

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

American Flag Raising Site (AHRS SITE SIT 002)

ANO/OR COMMON

Baranov Castle; Castle Hill

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Lincoln and Katlean Streets

--NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sitka

-- VICINITY OF

Alaska

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alaska

02

Sitka Division

220

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**

DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

**PRESENT USE**

AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Alaska Division of Parks

STREET &amp; NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Anchorage

-- VICINITY OF

Alaska

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

CDURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Alaska Division of Lands

STREET &amp; NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Anchorage

Alaska

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE

1960-62

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FDR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Washington

D.C.

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This sixty-foot rock outcropping near the edge of Sitka harbor is one of the more prominent natural features in the town. At the time of first European contact (ca. 1795) it fronted directly on the water, but in 1968 considerable fill was put in on the west and south faces so that the hill is now several hundred feet from the sea.

The south side of the site presents an almost sheer rock wall down to the base. The east side is much more gradual, and between the thirty-four contour and the base more or less level land exists. Other than this, the only level area is the summit—approximately one-hundred and twenty feet long and ninety feet wide.

Although the site of Tlingit houses prior to 1804 and the locus of Russian structures from 1804-1867, and American buildings from 1867-1898 and 1900-1955, nothing remains of this past human use on the surface. At the time the last building was demolished, however, a small cellar room carved from the rock was found near the south edge of the summit and much glass and other debris can be found in the soil.

The Tlingit houses were destroyed in 1804 when the Russian reoccupied Sitka (after being driven out in 1802). The first Russian building, thirty-five by twenty-one feet, was replaced about 1808 and its successor, built about 1823 of bricks apparently acquired from a passing ship, was damaged by an earthquake and torn down around 1833. In 1836, a new building, two story with attic and cupola, was almost complete. This last edifice lasted until March 17, 1894, when it was destroyed by fire. In 1900 the U.S. government built an agricultural station which remained on the site until 1955.

From that time until 1965, the property was a grassy Territorial and later State Park. At that time, a stone parapet with space for six cannon, pilasters for six interpretive plaques, and a flag pole were installed as a rehabilitation project in connection with the 1967 Alaska Purchase Centennial. With these features, the property is now maintained as a unit of the Alaska Park System.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1804 - battle; 1806 to 1869 - Capital; Oct 15, 1867 transfer ceremony

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

## Significance

The scene of the formal transfer of Russian America to the United States, the American Flag Raising Site is perhaps the most nationally important historical property in Alaska. The events of October 18, 1867, marked the Nation's first expansion into non-contiguous territory. Russia's withdrawal from the Northwest Coast of North America also represented the outermost reach of the Slavic eastern frontier and its recession. The site is of secondary national importance as the seat of the Russian-American Company in Alaska ca. 1806-1867 and as the place where the first official raising of the forty-nine star national flag in Alaska occurred.

## Historical Background

The Kiksadi clan of the Tlingits had four principal houses located on what is now Castle Hill, but was known to them as the "knootlian" site. When Alexander Baranov visited the area in 1795 and negotiated for a trading location, he expressed a preference for the rocky prominence. Actual construction of the Russian post in 1799, however, took place some seven miles to the north in hopes of preserving a friendly atmosphere.

The fort at that location, Redoubt St. Archangel Michael, was destroyed by the Tlingits in 1802. Two years later, Baranov returned with a force and launched an attack on Castle Hill, only to find it evacuated. The Indians had withdrawn to a sapling fort known as "shiske-nu" at the mouth of Indian River (a site now in Sitka National Historical Park). Several days of unsuccessful negotiations ensued and were followed by a six-day battle which culminated with the Russians seizing and burning the Indian fort. The Kiksadi fled and did not return to Sitka for some twenty years.

Russians occupied the Castle Hill site from this time on, and, when the administrative headquarters of the Russian-American Company in Alaska transferred from Kodiak to Sitka about 1806, the location became the seat of government.

continued-

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Alman, R.K., "Development Plan and Report for Baranof Castle State Historical Monument", mimeo., in Alaska Division of Parks files, Anchorage, Alaska, June 1965.

