

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LISTED ON:	
VLR	06/17/2010
NRHP	03/28/2011

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Chapel of the Centurion
other names/site number Building 166, DHR - DSS File # 114-0002-0001

2. Location

street & number 134 Bernard Road not for publication
city or town Fort Monroe vicinity
state Virginia code 51 county Hampton (Ind. City) code 650 zip code 23651

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

 7/12/10
Signature of certifying official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

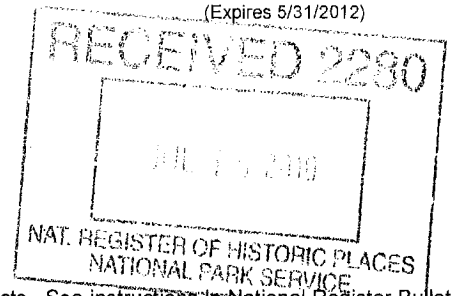
I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- other (explain:)
- determined eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

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 national statewide X local

[Signature] Date 7/27/10
Signature of certifying official

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

[Signature] Date December 2, 2010
Signature of commenting official

Federal Preservation Officer U.S. Army
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Patrick Andrews Date of Action 3/28/2011
Signature of the Keeper

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
0	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Carpenter Gothic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Concrete

foundation: Brick

walls: Wood

roof: Stone: Slate

other: N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

See Continuation Sheets

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1857-1960

Significant Dates

1857 (Completion Date)

1933 (Fire)

1968 (Renovation)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Major and Brevet Colonel Harvey Brown, 2d
Artillery

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance corresponds to the time in which the Chapel of the Centurion was associated with important architectural trends and military history. The time period of 1857 to 1960 represents the construction completion date and encompasses major significant alterations and additions.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The Chapel of the Centurion was used as a religious facility during its period of significance and is used so at present. However, the Chapel meets Consideration A as its significance is derived from its architecture.

Chapel of the Centurion
Name of Property

Hampton, Virginia
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

See Continuation Sheets

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

See Continuation Sheets

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

N/A

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # HABS VA,28-HAMP,2A
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): #114-0002-0001

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

Chapel of the Centurion
Name of Property

Hampton, Virginia
County and State

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 18N 383623 4095926
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary is shown on the attached scaled map

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The proposed boundaries form the core of the land associated with Chapel of the Centurion since the 19th Century, and encompass all known buildings, structures, and sites associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Katherine D. Klepper
Organization J.M. Waller, Inc. date _____
street & number 318 Cornog Lane, Building 28 telephone _____
city or town Fort Monroe state _____ zip code _____
e-mail katherine.klepper@us.army.mil

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Chapel of the Centurion
Name of Property

Hampton, Virginia
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Property: Chapel of the Centurion
Locality: Fort Monroe, Hampton, Virginia
Photographer: Katherine Klepper
Date Photographed: January 2009

Photo 1 of 4: Southeast Oblique

Photo 2 of 4: South Elevation

Photo 3 of 4: East Elevation

Photo 4 of 4: Sanctuary

Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Fort Monroe Directorate of Public Works
street & number 318 Cornog Lane, Building 28 telephone 757-788-5947
city or town Fort Monroe state VA zip code 23651

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 7

Page 1

Summary Description

Constructed in 1857, the Chapel of the Centurion stands as the oldest continually used wooden military structure for religious services in the United States. Adapted from designs published by noted Gothic Revival architect Richard Upjohn, the Chapel is a regular block building with projecting vestibule and chancel in design. The Chapel of the Centurion also contains three stained glass windows by the celebrated Tiffany Glass Company. Sited northeast, on the edge of the parade grounds, the Chapel of the Centurion's design is the only religious structure within the fortification walls of the largest defensive structure in the United States. In 1933, a fire caused damage to the ceiling and organ loft of the Chapel and in 1968 the building was raised nearly two-feet to accommodate an HVAC system in the basement. The Chapel of the Centurion is an outstanding example of small-church construction in the middle of the last century, and retains a high level of character and integrity original to its construction.

Narrative Description

The permanent military occupation of Fort Monroe in the early nineteenth-century reflected the changing political climate, as well as advances in architectural and military technology. The Chapel of the Centurion stands within the boundaries of the largest defensive structure in the United States. Designed as the first Third System fort in America, Fort Monroe covers approximately sixty-three acres of ground. The implementation of the Third System fortification represented an important shift in defensive fortification strategy that focused on the construction of massive brick and stone forts built on the entrances to major American harbors between 1816 and 1867.¹ This system of massive brick and stone fortifications evolved from the work of a Board of Engineers for Fortifications appointed by then President James Madison. Under the leadership of fortification expert Simon Bernard, the Third System type of seacoast defense was the most comprehensive, most uniform, and the most advanced the nation had yet to have.² These main defensive works were often large structures, based on a combining of the Montalembert concept, with many guns concentrated in tall thick masonry walls, and the Vauban concept, with layers of low, protected masonry walls. Fort Monroe was built as a seven front, brick and masonry fort with 10-foot thick walls and a wet moat of varying depth. The Fort was garrisoned 25 July 1823 and by 1825 the garrison was the largest in the United States.

