

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Nags Head Beach Cottage Row Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Along US 158 and Atlantic Ocean (see boundary description)

CITY, TOWN

Nags Head

VICINITY OF

1st

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

37

COUNTY

Dare

CODE

55

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mayor Charles Evans

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 95

CITY, TOWN

Nags Head

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 27950

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dare County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Manteo

STATE

North Carolina 27954

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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Boundary Description

North: the north property line of the C. H. White property, and extending three miles east along this line into the Atlantic Ocean. West: the mid-line of U. S. 158 business, except extending west to include the lots of the Whedbee House (#60) and St. Andrews-by-the-Sea (#59). South: the south property line of the Outlaw Cottage, and extending three miles east along this line into the Atlantic Ocean. East: a line parallel to and three miles east of the low tide line of the coast at Nags Head.

Note: The eastern boundary of the district delineates the boundary of the state of North Carolina's absolute jurisdiction into the Atlantic Ocean. The inclusion of this acreage of water is necessary for two reasons: First, to protect the character of the historic district. The beach cottages face the ocean, and much of the ambiance of the district, historically and esthetically, is dependent upon the limitless, uninterrupted expanse of the Atlantic that forms the backdrop of and view from the cottages. It is necessary to make sure that no oil derricks, rigs, or other construction occurs within sight of the historic district that would intrude on its integrity. Second, because of the treacherousness of the Outer Banks, and perhaps the salvagers said to have lured boats with lanterns hung from a nag's head, the ocean floor along this area is rich with shipwreck sites. The Duke Marine Laboratory's Oceanographic Atlas of the Carolina Continental Margin (1971) indicates the presence of a number of sites in this area, including possibly #672. Gratitude, 1846; #680. Moon, 1845; #684. Helen H. Benedict (probably too far south), 1914; #685. U. S. S. Huron, 1877; #686. Wreck; #687. Howard, 1846; #688. Anthracophora, 1846. While few if any of these wrecks have been investigated in depth, their potential presence is an important vestige of the history of the area.

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# DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE (Individual
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	cottages various
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	ORIGINAL SITE times and as a
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		group 1917, 1918, 1933, 1962 --
			all back from the beach.)

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Nags Head Beach Cottage Row Historic District is one of the few areas of late nineteenth to early twentieth century resort development along the eastern seaboard that retains essentially its original character. The string of frame, wood-shingled cottages between U. S. 158 and the Atlantic Ocean stretches for nine-tenths of a mile; to the west, across the road, are two complementary structures: St. Andrews-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church (#59) and the Whedbee Cottage (#60). To the north, south, and west of the district is typical twentieth century beach development, but the character that survives within the district boundaries, makes this row of beach cottages significant to the eastern seaboard.

Along the ocean front beach, facing the Atlantic, stands an irregular row of frame cottages whose shapes, texture, color, and detail are expressive of their function and the demands for survival on the weather-tortured Outer Banks. The regular rhythm of one and two-story units, the somber gray-brown colors, the rough texture of the wood shingled walls and roofs, and the repetition of sweeping gable roofs and expansive porches, relate in an almost organic fashion to the slope of the beach to the sea, and to the light sand and the gray and blue water of the changing ocean.

Within the unity of scale and shape, several variations occur. Probably the most common house type, dating from the 1910-1940 era and built chiefly by Elizabeth City builder Samuel J. Twine, is the large, bungalow type, 1½ stories high, with nearly full-width dormers extending across the front and back slopes of the gable roof to create essentially a two-story house. The house may be two, three, four, or five bays wide, and usually features porches on at least two and usually four sides, plus any number of wings, ells, and additions. In most cases, the slope of the main gable roof extends in front to shelter the front porch and sometimes the rear porch, from which side porches continue around unbroken creating a skirt-like effect. Notable among the cottages of this bungalow 1½-story type, whose sweeping rooflines contribute most strongly to the character of the row, are these: Griffin-Ingram Cottage (#4), Beasley Oil Company/Wood Beasley Cottage (#13), Toms-Buchanan Cottage (#24), Badham-Kittrell Cottage (#26), McMullen Cottage (#28), John Gilliam Wood Cottage (#29), Frank Wood Cottage (#32), Windemere (Frank Winslow Cottage) (#33), Spider Villa (Drane Cottage) (#34), Pruden Cottage (#36), MacMullen-Scott Cottage (#37), Neal-Moore-Vodrey Cottage (#38), Peters Cottage (#41), Lyn Bond Cottage (#46), Dixon-Clark Cottage (#51), Leary-Roberts Cottage (#53).

Also common and usually older is a simple gable-roof two-story cottage type, three to five bays wide. Single-story porches on two to four sides soften the boxiness of this house type, which includes some of the oldest (pre-1910) structures on the beach, such as Winslow-Baumgartner Cottage (#12), Gaither-A. L. Hargrove Cottage (#15), Foreman Cottage (#16), T. S. White Cottage (#20), Mary Winslow Cottage (#21), Nixon Cottage (#27), W. D. Pruden-Kemp D. Battle Cottage (#30), Fred Wood Cottage (#31), Winston-Wales Cottage (#35), Brantley Cottage (#40), LeRoy-O'Briant Cottage (#47), Whedbee Cottage (#60).

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Closely related to the two-story gable-roof house is an even more boxy form, the two-story with hip or pyramidal roof, whose highly restrained geometric quality is a foil to the sweeping expansiveness of the bungalow cottages. The T. G. Skinner Cottage with its sharp-pitched pyramidal roof, the Pruden-Battle Cottage with its shallower hip roof, and the starkly impressive Outlaw house, also with a hip roof, are the notable examples of this form.

One-story cottages, too, are interspersed among the larger structures. Particularly appealing are the steep gable rooflines of some of these, which have the multi-slope gables sometimes called the "coastal cottage," with the lower, shallower slope of one or both sides engaging a porch. The C. H. White Cottage (#1) is a good example of this type, as is its neighbor, the Guy Wood Cottage (#2). Several other one-story cottages, some of fairly recent construction, contribute to the beachscape, and continue the simplicity of form, gable roofs, weathered shingles, and other typical details. These include the Comer Cottage (#45) and Perry Cottage (#52).

A one-story house built over several periods of development is the E. R. Outlaw, Junior, Cottage (#47) with its low-slung silhouette under a wood shingle roof. Quite unusual is the Sheep-Foreman-Roysten Cottage (#18) which exhibits the irregular roofline, dormers, turned posts, and other details of the Queen Anne style--and is the only such fashionable example of that style on the beach; its shingled surfaces and expansive porches relate it to the beachscape. Another hint of concession to Victorian architect fashion is in the gable-topped wall dormers that interrupt the roofline of the Martha Wood Cottage (#22), a two-story gable roof cottage with porches on all four sides.

Within these types by form there are several intriguing variations produced for convenience, or by creativity or growth of a family. The massive Toms-Buchanan Cottage (#24), for example, has an unusually large two-story gable-roof main block, the core of an intricate complex of one and two-story extensions, articulated by a series of one and two-tier porches. The Foreman Cottage (#16) has, instead of the usual attached porches, porches inset into the form of the building itself: at the front, a porch is set into the first story and extends along the south side and part of the north; a small second-story porch is set into the south side, and into the south side of a rear ell. At the MacMullen-Scott Cottage (#37), there is a first-story porch set into the southeast corner, whose size is expanded by a roof sheltering its outer edge.

Whatever the size or shape of the cottages, certain features of detail, dictated by convenience, function, and custom recur; this repetition contributes much to the architectural unity of the district--as well as to the comfort of the residences.

Cottages are consistently placed high on open foundations of timber pilings. These are usually constructed of a series of vertical members with diagonal cross braces. The pilings place the houses high enough to be above low waves in case of storms, as well as making the houses more accessible to breezes. The repetitive geometric patterns of the

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braced underpinnings and the lack of a solid visual foundation is an important esthetic element in the character of the district. The height of the foundation varies, but it is often high enough to sling hammocks for sleeping and to hang up wet gear. Some of these foundations are screened with latticework to keep the pigs and sometimes cows out. As a longtime summer resident recalled:

Hogs wandering around would naturally come up to your door. . .the hogs were really the garbage pickup, but there was a penalty for it: The hogs would get up under your house, and they had fleas on them, and before you knew it you had fleas in your house, so then everybody started putting slats around the bottoms of the piers that held your house up, . . .to keep the hogs out.

