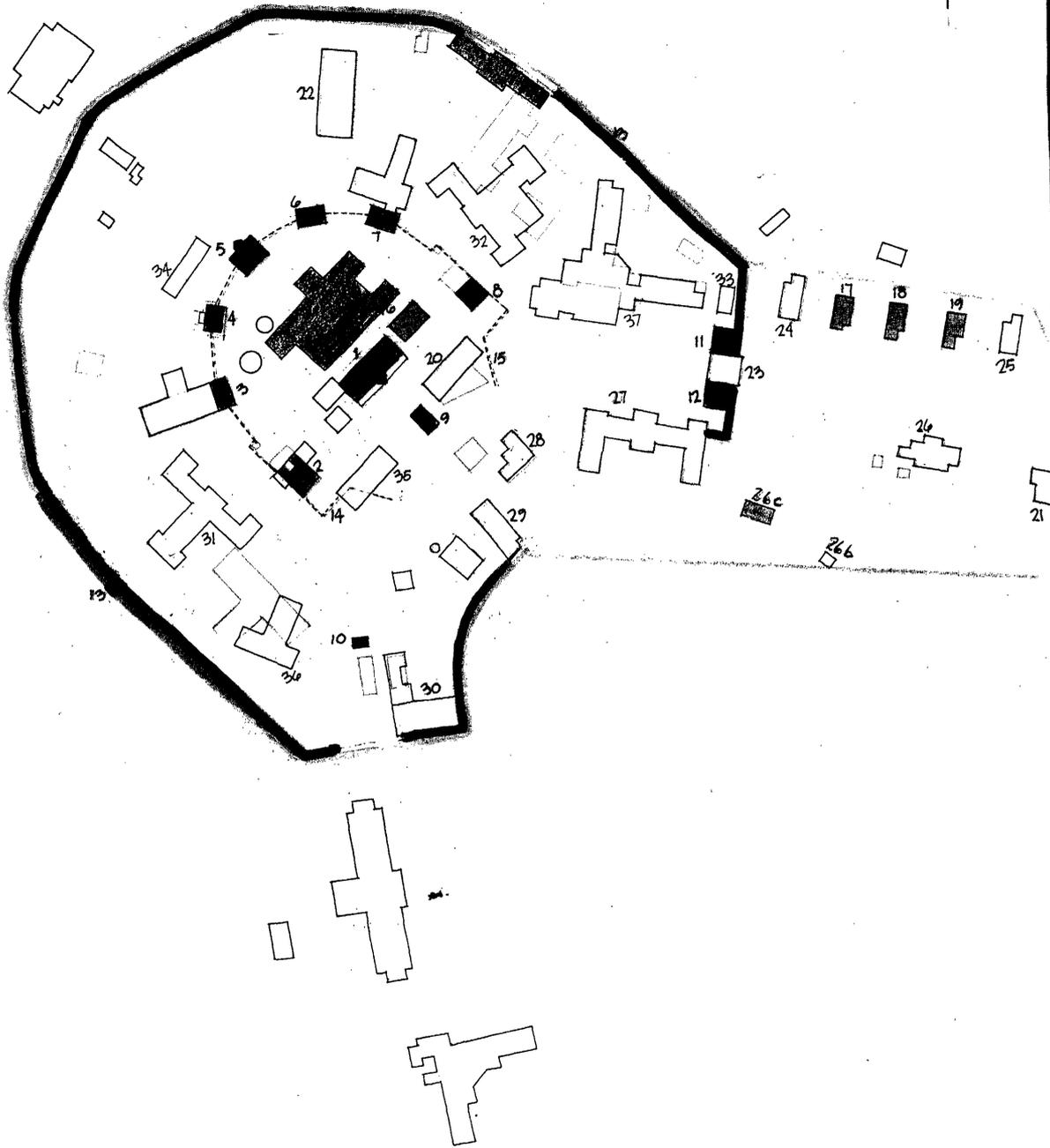
ITEM NUMBER 10

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POST 1935*

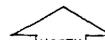
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6. Armourer's Shop (C)
7. Armourer's Shop (C)
8. Subaltern's Quarters (C)
9. Office (C)
10. Laboratory (C)
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13. Wall (C)
14. Fence (C)
15. Retaining Wall (C)
16. Kitchen/Mess Hall (C)
17. Cottage (C)
18. Cottage (C)
19. Cottage (C)
20. Kitchen/Medical Records (NC)
21. Employee Residence (C)
22. Unit 6 (C)
23. Administration Building (C)
24. Residence/Transitional Services (C)
25. Employee Housing (C)
26. Hospital/Director's Residence (C)
27. Unit 2 (C)
28. Carptenter Shop/Engineering and Maintenance (C)
29. Laundry (NC)
30. Storehouse/Carpenter Shop (NC)
31. Hospital for Men (NC)
32. Hospital for Women (NC)
33. Security and Fire Building (NC)
34. Department of Rehabilitative Services (NC)
35. Clothing Warehouse (NC)
36. Chapel (NC)
37. Unit 1 (NC)

