

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Salvo Post Office

other names/site number United States Post Office, Salvo, NC

2. Location

street & number W. side NC 12, 0.1 mile S. of junction with Park Road not for publication

city or town Salvo vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Dare code 055 zip code 27972

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William J. Rain Jr.
Signature of certifying official/Title

7-14-93
Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: post office

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: plain gable-front building

foundation WOOD

walls WOOD

roof SHINGLE

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance

ca. 1910-1943

Significant Dates

ca. 1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Douglas, Lafayette

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 7 Page 1Description

The Salvo Post Office is an unusually small wood-frame post office which has served the small Hatteras Island community of Salvo for nearly ninety years. Constructed ca. 1910, the post office, measuring only eight by twelve feet, is recognized by the U.S. Postal Service as the second smallest post office building in the nation.¹ Located just a few feet off the island's main highway, the building, owned by the postmaster, sits in the front yard of his residence. According to long-standing tradition the post office was constructed by the husband of the community's first postmistress. The one-bay-wide, two-bay-deep building exemplifies the traditional gable-front vernacular form. The interior is divided into two very small rooms; the post office lobby and the postmaster's workroom. The U.S. Postal Service believes the Salvo Post Office is the first portable post office of its type in the nation.²

Since its construction, the building has been the focus of a unique tradition of being purchased by succeeding postmasters and moved to their respective properties. The post office has occupied three sites in Salvo, all of which share similar features including the building's close proximity to the postmaster's house. The original location is said to have been very similar to the two subsequent sites with the exception that the post office was located behind, not in front of, the postmistress's house. The building was moved to its current site in 1979 by local volunteers using a boat trailer.³ The post office remained virtually unaltered until October, 1992, when a fire damaged much of the structure. Under the supervision of the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, the building was carefully restored in late 1992 and early 1993. It retains a large portion of its original fabric.⁴

Located just south of the center of the Salvo community, the post office now sits approximately one-half mile from the ocean and one-fourth mile from the Pamlico Sound, resting only forty-eight feet from the island's main thoroughfare, NC Highway 12. Seventy-five feet to the rear of the post office is the present postmaster's house, a one-story wood-shingled bungalow constructed in 1930.⁵ The area directly behind and to the sides of the post office contains a wide variety of coastal plants and trees, including large and mature live oaks, red cedars and wax myrtles.

The rectangular-shaped post office is raised about two feet on wood pilings above the sandy soil common to North Carolina's Outer Banks. Its tongue-and-groove, vertical wood-sheathed exterior has a one-bay front elevation with a nearly full-width entrance platform. Both side elevations feature two four-over-four sash windows with pegged mortise-and-tenon joints. The steeply pitched gable roof was recently resingled with wood to replicate the original roof covering. [See Exhibits A and B.]

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 7 Page 2

The interior of the post office contains two unequal-sized rooms separated by a partition wall which is paneled on the lobby side with vertical, narrow tongue-and-groove pine boards--the same material used for flooring. The back side of this wall facing the workroom is unfinished with exposed framing members. Drilled into the lobby floor are two one-inch diameter flood holes which allow water to seep into the building to prevent it from being lifted off its foundation during a flood. Such holes are typical among nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century buildings on the island. The interior originally was unfinished with all framing members of the exterior walls exposed. In the early 1930s the rooms were neatly dressed with narrow beaded tongue-and-groove paneling, arranged vertically in the lobby and horizontally in the workroom. A tray ceiling of the same material was also installed.⁶

Located in the southwest corner is a narrow board and batten door providing the only access to the postmaster's workroom from the lobby. Prior to 1980 a postal window was located to the right of the partition door. The small window was neatly framed and had a shelf that projected into the workroom. In 1980 the original postal window opening was enlarged for the installation of two large post office box units salvaged from another facility.⁷ Thereafter, during office hours the postmaster opened the partition wall door and inserted a chest-high wood panel with an attached shelf that served as the postal window.

Integrity Analysis

Traditionally coastal buildings are moved more often than other buildings because of the shifting nature of their sites. The privately-owned post office building really functioned as an outbuilding in the incumbent postmaster's yard. Upon retirement of the postmaster, succeeding postmasters purchased the building and moved it to their property. It appears that the portability of the building stems more from its diminutive size than from any preconceived design. Since its construction the post office has remained on the west side of Highway 12. Located within a half mile from the original site, the two later sites were very similar to the original location.⁸ The building, now facing east, was oriented south on its original site.

The building remained in continuous use as a post office until October 12, 1992, when an arsonist set the structure and a neighboring store on fire. Quick response from the community fire department rescued the building from total destruction. The floor, exterior walls and roof remained standing. Most of the framing, windows, some flooring, interior paneling, and exterior sheathing survived in varying degrees of condition. Immediately

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salvo Post Office
Dare County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 3

