

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

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

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Fort San Marcos de Apalache

AND/OR COMMON

Fort San Marcos de Apalache

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Canal Street

CITY, TOWN

St. Marks

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

second

STATE

Florida

CODE

12

COUNTY

Wakulla

CODE

129

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

**PRESENT USE**

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

State of Florida: Division of Recreation and Parks; Improvement Fund

Trustees of the Internal

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Wakulla County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Crawfordville

STATE

Florida

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties

DATE

1972

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Division of Archives, History and Records Management

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located at the confluence of the Wakulla and St. Marks Rivers, the present San Marcos de Apalache State Park is the site of three forts constructed by the Spanish beginning in 1660 and occupied, at various times, by Spanish, English, French, Indian, American, and Confederate forces.

The first two forts, were wooden, the third Spanish fort was much sturdier, though perhaps not completed, with walls constructed of large limestone blocks, quarried a short distance west of the site. Rows of wooden posts, four to six inches in diameter, presumably from the stockade walls of the early Spanish period are becoming exposed along the west bank of the St. Marks River. In this area the erosion began during an underwater archeological salvage operation which preceded an Army Corps of Engineers project which widened the rival canal. The water running off the spoil heaps of the salvage project eroded a section of the very low bank. In one ten foot square section of this area a large number of buttons of Spanish, French, English, and American origin were recovered.

Sections of limestone walls from the third Spanish fort are exposed in several places. Along the east bank of the Wakulla River, crumbling portions of the old bastion wall still remain in places five feet above grade, with large blocks at the bottom and smaller stones on top. The old Spanish bombproof foundations, made of very thick limestone blocks are extant, with portions of three walls, exposed one to three feet above grade, and the outlines of the rooms of the structure are visible. Much of the stone of the bombproof was used in the construction of the marine hospital in 1857, and that structure's old foundations support the new museum. More of this limestone was used by the Confederates to construct walls near their earthworks. A section of Spanish moat is located parallel to the Confederate earthworks, running east-west from the end of the bombproof wall.

The Confederate earthworks are still very pronounced elevations, and their magazine, a large mound, is the highest point on the site. The Confederate remains undoubtedly cover evidence of the earlier forts.

The San Marcos site is now maintained by the Florida Division of Recreation and Parks. Until the early 1960's the fort site was privately owned, overgrown and inaccessible except by boat. The state filled in some of the marshland to construct a road, Canal Street, from the mainland. There is a small parking lot and a masonry wall and entrance-way flanked by flagpoles leading to the park.

The state built their museum on the foundations of the old marine hospital, since they assumed that most of the remains of earlier occupations would have been destroyed during its construction in 1857. An archeological project excavated the hospital ruins prior to the museum's construction. Surrounding the museum the lawns are carefully kept and the grounds landscaped. The museum and the shed and shop indicated on the enclosed plat map are non-historic and do not contribute to the national significance of the landmark.

The section of the park beyond the museum area is kept in a more natural state. There are paths and cleared areas around the rest of the park, but much of the area is undisturbed

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> _ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> _CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> _LAW	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> _1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> _ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> _EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> _SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> _ART	<input type="checkbox"/> _ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> _MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> _THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> _COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> _PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> _TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> _1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> _COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> _INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> _POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> _OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> _INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1660-1865

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

With the Spanish occupation of the province of Apalache in western Florida in the mid-seventeenth century, the peninsula formed by the junction of the Wakulla and St. Marks Rivers became a strategically important defensive and shipping point. The fertile soil of Apalache proved to be ideal for the production of the grain which St. Augustine needed. Most of the grain was sent by water rather than over the long and arduous overland route. This tiny peninsula at the head of navigable water was the logical shipping point. At the same time, it constituted a chink in the coastal defenses of Apalache which had to be plugged.

Soon after 1660, the Spanish Crown ordered the spot fortified, but nothing was done for a decade. A wooden fort was finally built. The ease with which a raiding party of French, English, and Indians captured the fort in 1682 clearly demonstrated its inadequacy. Its garrison of 45 Spaniards and 400 Indians was widely scattered. A second and stronger wooden fort, built when the Spanish repossessed the point, became the nucleus of a sizeable settlement. The empires of Spain, England and France clashed in rivalries throughout the world during much of the eighteenth century. As a result of these global conflicts, Florida several times changed hands. Governor Moore of South Carolina led a devastating raid into Apalache in 1704. Following this, San Marcos apparently was abandoned along with the other settlements in Apalache and remained unoccupied until 1718. In that year, Captain Joseph Primo de Rivera brought a detachment of troops to build a third fort. Within a few years the Spaniards began to construct a stone fort, but it was not completed when possession of the territory passed to England as a part of the general world-wide settlement made in the Treaty of Paris.

