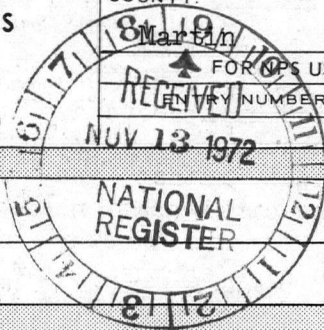


**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Martin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
NOV 13 1972	JAN 18 1973



1. NAME	
COMMON: Fort Branch Site	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: SE of Hamilton on S.R. 1416			
On north side of S.R. 1416, 1.1 miles east of junction with N.C. 125			
CITY OR TOWN: Hamilton vicinity (First Congressional District, The Hon. Walter B. Jones)			
STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Martin	CODE 117

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Unoccupied</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Rufus A. Coltrain and Henry Winslow			
STREET AND NUMBER: Route 1 Box 188			
CITY OR TOWN: Oak City Hamilton	STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Martin County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: Williamston	STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY:			
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: North Carolina	COUNTY: Martin	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE JAN 18 1973
FOR NPS USE ONLY			

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Situated high above a point where the Roanoke River bends slightly, Fort Branch commands an extensive sweep of the river. The earthworks are still virtually intact, and, as seen from a comparison with a contemporary diagram, the configuration of the fort is essentially as constructed. Approached from the landward side, the terrain is quite flat until it reaches the high earthen fortifications which extend outward from the sharp drop to the river to form an irregular semicircle which has three triangular projections. As measured in the plan, the fort extends about 1,400 feet along the west side of the river and is about 600 feet wide at its widest point. A ditch, from which the earth was taken to build the walls, runs along the outer perimeter of the fort walls. A triangular bastion, which has three reinforced angles, extends from the center of the fort on the landward side. On the west and north sides of the bastion, connected to it by parapets (the west one about 250 feet long, the north one 100 feet long), are blunted projections which contain only two reinforced angles. Beyond these outer projections the fort walls turn outward to run roughly parallel with the river until they close with the bluff, the extension to the north being considerably longer than the southern one. The wall on the river side contains no external projections and runs parallel to the irregular bank. The fort is entirely contained within the earth walls, which are roughly as tall as a man at most points. There are several earthen ramps to the platform-like tops of the walls scattered about the interior of the fort as well as at the acute interior angles.

Occupying a long narrow strip within the main body of the fort and extending into the central bastion projection is the space once occupied by the fort's commissary, now only a shallow ditch. To the north of the commissary area is a square, somewhat raised plot which is a cemetery ("an old neighborhood burying ground . . . enclosed within the walls"). The only marker remaining is a stone which is broken off near the ground. The only other prominent feature remaining within the fort is a boot-shaped projection with high walls extending into the fort from the wall on the river side. This enclosure once housed the fort's magazine. Though somewhat overgrown with trees, the outline of the fortified complex is still clear.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

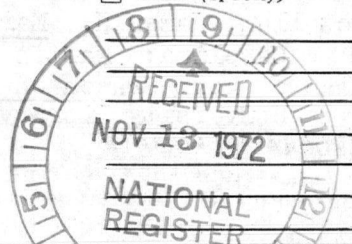
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <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 type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

By the fall of 1862, Federal forces were effectively blockading the coastal waters of North Carolina. The last port open in the state and the main line of communications with foreign nations was Wilmington. From Wilmington goods were shipped by rail over the Wilmington-Weldon railroad to Petersburg, and from there they went directly to the Army of Northern Virginia. One weak link in this rail line was the bridge crossing the Roanoke River at Weldon. It was feared that Federal gunboats would go upstream to Weldon and destroy this bridge. Therefore, a fort was needed to defend this link in the vital supply line and to protect construction on the ironclad C.S.S. Albemarle at Edwards Ferry, on the Roanoke River, up the river from Hamilton. The Confederate high command decided to build a sizable earthwork fort along the Roanoke River to house enough armaments to provide defense against Federal gunboats coming up the Roanoke River.

