

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maine	
COUNTY: Waldo	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Fort Knox State Park

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Fort Knox

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
on the west bank of the Penobscot River

CITY OR TOWN:
in the vicinity of Prospect

STATE Maine	CODE	COUNTY: Waldo	CODE
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted

Public Acquisition:
 In Process
 Being Considered

PRESENT USE: (Check One or More as Appropriate)
 Agricultural
 Commercial
 Educational
 Entertainment
 Industrial
 Military
 Religious
 Scientific
 State or Local Government
 Unimproved
 Other

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of Maine

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House

CITY OR TOWN:
Augusta

STATE:
Maine

5. LOCATION OF PROPERTY

COURTHOUSE

STREET AND NUMBER:
Waldo County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:
Belfast

STATE:
Maine

6. REPRESENTATION OF PROPERTY

TITLE:
Granite staircases

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Federal Archives and Records Administration

STREET AND NUMBER:
Belfast

CITY OR TOWN:
Belfast

STATE:
Maine

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER:
DATE:
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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

Located on the west bank of the Penobscot River in a commanding position on a high bluff, Fort Knox is a massive granite-and-brick five-sided fortress with a dry moat and sloping glacis on the landward sides, and two powerful flanking shore batteries. Massively constructed of granite blocks, the main fortress is about 146 feet by 252 feet in size and its walls average about 20 feet in height and 40 feet in width. Two of its five walls face east upon the river and these contain a series of eight great arched casements with ceilings heavily vaulted to support the artillery platforms mounted on the stone deck above. Both levels in these walls were armed with heavy guns that dominated the river. At the junction of the river walls, in the center east, is a large projecting bastion, built with cannon ports and rifle galleries, to permit a flanking fire along the walls. To the north of the bastion, and located in the center of that river wall, is the main entrance to the fortress, - a large flat-arched doorway topped by a granite pediment and flanked by pilasters. The plan of the fort includes an open-court yard. This parade ground is marked by numerous manholes which provide access to large bomb-proof areas below ground that were intended for the storage of supplies and provisions. On the river side, in the northeast and southeast corners, are two magnificent spiral staircases in which a complete circular column is formed by the treads and risers, which are of solid pieces of granite. The landside walls, to the north, south, and west, contained quarters, stables, and storage rooms, with rifle galleries along their outer faces, and heavy guns on the deck above. In the south wall, which is about 146 feet in length, were the officers' quarters; these were divided into two separate sections, each with two rooms each measuring approximately 50 by 20 feet. The enlisted men's quarters, located in the 252-foot west wall, were divided into eight compartments, each measuring about 30 by 15 feet in size. The north wall, about 146 feet in length, contained the stables and storage rooms.

The three landward walls are defended on the exterior by a wide and deep granite-faced dry moat. Rifle slits in the exterior face of the fort and also from rifle galleries in some exterior wall portions of the moat permitted a defensive fire along all sections of the moat. The exterior wall of the moat is covered by a massive sloping glacis or earthwork, which reduces the exposed granite landside walls of the fortress to a very silhouette. The northeast end of the glacis, facing on the river, is galleried, finely faced in granite, and pierced by canon ports and rifle slits. The entire north face of the glacis is also terraced with great rough hewn blocks of granite. The overall dimensions of the fortress, including the moat and glacis, are about 350 feet by 250 feet.

On the river side, near the northeast and southeast corners of the granite fort, are two wide and long tunnels. Granite staircases in these descend underground down the bluff to the two shore batteries located at a lower level and a short distance to the north and south of the main fortress. Both batteries are entrenched behind stone parapeted walls and contain brick hot-shot ovens and magazines; the north battery having platforms for 14 heavy guns and the larger seaward south battery, for about 25 guns.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1844-64

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 checked="" 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

Constructed by master craftsmen in the period 1844-64 and never fully completed, Fort Knox is a superb and completely unaltered example of a large mid-19th century granite coastal fortification. Fort Knox is also probably New England's finest unmodified specimen of the military architecture of this period.

History

The present site of Fort Knox was selected by Major General Wool in 1838, at the time of the United States' controversy with Great Britain over the northeastern boundary with Canada. The land for the site, 124.5 acres, was acquired in September, 1843-March, 1844. The post was named in honor of the Revolutionary War hero and first U. S. Secretary of War, General Henry Knox, of Thomaston, Maine. Construction began in 1844 and continued until 1864, when it ended forever. About 80% complete, the total cost of construction was \$928,500.31.

The fort was first garrisoned during the Civil War and was occupied from July 1863 to March 1866 by a detachment of some 50 Maine Volunteers. The fort was armed at this time with 111 heavy guns. During the Spanish American War, in June and July of 1898, the post was again occupied by a regiment of Connecticut Volunteers, who numbered about 354 men. An Act of Congress, March 4, 1923, authorized the Secretary of War to dispose of the Fort Knox reservation and its buildings. These were purchased by the State of Maine for the sum of \$2,121 on December 4, 1923. Fort Knox State Park has been administered by the Maine State Park and Recreation Commission since July 1, 1943.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Henry E. Dunnack, Maine Forts (Augusta, Maine, 1924), 45-66.

Maine, A Guide to "Down East" (American Guide Series) (Boston, 1937), 227.