Intersecting angles of wooden members make up the porches of the cottages as well. Nearly always roofed and supported on simple posts, the porches also feature enclosing balustrades of different, simple kinds. A particularly handsome and functional feature of Nags Head cottages is the ubiquitous porch bench. These are benches built into and extending out from the porch balustrade, with the base beginning flush with the balustrade and the back sloping outward from the porch. This catches breezes and provides adequate porch seating without cluttering the porch with furniture. In some cases, where porches have been screened in, the screening extends out and around the bench. These benches are seen in the early documentary photographs of the turn of the century or so, and continue to be used on new construction.

Heavy seas and strong winds that blow sand into the cottages are plagues in the season and during the off-season. To protect against this, nearly all the cottages feature similar door and window treatments. Most doors have normal inner doors and outer screen doors, useful during the season. Outside of the screen door, though, is a sturdy wooden batten door which is kept open during most of the season, but which is secured when the cottages are closed up. Also of wooden batten construction are the window shutters, hereinafter referred to as awning shutters. Each is a single leaf, hinged at the top, and held open with a prop stick. Open, the diagonal awning-like angle of shutter provides shade and closed, shelter from storms. In the season, the repetition of these diagonal projections from the elevations of the cottages echoing the angle of the roof slopes, articulates the simple forms of the buildings; in winter, the boarded-up look of the windows with their fastened shutters emphasizes the stern dignity of the waiting cottages--which look, as one visitor remarked, "like a bunch of haughty old ladies."

While the beachscape is perhaps the most dramatic view of the row of cottages, the view from the road is an intriguing one as well. From this view, the cottages are more complex in form: added to the diagonal sweep of gable and porch roof are the intricate rectangles and triangles of accretive additions, ells, projections, and porches, which expand many cottages far beyond what their ocean fronts suggest. Here certain features recur consistently. Most cottages have a one-story rear ell, although some have two-story ells, and several have a whole complex of additions. In the early cottages, the

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kitchen was originally separated from the living area by a porch (sometimes screened), and often the icebox stood on the porch. Many of these porches have been enclosed. With few exceptions, the rear ell projects from the north portion of the rear elevation. Many houses, too, have porches on all four sides. If, however, porches occur on but three sides, it is generally the north side that lacks a porch. This arrangement takes advantage of prevailing breezes.

The interiors of the beach houses are finished as simply as the exteriors. Generally, there were no fireplaces originally, although some have been added lately. Walls are either covered with simple sheathing or in most cases left unfinished, with the studs and exterior covering visible. Partition walls are typically of a single thickness of wood sheathing. Doors are of whatever type was popular at the time of construction, with simple panels. Interior wood is generally left unpainted. Floor plans vary, but all are simple and functional. The typical 1910-1940 floor plan in the houses built by Mr. Twine is a variation on the center-hall plan two rooms deep, except that the chief front room, the living room, is not partitioned from the hall but includes the space normally allotted to the hall; this produces a plan with two rooms across the front, and two rooms divided by a hall, at the rear. To the rear of the main block is the ell, often separated from the main block by a breezeway (sometimes now filled in). This often contained servants' quarters, children's rooms, or kitchen.

Many cottages feature freestanding garages. These are usually simple one-story affairs, with gable or sometimes hip roofs. In some cases some living space for servants and perhaps a simple inset porch is included. The boathouses, which generally stand near the road, usually have ramps leading to them. Board and batten, simple vertical boards, or the standard wood shingles are the primary surface materials.

It should be noted that nearly all the cottages are virtually without the usual trappings of architectural "style" inside and out, but rely on the simple expression of functional forms, materials, and plan for their character. This is particularly interesting since many of those for whom these houses were built either built or lived in some of the grandest and most fashionable houses of the Albemarle.

\* according to his obituary and vital statistics records, and contrary to previous information, builder S. J. Twine was Stephen Jesse Twine not Samuel J.

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- ERAS: 1. Pre-1910  
2. 1910-1940  
3. Newer than WWII

Name and Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches (Front, Rear, North, South)	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
1. C. H. White Cottage. 1-story with steep 4-slope gable roof, porches to rear and south.	3?	x	R,S	x	x
2. Guy Wood Cottage. 1-story, gable end facade.	3	x	S	x	x
3. George R. Little Cottage. 2-part structure: to north is 1-story gable roof shingle structure;	3	x	F,S		
3A. to south is large new 2-story recent vertically boarded gable-end house; has several Nags Head features but has decks, not porches.	3			x	x
4. Griffin-Ingram Cottage. Large, impressive 1½-story dormered 4-bay house, complex of wings to either side and to rear; wings to north & south are symmetrically placed gable-end structures.	2?	x	F,R	x	x
5. Williford Cottage. 1½-story house, 3-bay dormers front and back, north rear ell; gable roof sweeps into porches shed roofs; notable gable-roof shingle garage.	2?	x	F,S,R	x	x
6. Fletcher Cottage. Small gable roof 1-story cottage with asbestos shingles, extensive porch.	3		F,S	x	

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered		Awning	Lean-Out
		Shingle	Porches	Shutters	Bench
7. Tatem Cottage. Small gable-roof 1-story cottage with asbestos siding, extensive porch.	3		F,S,N		x
8. Branch Cottage. Plain boxlike asbestos-sided cottage with normal shutters, extensive porch.	3		F		
9. A. & J. Cottages. Simple gable-roof 1-story cottage, porches under extension of main roof.	3		F,S	x	
10. A. & J. Cottages. Simple 1-story gable roof weatherboarded cottage with high hip roof sheltering porch to south	3			x	
11. Open Space					
12. Winslow-Baumgartner Cottage. 2-story gable-roof house with porches on 4 sides, north one enclosed; end chimneys, no dormers.	2?	x	F,R,N,S	x	
13. Beasley Oil Company/Wood Beasley Cottage. 1½ story gable roof house with 3-bay front and rear dormers, north rear wing. Said to have been built for Mr. Graham White of Edenton in late 1920s by Mr. Twine (Silver).	2	x	F,R,N,S	x	
14. Beasley Cottage. To rear of #13; long narrow garage/servants quarters, shingled, inset porch.	2?	x		x	

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
15. Gaither-A. L. Hargrove Cottage. 2-story 3-bay gable roof house, north rear ell. Said to be one of oldest cottages, owned by Gaither family of Elizabeth City. Present owner found hand-hewn timbers in cottage during remodeling. In early 1930s was 1-story weatherboarded bungalow, raised to 2 stories, rear ell added, and shingled later. Had chicken coop, small stable, and other outbuildings. Owner: Mr. & Mrs. A. L. Hargrove, Raleigh.	1	x	F,S,R	x	
16. Foreman Cottage. Large 2-story gable end cottage, interesting porch place- ment: at 1st level set in under 2nd story at front, along south side.	2	x	F,S,R	x	
17. Cottage. To rear of 16. Small gable roof asbestos-shingled house.	3?				
18. Sheep-Foreman-Roysten Cottage. Unique example of multigabled Queen Anne style cottage: 1½-story with hip roof interrupted by projecting gables and dormers, elaborately capped chimneys. Porch has some turned posts. Owner: Geneva Roysten	1	x	F,S,R	x	
19. Cottages. To rear of 18. Pair of small gable-roof asbestos shingles houses.	3?				
20. T. S. White Cottage. 1½-story house with 2-story and 1-story rear north ells; 3-bay wall dormers. Owned by Mrs. Tom White of Hertford; evidently of 1920s, 1930s vintage.	2?	x	F,R,S,N	x	x

