

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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# 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 Loudoun

AND/OR COMMON

Fort Loudoun

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER south bank of Little Tennessee River about 3/4  
mile southeast of U.S. 411

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Vonore

\_\_ VICINITY OF

2nd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Tennessee

047

Monroe

123

**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  MUSEUM  
 COMMERCIAL  PARK  
 EDUCATIONAL  PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 ENTERTAINMENT  RELIGIOUS  
 GOVERNMENT  SCIENTIFIC  
 INDUSTRIAL  TRANSPORTATION  
 MILITARY  OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Fort Loudoun Association (under deed of trust from State of Tennessee)

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Vonore

\_\_ VICINITY OF

Tennessee 37885

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Inventory of Historic Assets

DATE

in progress

\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_ COUNTY \_\_ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Tennessee Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Nashville

Tennessee

# 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    | *reconstructed                                |   |

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present Fort Loudoun, a reconstruction on the original location, stands above the south bank of the Little Tennessee River about 3/4 mile southeast of U.S. 411 near Vonore in Monroe County, Tennessee. The site slopes south from the crest of an east-west ridge to a broad plateau along the river. The ridge is wooded to the north and west of the fort site. Open land to the south and east is used primarily for agricultural purposes. Access to the site is provided by a gravel driveway branching northeast from a hard-topped secondary road. A small visitors center and exhibit building has been constructed near the entrance to the driveway and limited parking is provided in the same area; both are screened from the fort site by the existing woods.

The original Fort Loudoun was constructed in 1756-57 under the command of Captain Raymond Demere and garrisoned until 1760. The plan of the fort was that of four-pointed star with its longer axis running northwest-southeast. The palisade, constructed of logs set at an angle and extending 15 feet above the exterior earthworks, was surrounded by a parapet of loose earth and fascines (bundles of saplings tied with withes or bark). Beyond the parapet was a dry moat planted with locust hedge. Massive log gates were located near the northwest bastion on the north side of the fort, near the southwest bastion on the south side of the fort, and near the center of the eastern side. Three cannons were mounted in each of the four bastions, one at the apex and one on each flank.

Structures within the fort were built of wood with stone chimneys and foundations. These included the officers' and enlisted men's quarters, the powder magazine, store houses, a smith shop, and a guardhouse. Additional facilities were constructed outside the fort. A landing for canoes--both those maintained by the garrison and those of visiting Indians--was located on the river bank near the fort's east gate. A trade store, smith shop, and barracks--all for visiting Indians--stood on the plateau southeast of the fort. Quarters for the families of enlisted men were located near the fort on the northern slope of the ridge.

Following demolition of Fort Loudoun in 1761, the site was largely neglected until 1917 when the Colonial Dames erected an historical marker there. In 1933 the current owners donated the site to the State of Tennessee. The Fort Loudoun Association was formed at that time and, under a deed of trust from the State, authorized to restore and maintain the fort as a memorial to the men who had served there. The Association's research program has produced a substantial body of documentary information regarding the original appearance of the fort and the general location of structures within it. A series of archeological investigations has produced both additional information on the appearance of the fort and numerous artifacts now on display at the visitors center.

# 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 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION                           | <input 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 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                           |   |  |

\*Development of the English Colonies, 1700-1775

SPECIFIC DATES 1756-1760

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Captain Raymond Demere

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Loudoun, begun in 1756 and occupied until 1760, was instrumental in allying the Cherokee with the English during the most critical years of the French and Indian War. This alliance was of great historical importance as it provided protection for the Southern frontier until the English armies in the North had almost completed the defeat of the French and their Indian allies.

Fort Loudoun, a palisaded log structure in the shape of a four-pointed star, was destroyed by fire in 1761. The site on which it stood, near Vonore in Monroe County, Tennessee, is now owned by the State of Tennessee and administered under a deed of trust by the Fort Loudoun Association. Using evidence obtained through archeological investigation, the palisade and surrounding earthworks have been reconstructed and the original stones from fireplaces and building foundations have been replaced. Trail exhibits mark other features of the site and a variety of artifacts have been recovered and placed on display. The Fort is open to the public daily from March through October and on winter weekends (weather permitting).