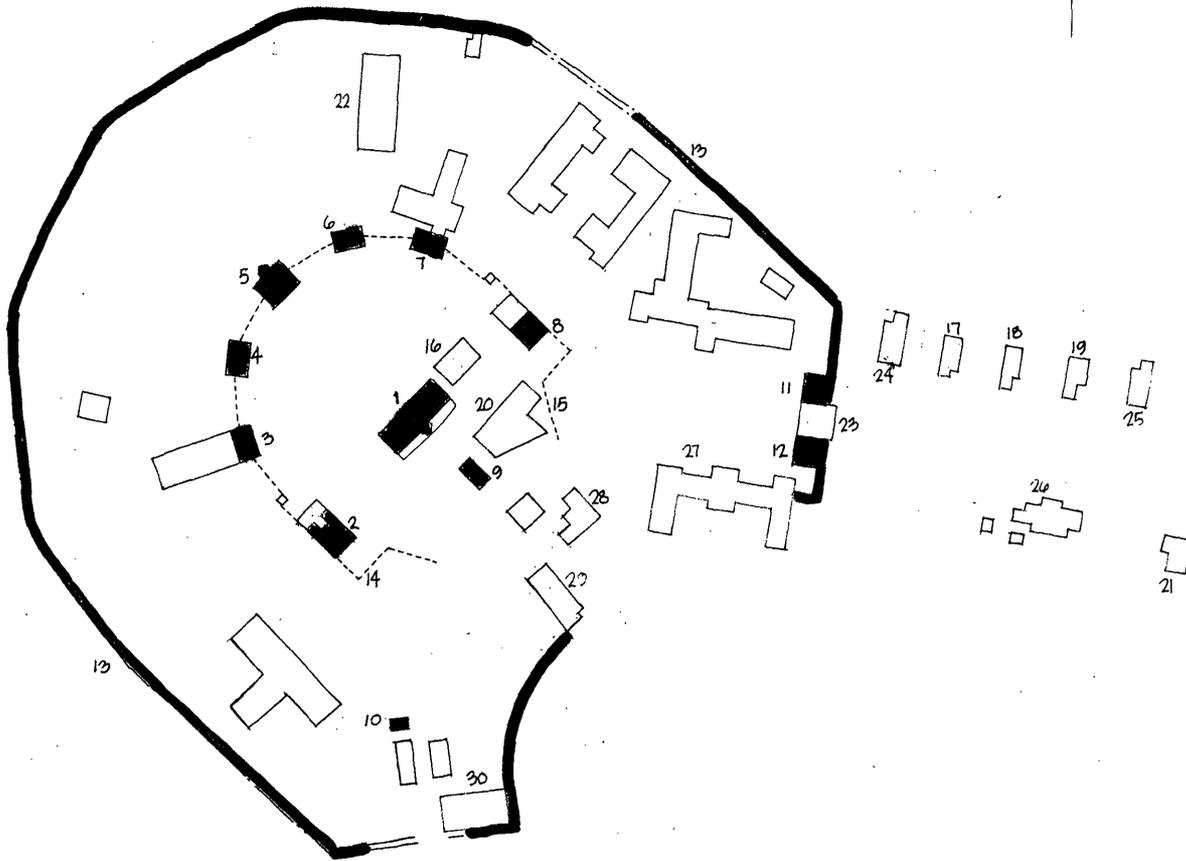
*Unidentified structures are either outside the district, considered not significant or have been demolished.