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16. Foreman Cottage. Large 2-story gable end cottage, interesting porch placement: at 1st level set in under 2nd story at front, along south side.	2	x	F,S,R	x	
17. Cottage. To rear of 16. Small gable roof asbestos-shingled house.	3?				
18. Sheep-Foreman-Roysten Cottage. Unique example of multigabled Queen Anne style cottage: 1½-story with hip roof interrupted by projecting gables and dormers, elaborately capped chimneys. Porch has some turned posts. Owner: Geneva Roysten	1	x	F,S,R	x	
19. Cottages. To rear of 18. Pair of small gable-roof asbestos shingles houses.	3?				
20. T. S. White Cottage. 1½-story house with 2-story and 1-story rear north ells; 3-bay wall dormers. Owned by Mrs. Tom White of Hertford; evidently of 1920s, 1930s vintage.	2?	x	F,R,S,N	x	x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
21. Mary Winslow Cottage. 2-story gable roof cottage, said to have been rebuilt after former cottage destroyed by 1962 Ash Wednesday storm. (Silver) Present owner: Mrs. Cader Harris, 200 Pine Lake Dr., Elizabeth City.	3	x	F,S,R	x	x
22. Martha Wood Cottage. 2-story house of unusual form: only 1-bay deep, with 2 gable wall dormers interrupting front roofline, north rear 1-story ell. Said to be that described by Outlaw as Gurkin Cottage owned by Grice, Julian Wood, and Frank Wood--and if so, among the older cottages. Owner: Mrs. Frank Wood, Edenton.	1?	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
23. Skinner Cottage. Square 2-story house, 3 bays wide, 2 deep, with striking steep pyramidal roof, porch on north side enclosed. Present owner states was built in 1930s to replace that built in 1880s for William Pailin of Elizabeth City. Owner: William G. Skinner, Keats Place, Raleigh.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
24. Toms-Buchanan Cottage. Large, complex 2-story house; main block gable roof, five bays wide, 4 deep, plus several 2-story extensions to sides and rear. Double porch along part of north side and south side of rear ell. Built for Toms family; wealthy Durham tobacco magnate John Buchanan married Toms daughter. Here Franklin Delano Roosevelt was entertained in 1937, when house was fairly new--and the largest on the beach.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
25. Outbuilding of 24. 1-story hip roof garage/servants quarters with inset porch at SW corner.	2	x	S,F	x	
26. Badham-Kittrell Cottage. 1½-story gable roof house, 5-bay dormers, extensive porch. 1-story north rear ell. 1st story asbestos-shingled, otherwise typical. Built for Badham family of Edenton in the early 20th century by Mr. Twine, states present owner. Owner: R. G. Kittrell, Meadow Lane, Henderson.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
27. Nixon Cottage. 2-story gable roof house, interior chimney. May be that described by Outlaw as built for Florence Grandy in 1866 and sold to Tom Nixon in 1908. It is, as recalled by Tom Nixon's daughters, the one he bought in 1908; it was originally 1 story, then dormers added, then raised to two stories. "We added onto it every time we turned around." Most work done by Mr. Twine. Owner: Mrs. Lloyd Horton & Mrs. W. H. Oakey, of Hertford.	1?	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
28. McMullen Cottage. 1½-story cottage with 3-bay dormers front and rear, gable roof extends to shelter front and rear porches. Roof has wooden shingles. To rear is board and batten garage/servants quarters. Said to be that built for George Pool, later owned by Mrs. Fannie Skinner and then by Charlie Turner Skinner.	1?	x	N,S,F,R	x	x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
29. John Gilliam Wood Cottage. Large 1½-story gable-roof house with 5-bay dormers front and rear, 1-story north rear ell, garage/servants quarters with corner porch under roof. Said to have been built in 1916 (Drane) for John G. Wood, Hayes, Edenton, by Mr. Twine. Said to replace Pool-Ward cottage cited by Outlaw. (Silver) Owner: Gilliam Wood, Hayes, Edenton; J. W. Forman.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
30. W. D. Pruden-Kemp D. Battle Cottage. Square 2-story house, 4 bays wide, north rear ell. Board and batten garage. Porch has spindle frieze of simple sticks. Said to have been built for Mrs. W. D. (Dorsey) Pruden about 1915-1917, although some claim it is an earlier, perhaps 19th century, house. Owner: Kemp D. Battle, Rocky Mount.	2?	x	F,S,R	x	x
31. Fred Wood Cottage. 2-story gable roof house, porches all four sides but north side enclosed, rear ell. Woods related to Woods of Hayes; house probably built by Mr. Twine (Silver) date uncertain.	2?	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
32. Frank Wood Cottage. Expansive 1½-story cottage, 3-bay dormers across front and rear. Sweeping porch roof projects at corners of front porch in unusual fashion. Built by Mr. Twine for Frank Wood and his daughter Rebecca Wood (now Drane) in 1923. Contains date 1926. Mrs. Drane recalls that "it was Papa's idea" to have corners project to provide additional shade from the sun. Owner: Elizabeth Collins, Hillsborough.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
33. Windemere (Frank Winslow Cottage). 1½-story gable roof house, 3-bay front and rear dormers, north rear ell. This was the site of Spider Villa (#34) when purchased by Mrs. Duncan Wales in the 1920s; she moved that cottage to its present lot, 1 lot south (Silver). The present (#33) cottage is said to have been built in the 1930s, about 1934-1935, by Mr. Twine. (Drane) Owner: Frank Winslow, Rocky Mount, partner of Kemp Battle.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
34. Spider Villa (Drane Cottage). 1½- story gable roof cottage, north rear ell. Facade weatherboarded beneath porch. Said to be the house described by Outlaw as built for W. W. Griffin in 1859--but present owner and others doubt such an early date. It was sold to Mrs. Duncan Winston, then owned by her daughter, Mrs. Wales. Mrs. Wales moved it from its site one lot north. In 1937 Mrs. Fred Drane bought the house from Mrs. Wales and had it expanded by Mr. Twine, adding porches, second story and rear extension.	1	x	S,F,R		x
35. Winston-Wales Cottage. Simple 2- story gable roof house, among the oldest on the beach. T-shaped house with 6/6 sash, shed roof porch, interior sheathed with plain boards. Outlaw says is house built for Henrietta Fearing in 1869, sold to Dr. Butt, then to Duncan C. Winston, and then to his daughter Mrs. Wales. Present owner says more like 1875, shortly before Winston's purchase about 1880. Owner: Betty Wales Silver, Raleigh.	1	?	S,F,R	x	x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-On Bench
36. Pruden Cottage. 1½-story rather narrow cottage, 3-bay dormers, expansive porch. Several normal shutters, a few awning type. Board and batten garage. Said to have been built by Mr. Twine for the misses Mary and Margaret Pruden in the early 1930s, for \$3,000. Owner: Jack Pruden, Durham.	2		N,S,F,R	x	x
37. MacMullen-Scott Cottage. 1½-story 4-bay house, unusual 4-bay wall dormer, porch inset at front south corner and extending outward from inset as well. Board and batten garage. Said to have been built by Mr. Twine in late 1920s or early 1930s for Percy MacMullen (Silver, Hathaway) of Elizabeth City. Owner: Don Scott.	2		F,S,R	x	x
38. Neal-Moore-Vodrey Cottage. 1½-story house, normal and awning shutters, wood shingle roof, porch on all sides as well as along north side of main block and north rear ell. Said (Dranes) to have been built for Dr. Kemp Neal of Raleigh in the late 1920s or early 1930s, sold to John Augustus Moore of Edenton, now owned by Vodreys. Mr. Twine built it.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
39. Lamb-Martin-Stewart-Folk-Patterson Cottage. Complex composite of sections, including 2-story block to south, various 1-story sections to north. Normal shutters. Said moved from Sound side and very old, and described as being the E. F. Lamb Cottage which Outlaw says was built on sound side "over the water," and moved to ocean side by house-mover named Pritchard; sold by original owner to Martins, then given to Mrs. George Folk and Mrs. Bessie Stewart (Outlaw, p. 22).	1	x	F		x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
Some present summer residents (Hathaway, Drane) agree it is the Bessie Stewart-Kate Folk Cottage, formerly owned by "Old Man Bruce" Martin (Hathaway). Owner: Mrs. Vol Patterson.					
40. Brantley Cottage. Plain, new 2-story cottage, two bays wide, 2 deep, north rear ell. Owner: Dr. Julian Brantley, Rocky Mount.	3	x	S,F,R	x	x
41. Peters Cottage. Large 1½-story house, 3-bay dormers nearly full width of house; asbestos shingled. Said built 1932, (Drane) or (Silver) after 1942 fire that destroyed Mrs. Charles Wood's boarding house on this site. Owner: Dr. W. A. Peters.	2 or 3		S,F,R	x	x
42. The Wood Shell. 1-story house, said original to have been attached to servants quarters of Mrs. Wood's Boarding house on site of #41. Owner: Charles Wood, Jr.	2?	x	F,R	x	
43. Burton Jones Cottage. 1-story cottage with picture window, front deck, porch along south side. Said (Silver) to be another wing of Mrs. Wood's boarding house, moved and re-modeled after 1942 fire. Was children's quarters of Mrs. Jone's house. Owner: Burton Jones.	2?		F,S,R		x
44. Nixon Cottage. Plain small 1-story boxlike structure, asbestos shingled.	3		F		x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
45. Comer Cottage. Simple, early-looking but allegedly fairly recent cottage, said (Silver) built for Webbs. History uncertain. 1-story gable roof, extensive porch, wood shingle roof.	?	x	N,S,F,R		x
46. Lyn Bond Cottage. 1½-story gable roof house, porches all sides, 4-bya front dormer, 2 shingle dormers at rear, unusual centrally placed rear ell. This is the "Swede" cottage, built by "a crowd of Swedes" including Andy Anderson (Dawson) to use when they fished for sturgeon at Nags Head. When the sturgeon season was over, they would go to their other cottage in New Jersey, and the Nags Head cottage was rented out. Said to have been built about 1912-1914. Present owner: Ruth (Mrs. Lyn) Bond, Elizabeth City.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
47. LeRoy-O'Briant Cottage. Plain 2-story gable-end house with asbestos shingles. Said to have been moved from Sound side (Silver) and to be fairly old (Silver), to have been owned by Milton LeRoy, a merchant whose brother Henry LeRoy ran the LeRoy Hotel and later LeRoy's Seaside Inn, later the First Colony Hotel. Cottage said to be 50-60 years old (Hathaway). Mrs. O'Briant was a LeRoy.	2?		N,S,F,R	x	
48. Open--can see St. Andrew's By the Sea through the gap.					