### Historical Background

Well before 1700 both the English and the French were aware that the Cherokee, the most populous and powerful of the Southeastern Indian tribes, held the key to the control of the Southeast. Both vied for Cherokee friendship; but by 1708 Thomas Nairne could truthfully write that "the Chereckee nation now Entirely Subject to us are well scituate to keep off any Incursions which either ye Illinois or any other French Indians may think of making into Carolina, and in effect so it is, they are now our only defense on the Back parts."

In the continuing rivalry between the English and French for the control of the Cherokee, French diplomacy at times gave way to force and Cherokee towns were attacked by the Indian allies of the French. In these attacks, the Overhill Towns, the westernmost of the Cherokee settlements, suffered most; and it was the Overhill Cherokee who in 1746 requested that the English build a fort in their country. Despite their awareness of the need for Cherokee support, the English did not accede to this request until 1756, two years after the beginning of the French and Indian War.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Billington, Ray A. Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier (New York, 1949).
- Corkran, David H. The Cherokee Frontier Conflict and Survival, 1740-62 (Norman, Oklahoma; 1962).
- Every, Dale V. Forth to the Wilderness, The First American Frontier, 1754-1774 (New York, 1961).

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 50 acres

UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |              |                  |   |      |               |                 |
|---|------|--------------|------------------|---|------|---------------|-----------------|
| A | 1,6  | 7 5, 3 25, 0 | 3, 9 4, 2 8, 8 0 | B | 1,6  | 7 5, 3 7, 6 0 | 3, 9 4, 2 49, 0 |
|   | ZONE | EASTING      | NORTHING         |   | ZONE | EASTING       | NORTHING        |
| C | 1,6  | 7 5, 3 40, 0 | 3, 9 4, 2 1, 70  | D | 1,6  | 7 5, 2 9, 6 0 | 3 9 4, 2 6, 6 0 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

see continuation sheet

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 Polly M. Rettig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original form prepared by Horace J. Sheely, Jr., Historian, 3/1/65

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| ORGANIZATION  | DATE           |
| <u>Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service</u> | <u>3/29/75</u> |
| STREET & NUMBER                                     | TELEPHONE      |
| <u>1100 L Street NW.</u>                            |                |
| CITY OR TOWN  | STATE          |
| <u>Washington</u>                                   | <u>D.C.</u>    |

## 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE N/A National Historic Landmark

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>FOR NPS USE ONLY</b>  |                      |
| I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER |                      |
| <i>[Signature]</i>   | DATE <u>11/24/78</u> |
| DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION                 | DATE                 |
| ATTEST:  |                      |
| KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  |                      |

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)  
 11/24/78

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Fort Loudoun

CONTINUATION SHEET

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The first extensive excavations at the site were sponsored by the WPA in 1936-37 under the direction of Hobart Cooper. These revealed the location of the main palisade line, the surrounding parapet, and the powder magazine. In addition, portions of foundations and hearthstones from several structures were uncovered; the exact position of the east gates was established; and the original well was located and cleared to a depth of 35 feet. In 1955-57 Elsworth Brown supervised a series of shallow excavations within the fort along the crest and south slope of the ridge, which produced addition information on the location of specific buildings. A similar program was carried out in 1958-59 under the direction of Peter H. Kunkel, with the further goal of recovering a sufficient number of artifacts to aid in functional interpretation of the site.

To date, reconstruction at the Fort Loudoun site has been limited to the main palisade, the surrounding parapet, the east gates, and the powder magazine. The latter is a one-room stone structure, partially below ground level, with a shingled roof in the shape of a pyramid. Logs have been used to outline the locations of some buildings within the fort and fireplace and foundation stones have been returned to their original positions. The sites of other facilities in and near the fort are identified by trail markers. Further reconstruction is planned as funding permits. In addition the Fort Loudoun Association has created a nature trail in the wooded area north and east of the fort.