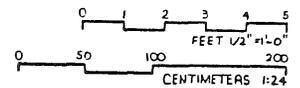
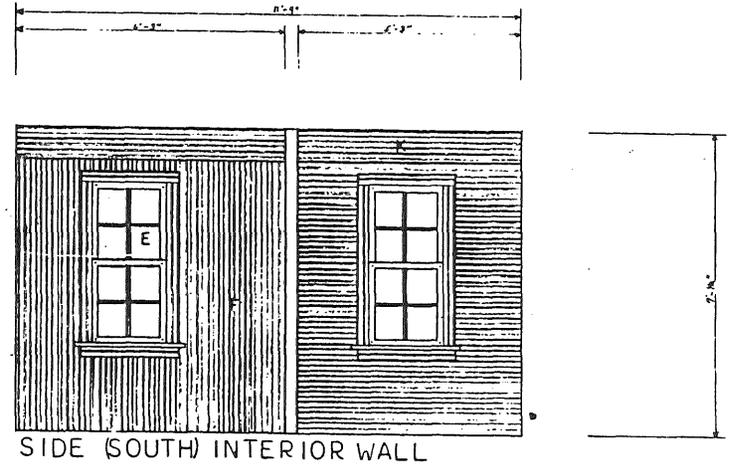
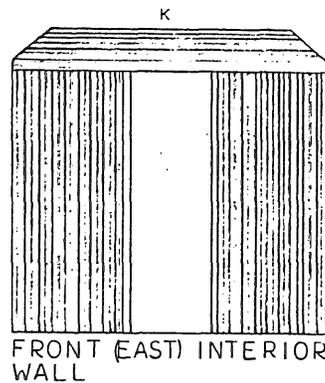
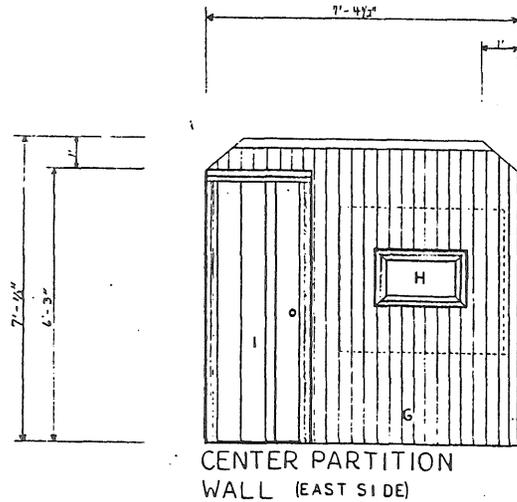
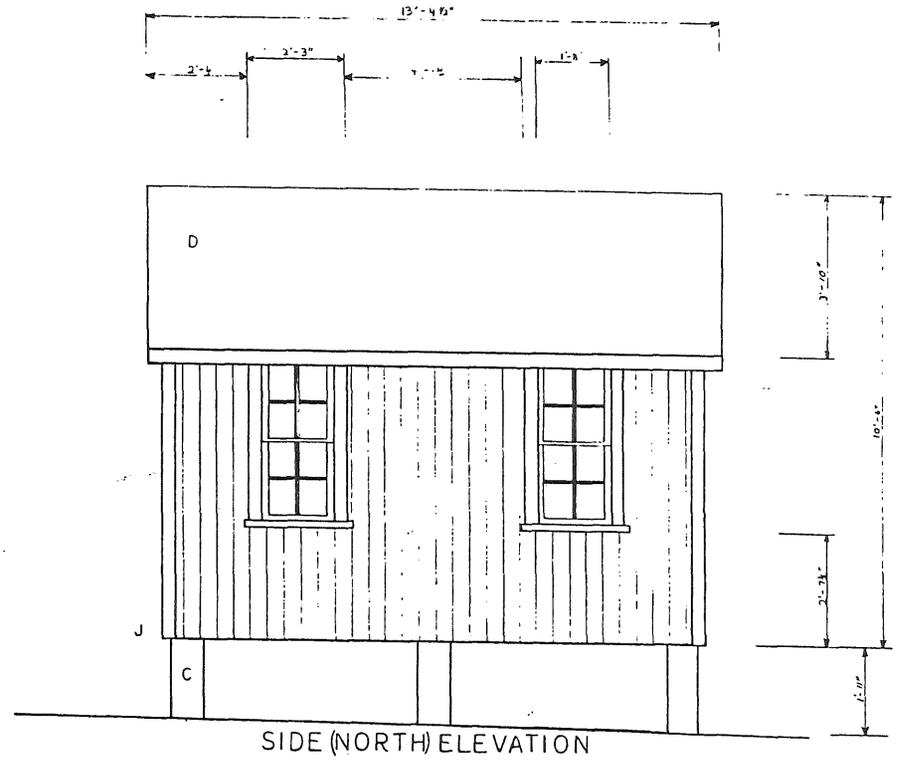
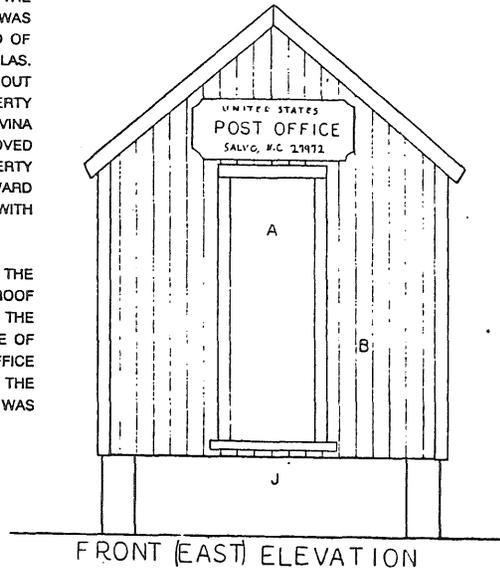
following the fire, staff of the State Historic Preservation Office were called in to evaluate the extent of damage to the structure and provide technical assistance for its initial stabilization. In mid-November, restoration of the building began under the close supervision of the State Historic Preservation Office, the postmaster and a resident architect. By early May, 1993, restoration work at the post office was completed. In every instance, the expenses and labor were borne by community volunteers.⁹