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
49. Sumner-C. H. Robinson-Gaither Cottage. 1½-story gable roof house with rather small front and rear 3-bay dormers, large north rear ell, with one and two-story sections. Said to be that described by Outlaw as Sumner Cottage (1868), later owned by Sumner's daughter Mrs. C. C. Allen, then sold to C. H. Robinson, then owned by daughter Eloise; Will Gaither of Elizabeth City married a Robinson. This may include this early house.	1	x	N,S,F,R	x	
50. Open					
51. Dixon-Clark Cottage. 1½-story cottage, unusually wide 5-bay dormer extending nearly to end of roof. 2-tier porch along 2-story north rear ell. Said to have been built probably by Mr. Twine for Minton Dixons of Edenton (Silver), now owned by Clarks of Tarboro. Notable 2-story garage/ servants quarters. Owner: Russell Clark, Tarboro.	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	x
52. Perry Cottage. Small 1-story with attic gable-end cottage, shed porch built for Dr. Frank Graham after Ash Wednesday, 1962, storm. (Site is that of house formerly owned by Marian Drane Graham; the H. V. Dunstan Cottage described by Outlaw as built in 1890 and later owned by Dr. R. B. Drane, was damaged in the Ash Wednesday storm of 1962, and given to W. D. (Billie) Pruden, who moved it inland toward the middle of the island, where it now stands.) House here now owned by: Bennett Perry, Henderson.	3	x	N,S,R	x	x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
53. Leary-Roberts Cottage. 1½-story gable roof house, narrow, with 2-bay dormer, chimney to south. Porch on 4 sides, north side enclosed. Notable garage/servants quarters. Said built in early 1930s (Silver).	2	x	N,S,F,R	x	
(54. Arlington Hotel. Boxy 2-story asbestos shingled wing of hotel moved from sound side to ocean side, run by Miss Cassie Morrisette. Damaged reduced to ruins in summer of 1975 and now gone.)					
55. Arlington Hotel Playhouse. 2-story gable roof cottage, asbestos shingled with northern slope of roof having two angles; was for children's supervised play when hotel was running.	3?				
56. House. 2-story asbestos-sided gable roof house, standard non-Nags Head form, small entrance porch; faces road, which it is near. History not known.	?				
56A. Outbuilding. Small gable-roof outbuilding up on stilts, rear porch. History not known.					
57. Edward Outlaw, Jr., Cottage. Long low, 1-story cottage composed of three sections covered by common roof, with continuous shed porches to either side. Northeast section said to be oldest. Built by author Outlaw.	2	x	F,R		x

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Name & Description	Era	Weathered Shingle	Porches	Awning Shutters	Lean-Out Bench
58. Outlaw Cottage. Stark imposing 2-story weatherboarded cottage with steep hip roof, no front porch. Mitered window frames, one early 6-panel door; said by Outlaw, Jr., to have been built for his father in Bertie County and shipped here. Early photo shows 1-story cottage, thus this is evidently expanded around that core. There were originally other structures nearby, but this is now the southernmost of the old group. Owner: Sam Worthington, Windsor.	1		N,S,R	x	
59. St. Andrews By the Sea. (Across road from #48) Picturesque shingled church, simple Gothic Revival style chapel. Originally a simpler building, located in dunes, moved near highway after road came through. Steeple, shingles, added. Interior plain sheathed, with attractive roof timbering. History of church goes back to 1840s; building destroyed in Civil War, rebuilt early 20th century (see text).	2				X
60. Whedbee Cottage. (Across road from #27-#28) Plain 2-story frame cottage, 3-bays wide, simple porch. Said to be the old Whedbee cottage, located where the Toms-Buchanan Cottage (#24) now is; Outlaw says the Whedbee cottage was built for Mrs. Kate Overman in 1866, sold to D. B. Bradford, then H. C. Tunis, then Tom Old, then Charles Whedbee, then John Buchanan. Despite its being moved, its history is of the ocean side, and it is near beach still.	1	x	N,S,F,R	x	x

# SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) (Recreation)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

S. J. Twine

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Nags Head Beach Cottage Row Historic District is an irregular, densely packed line of starkly handsome, wood shingled frame beach cottages extending nearly a mile along the North Carolina Outer Banks overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The cottages with their outbuildings compose a remarkable and evocative survival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century lifestyle of this once-isolated summer coastal resort. For years accessible only by boat, Nags Head was a fashionable antebellum resort that built up on the Sound Side; construction of summer cottages along the Ocean Side did not begin until after the Civil War. From its earliest years, Nags Head has been the resort of the families of merchants, planters, and professional men of northeastern North Carolina, especially the Albemarle. Families owned their own cottages, and returned to the casual, peaceful summer life, season after season, generation after generation, interrupted occasionally by destructive storms that forced the whole community back from the sea.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, the Ocean Side development expanded from the dozen or so pioneer cottages, with most of the 1920s and 1930s construction done by beloved Elizabeth City builder Samuel J. Twine. His functional, sturdy cottages, distinguished by their swooping roofs and expansive dormers, blend with the earlier cottages and provide much of the character of the district. Simple and unpainted, these cottages of the "unpainted aristocracy," provide a beachscape of memorable character, with the regular rhythm of sloping roofs and sweeping porches and the somber gray-brown of the weathered wood shingled surfaces blending subtly with the slope of the beach to the sea and the changing hues of light sand and gray-green ocean.

The Outer Banks of North Carolina consist of a "string of low, narrow islands jutting out into the Atlantic, protecting the mainland from the ravages of the sea, yet at the same time obstructing the passage of oceangoing vessels to inland ports."<sup>1</sup> The banks have existed since the earliest exploration era, yet their form is constantly changing at the whim of nature:

Three basic counteracting forces are constantly at work on the sea side of these islands. The first is the force of ocean waves, often fetching across hundreds of miles of open sea to break with fury on the shore. The second is the Gulf Stream, the "ocean river," a vast body of warm water moving steadily northward, caressing the tip of Diamond Shoals off Cape Hatteras before passing into the North Atlantic. The third is the littoral drift along this coast, a steady flow near the shore of cold waters stemming from the Labrador Current, carrying sediment and debris with it and always moving

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to the south. Yet another constant force. . . from the sound side of the islands, . . . /is the rivers of the mainland/ which flow ever eastward, through the broad sounds in their search for outlets to the sea, . . .<sup>2</sup> /creating/ openings . . . called inlets, they are in fact outlets.

