

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 30 1978

DATE ENTERED NOV 21 1978

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Dry dock and Commanding General's House
~~Parris Island Historic District~~

AND/OR COMMON

name change old - Capt Vance - 7.12.78

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER ~~In irregular pattern along Mexico Street, Tripoli Sts,
Street and Cuba Street~~ *and*

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Marine Corps Recruit Depot

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Parris Island

VICINITY OF

#1

STATE

South Carolina

CODE

045

COUNTY

Beaufort

CODE

013 ✓

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 type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)

Federal Government (Department of the Navy)

STREET & NUMBER

Commandant of the Marine Corps, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps

CITY, TOWN

Washington

VICINITY OF

STATE

D. C.

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Federal Courthouse (Register Section)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Charleston

STATE

South Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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 Parris Island Historic District comprises an area approximately two acres in size and contains three historically significant structures. These structures reflect the beginnings of Parris Island as a military installation and include the Commanding General's quarters (known as Quarters One), a circa 1900 gazebo, and the remains of the depot drydock.

The historic district begins on the west bank of the Beaufort river and runs in a southwesterly direction along the northern side of the drydock to Mexico Street. The Parris Island drydock (1) was constructed in the early 1890s and is significant from an engineering as well as historic standpoint. One of only several wooden graving-type drydocks ever constructed in the United States, it stands today, according to all available information, as the largest wooden drydock ever built in this country. In addition, it was the largest naval drydock ever constructed by the Federal government up to that time.

To construct this drydock, an undertaking which even today is the most difficult engineering feat to confront a marine builder, wooden pilings had to be driven down to bedrock by steam pile drivers. As the pilings were driven, a steam dredge dug out the drydock basin to its working dimensions of 26' deep by 104' wide by nearly 450' long. A massive 14"x16" pine beam framework was then anchored to the pilings and capped by 12"x12" heart-of-pine beams laid side by side. The drydock was finished in 6"x10" planks which descended stair-step fashion to the drydock floor and made it look much like an amphitheatre when the dock was empty. When in use, the drydock was sealed off from the Beaufort river by means of a floating-caisson type gate. Constructed of pine beam framing and covered with plate steel, the gate was floated into place then filled with water and allowed to sink thus sealing off the drydock from the river. To remove the gate, it was simply pumped dry until it floated and then towed out of the way. As ships began to "outgrow" the drydock in the 1920s, it was allowed to fall into disrepair. Today, the upper 10' of the drydock has been capped in concrete and the majority of the drydock has silted in with mud. The area is still recognizable as a drydock, however, and core samplings taken in the 1950s showed the wooden beams to still be solid and restorable.

At its confluence with Mexico Street, the boundary of the historic district turns and runs southeast down Mexico Street past a circa 1900 gazebo (2) which has been kept in excellent condition. This is a typical octagonal mode gazebo done in a Victorian period motif. It is on a raised foundation and has Chamfered-edged columns and brackets typical of the period. It still bears its original finial. While the exact date of construction is unknown, photos and records show that the gazebo was standing prior to 1910. It remains today immediately in front of and across the street from Quarters One where it was frequently the site of Sunday band concerts for the entertainment of the depot commander and all depot personnel.

The historic area boundary continues to the southeast to a point on Cuba Street where it turns to the northeast for several hundred feet and then to the northwest, completely encircling Quarters One (3).

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input 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 _____ BUILDER/ARCHITECT _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

From its status as the site of the first French settlement in America to its current role as the training ground for millions of United States Marines, the significance of Parris Island to the nation is apparant. The nomination of the Parris Island Historic District for inclusion in the National Register is an attempt to preserve some of that historic legacy, specifically, that portion of the island's history which deals with its first becoming a military installation.

The primary structure in the district is the remains of the Parris Island drydock. Its significance both from an historic and an engineering standpoint rest in its being among only several wooden drydocks ever constructed in this country, its status as the largest naval drydock in the country at the time of its construction, and its current status as the largest known wooden drydock ever constructed in the nation.