Although the fire did significant damage to the building, it was determined that enough of the historic fabric survived to restore, not reconstruct, the post office. Careful attention was given to preserving all significant building components not damaged beyond use by the fire. The most intact portion of the building was the frame. Approximately one-hundred percent of the floor frame, seventy-five percent of the wall frame, and twenty-five percent of the roof frame were sound enough to be preserved in place. On the exterior sixty percent of the tongue-and-groove vertical sheathing, hidden beneath modern plywood sheathing, could not be retained due to both fire damage and moisture deterioration. The interior of the building suffered the most damage. Seventy-five percent of the paneling, all of the ceiling and partition wall, and sixty percent of the flooring was damaged beyond repair. Three of the four windows survived the fire; only the rear-right window had to be rebuilt, and was done so in a like manner to the original. The partition wall door was replicated. The original front door had been replaced many years prior to the fire and no evidence of the original front door existed. A replacement was selected based on turn-of-the-century exterior doors found on Hatteras Island buildings. When replacement components were necessary, the restoration team reproduced exact replicas of historic materials and designs. The post office received only two minor changes from its pre-fire construction and appearance. The first was replacing the fiberglass shingles with wood shingles, to replicate its historic covering. The second was changing exterior trim colors to white from red and blue, which dated from 1984.¹⁰

SALVO POST OFFICE

THE SALVO POST OFFICE IS A SMALL TWO ROOM FRAME STRUCTURE WHICH HAS SERVED THE SMALL HATTERAS ISLAND COMMUNITY OF SALVO FOR NEARLY 90 YEARS. MEASURING ONLY 8 BY 12, THE POST OFFICE IS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE SMALLEST IN THE NATION. THE BUILDING WAS CONSTRUCTED AROUND 1905 BY THE HUSBAND OF THE COMMUNITY'S POSTMASTER, MARCIE DOUGLAS. IN THE LATE 1940S THE BUILDING WAS MOVED ABOUT ONE MILE SOUTH TO THE FRONT YARD OF PROPERTY OWNED BY THE NEXT POSTMASTER, MELVINA WHEDBEE. IN 1979 THE BUILDING WAS MOVED APPROXIMATELY 1/8 MILE NORTH TO PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CURRENT POSTMASTER, EDWARD HOOPER. MR. HOOPER HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE POST OFFICE FOR 46 YEARS.

ACCORDING TO EDWARD HOOPER THE BUILDING ORIGINALLY HAD A WOOD SHINGLE ROOF WITH NO CEILING OR INTERIOR SHEATHING. THE PRESENT PARTITION IS ORIGINAL TO THE DATE OF CONSTRUCTION. IN THE 1930S THE POST OFFICE UNDERWENT A RENOVATION. AT THAT TIME THE TRAY CEILING AND INTERIOR SHEATHING WAS INSTALLED.



DRAWN BY: W. REID THOMAS, 1992.

N.C. DIVISION OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

EASTERN OFFICE

SALVO POST OFFICE
DARE COUNTY NC

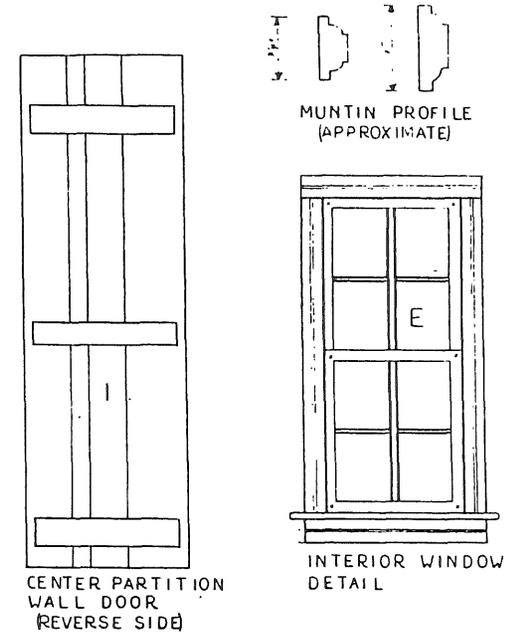
N.C. HWY. 12 SALVO

SCALE : 1/2" = 1'-0"

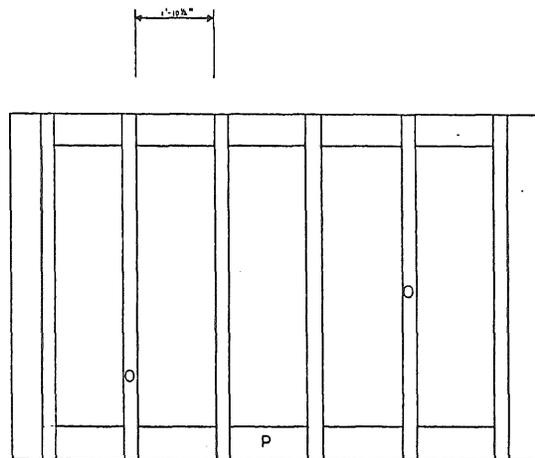
SHEET 1 OF 2 SHEETS

NOTES:

