

VLR-5/21/74 NRHP-6/20/74

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:  
Cradock Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: Bounded on the northeast by Paradise Creek, the southeast by Victory Blvd., and the northwest by George Washington Highway.

CITY OR TOWN: Portsmouth

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

STATE: Virginia

CODE: 51

COUNTY: (city)

CODE: 740

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (Yes/No)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Multiple ownership

STREET AND NUMBER:

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: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1973

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: 221 Governor Street

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond

STATE: Virginia

CODE: 51

STATE: Virginia

COUNTY: Portsmouth (city)

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ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)  
 Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)  
 Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)  
 Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Cradock is a geographically well-defined planned community located in the southern end of the city of Portsmouth. Busy highways bound it on the south, east and west, while its northern boundary is marked by Paradise Creek. It is mainly a working-class neighborhood consisting of some ninety residential blocks with a small commercial area in the center. The main street pattern is in the general form of an anchor with the main thoroughfare, Afton Parkway forming the shank. The parkway, a divided street with landscaped median, bisects the town, but is interrupted in the center by Afton Park, the town square. Located on the square is a fanciful bandstand, the town's focal point and symbol. Also on the square is the library and firehouse building. Around the square's eastern end is the small commercial area. At the western end of Afton Park is the major lateral thoroughfare, Prospect Parkway, also a divided street with landscaped median. The vista at the northern end of Prospect Parkway is terminated by the junior high school, while the southern vista is closed by the elementary school. In contrast to the wider thoroughfares most of the residential streets are narrow and gently curved to provide a quiet domestic atmosphere. This atmosphere is enhanced by the mature trees that line nearly every street.

Cradock's housing generally consists of single-family dwellings on fifty foot lots. The houses are simple and small, but are commodious. The architects kept the residential area from being monotonous by providing several styles of houses including modified English Cottage, Bungalow, Dutch Colonial and Colonial Revival. Of the 1235 houses originally planned for the community 759 were completed. Nearly all are of frame construction.

The commercial strips that have grown up around Cradock have tended to draw business away from the original shopping area. As a result the commercial buildings present a somewhat deteriorated face. Efforts are underway, however, to return vitality to the commercial area. The rest of the community is relatively well maintained. A strong community pride persists, and neighborhood associations have contributed to keeping up the visual quality of the area.

CL.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input 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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cradock is a well preserved example of one of the nation's first Government-built community projects. Conceived as a model community, it incorporated many of the most advanced planning techniques of its day. The town came into existence as a result of the rapid influx of workers at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard during World War I. An Act of Congress of 1918 allowed the Federal Government to build housing projects related to the wartime effort. Accordingly, the United States Housing Corporation began planning Cradock since the adjacent town of Portsmouth was not equipped to handle sudden increases in population. Similar activity took place across the James River near Newport News with the construction of Hilton Village.

The community was laid out according to the design of the distinguished New York architectural firm of George B. Post and Sons, who also designed many of the buildings. Assistance in the design was provided by the United States Housing Corporation. The engineering firms for the project were Hill and Ferguson, and G. C. and A. E. Wheeler. The site chosen for the community was a 310 acre farm about three miles south of Portsmouth on Paradise Creek. It was connected to Portsmouth by a streetcar line leading directly to the Shipyard. This line, in turn, was attached to the existing system covering all of Portsmouth and its major suburbs, making Cradock part of an early mass-transit system.

Cradock was named in honor of British Rear Admiral Sir Christopher G. F. W. Cradock whose fleet was sunk by the German Navy in 1914. The street layout was designed in the form of an anchor with Afton Parkway, one of the major thoroughfares, being the anchor's shank. The streets intersecting Afton were alphabetically arranged and were named for naval heroes such as Decatur and Farragut. In the center, at the intersection of Afton and Prospect Parkways, was Afton Park, which, with its bandstand, served as a community gathering point. Most of the features of present-day planned communities including schools, recreational areas, churches, a commercial area, and public transportation system were provided for Cradock. All of the facilities were planned to be within walking distance of one another. The town was a pioneer in use of concealed utility lines. The lines either were placed under median strips or behind houses to make them inconspicuous. The town had its own Government-built schoolhouse, firehouse, sewerage and water system, and electric street lighting system. Afton Parkway, the major traffic boulevard, also carried the streetcar line. Prospect Parkway was built as a residential and promenade street. Gillis Road was a long diagonal street stretching from the far end of the community to Paradise Creek where a bridge was planned to connect Cradock directly to the Shipyard and downtown Portsmouth. The bridge was never built as the Government dropped its

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Virginia	
COUNTY	
Portsmouth (city)	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8.

sponsorship of the Cradock project following the Armistice.