The Chapel of the Centurion faces northeast on the edge of the parade ground on the corner of Bernard Road and Ruckman Road on a small triangular plot of land surrounded by holly hedges. Landscaping also includes a small circular garden in the rear, and flowerbeds along the walls of the Chapel and near the front door. A large live oak shades the west elevation of the building. This location is approximately 2.8 miles east of downtown Hampton, Virginia in the Tidewater region of Virginia at the confluence of the James River and the Chesapeake Bay. In 1822, an outhouse was built to serve a set of quarters on the land where the chapel now stands. This structure was torn down in 1829, and the Chapel was constructed in 1857 over this site. Aside from this ancillary structure, the Chapel is the first building to occupy this piece of land within the Fort Monroe fortification walls.³ Completed in 1857, the Chapel cost about \$6,000 and no original architectural drawings exist for the Chapel of the Centurion.⁴

Exterior

Based upon the designs from Richard Upjohn's pattern book Rural Architecture, the Chapel is constructed from wood with board and batten siding and measures 33-feet by 66-feet 8-inches. Vertical three-inch battens with coved edges cover the joints of the vertical planks, which are set seven-inches on center. The foundation, of concrete faced with modern sized red brick laid in a running bond, was rebuilt in 1967. A board running horizontally along the bottom of the wall is set at a 45-degree angle to form a splash block. A simple white narrow board runs along the top of the wall. Presently painted white, the building has not always been painted as plainly. The Chapel of the Centurion, as dedicated, was far different from the building now familiar to the thousands who have visited it at Fort Monroe. As completed the Chapel was originally painted dark green with red trim. This color combination lasted until the advent of Army Field Forces'

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 7

Page 2

Headquarters in 1948, a forerunner of the Continental Army Command. It was at this time the "newcomers", the Army Field Forces, outraged the remaining coastal artillery population by painting their beloved chapel its present white. The old-timers referred to it unhappily as the "chicken-coop".⁵

The Chapel is trimmed with a molding similar in shape to the vertical battens of the walls. This trim follows the outside lines of the windows and doors. The soffit follows the line of the rafters which are boxed. A fairly large rounded wood molding runs along the location where the roof and fascia meet.

High pitched gable roofs covered with gray slate tiles shelter the Chapel below. The roof over the chancel and narthex is lower than the roof over the nave, but all maintain the same pitch. The sacristy has a shed roof angling off from the chancel roof. Sharply crowned raked moldings run down the gable ends, rising above the plane of the roof. A rounded molding runs along under the eaves. The peaks of the gable roof are metal, painted a shade of gray. Latin shaped wooden crosses stand on low plinths on each end of the nave roof.

The front double doors are of board and batten to match the treatment of the walls. A lap molding covers the join of the two doors, and a thumb latch is set in a long rectangular brass escutcheon. The back door, which is very narrow, is also covered with boards and battens. A large pane of glass framed by a simple molding is in the upper part of the door. This door also has a brass knob set in a small round escutcheon.

The front stoop is uncovered and constructed of brick with a wrought iron railing of Sears style on each side of the main doors. The top step is the original Chapel of the Centurion step. This granite step was raised and preserved in 1967, when the building was raised and required steps for access. The sacristy door is reached by a simple flight of wood steps.

Windows

All the Chapel windows are stained glass set in lead comes. These tall narrow windows are lancet in shape. The original design for the Chapel windows called for diamond-shaped panes of mottled brown and white glass. Most of these windows have been replaced over the years (documentation of exact dates is not reliable or always available) by windows intended to memorialize a person or event, save for the windows which are above the narthex and only visible from the exterior. Only the triple lancet over the narthex and the windows in the sacristy remain. Smaller windows light the sacristy and the sidewalls of the narthex. The sacristy windows have flat sills, but all other sills are sharply sloped outward. Along the sides of the nave, tall narrow windows with Gothic pointed arches are set in pairs. Three windows, the center one the largest, are set over the narthex and at the end of the church behind the alter. This center window over the alter is named "Cornelius the Centurion," and was designed by E. Barnard, crafted by Ridging Baird Co., of Boston Massachusetts and dedicated in 1880. On of the unique features of this window is the jeweled glass near the top. The window reads, "*I have fought the good fight,*" and the plaque reads, "*In Memoriam Bvt Maj Genl William F. Barry, Died July 17, 1789.*" The face of the Centurion was broken 1970, and the present replacement is a close reproduction to the original. To the right of the center window is "Blessed Mother and Child," dedicated in 1929. Two plaques adorn this window. The first reads, "*her children shall rise up and call her blessed Prov 31:28*" The second plaque reads, "*In memoriam Fanny Luscombe Easterbrook Wife of Chaplain Edmund P. Easterbrook U.S. Army Born Dec 10, 1864 Died: June 26, 1929.*" The window, "Good Sheperd" is to the left of the center window in the sanctuary. This window, dedicated in 1933, was also designed with two plaques. The 1st Plaque reads, "*I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Il Tim 4:17*". The second plaque reads, "*In Memoriam: Col. Edmund P. Easterbrook, Chief of Chaplains U.S. Army Born: Dec 22, 1864 Died: Jan 18, 1933* There are two windows on the north side of the sanctuary. Both of these windows were crafted by R. Geissler of New York and were designed before prior to the centennial of the Chapel. These windows are entitled "Lamb of God" and "Word of God" designed respectively in 1955 and 1956.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 7