The Victorian style Commanding General's home (Quarters One) and its neighboring gazebo make up the other structures in the historic district and even today reflect the style of living prevalent on military posts of the period. Although both structures are in excess of 70 years of age, their primary significance is historic. They are among the first few permanent structures built by the military on Parris Island and, in the case of Quarters One, the home of some of the Marine Corps' greatest generals including two former Commandants (Generals W. M. Greene, Jr. and D. M. Shoup). Plans are currently under way for the Parris Island Historic District actually had its roots in the civil war. The city of Beaufort and the surrounding area (including Parris Island) was captured by Union forces shortly after the outbreak of the war (November 7, 1861) and used by them as a major port facility throughout the conflict. Since the plantation owners and the residents of Beaufort fled the area in advance of the Union occupation and, since they had almost no warning of the Union's arrival, they were forced to leave behind all of their slaves and most of their personal belongings. This situation left the slaves bewildered, disorganized, and, at least in a sense, "free." The attempts of the "Northerners" to deal with the negroe situation, both by attempting to keep them productive on the plantations for the war effort yet still maintain as little control over them as possible, became, in effect, a "mini-Reconstruction" effort and gave the North a glimmer of the problems they would have to deal with when Reconstruction would begin

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Uya, O. E. "From Slavery to Public Service, Robert Smalls", Oxford University Press, New York, C. 1971
2. Tindall, G. B. "South Carolina Negroes 1877-1900", Columbia University Press, Columbia, S. C. c. 1952
3. Annual Report of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, "Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy 1891" (located USMC Archives, Washington, D.C.)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY TWO

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	5 3 0 9 0 0	3 5 7 9 1 0 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the Parris Island Historic District begins where the northeastern corner of the drydock meets the Beaufort river. From this point it runs southwest along a fence line which borders the northern side of the drydock to Mexico Street. The boundary then turns to the southeast down the center of Mexico Street to Tripoli Street. The boundary line then turns southwest down the center of Tripoli Street to Cuba Street, southeast down the center of Cuba Street to the hedgerow

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Captain James L. Vance Assistant Public Affairs Officer

ORGANIZATION

United States Marine Corps

DATE

8 February 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Marine Corps Recruit Depot

TELEPHONE

(803) 525 3276

CITY OR TOWN

Parris Island

STATE

South Carolina

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Charles E. Lep

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Frank B. J. Belcher

6/14/78

TITLE

Director, Real Property & Natural Resources

DATE

June 14, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles E. Lep

DATE

11-21-78

ATTEST

JANN H. GILMONE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/20/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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This encircling boundary line around Quarters One is well defined by an existing hedge/tree line.

Constructed between 1891 and 1895, Quarters One has been the traditional home of the depot Commanding General. Constructed in the Victorian style, the two story house boasts 27 rooms, a porch which spans the entire front and partially down both sides of the house, and has 6,213' of floor space. Although the house has undergone several renovations, it still retains its basic floor plan.

From Quarters One, the district boundary turns right along Tripoli Street back along the southern edge of the drydock to the river. The river's junction with the drydock marks the eastern boundary of the district.

Inventory of Historic Structures Located Within the Parris Island
Historic District: (see sketch map)

- (1) Parris Island drydock, built 1891 to 1893
- (2) Gazebo, built prior to 1910
- (3) Quarters One (Commanding General's home), built prior to 1895

