National Park Service
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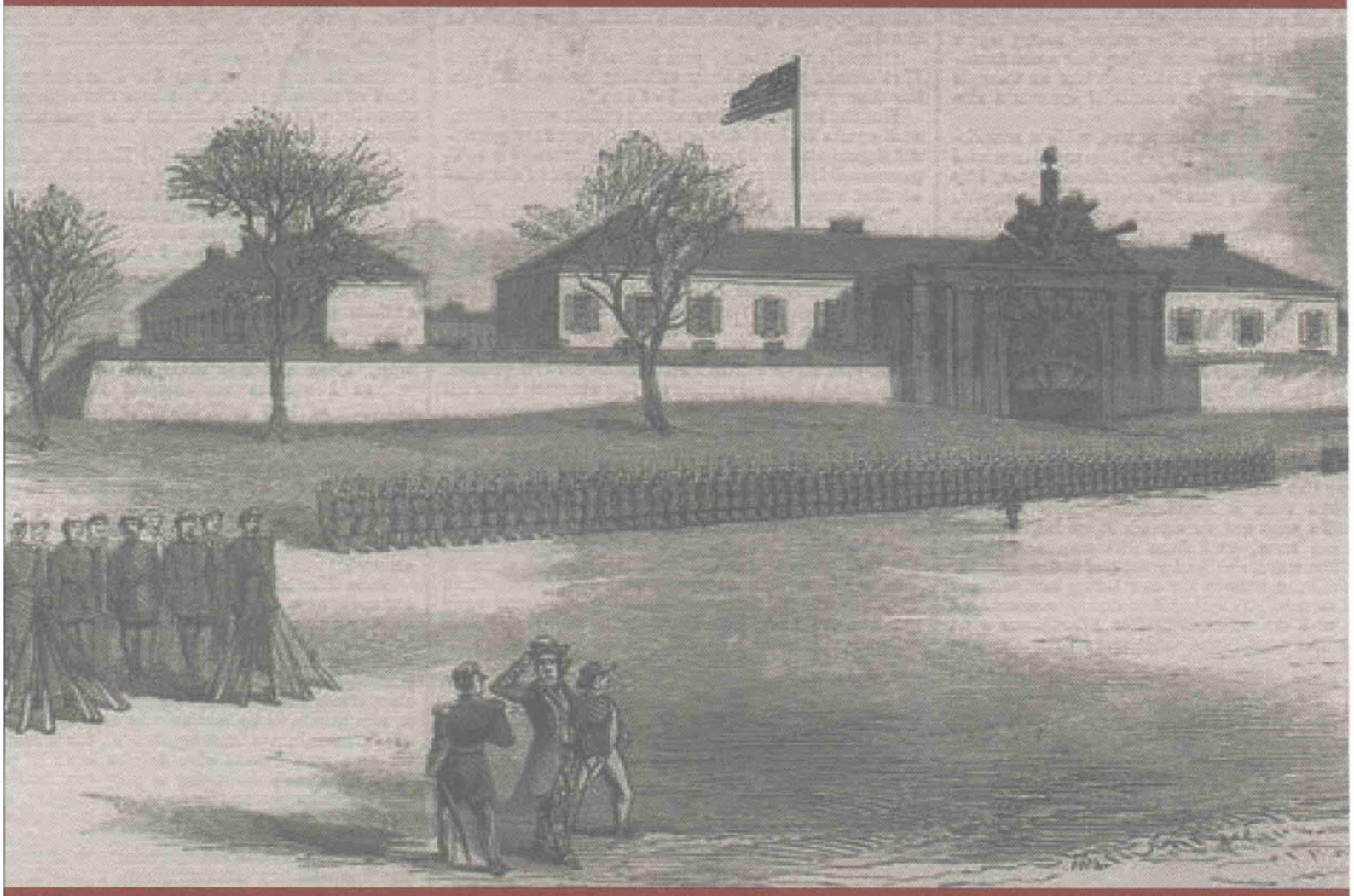
019/D-4

FORT JAY

Governors Island National Monument
National Parks of New York Harbor
New York, New York



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May 10, 2006

Memorandum

To: Roberta Beers
Technical Information Center (DSC- TIC)
Denver Service Center

From: Manager, Historic Architecture Program, NER

Subject: Transmittal of Historic Structure Report for Fort Jay

Enclosed please find one copy of the completed historic structure report for Fort Jay at Governors Island National Monument, National Parks of New York Harbor. If you have any questions about the report, or would like additional copies, please contact Publications Editor Sharon Ofenstein at (978) 970- 5141. Thank you.

Margaret A. Albee

Enclosure

FORT JAY

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

Governors Island National Monument
National Parks of New York Harbor
New York, New York

By

Barbara A. Yocum, Architectural Conservator
Historic Architecture Program
Northeast Region, National Park Service
Lowell, Massachusetts

2005

Errata Sheet – Fort Jay Historic Structure Report

page	correction		
xi	figure 39 should include the date of "Aug. 30th."		
xix	paragraph 2	line 9	"Britian" should be "Britain"
51	paragraph 2	line 3	"fig. 7" should be "fig. 9"
		line 4	"fig. 8" should be "fig. 10"
	paragraph 3	line 2	"fig. 10" should be "fig. 12"
57	paragraph 1	line 5	"fig. 11" should be "fig. 13"
			"fig. 6" should be "fig. 9"
		line 8	"fig. 12" should be "fig. 14"
		line 10	"figs. 13- 14" should be "figs. 15- 16"
87	paragraph 1	line 8	"figs. 26- 27" should be "figs. 28- 29"
			"fig. 32" should be "fig. 34"
106	paragraph 2	line 10	delete "February of"
111	caption for figure 38		delete "February"
197	paragraph 2	line 12	"figs. 66 and 93" should be "figs. 66 and 99"
204	paragraph 1	line 2	"figs. 14- 15" should be "figs. 14- 16"
	paragraph 3	line 2	"fig. 38" should be "fig. 35"
214	paragraph 3	line 2	"figs. 81, 90, and 92" should be "figs. 82, 91, and 93"

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96. East elevation of the west barrack (Building 210) in the courtyard of Fort Jay. Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1C, negative no. NY- 5715- IC- 4. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 168

97. Detail of the east elevation of the west barrack (Building 210) showing the postern. Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1C, negative no. NY- 5715- 1C- 3. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 169

98. Detail of the postern in the west barrack (Building 210) looking west. Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1C, negative no. NY- 5715- 1C- 2. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 169

99. Detail showing the doors of the postern in the west barrack (Building 210) looking west. Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1C, negative no. NY- 5715- 1C- 2. LC: http://memory.loc.gov. 170

100. South and east elevations of the triangular structure (Building 212) on the west side of the north barrack (Building 214). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 4- 6, negative no. NY- 4- 6- 28. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 170

101. South elevation of the north barrack (Building 214) in the courtyard of Fort Jay. Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1D, negative no. NY- 5715- 1D- 2. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 171

102. Detail of the south elevation of the north barrack (Building 214), showing the entrance to the magazine plaza. Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1D, negative no. NY- 5715- 1D- 4. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 171

103. East elevation of the east barrack (Building 202) north of the sally port. Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1A, negative no. NY- 5715- 1A- 4. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 172

104. Southeast corner of Fort Jay showing the rear and side elevations of the south barrack (Building 206), triangular structure (Building 204), and east barrack (Building 202). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative no. NY- 5715- 1B- 1. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 172

105. Rear elevation of the south barrack (Building 206). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative no. NY- 4- 6- 2. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 173

106. Southwest corner of Fort Jay showing the rear and side elevations of the west barrack (Building 210), triangular structure (Building 207), and south barrack (Building 206). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 4- 6, negative no. NY- 4- 6- 25. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 173

107. Northwest corner of Fort Jay showing the rear and side elevations of the north barrack (Building 214), triangular structure (Building 213), and west barrack (Building 210). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 4- 6, negative no. NY- 4- 6- 24. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 174

108. Northeast corner of Fort Jay showing the rear and side elevations of the east barrack (Building 202) and the north barrack (Building 214). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 4- 6, negative no. NY- 4- 6- 27. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 174

109. Northeast corner of the living room in quarters #206A of the south barrack (Building 206). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative no. NY- 5715- 1B- 4. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 175

110. Living room fireplace in quarters #206A of the south barrack (Building 206). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative no. NY- 5715- 1B- 5. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 175

111. Stair hall in quarters #206A of the south barrack (Building 206). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative no. NY- 5715- 1B- 6. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 176

112. Living room fireplace in quarters #214B of the north barrack (Building 214). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative no.NY- 5715- 1B- 5. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 176

113. Stair hall in quarters #214B of the north barrack (Building 214). Photograph by John T. Lowe for HABS, 1982- 83. Survey no. HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative no. NY- 5715- 1B- 6. LC: http://memory.loc.gov 177

114. Sculpture above the gateway at Fort Jay, circa 1994- 95. Park museum/reference collection, Governors Island NM 181

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Historic Structure Report on Fort Jay, Governors Island National Monument, provides a chronology of its physical evolution, describes its architectural elements, and identifies its character- defining features.

Fort Jay is located on Governors Island in New York Harbor, one- half mile from the southern tip of Manhattan. No defensive works are known to have been erected on the island during its early history. Governors Island was among the lands occupied in the early 17th century by the Manahatas Indians who called it "Pagganack." It became a Dutch holding in 1637, when the Manahatas conveyed the island to the Director and Council of New Netherland, a Dutch colony first settled in 1623. The Dutch called the island "Nooten" or "Nutten" for its abundant nut trees, and pastured cattle and goats there. It was also the site of an early windmill and a house erected by Wouton Van Twiller, second director- general of New Netherlands. Dutch rule ended in 1664 with the capture of New Netherland by Great Britian, which renamed the colony New York. The island acquired the name "The Governor's Island" following the passage of an act by the New York Assembly in 1698 to set aside the island "for the benefit and accommodation of his Majestie's Governors," although the more common "Nutten Island" survived well into the 18th century. New York Governor Cornbury is said to have constructed a "pleasure house" there during his tenure 1702- 08. The island was later used as a quarantine station and as a sanctuary for English pheasants. Although Major General William Pepperell's regiment encamped on the island in 1755, no defensive works appear to have been constructed at that time, nor do plans by Captain John Montréser to fortify the island in 1766 appear to have been implemented.

Defensive earthen works were first erected on the highest point of Governors Island by Continental troops in 1775- 76. The island and its fort were occupied by the British during the American Revolution until 1783, when it was surrendered, along with several buildings, to the Governor of New York. More than 10 years passed before renewed tensions with Great Britain resulted in funding from both the New York Legislature and the United States Congress in 1794 to reconstruct the works on Governors Island. This was part of a larger national effort to fortify ports that later became known as the First American System of coastal fortifications. Design of the New York Harbor defenses was assigned to French engineer Charles Vincent. The works on Governors Island had been completed by 1796, described in January of that year by the Secretary of War as "a fort made of earth, and two batteries under its protection, partly lined with brick masonry, two air furnaces, a large powder magazine, and a barrack for the garrison." Fears of a French invasion in 1797 resulted in a second- phase effort funded by additional appropriations to complete and enhance the coastal fortifications, including those on Governors Island. The fort is said to have acquired the name "Fort Jay" in 1798 for John Jay, then Governor of New York State. Governors Island and its fort were conveyed to the federal government two years later, in 1800, by an Act of the New York State Legislature. A plan of the fort as it existed that year shows it as a four- bastioned form surrounded by a ditch with a parapet having 51 embrasures, a gate and bridge on the east side, and a large magazine in the northeast bastion. The fort was still incomplete and incapable of defense in 1802, according to a written report, although it was then equipped with a "handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde," or guardhouse, that survives today.

Fort Jay had fallen into ruinous condition by 1806 when a second national campaign to strengthen the coastal defenses of the country, now known as the Second American System of fortifications, was implemented. This effort differed from the first by employing American engineers and using more durable masonry construction. The engineer chosen to design and oversee the defenses of New York Harbor was Colonel Jonathan Williams, Chief Engineer of the Corps of Engineers and first Superintendent of the Military Academy at West Point. Reconstruction of Fort Jay, renamed Fort Columbus about this time, began in July 1806 and was completed by December 1809. The only components of the old fort judged worth saving were "the walled Counterscarp, the Gate, the Magazine, and the Barracks," according to Colonel Williams in a report dated November 1808. The completed fort was described in a later report to Congress as "an enclosed pentagonal work, with four bastions of masonry, calculated for one hundred guns, fifty- five mounted, with brick barracks for two hundred and thirty men, including officers. [And] a stone and brick magazine...." Also constructed at this time was Castle Williams, a circular defensive work made of red sandstone that was erected on the west point of the island between 1807 and 1811. The earliest known plan of the completed fort is a plan by Joseph Mangin drawn in 1813.

The first significant repairs and alterations were made to Fort Columbus in the 1830s, resulting in the overall appearance of the fort as it exists today. The stone retaining walls were extensively rebuilt at this time, including the scarp that was faced with granite and topped with a new brickwork parapet. The old magazine in the northeast bastion was demolished and replaced by four new magazines erected in the north ravelin. Finally, the four existing brick barracks were replaced by four new barracks with flanking triangular structures and outdoor courtyards. Later changes have been made to the barracks by the U.S. Army over the years, including interior remodeling and replacement of the flat roofs with hipped roofs in 1855- 57, incorporation of five of the triangular buildings as additions in the 1860s and 1898- 99, and reconfiguration of the buildings as officers' apartments in 1921- 22 and again in the 1930s. Paint was stripped from the exterior brick buildings in the 1930s, the sodded glacis of the fort was converted to recreational use as a golf course by 1940, and the flagstaff was moved from the northwest bastion to the north ravelin by 1953.

Jurisdiction of Governors Island passed from the U.S. Army to the U.S. Coast Guard in 1966. Improvements made by the Coast Guard to Fort Jay, whose name was officially reinstated in 1904, included expansion of the golf course; remodeling of the barracks with new kitchens, bathrooms, heating and electrical systems, and storm windows and doors; and erection of chain- link fencing on the glacis. Fort Jay has sat vacant with minimal upkeep since closure of the Coast Guard base in 1997.

Fort Jay was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1934 and in 1982- 83. The fort was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. It was included in a National Historic Landmark District designated in 1985, and a New York Historic District designated in 1996. The fort is also located within the boundaries of Governors Island National Monument, created by Presidential Proclamations signed in 2001 and 2003. The period of significance for Fort Jay spans the years 1794- 1966, as defined by the National Register of Historic Places. The character- defining features for Fort Jay are described subsequently in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Preserve Historic Drawings

One of the great surprises of this project was the discovery that architectural drawings for all the extant buildings and structures of Governors Island, including Fort Jay and Castle Williams, are still located in Building 910, the former U.S. Coast Guard Facilities Engineering Division, on Governors Island. These drawings were prepared by and for the U.S. Army and the U.S. Coast Guard, some dating back to the 19th century. Building 910 and its contents are now within the jurisdiction of the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC), a park partner. Some of the drawings have been moved to another GIPEC structure, Building 108, which offers better environmental conditions than Building 910. (Building 108 also houses GIPEC's administrative headquarters.) GIPEC has been generous in allowing access to researchers, but both security and fire safety are concerns. The National Park Service should thus obtain all drawings related to the national- monument property for inclusion in its own archives and files.

The following suggestions are offered to ensure the future preservation and accessibility of this important collection. First, an assessment/survey should be made of the collection by a professional archivist and the information incorporated in the General Management Plan. Professionals at the Museum Services Center, Northeast Region, National Park Service, have the knowledge and expertise to facilitate this process. Second, a determination needs to be made as to the proper disposition of these drawings.

Preserve Character- Defining Features

Features of Fort Jay that are identified as "character- defining" in this report should be preserved if at all possible in order to retain the historic character of the fort. Alterations and improvements made to Fort Jay after 1966 by the U.S. Coast Guard are considered to be noncontributing, and can therefore be removed and/or altered without adversely impacting the fort's historic character. These include the expanded golf course; remodeled kitchens, bathrooms, heating and electrical systems, and storm windows and doors in the barracks; and chain- link fencing on the glacis.

Prepare Individual Historic Structure Reports

The large scope of this historic structure report for Fort Jay permitted only a superficial study of the fort's elements, its buildings, and structures. It is therefore recommended that individual in-depth historic structures reports be prepared when funding becomes available to supplement this beginning effort. These reports should address the defensive elements of Fort Jay, the guardhouse, the barracks, the triangular buildings, and the garages.

Update Existing- Conditions Record

The last recording of existing conditions at Fort Jay and its barracks was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1982- 83. This consisted of 38 black- and- white photographs and written reports that incorporated limited archival research and an assessment of existing conditions. A similar recordation project should be undertaken to update this information, including a conditions assessment survey. Selected materials with which Fort Jay is built are suffering from varying degrees of deterioration, particularly the sandstone of the gate and its sculpture, the counterscarp, and the building foundations. A conditions- assessment monitoring project and survey would help ascertain the rate of materials deterioration and inform the development of methods to preserve and maintain the historic fabric.

Prepare Measured Drawings

There are currently no drawings of the guardhouse and the barracks in their existing state. A complete set of measured drawings should be prepared to HABS standards.

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ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Governors Island National Monument is a new unit of the National Park Service that was established by Presidential Proclamation on January 19, 2001 (revised February 7, 2003). The national monument encompasses 22.78 acres of the 172- acre island in New York Harbor, located one- half mile from the southern tip of Manhattan. The remaining 150 acres have been transferred to the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) to manage and redevelop. Two fortifications, Fort Jay and Castle Williams, are the primary historic resources of the national monument. Governors Island has historically been administered by the U.S. Army (1800- 1966), and later by the U.S. Coast Guard (1966- 1997). A skeleton crew of Coast Guard personnel provided security, fire protection, and facility maintenance from 1997 until the sale of the national monument by the Government Services Administration to the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the sale of the remainder of the island to GIPEC on January 31, 2003. The National Trust subsequently conveyed the national monument area to the Secretary of the Interior, United States of America, and the remainder of the island to GIPEC.

Fort Jay and Castle Williams are masonry fortifications on Governors Island that date to the late18th and early19th centuries. Fort Jay was constructed of earth in 1794 on the site an earlier earthen work erected during the Revolutionary War. This was part of a national effort to fortify coastal ports, now known as the First American System of fortifications, in response to renewed tensions with Great Britain. A second phase of the First System improved and completed the works, including Fort Jay, during the years 1797 and 1802. The First System employed French engineers to design temporary, earthen works. A second national effort was initiated in 1806 to strengthen the coastal defenses of the country in response to British interference with American shipping; this is known as the Second American System of fortifications. This building campaign differed from the first by using American engineers and more durable masonry construction. Fort Jay was rebuilt in masonry between the years 1806 and 1809, and Castle Williams was erected between the years 1807 and 1811. The two works differ considerably in form and appearance. Fort Jay is a square, four- bastioned work with one ravelin surrounded by a wide ditch. Castle Williams is a circular casemated work built of red sandstone. Both held important strategic defense positions at the entrance to New York Harbor.

Fort Jay, the focus of this report, was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on March 27, 1974. It was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) with measured drawings, photographs, and a written report in 1936. The HABS record was updated between 1982- 84 with additional photographs and an addendum to the report. Fort Jay is also a contributing resource in a National Historic Landmark District for Governors Island designated February 4, 1985 (#85002435), and a New York City Landmarks Historic District designated June 18, 1996.

Fort Jay is included in the National Park Service's List of Classified Structures (LCS) as LCS number 233380 and structure number nine (9). The LCS management category specifies that the structure "must be preserved and maintained."

INTRODUCTION

Scope of Work

Two historic structure reports are to be produced for Castle Williams and Fort Jay on Governors Island, as described in a Project Agreement between the Historic Architecture Program (HAP), Resource Stewardship and Science, Northeast Region, National Park Service, and Governors Island National Monument, signed December 17, 2003. This report is the product of Phase II, which focused on the research and documentation of Fort Jay, descriptions of architectural elements, and identification of character- defining features. Both primary and secondary sources were reviewed, and other researchers were consulted in order to share information. Two site visits were also made to Governors Island and Fort Jay in January 2004 and August 2005.

Terminology and Spelling

Fort Jay and Castle Williams are two fortifications located on Governors Island. Fort Jay was constructed of mostly earthen materials in 1794, and reconstructed in masonry 1806- 09, when it was renamed Fort Columbus. Castle Williams was erected between 1807 and 1811. Fort Columbus was also the name of the military post located on Governors Island. The name of both the post and the fortification officially reverted back to Fort Jay in 1904, which is still used today.

Castle Williams was frequently found to be misspelled as "Castle William" in both published and unpublished, primary and secondary sources, throughout the years. This historical misspelling is preserved in the excerpts included in this report.

The name "Governor's Island" came into use in the late 17th century, when the island was designated for use by the governors of the new British colony New York. The name was officially changed from the Dutch "Nutten" or "Nooten" Island to "Governor's Island" by an act of the New York Legislature March 29, 1784. Use of the apostrophe was discontinued in official papers of the U.S. Army's Eastern Department, Division of the Atlantic, following its transfer to the island in 1878, although the earlier punctuation endured. Today the island is known as "Governors Island." Both spellings are preserved in this report.

Report Organization

This report is composed of three sections: a "Chronology of Castle Williams," "Architectural Descriptions," and "Character- Defining Features." The chronology is presented by decade or other defined time period, each prefaced by a narrative summary that is followed by excerpts of documentary sources and contemporary illustrations. A summary of documentary sources may be found in the bibliography. Descriptions of the fort's architectural elements include both the defensive components and its buildings and structures. Descriptions of the fort's existing

character- defining features include site orientation, overall design and form, spatial configurations, construction elements, fortification elements, buildings and structures, and landscape elements.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in this report:

ASP	American State Papers
BPL	Brooklyn Public Library
CAB/NACP	Cartographic and Architectural Branch, National Archives at College Park, MD
HABS	Historic American Buildings Survey, Washington, DC
LC	Library of Congress, Washington, DC
NAB	National Archives Main Building, Washington, DC
NACP	National Archives at College Park, MD
NARA – Northeast Region (NY)	National Archives, Northeast Region, New York City
RG	Record Group
SPB/NACP	Still Pictures Branch, National Archives at College Park, MD

CHRONOLOGY OF FORT JAY

17th Century

Summary

No fortifications appear to have been built on Governors Island in the 17th century when it was possessed by the Indians, the Dutch, and finally the British. The island was called "Pagganack" by the Manahatas Indians due to the groves of hickory, oak, and chestnut trees growing there. Settlement of the area by the Dutch commenced in 1623 with the arrival of the ship *New Netherlands,* chartered by the Dutch West India Company, followed by two more ships in 1625. The second sailing brought additional settlers, supplies, and cattle. The cattle were landed on Governors Island, called "Nutten" or "Nooten" island by the Dutch. Manhattan Island was purchased from the Manahatas Indians in 1626 by Peter Minuit, first director- general of the colony named New Netherland. Wouton Van Twiller, who served as the second director general from 1633 to 1637, is said to have built a house and kept goats on Nutten Island. However, it was not until June 16, 1637, that the island was officially deeded by the Manahatas Indians to the Director and Council of New Netherland. A windmill erected on the northwest shore of Nutten Island by 1639 had fallen into ruinous condition by 1648, according to the accounts of later director- general Peter Stuyvesant. Dutch rule ended in 1664 when New Netherland was captured by Great Britain and renamed New York. Reclaimed briefly by the Dutch in 1773, it was returned to the British in 1774. Nutten Island also acquired the name "The Governor's Island" under British rule, following an act by the New York Assembly in 1698 to set aside the island "for the benefit and accommodation of his Majestie's Governors."

Documentation

1621- 23

1621- 23. "The foundation of the [Manhattan] settlement may be dated from 1621, when the States- General of Holland gave the West India Company its Charter. In 1623 the 'New Netherlands,' a stout Dutch sailing vessel...with thirty families came to this western Land of Promise." (Edmund B. Smith, *Governor's Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637-1913*; New York: 1913, p. 13.)

1625

1625. "In 1625 two more ships sailed from Holland laden with agricultural implements, seeds for planting, 103 head of cattle, household furniture, and 200 settlers. Upon arrival in the harbour the cattle were landed on what is now Governor's Island." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 13.)

1626

1626. The island of Manhattan was sold by the Manahatas Indians to Peter Minuit of the Dutch West India Company. The colony is called New Netherland, the town at the tip of the island New Amsterdam. (*The Columbia Encyclopedia*. New York: 1968, p. 1297.)

Ca. 1626. A windmill was erected by the Dutch on Nutten (now Governors) Island.

1637

1637, June 16. Governors Island was conveyed by deed dated June 16, 1637, from the Manahatas Indians to the Director and Council of New Netherlands. The island was called "Pagganck" by the Indians, "referring to the groves of hickory, oak and chestnut trees with which it was well covered." The name was changed to "Nooten" or "Nutten" Island by the Dutch. Wouton Van Twiller, who served as the second director general of New Netherland from 1633 to 1637, is said to have left a house and 21 pairs of goats on Nutten Island upon his departure. (Smith, *Governor's Island,* pp. 11 and 19- 21.)

1639

1639. A windmill is shown on the northwest shore of the island in the same approximate location as Castle Williams today on the "Manatus Map" drawn in 1639. No other structures are depicted on the island, which was labeled as feature 34, "Nooten Eyland." (*Manhattan in Maps, 1527- 1995,* by Paul Cohen and Robert Augustyn; New York, NY: Rizzoli, 1997; p. 28.)

1648

1648. The windmill was in ruins by 1648, according to Peter Stuyvesant, who served as director- general of New Netherlands from 1646 to 1664. (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 21.)

1664

1664. The British captured New Netherland, including Nutten Island, renaming it New York. (*The Columbia Encyclopedia,* pp. 1297- 98.)

1664. "It is remarkable to note that no serious attempt was made by the Dutch to build fortifications [on Governors Island]. As a result when an English fleet of four frigates and 300 men captured New Amsterdam in 1664, it played no part." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937;* New York: The Governor's Island Club, 1937, p. 12.)

1673- 74

1673- 74. "New York was recaptured for the Netherlands in 1673 and then returned to the English in 1674, [Governors] island maintaining a dignified calm throughout the proceedings." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, p. 12.)

1698

1698. "In 1698 the Island was set aside by the [New York] Assembly as being 'part of the Denizen of His Majestie's Fort at New York for the benefit and accommodation of his Majestie's Governors for the time being,' and hence it came to be familiarly called 'The Governor's Island.'" (Smith, *Governor's Island*, pp. 11 and 33.)

1700- 1739

Summary

Governors Island remained an unfortified British outpost in the early decades of the 18th century. Although an appropriation of £15,000 for fortifying the harbor was obtained by New York Governor Cornbury, who served from 1702 to 1708, this is said to have been expended on the building of a "pleasure- house on Governor's Island." A later history of the island has conjectured that this house was erected on the high point of the island on the site of the present Fort Jay. The island served as a quarantine station for a brief period in 1710 to isolate the diseases of Palatine immigrants. However, no structures were depicted on two maps of the harbor and vicinity dated circa 1730 that labeled the island as "Nutten I." and "Nuting I." English pheasants were introduced during the tenure of Governor William Cosby, 1732- 1736. An act to protect the birds for one year was passed by the New York legislature in 1738.

Documentation

1702- 1708

"Notwithstanding the apprehended danger and the oft- repeated importunities of the governors, no measures of defense were taken, other than the appropriation of £15,000 during the governorship of Cornbury [1702- 08], for fortifying the Narrows. How much of sincerity there was in the patriotic appeals of Governor Cornbury may be estimated by the fact that the £15,000 so appropriated were applied by him to building a pleasure- house on Governor's Island for himself and succeeding governors, to which to retire when included to free himself from business." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals with Descriptions of Military Posts," Circular No. 4, War Dept., Surgeon General's Office. Washington, D.C., 1870.)

"It seems most reasonable to suppose that Lord Cornbury chose the finest situation [for his house] for elevation and general outlook in the middle of the Island where the present Fort Jay now stands." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* pp. 28- 29.)

1710

1710. "In 1710 the island became in fact if not in name the first quarantine with the arrival of a number of Palatines, whom the city fathers feared might spread disease in New York. The use of the island as a quarantine station at this time shows that it could never have been a very pretentious country seat for the governors. After a few months the Palatines were moved away to new lands...." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937,* p. 12.)

Circa 1730

Circa 1730. Governors Island is labeled as "Nutten I" on a map titled "A Plan of the harbour of New York." This map of circa 1730 was engraved by John Carwitham of London and was printed circa 1740. No structures are shown on the island. (Cohen and Augustyn, *Manhattan in Maps, 1527- 1995,* p. 57.)

Circa 1730. Governors Island is labeled as "Nuting I." on a nautical chart titled "A Draught of New York from the Hook to New York Town," by cartographer Mark Tiddeman. The chart was published in *The English Pilot,* Book 4, London, circa 1732- 80, and is believed to depict the date circa 1730. No structures are shown on the island. (Cohen and Augustyn, *Manhattan in Maps*, p. 66.)

1732- 1738

1732- 38. William Cosby, who served as Governor of the New York colony from 1732 until his death in 1736, introduces English pheasants on Governors Island. The New York legislature passes an act in 1738 to protect the birds for one year. (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 32.)

1740- 1774

Summary

The strategic importance of Governors Island in the protection of New York Harbor was recognized by the middle of the 18th century when relations between Great Britain and France became strained. The first known mention of troops on the island was the encampment of Major General William Pepperell's regiment in 1755, although no fortified works appear to have been constructed at that time. Plans to fortify "Governor's or Nutten Island" were prepared by Captain John Montrésor, a British subject and Chief Engineer of America, in 1766 (figs. 1- 2). There is no record, however, that these plans were ever executed. A map surveyed in 1766- 67 shows what appears to be an orchard on "The Governour's or Nutten Island" in the vicinity of the present Fort Jay.

Documentation

1740s

1741 and 1744. "Addressing the [New York] Legislature the 15th of April, 1741, [Governor Clarke] said: 'There is great cause to apprehend a speedy rupture with France. Your situation ought therefore to awaken you to see the importance of erecting batteries in proper places ... and one at Red Hook to prevent the enemy landing upon Governor's Island.' Governor Clinton, addressing the Assembly April 17, 1744, also urged action to prevent the enemy landing any force or artillery on Nutten Island." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 33.)

1750

1750. "By the Montgomery Charter of 1750 Governor's Island was made part of the City of New York...." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* pp. 27- 28.)

1755

"Until the middle of the eighteenth century the [Governor's] island remained both unfortified and unguarded. Although there were continuous war scares, fears of attack by the French, and many proposals for its defense, nothing was actually done either in garrisoning a post or building works until after the middle of the century." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, pp. 12- 13.)

"Although the Island's location as a strategic site for a fortification was urged by several Royal governors during the 18th century, the British appear to have done little more than garrison troops there." ("Fort Jay, Governor's Island, New York City, Written and Descriptive Data." Survey number HABS no. 4- 6. New York City: Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934- 36. With addendum titled "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)." Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1984, p. 11.)

1755, June 3. "The first mention of troops on Governor's Island is in connection with [British] Major General William Pepperell's Regiment as follows: 'New York, June the 3rd, 1755: Rec'd of the Honorable James De Lansea, Esq., the sum of Three Pounds, fourteen shillings and nine pence for five cord and three quarters of Oak wood for the use of Sir Wm. Pepperell's Regiment encamped on Nutten Island....'" (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 33.)

1766

1766, September 9. Excerpt from the journal of Captain John Montrésor (1736- 99), a British subject and Chief Engineer of America:

> Delivered to the Commander in Chief my Report. Made my design on a Scale of 200 feet to the inch for fortifying Governor's or Nutten Island.
>
> (Smith, *Governor's Island*, pp. 35- 36.)

Circa 1766. Plans by John Montrésor (1736- 99) for fortifying "Governors Island," circa 1766. (LC.) See figs. 1- 2.

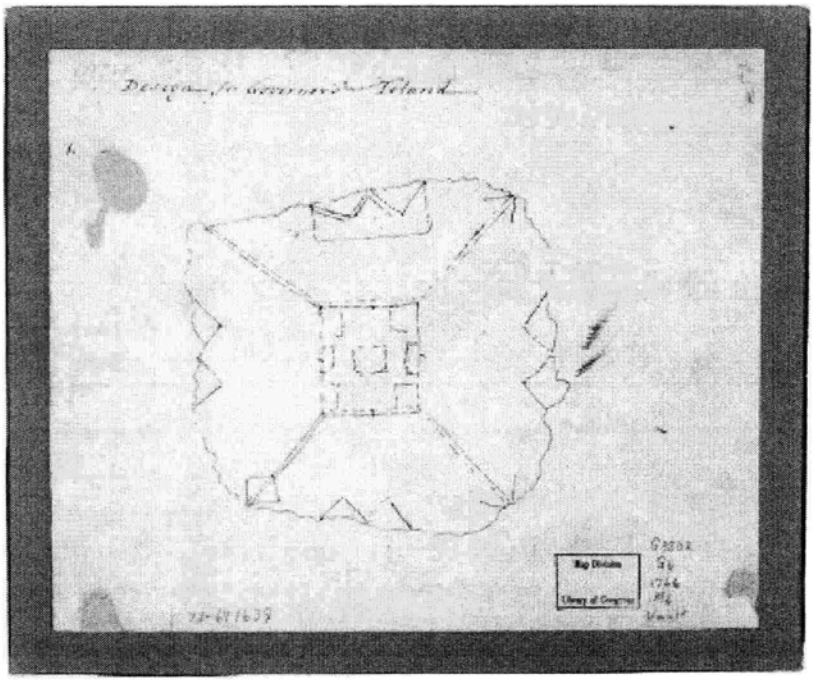


Figure 1. Plan entitled "Design for Governor's Island," circa 1766.

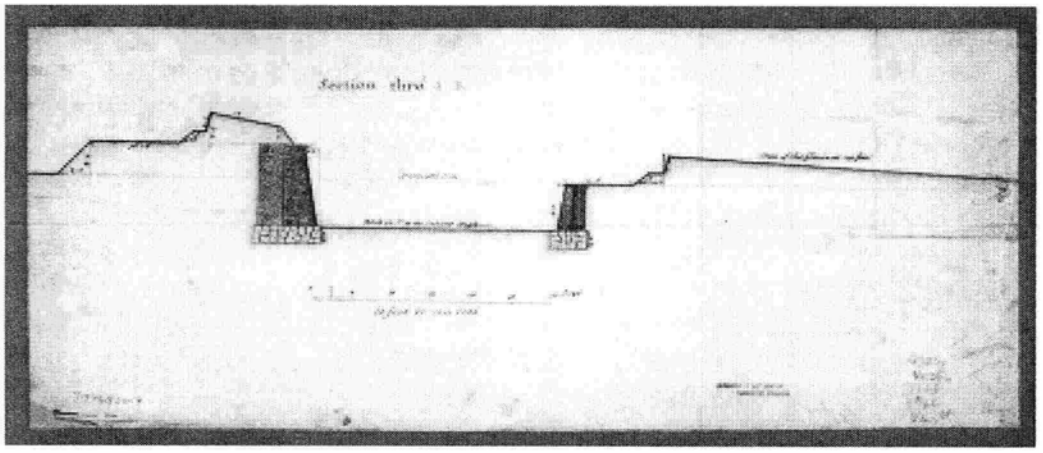


Figure 2. Section elevation of proposed fortifications for "Governor's Island," circa 1766.

1766- 1767

Circa 1766- 67. A "Plan of the City of New York" surveyed by Bernard Ratzer in 1766-67 labels Governors Island as "The Governours or Nutten Island" and depicts what appears to be an orchard in the vicinity of the present Fort Jay. No structures or fortifications are shown. (Cohen and Augustyn, *Manhattan in Maps, 1527- 1995*, p. 73.)

1775- 1783

Summary

Earthen fortifications were first erected on Governors Island, or Nutten Island as it was still called, during the American Revolution. Colonel William Prescott's regiment was directed in April 1775 to "give every assistance in their power to the works erecting thereon." Congressional delegate Benjamin Franklin mentioned the state of the island's defenses in a letter dated February 5, 1776, noting that "300 or 400 men would be sufficient to compleat all the works in one night." This was accomplished on the evening of April 9, 1776, when General Israel Putnam recruited 1,000 troops with entrenching tools. George Washington, Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, described Governors Island the following month as having "a large and strong work erected and a Regiment encamped there." Eight guns were mounted thereon by June 1776, according to a report of that date. These were used to fire on two of His Majesty's ships as they sailed by the island and up the Hudson River on July 12, 1776. The island was described by Lord Stirling in August 1776 as being "more strong and better guarded than any other post in the Army." Continental troops were nevertheless defeated in the Battle of Long Island on August 27, 1776. Governors Island was vacated shortly thereafter, according to Colonel William Douglas, who wrote on August 31, "we have evacuated Governor's Island where we have lost some cannon." A British map of the battles of Brooklyn and New York, as they came to be known, notes that Governors Island was "occuyp'd by the Hessians after the battle." Continental troops abandoned New York City in September, thus beginning occupation by the British that continued for seven years until the conclusion of the war. Three maps prepared during the occupation show Governors Island with a main fortification on the north side of the island in the same approximate location as Fort Jay today, and a smaller battery to the west (figs 3- 5).

Governors Island was surrendered by Rear Admiral Digby to New York Governor George Clinton on December 3, 1783. Presented to the Governor at that time was a list of the island's buildings and other improvements. These included captain's and lieutenant's barracks, kitchens, a guard house, convalescent hospital, gardener's house, summer house, cattle barn, three wells, and a wharf. None of these structures exists today. No mention was then made of the fortified earthen works, for which no surviving plans have been found.

Documentation

1775

1775, April 16. "A citadel and outworks were begun in 1775. General orders of April 16, 1775, read: 'Colonel Prescott's Regiment is to encamp on Governor's Island.... They are to give every assistance in their power to the works erecting thereon.'" (Smith, *Governor's Island*, pp. 39- 40.)

1775, October 6. "Though the probable expense of erecting fortifications had been estimated, it was not until Congress had decreed, on the 6th of October, 1775, that the provincial convention be directed immediately to render New York defensible, that works of fortification were thrown up on the island." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals," Circular No. 4, War Dept., Surgeon General's Office. Washington, D.C., 1870.)

1776

1776. "It was not until 1776 when the rebellious Americans hastily erected fortifications throughout [New York] city that the Island's history as a fortified site began. In April of that year, several regiments numbering a thousand men landed on Governors Island and erected breastworks capable of covering them from the fire of British ships." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 11.)

1776. "The exact layout of the defense system erected by General [Israel] Putman in 1776 is unknown, but it was probably located on the current site of Fort Jay since it is the island's highest point." ("Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings, U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island"; St. Louis, MO: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, July 1997; pp. 4- 5.)

1776, February 5. Letter from Benjamin Franklin to Charles Lee, Lieut.- General of the Continental Army, New York. (Excerpts from the letter are included in Smith, *Governor's Island,* pp. 40- 41.)

> There is Nutten (Governor's Island) well situated to place Guns and I imagine 300 or 400 men would be sufficient to compleat all the works in one night: the greatest difficulty would be to get cannon to Nutten Island.... If there was a lodgement with some Guns upon Nutten Island...as soon as the Batterys upon Nutten Island began to play there should be some of the Connecticut men ready to run down upon the Wharfs with some few guns ahead and astern with grape to clear the decks and fire into the ports. Six Guns would be sufficient upon Nutten Island and 12 pdrs would be heavy enough....

1776, April. "Governors Island's history as a fortification started in April 1776 when General Putman crossed from New York City to the island with 1,000 men and constructed the initial earthen defenses. The island was manned one week later. The exact plan of the defenses is not known, but the island's armaments included four 32- pound and four 18- pound cannons along with 30 smaller pieces." ("Ordnance and Explosives," p. 4- 1.)

1776, April 4. "General Putnam arrived in New York [City] on April 4th, 1776, and wrote to the President of Congress: 'After getting the works in such forwardness as will be prudent to leave I propose immediately to take possession of Governor's Island which I think a very important Post.'" (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 42.)

1776, April 9. "On 9 April 1776, under cover of darkness, General Israel Putnam with a thousand men went over [to] the island and by working feverishly all night threw up works and defenses sufficient to protect them from the guns of the fleet." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, p. 16.)

1776, April 9. "On April 9th Colonel Silliman of Connecticut wrote to his wife: 'Last evening draughts were made from a number of Regiments here, mine among the rest, to the number of 1000 men. With these and a proper number of officers Gen'l Putnam at candle lighting embarked on Board of a number of vessels with a large Number of intrenching tools and went directly on ... Nutten Island where they have been intrenching all night ... and have got a good Breast work there raised which will cover them from the fire of the Ships.'" (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 43.)

1776, April [?]. "The *New York Gazette* announces that on 'Monday night 1000 Continental troops stationed here went over and took possession of Governor's Island and began to fortify it.'" (Smith, *Governor's Island*, pp. 43- 44.)

1776, April 16. "On the 16th [of April, 1776] the famous Bunker Hill Regiment, Colonel Prescott's men, were ordered to the island. Indicative of the importance which [General] Washington, now in command, attached to the post is the fact that he placed there this experienced ... and already famous unit. Fortifications were completed by May...." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, p. 216.)

1776, May 9. Letter from General George Washington to Lieutenant General Charles Lee:

> My Dear Lee:
> We have done a great deal of work at this place. In a fortnight more I think the city will be in a very respectable posture of defense....
> Governor's Island has a large and strong work erected and a Regiment encamped there....
>
> G. Washington
>
> (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 41.)

1776, June. "The works [on Governors Island] in June mounted four 32 and four 18 pdrs." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 43.)

1776, June. "[A] June report shows that the batteries of the island mounted four 22-pounders as well as four 18- pounders." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637-1937*, p. 16.)

1776, July 6. Stephen Kemble of H.M. 60th Foot writes: "Observe the Rebels have fortified Governor's Island very strongly.... About half after three in the Afternoon His Majesty's Ship Phoenix, commanded by Captain Parker, and the Rose [sic: Roebuck], by Captain Wallace, with the Tryal Schooner and two Tenders got under sail to pass the Town of New York.... They received the whole of the Rebel fire from Red Hook, Governor's Island, the Battery and from some Guns in the Town." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 41.)

1776, July 12. "The cannon at Red Hook and Governor's Island opened fire, and as the ships [His Majesty's ships *Phoenix* and *Roebuck*] swept by lower Manhattan, heading into the mouth of the Hudson, the guns at old Fort George and other shore batteries opened up." (David McCullough, *1776*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005, p. 138.)

1776, August. "By August additional defenses resulted in its [Governors Island] being considered the strongest American post." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637-1937*, p. 216.)

1776, August. Lord Stirling writes: "The General bids me say that in our present situation Governor's Island is more strong and better guarded than any other post in the Army." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 42.)

1776, August. "On August 27th, the Americans were defeated by British troops in the Battle of Long Island. By the 30th, the patriots had been evacuated from Governors Island. Within hours, the Island was heavily bombarded by four British ships. (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 11.)

1776, August 31. "Col. Wm. Douglas in a letter to his wife, Northford, Conn., dated N. York Aug'st 31, 1776, says: 'We have evacuated Governor's Island where we have lost some cannon. They fired smartly from Fort Stirling yesterday at our boats passing from Governor's Island.'" (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 44.)

1776, September. "Two weeks later [following evacuation of the island], the American troops abandoned the city, and the British occupation began. Under the British, the ruined fortification and batteries on Governors Island were repaired, and a naval hospital was established." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 11.)

1776, September. Governors Island and New York City are occupied by the British for the remainder of the American Revolution, 1776- 1783. (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 42.)

1776, after September. A "Plan of New York Island" published in London by William Faden in 1776 shows the military campaigns in the area and delineates fortifications on "Governors Id" noted to have been "occupy'd by the Hessians after the battle." (LC.) See fig. 3.

Figure 3. Detail from the "Plan of New York Island" published in London by William Faden in 1776.

North

1776, after September. An untitled map of New York City and vicinity prepared during British occupation of the city is believed to be the work of English military surveyor Samuel Holland. The map includes "Governours Island" with a detailed depiction of the fortifications thereon. (New York State Library.) See fig. 4.

North

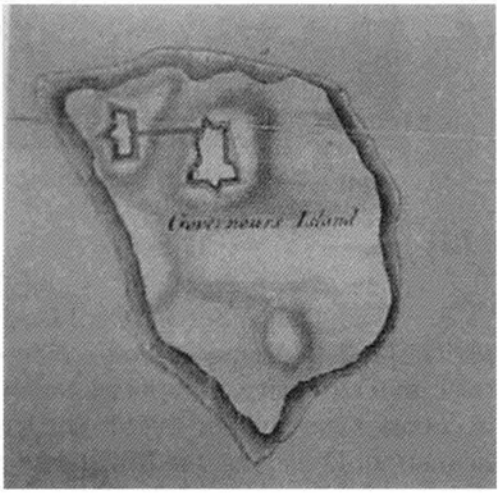


Figure 4. Detail from an untitled British map of New York City and vicinity showing "Governours Island" and its fortifications.

Circa 1782

Circa 1782. An untitled map drawn circa 1782 during the British occupation of New York shows the fortifications on "Governor's Island," along with what appear to be structures clustered within the main fort and outside the fort to the east. (Public Records Office, London.) See fig. 5.

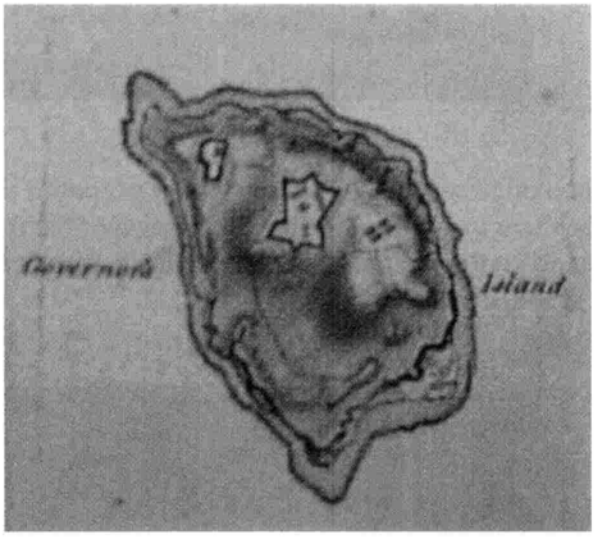
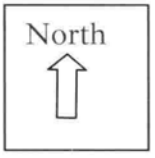


Figure 5. Detail of an untitled map showing "Governor's Island" and its fortifications.



1783

1783, December 3. "On 3 December 1783, Governors Island was surrendered by [British] Rear Admiral Digby to [New York] Governor Clinton. All the guns were removed, but the rather extensive, if impermanent, works which had been completed during the British occupancy were turned over to the United States. Fearing an attack on the part of the French fleet under D'Estaing, the British had persuaded thousands of New Yorkers to work on the defenses [of Governors Island]. Upon the surrender the list of buildings included the captain's and lieutenant's barracks, kitchens, a guard house, a convalescent hospital as well as a barn and gardener's house. Unfortunately none of these structures exist today." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, p. 24.)

1783, December 3. Letter from James Ducan, [British] Captain in the Navy, to His Excellency Governor Clinton [of New York]:

> Sir, Agreeable to my letter of this Morning's date, I do myself the honor of inclosing your Excellency a description list of the different buildings &c. on Governors Island, and have ordered the Keys to be Label'd with numbers corresponding to the different houses &c.
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | No. 1 | The Wharf |
> | No. 2 | The Well 12 feet deep with pump & c. |
> | No. 3 | Captain's Kitchen |
> | No. 4 | ditto Cellar |
> | No. 5 | A Barn for Cattle |
> | No. 6 | Gardner's House |
> | No. 7 | Hospital Kitchen |
> | No. 8 | Hospital Well |
> | No. 9 | Captain's Well |
> | No. 10 | Guard House |
> | No. 11 | Convalescent's Hospital |
> | No. 12 | Captain's Barracks |
> | No. 13 | Lieut. Barracks |
> | No. 14 | Lieut. Kitchen |
> | No. 15 | Summer House |
>
> ("Public Papers of George Clinton." Cited in *Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937,* p. 56.)

1784- 1793

Summary

Nutten Island was officially renamed "Governor's Island" by an Act of the New York Legislature on March 29, 1784. Previous studies have surmised that the fortified works on the island fell into disrepair in the years following the American Revolution. An unsubstantiated, though often- repeated, story first published in 1870 tells of the island being leased by the State of New York in 1784 to a Dr. Price who constructed a hotel and race course, the race course operating for only two years—1784 and 1785. By 1788, the Surveyor General had been ordered by the New York Legislature to survey the island for development, setting aside useful sites for fortifications. The island was later granted in 1790 to the Regents of Columbia College, who in turn leased it for fundraising purposes "to one John Price."

Documentation

Post- 1783

"The fortifications on Governor's Island were now neglected and undervalued, and continued to be so until the breaking out of the French Revolution...." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals.")

"For a decade [following the war], little attention was paid to the need for an effective coastal fortification system. As a result, the fortification works on Governors Island were neglected and fell into disrepair. The Island became the site of a hotel and a race track." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 11.)

1784- 86

1784. "The name of the Island was officially changed from 'Nutten' to 'Governor's' by Act of Legislature, March 29, 1784." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 11.)

1784- 85. "Governor George Clinton, in 1784, leased the island to a certain Dr. Price, who built on it a hotel and laid out a handsome race- course, on which races were run in 1785 and 1786...." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals.")

1784- 85. "The later Governors in some cases leased the Island for their own profit. There is a tradition that Governor Clinton leased the Island for a race course to a Dr. Price who built a hotel in 1784 and that horse races were run upon it in 1784- 5." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 25.)

1784- 86. "When the island returned to the Governor's power, he is reported to have leased it for a race track and summer resort.... This Utopian feeling did not last, however, ...and races are supposed to have been run on the track only through 1786...." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937,* p. 24.)

1784- 85. "Bellamy points out that a rumor that Governor Clinton leased the island for a racecourse cannot be substantiated in his papers. Nor does such a use of the island show up in the newspapers from the 1780s." (Blanche Wilder Bellamy, *Governor's Island in Historic New York, Vol. I, Being the First Series of the Half Moon Papers,* New York: G.P. Putnam Sons, 1899, p. 169. Cited in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, May- June, 2004, Chapter 1, p. 24.)

1788

1788. "[B]y 1788, the New York Legislature ordered the Surveyor- General to survey the island for development. The Land Office commissioners were allowed to set aside whatever parts of the island they thought might be useful for fortifications." (Bellamy, *Governor's Island in Historic New York,* p. 169. Cited in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 1, p. 24.)

1788, March 7. "By Act of March 7, 1788, [Governor's Island was made part of] the county of New York." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 28.)

1790

1790, March 31. "By Act of March 31, 1790, for the encouragement of education, Governor's Island was granted to the Regents [of the University of the State of New York] unless needed for Military purposes.... It was leased to Mr. John Price for twenty one years at an annual rental of £93 with a deduction for taxes. However, this was not to last long...." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 25, quoting an account by F.B. Hough in the "Historical and Statistical Record of the University of the State of New York.")

1790. "In 1790 ... it was decided that Columbia College should own the island.... Granted for a few years by the state [of New York] in the hope that funds could be raised there for the college, the authorities leased the island to one John Price...." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937,* p. 24.)

1794- 1796

Summary

Increasing tensions with Great Britain resulted in Governors Island being reclaimed for military purposes by the New York State Legislature in 1794, voiding the grant to the Regents of Columbia College. An act passed by the state legislature on March 26, 1794, appropriated £30,000 for the erection of fortifications on Governors Island under the direction of the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York. That same month the U.S. Congress approved funding for fortifying a number of coastal ports, later known as the First American System of coastal fortifications. This funding included $13,737.73 for New York Harbor. (Note that this was a transitional period in American currency, in which both pounds and dollars were used.) Of the amount for New York Harbor, $3,737.52 was designated for earthen works on Governors Island, including $1,727.52 for "the expense of constructing batteries, embrasures and platforms, for 24 pieces [guns]," $810 for "a redoubt with embrasures," $200 for a "magazine," $500 for a "block- house or barracks," and $500 for "contingencies." The engineer chosen to design the defenses for New York Harbor was Charles Vincent, a French engineer in the temporary service of the United States. Vincent was directed in special instructions from Secretary of War Henry Knox dated April 1, 1794, to use his judgment "under directions of the Governor" in choosing the locations of the batteries and works. More specific instructions were given for the works themselves. The parapets were to be formed of sodded earth, the embrasures framed with wood, the batteries secured by a redoubt of a size to contain 500 men housed in barracks or a blockhouse, the powder magazines constructed of large timbers, a reverberatory furnace for red- hot balls provided for each battery, and additional protection provided by a fraize [palisade].

Although Charles Vincent is the acknowledged designer of the New York Harbor fortifications in 1794, it is questionable how much influence he had on the design of the works on Governors Island. Surviving remnants of earthworks dating to 1776 may have been incorporated in the new works. Construction was begun on April 21, 1794, just three weeks after Vincent had received his instructions from the Secretary of War. Labor was provided by a regiment of artillery and a brigade of militia of New York City. They were joined the following month by volunteers from the city, including Columbia College students, professionals, and tradesmen. Vincent described the works on Governors Island works several months later as "one bastioned square commanding two low batteries, quite finished," further noting "a great part of these work [on Governors Island] is finished." He suggested that "being only sodded, it will not stand a very long time." Vincent's estimate for the cost of the works on Governors Island was $30,000, and for all the works at New York $182,000. His plans were submitted to Congress on December 19, 1794, which included one plan and two profiles of Governors Island. The whereabouts of these drawings, if they survive, is unknown today. A plan published in Edmund Bank Smith's history of Governors Island in 1913 and identified as "The Jay Plan of Fortifications, 1795- 1801," may have been drawn by Charles Vincent (figure 6).

Additional funds to complete the works on Governors Island were appropriated by the state and federal governments in 1795. These included £20,000 for the works on both Governors and Ellis Islands granted by the New York State Legislature on April 6, 1795. A total of $11,866.54 was reported as having been expended on Governors Island by the U.S. Government for the year 1795. No details of this work are known. The fortification of Governors Island had been completed by January 16, 1796, described by the Secretary of War as "a fort made of earth, and two batteries under its protection, partly lined with brick masonry, two air furnaces, a large powder magazine, and a barrack for the garrison; the whole completed."

Documentation

1794

1794. "In 1794 Commissioners were appointed to erect fortifications, works were begun on Governor's Island and the Regent's title [to Governor's Island] was voided." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 25, quoting an account by F.B. Hough in the "Historical and Statistical Record of the University of the State of New York.")

1794. "The fortification on Governor's Island, New York Harbor, **[was] partly built 1794- 95** [emphasis added], enlarged and completed 1798- 1801, and partly rebuilt 1806-1808..." (Order dated 1904 by Elihu Root, Secretary of War, transcribed in Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 112.)

1794. "Potential conflict again with the British in 1794 led Congress to address a systematic solution to national coastal defense [since named the First System of Seacoast Defense]. It was the first time the national government prescribed a major national program, and it represented one of the largest single financial outlays since the nation's founding.... In January 1794 Congress appointed a committee to investigate the needs of coastal fortifications." ("Walbach Tower, Battery Farnsworth, Associated Structures, and Environs, Fort Point, New Castle, New Hampshire: Historic Structures Report," draft dated January 2005; National Park Service, Northeast Region, p. 19.)

1794. "During the 1790s, the threat of war spurred Americans into action to develop a defense system for their coastal cities. A lengthy seacoast and the threat of naval attack from enemies across the Atlantic made such a system necessary. In March of 1794, a Congressional appropriation initiated a program which became known as the First American System of fortification. It was designed to effectively fortify American ports. Among the most important of these ports was New York City. Governors Island was of extreme importance strategically in the new defensive system that was to be developed for the protection of New York." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 11)

1794- 1804. "The French scares which soon broke the period of peace put the island back on a war basis. In 1794 heroic steps were taken to put the island in a state of defense and during the following decade more than $110,000 was spent in trying to establish suitable fortifications, much voluntary labor being employed. Old records tell of the volunteer labor of

worthy associations such as the Tammany Society and the Irish and German societies of New York, not to speak of groups of the city's tallow chandlers, tanners and curriers, stone cutters, peruke [wig] makers and hairdressers, as well as the students of Columbia College." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937,* p. 25.)

1794. "The increasing international rivalry of England and France during the ensuing fifteen years brought war scare after war scare, and the 'fortification fever' seized the people of New York. The first instance was in 1794, when England was feared as the potential aggressor. Both the Federal and state governments passed legislation to improve the defenses of New York harbor, and fortifications were begun on Governor's, Ellis, and Bedloe's Islands, much of the work being done by civilian volunteers." (Thomas Pitkin, "Historic Structures Report, Part I, Castle Clinton," 1960, p. 8. Footnote cites a book by I.N. Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, 1498- 1909, 1928, pp. 1305- 07, 1314- 15, and 1318.)

1794, February 28. Excerpt of a committee report submitted to the United States House of Representatives February 28, 1794:

> The committee directed to report on such of the ports and harbors of the United States as require to be put in a state of defence, with an estimate of the expense thereof, report, as their opinion, that the following ports and harbors ought to be put in a state of defence. [A list of several ports and harbors follows, including New York.]
>
> That, in their opinion, the fortifications ought to be of a nature to defend the several ports and harbors against surprise by naval armaments; and that the parapets of the batteries and redoubts should be formed of earth, where circumstances will admit.
>
> That the several places, to be fortified, be garrisoned by troops in the pay of the United States....
>
> An estimate of the probable expense of fortifying the ... Harbors in the manner specified [includes]:
>
> Governor's Island, *Twenty- four Pieces* [guns]

The expense of constructing batteries, embrasures and platforms, for 24 pieces,	$1,727.52
A redoubt with embrasures	810.00
Magazine,	200.00
Block- house or barracks	500.00
Contingencies,	500.00
	$3,737.52

(*ASP*, 3rd Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 61- 62. LC.)

1794, March 20. "On March 20, 1794, Congress approved the recommendations and funding. Twenty- one ports [including New York Harbor] were to receive fortifications, and garrisons were approved using federal troops and pay .... The forts were to be built primarily of earth: they were intended to protect against a surprise raid, rather than a full- scale invasion.

Earthen forts would also be cheaper and faster to build, given the threat of imminent war with England. The guns to be utilized were those already available." ("Walbach Tower, Battery Farnsworth, Associated Structures, and Environs, Fort Point, New Castle, New Hampshire," p. 19.

1794, March 26. "...the State [of New York] was duly credited [by the United States Government] with the several amounts of money it had expended, by authority of legislative acts, in the erection of fortifications on Governor's Island. By the authority of an act passed March 26, 1794, £30,000 had been so appropriated. This sum had been expended, under the supervision of George Clinton, Matthew Clarkson, James Watson, Richard Varick, Nicholas Fish, Ebenezer Stevens, and Elijah Hammond." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals." This reference was later interpreted by Smith in *Governor's Island* (p. 54) as follows: "On March 26, 1794, Congress appropriated for fortifications on Governor's Island $150,000. This expenditure was under the direction of George Clinton, Mathew Clarkson, James Watson, Rich'd Varick, Nicholas Fish, Ebenezer Stevens and A. Hammons.")

1794. "In 1794, Congress also added to the funding already appropriated by the State of New York to build fortifications on Governors Island." (Robert B. Roberts, *Encyclopedia of Historic Forts: The Military, Pioneer, and Trading Posts of the United States*; New York: Macmillian, 1988; pp. 555- 556. Cited in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 2, p. 30.)

1794. "Construction of the Governors Island fortification was begun shortly after the federal appropriation under the supervision of a Board of Commissioners appointed by the state. The new work was erected in the same location as the earlier fort but was increased in size by a third. Because of a lack of sufficient funding, the Board was compelled to call on local citizens for assistance with construction of the fort." ("Proceedings of the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York and Its Vicinity, April 2, 1794, to February 6, 1796," B.V. Sec. NY, Manuscripts Division, New- York Historical Society. Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 12. Also see "National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form: Governors Island," by Barbara Hightower, Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, Summer 1983; continuation sheet 2, Item 8, page 3.

1794, April. "The United States was not yet producing any military engineers, so Secretary of War Henry Knox recruited a number of foreign engineers to supervise the design and construction of forts....." ("Walbach Tower, Battery Farnsworth, Associated Structures, and Environs, Fort Point, New Castle, New Hampshire," p. 19.)

1794, April. "Charles Vincent [was] the presidentially appointed French engineer who designed the harbor's fortifications ...." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 11.)

1794, April 1. Excerpts of "Special instructions to Charles Vincent, acting as a temporary Engineer in the service of the United States," by Secretary of War Henry Knox, April 1, 1794:

> The President of the United States, considering the importance of New York, from its local situation, and the difficulty of fortifying it with small

means, is desirous of having the separate opinions of several engineers upon the subject. You will, therefore, please to repair to that city, and , if the Governor be present, show him these instructions.... I also enclose you the estimate of the sums which have been appropriated by Congress to this object. [Total for New York harbor is $12,522.36, including Governor's Island, $3,737.52; Paulus Hook, $3,161.68; and New York, $5,623.16.]

It will be readily perceived that the amount of this appropriation will not effectually fortify a harbor so circumstanced as New York. But this sum cannot be exceeded, and all your estimates are to be conformed accordingly.

The parapets which have been contemplated, have been of earth. It is conceived that, in most places, earth may be procured of a tenacious quality, and that a parapet formed thereof, would be respectable, as well for its defence as its duration, more especially if it is properly stopped and sodded, and sown with a certain species of grass called knotgrass.

It will depend upon your judgment at what places to have embrasures, or what to fire en barbette with the new carriage, such as are used on the sea coast of France.

It is, however, apprehended, that in all cases where embrasures are necessary, they ought to be framed of joist, and faced with two inch plank. Embrasures formed of earth are too liable to be injured. ...

The batteries which are to be erected on points of land, islands, or other places at a distance from New York, ought to be covered or secured by a redoubt, or other enclosed work, in which the garrison should reside constantly, either in a barrack, or a strong blockhouse, as shall be judged most expedient. But, in general, as the garrisons will be weak in numbers, a block house mounting one or two small pieces of cannon in its upper story will be more secure, and therefore to be preferred. These, however, ought not to be much, if any, exposed to the fire of heavy cannon. A block house will not contain more than fifty men. If the garrison, therefore, should be enlarged, tents must be used.

The redoubts in general ought to be of a size to contain five hundred men, so as to resist a sudden enterprise of an enemy, and perhaps the idea ought to be embraced in the first instance, that they should be of such extent as to admit timber casemates to be erected hereafter, so as to enable the garrison to resist, in some tolerable degree, a bombardment.

But it is not proposed at present to erect such casemates, excepting for a magazine, which must be formed of massy timber, and be six feet thick on the roof, exclusive of the earth, and jointed and calked in such a manner as to be perfectly tight. Care must be taken to have the magazines properly ventilated, and free from dampness. They are to be of a size sufficient to hold one hundred and fifty rounds of powder for each piece of cannon intended to be served from it. The spot at which a magazine of this nature shall be fixed, will require great judgment, so as

to combine security against an enemy, either open or subtle, or any danger from common accidents.

Your judgment will also direct what parts of your works shall be protected by a fraize, and what by palisades, or whether your redoubts shall have embrasures, or fire en barbette, with small cannon. As the redoubts are to cover the batteries, they would certainly secure and resist better without embrasures—the batteries are to annoy.

The choice of the ground on which the batteries and works are to be erected, with all the combinations and effects depending thereon, will rest upon your judgment, under the directions of the Governor. It has not been intended by any thing herein specified, to point out the particular manner in which the works should be executed. Outlines only have been given to serve in regulating the expense, which is limited by the sums before mentioned.

A reverberatory furnace for red hot balls must be erected for each battery.

Having finished your plans, you are to lay one copy before the Governor, and to transmit another to me, with full details of the reasons for your opinions. It is to be desired that you instantly undertake this business, in order that you may be ready to receive further orders, which will be given to you as soon as you shall be able to execute them....

H. Knox, Secretary of War

(*ASP*, 3rd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 77- 78. LC.)

1794, April 21. "On April 21 1794, 50 officers of a regiment of artillery and a brigade of militia of New York City began work on the fortification. A ferry was established between New York and Governors Island to transport the city- based volunteers who signed up to help protect their waterfront. On April 22nd, 1794, the New York cartmen volunteered to work on the island. The Tammany Society and the Democratic Society both volunteered. A sign- up list with dates out of order shows the extent of public participation in the building of Governors island's 1790s defensive structures: May 10—English republicans, May 8—Columbia College Students, May 5—Journeymen hatters, May 1—Republican ship carpenters, May 5—cordwainers of city, May 6—lawyers, May 6—St. Andrews society of the state of NY, May 7—Peruke [wig] makers and hair dressers, May 24—General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, May 7—students at law, May 9—Patriotic grovers [sic]of this city, 10th and 17th—Patriotic Schoolmasters, 12th—patriotic Republican bakers, coopers, tallow chandlers, members of Provident society." (Bellamy, *Governor's Island in Historic New York,* no page no. Cited in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 2, pp. 28- 29.)

1794, May 9. "A new Corps of Artillerists and Engineers was formed by Act of May 9, 1794, specifically to build and garrison the anticipated new posts." ("Walbach Tower, Battery Farnsworth, Associated Structures, and Environs, Fort Point, New Castle, New Hampshire," p. 19.)

1794, July 9. Excerpt of a letter from the Secretary of War to the Secretary of the Treasury dated July 9, 1794:

> ...I have the honor of transmitting you the sums to be expended upon the fortifications specified by the laws, the entire appropriation for which amount to one hundred and six thousand dollars. The sums apportioned to the different places amount to one hundred and four thousand and twenty- five dollars and fifty- two cents, leaving a balance of one thousand nine hundred and seventy- four dollars and forty- eight nets, to be apportioned hereafter to such places as may be deemed necessary. [For New York:] $12,522.36.
>
> (*ASP*, 3rd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 105- 106. Library of Congress.)

1794, [- - - -]ber 10. Excerpts of "General observations on the defence of the Harbor and City of New York, by engineer Charles Vincent, New York, 1794":

> ...Considering now the left hand shore, of which there is but one point occupied in the narrows, it will suggest the necessity to bestow the greatest attention in forming a solid protection on Governor's Island, the happy position of which can procure crossing fires with most of the points taken on the right hand shore, being equally distant from Bedloe's and Oyster Islands, and the city, with which it is possible to obtain crossing fires on the entrance of East river, where should, probably retire all the riches of the harbor, should the coast come to be attacked....
>
> Having thus given a general idea of the means of defence, which seem convenient to a point that ought, undoubtedly, be looked upon as one of the most important in the Union, we will endeavor to collect, in a general table, and at one view, all that we have deemed necessary to undertake, in order to ensure to this harbor the security convenable to the most magnificent emporium of the universe.
>
> [Attached table, being an] approximation of the necessary expense for finishing the proposed works for the defence of the harbor and city of New York against a marine enemy [including]:
>
> Name of the Spots to be Fortified: Governor's Island.
>
> Names of the Works to be Constructed: One bastioned square commanding two low batteries, quite finished.
>
> Amount of Each Work: $30,000 [for Governor's Island; $182,000 for all the works at New York].

> Observations: A great part of these works [on Governors Island] is finished. It is to be observed, nevertheless, that being only sodded, it will not stand a very long time; and that if they were lined with stones, the estimate should be very much higher.
>
> (*ASP*, 3rd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 78- 81. LC.)

1794, December 19. Submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives: "in pursuance of the instructions of the President of the United States, the Secretary of War respectfully submits to the House of Representatives copies of the instructions to the engineers, for erecting the fortifications for the defence of the sea ports of the United States, and their reports thereupon." Includes "one plan and two profiles on Governor's Island ... by Vincent." (*ASP*, 3rd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 71- 72. LC.)

1794. Map of Governors Island identified in a 1913 publication as "The Jay Plan of Fortifications, 1795- 1801." This may be the preliminary plan for fortifications submitted to Congress by engineer Charles Vincent in December 1794. (Smith, *Governor's Island*, follows p. 54. The original map was then noted to be "in possession M.S. Institution.") See fig. 6.

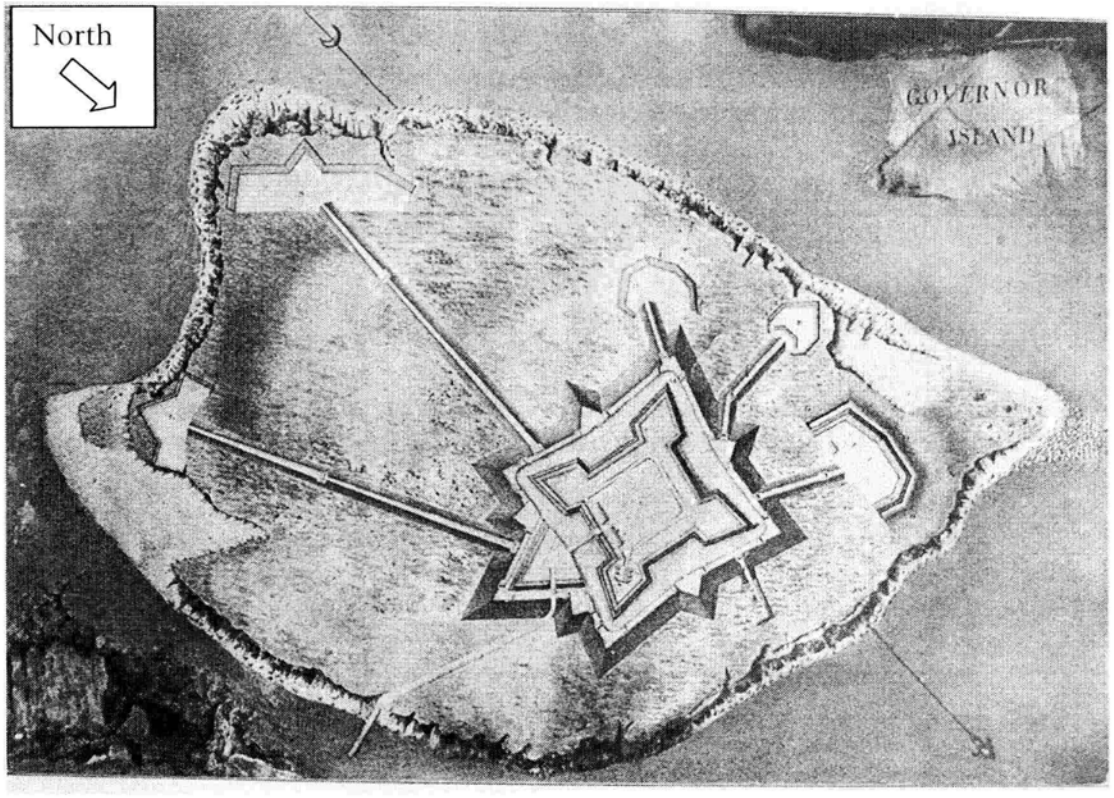


Figure 6. Plan of proposed fortifications on Governors Island, circa 1794.

1794. Amount actually expended by the U.S. Government on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1794 was $13,737.73. The Secretary of War reported on February 13, 1806, that $1,327.00 had been expended on Fort Jay in 1794. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 141; and 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. I, p. 193. LC.)

1795

1795, January 28. The committee for fortifications reported to the U.S. House of Representatives that an additional $8,000 would be sufficient to complete the fortifications at New York. (*ASP*, 3rd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 107- 108; and 4th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. I, pp. 115- 116. LC.)

1795, April 6. "A further sum of £20,000 pounds had been granted April 6, 1795 [by authority of an act passed by the New York State legislature] to complete certain works on this [Governors] island and on Ellis Island. The general [federal] government had given but little attention to the fortifying and improvement of the [Governor's] island." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals." This reference was later interpreted by Smith on page 54 of his book *Governor's Island* as follows: "A further sum of $100,000 was appropriated on April 6, 1795, to complete the works on Governor's and Ellis' Islands.")

1795. Amount expended by the U.S. War Department on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1795: $11,866.54. The Secretary of War reported on February 13, 1806, that $6,866.54 had been expended on Fort Jay in 1795. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 141; and 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. I, p. 193. LC.)

1796

1796, January 16. The Secretary of War reported to the U.S. Senate on the "State of the Fortifications of the United States," including the following description of Governor's Island:

> New York.—Governor's Island has been fortified with a fort made of earth, and two batteries under its protection, partly lined with brick masonry, two air furnaces, a large powder magazine, and a barrack for the garrison; the whole completed.
>
> (*ASP*, 4th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 110- 111. LC.)

1796. "Subsequent appropriations totaling nearly $92,000 over the next six years [1796-1802] allowed for the enlargement and improvement of the structure which was named Fort Jay in honor of Congressional Secretary of Foreign Affairs, John Jay...." [Sic: This expenditure was for the fortification of New York Harbor, which included Governors Island.] ("National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form: Governors Island," Item 8, Statement of Significance, pp. 2- 3.)