Page 3

All windows in the nave are shaped pointed arches and measuring 18-inches by 120-inches. Along the south nave wall, closest to the narthex, is the "Crown of Life" window, dedicated after 1906 and reads, "*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*" Next is the window is the "Ionic Corinthian Column," dedicated c. 1880. This window reads, "*In memory of Bvt Brig Genl C H Morgan, Major, 4th Artillery Died Dec 20 1875.*" The next set of windows, on the south side of the nave were both designed by the Tiffany Glass Company. The "Woman with Palm" window, dedicated c.1890, reads, "*In Memoriam Helen Fargo Wife of Lieut Herbert G Squires USA Born Dec 3 1857 Died Jan 17 1886.*" This window is documented as having been crafted in ca. 1886. This window is an example of a Tiffany portrait-figure window. These types of windows were usually non-ecclesiastical, academic or allegorical themes usually found in libraries and hospitals. The window depicts a classically-clad figure holding a palm frond. One assumes this figure is Helen Squire, however Tiffany was known for painting the same face on many of his windows. The folding of the gown is represented in actual folds of the glass. This treatment is known as drapery glass and is considered to be an invention of Tiffany. The figure is flanked by Corinthian columns supporting a trefoil motif with blue and green glass jewels at the top of the window. Next to this window is the "Per Mare, Per Terras" window also designed by the Tiffany Glass Company and dedicated c.1890. This window reads, "*Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, Until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob, PS. Cxxx11 3-6*" "*For he hath loved our nation and hath built us a synagogue. St. Luke vii, Colonel J McAllister, Born Oct 19, 1822 Died Jan 3rd 1887*". The McAllister window consists of a vertical grouping of military symbols surrounded by beige, mottled glass. Near the top is a military crest of a crossed cannon. The glass jewels in the window are formed by pressing glass into molds to create the irregular facets, which when in a window, produce prismatic, gem-like reflections of light. Both of these Tiffany Studio windows were restored in 1990 by the American Art and Leaded Glass Company.

Next to this set of Tiffany windows is a modern themed stained glass window entitled, "He Died So the Kids Next Door Might Live" and was designed in 1952 by R. Geissler, Inc. in New York. Dedicated in 1952, the window reads, "*He Died So the Kids Next Door Might Live*" *In Memory of First Lieutenant Robert L. Williams Jr. Born Feb 26, 1924 Died in Korea Aug 4 1950*". Beside this window is another Geissler window dedicated in 1958. The window was designed by Mrs. P.E. Winn and Colonel Eugene C. Jacobs, Commander US Army Hospital, Fort Monroe for the Chapel Centennial. The patches that adorn this window are those of the six armies, at that time part of the Continental Army Command. The flags were those of 1858 and 1958 and the Civil War soldier is copied from a tintype of Colonel Jacob's grandfather, who served at Fort Monroe in the Civil War. The window reads, "*Continental Command Chapel Centennial 1858 - 1958*".

The next to last set of windows on the south side of the nave are windows entitled, "St. Paul Defender of Faith" and "St. Michael". In 1966, the "St. Paul Defender of Faith" window was dedicated and reads, "*The Sword of the Spirit*" "*Duty Honor Country*" "*Col Perry McCoy Smith GAC USMA 1922 Born 1900 Died 1955*". This window was crafted by the J. and R. Lamb Studios of Tenafly, New Jersey. Also by this same company, the "St. Michael" window was dedicated in 1964 and reads, "*In Memory of Frederick Harrison Smith*" "*Major General*" "*United States Army*" "*Born 1879 Died 1961*" "*USMA Class of 1903*".

The final set of windows on the south side of the nave are entitled "Little Children" and "Power for Peace". "Little Children" was designed by the Rudy Glass Company and dedicated in 1969 and was given by the Church School Members at the conclusion of the chapel restoration. "Power for Peace" was designed by Colonel Eugene C. Jacobs and crafted by the George Payne Company. This is a striking window, featuring missiles taking off leaving billowing smoke below. This window was designed to commemorate the 56th Anti-Aircraft Missile Battalion. These two windows are partly obstructed by the organ loft which was added at a later date.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 7

Page 4

Windows on the north side of the nave are also sectioned into sets of two and run the length of the Chapel. The first set of windows closest to the sanctuary begins with the window entitled "Well Done Thou Good and Faithful Servant". This window was dedicated ca. 1880 and reads, "*Essayons Rene Edward DeRussy Colonel of Engineers Born Feb 27, 1789 Cadet USMA March 20, 1807, Died Nov 23, 1865 58 Years of Service Well Done Thy Good and Faithful Servant*". The St. Alban window, dedicated in 1890 is to the east of the DeRussy window. This window reads, "*In Memory of Brevt Major General Emory Upton, Colonel 4th Artillery*".