This ever-changing chain of islands early attracted pirates, fishermen, and ship salvagers, many of them from England; some were transient, but others settled on the Banks. Since there were no bridges to the mainland, the small population of the area "evolved a . . . distinctive pattern of life and activity, of speech and dress and habit," which has only in recent years been significantly altered by contact with the outside world. These people, called "bankers" or "hoi toiders," because of their Cockney-like accent, settled along the sound and in the woods in the middle of the island. They made their living as herdsmen, fishermen, and salvaging from wrecks. From time to time their numbers were increased by fishermen immigrating from the northeastern states, England and Scandinavia. For most of its history, the chief impingement of the outside world on the Outer Banks has been the construction by the United States government of lighthouses and lifesaving stations, and the establishment by private citizens of resort areas.

It was the relative isolation and healthy climate of the Outer Banks that stimulated the first use of the area as a resort by mainlanders. According to most sources, summer visitors first came to the Outer Banks because of the belief that breathing the salt air and bathing in the sea exempted the Outer Banks from the epidemics of malaria that swept the mainland in summer. Beaufort, Ocracoke, and Portsmouth were acclaimed for their healthy situations as early as the eighteenth century, but it was Nags Head that by the early nineteenth century had become established as a summer resort. Tradition claims that in about 1830, Francis Nixon,<sup>3</sup> a wealthy Perquimans County planter, explored the area "with the view of finding a suitable place to build a summer residence where he, and his family could escape the poisonous miasma vapors and the attendant fevers."<sup>4</sup> He is said to have bought 200 acres, paying fifty cents an acre for it, built his summer house, and attracted visitors from back home, who also found the area appealing. Other Perquimans planter families who early acquired Nags Head property included the Skinner family, notably Benjamin Skinner of Cove Grove (NR).<sup>5</sup>

Nags Head is unusual among the Outer Banks in that it is separated from the mainland not only by the Roanoke Sound but also by an intermediate island--Roanoke Island, site of the "Lost Colony" of Sir Walter Raleigh. The origin of the name Nags Head remains unknown: some claim it comes from the shape of the island, others cite as source places of the same name in England, and still others assert that it came from early settlers' habit of tying a light to a nag's head, who walked the beach at night to lure boats to their doom and thus enrich salvagers.

By the antebellum period Nags Head was a popular resort, populated primarily by planters and merchants from the Albemarle and other northeastern counties. There were

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three distinct settlement areas at Nags Head--the ocean side, the sound side, served by the deep water of Roanoke Sound, and the "flats" and woods between. The early resort development took place on the sound side, not the ocean side, but because lifestyle and traditions established on the sound side were reflected in the later development on the ocean side, the history of the sound side is crucial to the character of the ocean side district. (The sound side, while older and still including several isolated structures of significance, does not survive as a cohesive district.)

By 1838, a large hotel--said to accommodate 200 guests--was built on the sound, complete with ballroom. In 1849 a visitor from Norfolk reported seeing at the hotel "A company that would have done credit to any of the popular watering places in the country. I venture nothing in saying that the ladies were as pretty, and as tastefully dressed, as if they had just returned from the vendors of fashion in Paris."<sup>6</sup>

It was not only for short visits to the hotel, but more often for summerlong stays at their own cottages that merchants and planters went to Nags Head. A fictionalized account of life at Nags Head was published in 1850--Nags Head: or, Two Months among "The Bankers." A Story of Sea-Shore Life and Manners. By Gregory Seaworthy. Identified as the work of George Higby Throop (1818-1896), the novel, with another Throop work, is described as being "the first North Carolina novels of 'local color,' . . . and thus highly significant in the literature of the State." The book provides a visit picture of this lifestyle that continued without drastic changes well into the twentieth century. (The following extract is taken from an article on Throop by Richard Walser.)

The novel opens "on the afternoon of a pleasant day in July," on the banks of the Perquimans River at Hertford, where a schooner is being loaded with the necessities for the household's stay at the banks--"baskets, axes, beds and bedding, cart-wheels, and bodies ruthlessly divorced, parasols, a venerable umbrella, and a bottle of Sand's sarsparilla," as well as ducks and hens. The beach residence is to be "a little world of itself," with a cow, three horses, two dogs, and a household of twenty, a third of them Negro servants. Chartered packets run twice a week between the plantations and the beach to provision the planter with fresh vegetables. "One of these plies between Elizabeth City and Nags Head. Another comes from Hertford, another from Edenton, and another from Salmon River, or Merry Hill; the latter being owned and employed by a wealthy gentleman for the convenience of his family and friends."

Arriving at the banks, the schooner anchors half a mile off shore (in the sound) and sends passengers and provisions to land in smaller boats. A walk through the sand leads the visitor to a small five-apartment "story-and-a-half cottage, shingled and weatherboarded, but destitute of lath and plaster," and "surrounded by a dwarfish growth of live-oak." On its "eastern side, it has a comfortable piazza, where the family gather of an evening for a social chat, and for the enjoyment of the sea-breeze." The author

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found peculiar "the fact that a very large proportion of the visitors are actual residents in private dwellings," owned by the "Planters, merchants, and professional men." During the summer's stay, visitors would bathe in the ocean before breakfast, go to the bowling alley, or riding or fishing, dine and then take a siesta in the afternoon, swim again, and in the evening, go to the hotel, where "the musician makes his appearance, and "it is not long before the ladies make their appearance; the sets are formed, and the long-drawn 'Balance, all!' gives the glow of pleasure to every face." The dance goes on for hours, until you "are afraid to look at the clock, and then you dig your way, . . . through the dry, yielding, cringing, shrinking, nerve depressing sand, home-ward."

The writer also described a little chapel, "a wooden structure, of small pretensions to architectural beauty," located "about a stone's throw from the hotel, in the centre of a diminutive forest of live-oaks."<sup>8</sup> (Presumably this was the chapel consecrated in 1849 by the Rt. Rev. Levi Silliman Ives,<sup>8A</sup> Episcopal bishop of North Carolina, whose diary lists morning and evening prayer there.)

In the 1850s, the owners of the hotel, where the dance was held and much activity entered, improved access to Nags Head by arranging for the steamer A. H. Schultz to come regularly from Virginia; began construction of a horse-drawn railroad one mile long "from the Hotel /on the sound/ to the Ocean;" built "a substantial Wharf. . . from the landing on the Sound shore, to an anchorage, a distance of half a mile;" and con-<sup>9</sup>structed plank walks from "the Sound to the Hotel, and from the Hotel to the Ocean."

The resort, with its hotel with boardwalk, railroad, and band, and the many cottages along the sound, attracted visitors not only from eastern North Carolina but from Virginia and beyond. The editor of the American Beacon of Norfolk devoted four columns in the August 25, 1851, issue to Nags Head; he reported finding

picturesque dwellings on the hills occupied by the intelligent and wealthy Carolinians, who for twenty years have regularly congregated at Nags Head about the first of July, to pass in refined social inter-  
course, surrounded by the health reviving breezes of old Ocean, the season of the year that would expose them to sickness on their plantations.

The editor described the house as being

"of considerable size, . . . built in the fashion of regular homesteads with spacious porches and balconies and convenient outhouses as if for permanent occupancy. They are generally situated on high hills with beautiful wooded sides commanding a magnificent prospect of the ocean and sound, and separated in many instances by most romantic vallies thickly covered with stunted pine and oak and luxuriant grape vines."<sup>10</sup>

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By the 1850s Nags Head was among the chief resorts of the state. Reported the Southern Weekly Post of Raleigh on July 2, 1853,

The 'Spring season' is almost at hand, and soon the moneyed part of our population, who have time at their command, will be moving off on various lines of travel, in pursuit of health and excitement, at the numerous watering places and fashionable resorts of the Union. . . . Newport, Saratoga, Niagara, Cape May, the Virginia Springs, Old Point, Nags Head, and many other places of less note, will be thronged with visitors. . . . 10A

When the Civil War came, the strategic character of the Outer Banks attracted military action there:

. . . in the fall of 1861 there was fighting at Hatteras Inlet and later at Chicamacomico. By January of 1862 the Confederate States Army had moved in on Nags Head, taking over the hotel as the command post of General Henry A. Wise who was in charge of the defenses of Roanoke Island. When the island fell, Wise and his staff were forced to retreat up the Banks, but before abandoning the post they set fire to the hotel so it could not be used by the enemy."<sup>11</sup>

Another casualty of the war was the small Episcopal chapel, which in 1865, according to a church history was "torn down by the Federal troops under General Burnside and the material was used to build shelters for runaway slaves who sought refuge on Roanoke Island."<sup>12</sup>

The Civil War destroyed not only the hotel and the chapel, but also the fortunes of many of the planters who had patronized Nags Head before the war. Yet many of them held on to their summer places and as soon as the war ended, returned as regularly as before. The Norfolk Journal reported in August, 1867, that Nags Head "has never been patronized more than during the past season."<sup>13</sup>

After the war, new cottages, (many of them extending well out over the water) and hotels--including the great Nags Head Hotel that burned in 1900--were built on the sound, where the boats still anchored. It was apparently in the postwar period, however, that for the first time, people began to establish cottages along the ocean side as well. Some families built new cottages along the ocean side; others moved older ones across the flats to the beach on rollers. (Moving these houses built on sand was a common feature of Nags Head life, sometimes to accommodate the whim of an owner, more often as the only means of saving a house threatened by the shift in sand or attack by water.)