1796. Amount expended by the U.S. War Department on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1796: $1,124.00. The Secretary of War reported on February 13, 1806, that this entire amount had been expended on Fort Jay. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 141 and 193. LC.)

1797

1797, February 10. "On February 10, 1797, [the Secretary of War reported] that no alterations had been made since January, 1796, except in the repairs and such additions as could be made by the garrison. During this time there had been expended by the general government on the fortifications of the island as follows: in 1794, $1327; in 1795, $6,866.54; in 1796, $1,124. But now the apprehension of a French invasion caused such clamor for protection among the people that immediate attention by the general government was bestowed upon properly fortifying Governor's Island." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals.")

1797, February 10. The committee on fortifications reported to the U.S. House of Representatives that no alterations had been made to the fortifications since January 1796, except "such repairs and additions as could be made by the garrisons where troops have been stationed." Further, statements had been received from the board of commissioners and the engineer for fortifying the port and harbor of New York, containing descriptions and estimates for additional construction. (*ASP*, 4th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 116. LC.)

1797, June 6. The War Office recommended to a committee of the House of Representatives on fortifications that an additional appropriation of $90,000 be made to complete the works on Governor's Island, Bedloe's Island, and Oyster Island. (*ASP*, 5th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 117- 118. LC.)

1797. No funds were expended by the U.S. Government on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1797. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 141 and 193. LC.)

1798- 1805

Summary

Fears of a French invasion in 1797 prompted additional appropriations to be made by the U.S. Congress to complete and enhance the coastal works begun in 1794. This second campaign has become known as the second phase of the First American System of fortifications. The amount expended on the Governors Island fortifications by the U.S. War Department for the years 1798- 1801 totaled $80,695.69. Governors Island was still within the jurisdiction of New York State in 1798 when the works thereon were named "Fort Jay" for then- Governor and statesman John Jay. Two years later, on February 15, 1800, jurisdiction of the island was granted to the United States by Act of the New York State Legislature. The earliest known drawing of the almost- completed fort is a "Plan of Fort Jay...as it was in 1800" prepared by Joseph Mangin in January 1801 (fig. 7). This shows a four- sided fortification comprising four bastions and parapet walls with embrasures for 51 gun emplacements. The primary entrance was "the Gate" on the east side, accessed by a "Bridge" and "Draw- Bridge" that crossed a dry moat called the "Ditch." The rear entrance, or "Postern Gate," was located on the west side. Housing for the garrison was provided by three barracks, labeled "Caserns," situated on the east and north sides of the interior courtyard. Two smaller barracks flanked the east gate, and a third larger barrack was situated perpendicular to the gate on the north side. Fresh water was provided by a well, spelled "Weel," in the center of the courtyard. Gunpowder was stored in a "Powder Magazine" in the northeast bastion, and a "Flag" was located in the northwest bastion.

A written description of Fort Jay dated February 15, 1802, was provided by Major D. Wadsworth to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, for inclusion in a report to the Secretary of War. Wadsworth portrayed Fort Jay as "a regular square Fort with Bastions" that was still incomplete and therefore "not capable of any Defense in its present state." Not yet finished were the outer masonry walls, or counterscarp, of the ditch; the drawbridge at the gate; the banquette behind the parapet walls; and the platforms for the guns. Completed components of the fort included a timber parapet filled with earth, 12 feet thick, with 51 embrasures. A berm below the parapet was "well fraised" with pointed sticks driven into the ground. At the main entrance was a "handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde," or guardhouse. A secondary entrance, or "sally port," was "located in the opposite Curtain...carried under the rampart." Located within the fort were barracks of sufficient size to hold two companies and a "large magazine" for storing gunpowder. A "square Blockhouse of Timber," two stories tall, had been constructed over the well since Joseph Mangin's plan of 1800, described as an "unsightly building" that did "not seem to promise much utility." Fort Jay was also provided with two detached batteries, one on the south side, the other on the west side. Although not considered defensible, the fort was nevertheless armed with two 24- pounders, 19 heavy cannon, two mortars, five 8- inch howitzers, eight French 4- pounders, and four American 3- pounders.

The garrison at Fort Jay consisted of 52 men in 1803 and 44 men in 1804. No records of the fort were reviewed for the year 1805.

Documentation

1798

1798. "The fortification on Governor's Island, New York Harbor, [was] partly built 1794- 95, **enlarged and completed 1798- 1801** [emphasis added], and partly rebuilt 1806-1808...." (Order dated 1904 by Elihu Root, Secretary of War; transcribed in Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 112.)

1798. "[N]ow the apprehension of a French invasion caused such clamor for protection among the people that immediate attention by the general government was bestowed upon properly fortifying Governor's Island. $30,117 were at once appropriated to be expended [in 1798] on the fort, which now became known as FORT JAY. Such was the fervor of the day that the professors and students of Columbia College went in a body to Governor's Island and worked on the fortifications with shovels and wheelbarrows!" ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals."

1798. "Such was the fear of French invasion that the Professors and Students of Columbia College came to the Island and worked with shovels and barrows to complete the work. The Garrison at this time consisted on one Major, one Captain, one Surgeon, two 1st Lieutenants, one cadet, three Sergeants, one corporal, four musicians, five artificers and 34 privates." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 54.)

"In 1798 the fort was honored with the name of 'Fort Jay.'" (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, p. 26.)

"John Jay (1745- 1829), for whom Fort Jay was presumably named, served as Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1784- 89, as first Chief Justice of the new Supreme Court from 1789 to 1795, and as Governor of New York from 1795 to 1801." (www.columbia.edu.)

1798. Amount expended by the U.S. War Department on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1798 was $30,117.24. The Secretary of War reported on February 13, 1806, that this entire amount had been expended on Fort Jay. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 141; and 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. I, p. 193. LC.)

1798- 1801

1798. "Soon after the work [of coastal defense] was commenced [in 1794] the threat of war with England diminished. However, just four years later (1798) the United States entered into the Quasi- War with France, and efforts were again begun to reinforce coastal defenses. Since this work consisted mostly of enhancing and completing the earlier works, it is generally considered a second phase of the First System, rather than a separate generation. Congress approved another $115,000 in funding in late 1797 to continue work [fortifying U.S. ports and

harbors]...." ("Walbach Tower, Battery Farnsworth, Associated Structures, and Environs, Fort Point, New Castle, New Hampshire," p. 20.)

1799

1799. "In 1799 $30,116 were appropriated [sic: expended] for the work [on Governors Island]." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 54.)

1799. Amount expended by the U.S. War Department on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1799: $30,116.18. The Secretary of War reported on February 13, 1806, that $40,116.18 [sic?] had been expended on Fort Jay in 1799. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 141; and 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. I, p. 93. LC.)

1799- 1801. "Liberal appropriations were made by Congress in the three succeeding years for completing and improving the fort [sic: for fortifying New York Harbor]. In 1799 Congress appropriated [sic: the U.S. War Department expended] $30,116.18; in 1800, $20,124; in 1801, $10,338.05." ("A Report on Barracks and Hospitals.")

1800

"In 1800 the island was ceded to the United States by the State of New York...." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937,* p. 26.)

1800, February 15. "Governor's Island in New York Harbor [was] granted to the United States by Act of the [New York] State Legislature of February 15, 1800...." General Orders No. 4, War Department, Washington, D.C., January 13, 1909. (Drawer 189, NY- 14- 1; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1800, May 1. The Secretary of War recommended to the Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives on Fortifications that $100,000 be appropriated to fortify the ports and harbors of the United States. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 152. LC.)

1800. Amount expended by the U.S. War Department on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1800: $20,124.40. The Secretary of War reported in 1806 that $10,124.40 had been expended on Fort Jay in 1800. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 153; and 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 193. LC.)

1801

1801. Amount expended by the U.S. War Department on the New York Harbor fortifications, including Governors Island, for the year 1801: $10,338.05. The Secretary of War reported in 1806 that this full amount had been on Fort Jay. (*ASP*, 6th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 153; and 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. I, p. 193. LC.)

1801. Smith, *Governor's Island*, pp. 54- 55:

> In 1801 [sic: 1802] Fort Jay had a "handsome gateway with a corps de garde drawbridge." In connection with this gateway there is a pretty legend which, though persistent, cannot be verified as to time or person. The story is that a prisoner who was a stonecutter by trade was detailed to make the fine carving which adorns the gateway. During the progress of the work one day the commanding officer's little daughter stood under the gateway with the stonecutter who was inspecting his work from below. Just then a heavy block of stone or a stone cannon ball fell and would have killed the child, but the prisoner, too late to pull her aside, interposed his own body and saved her life with serious injury to himself. His reward for the gallant act was pardon. If the story cannot be proved, neither can it be disproved, and it has been told long enough to entitle it to a respectful hearing and a willing acceptance.
>
> In the centre of Fort Jay of 1801 [sic: 1802] was a square blockhouse of timber two stories high, but probably not cannon- proof, with a well under it. This is probably the block house for which Congress appropriated $500 in 1794.

1801, January 16. "Plan of Fort Jay on Governor's Island, State of New York, as it was in 1800," by Joseph Mangin, January 16, 1801. The plan shows a four- sided fort keyed with numerous features. The primary entrance was "the Gate" (C) on the east side of the fort accessed by "the Bridge" (A) and "the Draw- Bridge" (B) that crossed "the Ditch" (D). The rear entrance, called "the Postern Gate" (G) was located on the west side of the fort. Three structures labeled "the Caserns" (E), or military barracks, were situated on the east and north sides of the courtyard: two smaller ones on either side of the gate, and a longer one situated 90 degrees to the gate. A well, spelled "Weel" (F), is shown as a circular element in the center of the interior courtyard. A structure for storing gun powder, "the Powder Magazine" (H), was in the northeast bastion, and "the Flag" (I) in the northwest bastion. Embrasures, or splayed openings, in the parapet accommodated 51 guns. (Drawer 36, Sheet 16; RG 77: CAB/NACP. Reproduced in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 27.) See fig. 7.

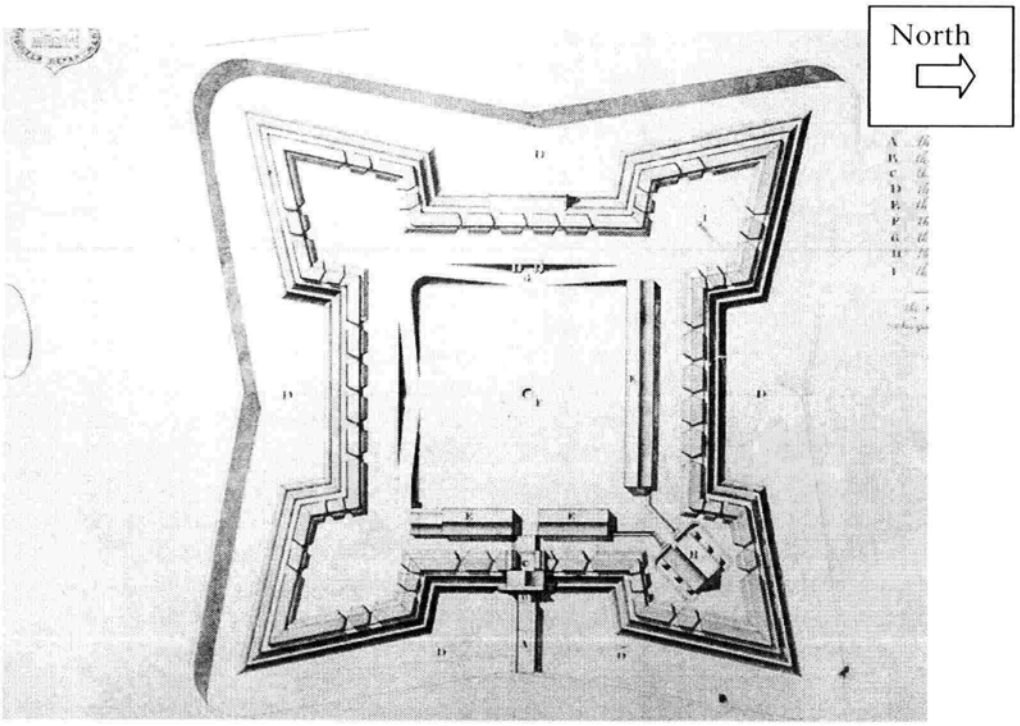


Figure 7. Plan of Fort Jay "as it was in 1800" by Joseph Mangin, January 16, 1801.

1801. Major Jonathan Williams was commissioned as Inspector of Fortifications:

> President Adams appointed [Jonathan] Williams, Feb. 16, 1801, a Major in the Second Regiment of Artillerists and Engineers, and on Dec. 14th following, President Jefferson...commissioned him Inspector of Fortifications. In the summer of 1801, Williams...as ordered...went to West Point and assumed command, Dec. 15, 1801, of the embryo Military School which preceded the present Military Academy.
>
> (Bvt. Major- General George W. Cullum, *Campaigns of the War of 1812-15 Against Great Britain, Sketched and Criticised; with Brief Biographies of the American Engineers*. New York: James Miller, 1879, pp. 20- 21.)

1802

1802, February 15. Excerpt of a report by Major D. Wadsworth, Reg. of Artill. & Eng., Fort Jay, conveyed to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, "for the purpose of enabling you to report to the Secretary of War":

> I. Fort Jay is a regular square Fort with Bastions. The exterior side taken on the Berms of the Parapet is about 400 feet. The flanks are open (that is perpendicular or nearly so to the Lines of Defence). The Parapet which is of Timber, with the Interstices filled up with Earth is about 12 feet in thickness and placed upon a Rampart of Earth faced with sodwork. The Berms of the Parapet (or the upper Berms for it has two) is well fraised.

The Counterscarp which is of Masonry is not quite finished. There is a handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde [guard room], Drawbridge not yet finished, and in the opposite Curtain a Sally Port carried under the Rampart. The Banquet of the Parapet has not yet been constructed nor have the Platforms of the Guns been laid. Of consequence it is not capable of any Defense in its present state.

The interior of the Parapet of Fort Jay, according to my computation amounts to between 1700 and 1800 feet, and, consequently, allowing a soldier in action to occupy three feet front and the Parapet to be lined by Troops drawn up in two Ranks, it would take upwards of 1000 men to line the Parapet, exclusive of the detached Batteries. [* It may perhaps be objected that this calculation is too large, because the Canon take up a considerable Part of the Parapet, which consequently cannot be lined wholly with musquetry; to which it may be answered that in a Plan of this Magnitude, a certain Body of Men ought to be kept as a Corps de Reserve ready to secure any part which might be giving way, and the principle above adopted is that generally followed in computing the capacity of Redoubts and the number of men necessary to man them.

The Parapet has 51 Embrasures (viz, two in each face of the Bastion, two in each Flank and five in each Curtain, except that in which the Gate is placed, which has but four. Allowing then, 8 Men to a Gun, the number necessary to [s?]ight the guns would be a little rising of 400. To these must be added the number of Men necessary to work the Guns in the detached Batteries, which on the present Plan are 22. Making in all 73 guns, which allowing the aforesaid number of 8 Men to a Gun will give 584 artillery men for the service of the Cannon.—To enable therefore Fort Jay to make an effectual Defence against a Superior Force it would be necessary to throw into it a Body of about 1000 Infantry and half that number of Artillery; for which as will immediately appear there is at present no accommodation, nor do I conceive it possible that sufficient quarters for that number of men can be placed in the Body of Fort Jay, unless perhaps by a total and very expensive change in the nature of the work.

The Barracks at present erected may answer very conveniently for two companies with their officers and in a case of necessity another company, and no more might possibly be crowded into them. There is a Space remaining for the erection of another Range [?] of Barracks sufficient for two companies more which is the greatest number (that is 5 companies with officers) that can be provided with Quarters in Fort Jay.

A square Blockhouse of Timber with its sides perpendicular to the capitals of the Bastion has been erected in the Center of Fort Jay. This unsightly Building two Stories high, supposed to be Cannon Proof, but of which I am very doubtful, does not seem to promise much utility. Under it is a well of good water, which answers for the ordinary supplies of the Garrison. It is proper to observe that good water is generally found on Governor's Island at a moderate depth below the surface.

There are two essential Defects in Fort Jay, the one natural and the other adventitious, which united to the want of Room for the Troops that would be necessary to defend it successfully, will forever render it incapable of affording a Defence proportional to the Expences which have been incurred in erecting it.

1. It is commanded from Long Island in two Places at the Distance of ¾ and a mile, and more completely at a Distance of 1 ¼ miles. It is also commanded from Red Hook at a Distance of 1400 or 1500 yards. Having besides no Lodgments which are Bombproof worth mentioning it must be considered that it could not resist a Moment after the Enemy should have established a Battery of Cannon or more especially a Battery of Mortar, at either of the Points above mentioned.

2. The second Defect, which I consider as adventitious or accidental depends upon the particular construction of Fort Jay and might have been avoided when the works was first laid out. The Portion of the Fort is such that the Capitol of the Bastions prolonged extends directly up the East River, by which means, as the salient angles of a Fortification are known to be its _____ ___, the protection and defence which Fort Jay can afford to the East River, is the least possible, it not being practicable after all the guns shall have been mounted to bring more than two out of 51 to bear upon that Part.

Another salient angle of the Fort bears nearly upon a Height on Long Island which commands Governor's Island. Consequently supposing that height occupied by an Enemy the annoyance which he would receive from Fort Jay would be rendered by its Position the least that it could be.

It presents besides a Front directly towards the Battery at New York distant 1200 & 1400 yards. Supposing Governor's Island then to fall into the Hands of the Enemy his Power to drive us from our remaining Defences, the Battery at New York, is thereby made the greatest possible. Not to mention that there exists not the least Probability that an Enemy's Ship would anchor directly on a Line between Governor's Island the Battery at New York, and that if it were probable, yet the Distance being only about 1200 yards is too small for a direct cross Fire, and the Batteries would be liable almost to batter each other as to damage the Enemy.

For these reasons given, I conceive the Plan of Fort Jay, in respect to the natural advantages and disadvantages of the ground to be nearly the worst which could have been adopted.

In fact the situation of Governor's Island, commanded as it is from Long Island would render it unwise to attempt the Erection of a Fort of any work capable of sustaining a siege. It is very well situated for the establishment of Batteries to protect the Harbour and Town, but for any other Purpose of Defence it seems to be by nature ill adapted. It may very well constitute a secondary, but ought now to be made a principal Point of Defence.

> Fort Jay is provided with two detached Batteries, one placed opposite the salient angle of the S.W. Bastion; the other opposite to the western Face of the N.W. Bastion [formerly with 13 guns]....
>
> The ordnance of Fort Jay (including the guns already mentioned) [i.e., two 24 Pounders transferred from the N.W. detached battery] consists of 19 pieces of heavy cannon and two mortars, besides a [train?] of Field Pieces on traveling carriages, consisting of 5 8 inch Howitzers, 10 French 4 Pounders (two of which are at Bedlow's Islands), and four (American) three Pounders.
>
> It may be observed that the 13 Gun Battery above mentioned has a Storehouse or rather Gun Shed and a small Magazine. The Battery itself the Store house and Magazine are entirely uncovered on the side of the East River, consequently could be easily ruined by a Ship or two which should take a judicious position on that Quarter.
>
> P.S. I have omitted to mention that the Furnaces for heating shot have been erected at the 13 Gun Battery at Fort Jay.... There is a large magazine at Fort Jay, but none at Ellis Island.
>
> (Jonathan Williams Papers, Manuscripts Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University.)

1802, April – July. Major Jonathan Williams:

> When [Thomas] Jefferson became President of the United States, he transferred, April 1, 1802, Major Williams to the head of the Corps of Engineers created by the recent law of March 16, 1802, in which it was provided that the Principal Engineer should have the Superintendence of the Military Academy. On the 8th July [1802],...he was promoted to be Lieut. Colonel.
>
> (Cullum, *Campaigns of the War of 1812- 15*, pp. 20- 21.)

1803

1803. The garrison at Fort Jay for 1803 consisted of 52 men, including one major, one captain, two first lieutenants, one cadet, three sergeants, three corporals, two musicians, eight artificers, and 25 privates. (*ASP*, 8th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 175. LC.)

1804

1804. The garrison at Fort Jay for 1803 consisted of 44 men, including one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, three sergeants, one corporal, four musicians, five artificers, and 34 privates. (*ASP*, 8th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 176. LC.)

1806- 1809

Summary

Increasing tensions with Great Britain resulted in a second national campaign to strengthen the coastal defenses of the country, later known as the Second American System of fortifications. It was during this period that Fort Jay on Governors Island was renamed Fort Columbus, although the official order for this change has not yet been found. Repairs and improvements of the works on Governors Island were estimated by the Secretary of War in February 1806 to cost $60,000. The state of the works in the spring of that year was recalled by Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Williams, head of the Corps of Engineers, in a draft report dated November 1808. Williams described Fort Jay as then being "in a state of absolute ruin," the sodded ramparts "subject to continual depredation by successive rains," the rotten wooden fraises "daily falling by their own weight," and the wooden parapet "a mass of ligneous putrifiction." These were "remove[d] as rubbish, to give place for a Work composed of durable materials." The only elements deemed worthy of saving were the walled counterscarp, the gate, the magazine, and two barracks. Also left undisturbed were trees in the parade (courtyard), the center well, and the timber blockhouse over the well, although the blockhouse was removed two years later. Construction began in July 1806 with the laying of a corner stone and was well underway by July 1807, when Colonel Jonathan Williams was assigned the task of "commencing and compleating" all the works for New York Harbor. The Secretary of War reported to Congress in November 1807 that the rebuilding of Fort Columbus was "in great forwardness" and would be "a strong regular work of the best materials." Another report submitted to Congress the following month described Fort Columbus as "an enclosed work of earth and wood...[that] has, within the two last years, been improved and faced with permanent mason work, and is nearly completed, and may be considered as a strong, well constructed, regular fort."

Details of the work at Fort Columbus are provided in the draft report by Colonel Williams on the "Progress & Present State of the Fortifications in the Harbour of New York" dated November 1808, which was summarized in a submittal to Congress in January 1809. The shape of the old fort was retained on the east, south, and west sides; a ravelin (triangular outwork) was added to the north side. The fort was also increased in size with the addition of 14 feet on each side, providing a terreplein (horizontal platform) 36 feet wide between the back of the barracks and parapet. Features of the new fort included a covered way, or depressed walkway, along the ditch's outer wall (the counterscarp) that was 20 feet wide. The scarp, or interior wall of the ditch, was 20 feet high, and the ditch itself 40 feet wide. The stone walls of the parapet atop the scarp were 10 feet wide, filled with tamped earth, and topped with sod. No embrasures (splayed openings for the guns) were provided in the new parapet, the guns instead being placed "en barbette," sitting on raised platforms of wood and flagstones behind the parapet. Two new barracks were built inside the fort on the parade or courtyard: a one- story structure on the south side, and a two- story structure on the west side opposite the gate. A second well providing fresh water was in the new north ravelin. No drains were thought necessary at the fort due to the sandy nature of the soil. Work remaining to be done included finishing two gun platforms and the interior of the west barrack; demolition of two old breastworks west of the fort; construction of the depressed pathway, or "covered defile," connecting with a new stone

battery to the west (later called Castle Williams); and sodding of the surrounding glacis (slope extending away from the fort).

The project of rebuilding Fort Columbus appears to have been completed by December 1809, judging by a report submitted to Congress by the Secretary of War that described it as follows: "Fort Columbus, on Governor's Island; an enclosed pentagonal work, with four bastions of masonry, calculated for one hundred guns, fifty- five mounted, with brick barracks for two hundred and thirty men, including officers. A stone and brick magazine...." Also mentioned in this report is the "castle" or "stone tower" that was later named Castle Williams, described as having only "the lower tier finished."

Documentation

1806- 09

1806. "The fortification on Governor's Island, New York Harbor, [was] partly built 1794- 95, enlarged and completed 1798- 1801, and **partly rebuilt 1806- 1808** [emphasis added]..." (Order dated 1904 by Elihu Root, Secretary of War, transcribed in Smith's *Governor's Island,* p. 112.)

1806. "In 1806, when war was brewing again with England, the [federal] government tore down almost all the so- called fortifications on the island and started anew to make a permanent fort." (*Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937,* p. 26.)

1806. Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 56:

> ...No further improvements were made till 1806, when Fort Jay was demolished, except the walled counterscarp, the gate, sally port, magazine and two barracks. All the rest of the works was removed to allow of more durable material to be used in construction.
>
> On the site of old Jay was erected a new Fort with the name changed to Fort Columbus, which name was retained until 1904 when by orders of the War Department it was re- named Fort Jay. The new fortification consisted of an enclosed pentagonal work with four bastions of masonry to hold 100 guns. On three of its sides it was built the same as Fort Jay the elder with the addition of 14 feet on each side; and on the north wall of a ravelin with two retired casemated flanks. Guns to command the (dry) moat were located here.... The minutes of the Military and Philosophical Society of West Point (1808) state that two detached batteries were built about this period.... The parapet had 52 embrasures and it would take 1,000 men to man the parapet. This work was completed in 1809.

1806, January 16. Excerpt of a report on fortifications made by committee member Mr. Mitchill to the U.S. Senate on January 28, 1806, including the following remarks on Governors Island:

> Governor's Island has already been much improved by military works, and is the spot on which Fort Jay and the principal other fortifications have been erected.... The greater part of Governor's Island is understood to be the property of the State—a small part of it only having been purchased by the nation. On these parcels of ground [Governors Island and Stanton Island] the labor of constructing works is the principal matter of expense. And it is in this posture of affairs that the memorialists, after the State has done so much, ask the nation to bear a proportional part of the charge, necessary to provide more formidable means of defence and offence.
>
> (*ASP*, 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 191. LC.)

1806, February 18. Excerpt of a report by the Secretary of War Henry Dearborn, submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives February 18, 1806, "relating to fortifications within the United States, and the territories thereof." Expenditures for Fort Jay, New York Harbor, for the years 1794- 1801 were reported to be $100,012.41. Additional "sums necessary for repairs and improvements" of Fort Jay were estimated to be $60,000.

> Remarks in relation to New York Harbor:
>
> On Governor's Island, a regular enclosed work, with detached batteries for heavy cannon and mortars, was erected with a magazine and barracks, which require considerable repairs and improvements....
>
> No considerable improvements have been made on the above mentioned works, or additional fortifications erected, for the defence of the harbor of New York, within the last five years; there having been no funds for those objects furnished by the State, as contemplated by the act of Congress of the 3d of May, 1798, and understood to have been intended by the State....
>
> Lieutenant Colonel Williams, of the corps of engineers, was, last autumn, directed to make...a survey of the harbor of New York, as would enable him to report, with accuracy, the width of the Narrows, from the water's edge on each side; the distances from Governor's Island to Bedloe's, to Ellis's Island, and to the battery in front of the city, and from the city to the nearest point on the Jersey shore. This duty he performed, and reported, accompanying his report with a drawing of the harbor, showing the relative situation of the several points alluded to in his instructions, with remarks on the subject generally, and particularly on fortifying the Narrows.
>
> (*ASP*, 9th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 192- 193. LC.)

1806, June 23. Excerpt of a letter from Secretary of War Henry Dearborn to Lt. Colonel Williams with an attached drawing showing the north front of Fort Jay, including both its existing state and proposed new ravelin. A long structure with gable roof, drawn in both plan and section elevation, is presumably one of two existing barracks buildings. See fig. 8.

> Sir, Your favor accompanying the drawing of a part of Fort Jay has been duly received. My ill state of health prevents me from giving the several subjects connected with the construction of the latter full consideration as I otherwise should have done. But on the subject of the proposed improvements in the works of Fort Jay, I can only observe, that, according to my recollection, the principles contemplated in your drawing correspond with our mutual opinion when you were last at this place; except that, of forming the front of the parapet with mason work. I had contemplated the whole parapet's being formed of salt marsh sod; but, if in your opinion, a mason work, say of three feet in thickness will have a better effect, you will have it so formed.
>
> (Jonathan Williams Papers, Manuscripts Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University.)

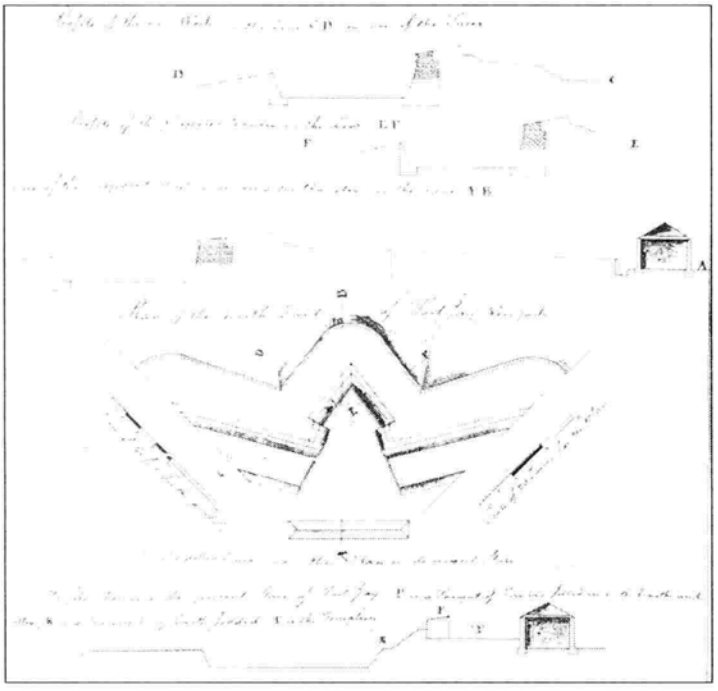


Figure 8. Drawing showing the north front of Fort Jay in its "present state" (lower profile), and the proposed new ravelin (upper plan and profiles), June 23, 1806.

1806, December 15. Excerpt of a report made by committee member Mr. Mitchill to the U.S. Senate:

> It appears from the communication of the Secretary of War, made to Congress on the 18th February, 1806, that several of the public works erected in different parts of the nation, for the purposes of defence, [including] Fort Jay, New York...stood in need of finishing, or repairs....
>
> They [the committee] are fully sensible of the great and growing importance of New York; its exposed situation is a subject of public and general concern. It is agreed that the national power ought to be employed in its protection. The attention of the Executive was, therefore, turned to that object during the summer and autumn of 1806, and upwards of $25,000 were expended in repairing and enlarging, in the most substantial manner, the works on Governor's Island. These are progressing with all convenient speed; and, though at this moment suspended, on account of the rigor of the season, the committee has had the satisfaction to learn that the labor will be resumed with the cessation of the cold, and be steadily continued until both the city and harbor shall be put into a respectable state of defence. By the fortifications which it is intended to construct, upon the different favorable positions which the land affords, both above and below Governor's Island, skilful engineers conceive that so much will be done as to repel every ordinary assault of ships, and of all other force less than an invading army. The intended substitution of permanent structures of solid masonry, instead of wood and sand, will require more time for their completion; but an ample compensation for this will be found eventually in their greater strength and durability.
>
> (*ASP*, 9th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 204. LC.)

1807

Ca. 1807. Fort Jay is renamed Fort Columbus sometime after December 15, 1806, and before July 21, 1807, based on archival sources. (Note: the actual order for the name change has not yet been located.)

1807. Description of the Second System of Seacoast Defense:

> Increasing tensions with the British also initiated the Second System [of Seacoast Defense]. Desperate British efforts to blockade Napoleonic France resulted in the abuse of American seamen, the *Chesapeake/ Leopard* affair of June 1807 being a prime example. Congress began discussions on new fortifications in late 1807, leading to a new appropriations act in January 1808. The $1 million specified in this act was the single largest appropriation yet made by the United States for any purpose. This reflected the fact that American planners had a comparatively large number of ports, rivers, and roadsteads to defend.... The Second System had to be designed to cover no fewer than 30 locations....

> Not surprisingly, this system had much in common with its immediate predecessor. Many of the new works were modifications of the forts and sites begun in the First System, but enlarged for more guns and equipped with better troop accommodations. Most of the new works that were started were still small and built of earth and masonry materials, as dictated by constraints of both time and money. The technology in general differed little from that of the First System.
>
> One significant difference with the Second System was its reliance on American- born- and- trained engineers, as opposed to foreign officers. The establishment of the new engineering academy at West Point produced expertise in military architecture soon sufficient to meet the need. In addition, several construction techniques were notable for this period. First, the use of more durable masonry facing to protect outer walls became more prevalent. Second, designers often used curved or elliptical *traces* for at least part of the exterior—particularly for the gun-armed walls facing the channel or water. Finally, the engineers began experimenting with all- masonry casemated forts, i.e., tiered layers of guns firing out of embrasures [such as Castle Williams].
>
> ("Walbach Tower, Battery Farnsworth, Associated Structures, and Environs, Fort Point, New Castle, New Hampshire," p. 22.)

1807, March 20. Excerpt of a joint resolution submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives by the Senate and Assembly of New York State:

> *Resolved*... That adequate measures should be adopted by the National Government, for the protection of the port of New York....
>
> *Resolved.* That an application be made to the President of the United States, in behalf of this State, to fix upon a plan of durable and permanent defence for the port of New York, fully adequate to the importance of the object, and that he be also respectfully requested to appropriate, out of the moneys placed at his disposal, as large a sum as can be usefully expended for that purpose, until Congress shall have it in their power to make further provision in the premises....
>
> (*ASP*, 10th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 215. LC.)

1807, July 21. Excerpt of the report "Outlines of a Plan of Defence [sic] for the City and Harbour of New York," by Secretary of War Henry Dearborn:

> It being the intention of the general Government, so to fortify the Harbour of New York, as well with the aid of Gun Boats, affords a reasonable defence to the Citizens and their property against Ships of War, unaccompanied with any very formidable armament such as can only be opposed by a superior Army. The following system has been considered as most expedient at present with such additions hereafter as may be thought advisable, farther in advance. Col. J. Williams will

> therefore consider the subsequent detail as his instructions and authority for commencing and compleating the contemplated works, with as little delay as circumstances will admit.
>
> Governors Island
>
> Fort Columbus is to be completed according to the plan now in operation....
>
> (Jonathan Williams Papers.)

1807, July 27. Excerpt of letter from Lt. Col. Jonathan Williams to Capt. R. Whiley, Military Agent for the Bay & Harbour of New York, July 27, 1807, requesting that he furnish "the necessary materials of labour for the following purposes":

> 1st procure a solid stone basis at the Point in front of this Fort called Perkins's Point [for the work later named Castle Williams] ....
>
> 2nd furnish labourers to excavate a Foundation at the point near the Hospital...but at present it will be best to lend your whole strength to the completion of Fort Columbus and that on Perkins's Point, upon which the location of the other much depends....
>
> It is not easy to foresee, all at once, the precise nature and quantity of materials that will be wanted, but the indications I have given will guide you as to foundations and faces, and for the interior mass of the Buildings about 80 or [an?] 100,000 cubic feet of stone will not be too great a preparation for each casemated Battery....
>
> (Jonathan Williams Papers.)

1807, November 20. Excerpt of statement and exhibits submitted by Secretary of War Henry Dearborn to a committee of the U.S. Senate:

> *The more important Ports and Harbors* [including] New York.—In addition to Fort Columbus (on Governor's Island) which is in great forwardness, and will be a strong regular work of the best materials, it has been considered necessary to erect a strong circular battery [later named Castle Williams] for two tier of cannon, one above the other, at the extreme westerly point of Governor's Island....
>
> (*ASP*, 10th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 219- 220. LC.)

1807, November 24. Excerpt of a resolution submitted by committee member Mr. Blount to the U.S. House of Representatives:

> That the numerous aggressions and violations of our jurisdiction [have been] recently committed within our ports and waters by British ships of war....
>
> That our most important ports and harbors, and those requiring the earliest attention, and the most expensive fortifications [include]...New York....
>
> *Resolved,* That it is expedient to authorize the President of the United States to cause such fortifications to be erected as, in addition to those heretofore built, will, with the assistance of gunboats, afford effectual protection to our ports and harbors....
>
> (*ASP*, 10th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 217- 218. LC.)

1807, December 8. Excerpt of a report submitted on December 8, 1807, to the House of Representatives "on the state of the fortifications of the respective ports and harbors of the United States...":

> New York
>
> Fort Columbus, *New York Harbor.*—An enclosed work of earth and wood, on Governor's Island, has, within the two last years, been improved and faced with permanent mason work, and is nearly completed, and may be considered as a strong, well constructed, regular fort. A strong, marine, casemated battery [later named Castle Williams] has been commenced on the extreme western point of the same island; and some progress has been made in forming foundations, for batteries, at other points in the vicinity of the city....
>
> (*ASP*, 10th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 223. LC.)

1808

1808, February 23. Jonathan Williams was promoted from Lieutenant Colonel to Colonel. (Cullum, *Campaigns of the War of 1812- 15*, p. 39.)

1808, July 10. Excerpt of letter from Col. Jonathan Williams at Fort Columbus to Capt. Whiley, Asst. Military Agent Fort Columbus. Williams issued blanket purchasing authority to Capt. Whiley:

> Sir, It being difficult if not impracticable to give a detailed and separate order for the different materials and quantity of each that may be required for erecting and completing the works now progressing in different points in the City and harbour of New York I conceive it my

duty in order that the Progress of the Public works may not be retarded, to order and direct generally and you are hereby ordered and directed accordingly to provide and furnish all and every such material and materials Comprehending Stone, brick, lime, timber, iron, iron work &c., &c., &c., as may be found necessary to complete the Public works now erecting at Governors Island Bedlows Island and Ellis's Island in the harbour of New York and at the battery, Potters field and the foot of Laight Street within the limits of said City of New York and for which you will consider this as sufficient authority—as well as whatever may be required for the Engineer Cutter Boat, &c., I am, Sir ....

(Jonathan Williams Papers, Manuscripts Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University; transcribed in a report by Thomas Pitkin, "Supplementary Material Relating to...Castle Clinton," April 1963, p. 8.)

1808, October 9. Excerpt of letter written by the Hon. Saml. Mitchell dated October 9, 1808:

The Chief Engineer who planned the general fortifications of New York and who actually superintended their construction is Colonel J. Williams, the learned and ingenious director of the American Military Academy at West Point and President of the American Philosophical Society. The high professional talents displayed by this gentleman in projecting the works have been very ably seconded in carrying them into operation.

At Governor's Island Fort Columbus is now finished. It consists of 4 bastions, 3 curtains and an attached casemated ravelin with two retired flanks, the whole capable of mounting 96 guns and might without inconvenience bring one- half its face at one instant against any passing ship, while it completely commands the East River.

It is a work composed of a walled rampart 8 feet thick at its base, diminishing by its slope to 6 feet at the line of the cordon with counter forts of five feet in depth at the distance of 13 feet from each other, surmounted by a solid brick parapet of 10 feet in thickness. The ditch is about 40 feet wide, with a walled counterscarp, a walled covert way and a sodded glacis extending to the water edge....

In Fort Columbus there are actually in place 60 cannon, in Castle Williams 52....

The estimated complement to man these guns is as follows. On Governor's Island: Fort Columbus 780 men, Castle Williams 1014....

(Letter transcribed by Smith in *Governor's Island,* p. 73.)

1808, November. Excerpt from "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War Relative to the Progress & Present State of the Fortifications in the Harbour of New York," by Col. Jonathan Williams, November 1808:

> In conformity to the orders of the Secretary of War the Subscriber has the honour to submit the following Report relative to the progress and present State of the Fortifications in the Harbour of New York.
>
> Governors Island
>
> It will be recollected that it was only in the Spring of 1806 that the demolition and renewal of the Works on Governors Island was determined on and that these Works were at that time in a State of absolute ruin. The sodded ramparts consisting of a Talus of 45 [degrees], a horizontal berm, a second Talus of 45 [degrees], & a Chemin de Ronde [a passage on top of the scarp wall] defended by horizontal fraises were subject to continual depredation by successive rains; the rotten fraises were daily falling by their own weight, and the wooden Parapet which surmounted this decaying Base was become a mass of ligneous putrification [crossed out, "rotten wood"]. In this State repair of any kind was totally out of the Question, and consequently no part of the old Fort except the walled Counterscarp, the Gate, the Magazine and the Barracks could be preserved. All the rest it became necessary to remove as rubbish, to give place for a Work composed of durable materials and in July of that year [1806] its corner stone was laid.
>
> Fort Columbus
>
> The Shape of the new Fort was on three of its sides the same with the old one, with the addition of fourteen feet on each side owing to the small talas or slope requisite for a Wall, and the great one indispensable to a sodded rampart with its Berme & Chemin des rondes. On the north side a ravelin has been attached with two [r]etired casmated Flanks in lieu of the old Courtine & its Flanks expressly to take off a Line of Fire which could not avoid the City & to form two Lines commanding the East & the Entrance of the north River. The new Fort with its Ravelin of Casemates is now completed except a part of the Glacis on the SE angle, with some finish to two of the Platforms & the interior of one Barrack. The Glacis from the Point commanding the whole end of the East River, to that which commands the opposite extreme at the SW entrance of Buttermilk Channel being a sweep of about 2/3 of the circumference extends to the waters edge & forms a compleat command of this part of the Harbour, except only where it is interrupted by the circular Castle hereafter described. The covert way is compleat round the whole enclosure except only the place d'armes opposite the Gate which for obvious reasons has been left open to the last but it is now closing and will soon be finished. The wall supporting the crest of the glacis is of ample thickness six feet high with its banquette and covert way of 20 feet in width to the extent of more than two thousand yards, round the Fort. (*Traverses on the covert way have not been thought necessary since the Island does not give space for regular approaches and therefore a close siege is not to be apprehended. Besides they could be made by the

Garrison in future, if a siege were threatened.) The Ditch, is about 40 feet in width, and the revetment of the rampart rises from its base to the cordon 16 feet which with the addition of four feet for the height of the exterior part of the parapet makes the whole ascent twenty feet in an almost vertical line. The wall here is 8 feet thick at its base, battering in a talus which reduces it to six at the cordon with counterforts or buttresses at the distance of 18 feet from each other of 5 feet in length. Between these counterforts which also serve as piers, arches are made upon which the interior wall of the parapet is placed in such a manner that in case of a breach the parapet would stand upon these arches supported by the counterforts & appear vaulted. The Parapet is ten feet in thickness, composed on one wall of 3 and one of two feet in thickness, with cross walls of two feet in width connecting the interior & exterior walls at the distance of 9 feet from each other, leaving a rectangular space of 9 by 5 feet, which is filled with earth rammed very hard forming together a resistance equal to solid masonry, which renders it impenetrable, to a cannon shot the whole being surmounted by sod which is in a fine growing state. The terreplein of the Ramparts which before was only 22 feet in width behind the former Barracks is now at least 36 [feet] on all sides which leaves a passage for an ammunition trundle behind the Platforms. - - As all the Guns are mounted on Carriages with high wheels, the Parapet has been made en Barbette; This is particularly advantageous for these Gun Carriages which are so constructed as to be made to move with ease along the Platform to any point, & managed with all the celerity & facility of field pieces. - - The Platform was at first intended to be wholly of flagg stone for the sake of durability, but it was found impossible to keep them always level owing to the constant gravity of heavy Guns partially bearing on the stones & sometimes the edges of them. It was therefore necessary to make so much of the Platform as the Gun Occupies when at rest, of Wood, that partly over which it occasionally passes is laid with flagg stones as at first intended. – Firing en barbette might be thought too great an exposure if the following circumstances were not known—1. The Glacis covers the Wall as high as the Cordon which is the Base of the Parapet & should an Enemy shot touch the surface it would inevitably bound over all; 2d. Should it pass above the surface higher than 4 feet it would also pass over all; 3d. Should it pass higher than 3 feet above the surface it would be arrested by the Parapet; 4th. Within the one foot space only the mouth of the Gun is exposed and 5th. The height and distance of the Fort from the water puts it out of the command of the musquetry from the Tops of Ships of War. Within the area of the Ravelin is a well of the finest water which, with another well formerly made in the center of the Parade, renders a perpetual supply of water certain. The Bombproof arches open into this area, they form together a protected space of about 2100 square feet with two embrasures in each from which the ditch on both sides may be effectually secured, so that the retired Flanks become completely protected, and the angles on either side are commanded by musquetry from a Gallery formed by a continuation of the Parapet in the [?] above. The Trees that were in the Fort have been undisturbed owing to the enlargement of the Terreplein of the ramparts before mentioned, which throws them so far in the rear as to be entirely out of the way of the Guns.—They were before very injudiciously planted at the very edge of the Parapet, & would have impeded the movement of the Guns in case of

an action. Rows of Trees in all Ramparts are usually planted in the rear of the Platform. Two new Barracks have been made on the sides of the Parade one of a single story opposite to & similar to that which existed before, the other of two story opposite but not similar to the one across the Gateway owing to the too great height of the old Barrack, it is this last Barrack which yet wants the inside finish.—The old Block House which stands in the center of the Parade has hitherto been preserved owing to the convenience of having tools & a variety of articles necessary to the progress of the work, but it will be removed in the course of this Winter being for all other purposes an [sic] useless encumbrance. In the Wall of the covert way on the west side directly opposite to & protected by the western Flank of the Ravelin, a space of about 8 feet is left unbuilt from which a zig- zag covered defile will be made to the Castle at the western point of the Island hereafter mentioned, so that the communication may be preserved in perfect safety during action with some maritime Force. It was thought proper to leave the excavation of this 'till after the entrance to the Castle will be completed. –Sortie is also made in a winding direction from the place d'armes directly opposite to the sallie porte.—It may be observed that round this Fort there does not appear any drains under the walls for the issue of the water that may fall within them, which is always practiced in Fortifications on Foundations of Clay, or in low ground where wet ditches are practicable. The whole space on which Fort Columbus stands being a Body of sand, no water can remain an instant even at the Bottom of the Ditch, consequently none could have run through these issues if they had been made. This is evidenced by the level of the water in the well within the walls. The Glacis has not been sodded to its full extent owing to the want of sod, but it will be all found with grass seed before Spring, when it will probably appear like a luxuriant Lawn.

There are two Breastworks of Earth in Front of the old Fort, which have not been removed, it being thought unnecessary to destroy them till the Castle is finished, least the Earth of which they are composed should be wanted at that height for the proposed covered defile [a narrow passage or gorge].

(Jonathan Williams Papers.)

1809

1809. Excerpt from Diedrich Knickerbocker [Washington Irving], *A History of New York*, first published in 1809:

> Even Governor's Island, once a smiling garden, appertaining to the sovereigns of the province, was now covered with fortifications, enclosing a tremendous block house—so that this once peaceful island resembled a fierce little warrior in a big cocked head, breathing gunpowder and defiance to the world!

(Diedrich Knickerbocker [Washington Irving], *A History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty;* London: 1836; pp. 131- 132. Cited in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 2, p. 25.)

1809, January 6. Excerpt of a report by Secretary of War Henry Dearborn submitted on January 6, 1809, by President Thomas Jefferson to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, being a summary of the reports received from the respective engineers of "the works which have been erected or repaired, for the defence of our ports and harbors":

New York

Fort Jay, on Governor's Island, with the whole of its buildings, was demolished in 1806, except the walled counterscarp, the gate, sally port, magazine, and two barracks; all the rest was removed as rubbish, to give place for a work composed of durable materials. On the site of the old fort, a new one (fort [sic] Columbus) has been erected, of the same shape, on three of its sides, as the former, with the addition of fourteen feet on each side. On the north side a ravelin has been added, with two retired casemated flanks. The new fort, with two new brick barracks, is now nearly completed, and has fifty cannon mounted.

On a point or rocks, at the west extremity of Governor's Island, a circular castle, of durable mason work [later named Castle Williams], to be connected with fort [sic] Columbus by a zig- zag covered defile, has been commenced and completed to the second floor, and is now ready to receive its first tier of guns....

(*ASP*, 10th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 236- 237. LC.)

1809, December 19. Excerpt of a report by Secretary of War William Eustis, December 19, 1809, submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives on December 21, 1811, regarding "the state of the fortifications for the defence of the ports and harbors of the United States":

New York

New York Harbor—*Fort Columbus,* on Governor's Island; an enclosed pentagonal work, with four bastions of masonry, calculated for one hundred guns, fifty- five mounted, with brick barracks for two hundred and thirty men, including officers. A stone and brick magazine; a castle, or stone tower [later named Castle Williams], of three tiers, on a projecting point of the island, calculated for fifty- two heavy guns, under a bomb- proof cover, and forth- eight on the terrace; the lower tier finished, calculated for twenty- six guns, twelve mounted; guns may be placed in the second tier in case of necessity. The bomb- proof will serve as barracks for two or three hundred men.

(*ASP*, 11th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 245- 246. LC.)

1810- 1819

Summary

The reconstruction of Fort Jay as a permanent fortification in durable masonry, renamed "Fort Columbus," had been completed by 1810, although work on the nearby castle and the south battery continued during this period. Colonel Jonathan Williams described the fort in a letter to Governor Tompkins dated January 19, 1810,as "finished" with a capacity of 104 guns, although only 50 were mounted. He further noted: "This is a regularly inclosed Work of masonry, with Ditch, counterscarp, Courtine (i.e., curtain wall) & Glacis capable of resisting a Siege." A more complete description was provided the following year by the Secretary of War in a report to Congress dated December 10, 1811: "Fort Columbus, situated on Governor's Island; within half a mile of the city; a regular enclosed work of masonry, comprehending four bastions and a ravelin, with sixty heavy guns mounted, a brick magazine that will contain five hundred barrels of powder, and brick barracks for two companies of men and officers, and a furnace for heating shot." The castle, named Castle Williams, and South Battery had both been completed by 1812, further strengthening the defensive capability of Fort Columbus. The fortifications thus provided protection to the inner harbor and City of New York during the War of 1812, which continued through 1815, although no battles were fought here.

The earliest known drawings of Fort Columbus as rebuilt 1806- 09 were prepared by Joseph Mangin in 1813. One is a map of Governors Island that includes a detailed plan of the fort that was mislabeled "Fort Jay" (fig. 7), the other a section elevation through the island that correctly labels the fort as "Fort Columbus" (fig. 8). The plan shows the newly enlarged fort with four bastions and north ravelin, a solid parapet with no embrasures, a large powder magazine in the northeast bastion, a smaller magazine on the west glacis, and barracks buildings flanking the four sides of the parade or courtyard. The barracks on the east and west sides were labeled "Officer's Pavil[ions]," and those on the north and south sides "Barracs" that were likely for soldiers. Other features included five small sentry towers, or bartizans, at the salient angles of the bastions and ravelin; a bridge across the ditch on the east side of the fort; a gate and guardhouse on the east side; and a sunken pathway, or covered defile, connecting the northwest bastion with Castle Williams. More difficult to interpret is the section- elevation drawing through Governors Island and Fort Columbus that shows trees and two structures that may be a barrack and powder magazine.

A small glimpse of the fort is also provided in a lithograph entitled "New- York taken from Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, 1816" (fig. 10). This shows a portion of the northwest bastion and beyond, looking across the North River to the city. Three guns are emplaced on a raised platform behind the parapet of the bastion pointing towards the water. Of particular interest are the exterior masonry walls of the parapet, topped by a luxuriant carpet of sod that also blankets the covered way at the outer perimeter of the fort and the glacis.

Documentation

1810

1810, January 19. Excerpt of letter from Col. Jonathan Williams to Governor Tompkins, regarding the status of the fortifications:

> I have rec'd your Excellencys Favour of the 6th Instant and in compliance with your request shall describe the present State of the defence of the Harbour.... Fort Columbus on Governors Island is finished and capable of mounting one hundred & four Guns, of which upwards of fifty are already on the ramparts. This is a regularly inclosed Work of masonry, with Ditch, counterscarp, Courtine & Glacis capable of resisting a Siege.
>
> (Jonathan Williams Papers, transcribed by Pitkin, p. 23.)

1811

1811, December 10. Excerpt of a report by the Secretary of War William Eustis dated December 10, 1811, submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives on December 17, 1811, regarding "the nature, extent, and condition, of the fortifications which have been constructed for the defence of the maritime frontier of the United States":

> New York
>
> New York Harbor—Fort Columbus, situated on Governor's Island; within half a mile of the city; a regular enclosed work of masonry, comprehending four bastions and a ravelin, with sixty heavy guns mounted, a brick magazine that will contain five hundred barrels of powder, and brick barracks for two companies of men and officers, and a furnace for heating shot.
>
> Number and description of troops, Artillerists: 780.
>
> On a projecting point of the island stands a stone tower, called Castle Williams .... Also, on the island, a stone magazine, which will hold two hundred barrels of powder, a brick arsenal; a wooden gunhouse, a wooden barrack for three hundred men and officers.
>
> Number and description of troops, Artillerists: 1,104.
>
> (*ASP*, 12th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, pp. 307 & 309. LC.)

1812

"By the beginning of the War of 1812, the strength of Fort Columbus was augmented by that of a second major fortification on Governors Island, Castle Williams...and by a third defense work, South or Half- Moon Battery. Castle Williams, a circular, casemated, masonry work, was located on a rocky promontory on the northwest side of the island. Its ability to mount approximately 100 guns and its bombproof construction allowed the Castle to effectively command the North River and the harbor to the southwest toward the Narrows. South Battery, a smaller masonry work with 13 guns mounted *en barbette* protected the entrance to Buttermilk Channel, a narrow waterway to the east of Governors Island. The strength of the fortifications on Governors Island and elsewhere in the harbor effectively protected the city and the harbor from attack." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, pp. 13- 14.)

1813

1813. Drawing: "A Map of Governors Island," by Joseph Mangin, 1813, including plans of Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. Fort Columbus is labeled "A" and called by its earlier name, "the Fort Jay." Also keyed on the drawing are "D. the Powder Mag[azines]" in the northeast bastion and on the west glacis, "E. the Officer's Pavil[ions]" on the east and west sides of the courtyard, "F. the Barracs" on the north and south sides of the courtyard, and "M. the Surgeon's House" on the northeast glacis. Other unlabeled features include small towers, or bartizans, at the salient angles of the four bastions, and a flagstaff in the northeast bastion. (Drawer 37, Sheet 1; RG 77; CAB/NACP.) See fig. 9.

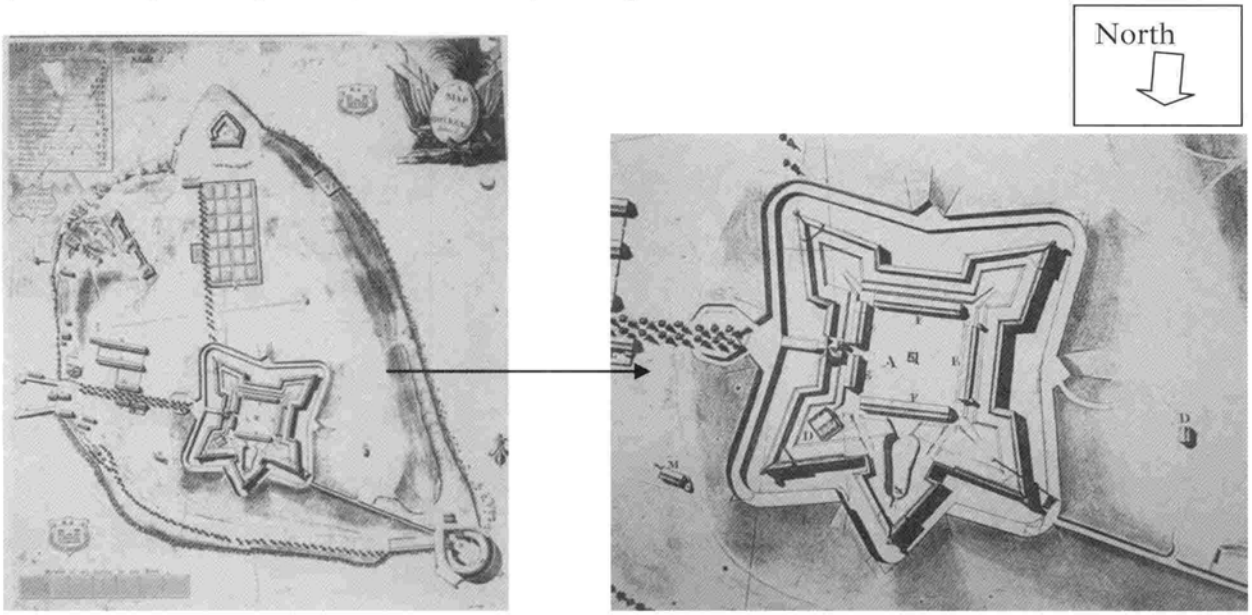


Figure 9. Map of Governors Island 1813 (left), and detail showing Fort Columbus (right).

1813. Drawing: "Map of the Islands and Military Points in the Harbor of New York, Their Distances and Situations and Profiles Through Governors, Bedloes and Ellis Island, and the Works Thereon" by Joseph L. Mangin. (Drawer 36, Sheet 20; RG 77; CAB/NACP; reproduced in HABS, "Governors Island, Castle Williams, Building #501," 1984, p. 2.) See fig. 10.

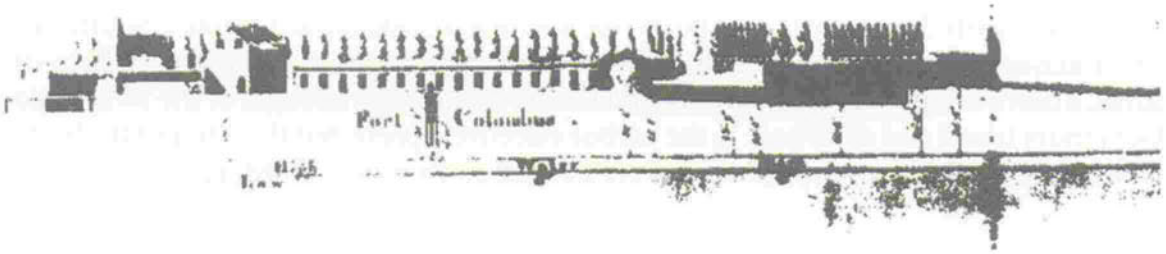


Figure 10. Detail of Fort Columbus, being an east- west, cross- sectional view looking south, 1813.

1815

1815. Painting of Colonel Jonathan Williams, 1815, by Thomas Sully. The painting is now in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and hangs in Mount Pleasant, the former home of Jonathan Williams in Philadelphia. See fig. 11.

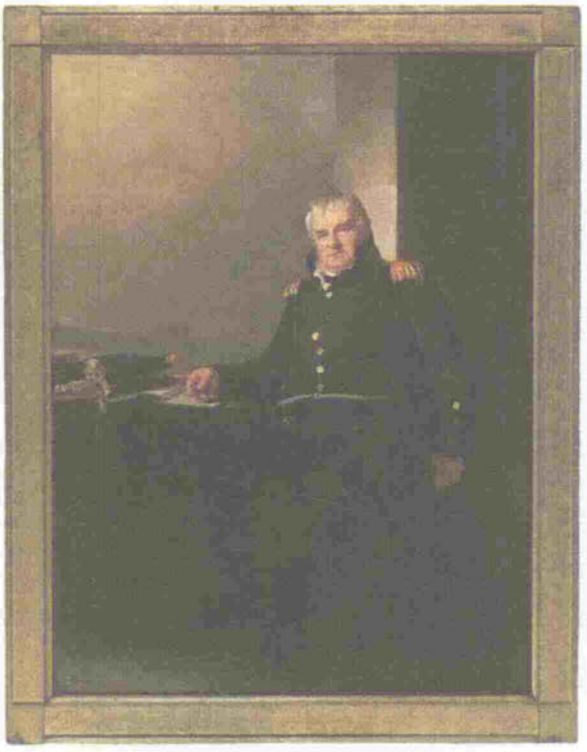


Figure 11. Colonel Jonathan Williams (1750- 1815), by Thomas Sully, 1815.

1816

Print labeled "New York taken from Fort Columbus, Governors Island, 1816." (Printed on border: "Lith. By Geo. Hayward." Written on border, "Valentine's Manual, 1860." The "Manual" was an abstract of historical materials about New York City, featuring maps and illustrations. It was first published in 1841 and reissued annually. (New York Public Library.) See fig. 12.

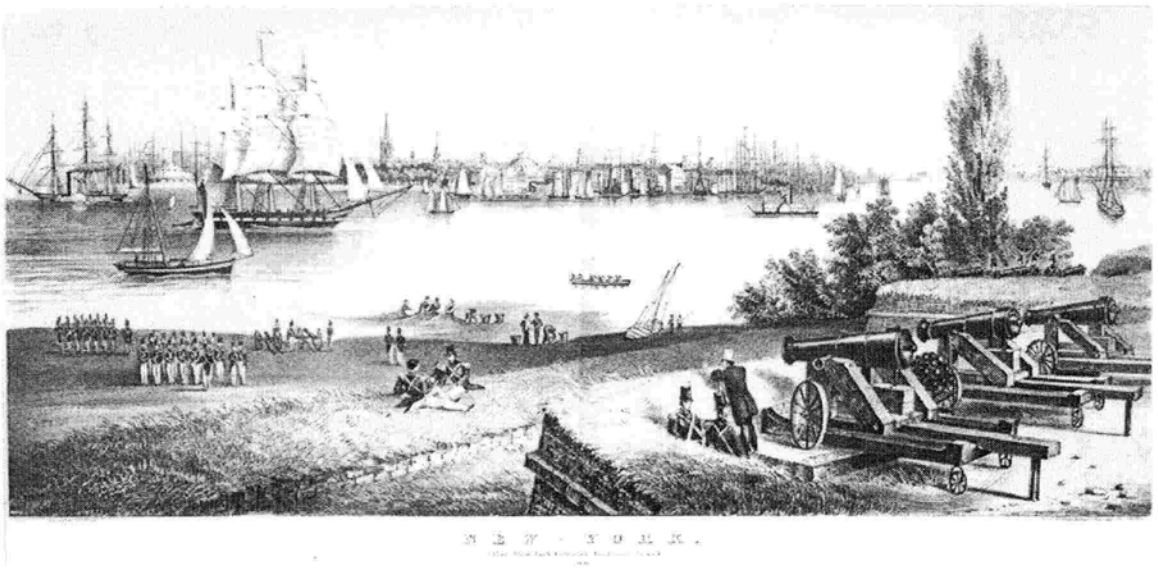


Figure 12. "New- York taken from Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, 1816."

1820- 1829

Summary

Little documentation was found for Fort Columbus for the years 1820- 29. The importance of the fortifications on Governors Island in the defense of New York Harbor appears to have diminished by 1826, less than 20 years after their rebuilding and completion. A report submitted to Congress by the Engineer Department that recommended new defensive works for New York suggested using the existing works for storage, recruiting, and military hospitals. The barracks buildings at Fort Columbus were in a poor state by 1827, reported to have leaking roofs and deteriorated woodwork, masonry, and plaster.

Documentation

1826

1826, February 25. Projected new works for defending and protecting the nation's coastline, including New York Harbor, were described in a "Revised Report of the Board of Engineers on the Defence of the Seaboard" dated February 25, 1826, submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives by the Engineer Department March 24, 1826. An excerpt discussing the role of the existing works, including those on Governors Island, reads as follows:

> New York Harbor—...Of the permanent works heretofore erected, Castle Clinton has already been ceded to the city. The others should be maintained as constituting a last barrier [of defense]; as affording convenient places of deposit for stores and munitions of all kinds, and of rendezvous for recruits, and good positions for military hospitals.
>
> (*ASP*, 19th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 3, pp. 283 & 290. LC.)

1827

1827, March 18. Letter from Major Henry Stanton to Brigadier General Thomas Jesup, noting that "the barracks buildings within the fort were in a bad state of decay with leaking roofs and deteriorated woodwork, masonry and plaster." (Consolidated Correspondence File, 1794-1915; Office of the Quartermaster General; RG 92; NAB. Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, pp. 4 and 10.)

1830- 1839

Summary

The first significant repairs and alterations were made to the fortifications on Governors Island beginning in the 1830s. Congressional appropriations for Fort Columbus, Castle Williams, and the South Battery amounted to more than $146,000 for the years 1830- 39. The existing state of Fort Columbus in June 1831 is documented in a plan and section- elevation through the south barrack (fig. 11), which appears little changed from its appearance in 1813 (fig. 6). Proposed alterations were illustrated on a plan dated October of the following year that showed the bartizans [sentry towers] removed from the salient angles, and four new barracks for officers and soldiers (fig. 12). Detailed drawings of the proposed new barracks included at the bottom of this plan show long two- story structures with gable roofs and attached two- story porches supported by columns (figs. 13 - 14). The need for new barracks was explained in a report submitted to Congress in November 1832, in which the old barracks were described as "in so bad a state of decay, independent of want of comfort and room, as to require, to repair them perfectly, the entire removal of their floors, ceiling, and roofs; the mere shells that would remain not being worth preserving." The report further noted that masonry repairs to the retaining walls of the ditch had commenced the previous fall but were briefly interrupted by "malignant cholera, which was at that time raging with considerable violence among the workman." Good progress had been made at the fort by October 1833, with most of the repairs completed on the walls of the ditch and the revetment of the glacis, four (of eight) rainwater cisterns installed beneath the rampart, and a new powder magazine constructed in the north ravelin. Construction of four new masonry barracks was well underway by November 1834 – the south, west, and north buildings described as "nearly finished" with their roofs "in readiness to receive the covering," and the masonry of the east barrack "in a state of forwardness." Work slowed in 1835 due to a shortage of mechanics and laborers, leaving plastering, painting, iron work, roofing, and carpentry still to be done on the barracks as late as November 1836. This was essentially completed, along with other repairs at Fort Columbus and Castle Williams, by November 1837.

The new barracks were subjected less than two years after their completion to an examination by a Board of Officers. Their report, dated April 1, 1839, noted that the buildings did "not seem to be well adapted to the purposes for which they were designed." Rooms were described as too small and poorly ventilated with windows inappropriately placed, subjecting the occupants to sudden changes in weather. The colonnades, or porches, in front of the buildings were thought to be a wasteful use of space. Finally, placement of the barracks against the terreplein wall for the purpose of enlarging the parade was thought to have been unsuccessful due to the small amount of ground gained and subsequent lack of rear exits. Despite these shortcomings, however, no funds for altering the barracks were allocated in 1839.

Drawings documenting the repairs and alterations carried out at Fort Columbus from 1832 to 1837 were prepared in 1839. A plan of the fort dated April 24, 1839 (fig. 17), shows the footprints of the four new barracks, salient angles unencumbered by sentry towers or bartizans, the northeast bastion devoid of its magazine (relocated to the north ravelin), and 87 new gun

emplacements at the outer walls. Details of the barracks were provided on one sheet dated December 1839 that includes both plans and an elevation drawing of the east and west "Officer's Quarters" and the north and south "Soldier's Quarters" (fig. 18). As completed, each barrack had a symmetrical façade 11 bays wide and two stories tall with a finished basement. Other features included a front porch two stories tall supported by 12 Doric columns, a flat roof, four chimneys, two principal doorways, windows with 12- over- 12 sashes and louvered shutters, two interior stairways, and two concrete cisterns in the terreplein behind the building. The officer's quarters were partitioned into eight small rooms per floor, while the soldier's quarters had six rooms per floor—two large rooms and four smaller rooms. A large arched opening centered in the first story of each building provided portals to the gate on the east side, the magazine court on the north side, and the ditch on the west and south sides. Small triangular buildings, one story tall with basement, flanked each barrack. The first story of these was labeled "office"; privies may have been located in the basement story. These structures were connected to the barracks by exterior walls, creating small open courtyards between the buildings.

Documentation

1830

1830, February 17. Excerpt of "Statement of troops forming the garrison of the fortifications of harbors & coast of the U.S.," submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives February 27, 1830: "Fort Columbus, NY Harbor, Regiment 4th artillery, 4 companies, 245 troops." (*ASP*, 21st Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 4, p. 306. LC.)

1830. November 19. Report of the Chief Engineer, Engineer Department: "Of the appropriation for contingencies of fortifications, the balance of last year's appropriation and about $7,000 of that of the present year have been drawn from the treasury, to be applied chiefly to repairs at Fort Trumbull, Connecticut; Fort Columbus and Bedloe's Island, New York [& c.]...." (*ASP*, 21st Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 4, p. 593. LC.)

1831

1831, March 2. Congressional appropriation includes $25,000 "for repairing Fort Columbus and Castle Williams, New York." (*Statues at Large*, 21st Congress, 2nd Session, p. 450. LC.)

1831, June. Drawing: "Plan of Fort Columbus." Noted on the drawing, "Rec'd from Major R.E. DeRussy with his letter dated Fort Hamilton June 19, 1831." The drawing shows existing features of the fort, including a gatehouse on the east side, four barracks buildings flanking the courtyard, and a powder magazine in the northeast bastion. These are colored red, probably indicating brick construction. The south barrack is detailed in a section- elevation as a one- story structure with gable roof and open porch on the courtyard side. Also shown are bartizans [sentry towers] at the salient angles of the four bastions and the north ravelin. (Drawer 37, Sheet 7; RG 77; CAB/NACP.) See fig. 13.

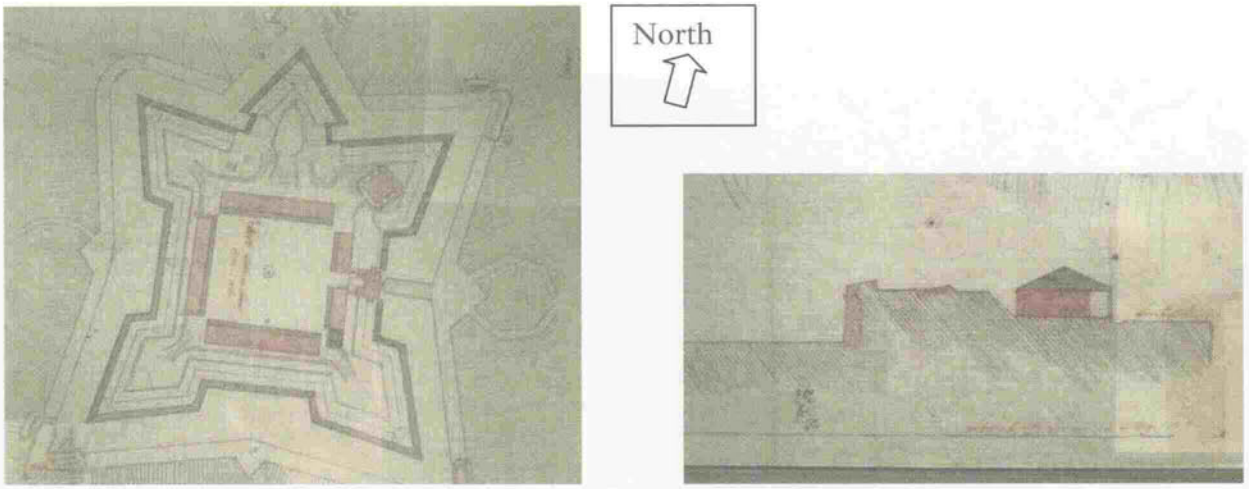


Figure 13. Plan of Fort Columbus (left) and section- elevation through the south barrack (right), 1831.

1831, November 4. Excerpt of a "Report of the Chief Engineer" dated November 4, 1831, to the U.S. House of Representatives:

> Governor's island, New York.—An appropriation was made this year for repairing the fortifications on this island, but in consequence of the arrangements necessary for removing the garrison, nothing has been done except to obtain some materials and machinery.
>
> (*ASP*, 22nd Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 4, p. 728. LC.)

1832

1832, September. "In September, 1832 [sic: later?], new barracks were begun within the fort, some of the troops having previously encamped on the parade. The scarp wall, the counter scarp revetments and the revetments of the glacis were completed, also the facing of the covered way revetment leading from Fort Columbus to the Castle." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 105.)

1832, September 30. Report of the Secretary of War: $42,182.84 applied to "repairing Fort Columbus and Castle William, New York," as of September 30, 1832. (*ASP*, 22nd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 51. LC.)

1832, October 17. "Plan of Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, N. York—Divided into Two Sections. The First Showing the Original Work. The Second, Exhibiting the Repairs and Alterations Proposed to be Adopted in Completing the Authorized Repairs." Noted on the drawing: "Maj. R.E. DeRussy, Oct. 17, 1832." Plans, elevations, and section elevations are included of the proposed new "Soldier Barracks" and "Officers Quarters." (Drawer 37, Sheet 8; RG 77; CAB/NACP. See figs. 14- 16.

