

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| |
|----------------------------------|
| STATE: Washington |
| COUNTY: Pierce |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| ENTRY DATE OCT 16 1974 |

1. NAME

COMMON:
Fort Nisqually Site

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Fort Nisqually

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
NW of Dupont off I-5
~~Near Old Fort Lake~~

CITY OR TOWN:
DuPont vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
#3 - Honorable Julia B. Hansen

STATE: **Washington** CODE: **53** COUNTY: **Pierce** CODE: **053**

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both | Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____ |
| ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (Yes): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
E. I. DuPont de Nemours and Co.

STREET AND NUMBER:
1007 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

STATE:
Delaware

CODE:
10

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Pierce County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
County-City Building, 930 Tacoma Avenue South

CITY OR TOWN:
Tacoma

STATE:
Washington

CODE:
53

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
None

DATE OF SURVEY:

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

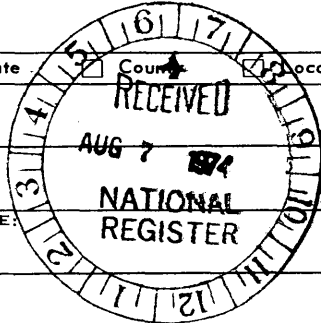
STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: **Washington**

COUNTY: **Pierce**

ENTRY NUMBER: **OCT 16 1974**

DATE: _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The 1833 site of Fort Nisqually was located near Puget Sound on a high bluff overlooking the Nisqually River Valley; to the rear of the fort was a series of large rolling plains. The fort structures themselves were located on level ground on the south bank of a stream near the mouth of the Sequelitchew Creek, which runs into Puget Sound. It was about one mile northeast of the Nisqually River and one-quarter mile from Puget Sound. The fort was enclosed on all sides by tall pine trees except on the northeast where it was open to the "boundless and picturesque prairie." The raising of crops and cattle was accomplished on the fertile spots of these comparatively barren prairies. The fort was moved in 1843 to a site one mile from the mouth of Puget Sound and two miles from the Nisqually River. It was relocated on Sequelitchew Creek near the south end of American Lake. The move was evidently made because of the difficulty in obtaining water at the old site. This nomination pertains to the original site.

The buildings inside the fort were all made of logs and roofed with bark. The principle structure was the Chief Factor's House which was 55' x 20' x 12' high. The roof was of cedar bark and held in place by large poles, the floors were puncheons, and there was an immense fireplace with chimney built of sticks and plastered with clay. Enclosing the buildings was a palisade made of split logs, one end which was firmly planted in the ground and the other fastened by wooden pins to a railing near the top. The palisades enclosed a space of approximately 200' x 250'. The fort was strengthened by four corner bastions that were built of squared timbers rather than round logs. The bastions were armed with cannons and swivel guns. The upper stories of the bastions projected beyond the palisades walls, making it possible for those within to watch activities immediately adjacent to the outside walls, insuring a better defense. The lower stories housed the prisoners. The date these bastions were erected is disputed. Some historians state that the bastions were built in 1843 at the relocated site, while Clarence B. Bagley in *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound* by Ezra Meeker, contends that the bastions were built in 1833. To support Bagley's claims, there is an illustration apparently of the original site done by a contemporary which shows one bastion; however, there is no date on the illustration. Besides the bastioned stockade and fort buildings proper, there were outbuildings: a blacksmith shop; a cabin; and eventually a saw pit.

The property encompassing the original and relocated sites was sold by Edward Huggins, the last factor, to the DuPont Company in 1906. Today there are no remains or signs of the original fort on the site. There is only a white concrete monument to mark the piece of grassy land surrounded by fir trees. A road runs adjacent to the site which is near an ammonium nitrate storage building on the DuPont property. There are also oil drums standing in rows to the right of the site. The land is undeveloped today, but there is no guarantee that it will remain so in the future.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

4. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1833-1869**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1833, while on a trading expedition down Puget Sound, Archibald McDonald, a Hudson's Bay Company employee, spent 12 days with eight or nine men erecting a log cabin near a small lake, later known as Old Fort Lake. The cabin was called Nisqually House and was the first white settlement in the Puget Sound area. It was to play a major role in the development of the Pacific Northwest. The post was built under the guidance of Dr. W. F. Tolmie of the Hudson's Bay Company, who later became the fort's first factor. The fort's early traders and factors were the first missionaries to the Indians. The first missionary work in Puget Sound apparently began on July 21, 1833 according to Dr. W. F. Tolmie's journal:

"Today the Indians assembled in front of the house in the number of 70 or 80 both male and female. With Brown as interpreter, we spoke in Chinook. Mr. Herson and I explained the Creation of the World, and the reason why Jews and Christians abstain from work on Sunday...."

