

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Charleston	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME	
COMMON: Site of Old Charles Towne	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Albemarle Point			
CITY OR TOWN: Charleston			
STATE South Carolina	CODE 41	COUNTY: Charleston	CODE 10

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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNERS NAME: South Carolina Tricentennial Commission, State of S.C.			
STREET AND NUMBER: Box 1970			
CITY OR TOWN: Columbia	STATE: South Carolina	CODE 41	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Charleston County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER: N.W. Corner Board and Meeting Streets			
CITY OR TOWN: Charleston	STATE: South Carolina	CODE 41	
APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 184 acres			

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: South Carolina: A Guide to the Palmetto State			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1941 Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/>			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: South Carolina Department of Archives and History (partial)			
STREET AND NUMBER: Box 11188, Capitol Station 1430 Senate Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Columbia	STATE: South Carolina	CODE 41	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	**	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If Known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Spanish spy, Camunas, reported in a deposition dated July 12, 1672, on the appearance of the settlement. He described a wooden fort at the land side of the village and about ninety houses in the village, without any formal streets. He said the fort was "of wood made into a sort of wall of heavy logs & its height & elevation is about (7 feet) with 28 pieces of artillery of iron and bronze, twelve of which are pointed toward the river & the port by which the ships enter, and the rest, from their low embrasure, toward different points on the mainland."

By February, 1674, the original palisade around the town had apparently fallen into ruin as witnessed by Thomas Vide. From the Grand Council records it becomes clear that a new palisade was built "about Charles Towne" in 1674, likely as a result, not only of disrepair of the old one, but from the fact that a larger area was very likely needed due to expansion of the village.

The first town was carelessly laid out in an irregular manner. The Surveyor General responsible for laying out the town lots was Capt. Florence O'Sullivan, who, according to Stephen Bull, was a very troublesome man. He made many errors in laying out the lots. He also gave the colonists other trouble, so it is apparent, therefore, that the Surveyor General was a focus for problems involving the irregular layout of Charles Towne resulting in the re-survey in 1672. On June 1, 1672, the Council passed an "Act for the uniform building of Charles Towne." And as a result, in July, people owning lots in Charles Towne came before the Grand Council and turned them in, and were issued new ones according to the new plan of the town. The record of lots mentioned at this time indicates that there were at least 62 lots in the new plan. The governor's plantation was located on the point of land across the creek to the south of Albemarle Point. Besides the town proper, most of the settlers were scattered on individual tracts some distance from the Point.

Presently the site is undergoing archeological excavation. Ruins found include some from the Jonathan Lucas Plantation of the early nineteenth century. Old bits of pottery made by Indians, ditches for fortifications, and similar remains have been found of the early town site.

\*\* under archeological investigation

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

# 8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian ☒

16th Century ☐

18th Century ☒

20th Century ☒

15th Century ☐

17th Century ☒

19th Century ☒

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) Founded in 1670

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal ☐

Education ☐

Political ☒

Urban Planning ☒

Prehistoric ☒

Engineering ☐

Religion/Philosophy ☐

Other (Specify) ☐

Historic ☒

Industry ☐

Philosophy ☐

Agriculture ☒

Invention ☐

Science ☐

Art ☐

Landscape ☐

Sculpture ☐

Commerce ☐

Architecture ☒

Social/Humanitarian ☐

Communications ☐

Literature ☐

Religion ☐

Conservation ☐

Military ☒

Theater ☐

Music ☐

Transportation ☐

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The settlement of Carolina was planned as a planting and trading province by the Lords Proprietor, and the success of the venture came about through the efforts of Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, after a 1664 settlement on the Cape Fear had failed. After a stormy voyage during which the vessels Albemarle and Port Royal were lost, the Carolina anchored off the Carolina coast and the settlers decided to plant at Kayawah. They arrived early in April, 1670. This group was joined on May 23, by a sloop, The Three Brothers, that had come by way of Virginia, and these people began the settlement that was to be referred to as "Albemarle poynt at Kyawaw."

The settlement was located on the Ashley River in country known by the Indians as Kayawah, and that it was on a point of land having a river on one side and a marsh on the other, known as Albemarle Point. In November, 1670, the colonists were informed that the town in which they were settled was to be known as Charles Towne.