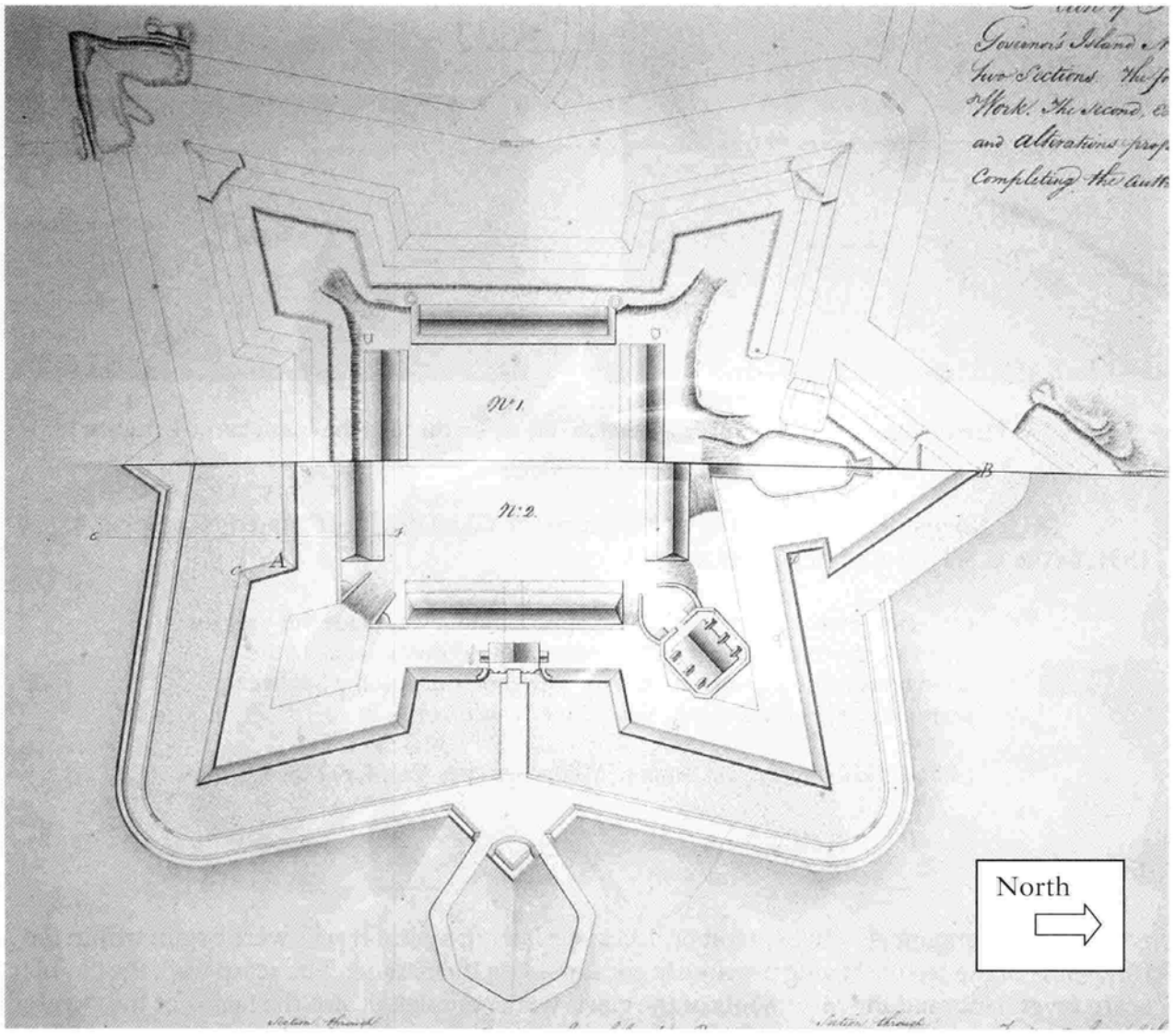


Figure 14. Plan of Fort Columbus, October 17, 1832, showing existing conditions ("No. 1," upper portion) and proposed alterations ("No. 2," lower portion).

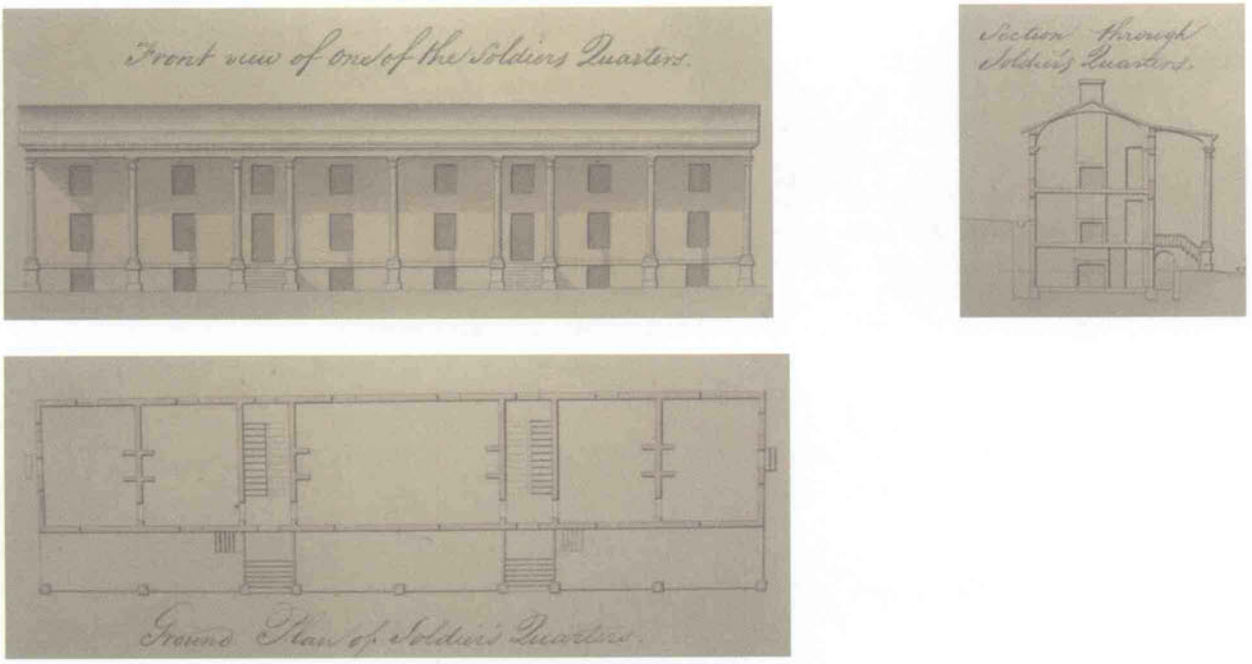


Figure 15. Front view, section elevation, and plan of proposed new Soldier's Quarters at Fort Columbus, October 17, 1832.

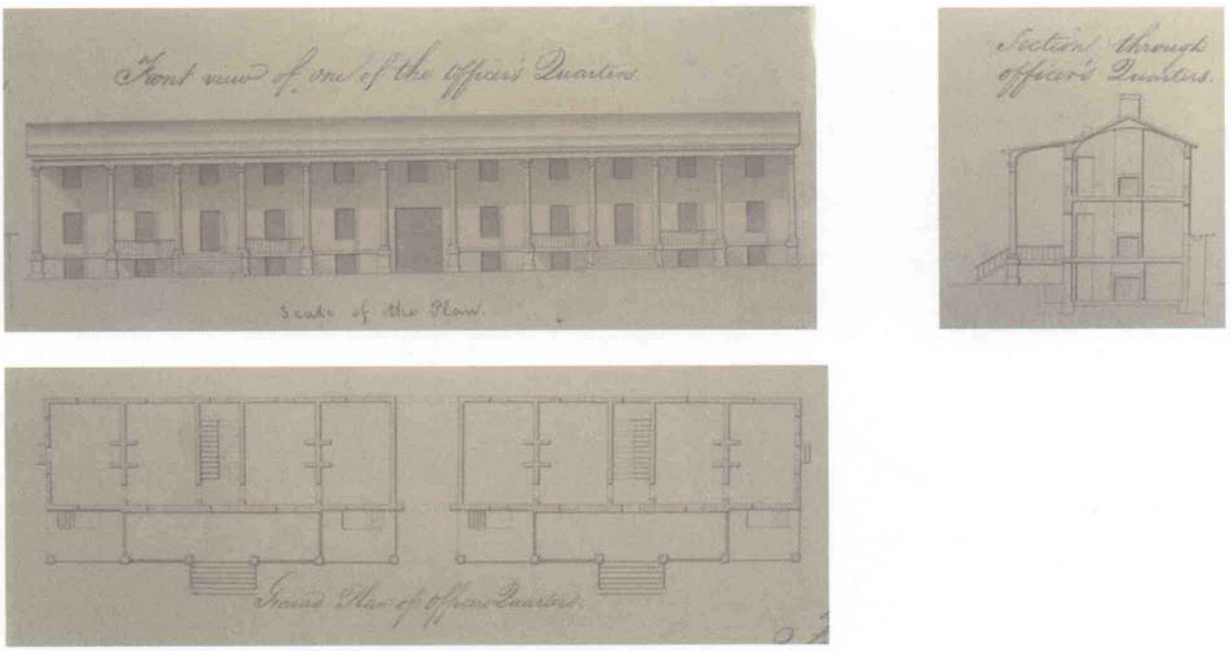


Figure 16. Front view, section elevation, and plan of proposed new Officer's Quarters at Fort Columbus, October 17, 1832.

1832, November 13. Report submitted to Congress by the Chief Engineer, Engineer Department, Washington, D.C.:

> Fort Columbus and Castle Williams, New York harbor-
>
> The repairs of Fort Columbus have been prosecuted in a most efficient manner. The repairs of the scarp walls were commenced last fall, and before the operations were suspended by the approach of cold weather upwards of 458 cubic yards of heavy masonry were constructed; materials having been received and prepared during the winter, operations were resumed early in the spring, and continued without interruption till the month of August last, when the work was abandoned in consequence of the alarm created by the malignant cholera, which was at that time raging with considerable violence among the workmen. The necessary measures having been taken to insure the health of the laborers, this interruption was of short duration, and, on the 4th of September last, the works were progressing with their usual vigor. The stone masonry laid within the year ending September 30, amounting to 2,470 cubic yards, extends about three- fourths around the work, two-thirds of which are finished and capped. The present barrack and quarters for the officers are in so bad a state of decay, independent of their want of comfort and room, as to require, to repair them perfectly, the entire removal of their floors, ceiling, and roofs; the mere shells that would remain not being worth preserving, it is deemed advisable to take advantage of the opportunity thus offered to remove these barracks to a situation within the work, which, besides offering the means of providing for the accommodation of a greater number of troops, would free its parade from a serious inconvenience arising from their present position. The cost of construction new quarters will be embraced in the estimate for the repairs of this work.
>
> (*ASP*, 22nd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 42. LC.)

1833

1833. Congressional appropriation: "In 1833 the sum of $50,000 was appropriated for repairs to Castle Williams and Fort Columbus." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 105.)

1833, September 1833. Report of the Secretary of War summarizing funding for repairs at Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. Appropriation for 1833 is $50,000; balance undrawn from the Treasury as of September 30, 1832, is $29,020.87; amount applied as of September 30, 1833, is $52,899.83. (*ASP*, 23rd Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 191. LC.)

1833, October 19. Excerpt of a report by Capt. J.L. Smith, Corps of Engineers:

> The scarp and curtain are finished. The counter scarp and revetment of the glacis are finished except the W. front. The passage way through the postern is raised to the height of the spring of the arch. Four cisterns, of 4,000 gallons each are finished under the rampart. Four more are to be made. The redan with casemated flanks on the N. front was formerly

> approached from the parade through a gap in the rampart. The gap has been filled by a magazine.
>
> The part of the hollow passage near the salient of the redan is to be occupied by two magazines for fixed ammunition or storage. This will enlarge the terreplein and the salient of the redan. The parapets are sodded and the glacis is being graduated.
>
> (Smith, *Governors Island*, pp. 105- 106.)

1833, November 23. Report from the Engineer Department, Washington, D.C.: "Fort Columbus and Castle William, Governor's island, New York.—Satisfactory progress has been made in the repairs of Fort Columbus, which will be completed, it is believed, this fall or early next spring." (*ASP*, 23rd 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 184. LC.)

1834

1834. Re: Construction of the existing barracks. "Construction of new barracks within the fort began at least by 1834 and was completed several years later." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 4.)

1834, September 30. Report of the Secretary of War summarizing funding for repairs at Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. Appropriation for 1833 is $50,000; balance undrawn from the Treasury as of September 30, 1833 is $26,121.04; amount applied as of September 30, 1834, is $25,857.01. (*ASP*, 23rd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 393. LC.)

1834, November 1. Report submitted to Congress by the Engineer Department:

> Fort Columbus and Castle William, Governor's island, New York.—The report of the engineer charged with the repairs of these works is highly favorable. In the former the scarp- walls, except the pointing and parapets, have been finished; the counterscarp revetments and revetments of the glacis are nearly completed. The facing of the covered- way revetment leading from Fort Columbus to Castle William will be done this fall. The masonry of the magazines and barracks, as well as that of the communications connecting the former, is finished, as is also the facing of the *redan*. All the masonry of the barracks on the south, west, and north fronts is nearly finished, and the roofs are in readiness to receive the covering; the masonry of those on the east front is in a state of forwardness. Measures have been taken to finish the repairs of Castle William as speedily as practicable.
>
> (*ASP*, 23rd Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 386. LC.)

1835

Circa 1835. Re: Building #202. "After construction of the four large buildings within the fort in the mid 1830s, Building #202 was occupied by officers." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 4.)

1835, September 30. Report of the Secretary of War summarizing funding for repairs at Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. Appropriation for 1835 is $0.00; balance undrawn from the Treasury as of September 30, 1834, is $49,075.66; amount applied as of September 30, 1835, is $31,611.20. (*ASP*, 24th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 661. LC.)

1835, November 15. Excerpt of a report from the Engineer Department:

> Fort Columbus and Castle William, Governor's island, New York.—The repairs of these works have been prosecuted with as much rapidity as the force at the command of the officer in charge would permit; should he be able to increase it sufficiently, the former fort will be entirely completed this fall, except the laying [of] the gun traverses, which must be postponed until funds for that purpose can be obtained. [Descriptions of work at Castle Williams.].... The constant employment afforded to mechanics and laborers of every description in the city of New York renders it very difficult to procure their services on the island, which has operated very unfavorably to these works the past season.
>
> (*ASP*, 24th Congress, 1st Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 655. LC.)

1836

1836, July 2. Congressional appropriations for 1836 include $20,000 "for repairs of Fort Columbus and Castle Williams, and officers' quarters, on Governor's Island, New York." (*Statutes at Large*, 24th Congress, 1st Session, p. 77. LC.)

1836, September 24. "Work obviously proceeded slowly [on the barracks] as an inspection report from September 1836 noted that the quarters were not yet ready for occupancy." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 1. LC. The original citation: "Sheras to Cross, September 24, 1836.")

1836, November 30. Part of a report to Congress from the Engineer Department:

> Fort Columbus and Castle William, Governor's island, New York.—It is anticipated that the repairs of these works will be completed the present working season. The masonry of Fort Columbus is now finished, except the construction of some offices and steps and the laying of a small portion of coping, flagging, and the completion of some traverse circles and pintle beds. The necessary plastering and painting will be finished this month, as well as the iron work and roofing of the barracks, at which time it is also expected the carpentry will be completed.
>
> (*ASP*, 24th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 6, p. 847. LC.)

1837

1837, September 30. Fiscal statement of the Engineer Department for the year ending September 30, 1837, summarizing the funding for "repairs at Fort Columbus and Castle Williams: Appropriation for 1837 is $0.00; balance undrawn from the treasury as of September 30, 1836, is $21,021.43; amount applied as of September 30, 1837, is $19,461.03." (*ASP*, 25th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 7, p. 639. LC.)

1837, November 30. Excerpt of a report submitted to Congress by the Chief Engineer, Engineer Department:

> Fort Columbus and Castle William, New York.—The repairs of these works are nearly completed; a small amount of coping stone remains to be executed, and some painting is required....
>
> (*ASP*, 25th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 7, p. 631. LC.)

1837, December 2. Report of the Secretary of War, 1837, with attached documents. "Forts under Construction: Fort Columbus, & c., Governor's island, New York harbor. No. of guns, 207; peace garrison, 100; war garrison, 535." (*ASP*, 25th Congress, 2nd Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 7, p. 580. LC.)

1839

1839, March 3. Congressional appropriation for 1839 "for repairs of Castle William and Fort Columbus, and officers' quarters, at New York, two thousand dollars." (*Statutes at Large*, 25th Congress, 3rd Session, p. 361. LC.)

1839, April 1. Proceedings of a Board of Officers convened on April 1, 1839, describing the poor design of the recently completed barracks within Fort Columbus:

> A Board of Officers appointed to examine the conditions of the barracks and quarters on the Island reported in 1839 that the buildings did "not seem to be well adapted to the purposes for which they were designed." According to the Board, the rooms were too small and poorly ventilated, and inappropriately placed windows subjected the men to sudden changes of weather. Space allotted for colonnades on the front of the building could have been more wisely used to enlarge the rooms. The Boards also felt that expanding the parade ground by placing the buildings next to the terreplein wall was unwise, since it allowed no space for exits at the rear of the buildings. Actually, removal of the barracks from their earlier position had not added sufficiently to the open space within the fort, and its use as a parade ground remained limited.
>
> (Consolidated Correspondence File, 1794- 1915; Office of the Quartermaster General; RG 92; NAB. Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 10.)

1839, April. "Plan of Fort Columbus Showing Recent Alterations in Barracks and Terreplein, April 24, 1839." Noted on the drawing: "Ltr. Of Maj. Smith April 27, 1839," and "Rec'd from Major Smith April 27, 1839." The new barracks had been completed by this time; the magazine removed from the northeast bastion; and the sentry towers, or bartizans, removed from the salient angles. Eighty- seven gun emplacements are shown at the parapet walls. (Drawer 37, Sheet 10; RG 77; CAB/NACP. Reproduced in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 24.) See fig. 17.

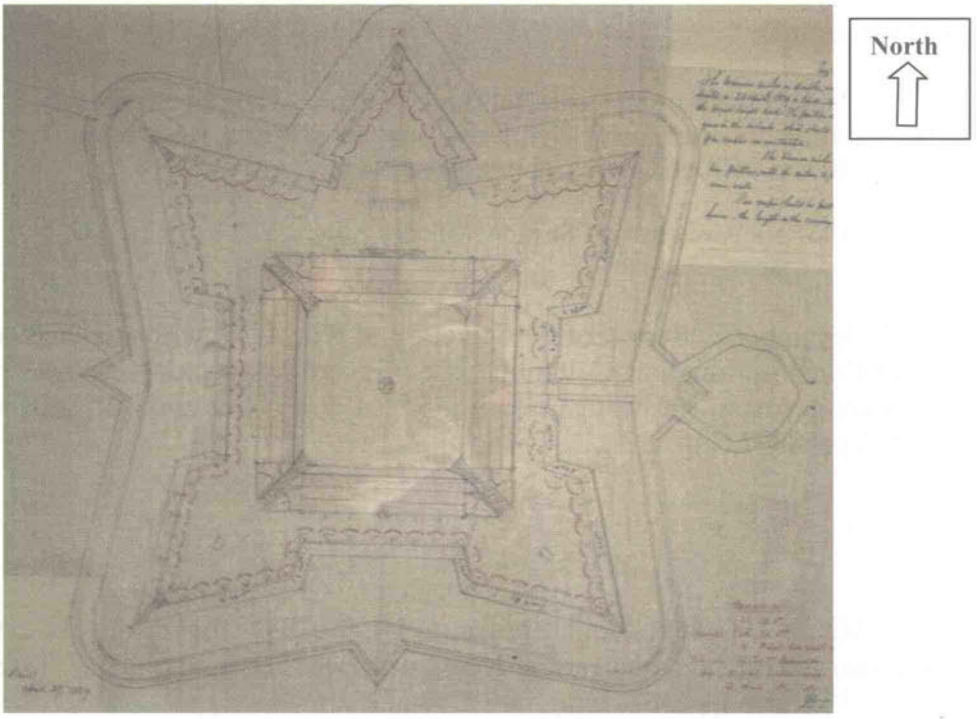


Figure 17. "Plan of Fort Columbus showing recent Alterations in Barracks and Terreplein," April 1839.

1839, December. Drawing: "Details of Barracks, Fort Columbus, Governor's Island" by Capt. J.G. Barnard U.S. Engr., Dec. 1839. Noted on the drawing: "Received with Capt. Barnard's letter of Jany 10th 1840." Includes an elevation and floor plans of the "East and West Barracks, Officer's Quarters," and floor plans of the "South and North Barracks, Soldier's Quarters." Details include two subterranean cisterns behind each barrack, shown in cross- section as oval-shaped with walls of 9- inch concrete; windows with 12- over- 12 sashes and louvered shutters; Doric- style columns supporting a two- story front porch; a "gutter" in front of the barracks with "cess pool" at either end; and two triangular- shaped buildings flanking the barracks labeled "office" in the first story. (Drawer 37, Sheet 23; RG 77, CAB/NACP. Reproduced in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 12.) See figs. 18- 19.

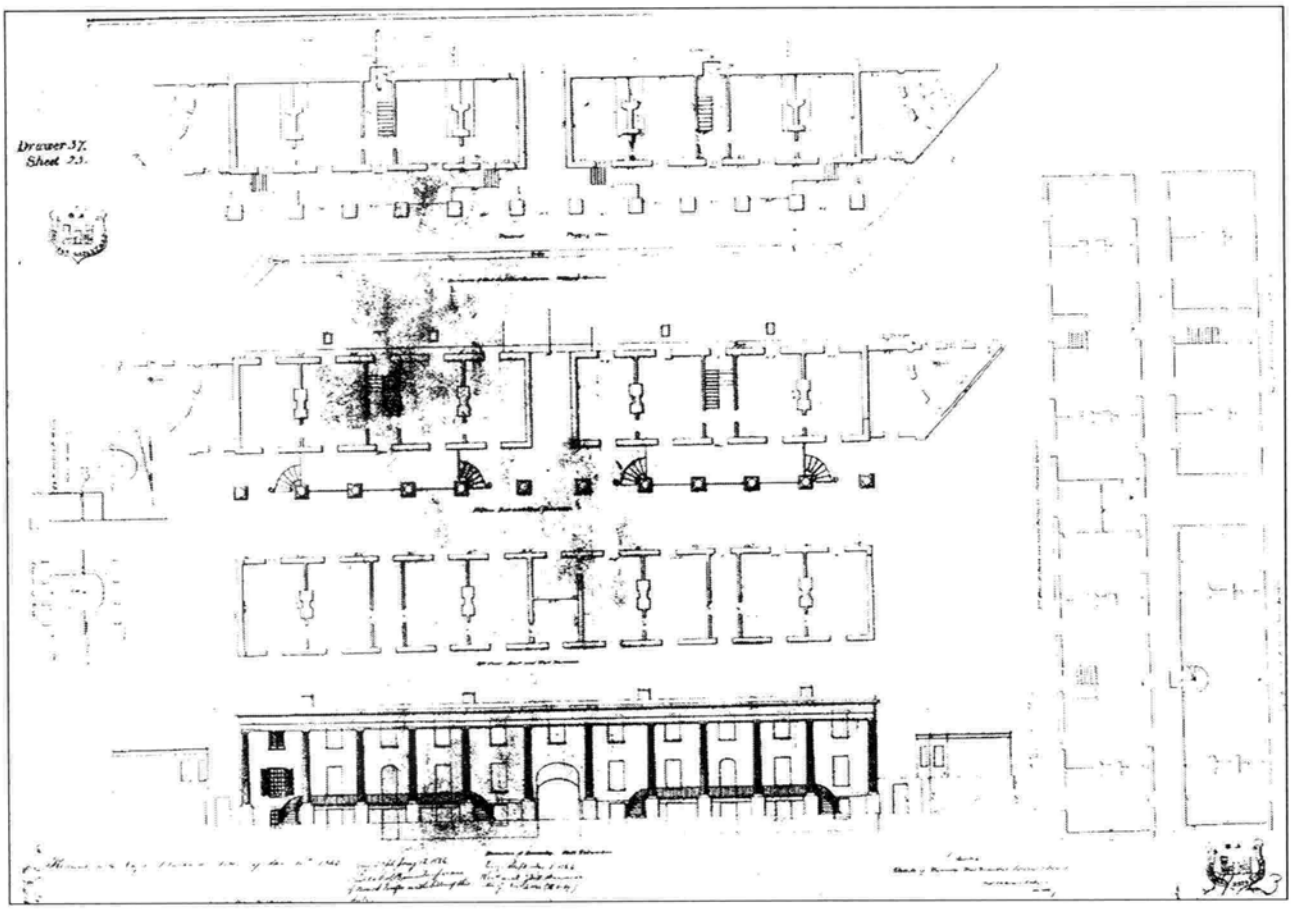


Figure 18. "Details of Barracks, Fort Columbus, Governors Island," December 1839.

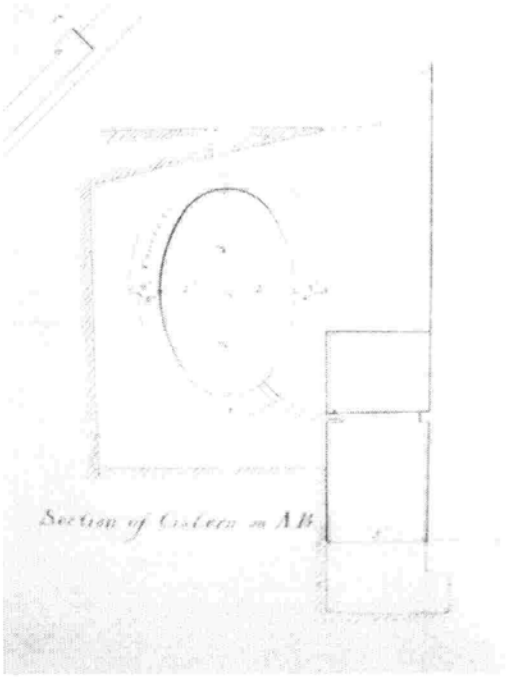


Figure 19. Detail showing subterranean cistern behind barracks, from drawing dated December 1839.

1840- 1849

Summary

The pace of work at Fort Columbus slowed in the 1840s, as attention focused instead on Castle Williams, where extensive repairs were carried out in the first half of the decade. A design was submitted in 1842 for a new latticework gate at Fort Columbus at the entrance to the magazine yard in the north ravelin (fig. 20), although it is not known if this was ever constructed. Most notable was a project in 1844 to renovate the fort's gun platforms and the wooden platforms between them. Eighty- two of the fort's 87 pintle centers, or platforms on which the guns rotated, were reconstructed using brick pavers and granite border stones set with concrete and gravel obtained from the beach. Wooden platforms between the guns were also removed and replaced by a sodded banquette. Plans were submitted the following year for alterations to the barracks (fig. 21). These included replacing the interior stairways with exterior stairways and a second- story balcony made of iron, converting selected windows in the second story to doorways, and removing partition walls to create larger rooms. No significant changes were made to the barracks, however, until the following decade.

Documentation

1842

1842, March. Drawing: "Barricade Frame and Wicket Gate in Postern Leading to Magazine Yard, Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, New York Harbor 1842." Noted on the drawing: "Rec'd with Capt. Sanders letter of 21 March 1842." This is a design for a latticework gate at the entrance to the "magazine yard" in the north ravelin of Fort Columbus. (Drawer 37, Sheet 38; RG 77; CAB/NACP.) See fig. 20.

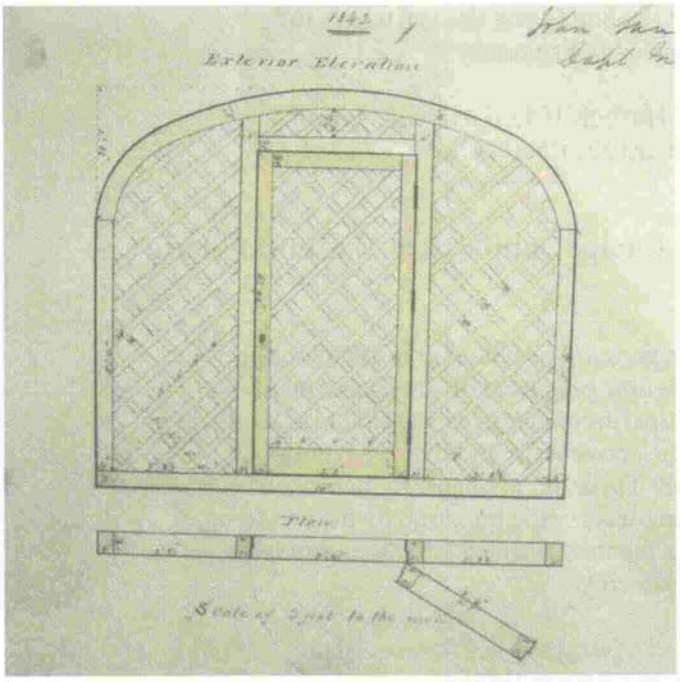


Figure 20. Design for a "wicket gate" at the entrance to the magazine yard in the north ravelin of Fort Columbus, 1842.

1842, August 31. Congressional appropriation for the year 1842 includes $5,000 "for completing Castle Williams, New York harbor"; $2,000 "for completing Fort Columbus, New York harbor"; and $8,000 "for permanent wharves for Fort Columbus, Castle Williams, and South Battery, Governor's Island, New York harbor, and to complete the work according to the original estimates." (*Statutes at Large*, 27th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 582. LC.)

1844

1844, April 10. Letter from George Dutton, Capt. U.S. Engineers, to Col. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C.:

> Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your instructions of 13 April relative to the strengthening of the Pintle Centres of the Barbette guns of Fort Columbus and other works, the repairs of which are now under my charge: with the accompanying sketch explanatory thereof.
>
> All the guns of Fort Columbus are now mounted and in order to effect the above repairs it will be necessary to dismount and remove them & carriages out of the way. A work of considerable labor, which I suppose must be done by the Engineer Department and for which I shall be compelled to call upon the Ordnance Department for the loan of the requisite machinery.

> I propose to commence first with the Southwest Bastion where the escarpments in firing were performed last summer.
>
> ("Letter Book, Fortifications NY Harbor, 1843 [- 45], Gov. Island." Entry 740; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1844, April 20. Excerpt of letter from George Dutton, Capt. U.S. Engineers, to Col. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C.

> ...Wooden platforms between the guns are provided in Fort Columbus and the south Battery but the plan now proposed by the Department of a sodden banquette instead, is so superior in every respect that I earnestly recommend it to be supplied in the above walls and that the wooden platforms be discarded altogether. The latter are liable to be broken to pieces by shocks whilst their strength is greatly impaired by the action of the sun and rain, notwithstanding the material may have been rendered imperishable by the process of [?]anizing.
>
> ("Letter Book, Fortifications NY Harbor, 1843 [- 45], Gov. Island." Entry 740; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1844, April 30. Letter from George Dutton, Capt. U.S. Engineers, to Col. James Bankhead, Commander Governors Island:

> Sir, The Engineer Department having directed under date of April 13th inst. Some important additions to be made to the pintle centres of Fort Columbus in concrete, cut stone work & brick pavement, and to have the same caused to the extent that can be covered by the funds available for that Work. I find on examination that the means in hand will just complete agreeable to the plan directed, all the centres on the west front facing the main channel & Castle Williams including the Southwest Bastion—in all 30 guns. In a personal interview which I had the honor to have with you a few days since you obligingly rendered the assistance of a portion of the troops under your command in dismounting the guns for the above purpose which would thus be much better done and effect a material savings of expense.
>
> Being now ready to commence this work may I request if equally convenient that the guns be now dismounted as suggested on the West front and Southwest Bastion of Fort Columbus.
>
> ("Letter Book, Fortifications NY Harbor, 1843 [- 45], Gov. Island." Entry 740; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1844, May 10. Letter from George Dutton, Capt. U.S. Engineers, to Col. James Bankhead, Commander Governors Island. Again asking that the 30 "barbette guns of Fort Columbus" be removed from their pintles on the west front and the southwest bastion. ("Letter Book, Fortifications NY Harbor, 1843 [- 45], Gov. Island." Entry 740; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1844, July 15. Excerpt of letter from George Dutton, Capt. U.S. Engineers, to Col. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C. Dutton is now proposing strengthening all 87 pintle centers at Fort Columbus "including those finished which are 27 in number with their banquettes." Materials used to strengthen the 27 pintle centers included granite border stones, cement, gravel, hard bricks, and iron. Cost to date: $493.05. Dutton explains "There remain 60 centres to be fitted up in the same manner which at the above rate will require the sum of $3,852.60 to which must be added to cost of any additional repairs of Fort Columbus which you may require to have done." ("Letter Book, Fortifications NY Harbor, 1843 [- 45], Gov. Island." Entry 740; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1844, August 20. Excerpt of letter from George Dutton, Capt. U.S. Engineers, to Col. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C., discussing the work at Governors Island including Fort Columbus. An attached addendum details the "cost of strengthening 13 pintle centres at South Battery with sodded banquettes between them, according to plan furnished by the Engineer Department April 13, 1844." Similar materials and workmanship were undoubtedly also used to strengthen the pintle centers at Fort Columbus.

Materials:
- Granite border stones
- Bricks for pavement
- Cement
- Gravel
- Tools & machines

Workmanship:
- Superintendence
- Stone cutting
- Masons setting stones
- Masons laying bricks & pointing
- Masons cutting out recesses for curbs
- Carpenters
- Smiths at masons tools

Labor:
- Masons
- Stone cutters
- Smiths
- Excavating around pintles
- Breaking stone
- Preparing and putting in concrete
- Drilling for dowels
- Hoisting at derrick
- Hauling with teams

Taking gravel from beach
Screening and gravel
Receiving materials
Building and sodding banquettes
Pointing platforms with asphalt
Cleaning up the work

Total Cost: $853.75

("Letter Book, Fortifications NY Harbor, 1843 [- 45], Gov. Island." Entry 740; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1844, October 18. Excerpt of letter from George Dutton, Capt. U.S. Engineers, to Col. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C., reporting on "the progress of the repairs and improvements on the Public Works of the inner harbor, NY, which are under my charge [including] permanent wharf, repairs to Fort Columbus, South Battery, and Castle Williams on Governors Island, and Fort Gibson on Ellis Island":

> Fort Columbus. The modification and strengthening of the pintle centres of this work according to your plan and instruction of the 13th April last has been executed. Eighty two centres have been fitted up in this manner and the center stone blocks adjusted to the true center of the gun backs and to the proper level. Sodded banquettes have been built between them and along the whole extent of the breast high wall. The guns have been replaced and the batteries are now in the best order. Expenditure: $4,949.60.
>
> ("Letter Book, Fortifications NY Harbor, 1843 [- 45], Gov. Island." Entry 740; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1844, November 5. Letter from Colonel James Bankhead to Brigadier General R. Jones. "Discusses problems with the plans and proposes alterations to make the buildings more functional." A drawing by Colonel Bankhead was enclosed with the letter showing the "present plan and elevation" and "proposed alterations." See fig. 21.

> Iron balconies accessible by exterior stairs were to be placed on the second story of all four buildings, and windows at the ends and center were to be converted to doors opening onto the balconies. Interior stairways could then be removed and the rooms enlarged in the enlisted barracks and access provided to the interior rooms in the officers' quarters.
>
> The proposed changes were apparently not made in the mid 1840s since another set of alterations to the buildings was proposed in 1855.
>
> (Colonel James Bankhead; Box 98; Consolidated Correspondence File, 1794- 1915; Office of the Quartermaster General; RG 92; NAB. Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, pp. 2 and 10.)

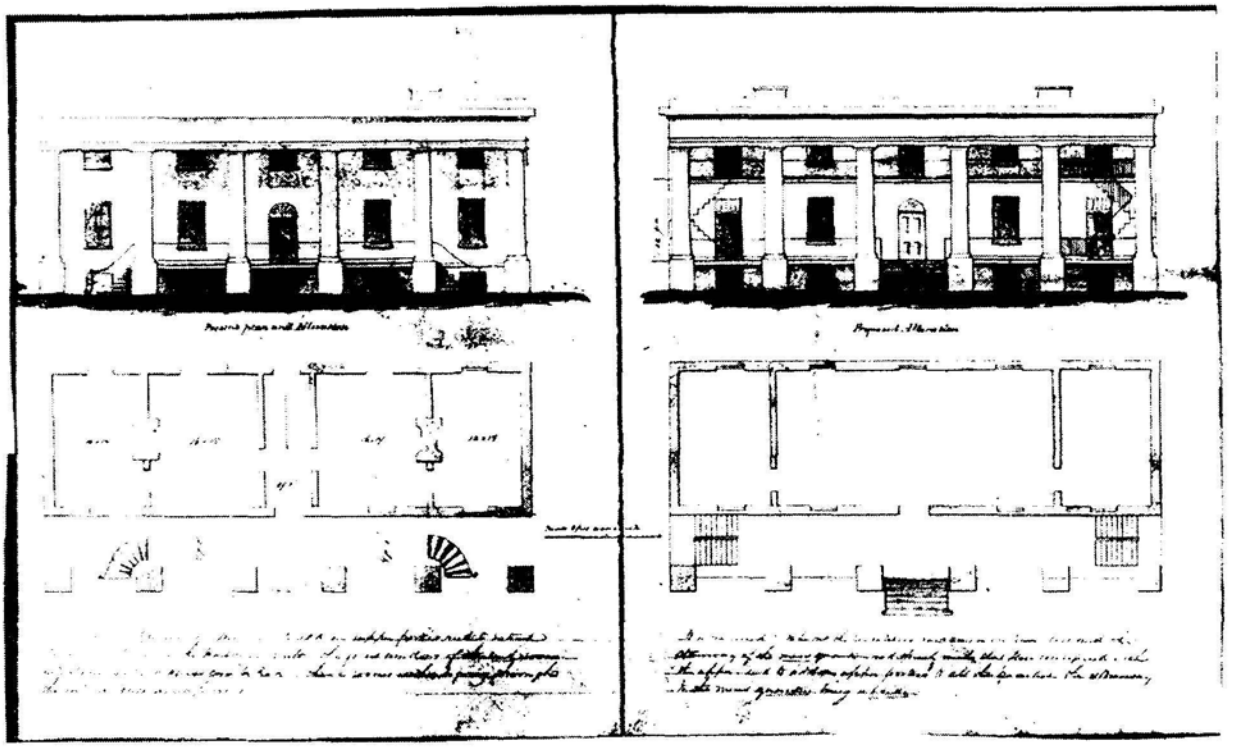


Figure 21. Drawings of a portion of a representative barrack at Fort Columbus illustrating "present plan and elevation" (left) and "proposed alterations"(right), 1844.

1845

1845, January 6. Architectural drawing entitled "Plans and Section of Soldiers Barracks at Governor's Island, New York," and "Plans and Sections of Officers Quarters " drawn under the direction of Col. J.G. Totten, Chief Engineer, by H. G. Wright, Lt. of Engineers, Washington, D.C., January 6 and 14, 1845. These plans were for new frame barracks to be constructed outside the walls of Fort Columbus. (Drawer 37, Sheets 33 and 34; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1850- 1859

Summary

Fort Columbus ceased functioning as an Artillery Post in 1852 and was thereafter designated as a General Recruiting Depot. The subsequent need for adequate troop accommodations may have prompted renovations to the barracks that were carried out in 1855 and 1857. Problems with the nearly flat roofs of the buildings were noted in 1850 that undoubtedly contributed to later deterioration of the cornices, flooring, and plaster. An appropriation from Congress of $26,500 for the "construction and repairs of quarters and barracks at Fort Columbus" was passed in March 1855. This was for the construction of two new blocks of officer's quarters outside the fort, and for the repair of the existing brick barracks inside the fort. Plans were prepared the following month for proposed alterations to the soldier's quarters in the north and south barracks (fig. 23), and to the officer's quarters in the east and west barracks (fig. 24). Replacement of the flat tin roofs with slate- clad, pitched roofs took place in July and August of that year. New cornices were constructed, gutters and leaders of galvanized iron installed, and the brick chimneys heightened by 10 feet to clear the new roofs. Additional work on the north and south barracks, described as being "in the worst state," was also carried out in August and September. This included the erection of exterior iron stairways and galleries; complete removal of the interior stairways, plaster, and selected partition walls; replastering; repairs to the windows; and installation of new floors, doors, and baseboards. The work accomplished in 1855 was described the following year as having "added very much to the convenience of the troops as well as increased the accommodations for them."

A total of $4,000 was expended in 1856 to renovate the gun carriages' traverse circles at both Fort Columbus and Castle Williams to accommodate new armament. The bridge across the ditch at Fort Columbus was also "thoroughly repaired" in 1856 because of the "the decayed state of the timbers."

An additional appropriation from Congress of $14,000 was granted in 1857 for work on the barracks, quarters, and hospital at Fort Columbus. This included conversion of the east barrack in Fort Columbus from an officer's quarters to soldier's barracks. The renovation was to be similar to that carried out in 1855 on the north and south barracks, judging by a cost estimate for the work prepared on April 16, 1857, that included $550 for "iron galleries, stairs, & c."; $1,350 for "stairs"; $350 for "[illegible] stairs extra time & c."; $800 for "plastering, removing partitions & c."; $150 for "repairing windows painting & c.," and $201 for "9 new doors & baseboard."

Work had commenced by May with "masons removing partitions & c. from the E. barrack Fort Columbus, preparatory to modifications." Plans for installing three prison cells in the basement of the east barrack were prepared in June. Although no documentation of the project's completion has been found, the work was presumably done by the end of the year. The fort then had three completely renovated quarters for soldiers (the east, north, and south barracks) and one unremodeled building for officers (the west barrack).

The "permanent privies" within the fort were found in 1858 to be "quite inadequate to the number of men now quartered in the work." A new privy was under construction in November of that year and expected to be completed by the end of the month. No information has yet been found on the location of this structure.

Documentation

1850

1850, January 28. Letter from Colonel H. Whiting to General Thomas Jesup. "Discusses problems resulting from the nearly flat roof [of the barracks] and recommends raising the pitch of the roof." (Box 346; Consolidated Correspondence File, 1794- 1915; Office of the Quartermaster General; RG 92; NAB. Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 10.)

1851

1851. Bird's- eye view of New York City and Brooklyn, showing Battery Park and Governors Island in the foreground. Lithograph by J. Bachmann; published by A. Guerber & Co. This is a schematic portrayal of Fort Columbus with its wide expanse of sodded glacis. (LC.) See fig. 22.

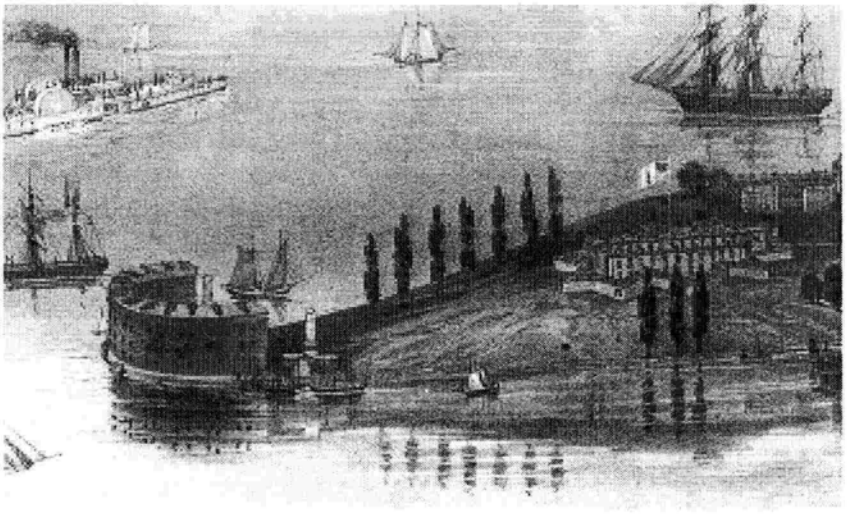


Figure 22. Detail of the bird's- eye view showing the forts on Governors Island, 1851.

1852

1852, November 15. "Fort Columbus continued to be an Artillery Post until November 15, 1852, when Governors Island became a General Recruiting Depot vice [replacing] Fort Wood, pursuant to Genl. Orders No. 38, Series of 1852, A.G. Office." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 106.)

1855

1855. Re: Uses of the barracks buildings. "By 1855 when alterations were made to the [barracks] buildings, #202 had been converted to enlisted barracks." [This is incorrect. The east barrack was not converted from officer's quarters to soldier's quarters until 1857.] (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 4.)

1855, March 3. Congressional appropriation of $26,500 was approved "for construction and repairs of quarters and barracks at Fort Columbus, New York." (*Statutes at Large,* 33rd Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 640- 641. LC.)

1855, April. Two drawings of the east and west barracks by J.B. McPherson were titled "Proposed alteration in Soldiers Quarters in Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, NY" (fig. 23), and "Officers Quarters in Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, NY, with Proposed Alterations" (fig. 24). Both drawings were noted by Richard Delafield, Major of Engineers, to have been "forwarded to the Chief Engineer with my letter of 2nd April 1855." Subsequent correspondence identifies the north and south barracks in use as soldier's quarters and the east and west barracks as officer's quarters in 1855.

> Proposed changes were apparently not made in the mid 1840s since another set of alterations to the buildings was proposed in 1855. [Two drawings illustrate] proposed changes in the floor plan and exterior stairways, which differed little from the earlier proposals, [were] submitted to the Chief of Engineers. The drawing[s]...illustrate a further alteration not recommended in the earlier plans. The flat roof was to become a hipped roof. The suggestion to raise the roof had been made at least five years earlier since the interiors had been repeatedly damaged by leaks.... The alterations were presumably made at that time although could not be documented....
>
> (Drawer 37, Sheets 39 and 40; RG 77; CAB/NACP. Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, pp. 2- 3, 9, and 14.)

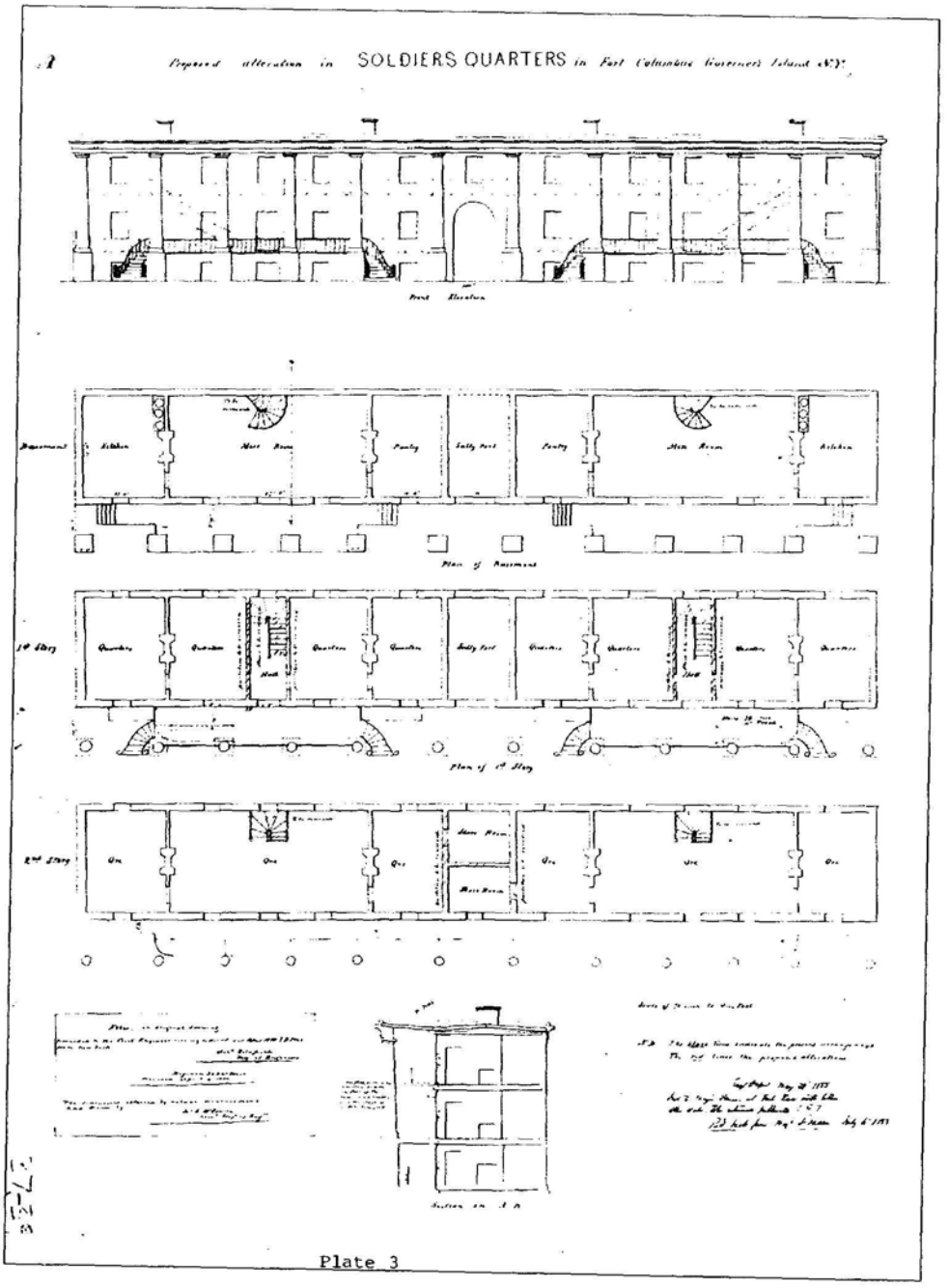


Figure 23. "Proposed Alterations in Soldier's Quarters in Fort Columbus," April 1855. Later correspondence identifies the soldier's quarters in 1855 as the north and south barracks.

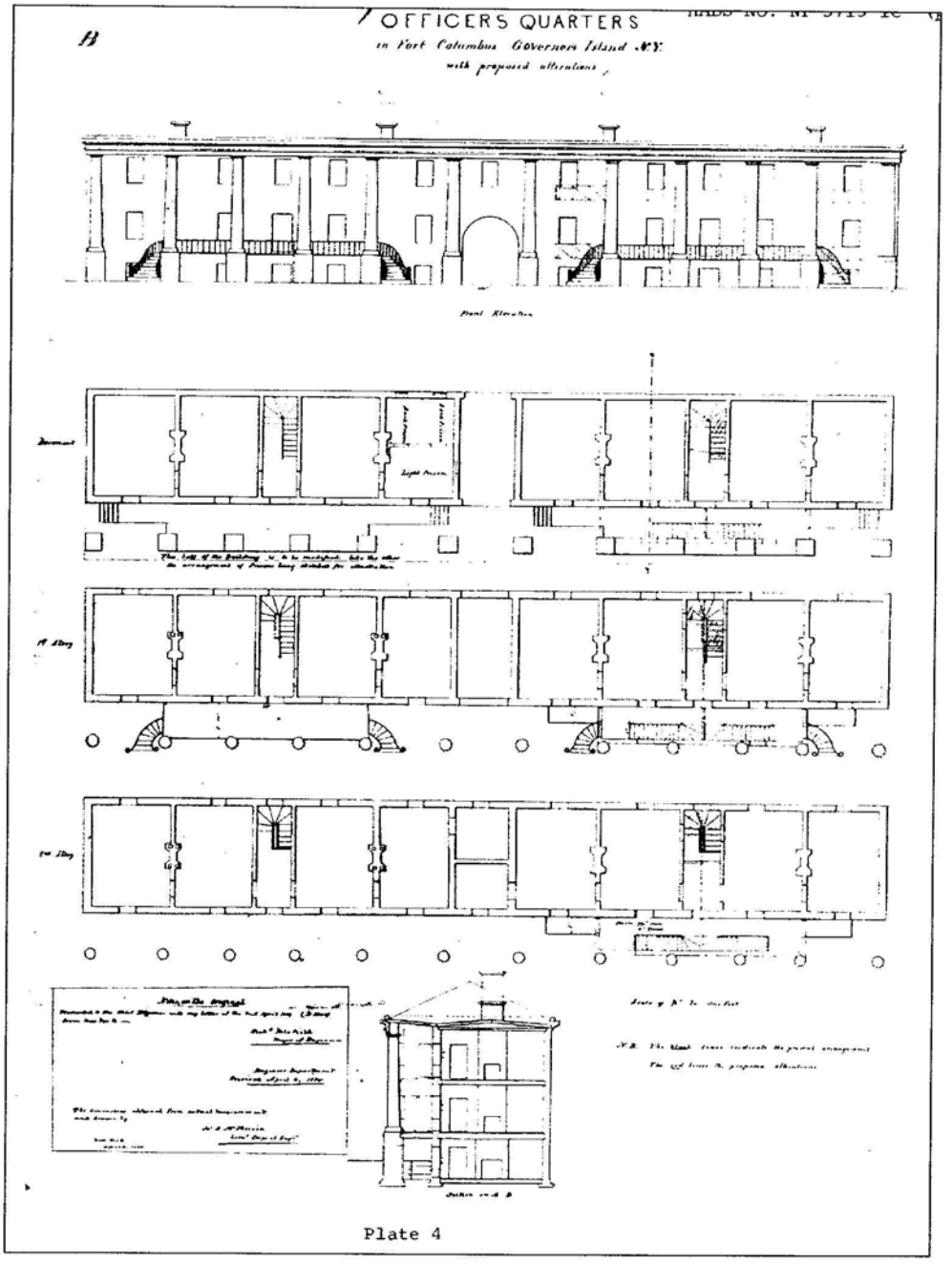


Figure 24. "Officers Quarters in Fort Columbus, Governor's Island NY with proposed alterations," April 1855. Later correspondence identifies the officer's quarters in 1855 as the east and west barracks.

<u>1855, May 11.</u> Excerpt of letter from [?] McPherson, Lieut. of Engineers, to Col. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C. This is a cover letter for a monthly report of operations for April including work at Fort Columbus, noting "At the last [?] the Officers Quarters and repairs of soldiers quarters are rendered extremely urgent owing to the dilapidated condition of the roofs, floors, & c." (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1855, May 29. Excerpt of letter from [?] McPherson, Lieut. Of Engineers, to Messrs. Crawford & Quinn, Troy, NY:

> Being about to repair the soldiers quarters of Governors Island New York Harbor, which will include the putting on new roofs. I wish to know what you will put on slate roof...similar to that which you have been putting on for Major [?] at the arsenal, furnishing the slate nails and all the necessary materials. There are four buildings one hundred & fifty feet long by 32 feet wide which are to be roofed. The slate must be of the upmost quality of American slate and in size about 9" x 18".
>
> (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1855, June 26. Excerpt of letter from [?] McPherson, Lieut. Of Engineers, to Messrs. Crawford & Quinn, Troy, NY, regarding the reroofing work at Fort Columbus:

> A portion of the buildings are necessarily occupied and the officers and soldiers very much exposed, so that I am exceedingly desirous to get the roofs completed as soon as may be.
>
> [A discussion follows of "the two new blocks of officers quarters outside ...."]
>
> (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59, Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1855, September 30. Excerpt of a "Memoir of the progress of operations in the construction and repairs of quarters and barracks at Fort Columbus New York Harbor for the year ending September 30th 1855:"

> ... Early in July the construction of the new slate roof having a proper pitch in place of the old flat roof covered with tin, was commenced and by the 24th August the roofs on the four brick buildings inside the Fort were completed including cornice, gutters leaders & c.—requiring in the construction 66.936 feet of timber, 235.99 squares of slating, 1574 running feet of galvanized iron gutter, 1296 running feet of cornice, 160 ft. 5" galvanized iron leader, and the topping of 17 chimneys about 10 feet each.
>
> ... After the roofs were put on the four buildings inside the Fort it was found that the appropriation would be insufficient to carry out all that was proposed, the repairs—owing to the dilapidated condition of these buildings—being much more extensive than was anticipated. On this account it was deemed advisable not to commence on interior work of more than two of them—the north and south—used as soldiers Barracks as they were in much the worst state.
>
> These have been changed and repaired in accordance with the plans, with the exception of four small iron galleries on the lower story, and are

now occupied by the troops. These changes and repairs required the construction and putting up of 276 running feet of iron gallery 4' wide and four flights of iron stairs. The laying down of 138 square yards of plastering, besides new doors, bases, repairs of windows & c.

Recapitulation

...In the month of June the work was commenced and pushed forward with energy in order that the soldiers might be enabled to occupy their barracks before the weather became cold. New slate roofs including gutters, cornice, leaders & c. have been put on the four brick buildings inside the Fort, and two of these, the south and north used as soldiers Barracks have been thoroughly repaired, new floors laid, iron stairs and galleries put up, and are now occupied by the troops.

(Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1855, September. Excerpt of an "Inventory of books, maps, plans, drawings, instruments, and the public property in possession of Major Richard Delafield, Corps of Engineers, turned over by him to Capt. George Dutton of the same corps."

7. Sketch of the postern, Fort Columbus
143. Plan of Fort Columbus previous to repairs and alterations
160. Plan of upper tier Fort Columbus Governors Island
170. Sketch of Fort Columbus showing the number position and range of guns 07 barbette and 4 casemate
269. Tracing of fortifications on Governors Island in 1841
270. Drawing of proposed alterations of soldiers quarters Fort Columbus Governors Island
271. Sketch showing the arrangement of timbers in the new roof of quarters in Fort Columbus
272. Same as 270

(Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741, p. 234; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1855, October 10. Excerpt of letter from [illegible] to Brig. General Totten, Chief Engineer, responding to an inquiry in regards to the appropriation for the repairs of barracks and quarters at Fort Columbus:

The building now occupied as an office for the general recruiting service...was not included among those for which the appropriation was made.

The soldiers barracks required more extensive repairs to fit them for use than was anticipated; and which could not be brought to life until in the course of repairs the old work had to be taken down. In putting on new roofs it was found that the old cornice was completely rotten and had to be put up anew, and that new gutters and leaders of galvanized iron were

required throughout; the beams upon which the flooring rested were also rotted off, and the plastering, instead of patching, which it was supposed was all that was required, had to be removed throughout, in two of the buildings. However, nearly all the other perishable parts of these buildings were found in a similar state of decay, and these buildings of which there are four are of considerable size, and are now all occupied and complete; except some little work to be done on the hearths, to cost about $50.—and four small iron galleries on the lower story, which do not prevent occupation of the rooms, and which it was deemed advisable to leave at present for want of funds.

(Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1856

1856, April 21. Excerpt of a news article, "The Harbor Fortifications," in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle:*

The Harbor Fortifications of New York are being completed and the armament being supplied them.... Fort Columbus and Castle William are both armed, and when South Battery has received its armament, the united force of the three will be one hundred and ninety seven guns.

(Brooklyn Museum of Art/Brooklyn Public Library—Brooklyn Collection.)

1856, September 22. Excerpt of the "End of fiscal year report" from George Dutton, Captain U.S. Engineers, to Brig. General Totten, Washington, D.C.:

Fort Columbus & Castle Williams, Governors Island.

For repairs and changes in the traverse circles, to fit them for new armament, $4,000.00

Barracks and quarters on Governors Island. For finishing the new officers quarters outside of Fort Columbus, and repairs of officers and soldiers quarters inside of the fort and of the hospital. $14,000.oo

(Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1856, September 30. "Memoir of the progress of operations connected with the construction and repairs of barracks and quarters and the repairs of Fort Columbus and Castle Williams on Governors Island, NY Harbor, for the year ending September 30, 1856":

[Mentions the work on the new officers quarters outside of Fort Columbus] consisting of two frame buildings...as well as the repairs of the

> Soldiers Barracks inside the Fort until the appropriation available for this purpose was exhausted. At this stage of the work the Soldiers Barracks were so far advanced that they could be occupied.... Authority was given to apply a small sum from the Contingencies of Fortifications to carry out a few necessary repairs on the Soldiers Barracks.... This was accordingly done....
>
> During the month of February under instructions from the Department, the Casemates in Castle Williams were cleared out and all the Batteries on the Island put in a complete state of efficiency as far as depended upon the Engineer Department.
>
> In April the roadway leading across the Ditch into Fort Columbus was thoroughly repaired, the greater part requiring to be put down new owing [to] the decayed state of the timbers.
>
> The changes made in the Soldiers Barracks by removing some of the partition walls thereby increasing the size of the rooms and giving better ventilation and the erection of exterior stairs and galleries have added very much to the convenience of the troops as well as increased the accommodations for them, and the experience of a year has shown that the changes were undoubtedly the best that could have been made under the circumstances.
>
> It would be very desirable to have further appropriation to convert one more of the buildings in Fort Columbus into Soldiers Barracks as proposed by the plan, and this it is believed would give ample accommodation to all the troops who may be quartered on the Island.
>
> (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1856, December 3. Excerpt of a news article, "Appropriations for Fortifications, &c.," in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle:*

> The estimates of appropriations required for the service of the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1856, include the following:
> Fortifications and other works of defence ...
> For barracks, quarters and hospital at Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, New York harbor, [$] 14,000.00
>
> (Brooklyn Museum of Art/Brooklyn Public Library—Brooklyn Collection.)

1857

1857, March 3. Congressional appropriation of $14,000 is approved "for barracks, quarters, and hospital at Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, New York harbor." (*Statutes at Large,* 34th Congress, 3rd Session, pp. 191- 192. LC.)

1857, April 16. Excerpt of letter to Gen. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C., regarding cost estimates "for converting East building into Soldier's barracks.... The estimate for the alterations of the 3d building in Fort Columbus are based upon the actual cost of the work done to the other two."

Iron galleries, stairs & c.	$550.
Floors	$1,350
[Illegible] stairs extra time & c.	$350
Plastering, removing partitions & c.	$800
Repairing windows painting & c.	$150
9 new doors & baseboard	$201
TOTAL	$3,401

(Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1857, May. "Report of Operations at Governors Island for the Month of May 1857," includes the following notation regarding work on the east barrack. "Masons—removing partitions & c. from the E. barrack Fort Columbus, preparatory to modifications ... the alteration of the E. barrack Fort Columbus in progress...."(Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1857, June 4. Excerpt of letter from Maj. Delafield to Gen. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C.:

> I enclose herewith a sketch showing the light and dark prisons as they are laid down on the plan of the West barracks Fort Columbus. They are, as I understand, [illegible] matter, intended for the East barracks, but drawn on the other plan because there was no special plan of the East barracks.
>
> ...A modification is proposed in the basement of the East barracks in the arrangement of the rooms next the Gateway for Guard- room and prison as given in the plans for Bedlows Island—and on the opposite side for the Officer of the Day.
>
> In the sketch however the room on one side is divided into a light prison and two cells for dark prisons. The drawing indicates a grated window to each dark cell—an arrangement not consistent with the object purpose. There is [illegible] some other room on this side for these objects; here the guard room will have to be on the other side—But as the earthen rampart lies against the [illegible] of this room...it cannot be divided into [illegible] rooms for a guard room and room for Officer of the Day....
>
> Perhaps it would be best to fit up a portion of the east room immediately above (now intended for quarters for new [illegible] officers) as [two words illegible] for the Officer of the Day.
>
> It will be seen[from the drawings] that the surface of the terreplein behind is about 4' higher than the ceiling of the basement rooms—the dark prisons will be dark enough—but it may be well to carry up

ventilators where the rear windows are marked. The window from the light prison into the passageway should be such—and two with the room on the other side.

It should be remembered that in the wall of the passageway on the inside and included in the space where the right hand dark prison is laid down, is an opening with a [illegible] door, to reach some of the machinery of the draw bridge.

As all these maters have been left in some doubt, I present them again for your decision, desiring it as soon as convenient as the alteration of the building is in rapid progress.

(Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; National Archives, Northeast Region, NYC.)

1857, June 4. Drawing: "Plan of Part of Basement of E. Barracks, Fort Columbus." Noted on the drawing: "Showing Maj. Delafield's proposed arrangement of Prison, to accompany his ltr. of June 4, 1857." (Drawer 37, Sheet 44; RG 77: CAB/NACP.) See fig. 25.

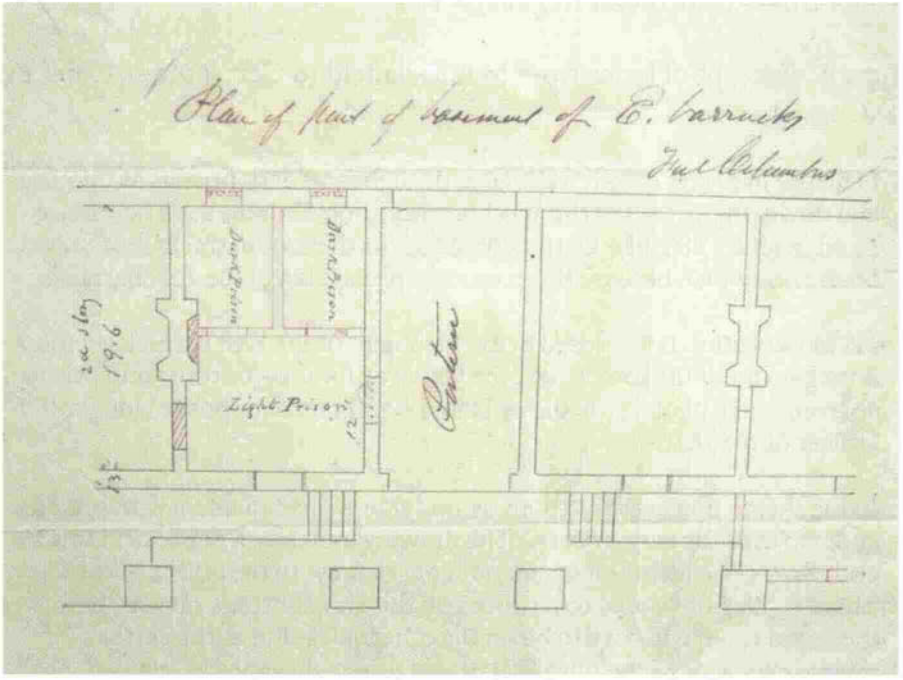


Figure 25. Plan of the basement in the east barrack showing the proposed placement of prison cells, June 1857.

1857, June 15. Excerpt of letter From Maj. Barnard to Gen. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C.:

> I herewith enclose you a sketch of the proposed arrangement of the room on the right of the postern (with reference to the front of the building) in the basement of the E. barracks, for light and dark prisons.
>
> [Most writing here is very difficult to decipher—goes on to discuss the details of grated doors, ventilation, etc.] I am aware that these rooms are quite inadequate as prisons.... To make them so would require a new construction.
>
> (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1857, July 1. Drawing: "Sketch of Arrangement of Light & Dark Prison in E. Barracks, Fort Columbus." Noted on the drawing: "Ltr. of Maj. J.G. Barnard, June 15, 1857." (Drawer 37, Sheet 43; RG 77: CAB/NACP.) See fig. 26.

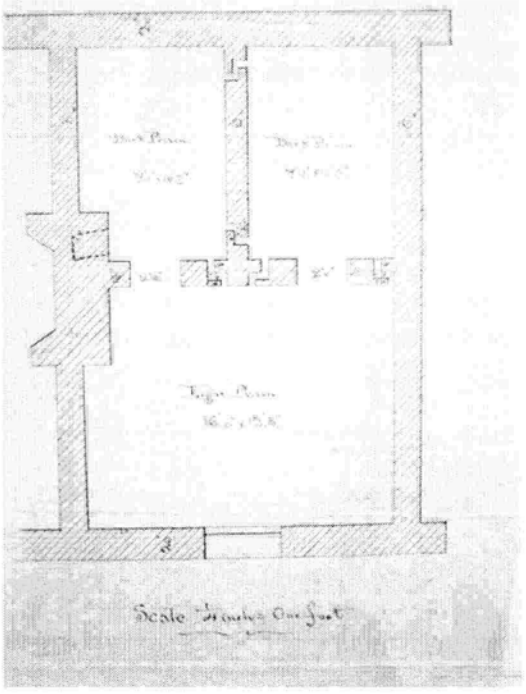


Figure 26. Proposed arrangement of light and dark prisons in the basement of the east barrack (Building 202), June 1857.

1857, June 15. Excerpt of letter to Gen. Totten, Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C.:

> I herewith enclose you a drawing of the prison in the E. building Fort Columbus.
>
> I do not know that it is necessary to add anything to that contained in a previous letter except to mention that the...ventilators have been introduced in accordance with your suggestions. [A long description of the basement prison cells that was not transcribed follows.]
>
> (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741, pp. 208- 209; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1858

1858, September 16. Excerpt of letter to Col. Thayer, Acting Chief Engineer, Washington, D.C.:

> It has been the intention of the Department for a long time to construct a permanent privy adequate to the wants of the garrison in Fort Columbus—but this cannot be done at present, and Capt. Jones suggests the construction of a temporary one at the water's edge would cost very little.
>
> It was my intention to bring these old works of the inner line of defence of the harbor to the notice of the Board of Engineers at its next session, in order that it might be decided what further construction or repairs is necessary on them.
>
> In reference to the works on Governors Island, however, the [illegible] of these permanent works with a recruiting depot gives rise to demands for alteration or enlargement—unnecessary, perhaps, as works of fortification and therefore not properly belonging to the Engineers—yet which the Engineer Department cannot ignore entirely, since it must retain its control over all modifications of its permanent works.
>
> (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741, pp. 208- 209; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1858, November 26. Excerpt of letter to Col. [Lay?]:

> I respectfully state that a privy is now being constructed at this work [Fort Columbus] which will be completed during the next month.
>
> I [illegible] remark in this connection, that when the present quarters inside of Fort Columbus were built, permanent privies were built in the interior of the work. They were doubtless too small in the first place, and are quite inadequate to the number of men now quartered in the work.
>
> (Press copies of letters sent 1855- 59; Entry 741, pp. 208- 209); RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1860- 1869

Summary

Fort Columbus served during the 1860s as a defensive fortification, quarters for the troops stationed on Governors Island, and for Confederate officers and their staff held as prisoners of war. The earliest known photographs of the fort were taken by the studio of Matthew Brady sometime during the Civil War (1861- 65) and by the War Department in September 1864. One is a distant view taken from the upper barbette tier of Castle Williams (fig. 27), and four are closer studies showing the fort's gate with sculpture and barracks (figs. 30- 33). Engravings published in 1861 and 1865 provide additional documentation of the fort's appearance during these years (figs. 26- 27 and 32). Fort Columbus and Castle Williams were both deemed to be "in good condition for defense" in January 1861, just three months before the first volleys of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Fort Columbus was described in July of that year as an "older" fort armed with 87 "old guns" that required upgrading to modern standards. Only one month later, in August 1861, the forts on Governors Island were pressed into service as prisons for Confederate prisoners of war.

Confederate officers were held at the barracks in Fort Columbus, while enlisted soldiers were imprisoned at Castle Williams. The first prisoners of record arrived on Governors Island September 4, 1861, and were transferred to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor the following month. It was not until April of the following year that prisoners were again received on the island. Post commander Colonel Loomis wrote in May 1862 of 499 noncommissioned officers, prisoners of war, who were on Governors Island—presumably held at Castle Williams. Another 539 prisoners arrived in early June, thus crowding the island with more than 1,000 prisoners. This condition did not last, however, since only 486 prisoners were reported as being on hand by the end of June in the first official "Monthly Abstract from Monthly Returns of the Principal U.S. Military Prisons" dated July 1862. Most had been transferred by the end of July, leaving no prisoners at Post Fort Columbus for the remainder of 1862, except in September, when five were noted.

The year 1863 was comparatively quiet, with only 15 prisoners held in June and July, 14 in August, and 13 in September. Colonel Hoffman, Commissary- General of Prisoners, visited Governors Island in December 1863. He described the Fort Columbus as then furnishing "no room for prisoners," and Castle Williams being used primarily for deserters from the Union Army and only occasionally for prisoners of war, with a maximum capacity of 500. More activity occurred in 1864, with eight prisoners recorded on the island in January, 78 in February, 301 in September, 303 in October, 316 in November, and 34 in December. As in previous months, no breakdown was provided as to the number held at the barracks in Fort Columbus versus those imprisoned in Castle Williams. Prison activity slowed in the final months of the war, the number of prisoners on Governors Island in 1865 dwindling to 135 in January, 126 in February, 9 in March, and finally none in April.

The surviving journals of three Confederate officers held at Fort Columbus in 1861 and 1862 provide more personal glimpses of the island and its forts. These were Captain Thomas Sparrow with the Washington Grays of North Carolina, Lieutenant Alonzo Bell with the Jonesboro Guards of North Carolina, and Commissary Sergeant Edward Drummond with the First Regiment, Georgia Infantry. The experiences of these men differed considerably from those of the enlisted men imprisoned in the dank and unhealthful Castle Williams. All three were granted parole and allowed to walk certain areas of the island during defined hours. Regular activities included eating, sleeping, visiting the men at the castle, reading, writing, attending concerts, and playing ball and cards. Sparrow, Bell, and 12 other men were quartered in September and October 1861 in a large second- story room of the north barrack. Two smaller rooms were occupied by fellow officers in the second story, as were three rooms on the floor below. Heat was provided by a fireplace, into which it was forbidden to spit, according to the rules of the room. The dining room and kitchen were located in the basement, where there were six tables with benches. Captain Sparrow further described his impressions of Fort Columbus as follows:

> A bastion built of granite surrounded with a moat fifty feet wide. Around and outside of the moat or ditch is a counter scarp or breastwork & sloping outwards from this is a glacis beautifully turfed with bluegrass....
>
> In the interior of the work are four buildings fifty feet [sic] long and each having a basement & two stories facing on a square. Each building having twelve Ionic Columns & a double piassa [sic]. The square is divided into four grand plots by walks crossing at eight angles in the centre, where stands a pump. Shade trees surround each plot of grass so that the place has a green & cheerful aspect.

