



**Name of Property:** Fort Monroe

**City, State:** Hampton, Virginia

**Period of Significance:** 1819-1946

**NHL Criteria:** 1 and 4

**NHL Theme:**

- I. Peopling Places
  - 4. Community and Neighborhood
  - 6. Encounters, Conflicts, and Colonization
- II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements
  - 2. Reform Movements
- IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
  - 3. Military Institutions and Activities

**Previous Recognition:** National Historic Landmark (designated December 19, 1960)  
Historic American Buildings Survey No. VA-595 series  
National Monument (2011)  
National Register of Historic Places (October 15, 1966; additional documentation, March 9, 2015)

**National Historic Context:** V. Political and Military Affairs, 1783-1860

- K. The Army and Navy

VI. The Civil War, 1861-1865

- A. The National Divides, 1860-1861
- B. War in the East
- D. Naval Action
- E. Political and Diplomatic Scene

VII. Political and Military Affairs, 1865-1939

- D. America Becomes a World Power



- 1. Military Affairs
  - E. World War I, 1914-1919
- VIII. World War II
  - D. The Home Front
- XVIII. Technology (Engineering and Invention)
  - E. Military (Fortifications, Weapons, and War Vehicles)
- XXX. American Ways of Life
  - A. Slavery and Plantation Life

**NHL Significance:**

- Fort Monroe is significant under Criterion 1 for its longstanding role in coastal defense of the Chesapeake and mid-Atlantic seaboard, as the location of the Civil War-era Contraband Decision in 1862, and for service as the Coast Artillery School, the primary training center for Army coastal defense, from its reorganization in 1907 to 1946.
- Fort Monroe is further significant under Criterion 4 as the first, most elaborate, and largest of the Third System of Coastal Defense fortifications, a system flagship that long served as a key geographic location, military symbol, and as strategically adapted through successive phases of Army standardized construction and development.
- Construction of Fort Monroe began in 1819 under the auspices of French military engineer Brigadier General Simon Bernard (1779-1839), with the modern fort first garrisoned by 1824. Fort Monroe remained a continuously active US Army installation until September 2011.
- The property is nationally significant for the period 1819 to 1946, beginning with construction of the current Fort Monroe through its subsequent development and contribution to US military and political history, including mobilization during the Civil War and World Wars I and II.

**Integrity:**

- Fort Monroe is an expansive district with 166 contributing buildings, three contributing structures, one contributing object, and one contributing site encompassing the overall designed landscape and a single archeological site number for the entire historic district. The district overall retains a high level of all seven aspects of historic integrity to original dates while also reflecting longstanding use for an evolving military mission.
- Areas such as the Coast Artillery School, Waterfront, Training and Recreation, and Batteries in particular evolved over time through the development of additional facilities, infill of land, and changes in defensive strategies, but changes occurred during the period of significance and represent Army use.
- Noncontributing buildings are largely those constructed after the period of significance, typically located in less dense areas away from historic construction.

**Owners of Property:** National Park Service, Fort Monroe Authority, US Coast Guard, Catholic Diocese of Richmond, US Army, The Chamberlin

**Acreage of Property:** 400 acres

**Origins of Nomination:** In accordance with mitigation outlined as a result of consultation regarding the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission, the US Army subsequently drafted updated NHL documentation.

**Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:**

- The update provides a more detailed description of the historic district, as well as an inventory of all contributing and non-contributing resources. This information can aid the National Park Service, its



partners, and other owners in planning, resource management, and interpretation.

- The revised statement of significance and expanded context reflects current scholarship.

**Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** None known

**Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of August 20, 2024):**

- Wm. David Stroud, Director of Cultural and Natural Resources & Historic Preservation Officer, Fort Monroe Authority

**Landmarks Committee Comments:**

- Review status of World War II “temporary” buildings, which are increasingly rare and could be considered contributing.
- Include reference to US Army Corps of Engineers, *Guidelines for Identifying and Evaluating Historic Military Landscapes* (2009)
- Note possible research potential of relationship to Hampton University during World War II
- Include brief biographical reference for architect Paul Pelz
- Clarify provision for electorate to ratify the Virginia Convention’s vote to secede as relates to timeline for self-emancipation of enslaved individuals.

**Landmarks Committee Recommendation:** The Committee recommends that the National Park System Advisory Board recommend to the Secretary of the Interior the acceptance of the NHL updated documentation for the Fort Monroe National Historic Landmark in Hampton, Virginia, with any additions and corrections as noted by the Committee being made prior to the nomination being forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior for action.

**Advisory Board Recommendation:** The National Park System Advisory Board recommends to the Secretary of the Interior the acceptance of the updated documentation for the Fort Monroe National Historic Landmark located in Hampton, Virginia.