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in earnest following the war. From out of the confusion of the area emerged one of the most interesting men of the civil war/post civil war period, Robert Smalls. Born in Beaufort in 1839, the son of a Jewish slave owner and a Negro slave woman, Smalls, himself a former slave, gained fame by commandeering a Confederate transport from Charleston harbor and delivering it to the Federal fleet which was blockading the area at the time. Smalls continued to serve with the Union until the conclusion of the civil war at which time he returned to Beaufort. Entering politics as a Republican, Smalls notariaty grew. He was elected to four two-year terms in Congress where he won the grudging respect of his white skinned associates. Known as the "Gullah Statesman", Smalls "was the most colorful figure in Republican politics during the period."¹ Parris Island owes its existence as a military base to Smalls since his "major accomplishments in Congress were..... to locate a naval station at Parris Island in Beaufort County and to get appropriations for storehouses and docks."²

The federal government received the first deed to any portion of Parris Island on 22 December, 1883, from Mr. J. E. Jouett, one of the island landowners. He conveyed to the United States for the sum of \$5,000.00 the title to 37 acres of land of which the Parris Island Historic District is a part. The new naval installation constructed on this first plot was called the United States Naval Station, Port Royal, South Carolina.³

Following it's beginnings in 1883 as a naval quarantine station, Parris Island, because of it's sheltered location and excellent deep water access, was chosen to be the site of the largest naval drydock ever built by the Federal government up to that time. Construction was begun on the drydock on 29 June, 1891, with construction being completed in 1893. It remained in service until the 1920s when ships simply "outgrew" the facility. The first permanent Marine post on Parris Island was established just a few days after drydock construction began. The Marines, under the command of First Sergeant Richard Donovan, were assigned to protect government interests during the construction period since the laborers were "very vicious characters from the cities in the vicinity."⁴

1. Tindall, G. B. "South Carolina Negroes 1877-1900", Columbia University Press, Columbia, S. C. c. 1952 P. 54
2. Ibid., p. 56
3. Navy Department, Bureau of Yards and Docks, Federal-owned Real Estate Under the Control of the Navy Department, Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office 1937 p. 345
4. Annual Report of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy 1891, p. 617

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PAGE **three**

This guard detachment became a full-fledged Marine Barracks on 15 September, 1896. As the government procured more and more of the acreage on Parris Island, Marine presence expanded. On 1 January, 1909, the Barracks became a training school for junior officers and was named the Marine Officers School. It wasn't until 1 November, 1915, however, that the base came entirely under Marine Corps control. It was at that time that the Marines began using Parris Island in earnest for the purpose to which it is world-renown today, the training of United States Marine recruits.

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4. Navy Department, Bureau of Yards and Docks, "Federal-owned Real Estate Under the Control of the Navy Department", Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. (located USMC Archives)
5. Taylor, A.A., "The Negro in South Carolina During the Reconstruction", AMS Press, New York c. 1924 (reprinted 1971)
6. Rose, W. L., "Rehearsal for Reconstruction", Bobs-Merrill Company, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana c. 1964
7. Jones, K. M., "Port Royal Under Six Flags", Bobs-Merrill Company, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana c. 1960
8. The Palmetto Post, 30 April, 1891 (Beaufort County Library)
9. The Palmetto Post, 3 July, 1891 (Beaufort County Library)
10. Charleston, S.C., The News and Courier, 23 June, 1894 (Located in County Library, Charleston, S.C.)

