

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| STATE: Rhode Island | |
| COUNTY: Newport | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER 001 | DATE 2 1973 |

1. NAME

COMMON:
Conanicut Battery

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
To the west of the northern portion of Beaver Tail Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Jamestown

STATE: Rhode Island, 02835 CODE: 44 COUNTY: Newport CODE: 005

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input checked="" 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) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Town of Jamestown

STREET AND NUMBER:
71 Narragansett Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Jamestown STATE: Rhode Island, 02835 CODE: 005

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Town Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER:
71 Narragansett Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Jamestown STATE: Rhode Island, 02835 CODE: 44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

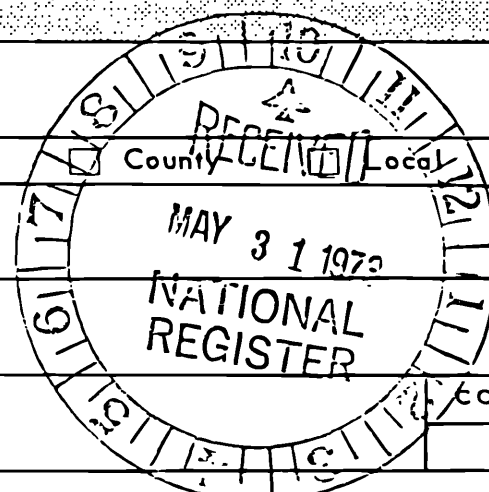
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Not so represented

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:



STATE: Rhode Island

COUNTY: Newport

ENTRY NUMBER: 001

DATE: 2 1973

FOR NPS USE ONLY

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Conanicut Battery is a Revolutionary War fortification located on the west side of Conanicut Island (Jamestown), on what is known as Prospect Hill, which has also sometimes been called Fox Hill. Its original plan was supposed to have been thus: Today one cannot easily surmise this shape, but it is still clearly a rectangular landform with sides that are "pulled in" towards the center. This artillery emplacement could be described as a continuous trench dug about six feet below ground level, with sides which are built up about two feet above ground level, giving an impression of long mounds. The pathwork is about 150 feet in length and 75 feet in width at its maxima, and 100 feet by 50 feet at minima--and thus it has a large central area. Particularly remarkable is the fact that the forms are still so very well defined; perhaps part of the reason for this survival is that the earth here is hard and stony. The land slopes down towards the West Passage in Narragansett Bay; one can see Point Judith and Block Island to the southwest and Dutch Island, with its lighthouse, to the north.



A site of about an acre has been cleared on and around the battery. In 1931, the Daughters of the American Revolution placed a bronze marker (which seems no longer in evidence) at the site and planted three large spruce trees (which remain) symmetrically down the center of the battery.



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) 1776

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 type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The land on which the Conanicut Battery was built originally belonged to Benedict Arnold, a former governor of Rhode Island, but at the time of the Revolution it was in the possession of Jerathmael Bowers. The fortification was built by Americans, probably in May of 1776, and was to be used in concert with a battery at Bonnet Point to defend the West Passage of Narragansett Bay with its six or eight heavy cannon, but it

was occupied by the British from the time they landed in Newport in December, 1776 until August, 1778, when ..., anticipating the arrival and occupancy of the island by the French, they (the British) spiked the guns, destroyed the magazines, abandoned the place and returned to Newport. [Field]

When the French arrived in the summer of 1778, Captain Frederick MacKenzie, who had been with the British Royal Fusiliers in Newport, recorded in his diary:

The General, judging it would answer little purpose to risque the loss of the Detachments upon Conanicut, sent orders, as soon as the French ship had passed the Battery on Fox Hill, to withdraw ... The French took possession of Conanicut this day and hoisted a White Colour there.

Though the cannon of Conanicut Battery were never fired in active fighting, the battery had, nevertheless, a certain effect by its very existence and placement. It was strategic, first, in the intended defence of Narragansett Bay by the Americans and, second--when under British control--in the blockade of the bay which kept the colonial navy bottled up in Providence and also restricted the movements of privateers.



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Field, Edward: Revolutionary Defences of Rhode Island (Providence, Rhode Island, 1896), pp. 117, 143-146.
 Diary of Captain Frederick Mackenzie of the Royal Fusiliers, in the collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, Rhode Island, pp. 122-129, 315-322.

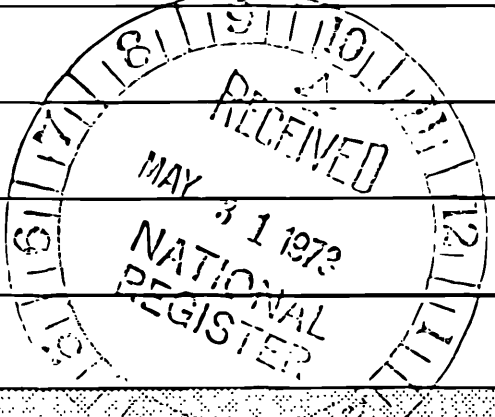
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY | | | O R | 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 | ° ' " | ° ' " | | 41 ° 28 48.79 N | 71 ° 23 ' 37.74 W | |
| NE | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |
| SE | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |
| SW | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: C. 1 acre

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|--------|------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
B. Christopher Bene, Surveyor-Researcher

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission DATE: May 17, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
John Brown House, 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02906 CODE: 114

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 Frederick W. Williamson
State Historic Preservation
Officer

Title _____

Date 5/7/73

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert Van Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7/2/73

ATTEST:
W. S. Smith
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 6 19 73

1973001201/1594630

OTM REF
12.11.11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NARRAGANSETT PIER QUADRANGLE
RHODE ISLAND
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6767 III SE
(PRUDENCE ISLAND)

