

P140351261

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED SEP 1 1976
DATE ENTERED DEC 12 1976

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 Gaines
AND/OR COMMON
Fort Gaines

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *S of Mobile a.*
East end of Dauphin Island
CITY, TOWN
Mobile
STATE Alabama
VICINITY OF
1
COUNTY Mobile
CODE 01
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
1
CODE 002 097

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Dauphin Island Park and Beach Board (an agency of the County of Mobile)
STREET & NUMBER
P. O. Box 97
CITY, TOWN
Dauphin Island
STATE
Alabama 36528

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Title Insurance Co.; 164 St. Francis St., Mobile, Alabama
STREET & NUMBER
Mobile County Courthouse, South Royal St., Mobile
CITY, TOWN
Mobile
STATE
Alabama

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

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 type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the easternmost point of Dauphine Island, a narrow strip of sand which flanks the western entrance to Mobile Bay, Fort Gaines is a fine example of a mid-19th Century, French influenced, masonry fort which exhibits outstanding brickwork, particularly in the complex vaulting systems of the bastions.

As originally conceived in 1818, the fort was laid out as a regular pentagonal bastioned work of brick and earth, much like its companion, Fort Morgan, which guards the eastern entrance of the bay. After two years of work and the expenditure of \$219,743.91, the fort was only 4/3 completed when construction was halted for 43 years.

During the ensuing period new concepts of fortification were developed and in 1854 when construction was resumed, new plans prepared by U.S. Chief Engineer J.G. Totten supplanted the earlier design and a five-side fort, comprising 2/3 of a hexagon with the opening at the discontinuous part of the polygon closed by a straight line, was projected. The center point of the polygon was directed toward the channel in the mouth of the bay, while the entrance consisted of a single gate on the gorge front secured with a heavy wooden drawbridge.

Following the advanced theories the scarp, which was 22.5 feet high and tapered from 5 feet at the base to 4½ feet at the top, was separated from the base of the exterior slope of the rampart creating a three foot chemin-des-roundes. The earthen rampart tapered upward from the chemin-des-roundes to a height of 24 feet at the parapet wall.

The fort measures 400 feet along the gorge (west) wall, 223 feet along the north and south flanks, and 209 feet each on the left and right face (east). From the extreme points of the bastions, the dimensions are increased by 100 feet on the gorge wall, 94 feet on the north and south flanks and 81 feet on the face. Closely spaced along the five foot thick walls are numerous rifle ports spanned by segmental arches.

Communication, water, and ventilating systems are carefully integrated in each bastion. Access from the parade was afforded by and long vaulted tunnel under the ramparts, while access from the chemins-des-roundes was through an arched opening to the tunnel. Water collected by catch-basins on the roof of each bastion, was conducted to cisterns below the floors, and ventilation was provided by six flues penetrating the roof of each bastion.

The buildings contained within the enceinte of the fort consist of two guard houses flanking the vaulted tunnel from the gate, a store house directly across from the tunnel, officers quarters on the south side of the parade and soldiers barracks on the north. With the exception of the soldiers barracks, which are roofless and vacant, the buildings remain in good condition.

In 1901 two concrete batteries which extend into the parade to a small degree were constructed along with a magazine. At this time the chemin-des-roundes on the right and left face curtains were filled and a small concrete blockhouse was constructed atop the southwest bastion.

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 Joseph G. Totten - Designer

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Gaines, along with its companion Fort Morgan (NHL), was initially conceived by French engineer, Baron Simon Bernard, to command the entrance to Mobile Bay, and the two forts were among the first undertaken by the U.S. in the elaborate chain of works conceived but the lesser of the two forts and its completion was delayed until the mid-19th Century. When completed, under new plans supplied by Chief Engineer J.G. Totten, Fort Gaines was a sophisticated work of earth and masonry which utilized the most advanced theories of fortification design and employed skillfully integrated communication, ventilation and water systems in the bastions. Structural work was particularly fine with interior spaces spanned by a complex series of vaults of various configurations.

