Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

VLR-12/15/81 NRHP-8/26/82

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

100-113

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON
FORT WARD
FORT WARD PARK

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
4301 West Braddock Road — N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Alexandria, — N/A VICINITY OF — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 8th

STATE
Virginia — CODE 22304 — COUNTY (no county) — CODE 510

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	X MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	X PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
X SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
	N/A	__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
City of Alexandria, Virginia

STREET & NUMBER
301 King Street, City Hall

CITY, TOWN
Alexandria — N/A VICINITY OF — STATE Virginia 22314

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC
Circuit Court Clerk - City Hall

STREET & NUMBER
301 King Street

CITY, TOWN — STATE
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Property declared eligible? no

TITLE
FORT WARD PARK - APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL GRANT (Map Code #05-102 Revised 3/25/63)

DATE
August 1, 1962 — X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
City of Alexandria, Department of Planning and Community Development

CITY, TOWN — STATE
Alexandria — Virginia 22314

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	XUNALTERED	XORIGINAL SITE
XGOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE N/A
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

FORT WARD is a 35-acre Historic Park owned and operated by the City of Alexandria, Virginia. The park is comprised of three major elements. In order of importance they are:

a) Civil War Earthen Fortifications
b) Reproduction Period Military Buildings, and
c) Recreational Facilities

a) The Earthen Fortifications are a well-preserved 818 yard perimeter trace of the improved (1864-1865) fortified work. Original Infantry Trenches remain within the site, as well as, an Outlying Gun Battery. An archaeological exploration was performed in the summer of 1961 which established profiles and limits of the original construction in sufficient detail to allow accurate restoration of the Northwest Bastion of this work. The restoration was based on both archaeological and historical research to ensure its accuracy. The City employed an on-site archaeologist to supervise the restoration project. (Report of Edward McM Larrabee on file at Fort Ward Museum.)

The original fort was constructed in the shape of an elongated, 5-pointed star (or 5 bastions), using the French field fortification system as espoused by General Sebastien Le Prestre Vauban. The earthwork was constructed by staking the site, building a wooden frame conforming to the shape of the finished fortification. The frame was filled with earth, creating walls with very sharp angles. The interior of these walls were lined with revetting (wooden poles) and the outside of the slopes (banks) were covered with blocks of sod to prevent erosion. The 1864-65, the fort had emplacements for 36 guns and required about 1200 men for full troop strength.

The entire fort was surrounded by a ditch (moat without water), and an abbatis (felled trees with sharpened branches) was used to line the outer edge of the ditch. A Rifle Trench extended from the North Bastion toward the fort next in line to Fort Ward (Battery Garasche). An Outlying Gun Battery was located 150 yards to the front point of the Northwest Bastion. (An authentic abbatis was used to surround the restored area and thereafter for about five years. However, once this site was established as a well-used facility, the felled trees proved to be a safety hazard and were replaced with an acceptable, low-growing hedge.)

The remainder of the site outside the restored area has secondary growth of tree cover which has been trimmed above ground to expose the original constuction trace, while still protecting the ground from erosion. Clearing has been accomplished to allow full comprehension of the topographical and military significance of the site.

(see Continuation Sheet #1)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
_PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	_COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	_RELIGION
_1400-1499	X ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	_CONSERVATION	_LAW	_SCIENCE
_1500-1599	_AGRICULTURE	_ECONOMICS	_LITERATURE	_SCULPTURE
_1600-1699	_ARCHITECTURE	X EDUCATION	X MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
_1700-1799	_ART	X ENGINEERING	_MUSIC	_THEATER
X 1800-1899	_COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	_PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
_1900-	_COMMUNICATIONS	_INDUSTRY	_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
		_INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1861- 1865 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Union Army Corps of Engineers

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - See Continuation Sheet #3 for STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE paragraph

When Virginia's vote of secession became effective in April, 1861, Union forces crossed the Potomac River and seized control of Alexandria and Arlington. Unable to determine the strength of the Confederate Army after the Battle of First Manassas (Bull Run), the Federal Government recognized the need for a defense system for the protection of the Capital City of Washington. Under the direction of the Corps of Engineers, the army began construction of a chain of forts known as the Defenses of Washington - which would later be recognized in military annals as one of the most formidable defense systems ever erected in the Western Hemisphere. By the end of the war in 1865, a total of 68 forts and batteries, 93 unarmed batteries, and over 30 miles of military roads had been built. Of these 68 forts and batteries, 9 were located in close proximity to Alexandria - with one water battery, Battery Rodgers, located within the City limits. These forts were frequently referred to as the defenses of Alexandria..

