Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

Theme: Civil War"

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Fort St. Philip

AND/OR COMMON: Fort St. Philip

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 2.5 miles southeast of Triumph on La. 23, on the east bank of the Mississippi River

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Triumph

X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 1st.

STATE: Louisiana

CODE: 22

COUNTY: Plaquemines

CODE: 075

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	X AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
X SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Mr. Ivan Vela & others

STREET & NUMBER: c/o Frank Ashby, 526 Whitney Building

CITY, TOWN: New Orleans

__ VICINITY OF

STATE: Louisiana

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Plaquemine Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER: Louisiana Route 39 on east bank of the Mississippi River

CITY, TOWN: Pointe a la Hache

STATE: Louisiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: none

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	X RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fort St. Philip is located diagonally upriver from Fort Jackson on the east bank of the Mississippi about thirty miles from its mouth. A description of the fort written by J.G. Barnard, Chief Engineer of the Army of the Potomac, states the condition of the fort before it was seized by Confederate soldiers.

> Fort St. Philip was partly built by the Spaniards and finished to its present outline by us in 1812-1815. It is very irregular in figure. It occupies a quadrilateral space of about 150 by 100 yards.
>
> The front toward the river (first built) had a bastioned terrace; the other portions have been added to inclose the work and give some semblance to flanking arrangements. The brick scarp was originally of slight relief and imperfectly founded; was found in very bad condition when I took charge in 1841. Under my charge the walls were strengthened by relieving arches, an additional thickness of masonry given to them. The earthen parapets extended all around the work (there may have been a mere brick wall as parapet before), and the wet ditch deepened so as to have 6 feet depth at lowest water.
>
> It may be stated in a general way that the scarp wall on land fronts has 16 to 17 feet height (from bottom of ditch) and on water fronts about 14 or 15 feet. The part of the ditch next the scarp walls is not more than 2 or 3 feet deep at low water, the deepest part of the ditch being generally near the counterscarp. (There is no brick counterscarp; merely board revetment, as at Fort Jackson).
>
> It was intended to arrange a low glacis with covert way and revetted breast-height wall around the work, but I believe this has not been done; if not, one-half of the height of the scarps would be seen from the outside, and it would require little battering to bring them down. There is a postern and drawbridge in the western face and another near the most northern angle of the works.
>
> Two external batteries (earthen) have been built of late years in connection with this work, having wet ditches (6 feet at low water), having parapets 20 feet thick, crest 19 feet above the bottom of ditch, which is 20 feet wide (at bottom). These batteries were intended for 22 heavy guns each on water faces and 6 24-pounders on extremities and rear.
>
> The main work of St. Philip is arranged to receive, say, 20 heavy guns bearing directly upon the channel, besides some dozen

or more bearing upon the land.

This armament of 72 channel-bearing guns (fort and external batteries) is all en barbette and very low at that, the crests (or tops) of the parapets being but 14 feet above low water of the river and 9 feet above ordinary high water. (published Rush, Richard, et al, Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies. Series I vol 18 p. 15-16).

Fort St. Philip received very little damage because the most effective gun implacement was destroyed early in the fighting. Some small damage was done to the works, but not enough to ffect the efficiency of the battery.

No new construction to the walls of the fort followed the war although certain repairs were made during World War I so a watchman could be housed there. A few wooden buildings were also errected at that time. It was disposed of at public auction in 1923. The area is owned privately and is now kept mainly as undeveloped lands. The brick walls are in good condition. Between the fort and the river-bank are the remains of a concre battery dating from the Spanish American War.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	X MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
X 1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	X EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1746,1791, 1812, 1862 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort St. Philip, about thirty miles from the mouth of the Mississippi River was built originally by the French in 1746 and rebuilt by the Spanish in 1791. Andrew Jackson again repaired the fort in 1814 in anticipation of British attack during the War of 1812. Then, during the Civil War, Fort St. Philip, along with Fort Jackson, located across the Mississippi, formed the two most important links in the Confederate defense of New Orleans. When both fell after a six day battle ending April 24, 1862, the city was easily taken by Union forces, depriving the Confederacy of an important port and opening up the river for Union forces from Memphis to the Gulf of Mexico.

