

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <u>Mass.</u>	
COUNTY: <u>Bristol</u>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER <u>70.7.20.0007</u>	DATE <u>7/1/70</u>

1. NAME	
COMMON: <u>Dighton Rock</u>	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION	
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>in Dighton Rock State Park, bounded as follows:</u>	
A landfill bounded on the north, west, south by the Taunton River, on the east by chain	
CITY OR TOWN: <u>and post fence in approximate location of original river bank</u>	
STATE: <u>Berkley Dighton vic.</u>	COUNTY: <u>Bristol</u>
CODE: <u>25</u>	CODE: <u>005</u>

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Site ☐ Building ☐ Structure ☒ Object	☒ Public ☐ Private ☐ Both	☐ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☒ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☒ Unrestricted ☐ No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
☐ Agricultural ☐ Commercial ☐ Educational ☐ Entertainment	☐ Government ☐ Industrial ☐ Military ☐ Museum	☐ Park ☐ Private Residence ☐ Religious ☐ Scientific	☐ Transportation ☒ Other (Specify) <u>recreational site</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY	
OWNER'S NAME: <u>Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Dept. of Natural Resources)</u>	
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>100 Cambridge Street</u>	
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Boston</u>	STATE: <u>Mass</u>
	CODE: <u>25</u>

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION	
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: <u>Department of Natural Resources</u>	
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>100 Cambridge Street</u>	
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Boston</u>	STATE: <u>Massachusetts</u>
	CODE: <u>25</u>

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS	
TITLE OF SURVEY: <u>Inventory of Historic Assets</u>	
DATE OF SURVEY: <u>1970</u>	☐ Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: <u>Massachusetts Historical Commission</u>	
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>Office of the Secretary, State House</u>	
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Boston</u>	STATE: <u>Massachusetts</u>
	CODE: <u>25</u>

STATE: Mass
COUNTY: Bristol
ENTRY NUMBER: 70.7.20.0007
DATE: 7/1/70
FOR NPS USE ONLY

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

PH 0005991 HBS No 017M



7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☒ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	☐ Altered	☒ Unaltered	☒ Moved	☐ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Dighton Rock is located in a state park in Berkley, Massachusetts, on the banks of the Taunton River. The Rock is gray, feldspathic boulder weighing approximately 50 tons. The exposed surface of the Rock has dimensions of 10 x 10 x 5 feet. One face of the rock has a broad, smooth, sloping surface on which numerous cryptic inscriptions and symbols have been carved.

Formerly the boulder was in the tidal waters of the Taunton River where the inscriptions suffered increasing water damage. In 1964, the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources raised the stone to its present level and constructed a landfill under it, forming a promontory. The Rock is now reddening through chemical reaction with certain iron compounds in the air and is in danger of drying out and crumbling. The Department of Natural Resources proposes to stop these weathering processes by erecting a building over Dighton Rock to serve as a protective shelter and also as a tourist center interpreting the Rock's history.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian | ☒ 16th Century | ☐ 18th Century | ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century | ☒ 17th Century | ☐ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| ☐ Aboriginal | ☐ Education | ☐ Political | ☐ Urban Planning |
| ☐ Prehistoric | ☐ Engineering | ☐ Religion/Philosophy | ☒ Other (Specify) <u>exploration</u> |
| ☒ Historic | ☐ Industry | ☐ Science | _____ |
| ☐ Agriculture | ☐ Invention | ☐ Sculpture | _____ |
| ☐ Architecture | ☐ Landscape | ☐ Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| ☐ Art | ☐ Architecture | ☐ Theater | _____ |
| ☐ Commerce | ☐ Literature | ☐ Transportation | _____ |
| ☐ Communications | ☐ Military | | |
| ☐ Conservation | ☐ Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The origin of the petroglyphs on the surface of Dighton Rock is one of America's historic mysteries. These pecked incisions on the feldspathic boulder are apparently a combination of alphabetic and pictorial symbols. Rev. John Davenport first copied the figures in 1680 and interested Cotton Mather in their study. In 1690, Mather described the Rock "filled with strange characters which would suggest as odd thoughts about them...as there are odd shapes in that elaborate monument..." More than 600 books and articles on Dighton Rock have appeared since Mather first wrote, advancing some 35 theories as to the source of the inscriptions. Various theories ascribe the petroglyphs to natural weathering, to Viking explorers, to pirates and to the Japanese, Chinese, Phoenicians, Scythians, Egyptians, Romans, Hebrews, and local Indian tribes.

The explanation of the Rock currently most popular is that given by the late Professor E. B. Delabarre. Professor Delabarre was convinced that the inscriptions were the Latin record of a visit made to the Rock by the lost Portuguese explorer Miguel Corte-Real. Corte-Real's ship disappeared off the coast of Newfoundland in 1502. Delabarre believed he had found in the inscriptions Corte-Real's name, a Portuguese cross and a date--1511. A local Indian legend also tells of strange men in a wooden house who came up the river and fought with the natives. Despite wide acceptance of this explanation, however, other of the theories persist and it now seems unlikely that there will ever be definitive evidence in support of any one of them.

* Davenport (Edward W. Small report, 10/18/54, NEHSE files)

RECEIVED
MAY 12 1971
NATIONAL
REGISTER

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Delabarre, E. B. Dighton Rock, a Study of the Written Rocks of New England. New York, 1928.

Hurd, D. H. History of Bristol County. Philadelphia, 1883.

Pohl, Dr. Frederick. The Viking Explorers. New York, 1966.

WPA. Massachusetts. Boston, 1937.

