

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Hampshire
COUNTY: Rockingham
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE JUL 2 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Fort Constitution (Fort William and Mary Site)

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Castle William and Mary (Fort William and Mary)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Walbach Street 6/1 North Bldg

CITY OR TOWN:
New Castle

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
First

STATE: New Hampshire CODE: 33 COUNTY: Rockingham CODE: 015

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of New Hampshire
Division of Parks

Department of Resources and Economic Development

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 856
State House Annex

CITY OR TOWN:
Concord

STATE:
New Hampshire 03301

CODE:
33

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Rockingham County Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:
Rockingham County Courthouse
Hampton Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Exeter

STATE:
New Hampshire 03833

CODE:
33

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Plan

DATE OF SURVEY: November 30, 1970 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
State of New Hampshire
Department of Resources and Economic Development

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 856
State House Annex

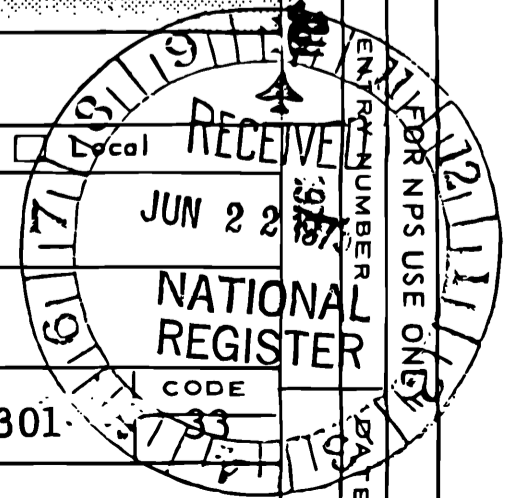
CITY OR TOWN:
Concord

STATE:
New Hampshire 03301

CODE:
33

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: New Hampshire
COUNTY: Rockingham



7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Present and Original Physical Appearance: Fort Constitution, as built in 1808, was apparently a square shaped fortress measuring about 145' on a side. A single bastion, about 32 x 22 feet, projected from the southwest corner on the land side and afforded flanking fire for the 10-foot wide arched gateway located in the center of the west wall. A keystone with the date 1808 is in the center of the arch. A second and smaller gate, the sally port, is situated in the north wall. The original 1808 walls, now standing on three sides of the fort, are comprised of rubble stone topped by red-colored brick. Four brick structures--the ordnance building, laundry, officers' barracks, and enlisted men's barracks--once stood parallel to the south wall and the commanding officer's house was situated near the center of the east wall. All of these structures are gone and only portions of their foundations remain. The brick magazine with its arched ceiling does exist as well as a sentry room.

In 1862-66 alterations were begun but never completed in an effort to modernize Fort Constitution. The 1808 brick and stone wall on the east side was demolished and replaced by a new granite wall built at a lower level, beyond the 1808 wall, and nearer the water. The new granite wall also arched partially around the outside of the 1808 walls on the north and south sides. Never fully completed, the 1862-66 walls contained casemates for about 30 cannons.

Considerably reduced in activity after the Civil War, Fort Constitution today is comprised of the foundations of incomplete alterations from different periods, including the Spanish-American War and World Wars I and II. The aerial photograph shows the 1862 walls around the point. To the right of the apex the wall is incomplete; in front of that opening is a rocky ledge. A road bisects the old fort; foundations of old barracks are on either side. The small 1808 magazine is to the right of the road; to the right of the gateway is the sentry room. The bastion is on the southwest corner. An old mines building is located between the 1808 and 1862 walls on the north side. Just beyond the west wall are Coast Guard buildings. Since the 19th century walls are in poor condition, the fort has been tightly fenced to prevent visitors from wandering into what has been a hazardous area. Recently, the Division of Parks has re-evaluated this site and work is now in progress to make the Fort accessible to the public by this June. Interpretive signs will give the visitor a feeling for the changing kinds of fortification over a period of some 300 years.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Source: J. M.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) December 14 and 15, 1774			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry		
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>Military: As a result of information brought by Paul Revere on December 13, 1774 from Boston to the Committee of Safety in Portsmouth, the Sons of Liberty planned an assault which resulted in the capture of Fort William and Mary, December 14, 1774. This uprising against the general authority of the King was probably the first overt act of the American Revolution. Nothing remains of this fort constructed in the 17th century and repaired as needed in later years except the base of its walls which were used when Fort Constitution was built on the same site in 1808. Later modified in 1862-66, Fort Constitution now lies in ruins. However, it serves to remind us that here, from 1632 to 1950, was an armed fort.</p> <p>Fort William and Mary was situated on a rocky ledge on the northeast point of New Castle Island and about 200 yard south of the main channel of the Piscataqua River, thus guarding the approaches to Portsmouth Harbor. As early as 1632 there is indication that a fort had been built on the northeast point of New Castle Island. By 1694 the harbor defense occupying the point was known as Castle William and Mary in honor of the King and Queen brought to the throne by the Glorious Revolution in 1688.</p> <p>On December 13, 1774 Paul Revere brought the news of a British embargo on munitions of ware and the probable arrival of a large garrison of British troops at Castle William and Mary. This news raised an alarm in the town. The next day the Portsmouth Sons of Liberty, with others from New Castle and Rye, in all about 400 men, under the leadership of the Committee of Safety embarked in two boats for New Castle Island. Coming as something of a surprise in a time of peace, the commander of the Captain John Cochran, realized that he could do nothing with his garrison of five men. Therefore he prudently discharged several cannons well over the heads of the advancing multitude, and permitted the fort and military stores to be taken without further resistance. One hundred barrels of powder, 60 stand of small arms. and 16 cannon were removed over a period of two days and carried to Durham, New Hampshire. From here the supplies were distributed throughout neighboring towns and eventually was used on the British regiments in the Battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775. During four months in the summer of 1775 Fort William and Mary also served as a place of refuge for John Wentworth, the last Royal Governor of New Hampshire, prior to his flight to Boston.</p>			
Continued on Continuation Sheet 1			