Conclusion of the American Revolution brought a second general settlement to European rivalries and a new orientation to the contest over Florida. Spain returned to Florida for a second period of control, 1783-1821. The young and vigorous United States now seemed the chief threat to Spanish control. A secondary factor was rivalry for the Indian trade in this region. The British firm of Panton, Leslie & Co. had established a trading factory at San Marcos during the English regime. With the return of Spain, they were permitted to remain by special agreement. San Marcos, as a result, became a thriving center of Indian trade. During this period San Marcos experienced considerable excitement when the adventurer William A. Bowles attempted to break the monopoly of Panton, Leslie & Co. Bowles threatened San Marcos in 1788, he captured the Apalache store in 1792 briefly, and in 1800 he seized St. Marks. Soon after, however, Governor Folch retook the fort, and although Bowles was at large for two years longer, his activities did not menace the garrison.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Verne E. Chatelain, The Defenses of Spanish Florida, 1565 to 1763 (Washington, 1941); Herbert E. Bolton and Mary Ross, The Debatable Land (Berkeley, 1925); Philip C. Brooks, "Arbuthnot and Armbrister, Case of.", Dictionary of American History, Vol. I, p. 98. (New York, 1942); Mark F. Boyd, "The Fortifications at San Marcos de Apalache," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XV, No. 1 (July, 1936); Ralston B. Lattimore, "Fort St. Marks," Historic Sites Survey Report, 8 pp., illus., September 18, 1939; (continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 100 acres  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	7,6,9	4,8,0	3,3,9	0,6,0	B	1,6	7,6,8	6,3,0	3,3	3,8	4,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING		
C	1,6	7,6,8	3,4,0	3,3	3,9	4,3,0	D					

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Until the state constructed a narrow road to the Fort San Marcos site, it was an island of about five acres, separated from the mainland by marsh. The present developed park which has in the areas around the museum been filled-in to slightly increase the grade and to combat erosion, contains 7.17 acres.

As indicated on the enclosed map, "Plan of the Fort St. Marks," dated June 25, 1835, the fort complex extended beyond land presently contained within the state-owned park.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: 1958 Frank Sarles  
 Blanche Higgins Schroer, Landmark Review Project; 1963 Horace Sheely

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey DATE:

STREET & NUMBER: 1100 L Street, N.W. TELEPHONE: 523-5464

CITY OR TOWN: Washington D.C. STATE:

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL  date: Nov. 13, 1976

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE: May 11, 1978

TITLE: DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE: 11/24/78
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE:
ATTEST:	DATE:
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

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Fort San Marcos

CONTINUATION SHEET

de Apalache

ITEM NUMBER

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marshland with heavy foliage. A long wooden boardwalk extends out and over the edge of the Wakulla River and accross a stretch of the marsh so that the site can be observed without unnecessary construction that might infringe on the historic remains or the wildlife there.

Addendum: Title of Salvage Operation

Fort St. Marks Salvage Program, 1963  
Dept. of Anthropology  
Florida State University  
Directed by Hale G. Smith  
September 28, 1963 to December 15, 1963

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Fort San Marcos  
CONTINUATION SHEET de Apalache ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

After this excitement, San Marcos became relatively unimportant, but remained as a small garrison and trading center until the invasions by Andrew Jackson. When Jackson invaded Florida during the Seminole campaign of 1818, he captured and occupied San Marcos. Near the fort, on April 29, he executed the British traders Robert Ambrister and Alexander Arbuthnot. At a court-martial constituted at St. Marks, Jackson tried Arbuthnot for espionage and inciting the Indians against the United States and Ambrister for actively leading them in war. When the news reached London in the fall of 1818, a public outcry demanded disavowal, apology and reparation. The British ministry, however, recognized that these men had been engaged in unauthorized practices, and its firmness prevented a rupture in relations. Jackson's vigorous action in Florida, backed by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, was instrumental in forcing the Spanish government to sign the Adams-Onis Treaty, by which Florida was ceded to the United States.

Florida was ceded to the United States in 1821 and United States troops were sent to occupy the fort at St. Marks. The fort was abandoned in 1824, and turned over to the State of Florida. In 1839, the fort was returned to the U.S. Government, and construction of a federal marine hospital to care for yellow fever victims began in 1857. Limestone and flint rock from the Spanish bombproof was used in its construction, and the hospital was finished in 1858.

In 1861 the Confederates took San Marcos, renaming it Fort Ward. A Federal squadron blockaded the mouth of the St. Marks from 1861-1865. On July 12, 1863, the Union forces attempted to take the fort but were unsuccessful. On May 12, 1865 the Confederates surrendered the fort.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Fort San Marcos de Apalache ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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Robert C. Dailey, L. Ross Morrell, and W. A. Cockrell, "The St. Marks Cemetery"  
Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties, Bulletin No. 2, Tallahassee, Florida;  
Department of State, 1972.

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The undeveloped marshland, according to Florida archeologist L. Ross Morrell who has supervised excavations at the fort site, undoubtedly is of historical significance and contains subsurface remains of the military occupations there.

Beginning at point X indicated on the USGS map, proceed northeast 2500' along the western bank of St. Marks River to a point; thence 2600' in a northwesterly direction to the Indefinite Forbes Purchase Line; thence approximately 500' to the eastern bank of the Wakulla River; thence 1100' southeast along the eastern bank of the Wakulla River to the point of origin.