Working eastward down the nave, the next set of windows are entitled, "The Armor of God" and "Sheaf of Wheat". Dedicated in 1879, "The Armor of God window reads, "*Faith Unto Death, In Mormoriam Albion Howe Bvt Capt 4th Arty Class of 1869*". This window was designed by the John Bolton School, one of the oldest stained glass companies in the United States. The "Sheaf of Wheat" windows reads, "*In Memoriam Caroline Matilda Barry Aug 4 1871*". Next is a window designed for the Fort Monroe Centennial Celebration. R. Geissler was commissioned to craft a window to commemorate the first playing of "Taps" for the burial of a soldier at Harrison Landing. This window was dedicated in 1958 and reads, "*Taps 1862*". Beside the "Taps" window is a window also by R. Geissler entitled, "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism". Dedicated in 1965, the window reads, "*One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism In Memory of Luther W. Evans Chaplain Colonel US Army 1904-1969*" and has the shield of the Chaplain Corps.

The next to final set of windows on the north side of the nave begins with a window entitled, "Forbid Them Not". This window is the third chapel window designed by the Tiffany Studios. Showcasing Tiffany's exemplary command over shaping glass, the window features drapery glass and the significant advances in leading that the Tiffany studio had made. The two figures shown in this window originally appear in a much larger design entitled, "Christ Blessing the Children," which hung in All Saints Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia and in other locations around the country. This design was created by Frederick Wilson for the Tiffany Firm. The window reads, "*In Momoriam Helen Kimberly Gilford wife of John H. Gilford July 20 1906*". The second window of the set is entitled, "Angel Gabriel," and was crafted by J. R. Lamb of Tenafly, New Jersey.

The final set of windows are the north side of the nave are entitled "Nehemiah" and "St. Peter". Nehemiah was designed by the Rudy Glass Company and dedicated in 1969 to commemorate the Chapel renovation. It is interesting to note on this window the drainpipe running from the narthex roof in the picture of the Chapel. This pipe would have been like those used to fill the large cistern at the Chapel around 1885-1890. The final window on the north side of the nave, "St. Peter" was designed by the J.R. Lamb Company and dedicated in 1970. Peter brought Cornelius to Christ and this is the only window in the Chapel to bear the Peter name. These two windows are partly obstructed by the organ loft which was added at a later date.

The narthex windows are the only stained glass windows in the Chapel crafted in Virginia. Dedicated in 1976, these windows were crafted by the Old Dominion Stained Glass Co. The windows read, "*United States Army Vietnam 1960-1973 In Honor of Those Who Served and Died Under US Colors in Southeast Asia*" The Green Beret window reads "Wearing the Green Beret," and the motto with shield "De Opresso Libre".

Interior

The interior walls of the Chapel are constructed of plaster, painted white, while the ceilings and back walls of the nave are of random-width planks. The ceiling beams rise from console brackets, doubled, with decorative drops that are set between the sets of windows. These arches are compound, with the upper part rising into the high peak of the roof, and a lower pointed arch below a wood tie beam. In the chancel, the peaks above the tie beams are pierced in trefoil shapes. The last beam in the chancel is set forward from the back wall. This allows lights concealed behind this beam to illuminate the chancel as though it was lit from above. At the back of the nave, the vertical panelling conceals closets and

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 7

Page 5

the stairwell to the organ loft. The chancel is raised two steps above the nave, and the altar end of the chancel is again raised another step, so that ultimately the altar stands one-foot higher than the nave. Double doors are located between the narthex and nave. The closets at the rear of the nave are closed off with vertically-planked doors which blend into the surrounding panelling. There is no visible frame around these doors

Red carpeting covers a wooden floor with a baseboard constructed from a simple board with a beveled top. Narrow round moldings, stained dark to match other woodwork, run along the edges of the window openings. A dado runs across the ends of the nave on each side of the narrower chancel and has recessed panels with pointed arches, echoing the shape of the lancet windows. This has been stained dark like the other moldings to match the other woodwork. A matching railing encloses the pulpit and lectern. The communion rail is shaped wood, that is supported by brass posts with brass leaves and stems rising from them.