Edward Drummond, who was held at Fort Columbus from April to June 1862, described his environs as "a very fine place" where he had "nearly full sway of the Island."

The effectiveness of Fort Columbus as a defensive work had been compromised by June 1863, according to Richard Delafield of the Corps of Engineers, who observed that numerous buildings then blocked the fort's line of fire. Recommendations were made to demolish these structures, but no action appears to have been taken. A map of Governors Island dated December 1867 clearly illustrates the development that had occurred all along the shores of the island (fig. 35).

A Congressional appropriation of $100,000 was made in July 1864 for making repairs to several fortifications in New York Harbor, including Fort Columbus. No details have yet been found of how this money was expended.

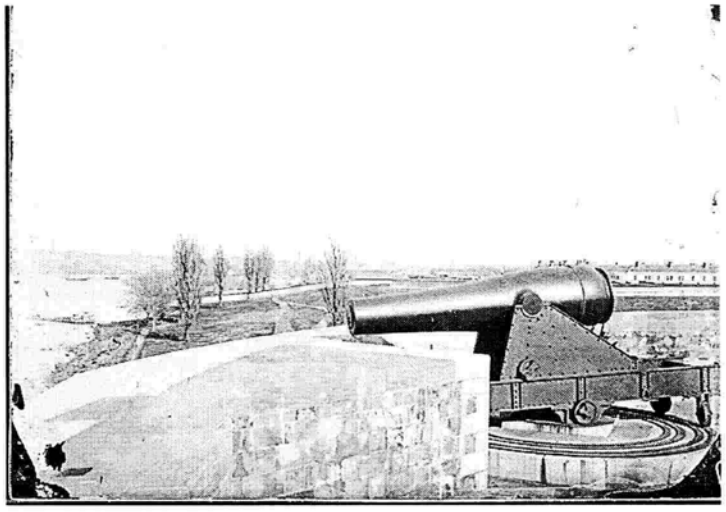
Detailed descriptions of the Fort Columbus barracks are contained in reports for the years 1863 and 1868. These indicate that the west building continued to be used as officer's quarters and the east, south, and north buildings as soldier's quarters. The west barrack was divided into eight sets of quarters of two rooms each, for a total of 16 rooms. Four apartments were located on the first floor and four on the second floor, accessed by two interior stair halls. This layout was unchanged from the original construction of 1834- 37. The east, south, and north barracks had two large rooms and four small rooms in the first story, three large rooms and two small end rooms in the second story, and no interior stairways. Exterior iron stairways leading to an iron

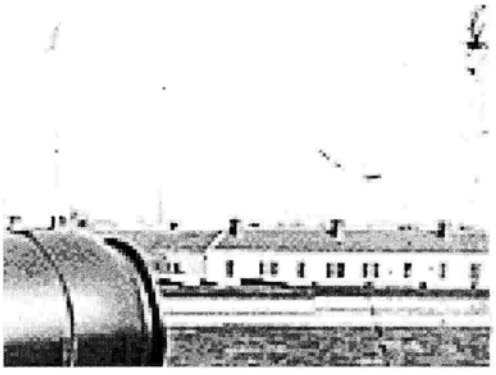
"piazza" or balcony in the second story provided access to that level. This configuration dated to the alterations made to the buildings in the mid- 1850s, when the interior stairways were removed and rooms enlarged. The triangular buildings at the ends of each barrack were described in 1868 as having kitchen storerooms and privies in the basement story and various other functions, such as tailor shops, in the second story. One had been remodeled as a bakery; later documentation suggests that it was located on the east side of the south barrack, where the triangular structure had been incorporated as an addition, as shown on the Governors Island map of 1867.

Documentation

1861- 65

1861- 65. A photograph by Matthew Brady's studio taken from the upper tier of Castle Williams circa 1861- 65, shows the south barrack of Fort Columbus in the background to the east. (Matthew Brady Collection; Signal Corps Records, RG 111; SPB/NACP. Reproduced in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 4, p. 74.) See fig. 27.





Detail of the flag and west barrack at Fort Columbus, circa 1861- 65.

Figure 27. Upper tier of Castle Williams, looking east towards Fort Columbus, circa 1861- 65.

1861- 65. "During the Civil War a double guarded cell was maintained in what is now the basement of K Co., 29th Infantry [the east barrack]. This consisted of an outside cell in which the guard was locked in and an inner one for the prisoner. One or more celebrated Confederate officers were imprisoned here before execution, including Captain John G. Beall, a naval officer, who with two others, captured the S.S. 'Philo Parsons' and S.S. 'Island Queen.' His execution took place February 24, 1865." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 110.)

1861- 65. "Great were the difficulties of [barge] passage for those on pleasure bent in cold and storm and darkness, but...greater still was the difficulty of remembering the countersign without which no one was admitted within the frowning draw- bridge gate of Fort Jay [sic: Columbus], where in those days all the officers' families resided." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 110.)

1861

1861, January 18. Report from the Engineer Department to the Secretary of War regarding the condition of the forts: "Fort Columbus and Castle William, New York Harbor.—Both in good condition for defense." (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Vol. 1. Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office (GPO), 1899, p. 49.)

1861, April 12. Hostilities between the Northern and Southern states officially began with the firing on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina.

1861, May 4. Two engravings of Fort Columbus published in 1861 show troops drilling outside the fort and parading on the interior quadrangle of Fort Columbus. One is captioned "Recruits Drilling in Squads on Governor's Island, New York," the other "Parade of United States Troops on Governor's Island before Embarkation." (Published in *Harper's Weekly*, May 4, 1861.) See figs. 28- 29.

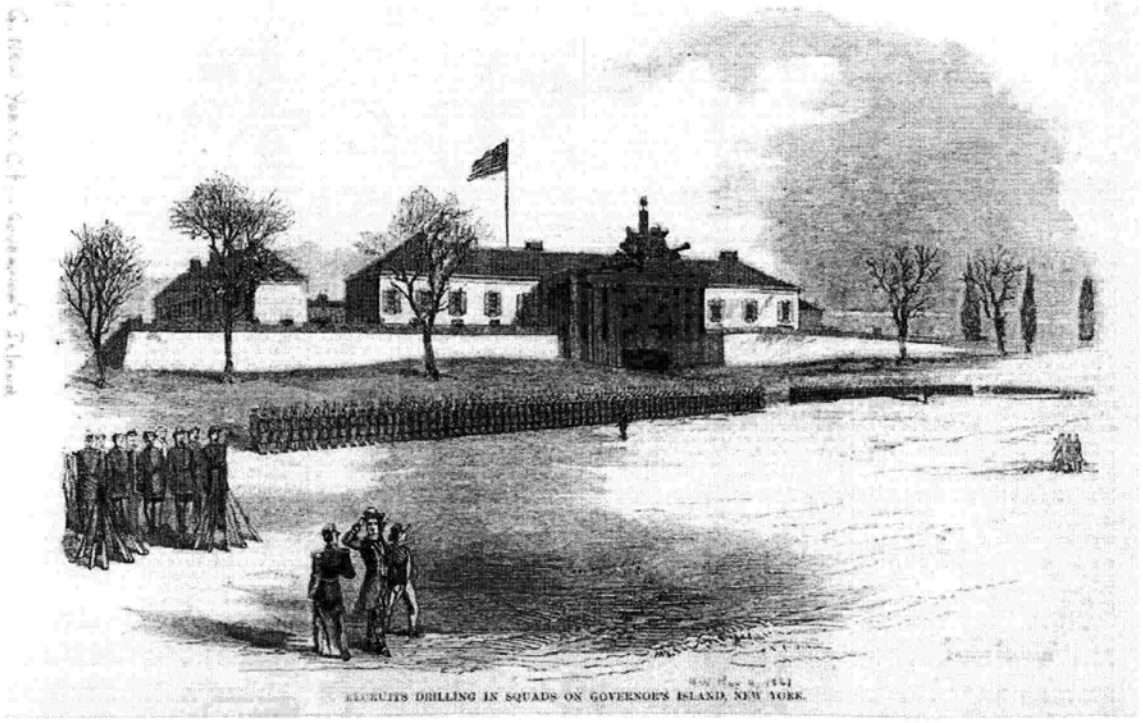


Figure 28. Recruits drilling outside Fort Columbus, 1861.

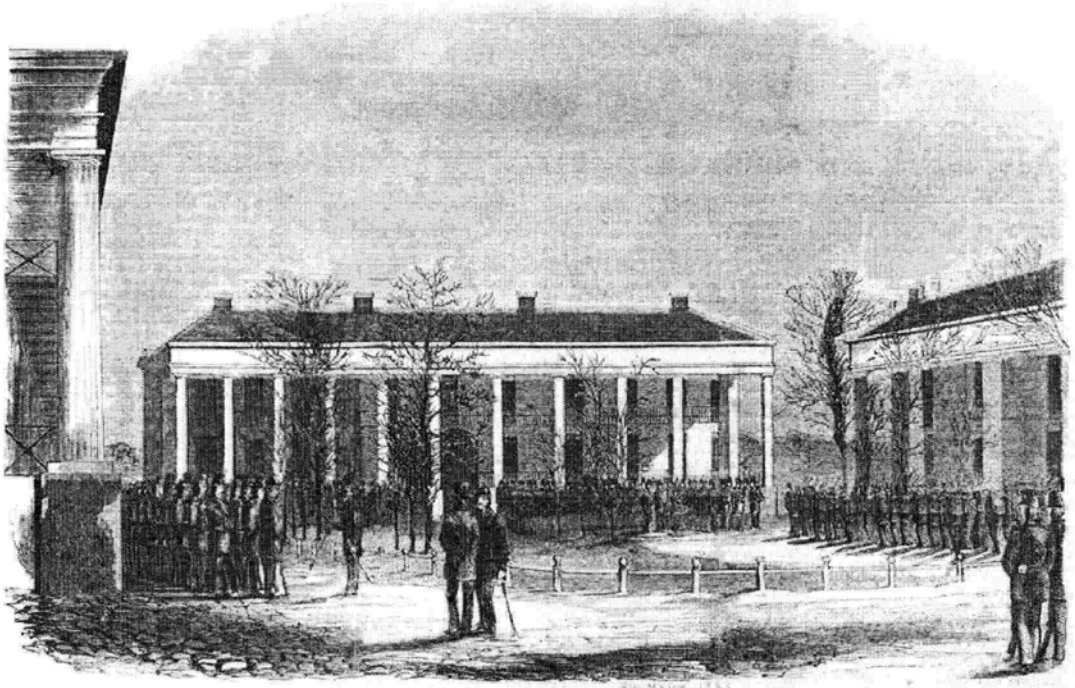


Figure 29. Troops drilling on the quadrangle of Fort Columbus, 1861.

1861, July 12. A letter from the Engineer Department to the Secretary of War describes the existing fortifications on Governors Island as "finished works," Castle Williams outfitted with 78 guns, and Fort Columbus with 87 guns. The following was also noted about the older fortifications of New York Harbor:

> It should here be remarked that in the older of these finished forts and batteries the platforms for the barbette guns were to some extent made for lighter guns than are now thought to be necessary for such important positions. Such platforms are to be altered to suit the heavier guns, but it is certainly most judicious to retain the old guns—generally 32-pounders—and the present platforms until there is a supply of 8- inch and 10- inch columbiads to be substituted.
>
> (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Vol. 1, pp. 333- 335.)

1861, August 29. "The Washington Grays [a Confederate unit, from North Carolina], were taken as prisoners of war [at Fort Hatteras] and transported to Governors Island, New York, on August 29, 1861. In February, 1862, they were exchanged and reorganized into Company K, 10th North Carolina regiment." (http://www.n- ssa.org/TIDEWATER/ WASHINGTON/washington_grays.html. Cited in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 4, p. 73.)

1861, September 4. Letter from Commander Fort Columbus to Adj.- General U.S. Army. "I have received the whole of the prisoners of war upon this island. The officers are quartered in Fort Columbus and the men at the Castle." (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 2, Vol. 3. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1898, p. 34.)

1861, September 4- October 30. Alonzo Etheridge Bell and Thomas Sparrow are among the Confederate officers who arrived at Governors Island on September 4, 1861 as prisoners of war. Both had been captured at Fort Hatteras and were quartered together in the north barrack at Fort Columbus. Bell was a lieutenant with the Jonesboro Guards of Camden County, North Carolina. Sparrow was a captain with the Washington Grays of North Carolina. The two men recorded their experiences on Governors Island in journals that survive in separate archives today. Bell and Sparrow were transferred on October 30, 1861, to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor, Massachusetts. Excerpts from the journals follow. (Bell's journal is at the North Carolina State Archives; Sparrow's journal at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Both journals have been transcribed by Alex Christopher Meekins, PhD candidate at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.)

Journal Excerpts:

> September 4 (Bell). Our men were put in the Castle William, which is a small Fort on the water on the western side of the island. The officers were put in Fort Columbus which is in the centre of the island and is much superior to the other. The island is used for drilling camp of discipline, etc., etc. It has a great many pretty walks & shades. There is one church, one store, a hospital, several dwellings, offices, a large magazine, etc., etc.... After being duly installed in our quarters, we signed a parole of honor for the privilege of walking over a certain part of the island and visiting the men twice a day between 9 & 10 A.m. and 4 & 5 p.m. (p. 16)
>
> September 4 (Sparrow). We landed at the wharf...& the men were formed in companies in two ranks & marched across the Island to Castle Williams....
>
> The officers were all marched up to the interior of Fort Columbus, which is in the interior of the island. It is a bastion built of granite surrounded with a moat fifty feet wide. Around and outside of the moat or ditch is a counter scarp or breastwork & sloping outwards from this is a glacis beautifully turfed with bluegrass.
>
> In the interior of the work are four buildings fifty feet [sic: 150] long and each having a basement & two stories facing on a square. Each building having twelve Ionic Columns & a double piassa [sic]. The square is divided into four grand plots by walks crossing at eight angles in the centre, where stands a pump. Shade trees surround each plot of grass so that the place has a green & cheerful aspect.
>
> Quarters. The buildings are located North, South, East & West. We are assigned to part of the North building, facing southward. The upper piassa overlooks a part of the bay & the upper back windows overlook N.York City, East River, Jersey City & Brooklyn.

Lower floor. Col. Martin & Major Andrews in a small room West end. Capt. Lucius Johnson & als. the cosy [sic] middle room & Lt. Col. Johnston the small east room.

Upper floor. Commodore Barrn & Coln. Bradford the West end room over Col. Martin. Next to this the middle room is occupied as follows. [Lists 14 men, including Capt. Thos. Sparrow.] In the last room upstairs, East, Major Gilliam, Capt. Lamb, Capt. Sharp, Lieut. Shaw & others.

The dining room is in the basement. There are six tables with benches. We have tin plates & cups & army rations—beef, port, potatoes & light bread, rice & beans occasionally, coffee & sugar, bread & coffee only at night. (pp. 110- 114)

September 5 (Bell). We sleep on [a] common straw mattress placed on a frame about 18 inches from the floor. We have no sheets and one given us to cover with. We certainly shall learn to live economically whether we practice it or not. We have our rations served out to us, which we have to cook or have to cook ourselves. We have some few Negroes along who officiate cooks .... Our cooking & eating is [sic] done in the basement. We can hire out our washing done for 60 cents a dozen by the women in the fort who are mostly Irish. They wash very well. The men sometimes wash their own socks[,] towels and handkerchiefs and is really amusing to see them. (p. 17)

September 20 (Sparrow). I copy here as a matter or curiosity hereafter a set of rules for the regulation of our room drawn up by myself & posted on the back of our room door.
No. 1. No talking after Tattoo, taps.
No. 2. On rising each officer must make his bed.
No. 3. No spitting on the floors, piassas, pavements; nor in the fire places.
No. 4. The Chief will appoint a police force of two each morning who will put the room in perfect order.
No. 5. Vulgarity is positively forbidden. Profanity is discountenanced.
No. 6. The Chief shall procure the morning papers & read them or appoint a reader for the room. All newspapers are to be in his custody & are to be taken care of until read by all.
No. 7. Policy duty will be performed by detachments in the following order. [A list of names follows, including T. Sparrow and A.E. Bell.] (pp. 128- 129)

September 25 (Sparrow). Furniture, etc. We have in our rooms neither tables, chairs, nor benches. The only furniture is a camp garrison bedsted made of four boards with a headboard. We do our writing by taking out one of these headboards & laying it across our laps as I am now doing. We sit upon the beds & the few trunks in the room. Our bedding consists of cotton sacks with a slit in the middle filled with long wheat straw. Our covering a simple coarse gray army blanket with "U.S." wrought in the centre of each. I have the benefit of a blanket shared & over- coat under my head. (p. 176)

> Rations. The U.S. Government supplies us common army rations consisting of fat port, Irish potatoes, rice &, occasionally, beef. No way to cook except boilers We have recently added, through the kindness of friends in N. York, crackers, cheese, molasses, hams, sauces, etc., and have begun to live quite well. (p. 177)

1861, October 26. Order from Asst. Adjutant- General U.S. Army to Commander Fort Columbus, directing the "political prisoners and prisoners of war at the several posts in NY Harbor" be sent to Fort Warren, Boston Harbor, via steam transportation. (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 2, Vol. 2. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1897, p. 120.)

1861, November 30. Excerpt of letter from the Engineer Department, Washington, D.C., to the Secretary of War, reporting on the condition of the "several forts under construction, and the progress of work during the year":

> Fort Columbus, Castle William, South Battery, Fort Wood, and Fort Gibson, all works immediately in front of the southern end of the city of New York, and constituting the inner line of defense, are in serviceable condition and entirely ready for the whole of their respective armaments. Small expenditures are needed at several of them, most of which have been heretofore specified. Such as are pressing will be attended to.
>
> (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Vol. 1, p. 687.)

1861, December 30. Excerpt of letter from the Engineer Department, Washington, D.C., to the Governor of New York, regarding the condition of the coastal fortifications including: "Fort Columbus, ready for seventy- six 15- inch, 10- inch, and 8- inch guns, including eleven 32 and 24 pounders." (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 2, Vol. I, p. 767.)

1862

1862, February 15. Excerpt of letter from Commander Fort Columbus to the Secretary of State. "There are neither political prisoners nor prisoners of war now at this post. The last detachment (sixteen left behind sick) were sent to Fort Warren January 28 ultimo." (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 2, Vol. 2, pp. 224- 30.)

1862, April 22 – June 19. Edward Drummond, a Confederate commissary sergeant with the First Regiment, Georgia Infantry, arrived at Governors Island as a prisoner of war from Fort Pulaski, GA. He and the officers were quartered in the barracks at Fort Columbus, the enlisted men at Castle Williams. Drummond and his comrades were transferred to Johnson's Island Prison in Ohio on June 19, 1862. Drummond's journal was published in 2004. (Edward William Drummond, *A Confederate Yankee: The Journal of Edward William Drummond, A Confederate Soldier from Maine*. Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2004.)

Journal Excerpts:

> April 22. Arrived here this evening. The Men have been Marched to Castle William. We are in the Officers Garrison with Ten Officers taken at Newbern about Six weeks since. Rather close tonight but in hopes to soon get better quarters or more roomy at least. (p. 41)
>
> April 23. We are all messing on the opposite side of the Garrison which by the way is a very fine place and commands a view of all the Cities about New York and a full view of the Harbour. We are all on parole and have nearly full sway of the Island. (pp. 41- 42)
>
> April 26. We have a prospect of better living as we are promised a Mess Room and a chance to cook our own Rations, which we can do better as our Cooks are nearly all with us. (p. 45)
>
> May 14. We have done nothing today but our regular duties which consist of Eating, Playing Ball, Euchre &c. &c. and sleeping. (p. 53)
>
> May 21. We have been permitted to hire cooks and all have scattered about in messes among the different Wash Women and are fixed very comfortably at about $3 per week. Our friends have been very kind in furnishing us with funds and we can live very comfortably. Our Washing costs us One Dollar per Dozen. (p. 56)
>
> May 27. We had a very disagreeable day today, it being rainy and quite cold. We have kept our fires going all day. (p. 58)
>
> May 28. We have started a weekly paper for our own amusement, which made its debut tonight, called the Dixie Discourses. After reading of the paper our regular nightly Prominade Concert took place. And now Euchre & Whist are introduced as usual and will no doubt last until late bed time as usual. (pp. 58- 59)
>
> June 2. The Island being over- run with soldiers, we could not have our usual game of ball which is our principal out door exercise. (p. 62)

1862, May 6. Excerpt of letter from Commander Fort Columbus to Commissary-General of Prisoners. "I have on this island 499 non- commissioned, & c. and 37 commissioned officers, prisoners of war. Many of the rank and file need clothing." (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 2, Vol. 3, p. 522.)

1862, June 17. Excerpt of letter from Commissary- General of Prisoners to the Secretary of War:

> Pursuant to instructions heretofore rec'd I have ordered that the rebel officers, prisoners at Fort Delaware and Fort Columbus be sent to the depot at Sandusky [Johnson's Island Prison—includes Edward Drummond], the movement to take place the latter part of the week....

> Governors Island is better adapted for the reception of prisoners than any place in the interior and I would respectfully suggest that sheds for the accommodation of 5,000 be erected there immediately. The cost of transportation thence to an inland camp would go far toward covering the expense of the buildings. I would respectfully suggest also that bunks be put in Castle William for the accommodation of prisoners confined there. By this means more can be provided for there and good police and health will be promoted. Of course they would be so arranged as to be easily removed.
>
> (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 2, Vol. 4, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1899, pp. 35- 36.)

1862, July 9. Excerpt of letter from the Secretary of War to Adj.- General U.S. Army. "You will take immediate measures to remove the prisoners of war from Governors Island to some place of security and also to guard Fort Columbus and Castle William from any danger by surprise otherwise from prisoners there." (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 4, p. 159.)

1862, July 10. Letter from Adj.- General U.S. Army to the Secretary of War. "The Baltic will be ready this evening and will take from Fort Columbus all the prisoners of war, including one officer, except a few sick, over a thousand [sic?], and from Fort Lafayette, about 120, leaving there some forty political prisoners. Not a man is now in Castle William. I send a guard of 4 officers and 100 men." (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 4, 1899, p. 165.)

1862, July 31. First monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.

Fort Columbus:
486 prisoners are on hand June 30
472 transferred
13 died
1 escaped
0 prisoners remaining July 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1899, p. 986.)

1862, August 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons. No listing for Fort Columbus [?]. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 986.)

1862, September 30. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons. No listing for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 987.)

1862, October 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.

Fort Columbus:
5 prisoners on hand September 30
1 transferred
4 released
0 prisoners remaining October 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 987.)

1862, November 30 and December 31. Monthly abstracts of U.S. Military Prisons. No listings for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 988.)

1863

1863, January - May. Monthly abstracts of U.S. Military Prisons. No listings for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, pp. 988- 990.)

1863, June. "In a June 1863 letter to the Commander of the Department of the East, Richard Delafield of the Corps of Engineers reported that the existence of numerous buildings on the Island blocked the lines of fire [of Fort Columbus]. He went on to recommend that these structures be demolished as soon as possible and that families living on the Island be moved elsewhere. Delafield's recommendations were not carried out, and the harbor passed the remaining years of the Civil War without action." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 14.)

1863, July 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
15 prisoners on hand June 30
0 transferred, released or died
15 prisoners remaining July 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 991.)

1863, August 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
15 prisoners on hand July 31
1 transferred
14 prisoners remaining August 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 991.)

1863, September 30. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
14 prisoners on hand August 31
271 joined
203 transferred
2 died
67 released
13 prisoners remaining September 30

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 992.)

1863, October 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.

Fort Columbus:
13 prisoners on hand September 30
244 joined
257 transferred or released
0 prisoners remaining October 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 992.)

1863, October 31. "Inspection report made on public Buildings, Officers and Troop Quarters at Fort Columbus New York Harbor on the 31st day of October 1863 by 1st Lieut. James L. Casey, 5th Infantry, Acting Assistant Quartermaster U.S. Army":

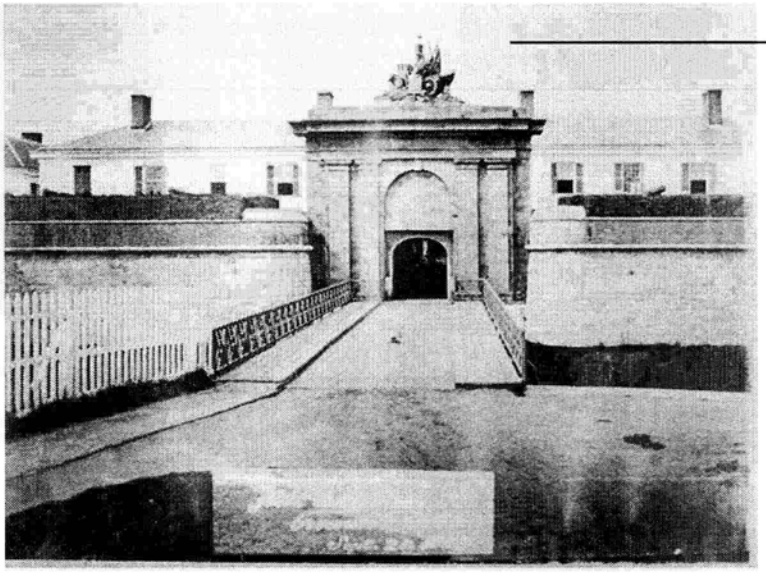
> [East barrack]. A report from 1863 does indicate that the building had been altered by that year and that it was being used as enlisted barracks instead of officers' quarters. Like the enlisted barracks on the north and south of the parade, the first floor of 202 [the east barrack] contained two large and four small rooms and three large and two small rooms were on the second floor. The report further notes that each of the enlisted barracks had balconies on the second floor. In 1863 there were still eight small rooms in the basement.
>
> (Box 191, Fort Columbus; Consolidated Correspondence File, 1794-1915; Office of the Quartermaster General; RG 92: NAB. Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 10.)

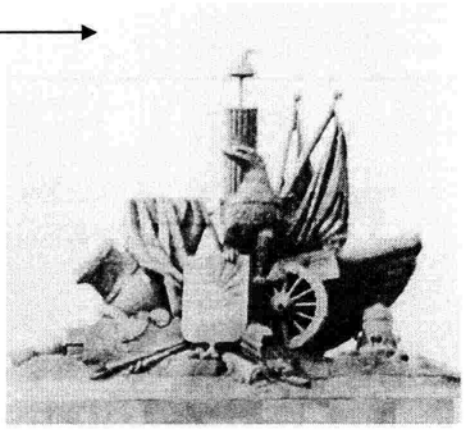
1863, November 30. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons. No listing for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 993.)

1863, December 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons. No listing for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 993.)

1864

1864, September 28. The gate and barracks of Fort Jay were recorded in four photographic views dated September 28, 1864, in the Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs. (Catalog numbers 165- C- 236, 165- C- 1088, 165- C- 1089, and 165- C- 1094A; SPB/NACP.) See figs. 30- 33.





Detail view of the gateway sculpture. Note missing eagle wings and upper portion of the left flag.

Figure 30. "Garrison Quarters, Main Sally Port," September 28, 1864.

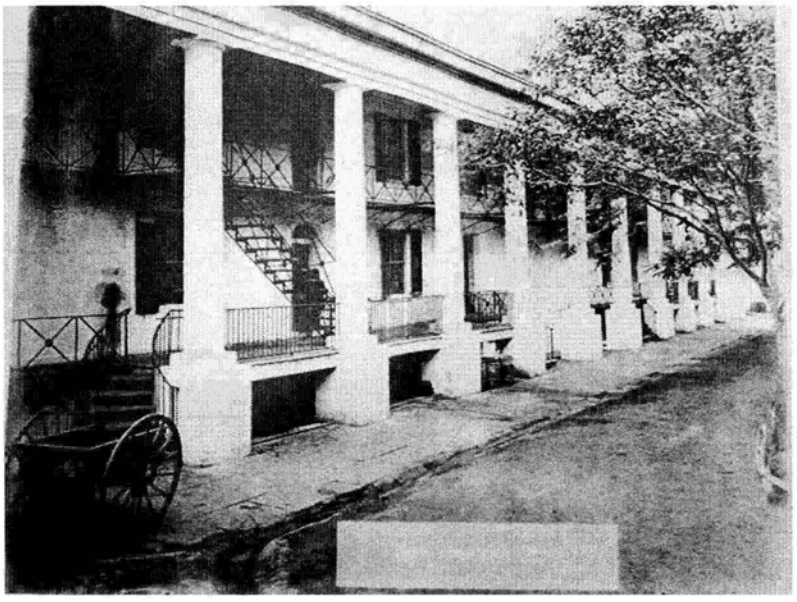


Figure 31. Unidentified barrack at Fort Columbus, September 28, 1864. This is either the east, south, or north soldier's quarters, based on the presence of an iron gallery in the second story.

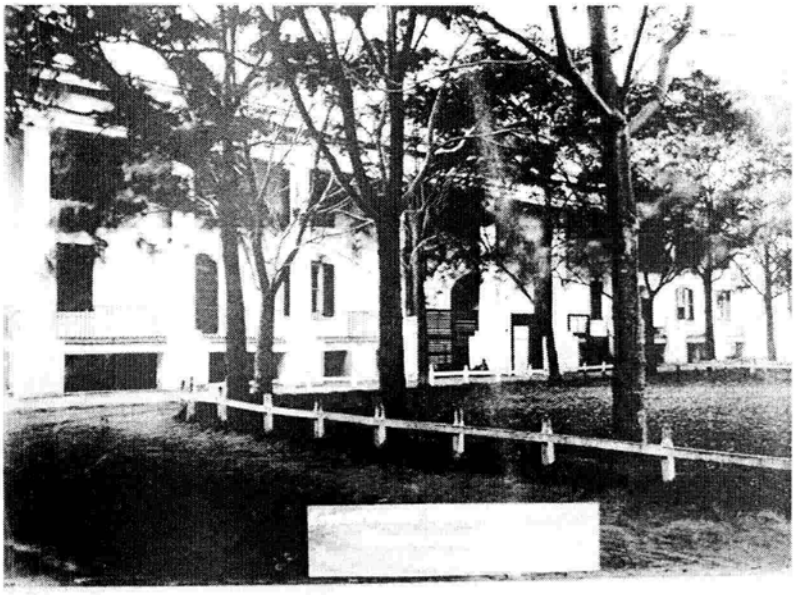


Figure 32. Unidentified barrack at Fort Columbus, September 28, 1864. This is the west officer's quarters, based on the absence of a gallery in the second story.

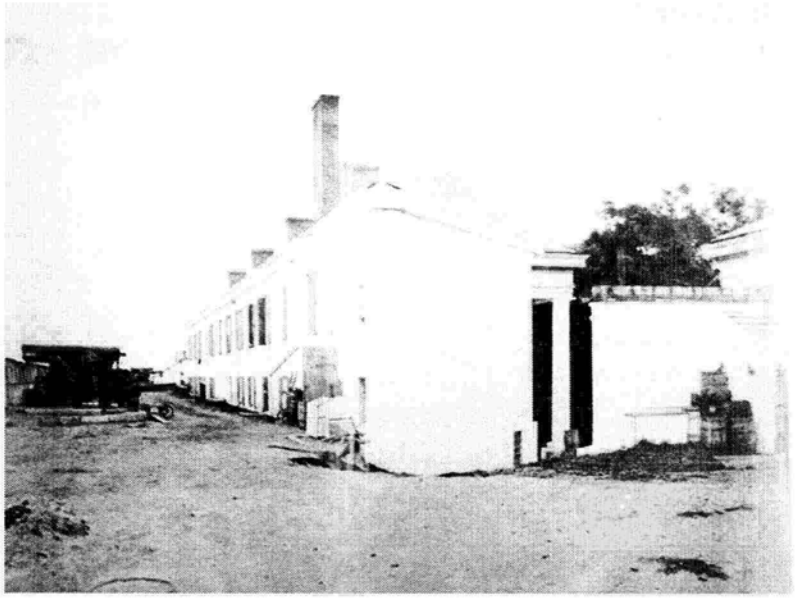


Figure 33. Back side of unidentified barrack at Fort Columbus, September 28, 1864. This is most likely the south barrack, judging by the extension on the near side that incorporated the small triangular building.

1864, January 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.

Fort Columbus:
0 prisoners on hand December 31
8 joined
1 sick
0 transferred
8 prisoners remaining January 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 994.)

1864, February 29. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.

Fort Columbus:
8 prisoners on hand January 31
78 joined
8 transferred
8 citizens
78 prisoners remaining February 29

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 994.)

1864, March 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.

Fort Columbus:
78 prisoners on hand February 29
78 transferred
8 citizens
0 prisoners remaining March 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 995.)

1864, April - July. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons. No listings for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 995- 997.)

1864, July 1. Congressional appropriation for fiscal year July 1, 1864 – June 30, 1865, includes $100,000 "for repairs of Fort Columbus, Castle Williams, South Battery, Fort Wood, New York harbor." (*Statutes at Large*, 38th Congress, 1st Session, p. 353. LC.)

1864, July 18. General Order No. 231, War Department, Adjt. General's Office.

> An Act making appropriations for the construction, preservation, and repairs of certain fortifications and other works of defense, for the year ending the 330th of June, 1865. [A long list, including:] repairs of Fort Columbus, Castle Williams, South Battery, Fort Wood, and Fort Gibson, New York Harbor, one hundred thousand dollars.
>
> (*The War of the Rebellion*, Series 3, Vol. 4. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1900, p. 504.)

1864, August 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons. No listing for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 997.)

1864, September 30. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.

Fort Columbus:
0 prisoners on hand August 31
301 joined
2 sick
301 prisoners remaining September 30

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 998.)

1864, October 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
301 prisoners on hand September 30
6 joined
4 died
7 sick
303 prisoners remaining October 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 998.)

1864, October 31. Excerpt of report from Asst. Adj.- General U.S. Army to the Secretary of War. "Recruiting for the Regular Army.... Only two principal depots for the general service are now maintained, one for infantry at Fort Columbus, New York Harbor, and one for mounted service at Carlisle, Pa. At these points the recruits are collected and forwarded to batteries and regiments in the field." (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 3, Vol. 4, p. 807.)

1864, November 30. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
303 prisoners on hand October 31
410 joined
389 transferred
7 died
1 released
40 sick
316 prisoners remaining November 30

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 999.)

1864, December 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
316 prisoners on hand November 30
3 joined
272 transferred
11 died
2 released
40 sick
34 prisoners remaining December 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 999.)

1865

1865, January 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
34 prisoners on hand December 31
104 joined
2 transferred
1 released

13 sick
135 prisoners remaining January 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 1000.)

1865, February 28. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
135 prisoners on hand January 31
17 joined
21 transferred
5 died
126 prisoners remaining February 28

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 1000.)

1865, March 31. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
127 [sic?] prisoners on hand February 28
0 joined
115 delivered or exchanged
3 died
9 prisoners remaining March 31

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 1001.)

1865, April 6. Print of "Governor's Island and Fort, New York Harbour." Written on border, "Apr. 6, 1865." (New York Public Library.) See fig. 34.

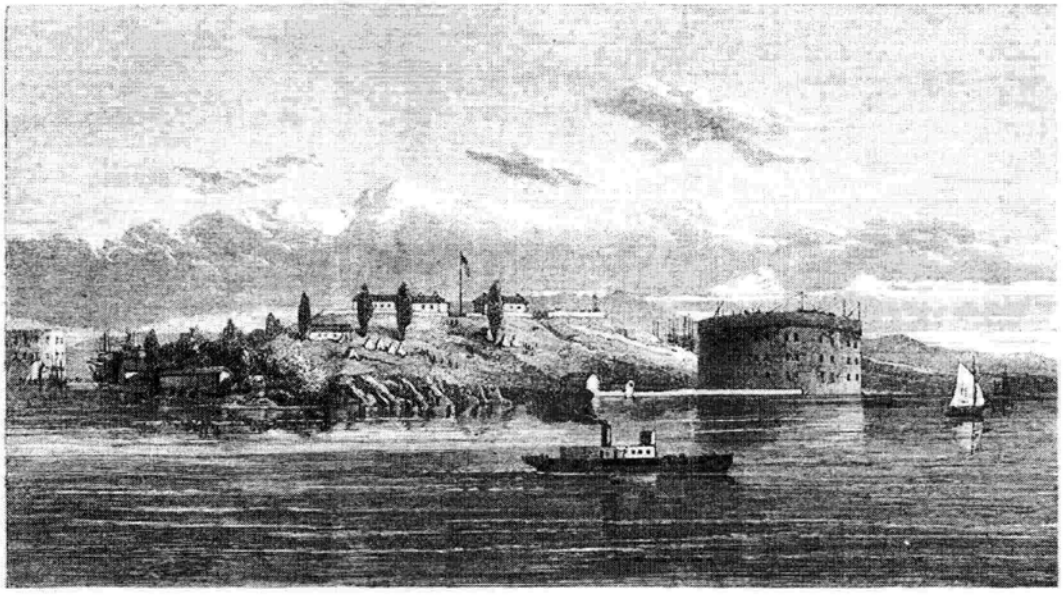


Figure 34. "Governor's Island and Fort, New York Harbour," 1865.

1865, April 9. The war ended with the surrender of General Lee to General Grant at Appomattox Courthouse, VA.

1865, April 30. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons.
Fort Columbus:
9 prisoners on hand March 31.
6 joined
15 transferred
0 prisoners remaining April 30

(*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 1001.)

1865, May - September. Monthly abstract of U.S. Military Prisons. No listings for Fort Columbus. (*The War of the Rebellion,* Series 2, Vol. 8, p. 1001.)

1867

1867, December 1. "Map Showing the Position of all Buildings on Governors Island 1st December 1867, From a Survey Made Under the Direction of Major John G. Barnard, Corps of Engineers. Major Nicholas Bowen." Note that the east triangular building had been joined to the south barrack by this time. (Drawer 37, Sheet 55; RG 77: CAB/NACP.) See fig. 35.

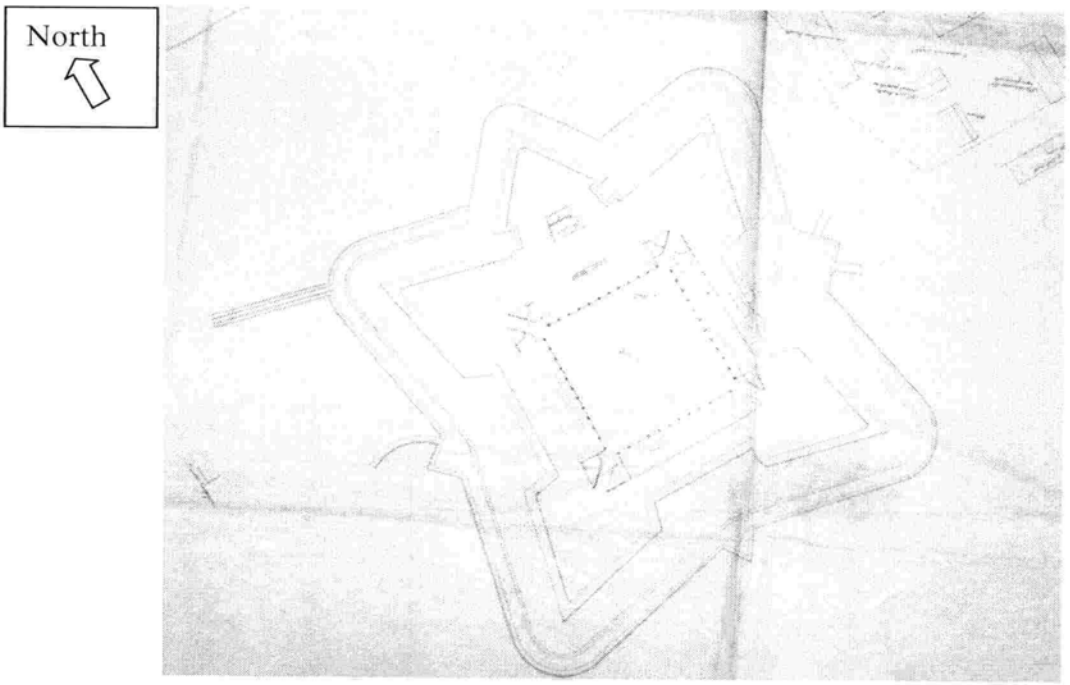


Figure 35. Detail of Fort Columbus from a map of Governor's Island, December 1867.

1868

1868. "In 1868 the barracks in Fort Jay were as now [in 1913], but the one on [the] west side was used for Officers' Quarters. The officers' quarters were divided on either side of the sally port into two parts by a hall, on each side of which were communicating rooms, 16 rooms in all and 8 kitchens reckoned for 8 sets of quarters." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 86.)

1868. "The wells [on Governors Island in 1868] are four in number. One is in Castle Williams and furnishes a small supply of tolerably good water.... Another well is in front of Fort Columbus, but unfit for drinking purposes.... Surgeon Page...goes on to say that rain water is collected from the roofs of nearly all the buildings in cisterns." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 102, quoting a history of Governors Island by Surgeon Page published in 1868.)

1868, May 14. Excerpt of a report that describes the barracks buildings at Fort Columbus, entitled *Governor's Island, Record of Medical History of the Post*, published by the U.S. Surgeon General's Office, May 14, 1868:

> Corridors extend the whole length of these [barracks] buildings on the face looking to the parade; on all the buildings to either side of the sally porte a piazza is built the width of the corridors and on three of the buildings a piazza extends the whole part of the upper story but only half the width of the corridor. This piazza is supported by iron rafters extending from the building to the pillars of the corridor, a stairway leads from each end of the upper piazza to the lower one.... In the men's quarters there are no halls—all stairways being built out doors.... Adjoining each end of these buildings next to the ramp are located small triangular buildings with one story over a basement resting on the level of the parade. The basements of these buildings are used, some for store rooms for company kitchens, others for privies and the upper stories are devoted to various uses—tailor shops, etc. One of these buildings is transformed into a bakery....
>
> (Quote from the 1868 report included in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 3.)

1869

1869, October 5. Excerpt of a news article, "Inspection of Harbor Defences," in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle:*

> Today Gen McDowell...is supposed to be on a tour of inspection through the various forts in New York harbor, excepting Fort Columbus, Governor's Island, which is used simply as a recruiting station.
>
> (Brooklyn Museum of Art/Brooklyn Public Library—Brooklyn Collection)

1870- 1879

Summary

The U.S. Army post at Fort Columbus on Governors Island continued to serve as a recruiting station until 1878, when it became the Headquarters of the Division of the Atlantic under the command of General Winfield Hancock. Improvements were made to the island's infrastructure by General Hancock as befitting its status as administrative headquarters. These included the introduction of water lines connected to the city, sewerage lines, and the installation of outdoor lighting. The island had been equipped with water and sewer lines by August 1879, according to a map of that date (fig. 39), ending the need to supplement well and cistern water with water shipped from the city. All four barracks within Fort Columbus were connected to the new plumbing, the water lines entering from the east and the sewer line draining to the north.

Little is known about the repairs and improvements that were made to Fort Columbus in the 1870s aside from the introduction of plumbing and exterior lighting. A Congressional appropriation of $52,000 was made in 1870 for "Fort Columbus," although no details of how this appropriation was expended have yet been found. A report dated 1871 notes the officer's quarters in the west barrack as being in "good condition" and the troop's quarters in the east, south, and north barracks in "excellent condition." All four barracks were described as being 150 feet long by 22 feet wide and two stories tall with stone basements, brick walls, and slate roofs, the officer's quarters equipped with eight apartments, and the troop's quarters able to accommodate 300 to 400 men. Numbers had been assigned to the buildings and structures on the island by 1879, as shown on a plan dated February of that year (fig. 38). The numbers assigned to Fort Jay were 51 through 54 for the barracks and 55 for the magazine in the north ravelin. The south barrack had been converted to officer's quarters by August 1879, as indicated on the previously mentioned map showing water and sewer lines. Use of the triangular structures had also evolved, according to a report dated 1875 that described the basement stories in use as a bakery, barber shop, sculleries, and privies, and the upper stories occupied by tailors and married soldiers.

The practice of dropping the apostrophe in "Governor's" Island is said to have been initiated in the official papers of the Eastern Department of the Division of the Atlantic. However, this was not commonly adopted until considerably later in the 20th century.

Documentation

1870

Descriptions of the barracks buildings' exterior, interior, and use are given in *A Report on Barracks and Hospitals with Descriptions of Military Posts*, Circular No. 4, published by the U.S. Surgeon General's Office in 1870. (Cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 11.)

1870. Excerpt from "A Report on Barracks and Hospitals":

> The main work, now called Fort Columbus, is situated on the highest point of the island, near the northern portion, and is an old- fashioned, four- bastioned fort, with deep ditch. Within the fort are situated four buildings, extending coequal with the curtains of the fort, and surrounding the parade. These buildings are built of stone and brick, with two stories and basement, and are roofed with slate....

1870, July 11. Congressional appropriation for the year ending June 30, 1871, includes $52,000 "for Fort Columbus, Governor's island, New York." (*Statutes at Large*, 41st Congress, 2nd Session, p. 222. LC.)

1870, November 26. A news article in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* notes that during the past fiscal year "no work was done upon this fort." (Brooklyn Museum of Art/Brooklyn Public Library—Brooklyn Collection.)

1870, December. Description of barracks by the U.S. Quartermaster's Department, pasted on the back side of a schematic drawing of a representative barrack building. (#30; Miscellaneous Fortifications File, Fort Jay, New York; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

U. S. Quartermaster's Department.

BARRACKS.—Fort Columbus, on centre of Governor's Island, N. Y. H.
LOCATION.—1066 yards Southwest of New York City, at the junction of North and East Rivers.
CAPACITY.—360 Officers and Men.
STABLES.—None.
MATERIALS.—Brick walls.
ROOF.—Slate.
BUILT.—Not known.
CONDITION.—Good.
OCCUPIED.—December 20, 1870, by 3 Officers and 340 Men.

1871

1871. *Online Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations in the Year 1871*, by the War Department, Quartermaster General's Office, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872. (CAB/NACP.) Excerpts from the report follow.

> Fort Columbus, New York Harbor
> (Established 1809)
>
> QUARTERS—Officers' quarters—inside Fort Columbus—stone basement, brick walls, 150 by 22 feet, two stories, basement, and slate roof; divided into apartments capable of accommodating eight captains or twelve subalterns, with regulation allowance; condition, good. Troops' quarters—three ranges of buildings inside of Fort Columbus—east, south and north sides—each range 150 by 22 feet, two stories and basement, slate roof, stone basement and brick walls, with verandas and iron railings in front; can accommodate from three hundred to four hundred men; condition of these quarters is excellent.
>
> FUEL, FORAGE, AND WATER—Fuel is received, on yearly estimates, from the chief quartermaster of the department at New York City, and the yearly consumption is generally delivered on or before the 1st of November in each year.... Water is obtained at the post from springs and cisterns, and is sufficient to supply the wants of the depot, except in warm and dry weather, when Croton water is supplied from the city of New York, on requisition on the chief quartermaster. The Croton water is pumped into the cisterns at the depot from the water- tanks of the steamer in the service of the Quartermaster's Department. [pp. 128- 129]

1874

1874. Bird's- eye view of New York showing the waterfront, Brooklyn Bridge, with Battery Park and Governors Island in the foreground. (LC.) See detail, fig. 36.

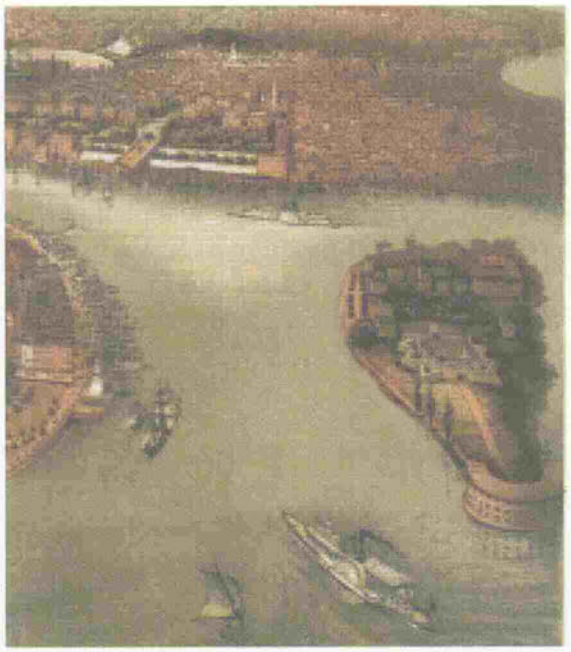


Figure 36. Detail of 1874 bird's- eye view, showing Fort Columbus and Castle Williams on Governors Island (right foreground).

1875

1875. Descriptions of the barracks buildings. "A report from 1875 noted that 16 to 18 single bunks were in each of the large rooms within the building [#202]. In that year, Companies A and C and the music boys of Company B occupied the three barracks buildings, but the report did not specify which company was quartered in Building #202. The report also noted that the triangular buildings at the corners of the larger buildings were occupied by company tailors and married soldiers on the upper stories while ground floors housed the bakery, barber shop, sculleries and privies. Again the report was not detailed enough to determine the specific uses of the two buildings located next to Building #202." (*A Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, with Descriptions of Military Posts,* 1875, cited in HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, pp. 4- 5.)

1875. "Circular No. 8 (1875) states that the cisterns [on Governors Island] frequently ran dry. At these times they were cleaned and fumigated and filled with Croton water brought from the City in tanks of Quartermaster boats." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 103.)

1877

1877, February 17. Drawing: "Sketch Illustrating the Proposed Introduction of Water Supply and Drainage for Fort Columbus Governor's Island NY Harbor, Feb. 17/77." Noted on the drawing: "Sec. of War authorized expenditure of $3,300 for this work, Mar. 21/77, Order to Col. Easton." The plan shows a "water closet for men" installed in the triangular building east of the north barrack (Building 214). Water was piped to a cistern north of the east barrack (Building 202) that supplied water to the water closet and the "Officers Quarters" (Building 210) in the west barrack. Waste water was drained via a 9- inch pipe. (#10; Miscellaneous Fortifications File, Fort Columbus, New York; RG 77; CAB/NACP.) See fig. 37.

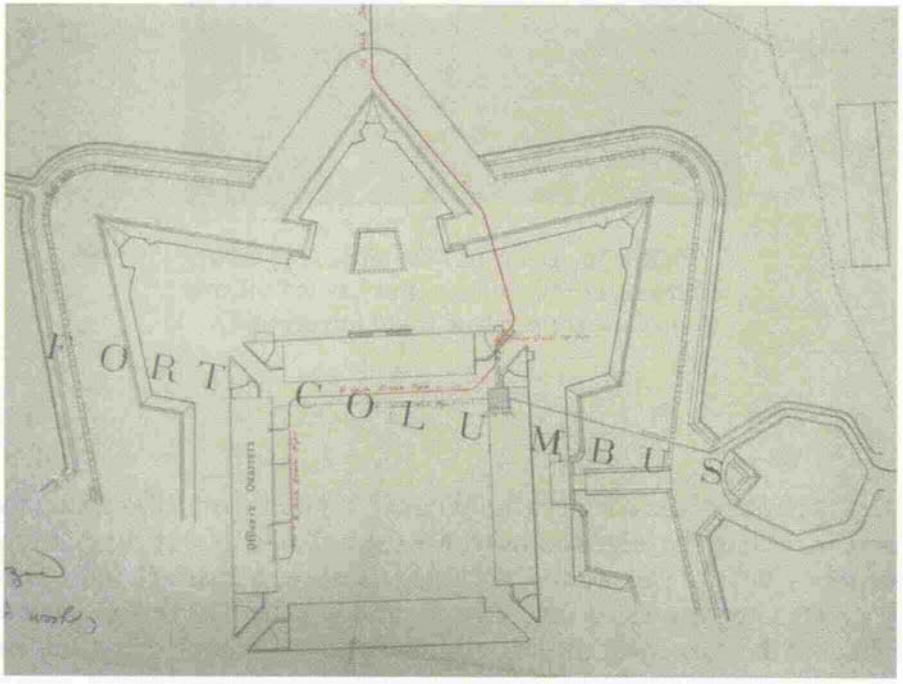


Figure 37. Detail of proposed water supply and drainage for Fort Columbus, February 1877.

1878

1878. "At the close of the [Civil] war Governors Island relapsed again into comparative inaction, although it remained a recruiting post until 1878, when it became Headquarters of the [Eastern Department], Division of the Atlantic under command of General Winfield S. Hancock.... By then all thought of Governors Island as an effective military fortification was vanishing and it became an important administrative center for army affairs...." (*Governor's Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, p. 34.)

1878. "The Eastern Department [of the Division of the Atlantic] in official papers has for some time past discontinued the use of the apostrophe [in Governor's Island]...but this use has not been generally adopted." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 25.)

1878. "In 1878, an army reorganization placed the headquarters of the Division of the Atlantic at Governors Island. This division was divided into the Departments of the East and South; the headquarters of the former joined the division's [headquarters] at Governors Island. In keeping with its status as a major headquarters, General Winfield Hancock improved the post's living quarters, removed dangerous buildings, established regular ferry service, installed outdoor lighting, and connected the island's water lines with those of the city." ("Ordnance and Explosives ," p. 4- 3)

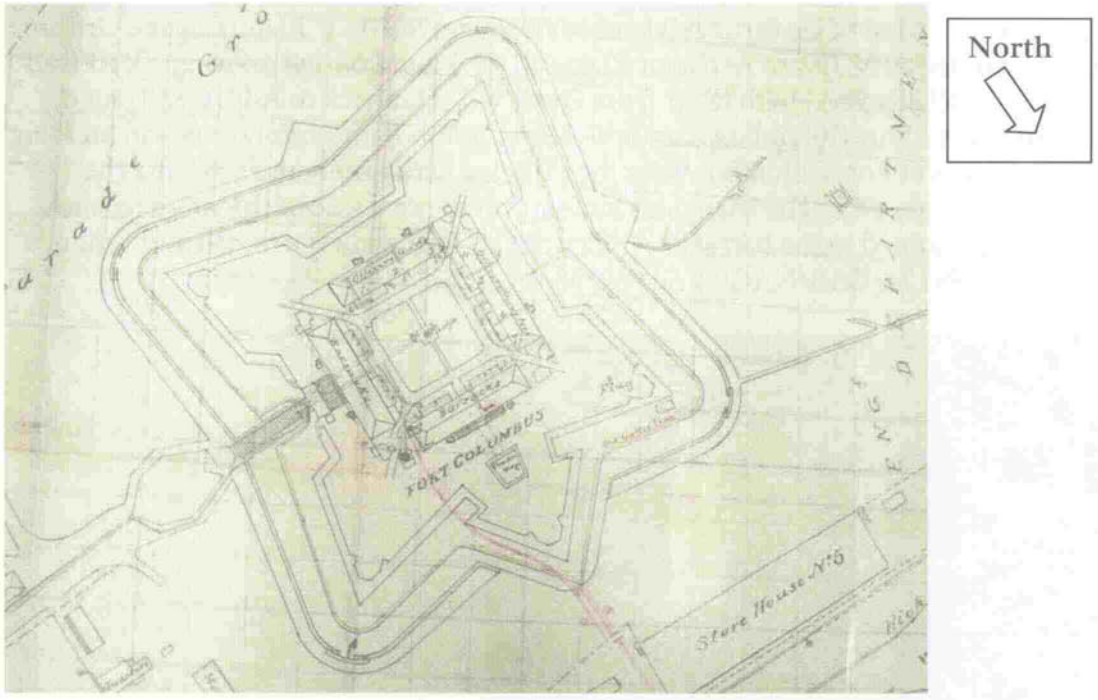
1879

1879, February. "Map of Governors Island NYH. Surveyed by 1st Lieut. Eugene Griffin, Corps Engrs., and Frederick N. Owen Assistant Engr. 1879." Noted on the drawing: "Received this day from Adjt. Gen'l [illegible] with letter from Gen'l W.S. Hancock to Adjt. Gen'l dated Feb. 25, 1880." Includes "Fort Columbus, Castle Williams, South Battery: contours and building schedule." The barracks at Fort Columbus were then labeled with numbers 51- 54 and the north magazine with number 55. The triangular building on the east side of the south barrack (labeled "52") is shown joined to the barrack. A "flagstaff" is located in the northeast bastion. (Drawer 37, Sheet 63; RG 77: CAB/NACP.) See fig. 38.

Figure 38. Detail of the center of Fort Columbus from a plan of Governors Island, February 1879.

1879, April 4. Letter from Capt. Theo. Ward, 1st U.S. Arty., "Reports injury to counter scarp wall at Fort Columbus by target practice." (Index to letters received August 1877 – April 1884; Entry 778; RG 77; NARA – Northeast Region (NY).)

1879, August 30. "Map showing location of Water, Drain and Sewer Pipes on Governors Island." Noted on the drawing: "Office of the Post Quartermaster, Fort Columbus, NYH, Aug. 30th, 1879," and "This tracing was furnished by Col. A.J. Perry Nov. 15, 84." The barracks at Fort Columbus had been equipped with water and sewer by August 1879, according to this drawing, making the subterranean cisterns behind the buildings obsolete. Piped water entered the fort on the east side, sewage drained to the north, and storm water was channeled to a gutter in the ditch. The south and west barracks were then labeled as "Officers Quarters" and the east and north as "Barracks." (#13; Miscellaneous Fortifications File, Fort Columbus, New York; RG 77; CAB/NACP.) See fig. 39.



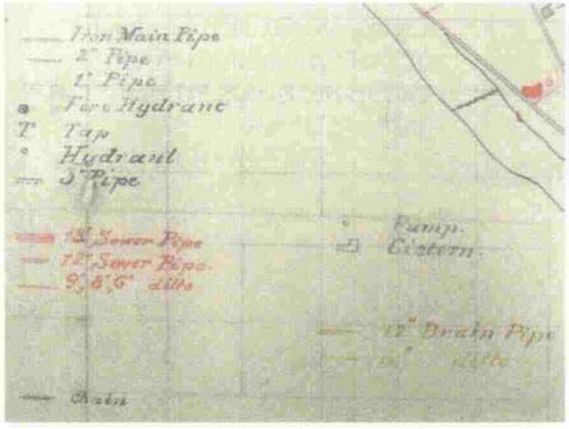


Figure 39. Detail showing locations of water, drain, and sewer pipes at Fort Columbus from a map of Governors Island dated August 1879 (above), with key (left).

1880- 1889

Summary

The fortifications on Governors Island were documented in the 1880s by four articles published between 1881 and 1888. Many improvements had been made under General Hancock since 1879, such as the introduction of water piped from Brooklyn. One hundred men occupied Fort Columbus in 1881, although as many as 800 could be accommodated. They resided in barracks that were described as "clean, well- ventilated, and in good repair." The barracks featured wide piazzas furnished with easy chairs that overlooked a lawn with intersecting walks. Comfortable quarters, combined with a theater for entertainment and fresh rations, made a soldier's life at Fort Columbus "less irksome...than at any other post." Fort Columbus continued to serve in an administrative function in the 1880s as the Headquarters of the Division of the Atlantic. Its value as a coastal defensive work was acknowledged to be marginal, being described in 1886 as an "antiquated fortress." Buildings constructed along the coastline blocked the line of fire of Fort Columbus and Castle Williams, as illustrated in two engravings published in 1881 and 1886 (figs. 40 and 42). In addition, the works were thought to be incapable of resisting the assault of modern iron- clad vessels. The use of Governors Island as a military base was in question by the end of the decade, as illustrated in an article published in the *New York Times* in July 1888. A New York Congressman then proposed that the island be given to the State and converted to "a marine park for the people."

Documentation

1881

1881, February. "Garrison Life at Governor's Island, New York Harbor," by William H. Rideing, *Scribner's Monthly*, February 1881, pp. 593- 602, with two illustrations of Fort Columbus (figs. 40 and 41). Excerpts from that article follow.

> The island is at present the head- quarters of the Department of the Atlantic, of which General Hancock is commander. Fort Columbus is occupied by two batteries of artillery, numbering about one hundred men. Many improvements have been made under General Hancock's administration.... The yield of the wells being impure, Brooklyn water has been introduced by a flexible pipe carried under Buttermilk Channel, and it is proposed to bring illuminating gas to the island the same way....
>
> Fort Columbus, with its five bastions, fills the center of the island, and is surrounded by a moat, in which the grass is smooth and intensely green. Beyond the sally- port, which is surmounted by an elaborate group of statuary, we enter a cool archway leading into a hollow square, formed by the quarters of the officers and men. There is a lawn in front and intersecting walks between. The buildings have wide piazzas, which are

abundantly supplied with easy- chairs made by the convicts at Fort Leavenworth, and a soldier's life is probably less irksome at Fort Columbus than at any other post. The barracks are clean, well-ventilated, and in good repair. The ordinary rations are supplemented by supplies of fresh fish and plenty of garden produce. Among various other resources of amusement, the men have a "coterie," which gives entertainments once a month, and a theater, which is utilized for negro minstrels. The theater is a small apartment over the barracks; a miniature stage is erected, and the proscenium is decorated with silhouettes of cannon, shields, and eagles.... The theater is also used as a reading-room, and a center table is filled with a variety of periodicals. (p. 602)

Figure 40. Bird's- eye view of Governors Island showing Fort Columbus (center) and Castle Williams (right), 1881.

Figure 41. The "sally port," or main entrance, of Fort Columbus, 1881.

1885

1885, May 15. Excerpt of a news article, "Buttermilk: Views from the Familiar Channel So Named," in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle:*

> Governor's Island has long been in possession of the United States, and its interior defenses, greatly improved since the close of our internecine war, are said to be all but impregnable. Fort Columbus is in the heart of the island, and is so commodious that it can accommodate, besides the appliances of war and rations for many months, 800 soldiers. Castle William, which in 1812 was considered strong enough to withstand the shot and shell of an enemy, even if a British man of war should fire them, is now worthless for defense. The heavy guns of the present time would speedily flatten its walls to the earth. It is questionable if it would be used even if we should ever be so situated as to have a formidable armed vessel, belligerently disposed, get within reasonable range of it.
>
> (Brooklyn Museum of Art/Brooklyn Public Library—Brooklyn Collection.)

1886

1886, February 13. "Seacoast Defences: Our Great Cities at the Mercy of Any Hostile Fleet; How New York Ought to be Defended—War Ships, Forts and Great Guns—Lieutenant Griffin's Report," *The Daily Graphic: New York*, Saturday, February 13, 1886, p. 722; illustrations follow page 715. The article describes a recent report by Lieutenant Eugene Griffin, Corps of Engineers, entitled "Our Seacoast Defences," observing "Fort Columbus, one of the antiquated fortresses on Governor's Island, and Castle William, the other...would offer but a feeble resistance to the invading fleet of a warring nation." (Bound volume, *Daily Graphic, NY, January- June 1886*, in the library of the Historic Architecture Program and Architectural Preservation Division, Lowell, MA, on loan from the Statue of Liberty NM.) See fig. 42.

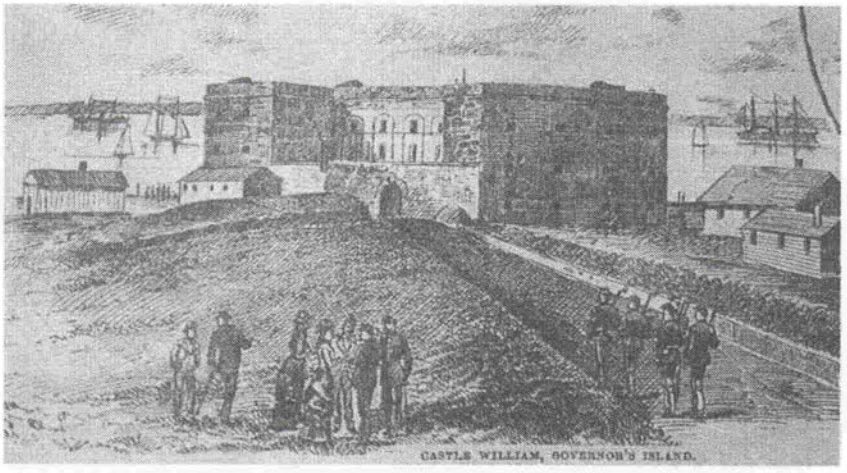


Figure 42. View looking towards Castle Williams, showing the connecting pathway to Fort Columbus in the foreground, 1886.

1886, November 28. Excerpt of an article entitled "Coast Defenses" published in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*:

> The report of General Duane, Chief of Engineers, to the Secretary of War in regard to the state of fortifications on our coasts will attract public attention and should lead to immediate action on the part of Congress. It is not too much to say that at present we are without coast defenses capable of resisting the assaults of iron clads. Modern guns have now become weapons of such fearful power that fortifications built even so late as a quarter of a century ago have grown utterly obsolete. Our huge granite or brick fortresses, like Castle Williams, would only prove death traps to their garrisons if attacked by modern guns.

1888

1888, July 30. News article: *New York Times*, July 30, 1888 (excerpt included in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 8, p. 13):

> Governor's Island For A Park. Congressman Cox, who is greatly interested in the conversion of Governor's Island into a marine park for the people, says that the committee on Military Affairs will soon report formally upon his bill for the surrender of the island to the State by the Federal Government.... Governor's Island is of no use for that [defense against a foreign enemy], and will never again be used as a fortress by the nation.

1890- 1899

Summary

The 1890s may be characterized as a decade of rich photographic documentation for Fort Columbus. Photographic views published in 1890, together with a series entitled "U.S. Military Posts of the Late 19th Century," provide a wealth of information on the physical appearance of the fort. Of particular interest is the sculpture above the gate that remained in either partially completed, or deteriorated, condition as late as 1890 (fig. 43). Comparison with an earlier photograph taken in 1864 (fig. 30) shows the sculpture then, as in 1890, with a wingless eagle and partial flag on the south side. Some changes had occurred at the fort, however, such as replacement of the original 12- over- 12, double- hung sashes in the barracks with six- over- six and four- over- four sashes. Two of the ca.- 1830s freestanding triangular structures had been enlarged to form additions by 1898: one on the south side of the west barrack, the other on the east side of the north barrack. The latter appears to have been remodeled as a wash house, judging by architectural drawings for the renovation dated November 1898 (figs. 47- 48).

A rare interior photograph dated circa 1898 is the only known interior view of the barracks in the 19th century (fig. 51). A distinctive pair of exterior doorways with arched transoms identifies this as the large first- story room on the south side of the east barrack. The room is shown furnished with two rows of cots occupied by reclining soldiers. Windows and doorway transoms in the east and west exterior walls provided natural light. A six- panel door at the end wall connected with a smaller room to the south. To the left of the door is a fireplace mantel with arched opening in the Italianate style, although the primary source of heat appears to have been a large stove with long smoke pipe sitting in the middle of the room. Additional architectural distinction was provided by a wide cornice molding at the upper wall.

Another photograph, also dated circa 1898, shows the old powder magazine on the west glacis of Fort Columbus (fig. 52). This stone- and- brick structure dating to the 1790s was described by Edmund Banks Smith as "the oldest building in undisturbed condition on Governor's Island" in his history of Governor's Island published in 1913. The magazine no longer exists today.

Documentation

1890

1890. Several photographic illustrations of Fort Jay were published in *The Illustrated American,* 1890. (Park museum/reference collection, Governors Island NM.) See figs. 43- 45.

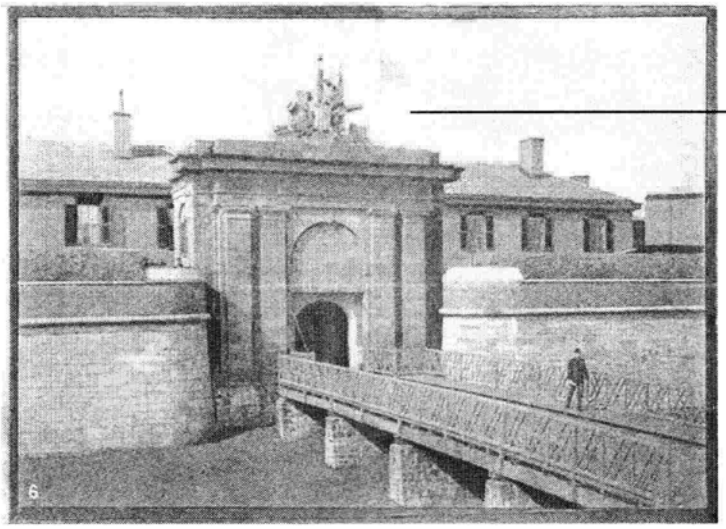
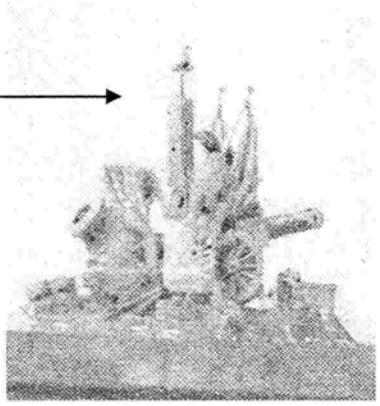


Figure 43. Gateway and sally port of Fort Columbus, 1890.



Detail view of the gateway sculpture. Note the missing eagle wings and upper portion of left flag.

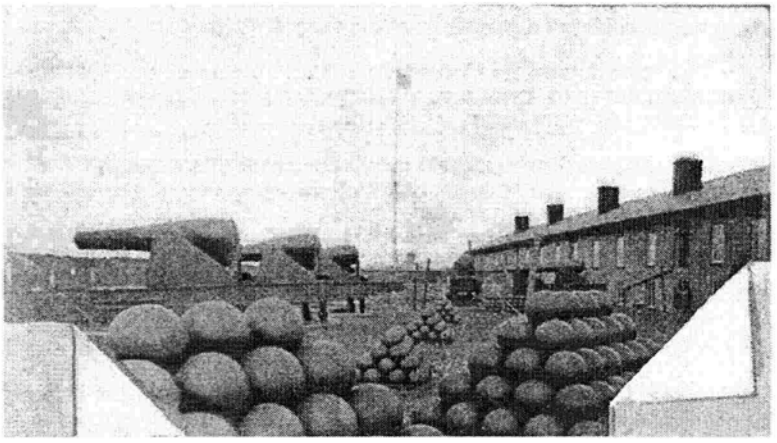


Figure 44. The ramparts of Fort Columbus, showing the back side of the west barrack on the right, 1890.

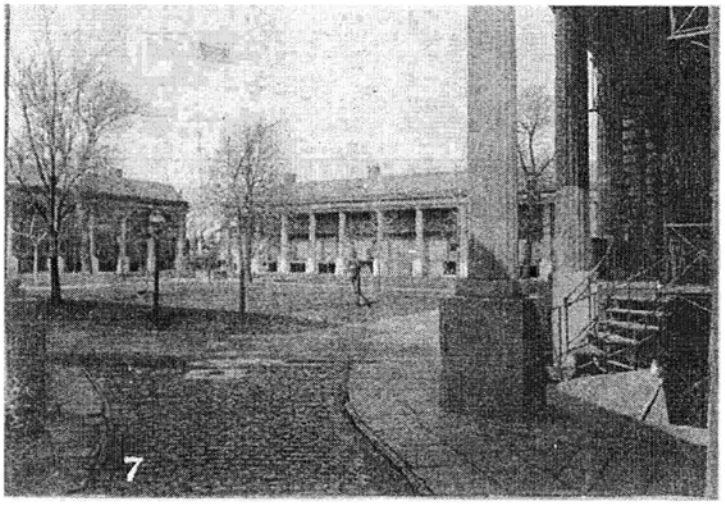


Figure 45. The quadrangle of Fort Jay looking northwest, 1890.