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			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	44°	34'	38"	68°	48'	56"		
NE	44°	34'	38"	68°	48'	08"		
SE	44°	33'	43"	68°	48'	08"		
SW	44°	33'	43"	68°	48'	56"		

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **124 acres**

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:

Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION **Division of History, Office of Archeology and
Historic Preservation, National Park Service**

DATE
7/10/70

STREET AND NUMBER:

801 19th Street, N. W.

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE

D. C.

CODE

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 _____

Title _____

Date _____

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

ST Maine	
COUNTY Waldo	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

2. Boundaries for Fort Knox State Park, Prospect: 124.5 acres of land.

The precise boundary of Fort Knox State Park are shown in detail on the following two maps on file with the Branch of Historical Surveys:

1. "Fort Knox Reservation, Prospect, Maine, dated November 11, 1941; Scale 1 inch equals 200 feet."

2. "Plan of the Public Grounds at the Narrows of the Penobscot River, Drawn by A. W. Tinham, July 4, 1844, U.S. Engineer Department."

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(Continuation Sheet)

ST. Maine	
COUNTY Waldo	
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(Number all entries)

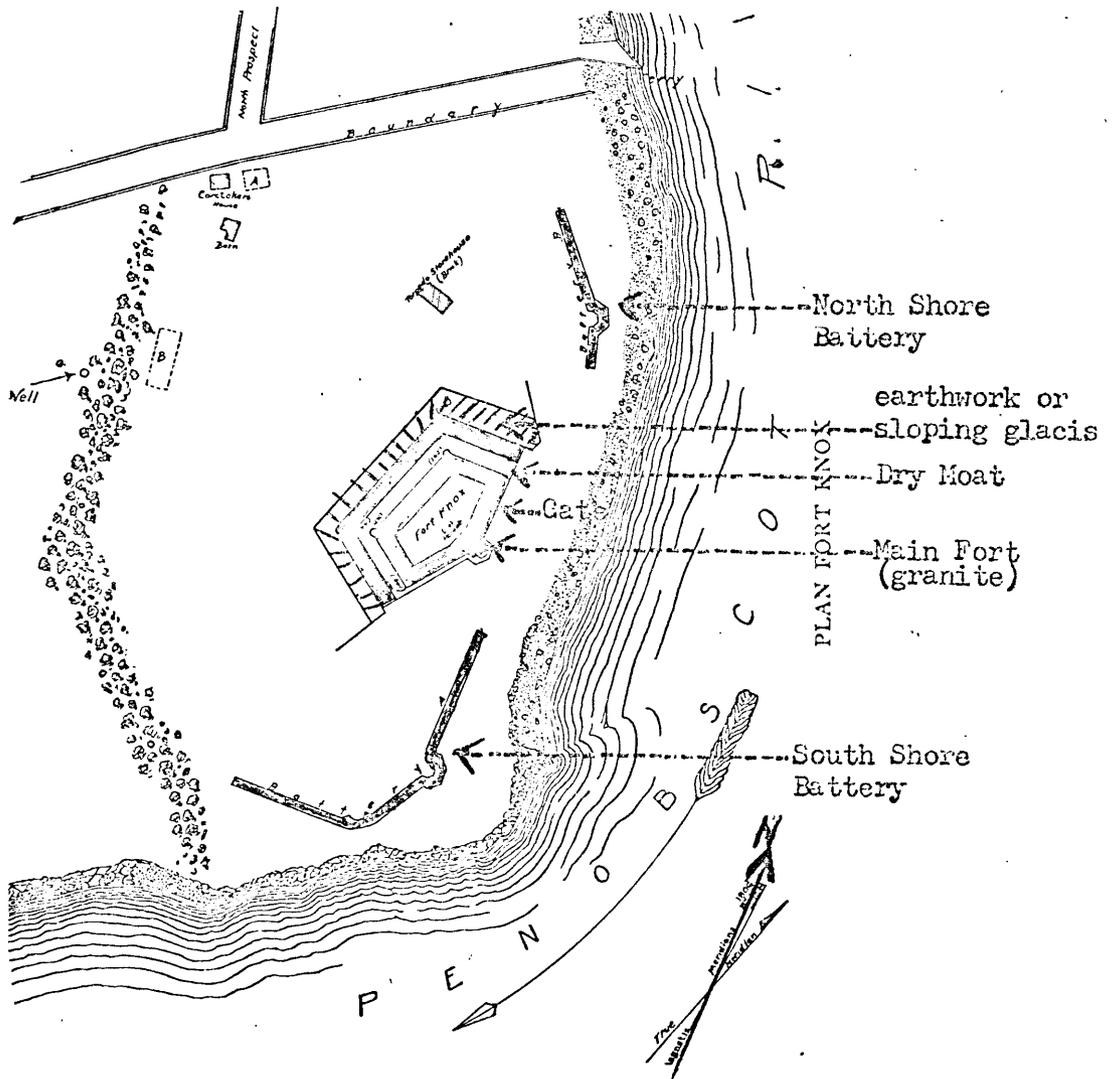
7. Description

Continued

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Constructed to mount a total of 137 cannon, only three heavy guns remain in the fortress today; these are two 10-inch Rodmans and one 15-inch Rodman.

The fortress was nearly completed when construction ended in 1864. Only more grading and a limited amount of building and finishing had been projected. The brick and stone work of the fort are of the finest quality and remain unaltered except for removal of small amounts for building purposes. The fort is in good condition and is open to visitors as an historical exhibit.



Plan of Fort Knox near
 Prospect, Maine