The front of the organ loft was extended by three-feet in 1967. This balcony was not original to the 1857 plans and was most likely added ca. 1888, when it was decided that an organ loft was necessary for the Moller organ that was installed in 1888. Applied molding forms pointed arches of slightly different proportions than those used elsewhere in the Chapel. Col. Stanford Polonsky, of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, researched Christ Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1967 to reconstruct the balcony to emulate the Gothic style and maintain the integrity of Upjohn's aesthetic. The result is as we view it today, a wooden balcony, decorated along its face with Gothic arches. The two octagonal posts with tulip-shaped capitals that support the balcony are original to the 1888 addition. A steep, narrow staircase rises to the organ loft. Wooden handrails on each wall are fastened to wooden brackets. The first drawings available of the chapel shows two staircases, opposite to each other, leading up to the organ loft.⁶ Presumably one was converted into closets during the restoration after the 1933 fire. The 1933 fire caused severe damage to the ceiling and organ loft of the chapel. An entertaining story told about this damaging fire says that it happened during the funeral of a man who had frequently said that if he ever entered the church, it would burn down. As part of the fire restoration all of the Chapel windows were removed and sent for repair to the Geissler studios in Pennsylvania; when they were replaced, many of the windows were not returned to their original openings.⁷

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 8

Page 6

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Chapel of the Centurion at Fort Monroe is the Army's oldest wooden structure in continuous use for religious services. Significant under Criterion C, the Chapel retains a high level of significance for its architectural design and character, with Criteria Consideration A for being a religious property. Consecrated May 3, 1858 the building is an adaptation of a small mission church designed by Richard Upjohn and published in his book *Rural Architecture*. Significant stained glass windows are found throughout the Chapel and are designed by famous artisans such as Louis C. Tiffany, J. & R. Lamb Studios, R. Geissler and the John Bolton School. These designs memorialize both individuals and events in our nation's military history as well showcases an almost one hundred year history of stain glass practice and design.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Chapel of the Centurion at Fort Monroe, Virginia is an 1857 adaptation of Richard Upjohn's design in *Rural Architecture* for a small mission church. Upjohn, born in 1802, was an English-born artisan and architect who established an architectural practice in New York City and became a national leader in the Gothic Revival in American architecture. Best known for his Gothic Revival church architecture, Upjohn's design had a long lasting influence on nineteenth century American church architecture. In 1857, Upjohn became the first president of the American Institute of Architects and has been called the most important figure in American architecture between Thomas Jefferson and H. H. Richardson.⁸

Upjohn believed that as an architect and a man of faith it was his duty to provide Gothic designs for small parishes, and to provide them at a cost the parishes could afford. By 1847 so many requests for plans were arriving in his office that he resolved to publish a book illustrating churches he had designed and could recommend for parishes in need of correct but inexpensive models.⁹ He moved the High Church Anglican model into the American idiom, using his extraordinary skills to translate a medieval architecture of stone into wooden buildings suitable for the American frontier, adapted to new needs and available materials, without losing the qualities essential to the ecclesiological movement.¹⁰ By 1850, Upjohn's firm was inundated with work. "During the five years from 1845-1849, something over sixty commissions- not counting, of course, what was already under way at the earlier of the two dates- had come to the office, many of them for churches of an expensive character."¹¹ His book, first published in 1852, was reissued several times and had a long-lasting influence. Church designs from Upjohn's *Rural Architecture* are characterized by board and batten vertical siding and lancet windows, a deep chancel expressed on the exterior, and the center aisle and choir stalls appropriate to the Anglican liturgy.

The Gothic Revival architecture reached a high point in America between 1830 and 1860. While often adapted to residential structures, the best examples of Gothic Revival were the churches of the period.¹² A form of the Gothic Revival, the Carpenter Gothic style in America grew out of a need for quickly built houses and the desire for fanciful details. Technological advances such as the new balloon framing technique and the invention of steam powered scroll saws allowed for the mass production of intricate moldings. This ability to mass-produce also led to a proliferation of pattern books like Upjohn's *Rural Architecture*.

The Gothic style favored by Upjohn with its emphasis on an altar, rather than a modest communion table and commanding pulpit, flowed from his own high church Episcopalianism. This design placed importance upon the High Episcopalian emphasis on ritual, vestments, and the celebration of communion as the major service of the church. The style also allowed Upjohn to emphasize awe, mystery, tradition, and liturgical space. He stressed the communion service as the center of worship by setting chancel and altar apart from the congregation, thus making these the focal point of the interior.¹³ Virginia at the time of construction was not as known for its use of High Episcopalian design and the use of an

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 8

Page 7

Episcopal design for the Chapel of the Centurion should be noted. Census data reveals that in 1850 there were only 173 Episcopal churches in Virginia, compared with 650 Baptist churches during this same period.¹⁴ The decision to use an Upjohn design was most likely a decision by the acting post chaplain, Reverend Mark L. Chevers. Although the Chapel of the Centurion was constructed as a non-denominational church, it is not unexpected that an ecclesiastical design with roots in High Episcopalian was chosen as the design source for the Fort Monroe Chapel.