1891

1891, August 2. Excerpt of a news article published in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, "To Governor's Island: A Trip in the Little Steam Tug to Castle William," together with an engraving of the gate (fig. 46):

> The only landmark left of old Fort Jay is the escarpment of red sandstone just beyond the entrance of the present Fort Columbus.... The entrance gate is very imposing, a sort of triumphal arch, and it claims a little bit of romance for its own. Surmounting the gateway of granite is a fine piece of carving done from red sandstone. During the late war a prisoner incarcerated here, who was a bounty jumper as well as a deserter, was about to pay the penalty of his crimes according to military discipline. Earnestly requesting that he might be permitted to leave something worthy of remembrance, and possibly blot out the stain in a measure resting upon him before he paid the forfeit of his misdemeanors, he was provided with a block of stone, and lo! He wrought from out the unwieldy mass these wonders. Day after day he worked with chisel and mallet, and now there rests upon the entablature of the arch a graceful and symmetrical piece of work, comprising the equipments of war, the crest of the United States, the cap of liberty resting upon the closely bound fasces, the emblematic eagle and the miniature fortress. It is needless to add that when the knowledge of this artistic piece of work came to the governor he pardoned the erring man.

Figure 46. "The old gateway" at Fort Columbus, 1891.

1891, November 23. Excerpt of a news article in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle,* "The Water Scare Will Soon be Over," describing a water- main break:

> The garrison at Governor's island, numbering several hundred men, gets all its water from the Brooklyn system. The officers there had received no intimation up till last night of the threatened shortage, and as the consumption on the island is about 120,000 gallons a day the announcement created a stir. Orders were given to have a tank at Fort Columbus, which holds 60,000 gallons, filled at once, and when the news spread over the island tubs and other vessels available were set out to catch rain water. This with what the Fort Columbus tanks holds will be about the sole source of reliance for there are no natural springs or cisterns on the island. In case of emergency water could be taken there from Staten Island or New York on boats.

1898, November. Drawing: "Proposed arrangement of Lavatory Fixtures in Barrack Additions at Fort Columbus, NYH." Noted on the drawing: "Nov. 30/98 approved by Sgr. [illegible]." Plumbing fixtures are shown in the triangular building to the east of the north barrack (now Building 214, then labeled "No. 54") that had been joined as an "addition" to the main building. Located in the first story were urinals, water closets, a store and fuel room, and a water boiler and heater. In the second story were four shower stalls, a room with a bathtub, lockers, and wash sinks. (#20; Miscellaneous Fortifications File, Fort Jay, NY; RG 77; CAB/NACP.) See figs. 47- 48.

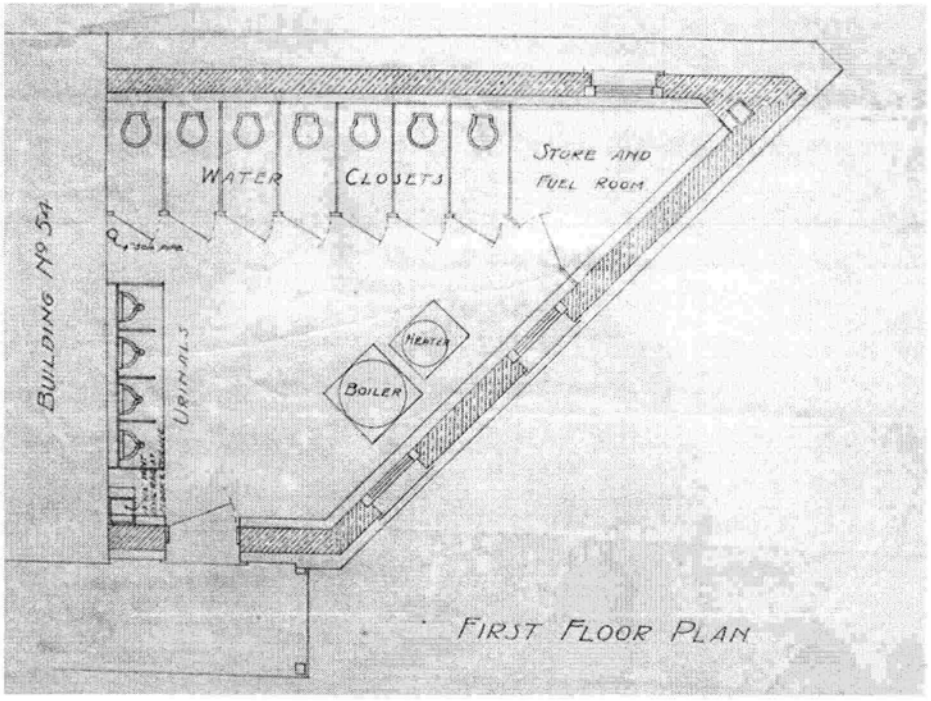


Figure 47. Details of proposed lavatory fixtures for the first story of the east addition to the north barrack, November 1898.

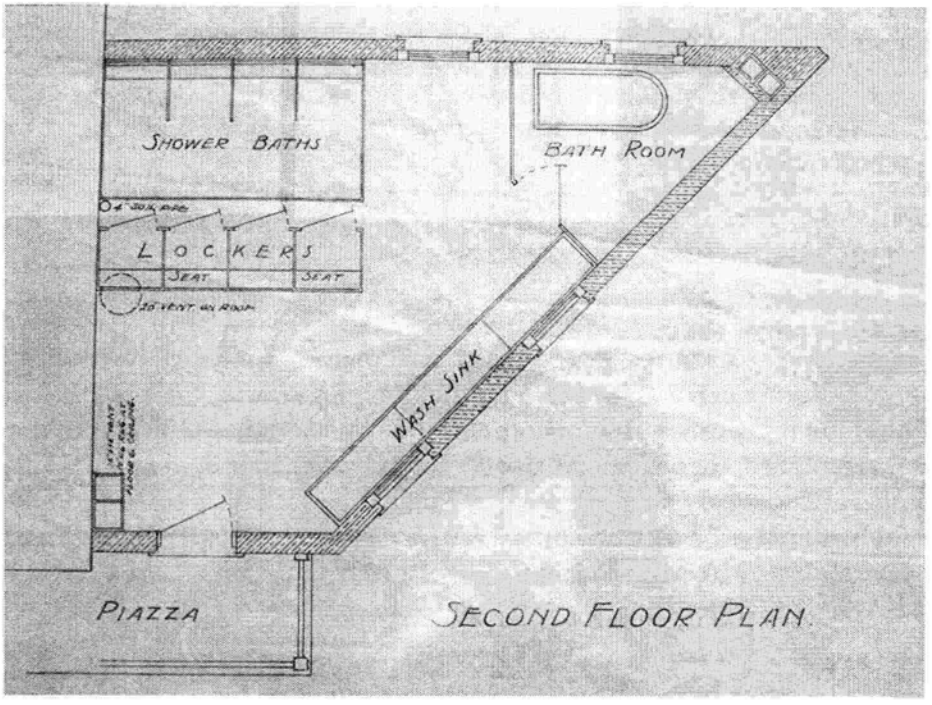
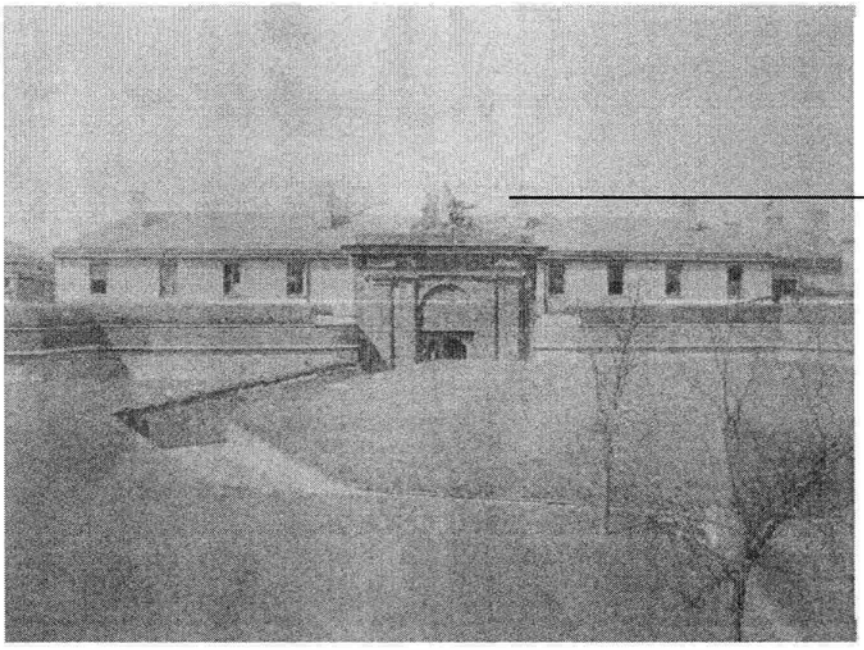
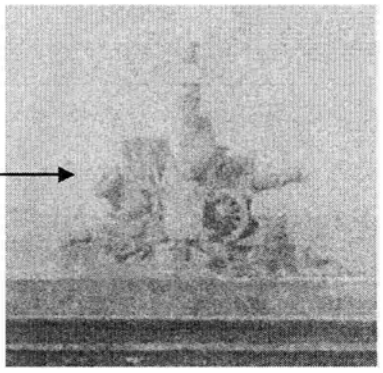


Figure 48. Details of proposed lavatory fixtures for the second story of the east addition to the north barrack, November 1898.

Circa 1898. Photographs: "U.S. Military Posts of the Late 19th Century, Fort Columbus, NY" in the Records of the Quartermaster General. The Statue of Liberty, erected in 1886, is visible in the background of some of these views. Exterior shutters had been removed from the windows of the barracks by this time and most of the early 12- over- 12 window sashes replaced by six- over- six and two- over- two sashes. The portfolio includes a rare interior view of one of the barracks and the old magazine on the west glacis. (Catalog numbers 92- F- 15- 2, 92- F- 15- 12, 92- F- 15- 5, and 92- F- 15- 6; Folder #15; RG 92; SPB/NACP.) See figs. 49- 52.





Detail of gateway sculpture. Note missing eagle wings and flags.

Figure 49. "Entrance to Regular Fort," circa 1898.

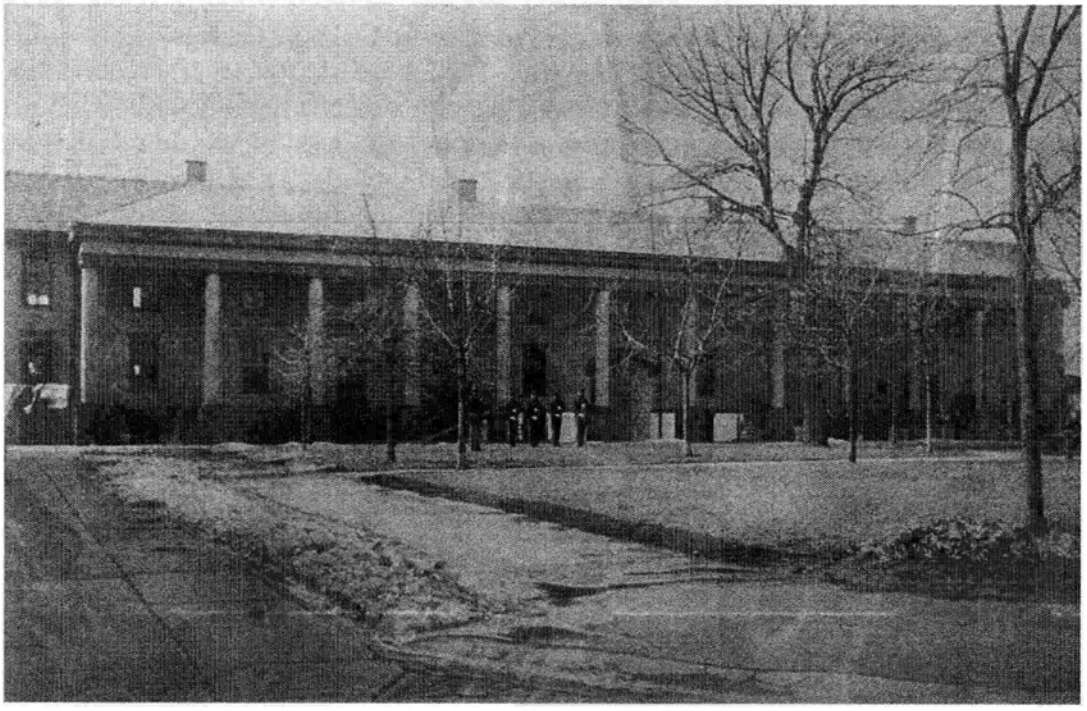


Figure 50. "Barracks: One of Four Similar Buildings" (the west barrack), circa 1898.

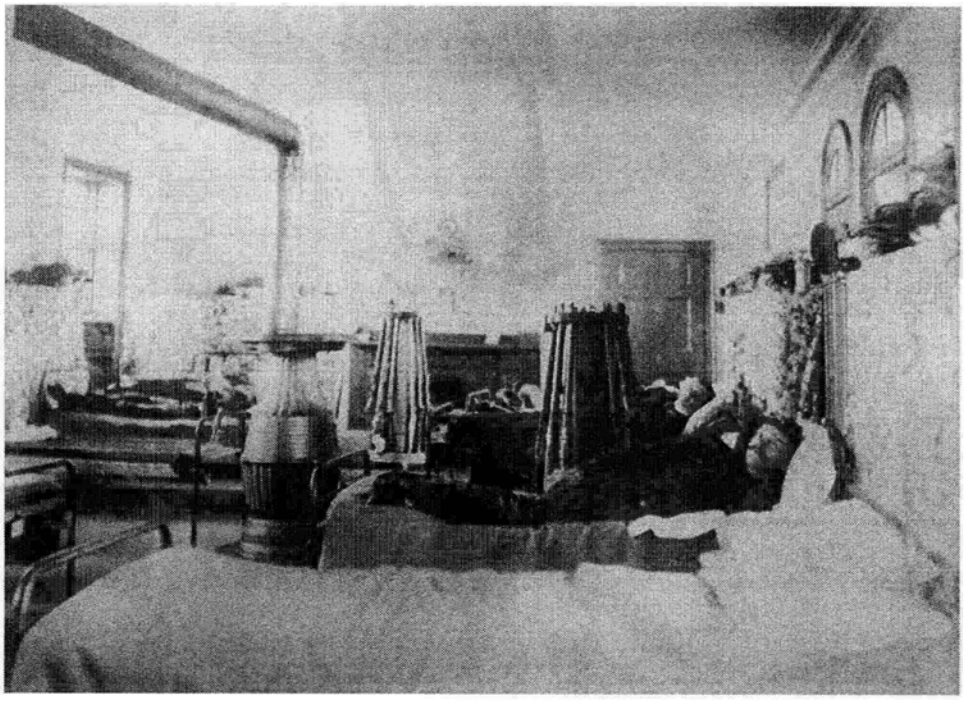


Figure 51. "Barrack Interior," showing a room in the first story of the east barrack, circa 1898.

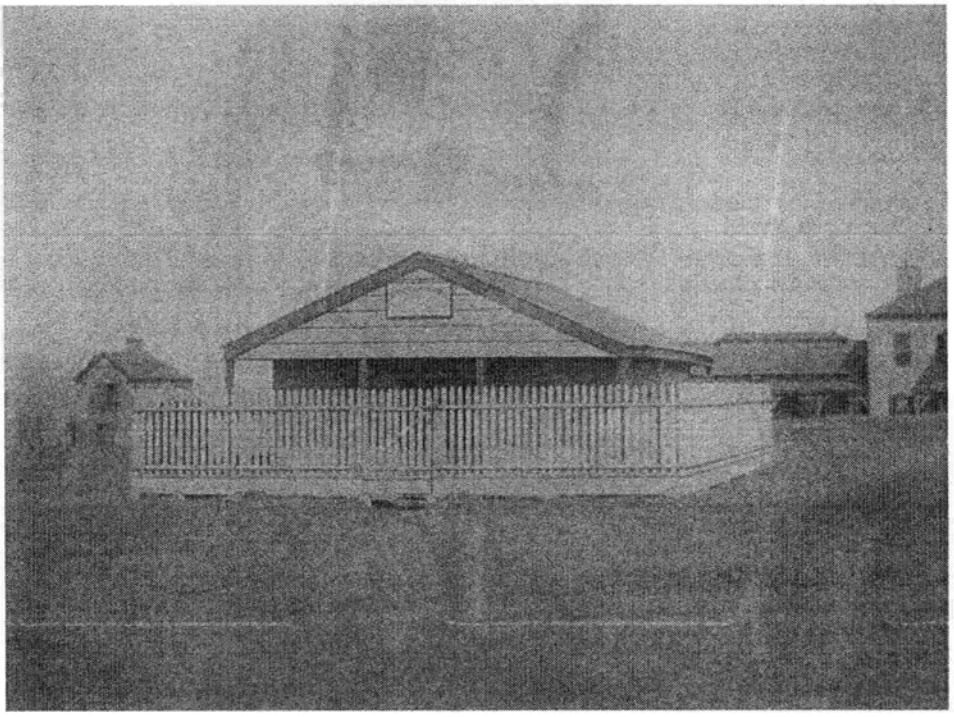


Figure 52. "Magazine" on the west glacis of Fort Columbus, circa 1898.

Circa 1898. Unlabeled photograph of troops drilling behind one of the barrack buildings at Fort Columbus. A date of "circa 1898" is based on the soldiers' uniforms. (Park museum/ reference collection, Governors Island NM.) See fig. 53.

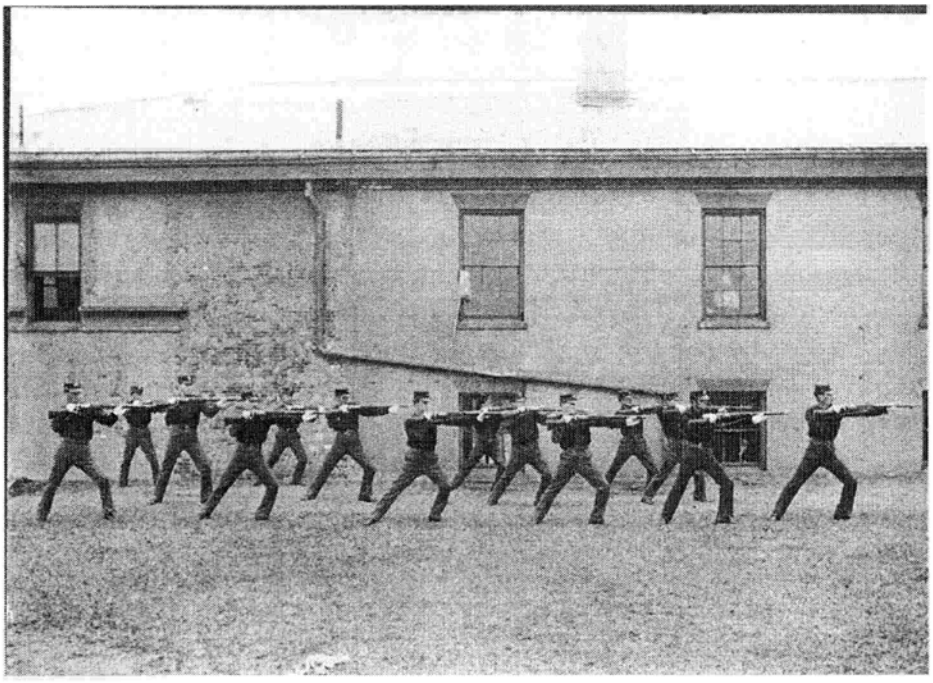


Figure 53. Troops training at Fort Columbus, circa 1898.

1900- 1909

Summary

The first decade of the new century was significant as a period of radical change on Governors Island. The work of enlarging the island with fill removed from subway excavations in New York City commenced in 1901, more than doubling its size when the project was completed in 1912. A commitment was made at this time by Secretary of War Elihu Root to preserve the old fortifications, Fort Columbus and Castle Williams, and to harmonize new structures with them. The name "Fort Columbus," used by both the fortification and the military post of which it was a part, was changed to "Fort Jay" in January 1904. Electric lighting was introduced to the island in the spring of that year. Numbers continued to be assigned to the structures and buildings of Governors Island in 1908 as they had been since 1879, with the barracks buildings of Fort Jay designated as buildings 51, 52, 53, and 54.

Documentation

1901

1901, January 6. Excerpt of a news article published in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* titled "Proposed Enlargement of Governor's Island":

> Washington, January 5—Plans have been formulated and estimates submitted for greatly enlarging the present area of Governor's Island by filling in the shoal adjoining the present sea wall and for the construction of piers and the erection of a number of permanent store houses. It is proposed to spend $1,595,000 on these improvements....

1901, March 3. "On March 3, 1901, $260,000 was appropriated toward the enlargement of Governors Island and for construction of storehouses and other buildings." ("Governors Island Historic Resource Study" Draft 2, Chapter 8, p. 23.)

1901, June 11. Excerpt of a news article published in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* titled "Governor's Island":

> There is a proposition to spend a million and a half of dollars on Governor's Island, for the purpose of improving it as an Army station.... At present the island is a depot and a prison. Castle Williams is used as a place of confinement for deserters and other offenders, and there are pleasant cottages which are occupied by officers, but as a station it has no consequence, except as a place of storage.... Governors Island, on the contrary, has many advantages as a public park. It is worthless as a defense, and by mans of ferries it could be put in reach of thousands who

> at present occupy rookeries in lower Manhattan and tenements in crowded parts of Brooklyn.

1901, June 29. Excerpt of letter from Elihu Root, Secretary of War, to McKim, Mead and White, Architects, regarding the enlargement of Governors Island.

> The two old structures on the island, Castle William and the old fort, are to be preserved, and it seems desirable that the new structures should be in harmony with them....
>
> (The letter is quoted in "Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 8, p. 22.)

1901, August. "The actual extension of work was begun August 1901, and the sea wall was first built to enclose the area.... The number of acres is 103.55 in the extension, as compared with 69.8 in the Old Island, 173.35 acres in all.... The work was done by the Engineer Department...Corps of Engineers. The estimated cost of this improvement was $1,100,000.... The approximate cost per acre was $10,000." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 156.)

1901. "A seawall is constructed and backfilled with 4,787,000 cubic yards of fill from the excavations for New York's Lexington Avenue subway to create the current island, increasing its size from 90 [sic] to 172 acres." (Booklet: "Governor's Island, New York," General Services Administration, 1999, p. 11.)

1901- 12. "In 1880 New York graciously ceded to the island 103 acres of land completely submerged under the waters of the harbor. Between the years 1901 and 1912 these acres were filled." (*Governor's Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937*, p. 34.)

1902

1902, April 16. Drawing: "Sketch Plan Showing Extension of Governor's Island, New York," with Secretary of War Elihu Root's signature, by McKim, Mead and White, Architects. (Blueprint File, Governors Island, NY; RG 92; CAB/NACP.)

1902. "Though the firm of McKim, Mead, and White prepared a design for Governors Island buildings as early as 1902, only a few of those planned buildings were actually constructed. By the time the final 1928 design was prepared, each of the principals had died...and the building of the Governors Island structures was overseen by Lawrence Grant White, Stanford's son." ("Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 9, p. 118.)

1904

1904, January 25. General Orders No. 18, War Department, Washington, D.C., January 25, 1904:

> The fortification on Governor's Island, New York Harbor, partly built 1794- 95, enlarged and completed 1798- 1801, and partly rebuilt 1806-1808, now known as Fort Columbus, is hereby restored to its original name of Fort Jay; and the said fortification and the Military post located on the said Island will hereafter be known and designated as Fort Jay. Elihu Root, Secretary of War.
>
> (Order transcribed in Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 112.)

"Electric lighting was introduced [on Governors Island] on May 10, 1904." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 101.)

1905

"[The] cisterns [on Governors Island] are being gradually filled. A number were filled from the excavations of the new Chapel in 1905- 06." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 103.)

1907

1907. A "Bird's eye view, looking south," showed the proposed expansion of the island. Accompanying text reads: "Governor's Island as it will appear when the present plans are carried out. As completed, the island will be three times its present size, 101 acres being now in process of reclamation by means of sea walls and dredging. It will accommodate a regiment of 1,200 men." Written in the border is "Nov. 30, 1907." (*Scientific American.* New York Public Library.) See fig. 54.

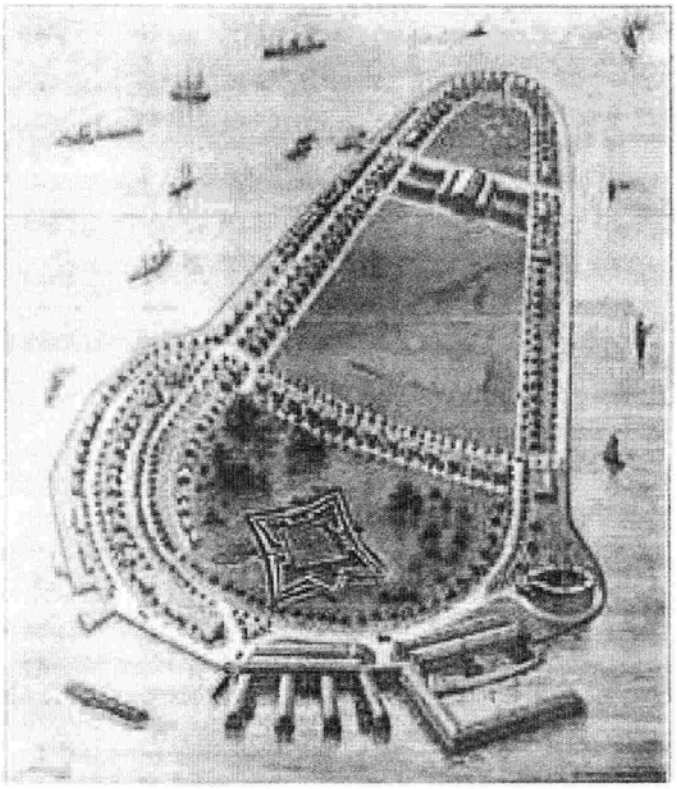


Figure 54. Bird's- eye view of Governors Island showing proposed expansion, 1907.

1908

1908. Drawing: "First U.S. Army Engineers Map of Governors Island, 1908, from a drawing by J.M. Hilton." Original map is dated March 1962. The barracks within Fort Jay are designated as building numbers 51 through 54. (Cited and reproduced in "Ordnance and Explosives," reference documents.)

1910- 1919

Summary

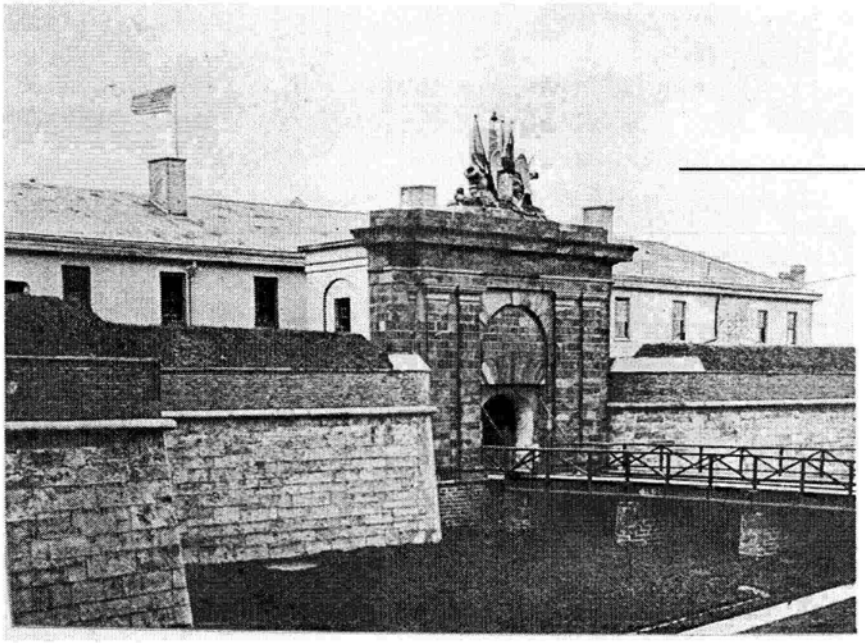
Much information on the history and evolution of Fort Jay is found in *Governor's Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags*, written and published in 1913 by Edmund Banks Smith, chaplain of Governor's Island. This includes a photograph of the sally port at Fort Jay that shows the sculpture atop the gate as recently repaired, with two new light- color wings on the eagle, and the upper portion of the flag on the south side as finally completed. Banks also described the historic connecting pathway between Fort Jay and Castle Williams as being still visible but mostly destroyed by 1913, having been leveled for "modern constructions" on the north side of the island.

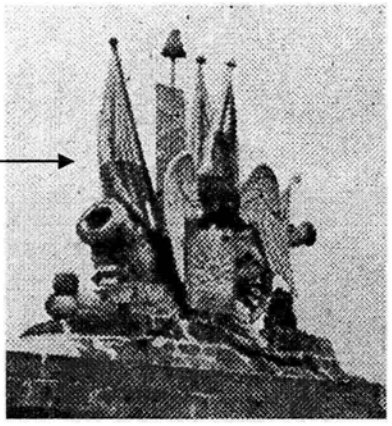
Documentation

1913

1913. Edmund B. Smith notes in his history of Governors Island that use of the apostrophe in "Governor's Island" had been discontinued "for some time past" in official papers of the Division of the Atlantic, Eastern Department, which had been transferred to the island in 1878. Edmunds, however, used the apostrophe in his book. (Smith, *Governor's Island,* footnote p. 25.)

1913. A photograph of the sally port at Fort Jay is published. The sculpture appears to have been recently repaired, with new wings on the eagle and upper flag on the south side. The triangular structure on the north side of the east barrack had also been joined as an addition to the barrack by this time. (Smith, *Governor's Island,* follows page 160). See fig. 55.





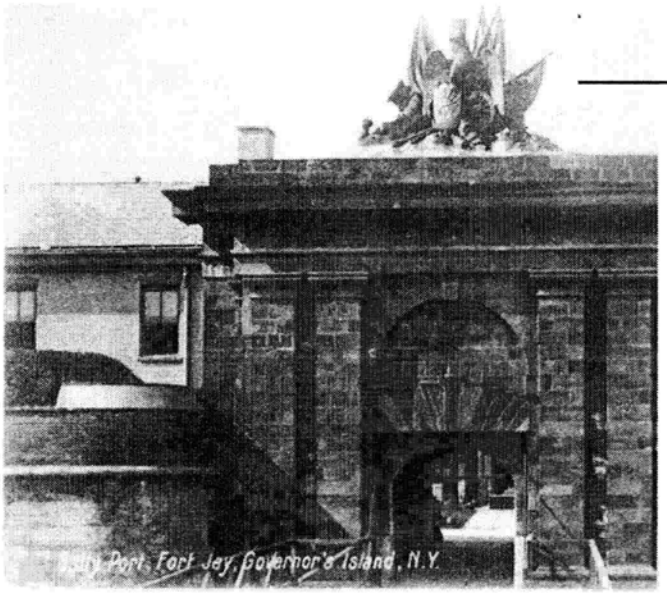
Detail of the gateway sculpture. Note the newly restored eagle wings and upper flag on the left side.

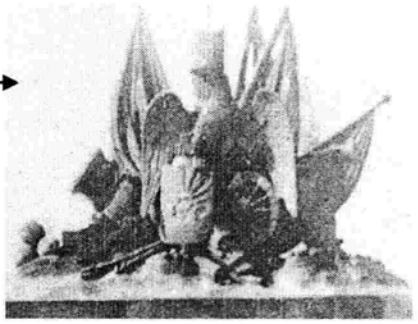
Figure 55. The sally port at Fort Jay, 1913.

1913. "A passageway connected the Castle [Castle Williams] with the main fort [Fort Columbus] in the middle of the Island. Its remains are clearly visible to- day. What is left of the way extends from the Fort to the Post Hospital. The rest of it was destroyed evidently to make way for modern constructions on the northern edge of the Island. A large tree has grown up in this passage." (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 57)

1914

Circa 1914. A postcard of Fort Jay entitled "Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY," published by the Rotograph Co., New York City, shows the recently repaired gateway sculpture. (Park museum/reference collection, Governors Island National Monument.) See fig. 56.





Detail view of the gateway sculpture. Note that the eagle's new wings and the upper portion of the left flag appear to have darkened with the passage of time.

Figure 56. Postcard view of the sally port at Fort Jay, circa 1914.

1920- 1929

Summary

Minimal documentation was reviewed for this study for the decade 1920- 29, although more information undoubtedly exists in the records of the U.S. Army. Alterations were made to the four barracks within Fort Jay around 1920- 21 when the buildings were converted to officers' housing. Although no records of this work have yet been found, some information was provided by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1934. The interior layout of all four barracks appears to have been changed to accommodate officer housing. The floor plans for one representative building, the east barrack, were drawn by HABS in 1934 (see Appendix). These show the building configured as four apartments, with two units in the first story and two in the second story. Wallboard partition walls divided the large rooms formerly occupied by soldiers into smaller residential spaces. Lodging for support staff, such as cooks and maids, was provided in the basement story, where new windows had been cut in the back walls for additional light and ventilation. This required the installation of long light wells in place of the former subterranean cisterns. Additional living space was also created at the south barrack by filling in the center postern arch. Central heating may have been installed at this time along with updated electrical wiring. Finally, slate roofing shingles dating to the 1850s were replaced by asphalt shingles.

An aerial photograph of Governors Island taken in 1922 provides a bird's- eye view of Fort Jay looking towards the north. A large metal water tower with conical roof had been erected by this time between the north ravelin and the northwest bastion. Four long buildings had also been built on the northwest glacis in the vicinity of the historic pathway connecting the fort with Castle Williams. Also of interest are the exterior brick walls of the barracks that retained their light- painted finish. Guns remained in place at the perimeter walls.

Documentation

1920- 1921

1920- 21. "In 1920- 21, the...the [east, south, and north barracks] buildings were converted into officers' quarters and the west [barrack] building altered.... Before the alterations of 1920- 21 the roofs were covered with slate." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 4.)

1921, May and November. Map: "New York Harbor, Fort Jay, Governors Island General Map." (Cited in "Ordnance and Explosives," reference documents.)

1922

1922. Aerial photograph of Governors Island, looking north, by Hamilton Maxwell, 1922. (Collection of the New - York Historical Society. Reproduced in the "Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Governors Island, Governors Island National Monument," 2003, Part 2a, p. 9.) See fig. 57.

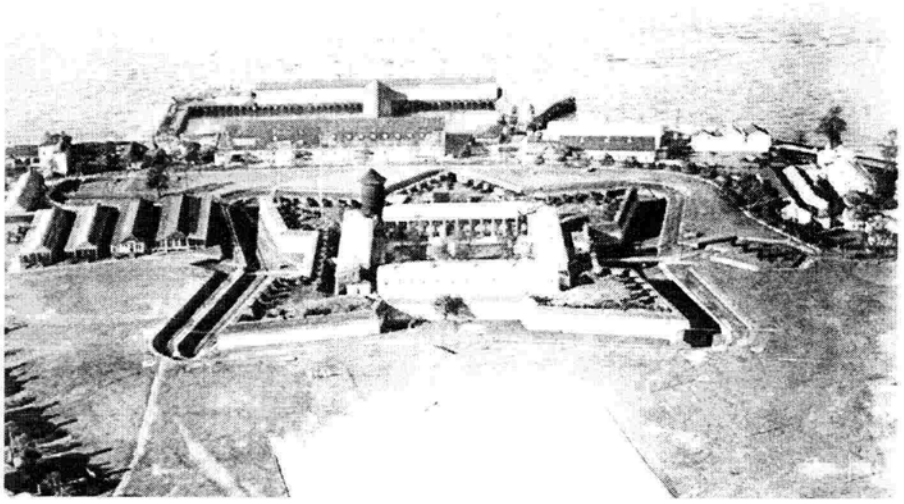


Figure 57. Aerial view of Fort Jay, looking north, 1922.

1928

1928, September 1. Map: "Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY, Buildings and Roads." (File: Ft. Jay, 3 of 7; Box 102; Entry 393; RG 77; NAB. Cited in "Ordnance and Explosives," reference documents.)

1930- 1939

Summary

A considerable amount of work occurred at Fort Jay in the 1930s. Recognition that the fort possessed national historic significance occurred in the winter of 1934 when the Historic American Buildings Survey was commissions to prepare measured drawings of existing conditions and a written historical report illustrated by 10 photographs (see Appendix and figs. 58- 67). Materials and construction details were documented by the drawings, such as the east barrack that was then in use as officer's quarters. This was noted to have a mixture of window sashes and door types dating from various periods and an exterior paint scheme consisting of yellow walls, gray trim, and buff- color columns. The bridge at the sally port was then made of wood planks with simple wood railing. The stone sculpture atop the stone gate was still intact in 1934. Fort Jay did not retain this appearance for long, however. Plans to remodel the east barrack were prepared by the U.S. Army only a few months later, followed by extensive work on the other three barracks by the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Architectural drawings for the renovation of the east barrack were prepared between May and December 1934. The plans retained the existing configuration of two apartments per floor but completely altered the interior layout. New porches and exterior stairways replaced the existing porches and stairways on the courtyard side of the building, and new window sashes and doors replaced the old. A new coal- fired, steam- heating system was also included in the design, although the four old brick chimneys and basement fireplaces were retained.

Work on the other three barracks progressed counter- clockwise around the courtyard, beginning with the north barrack in 1936, followed by the west barrack in 1937, and ending with the south barrack in 1937- 38. This work was designed and executed by the WPA and thus differed from the renovation of the east barrack that had been carried out by the U.S. Army. Each barrack was divided into four apartments like the east barrack, but was configured "townhouse style," with the basement, first, and second stories connected by new interior stairways. The three barracks were gutted to the brick walls and their brick chimneys rebuilt from the foundation up. All window sashes and doors were replaced, and new steam heating, plumbing, and electrical systems installed. The new layout included maid quarters, a laundry room, a boiler room, and a coal- storage room in the basement story; a living room with fireplace, dining room, and kitchen in the first story; and three bedrooms and two tiled bathrooms in the second story. Built- in features such as china cabinets, bookcases, and telephone nooks were provided.

Although similar in design and layout, each barrack had an interior stairway balustrade that was of distinctively different character. The balustrade of the north barrack was in the Greek Revival style, the west barrack in the Mission style, and the south barrack in the Federal style. Outside, the metal railings of the new porches in the first and second stories featured center medallions with military motifs. The exterior brick walls of all four barracks were also stripped of their paint at this time, according to the photographic documentation. The WPA reported that the renovations of the north, west, and south barracks had been completed by 1939.

Other work carried out by the WPA at Fort Jay included the construction of eight two- bay brick garages for automobiles, the drawings for which are dated 1937. Plans to remodel the triangular building south of the east barrack as an amateur radio station were also prepared in 1937. Work on the gate and guard house also appears to have been planned by the WPA, judging by drawings dated 1938 and 1939. This included laying a new wood floor and applying new plaster to the walls of the guard house. The wooden bridge at the sally port was reconstructed in wood sometime between 1934 and 1937, based on the photographic documentation. Plans dated 1939 to replace the wooden bridge with one of concrete were not carried out until more than 10 years later.

Documentation

1930s

1930s. "Repairs to the fort were made once again in the 1930s. During that decade work on military installations, including the one on Governors Island, was undertaken by the Works Progress Administration. Under this program, the brick of the scarp wall was replaced, the counterscarp repaired, the barracks buildings remodeled, garages constructed in the bastions and new walks laid." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p 10.)

1934

1934. Ten measured drawings documenting the existing conditions of Fort Jay were prepared between January and March 1934 by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Branch of Plans and Design (see Appendix). A "Written Historical and Descriptive Data" report was also prepared for Fort Jay by A.C. Dalmas for HABS. The report is illustrated by 10 black- and- white photographs taken on March 15, 1934, by E.P. McFarland. (Survey number HABS NY- 4- 6; LC.) See figs. 58- 67.

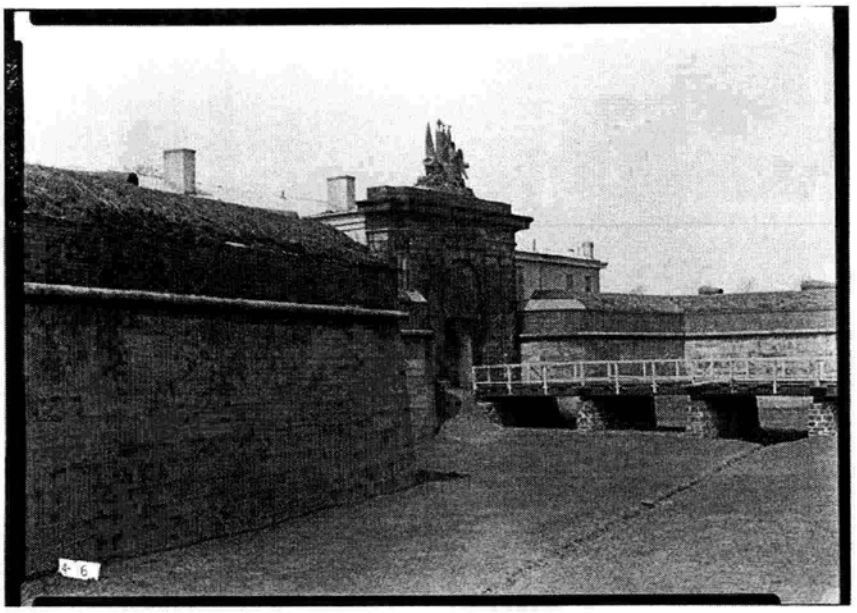
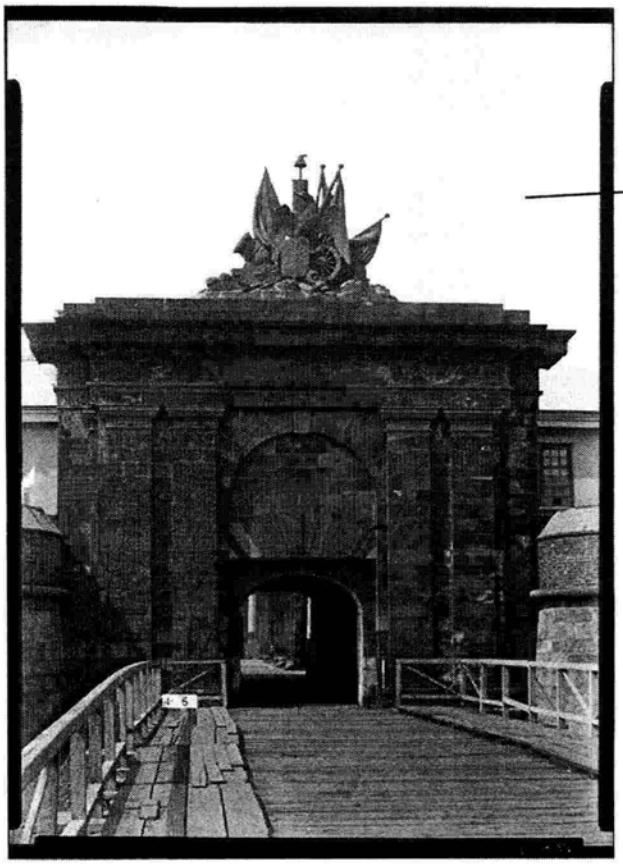


Figure 58. East sally port and scarp wall of Fort Jay, March 1934.



Detail view of the gateway sculpture, 1934.

Figure 59. Bridge and gate at the east sally port of Fort Jay, March 1934.

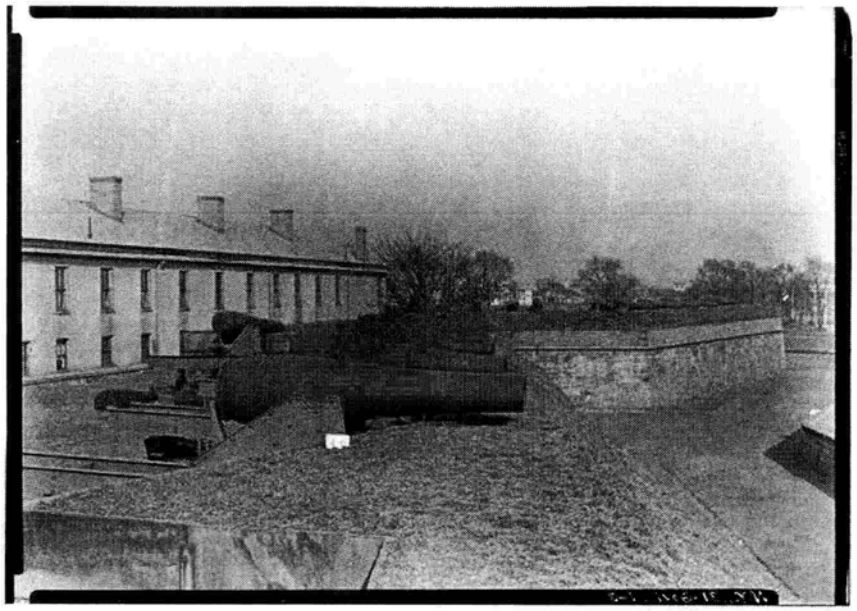


Figure 60. View from the southwest bastion of Fort Jay showing the back side of the south barrack (Building 206), March 1934.

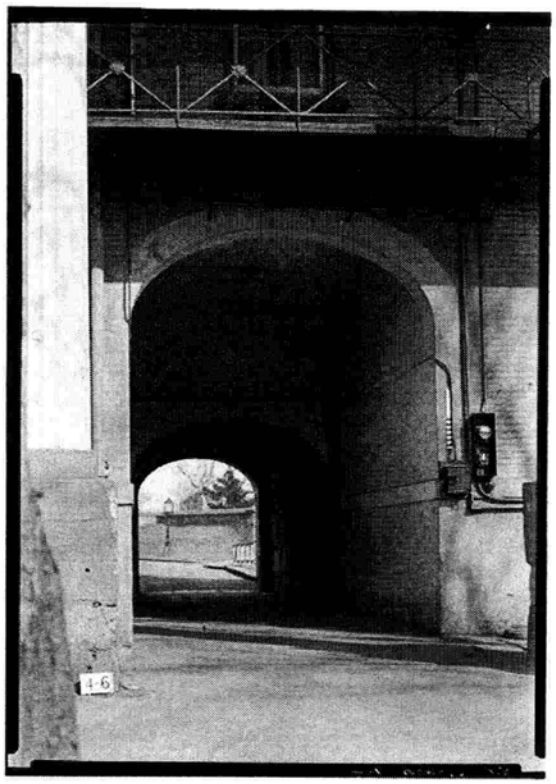


Figure 61. Detail of the sally port through the east barrack (Building 202), view looking east, March 1934.

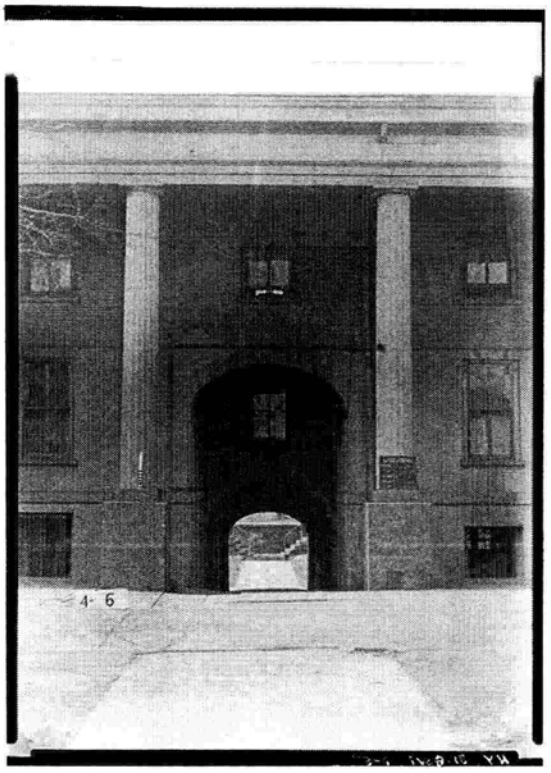


Figure 62. Detail of the west barrack (Building 210) from the courtyard side of Fort Jay showing the postern, March 1934.

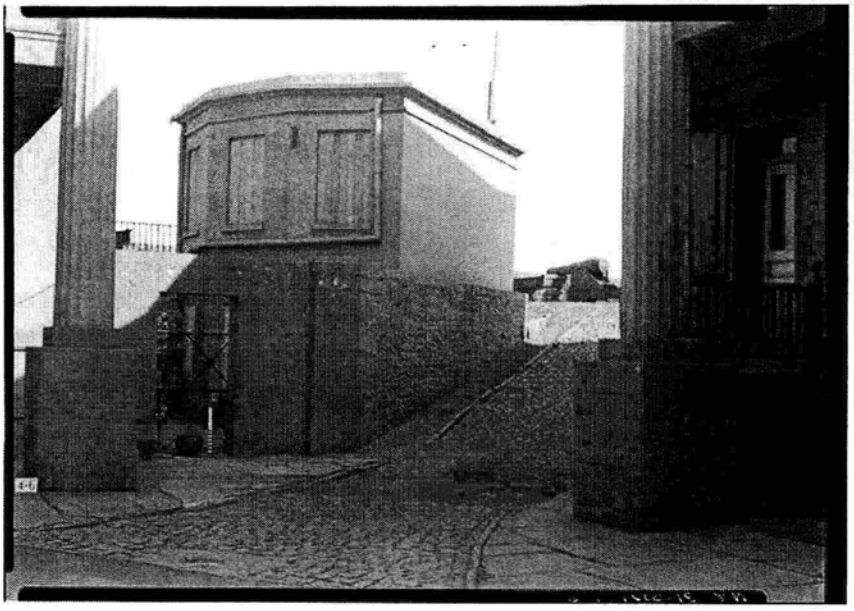


Figure 63. Southeast triangular (Building 204) in the courtyard of Fort Jay, March 1934.

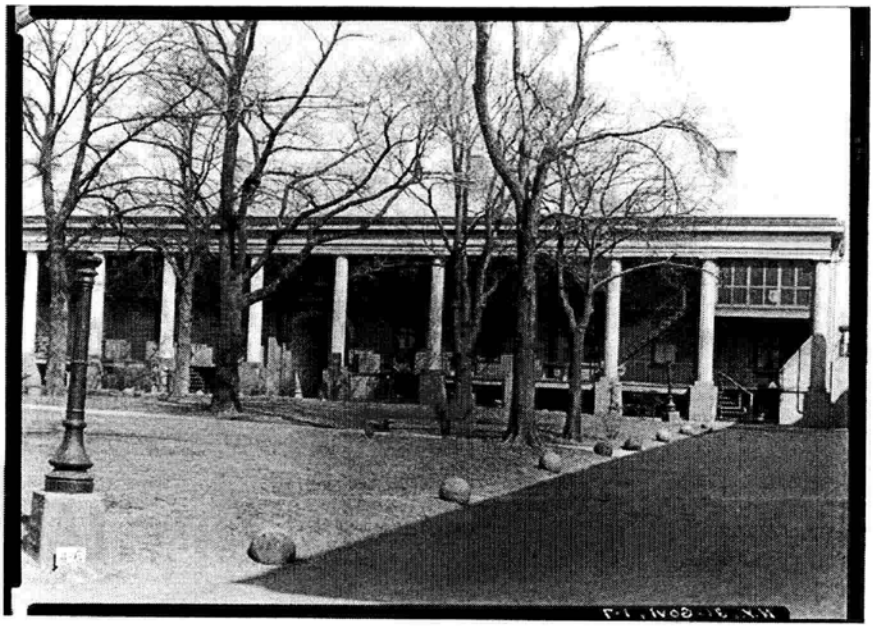


Figure 64. West elevation of the east barrack (Building 202) of Fort Jay, March 1934.

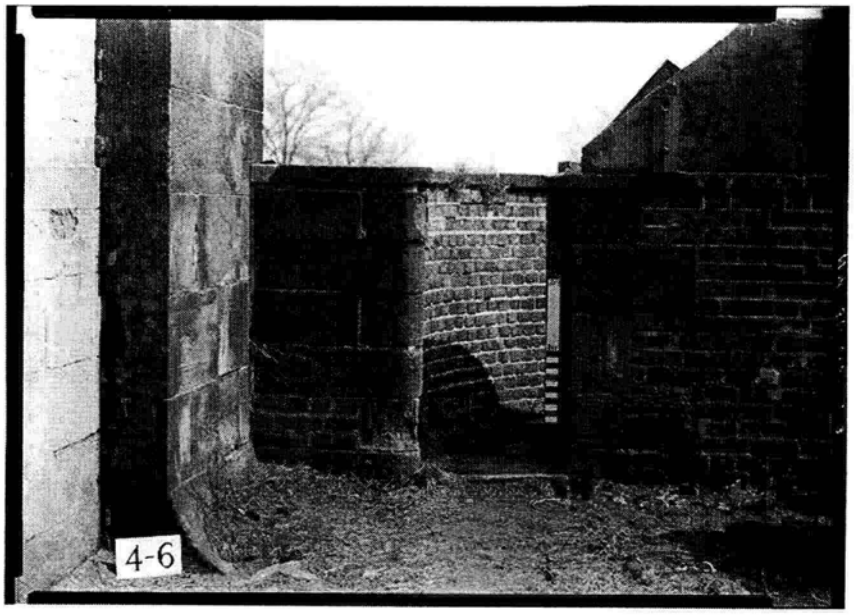


Figure 65. Observation post at the east sally port of Fort Jay, March 1934.

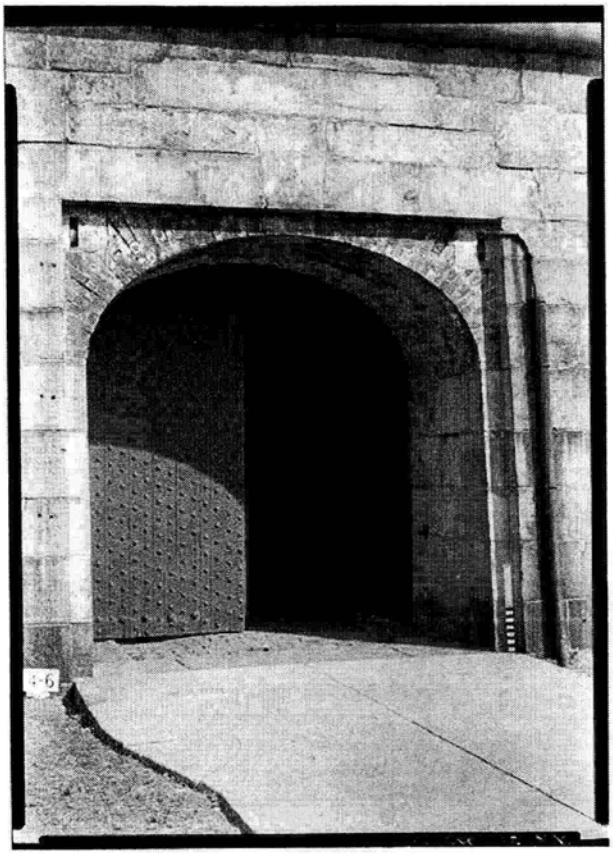


Figure 66. View of the west postern from the ditch, March 1934.

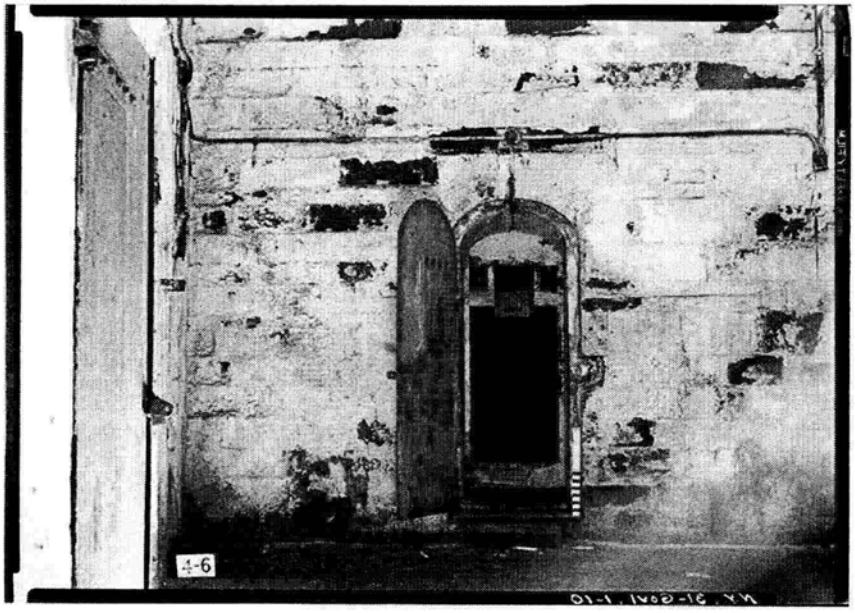


Figure 67. Magazine court in the north ravelin of Fort Jay, showing doorway to cell, March 1934.

1934, March. "In March of 1934, the building [#202] was being occupied by four officers and their families." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 5.)

1934- 35

1934. "In the same year [1934], plans were made to remodel the interior of all four [barracks] buildings within the fort giving them a completely new floor plan. Work began on Building #202 in 1934...." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 5.)

1934- 35. Architectural drawings are prepared by the U.S. Army for alterations to the east barrack (Building #51, later changed to #202). Drawings dated May 23, 1934, include plans of the basement, first floor, and second floor. Plans for the new heating system are dated December 1934. Two additional drawings for the renovation are dated March and April 1935. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island—formerly the U.S. Coast Guard Facilities Engineering Division. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed in 1982- 83 by the Historic American Buildings Survey and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1A, negative nos. NY- 5715- 1A- 6, NY- 5715- 1A- 7, and NY- 5715- 1A- 8; LC.) See fig. 68.

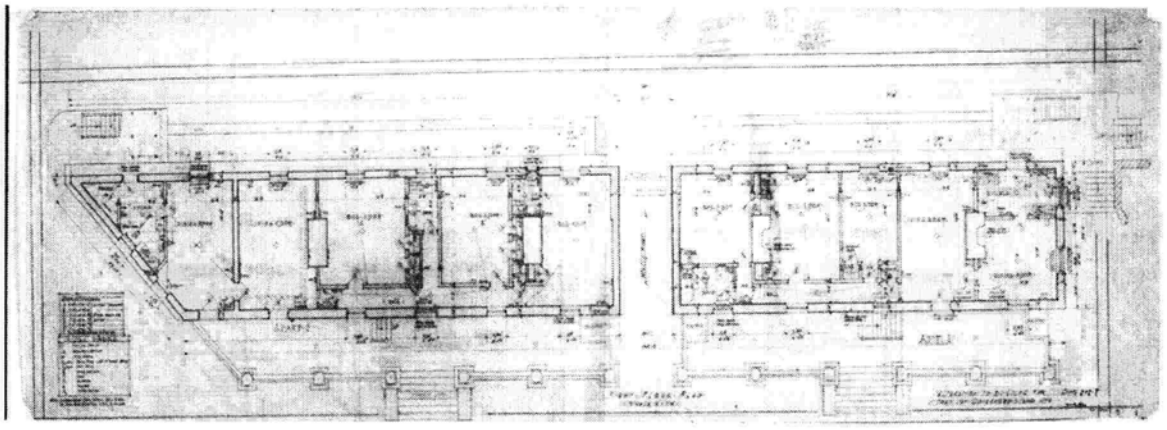


Figure 68. First- floor plan of the east barrack (Building 202), 1934.

1936

1936. "Work...was completed on the other three barracks [south, west, and north] between 1936 and 1938 as part of the extensive work done on the Island by the Works Progress Administration." (HABS, "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)," 1984, p. 5.)

1936. Architectural drawings are prepared for alterations to the north barrack (Building #54, later changed to #214), by the Works Progress Administration, project number 265- 97- 2003. These included floor plans for the new layout and detail drawings for new porches, windows, exterior and interior stairways, chimneys, and bathrooms. The final floor plans are dated November 2, 1936. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed in 1982- 83 by the Historic American

Buildings Survey and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #214." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1D, negative nos. NY- 5715- 1D- 7, NY- 5715- 1D- 8, and NY- 5715- 1D- 9; LC.)

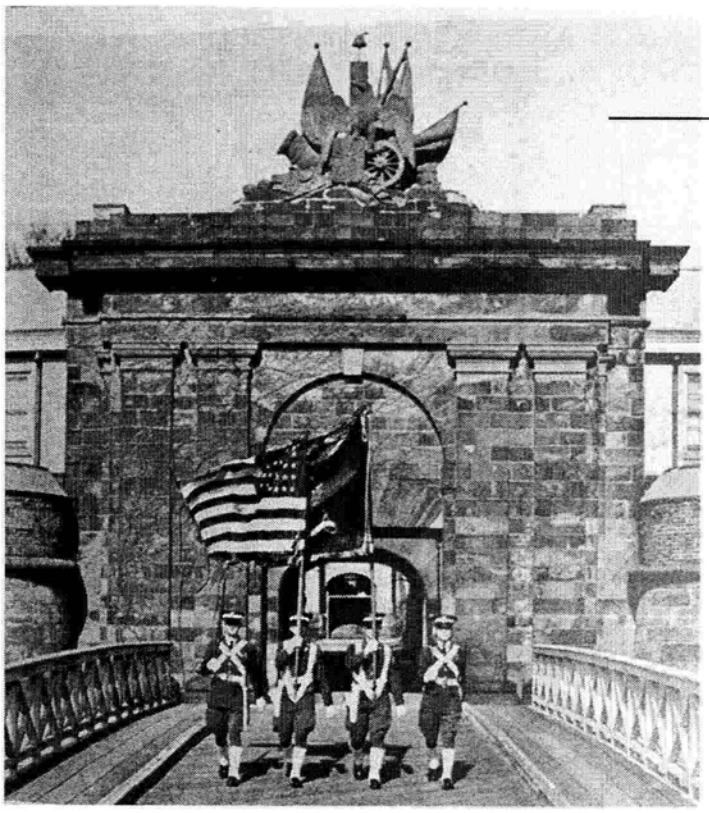
1937

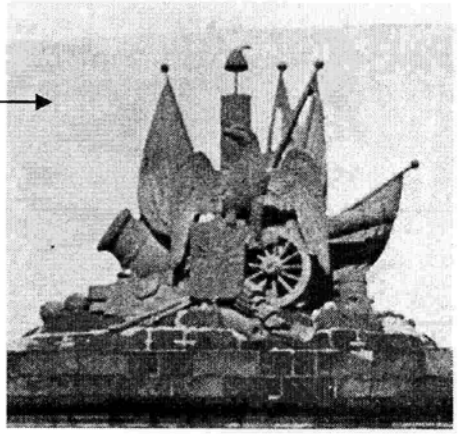
1937. Architectural drawings are prepared for alterations to the west barrack (Building #53, later changed to #210) by the Works Progress Administration. Floor plans and detail drawings for the remodeling dated January through August 1937 were assigned project number 265- 97- 2003. Plans for upgrading of the plumbing, heating, and electrical systems were dated February and March 1937 and assigned project number 265- 97- 2007. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed in 1982- 83 by the Historic American Buildings Survey and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #210." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1C, negative nos. NY- 5715- 1C- 5, NY- 5715- 1C- 6, and NY- 5715- 1C- 7; LC.)

1937. Two architectural drawings dated February and September 1937 were prepared for the construction of eight brick garages at Fort Jay by the Works Progress Administration, project number 265- 97- 2007. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. The 1983 National Register nomination for Governors Island notes that the garages were constructed between 1937 and 1938. See continuation sheet 15, Item 7, p. 16.)

1937. Architectural drawings were prepared by the Works Progress Administration for the renovation of the triangular building (Building 204), south of the east barrack, as an amateur radio station. Project number 265- 97- 2007. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

Circa 1937. A photograph of the main gate and bridge at Fort Jay was published on page 53 of *Governors Island: Its History and Development, 1637- 1937* by The Governors Island Club, 1937. The photograph is captioned: "New York's Own 16th U.S. Infantry Colors Emerge from Main Gate, Fort Jay." See fig. 69.





Detail view of the gateway sculpture.

Figure 69. Photograph of the main gate at Fort Jay, published in 1937.

1937- 38. Architectural drawings were prepared for alterations to the south barrack (Building #52, later changed to #206) by the Works Progress Administration, project number 265- 97- 2- 3. Plans and detail drawings for the renovation are dated September 1937 through May 1938. Project number 365- 97- 2- 16 addressed additional work on the heating system. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed in 1982- 83 by the Historic American Buildings Survey and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #206." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative nos. NY- 5715- 1B- 7, NY- 5715- 1B- 8, and NY- 5715- 1B- 9; LC.)

1938

1938. Photographs of the exterior and interior of the west barrack (Building #52, later #206) document the renovation by the Works Project Administration. (Included as plates 5 and 6 in HABS: "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #206," 1984, pp. 17 - 18. LC.) See figs. 70- 71.

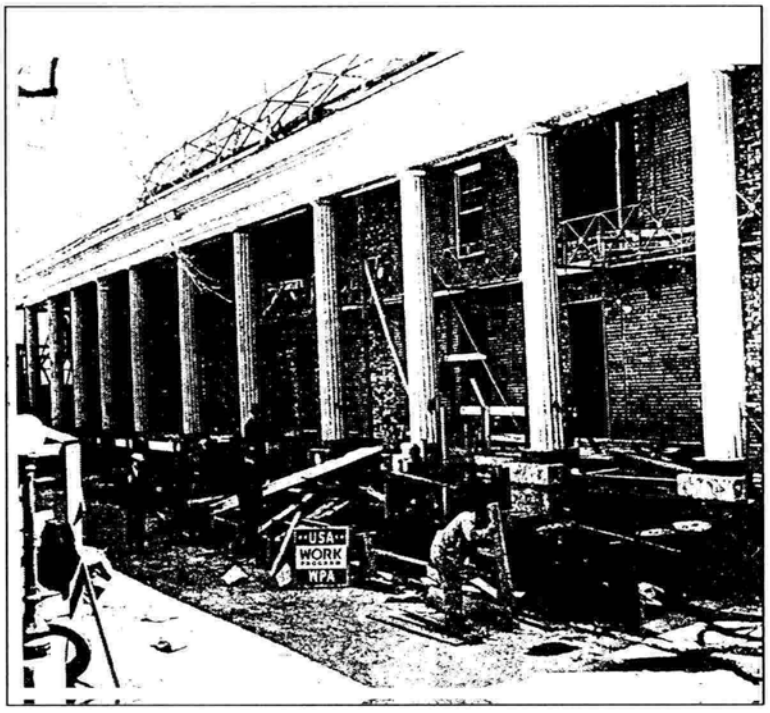


Figure 70. Exterior renovation of Building #206 by the Works Progress Administration, February 2, 1938.

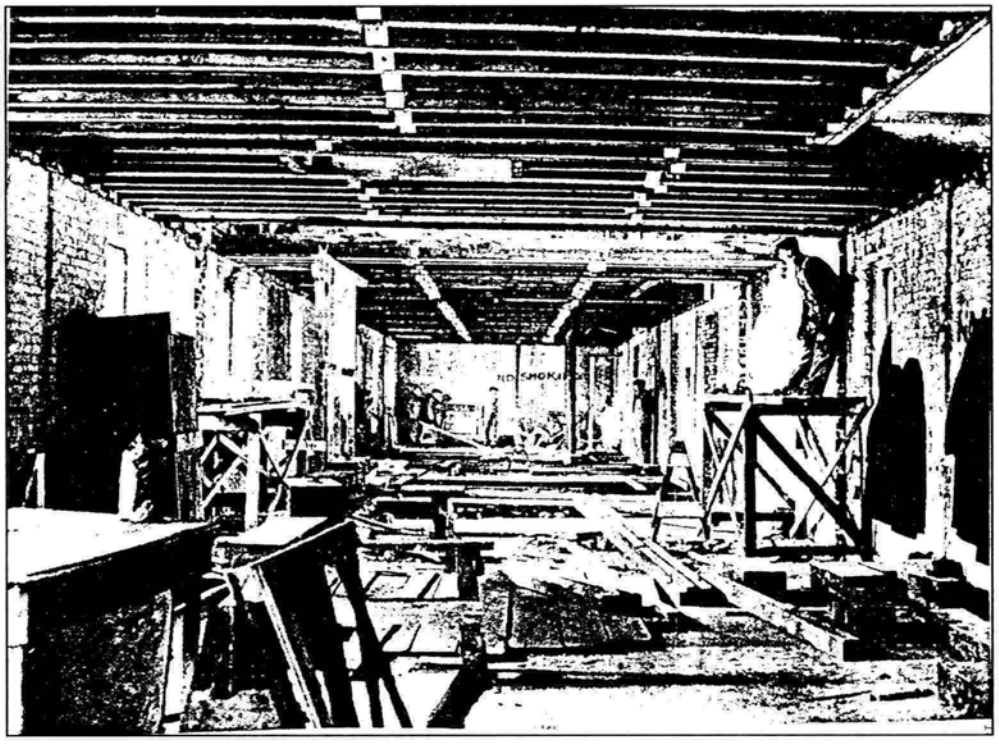


Figure 71. Interior renovation of the south barrack (Building #206) by the Works Progress Administration, 1938.

1938. Three architectural drawings for repairing the gate and guardhouse at Fort Jay are prepared. Work on the two interior rooms of the guardhouse may have been carried out at this time, based on notes to "lay new wood floor" and apply "new plaster on walls." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. Note that one of these drawings was photographed by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1982- 83 and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), survey number HABS NY- 4- 6, negative no. NY- 4- 6- 33.) See fig. 72.

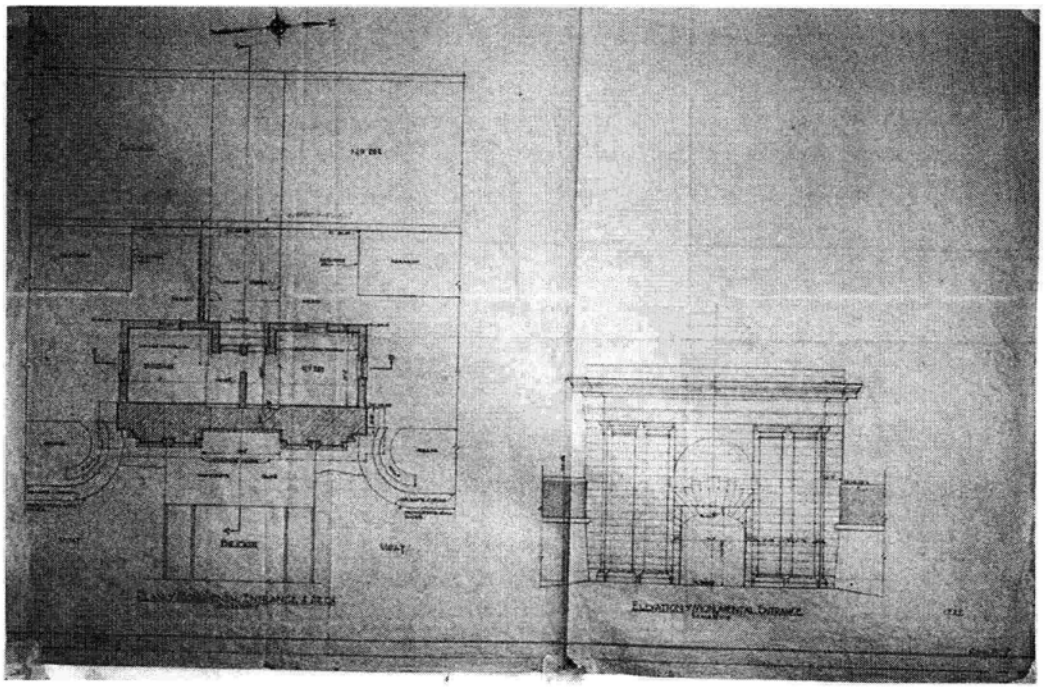


Figure 72. "Monumental Entrance & Arch" of the east sally port at Fort Jay, 1938.

1939

1939. " In 1939 WPA reported that it had gutted and rebuilt Buildings 52 [now 206], 53 [210], and 54 [214]...." ("Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 9, p. 193.)

1939, July. Two drawings of the sally port and postern were prepared by the Works Progress Administration in July 1939, project number 765- 97- 2- 15. The former is titled "Quadrangle Arch Detail and Building No. 201," and the latter "Detail of Arch at Bldg. No. 210." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1939, August. A set of five drawings for the construction of a "Concrete Bridge Over Moat at Quadrangle Entrance" at Fort Jay is prepared by the Works Progress Administration, project number 765- 97- 2- 15. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1940- 1949

Summary

A portion of Fort Jay's glacis had been converted to recreational use sometime before the war, based on a plan dated 1940 for the installation of a "lawn sprinkling system" for a golf course south of the fort. Mechanical equipment was introduced in the north magazine court in 1942, and details of the domestic hot- water system were recorded in 1944. Existing conditions of the barracks were recorded in a set of floor plans prepared by a private engineer, Peter W. Bruder Associates of New York City, sometime around the late 1940s. These document the interior layout of the barracks as remodeled by the U.S. Army and the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. The drawings also indicate that the heating fuel had been changed from coal to oil by this time. No documentation regarding the role of Fort Jay and its barracks during World War II was reviewed for this study.