In October, 1862, Lieutenant J. Innis Randolph was sent to find a suitable fort site under the orders of Major General S. D. French. He recommended Rainbow Bend, on the Martin County side of the Roanoke River, as the best choice for placement of a fort, pointing out that Captain R. K. Meade, C. S. A. engineer, had previously constructed a small battery there. Randolph concluded, however, that the battery would need some alterations which would require only "slight labor and time" to put the work in perfect repair. He also concluded that an obstruction in the river would be indispensable to complete its defense.

The actual construction of fortifications was begun almost immediately under the direct supervision of W. G. Bender, first lieutenant, engineer, C. S. A. The superintendent of the labor force was a Private Carroway, a native of Martin County. The work force was composed of slaves obtained from the neighboring farms and plantations, some lent, others hired.

Federal forces raided the area after construction was begun, but before the fort was garrisoned. Work was temporarily suspended until the Federal troops left the area; however, damage done by them was quickly repaired, and enlargement of the original battery was continued. The final work was completed in the early summer of 1863, and in August the fort was garrisoned by elements of Companies B, C, and H of the Tenth Regimental, North Carolina Troops (First Artillery). The fort was named for General Lawrence O'Bryan Branch, a North Carolinian who was killed during the Battle of Sharpsburg (1862) in Maryland.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Compiled Service Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
 Hoke, William Alexander Papers, #345, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
 Manarin, Louis H. North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster, Vol. I Raleigh, North Carolina: State Department of Archives and History, 1966.
 McCallum, James H. Martin County During the Civil War. Williamston, North Carolina: Martin County Historical Society, 1971.
Plan of Fort Branch on the River (1864). Rare Documents Collection, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina.

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	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0 0 0	0 0 0	35	55	39
NE	0 0 0	0 0 0	77	10	19
SE	0 0 0	0 0 0			
SW	0 0 0	0 0 0			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit Staff

ORGANIZATION
State Department of Archives and History

DATE
7 November 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Raleigh

STATE
North Carolina

CODE
37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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 H. G. Jones

Title Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date 7 November 1972

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

Robert M. Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 6/18/73

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date June 5, 1973

NO
UTM
CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Martin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

JUN 18 1973

8.

With the completion of the ram Albemarle, a concerted effort was mounted by the Confederacy to recapture Plymouth. The artillery companies at Fort Branch assisted in this effort, and the fort was temporarily abandoned while the Southern forces held the Roanoke River in its entirety. However, with the sinking of the Albemarle and the recapture of Plymouth, Fort Branch was again garrisoned to protect the upper reaches of the Roanoke River. The fort was abandoned for the last time on April 10, 1865.

Although Fort Branch did not figure in any important battles, it is significant as one of North Carolina's best-preserved earthwork fortifications. Located on a bluff providing a panoramic view of the Roanoke River, Fort Branch with its well-defined ramps, ditch, and protecting walls is a remarkable Civil War landmark.



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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Martin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

9.

Research and architectural description by Charles G. Suttlemyre, Jr., Survey Specialist.



PROPERTY

~~SATA~~ Fort Branch site

STATE N.C.

MARTIN
CO.

Working number

11.13.72.1693

8/4/73

73001358

TECH REVIEW

Photos

2

Maps

1

REVIEW

1/4
2-1-
73

HISTORIAN

better as a "site" in cat.
not the best example but sign. locally + stateAccept. Amh
3/9/73

ARCHEOLOGIST

No objection 5/23/73
J. H. H.

ARCHITECT

I'll defer to arch. but agree that it should
be. "Site of Fort Branch." Change titleaccept
cat

BRANCH CHIEF

OK R-7
6/8/73

EDITORIAL REVIEW

OK
6/5/73

KEEPER

National Register write-up

Acknowledge

Federal Register entry

C-7-73

Send-back

Re-submit

Register no.

JUN 18 1973



NEGATIVE NUMBER N-72-2-305
PHOTOGRAPHER Calhoun Cockshutt
PHOTO DATE 2-22
SUBJECT Fort Branch

NPS Number 6.18.73

Title: Fort Branch Site

Loc. Martin Co., N.C. (1)
View of land
fortifications

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

FROM STATE DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
RALEIGH, N. C.