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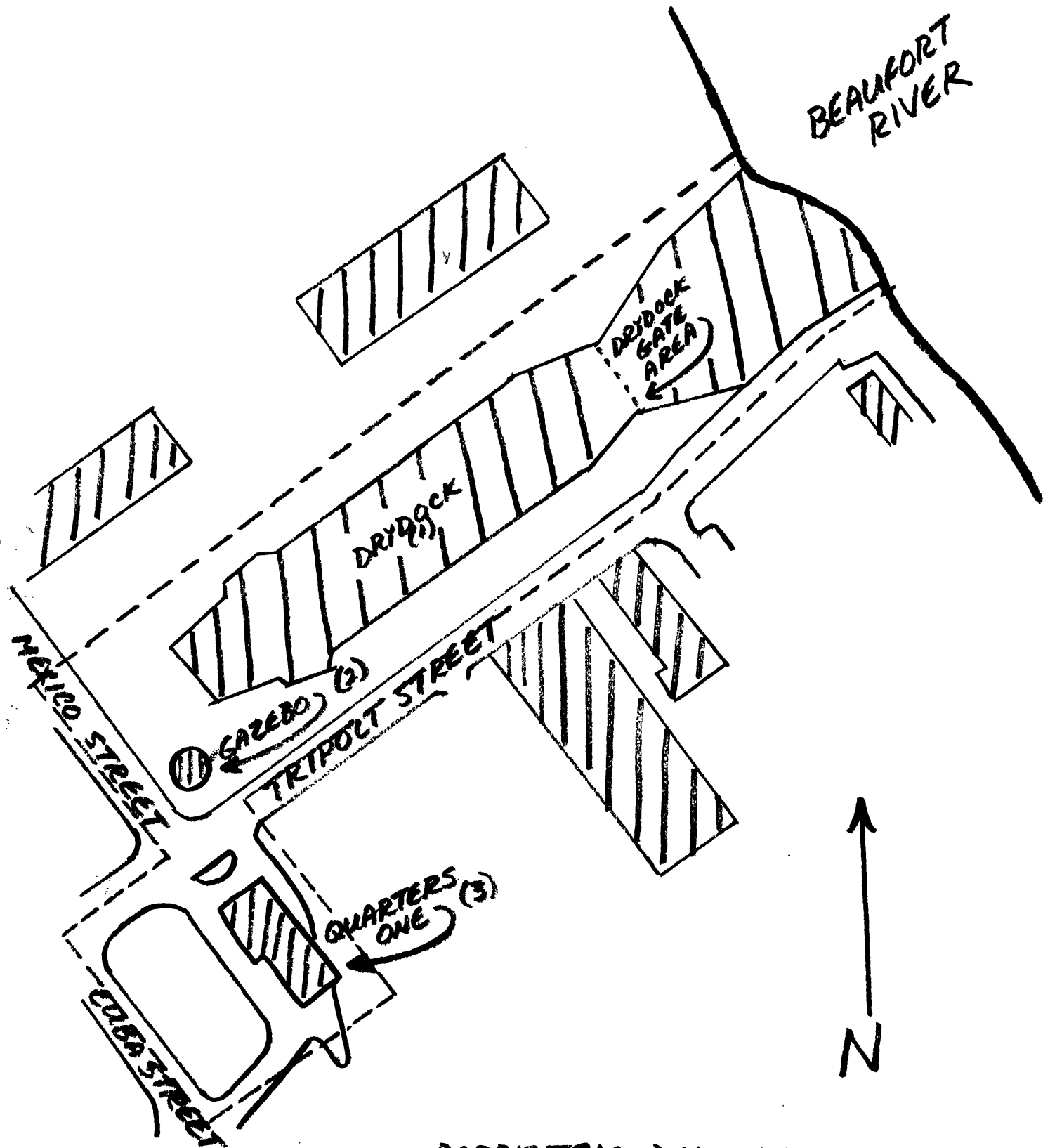
DATE ENTERED

NOV 21 1978

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behind Quarters One. The boundary line then continues all the way around Quarters One (along the hedge line) to where it intersects Tripoli Street. The boundary then turns northeast along Tripoli Street back to the Beaufort river. The Beaufort river at it's intersection with the drydock marks the eastern boundary of the district.