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Fort Loudoun

CONTINUATION SHEET

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On October 1, 1756, when the English force under Captain Raymond Demere arrived at the site on the Little Tennessee River chosen for the construction of the fort, they found that French agents had been among the Cherokee, attempting to negotiate for the construction of forts in the Cherokee country. Without delay Demere began the building of the fort, which was named Fort Loudoun. By the early summer of 1757, the fort was completed; and on August 14 of that year, Demere delivered its command to his brother, Captain Paul Demere.

Supplied with war hatchets, guns, powder, bullets, and knives by the new commander, Cherokee war parties set out from time to time against the French and their Indian allies in the Ohio region. Cherokee warriors also went in large numbers in aid the Virginians in their campaigns. That this aid was of great importance was shown by Col. George Washington's statement that they "should be shown all possible respect ... as upon them much depends. It is a critical time ..., and their assistance very necessary."

At no time since the outbreak of the French and Indian War had relations between the English and the Cherokee been so friendly. However, when a number of warriors, who had served under General Stanwix in the Ohio campaign, were killed by Virginia frontiersmen while returning home, matters began to deteriorate. Incident followed incident, and when 31 Cherokee leaders, members of a peace delegation to South Carolina, were taken captive in 1759, the Middle Towns went on the warpath against the frontier settlements. In 1760, the 22 members of the delegation, who were still held captive, were killed; and the Lower and Overhill Towns joined with the Middle Towns in a general war against the English.

Fort Loudoun was attacked on March 20, and, though the firing ceased after 96 hours, the fort remained under siege. A relief column, marching from South Carolina, was repulsed by the Cherokee; and a Virginia army, which was mobilized to relieve Fort Loudoun, never entered the Cherokee country. His garrison starving, Captain Demere finally determined on August 7 that he had no choice but to surrender.

In return for the promise of safe conduct to South Carolina, Demere agreed to turn over the fort and its arms and ammunition to the Cherokee. On the second morning of the march, the Indians attacked suddenly. All of the officers, save one, were killed, and the remainder of the party was captured. Most of the survivors were later ransomed by South Carolina or Virginia.

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The Cherokee occupied the fort for a short time. However, in 1761, the Lower and Middle Towns were laid waste by an English force, and the Cherokees sued for peace. They agreed to surrender Fort Loudoun, but the English never regarrisoned it. Shortly after, orders came from England to destroy it.

War with the Cherokee had been feared by the English and desired by the French, but it came too late to be of any real help to the French. By 1760, the French and Indian War had been all but won by the English; Fort Duquesne had fallen in 1758, Quebec had fallen in 1759, and Montreal was soon to fall.

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Fort Loudoun

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Fort Loudoun Association. "Fort Loudoun, 1756-1760" (pamphlet, n.p., n.d.).

Hamer, Philip M. "Fort Loudoun in the Cherokee War, 1758-61", North Carolina Historical Review, II (1925).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Anglo-French Rivalry in the Cherokee County, 1754-1757",  
North Carolina Historical Review, II (1925).

Kunkel, Peter H. "Fort Loudoun Archaeology: A Summary of the Structural Problem",  
Tennessee Archaeological Society Miscellaneous Paper No. 6 (1960).



