

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 30 1975

DATE ENTERED MAY 13 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 *W*



St. Marys Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

City of St. Marys

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

roughly bounded by Waterfront Rd, Marine Alexander & State Bond Cemetery

CITY, TOWN

St. Marys

— VICINITY OF

1st - Bo Ginn

STATE

Georgia

CODE

13

COUNTY

Camden

CODE

039

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple Owners

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

St. Marys

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Georgia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Camden County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE
Georgia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Marys, once Georgia's fifth largest city, lies in the southeastern-most corner of the state at the termination point of Georgia highway 40. The town today stands much as it did nearly two hundred years ago when it was initially laid out in 1788. Several early maps of St. Marys are still in existence and most indicate that the present town plan has had few, if any, major alterations.

Laid out in a square grid pattern, the original town occupies a site of some 1620 acres in area, although presently, the corporate limits of the city far exceed the area of developed streetwork and stretch out into what can only be considered as wilderness. The original maps show the town to have included a fort, swamp-marshland, some streets running north-south and running east-west, and a cemetery.

St. Marys is rich in history and most of its key monuments stand as witnesses to the events that have long since passed in this almost forgotten seaport. Osborn Street, now a two-lane avenue divided by a green-belt median, is probably one of the only altered streets in the entire community and one of the best displays of the city. Along this thoroughfare, named after a local circuit judge - supposedly the first to hold court in the State of Georgia according to local tradition - one finds several of the town's more important structures including the Washington Oak and Pump, Orange Hall (already on the National Register), the Rudolph and Archibald Clarke Houses, the Sandiford and Randolph-Riggins Houses, the St. Marys Catholic Church (formerly the local bank), the Spencer House and the Riverview Hotel. Representative of various phases of the town's history are:

The Washington Oak and Pump (1799)

Originally on the site of four oaks, planted as a tribute to George Washington on the day he was buried of which only one oak remains, the Washington pump is made of cyprus with a hand-forged iron handle. This pump is the sole survivor of an original six pump group, as one pump was initially to be found in each square of the town.

The Archibald Clarke House (1801-1805)

This house, originally owned by a Mr. Jackson was bought and completed by Archibald Clarke (1782-1849) as a variation of the plantation plain. Not long after construction was completed, a ten room addition was added to the building's north side. As it stands today, the house is two stories in height with a rather off-balanced facade due to the early alterations, has a pine weatherboard exterior finish and nine over nine windows. Aaron Burr, on his way to east Florida following his duel with Alexander Hamilton, in late 1804, visited this house according to a 1930's W.P.A. plaque on the facade as did General Winfield Scott who stopped here on his way to Florida in the late 1830's to fight the Seminoles and Creeks.

The Rudolph House (c.1880)

A variation of the plantation plain style, this two-story house built by John Rudolph sports a full veranda on both floors complete with turned balusters and a shed roof.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 30 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 13 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The plan is that of two rooms over two rooms and the house has a two story addition off the rear, which gives the overall plan a "T" shape. The front facade, divided into three bays by the columns of the porch, contains six over six windows topped with simple entablatures that are symmetrically placed in each end bay while a door with sidelights and transom is found in each center bay. The house, clad in pine clapboard, painted blue with white trim, is terminated on each end by brick chimneys that externally runs through the total height of the house.

The Riverview Hotel (1914)

This two-story brick building with a full veranda on each floor was built in 1914 on the site of what had once been St. Marys' commissary and railroad office. Shops and the hotel lobby are found on the ground floor while the actual hotel rooms are located on the second floor off a central hall.

Wheeler, Ready and Norris Streets are three north-south streets that also possess a rather large number of notable structures. On Wheeler Street, some of the more outstanding structures are the Pratt-Gillican House, Christ Episcopal Church (1869), the Arnow-Bunkley House (1910-1915) and the Russell-Lovell House (1915). The most notable of these is the Pratt-Gillican House:

Pratt-Gillican House (1825)

Central hall in plan, with the entrance on the second floor, this house is one of the earliest dwellings in the county and representative of many of the "Sand Hills" raised cottages found in the Savannah area. The ground floor is stuccoed while the top floor is clad in pine clapboard painted white. The front porch is not original (the original wrapped around three sides of the house with rounded corners) and was probably altered around the turn of the century. Built by the Reverend Horace Pratt as his library or study, (it is not quite clear which, precisely) this cottage was built before Orange Hall.