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	° ' "	° ' "		41° 48' 46"	71° 06' 38"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Richard W. Hale, Jr., Acting Chairman	
ORGANIZATION Massachusetts Historical Commission	DATE March 30, 1971
STREET AND NUMBER: Office of the Secretary, State House	
CITY OR TOWN: Boston	STATE Massachusetts
	CODE 25

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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 John F. X. Davara
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Mass. Historical
Title Commission

Date March 30, 1971

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

Ernest A. Connally
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
7/1/78

Date _____

ATTEST:

William J. Montague
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Advance

Administration

Bristol Co.
Dighton Rock Mass.

4/12/71

70.7.20.0007
4/1/70

8/2/71

4/13/71

✓
✓
✓
✓
✓

photo of glyphs would have been nice. "Object" should be checked, not "site."
Wonder if this really qualifies. Doubtless signif. as object, but has been
moved once and presumably could be again. Please pass this to George to see.

OK 5/21/71
Hessink
4/26/71

OK Levy
5/4/71

OK 5/7/71
Bretanville

See attached note.

*

Agree with George. Hale wants to help build the canopy. If we do put it on of Chambo
and give it, it might be a good way to have a say so in proper interpretation. 5-17-71

Site is right about object. Can we name it like 5 Marston
without seeing symbols? What if they are just
from natural weathering, as mentioned? 4/27/71

form signed by Keeper-OK

This is going to be a tough one to write
up, but

OK
CD
5/21/71

4/12/71.1

#10





Berkley

Dighton Rock

View of Rock in surroundings, view from southeast.

NPS Number 70-7-25-0007

Title: Dighton Rock

Photo: Commonwealth of Mass.
Dept of Natural Resources
100 Cambridge St Boston

Bristol Co., Mass

①

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Mass.	
COUNTY	
Bristol	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
70-7-25-0007	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Dighton Rock

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

In Dighton Rock State Park

STREET AND NUMBER: A landfill bounded on the north, west, south by the Taunton River, on the east by chain and post fence in approximate location of original river bank.

CITY OR TOWN:

Berkley

STATE:

Mass.

CODE

25

COUNTY:

Bristol

CODE

005

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Department of Natural Resources

DATE OF PHOTO: March, 1971

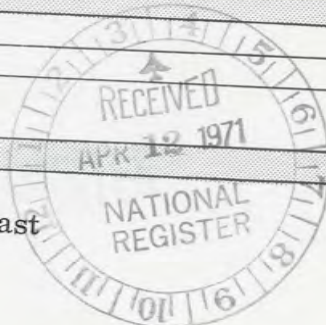
NEGATIVE FILED AT:

Department of Natural Resources

4. IDENTIFICATION

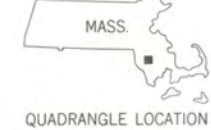
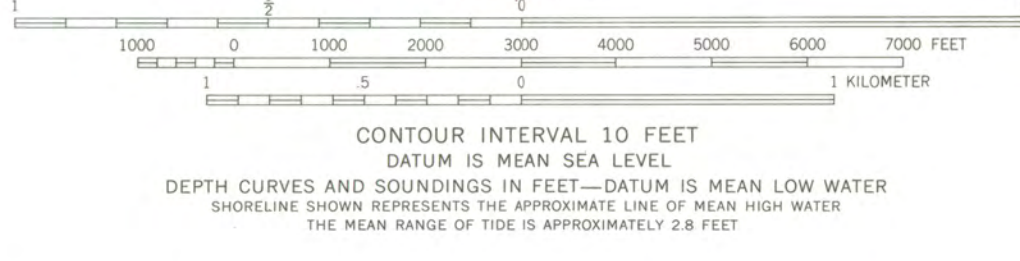
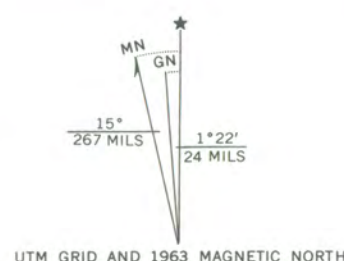
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

View of Rock in its surroundings, from the southeast





Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
Topography by planimetric surveys 1942. Revised 1963
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Chart 353 (1963)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
State Route ———

ASSONET, MASS.
N4145—W7100/7.5

1963

AMS 6767 I SE-SERIES 7814

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Form 10-301
(Dec. 1968)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE

Mass.

COUNTY

Bristol

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

70.7.20.0007 7/1/70

1. NAME

COMMON: Dighton Rock

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

in Dighton Rock State Park

STREET AND NUMBER: A landfill bounded on the north, west, south by the Taunton River, on the east by chain and post fence in approximate location of original river bank

CITY OR TOWN:

Berkley

STATE:

CODE

COUNTY:

CODE

Mass.