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Fort Loudoun

CONTINUATION SHEET

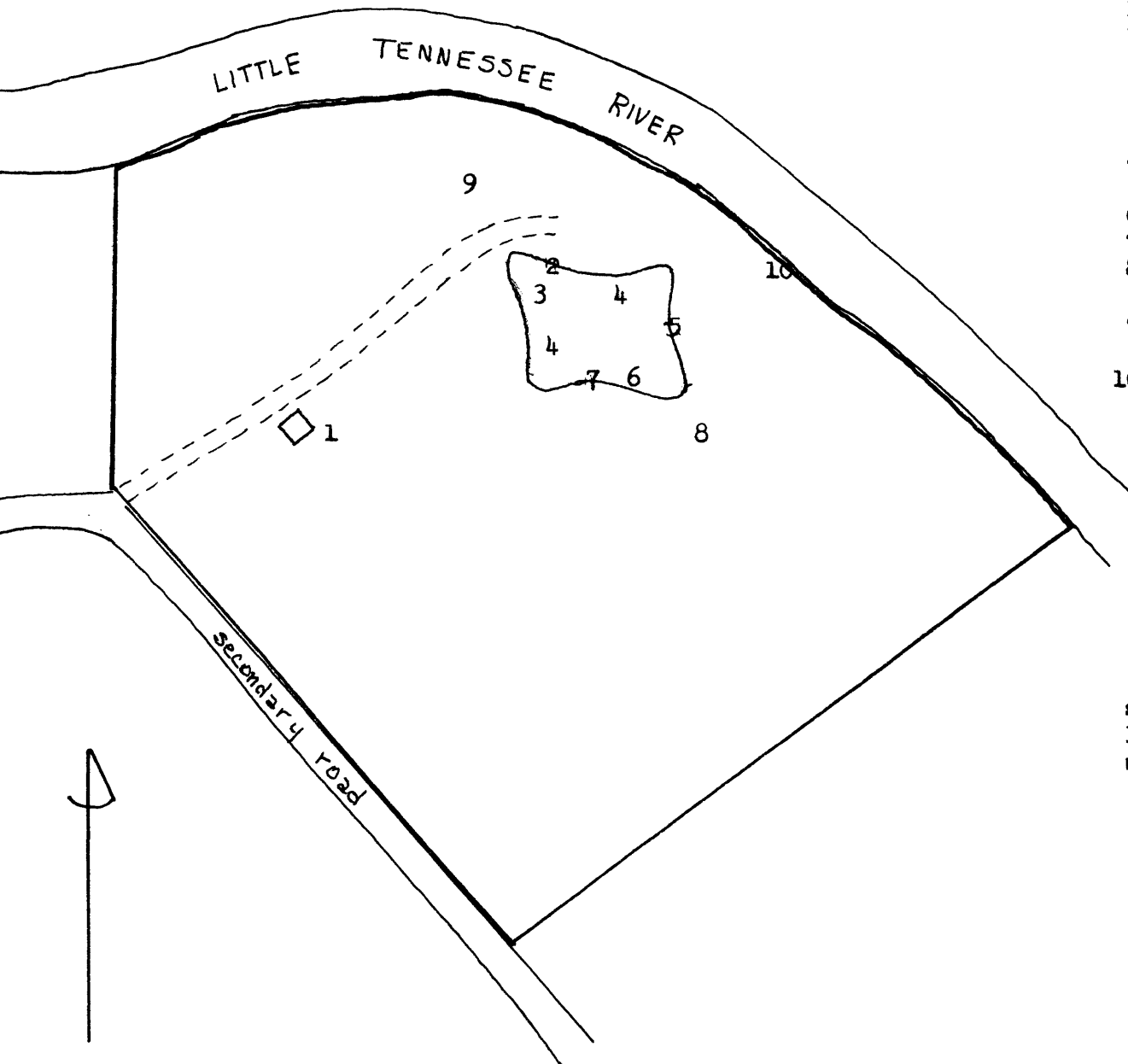
ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

The boundaries of the national historic landmark designation for Fort Loudoun at Vonore, Tennessee, are shown in red on the accompanying sketch map and in black on the accompanying U.S.G.S. map (7.5 minute series; Vonore, Tennessee Quadrangle; 1941). Specific lines are defined as follows: beginning at the intersection of the southern bank of the Little Tennessee River and a line extended directly north from the junction of the western line of the gravel driveway to Fort Loudoun and the northern curblineline of the paved secondary road from which it branches; thence, southerly along said extended line to the junction described above, thence, southeasterly along the northern curblineline of the secondary road 1500 feet to a point; thence, turning at a right angle with the secondary road and proceeding northeasterly in a direct line to the southern bank of the Little Tennessee River; thence, northwesterly and westerly along said southern bank to the point of beginning.

FORT LOUDOUN  
Vonore, Tennessee

National Historic Landmark  
Boundary                     

1. visitors center
2. north gate
3. powder magazine
4. building sites
5. east gate
6. well
7. south gate
8. probable site - Indian trade store,  
smith shop, and barracks
9. probable site - enlisted men's  
family quarters
10. canoe landing



sketch map  
1975  
not to scale