Fedorova, Svetlana G., Russian Population in Alaska and California Late 18th Century--1867, Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly, trans. and eds., Kingston, Ontario, 1973. -continued-

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.6

UTM REFERENCES

A	08	479750	6322650	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 1, Tract A, U.S.S. 1474

57°02'56"N/135°20'10"W

The boundary encompasses the entire Castle Hill and is a line drawn around the base of that hill. The boundary is shown in red on the accompanying United States Coast and Geodetic Survey map of Sitka Harbor, dated 1973, Scale-1:10,000. The boundary is also shown in red on the aerial photograph (2-4), AMT 6000,290° Sitka 7-9-65 accompanying this form.

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

William S. Hanable

ORGANIZATION

Alaska Division of Parks

DATE

April 4, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

TELEPHONE

(907) 274-4676

CITY OR TOWN

Anchorage

STATE

Alaska

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*[Handwritten Signature]*

DATE

9/8/83

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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American Flag Raising Site

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRS), Alaska Division of Parks, 323 E. 4th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska

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After the sale of Alaska to the United States by the Treaty of Cession of March 30, 1867, commissioners were appointed to arrange actual transfer of the territory. On the afternoon of October 18, 1867, Brigadier General Lovell H. Rosseau, representing the United States, and Alexei Pestchouroff, Commissioner of the Tsar, met near the foot of the flagstaff in front of the Governor's House on Castle Hill. Detachments of American and Russian troops were drawn up on the parapet beside the building. The Russian flag was lowered; the United States was raised; and a brief exchange of statements completed the normal transfer of an area as large as Sweden, Finland, and Denmark combined.

Very shortly after the transfer, Brevet Major General Jefferson C. Davis, Commander of U.S. troops in Alaska, established headquarters of the Military District of Alaska in the former Governor's House. This use continued until 1877, when Army forces withdrew from Alaska. The building remained the scene of government operations, however, until 1894 when it burned. In 1898, the property was transferred to the Department of Agriculture and in 1900 a building was erected by the Agriculture Department that served as headquarters for its activities in Alaska until 1932. After that time, the building saw a variety of uses including service as an American Legion Post, nightclub, restaurant, and shop. In 1955, the building was demolished. The site, now designated as Territorial Park No. 1, was maintained as a grassy area with Russian cannon displayed.

On January 3, 1959, Alaska was officially admitted to the Union as the 49th State. President Eisenhower at this time announced a new design for the national flag--seven rows of seven stars appearing on the blue field, with the second, fourth, and sixth rows indented, the first change in forty-seven years. This became official on July 4, 1959, under the constitutional proviso that design change goes into effect on the 4th of July following ratification of admission of a new state. On July 4, 1959, the first official raising of the new flag in Alaska took place at the scene of the formal transfer ceremonies of 1867, adding to the totality of events creating national historical significance for the American Flag Raising Site.

This national historical significance was recognized on June 13, 1962, when the property was designated a National Historic Landmark.

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American Flag Raising Site, Alaska