Along Ready Street are found seven structures that stand out in the St. Mary's community. Among others, these are the Buddell House, Flood House, Tompkins House (c.1890), Miller House, Stone House (c.1880), and the Frohock-Bauknecht House (altered c.1901).

Buddell House

The Buddell House is a two story front-end gable frame with a classically inspired treatment of the facade. Plain, square columns on the two-story porch contrast vividly with the elaborate jig-saw work of the upper porch rail-guard. The house possesses a one-story side hall.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 30 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 13 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

Frohock-Bauknecht House

The Frohock-Bauknecht House is actually not one house, but two: earlier in this century (probably around 1900-1901) two plantation plains were combined to form a single structure in the shape of a "T". Heavy ionic columns support a porch which extends from the original east front of one plantation plain to the original (old) front on the southern-oriented plantation plain; a second floor, classically inspired porch on the east front has now been enclosed, forming a strange projection of the main block of the house over the front porch. This house has apparently been much-altered and little information is available to explain its present state. Photographs from 1890 show the house to have been a three storied elevated plantation plain with a two story porch.

Norris Street contains several typical residences but 212 East Conyers, on the corner with Norris Street probably is the most unusual:

Oliver Residence, 212 East Conyers (1900-1905)

A raised cottage executed in pine and resting on brick piers, this house stands a full story above ground with only open space beneath. The house is, indeed, unusual in appearance; in plan it is square with a central chimney, yet the north-east corner for seemingly no reason (it is not the entrance) has been "bevelled" off. A small entrance porch reached by a long flight of stairs reflects the bevelling of the corner of the house. The building was erected around 1900-1905 by Dr. Oliver.

Another interesting St. Marys' structure is the Presbyterian Church on West Conyers built in 1808:

Presbyterian Church (1808)

A white, pine, clapboard structure with a projecting wooden bell-tower, which also acts as an entrance portal, is not as outstanding for its architectre as it is for its "historic" bell. Cast by Paul Revere, this bell is one of 389 that were made by Paul and Joseph Warren Revere from 1792 to 1826. Only 78 were still in use by 1911 (since most had been badly hung and tone injured) as 88 had been destroyed by fire, lightening or by cracking and 5 were in museums.

Two of St. Mary's other interesting features are the waterfront and the Oak Grove Cemetery. The waterfront, now much deteriorated, has all but vanished as a significant, working harbor. Consisting of a narrow strip of land which today runs for only a portion of the town's width, the only elements remaining in the area are contemporary:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	DEC 30 1975
DATE ENTERED	MAY 13 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

new docks, new buildings and the like. A cannon, remnant of the day when St. Marys was a fortified area, still stands aimed at the river, just in front of the Riverview Hotel at the south end of Osborne Street. Oak Grove Cemetery, some of whose unmarked graves probably pre-date the oldest marked grave, (that of Richard Gascoigne, a native of Warwickshire, England; 1801), is the major burial place for residents of St. Marys. Here, among the many leading citizens, Revolutionary War, Civil War and more recent graves, stand what are probably the most significant tombs in the area - those of the Acadians - French Huguenots who, driven from their homeland and persecuted for their religious beliefs, settled in and around St. Marys and found in this cemetery in a new country, their final resting place.

CONTINUATION Verbal Boundary Description ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

of West Weed in westerly direction to Oak Grove Cemetery; proceed south along Western boundary of Oak Grove Cemetery to the St. Marys River.