In 1838 the Continental Congress had made provisions for post chaplains. Reverend Mr. Mark L. Chevers of St. John's Episcopal Church of nearby Hampton, Virginia, petitioned for the job at Fort Monroe. Mr. Chevers had been performing this duty unofficially since the latter part of 1826 and with the act of Congress became Fort Monroe's first chaplain. Until the completion of the Chapel of the Centurion the Reverend used a casemate as the designated place of worship on the Fort. Over the course of his duty Chevers saw Black Hawk and his braves come and go. Lieutenant Robert E. Lee was a member of his congregation and called on the illustrious prisoner Jefferson Davis, in his casemate cell. He was Post Chaplain when an explosion at the arsenal on Ingalls Road took two lives but left one man miraculously untouched. The gift of members of the congregation, the "Church of the Centurion" was erected due to the efforts of Lt. Julian McAllister, the sole survivor of the arsenal accident. McAllister was also the principle donor to the degree that he provided most of the funds for the construction of a non-denominational church for the Army.

Although the design of the Chapel of the Centurion is attributed to Richard Upjohn, the design of the Chapel differs from the small mission church plans published in Rural Architecture in two primary ways: alterations executed at the time of construction (omission of the tower and changing the fenestration arrangement) and alterations executed after the Chapel had been consecrated. The fenestration of the nave differs significantly from the Upjohn Rural Architecture prototype. The lancet windows in the Chapel of the Centurion are paired, effectively doubling the total number of nave windows prescribed by Upjohn in his small mission church design. The fenestration over the entry to the Chapel was also increased from one lancet to three. Another notable departure from the Upjohn plan was the omission of the lateral tower.

An additional fenestrated bay was soon added to the Chapel in the form of a narthex. This bay first appears in photographs from the 1880s. Physical evidence supports that this was indeed an addition as the interior wall between the narthex and the nave is board and batten which continues the rhythm of the exterior board and batten. In 1888, a Moller organ was installed and it was during this installation that an organ loft was awkwardly constructed. The addition of the loft obscures the uppermost sections of the nearby nave lancet windows. The Upjohn church prototype suggested the organ be placed in the nave to the right of the chancel, not in an organ loft as located in the Chapel of the Centurion.

The original windows for the Chapel called for diamond-shaped panes of mottled, brown and white glass. These were gradually replaced with memorial windows, beginning in 1879. The Chapel of the Centurion windows represents almost one hundred years of stain glass history, with windows added as late as 1976. Three of these lancets were designed and crafted by artisans at the Tiffany Glass Company. These three windows deserve special attention not only because of their unparalleled craftsmanship, they also provide a rare example of Tiffany windows in their original Virginia setting. Tiffany made abundant use of drapery glass in ecclesiastical stained glass windows to add a three-dimensional effect. This process requires extensive skill and experience as it requires a hand-held roller to be manipulated forcefully over a sheet of molten glass to produce heavy ripples, while folding and creasing the entire sheet. "Forbid Them Not" designed in 1911 is an exquisite example of this type of craftsmanship. Tiffany's use of lead rods used to hold together the panes of glass, called comes, of various widths and lengths represents an advancement in the process of leading. In Gothic windows the comes were usually of uniform thickness arbitrarily bisected compositions in order to reinforce the window structure. On this window and the two other Tiffany windows at the Chapel, the comes enhance or play down their representational role within the design.¹⁵

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 8

Page 8

"The Armor of God" window by the John Bolton School, dedicated in 1879 to the Chapel, is an excellent example of enameled glass. The window is one of the two oldest stained glass windows in the chapel. John Bolton and his brother William were known for creating the first-known American-made figural window. Painter Otto Heinigke wrote of the brothers, "Let me tell you that there is nothing being done today the world over, that can compare with the vigor, the freedom and the fire of these remarkable windows."¹⁶ Several of the windows in the Chapel were designed by other important stained glass studios such as Richard Lamb of Lamb Studios and by R. Geissler, Inc.

While the physical craftsmanship of the windows is an important part of the stained glass trade history, events in the history of the Fort and the nation can be traced in the windows donated to memorialize the lives, achievements and sometimes sacrifices of military members and their families. Dedicated ca. 1880, the "Well Done Thou Good and Faithful Servant" window memorialized the life of Colonel Rene Edward DeRussy, Superintendent of Engineer Construction at Fort Monroe from 1838 to 1854. In 1952, the window entitled, "He Died So the Kids Next Door Might Live," was dedicated in memory of first Lieutenant Robert L. Williams, Jr., the first service person from the Peninsula to be killed in the Korean Conflict. This window was given by his wife and mother. Six years later, in 1958, the window *Taps 1862* was dedicated to commemorate the first playing of "Taps" for the burial of a soldier at Harrison's Landing, present site of Berkley Plantation. In 1958 another window was dedicated for the member and friends of the 56th Anti-Aircraft Missile Battalion. Entitled "Power for Peace," the window derived its theme from President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Power for Peace" slogan.