According to local historian Edward G. Outlaw (who began to summer at Nags Head in 1884 as a boy), the first to build a house on the beach was Dr. W. G. Pool of Elizabeth

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City, followed by Ruben Overman.<sup>14</sup> Outlaw recalled that Pool first built "north of the hotel property which ran from Sound to ocean." After a few years,

Dr. Pool decided to build on the ocean front. Over there by themselves, his family was very lonely. So he acquired all the property north of the hotel property as far up as the Samuel Tillett line, and commenced to donate to his friends' wives, building lots which were about 130 feet wide with a <sup>15</sup>40-foot street between each lot, running from west to east to the ocean.

This recollection is borne out by deeds of the postwar period. On September 14, 1866, William G. Pool purchased from members of the Midgett family, for \$30, 50 acres of land "at or near Nags Head," bounded by the Atlantic Ocean and south of Tillett's heirs.<sup>16</sup> The following November 6, Pool sold to Kate Overman for \$1, a lot on the ocean at Nags Head, and expressed in the deed his desire for R. F. Overman and his wife Kate of Elizabeth City "to build on my land at Nags Head in Currituck County and reside there during the Summer Months."<sup>17</sup> A similar deed was executed that day to Florence L. Grandy, for her use and her husband's, C. W. Grandy. On June 1, 1869, Pool sold to Henrietta Fearing, wife of Isaiah Fearing, a lot with improvements, also for \$1. (In 1869 Dr. Pool became involved in a curious event that has about it as romantic a mystery as any associated with the Outer Banks: he was given by an old "Banker" woman a portrait of an elegant young woman, believed by many to be a portrait of Aaron Burr's daughter Theodosia who was lost at sea in 1812.)

Outlaw recalled that in the early years along the beach, there were thirteen cottages "strung along the edge of the surf, above high water within 300 feet of the line of breakers, a single row of buildings with generous spacing between the cottages, and next door neighbors were not within 'speaking distance.'"<sup>18</sup>

Of the thirteen pioneer beach cottages, some have been destroyed in storms or moved to other parts of the beach, but nine are believed locally to survive, usually as the core for later construction. As stylistic post Civil War construction and almost continual expansion make positive physical identification of the early cottages difficult; family tradition and memory provides a surer guide. The Sumner Cottage (dated by Outlaw as 1868) is said to be that (#49) now owned by Will Gaither of Elizabeth City who married a Robinson.<sup>19</sup> The E. F. Lamb Cottage (said to have been moved from the sound, where it had been connected by a private pier to the old hotel) may be part of the present Patterson cottage (#39). Edward Outlaw claimed that the Henrietta Fearing Cottage, built in 1869, is the present Wales Cottage (#35), but the present owner, believes that it was built around 1875; in either case, it is among the oldest built on the beach.

The W. W. Griffin Cottage (#34), dated 1859 by Outlaw and described as being owned by Mrs. Duncan Winston and then by Mrs. Wales, may be the one-story cottage sold by

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Mrs. Wales to Mrs. Fred Drane in 1937 and expanded to its present size by Samuel Twine. The name, Spider Villa, derives from a visit when a group of Hertford men encountered many large spiders. Some of the timbers, of the early construction, are said to be old hand-hewn ones reused from a Methodist Church in Elizabeth City and carried by boat to Nags Head.<sup>20</sup>

The George Pool Cottage, dated by Outlaw, 1866, is believed to be the Charlie Turner Cottage (#28) now owned by Philip MacMullen.<sup>21</sup> The cottage built for Florence Grandy at the urging of Dr. Pool in 1866 is said by Outlaw to be that sold to Tom Nixon in 1908; and thus may be the core of the cottage still owned by the Nixon family heirs of Hertford (#27). The house built about the same time for Kate Overman, also Pool's friend, is said to have been sold and moved back of the highway where it is now the Whedbee Cottage (#60).<sup>22</sup> The Gurkin Cottage, undated, is suggested to be the present Martha Wood Cottage (#22).

The Edward Outlaw, Sr., Cottage (#48) was built in 1885, according to Edward Outlaw, Jr.; it was "fabricated" near the homeplace in Bertie County, loaded on a steamer, taken to Nags Head, and erected there with the help of Solomon Moore, Tilghman Tillett, and a black carpenter from Bertie County named Daniel Moore. A documentary photograph shows a small three or four-bay one-story cottage with gable roof; this is believed to be the core of the two-story cottage described as the Outlaw Cottage, now owned by Sam Worthington.

During the post-Civil War period along the beach, while Nags Head no longer had its antebellum glamor, it continued to be the regular resort of planter, professional, and merchant families from the northeastern part of the state, despite the decline in many of their fortunes. As always, getting there each summer was a major undertaking. As E. R. Outlaw, Jr., recalled,

My father always chartered a steamer. The boat would stop at our landing, Quitsna. There they loaded on ten cords of wood, carts, furniture, boxes and barrels all day; then the chickens, then last the family, the horse and mule and dog car or buggy, three or four dogs, and two cats in a box. We left Quitsna, usually stopped at Plymouth, and at Jamesville to load shingles. Then at Avoca we loaded Dr. Capehart and family and his horse and cow. Then we steamed to Edenton where we loaded Mrs. D. C. Winston and family, furniture and cow; usually the Jones family, Dr. Drane and family and most of the Bond family. Next morning we would leave Edenton, towing several small boats, and about off Alligator River, we usually took a heavy thunder storm and we were all "frightened to death."<sup>23</sup> Usually this included the Captain, as he was scared of rough water.

The steamers that plied the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River in these days were primarily freighters, but there was also the sail boat, the Lew Willis, that "called

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twice a week," running from Elizabeth City to Manteo and Nags Head. Many of the sound side cottages extended out over the water, or had their own piers, for the use of private sail boats.

Once at Nags Head, families found the familiar leisurely pace and familiar faces. Summer after summer, new generations of Skinners, Pools, Nixons, Outlaws, Woods, Winstons, Martins, Bonds, and others played in the sand, danced at the hotel, courted on the sand hills (much more numerous in those days than today, including Hotel Hill, Engagement Hill, and the "Seven Sisters"),<sup>24</sup> fished in the freshwater ponds, and swatted the mosquitoes that came in through the unscreened windows. Horse carts conveyed baggage and people from place to place--two-wheelers, with room for a driver and a crowded load of people or possessions. Sail boats furnished transportation to Manteo for provisions not available from Hollowell's store or from local farmers like Tilghman Tillett, who brought fresh vegetables around in his cart. Life was casual--but with a degree of elegance: "In those days, finery was a prerequisite to a summer at Nags Head. There was lots of dressing done by the few visitors who went to Nags Head"<sup>25</sup>

Storms, fires, and wars sometimes interrupted the serene rhythm of life. Outlaw recalled that during the Spanish American War, the hotel did not open, and there were very few families at Nags Head. In 1899, the year after the Spanish-American War, "a terrific hurricane roared up the coast, . . . striking Nags Head with a northeast gale registering at the Nags Head life saving station 85 miles an hour. Then the windgauge blew away." Waves rose until "the ocean swept across the sandy strand from sea to Sound." An inlet was cut across, through which water rushed, and "cottagers on the beach made their way to the hotel on the Sound side by using lifelines to which each person was tied. They struggled through water about four feet deep." Others were rescued by boat, and all gathered at the hotel, where after<sup>26</sup> "provisions and liquor ran out," only salt herring and biscuits were left to eat.