The strategic importance of the eastern point of Dauphine Island was recognized as early as 1713 when the French Governor LaMothe-Cadillac recommended the construction of a fort at that location. It was not, however, until after the United States gained control of the area in 1814 that the first plans for the construction of a fort were formulated. In 1816, the French fortification expert, Bernard, accompanied by his draftsman G.T. Poussin surveyed Mobile Bay. At the time of Bernard's survey, Mobile Bay was approximately 3½ miles wide and had two channels of entry separated by a wide bay. On the east the channel by Mobile Point was nearly 1 mile wide and a minimum depth of 17 to 18 feet. On the west, the channel was 1200 yards from the tip of Dauphine Island, but was only about 300 yards wide and 10 feet deep. To defend these channels, Bernard designed two identical forts, each to be a regular pentagonal bastioned work.

Construction of the fort on Mobile Point was contracted in May of 1818 and the following month work was contracted for the Dauphine Island fort. In 1821, after two years, the work on Dauphine Island was halted when Congress refused to appropriate funds. The argument against continuing the fort was that the channel was not as deep as reported and the surrounding waters were not sufficiently deep for naval support.

In 1840 the fort was again listed among the works projected due to the fact that steamboats of shallow draft could pass in the channel off the island, but it was not until 1845 that Congress appropriated \$20,000 to commence work on the fort. Ownership legalities further delayed construction activity until 1853 when the State of Alabama granted clear title to the land. At that time the fort was named in honor of Edmund Pendleton Gaines.

The following year new excavations began, but the Bernard plans were abandoned for more modern and advanced designs supplied by Chief Engineer J.G. Totten, which consisted of the latest developments in the years since the last work was done on the fort. These new plans traced a five-sided fort comprising two-thirds of a hexagon which allowed a combined uniform defense of a 240 degree arc in the direction of the channel. Work

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Craighead, Ervin. History of the Mobile Cadets: 1845-1925. Merchants Printing Company: Mobile, 1925.

McWilliams, R.G. "History of Dauphin Island". Pamphlet in Special Collection Mobile Public Library. No publisher, no date.

Official Records of the War of the Rebellion.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 28.5 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	39,668,0	3,34,68,0,0	B	1,6	39,66,8,0	3,34,63,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,6	39,64,2,0	3,34,63,2,0	D	1,6	39,64,2,0	3,34,68,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The area considered in this nomination comprises all the land directly East from a North-South fence line approximately 57 yards west of the entrance to Fort Gaines. On this acreage stands Fort Gaines, its external exhibitions, landscaped grounds, un-excavated areas and public parking area.

The North-South fence line extends from Mobile Bay on the North to the Gulf of Mexico on the South.

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

William Russell Armistead and Ellen Mertins

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

STREET & NUMBER

725 Monroe Street

CITY OR TOWN

Montgomery

DATE

August 11, 1976

TELEPHONE

(205) 832-6621

STATE

Alabama 36130

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Miss B. Howard

TITLE

SHPO Ala

DATE

August 19, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

12/12/76

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/6/76

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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continued on the fort until January 5, 1861, when State Militia troops siezed the fort under orders issued by Governor A. B. Moore. The fort was largely completed during the Civil War by the Confederacy.

On August 3, 1864, 1500 Union soldiers under General Gordon Granger invested Fort Gaines on the land side 1200 yards to the west, and the following day opened fire. Union Rear Admiral David G. Farragut breeched the mouth of Mobile Bay and passed under the guns of Fort Morgan on Mobile Point and the Battle of Mobile Bay ensued. On August 5, Union vessels turned their guns on Fort Gaines and three days later the commandant, Colonel Charles D. Anderson, unconditionally surrendered the fort to Union forces.

The fort was found to be in excellent order after the shelling engagements, and after the war, the masonry and earthen fortifications were repaired.