The Chapel of the Centurion retains local architectural significance for its design and fenestration. An example of an adapted Richard Upjohn rural gothic style, the Chapel stands as an architectural model for the religious movement that took place during the mid-nineteenth century and the subsequent ecclesiastical designs that reflected the movement. The Chapel of the Centurion at Fort Monroe is the Army's oldest wooden structure in continuous use for religious services. While minor changes have been made to the Chapel of the Centurion over the years, the Chapel's physical integrity remains remarkably intact. Both the architectural choices and window designs symbolize the long relationship between religion and the military in the United States.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number 9

Page 9

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Centurion

Hampton, VA

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

N/A

Section number Endnotes Page 10

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⁶ Phyllis Sprock. Department of the Army Inventory of Historic Property Form. "Chapel of the Centurion." *Department of the Army Inventory of Historic Property Form*, Department of the Army, 1979.

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⁸ Everard M. Upjohn, *Richard Upjohn: Architect and Churchman*, (New York: DeCapo Press, 1968), Preface, vii.

⁹ Pheobe B. Stanton. *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste 1840-1856*, (The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1997), p. 258.

¹⁰ Christabel Gough and Ron Kopnick. "The Serious Side of "Carpenter Gothic: Why Richard Upjohn Wanted to Build a Country Church in Maspeth" [web-site] <http://www.junipercivic.com/HistoryArticle.asp?nid=8>, 2010.

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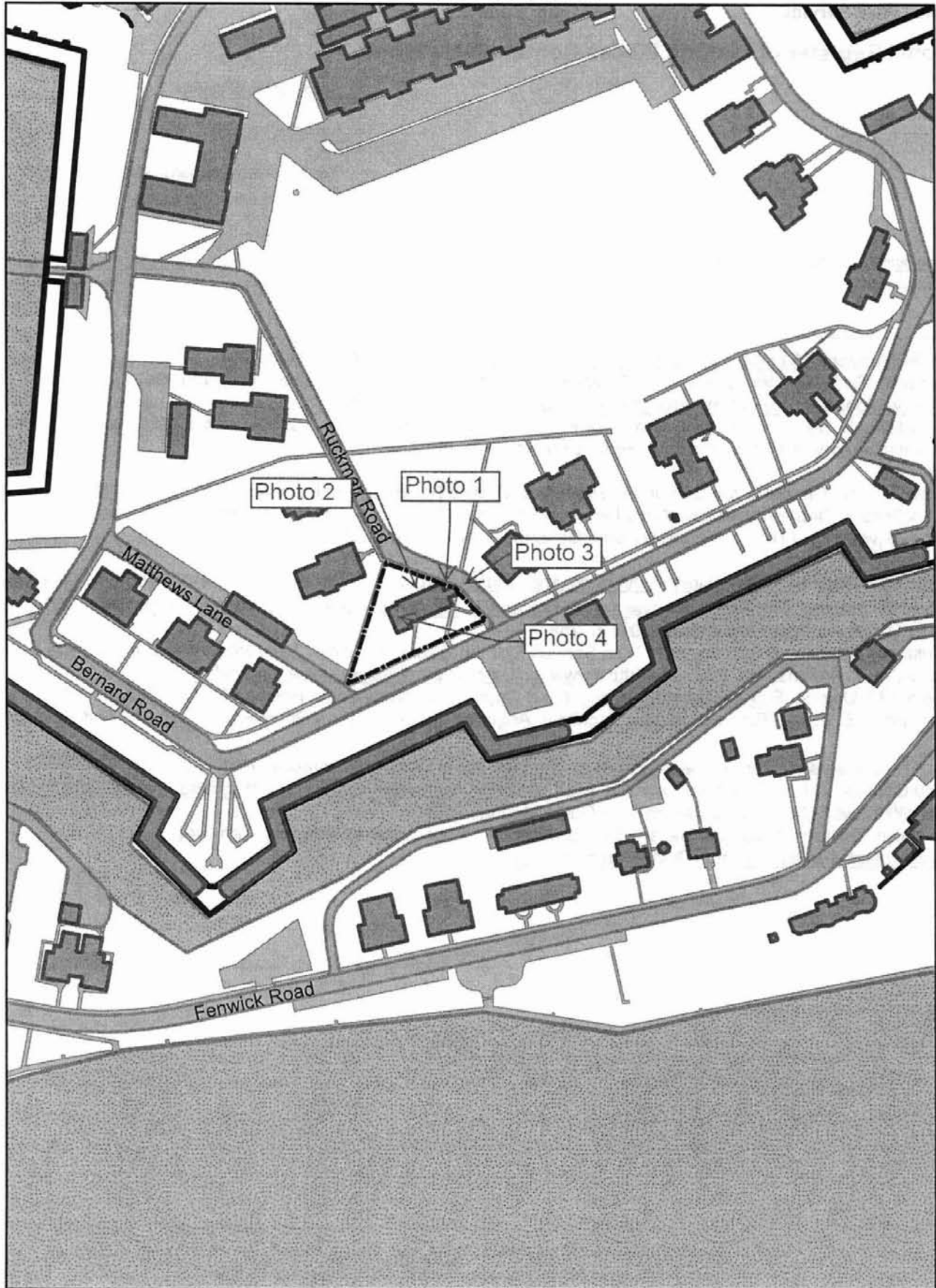
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Chapel of the Centurion - Fort Monroe
City of Hampton, VA
DHR ID#114-0002-0001



