1. NAME

COMMON: Tarboro Town Common
AND/OR HISTORIC: 

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Between Wilson St., Albermarle Ave., Park Ave., and St. Patrick St.
CITY OR TOWN: Tarboro
STATE: North Carolina

3. CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY (Check One)</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Building</td>
<td>□ Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>□ Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Both</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- □ Agricultural
- □ Government
- □ Park
- □ Transportation
- □ Commercial
- □ Industrial
- □ Private Residence
- □ Other (Specify)
- □ Educational
- □ Military
- □ Religious
- □ Residential
- □ Entertainment
- □ Museum
- □ Scientific
- □ Unoccupied
- □ Preservation work in progress
- □ No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Town of Tarboro
STREET AND NUMBER: 
CITY OR TOWN: Tarboro
STATE: North Carolina

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
A. Edgcombe County Courthouse
STREET AND NUMBER: St. James and Main Streets
CITY OR TOWN: Tarboro
STATE: North Carolina

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: 
DATE OF SURVEY: □ Federal □ State □ County □ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
STREET AND NUMBER: 
CITY OR TOWN: 
STATE: 
CODE: 

(Signature)
(PRINT)
(PRINT)
(CITY OR TOWN)
(CODE)

Edgcombe County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds).


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
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<td>Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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Approximate acreage of nominated property:

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. FORM PREPARED BY

John G. Zehner, Asst. Asst. Research & Restoration; John B. Wells, Survey Specialist
North Carolina Department of Archives and History September 8, 1970

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 [x] Local [ ]

Name: [Signature]
Title: Director, North Carolina State Department of Archives and History
Date: September 8, 1970

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register
The Tarboro Town Common is roughly triangular in shape being bounded on
the north by Park Avenue, on the east by St. Patrick Street, on the south
by Wilson Street, and the western end tangent to Albemarle Avenue. The area
is subdivided into four unequal portions by three north-south streets:
Trade Street, Main Street, and St. Andrew's Street. The common consists
of a series of relatively flat lawns featuring a varied collection of mostly
deciduous trees, predominately oaks and elms, some of great age. These have
grown up over the years in no overall planting scheme, but today form an
exciting series of vistas and alternating areas of light and shade. Located
on the common is a nineteenth-century cotton press moved to its present
location from Norfleet Plantation in Edgecombe County. There are several
memorials including a Confederate monument erected in 1904, featuring
the typical high pedestal surmounted with a statue of a rifle-bearing
Confederate soldier. Other monuments on the common include a stone obelisk
dedicated to the memory of Colonel Louis D. Wilson, a mid-eighteenth century
local political figure; a large stone with metal marker cast from the
Battleship Maine, which pays tribute to the Spanish-American dead. The
most interesting monument is an unusual cast iron fountain consisting of a
central two-tier element surrounded by an octagonal basin with four
Corinthian colonnettes supporting spherical light globes placed at alternate
corners of the octagon. This fountain is a memorial to Henry Wyatt of the
Edgecombe Guards, C.S.A., purported locally to have been the first Confed-
erate soldier killed in the Civil War.
The Tarboro Town Common was originally a part of the one-hundred-and-fifty-acre plantation of Joseph Howell, on the north bank of the Tar River in Edgecombe County. On September 24, 1760, Reverend Mr. James Noir, Lawrence Toole, Captain Aquila Sugg, Elisha Battle, and Benjamin Hart, purchased the property for $2,000 "being part of the Plantation... laid out for the use of building and erecting a Town thereon and the above Reverend James Noir [et al] are appointed Commissioners." All the property was to be laid out in lots except "fifty Acres for Commons for the use of the said Town..." The same year the North Carolina General Assembly passed an act for the establishment of the town specifically mentioning "a part thereof for a common." According to an early map the commons surrounded Tarboro on three sides: the north, south, and west. All but the northern common were eventually whittled away in the face of Tarboro's expansion leaving the present area, containing nine acres. Even this small plot has suffered encroachments. In 1813 the State General Assembly passed an act "for erecting an academy in the Town of Tarborough" which authorized the commissioners to sell two acres of land "belonging to the Town Commons." In 1838 one acre "situated in the Grove of said commons" just north of Wilson Street was sold to the Trustees of the Tarboro Academy for "the purposes of a location of an Academy." In later years a public graded school was also erected on the northern common. During the War Between the States it served as a training ground and temporary barracks for the Edgecombe Guards.

Since the turn of the century, the remaining Tarboro Town Common has been utilized as a site for several memorials and a fountain, and continues as a park for the citizens of the city of Tarboro.

In the eighteenth century there were a number of planned towns in North Carolina. Many of them featured undeveloped spaces designated as markets or courthouse squares. Tarboro, with three specifically designated as "Town Commons," was most unusual. As such, the remaining common is a unique survival of early urban planning in the South.
Tarboro Town Common
Between Wilson St., St. Patrick St., Albemarle Ave., and Park Ave.
Tarboro

Map of the Town of Tarboro
Town of Tarboro
Scale: 1"/100'
May 16, 1968

Latitude

Longitude

<table>
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<th>degrees</th>
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