Documentation

1940

1940, February 28. A plan is prepared: "Lawn Sprinkling System, Golf Course South of Fort Jay, Signal Office Second Corps Area, Governors Island, NY." It is therefore clear that a portion of the fort's glacis had been converted to recreational use by this time. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1942

1942, May 18. A plan is prepared for the installation of mechanical equipment in the magazine court in the north ravelin of Fort Jay: "Equipment & Duct Layout, Ordnance Room No. 5, Bldg. 215." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1944

1944, October 26. A plan is prepared by the Office of the Post Engineer, Fort Jay, detailing the domestic hot water heating for the barracks of Fort Jay: "Hot Water Heating Detail, Buildings No. 202, 206, 210, 214." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

Late 1940s

Late 1940s. A set of 16 drawings documenting the existing conditions of the four barracks inside Fort Jay are prepared by Peter W. Bruder Associates of New York City, Consulting Engineers, for the Headquarters Fort Jay, Office of the Post Engineer, Governors Island. Included for each building were a basement plan, first- floor plan, second- floor plan, and a section and elevation drawing. The window sashes were then noted to be six- over- six, double- hung sashes, and the roofing shingles were asbestos. Oil had replaced coal as a source of fuel for the heating systems, a change that occurred at Castle Williams in 1947- 48. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1950- 1959

Summary

The 1950s at Fort Jay may be characterized as a time of general repairs, updating, and commemoration. The wooden bridge at the main entrance was replaced with one made of reinforced concrete with a metal railing in 1952. A wooden foot bridge was also constructed across the moat at the southwest bastion in 1952, and a bronze plaque attached to the east face of the main gate commemorating the "Students and Soldiers of Freedom" of Columbia College who participated in the construction of the fort in 1794. Architectural drawings for the renovation of the kitchens in the south barrack were prepared in 1953. A site plan drawn that same year continued to label the barracks buildings within Fort Jay as numbers 51, 52, 53, and 54. Fencing at the moat and the perimeter of the glacis appears to have been introduced in the 1950s, based on a drawing dated 1958. The fencing, intended "for safety purposes," consisted of barbed wire at the scarp wall, chain link at the counterscarp wall of the north ravelin, and open-face brickwork beneath the porches of the barracks.

Documentation

1951

1951. A photograph of the main gate at Fort Jay was published. The sculpture above the gate appeared to be good condition, and the brick walls of the east barrack were unpainted. (*Three Centuries Under Three Flags, The Story of Governors Island from 1637* (Governors Island, NY: Headquarters First Army, 1951; follows p. 36.) See fig. 73.

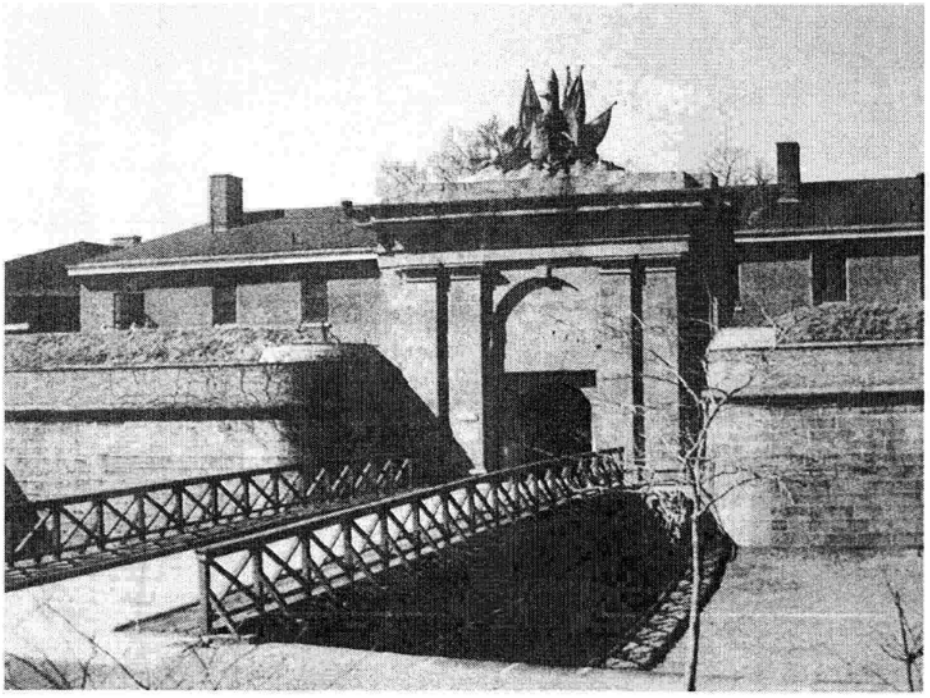


Figure 73. Photograph of the main gate at Fort Jay, published in 1951.

1951, March 30. A drawing was prepared: "Alt[eration] to Bridge at Quadrangle, Fort Jay." The scope of work for this project notes that "It is proposed that existing wood bridge be removed & to be replaced with new reinforced concrete. Existing five (5) stone piers remain as same are found to be in good condition." The new bridge, with a new metal railing of simple design, was to have a capacity of 20 tons. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1952

1952. Two bridges were constructed over the ditch of Fort Jay. One at the east sally port, labeled by the Army as structure #219, was described in 1983 as a "concrete vehicle bridge on sandstone piers constructed at the east entrance to Fort Jay in 1952 to replace an earlier bridge." The second bridge was described in 1983 as a "wooden foot bridge constructed in 1952 over the moat at the southwest bastion of Fort Jay." ("National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form: Governors Island," continuation sheet 16, Item 7, p. 17.)

1952. A bronze plaque commemorating the "Students and Soldiers of Freedom" of Columbia College was mounted to the stone gateway of Fort Jay. The plaque honors the "students and faculty who participated in the fort's construction in 1794." It is bolted to the east elevation, south side, of the stone gate.

1953

1953, April 13. An architectural drawing was prepared by the Office of the Post Engineer for renovations to the south barrack: "Renovations to Qtrs. 206, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York." The work involved updating of the kitchens with new wooden cabinets and installation of new linoleum flooring. Note that the building had been numbered "52" in 1953, later updated on the drawing to "206." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1953, May. A plan was prepared: "Site Plan of Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York." The four barracks buildings in Fort Jay were assigned numbers 51 through 54 on the plan. (Cited in "Ordnance and Explosives," reference documents.)

1958

1958, June 16. An architectural drawing was prepared: "Fence Around High Wall of Moat and other Fencing for Safety Purposes in Quadrangle, Fort Jay, New York." The proposed fencing included barbed wire on top of the scarp wall, chain link on top of the counterscarp wall at the north ravelin, and open- face brick walls beneath the porches of the barracks. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1959

1959, March 16. A drawing was prepared by the Office of the Post Engineer: "Electrical: Replacing Electrical Services in Quadrangle, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York," revised to June 2, 1960. A note on the drawing refers to removing the present "200 ampere service switch." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1960- 1969

Summary

Governors Island remained an Army base until June 1966, when the island was transferred to the U.S. Coast Guard. Maps of the island prepared during the final years of Army occupation show an expanded golf course on the glacis of Fort Columbus, and the barracks designated as "Officer Family Housing." The numbering system of the buildings and structures had changed by 1964, with those within Fort Jay assigned numbers 201 through 216. This system was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard when it gained jurisdiction of the island in 1966. No immediate improvements or alterations are known to have been to Fort Jay by the Coast Guard in the 1960s, except for waterproofing the underground magazines and casemates (bombproof vaults) in the north ravelin in 1968.

Documentation

1962

1962, March 15. A map was prepared: "General Site Map, Golf Course Site, Master Plan Basic Information Maps, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York." This map shows the golf course as existing. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1962, March. A map was prepared: "Reservation Map, Master Plan, Basic Information Maps, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York." The barracks in Fort Jay are labeled as "Officer Family Housing" and the glacis south of the fort as "Recreation." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1964

1964, September 1. Plan: "Site Plan, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York." A new numbering system had been instituted by this time for the buildings and structures on Governors Island, with the numbers 201 through 221 assigned to Fort Jay. (Cited in "Ordnance and Explosives," reference documents.) See fig. 74.

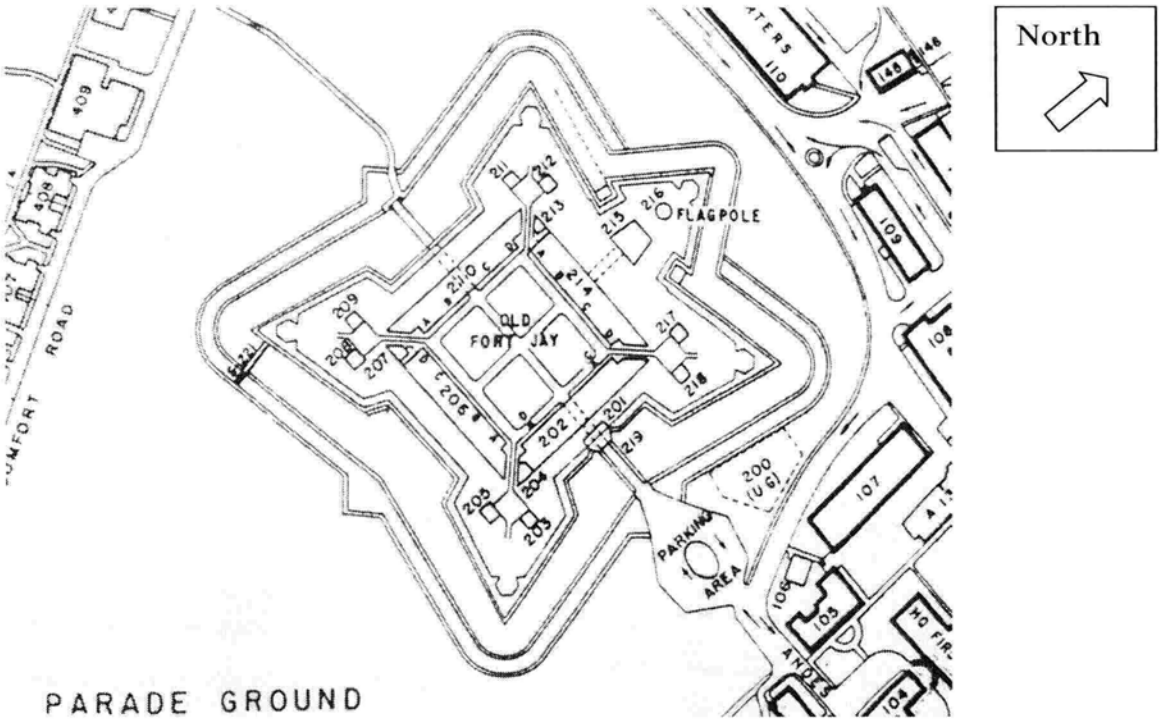


Figure 74. Detail of Governors Island site plan showing Fort Jay, September 1, 1964.

1966

1966. "In 1966, the Army elected to leave Governors Island and consolidate First Army and other units at Fort Meade, Maryland. The Army left for budget reasons, but so far little discussion of what it meant to give up an island that generations of Army supporters had fought to retain and enjoy has emerged from this study.... The Army turned Governors Island over to the U.S. Coast Guard on June 30, 1966.... By consolidating all its New York- based activities and some out- of- town training courses, the Coast Guard organized the largest Coast Guard base in the world on the island." ("Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 10, pp. 209- 11.)

1968

1968, June 14. Drawings were prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard of the magazine in the north ravelin, titled "Bldg. 215- Waterproofing Plans, Elev. & Sect." A note on the drawing reads, "All waterproofing materials to be applied to all ceilings, walls and floors." Wood flooring and "sub- base" were to be removed from Rooms #2 and #5 on the east and west sides. (Drawing photographed by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1982- 83 and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), survey number HABS NY- 4- 6, negative no. NY- 4- 6- 34; LC.) See fig. 75.

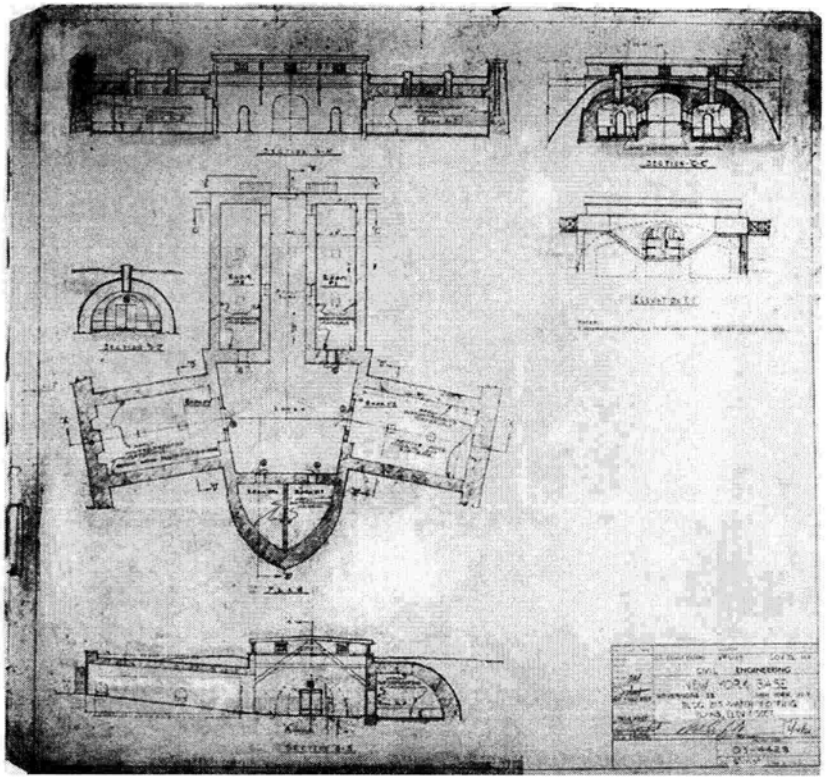


Figure 75. Plan, elevations, and section- elevation drawings of the magazine court in the north ravelin of Fort Jay, June 14, 1968.

1970- 1979

Summary

The barracks of Fort Jay continued to serve as housing for officers of the U.S. Coast Guard and their families in the 1970s. Recognition of the fort as a structure of national significance was conferred in March 1974 when it was individually entered in the National Register of Historic Places. A campaign to assess and repair the brickwork walls of the four barracks, three triangular buildings, and eight garages within Fort Jay was also carried out in that year. Reroofing of the four barracks with new asphalt shingles and metal flashing is specified in a construction drawing dated 1976. Smaller projects to renovate the kitchen in the east apartment of the south barrack, and to install a spiral stair in the north apartment first- story of the east barrack, took place in 1979.

Documentation

1974

1974. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory –Nomination Form: Fort Jay." Stephen S. Lash Associates for the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, September 3, 1971. Entered in the National Register March 27, 1974.

1974, December 12. Architectural drawings were prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard: "Masonry Restoration Bldg Architectural Elevations, Civil Engineering Base New York, Governors Island, New York." Drawings covered the four barracks, the garages, and the triangular buildings. Areas requiring brickwork repairs were denoted and approximate square footage estimated. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1976

1976. A bronze plaque was installed on the east face, north side, of the gate at Fort Jay by the New York Community Trust during the nation's bicentennial to commemorate the fort as an "important example of military architecture" and a reminder of "the early defenses erected in New York harbor to protect the City from invasion by sea." Wording on the plaque also inaccurately states that the "fort was completed in 1798 and named after John Jay, then Secretary of Foreign Affairs." John Jay was in fact serving as New York State Governor in 1798. The existing fort was completed in 1811, not 1798.

1976, October 14. An architectural plan was prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard: "Architectural Roofing Repair Plan, Quadrangle Bldgs No. 202, 206, 210 & 214, Coast Guard Support Center, NY, Governors Island, New York." Drawing No. 03- 5672. Notes on the drawing specify removal of existing asphalt roofing shingles and flashing, to be replaced by new shingles and metal flashing. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1979

1979, January 2. Architectural drawings were prepared for the renovation of the pantry in apartment A of the south barrack (Building 206): "Quarters 206A, Convert Pantry to Kitchen." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1979, October 18. An architectural drawing was prepared for the installation of an interior stairway in the first- story apartment on the south side of the east barrack (Building 202): "Building No. 202, Install New Spiral Staircase in Quarters 202B, U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, NY." This stairway provides direct interior access between the basement and first stories today. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1980- 1989

Summary

Documentation and recognition of Fort Jay as a site of national significance continued in the 1980s. Thirty- eight black- and- white, large- format photographs were taken of Fort Jay and its barracks by John T. Lowe for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1982- 83. These included aerial, exterior, and selected interior views (see figs. 76- 113). The historical report on Fort Jay dated 1934 was also updated by HABS in 1984, and separate reports were prepared on the four barracks buildings. Fort Jay and Castle Williams were assessed as significant contributing resources in a district nomination of Governors Island to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983, encompassing approximately121 acres on the north side of the island. The nomination was accepted and entered as a National Historic Landmark district in 1985.

Remodeling of the barracks, triangular buildings, and landscape also occurred in the 1980s. The old steam- heating systems and radiators installed in the barracks in the 1930s were removed and replaced by hot- water heating systems with baseboard units in 1981. Kitchens and bathrooms were remodeled, electrical wiring updated, interior light fixtures replaced with new fixtures in a Colonial style, and aluminum storm windows installed in 1984. Plans for the three triangular buildings prepared in 1988 called for gutting the buildings to the brick walls, installing new floors and metal doors, rehabilitating the windows, and installing new electric service and light fixtures. The exterior landscape of the fort was also altered in this decade with the installation of fencing at the perimeter of the fort's glacis, to contain errant golf balls launched from the glacis golf course.

Documentation

1980

1980, May 14. An architectural drawing was prepared by the Public Works Engineering Division: "Installation of New Fence of Golf Course, U.S. Coast Guard, Governors Is., NY." The proposed fencing is shown on the south perimeter of the glacis along Comfort Road. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1981

1981, June 20. Mechanical drawings were prepared by Michael Baker, Jr., of New York, Inc., Consulting Engineers, for the U.S. Coast Guard: "Buildings 202, 206, 210 & 214, Heating & Hot Water Renovations, Support Center, Governors Island, New York." The drawings specified the removal of "all steam and condensate return lines" from the four buildings; the

installation of new domestic hot- water heaters and baseboard heating units; and the addition of a new oil- fueled boiler in the basement of Building 214. Existing oil- fueled boilers were to remain in Buildings 202, 206, and 210. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1982- 83

1982- 83. Thirty- eight photographs were taken in October 1982 and September 1983 of Fort Jay and its barracks by John T. Lowe for the Historic American Buildings Survey. (LC.) See figs. 76- 113.

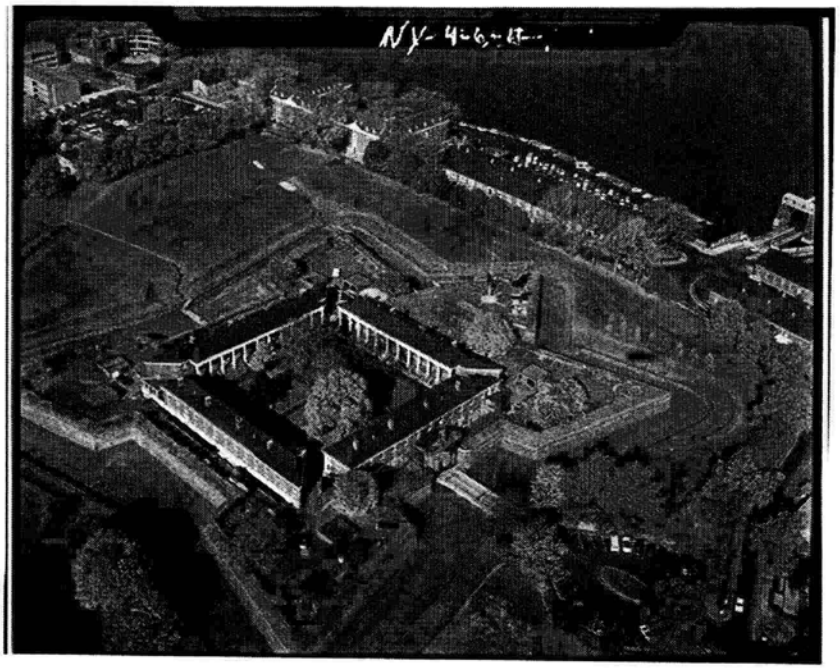


Figure 76. Aerial view of Fort Jay, looking northwest, 1982- 83.

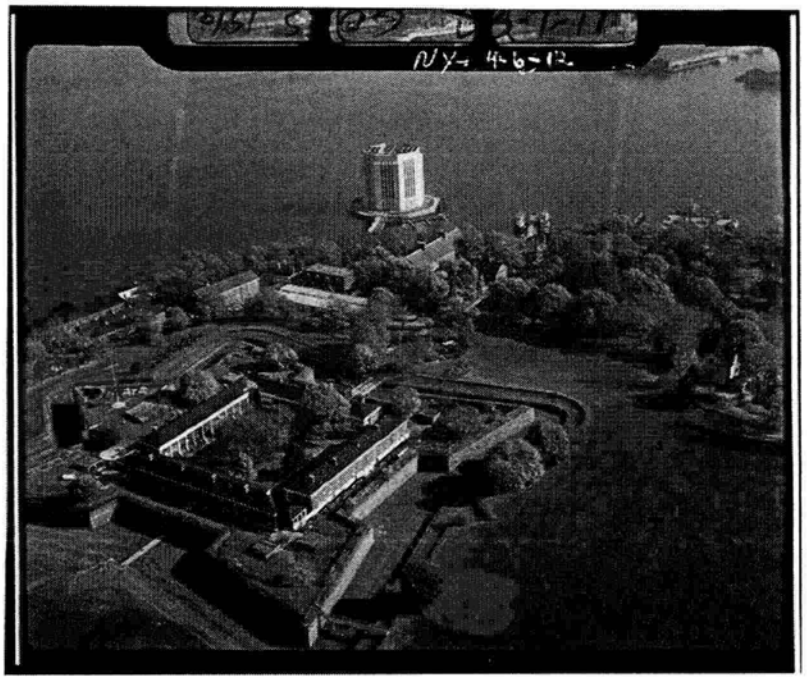


Figure 77. Aerial view of Fort Jay looking northeast, 1982- 83.

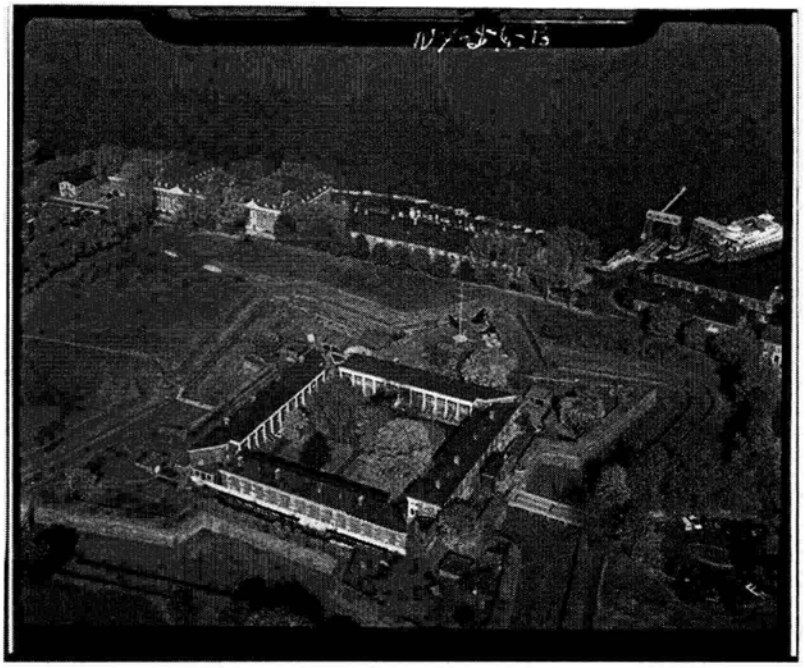


Figure 78. Aerial view of Fort Jay, looking north- northwest, 1982- 83.

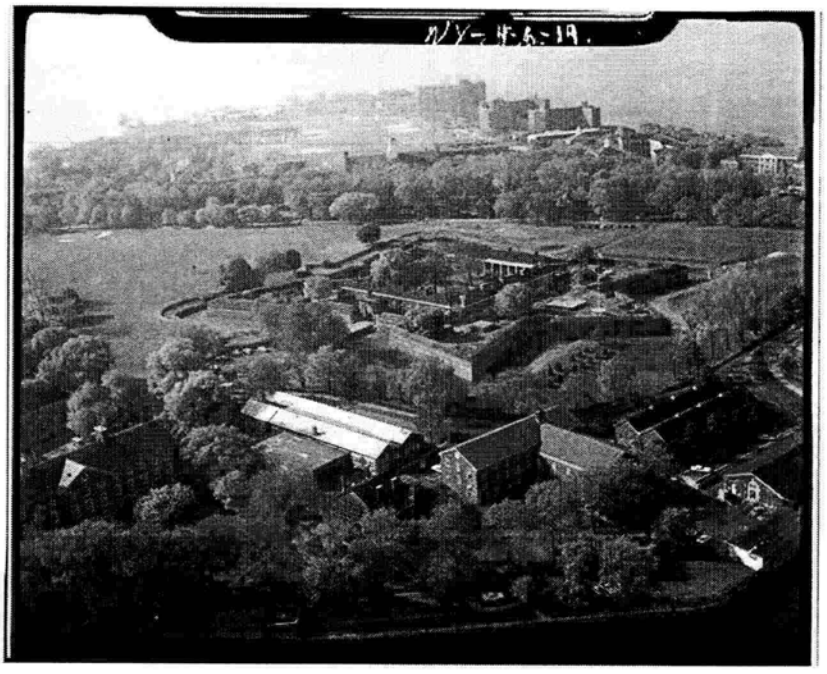


Figure 79. Aerial view of Fort Jay, looking southwest, 1982- 83.

Figure 80. Aerial view of Fort Jay, looking north, 1982- 83.

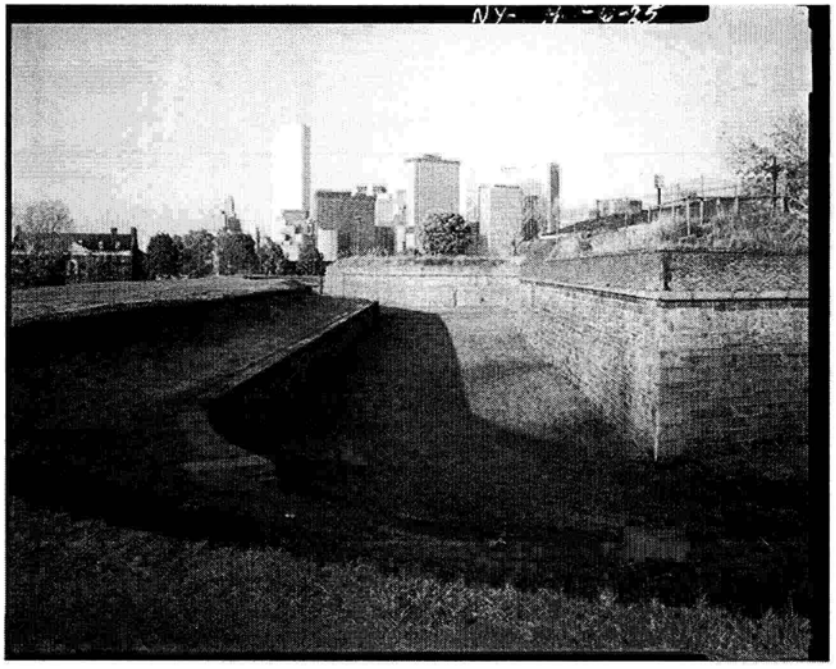


Figure 81. Southwest ditch of Fort Jay, looking northwest, 1982- 83.

Figure 82. Ditch on west side of Fort Jay, looking north, 1982- 83.
(Note: photograph is printed backwards.)

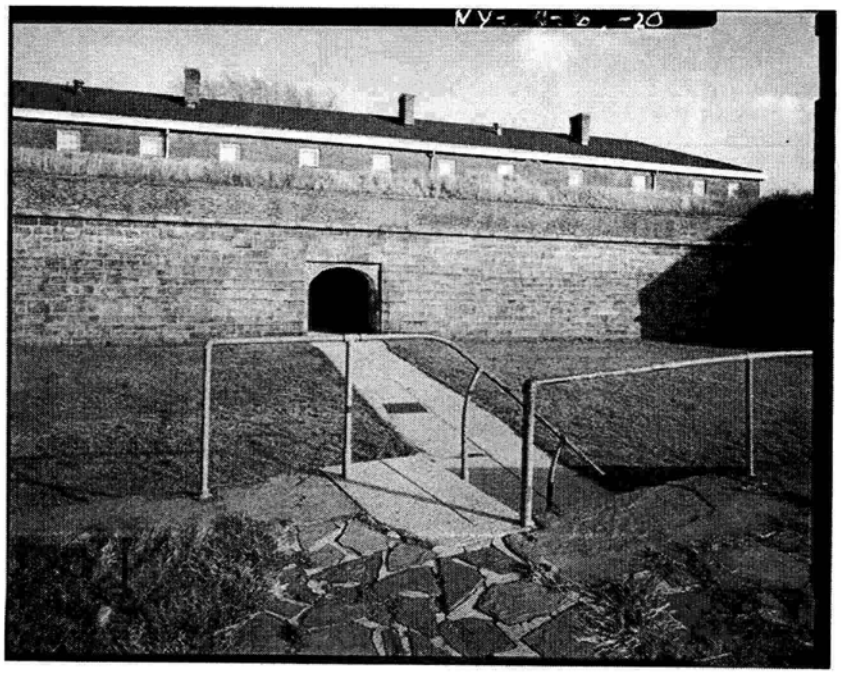


Figure 83. West scarp and entrance (sally port) of Fort Jay, showing the upper rear elevation of the west barrack, 1982- 83.

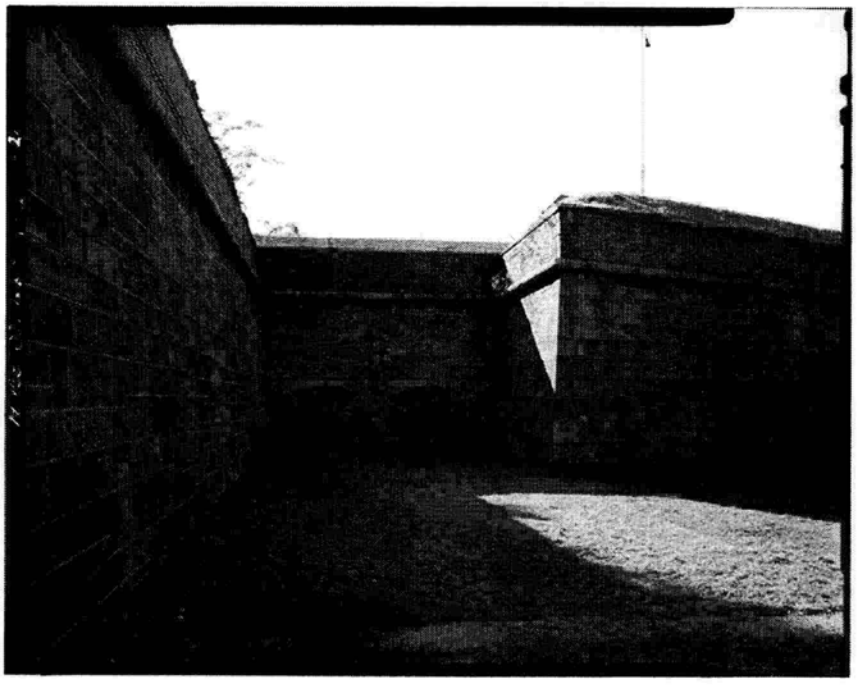
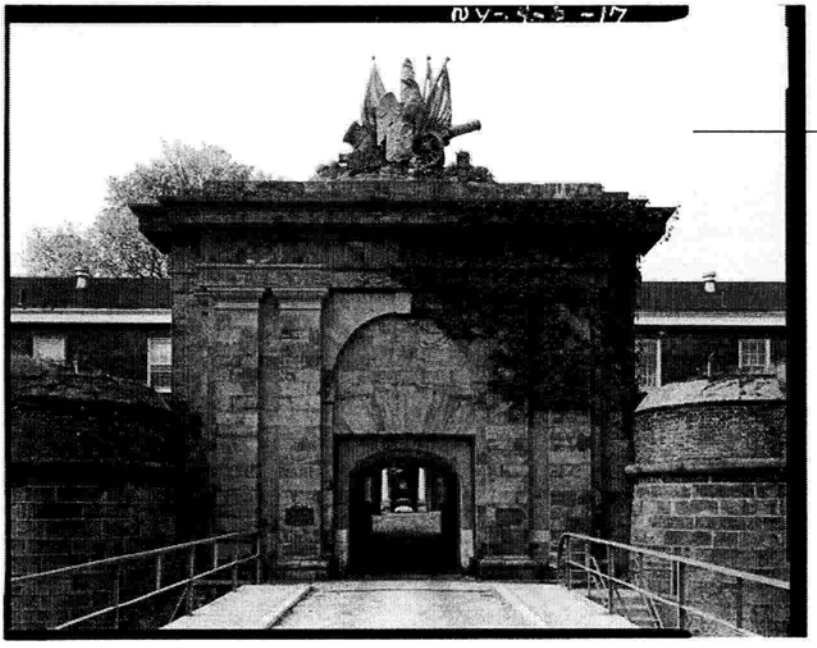
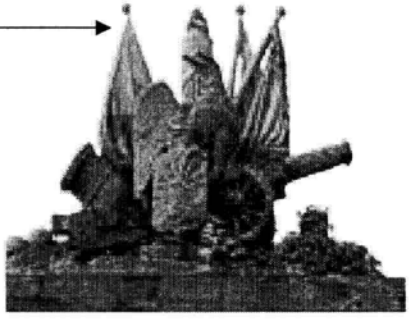


Figure 84. Ditch and northeast scarp of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

Figure 85. East entrance (sally port) of Fort Jay looking northeast, 1982- 83.





Detail view of the gateway sculpture showing one eagle wing and one flag missing.

Figure 86. South elevation of the east gate of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

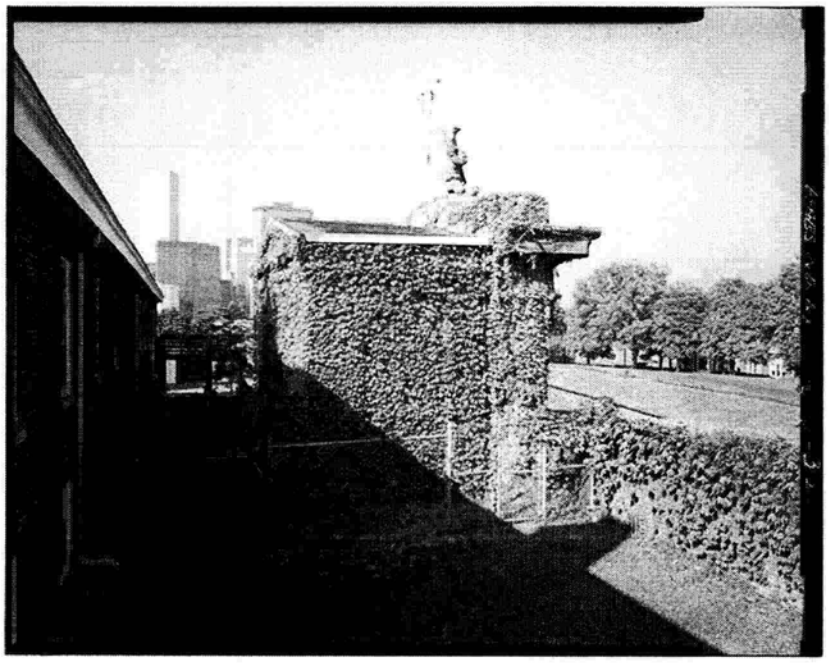


Figure 87. Exterior south elevation of the east gate and guard house of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

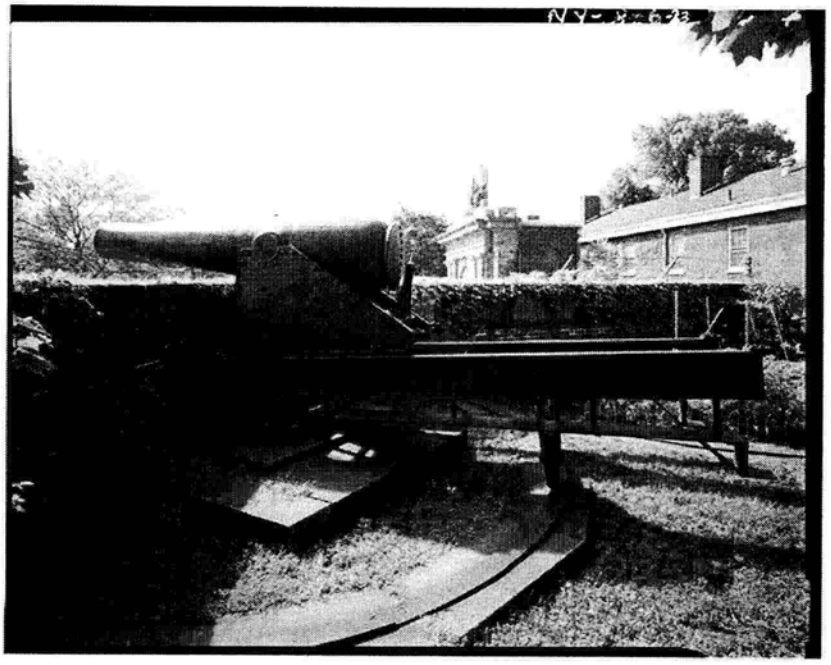


Figure 88. Gun emplacement on the northeast bastion of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

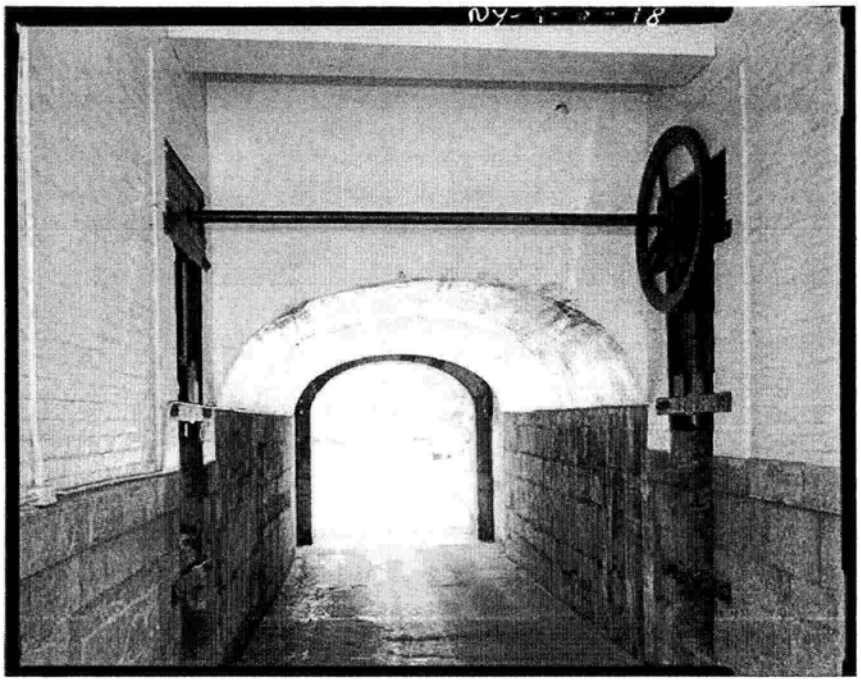


Figure 89. Interior detail of the east sally port, looking east, 1982- 83.

Figure 90. Courtyard of Fort Jay, looking northwest, showing the south barrack (Building 206) on the left, the west barrack (Building 210) in the center, and the north barrack (Building 214) on the right, 1982- 83.

Figure 91. West elevation of the east barrack (Building 202) in the courtyard of Fort Jay, 1982- 83

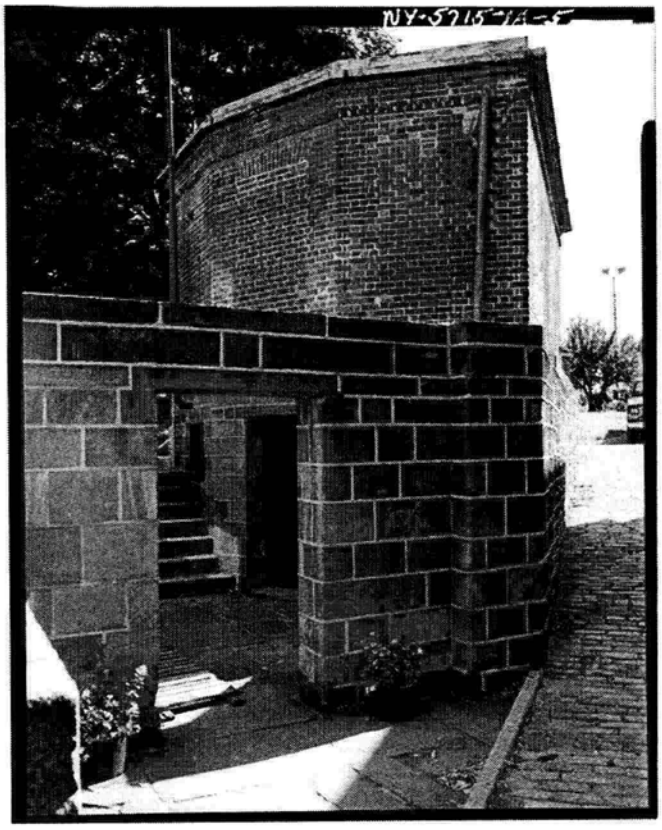


Figure 92. West elevation of the southeast triangular building (Building 204) in the courtyard of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

Figure 93. North elevation of the south barrack (Building 206) in the courtyard of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

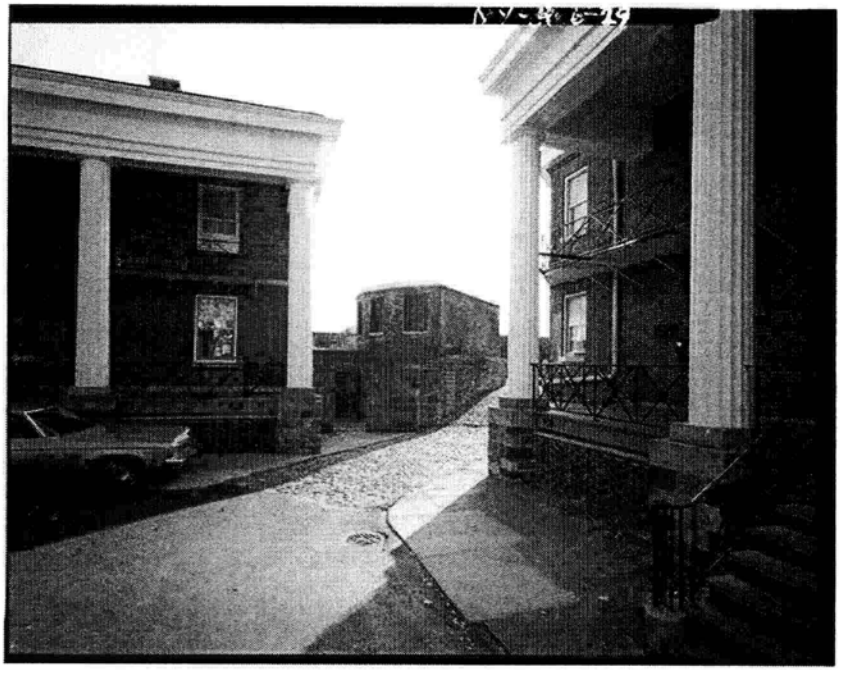


Figure 94. Southwest corner of the courtyard of Fort Jay, showing the south barrack (Building 206) on the left, the southwest triangular structure (Building 207) in the center, and the west barrack (Building 214) on the right, 1982- 83.

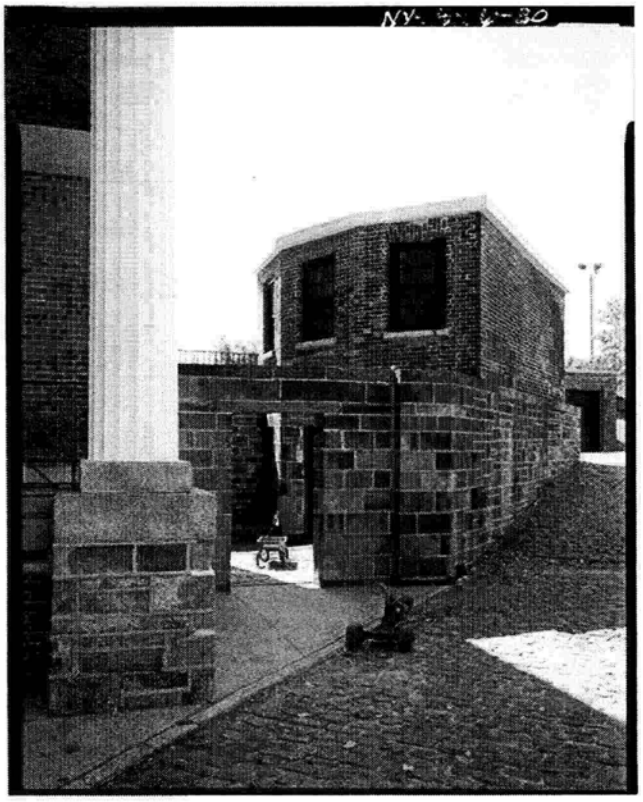


Figure 95. East and north elevations of the southwest triangular structure (Building 207) in the courtyard of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

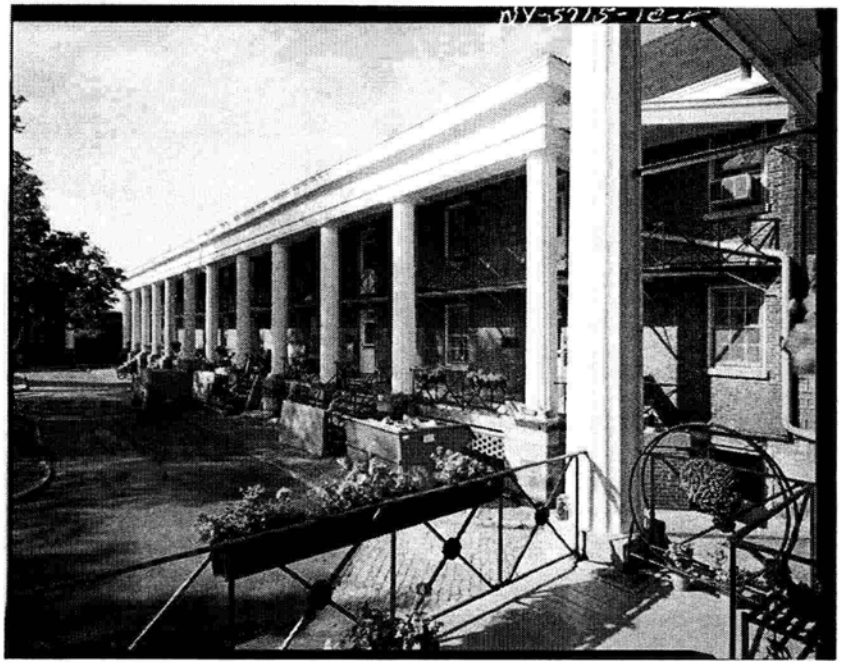


Figure 96. East elevation of the west barrack (Building 210), in the courtyard of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

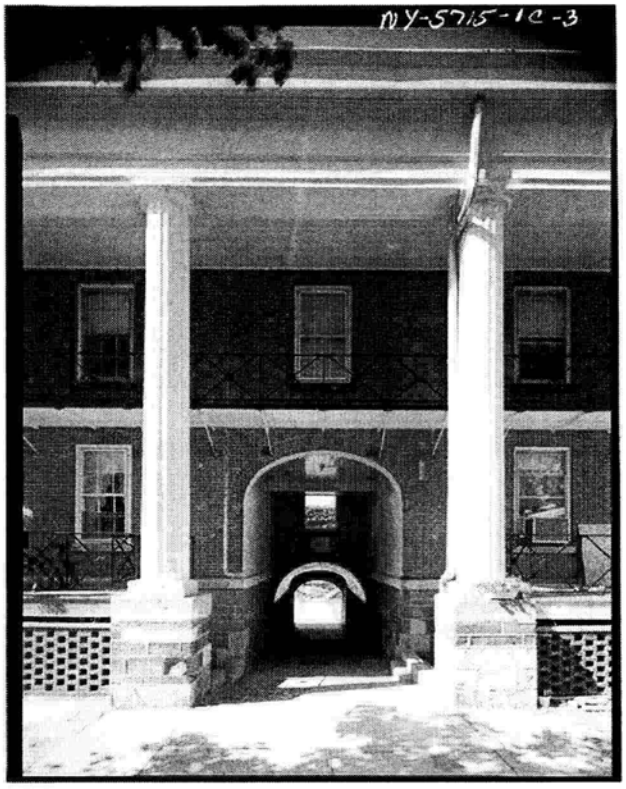


Figure 97. Detail of the east elevation of the west barrack (Building 210), showing the postern, 1982- 83.

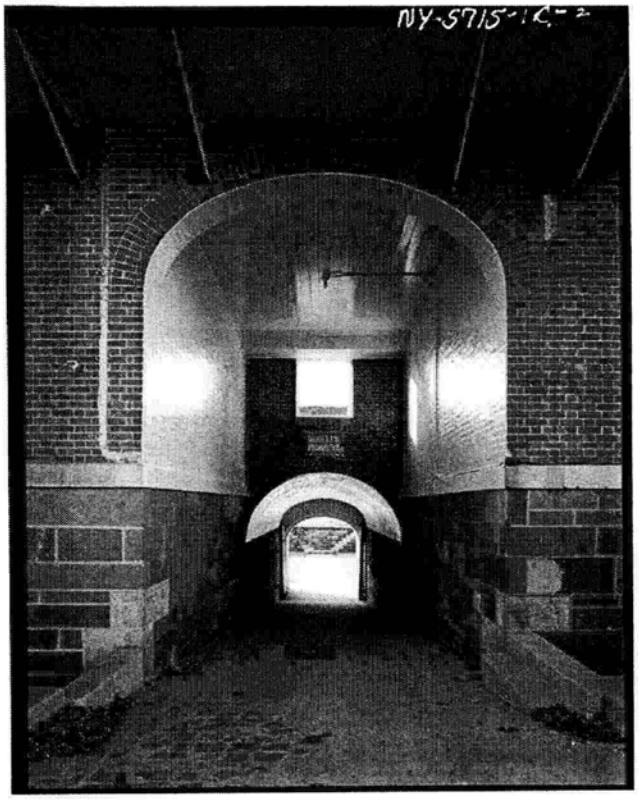


Figure 98. Detail of the postern in the west barrack (Building 210), looking west, 1982- 83.

Figure 99. Detail showing doors of the postern of the west barrack (Building 210), looking west, 1982- 83.

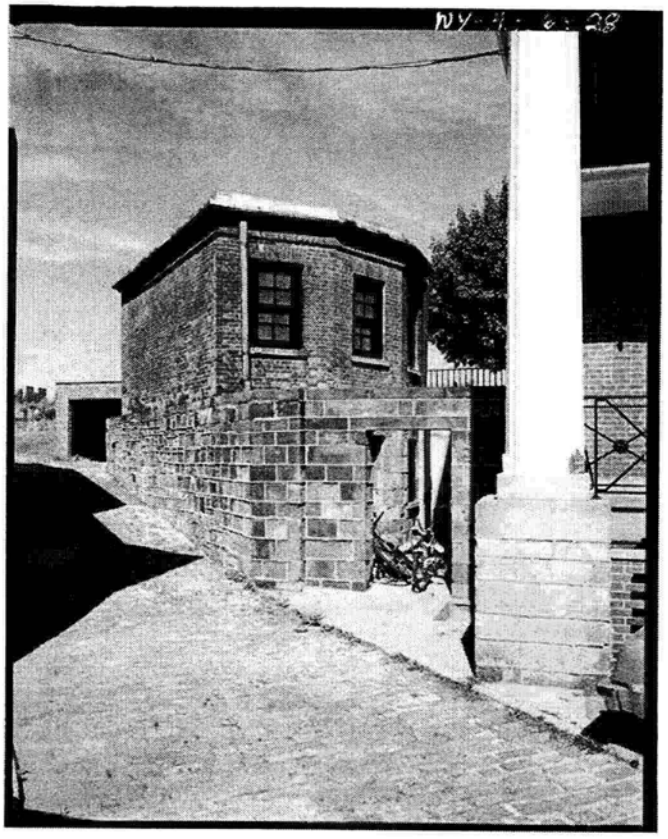


Figure 100. South and east elevations of the triangular structure (Building 212) on the west side of the north barrack (Building 214), 1982- 83.

Figure 101. South elevation of the north barrack (Building 214) in the courtyard of Fort Jay, 1982- 83.

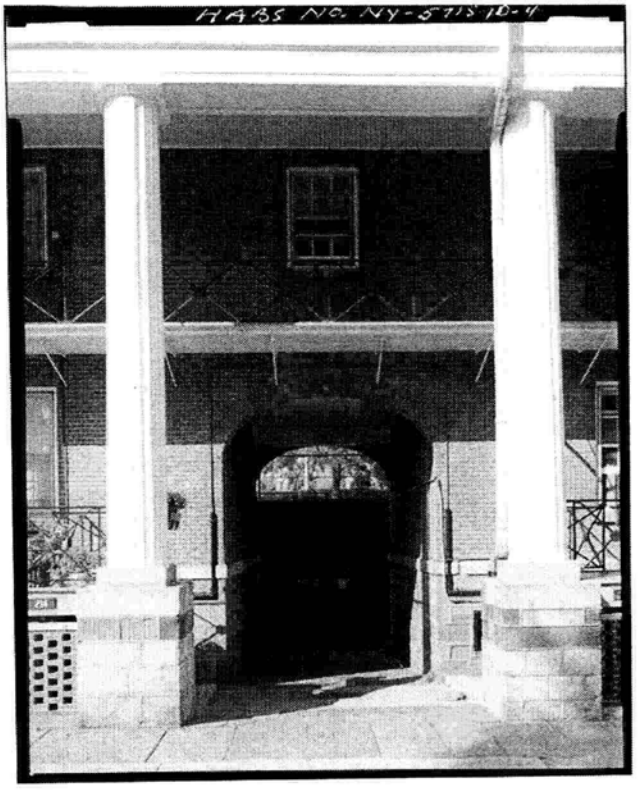


Figure 102. Detail of the south elevation of the north barrack (Building 214), showing the entrance to the magazine plaza, 1982- 83.

Figure 103. East elevation of the east barrack (Building 202) north of the sally port, 1982- 83.

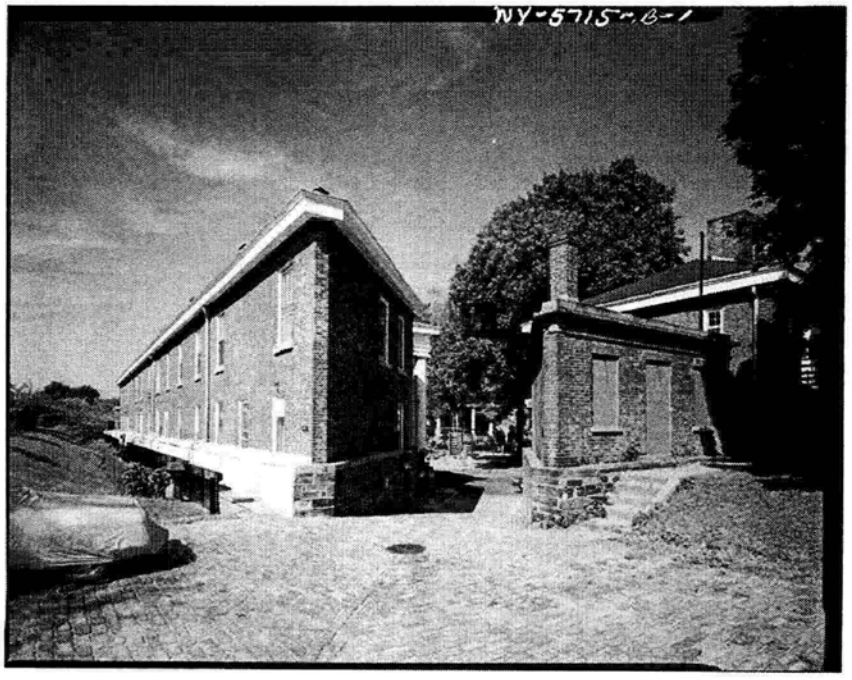


Figure 104. Southeast corner of Fort Jay, showing the rear and side elevations of the south barrack (Building 206), triangular structure (Building 204) in the center, and east barrack (Building 202) on the right, 1982- 83.

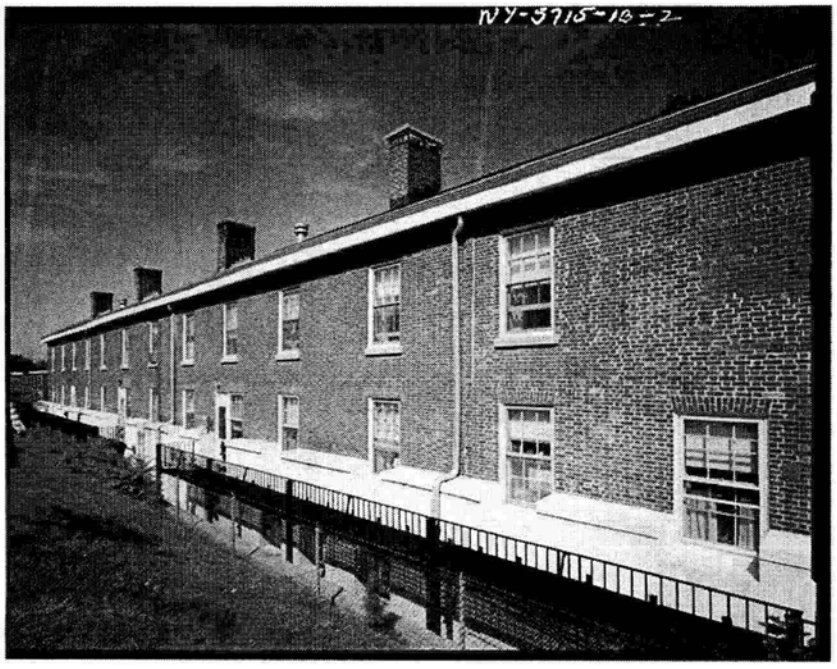


Figure 105. Rear elevation of the south barrack (Building 206), 1982- 83.

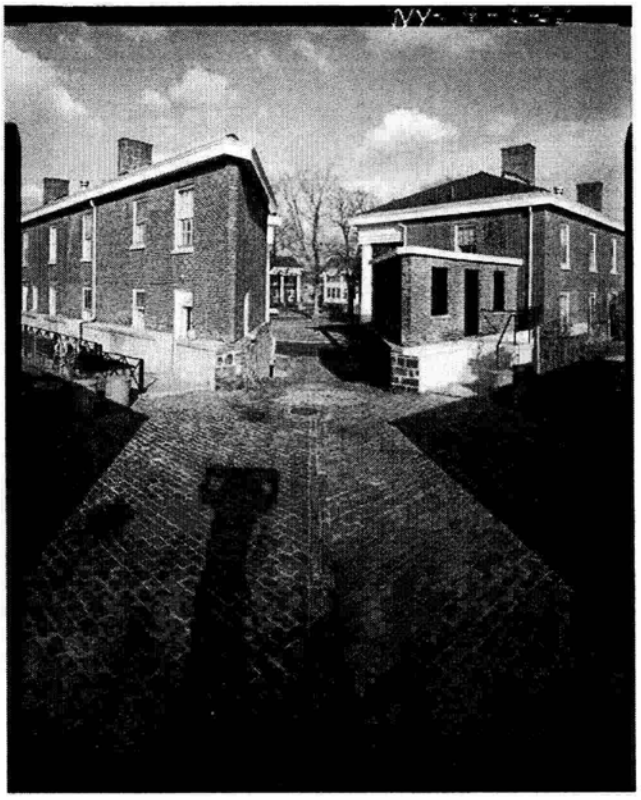


Figure 106. Southwest corner of Fort Jay, showing the rear and side elevations of the west barrack (Building 210) on the left, triangular structure (Building 207) in the center, and south barrack (Building 206) on the left, 1982- 83.

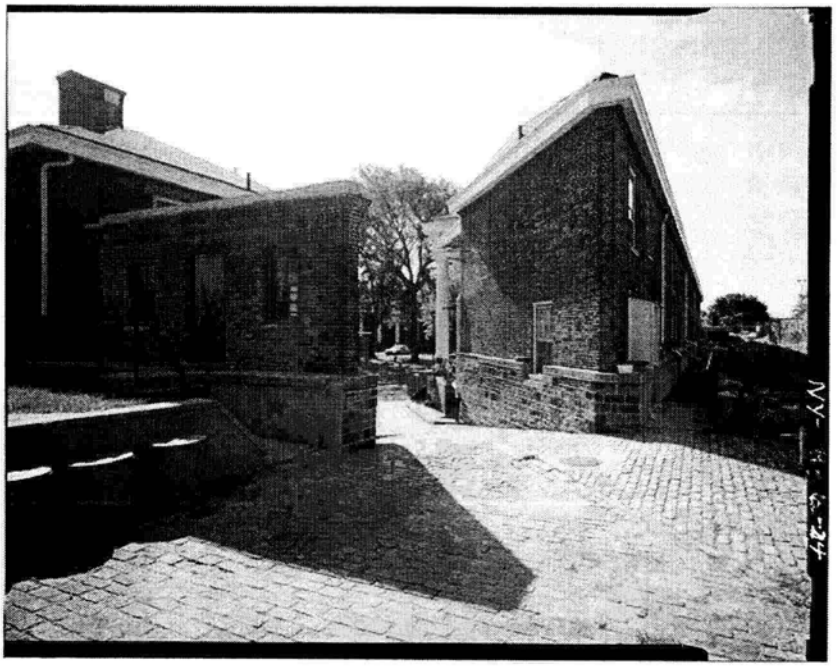


Figure 107. Northwest corner of Fort Jay, showing the rear and side elevations of the north barrack (Building 214) on the left, triangular structure (Building 213) in the center, and west barrack (Building 210) on the right, 1982- 83.

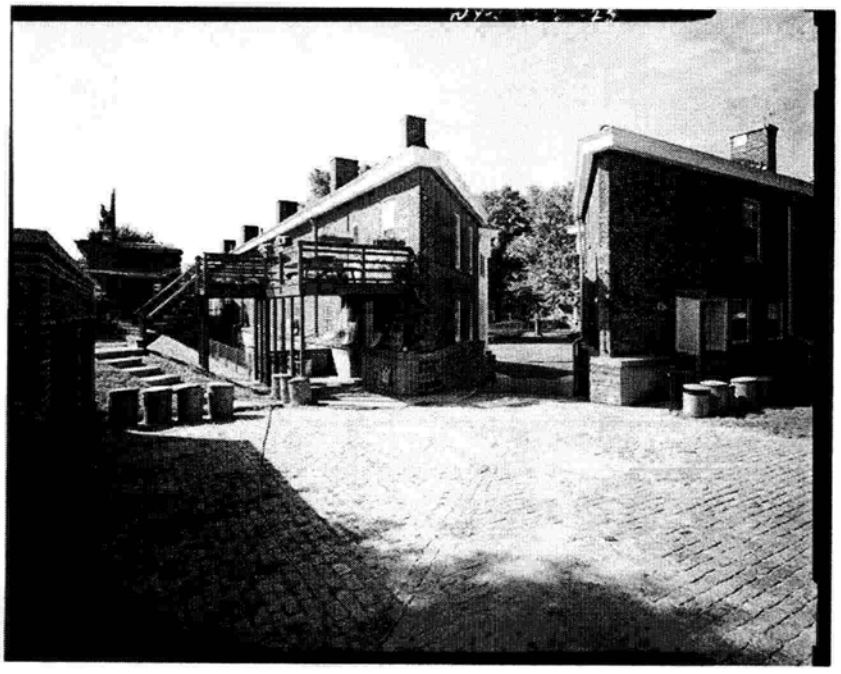


Figure 108. Northeast corner of Fort Jay, showing the rear and side elevations of the east barrack (Building 202) on the left, and the north barrack (Building 214) on the right, 1982- 83.

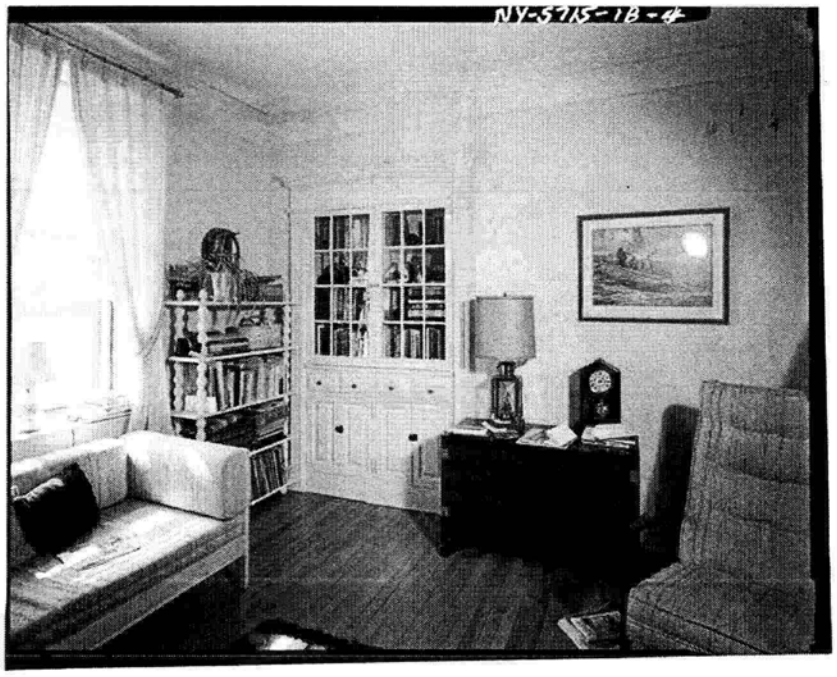


Figure 109. Northeast corner of living room in quarters #206A of the south barrack (Building 206), 1982- 83.

Figure 110. Living room fireplace in quarters #206A of the south barrack (Building 206), 1982- 83.

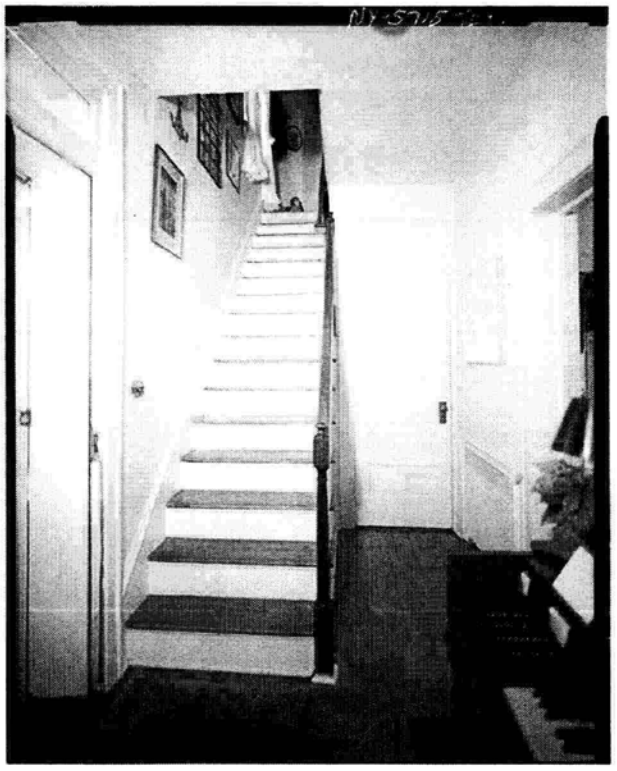


Figure 111. Stair hall in quarters #206A of the south barrack (Building 206), 1982- 83.

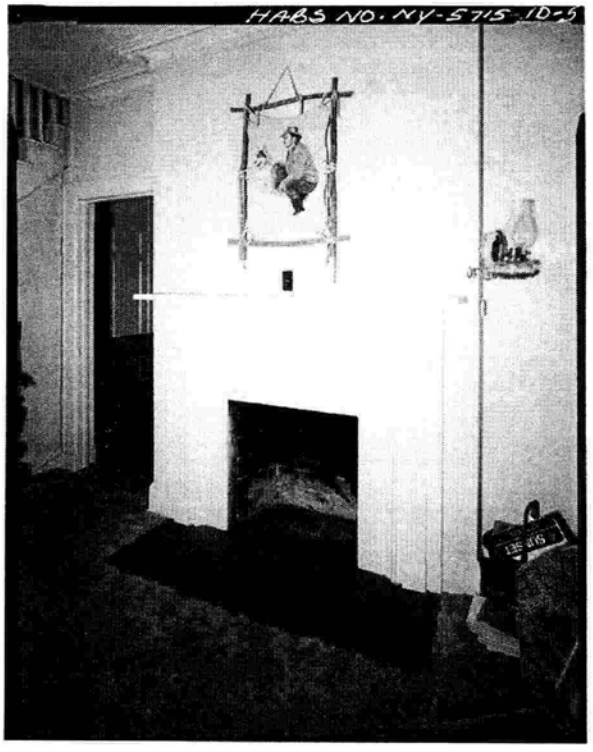


Figure 112. Living room fireplace in quarters #214B of the north barrack (Building 214), 1982- 83.

Figure 113. Stair hall in quarters #214B of the north barrack (Building 214), 1982- 83.

1983

1983, May 13. Mechanical drawings were prepared for the renovation of the heating systems in the four barracks buildings in Fort Jay: "Htg/Dom HW Sys [Heating / Domestic Hot Water System] Renovation, Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York." The drawings specified the removal of existing heating equipment, including boilers, radiators, convectors, and piping, to be replaced by new boilers, hot- water heaters, baseboard heating units, and piping. Fiberglass batt insulation, 6 inches thick, was to be installed in the attic of each building. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1984

1984. An addendum to the 1936 report on Fort Jay is prepared by the Historic American Buildings Survey, along with separate reports on the four barracks buildings within Fort Jay. (LC: http://memory.loc.gov.) The reports are as follows:

> Fort Jay: "Fort Jay, Governor's Island, New York City, Written and Descriptive Data." Survey number HABS no. 4- 6. New York City: Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934- 36; with addendum entitled "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay)." Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1984 (LC: http://memory.loc.gov.)

East Barrack: "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #202, Written Historical and Descriptive Data." Survey number HABS no. NY- 5715- IA.

South Barrack: "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #206, Written Historical and Descriptive Data." Survey number HABS No. NY- 5715- IB.

West Barrack: "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #210, Written Historical and Descriptive Data." Survey number HABS no. NY- 5715- IC.

North Barrack: "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #214, Written Historical and Descriptive Data." Survey number HABS no. NY- 5715- ID.

1984, February 24. Architectural drawings were prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard for installing storm windows on the east, south, west, and north barracks: "Storm Windows: Architectural Elevations." (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1984, July 2. Architectural drawings are prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard for remodeling the kitchens in the four barracks of Fort Jay: "Bldgs 202, 206, 210, 214, Kitchen Rehab[ilitation], Coast Guard Support Center, NY, Governors Island, New York." The drawings include photographs of the existing kitchens. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1984, July 2. A set of drawings was prepared by Gilbert Meyers, P.E., Consulting Engineers, for the U.S. Coast Guard: "Elec. Dist. System, Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York." The drawings specify rewiring and installation of new antique-style light fixtures for the four barracks (Buildings 202, 204, 210, and 214). (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1985

1985, February 4. Fort Jay and Castle Williams are described as significant contributing resources in a nomination of a portion of Governors Island to the National Register of Historic Places. Fort Jay is therein described as a "square fortification with four bastions and a ravelin surrounded by a dry moat...one of the best preserved and largest examples of its kind in the country." Selected elements of the fort that were described as contributing to the nomination included the 1809 [sic] guardhouse (Building 201), the 1830s barracks (Buildings 202, 206, 210, and 214), the 1830s triangular buildings (Buildings 204, 207, and 213), and the "original" magazine (Building 215). Described as noncontributing to the district were the 1930s garages (Buildings 203, 205, 208, 209, 211, 212, 217, and 218), the undated steel flagstaff (Structure 216), the 1952 concrete bridge (Structure 219), and the 1952 wooden bridge (Structure S- 221). The period of significance for the district as defined by the nomination encompassed the years "1794- present [1983- 85]," when the island served as a military post, with particular significance ascribed to the New York Harbor fortifications for the years 1794- 1815, and use of the island as Headquarters for the First U.S. Army 1933- 43. ("National Register of Historic Places, Inventory – Nomination Form: Governors Island," by Barbara Hightower, Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, Summer 1983. Entered as a National Historic Landmark District February 4, 1985.)