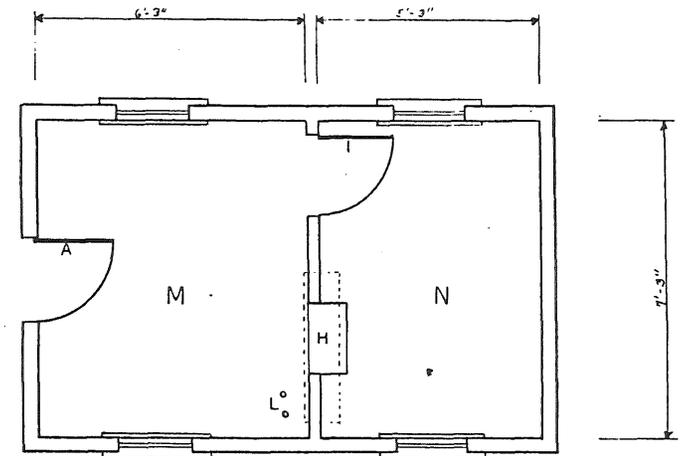
- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>A REPLACEMENT HOLLOW CORE DOOR.</p> <p>B 1 BY 5 VERTICAL TONGUE AND GROOVE SIDING (SHOWN) - NOW COVERED WITH MODERN T-111 PLYWOOD SIDING.</p> <p>C CREOSOTE PILINGS.</p> <p>D ASPHALT SHINGLE ROOF.</p> <p>E 4/4 SASH WINDOWS WITH PEGGED MORTISE AND TENON JOINTS.</p> <p>F 3 1/4 BY 3/8 BEADED TONGUE AND GROOVE SHEATHING. SAME USED FOR CEILING.</p> <p>G PARTITION WALL - 3 1/4 BY 3/4 (PLAIN) TONGUE AND GROOVE (SAME AS FLOORING).</p> <p>H CONJECTURAL DRAWINGS OF ORIGINAL MAIL SLOT OPENING (BASED ON CONSERVATIONS WITH EDWARD HOOPER, POSTMASTER). DASHED LINE INDICATES OPENING CUT FOR MODERN MAIL BOX UNITS.</p> | <p>I ORIGINAL PARTITION BOARD AND BATTEN DOOR.</p> <p>J MODERN PLATFORM AND STEPS - NOT SHOWN.</p> <p>K TRAY CEILING (SEE "F").</p> <p>L FLOOD HOLES - DRILLED THROUGH FLOOR TO ALLOW FLOOD WATERS INSIDE THE BUILDING TO PREVENT THE STRUCTURE FROM BEING LIFTED OFF ITS PILINGS DURING A FLOOD.</p> <p>M POST OFFICE LOBBY.</p> <p>N POSTMASTER'S OFFICE/WORKROOM.</p> <p>O FLOOR JOISTS 4 BY 5.</p> <p>P SILLS 4 BY 9.</p> |
|--|---|



SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"



FLOOR FRAMING PLAN



FLOOR PLAN



DRAWN BY: W. REID THOMAS

SALVO POST OFFICE, DARE COUNTY

SHEET 2 OF 2 SHEETS

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0" (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

NC

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 8 Page 4Summary Statement of Significance

The tiny, vernacular, gable-front, wooden post office building in Salvo is a rare surviving example of an uncommon Outer Banks post office building type. Except for brief periods, the Salvo Post Office has served the postal needs of this small Hatteras Island community since the first decade of the twentieth century. Constructed by the husband of the post mistress around 1910, this diminutive building has been owned by three successive postmasters. It has functioned essentially as an outbuilding in the incumbent postmaster's yard, and, as such, has been moved twice. The Post Office is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A because it represents the early-twentieth-century development of a regular center of postal service that was a source of pride and identity to the islanders in a remote barrier island community. It is eligible under Criterion C as a vernacular building type adapted to an unusual community use. Early post offices were almost exclusively located in store buildings and homes: the construction of the Salvo Post Office in the yard of the post mistress' home was a departure from a long-standing Outer Banks building practice. The Salvo Post Office served the community for ninety years in spite of two postal service efforts within the last fifteen years to close it. A fire on October 7, 1992, forced the closing of the building and under the guidance of experts from the State Historic Preservation Office the building was subsequently restored. The Salvo community is presently conducting a petition drive to re-open the restored building for service as a post office in order to continue a more than eighty-year tradition of postal service from this important community landmark.