BEAUFORT RIVER

DRYDOCK GATE AREA

DRYDOCK (1)

GAZEBO (2)

TRIPOLT STREET

MEXICO STREET

CEDAR STREET

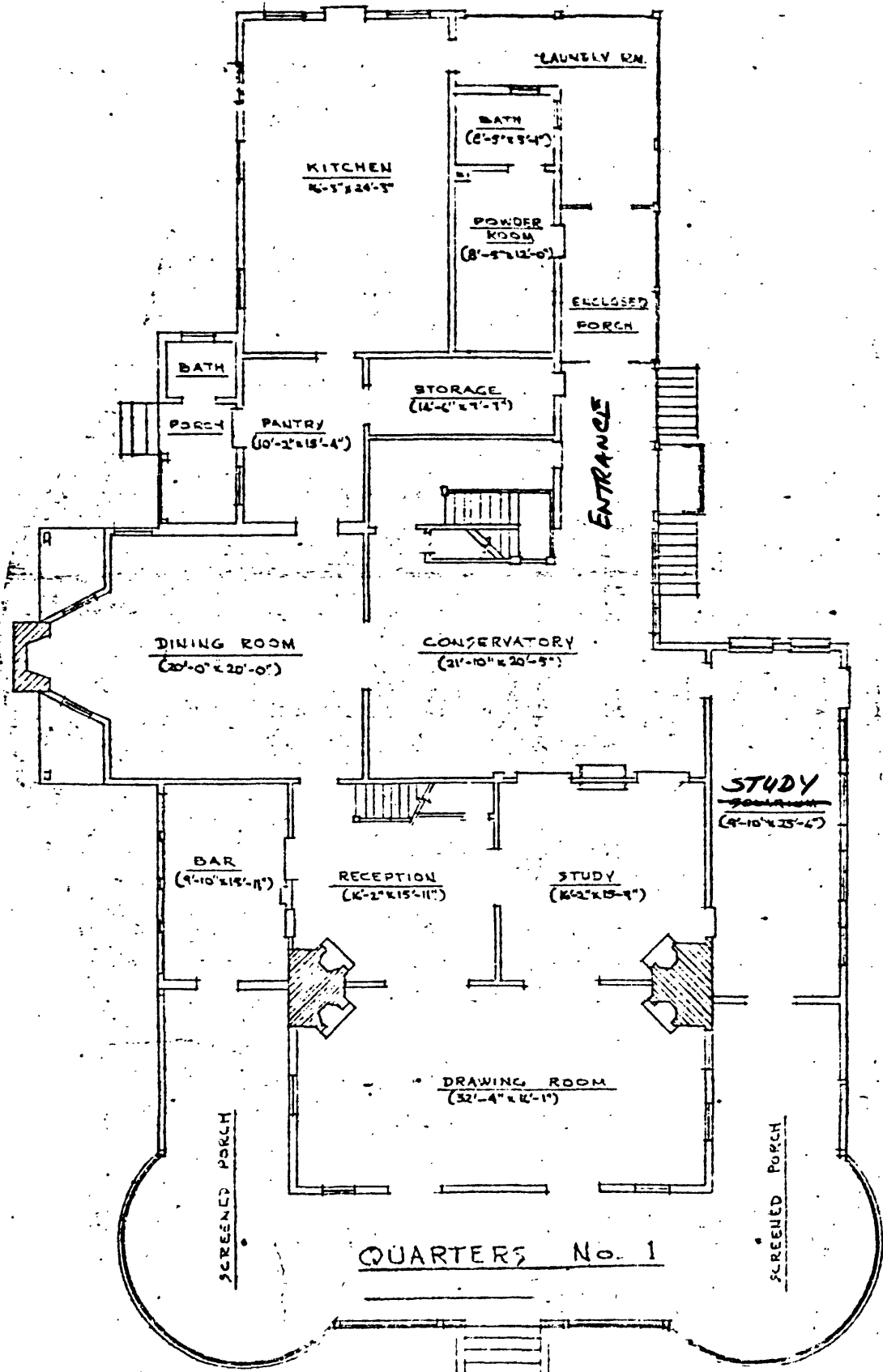
QUARTERS ONE (3)



PARRIS ISLAND HISTORIC DISTRICT
(NOT TO SCALE)

