

FORT MATANSAS  
18 MI. S. OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA.

St. Johns Co.

HABS No. 15-5

HABS  
FLA.

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
DISTRICT No. 15

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY.  
BERNARD W. CLOSE — DISTRICT OFFICER  
1005 DISBER BUILDING, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA.

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FORT MATANSAS  
Eighteen Miles South of St. Augustine  
St. Johns County  
Florida

Owner: Not given.

Date of Erection: About 1743.

Architect and Builder: Not given.

Present Condition: Fair.

Number of Stories: Two.

Materials of Construction: Coquina.

Other Existing Records: See text.

Additional Data: See following pages.

## HISTORICAL DATA

## FORT MATANZAS

Fort Matanzas, about 1743, is on Matanzas inlet in St. Johns County, about 18 miles south of St. Augustine, Florida. Built by the Spaniards, of Coquina rock, for the purpose of preventing the English from attacking St. Augustine from the south. Source: Letter of Don Antonio Arredondo, 1743, entitled "Suggestions in regard to Fortifying St. Augustine," Brooks Transcripts, Collection 5, Acquisition No. 134, Library of Congress.

Decayed and crumbling, old Fort Matanzas, 18 miles south of St. Augustine on the Atlantic Coast, still bears mute evidence of that historic period when the Spaniard struggled bitterly to defend Florida against the invader. During those turbulent times, Governor Oglethorpe of Georgia, and other militant English colonists, were a constant menace to the Spaniards, and it was primarily to repel their attack that Fort Matanzas was erected by the Spanish governor, Monteano. In 1739 war was declared between England and Spain, and subsequently in 1740 Oglethorp unsuccessfully laid siege to St. Augustine.

Author: H. C. Dozier.

APPROVED:

*Bernard W. Close*  
Bernard W. Close,  
District Officer.

Fort Matanzas (Fort Matanzas National Monument)  
Rattlesnake Island  
15 Miles South of St. Augustine (Current Information)  
St. Johns County  
Florida

HABS No. FL-15-5

Addendum to  
Fort Matanzas  
18 Miles South of St. Augustine (Originally recorded)  
St. Johns County  
Florida

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

STATE Florida	COUNTY St. John's	TOWN OR VICINITY Rattlesnake Island
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HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Fort Matanzas (National Register)	HABS NO. FL-15-5
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SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE  
Fort Matanzas National Monument

COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES)  
Rattlesnake Island  
15 Miles south of St. Augustine

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1737-1742	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)
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SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE)  
Fort Matanzas was originally established in 1565, and served as the site of the final struggles between Spain and France for domination of Southeast. The present fort was built in 1737-42, to reinforce the garrison against attacks by Oglethorpe of Georgia.

STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)

MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS)  
Quarried coquina blocks

HIGHLIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE)

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)

MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES  
Abandoned in 1819  
Restored c1970

PRESENT CONDITION AND USE  
National Park; historic site

OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.)  
National Register of Historic Places, 1972, 1976

COMPILER, AFFILIATION	DATE 6-17-83
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