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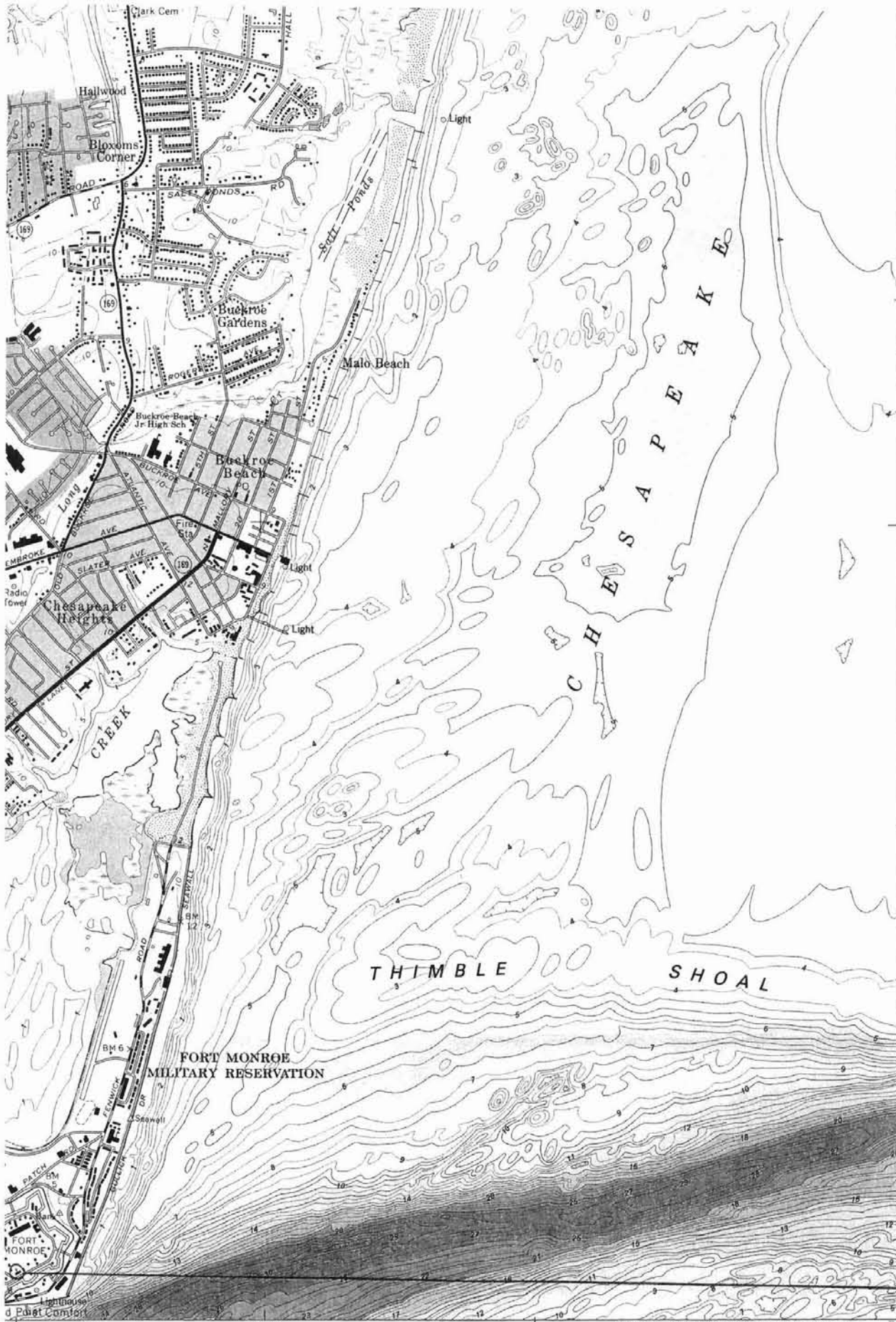
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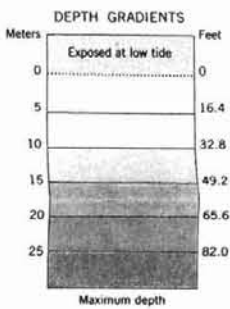
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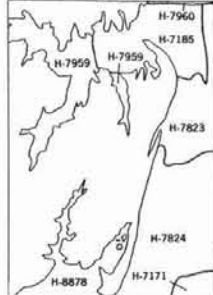
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HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY
 INFORMATION

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