Threats of a Spanish invasion made the settlers quick to build fortifications. Both a broad trench and a palisade may likely have been used, according to sources such as the Shaftsbury Papers. Camunas, Spanish spy, reported that the colonists had "a strong house of wood roofed with shingles. Around & within this wooden fort, fifty men are stationed with an infantry captain in charge, as appeared to him, and in the said house were many firearms, shot-guns, and naked cutlasses." This wooden fort covered with shingles would appear to have a striking resemblance to the structure which Joseph West was supposed to build when he arrived in Carolina. He was instructed to build two houses within the fort protecting the town, both of which were not to be thatched, i.e., they were to be covered with a more secure and permanent roof; shingles. One was to contain food, clothing, tools, etc., while the other was to house the stores of war. It is apparently this shingled building, located on the land side of the village, and housing the stores of war, that Camunas saw and described. It was constructed to protect, not against the Spaniards, but against the Indians and whoever might want to harm them on this land side of the village.

Friendly Indians helped the colonists during the first years of settlement. As the first crops were growing the Indians almost daily brought food, and continued to do so during the winter, for the hoped-for crop was not to produce the expected return. Among the variety of plants tried at Charles Towne, vineyards and olive groves were considered quite important. Vineyards were still being grown at Charles Towne in the 1770s, and olives still flourished until 1837, when a severe frost killed most of the trees then growing.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

South Stanley, Exploratory Archaeology at the Site of 1670-1680 Charles Towne on Albemarle Point in South Carolina. (Columbia: Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1969), pp. 1-54.

Writers' Program of the WPA, South Carolina: A Guide to the Palmetto State. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 285.

## 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			D R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	32 ° 48 ' 54.7	79 ° 59 ' 35.5"				
NE	32 ° 48 ' 54.7	79 ° 58 ' 57.5"				
SE	32 ° 48 ' 2 "	79 ° 58 ' 57.5"				
SW	32 ° 48 ' 2 "	79 ° 59 ' 35.5"				

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. Toney J. Lister, Historic Resources Assistant		
ORGANIZATION South Carolina Department of Archives and History	DATE 6/16/69	
STREET AND NUMBER: Box 11188, Capitol Station, 1430 Senate Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Columbia	STATE South Carolina	CODE 41

## 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

## NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

National ☒ State ☐ Local ☐

Name

*Charles E. Lister*

Title

*Director, S.C. Dept. of Archives & History*

Date

*First Submitted June 22, 1969  
Resubmitted Nov. 26, 1969*

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

*Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date

ATTEST:

*Keeper of The National Register*

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
South Carolina	
COUNTY	
Charleston	
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(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE (OLD CHARLES TOWNE)

As early as 1670, Governor Sayle had set aside the land known as Oyster Point, between the Ashley and Wandoo(Cooper) River as a town site. As the 1670s passed, more people moved to this site across the river from the original settlement on Albemarle Point, and in 1679, the new Charles Towne was declared the port town. By the following year the old site was referred to in the minutes of the Grand Council as "Kiawah sometimes called Charles Towne," and from this time on, Oyster Point and its settlement was to carry this name, eventually evolving to Charleston.

Between 1694 and 1697, 760 acres of land known as "Old Town Plantation" was granted to James Le Sade. This included the site of the original Charles Towne, and no record survives revealing the transfer of the town lots or the adjoining two acre lots by the individual property owners. The plantation went through several hands, and is presently being negotiated for by the South Carolina Tricentennial Commission.

Artifacts found in the excavation area include Indian pottery of the Early Woodland Period, perhaps as early as 500 B.C. The discovery of a number of fragments of baked clay objects (that apparently had holes shaped into them before firing) on the Charles Towne site represents the northernmost known occurrence of these objects on the east coast.

Seventeenth-century Indian pottery was also found on the site. Trade with the Indians began almost immediately after the colonists' arrival at Albemarle Point. European ceramics found on the site thus far are two pieces of a Bellarmine type, brown, salt-glazed jug found on the surface. Also some pipes, musket balls, nails, bone and oyster shell have been found.

Eighteenth-century artifacts include ceramics and bottle glass in considerable quantity, apparently representing a dwelling of the early part of the eighteenth century. These objects come from the period that the William Branford family and the Horrys lived here.

Nineteenth-century objects include the Jonathan Lucas Plantation site and the area of the "Negro Settlement" associated with it. A small tabby ruin may represent a nineteenth-century structure intruding onto the seventeenth-century ditch.

The present Waring house and Old Town Plantation represent the twentieth century on the site, and the fact that the land is still held in a vast tract as a plantation, reflects the tradition of the use of the land that extends into the seventeenth century when the plantation concept of the utilization of land was first begun with those first settlers to make Albemarle Point their home. This fact should not be overlooked in the interpretation of the Charles Towne site; rather than looking on the present plantation house as a product of the twentieth century, it should more properly be seen as the end product of a long period of utilization of the land by man, beginning with the first occupation on the site some four thousand years ago.