Cradock unsuccessfully attempted self-government after the War, and in 1922 its administration was taken over by Norfolk County. Today it is part of the city of Portsmouth, but a strong community pride has enabled Cradock to maintain a separate identity. Although the streetcar system no longer exists, the community has changed little in character and appearance since 1918, which is a testament to the quality of its design. Following a period of decline in recent years, it currently is experiencing a return to its original status as a desirable place to live.

CL.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Unpublished scrapbook prepared by Portsmouth Office of Planning  
in archives of Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	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	36°	48'	34"	76°	19'	40"
NE	36°	48'	34"	76°	18'	26"
SE	36°	47'	38"	76°	18'	26"
SW	36°	47'	38"	76°	19'	40"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 310 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: May, 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., Director  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

STATE <b>Virginia</b>	
COUNTY <b>Portsmouth (city)</b>	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)*

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

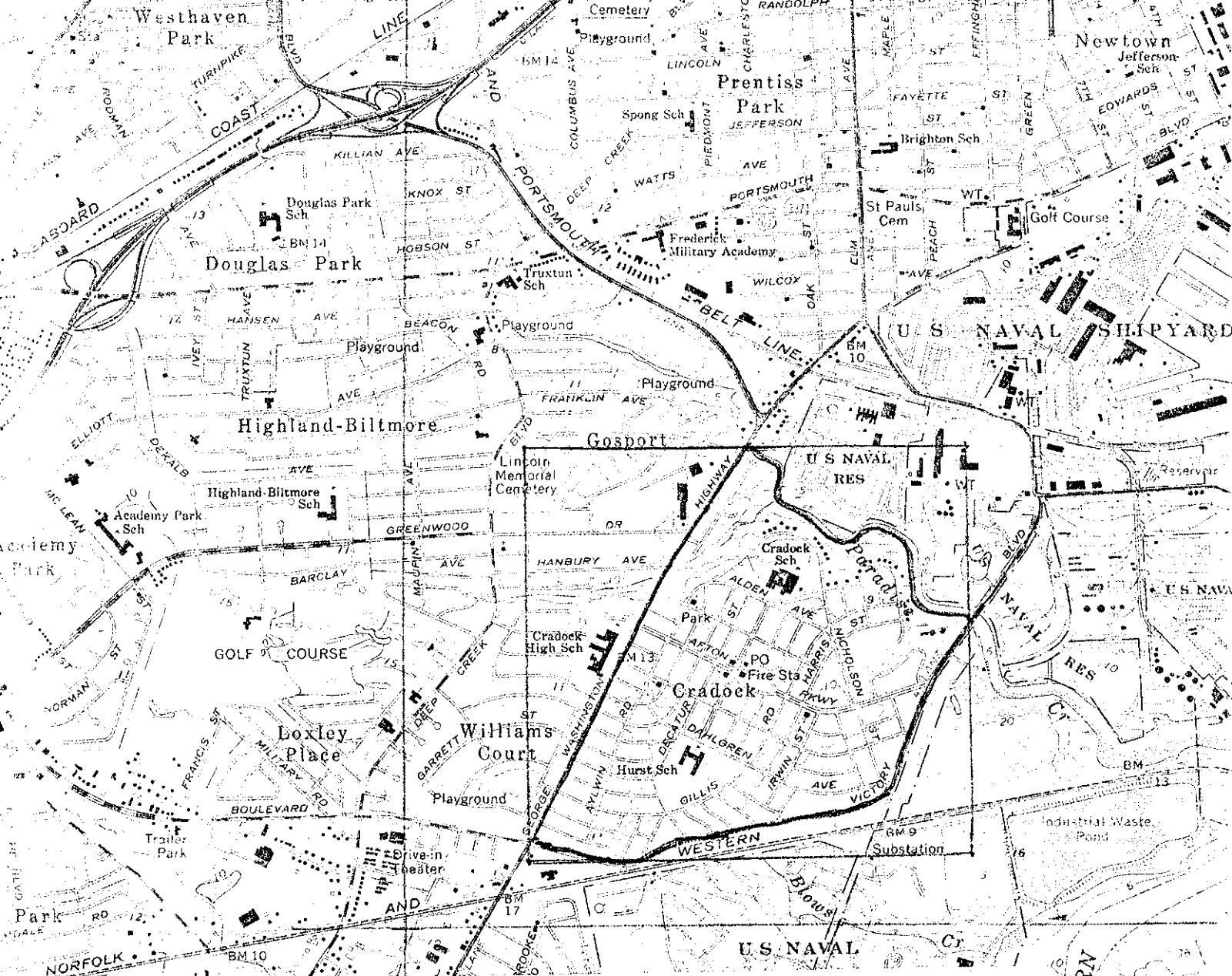
<b>1. NAME</b>			
COMMON: <b>Cradock Historic District</b>			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>Bounded on the northeast by Paradise Creek, the southeast by Victory Blvd., and the northwest by George Washington Highway.</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Portsmouth</b>			
STATE: <b>Virginia</b>	CODE <b>51</b>	COUNTY: <b>(city)</b>	CODE <b>740</b>
<b>3. MAP REFERENCE</b>			
SOURCE: <b>U. S. G. S. 7 1/2' quadrangle Norfolk South, Virginia</b>			
SCALE: <b>1:24000</b>			
DATE: <b>1965</b>			
<b>4. REQUIREMENTS</b>			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

★ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973-729-148/1441 3-1

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

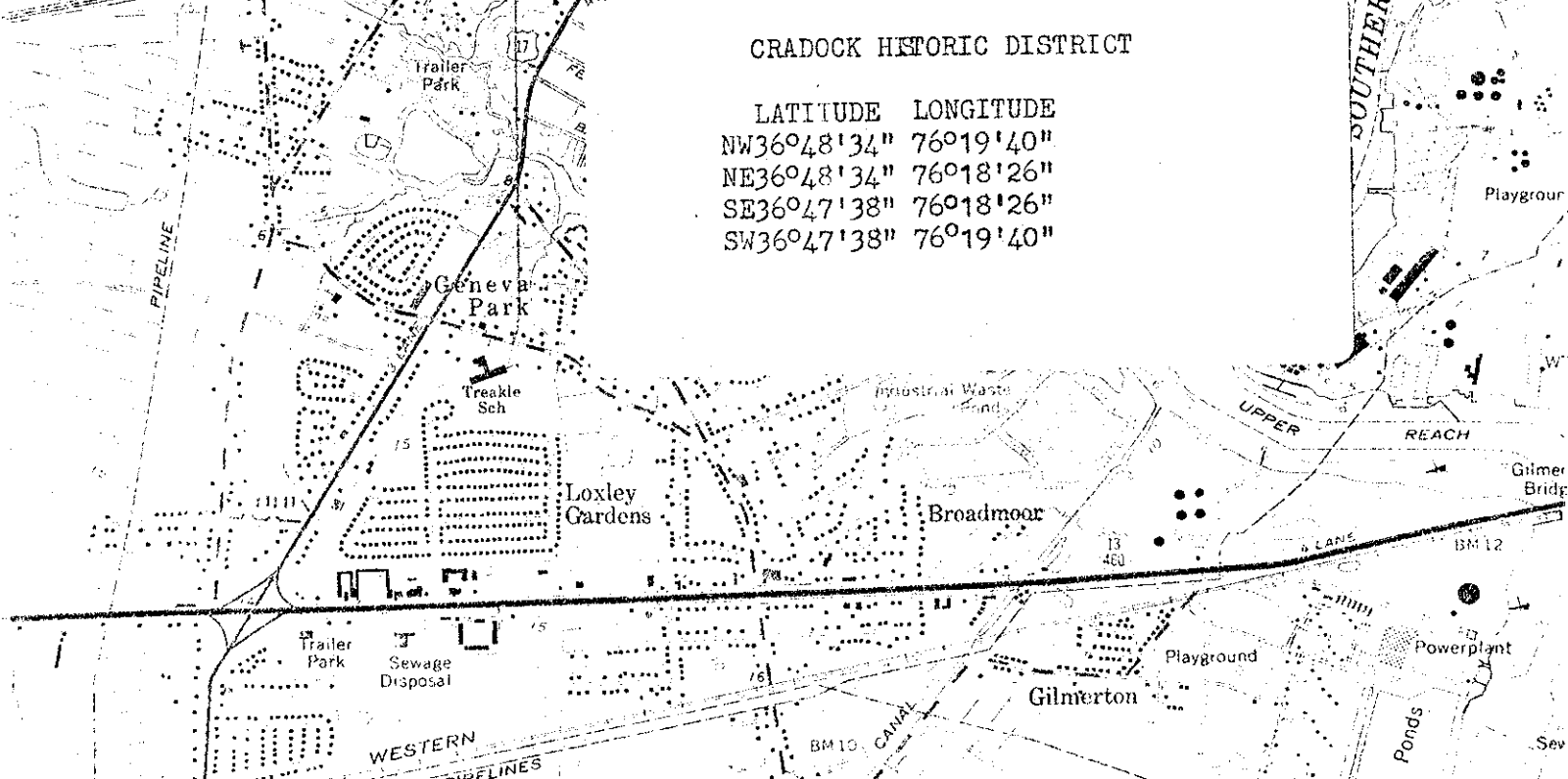
*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)*