In 1890, a new national plan of defense was developed and Mobile Bay was among 27 ports for which fortifications were considered urgent. In 1895 work was begun on concrete batteries, which were completed and turned over to the U.S. Artillery in 1901. These batteries, which housed disappearing type Sea-Coast cannon, were named Battery Stanton and Battery Terrett.

In the 1940's the Alabama State Armory Commission leased the fort as a camp site for the State Guard and after World War II Fort Gaines was returned to the State of Alabama. In 1955 it was opened to the public as a tourist attraction.

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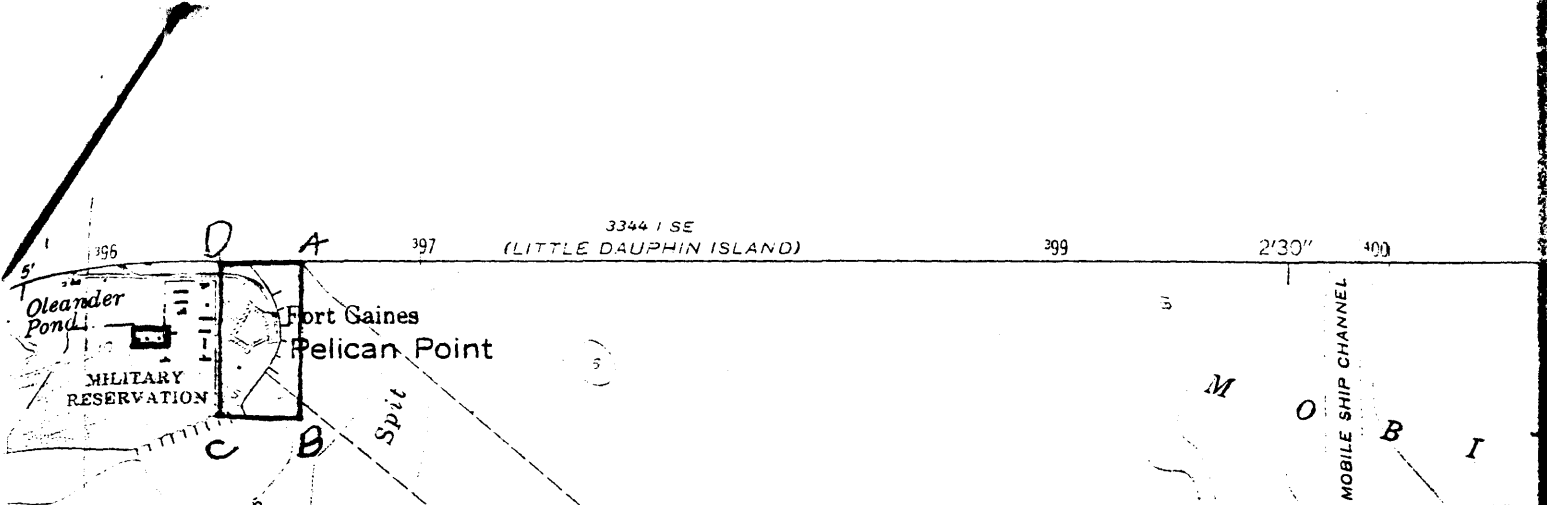
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

Owen, T. M. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography. S. J. Clarke
Publishing Company, Chicago: 1921.