APR 4 1972

PRINT BY NORTH CAROLINA
MUSEUM OF HISTORY



NEGATIVE NUMBER N-72-2-309
PHOTOGRAPHER Catherine Cock Shutt
PHOTO DATE 2-72
SUBJECT Fort Branch

NPS Number 6.18.73

Title: Fort Branch Site

Loc.

Martin Co., N.C.

(2)

View of river

fortification

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

FROM STATE DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
RALEIGH, N. C.

APR 4 1972

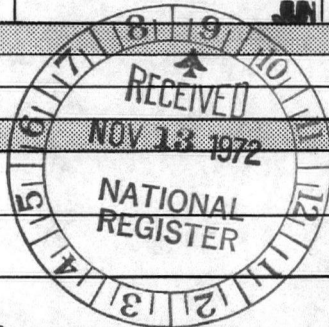
PRINT BY NORTH CAROLINA
MUSEUM OF HISTORY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Martin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE JAN 18 1973



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Fort Branch			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
S.R. 1416			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Hamilton vicinity			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
North Carolina	37	Martin	117
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
Martin County Map			
SCALE: 1" = 1 mile			
DATE: January 1, 1961			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Martin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
331	8 1973

1. NAME

COMMON: Fort Branch
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

S.R. 1116

CITY OR TOWN:

Hamilton vicinity

STATE:

North Carolina

CODE

37

COUNTY:

Martin

CODE

117

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: Plan of Fort Branch, W. A. Hoke Papers, #345, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library

SCALE: None

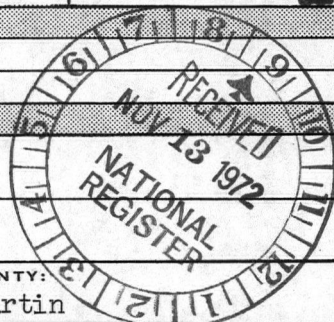
DATE: February 24, 1864

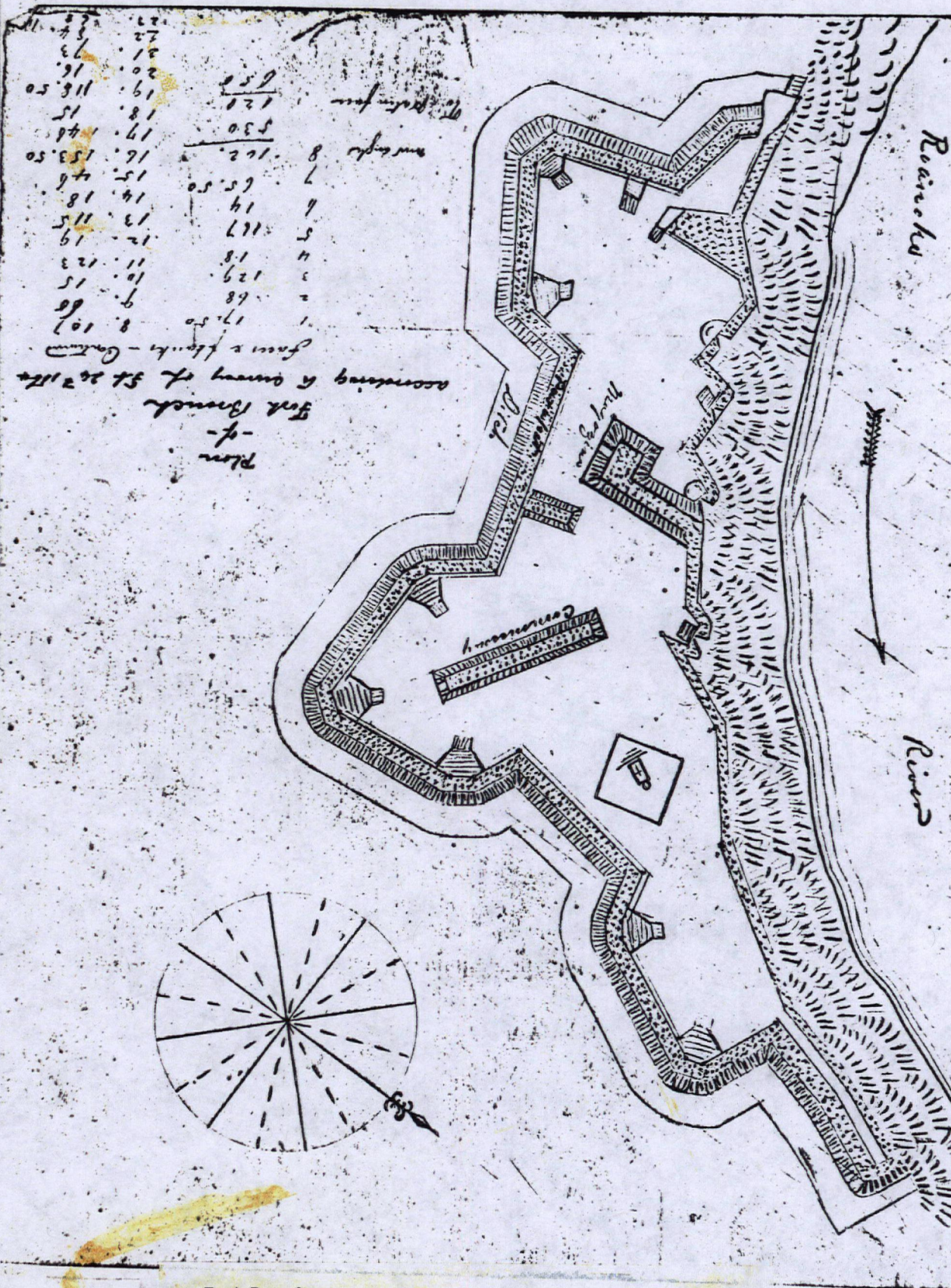
4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