25

Bristol

005

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

U.S.G.S. Assonet

SCALE: Scale: 1:24,000

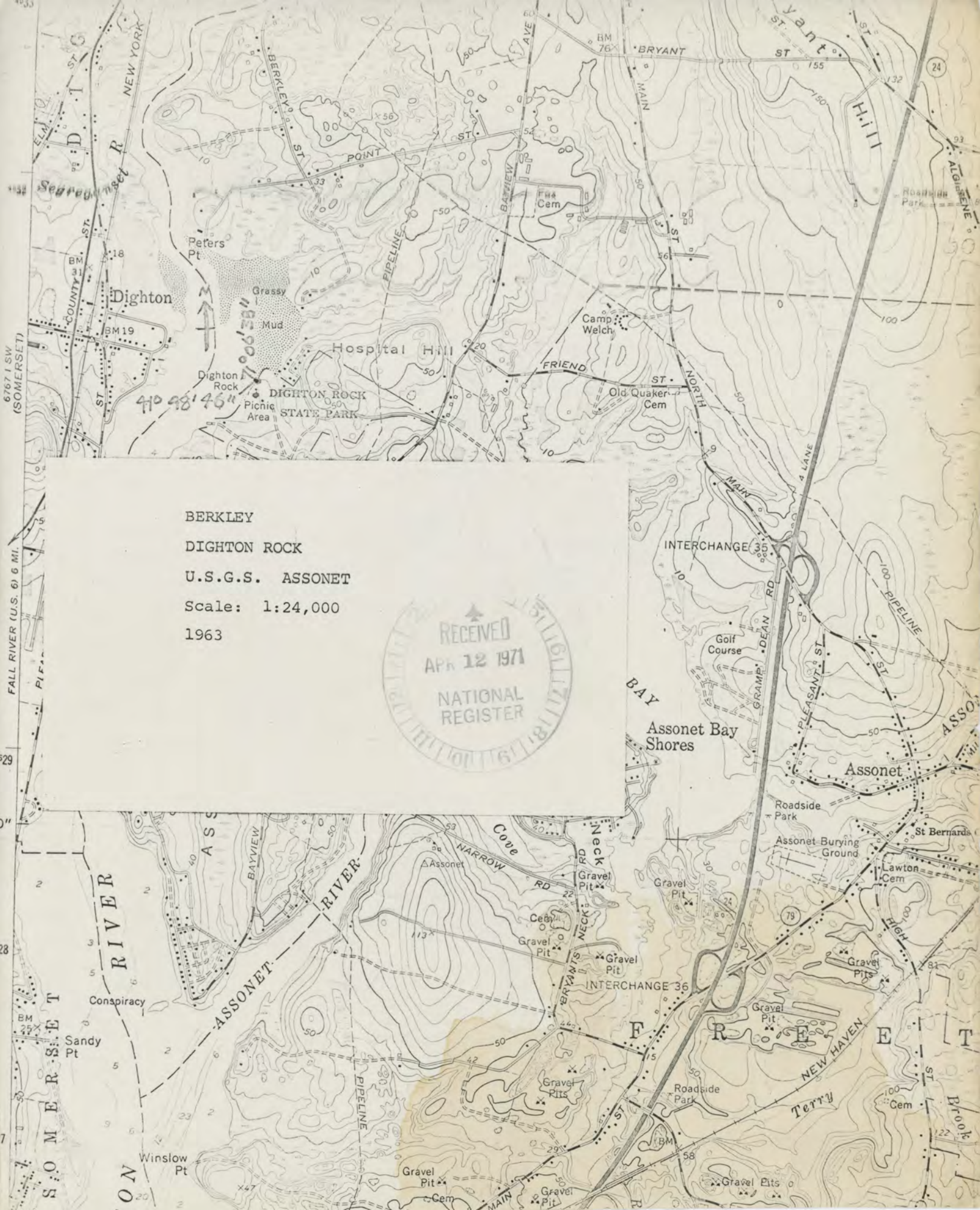
DATE: 1963

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.





BERKLEY

DIGHTON ROCK

U.S.G.S. ASSONET

Scale: 1:24,000

1963



(not a commitment)

TO SECRETARY

MAY 11 1960

FOR SIGNATURE
ADVANCE COPY

MAY 13 1960

L58-IBH
PARKS

COVERING BRIEF

TO: *Acting* The Assistant to the President
FROM: Secretary of the Interior *mass*

Problem: To reply to the letter of May 3 from Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva, Secretary-Treasurer of the Miguel Corte Real Memorial Society, Inc., New Bedford, Massachusetts, asking for American recognition of the importance of Dighton Rock and suggesting a statement by the President on the subject, possibly at the celebration in honor of Prince Henry the Navigator in Lisbon, Portugal, during the President's proposed visit to Portugal.

Discussion: The Dighton Rock is a gray, massive, sandstone rock of about 400 cubic feet in content, weighing about 40 tons, on the eastern bank of the Taunton River within the Town of Berkley and County of Bristol, Massachusetts. It appears to bear Indian and other inscriptions, efforts to decipher which have been repeatedly made since 1600. It has been claimed by some that it bears the name of the Portuguese explorer Miguel Corte Real (Cortereal), the date 1511, and the Portuguese coat of arms. The fact that 600 or more articles or books, discussing the Rock and its meaning, have been written in several languages is indicative of the complicated nature and importance of the problem. As yet, scholars are not agreed. The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, created under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), took the view in 1952 that the problem remains unsolved.

Implementation: If you sign the attached letter and Dr. da Silva sends the 20-page historical report he has offered to send, the report can be forwarded to the National Park Service, which will be glad to study it and keep it on file with other data relating to the Rock.

Recommendation: That the attached draft of a letter be used in replying to Dr. da Silva (Tab A).

Copy to: DCCO
Asst. Sec., Pub. Land Mgmt.
Division of Legislation
Under Secretary
Regional Director, Region Five
NPS Planning
Branch of History

(SGD) FRED G. AANDAH

} Each with copy of incoming
}

CWPorter:meh 5/10/60

FRS 9433

Dear Dr. da Silva:

President Eisenhower appreciates your letter of May 3 to him with enclosure regarding the importance of Dighton Rock on the Taunton River in Berkley, Massachusetts, as well as your interest in his proposed visit to Portugal and his efforts to foster international good will.

While the President has not personally made a study of the fascinating problem afforded by the inscriptions on Dighton Rock, the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior made such a study in 1952 on the basis of which the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments passed the following resolution at its meeting in Washington, D. C., on November 17-18 of that year:

"The Advisory Board having considered the fascinating problem presented by the inscribed Dighton Rock in Berkley, Massachusetts, and having found that the researches of Professor Delabarre between 1919-28, identifying certain markings as Portuguese, have as yet not been generally accepted, believes that judgment in the case should be suspended until new techniques are devised for recording the markings on the rock or ways and means found to permit a satisfactory examination of the inscriptions now exposed for only a short time at low tide. In the meantime, it is the view of the Board that the Old Colony Historical Society and the State of Massachusetts rather than the Federal Government should preserve the rock and protect it from vandals, so far as possible."