	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
NW	30°	44'	36"	81°	33'	24"
NE	30°	44'	36"	81°	32'	39"
SE	30°	44'	00"	81°	32'	39"
SW	30°	44'	00"	81°	33'	24"

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" 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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Early claims purport that the French explorer Jean Ribault, who sailed from Haure de Grace, France in 1562, was responsible for the first settlement at St. Mary's, which today is located on a river that bears the same name and constitutes the official border between Georgia and Florida. Ribault, in the course of his explorations, abandoned the Indian name for the river, Thalthlothagupka, meaning "rotten fish", and called it the Seine; sailing the Georgia coast for years, the adventurous Frenchman went on to discover the Satilla, Altamaha, Ogeechee and Savannah Rivers. According to local tradition, the present name of the river and town, St. Marys, is derived from that of a Spanish mission which was located nearby, in 1566.

Built on the north bank of the St. Marys River at a place called Buttermilk Bluff, the original town was built on a tract of land some 1620 acres in size that had been purchased on December 12, 1787 by the town proprietors from Jacob Week for a paltry \$38. The town's proprietors were a body of twenty men who acted as both "founding fathers" and as "overseers" of the community's well-being. These men were: Issac Wheeler, William Norris, Nathaniel Ashley, William Ashley, Lodowick Ashley, James Seagrove, James Finley, John Fleming, Robert Seagrove, Henry Osborne, Thomas Norris, Jacob Weed, John Alexander, Langley Bryant, Jonathan Bartlett, Stephen Conyers, William Ready, Prentis Gallup, Simeon Dillingham and Richard Cole.

The city of St. Mary's was first laid out, in a square grid fashion with six city plazas or "squares" by James Finley, County Surveyor, in August 1788; it was officially recorded on January 5, 1789. Laid out a second time, by a legislative act of December 5, 1792, the town was surveyed again by James Parker and recorded in map form (still in existence) by Parker, Hopkins and Meers. One of Georgia's oldest towns, the city was eventually incorporated by an act of the legislature and officially chartered as St. Marys in 1802.

St. Marys was the first seat of Camden County (1792-1800) and its third seat (1871-1923); an act of August 11, 1923 authorized removal of the county seat from the town to Woodbine. A bustling seaport from 1787 until the mid 1840's St. Marys, only nine miles upriver from the Atlantic Ocean, was harbor to many a steamship and frigate plying the Atlantic coast and especially for those on the Savannah to Fernandina run. A short railroad, originally built at the turn of the century and later connected to the Savannah-Jacksonville tracks of the Seaboard Airline, increased St. Marys importance as a commercial town which did considerable trade for years in lumber, fruit, vegetables and sea-island cotton.

Architecturally, St. Marys is significant as an excellent example of an early port city and a typical out-post in an area of low inhabitation. Many of its individual structures are highly significant as good examples of early residential and religious structures in Georgia.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

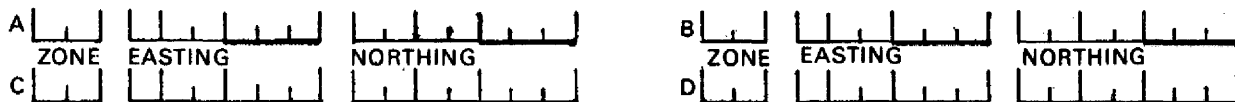
Records of the Office of the Surveyor General, Georgia State Archives, Atlanta
Camden County Newspaper Clippings File, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section

The Bells of Paul Revere, 1941.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 230 acres

UTM REFERENCES SEE CONTINUATION SHEET



VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starting at a point on the south bounded by the St. Marys River and running east to the centerline of Norris Street; proceed north to the centerline of East Alexander Street at which point proceed west to centerline of Ready Street; proceed south along Ready Street to East Conyers; proceed along rear lot lines of structures on North side of Conyers in a westerly direction to the western-most lot lines of the structures at Seagrove and Conyers; proceed along centerline of Conyers east to the rear lot lines of structures on Wheeler Street; ~~proceed south to centerline of West Weed Street; proceed along centerline~~

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES (cont.)

