

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>
COUNTY: <b>Jackson</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>JUL 17 1974</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Ft. Blount - Williamsburg Site**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**On Cumberland River 4-river miles downstream of Gainesboro**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Gainesboro**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
**Joe L. Evins, 4th District**

STATE:  
**Tennessee**

CODE  
**47**

COUNTY:  
**Jackson**

CODE  
**087**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input 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)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____	

**4. AGENCY**

**U. S. Army, Corps of Engineers**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)  
**Nashville District**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P. O. Box 1070**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Nashville**

STATE:  
**Tennessee**

CODE  
**47**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
**District Engineer, Nashville District, Corps of Engineers**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P. O. Box 1070 37202**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Nashville**

STATE:  
**Tennessee**

CODE  
**47**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

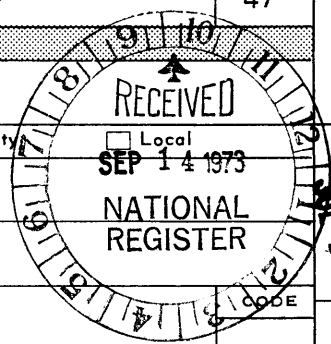
DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **Tennessee**

COUNTY: **Jackson**

ENTRY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: **JUL 17 1974**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	N/A					
	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input 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 Fort Blount - Williamsburg Site is presently described as part of a typical Cumberland River bottom farmland area. The site is located on gently rolling terrain within an oxbow-like bend (entitled Smith Bend) of the Cumberland River. As indicated in accompanying photos, the site is surrounded by moderately mountainous terrain typical of the Middle Tennessee area Cumberland Mountains. The immediate site is composed of pastureland, abandoned fields, and small woodlots of low-grade mixed hardwood. The old townsite of Williamsburg is part of a well kept improved pastureland area. The site of Fort Blount is located on Corps of Engineers land, a segment of the Cordell Hull Dam and Reservoir project area.

Records indicate that in addition to Fort Blount, Williamsburg, in its thriving era, was composed of at least a dozen dwellings, a drug store, a distillery, tavern, hotel, livery, horse-drawn mill, printing shop, and general stores were clustered along the road toward Bagdad. The Bagdad road was joined by the road from the Beach Hill area south of Holleman's and Woodfolk's Ferry and the westbound Highland-Wartrace road that lead from the conflux of north-south and east-west trails used by Indians who traversed the "happy hunting ground" which this area had become in the four hundred years prior to white settlement.

In 1809 a county academy, Montpelier, was chartered and built in Smith's Bend, of which a log girls' dormitory still stands. With the authorization from the Tennessee legislative body (1817) to remove the county seat to its present site of Gainesborough, the decline of the settlement (lands reverting to Williamsburg by mid-century) left few existing structures in use. The graves of Williams, his wife Margaret, and two daughters, shaded by a stalwart oak, are in a meadow covered by inscribed 5 x 10-foot limestone quarried slabs. The only other existing artifacts to monument the event today are the three-foot-high stone foundation of a small cabin, logs saved from the original town jail which was razed only a few months ago, and a nearby hexagonal raised stone slab over an unmarked grave, most probably guarding the remains of Edmund Jennings, a companion to Williams, Moses Fisk, James Robertson and Andy Jackson in the Red Stix campaign and other frontier challenges. Jennings in a letter to Williams made the request that when he died, "to see that he be buried beside the trail, make the grave six feet deep, and fill it with rocks so that the critters would not dig up his bones."

The logs from the original town jail have been recently stored in a closed garage by members of the Jackson County Historical Society; they remain undamaged.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

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 type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ft. Blount - Williamsburg area is significant in that it represents a facet of the broad cultural, political, military, and social history of the westward movement and the pioneering settlement of the American frontier. It is a typical representation of the events in the life of the people of the Middle Tennessee region for the period during which Harriette Arnough describes as the flowering of the Cumberland. Relating to other significant events in the developing culture of the state of Tennessee, it is the important link between the counties of East Tennessee and the Cumberland Settlements during the post-Revolutionary War transitional period. Embodying as it does the threefold factors, the ferry crossing, the protecting forts, and the settlement of Williamsburg which was the hub of the military-political organization comprising Jackson County, it extended from the Kentucky line on the north, Smith County on the west, the Caney Fork and the Cumberland Plateau on the south boundary, and "The Wilderness" strip separating the Middle District from the Holston settlements which tried to be born prematurely as the State of Franklin. This being the area made hazardous by Indian attack for the travelers coming inland, the fort was established in 1790 by Gov. William Blount who commissioned Lt. William Martin and a garrison of 20 soldiers to construct a fort at the crossing protecting the Crossville area; a segment of old North Carolina Military Trace; and the trail, described as "the original trace from Watauga to Nashville" which descended from the plateau to Blackburn Springs, down Flynn's Lick Creek to its mouth where Sampson Williams had operated a ferry since the late 1780's. Thus, crossing the Cumberland River to its north bank, settlers made their way through the Bagdad community to the outpost operated by Tilman Dixon, via the Bledsoe's Fort at Castalian Springs, and on past Mansker's Station to Fort Nashborough. After four years the Indians had been subdued to a degree that (the state of Franklin passing out of existence with the creation of the Southwest Territory) the fort was abandoned, while the surrounding land on the north of the river became a part of Sampson Williams' plantation, operated by Sampson Williams. Williams, who figured strongly in the leadership role of late 90's Indian uprisings and who demonstrated remarkable skill in political and economic leadership in Davidson, Sumner, and Smith Counties, effected the establishment of Jackson County in 1801, taking its name from his good friend and patriot in arms, Andrew Jackson. In 1806 the site was designated as the county seat and "Williamsburg" rapidly became a thriving settlement, the center of the military district wherein monthly muster of all eligible adult male citizens was held on the parade grounds adjacent to the courthouse, jail, and stocks. A deer park was maintained to