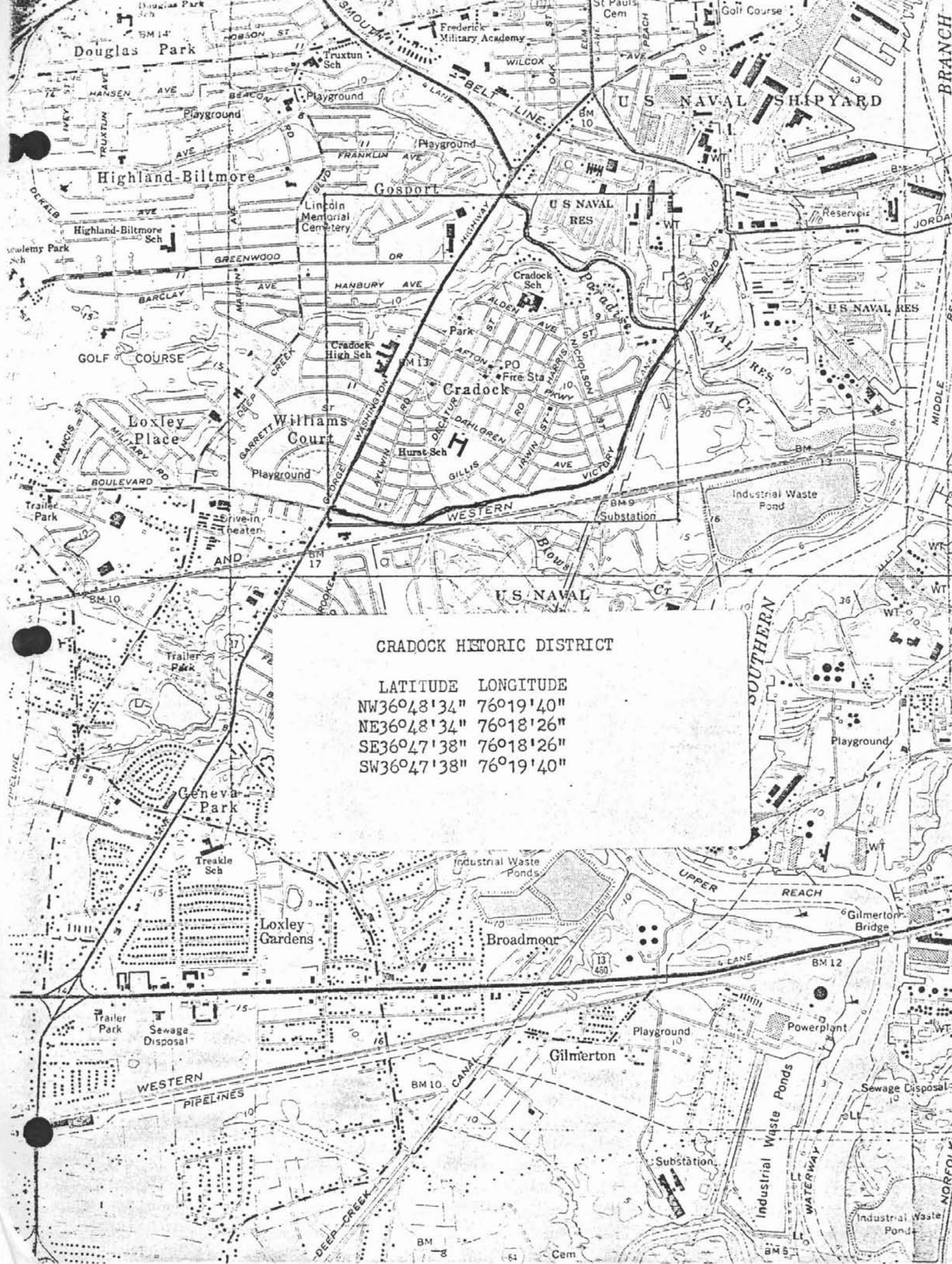
<b>1. NAME</b>		
COMMON <b>Cradock Historic District</b>	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE <i>(Assigned by NPS)</i>
<b>2. LOCATION</b>		
STATE <b>Virginia</b>	COUNTY <b>(city)</b>	TOWN <b>Portsmouth</b>
STREET AND NUMBER <b>Bounded on the northeast by Paradise Creek, the southeast by Victory Blvd., and the northwest by George Washington Highway.</b>		
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>		
PHOTO CREDIT	DATE	NEGATIVE FILED AT
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		



CRADOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT

LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW36°48'34"	76°19'40"
NE36°48'34"	76°18'26"
SE36°47'38"	76°18'26"
SW36°47'38"	76°19'40"





CRADDOCK HISTORIC DISTRICT

LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW36°48'34"	76°19'40"
NE36°48'34"	76°18'26"
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SW36°47'38"	76°19'40"