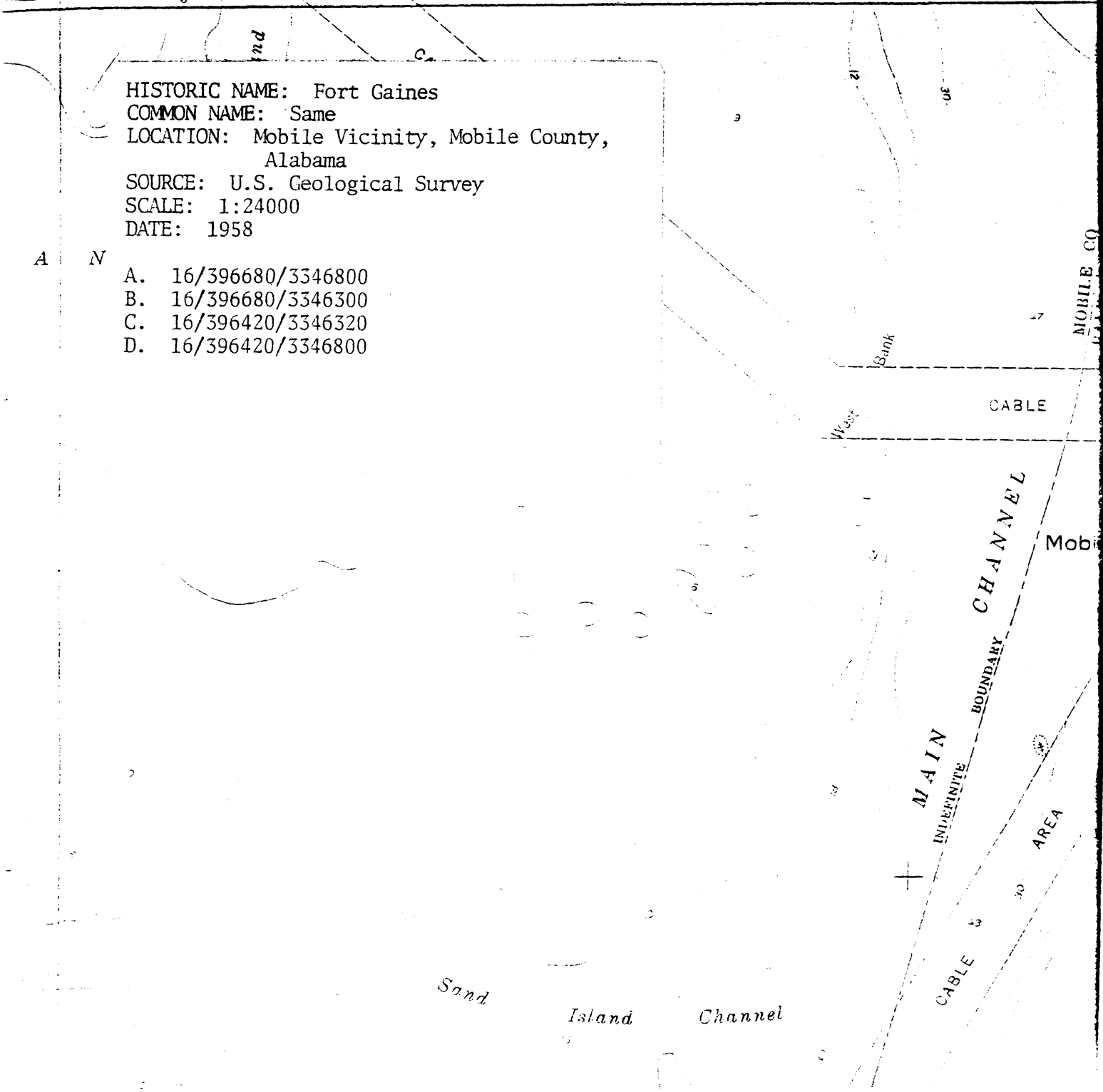
Robinson, Willard B., "Military Architecture at Mobile Bay," Journal of the Society
of Architectural Historians. May, 1971.



HISTORIC NAME: Fort Gaines
 COMMON NAME: Same
 LOCATION: Mobile Vicinity, Mobile County,
 Alabama
 SOURCE: U.S. Geological Survey
 SCALE: 1:24000
 DATE: 1958

A N

- A. 16/396680/3346800
- B. 16/396680/3346300
- C. 16/396420/3346320
- D. 16/396420/3346800



SEPT. 1985

1:6000

SAM 21

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No 4

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