It appears from this that the Federal Government cannot very well give special recognition to the Dighton Rock at this time because general agreement does not exist among scholars in this Country regarding the significance of the Rock. For the same reason, the President could not express an American point of view on the subject at the forthcoming celebrations in Lisbon without becoming involved in possible controversy. About all he could say is that we are keenly interested in the historic possibilities afforded by the inscriptions on the Rock and are continuing to study them. In this connection, we shall be glad to have a copy of the 20-page historical report which you offer to send us. We want to give all possible honor to the important contributions of Prince Henry the Navigator and Miguel Corte Real whose achievements are genuinely appreciated by the American people.

Sincerely yours,

The Assistant to the President

Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva
Secretary-Treasurer, Miguel Corte
Real Memorial Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 648
New Bedford, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. da Silva:

We deeply appreciate your letter of June 30 with its accompanying report in further support of the request made in your letter of May 3 to President Eisenhower asking for Presidential recognition of the importance of Dighton Rock, Berkley, Massachusetts.

The report and recent historical literature dealing with the Dighton Rock have been studied with care. It would appear that scholars in this Country and abroad have not yet agreed on the true meaning and significance of the Rock. In the circumstances, it would be premature for the President of the United States to publicly visit it and make a statement of his own regarding its historical importance, although the kind invitation to make the visit is appreciated. For the same reason, the Federal Government is unable at this time to participate in the plan of preservation recommended on pages 50-55 of the report, which would provide for a cofferdam, monumentation, landscaping, and museum developments at the site.

We are interested that the International Congress to be held in Lisbon in September 1960 is expected to go into the history of the Dighton Rock inscriptions. It is our hope that the discussion in Portugal may result in throwing additional light on the fascinating problem which the markings on the Rock afford.

Sincerely yours,

The Assistant to the President

Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva
Secretary-Treasurer, Miguel Corte
Real Memorial Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 648
New Bedford, Massachusetts

15
FOR SIGNATURE
ADVANCE COPY

JUL 18 1960

L58-100
PARKS

COVERING BRIEF

TO: The Assistant to the President

FROM: ^{ASSISTANT} Secretary of the Interior

(SCD) FRED G. AANDAH

Problem: To reply to the letter of June 30 from Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva, Secretary-Treasurer of the Miguel Corte Real Memorial Society, Inc., New Bedford, Massachusetts, in further reference to his letter of May 3 to President Eisenhower asking for American recognition of the importance of Dighton Rock and inviting the President to visit the Rock on August 20 for the purpose of viewing the inscriptions and issuing his own opinion regarding the Rock's significance, presumably for the purpose of encouraging its preservation through the Federal Government. *md*

Discussion: The Dighton Rock is a gray, massive, sandstone rock of about 480 cubic feet in content, weighing about 40 tons, on the eastern bank of the Taunton River within the Town of Berkley, Massachusetts. It appears to bear Indian and other inscriptions, efforts to decipher which have been repeatedly made since 1680. It has been claimed by some that it bears the name of the Portuguese explorer Miguel Corte Real (Cortereal), the date 1511, and the Portuguese coat of arms. About 600 or more articles or books, discussing the Rock and its meaning, have been written in several languages and have arrived at widely different conclusions over the years. The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, created under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), concluded in 1952 that the riddle of the Rock remained unsolved. An important study, "The Enigma of Dighton Rock," in American Heritage, June 1958, pp. 62 et seq., shows that scholars are still in disagreement.

Implementation: The National Park Service will be glad to file the report with Service data on Dighton Rock, if so desired.

Recommendation: That the attached draft of a letter be used in replying to Dr. da Silva (Tab A).

Copy to: DCCO Regional Director, Reg. Five)
LM NPS Planning) Each w/c of inc.
DL Branch of History)
US
S

CWPorter:meh 7-13-60

PRS 09

L58-HH

March 1, 1968

Dr. Manuel Luciano da Silva
Bristol County Medical Center
1180 Hope Street
Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

Dear Dr. da Silva:

On behalf of Vice President Humphrey, thank you for your recent letter concerning Dighton Rock in Berkley, Massachusetts.

Historic sites and buildings established as units of the National Park System must be judged to possess national historical significance and to meet standards of suitability and feasibility for park purposes as well. Legislation in the Congress is ordinarily required to authorize the establishment of areas administered by the National Park Service.

The determination of national historical significance is made by the Secretary of the Interior under authority of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666). Such determinations are usually based on the recommendations of the Secretary's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments. The Advisory Board considered Dighton Rock in 1952 and concluded that its preservation should be the responsibility of the Old Colony Historical Society and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts rather than the Federal Government.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (P. L. 89-665), which authorizes matching grants for historic preservation projects, may eventually be a source of financial assistance for the preservation of Dighton Rock. To assure that proper consideration is given to its inclusion on the National Register, you may wish to get in touch with the State Liaison Officer named by the Governor of Massachusetts to carry out the State's responsibilities under P. L. 89-665. He is the Hon. John F. X. Davoren, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, Massachusetts 02135.

We appreciate your continuing interest in the preservation of Dighton Rock, and we were glad to supply this information to you.

Sincerely yours,

/S/ ROBERT M. UTLEY

Robert M. Utley
Chief Historian

cc:

Regional Director, NE w/c inc.

/HH - w/c inc.

HHP - Mr. Sarles w/c inc.