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

C. L. Parsons, "The Capture of Fort William and Mary," Proceedings of the New Hampshire Historical Society, IV (1906), 18-47.
 Irene St. Gelais, "Fort Constitution/William & Mary: Background Information," (Concord, NH; Department of Resources and Economic Development, February 1967).
 Charles W. Snell, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form" (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, Division of History, January 11, 1972).
 Squires, J. Duane, Fort William and Mary From Colonial Times to the Revolutionary War ([Concord]: The Society of Colonial Wars in the State of New Hampshire and the New Hampshire American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1972).

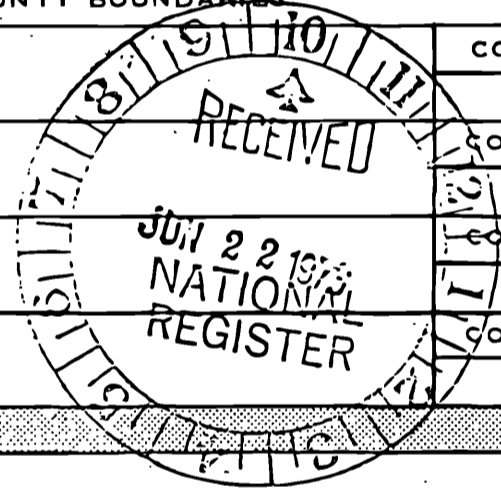
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"		43° 04' 17"	70° 42' 35"	
NE	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"				
SE	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"				
SW	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **2 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Joseph Copley, Nancy C. Merrill; Chairman, and Leonard Rhodes

ORGANIZATION: **Fort William and Mary Committee**
New Hampshire American Revolution Bicentennial Commission

DATE: **May 21, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
112 Front Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Exeter** STATE: **New Hampshire 03833** CODE: **33**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: George Gilman
 Title: Commissioner
Department of Resources and Economic Development
 Date: June 14, 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert W. Utley
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/2/73

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 6 27 73

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 1

STATE	
New Hampshire	
COUNTY	
Rockingham	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUL 2	1973

(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)
Statement of significance

During the remainder of the War for Independence there was no activity at the Castle, now renamed Fort Hancock and under the jurisdiction of the State of New Hampshire. In 1808 the old 18th century fortification, which had been ceded to the federal government was rebuilt and renamed Fort Constitution in honor of our newly formed government. The work on the new harbor defense was done under the superintendence of LeBaron, a military engineer, and the post commander, Baron John Baptiste de Walbach, an artillery officer in the U.S. Army. Fort Constitution was continuously garrisoned down to the Civil War and during the War itself by successive companies of heavy artillery. Efforts to modernize the fort were made during the Civil War. Alteration began on November 16, 1862; the brick and rock 1808 wall on the east side of the fort was demolished and replaced by a strong granite wall containing some 30 gun casements. Work on this project was still in progress when the war ended. Between the Civil and Spanish-American Wars it was reduced to caretaker status but reactivated during the latter conflict. It then became a base for coast artillery until 1950.

The State of New Hampshire acquired Fort Constitution, which comprises about two acres of land for State Park purposes, in 1960. Archeological excavations in 1968-1970 confirmed the locations of buildings constructed in 1808 as well as evidence of pre-Constitution occupations. At the present time, the Division of Parks is making the area safe for visitors; it will be open to the public this coming June.