1987

1987, May 12. A map of the golf course on the glacis of Fort Jay was prepared by the Facilities Engineering Division of the U.S. Coast Guard: "Golf Course Location of Greens (#299), U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, New York." The golf course was then assigned a number, "299," similar to the buildings and other structures on Governors Island. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1988

1988, May 15. Extensive work on the three triangular buildings within Fort Jay was proposed by the U.S. Coast Guard. The drawing for this work is entitled "Repairs to Bldg. 204," although notes thereon indicate that work was also to be carried out at Buildings 207 and 213. This included repair of the concrete floors in the basement stories, removal and reconstruction of the floors in the upper stories, removal of the old lath and plaster, replacement of the existing doors with new metal doors, rehabilitation of the windows, and installation of new electric service and light fixtures. Drawing no. 840- 225- QAD, May 15, 1988. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1990- 1999

Summary

Governors Island ceased its function as a government facility upon the departure of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1997. A limited amount of work was carried out at Fort Jay in the years preceding the base closure. Heating systems on the island, including the barracks at Fort Jay, were converted from oil fuel to natural gas when a distribution system was installed in 1992. Plans to repair the masonry walls of the fort were also prepared in this year, although it is uncertain if the project was ever carried out. The sculpture atop the gate, for example, was to be replaced with a replica in "cast stone," which was never done. A photograph of the sculpture taken in 1994- 95 shows it in deteriorated condition (fig. 114), with one wing missing from the eagle then as it is today. New chain- link fencing for the glacis golf course was proposed in 1995 and presumably installed.

The U.S. Coast Guard announced its plans to leave Governors Island for budgetary reasons in October 1995. A programmatic agreement signed the following spring ensured that structures located within the National Historic Landmark District, including Fort Jay and Castle Williams, would continue to receive maintenance treatment following the Coast Guard's departure. Although most Coast Guard personnel had vacated the island by August 1996, the ceremony marking the closure of the base did not take place until September 30, 1997. A skeleton crew manned by the Coast Guard continued to provide security, fire protection, and facility maintenance, pending disposal of the island by the General Services Administration.

Several reports and planning studies were contracted by the U.S. Coast Guard and the General Services Administration in preparation for the base closure. These included:

"Final Environmental Assessment for the Closure of Support Center," May 1995;

"Phase IA Archaeological Assessment of the Governors Island National Historic Landmark District, Governors Island, New York," by James C. Garman and Holly Herbster; Pawtucket, RI: Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc., June 1996 (revised August 1996);

"Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings, U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island," by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, July 1997;

"Governors Island Land Use Study: Land & Facility Assessment," prepared by the Beyer Blinder Belle consortium for the U.S. Coast Guard and the General Services Administration, September 1997; and

"General Services Administration Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Disposition of Governors Island, New York," by Edwards and Kelcey Engineers, Inc., for the U.S. General Services Administration, November 4, 1998.

Documentation

1992

1992. "A natural gas supply and distribution system was installed [on Governors Island by the U.S. Coast Guard] in 1992 to replace existing oil heat which had required delivery of heating oil. Gas is supplied from Brooklyn via an 8- inch...natural gas pipe under Buttermilk Channel which was also installed in 1992." ("Governors Island Land Use Study," p. 21.)

1992, August 6. A major project to repair the masonry walls of Fort Jay and its gate was documented in a set of 15 drawings prepared by the Civil Engineering Unit of the U.S. Coast Guard: "Rehabilitation of Moat Walls." The proposed work included repairing cracked stones, replacing missing stones, and resetting displaced stones. Missing and deteriorated brickwork was to be replaced with new brickwork to match the original as closely as possible. Graffiti and obsolete electrical equipment were to be removed from the walls. The deteriorated sculpture on top of the gate was also to be removed and replicated in a cast- stone material. (Drawing no. NY- 0325, August 6, 1992, in the drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1994- 95

Circa 1994- 95. A photograph of the gateway sculpture at Fort Jay showed it in deteriorated condition, missing one wing and one flag. (Park files, Governors Island NM.) See fig. 114.

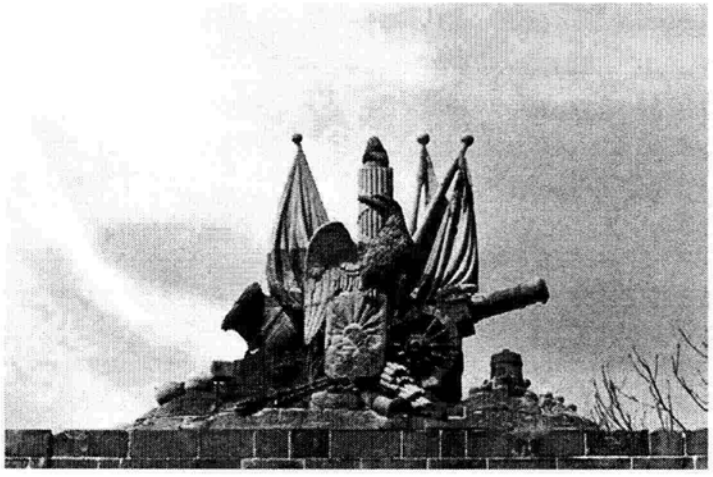


Figure 114. Sculpture above the gateway at Fort Jay, circa 1994- 95.

1995

1995. "In October 1995, the Coast Guard announced its plans for the cessation of its operations at Governors Island. Coast Guard facilities in Bayonne, NJ; Staten Island, NY; Tidewater, VA; and Charleston, SC, will assume the responsibilities of the closed base. The Coast Guard hopes to sell the island through the disposal agency, GSA, by 01 October 1998. Releasing the property is expected to save the Coast Guard thirty million dollars a year." ("Ordnance and Explosives," pp. 4- 5.)

1995, May. An environmental- assessment report concluded that no significant environmental impacts would result from closure of the U.S. Coast Guard base on Governors Island under the preferred alternative of "Standard Maintenance." ("Final Environmental Assessment.")

1995, May 4. Replacement of the existing glacis fencing at Fort Jay with new chain- link fencing was detailed on a drawing by the U.S. Coast Guard: "Fence Replacement, Golf Course." (Drawing no. NY- 0542, May 4, 1995, in the drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1995, October 16. "On October 16, 1995, the USCG announced that it would close Governors Island by the end of Summer 1997. This decision was made in response to the Presidential mandate to meet the goals of the National Performance and Results Act, and the challenge of reducing the Federal budget deficit. The Coast Guard was charged with identifying a permanent, recurring savings of $400 million. A cost/benefit analysis performed for the possible closure of Governors Island and the relocation of facilities estimated an annual savings to the Coast Guard to be initially $59.5 and $33 million thereafter." ("Final Environmental Impact Statement," p. i.)

1996

1996. "The Coast Guard left the Island in a money- saving move in 1996, which ended the centuries of federal military use of the place [Governors Island.]" ("Governors Island Historic Resource Study," Draft 2, Chapter 10, p. 214.)

1996, April. "In April 1996, a Programmatic Agreement was signed by the USCG, United States General Services Administration (GSA), Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, New York State Historic Preservation Officer, and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the USCG's and GSA's consultation responsibilities under Sections 106 and 110(f) of the National Historic Preservation Act for the closure and disposal of the USCG Support Center on Governors Island. The agreement established that the closure and disposal of the island would be administered in accordance with a series of stipulations. Included in the Programmatic Agreement were the following stipulations: the continuation of caretaker maintenance on structures in the Governors Island National Historic Landmark district...[etc.]." ("Final Environmental Impact Statement," p. i.)

1996, June. Archeological assessment and testing was carried out in 1996 at Governors Island by the Public Archaeology Laboratory of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, for the U.S. Coast Guard, in order to identify potentially significant sites eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Test pits and trenches were located both inside the walls of Fort Jay and outside on the glacis (the existing golf course). Two sites of high potential significance were identified. The first was the interior courtyard where various artifacts of Civil War vintage were unearthed. The second was just outside the walls on the south side of the fort. Here prehistoric artifacts and remnants of ca.- 1750s earthworks were found. A "phase II evaluation study" of these sites was recommended, which was carried out in 1998. Additional work undertaken on the glacis/golf course in 1998 found remnants of the pathway (covered defile) connecting Fort Jay and Castle Williams, including a brick wall and cobblestone paving. ("Phase Ia Archeological Assessment," pp. 49- 54, 66- 70, and 81- 82.)

1996, June 18. The Governors Island National Historic Landmark District was also designated a New York City Historic District.

1996, August. Report: "By August 1996 all Coast Guard residents and dependents had been relocated from Governors Island to other facilities." ("Final Environmental Impact Statement," p. i.)

1997

1997, July. A report on the historical use of ordnance and explosives on Governors Island was prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the U.S. Coast Guard. ("Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings, U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island"; St. Louis, MO: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, July 1997.

1997, September 30. "The Coast Guard officially departed September 30, 1997, after a low key but nostalgic ceremony." ("Governors Island Memories: June 1966 to September 1997," *The Reservist*, December 1997.)

1997, October 1. "On October 1, 1997, a 57- person caretaker crew of civilian and military Coast Guard personnel began providing security, fire protection and facility maintenance on Governors Island until its disposal, which is the responsibility of the GSA." ("Final Environmental Impact Statement," p. i.)

1997. "The proposed action is the disposition of Governors Island, New York. The General Services Administration has been directed by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 to dispose of the island, for fair market value not before the year 2002. The Balanced Budget Act directs GSA to provide the right of first offer to the State and or City of New York. Governors Island was vacated by the United States Coast Guard in 1997 after determining that the island was no longer necessary to fulfill their mission." ("Final Environmental Impact Statement," abstract.)

1998

1998. Additional archeological investigations were carried out at Fort Jay by the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (see 1996).

1998, November 4. An environmental study identifies the preferred alternative for Governors Island to be "the disposition of the island, in compliance with the Balanced Budget Act of 1997." ("Final Environmental Impact Statement.")

2000- 2004

Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) developed a "Preservation and Design Manual" to provide additional guidance in the federal decommissioning and sale of Governors Island. The final document, published January 28, 2003, was prepared in consultation with the New York City Planning Department, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, the New York State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Its purpose was to guide the development of the historic district portion of the island to ensure preservation of its historic and architectural resources. The three components of the "Preservation and Design Manual" are (1) "Preservation & Design Standards," (2) "Design & Development Guidelines," and (3) "Building & Property Summary Sheets." Castle Williams and Fort Jay were described in the manual as two of the "most significant structures on Governors Island."

National monument status was conferred on a portion of the Governors Island Historic District upon the signing of Presidential Proclamation 7402 by President William J. Clinton on January 19, 2001. This designated approximately 20 acres of the island as the Governors Island National Monument, which included Castle Williams and Fort Jay. Governors Island was cited in the proclamation as providing "an excellent opportunity for the public to observe and understand the harbor history, its defense, and its ecology."

The national monument property was actually conveyed two years later, on January 31, 2003, from the United States of America, acting through the General Services Administration, to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which subsequently conveyed the same property to the Secretary of the Interior. On the same date, GSA conveyed the rest of the island (150 acres) to the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation, a business corporation acting on behalf of New York State and the City of New York.

Monument Preservation Covenants in the quitclaim deeds between GSA and the National Trust, and subsequently between the National Trust and the Department of the Interior, restrict the use of the monument property to national monument purposes, and for other monument-permitted uses, defined as: "(a) museums and historic sites, such as national parks and monument areas; (b) not- for- profit cultural facilities; (c) historic interpretation sites; (d) other non- commercial uses customary for national parks and monument areas; (e) commercial uses necessary for and limited to visitor services ancillary to the use of the Monument Property; and (f) office and administrative space ancillary to the use of the Monument Property."

Presidential Proclamation 7647, signed by President George W. Bush on February 7, 2003, clarified the boundaries of the national monument, increasing the acreage from approximately 20 to 22 acres. It also noted that the proximity of Governors Island to lower Manhattan "makes it an appropriate location from which to reflect upon the tragic events of September 11, 2001." This proclamation also states that "it would be in the public interest to preserve Castle Williams, Fort Jay, and certain lands and buildings necessary for the care and management of the Castle

and Fort as the Governors Island National Monument." The monument property, including Castle Williams, is managed and maintained by the National Park Service.

Documentation

2001

2001, January 19. President William J. Clinton establishes Governors Island National Monument, reserving approximately 20 acres of land including the fortifications Castle Williams and Fort Jay, to be managed by the Secretary of the Interior acting through the National Park Service. (Presidential Proclamation 7402, signed January 19, 2001. The property, however, remained subject to a public law stipulating that the State and City of New York had a right of first offer in the sale of Governors Island, including the monument property. This right was subsequently waived.)

2003

2003, January 31. The United States of America, through the Property Disposal Division of the General Services Administration, conveyed 150 acres of the island to the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC), a business corporation acting on behalf of the State and City of New York. GSA also conveyed the national monument property to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which conveyed the same property to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Preservation covenants contained in the quitclaim deeds restrict the uses of the monument property for national monument purposes, and for other monument-permitted uses. (Quitclaim deed, copy at Governors Island NM).)

2003, February 7. President George W. Bush issues a Presidential Proclamation that describes the transfer of Governors Island and clarifies Governors Island National Monument boundaries, which encompass approximately 22 acres of land, including the fortifications Castle Williams and Fort Jay. (Presidential Proclamation 7647, signed February 7, 2003.)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTIONS

General Information

Name

Fort Jay, Circa 1798. Fort Jay is said to have been named for John Jay in 1798, although no primary documentation supporting this date has yet been found. Prior to 1798, the earthen fortifications were generally referred to in Congressional records as "the works," "the defences," or "the forts at Governor's Island." The fort was named "Jay" for New York Governor John Jay upon its reconstruction during the years 1798- 1801. John Jay (1745- 1829) served as Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1784- 89, as first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1789 to 1794, as presidentially appointed statesman to Great Britain 1794- 95, and as Governor of New York from 1795 to 1801. The earliest document bearing the name "Fort Jay" that was examined for this study is a plan of the fort dated January 16, 1801.

Fort Columbus, 1806- 07. The fort was renamed "Fort Columbus" sometime after December 15, 1806, and before July 21, 1807, presumably for the 15th- century explorer Christopher Columbus. Edmund Banks Smith opined that this change was "supposed to have been due to Jay's temporary unpopularity with the Republican party, which was not satisfied with the Jay Treaty with England (1794)." (Edmund B. Smith, *Governor's Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637- 1913*; New York: published by the author, 1913; pp. 112- 13.) Whether or not this was in fact the case has yet to be substantiated, as the original orders for this change not yet been found. The fort retained the name "Columbus" throughout the remainder of the 19th century.

Fort Jay, 1904. The name "Fort Jay" was restored in 1904 by General Order No. 18, signed by Secretary of War Elihu Root on January 25 of that year. The order reads as follows: "The fortification on Governor's Island, New York Harbor ... now known as Fort Columbus, is hereby restored to its original name of Fort Jay; and the said fortification and the Military post located on the said Island will hereafter be known and designated as Fort Jay." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 112.) The fort, although no longer a military installation, retains this name today.

Site

Fort Jay is located on the highest point of land at the north end of Governors Island. Edmund B. Smith conjectured that this had been the site of an earlier house constructed by Lord Cornbury during his tenure as Governor of New York 1702- 08. (*Governor's Island*, pp. 28- 29.) It was also the site of an earthen fortification erected in 1776 during the American Revolution (figs. 3- 5).

Armament

Five 10- inch and 15- inch Rodman guns of Civil War vintage are currently mounted on the terreplein behind the parapet walls of Fort Jay. Three guns are in the north ravelin, one in the northeast bastion, and one in the southeast bastion. When completed in 1809, the fort is said to have been capable of mounting 100 to 104 guns; 87 gun platforms were in place by 1865. Detailed descriptions of the fort's armament can be found in armament sketches and inventories for the years 1863 through 1902.

Fortification Elements

Approach/Barbican

The main approach to Fort Jay is via a hexagonal sunken area rimmed by parking spaces in the east glacis. The retaining walls around the perimeter are brickwork laid in a Flemish bond. This area had been adapted as a combination roadway and "parking area" by 1953, according to a map of that date. The perimeter retaining walls are earlier, dating to either the remodeling of the fort in the early 19th century, or to repairs made in the 1830s. They are all that remains of a hexagonal sunken pathway that was described by Colonel Jonathan Williams in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" as follows: "Sortie is...made in a winding direction from the place d'armes [gathering place for soldiers on the covered way] directly opposite the sallie port." The earliest plan showing this feature is a map of Governors Island by Joseph Mangin dated 1813 (fig. 9). It is also shown on later plans dated 1832, 1839, 1879, 1908, and 1928 (figs. 14, 17, and 39). The unaltered configuration of the pathway, with center raised hexagonal area, is documented in an aerial photograph taken in 1922 (fig. 57). The hexagonal "drive path" was still intact in 1934, when it was recorded on a drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey (see Appendix). This was altered by the U.S. Army sometime between 1934 and 1953, when the center portion was demolished to make room for a combination roadway and parking spaces. In its place was installed a raised planting bed that exists today. The roadway is paved with asphalt.

Glacis

For Jay is surrounded by a glacis, a long expanse of ground sloping gently up to the ditch around the fort. The glacis is planted today with mowed grass, a feature that has existed since at least 1861, when the glacis was described as "beautifully turfed with bluegrass." The glacis originally provided an unobstructed line of fire from the fort to the water. Buildings, trees, and other obstructions have encroached over the years, however, effectively crippling the defensive capability of the fort. This had become a concern as early as June 1863, judging by a letter written by Richard Delafield of the Corps of Engineers, who recommended demolition of the

offending structures. Recreational use of the south glacis as a golf course by the U.S. Army had begun by 1940, according to a plan of that date for the installation of a sprinkler system. The golf course was later expanded to the surrounding glacis as documented in later site plans dated 1962 and 1987. Use of the glacis golf course ended in 1997 when the U.S. Coast Guard left Governors Island.

Covered Way

The covered way at Fort Jay is a wide pathway between the glacis and the ditch that dates to the rebuilding of the fort between 1806 and 1808. It is sunken below the level of the glacis so as to provide protection, or "cover," to the soldiers walking thereon. A brick retaining wall forms the outer edge of the walkway. The wall is laid in a Flemish bond with sandstone coping and sandstone quoins at the corners, and is thought to date to repairs made in the 1830s. The walkway itself runs along the top of the counterscarp (the outer wall of the ditch), and is planted with grass. Colonel Jonathan Williams mentioned the covered way in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808:

> The covert [sic] way is compleat round the whole enclosure except only the place d'armes [space for troops to assemble] opposite the Gate. The wall supporting the crest of the glacis of ample thickness is six feet high with its banquette and covert way of 20 feet in width to the extent of more than two thousand yards, round the Fort.

The completed fortification, along with its covered way, was illustrated in a plan by Joseph Mangin dated 1813 (fig. 9).

Extensive rebuilding of the masonry walls at Fort Jay in the 1830s included the revetment, or retaining wall, of the covered way at the glacis. Captain Smith of the Corps of Engineers reported on October 19, 1833, that "the counter scarp and revetment of the glacis are finished except the W. front." A report submitted to Congress in November of the following year noted, "the counterscarp revetments and revetments of the glacis are nearly completed." Although the material of the glacis revetment was not described, this was presumably the brick and sandstone that exists today.

Ditch

Fort Jay is surrounded by a sodded ditch, or dry moat. This is an early feature of the fort that existed as early as 1800 (fig. 7), and which was retained during the reconstruction of 1806- 08, as shown on the 1813 plan by Joseph Mangin (fig. 9). Colonel Williams described this feature in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808 as "the Ditch...about 40 feet in width." Grass was growing in the ditch by 1881, described in a news article as "smooth and intensely green." An underground tank of unknown type had been installed in the east ditch north of the sally port by 1962, noted on a plan of that date as "underground reservoir 200." An archeological assessment of Governors Island undertaken in 1996 noted that

remediation for lead contamination was being undertaken in the ditch concurrent with the archeological survey. Although no subsurface archeological testing was performed at that time, various informants reported finding historic bottles, clay pipes, ceramic sherds, and ammunition in the exposed soil.

Counterscarp

The counterscarp at Fort Jay has previously been thought to be one of the earliest surviving elements of the fort dating to 1802- 06, but in fact appears to have been extensively rebuilt in the 1830s. This outer wall of the ditch is retained by red sandstone blocks topped with sandstone slabs. The counterscarp was one of the few early components of the fort retained when reconstruction of the fort commenced in 1806, according to Colonel Jonathan Williams in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808. Williams noted that "no part of the old Fort except the **walled Counterscarp** [emphasis added], the Gate, and the Magazine and Barracks could be preserved."

Extensive rebuilding of the masonry walls at Fort Jay in the 1830s did include the counterscarp, according to reports submitted to the Engineer Department. Captain Smith of the Corps of Engineers reported on October 19, 1833, that "the counter scarp and revetment of the glacis are finished except the W. front." A report submitted to Congress in November of the following year noted that "the counterscarp revetments and revetments of the glacis are nearly completed." Although the material of the counterscarp revetment (wall) was not described, this was presumably the same sandstone construction that exists today. The stone counterscarp was erroneously described in a news article published in August 1891 as "the only landmark left of old Fort Jay...the escarpment of red sandstone just beyond the entrance of the present Fort Columbus."

Stairways at Counterscarp

Four pairs of masonry stairways provide access from the ditch to the covered way. These stairways are a component of the counterscarp, with sandstone base and granite steps. They appear to be contemporary with the sandstone counterscarp that was reconstructed in the 1830s, although some of the steps have been replaced with new granite at some later date. The stairways are located at the northeast, southeast, and southwest salient angles of the counterscarp, and in the west wall opposite the postern. An earthen ramp in place of a stairway is located in the northwest salient angle. This was most likely used to facilitate transport of heavy wheeled objects such as guns and wagonloads of munitions and supplies. The counterscarp stairways are documented by a plan of the fort "showing recent Alterations" dated April 1839 (fig. 17).

Scarp

The scarp is the inner wall of the ditch, which rises at a slight angle from the ditch. It is constructed of granite ashlar topped by a rounded granite cordon thought to date to repairs made in the 1830s. The position of the scarp dates to the rebuilding of Fort Jay in 1806- 09 when it was extended outward 14 feet and faced with durable masonry—most likely sandstone. Colonel Jonathan Williams explained in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" in November 1808 that the reason for extending the wall was "owing to the small talas or slope requisite for a Wall." Williams further noted that the wall was 16 feet tall, 8 feet wide at the base, 6 feet wide at the top, and supported on the interior side beneath the terreplein by buttresses 5 feet long spaced 18 feet apart.

Extensive rebuilding of the scarp appears to have taken place from 1831 to 1834, judging by reports submitted to the Engineer Department. This most likely involved replacement of original sandstone walls with the more durable granite that exists today. An excerpt of a report by the Chief Engineer dated November 13, 1832, gives a glimpse of the magnitude of the project:

> The repairs of Fort Columbus have been prosecuted in a most efficient manner. The repairs of the scarp walls were commenced last fall, and before the operations were suspended by the approach of cold weather upwards of 458 cubic yards of heavy masonry were constructed; materials having been received and prepared during the winter, operations were resumed early in the spring, and continued without interruption till the month of August last, when the work was abandoned in consequence of the alarm created by the malignant cholera, which was at that time raging with considerable violence among the workmen. The necessary measures having been taken to insure the health of the laborers, this interruption was of short duration, and, on the 4th of September last, the works were progressing with their usual vigor. The stone masonry laid within the year ending September 30, amounting to 2,470 cubic yards, extends about three- fourths around the work, two-thirds of which are finished and capped.

Another major project to repair the masonry walls of Fort Jay, including the scarp, was proposed by the U.S. Coast Guard Civil Engineering Unit in August 1992 ("Rehabilitation of Moat Walls"). The work included repairing cracked stones, replacing missing stones, resetting displaced stones, and removing graffiti and obsolete electrical equipment. The extent to which this work was carried out, if at all, is not known.

Scarp Counterforts

Subterranean stone counterforts, or buttresses, support the scarp of the fort. The counterforts and arches are buried beneath the earthen terreplein and are therefore not visible. Colonel Jonathan Williams described the counterforts in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808 as being 5 feet in length and spaced 18 feet apart. Williams further noted that the counterforts also served as piers for arches that supported the interior wall of the

parapet. The counterforts presumably still exist, since no records describing alterations to them have been found.

Parapet

The parapet is a solid wall on top of the scarp that provided protection for men and guns positioned behind it. The existing parapet, like the scarp on which it rests, dates to the rebuilding of the fort's masonry walls in the 1830s. It is approximately 10 feet thick, with parallel walls made of brickwork laid in Flemish bond; the corners are finished with sandstone quoins. The center of the parapet between the parallel brick walls is filled with rammed earth, and the top is sodded. Also incorporated in the parapet on either side of the sally- port gate are two narrow curved spaces that served as sentry outposts. The parapet was heightened at some later date with mounded earth held up on the interior side by bluestone panels supported by iron rods. No documentation of this alteration has yet been found, although a photograph taken in 1864 indicates it had occurred by that time (fig. 33). Later patches to the brickwork walls used darker bricks laid in common bond.

The existing parapet at Fort Jay was preceded by two earlier parapets. (See "Missing Fortification Elements: Parapets" for additional information.) There can be little doubt that the parapet was rebuilt a third (and last) time in the 1830s, when the scarp on which the parapet sits was reconstructed in granite. Reconstruction of the parapet resulted in removal of then-existing bartizans (sentry towers) from the salient angles, judging by a plan of the fort dated 1839 that shows the bartizans as missing (fig. 17). The brickwork parapet with sandstone quoins that exists today presumably dates to this time.

Terreplein

The terreplein is the area behind the parapet where guns were historically positioned, only a few of which remain today. The width of the terreplein (bounded on one side by the parapet and on the other by the back walls of the barracks) was reduced to its present dimensions in the 1830s, when the current barracks were built closer to the parapet than the earlier barracks. The surface of the terreplein is sodded, except where the platforms for the large guns are located. These platforms are positioned around the perimeter of the fort on the terreplein, behind the parapet walls. They consist of granite stones with center metal pivot plates and curved metal rails (traverses). They may date to 1856, when $4,000 was expended for "repairs and changes in the traverse circles to fit them for new armament." The existing platforms appear to have been in place at Fort Jay by September 1864, as recorded in a photograph dated September 28, 1864 (fig. 33). See "Armament" for additional information.

The terreplein as it existed in November 1808 was paved with flagstones except for the areas beneath the guns, which were made of wood, according to Colonel Jonathan Williams in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War." The wooden platforms were replaced in 1844 by brick paving and granite curbing stones set in concrete, as described in the correspondence of

Captain George Dutton of the Corps of Engineers. These were in turn replaced by the existing gun platforms described in the preceding paragraph.

Bastions

Fort Jay has four bastions, a bastion being defined as "a work which projects from the main walls of a fortress and is shaped in the form of an irregular pentagon." This four- bastioned form existed by 1800, as illustrated in a plan of Fort Jay by Joseph Mangin dated January 1801 (fig. 7). It was retained when the fort was rebuilt in masonry in 1806- 09 (fig. 9).

Ravelin

The ravelin is a triangular outwork on the north side of Fort Jay that dates to the rebuilding of the fort in 1806- 08. The earliest known documented reference to the proposed ravelin is a drawing that accompanied a letter from the Secretary of War dated June 23, 1806 (fig. 8). The ravelin had been completed by November 1808, as described by Colonel Jonathan Williams in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War":

> On the north side a ravelin has been attached with two retired casemated Flanks in lieu of the old Courtine [curtain wall] & its Flanks expressly to take off a Line of Fire which could not avoid the City & to form two Lines commanding the East & the Entrance of the north River.... Within the area of the Ravelin is a well of the finest water which, with another well formerly made in the center of the Parade, renders a perpetual supply of water certain. The Bombproof arches [flanking casemates] open into this area, they form together a protected space of about 2100 square feet with two embrasures in each from which the ditch on both sides may be effectually secured, so that the retired Flanks become completely protected, and the angles on either side are commanded by musquetry from a Gallery formed by a continuation of the Parapet in the [illegible] above.

The completed ravelin with lozenge- shaped interior space is documented by plans of the fort dated 1813, 1831, and 1832 (figs. 9, 13, and 14). The interior space was altered in 1833- 34 when four magazines were constructed on the north and south sides. These magazines, which exist today, are described in the section titled "Magazine." There are no visible remnants of the well.

Sally Port

The sally port, or main entrance, is centered on the east side of the fort opposite the postern. Like the postern, the sally port consists of two connected portions: a low arched passage that opens onto a bridge across the ditch, and a tall passage in the center of the east barrack that

opens onto the quadrangle. Of these two portions, the former is the oldest as illustrated on a plan dated 1801 (fig. 7). The walls are cut sandstone and the vaulted ceiling is brick. Additional features of this early passage are a monumental gate on the east side and a stone- and- brick guardhouse built on top of the passage (see "Gate" and "Guardhouse"). The west portion of the sally port that passes through the east barrack dates to the construction of that building in 1834-37. The lower walls here are cut granite, the upper walls are brick, and the flat ceiling is wood. Machinery for the now- missing drawbridge is located in this section, and presumably dates to the 1830s. The floor of the entire sally port is concrete covered with asphalt. More research needs to be done to determine the original floor material. There are no doors at the sally port, most likely because the drawbridge served the function of closing the entrance (see "Bridges").

Gate and Sculpture

The monumental sandstone gate at the east sally port is one of the oldest surviving elements of Fort Jay. Construction of the gate may have begun as early as 1797; it had been completed by February 1802, when it was described by Major D. Wadsworth as "a handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde [guard room]." Colonel Jonathan Williams noted in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808 that "the Gate" was one of only a few structures retained during the reconstruction of the fort beginning in 1806. The gate was recorded in early plans of the fort dated 1801 and 1813 (figs. 7 and 9). Its appearance today is believed to be little changed from its original construction, being a neoclassical design rendered in large pink sandstone blocks that features a low arched entrance set in a tall blind arch flanked by two pairs of Doric pilasters supporting a full stone entablature. The gate was described in 1891 as a "sort of triumphal arch." Two bronze commemorative plaques are mounted to the front facade of the gate. One, mounted on the south pier in 1952, honors the students of Columbia University who helped construct the fort in the 1790s. The other, mounted on the north pier in 1976, commemorates John Jay, for whom the fort was named.

The gate is surmounted by a sandstone *trophée d'armes* sculpture. This is an elaborate grouping of statuary featuring symbols of the republic and equipment of war, including a bald eagle clutching the shield of the United States, a liberty cap atop a fasces, flags, guns, a mortar, and cannon balls. Documentation of the sculpture is surprisingly scarce. No records have yet been found of its commission or execution, nor has a name or date been identified on the work itself. A popular legend recounted by Edmund B. Smith in his 1913 history of Governors Island identifies the artist as a "prisoner who was a stonecutter by trade" who worked on his masterpiece at some unspecified time. Early plans of the fort and its gate dated 1801 through 1839 give no indication that a sculpture existed in those years.

The earliest pictorial image of the sculpture is an engraving published in *Harpers Weekly* on May 6, 1861, several months before the first Confederate prisoners were received on Governors Island (cover and fig. 28). The earliest known photograph is dated 1864, which shows the eagle with no wings and only the lower portion of the flag on the south side (fig. 30). Whether the sculpture had been left partially completed, or was damaged at some later date, is not known. Even more curious is the fact that the sculpture remained in this state for more than 30 years, as evident in later photographs dated 1890 and circa 1898 (figs. 43 and 49). New wings and the

upper portion of the flag had finally been added by 1913 (fig. 55). The left wing disappeared again sometime between 1951 and 1982- 83 (figs. 73 and 85), and it has yet to be replaced. A recommendation made by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1992 to replace the sculpture with a replica made of "cast stone" was never carried out.

Postern

The postern, or secondary entrance, is centered on the west side of the fort opposite the sally port. Like the sally port, the postern consists of two connected portions: a low arched passage beneath the terreplein that opens directly onto the ditch, and a tall passage in the center of the west barrack that opens onto the quadrangle. The west portion beneath the terreplein may have existed as early as 1801, as shown on a plan of that date (fig. 7). The walls are of cut sandstone, and the vaulted ceiling is brick. The east portion that passes through the west barrack dates to the construction of that building in 1834- 37. The lower walls here are cut sandstone; the upper walls are brick, and the flat ceiling is wood. The floor of the entire postern tunnel is concrete. A pair of arched wooden doors, painted black, is located at the west end of the postern. These doors are made of two layers of vertical boards joined with clenched spikes and hung on iron strap hinges. The date of these doors in not known, although doors of similar appearance were photographed by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1934 and 1982- 83 (figs. 66 and 93).

Quadrangle

The quadrangle is the center courtyard inside Fort Jay that is bordered by the east, south, west, and north barracks. This space was referred to as the "parade" by Colonel Jonathan Williams in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808. The existing spatial configuration of the quadrangle dates to the construction of the existing barracks, which replaced earlier barracks in 1834- 37. Grass, deciduous trees, and two intersecting paths dividing the quadrangle into four quadrants are features that have existed since at least 1861. Missing elements include an early timber blockhouse (1801- 09), a center well with pump (1801- circa 1913), a low wood fence (circa 1861- 64), four electric lamp posts (1920s – sometime after 1951), and a border of cannon balls (extant 1934). The earliest known illustration of the quadrangle is an engraving of "troops drilling" published by *Harpers Weekly* in 1861 (fig. 29). The earliest known photographic view is dated 1864 (fig. 32). The center quadrangle is paved with concrete and asphalt of unknown date.

Casemates

Two subterranean casemates in the north ravelin of Fort Jay were constructed sometime between 1806 and 1808. The walls of the casemates are sandstone, the vaulted ceilings are brick, and the floors are concrete. Each casemate is entered through a wide doorway off the magazine courtyard. Double doors of sheet metal had been installed by 1934, possibly replacing earlier

wooden doors. Two original embrasures in the end walls of each casemate were most likely enclosed with brickwork circa 1834, when the casemates were converted to magazines. Fresh air is provided to each casemate by a sheet- metal ventilator of unknown date in the ceiling.

Construction of the north ravelin was still in the planning stages in 1806, according to a letter from Secretary of War Henry Dearborn to Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Williams dated June 23 of that year. This work had been completed by November 1808, as noted in a draft report by Williams, who described the completed ravelin "with two retired casemated Flanks...." The casemates were probably adapted as powder magazines in 1834, when the ravelin was remodeled as a magazine court, with new magazines installed on its north and south sides. The casemates were definitely so employed by the turn of the century, as indicated on armament sketches dated 1898 and 1900. The former casemates were recorded in measured drawings by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1934, which noted the floors as then paved with "flagstone" and the embrasures enclosed with brickwork (see Appendix). Plans prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1968 specified the application of "waterproofing materials," along with the removal of later "wood flooring and sub- base" (fig. 75). The magazines were later used to store small arms, according to the 1983 report by the Historic American Buildings Survey.

Magazine

The magazine of Fort Jay is located behind the north barrack, concealed beneath the terreplein of the north ravelin. It was originally used to store powder for guns and later for small arms storage. The magazine consists of six chambers dating from two periods of construction: 1806-08 and 1833- 34. The chambers open off a center roofed, subterranean court that is accessed through an arched masonry passage in the center of the north barrack. The oldest chambers, constructed in 1806- 08 as flanking casemates, open off the east and west sides of the center court (see "Casemates" for details). The remaining four chambers were built between 1833 and 1834 on the south and north sides of the center court. Their construction is documented by a report from Captain J.L. Smith of the Corps of Engineers dated October 1833, and a report from the Engineer Department dated November 1834. Measured drawings of the magazine were prepared by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1934 (see Appendix, sheets 7 - 8). A plan by the U.S. Coast Guard for waterproofing the magazine chambers is dated 1968 (fig. 75). All six chambers of the magazine retain their original masonry (sandstone) walls and brick- arched ceilings. Additional research is required to determine the date of the concrete floors, metal doors, and iron bars at the windows. Flagstone paving in the passage and center court existed in 1934, as shown on the HABS drawings. The existing rooftop structure over the center court, consisting of a wood- framed roof supported on low brick walls, replaced an earlier "corr[ugated] iron structure" sometime after 1934.

Building numbers were assigned to the structures on Governors Island by the U.S. Army, including the magazine within Fort Jay, by 1879. The magazine was then assigned number 55, later changed to number 76 on a plan of Governors Island dated 1953. A new system was in place by 1964 that renumbered the magazine as 215. This system was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard during the years 1966- 97 and remains in use today.

Missing Fortification Elements

Fraises

Fraises, or pointed stakes driven into ramparts, were a feature of the earthen fortification designed by Charles Vincent for Governor's Island in 1794 that was later named Fort Jay. The use of fraises was suggested in "special instructions" to Vincent by the Secretary of War dated April 1, 1794, in which he was advised "your judgment will...direct what parts of your works shall be protected by a fraize, and what by palisades...." That fraises were actually installed is confirmed in a report dated February 15, 1802, from Major D. Wadsworth to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, which described the "Berms of the Parapet" at Fort Jay as being "well fraised." The fraises were in a deteriorated state by 1806 as described by Colonel Jonathan Williams in a draft report to the Secretary of War dated November 1808. Williams noted the "horizontal fraises were subject to continual depredation by successive rains; the rotten fraises were daily falling by their own weight...." The fraises were removed during the subsequent rebuilding of the fort 1806- 09.

Parapets

The existing brick parapet at Fort Jay was preceded by two earlier parapets. The first that existed by 1800- 01 (fig. 7) was made of earth with timber retaining walls and featured 51 embrasures. The timber had rotted by 1806 and was replaced by a masonry parapet between 1806 and 1808. Colonel Jonathan Williams described the new parapet in a "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808:

> The parapet is ten feet in thickness, composed on one wall of 3 and one of two feet in thickness, with cross walls of two feet in width connecting the interior & exterior walls at the distance of 9 feet from each other, leaving a rectangular space of 9 by 5 feet, which is filled with earth rammed very hard forming together a resistance equal to solid masonry, which renders it impenetrable, to a cannon shot, the whole being surmounted by sod which is in a fine growing state....

Williams explained in the same report the rational of having the guns fire above a solid parapet, rather than positioned within embrasures, as follows:

> Firing en barbette might be thought too great an exposure if the following circumstances were not known—1. The Glacis covers the Wall as high as the Cordon which is the Base of the Parapet & should an Enemy shot touch the surface it would inevitably bound over all; 2d. Should it pass above the surface higher than 4 feet it would also pass over all; 3d. Should it pass higher than 3 feet above the surface it would be arrested by the Parapet; 4th. Within the one foot space only the mouth of the Gun is exposed and 5th The height and distance of the Fort from the water puts it out of the command of the musquetry from the Tops of Ships of War.

Although not mentioned by Williams, the masonry walls of the parapet as reconstructed in 1806- 08 were most likely sandstone. Bartizans, or small sentry towers, were also a feature of the parapet, located at the salient angles of the bastions and the new north ravelin (see "Bartizans"). The only known view of the parapet as rebuilt by Williams is a lithograph dated 1816 (fig. 12). It was replaced by the existing brick parapet in the 1830s.

Pathway to Castle Williams

A sunken pathway in the northwest glacis of Fort Jay formerly connected the covered way of the fort with the sally port of Castle Williams. Visible remnants include a wide opening in the glacis retaining wall of the covered way opposite the salient angle of the northwest bastion, and a slight depression in the glacis near the covered way. Archeological investigation of this feature in 1998 identified surviving subterranean remnants of cobblestone paving and brickwork retaining walls (Shannon Wright and Timothy Binzen, "Archeological Overview and Assessment of Governors Island National Monument, New York, New York." Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts, 2003, p. 99.) The pathway was described by Colonel Jonathan Williams in a "Draft Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808:

> In the Wall of the covert way [of Fort Columbus] on the west side directly opposite to & protected by the western Flank of the Ravelin, a space about 8 feet is left unbuilt from which a zig- zag covered defile will be made to the Castle at the western point of the Island...so that the communication may be preserved in perfect safety during action with some maritime Force. It was thought proper to leave the excavation of this 'till after the entrance to the Castle will be completed. [Castle Williams was completed in 1811.]

The "covered defile" as actually constructed, however, was a straight line, not the "zig- zag" envisioned by Williams. This is clearly illustrated in several 19th- century maps and plans of the island and fort dated 1813, 1832, 1867, and 1879 (figs. 9, 14, 35, and 39).

The brickwork retaining walls of the "covered defile" found by the archeologists may date to the 1830s, based on a report submitted to Congress by the Engineer Department in November 1834 that noted, "The facing of the covered- way revetment leading from Fort Columbus to Castle William [sic] will be done this fall."

The connecting pathway was still in use as late as 1886, as seen in an engraving published in *The Daily Graphic* (fig. 42). This shows four armed soldiers marching towards the castle in a wide sunken pathway with high banked walls. Development in the early 20th century resulted in the removal of approximately one- third of the pathway near the castle, as shown on a map of Governors Island dated 1908. Remnants were still visible several years later, as described by Smith in 1913:

> A passageway connected the Castle with the main fort in the middle of the island. Its remains are clearly visible to- day. What is left of the way extends from the Fort to the Post Hospital. The rest of it was destroyed evidently to make way for modern constructions on the northern edge of the Island. A large tree has grown up in this passage. (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 57.)

The surviving portion of the pathway at the fort's northwest bastion, described as "remains of the covered way [sic]," was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey on a plan of Fort Jay dated 1934 (see Appendix).

Pathway to the Glacis Magazine

A second sunken pathway created circa 1809- 11 provided a connection between Fort Jay and the powder magazine on the west glacis. This pathway was centered on the west side of the fort directly opposite the postern. It differed from the pathway to Castle Williams by being curved where it exited the fort, rather than straight. The pathway is clearly illustrated in plans of Governors Island dated as late as 1964, even though the magazine had been demolished in the 1920s. A remnant of the pathway survives today in two curving retaining walls on the west side of the fort at an opening in the glacis retaining wall of the west covered way. These are brick walls laid in a Flemish bond; they may date to the rebuilding campaign of the 1830s. Existing flagstone paving most likely replaced earlier paving, such as cobblestones found by archeologists in 1998 at the pathway to Castle Williams.

Wells

Fresh water for the garrison at Fort Jay was initially supplied by wells. The original well was located in the center of the quadrangle, labeled as a "weel" on a plan of Fort Jay dated January 16, 1801 (fig. 7). A two- story timber blockhouse had been erected over the well by February 15, 1802, as described in a report by Major D. Wadsworth to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications. Wadsworth noted that under the blockhouse was "a well of good water, which

answers to the ordinary supplies of the Garrison." A second well "of the finest water" was located within a new north ravelin by 1808, making "a perpetual supply of water certain," according to Williams in a draft report to the Secretary of War dated November of that year. The report also recorded Williams' intention to remove the blockhouse that winter, calling the structure a mostly "useless encumbrance." Well water was supplemented in the 1830s with rainwater collected in underground cisterns. The original well may have still been in use in 1861, described by Confederate prisoner Thomas Sparrow as then being equipped with a pump. Well water on the island had become "troublesome" by 1868, according to Surgeon Page, who noted that some of the water was then "unfit for drinking purposes." Water was piped to the island beginning in 1880, making both the wells and cisterns obsolete. The pump at the center well remained in place until as late as 1905, however, and had been "lately removed" by 1913, according to Edmund Smith in his history of Governors Island.

Buildings and Structures

Guardhouse

A brick guardhouse abuts the upper gate of Fort Jay on the interior (west) side, where it sits above the sally- port tunnel. Construction of the gate and guardhouse may have begun as early as 1797 and had been completed by February 1802, when Major D. Wadsworth described "a handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde [guardhouse]." Colonel Jonathan Williams noted in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808 that "the Gate" was one of the few structures retained during the reconstruction of the fort beginning in 1806. Williams may have neglected to mention the guardhouse because it was considered to be a component of the gate. Early plans showing both the gate and its gable- roofed guardhouse are dated 1801 (fig. 7) and 1813 (fig. 9). No mention was made of the guardhouse when the barracks were reconstructed in the 1830s, suggesting that the old guardhouse was retained at that time. The earliest pictorial view of the existing structure is an engraving showing the south elevation that was published by *Harpers Weekly* in May 1861 (cover and fig. 28).

The guardhouse is a small one- story, gable- roofed structure with two rooms in the main story and two unconnected rooms in the basement story that straddle the sally- port tunnel. Original surviving elements include the cut- sandstone foundation walls and steps, upper brick walls laid in Flemish bond, blind arches characteristic of the Federal style at the doorway and window openings, shallow- pitch gable roof, and built- in stone gutters. The foundation and upper walls of the guardhouse abut the stonework of the gate, leading previous studies to surmise that the guardhouse was constructed sometime after the gate. While this may have been the case, the documentary evidence mentioned in the previous paragraph suggests that both the gate and the guardhouse existed by 1802. Alterations have been made to the guardhouse over the years, such as new wooden floors and plaster walls installed in the main story, as specified on a plan dated 1938 (fig. 72). Four window openings in the main story were enclosed with brickwork, and four window openings in the basement story with brickwork or stone, sometime after 1938. A pair of exterior metal doors replaced earlier doors of unknown appearance sometime in the 20th century. Finally, access to the two basement rooms was removed at some unknown date.

Physical investigation of the basements may reveal additional information about the early construction and layout of this early structure.

Numbers were assigned by the U.S. Army to the buildings and structures on Governors Island by 1879. It was not until the mid- 20th century, however, that the small guardhouse received its own number. A plan dated 1964 labels the guardhouse as number 201. This numbering system was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard during the years 1966- 97 and remains in use today.

Barracks

Overview

The four brick barracks within the walls of Fort Jay date to 1834- 37. The barracks have sat vacant since the departure of the U.S. Coast Guard from Governors Island in 1997, although minimal heat is maintained during cold months. Before 1997 the barracks were in continuous use as quarters. The buildings as originally constructed in 1834- 37 were designed to accommodate officers in the east and west barracks and soldiers in the north and south barracks (figs. 23- 24). The interior layout of the east barrack was later altered in 1857 to serve as additional soldier housing. The north barrack was used during the Civil War as quarters for captured Confederate officers; enlisted men were imprisoned at Castle Williams. All four barracks were converted to officers' quarters by the U.S. Army in 1921- 22 and remodeled again in the 1930s. By 1962 the barracks were labeled by the U.S. Army as "Officer Family Housing." This use was continued by the U.S. Coast Guard during its years on Governors Island from 1966 to 1997.

The barracks are located in the center of Fort Jay facing an interior quadrangle. Each barrack measures approximately 154 feet long by 34 feet wide, and is two stories tall with a full basement and unfinished attic. Wide galleries, or porches, supported by 12 Doric columns are a distinctive feature of the front facades. The barracks have undergone several major renovations over the years: in 1855- 57, in the 1860s, in 1898- 99, in 1921- 22, in the 1930s, and in the 1980s. The barracks as they exist today retain a mixture of both original and later materials, although their present appearance dates primarily to the 1930s.

Building numbers were assigned to the structures on Governors Island by the U.S. Army, including the barracks within Fort Jay, by 1879. This early numbering system, in use from 1879 through 1953, assigned numbers 51 through 54 to the barracks. This was changed by 1964 when the east barrack was labeled as building number 202, the south barrack as 206, the west barrack as 210, and the north barrack as 214. This numbering system was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard during the years 1966- 97 and is still in use today.

1830s

Construction of the barracks in the 1830s to replace earlier dilapidated structures is documented by preliminary drawings dated 1832 (figs. 14- 15), correspondence and reports dated 1834- 37, and as- built drawings dated 1839 (figs. 17- 18). Surviving elements from the 1830s include the stone foundation walls; brick walls laid in Flemish bond; the masonry columns (mortar skim over brick); the four chimneys of the east barrack; selected doorway and window openings; and the center arched passages in the east, north, and west barracks. Brickwork walls of 1830s vintage are also found as part of additions at the ends of the barracks. These walls remain from triangular structures built adjacent to, and contemporaneously with, the barracks. Early brick fireplaces survive in the basement rooms of the east barrack only, although their openings were bricked in at some later date.

1850s

Slate- clad hipped roofs replaced the original flat tin roofs and the brick chimneys were heightened in the 1850s. Additional alterations were made at this time to the east, north, and south barracks that included removal of the interior stairways, replacement of the interior woodwork and plaster, modifications to the interior layout, and construction of exterior galleries in the second story. These changes are documented by reports, correspondence, and two drawings dated 1855 (figs. 23 - 24). Little remains today of this work, with the possible exceptions of the upper chimneys of the east barrack and the wood framing of the hip roofs.

1860s

The east end of the south barrack had been lengthened with a brickwork addition by 1867, as shown on a plan of that date (fig. 38). This addition incorporated and expanded an adjacent triangular building of 1830s vintage, and was used as a bakery.

1898- 99

Similar additions were made to the east, west, and north barracks in 1898- 99, also by incorporating and enlarging adjacent 1830s triangular structures. The additions accommodated interior lavatories, water closets (toilets), showers, and bathtubs (figs. 47- 48). While the exterior walls of these additions remain today, later renovations have completely altered their interiors.

1921- 22

The interior layout of all four barracks was altered once again in 1921- 22 to serve as quarters for officers. No documentation of this work has yet been found, although measured drawings documenting the appearance of one representative building, the east barrack, were prepared by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1934 (see Appendix). These show the

barrack divided into four separate apartments, with two quarters in the first story and two in the second story. Long window wells in the rear of the buildings had replaced the subterranean water cisterns installed in the 1830s, enabling new windows to be cut in the basement stories. The original slate roofing shingles had been removed and replaced by asphalt shingles. Central heating, new kitchens and bathrooms, and upgraded electrical wiring were no doubt installed in 1921- 22. Brickwork enclosing the center arched passageway in the south barrack is also of this vintage. The interior layouts of 1921- 22 no longer exist, having been completely altered in all four barracks in the 1930s.

1930s

Alterations were made to the east barrack by the U.S. Army in 1934- 35, and to the other three barracks by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) between 1936 and 1938. This work is well documented by architectural drawings prepared by the Army and the WPA (fig. 68). The apartment- style layout of the 1920s was retained at the east barrack, but the interior partitions were rearranged to create new floor plans. More drastic changes occurred in the north, west, and south barracks, where the buildings were gutted to the brick walls and multi- level, townhouse- style quarters were created (four units per building). The WPA rebuilt the brick chimneys from the ground up, reconstructed the exterior porches and steps, and installed a new coal- fired, steam- heating system in each of the three buildings. Maids' quarters and laundry rooms were located in the basement story; a living room, dining room, and kitchen in the first story; and three bedrooms and two tiled bathrooms in the second story. Built- in features included a bookcase in the living room, a china cabinet in the dining room, and a telephone nook in the hall. A distinguishing feature of each building was the balustrade of the main interior stairway: the Greek- Revival style was used in the quarters in the north barrack, Mission style in the west barrack, and Federal style in the south barrack. The new interior doors of the north, west, and south barracks featured five panels, while those in the east barrack had four panels. The windows of all four buildings received new six- over- six sashes, and exterior paint was stripped from the exterior brick walls. Much of what remains at the barracks today dates from these extensive renovations. This includes the exterior porches and steps; selected doorway and window openings; six- over- six window sashes; exterior and interior doors; and the brick chimneys of the south, west, and north barracks. Inside, surviving 1930s elements are the floor framing and floors; partition walls; plaster walls and ceilings; stairways; fireplace mantels; built- in bookcases, china cabinets, pantry cabinets, and telephone nooks; and basement bathrooms and laundry sinks.

1958

Few changes appear to have been made to the barracks by the Army in the intervening years between 1940 and 1966, with the exception of an open brickwork screen installed beneath the front porches for safety purposes in 1958. These walls screen the open area beneath the exterior porches.

1980s

Some updating of the barracks was carried out by the U.S. Coast Guard after that agency assumed control of Governors Island in 1966. Improvements made in the 1980s included installation of new hot- water heating systems and equipment, remodeling of the kitchens and bathrooms in the first and second stories, updating of the electrical wiring, replacement of interior light fixtures with Colonial- style fixtures, and installation of aluminum storm windows.

Triangular Buildings

Three small triangular buildings dating to the 1830s are located south of the east barrack, west of the south barrack, and west of the north barrack. The buildings are two stories tall, their walls made of sandstone blocks in the first story and brick laid in Flemish bond in the second story. Freestanding sandstone walls connect the triangular buildings to the adjacent barracks, creating an open courtyard between the buildings. The original fenestration is preserved in the northwest and southwest buildings, consisting of one doorway flanked by two windows in the ground story, and one doorway and five windows in the upper story. Existing metal window sashes most likely date to the 1920s or 1930s; metal doors may be later replacements installed in 1988. Only the southeast building retains its original brick chimney. The interior finishes of all three buildings, including the framing of the main floor, were completely renovated in 1988. Five other triangular buildings were incorporated as additions to the barracks in the 19th century; only remnants of their exterior walls survive today.

Although no written records have yet been found of the construction of the triangular buildings, they were presumably built at the same time as the barracks in1834- 37. Eight of these small structures had originally been built at either end of the four barracks, as shown in a plan following their completion dated April 1839 (fig. 17). More details are provided in a drawing of December 1839 that includes plans of the ground floor, the main floor labeled "Office," and an elevation of the front façade (fig. 18). The triangular building east of the south barrack had been incorporated as an addition to the barrack by 1867, as shown on a plan of that date (fig. 35). The buildings were described the following year in a report entitled *Governor's Island, Record of Medical History of the Post*:

> Adjoining each end of these buildings [barracks] next to the ramp are located small triangular buildings with one story over a basement resting on the level of the parade. The basements of these buildings are used, some for store rooms for company kitchens, others for privies and the upper stories are devoted to various uses—tailor shops, etc. One of these buildings is transformed into a bakery....

Another report published in 1875 noted that the ground floors then housed a bakery, a barber shop, sculleries, and privies, while the upper floors were occupied by company tailors and married soldiers. Four triangular buildings appear to have been incorporated as additions to the east, north, and west barracks in 1898- 99, outfitted as communal bathrooms with indoor plumbing (figs. 47- 48). The southeast triangular building was remodeled in 1937 as an amateur radio station, according to plans of that date prepared by the Works Progress Administration.

The most recent work to extensively repair the three triangular buildings is documented by architectural drawings by the U.S. Coast Guard dated 1988. This included patching the concrete floors in the ground stories, rebuilding the wood- frame floors in the main stories, removing existing lath and plaster, replacing existing metal doors with new metal doors, repairing existing window sashes, and installing new electric service and light fixtures.

Building numbers were assigned to the structures on Governors Island by the U.S. Army by 1879. The triangular buildings appear to have been considered as components of the adjacent barracks in the 19th century, however, and were not separately recorded. This had changed by 1964, when the southeast triangular building was individually labeled as number 204, the southwest building as number 207, and the northwest building as number 213. This numbering system was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard during the years 1966- 97 and is still in use today.

Garages

Eight brick garages within the walls of Fort Jay were designed and constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the 1930s as project number 265- 97- 2007. Two each are located in the four bastions behind the barracks. The garages are documented by two architectural drawings dated February 12 and September 9, 1937. Each is identical in design, measuring 21 feet 8 inches square, one story tall, with a flat roof and two interior bays separated by a brick partition. The red- brick walls are laid in a common bond and sit on a concrete slab. Two wide doorways in the front elevation and two louvered windows in the rear elevation are original features. The existing metal overhead doors replaced the original wooden paneled doors sometime after 1982- 83.

Building numbers 55 through 66 were assigned to the garages by the U.S. Army, as shown on a plan of Governors Island dated 1953. This was changed by 1964 to the current numbering system, which was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1966 and is still in use today. The garages in the southeast bastion are assigned numbers 203 and 205, in the southwest bastion numbers 208 and 209, in the northwest bastion numbers 211 and 212, and in the northeast bastion numbers 217 and 218.

Missing Buildings and Structures

Barracks

Four early barracks within Fort Jay were demolished in the 1830s to make room for four new barracks. A "barrack for the garrison" had been constructed by January 16, 1796, as noted in a report submitted to Congress by the Secretary of War. This was likely one of two long "caserns," or military barracks, shown within the fort on the north and east sides on a plan dated January 16, 1801 (fig. 7). Major Wadsworth noted in 1802 that these barracks "may answer very conveniently for two companies with their officers and in case of necessity another company."

A section- elevation of the barrack on the north side, dated June 1806, shows the building as one story with a gable roof (fig. 8).

Two additional barracks were constructed on the south and west sides of the quadrangle between 1806 and 1808, as noted by Colonel Jonathan Williams in his "Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War" dated November 1808:

> Two new Barracks have been made on the sides of the Parade one of a single story [the south barrack] opposite to & similar to that which existed before, the other [the west barrack] of two storys [sic] opposite but not similar to the one across the Gateway owing to the too great height of the old Barrack, it is this last Barrack which yet wants the inside finish.

The four barracks were described the following year in a report to the Secretary of War dated December 1809 as "brick barracks for two hundred and thirty men, including officers." They had fallen into disrepair by 1832, as explained in a report to the Chief Engineer dated November 1832:

> The present barrack and quarters for the officers are in so bad a state of decay, independent of their want of comfort and room, as to require, to repair them perfectly, the entire removal of their floors, ceiling, and roofs; the mere shells that would remain not being worth preserving, it is deemed advisable to take advantage of the opportunity thus offered to removed these barracks to a situation within the work, which, besides offering the means of providing for the accommodation of greater number of troops, would free its parade from a serious inconvenience arising from their present position.

Construction of the new barracks was well underway, and the old barracks presumably demolished, by November 1834.

Barrack Cisterns

Cisterns, or underground tanks for storing rainwater, were first installed at Fort Jay in the 1830s at the same time as the existing barracks buildings were built. The earliest known reference to the cisterns is in a report dated October 19, 1833, by Captain J.L. Smith, Corps of Engineers, who wrote: "Four cisterns, of 4,000 gallons each are finished under the rampart. Four more are to be made." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 105.) A later plan of the completed barracks dated December 1839 shows two cisterns each located in the rampart behind the east and west barracks (fig. 18). This was most likely also the case at the north and south barracks. A section through one of the cisterns shows it as an oval- shaped reservoir constructed of concrete. Surgeon Page noted in 1868 that "rain water is collected from the roofs of nearly all the buildings [on Governor's Island] in cisterns." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 102.) Another publication dated 1875 observed that the cisterns often ran dry, at which times "they were cleaned and fumigated and filled with Croton water brought from the City in tanks of Quartermaster boats." (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 103.) The cisterns were probably made

obsolete in 1879 when water was piped to the island from Brooklyn. The cisterns were gradually filled with earth beginning in the early 20th century, some with excavations for a new chapel in 1905- 06. (Smith, *Governor's Island,* p. 103.) The cisterns were removed from the back sides of the buildings circa 1921- 22 in order to provide light wells for new windows in the cellar stories. Two cisterns of unknown date located in front of the north barrack were still intact as late as 1934, however, as documented in drawings and a report prepared by the Historic American Buildings Survey.

Blockhouse

A "blockhouse" was located in the center of Fort Jay/Columbus circa 1801 to circa 1809. Plans to construct a blockhouse are documented in a report submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives February 28, 1794, in which the expense of a "Block- house or barracks" for a fortification on Governor's Island was estimated at $200. Engineer Charles Vincent was subsequently directed the following month by the Secretary of War to include a "barrack or a strong blockhouse" in his design of fortifications for New York Harbor. Vincent's special instructions further specified that "a block house mounting one or two small pieces of cannon in its upper story will be more secure, and therefore to be preferred," and that the structure would "not contain more than fifty men." A "barrack for the garrison" had been constructed by January 16, 1796, as noted in a report submitted to Congress by the Secretary of War. This appears to have been one of two barracks constructed on the east and north sides of the quadrangle, as shown on a plan of the fort dated 1801 (fig. 7). No structure, other than a "weel," or well, then occupied the center of the fort. It was not until shortly thereafter that a blockhouse was erected over the well, as described in a report from Major D. Wadsworth to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, dated February 15, 1802:

> A square Blockhouse of Timber with its sides perpendicular to the capitals of the Bastion has been erected in the Center of Fort Jay. This unsightly Building two Stories high, supposed to be Cannon Proof, but of which I am very doubtful, does not seem to promise much utility. Under it is a well of good water, which answers for the ordinary supplies of the Garrison.

The blockhouse was still standing in November 1808, when it was described by Colonel Williams in a draft report to the Secretary of War as follows: "The old Block House which stands in the center of the Parade has hitherto been preserved owing to the convenience of having tools & a variety of articles necessary to the progress of the work, but it will be removed in the course of this Winter being for all other purposes an [sic] useless encumbrance." The blockhouse had been removed by 1813, judging by its absence on a map of that date by Joseph Mangin. No plans or other illustrations of the blockhouse have yet been found.

Furnaces

Furnaces, or ovens for heating shot for the guns, were a feature of the early fortifications of Governors Island. Special instructions to Engineer Charles Vincent from the Secretary of War dated April 1, 1794, specified "a reverberatory furnace for red hot balls must be erected for each battery." The earthen fort and two detached batteries had been completed and equipped with "two air furnaces" by January 16, 1796, as noted in a report to Congress by the Secretary of War. These "furnaces for heating shot" were located at the northwest detached battery, also called the "13 Gun Battery," according to a report dated February 15, 1802, from Major D. Wadsworth to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications. Both batteries, along with the furnaces, were removed as part of the reconstruction of the fort in 1806- 09. The main body of the fort was likely equipped with a furnace at this time, judging by a later description of the fort that included "a furnace for heating shot" in a report by the Secretary of War to Congress dated December 10, 1811. No information has yet been found on the exact location of the furnace within the fort, or when it was removed.

Magazines

Two early magazines, or structures for storing gunpowder, are missing from Fort Jay. One was located on the northeast bastion of the fort, the other on the west slope of the glacis. Both were probably constructed in the 1790s. Special instructions for fortifying New York Harbor, including specifications for the magazines, were given to Engineer Charles Vincent in a document from the Secretary of War dated April 1, 1794:

> [The magazines] must be formed of massy [massive] timber, and be six feet thick on the roof, exclusive of the earth, and jointed and calked in such a manner as to be perfectly tight. Care must be taken to have the magazines properly ventilated, and free from dampness. They are to be of a size sufficient to hold one hundred and fifty rounds of powder for each piece of cannon intended to be served from it. The spot at which a magazine of this nature shall be fixed, will require great judgment, so as to combine security against an enemy, either open or subtle, or any danger from common accidents.

Later descriptions of the magazines suggest that either these instructions were not followed, or the magazines were subsequently rebuilt in brick and stone. A plan of Fort Jay dated January 16, 1801, shows a large "Powder Magazine" in the northeast bastion. Major D. Wadsworth described two magazines the following year in a report dated February 15, 1802, to Major Colonel Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications, including a "large Magazine" at Fort Jay and another "small Magazine" at the detached 13- gun battery on the northwest side.

The magazine located within the fort was one of only a few early features that were retained during the rebuilding of 1806- 09, as noted by Colonel Jonathan Williams in his draft report to the Secretary of War dated November 1808. It was subsequently described in a report by the Secretary of War dated December 10, 1811, as "a brick magazine that will contain five hundred barrels of powder." Later plans of the fort showing the magazine in the northeast bastion are dated 1813 and October 17, 1832. The magazine was most likely demolished in 1834 when it was replaced by four new magazines in the north ravelin. (*ASP*, Military Affairs, Vol. 5, p. 386.) It was definitely gone by April 27, 1839, based on a revised plan of the fort that shows it as missing.

The magazine on the west slope of the glacis was a component of an earthen battery or breastwork constructed in the 1790s. Colonel Williams noted in his draft report of November 1808 that the two breastworks "in Front of the old Fort" were being retained until the Castle had been finished. This probably included the powder magazine in the northwest battery. No explanation has been found as to why the magazine was spared when the breastworks were demolished, although its location between the fort and Castle Williams may have proved useful. The structure was described as "a stone and brick magazine" in a report by the Secretary of War dated December 19, 1809. More details were provided in another report by the Secretary dated December 19, 1811, which recorded the structure as "a stone magazine, which will hold two hundred barrels of powder." Plans showing the magazine are dated 1813, 1867, 1900, and 1908 (figs. 9 and 35). Only one photograph of it is known, dated ca. 1898 (fig. 52). Edmund B. Smith called the magazine "the oldest building in undisturbed condition on Governor's Island" in his history of Governor's Island published in 1913, providing the following details:

> This little magazine on the west glacis slope is a stone building with a stone dove- tailed roof and double walls, the interior ones of brick with ventilating apertures arranged to avoid the outside windows. The interior sheathing of the magazine is one inch white pine. On the north side is a ventilating window which at some period was bricked up and cemented. The wooden inside door is furnished with fine copper bolts. The interior ceiling is heavy rough- hewn oak beams. On these beams are painted in black a number of names and initials of an early period, showing the magazine to date from at least the period of the Castle, 1807- 11, and probably earlier, as the Castle had its own magazines and Fort Jay was (in part) of earlier construction. These names are painted in bold characters and some of them are of artistic excellence. Among them are: WH 1812, CM 1812, CF Morton 1815. This magazine is at present [1913] used for the storage of saluting powder. It is surrounded by a fence of venerable appearance which is believed to have done picket duty long enough to entitle it to honourable mention. The warning sign over the door, though frequently renewed, also shows evidence of antiquity in the lettering employed.
>
> (Smith, *Governors Island*, p. 109.)

The stone magazine on the glacis appears to have been demolished in the 1920s when it was replaced by other buildings erected by the U.S. Army. Remnants of the pathway from the fort to the magazine survive today, however (see "Pathway to Glacis Magazine").

Water Tank

A water tank sat in the northwest bastion of Fort Jay behind the north barrack circa 1880- 1941. The tank may have been installed in 1880 to serve as a water reservoir when water was first piped to the island from Brooklyn. (Smith, *Governor's Island*, p. 102.) A tank is known to have existed by 1891, based on its description during a water crisis as "a tank at Fort Columbus, which holds 60,000 gallons." (*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Nov. 23, 1891.) An aerial photograph taken in 1922 shows a tank in the northwest bastion as a dark cylindrical structure, probably of metal, with a conical roof (fig. 57). A "water tank" in this same location was also documented in a plan and one elevation drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1934 (see Appendix). The tank was probably made obsolete in 1941 with the construction underground water reservoirs beneath the northeast glacis of the fort, together with a new reservoir pump house. The tank had been removed by 1959, judging by an aerial photograph of that date that shows it as missing. All that remained by 1984 was the tank's "circular concrete foundation," according to the Historic American Buildings Survey.

Landscape Elements

Bridges

Two bridges cross the ditch, or dry moat, at Fort Jay. One is a vehicle bridge located on the east side of the fort at the sally port. The other is a foot bridge that crosses the ditch at the southwest bastion. The two bridges were considered to be "non- contributing" structures in the National Register nomination for the Governors Island National Historic Landmark District dated 1983 (accepted 1985), although both were constructed in 1952 and therefore fall within the defined period of significance.

Vehicle Bridge

A concrete vehicle bridge with metal railings, supported on early sandstone piers, crosses the ditch on the east side of the fort at the sally port or main entrance. Architectural plans for the concrete bridge are dated March 30, 1951. The bridge is said by the National Register district nomination of 1983 to have been constructed in 1952. This replaced a wooden bridge in this same location of circa 1934- 37 vintage. Machinery and chains for an early, now- missing drawbridge survive today at the sandstone gate and at the walls of the sally- port tunnel.

The earliest documentation of the bridge is a plan of Fort Jay by Joseph Mangin dated January 16, 1801, depicting a "Bridge" with "Draw Bridge" crossing the "Ditch" in front of the "Gate" (fig. 7). Major D. Wadsworth later reported on February 15, 1802, that the fort had "a handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde [guard room], Drawbridge not yet finished." A plan of the fort dated April 1839 shows a narrowing of the bridge at the gate, which was most likely

the movable, or "drawbridge," portion (fig. 17). The wooden bridge was extensively rebuilt in 1856, as described in a letter dated September 30 of that year:

> The roadway leading across the Ditch into Fort Columbus was thoroughly repaired, the greater part requiring to be put down new owning [to] the decayed state of the timber.

The earliest known pictorial view of the bridge is an engraving published in *Scribner's Monthly* magazine in February 1881 (fig. 41). This shows the bridge supported on stone piers, drawbridge chains still in place, and side railings with diagonal ("x"- shaped) balusters. Few changes appear to have occurred in subsequent years, based on photographs of the bridge and gate published in 1890 and 1913 (figs. 43 and 55). Measured drawings of the bridge and surviving drawbridge machinery were prepared, and photographs taken, by the Historic American Buildings Survey, in 1934 (see Appendix and figs. 58- 59). The bridge was then noted to be "stationary," with wood planking supported on 4- by 12- inch joists, a simple wood railing, and red sandstone piers. A "concrete slab" had been poured in the former location of the drawbridge by 1938, as shown on a "Plan of Monumental Entrance & Arch." However, it was probably not until 1952 that the entire bridge was rebuilt with concrete decking and metal railings. The bridge was labeled as structure number "219" on a site plan of Fort Jay dated September 1964 (fig. 74). The concrete bridge and the surviving drawbridge machinery were photographically documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1982- 83 (figs. 85- 86 and 89).

Footbridge

A wooden footbridge crosses the ditch at the southwest bastion of Fort Jay. This bridge was dated "1952" by the National Register historic district nomination of 1983. It is shown on a site plan of Fort Jay dated September 1964 labeled as structure "#S- 221" (fig. 74). The footbridge is also documented in aerial photographs of the fort taken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1982- 83 (figs. 77 and 80).

Fencing

Two types of fencing are found at Fort Jay: barbed wire and chain link. Barbed- wire fencing was installed on top of the parapet walls in 1958 "for safety purposes," according to a drawing of that date. Chain- link fencing along the perimeter of the glacis and elsewhere relates to the use of the glacis as a golf course. Sit plans documenting this fencing are dated 1958, 1980, and 1995.

Flagstaff

A tubular steel flagstaff, 77 feet tall, is in the north ravelin of Fort Jay. The flagstaff had been moved to this location from the northwest bastion by the U.S. Army sometime between 1922 and 1953, based on an early aerial view (fig. 57) and later plan of Governors Island. The earliest documentation of a flagstaff in the northwest bastion is a plan of Fort Jay by Joseph Mangin dated January 16, 1801 (fig. 7). It remained in this location following reconstruction of the fort in 1806- 09, and through at least the 1920s. The reason for its removal to the north ravelin is not known.

Numbers were assigned to the buildings and structures on Governors Island by the U.S. Army by 1879, although the flagstaff appears to have remained unnumbered in the 19th century. The flagstaff had been assigned number "75" by the 1920s, and was still so designated in 1953. The number was changed to "216" by 1964, which was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard during the years 1966- 97 and is still in use today.

Lighting

Tall street lights are located at the bridge, within the quadrangle, and on the covered way of Fort Jay (figs. 81, 90, and 92). No record of their installation has yet been found, although photographic documentation indicates that this occurred sometime after 1951 and before 1982-83. These lights replaced electric lamp posts with glass globes set at the four exterior corners of the quadrangle (fig. 64). The lamps existed by 1934, and may have been installed in the 1920s when the barracks were converted to officers' housing.

Loudspeakers

Four pairs of loudspeakers mounted on tall metal poles are positioned at the salient angles of each of the four bastions. No records documenting their installation have yet been found. The speakers first appear in photographs taken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1982-83 (figs. 77- 80 and 95).

CHARACTER- DEFINING FEATURES

Definition

"Character- defining features" (CDFs) are defined in *Director's Order #28, Cultural Resource Management Guidelines,* as follows:

> A prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a historic property that contributes significantly to its physical character. Structures, objects, vegetation, spatial relationships, views, furnishings, decorative details, and materials may be such features.[1]

By this definition, a CDF can date from any period in the history of a property. In the case of a building or structure, this could span the time period from its date of construction to the present day.