FBSarles:mg



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary

State House, Boston 02133

Fed. Reg.

John F. X. Davoren

Secretary of the Commonwealth

June 4, 1970

Dr. William Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register
Department of the Interior
801 19th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20006



Dear Dr. Murtagh:

In Massachusetts we wish to avail ourselves of pre-submission of state-owned properties for the Register. These four properties have been passed on by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at their March 17 meeting.

70.7.20.0004 1. Quincy Homestead, 34 Butler Road, Quincy, Norfolk County, which is already a state landmark

70.7.20.0005 2. Plymouth Rock, Water Street, Plymouth, Plymouth County. This is already part of the Cole's Hill National Landmark, but should, for obvious reasons be separately listed in the Register.

Then come two properties which are not located by streets, but which can be located by latitude and longitude.

70.7.20.0006 3. Moswetuset Hummock, Quincy, Norfolk County, 42 deg. 17 20 N, 71 1 20 W, the Indian seaside site which, with a change in spelling, gave the Commonwealth its name. On Squantum Street, c. 1,000 feet Northeast of intersection with Morrissey Blvd.

70.7.20.0007 4. Dighton Rock, Berkeley, Bristol County, 41 deg. 48 51 N, 71 06 42 W., is famous for its mysterious inscriptions ever since Cotton Mather transcribed them in the late 17th century. 1 mile west of Bayview Ave. in Dighton Rock State Park
These sites are in the following Congressmens' districts:

- 1, Quincy-- Representative James A. Burke
- 2, Plymouth--Representative Hastings Keith
- 3, Quincy--Representative Burke
- 4, Dighton--Representative Margaret Heckler

(over)

Yours sincerely,

Richard W. Hale /s/
Richard W. Hale, Acting Chairman
Massachusetts Historical Commission

RWH/s

4 Advance Nomination

DATE OF RECEIPT 6/11/70
DATE PAGE
INFO (S)
PHOTO DESCRIPTION (S)
MAP (S)
MAP DESCRIPTION (S)
LARGE
SMALL

6/18/70

OK

6/18/70

I only have reservations about #2 (Plymouth Rock); already a part of NHL. But perhaps this legendary site would qualify under Sec. 2.3(F); think of generations of American schoolchildren.
Conference

Gamble
6/24/70

MYSTERY

ARCHITECT

OK

Chambers

ASST. KEEPER

KEEPER

OK

Adm
6/25/70

WALK, PART

8/4/70



6.11.70.1-
6.11.70.4

H30-HR

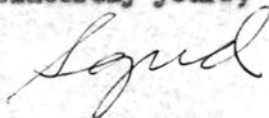
JUL 6 1970

Hon. John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Mr. Davoren:

We are pleased to inform you that the historic properties listed on the enclosure have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Edward W. Brooke and the appropriate Representatives have also been notified. Please withhold any publicity on this until you have received a carbon copy of the Congressional correspondence.

Sincerely yours,



Ernest Allen Connally
Chief, Office of Archeology
and Historic Preservation

Enclosure

JUL 1 1970

Entered in the National Register _____

cc:

HR

RGamble:mmm

6/26/70

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN HR

Properties added to the National Register of Historical Places

MASSACHUSETTS

Quincy Homestead
Plymouth Rock
Neswetusset Hammock
Dighton Rock

Norfolk County, Massachusetts
Plymouth County, Massachusetts
Norfolk County, Massachusetts
Bristol County, Massachusetts

an Chambers

Bristol Co, Mass 6/21/70
Counally 7-1
7 Wood
7/9

Under 7-9
Eaton 7/10/70

Freeman
7/13
PZ 7/13

H30-HR

JUL 14 1970

Hon. Margaret M. Heckler
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. Heckler:

We are pleased to inform you that Dighton Rock in Bristol County, Massachusetts, has been nominated by the State Liaison Officer appointed by the Governor for the implementation of the National Historic Preservation Program in Massachusetts and has been entered into the National Register of Historic Places. Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Edward W. Brooke have also been provided with this information. By copy of this letter, the State Liaison Officer, Hon. John F. X. Davoren, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, Massachusetts 02133, has likewise been notified. A leaflet explaining the National Register is enclosed.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) GEORGE B. HARTZOG, JR.

Director

Enclosure

JUL 1 1970

Entered in the National Register

cc:

Hon. John F. X. Davoren, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman,
Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Director, Northeast Region

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN HR

6/26/70

cc: Mr. Melvin
T HR
RCamble:um



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary

State House, Boston 02133

John F. X. Davoren

Secretary of the Commonwealth

July 16, 1970

Miss Elizabeth Dipple
Office of Archeology and
Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
801 19th Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C., 20006

Dear Miss Dipple:

This is to confirm the data I telephoned to you.
Moswetuset Hummock's address is Squantum Street, Quincy,
about 1000 feet northeast of its intersection with Mor-
rissey Boulevard.

Dighton Rock: Dighton Rock State Park, Berkeley, one mile
west of Bay View Avenue.

Also enclosed is a photocopy of the clipping from the
Worcester Telegram about Elm Park, about which I spoke to
you. It reached me by chance from friends in Worcester.

Thank you for your help on this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard W. Hale Jr.".

Richard W. Hale Jr.

Acting Chairman
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

RWH/st

AG435-IL

JUL 24 1970

DIVISION OF HISTORY	
SURNAME	NAME
HH	la
HHP	
HHS	11/10
	file

Hon. Claiborne Pell
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Pell:

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of Miss M. Ida Sousa concerning the need for archeological investigations at Dighton Rock. The enigma of Dighton and appeals for recognition of it as being of national historical significance have been presented to the Department of the Interior on a number of occasions during recent years. Unfortunately, according to archeological experts who have studied the carvings, there can be no certainty of its historical value despite the Portuguese Chronicles which indicate that it could have been possible for Manuel Cortereal to have inscribed the rock in 1511. Without reasonable authentication, we feel that national recognition would be premature. Such was in part the opinion of the Advisory Board in 1952. With these conditions, archeological investigations under the aegis of the Federal Government could not be warranted.

