

*Already listed*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 3 1984
DATE ENTERED	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Castle Clinton, Castle Garden

AND/OR COMMON

Castle Clinton National Monument

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Battery Park

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

New York City

VICINITY OF

17

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New York

36

New York

061

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*

National Park Service, North Atlantic Region

STREET & NUMBER

15 State Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Boston,

VICINITY OF

Mass.

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New York City Register

STREET & NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

New York, New York

10007

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings Vol. VII

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Published in Founders and Frontiersmen: Historic Places Comemorating Early  
Nationhood and the Westward Movement, 1783-1828. Ed. by R.G. Ferris.

CITY, TOWN

Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1967

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Castle Clinton has undergone numerous physical changes since its original construction, all relating to its diverse uses: as a military installation (1808-23), entertainment and reception center (1823-54), immigration depot (1855-90), aquarium (1896-1941), and National Monument and National Park Service site (1946-present).

Military installation (1808-23): Originally a one-tiered, open casemated fort of reddish brownstone, mounting 28 guns, the building was circular in design, with an inner radius of 92 feet. An unfinished segment of the circle was rounded off and cut by the straight line of the gorge, or rear wall, of the fort, at the center of which was the sallyport. The fort was entered through a massive ornamental gateway, probably designed by the architect, John McComb, Jr. It was faced inside and out with ashlar except for the coping and for the lintels and sills of the embrasures. The fort was built on a manmade island of stone about 200 feet off the "west head" of the Battery, to which it was joined by a wooden causeway and drawbridge. Although there were a number of modifications, additions, and repairs made during these years which reflected the building's evolving military uses (new officers' quarters, stairways, a portico), the fort remained essentially unchanged through 1823.

Entertainment and reception center (1823-54): The interior underwent substantial remodeling and became a fanciful garden ornamented with shrubs and flowers, and the top of the castle was used as a promenade. Major alterations were undertaken in 1844-45 with the conversion of the building to a theater: additions included a roof, flooring, galleries, permanent seating, and a stage; the officers' quarters to the left and right of the main entrance were converted to refreshment rooms. Important physical changes also took place at the Battery during these years: landfill was added, connecting Castle Garden with the mainland.

Immigration depot (1855-90): About 1,000 feet of fencing was put up around the building, except for the portion facing the water. The buildings near the gate, formerly residences, were converted to offices. The interior of the building was adapted to meet its new function. The interior was gutted by fire in 1876, however, leaving only the exterior walls standing. Also spared in the fire were the buildings on the northern part of the grounds between the old walls and outer fence (the hospital, Labor Bureau, and Intelligence Office). Reconstruction of the main building began in 1876; changes included the closing of the embrasures with windows instead of boards and the addition of two new doorways, one each on the east and west sides.

Aquarium (1896-1941): Tanks housing up to 10,000 fish and other aquatic animals were added around the building's inner walls; there was also a seal pool in the center of the rotunda. Landfill was extended out into the Hudson River in order to completely surround the counterguard of the old fort with a grassy, tree-shaded park.

National Monument and National Park Site (1946-present): The structure was restored to its earliest military use (1811-23) by the National Park Service in the 1960s and 70s. Significant changes include the removal of the aquarium roof; the removal of the stucco from the exterior walls; restored officers' quarters; restored portico and casemate roofs; and the introduction of wayside exhibits and exhibit areas. As originally, the structure remains a one-story open, roughly circular fort with a 92-foot radius constructed of brownstone and ashlar. Exterior walls are 8 feet thick. The massive foundation is composed of rough stone. The structure includes brick magazines, a portico of wooden columns and roof, a gravelled courtyard, and two water reservoirs below ground with wooden covers.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES	1808-1821	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	John McComb U.S. War Department
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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Castle Clinton National Monument is both a link with the colonial past and the symbol of the growing new American nation; its unique story represents and illuminates important aspects of American military history, urban history, and immigration history.