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

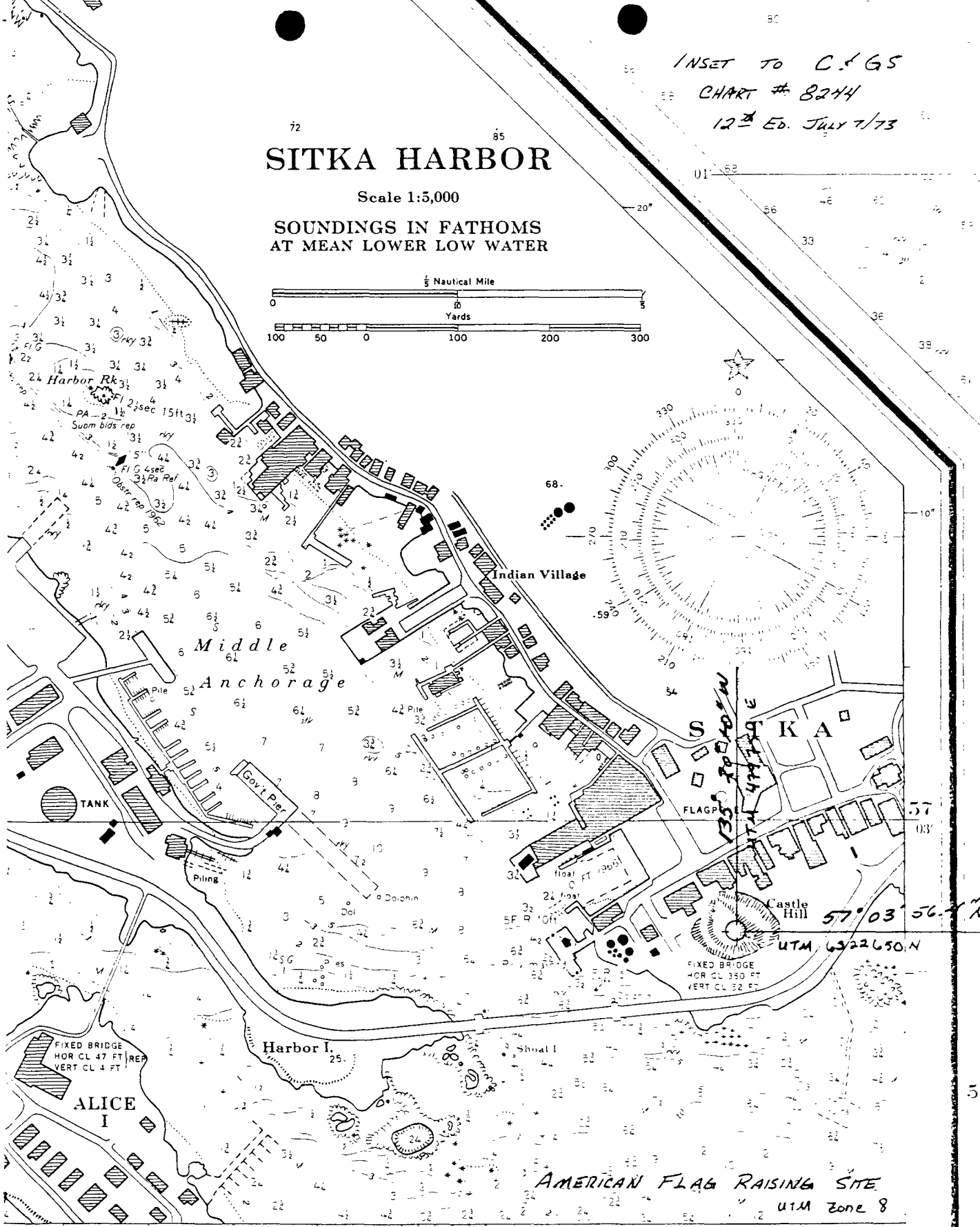
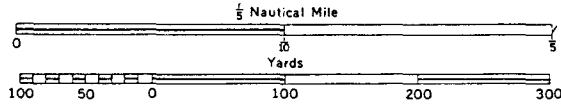
Hall, George A., "Report of Forty-Nine Star Flag Raising Ceremony, Sitka, Alaska, July 4, 1959" photocopy in Alaska Division of Parks files, Anchorage, Alaska, August 18, 1959.  
Hussey, John A., "Preliminary Study of the American Flag-Raising Site, Sitka, Alaska", mimeo., in Alaska Division of Parks file, Anchorage, Alaska, March 1, 1955.

INSET TO C. & G.S.  
CHART # 8244  
12<sup>th</sup> Ed. JULY 7/73

# SITKA HARBOR

Scale 1:5,000

SOUNDINGS IN FATHOMS  
AT MEAN LOWER LOW WATER



AMERICAN FLAG RAISING SITE  
UTM Zone 8

135° 20'

- 1 Q.M. Storehouse
- 2 Steam Saw Mill
- 3 Ord. Storehouse
- 4 Com.
- 5 Ord.
- 6 Castle
- 7 Brakehouse
- 8 Barracks
- 9 C.O. Office
- 10 Com. Sergeants Qrs
- 11 Barracks
- 12 Post Office
- 13 Officers Qrs.
- 14
- 15 C.O. Qrs.
- 16 Q.M. Storehouse
- 17 Laundress Qrs
- 18 Blacksmith shop

- 19 Carpenters shop
- 20 Ord. Sergeants Qrs
- 21 Old Magazine
- 22 Store
- 23 Laundress Qrs.



