

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Beaufort	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70.10.45.0029	DATE 10/15/70

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Chester Field

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
(38BU29)

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: [REDACTED]

CITY OR TOWN: [REDACTED]

STATE: South Carolina      CODE: 39      COUNTY: Beaufort      CODE: 013

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) none

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

[REDACTED]

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
County Auditor's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Beaufort      STATE: South Carolina      CODE: 39

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: none

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent  Good  Fair  Deteriorated  Ruins  Unexposed

(Check One)

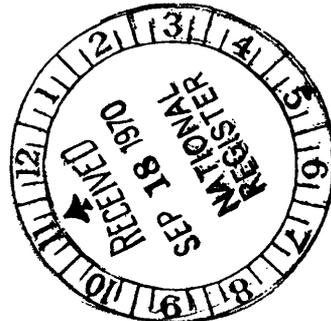
Altered  Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved  Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Chester Field is a prehistoric Indian shell midden deposited in a ring shape. Approximately one half the ring on the west has been removed  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ The original diameter of the ring from crest to crest was at least 143 feet. The midden stands about 4 feet above a flat central area, which is about 13 feet above mean sea level. The interior and areas surrounding the ring are free of shells or other debris. The midden is composed primarily of oyster shell with lesser amounts of other molluscs, animal bone, and pottery sherds. Very large live oaks grow on the area of the site, but undergrowth is not dense. Two trenches pass through the perimeter of the ring on the east and north edges, but approximately 45 percent of the ring is intact.



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**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |                                       |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century             | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture            | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Chester Field is one of 20 or more prehistoric shell rings located from the central coast of South Carolina to the Central Coast of Georgia, a distance of about 150 miles. All are believed to date early in the second millenium B.C., and they contain some of the earliest pottery known in North America. Only very limited excavations have been undertaken in a few of these rings. Consequently, the function of the ring shape is unknown, although the rings appear to be carefully planned and systematically deposited structures. As such, they also present one of the earliest records of sedentary life among people who must have lived entirely by foraging. The shell rings can be expected to yield valuable information about past habitats on the coast, both from their rich content of food refuse and from their relationships to modern environments. Most are situated about 5 feet above present mean sea level, but the relationship to sea level at the time of occupation is unknown. It seems unlikely that sea level was a great deal higher about 4000 years ago than at present from the evidence of these lowlying rings. An unknown number of shell ring sites has been lost to marine erosion and to borrowing shell for road building; many of the remaining rings show the effects of unauthorized digging.

The Chester Field site was partially excavated by W. H. Ritter in 1932 and 1933. More area was tested and a greater collection of artifacts obtained than for any other shell ring in South Carolina. Most of the material recovered is in the Charleston Museum. Flannery (1943) described the site very briefly and Griffin (1943) described the pottery from the site, which he found to be Stallings Island fiber-tempered ware of an early type. The site has never been dated.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Ritter, W. H., n.d., Shell Mound on Land Owned by Chester Fields, Buxton, Beaufort County, S. C. Manuscript, Charleston Museum, Charleston. Flannery, Regina, 1943. Some notes on a few sites in Beaufort County, South Carolina. Anthropological Papers, No. 21, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D. C.

Griffin, James B., An analysis and Interpretation of the Ceramic Remains from Two Sites near Beaufort, South Carolina. Anthropological Papers, No. 22, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D. C.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 . "	0 . "		0 . "	0 . "	
NE	0 . "	0 . "		0 . "	0 . "	
SE	0 . "	0 . "		0 . "	0 . "	
SW	0 . "	0 . "		0 . "	0 . "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: \_\_\_\_\_

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
South Carolina	39	Beaufort	
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Dr. E. Thomas Hemmings

ORGANIZATION: Institute of Archeology and Anthropology DATE: 4-15-70

STREET AND NUMBER: University of South Carolina

CITY OR TOWN: Columbia STATE: South Carolina CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

**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: *Paul S. Long*

Title: Director, South Carolina Department Archives & History

Date: August 29, 1970

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

*Ernest Allen Connolly*  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

OCT 15 1970

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

*William J. Hamstead*  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 061 0 1 190

OCT 1 1970