The next year, 1900, brought another disaster--"one Sunday afternoon just before boat-leaving time, 5:30, the hotel caught fire and was completely destroyed, leaving only the old bar room and ten-pin alley standing."<sup>27</sup> This was quite a blow to the community, for the center of the social life had been destroyed; the steamer chartered by the hotel stopped as well:

After the hotel burned, . . . the only transportation to Nags Head was a sail boat about three trips a week. Then finally engines were put<sup>28</sup> in the Hattie Creef and [its skipper] Martin Johnson ran daily trips.

Other steamers were begun, including some by the Eastern Carolina Transportation Company. Sunday excursions were started by Mr. J. H. Leroy, with the steamers Guide and Tourist. Competition (and soon dominance) came from the North River Line, which ran the Virginia which later burned and was replaced by the Annie L. Vansciver. The hotel was gone, but some years after the fire, Dr. C. W. Sawyer, in good Nags Head

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tradition, purchased the remaining bar building, moved it to his property, and set up a boarding house, the Albemarle, which stood over the water. "He also built a pavilion in front of it on the dry sand with dancing each night," which was "much patronized by visitors during the days of prohibition."<sup>29</sup>

With the steamers running regularly and the pavilion replacing the hotel as the center of night life, the twentieth century began. This period at Nags Head is recalled by people from Edenton and Elizabeth City now living, whose memories provide a vivid picture of Nags Head in the early twentieth century era.

The steamers were a colorful new part of Nags Head, including the Hattie Creef (which transported the Wright Brothers to the Banks), the E. R. Daniels, and the Owen T. Lloyd, Jr. The boats brought people, freight, and ice to the island--the sound side--from Elizabeth City and elsewhere. Martin Johnson's Trenton was the mainstay, running six days a week. The Haven Bell and the Annie L. Vansciver were excursion boats that left in the morning from Elizabeth City and returned at night.

1 the Vansciver, Flat's Band, of local black musicians, played as the boat steamed along--the bones, bass fiddle, and kazoo. When the boat was due, people gathered at the pier to watch, for there was great competition between the excursion boats, and two rival boats raced full steam ahead to the pier, bands playing, while the summer people and natives alike watched. With the boat tied up, the musicians would go ashore and visit various cottages, where they would play, passing a hat for contributions. Those who came on the week end excursion boat arrived about noon and "would head out for the ocean side as hard as you could." Then, when the boat blew the whistle about one hour before departure, "people would streak back to the boat."<sup>30</sup>

During the week, too, there was a gathering at the pier every afternoon:

The boat came in about 5 o'clock, and we would leave home about 4 o'clock to meet the boat and see who was coming to Nags Head. . . we waited for the mail to be put up, went back to the ocean side, had supper, and after supper, we went back to the pavilion for the entertainment, and walked back home again that night. But we were young, and we didn't mind it. Nobody minded it. It was always done in groups, a whole crowd together. . .there was no danger anyhow because everybody down there knew each other. No strangers could come in except on that boat, and if they did, you'd see them. Nobody was afraid. . .you never thought about locking a door.<sup>31</sup>

Replacing the hotel as the center of evening social life was the pavilion--

"Not a thing in the world but lanterns hanging around and an old scratchy victrola; it was my job to keep the victrola cranked. That's how I could stay there all summer. I slept in a little room back

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there and I kept the dance hall swept out and kept the sand off the records. They just had open windows, that's all. The natives would go there and take their children nights. They had benches all around . . . the tourists would learn to dance; and it was mostly square dancing."<sup>32</sup>

As well as the victrola at the pavilion, there was live music. "Mr. Perry had a piano, had a fellow there that played square dance music. Mr. John Culpepper played accordian. . . for square dancing. . . . For ballroom dancing, a fellow named Howard Weaver had a little orchestra, piano, violin, accordian, and drums."<sup>33</sup> On the ocean side was an equal attraction for daytime activity--the Bathhouse.

"At 11 o'clock in the morning everybody on the ocean side would gather up at the boathouse because they had a life line. . . that went out in a V, and everybody wanted to be inside that V to go bathing. . . On the sound side, Miss Allie Grice, Mrs. Charles Grice, had a flag that she'd run up, about 10:15 or 10:20, or some time (she had a regular time for it), to notify all the people on the sound side it was time to go to the ocean side. They'd all meet and come over in a group, and get over there about 11 o'clock. . . The sound side people and the ocean side people all went to the ocean together, which brought about a friendliness as well as contributing to. . . safety."<sup>34</sup>

The Bathhouse not only provided the life line, but was also the only place on the ocean side selling refreshments. They had "soft drinks, Coca Cola, a few snacks. . . zu zus (an old-fashioned kind of gingersnaps), lemon snaps, animal crackers, vienna sausage, a can of beans, that was about it."<sup>34-A</sup>

Besides the pavilion and the bathhouse, new hotels were constructed: the Albemarle, connected with the pavilion; the LeRoy Hotel, sound side predecessor to the ocean side LeRoy's Seaside Inn, now the First Colony Hotel; and Hollowell's Hotel, where, when it was moved, "Miss Ethel Hollowell never stopped cooking while Old Man Twine moved it."<sup>35</sup> The Arlington was moved, too, from the sound side to the ocean side and was an important feature of the beach until it was destroyed by a recent storm. It was Miss Cassie Morrisette of the Arlington who had the wooden walkway built across from the sound side to the ocean so people could come over to the Arlington:

"There was a little walkway /because of standing water in the lowlands/, from the sound to the ocean, and you had a little handrail, . . . little two-board wide with a handrail. . . Mosquitoes! They'd eat you up, so it was built up 2½-3 feet, then you didn't disturb the mosquitoes."<sup>36</sup>

the ocean siders would chip in to buy kerosene to pour on the water to stop the mosquitoes from breeding.

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During the early twentieth century, too, in the mid-island area on former hotel land, an Episcopal church was built in 1915 with funds gained from Congress's restitution for the Yankee soldiers' destruction half a century earlier, and funds collected over the years. In 1917 and 1918 violent storms attacked the beach: people moved the cottages back in 1917, only to find them the next year with "their steps hanging in the water."

After World War I, changes occurred that diminished Nags Head's isolation from the outside world and encouraged the shift of activity from the sound side to the beach. In 1924, Washington Baum took office as chairman of the Dare County Board of Commissioners, and soon began to "figure out some way to get these roads and bridges" to the county.<sup>37</sup> Progress was slow at first, but within the decade bridges were constructed from Roanoke Island to the banks, and across Currituck Sound to the banks at the north; a state highway through Kitty Hawk and Nags Head, completed by 1931, ran near the beach and brought people to the ocean side rather than the sound. Storms, too, diminished the sound side. In the storm of 1918, when the "sound and the ocean met," considerable damage was done to the sound side as well as the ocean side. Storms in 1932 and 1933 were even more destructive; the 1933 storm, recalled James Hathaway, "really finished the sound side."

The growing popularity of the beach after 1910 brought increased construction in the 1920s and 1930s, which produced much of the present character of the district. The new cottages, in a dramatic dormered shingle style, were largely the work of one man--house mover and builder Samuel J. Twine. Older cottages were remodeled and expanded by Twine as well. Mr. Twine--or "Old Man String" as some called him as children--built in the twentieth century not only a collection of superbly functional and handsome beach cottages, but also a reputation as a man of irreproachable skill and honesty. With his "little glasses pinched up his nose,"<sup>38</sup> he was a "little shrimp of a fellow, but he knew his work."<sup>39</sup> It was said that if he gave you a price for a job, but lost money on it, he "would give you a good job just the same." He is said to have been building cottages a few years before 1920, and to have constructed St. Andrews at its mid-island location (1915).<sup>40</sup> Moving houses, repairing and expanding or building them from scratch--all were part of old man Twine's repertoire. "Nobody could build nothing down there if Mr. Twine didn't do it."<sup>41</sup> Mr. Twine would go down at the beginning of the season to get houses into repair, and close them up in the winter, and during the winter he worked at odd jobs and carpentry in Elizabeth City. His designs were elegantly functional--though they were considered simply comfortable and sturdy.<sup>42</sup> ("You never heard of a cottage Twine built being blown down in a storm.")<sup>42</sup> All of similar distinctive character with their swooping roofs, expansive porches, leaning-out benches, and dormers, the houses were nevertheless individualized. When Mrs. Pruden was planning her house, for example,<sup>43</sup> "she had Mr. Twine hold the planks up so she could see how the one of it would look."<sup>43</sup>