As an alternative approach, we would suggest an effort by the citizens of Massachusetts to have Dighton Rock entered in the list of historical landmarks for the Commonwealth. This would fall under the purview of the Honorable John F. X. Davoren, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, Massachusetts.

We hope that these views will be of some value in your reply to Miss Sousa.

Sincerely yours,

Director

Enclosure (Constituent's letter returned)

cc:
CL, Mr. Holley)w/c of inc.
Dir., Northeast)
HA, Mr. Sudderth)
LL, Mr. Melvin)

FNP:WESudderth:1wt:7-16-70

CL-5220

HP-mass.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of the Secretary
State House, Boston 02133

John F. X. Davoren

Secretary of the Commonwealth

April 8, 1971

The Office of Archeology and Historic
Preservation

National Park Service

801 19th Street, N.W.

Washington, D. C. 20006

Attention: Mrs. Sally Marusin

REGISTERED MAIL

Dear Sirs,

Enclosed are National Register submissions for:

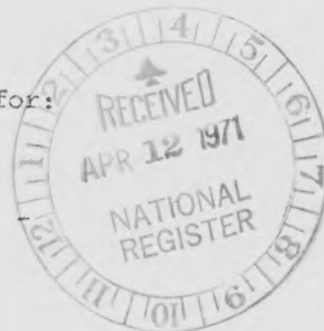
Dighton Rock

Old Barnstable Jail

Quincy Homestead

Margaret Fuller House

Cambridge Neighborhood House



These have been declared eligible for submission by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the State Review Board, and have been signed by Secretary of the Commonwealth, John F. X. Davoren, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission and designated the State Liaison Officer.

Sincerely yours,

Richard W. Hale Jr.

Richard W. Hale, Jr.

Acting Chairman

Massachusetts Historical Commission

RWH:aw

APR 12 1971

There is considerable material on Dighton Rock in the files of the National Survey of Historic Sites & Buildings. Attached is part of Edwin Small's report of 10/18/52, the inventory form of 2/20/59, and parts of pertinent correspondence. The balance of the Survey file, including photos, sketches, etc., is in my office at the moment.

Small's report does an excellent job in summing up the problems. Note especially Byers' comments on pp. 5-6 of attached Part II, Confidential Data. Despite the fact that the inscriptions may well be local Indian petroglyphs, and its potential significance for indicating early European, etc., exploration of this area unrealized, I believe we should approve the nomination. Besides, after almost 300 years of attention, the stone has almost become historic in its own right!

L. L. Battanack, 5/7/71

12/25/71

JUL 7 1971

H30-HR

Hon. John P. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission
Office of the Secretary
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Mr. Davoren:

We are pleased to inform you that the historic properties listed on the enclosure have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Edward W. Brooke and the appropriate Representatives are being informed. A leaflet explaining the National Register is enclosed for each of the property owners. Please withhold any publicity on this until you have received a carbon copy of the Congressional correspondence.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)

Director

Enclosures

Entered in the National Register

JUL 2 1971

cc:
HR

PDHerrick:mm

6/28/71

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN HR

Properties added to the National Register of Historic Places

MASSACHUSETTS

Cambridge Neighborhood House

Middlesex County
Cambridge, Massachusetts

"Old Jail"

Barnstable, Massachusetts

Fuller (Margaret) House

Middlesex County
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dighton Rock

Bristol County
Berkley, Massachusetts

JUL 7 1971

N30-HR

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN HR

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Kennedy:

We are pleased to inform you that the historic properties listed on the enclosure have been nominated by the State Liaison Officer appointed by the Governor for the implementation of the National Historic Preservation Program in Massachusetts and have been entered into the National Register of Historic Places. Senator Edward W. Brooke and the appropriate Representatives have also been provided with this information. By copy of this letter, the State Liaison Officer, Hon. John F. X. Davoren, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston, Massachusetts 02133, has likewise been notified. A leaflet explaining the National Register is enclosed.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)

Director

Enclosures

Entered in the National Register

JUL 2 1971

cc: Hon. John F. X. Davoren, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Also notified: Hon. Edward W. Brooke
United States Senate

Hon. Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.
Hon. Hastings Keith
Hon. Margaret M. Heckler

cc: Director, Northeast Region

HR

PDHerrick:mm

6/28/71

Properties added to the National Register of Historic Places

MASSACHUSETTS

Cambridge Neighborhood House

Middlesex County
Cambridge, Massachusetts

"Old Jail"

Barnstable, Massachusetts

Fuller (Margaret) House

Middlesex County
Cambridge, Massachusetts

+ Dighton Rock

Bristol County
Berkley, Massachusetts

V Confidential Data

A. Suggested development:

No development is suggested or recommended exclusive of the possibilities for preservation which have been discussed under IV, F. The present holdings of the Old Colony Historical Society of Taunton are adequate to provide a right-of-way to the rock and for possession of the rock itself. These requirements are the maximum so long as the rock is to be considered primarily an object of archaeological or scientific interest and to be preserved for further study and investigation. In the event, however, the Delabarre theory should ever receive complete acceptance and the object and site become as significant for the Age of Exploration as Plymouth Rock is today for the Colonial Period or Age of Settlement, acquisition of several acres on the shore behind the rock and the elimination of at least three summer cottages would be advisable.