Historical Background and Community Development and Politics and Government Contexts

Centrally located on the Outer Banks Island of Hatteras in Dare County, Kennekeet Township, Salvo lies twenty miles north of Cape Hatteras.¹¹ Bordering Salvo to the south is Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area established in the 1930s.¹² The small communities of Waves and Rodanthe, both originally named Chicamacomico, lie just north of Salvo.¹³ Passage to Hatteras Island from the mainland prior to the late 1930s was mostly by small boats using the Pamlico Sound.¹⁴ The island's main thoroughfare, NC Route 12, was paved in 1951, opening up Hatteras Island to thousands of tourists and related economic growth. Prior to the recent influx of tourists, most of the residents made a living by fishing or working for the Coast Guard or the National Park Service. Over the past twenty years tourism has created many new jobs for residents of Salvo. Today approximately two-hundred year-round residents live in Salvo.¹⁵ In 1910 the population was approximately seventy-seven.¹⁶

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 8 Page 5

The original name of Salvo was Clarks until the Civil War. According to local tradition, the name Salvo was derived from a commander on a Union boat who discovered the village did not have a name on his chart. He ordered his crew to "give it a salvo (a simultaneous discharge of firearms) anyway" and the name Salvo was entered into the chart.¹⁷

The history of postal service in Salvo can be traced to the late nineteenth century, when William Wellington Hooper (- 1926), the current postmaster's great-grandfather, would pick up mail from nearby Rodanthe and deliver it to Salvo. Until a post office was established in Salvo, the villagers had to travel to Rodanthe to conduct postal business.¹⁸ The post office at Rodanthe, established in 1874, received its mail by boat from Manteo, the seat of Dare County.¹⁹ Mail delivery continued by boat until the late 1930s when roads and ferry service were improved enough for mail to be delivered by trucks.²⁰

Establishing a post office along the Outer Banks around the turn of the century was not difficult. A request was made to the Postal Service, usually from a prominent merchant in a village. The proposal required listing the number of people to be served and the name of the nearest established post office. If approved, the person making the request was usually appointed postmaster and the new post office was located in his store or home. The following post offices were established along the Outer Banks around the turn of the century: Frisco in 1898; Deals in 1907; Seagull in 1908; Duck and Griffin in 1909; and Cape Lookout in 1910.²¹

Salvo's first post office was established on January 26, 1901. Kenneth R. Pugh (1861-1936), a blind Methodist minister, was appointed to serve as the community's first postmaster.²² He operated the post office in a shed room on his front porch. Maria Hooper, mother of current postmaster Edward Hooper, worked for Kenneth Pugh as his postal assistant.²³

In 1908 Marcie Douglas (1880-1950) assumed the position as the first female postmaster.²⁴ Between 1908 and 1913, Mrs. Douglas's husband, Lafayette Douglas, a fisherman and carpenter, constructed the post office building that stands today.²⁵ The construction of the post office represented a major turning point for postal history in the community. For the first time the village had a specific building, even though it was privately-owned, that could be called a post office. Prior to the construction of the present structure, Mrs. Douglas operated the post office out of her kitchen.²⁶ The current postmaster, Edward Hooper, began his career working at an early age as Marcie Douglas's postal assistant. The post office was used on a limited basis until the 1930s. Mrs. Douglas did not keep regular postal hours, but could usually be found working in her kitchen and would go out to greet customers and open up the post office. Her work load slowly increased during her tenure as postmistress. By 1930, twenty

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 8 Page 6

families were living in Salvo. Due to increased use of the building, Mrs. Douglas's husband added the interior paneling and ceiling in the early 1930s, in an attempt to make the building more comfortable. During cooler months she carried a portable kerosene heater to her post office workroom to keep warm. After a long period of illness, Marcie Douglas retired on December 31, 1946.²⁷

In 1947 Melvina Whedbee (1907-) succeeded Marcie Douglas as postmistress. Mrs. Whedbee was trained to operate the post office by Mrs. Douglas's assistant, Edward Hooper. In 1945, prior to taking on her duties as postmistress, Mrs. Whedbee's husband became ill and died while serving in the Coast Guard. Since she had five children to support, she sought employment running the post office and sold Avon products on the side. Ms. Whedbee operated the post office out of her living room until she acquired the building for \$100.00 and moved it to her property in 1953. Using skids, community volunteers moved the post office to Ms. Whedbee's property which is located approximately one-eighth of a mile from the original site. This eight-year period was the only time from construction until the fire that the building was not in use. Following Melvina Whedbee's acquisition of the building she had a gas heater installed in the workroom. On January 28, 1977, Ms. Whedbee retired at the age of seventy.²⁸

In 1977 Edward Augustus Hooper (1922-) became postmaster of Salvo. Starting at the age of six, he had begun delivering mail to people in the community, following in the footsteps of both his grandfather and his great-grandfather. In 1938, Edward Hooper and his family moved into the house where he and his brother William currently reside. Until 1979 Mr. Hooper continued to operate the post office from the former postmistress's property. He acquired the building for \$500.00, and with voluntary community assistance moved the post office to his property on November 17, 1979. He then rented the post office building to the U.S. Postal Service for \$60.00 per month. This fee also included free phone service.²⁹

Following the relocation of the post office to Mr. Hooper's property, he had electrical wiring installed for the first time. A second major change took place in 1980, when two post office box units containing ninety-four boxes were installed in the lobby and the wooden pigeon hole mail box holder in the workroom was converted to storage. Citizens who wished to pick up mail no longer needed to see the postmaster. Mr. Hooper left the lobby unlocked until 8:00 pm, Monday through Saturday, so box holders could stop by to check their mail after hours.³⁰