On November 12, 1836, the first steam vessel arrived in Puget Sound, the *Beaver*. Engaged by the Hudson's Bay Company, it was based at Fort Nisqually and carried trade along the coast from the Columbia River to the northern Russian settlements in Alaska.

In 1838, the Hudson's Bay Company organized a subsidiary firm at Fort Nisqually, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, designed to provide subsistence to other Hudson's Bay posts. The new company exploited the rich and fertile pasture lands adjacent to the creeks. The company so increased its trade of farm products to the Russians in Alaska, the Hawaiian Islands, and the English that it eclipsed the fur trade. Because of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, Fort Nisqually itself was the first fort not built exclusively for fur trading and, in fact, introduced scientific farming to the Puget Sound area. After 1839, the fort became the principle depot for curing meats and loading vessels bound for Russian American ports. It can be said that Puget Sound Agricultural Company brought to Puget Sound the first large scale agricultural enterprise and, in the whole Washington Territory, was second in importance only to its parent, the Hudson's Bay Company.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dr. W. F. Tolmie's Journal, Mitchell Press Limited, Vancouver, Canada, 1963.
 Bancroft, Herbert Howe, History of the Northwest Coast, A. L. Bancroft and Company, San Francisco, Vol. II, 1884.
Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition During the Years 1838-1842, Vol. IV., Charles Wilkes, Printed by C. Sherman, 1844.
 Snowden, Clinton A., History of Washington - The Rise and Progress of an American State, Century History Company, New York, 1909.
 Hudson's Bay Company Journal of occurrences as recorded in Told By the Pioneers, Vol. I, c. 1937, published by E. N. Hutchinson.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

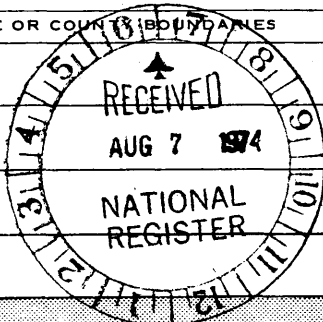
| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY | | | OR | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|----|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER | LATITUDE | LONGITUDE | | LATITUDE | LONGITUDE | |
| | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds | | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds | |
| NW | ° ' " | ° ' " | | 47° 6' 34" | 122° 39' 46" | |
| NE | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |
| SE | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |
| SW | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |

6/11/74
 11/515651
 5217120

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: One

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Ms. Kathleen J. Norris

ORGANIZATION: Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation DATE: July, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
P.O. Box 1128

CITY OR TOWN: Olympia STATE: Washington CODE: 53

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Charles S. Rippe
 Director

Title Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Date 8/1/74

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

AR. Westerman
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 10/16/74

ATTEST:
Yvonne [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 10-11-74

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

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| COUNTY | Pierce | |
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| | | OCT 16 1974 |

(Number all entries)

#8 Significance
Fort Nisqually Site

The fort was relocated in 1843, but evidently no change took place in its varied enterprises. It continued to increase in importance, developing into the leading supply station for other company posts in the Northwest. Located in the direct line of overland travel between Fort Vancouver and Fort Langley, it became a necessary stopping place where boats and horses could be exchanged and supplies removed.

On June 15, 1846, the English relinquished claims to territory below the 49th parallel, but both the Puget Sound Agricultural Company and the Hudson's Bay Company still controlled 160,000 acres in and around Fort Nisqually. In 1848 at Tumwater, a small town some 15 miles southwest of Fort Nisqually, a meeting was called by the American settlers to stop the threats of encroachment by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. The Americans posed a series of resolutions along with the demand that the Puget Sound Agricultural Company remove its cattle from territory south of the Nisqually River within one week. The Company complied, but its existence was a sore point with settlers until 1869 when the U.S. Government paid \$650,000 for both companies. Fort Nisqually itself was valued at \$12,000. This area contested by settlers and the British may well be the most significant landmark from the days of British occupation in Puget Sound.

Edward Huggins, the last factor of Fort Nisqually, became an American citizen, and held as a homestead the land where the fort stood. In 1906 he sold this land to the DuPont Powder Company. In 1933 the remaining fort structures were moved to Point Defiance Park in Tacoma, where a duplicate of the fort was constructed housing the restored granary and Factor's House.

Fort Nisqually is significant for its important role as the site of major British and American development in Puget Sound during the early days of settlement. Important to the inception of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, the existence of Fort Nisqually aided American settlement of the area.