B. Estimated cost of management and protection:

If left exposed as at present, no costs for management or protection of Dighton Rock would be necessary. The initial cost of building a coffer dam and/or barrier described under IV, F., might be considerable, with an annual allotment of several hundred dollars for upkeep and maintenance. Any larger development, of course, involving the acquisition of shore property would require the presence of personnel for management and protection and increase accordingly the annual costs.

C. Evaluation of the history or archaeological significance of the site for historic site survey purposes:

Unless the Delabarre theory ascribing some figures of the inscription on Dighton Rock to the Portuguese explorer, Miguel Cortereal, in the year

1511 is finally accepted, we believe any basis on which it might be considered for national recognition to be very slender. The Indian pictographs and the lack of certainty as to whether they were inscribed in the pre-Columbian period or not until after the arrival of the white man is a problem to be solved by archaeologists. Offhand, we would question the importance of the Indian pictographs, whether they date before or after Columbus or Cortereal, but would be satisfied to accept the verdict of an archaeologist who has specialized in the field of petroglyphs.

In connection specifically with the Delabarre theory as to the Cortereal inscription, the methods of archaeology are also needed before any fact of outstanding historical significance may be established. It is more than a quarter of a century since Professor Delabarre's investigation was performed. Archaeologists have reviewed his research, yet insofar as we have been able to determine no thoroughly searching, independent and objective investigation has been made by a specialist in petroglyphs as a check against Professor Delabarre's work, nor any attempt to improve on the excellent flashlight reproductions of Professor Delabarre's day. Such a project, even if unfruitful with regard to establishing any important historical associations in the Age of Exploration, would at least give the proponents of the Delabarre theory food for thought and dispell, once and for all, any misconceptions to the effect that participation by archaeologists has been limited simply to sterile sneering and unconstructive commentary.

After Professor Delabarre's book appeared in 1928, archaeologists wrote reviews and were as charitable as the uncertainty of internal evidence would

permit. The key review was probably written by Charles C. Willoughby, Director Emeritus, Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. His review appeared initially in The New England Quarterly for July, 1929, and was repeated with minor changes in the American Anthropologist for July-September, 1929. Director Emeritus Willoughby thought Dighton Rock "probably the most famous object of archaeological interest in America" and Professor Delabarre's book "a valuable contribution to New England archaeology, whether or not the reader is able to accept all the author's conclusions, which are presented in a clear and interesting manner". With regard to the deciphering of letters by Professor Delabarre, he wrote "a few of the characters can be traced without difficulty in his illustrations, but the majority of them appear to be too obscure for unqualified acceptance".

A review by Truman Michelson in the American Historical Review for January, 1930, printed with permission of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, followed the opinion already expressed by Willoughby and even referred to the latter's review in the American Anthropologist. "Truth compels me to state" concluded Michelson, "that a very few characters may have values assigned by Dr. Delabarre, but the rest can not be accepted".

A similar attitude was taken by Julian H. Steward, Bureau of American Ethnology, in a comprehensive article on "Petroglyphs of the United States" printed in the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution, 1936, pages 405-425. Steward is particularly helpful in describing the problem of accuracy in reproducing the characters or lines of petroglyphs. The following paragraph, page 411, states the problem generally and also calls attention to Dighton Rock:

"It should be remarked at this point that the mere recording of entirely genuine petroglyphs is usually fraught with possibilities of errors. A good photograph of the untouched inscriptions is best. Often, however, when it is impossible to procure a clear photograph, it is necessary to chalk in the lines if the design is carved. This introduces a real possibility that the person will chalk so as to idealize or that he will see what is actually not there. The greatest danger is in copying, in which one tends unconsciously to record what he thinks the petroglyph is intended to be, not what it really is. Distortions in hand drawings are particularly patent in the many reproductions of Dighton Rock, each person slightly falsifying the real inscriptions to fit his preconceived idea of what they represent."

Professor Delabarre had the benefit of as good reproductions as it was possible to obtain at the time his work was done through the use of flashlight photography. Insofar as we are aware, no charges of distortion or falsification have ever been levelled at Professor Delabarre's work. The problem has been rather that of unwillingness to accept Professor Delabarre's conjectures where lines are indistinct or missing on his photographs. It is this point of view, we believe, Steward expresses when he describes, page 410, "Some of the post-Columbian names and dates" Professor Delabarre claimed to have found on Dighton Rock as "not entirely convincing".

We got a somewhat similar reaction from Douglas S. Byers, Director of the Robert S. Peabody Foundation for Archaeology at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, when we discussed the Delabarre theory with him on October 14. Byers said that the integrity of Professor Delabarre had never been questioned by archaeologists. It was simply a matter of being unable to say that his conjectures, which contain a high degree of probability, had been proved or could be proved on the basis of the internal evidence provided by the inscription on the rock. Byers went on to point to the unenviable position any professional archaeologist would expose himself if he should take the stand that the Delabarre theory had been proved. Moreover, he was not optimistic about any new techniques or methods of archaeology that would be an improvement on Professor Delabarre's approach to the problem.

Byers feels that the preservation of Dighton Rock should be assured, and said that he would deplore the presence of any undesirable exploitation just as much as Mr. Aguas. He was inclined to favor removal of the rock either to a museum or to a dry place on the shore nearby where it would be more accessible for observation. "It is not doing anyone any good where it is now, covered up most of the time by the tide" he said. The rock would be difficult to dislodge, he thought, but hoisting equipment on a barge during an unusually high tide in the fall or spring might do the job.

