

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

# 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 Altamaha Town

other names/site number 38BU1206

### 2. Location

street & number [REDACTED]  not for publication

city or town Bluffton  vicinity

state South Carolina code SC county Beaufort code 013 zip code 29910

### 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.)

Mary W. Edmonds 11/29/93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History  
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:

- 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Janet E. Swenson

1-21-94

Altamaha Town  
Name of Property

Beaufort, SC  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
Yamasee Indian Towns in the South  
Carolina Lowcountry, 1684-1715

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**  
0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Village site

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT: Not in use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other \_\_\_\_\_

**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)

ARCHAEOLOGY: Historic-Aboriginal

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Native American

**Period of Significance**

c. 1695-1715

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

Yamasee

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**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:

S.C. Institute of Archaeology & Anthropology  
Columbia, S.C.

Altamaha Town  
Name of Property

Beaufort, SC  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** [REDACTED]

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 [REDACTED]  
Zone Easting Northing

2 [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED]  
Zone Easting Northing

4 [REDACTED]

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Dr. Chester B. DePratter / Research Associate Professor

organization S.C. Institute of Archaeo. and Anthro. date December 10, 1992

street & number 1321 Pendleton Street telephone (803) 777-8170

city or town Columbia, state SC zip code 29208

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)



**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Beaufort, SC

Narrative Description

[REDACTED]

location would have been important to the site's Yamasee inhabitants (c.1695-1715). Archaeological evidence indicates that the site was occupied by Native Americans intermittently from at least 1500 B.C. to A.D. 1715 based on various pottery types recovered during testing and excavations. The site contains at least two pre-Yamasee period burial mounds, and one of those (Hasell Point Mound, 38BU20) is on the National Register. At present, there is no evidence that mound was used or modified by the Yamasee who occupied the site, so it is considered a non-contributing structure for the purposes of this nomination.

The land in question was granted to Governor Robert Johnson in 1732, but due to a prior grant, the tract was ultimately given to Richard Lambton. Gabriel Manigault acquired the property in 1752, but records do not reveal how the land was used or how long the Manigault family retained ownership. In 1842, Nathaniel Heyward purchased the tract from William Smith, and Mr. Heyward established a plantation on his new acquisition. At Heyward's death, ownership of the property returned to the Manigault family and remained with them until it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Field of Chicago as part of their Chelsea Plantation. The 600-acre parcel containing the remains of Altamaha Town was purchased by the present owners from the Field estate in 1988.

Altamaha Town was the head town of the Lower Yamasee Towns. Altamaha Town was definitely located on the nominated tract from 1707 to 1715, and it may have been located there as early as 1695 (see Multiple Property Documentation Form for discussion of Yamasee migrations). The location of Altamaha Town was first identified in the summer of 1989 through the use of contemporary plats, other documents, and archaeological survey. Mapping and systematic testing was conducted intermittently during the latter half of 1989 and the winter of 1990, and the site was more intensively investigated during the summer of 1991 with a Survey and Planning Grant from the South Carolina Department of Archives and History (DePratter 1992).

The archaeological research at Altamaha Town revealed that the town was not a compact, easily defensible community as might be expected, but was instead a village composed of dispersed households spaced seventy-five to one hundred meters apart over an area covering as many as 125 acres. During the 1991 field season, three household clusters were identified and tested (see attached map-XUA, XUB, and XUD), but these clusters represent less than ten percent of the

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approximately forty houses that were once present in Altamaha Town. Work in these clusters during the summer of 1991 focused on recovering a sizeable sample of Yamasee pottery for use in identifying other Yamasee sites and to determine the state of preservation of the archaeological remains on the site. Approximately eighty-five one meter squares and sixty shovel tests were excavated. This work indicated that household clusters were approximately thirty to forty meters in diameter with little or no cultural material present in the intervening space. Features relating to the Yamasee occupation were encountered beneath a twenty to thirty cm thick plowzone, but only one feature--a hearth--was excavated.

At present, the total Yamasee occupation area at this site is not known. The parcel being nominated includes an unknown fraction of the total site area. Dense woods and the wide separation of Yamasee household clusters will make precise delineation of site boundaries difficult, although future research will attempt to identify site limits. Identification of site boundaries is further complicated by prior site usage. The area to the west of the nominated tract contains evidence of a slave settlement and other features believed to be associated with the Heyward plantation. Some portions of this plantation period occupation have been disturbed in the recent past by unknown individuals, and the combination of plantation occupation and site looting may have obscured the Yamasee households in that area.

At the time the site was occupied by the Yamasee, the village may have covered 125 acres and included forty households. Construction type of Yamasee houses is currently unknown. Household clusters may have included outbuildings (sheds, smokehouses, etc.) and outdoor activity areas (pottery firing, hide processing, etc.). Areas around individual structures should contain evidence of all aspects of Yamasee daily life.

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Beaufort County, SC

Narrative Statement of Significance

Altamaha Town was the head town of the Lower Towns of the Yamasee. The chief of Altamaha Town is mentioned in numerous contemporary documents as being one of the most important individuals among the Yamasee during the entire thirty years represented by their presence in South Carolina.

The history of the Yamasee occupation in Carolina is given in the Multiple Property Documentation Form and the accompanying nomination for Pocosabo Town. Because the background history and significance for Altamaha town is identical to that of Pocosabo Town, that information will not be repeated here.

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Beaufort County, SC

Major Bibliographic References

- Covington, James W., "Stuart's Town, the Yamasee Indians, and Spanish Florida." Florida Anthropologist 20 (1968): 8-13.
- "The Yamasee Indians in Florida: 1715 -1763." Florida Anthropologist 23 (1970): 119-128.
- DePratter, Chester B., "Yamasee Archaeological Project: The 1991 Field Season." Report in progress; to be submitted to S.C. Department of Archives and History.
- Green, William, "The Search for Altamaha: The Archaeology and Ethnohistory of an Early 18th Century Yamasee Town." M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1991.
- Hann, John H., "Twilight of the Mocamo and Guale Aborigines as Portrayed in the 1695 Spanish Visitation." Florida Historical Quarterly 66 (1987): 1-24.
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- Lanning, John T., The Spanish Missions of Georgia. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935.
- McKivergan, David A., Jr., "Migration and Settlement among the Yamasee of South Carolina." M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1991.
- Milling, Chapman, Red Carolinians. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1940.
- Snell, William R., "Indian Slavery in Colonial South Carolina: 1671-1795." Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of History, University of Alabama, 1972.