

VLR- 11/19/74 NRHP 12/19/74

Form 10-300 (Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| |
|------------------------------|
| STATE: Virginia |
| COUNTY: Portsmouth (city) |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| ENTRY DATE |

1. NAME

COMMON:
Quarters A, B, and C

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Norfolk Naval Shipyard

CITY OR TOWN:
Portsmouth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Fourth (Robert W. Daniel, Jr.)

STATE: Virginia CODE: 51 COUNTY: (in City) CODE: 740

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No |

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | | |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
U. S. Government, Department of the Navy

STREET AND NUMBER:
Norfolk Naval Shipyard

CITY OR TOWN:
Portsmouth

STATE:
Virginia

CODE:
51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Portsmouth

STATE:
Virginia

CODE:
51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1958 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
D. C.

CODE:
11

STATE: Virginia

COUNTY: Portsmouth (city)

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One) | | | | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
| | (Check One) | | | (Check One) | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Quarters A, B, and C are three Greek Revival houses built as officers' quarters and still used as such. The houses stand near the workshops in the old part of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. They are screened from the adjacent public street by a high brick wall erected in 1803 around the original Gosport Shipyard. Wooden fences separate the houses' yards from one another, and each individual yard is divided into two sections by a picket fence. The brick stables at the ends of the yards are now used as garages.

A set of early plans for Quarters A, built c. 1837, refer to this building as the Commandant's House. Larger and more formal than the other two, it is a two-story, Flemish-bond brick structure set on a high basement and covered by a hipped roof with interior end chimneys. The central entry, with its Doric pilasters, plain full entablature, and blocking course, is taken directly from Plate 28 of Asher Benjamin's The Practical House Carpenter (1830), with the minor addition of a transom light. Two curving flights of stairs with original iron railings ascend to a landing at the front-door level. The three-part windows, each consisting of a pair of two-over-two sash flanking a six-over-six window, have ramped white marble lintels with corner blocks. Frame, two-story sun porches with bracketed cornices have been added to the side and to the rear of Quarters A. The latter, with its fantastically carved pilasters and elaborate jig-sawn balusters is a handsome example of its style.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Quarters A's plan has been slightly modified by the cutting of large arches between the reception rooms. Paralleling its central entrance hall, to the left is a service passage off which at the house's northeast corner, is an elliptical stair with eased and scrolled banister, derived from Plate 62 of Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter. Farther down the passage is a pantry. To the right of the entrance hall is the dining room, and the rear half of the house is occupied by a double parlor separated by a flattened segmental arch with corner block impost, a central tablet, and symmetrically molded trim. The second-floor plan is similar to the first, but double doors, rather than an open arch, separated the two rear chambers. Much original detail remains in the house including paneled window reveals, simple marble mantels, and Greek-fret stair brackets.

Quarters B and C are very much alike. They are also two-story, Flemish-bond brick buildings set on high basements and covered by hipped roofs with interior end chimneys. The façades of these houses are laid in pressed brick. They are three-bay buildings with their entrances in one of the end bays. Their plans are mirror images of each other. Instead of the three-part windows of A, B and C's ramped-lintel windows are single ones, with six-over-six sash. Two-story frame sun porches have been added to the rears of these houses, and small, two-story frame kitchen wings to the sides.

To one side of the entrance halls in these quarters is the dining room. Midway in the house, the hall intersects a cross-hall, at the near end of which is another entrance door and at the far end a stair similar to that in Quarters A. A double parlor stretches across the back of the building. In Quarters B, which is slightly larger than Quarters C, this parlor is divided by an arch, as in Quarters A. In Quarters C, it is a single large room with a fireplace at one end only.

(see continuation sheet #1)

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

(Continuation Sheet) #1

| | |
|-----------------------------|------|
| STATE Virginia | |
| COUNTY Portsmouth (city) | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| | |

(Number all entries)

7. Description (continued)

Like A, most of the original woodwork survives. Especially impressive is the side-and-transom-light doorway at the juncture of the front and side entrance halls in Quarters C.

All three of these houses are in an excellent state of preservation. Quarters C probably retains the most original features, including its hard pine floors.

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Quarters A, B, and C at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard are handsome and finely crafted examples of Asher Benjamin's Greek Revival style and illustrate in striking form the pervasive national influence of architectural handbooks among builder-craftsmen of the early-nineteenth century. In addition, they are relics, along with their contemporary, the nearby Drydock No. 1, of a period of rapid expansion for the United States and the original Gosport Navy Yard following the War of 1812.

What is now the Norfolk Naval Shipyard is the oldest such naval facility in the United States. The site had been recognized as an ideal one for shipbuilding as early as 1620. In 1767 the Gosport Shipyard was established to supply the Royal Navy. Taken over by the Commonwealth of Virginia during the American Revolution, it lay dormant from 1784 until 1794, when the United States Government leased it for the use of the newly-formed Department of the Navy. In 1801, the Federal government bought the Gosport Navy Yard outright and made some improvements. After the War of 1812, a systematic effort to expand and improve the facilities at Portsmouth began.

According to the Public Works Record Book, Quarters A was built in 1824 with Quarters B and C following soon after. However, an 1827 map of the Yard designates them as the "Proposed Commandant's House," the "Proposed Master Commandant's House," and the "Proposed Surgeon's House," respectively. Furthermore, the architectural handbook from which their detailing was derived was not published until 1830. An 1842 map of the Yard shows them all existing and functioning in their designated capacities in that year and notes that Quarters A was authorized in 1837. Consequently, the construction of the three houses must be assigned to the years 1837-1842.