Byers called attention to the scarcity of Indian petroglyphs in New England and the importance of preserving Dighton Rock for this reason if no other. He tended to rank the rock higher in this connection than we have in a prior paragraph of this section. Petroglyphs studied by archaeologists in other parts of the country, we gather, are now commonly attributed

to the Indians before they had contact with the white man. Byers intimated that this may well be the case with some of the picture-writing on Dighton Rock, but it has not been proved. Such a theory does not coincide with that of Professor Delabarre who concluded the "Indian records belong..., in all probability, to the period extending from about 1640 to about 1675". (See Dighton Rock, page 185).

We had hoped also to talk with Frederick Johnson, an associate of Dr. Byers under the Peabody Foundation for Archaeology. Unfortunately, Dr. Johnson was absent on a field trip. Byers was able to tell us, however, that Johnson had performed exploratory work before the recent war on Grassy Island, an Indian camp site of a thousand years or more ago now lying submerged at high tide in the Taunton River less than a quarter of a mile north of Dighton Rock. The fact that the camp site is now under water at high tide, sometimes to a depth of three feet or more, is strong evidence if not proof that Dighton Rock was at one time above the reach of the tides or at least so situated that rock-carvers had more time between tides to practice their craft than they would today. Byers thought Johnson had been interested in Dighton Rock primarily in connection with the problem of tide levels and that he had made no especial investigation of the inscription upon it.

Dr. Henry F. Howe, a physician of Cohasset, Massachusetts, has acquired some reputation as an amateur historian of New England, especially for the periods of exploration and settlement. His book, Prologue to New England, was published in 1943 and Salt Rivers of the Massachusetts Shore last year. We had the opportunity to discuss the subject of Dighton Rock with Dr. Howe

at Plymouth, Massachusetts, on September 26 when we appeared on the same program at the annual New England Conference of the American Association of Museums. Dr. Howe is greatly interested in Dighton Rock and has been to see it many times with friends of his who are members of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, a group banded together for the purpose of making field trips and studying archaeological sites and objects in the state. Dr. Howe feels that the inscription on Dighton Rock is apt to remain a mystery for some time and, perhaps, forever unless it is possible to develop techniques more proficient than any available now to bring out the details of the letters upon which Professor Delabarre's conjectures are built. Dr. Howe repeated to us the substance of what he had already written on pages 8 and 21 of his Prologue to New England.

Edwin W. Small

Edwin W. Small
Superintendent
Salem Maritime National Historic Site

October 18, 1952

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE Massachusetts	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. Theme II - Early Indian Farmers III? (???)
3. NAME(S) OF SITE Dighton Rock	4. APPROX. ACREAGE 1/438th acre
5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet) Near Berkley on shore of Taunton River	
6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner) State of Massachusetts	
7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)	

Allegedly New England's oldest petroglyph and believed to be (by some) the oldest monument in U. S. bearing a white man's message.

Proposed through Congressman Martin April 1952. Service reply stated that the matter would be presented to the Advisory Board in the fall and that an historical investigation and report had been requested. No record of further action.

The investigation by Hartshorn and Johnson made subsequently for the State of Massachusetts when the matter of whether or not it was possible to remove the rock to the adjacent mainland in order to preserve it indefinitely as an historic feature resulted in so elaborate a set of methods and precautions being recommended for the operation, that the plan to move it was dropped, and the proposal is at present shelved. This report states:

"We are offering no opinion concerning the inscription on the rock. We are considering Dighton Rock only as an historical monument that has been known throughout the world since about 1680. The fact that six hundred or more articles or books, discussing the rock and its meaning, have been written in several languages reinforces an opinion that Dighton Rock is perhaps one of the world's most famous inscribed rocks. It is true, we believe, that the state of Massachusetts is now directly responsible for the preservation of Dighton Rock, which is analogous to some irreplaceable antique piece of furniture or painting by an old master."

The rock is a gray felspathic massive sandstone estimated 480 cu. ft., and weighing 40 tons (Delabarre ref.) Inscription weathering slowly.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Give best sources; give location of manuscripts and rare works)

"Results of Some Investigations of and about Dighton Rock: Being a Report to the Commission on Dighton Rock", signed by Joseph Hartshorn, U. S. Geological Survey and Frederick Johnson, R. S. Peabody Foundation.

9. REPORTS AND STUDIES (Mention best reports and studies, as, NPS study, HABS, etc.)

Six hundred articles mentioned by above reference.

10. PHOTOGRAPHS * ATTACHED: YES ☐ NO ☒	11. CONDITION Good	12. PRESENT USE (Museum, farm, etc.) Holding down Taunton R. shore	13. DATE OF VISIT
14. NAME OF RECORDER (Signature)	15. TITLE Regional Archeologist	16. DATE 2-20-59	

* DRY MOUNT ON AN 8 X 10 1/2 SHEET OF FAIRLY HEAVY PAPER. IDENTIFY BY VIEW AND NAME OF THE SITE, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH, AND NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER. GIVE LOCATION OF NEGATIVE. IF ATTACHED, ENCLOSE IN PROPER NEGATIVE ENVELOPES.

(IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED USE SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET, 10-317a, AND REFER TO ITEM NUMBER)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE Massachusetts	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. Arch. II? of white inscriptions, could be VIII? (???--!)
3. NAME(S) OF SITE Dighton Rock	4. APPROX. ACREAGE 1/438th acre
5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet) Near Berkley on shore of Taunton River	
6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner) State of Massachusetts	
7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)	

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(IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED USE SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET, 10-317a, AND REFER TO ITEM NUMBER)

MS

DIGHTON ROCK (25-71-00006-00). *Dighton Rock State Park, Bristol Co.* State ownership. A rock marked with cryptic inscriptions of unknown meaning and origin that have presented an historical mystery since the 17th century. Construction of a facility to protect the rock from air damage and discoloration. \$10,720.50.