**POST OF SITKA**

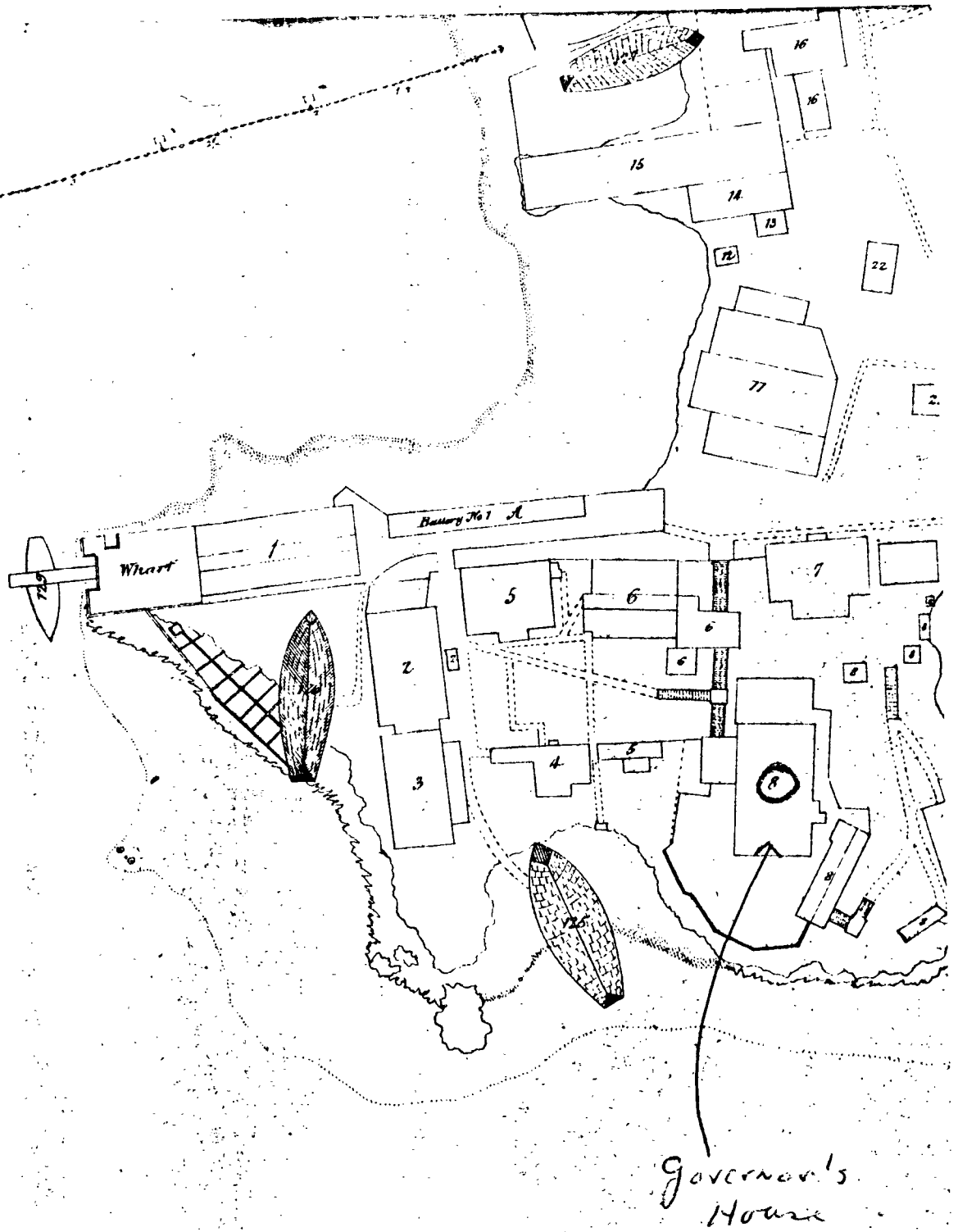
**ALASKA**

August 1877

(Ruined lines denote Overt. Build.)

MAP III





From  
1867 map of  
Sitka