For nearly 200 years after the first European settlement, the southern tip of Manhattan Island, long known as the Battery, was an important--if not the principal--defense point for New York City. Castle Clinton was originally known as "West Battery," the last in a series of forts on the site which, starting with the 1626 Dutch settlement, guarded Manhattan Island from attack by sea. As such, the site is one of the last surviving links with the early history of New York.

West Battery was built between 1808 and 1811 to strengthen New York's sea defenses, as relations with Great Britain became increasingly strained. The fort thus became an important part of the New York City defense system during the war of 1812. After the war, West Battery was renamed Castle Clinton in honor of New York's wartime mayor, DeWitt Clinton. Castle Clinton served as Third District Military Headquarters through 1821 and then as a quartermaster depot until 1823.

No longer needed for military purposes, Castle Clinton became known as Castle Garden in 1824 and gained fame as an entertainment center through 1855. Opera, dramas, concerts, and fireworks displays took place there; and with the addition of a roof around the year 1845, the structure became a theater. Castle Garden reflected the growth of New York City and its expanding cultural life. The building served as the city's official welcoming site for distinguished Americans and foreign guests (including Andrew Jackson and Lafayette); as the scene of such notable scientific demonstrations as Samuel F. B. Morse's telegraph in 1842; and as the well-remembered site of the American concert debut of Jenny Lind (the Swedish Nightingale) in 1850.

As immigrants began entering the United States in increasing numbers by mid-century, the need to process them became obvious. Castle Garden was thus leased by the New York State Commissioners of Emigration in 1855 and served for the next 35 years as the nation's principal reception center for millions of immigrants, even after the disastrous 1876 fire that destroyed much of the building. The center closed in April 1890, as nearby Ellis Island became the major receiving point for immigrants in 1892.

Castle Garden then entered into a new phase of use beginning in 1896: it was converted into the New York Aquarium, reflecting the increased need for urban recreation and the growing popularity of the natural sciences. The aquarium remained on the site until 1941 when it moved to Brooklyn.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hugins, Walter E. "West Battery--Castle Clinton 1811-1821." NPS, 1956.

Svejda, George J. "Castle Garden as an Immigrant Depot, 1855-1890." NPS, 1968

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	5, 8, 3, 0, 4, 0	4, 5, 0, 6, 0, 9, 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Amy Millman, Robert Weible

Feb., 1983, March 1984

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service, North Atlantic Region

DATE  
617-223-3778

STREET & NUMBER

15 State Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Boston, MA 02109

STATE

# 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ NONE \_\_\_

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is  National \_\_\_ State \_\_\_ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Edna C. Beards*

TITLE

*Federal Preservation Officer* DATE *4/26/84*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Theresa M. Dwyer*

DATE

*12/18/84*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Closed because it appeared to stand in the way of the planned Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, Castle Clinton was saved from demolition by citizens' groups convinced of the building's national significance. In 1946 Congress authorized its establishment as a National Monument; and in 1950 Castle Clinton was so declared officially and placed under the administration of the National Park Service, which restored the structure to its early nineteenth-century military appearance.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Castle Clinton NM ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 3

All that certain piece or parcel of land situate, lying and being in the Borough of Manhattan, City, County and State of New York, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a point in the center of the entrance to the fort known as Castle Clinton on the outside line of the front wall thereof; thence easterly at right angles to the front wall 40 feet to a point; thence northerly 95 feet at right angles to the last described line to the point of beginning having a coordinate value of North 1704.53 feet West 9421.14 feet in the system used by the President of the Borough of Manhattan of the Borough Survey; thence s. 55 degrees 48 minutes 20 seconds e. for a distance of 190 feet along a line parallel to the outside line of the front wall of said fort and 40 feet therefrom to a point; thence s. 15 degrees 45 minutes 50 seconds w. for a distance of 102 feet to a point; thence n. 80 degrees 38 minutes 10 seconds w. for a distance of 102 feet to a point; thence n. 14 degrees 28 minutes 50 seconds e. for a distance of a 100 feet to a point; thence n. 45 degrees 55 minutes 40 seconds e. for a distance of 106 feet to the point of beginning.