On two occasions within the last fifteen years, the U.S. Postal Service tried to relocate the Salvo Post Office because of the miniature size of the building, the lack of restrooms, and the difficulty of adapting the building to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 8 Page 7

Both attempts proved unsuccessful due to strong resistance from the community.³¹

In 1988, the post office earned a special distinction when the U.S. Postal Service declared the facility the second smallest post office in the nation. Only Ochopee, Florida's post office is smaller. However, unlike Salvo's Post Office, the Ochopee building was not constructed for use as a postal facility.³²

Early on the morning of October 7, 1992, an arsonist broke into the post office and set it on fire. Firefighters from Rodanthe arrived in minutes and extinguished the blaze. The postmaster and postal service had to be temporarily relocated to Rodanthe's Post Office due to the severe fire damage to the interior of the Salvo Post Office. Following the fire citizens from the community and surrounding areas organized a campaign to restore the building and convince postal officials to put it back into use. They called upon the expertise of the State Historic Preservation Office to properly restore the building after the fire. With community funds and labor, the restoration work was completed by early May 1993.³³

Efforts to reinstate postal service into the building continue to date. Supporters of the Salvo Post Office have launched a petition drive that has reached as far as California. Numerous letters have been written by friends of the Salvo Post Office to state and national officials including the President of the United States. Several radio and television stations and newspapers from across North Carolina and Virginia continued to cover the progress of the supporter's endeavor. Currently the U.S. Postal Service is proposing to consolidate the postal operations of Salvo, Waves, and Rodanthe. It is possible that the new postal facility will be located in Salvo. The U.S. Postal Service has indicated an interest in preserving the historic building on the grounds of the new building. The final plans for a new and consolidated postal facility have not been made.³⁴ The petitioners in support of reopening the restored post office continue their efforts to convince the postal service of the practicality and historical significance of reusing the restored building. With the pending consolidation of area post offices, supporters of the Salvo Post Office fear that the community will lose what it gained from the establishment of its post office in 1903, a sense of identity.

Architectural Context

The Salvo Post Office represents an unusual building type because it was specifically built to house an Outer Banks post office. The majority of turn-of-the-century post offices along the Outer Banks were located in store buildings or private homes.³⁵ The former post office on Portsmouth

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 8 Page 8

Island in neighboring Carteret County, for example, was located in the village's general store. This surviving rectangular-shaped frame building although similar in shape and form to the Salvo Post Office, measures thirty-seven by seventeen and one-half feet making it considerably larger.³⁶ Other Outer Banks store/post office combinations thought to have been similar to the building on Portsmouth Island were located in the villages of Hatteras, Ocracoke, Buxton, Frisco and Waves. The former post office buildings at Hatteras and Frisco are still standing and have been adapted for other uses. It is likely that the builder of the Salvo Post Office, husband of the first postmistress, constructed it as a small ancillary building in the back yard of their dwelling so that his wife would not have to be bothered with distributing mail from her kitchen.³⁷

The Salvo Post Office is not unlike other buildings constructed on the Outer Banks in the early years of the twentieth-century. Scattered across Hatteras Island were a host of small frame buildings mostly associated with the fishing industry. Other identified examples for this simple diminutive building type included the U.S. Lifesaving Service's equipment storage buildings and "halfway houses," meeting points for lifesaving patrols midway between lifesaving stations. These rectangular-shaped buildings contained one room, no windows, and one entrance in a gable end.³⁸

This modest gable-end building type is represented across the state in a few late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century post office buildings. Perhaps most closely related to the Salvo Post Office is the former Falcon Post Office in Cumberland County, constructed in 1909 and measuring approximately fifteen by twenty feet. This frame building is similar in its narrow, rectangular form, interior arrangement and use of tongue-and-groove paneling. The exterior of the building differs with its sheathing of weatherboards and larger two-over-two sash windows. The facade of the Falcon Post Office contains both a door and window, which are positioned off-center. A second exterior door, located on the side of the building, provides access to the postmaster's workroom.³⁹

Certain unique building components found on the Salvo Post Office are indicative of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century buildings along the Outer Banks and distinguish it from other postal facilities. The builder, Lafayette Douglas, erected a sturdier floor frame, placed the building on pilings and drilled flood holes through the floor so the building could withstand high winds and water. The sturdy frame and use of pilings also made the building easier to move.

Small, individual post office buildings located along the Outer Banks tended to be the exception rather than the rule. Most of these buildings have long since disappeared. The Salvo Post Office is unique, distinguished by its colorful history, modest vernacular construction, and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salvo Post Office
Dare County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 9

extremely small size that facilitated its relocation. It has no parallel in North Carolina.