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

H. Lee Dunagan, Intern (Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, Architectural Historian, Consultant)

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Preservation Section, Dept. Natural Resources September 11, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

270 Washington Street, S.W., Room 703C

404-656-2840

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Atlanta

Georgia

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

12/16/75

TITLE

David M. Sherman

DATE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

AC

DATE

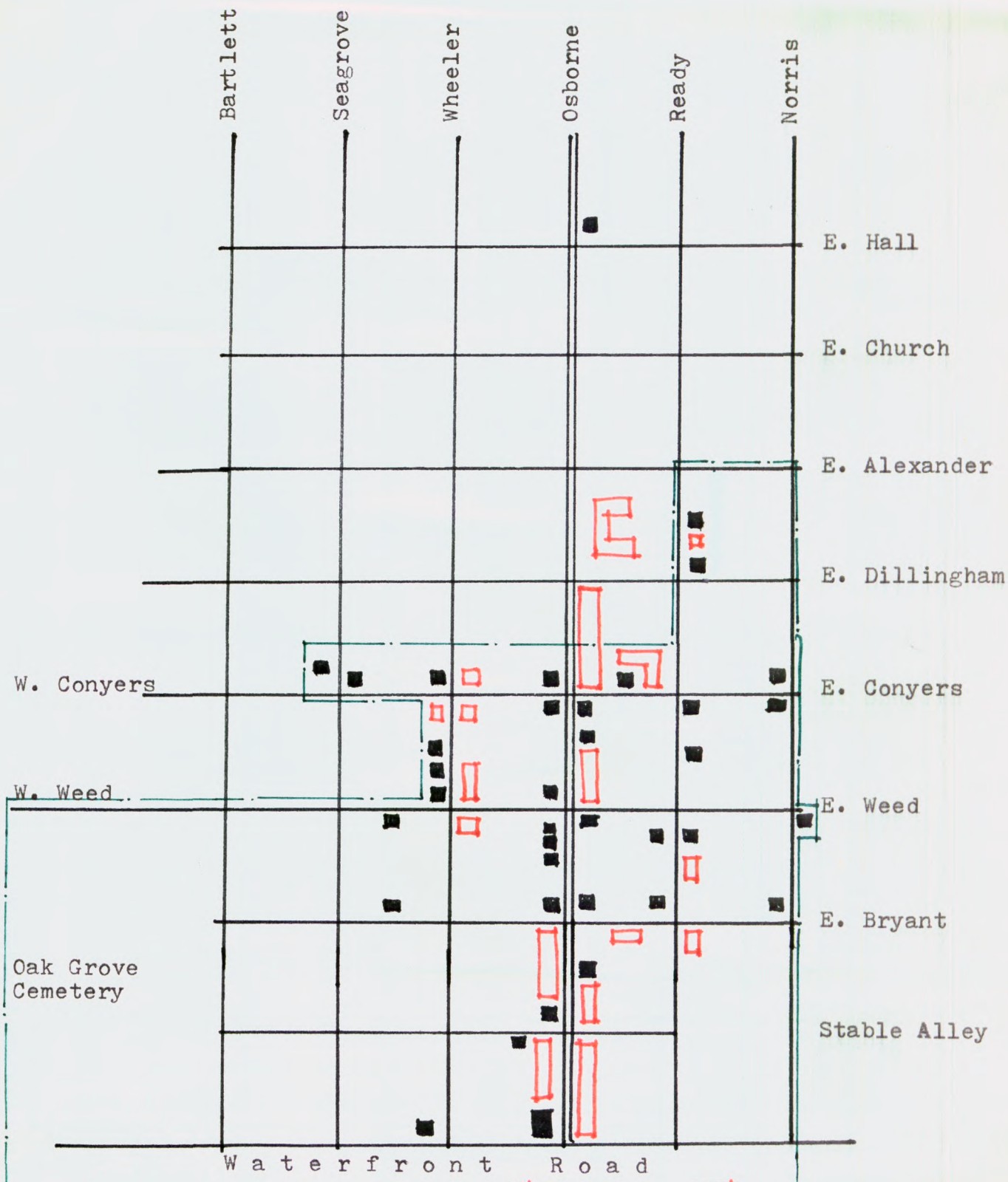
5/13/96

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5/22/76



Intrusions □
 Signif. Struct. ■
 DISTRICT BOUND. - - -

SKETCH MAP OF ST. MARYS