FORT WARD was the fifth largest of the 68 forts, with a perimeter of 818 yards and 36 gun emplacements. A Rifle Trench extended from its North Bastion toward the next fortification in line, Battery Garasche. An Outlying Gun Battery was located 150 yards to the front point of the Northwest Bastion. Fort Ward, located approximately 4 miles west of Alexandria, had the distinction of having been built at the highest elevation above sea level of any of the forts in the defenses of Alexandria.

The objective of this fortification, together with Fort Worth to the South East was to guard the approaches to Alexandria via routes from the West (State Route 236 - Little River Turnpike) and Northwest (State Route 7- Leesburg Turnpike). Fort Ward was considered by the Chief Engineer of the system, Major General John G. Barnard, to be one of the "major works in the defenses of Alexandria and after its reconstrucion, one of the largest forts constituting the defenses of Washington." (Report on the Defenses of Washington by Maj. Gen. John G. Barnard, 1871, p37)

In 1864, the fort underwent extensive renovation to correct, and improve early design deficiencies. The perimeter of the fort was enlarged from 540 to 818 yards and the number of gun positions increased from 24 to 36. The fort required about 1200 men - primarily Infantry and Artillery - for full troop strength. It is conceivable however, that due to pressing manpower needs elsewhere, this figure was actually achieved only for brief periods.

(see Continuation Sheet #1)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Barnard, Bvt. Maj. Gen, J.G. (USA), Defenses of Washington (Report of), 1871.

Cooling, Benjamin F., Symbol, Sword and Shield, Defending Washington During the Civil War, 1975.

McClure, Stanley, (USNPS) The Defenses of Washington, 1861-1865, 1961.

Wills, Mary Alice, The Confederate Blockade of Washington, D.C., 1861-62, 1975.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 35 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Alexandria, Virginia, DC, Maryland QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	18	317,610	4,308,050
B	18	317,720	4,299,540
C	18	317,320	4,299,720
D	18	317,320	4,306,010
E			
F			
G			
H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Fort Ward is located east of I-395, between Seminary Road and State Route 7 It is bounded on the South by West Braddock Road, and on the North by North Van Dorn Street. (Approximately 4 miles west of the center of Alexandria) (see continuation sheet 3)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A		N/A	
N/A		N/A	

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Wanda S. Dowell, Curator — March 30, 1981

ORGANIZATION — DATE

Fort Ward Museum, City of Alexandria, Virginia — 703-838-4848

STREET & NUMBER — TELEPHONE

4301 West Braddock Road,

CITY OR TOWN — STATE

Alexandria, Virginia 22304

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE x 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE H. Bryan Mitchell

TITLE H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission — DATE FEB 16 1982

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

GPO 921-803

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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FORT WARD, Alexandria, Va.

The City of Alexandria was also commended by an award from the Council on Abandoned Military Posts (CAMP) for its major contribution in the preservation and interpretation of this historical site.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Ward formed one of the strongest links in a chain of sixty-eight forts and batteries erected between 1861-65 by the Union Army Corps of Engineers for the protection of the Nation's capital. Guarding the approaches to Alexandria from the west and northwest on an elevated site four miles west of the city, the star-shaped earthenwork fortification was the fifth largest fort in the system, with a perimeter of 818 yards, holding thirty-six gun emplacements and troops numbering as many as 1,200 men. Although Fort Ward was selected as one of twenty forts to be retained as a permanent defense of Washington, the idea of a permanent system was abandoned in 1866, and the fort fell into a state of neglect for almost a century. During the Civil War Centennial, the City of Alexandria with the assistance of a professional archaeologist restored the northwest bastion of the fort to its original condition and cleared the perimeter as well as the outlying gun battery and rifle trench. With public investigation of the topographical and military significance of the site thus assured, Fort Ward today serves as a 35-acre historic park and museum owned and operated by the City of Alexandria.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATE- Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on N side of W. Braddock Rd. about 1100' SE of intersection with N. Van Dorn St.; thence extending about 910' N to S side of N. Van Dorn ; thence following said side about 1110' E; thence about 1600' SE to N side of W. Braddock (excluding and following W lines of cemetery); thence about 1520' NW along N side of W. Braddock to point of origin.

Justification: The bounds have been drawn to encompass the present 35-acre Historic Park consisting of the earthen fortifications, the reproduction military buildings, and the park.