Footnotes

1. Amy Auster, "Pocket Post Office," *Coastland Times*, 9 December 1991; p. 1A.
2. Auster, "Pocket Post Office." *Coastland Times*, 9 December 1991; p. 1A.
3. Author's interview with Edward A. Hooper, Salvo, N.C., July 13, 1992, notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, hereinafter cited as Hooper interview.
4. Author's interview with James Morrett, Salvo, N.C., May 4, 1993, notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, hereinafter cited as Morrett interview.
5. Hooper Interview.
6. Hooper Interview.
7. Hooper Interview.
8. Hooper Interview.
9. Morrett Interview.
10. Morrett Interview.
11. Roger L. Payne, *Place Names of the Outer Banks* (Washington, N.C.: Thomas A. Williams, Publisher, 1985), 164.
12. David Stick, *Dare County: A History* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1980), 59.
13. Payne, *Place Names of the Outer Banks*, 161, 191-192.
14. Stick, *Dare County: A History*, 51-55.
15. Hooper Interview.
16. Gary S. Dunbar, *Historical Geography of the North Carolina Outer Banks* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1958), 98.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salvo Post Office
Dare County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 10

17. Payne, Place Names of the Outer Banks, 164.
18. Hooper Interview.
19. Phil H. Perkinson and Lemeul Johnson, North Carolina Post Office Catalog (Raleigh, N.C., 1984), 75.
20. Hooper Interview.
21. Stick, Dare County: A History, 34-37.
22. Perkinson and Johnson, North Carolina Post Office Catalog, p. 75.
U.S. Census, 1870: Dare County, Population Schedule; U.S. Census, 1900, Population Schedule.
23. Hooper Interview.
24. Author's interview with Melvina Whedbee, Salvo, N.C. July 14, 1992, notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, hereinafter cited as Whedbee interview.
25. Hooper Interview.
26. Whedbee Interview.
27. Hooper Interview.
28. Hooper Interview.
29. Hooper Interview.
30. Hooper Interview.
31. Hooper Interview.
32. Auster, "Pocket Post Office." Coastland Times, 9 December 1991; p. 1A.
33. Morrett Interview.
34. U.S. Postal Service to N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, 13 May 1993, Letter in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salvo Post Office
Dare County, North Carolina

Section number 8,9 Page 11

35. Stick, Dare County: A History, 26-30.

36. Sarah Olson, Historic Resource Study: Portsmouth Village, Cape Lookout National Seashore North Carolina (Boulder: University of Colorado, 1982), 147.

37. Hooper Interview.

38. Stick, Dare County: A History, 36.

39. Author's interview with Luetta Morris, Falcon, N.C., May 6, 1993, notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

Bibliography

Austin, Dorothy. Interview with author, Salvo, N.C., July 14, 1992. Notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

Branson, Levi, ed. North Carolina Business Directory. Raleigh: J.A. Jones, 1872, 1878, 1884, 1890, 1896, 1897.

Auster, Amy. "Pocket Post Office." Coastland Times, 9 December 1991; p. 1A.

Cumming, William P. North Carolina in Maps. Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1966

Dunbar, Gary S. Historical Geography of the North Carolina Outer Banks. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958.

Hooper, Edward A. Interview with author, Salvo, N.C., July 13, 1992. Notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalvo Post Office
Dare County, North CarolinaSection number 9 Page 12

Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Albert Ray Newsome. The History of a Southern State: North Carolina. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1979.

Morrett, James. Interview with author, Salvo, N.C., October 12, 1992, and May 3, 1993. Notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

Morris, Luetta. Interview with author, Falcon, N.C., May 6, 1993. Notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

News and Observer. North Carolina Yearbook and Business Directory. Raleigh: The News and Observer Press, 1905, 1910, 1915.

Olson, Sarah. Historic Resource Study: Portsmouth Village, Cape Lookout National Seashore North Carolina. Boulder: University of Colorado, 1982.

Payne, Roger L. Place Names of the Outer Banks. Washington, North Carolina: Thomas A. Williams, Publisher, 1985.

Perkinson, Phil H. and Lemeul Johnson. North Carolina Post Office Catalog. Raleigh, 1984.

Powell, William S. The North Carolina Gazetteer. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976.

Scheonbaum, Thomas J. Islands, Capes, and Sounds: The North Carolina Coast. Winston-Salem: John F. Blair Publisher, 1982.

Stick, David. Dare County: A History. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1980.

United States Census Records, Dare County, North Carolina.
Population schedules for years 1870, 1900 and 1920.

Whedbee, Melvina. Interview with author, Salvo, N.C., July 14, 1992. Notes on interview in possession of the Eastern Office, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 13

Salvo Post Office
Dare County, North Carolina

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is the eastern end of Block 80, Parcel 013288-000 as shown on the Dare County Tax Map 0647-20, PIN 7148. It is specifically described as follows: beginning at a point at the SE corner of Block 80; thence extending approximately 50' N along the W side of NC 12 to a point at the NE corner of Block 80; thence extending approximately 50' W along the N property line; thence extending approximately 50' S in a straight line; thence extending approximately 50' E along the S property line of Block 80 to the point of origin. The nominated property is in the shape of a square approximately 2500' in area.