(cont. on continuation sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bass, John M., "Half an Hour with Some Early Visitors in Tennessee," Tennessee Old and New, The Tennessee History Commission and The Tennessee History Society, Kingsport, Kingsport Press.

Clayton, W. Woodford, editor. History of Davidson County, Tennessee. Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1908.

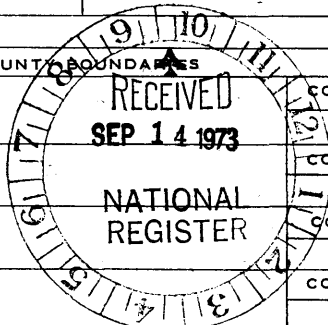
Draper, R. Garland, Fort Blount. Pamphlet File, Tennessee Tech Library, Cookeville, Tennessee. (cont. on continuation sheet)

**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		
NW	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NE	36°	19'	15"	85°	45'	15"	°	'	"
SE	36°	19'	15"	85°	44'	42"	°	'	"
SW	36°	18'	38"	85°	44'	42"	°	'	"
	36°	18'	38"	85°	45'	15"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 125

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



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: <b>District Engineer, Nashville District</b>		DATE: <b>4/30/73</b>
BUSINESS ADDRESS: <b>Corps of Engineers</b>		
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>P. O. Box 1070</b>		PHONE: <b>749-5626</b>
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Nashville</b>	STATE <b>Tennessee</b>	CODE <b>37202</b>

**12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION**      **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

State Liaison Officer recommendation:  
 Yes  
 No  
 None  
*Michael J. Smith*  
 State Liaison Officer Signature

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

*Richard G. Hunt*  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

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

Date 7/17/74

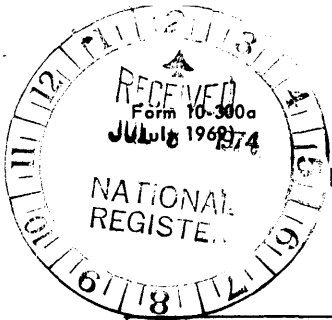
ATTEST:  
*Lawrence Hunt*  
 Keeper of The National Register

*Richard G. Hunt* 7 May 73  
 Federal Representative Signature Date  
**Col. CE, District Engineer**

Date 7.16.74

*Richard G. Hunt*  
 Federal Rep.; Dir. of W, USCE 9 May 74

1612660/4000080  
 1612670/4018800  
 161190/4000080  
 16111840/1618900  
 SEE INSTRUCTIONS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Tennessee	
COUNTY	Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
JUL 17 1974		

(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

provide meat for these training days.

Until the 1830's the form of county government was the military district which provided the voluntary troops who were so effective in Indian warfare and the southern coastal battles and defensive posts of the War of 1812.

In preparation of the above statement, interested citizens and leaders of Jackson County have expressed that, "America must not allow the vestiges of this memorable era with its glowing examples of the fortitude, faith, and strength of our forefathers to pass unnoted."

There are no known remains of the fort; the exact location of the structure has not been identified. An archeological excavation will be needed to delineate the exact location and design of the fort and grounds.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (cont.)

Draper, R. Garland. History of Jackson County, Tennessee. On Microfilm, Tennessee Tech Library, Cookeville, Tennessee.

Guild, Josephus Conn. Old Times in Tennessee. Nashville: Tavel, Eastman, & Howell. 1878.

Haile, Ann Byrne. From paper "Sampson Williams," 1959.

Hale, Williams Thomas. History of Tennessee and Tennesseans. 8 Volumes. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913.

Heiskell, Samuel G. Andrew Jackson and Early Tennessee History. Nashville: Ambrose Printing Company, 1921.

Jackson County Sentinel, Articles, from 1889's to 1973. Gainesboro, Tennessee.

Morgan, Daniel Harvey. Scrapbook on Tennessee History, April 23, 1930. Jackson County Library, Gainesboro, Tenn.

Putnam, Albigeance Waldo. History of Middle Tennessee; or Life and Times of General James Robertson. Nashville: A. W. Putnam, 1859.

Ramsey, Gettys McGready. Annals of Tennessee to the End of the Eighteenth Century. Kingsport: Kingston Press, 1826.

Williams, Samuel Cole. "Moses Fisk." East Tennessee Historical Society's Quarterly, XX (November, 1948), 16-36.