Fort Branch
 S.R. 1416
 Hamilton vicinity, North Carolina

Plan of Fort Branch
 (W.A. Hoke Papers, #345, Southern Historical Collection,
 University of North Carolina Library)
 Scale: None
 Date: February 24, 1864

Form 10-301
(July 1969)

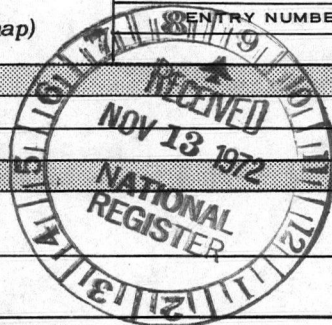
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

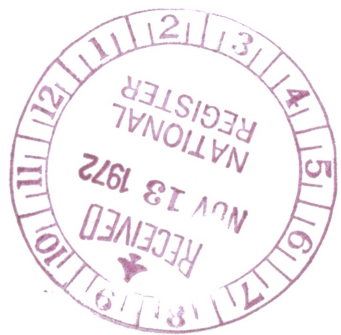
STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Martin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JAN 18 1973	



1. NAME			
COMMON: Fort Branch			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
S.R. 1416			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Hamilton vicinity			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
North Carolina	37	Martin	117
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: Plan of Fort Branch, Rare Documents Collection, Duke University Library, Durham			
SCALE: 1": 100 feet			
DATE: February 28, 1866			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





PHOTOSTATIC COPY BY
DEPT. OF ARCHIVES & HISTORY
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

MAR 22 1972

FROM RECORDS IN ITS
ARCHIVES

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NORTH CAROLINA

Date Entered JUN 18 1973

Name
Fort Branch Site

Location
Hamilton vicinity
Martin County

York-Gordon House

New Bern
Craven County

Hon. Sam J. Ervin, Jr.
Hon. J.A. Helms
Hon. Walter B. Jones
Director, Southeast Region
PHR, MOTT:so-p 6/25/73

Also Notified

State Historic Preservation Officer
Dr. H.G. Jones
State Historian & Administrator
Office of Archives & History
Department of Art, Culture, & History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611