Justification

The restored Salvo Post Office Building and its current site onto which it was moved in 1979 are almost identical in character and setting to the appearance of the Post Office during its period of significance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salvo Post Office
Dare County, North Carolina

Section number Photos Page 14 Photographs

1. Salvo Post Office
Dare County, N.C.
Photographer: Reid Thomas
July 1992
North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh. Accession # N.92.8.1453
East facade on right; south facade on left. View
looking to the northwest.
2. Salvo Post Office
Dare County, N.C.
Photographer: Reid Thomas
October 1992
North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh. Accession # N.92.8.1535
Fire damaged post office. East facade on right;
south facade on left. View looking to the
northwest.
3. Salvo Post Office
Dare County, N.C.
Photographer: James Morrett
April 1993
North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh. Accession # N.93.3.1637
Restored post office. East facade on left; north
facade on right. View looking to the southwest.
4. Salvo Post Office
Dare County, N.C.
Photographer: Reid Thomas
July 1992
North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh. Accession # N.92.8.1490
Detail of interior lobby with postmaster Edward
Hooper behind panel. View looking west.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

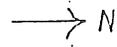
Salvo Post Office
Dare County, North Carolina

Section number Photos Page 15 Photographs

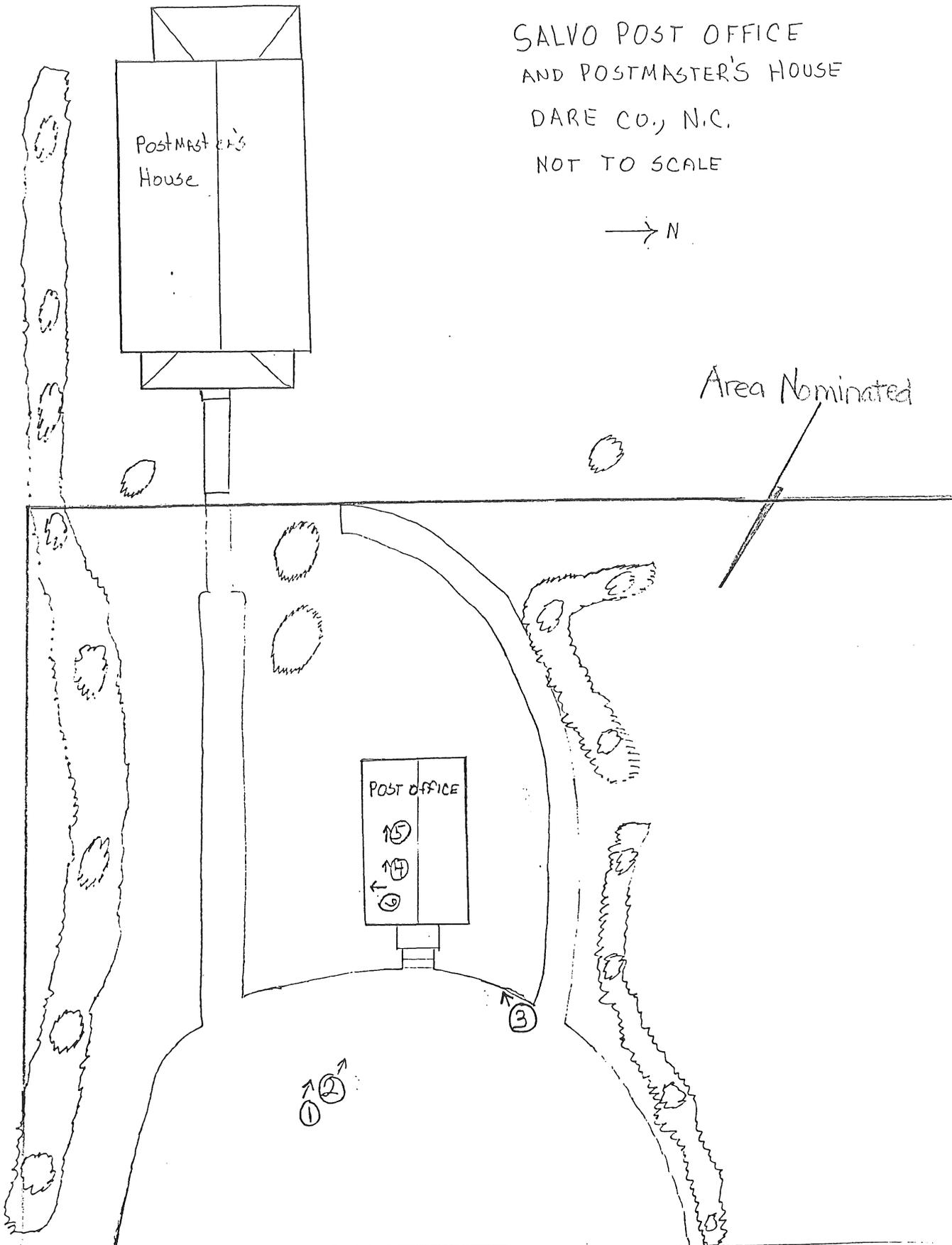
5. Salvo Post Office
Dare County, N.C.
Photographer: Reid Thomas
July 1992
North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh. Accession # N.92.8.1484
Detail of postmaster's workroom. View looking
west.

6. Salvo Post Office
Dare County, N.C.
Photographer: Reid Thomas
July 1992
North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh. Accession # N.92.8.1481
Detail of southeast window. View looking south.

SALVO POST OFFICE
AND POSTMASTER'S HOUSE
DARE CO., N.C.
NOT TO SCALE



Area Nominated



Salvo Post Office, Salvo
Dare County, N.C.
UTM References:
18 457 020 3932830
Quad: Rodanthe, NC
Scale: 1:24,000



A T L A N T

3931

3932

3230'

3934