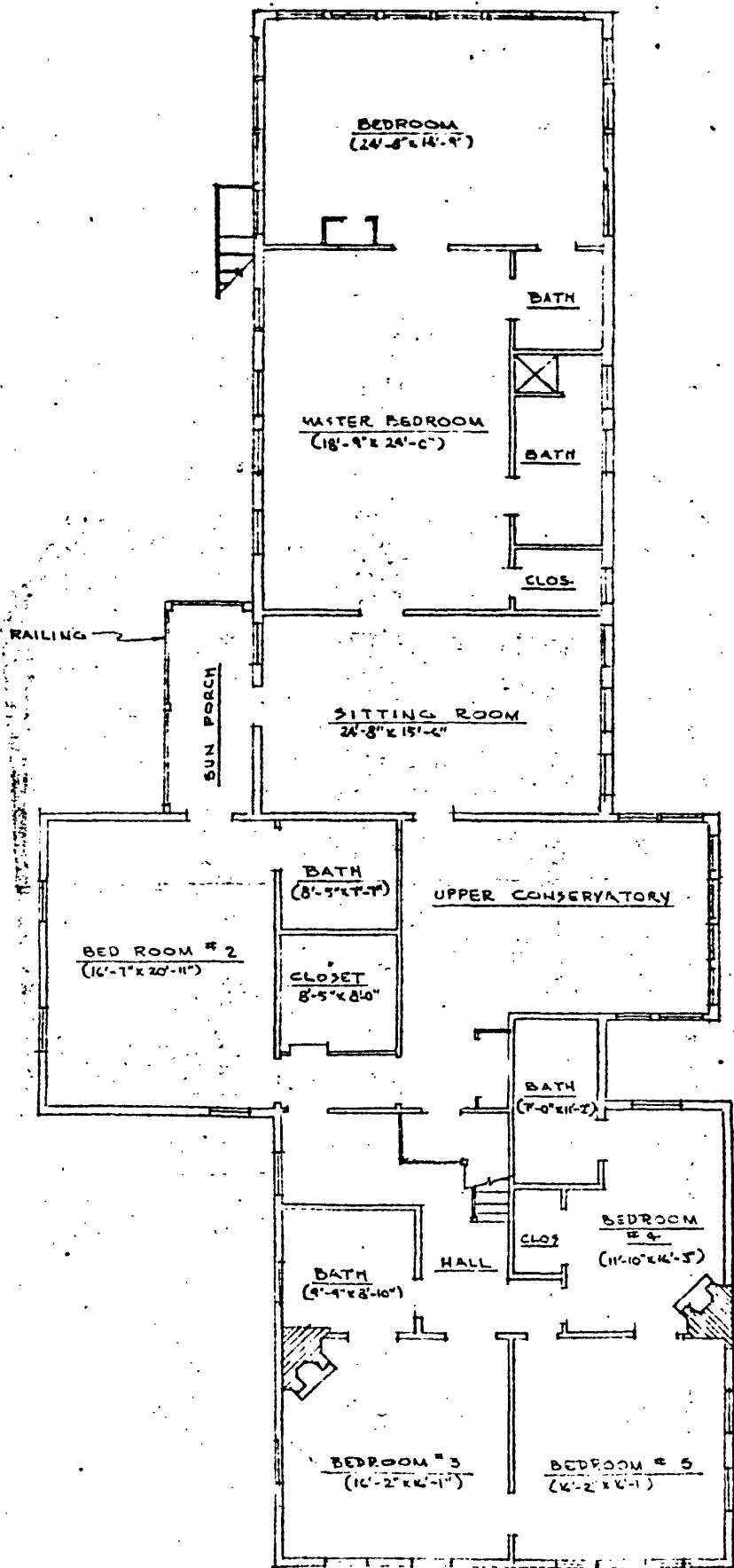
----- (INDICATES BOUNDARY OF HISTORIC DISTRICT)

SCALE
FEET



QUARTERS No. 1

1ST FLOOR PLAN



2ND FLOOR PLAN