HISTORY

Fort St. Philip was first fortified by the French in 1746 and rebuilt by the Spanish in 1791-92. During the War of 1812, Andrew Jackson strengthened the position, placing Commander Patterson and two additional batteries on the site prior to the Battle of New Orleans. Although the fort did not actually play a part in the battle, it was bombarded for three days by Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, British Commander of all naval forces in the United States, in an attempt to inflict damage upon American forces after the British defeat at the Battle of New Orleans.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Fort St. Philip, along with Fort Jackson on the opposite bank of the river, was heavily fortified. It was believed that the forts were strong enough to prevent the passage of any enemy fleet up the Mississippi River. As a result, only scattered batteries were constructed along the remaining sixty miles to New Orleans.

In his assessment of the fortifications, Union Brigadier-General and Chief Engineer, Army of the Potomac, J.G. Barnard, found them to be considerable but not overwhelming in strength. Noting the river began to rise in March, he suggested such an attack would be feasible from that time until August, and should be undertaken at night.

It was decided that the advantage of opening the Mississippi River to Union navigation from Memphis and the taking of New Orleans outweighed the small risk which was felt to be involved in such an endeavor. Accordingly, Flag-Officer David G. Farragut, with a Union fleet of forty-three vessels, crossed the sandbars at the mouth of the Mississippi in late March and early April, appearing below the forts on April 16, 1862. Two days later, the nineteen mortar boats in the fleet began a heavy bombardment of the forts, continuing without

cessation until April 24. The Confederates returned the fire, but with inferior powder, their fire effected little damage. Early on the morning of April 24, the rest of the fleet, supported by the fire of the mortar boats, passed the forts in three divisions. Confederate gunboats and rams entered the scene, but the confusion caused by the darkness and thick smoke, made any maneuver difficult and uncertain. Farragut's fleet successfully passed the forts and received a bloodless surrender of New Orleans. Forts St. Philip and Jackson, isolated, badly damaged, and open to Union attact surrendered on April 28, giving the North control of the river and striking a crippling blow to the Confederacy.

Fort St. Philip was not regularly garrisoned after 1871. During World War I it was repaired and a watchman was kept there until 1923. It was then sold at public auction.

After the Civil War, use of the forts at Plaquemines Bend was sporadic. Fort Jackson was used as a prison and later as a minor training base. Gradually much of the reservation was abandoned. During the Spanish-American War in 1898, the fort was repaired and modernized and two large costal guns were installed. During World War I the fort was again used as a training base. After the war the site was declared surplus and sold.

Fort Jackson was purchased in 1927 by Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Harvey of New Orleans. In 1960, they donated the land to the Parish of Plaquemines. The donated portion of the reservation site has since been renovated and converted into a historical park and recreation area.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Coles, Harry L., The War of 1812, Chicago, 1965.

Rush, Richard, et al., eds. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies the War of the Rebellion, Washington, 1894-1914. Series I, vol. 18, pp. 15-16,432 30

Scott, R.N. et al., eds., War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 130 vols., Washington, 1880-1901,Series I, vol. VI, pp. 550-552.

Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Vol II, New York, 1887.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 53±

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	16	260700	3250925	B	16	261200	3250725
C	16	260350	3249975	D	16	260125	3250425

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The fort has gradually deteriorated and been overgrown with vegetation. Earthworks still remain as mounds, now covered with trees. The brick walls are in good condition. Between the fort and the riverbank are the re of a concrete battery dating from the period of the Spanish American War. The ar is privately owned and is now kept mainly as undeveloped land. Unlike Fort Jacks Fort St. Philip was not inundated with water, perhaps because the levee system w maintained by the owners to keep the land suitable for use.

Fort St. Philip comprises approximately fifty-three acres enclosed by levees. It

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Patricia Heintzelman, Architectural Historian, Landmark Review Project

ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Survey

DATE 202-523-5464

STREET & NUMBER 1100 L. Street, NW.

TELEPHONE 202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN Washington

STATE D.C.

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Landmark Designated: DEC 19, date

Boundary Certified: June 21, 1978

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS).

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION DATE 11/29/78

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS).

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

surrounded by the Mississippi on the southeast and canals on the remaining sides, using the far banks of the canals and the near bank of the Mississippi River. This natural boundary encompasses the historic fort as indicated in maps of this time, providing a definable dry land mass in a swampy marsh area.