A more restrictive definition is cited in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties,* in which CDFs are tied to the "historic character" of a building or structure:

> Character- defining features...[are] those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the building's historic character.... The character of a historic building may be defined by the form and detailing of exterior materials, such as masonry, wood, and metal; exterior features, such as roofs, porches, and windows; interior materials, such as plaster and paint; and interior features, such as moldings and stairways, room configuration and spatial relationships, as well as structural and mechanical systems.[2]

"Historic character" is thereby tied to historical significance, which Director's Order #28 defines as "the meaning or value ascribed to a structure, landscape, object, or site based on the National Register criteria for evaluation. It normally stems from a combination of association and integrity."[3]

An excerpt of the statement of significance for the National Historic Landmark District nomination for Governors Island, which includes Fort Jay and Castle Williams as significant contributing resources, reads as follows:

> The Governors Island historic district derives its significance largely from the island's role as a major component in the defense system of one of the country's most important harbors, New York Harbor.... The present fortifications, Fort Jay, a square four bastioned fort, and Castle

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[1] *Director's Order (NPS)- 28, Cultural Resources Management Guidelines,* Release No. 4, Appendix A (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, History Division, 1994), p. 188.

[2] Kay E. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Historic Preservation Services, 1995), p. 63.

[3] *Director's Order (NPS)- 28,* Appendix A, p. 193.

> Williams, a circular casemated work, erected as part of the second American System of fortification in the years preceding the War of 1812, were two of the harbor's largest defense works.... The island is also significant for its role as a major Army administrative center for nearly a century. Beginning in 1878 when the Military Division of the Atlantic and the Department of the East were transferred to the island, the post served as headquarters for major Army commands until 1966.[4]

The period of historical significance for Governors Island as defined by the National Register nomination therefore spans the years 1794, when Fort Jay was originally constructed, to 1966, when the U.S. Army left the island.

Fort Jay: Character- Defining Features

Site Orientation

The orientation of Fort Jay on the highest point of Governors Island overlooking the North River and Buttermilk Channel is a character- defining feature dating to its original construction as a defensive work in 1794- 1802. The site is also significant for being the location of an earlier earthen fortification that played a role in the American Revolution 1776- 1783.

Overall Design and Form

Fort Jay achieved its four- bastioned form with perimeter ditch during its construction from 1794 to 1802. A ravelin (triangular outwork) was added to the north side during reconstruction of the fort in durable masonry 1806- 09. This overall design and form, which survives today, is a character- defining feature of Fort Jay.

Spatial Configurations

The spatial configuration of a center quadrangle within Fort Jay bordered by four detached barracks is a character- defining feature that existed as early as 1808. This center space was enlarged to its present size in the 1830s when the old barracks were demolished and replaced by the existing barracks that were positioned closer to the outer walls of the fort. Other spatial configurations of note are the spacious sweep of the glacis that is preserved today in the open lawns of the golf course installed by the U.S. Army by 1940, the wide sodded ditch surrounding

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[4]National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, "Governors Island" entered February 4, 1985.

the fort that retains its early 19th- century configuration, and the dark cavernous casemates and magazines in the north ravelin dating to 1806- 09 and the 1830s.

Construction Materials

The masonry materials of which Fort Jay is constructed date from many periods of construction and remodeling; they are collectively character- defining. **Pink and red sandstone** was used in building campaigns of 1794- 1802, 1806- 09, and in the 1830s. **Red brick** was also employed in 1794- 1802, 1806- 09, and in the 1830s, in addition to later work undertaken in the 1860s, 1898- 99, and in the 1930s. **Gray granite ashlar** was chosen for the reconstruction of the fort's scarp in the 1830s, and was used sparingly in the foundation of the east barrack in the 1830s. Granite blocks have also replaced selected deteriorating sandstone blocks within the fort over the years, resulting in a patchwork appearance of granite and sandstone.

Fortification Elements

The fortification elements of Fort Jay define its character as a 19th- century defensive work, and are collectively character- defining features. These elements are in a remarkably good state of preservation, except for deteriorating sandstone features. The surviving fortification elements of Fort Jay include its four- bastioned form with one ravelin, sodded glacis, sodded covered way, sandstone counterscarp, sodded ditch, granite scarp, solid brick- and- earth parapet, sodded terreplein, sally port and gate with *trophée d'armes* sculpture, postern, subterranean magazine, and interior quadrangle. Remnants of the outer walls of the sunken approach, or barbican, are preserved today in the brick retaining walls of a modern parking area east of the fort. A guardhouse and barracks for the men of the garrison are discussed subsequently in "Buildings and Structures."

Buildings and Structures

The buildings within Fort Jay were constructed or erected before the end date of the period of significance (1966), and are therefore considered character- defining features of the fort. These buildings and their individual character- defining features are as follows:

Guardhouse

A brick guardhouse is significant for being the earliest surviving building at Fort Jay. This small Federal- style structure abuts the upper gate and sits above the sally- port tunnel. Documentary records suggest that the guardhouse existed by 1802 and survived later rebuilding campaigns in 1806- 09 and the 1830s. While some changes have been made to both the building and the adjacent terreplein over the years, the guardhouse nevertheless retains a high degree of

architectural integrity. Character- defining features of the guardhouse include its ancillary position behind the gate, its diminutive size, sandstone foundation and steps, unpainted brickwork walls, blind arches at the doorway and window openings, symmetrical fenestration, shallow- pitched gable roof, stone gutters, and interior layout of two rooms in the main story and two rooms in the basement straddling the sally- port tunnel. Plaster finishes and a wooden floor in the main story date to repairs made in the 1930s, and are therefore character- defining. Additional research is required to determine the date of the existing metal doors and brickwork enclosures at the windows.

Barracks

Four brick barracks dating to 1834- 37 are positioned on the four sides of the quadrangle at Fort Jay. The buildings retain the exterior walls of their original construction, along with later alterations that are collectively character- defining. The barracks are similar in design, scale, and materials used in their construction. Each is a simple Greek Revival design with long narrow dimensions, two main stories of living space above a finished basement, a hipped roof, four brick chimneys, and a two- story gallery supported by 12 Doric columns facing the quadrangle. Foundations are gray granite in the east barrack and sandstone blocks in the south, west, and north barracks. The walls above are unpainted brickwork laid in Flemish bond. Arched passages centered in the east, west, and north barracks are original features that serve as the sally port, postern, and entrance to the magazine in the north ravelin. A similar arched passage in the south barrack was enclosed for use as living space circa 1921- 22. Other character- defining features include brick additions at the ends of the barracks that incorporated earlier triangular structures in the 1860s and 1898- 99. Double hung, six- over- six window sashes are of 1930s vintage, as are the existing two- story porches and metal railings that feature center medallions cast with military symbols. The irregular and asymmetrical placement of doorway and window openings is a feature dating to alterations made in 1921- 22 and the 1930s.

The interiors of all four buildings retain their 1930s character, when the barracks were extensively remodeled. The interior layout of the east barrack is characterized by having two apartments per floor, while each of the other three barracks is divided into four townhouse-style units with interior stairways. The stairways themselves are character- defining, with a Federal- style balustrade used in the units of the south barrack, an oak Mission- style balustrade in the west barrack, and a Greek Revival- style balustrade in the north barrack. Other interior 1930s elements of particular interest in the south, west, and north barracks are surviving plumbing fixtures in the basement stories, wooden Federal- style mantels, and built- in bookcases, china cabinets, and telephone nooks.

Triangular Buildings

Three triangular buildings adjacent to the east, south, and north barracks are the only surviving remnants of eight identical structures constructed at the same time as the barracks (1834- 37). The five missing buildings were incorporated as additions to the barracks in the 1860s and 1898- 99. The three surviving structures retain a high degree of architectural integrity. Character- defining features include their siting, scale, shape, and materials of construction.

Each building is connected to its adjacent barrack by original freestanding sandstone walls, creating a small outdoor courtyard that is an original feature dating to the 1830s. The buildings themselves are small in scale, two stories tall, with no interior stairways. The ground story is accessed by an original doorway opening off the courtyard, and the upper story by a second original doorway facing the terreplein. The triangular shape of each building is both distinctive and character- defining, as is the wall facing the courtyard that is angled in three facets. Also notable are the sandstone walls of the ground story and unpainted brickwork walls laid in Flemish bond in the upper story. Only one brick chimney survives at the southeast building, and it is therefore of particular importance. Fenestration is unaltered, and therefore significant, in the southwest and northwest buildings. Brickwork infilling the second- story windows of the southeast building is of unknown date. Existing window sashes made of metal are of 1920s or 1930s vintage and therefore character- defining.

Garages

Eight brick garages are located in the four bastions behind the barracks, constructed by the Works Progress Administration in 1937- 38. The garages remain relatively unaltered from their original construction in the 1930s. Character- defining features include their ancillary positions in the rear of the barracks, their siting of two garages per bastion, their small scale, and identical appearance. Each garage is built on a concrete slab with a square plan, unpainted brick walls, small louvered windows in the rear elevation, flat roof, and two interior bays accessed by two wide doorways.

Landscape Elements

The landscape elements of most significance are the vehicle bridge and the tubular steel flagstaff in the north ravelin. A bridge has crossed the ditch at the sally port since the original construction of the fort and is therefore character defining. The stone piers of the bridge date to the 19th century, while the concrete decking replaced an earlier wooden bridge in 1952. The flagstaff that had historically been located in the northwest bastion was moved to its present position by the U.S. Army sometime between 1922 and 1953. Display of the American flag at Fort Jay was a proud tradition dating to the beginnings of the fort, thus making the flagstaff a character- defining feature.

Nonhistoric Features and Materials

Alterations made by the U.S. Coast Guard in the 1980s occurred after the period of significance (1966), and so are therefore not character- defining features. In the barracks, these alterations include remodeled kitchens and bathrooms in the main stories, interior Colonial- style light fixtures, exterior aluminum storm windows and doors. In the triangular buildings, nonhistoric alterations include the extensively remodeled interiors and the exterior metal doors that also appear to date to this time. The garages' existing metal overhead doors, installed sometime after 1982- 83, are likewise nonhistoric. Additional research is required to determine if the existing street lights and loudspeakers within the fort were installed before or after 1966.

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1898 "Proposed arrangement of Lavatory Fixtures in Barrack Additions at Fort Columbus, NYH." Noted on the drawing: "Nov. 30/98, approved by Sgr. [illegible]." (Misc. Forts File, Fort Jay, New York, Sheet 20; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1898 "Armament Sketch, Fort Columbus, New York, drawn under direction of H.M. Adams, Corps of Engineers, USA, December 31, 1898." (Drawer 250, Sheet 1- 18; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1899 "Armament Sketch, Forts on Governors Island, New York, drawn under direction of Lieut. Col. W.H.H. Benyaurd, Corps of Engineers, USA." An inventory of armament for Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. (Drawer 250, Sheet 3- 14; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1900 "Armament Sketch, Forts on Governors Island, New York, drawn under direction of Major W.L. Marshall, Corps of Engineers, USA, December 31, 1900." An inventory of armament for Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. (Drawer 250, Sheet 3- 16; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1901 "Armament Sketch, Forts on Governors Island, New York, drawn under direction of Major W.L. Marshall, Corps of Engineers, USA, December 31, 1901." An inventory of armament for Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. (Drawer 250, Sheet 3- 18; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1902 "Sketch Plan Showing Extension of Governor's Island, New York," with Secretary of War Elihu Root's signature, by McKim, Mead and White, Architects. (Blueprint File, Governors Island, NY; RG 92; CAB/NACP.)

1902 "Armament Sketch, Forts on Governors Island, New York, drawn under direction of Major W.L. Marshall, Corps of Engineers, USA, December 31, 1902." An inventory of armament for Fort Columbus and Castle Williams. (Drawer 250, Sheet 3- 20; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1908 "First U.S. Army Engineers Map of Governors Island, 1908, from a drawing by J.M. Hilton." Map is dated March 1962. The barracks buildings in Fort Jay are numbered 51- 54. (Reproduced in "Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings," July 1997, reference documents.)

1921 "New York Harbor, Fort Jay, Governors Island General Map." (Reproduced in "Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings," July 1997, reference documents.)

1928 "Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY, Buildings and Roads." (File: Ft. Jay, 3 of 7; Box 102; Entry 393; RG 77; NAB. Reproduced in "Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings," July 1997, reference documents.)

1934 "Fort Jay, Governor's Island, New York Harbor, New York." 10 drawings measured and drawn between January and March 1934 by the Historic American Buildings Survey, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Branch of Plans and Design. Survey number HABS NY- 4- 6. (LC: http://memory.loc.gov.)

1934- 35 East Barrack (Building 202). Set of drawings for alteration of the east barrack by the U.S. Army, no title blocks. The building was then numbered 51, later updated on the drawings to number 202.

- Basement Plan, drawing no. 202- 6, May 23, 1934.
- First Floor Plan, drawing no. 202- 7, May 23, 1934.
- Second Floor Plan, drawing no. 202- 8, May 23, 1934.
- "Detail of Exterior Doors," no drawing no., May 25, 1934.
- "Pipes for Heating System in Basement Building #202," no drawing no., Dec. 17, 1934.
- "Alterations to Building 202," drawing no. 42- 10, Mar. 8, 1935.
- "Alterations to Building 202," drawing no. 42- 10, April 6, 1935.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island—formerly the U.S. Coast Guard Facilities Engineering Division. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed by HABS in 1982- 83 and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #202." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1A, negative numbers NY- 5715- 1A- 6, NY- 5715- 1A- 7, and NY- 5715- 1A- 8. LC: http://memory.loc.gov.)

1936 North Barrack (Building 214). Set of drawings for alteration of the north barrack by the USA Work Program, WPA, for the 2nd Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY. Project number 265- 97- 2003. The building was then numbered 54, later updated on the drawings to number 214.

- Basement plan, drawing no. 2003- 5, Nov. 2, 1936.
- First floor plan (final), drawing number and date missing (drawing ripped).
- Second floor plan, no drawing number (ripped), Oct. 24, 1936.
- Door detail, drawing no. 2003- 54- 266, Nov. 17, 1936.
- Porch and window details, drawing no. 45- 5- 4, May 29, 1936.
- Stair details, no drawing number, April 29, 1936.
- Chimney details, drawing no. 45- 8, Mar. 18, 1936.
- Bathroom details, drawing no. 215- 5, no date.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed by HASBS in 1982- 83 and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #214." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1D, negative numbers NY- 5715- 1D- 7, NY- 5715- 1D- 8, and NY- 5715- 1D- 9. LC: http://memory.loc.gov.)

1937 West Barrack (Building 210). Set of drawings for alteration of the west barrack by the USA Work Program, WPA, for the 2nd Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY. Project number 265- 97- 2003. The building was then numbered 53, later updated on the drawings to number 210.

- Plan of basement alterations, drawing no. 44- 5- 1, Feb. 10, 1937.
- Plan of first floor alterations, drawing no. 44- 5- 2, Feb. 11, 1937.
- Plan of second floor alterations, drawing no. 44- 5- 3, Feb. 11, 1937.
- Exterior porches and steps, drawing no. 44- 5, Jan. 9, 1937.
- Basement pipe trench, drawing no. 44- 9, Aug. 18, 1937.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed by HABS in 1982- 83 and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #210." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1C, negative numbers NY- 5715- 1C- 5, NY- 5715- 1C- 6, and NY- 5715- 1C- 7. LC: http://memory.loc.gov.)

1937 West Barrack (Building 210). Set of drawings for upgrading heating, plumbing, and electrical systems in the west barrack by the USA Work Program, WPA, for the 2nd Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY. Project number 265- 97- 2007. The building was then numbered 53, later updated on the drawings to number 210.

- Plumbing plan of the first floor, drawing no. 44- 3- 1, Feb. 26, 1937.
- Plumbing plan of the second floor, drawing no. 44- 3- 3, Feb. 26, 1937.
- Heating plan for basement, drawing no. 44- 2- 1, Mar. 5, 1937.
- Heating plan for first floor, drawing no. 44- 2- 2, Mar. 5, 1937.
- Heating plan for second floor, drawing no. 2007- 53- 482, no date.
- Electrical plan for basement, drawing no. 44- 4, Mar. 17, 1937.
- Electrical plan for first floor, drawing no. 44- 4, Mar. 17, 1937.
- Electrical plan for second floor, drawing no. 44- 4, Mar. 17, 1937.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1937 Garages. Two drawings for the construction of eight garages at Fort Jay by the USA Work Program, WPA, for the 2nd Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governors Island. Project number 265- 97- 2007.

- "Quadrangle Garage Drwgs, for Building 206 [sic: for all four barracks]," drawing no. 43- 8- 2, Feb. 12, 1937.
- "Typical Plan & Details of Quadrangle Garages," no drawing number, Sept. 9, 1937.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1937 Southeast Triangular Building (Building 204). Three drawings by the USA Work Program, WPA, for the remodeling of Building 204 as an amateur radio station. Project number 265- 97- 2007.

- "Floor Plans, Amateur Radio Station," ca. 1937.
- "Heating Layout, Amateur Radio Bldg #204, June 3, 1937."
- "Electric Layout for Amateur Radio Station, #204, June 10, 1937."

1937- 38 South Barrack (Building 206). Set of drawings for alteration of the south barrack by the USA Work Program, WPA, for the 2nd Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governor's Island. Project number 265- 97- 2- 3. The building was then numbered 52, later updated on the drawings to number 206.

- Plan of basement construction, drawing no. 43- 1- 3, Nov. 24, 1937. (Photographed by HABS 1982- 83; missing from the collection Aug. 2005.)
- Plan of first floor construction, drawing no. 43- 1- 1, Nov. 24, 1937.
- Plan of second floor construction, drawing no. 43- 1- 2, Nov. 24, 1937.
- Heating plan for basement, drawing no. 43- 2- 3, Feb. 11, 1938.
- Heating plan for first floor, drawing no. 43- 2- 1, Feb. 11, 1938.
- Heating plan for second floor, drawing no. 43- 2- 2, Feb. 11, 1938.
- Electrical plan for basement, drawing no. 43- 3- 3, Nov. 24, 1937.
- Electrical plan for first floor, drawing no. 43- 3- 1, Nov. 24, 1937.
- Electrical plan for second floor, drawing no. 43- 3- 2, Nov. 24, 1937.
- Framing plan of first floor, drawing no. 43- 4- 1, Jan. 21, 1938.
- Framing plan of second floor, drawing no. 43- 4- 2, Jan. 24, 1938.
- Plumbing plan, drawing no. 43- 6, Nov. 24, 1937.
- Service balconies details, drawing no. 43- 11- 1, Jan. 12, 1938.
- Service balconies details, drawing no. 43- 11- 2, Oct. 5, 1937.
- Stair details for apartments B, C, & D; drawing no. 43- 12; Mar. 21, 1938.
- Stair details for apartment A, drawing no. 43- 14, Mar. 1, 1938.
- Railing details for balcony and exterior stairs, drawing no. 43- 15, Feb. 24, 1938.
- Chimney details, drawing no. 43- 16, Sept. 15, 1937.
- Exterior doors details, drawing no. 43- 17, May 5, 1938.
- Fireplace details, drawing no. 43- 18, no date.
- Bathroom details, drawing no. 43- 19, no date.
- Window details, drawing no. 43- 10, Feb. 3, 1938.
- China closet details, drawing no. 43- 21, Feb. 4, 1938.
- Basement window detail, drawing no. 43- 23, Feb. 9, 1938.
- Bookcase details, drawing no. 43- 23- 1, Sept. 28, 1937.
- Living room bookcase details, drawing no. 43- 23- 2, Feb. 17, 1938.
- Exterior kitchen doors details, drawing no. 43- 26, Feb. 16, 1938.
- Exterior door details, drawing no. 43- 27, Feb. 28, 1938.
- Bathroom details, drawing no. 52- A13- C, Mar. 7, 1938.
- Basement electric meters & feeders, drawing no. 52- B- E, Nov. 24, 1937.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed by HABS in 1982- 83 and included in the report "Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #206." Survey number HABS NY- 5715- 1B, negative numbers NY- 5715- 1B- 7, NY- 5715- 1B- 8, and NY- 5715- 1B- 9. LC: http://memory.loc.gov.)

1938 South and West Barracks (Buildings 206 & 210). Set of drawings for upgrading the heating system in the south and west barracks by the USA Work Program, WPA, for the 2nd Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY. Project number 365- 97- 2- 16.

- "Basement Pipe Trench," Building No. 206, drawing no. 43- 25, Mar. 16, 1938.
- "Smoke Breeching, Building No. 206," drawing no. 43- 10, July 29, 1938.
- "Smoke Breeching, Building No. 210," drawing no. 44- 6, July 21, 1938.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1938 Gate and Guardhouse (Building 201). Set of drawings for repairs and alteration of the gate and guardhouse at Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY.

- "Fort Jay, NY, Monumental Arch, Building No. 201," drawing no. 201- 3, June 6, 1938.
- "Proposed Alteration to Archway," drawing no. 201- 6, June 13, 1938.
- "Plan of Monumental Entrance & Arch," drawing no. 201- 7, 1938.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1939 Gate and Guardhouse (Building 201). "Quadrangle Arch Detail and Building No. 201," by the Works Progress Administration, City of New York, for the Second Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY, July 14, 1939. Project number 765- 97- 2- 15, drawing no. 201- 2, (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1939 West Barrack (Building 210). "Detail of Arch at Bldg. No. 210 [was 53]," by the Works Progress Administration, City of New York, for the Second Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY, July 13, 1939. Project No. 765- 97- 2- 15. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1939 Concrete Bridge (Structure 219). Set of five drawings for construction of the "Concrete Bridge Over the Moat at Quadrangle Entrance," by the Works Progress Administration, City of New York, Aug. 2, 1939. Project No. 765- 97- 2- 15. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1940 Glacis Golf Course. "Lawn Sprinkling System, Golf Course South of Fort Jay, Signal Office Second Corps Area, Governors Island, NY," February 28, 1940. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1942 Magazine Court (Building 215). "Equipment & Duct Layout, Ordnance Room No. 5, Bldg. 215, Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY," by Kerry Saunders, Inc. Drawing no. 60- 3, May 18, 1942. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1944 Barracks. "Hot Water Heating Detail, Buildings No. 202, 206, 210, 214," by the Office of the Post Engineer, Fort Jay, New York, Oct. 26, 1944. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

Late 1940s	Barracks. Set of 16 undated drawings showing the existing conditions of the east, south, west, and north barracks by Peter W. Bruder Associates, Consulting Engineers, New York, NY, for the Headquarters Fort Jay, Office of the Post Engineer, Governors Island 4, NY. Included for each building are a basement plan, first floor plan, second floor plan, and a section and elevation drawing. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)
1951	Concrete Bridge (Structure 219). "Alt[eration] to Bridge at Quadrangle, Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY," by the Office of the Post Engineer, March 30, 1951. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)
1953	"Site Plan of Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York," May 1953. The barracks buildings in Fort Jay are numbered 51- 54. (Reproduced in "Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings," July 1997, reference documents.)
1953	South Barrack (Building 206). "[Kitchen] Renovations to Qtrs 206, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York," by the Office of the Post Engineer, April 13, 1953. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)
1958	Fences. "Fence Around High Wall of Moat and other Fencing for Safety Purposes in Quadrangle, Fort Jay, New York," June 16, 1958. Drawing no. E- 149, 1700- 20. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)
1959	Barracks. "Electrical: Replacing Electrical Services in Quadrangle, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York," by the Office of the Post Engineer, Mar. 16, 1959, revised to June 2, 1960. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)
1962	Glacis Golf Course. "General Site Map, Golf Course Site, Master Plan Basic Information Maps, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York," March 15, 1962. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)
1962	Site Plan. "Reservation Map, Master Plan, Basic Information Maps, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York," March 15, 1962. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)
1964	"Site Plan, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York," September 1, 1964. The barracks buildings in Fort Jay are numbered 202, 204, 210, and 214. (Park files and reproduced in "Ordnance and Explosives Archives Search Report Findings," July 1997, reference documents.)

1974 "Masonry Restoration, Architectural Elevations, Civil Engineering Base, New York, Governors Island, New York," by the U.S. Coast Guard, December 12, 1974. The following drawings are included in this set:

- East Barrack, Building 202, drawing no. 03- 5450.
- South Barrack, Building 206, drawing no. 03- 5451.
- West Barrack, Building 210, drawing no. 03- 5452.
- North Barrack, Building 214, drawing no. 03- 5453.
- Garages, Building 203 (drawing no. 03- 5439), Building 205 (drawing no. 03- 5440), Building 208 (drawing no. 03- 5441), Building 209 (drawing no. 03- 5442), Building 211 (drawing no. 03- 5443), and Building 212 (drawing no. 03- 5444). Note that the drawings for Buildings 217 and 218 (numbers 03- 5445 and 03- 5446) are missing from the collection.
- Triangular Buildings, Building 204 (drawing no. 03- 5447), Building 207 (drawing no. 03- 5448), and Building 213 (drawing no. 03- 5449).

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1976 Barracks. "Architectural Roofing Repair Details, Quadrangle Buildings No. 202, 206, 210 & 214, Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York," October 14, 1976. Drawing No. 03- 5672. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1979 South Barrack (Building 206). "Quarters 206A, Convert Pantry to Kitchen," Jan. 2, 1979.

Sheet 1, "Cabinet Plan & Elevation."
Sheet 2, "Cabinet Elevations."
Sheet 3, "Mechanical / Electrical Plan."

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1979 East Barrack (Building 202). "Building No. 202, Install New Spiral Staircase in Quarters 202B, U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, NY," by the Public Works Engineering Division. Drawing no. 040- 016- 202, Oct. 18, 1979. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1980 Fencing. "Installation of New Fence of Golf Course, U.S. Coast Guard, Governors Island, NY," by the Public Works Engineering Division, May 14, 1 980. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1981 Barracks. "Buildings 202, 206, 210 & 214, Heating & Hot Water Renovations, U.S. Coast Guard 3rd District Gov. Isl, NY," by Michael Baker, Jr. of New York, Inc., Consulting Engineers, New York, NY, for the Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York, June 20, 1981. Two sheets. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1983 Barracks. "Htg/Dom HW Sys [Heating / Domestic Hot Water System] Renovation, Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York," May 13, 1983.
- East Barrack (Building 202), set of 8 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6227.
- South Barrack (Building 206), set of 8 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6228.
- West Barrack (Building 210), set of 8 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6229.
- North Barrack (Building 214), set of 8 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6330.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1983 West Barrack (Building 210). "Elec. Dist. [Electrical Distribution] System, Bldg. 210, Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York." Set of 3 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6355, July 2, 1983. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1984 Barracks. "Storm Windows: Architectural Elevations, Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York," Feb. 24, 1984.
- East Barrack, Building 202, drawing no. 03- 6283.
- South Barrack, Building 206, drawing no. 03- 6284.
- West Barrack, Building 210, drawing no. 03- 6285.
- North Barrack, Building 214, drawing no. 03- 6286.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1984 Barracks. "Kitchen Rehab[ilitation], Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York," July 2, 1984.
- East Barrack (Building 202), set of 6 sheets, drawings no. 6388.
- South Barrack (Building 206), set of __ sheets, drawings no. 6389.
- West Barrack (Building 210), set of 4 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6390.
- North Barrack (Building 214), set of 4 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6391.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1984 Barracks. "Elec. Dist. [Electrical Distribution] System, Coast Guard Support Center, Governors Island, New York," by Gilbert Meyers, P.E., Consulting Engineers, New York, NY, for the U.S. Coast Guard, 3rd District, July 2, 1984.
- East Barrack (Building 202), set of 7 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6353.
- South Barrack,(Building 206), set of 3 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6354.
- West Barrack (Building 210), set of 3 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6355.
- North Barrack (Building 214), set of 3 sheets, drawings no. 03- 6356.

(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1987 Glacis Golf Course. "Golf Course Location of Greens (#299), U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, New York," by the Facilities Engineering Division, May 12, 1987. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1988 Triangular Buildings (Buildings 204, 207, and 213). "Repairs to Bldg. 204, U.S. Coast Guard Support Center, New York," by the Facilities Engineering Division. Drawing no. 840- 225- QAD, May 15, 1988. Although the drawing is entitled "Bldg. 204," notes thereon also refer to Buildings 207 and 213. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1992 Ditch Walls. "Rehabilitation of Moat Walls, USCG Support Center, Governors Island, New York," by the U.S. Coast Guard Civil Engineering Unit, New York. Drawing no. NY- 0325, 15 sheets, August 6, 1992.

- Sheet 1. Cover Sheet, Location Map, Site Plan.
- Sheet 2. Architectural Plan.
- Sheets 3- 6. Architectural: Scarp/Parapet Wall Elevations.
- Sheet 7. Architectural: Gatehouse Elevations.
- Sheets 8 and 9. Architectural: Moat Wall Elevations.
- Sheets 10 and 11. Architectural: Counterscarp Wall Elevations.
- Sheet 12. Architectural: Scarp, Counterscarp and Moat Wall Details.
- Sheets 13- 15. Architectural: Repair Details.

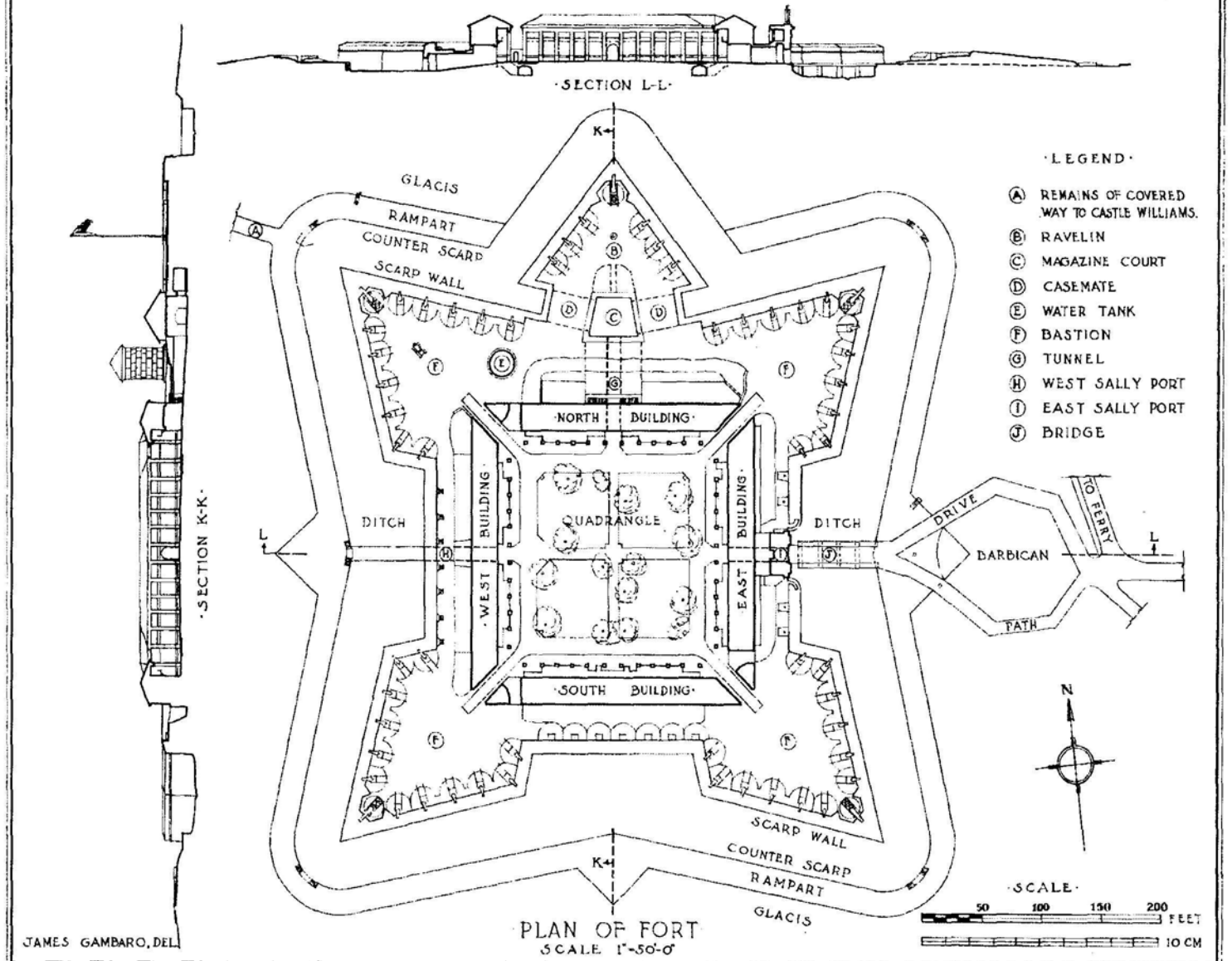
(Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

1995 Fences. "Fence Replacement, Golf Course, Civil Site Plan, USCG Support Center, Governors Island, New York," by the Civil Engineering Unit. Drawing no. NY-0542, May 4, 1995. (Drawing files, Building 910, Governors Island.)

APPENDIX

Historic American Buildings Survey Drawings

Fort Jay, 1934



PLAN OF FORT
SCALE 1"-50'-0"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

NAME OF STRUCTURE
FORT JAY
GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK.

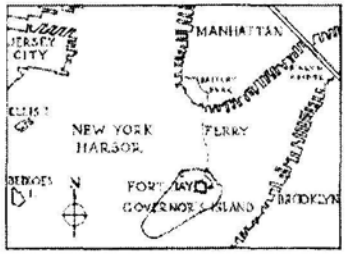
SURVEY NO. 4-6
MCH. 25-1934

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 1 OF 10 SHEETS

INDEX NO.

FORT JAY

GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK.



SKETCH MAP
SHOWING LOCATION

ERECTED -1797-1833.
ENGINEER FOR ORIGINAL FORT,
M. VINCENT.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

MEASURED: JAN. 20 - FEB. 27, 1934.
DRAWN: FEB. 28 - MAR. 23, 1934.
MEASUREMENTS CHECKED:

DRAWINGS APPROVED: Wm. Dewey Foster, DISTRICT OFFICER
DRAWINGS APPROVED: [illegible], CHIEF ARCHITECT
ACCEPTED FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS: [illegible]

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1800 PORHAM AVE. N.Y.C.
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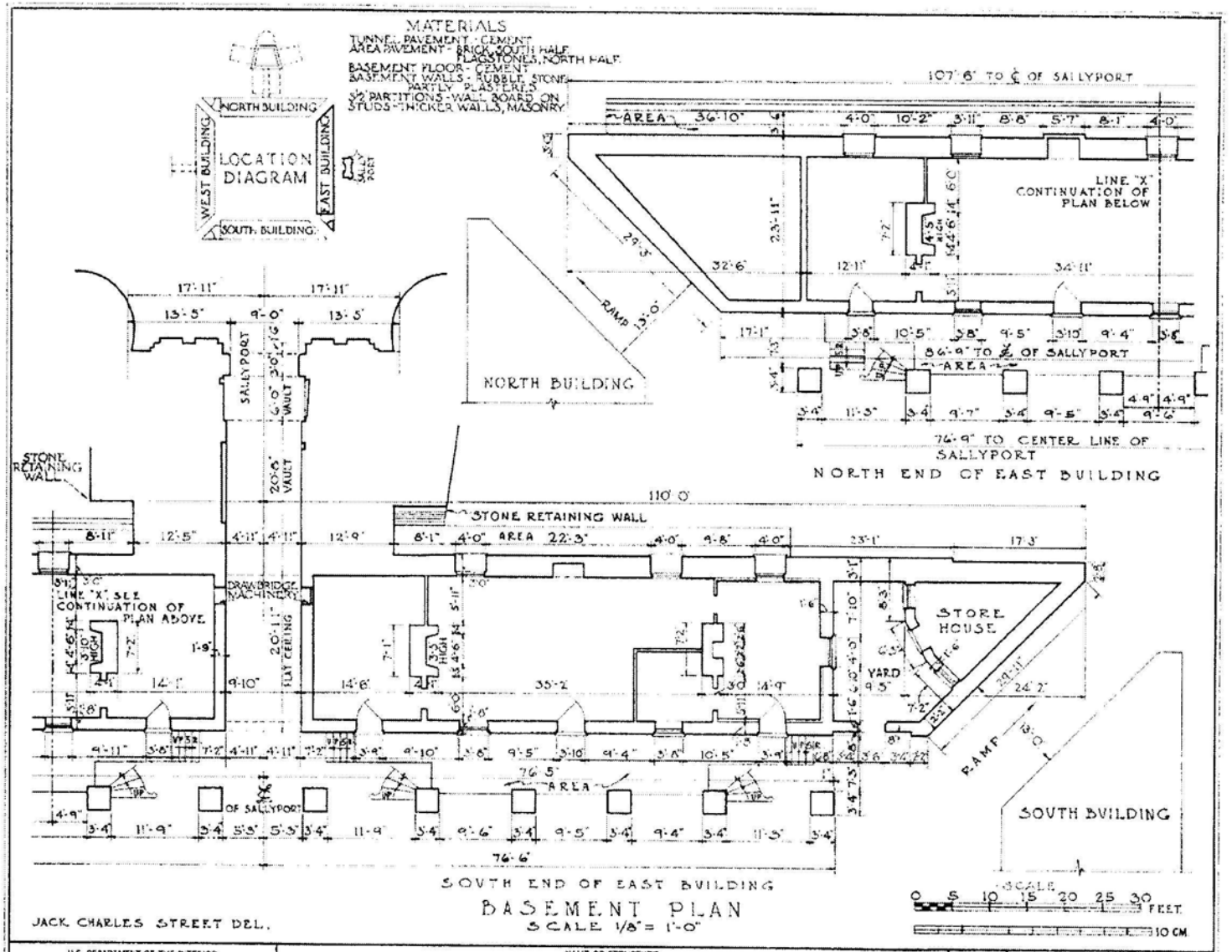
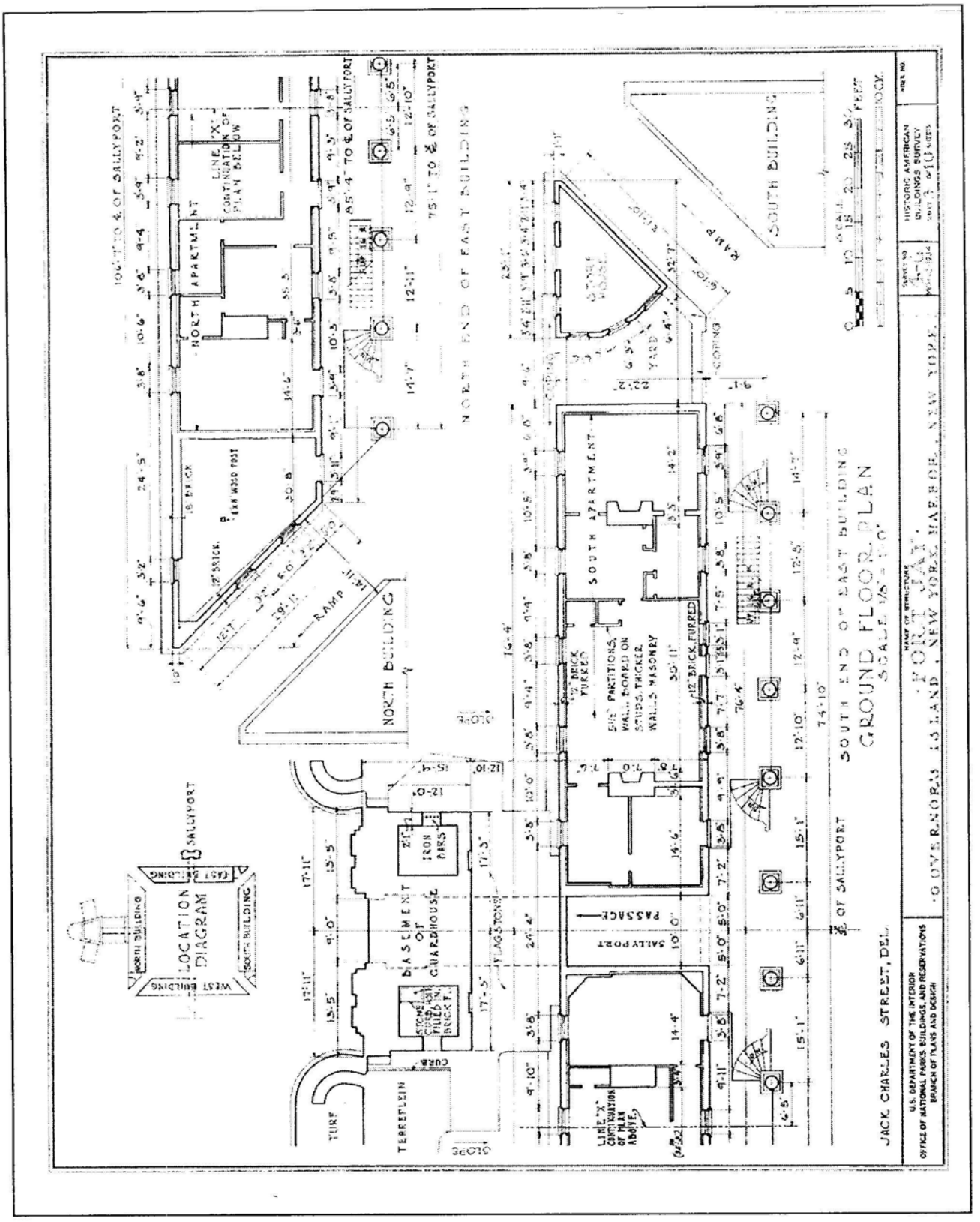
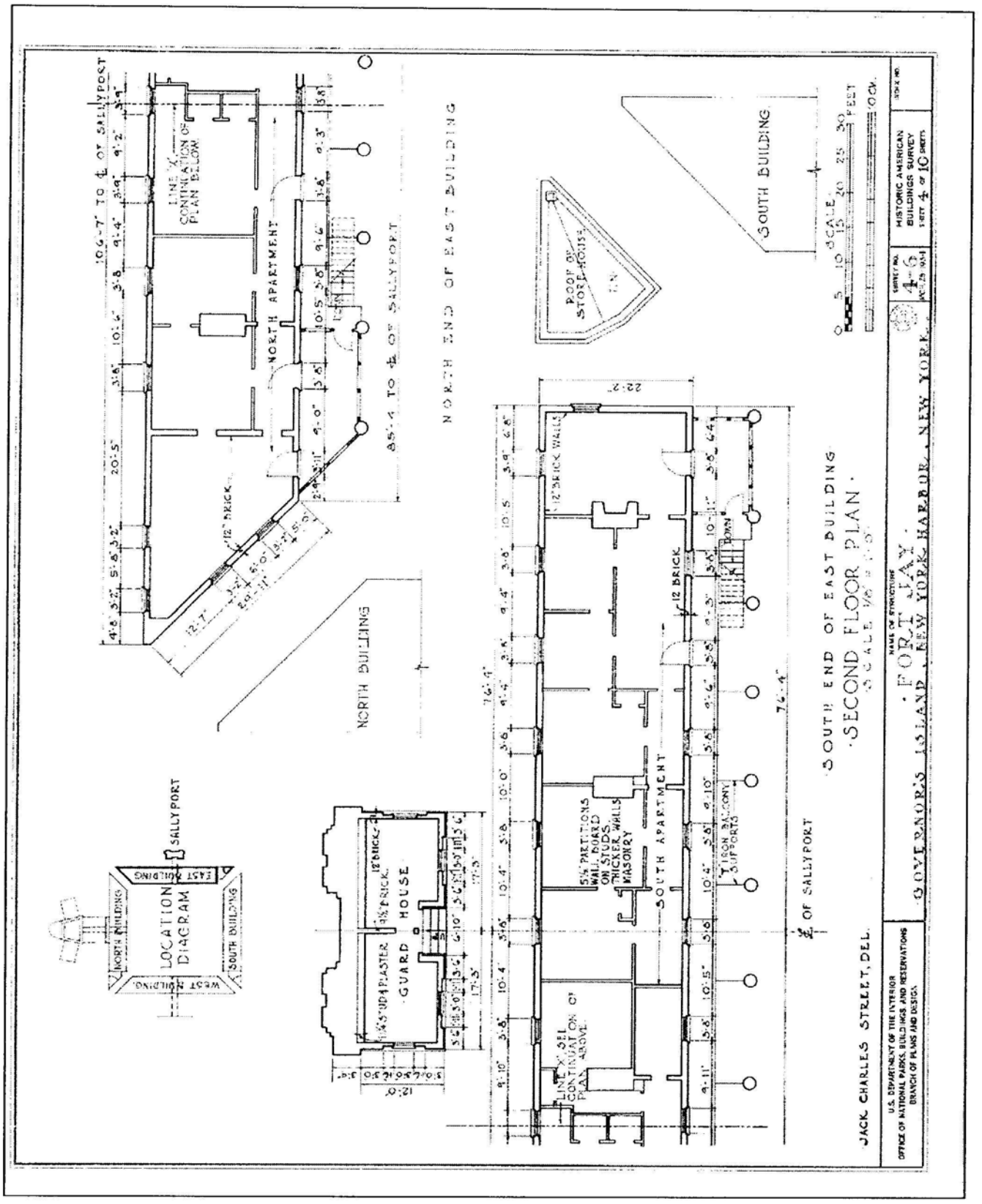
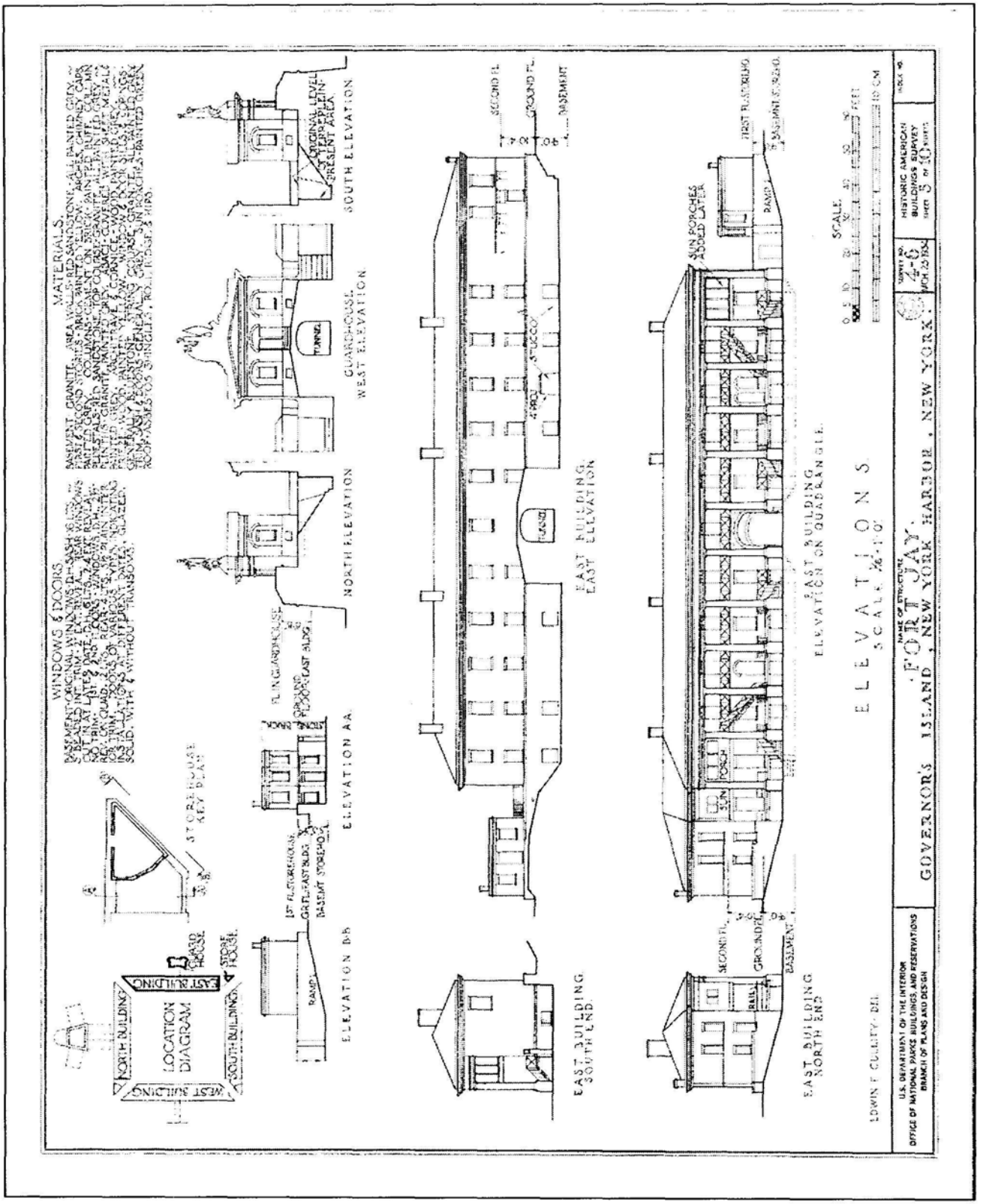
SURVEY NO. 4-6
SHEETS 1-10

INDEX NO.


MATERIALS
TUNNEL - PAVEMENT - CEMENT
AREA PAVEMENT - BRICK, SOUTH HALF
FLAGSTONES, NORTH HALF
BASEMENT FLOOR - CEMENT
BASEMENT WALLS - RUBBLE STONE
PARTLY PLASTERED
1/2 PARTITIONS - WALL BOARD ON
STUDS - THICKER WALLS, MASONRY
LOCATION DIAGRAM
NORTH BUILDING
WEST BUILDING
EAST BUILDING
SOUTH BUILDING
SALLY PORT
107'-8" TO ℄ OF SALLYPORT
LINE "X" CONTINUATION OF PLAN BELOW
86'-9" TO ℄ OF SALLYPORT
74'-9" TO CENTER LINE OF SALLYPORT
NORTH END OF EAST BUILDING
NORTH BUILDING
RAMP
SALLYPORT
VAULT
STONE RETAINING WALL
110' 0"
DRAWBRIDGE MACHINERY
FLAT CEILING
LINE "X" SEE CONTINUATION OF PLAN ABOVE
STORE HOUSE
YARD
RAMP
SOUTH BUILDING
76' 6"
SOUTH END OF EAST BUILDING
BASEMENT PLAN
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"
JACK CHARLES STREET DEL.
SCALE
FEET
10 CM
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
NAME OF STRUCTURE
FORT JAY
GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK
SURVEY NO.
46
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 2 OF 10 SHEETS
INDEX NO.


GROUND FLOOR PLAN
SOUTH END OF EAST BUILDING
NORTH END OF EAST BUILDING
NORTH BUILDING
SOUTH BUILDING
LOCATION DIAGRAM
BASEMENT OF GUARDHOUSE
SALLYPORT
PASSAGE
TERREPLEIN
JACK CHARLES STREET, DEL.
FORT JAY
GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY


SOUTH END OF EAST BUILDING
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
NORTH END OF EAST BUILDING
NORTH APARTMENT
SOUTH APARTMENT
NORTH BUILDING
SOUTH BUILDING
LOCATION DIAGRAM
GUARD HOUSE
SALLYPORT
EAST BUILDING
WEST BUILDING
NORTH BUILDING
SOUTH BUILDING
ROOF OF STORE HOUSE
12" BRICK
12" BRICK WALLS
5¼" PARTITIONS WALL BOARD ON STUDS. THICKER WALLS MASONRY
LINE "X" SEE CONTINUATION OF PLAN ABOVE
LINE "X" CONTINUATION OF PLAN BELOW
106'-7" TO ℄ OF SALLYPORT
85'-4" TO ℄ OF SALLYPORT
℄ OF SALLYPORT
JACK CHARLES STREET, DEL.
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
NAME OF STRUCTURE
FORT JAY
GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 4 OF 10 SHEETS
SCALE
FEET



WINDOWS & DOORS
MATERIALS
LOCATION DIAGRAM
NORTH BUILDING
SOUTH BUILDING
EAST BUILDING
WEST BUILDING
GUARD HOUSE
STORE HOUSE
STOREHOUSE KEY PLAN
ELEVATION B-B
ELEVATION AA
NORTH ELEVATION
GUARDHOUSE WEST ELEVATION
SOUTH ELEVATION
EAST BUILDING SOUTH END
EAST BUILDING EAST ELEVATION
EAST BUILDING NORTH END
EAST BUILDING ELEVATION ON QUADRANGLE
SUN PORCHES ADDED LATER
SCALE
ELEVATIONS
SCALE 1/16"=1'-0"
NAME OF STRUCTURE
FORT JAY
GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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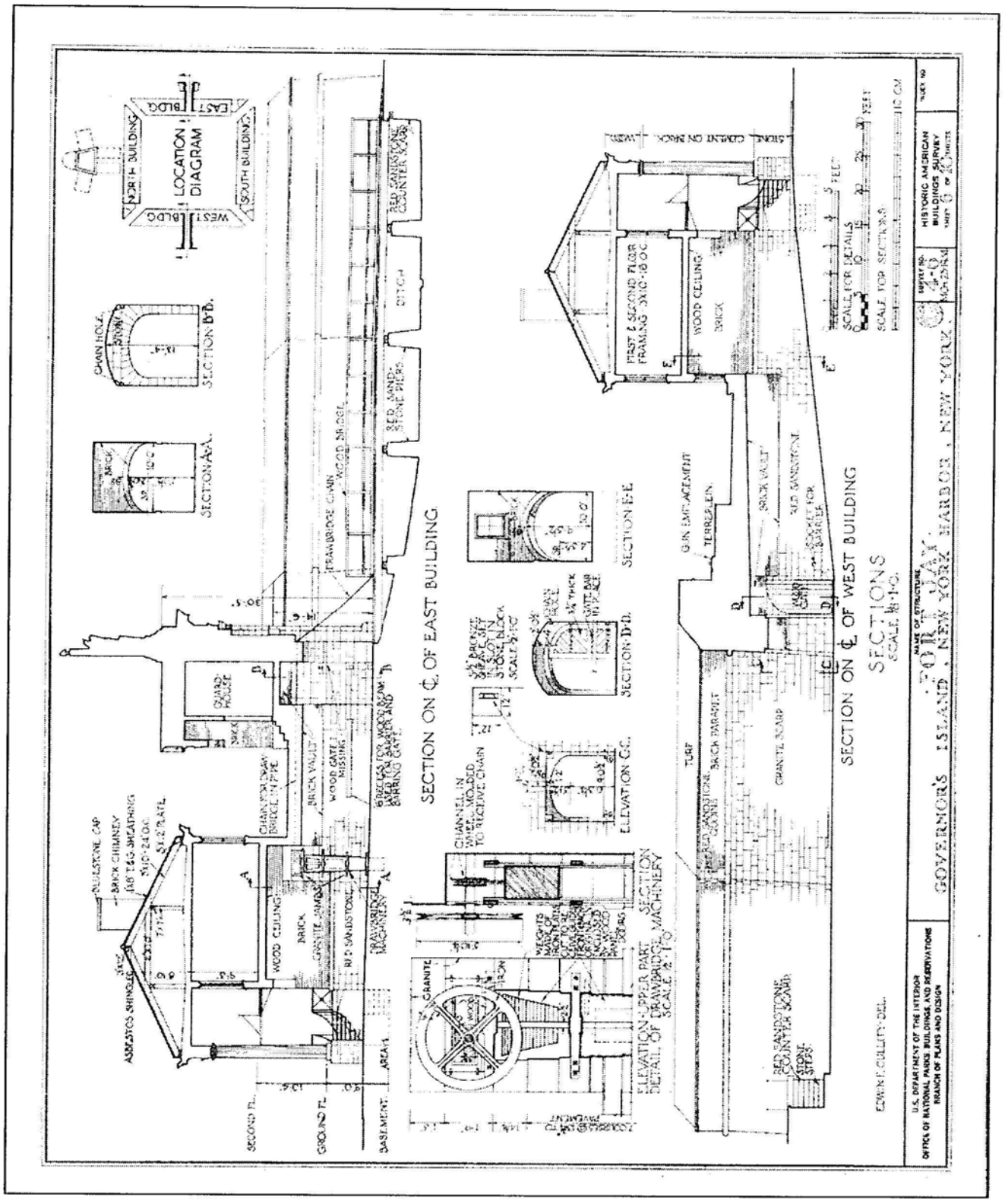
LOCATION DIAGRAM
NORTH BUILDING
SOUTH BUILDING
WEST BLDG
EAST BLDG
SECTION A-A
SECTION B-B
SECTION ON ℄ OF EAST BUILDING
SECTION ON ℄ OF WEST BUILDING
SECTIONS
ELEVATION C-C
SECTION D-D
SECTION E-E
ELEVATION-UPPER PART DETAIL OF DRAWBRIDGE MACHINERY
SECTION
GUARD-HOUSE
DRAWBRIDGE CHAIN
WOOD BRIDGE
RED SANDSTONE PIERS
DITCH
RED SANDSTONE COUNTER SCARP
WOOD CEILING
BRICK
GRANITE JAMBS
RED SANDSTONE
BRICK VAULT
WOOD GATE MISSING
CHAIN FOR DRAW BRIDGE IN PIPE
ASBESTOS SHINGLES
BLUESTONE CAP
BRICK CHIMNEY
SECOND FL.
GROUND FL.
BASEMENT
AREA
GRANITE
IRON
FIRST & SECOND FLOOR FRAMING
GUN EMPLACEMENT
TERREPLEIN
BRICK PARAPET
GRANITE SCARP
TURF
RED SANDSTONE COUNTER SCARP
STONE STEPS
SCALE FOR DETAILS
SCALE FOR SECTIONS
FEET
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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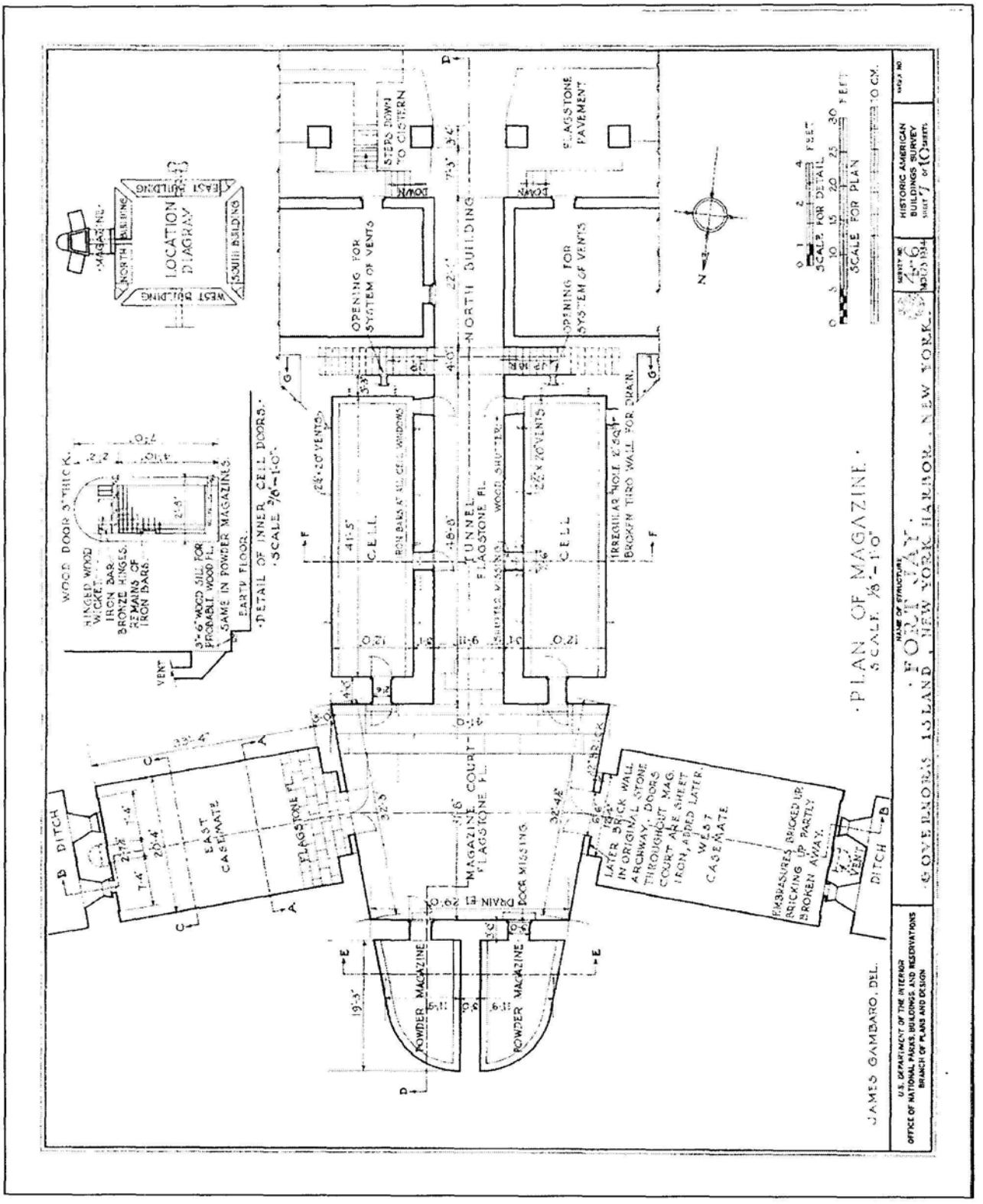
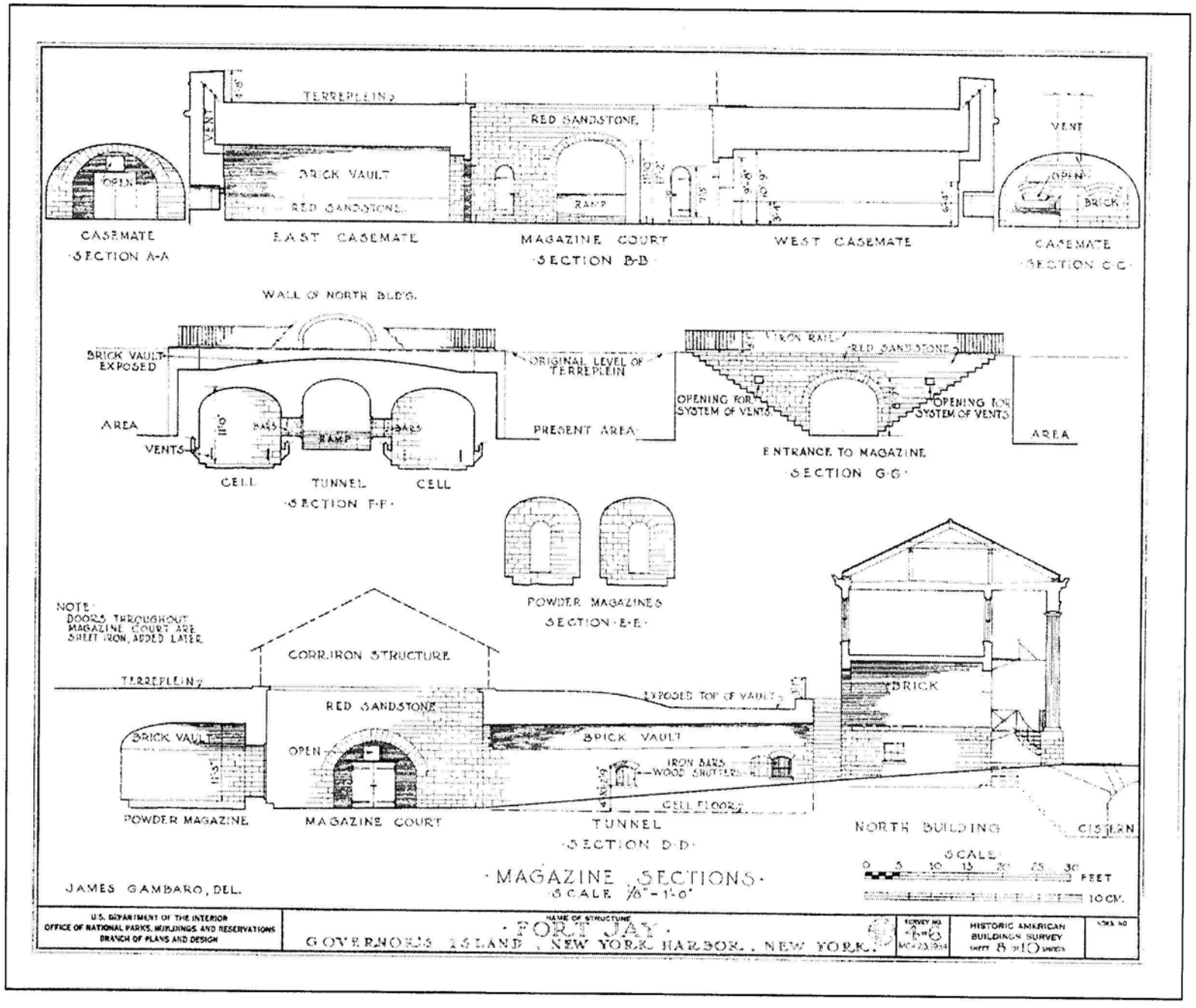
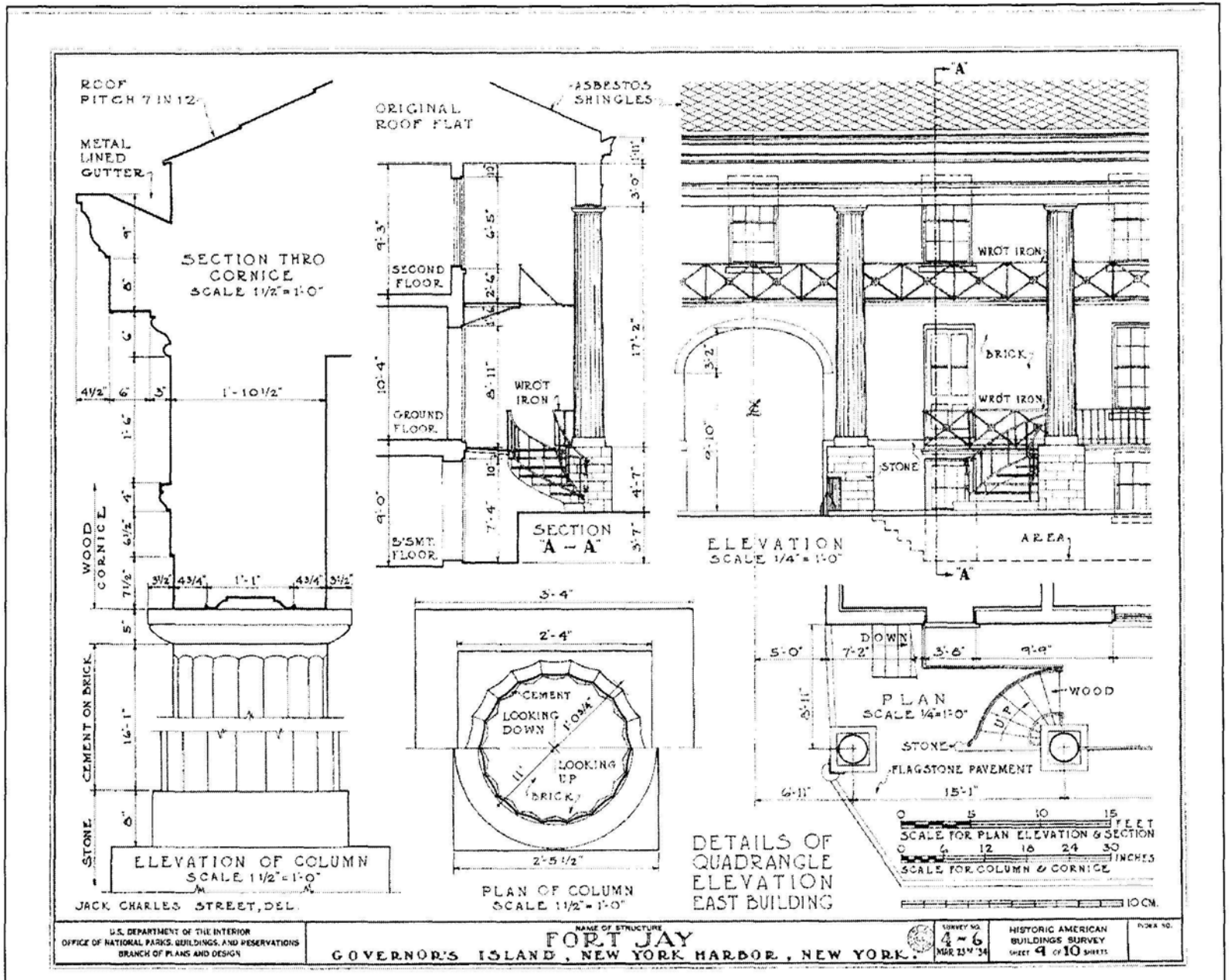

PLAN OF MAGAZINE
SCALE 1/8"=1'0"
FORT MAY
GOVERNORS ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
JAMES GAMBARO, DEL.
LOCATION DIAGRAM
NORTH BUILDING
SOUTH BUILDING
EAST BUILDING
WEST BUILDING
MAGAZINE
NORTH BUILDING
OPENING FOR SYSTEM OF VENTS
STEPS DOWN TO CISTERN
FLAGSTONE PAVEMENT
DOWN
NORTH BUILDING
TUNNEL
FLAGSTONE FL.
CELL
IRREGULAR HOLE BROKEN THRO WALL FOR DRAIN
WOOD SHUTTER
WOOD DOOR 3" THICK
HINGED WOOD WICKET
IRON BAR
BRONZE HINGES
REMAINS OF IRON BARS
3"-6" WOOD SILL FOR PROBABLE WOOD FL.
SAME IN POWDER MAGAZINES
EARTH FLOOR
DETAIL OF INNER CELL DOORS
SCALE 3/8"=1'0"
VENT
DITCH
EAST CASEMATE
FLAGSTONE FL.
MAGAZINE COURT
FLAGSTONE FL.
DRAIN
DOOR MISSING
LATER BRICK WALL IN ORIGINAL STONE ARCHWAY. DOORS THROUGHOUT MAG. COURT ARE SHEET IRON, ADDED LATER.
WEST CASEMATE
EMBRASURES BRICKED UP, BRICKING UP PARTLY BROKEN AWAY.
POWDER MAGAZINE
POWDER MAGAZINE
SCALE FOR DETAIL
SCALE FOR PLAN
FEET
N


TERREPLEIN
VENT
RED SANDSTONE
BRICK VAULT
RED SANDSTONE
OPEN
RAMP
VENT
OPEN
BRICK
CASEMATE
SECTION A-A
EAST CASEMATE
MAGAZINE COURT
SECTION B-B
WEST CASEMATE
CASEMATE
SECTION C-C
WALL OF NORTH BLD'G.
BRICK VAULT EXPOSED
ORIGINAL LEVEL OF TERREPLEIN
AREA
VENTS
BARS
RAMP
BARS
CELL
TUNNEL
CELL
SECTION F-F
PRESENT AREA
IRON RAILS
RED SANDSTONE
OPENING FOR SYSTEM OF VENTS
OPENING FOR SYSTEM OF VENTS
AREA
ENTRANCE TO MAGAZINE
SECTION G-G
POWDER MAGAZINES
SECTION E-E
NOTE:
DOORS THROUGHOUT MAGAZINE COURT ARE SHEET IRON, ADDED LATER.
CORR. IRON STRUCTURE
TERREPLEIN
RED SANDSTONE
EXPOSED TOP OF VAULT
BRICK
BRICK VAULT
OPEN
BRICK VAULT
IRON BARS
WOOD SHUTTERS
CELL FLOORS
POWDER MAGAZINE
MAGAZINE COURT
TUNNEL
SECTION D-D
NORTH BUILDING
CISTERN
SCALE
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 FEET
10 CM.
JAMES GAMBARO, DEL.
MAGAZINE SECTIONS
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
NAME OF STRUCTURE
FORT JAY
GOVERNORS ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK
SURVEY NO.
HABS
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 8 OF 10 SHEETS
HABS NO.


ROOF PITCH 7 IN 12
METAL LINED GUTTER
SECTION THRO CORNICE
SCALE 1 1/2" = 1'-0"
WOOD CORNICE
CEMENT ON BRICK
STONE
ELEVATION OF COLUMN
SCALE 1 1/2" = 1'-0"
JACK CHARLES STREET, DEL.
ORIGINAL ROOF FLAT
ASBESTOS SHINGLES
SECOND FLOOR
GROUND FLOOR
BSMT. FLOOR
WROT IRON
SECTION "A - A"
"A"
WROT IRON
BRICK
STONE
AREA
ELEVATION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"
CEMENT
LOOKING DOWN
LOOKING UP
BRICK
PLAN OF COLUMN
SCALE 1 1/2" = 1'-0"
DOWN
WOOD
PLAN
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"
STONE
FLAGSTONE PAVEMENT
SCALE FOR PLAN ELEVATION & SECTION
SCALE FOR COLUMN & CORNICE
DETAILS OF QUADRANGLE ELEVATION EAST BUILDING
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
NAME OF STRUCTURE
FORT JAY
GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR, NEW YORK.
SURVEY NO. 4-6
MAR 23 '34
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 9 OF 10 SHEETS
INDEX NO.

National Park Service
U.S Department of the Interior

Historic Architecture Program
Northeast Region
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"Recruits Drilling in squads on Governor's Island, New York."
Harper's Weekly, May 4, 1861
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