MT. VERNON ARSENAL / SEARCY HOSPITAL

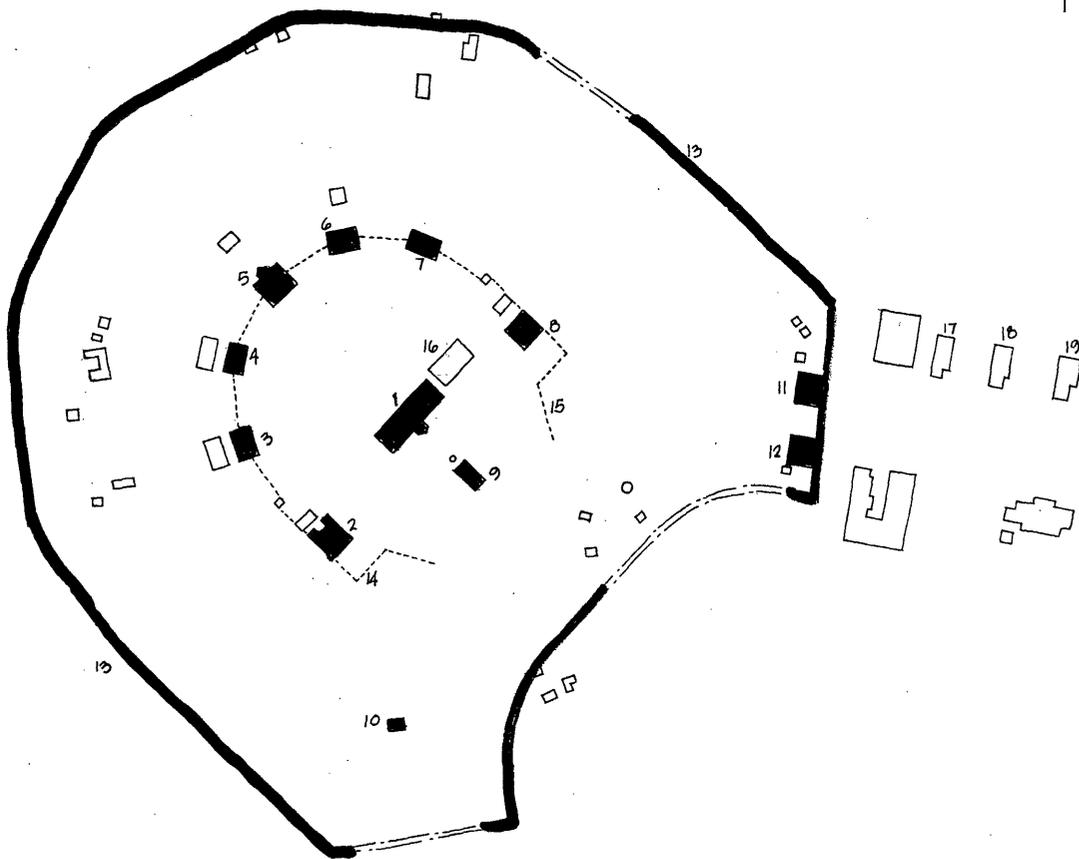
- 1840
 - c-1880
 - 1935
 - POST 1935
 - Destroyed
- MAP A-2
- MAP A-1


 NORTH
 NOT TO SCALE



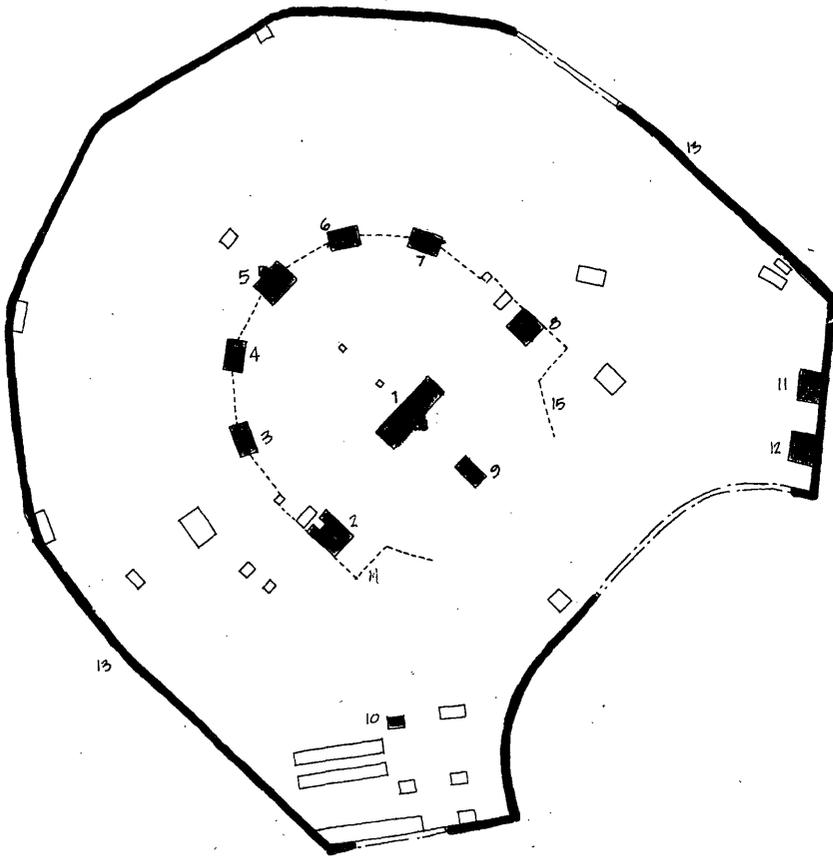
MAP A-2





MAP A-3





MAP A-4