The works of Asher Benjamin were highly influential in the early-nineteenth century. Beginning with The Country Builder's Assistant in 1797, Benjamin undertook, over the next fifty-odd years, to keep provincial craftsmen supplied with his own versions of the prevailing cosmopolitan taste. Many persons copied designs directly from these books; more competent craftsmen adapted from them with greater or lesser freedom. Quarters A, B, and C are good examples of this practice. No detail is exactly like any in Benjamin's books; some are very close, but others combine elements from various of his plates according to the carpenter's own taste.

All three of these houses survived the burning of the Gosport Navy Yard by evacuating Union forces in 1861 and another by departing Confederate forces the next year. Well maintained, they continue to serve as residences for high ranking officers of the Yard.

FOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Benjamin, Asher. The Practical House Carpenter. (1830).
 Butt, Marshall W. Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Va., A Brief History
 Revised Edition, 1960.
 _____ . Portsmouth: Under Four Flags 1752-1961., 1961.
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY | | | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES | | | |
|--|----------|---------|---|---------|---------|---------|
| CORNER | LATITUDE | | LONGITUDE | | | |
| | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds |
| NW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |
| NE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |
| SE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |
| SW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **three acres**

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION:
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE:
 November 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
 221 Governor Street

CITY OR TOWN:
 Richmond

STATE:
 Virginia

CODE:
 51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Junius R. Fishburne, Jr.
 Title: Exec. Director Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Date: **NOV 19 1974**

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

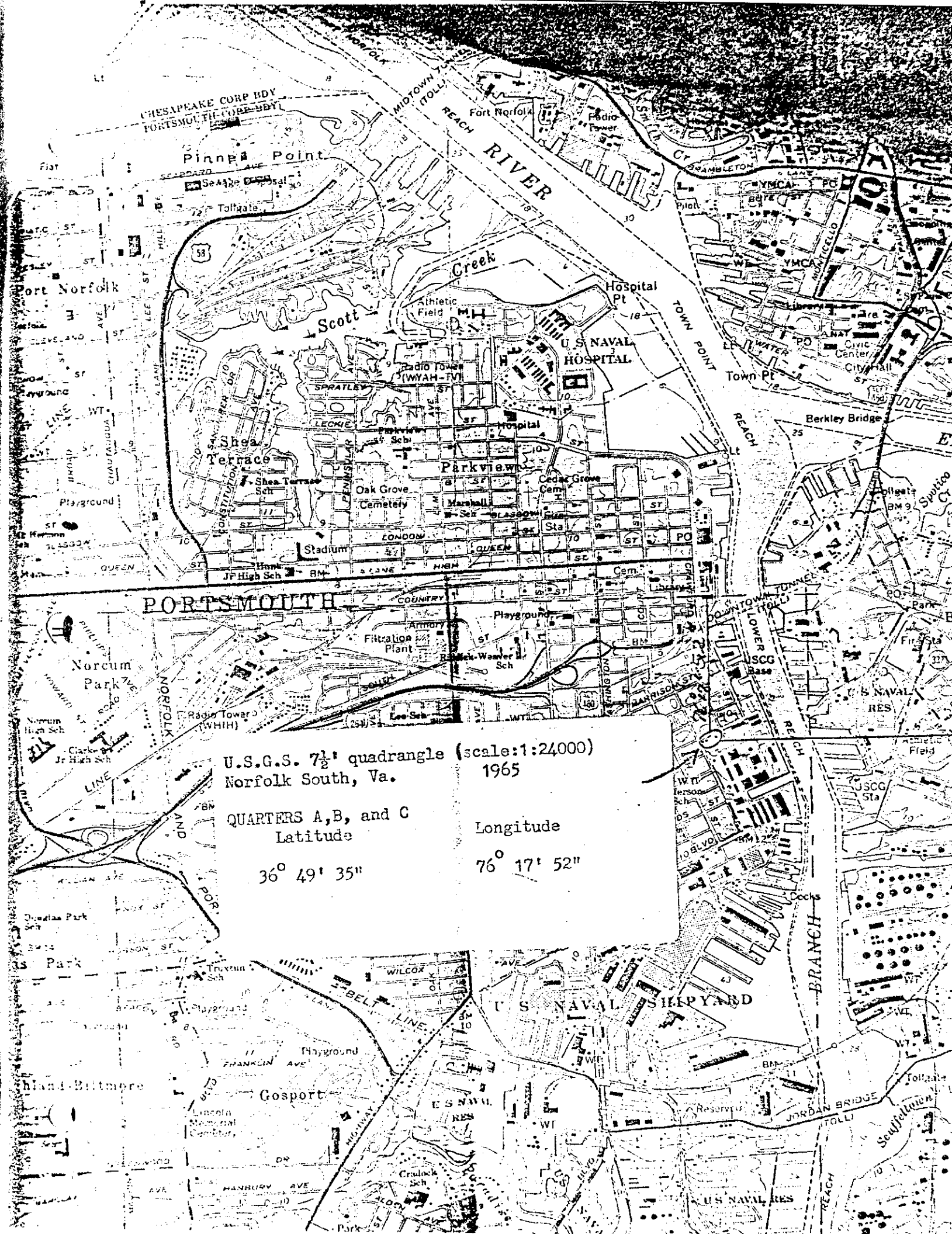
Date: _____

ATTEST: _____

 Keeper of The National Register

Date: _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



CHESAPEAKE CORP BDY
PORTSMOUTH CORP BDY

Pinna Point

REACH RIVER

Creek

Scott

Hospital Pt

U S NAVAL HOSPITAL

YMCA

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PORTSMOUTH

Norcum Park

U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)
Norfolk South, Va. 1965

QUARTERS A, B, and C
Latitude

Longitude

36° 49' 35"

76° 17' 52"

U S NAVAL SHIPYARD

Gosport

U S NAVAL RES