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In the early decades of the twentieth century, despite new construction and the advent of the automobile, the lifestyle continued much the same. The same families came from the Albemarle and nearby counties, and everybody still knew everybody. Square dances at the pavilion, crabbing and fishing, courting on "Engagement Hill" still gave the summer life its character. Families still came with two or three servants. In the morning and late in the afternoon the ladies went in groups to the beach, and held hands as they walked a little way out into the surf and then stood out in the ocean, and "talked and talked and talked." After mid-day dinner, the servants cleaned up and then, "while the white folks were taking their nap," about 2 o'clock, all the servants went out, "and the beach was theirs."<sup>44</sup> It was a time of freedom for the children, too:

"When we'd go /to Nags Head for the summer/ we'd take our shoes off, and after the trip back in the fall, Rucker and Sheely /'s store in Elizabeth City/ would open early so we could get shoes for fall, . . .we'd outgrown the shoes we took off in the spring."<sup>45</sup>

An annual event in this period was the August 13 visit to Roanoke Island, led by Dr. Drane, the Episcopal rector. In the years before the "Lost Colony" drama memorialized Raleigh's effort, a pilgrimage would be made to Fort Raleigh and a memorial service held; men, "full of red bugs and ticks," the pilgrims would return at night to the beach and "go right into the ocean to get rid of them."<sup>46</sup>

By the 1930s, interest in the Lost Colony on Roanoke Island, spearheaded by W. O. Saunders, editor of the Elizabeth City Independent,<sup>47</sup> led to WPA work on the "Cittie of Raleigh" at Fort Raleigh. Dramatist Paul Green wrote an outdoor "symphonic drama," the "Lost Colony," which was first presented in 1937. During that summer, President Franklin D. Roosevelt attended the dedication of the waterside theatre. He had lunch at the Toms-Buchanan Cottage (#24), a new cottage, the largest on the beach, built for the wealthy tobacco family of Durham. The elaborate arrangements for the visit included the construction of a ramp for the president's wheelchair. After the festivities were over, and the presidential party had left, leaving beach life somewhat returned to normal, Mrs. Buchanan recalled that "the happiest moment of her life was when that limousine drove away."<sup>48</sup>

In recent decades, the new roads and a later bypass, the "Lost Colony," and the growth of the economy, have increased pressure on the Outer Banks. Development has increased, but in Nags Head, high-rise construction has been restricted by local zoning. Prices for the shifting sands have shot up from \$300 a lot 50 years ago to \$50,000 in 1975; commercial development has increased. The Ash Wednesday storm of 1962, which brought "a pall over Edenton" when the news of its depredations was heard, forced yet other move away from the ocean, back along the sand toward the road, with the cottages carefully kept in the same relationship to each other. But thus far traditional ways and the love of the families for this stretch of beach have prevailed against fierce storms and high real estate values, and the mile stretch of "old Nags Head" survives

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along the beach, embracing the surviving members of the baker's dozen of pioneer beach houses, and the grand, sweeping Mr. Twine cottages of the 1920s and the 1930s of the beach's heyday.

FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Stick, David, Dare County: A History, 1970, p. 11.
- <sup>2</sup>Stick, David, Dare County: A History, 1970, pp. 11-12.
- <sup>3</sup>Outlaw, Edward R., Jr., Old Nags Head, 1952, 1956, p. 18.
- <sup>4</sup>Stick, David, The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958, 1958, p. 96.
- <sup>5</sup>Winslow, Ray, Perquimans County Historian, Interview.
- <sup>6</sup>Stick, David, The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958, 1958, p. 98.
- <sup>7</sup>Walser, Richard, "The Mysterious Case of George Higby Throop. . .", pp. 18-20.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>8A</sup>Outlaw, Edward R., Jr., Old Nags Head, 1952, 1956, p. 8.
- <sup>9</sup>Stick, David, The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958, 1958, p. 103.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid, p. 102.
- <sup>10A</sup>Southern Weekly Post, July 2, 1853, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- <sup>11</sup>Stick, David, The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958, 1958, p. 106.
- <sup>12</sup>Outlaw, Edward R., Jr., Old Nags Head, 1952, 1956.

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- 13 Stick, David, The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958, 1958, p. 106.
- 14 Outlaw, Edward R., Jr., Old Nags Head, 1952, 1956, p. 43.
- 15 Ibid, p. 15.
- 16 Currituck County Deeds, Deed Book 30:p. 19.
- 17 Currituck County Deeds, Deed Book 30:p. 108.
- 18 Outlaw, Edward R., Jr., Old Nags Head, 1952, 1956, p. 21.
- 19 Interview with Betty Wales Silver, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 20 Interview with Mrs. Fred Drane, Edenton, North Carolina.
- 21 Interview with Mrs. Betty Wales Silver, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 22 Interview with Mrs. Lloyd Horton, Hertford, North Carolina.
- 23 Outlaw, Edward R., Jr., Old Nags Head, 1952, 1956.
- 24 Interview with Mrs. Fred Drane, Edenton, North Carolina.
- 25 Outlaw, Edward R., Jr., Old Nags Head, 1952, 1956.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Interviews with Frank Benton and W. C. Dawson, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

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- 31 Interview with W. C. Dawson, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
- 32 Interview with Frank Benton, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
- 33 Interview with W. C. Dawson, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
- 34 Ibid.
- 34A Ibid.
- 35 Interview with Frank Benton, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Stick, David,
- 38 Interview with Betty Wales Silver, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 39 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Fred Drane, Edenton, North Carolina.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Interview with Mr. James Hathaway, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Fred Drane, Edenton, North Carolina.
- 44 Interview with Betty Wales Silver, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 45 Interview with Mr. James Hathaway, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Interview with W. C. Dawson, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
- 48 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Fred Drane, Edenton, North Carolina.

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Currituck County Records. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroup: Deeds).

County Records. Division of Archives & History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroup: Deeds).

# GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2083 acres

Zone 18??

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	4,4,8,0,8,0	3,9,8,1,6,6,0	B	1,7	4,4,8,7,8,0	3,9,8,0,1,6,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,7	4,4,3,9,8,0	3,9,7,8,2,0,0	D	1,7	4,4,3,5,4,0	3,9,7,9,5,0,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

Description and Significance by Catherine W. Cockshutt, Survey Supervisor

ORGANIZATION

Division of Archives & History

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

109 East Jones Street

TELEPHONE

829-4763

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

# STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

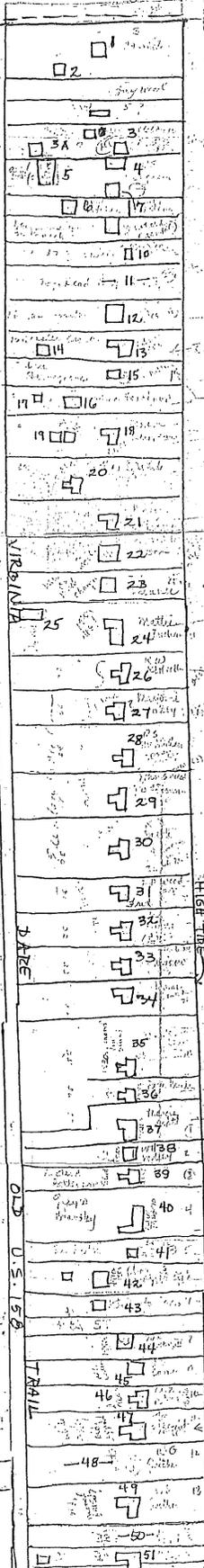
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

← North boundary



O C E A N

↑ Edenton People ↓

ROANOKE ST.

U.S. 158

TRAIL

59 St Andrews by the Sea

60 Wheedee

BARRACKS LOTS

BARRACKS

XIR/INA

Allen - 1903  
Wheeler - 1938 - 1176d

Lea - 1900 - 1176d

Head

Edenton

Edenton

Edenton

Edenton

Edenton

Edenton

Edenton

Edenton

