

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 | DATE |
| | |

1. NAME

COMMON:
Fort Dumpling

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Ocean Street

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Unused |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comments | | | |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
United States Government (General Services Administration)

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: II

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:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

At the southeastern tip of the main part of Conanicut Island three great thrusts of granite extend into the channel from Narragansett Bay to the ocean. The 80-to-100-foot cliffs are some of the most southerly outcroppings of this sort along the eastern seaboard and are unique in lower New England. Mariners as early as Verazzano in 1524 have remarked on the way in which these land forms serve as a natural location for the defense of the whole of Narragansett Bay.

The center "finger" of land, between what are called today West Cove, to the west, and Fort Cove, to the east, was for one hundred years the site of Fort Dumpling, built 1798-1800 under direction of an important French military engineer, a veteran of our Revolutionary War, Major Louis Tousard. The fort and its original siting can be observed in old photographs: the land, overgrown with scrubby weeds where granite is not exposed, rises slowly from the island to a plateau just large enough, it appears, for the fort. The granite is more in evidence and the incline steeper, of course, down to the water. The fort was built on the 50-foot promontory out of stone masonry in the form of an ellipse, whose axes were 81 feet (easterly) and 180 feet (northerly) respectively. An old elevation shows two rows of small square windows in the 26-foot-high wall, and descriptions tell of four brick-arched casemates on the channel side. These forms as described probably correspond to a kind of corridor with arched openings that was built inside the fort along the wall and which appears in old photographs. These old photographs show that the fort had become by then truly a "picturesque ruin," as General Cullum called it, and the island lost a notable work of architecture when it was declared unsafe and subsequently dynamited in March, 1898.

Today one approaches the site on land from Jamestown's Ocean Street. The 52 acres that have been a naval reservation are stark and rough and generally unspoiled: the dark, resilient vegetation--mostly weeds, berry bushes, and evergreen trees--covering the rolling landscape is often enshrouded by the fog which slips in from the ocean. As one nears Fort Dumpling's site, fairly modern military and maritime buildings dominate the scene. A submarine-mine storehouse facing Fort Cove, and a large pier area, begun before 1896, have considerably altered the physical character of the cove. Nothing structural remains of Fort Dumpling itself; the hill on which it stood has been isolated by the paved areas behind it, and there is a World War II concrete hut at the top, behind a bunker. From the top of the mound there is a splendid vista--Fort Adams, and Trinity Church's spire dominating the Newport skyline, both to the east; Castle Hill to the southeast; and Kettlebottom Rock, Beaver Tail, Point Judith, and Block Island, all to the southwest. The plateau on the hill still measures about the same as when it accommodated the fort; but immediately south and adjacent to the site, the land has been built up to hold a dug-in World War II fortification. Originally, the land dropped directly down to rugged granite shoreline formations over which the waves break.

(See Continuation Sheet.)

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

| 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |
| SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) <u>1798-1800</u> | | | |
| 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/Phi- losophy | <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 | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- itarian | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE | | | |
| <p>For over four hundred years the advantages of the Fort Dumpling location have been noticed and/or employed, beginning first with the observation by the Italian explorer Giovanni Verazzano, who in 1524 wrote "In the midst of the harbour's east entrance there is a rock of freestone, formed by nature, and suitable for the construction of any kind of machine or bulwark for the defence of the harbor."</p> <p>Later, in 1636, Roger Williams remarked in his letters that Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts wished Narragansett Bay and Conanicut (Jamestown) Island settled and protected, as any attack through that area would "lead to the back door of Boston."</p> <p>In 1764 or 1765, the British military officer and colonial official Robert Melville wrote, regarding "points of defence by forts and batteries," that "nature has done her part, every point, height and Island being placed in the very best place for effectual defence." For these reasons, British forces at the time of the American Revolution were quick to over-run and hold Conanicut Island, and a detachment was posted on "that part called the Dumplings," lest the Americans instead have control over the entrance to Newport Harbour.</p> <p>Finally, in 1798-1800, when maritime relations with France were strained, Fort Dumpling was actually constructed under the direction of Major Louis Tousard, who also superintended the building of its larger neighbour, Fort Adams in Newport. Behind walls, and an elliptical tower 180 by 81 feet on the ground, of stonework, a gun battery in casemates was well protected and was activated as a vital part of harbour defence in the War of 1812 and in the Civil War. The existence and dominating position of this fortification were reasons why an enemy never dared approach--never penetrated the inner bay--and why the artillery placed there was never obliged to go into serious action.</p> <p>By 1898 the old fort had become ruinous, and the remains were demolished by dynamiting in order that Fort Wetherell, hurriedly required on account of the Spanish-American War, could be constructed on the strategic site. The name Fort Wetherell remained throughout and after</p> | | | |
| (See Continuation Sheet.) | | | |

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

| | |
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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

The coves nearby are "bold"--they are deep and thus accommodate deep-keeled boats and are excellent places for fishing--and they have small sandy beach areas.

8. Significance.

World Wars I and II--at which latter time additional concrete defences were built into the cliff--until the entire emplacement was finally abandoned by the military.

Arrangements are just now (January, 1972) in the making for transfer of the Fort Dumpling site from the General Services Administration to the State of Rhode Island, its future use to be that of a park or "passive" recreation area, differing somewhat from the park, museum and educational uses planned for its companion, Fort Adams, across Narragansett Bay's east channel. So, both on land and from the sea, people can use, see and appreciate this promontory which for so long has formed a New England landmark and a natural local harbour defence. It will be fortunate for Jamestown and for Rhode Island that there is such a plan to preserve this location for public use, recognition and appreciation; and that it will thus escape certain other less desirable uses and constructions which had been proposed for the site.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

U. S. Works Progress Administration. Federal Writers' Project: Rhode Island. A Guide ... (Boston, 1937), p. 432.
 Field, Edward: Revolutionary Defences in Rhode Island (Providence, Rhode Island, 1896), p. 143.

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 ' 38.43" N | 71 ° 24 ' 3.07" W | |
| 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: B. Christopher Bene, Surveyor-Researcher
Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission DATE: January 29, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: State House, 90 Smith Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02903 CODE: 14

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 _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

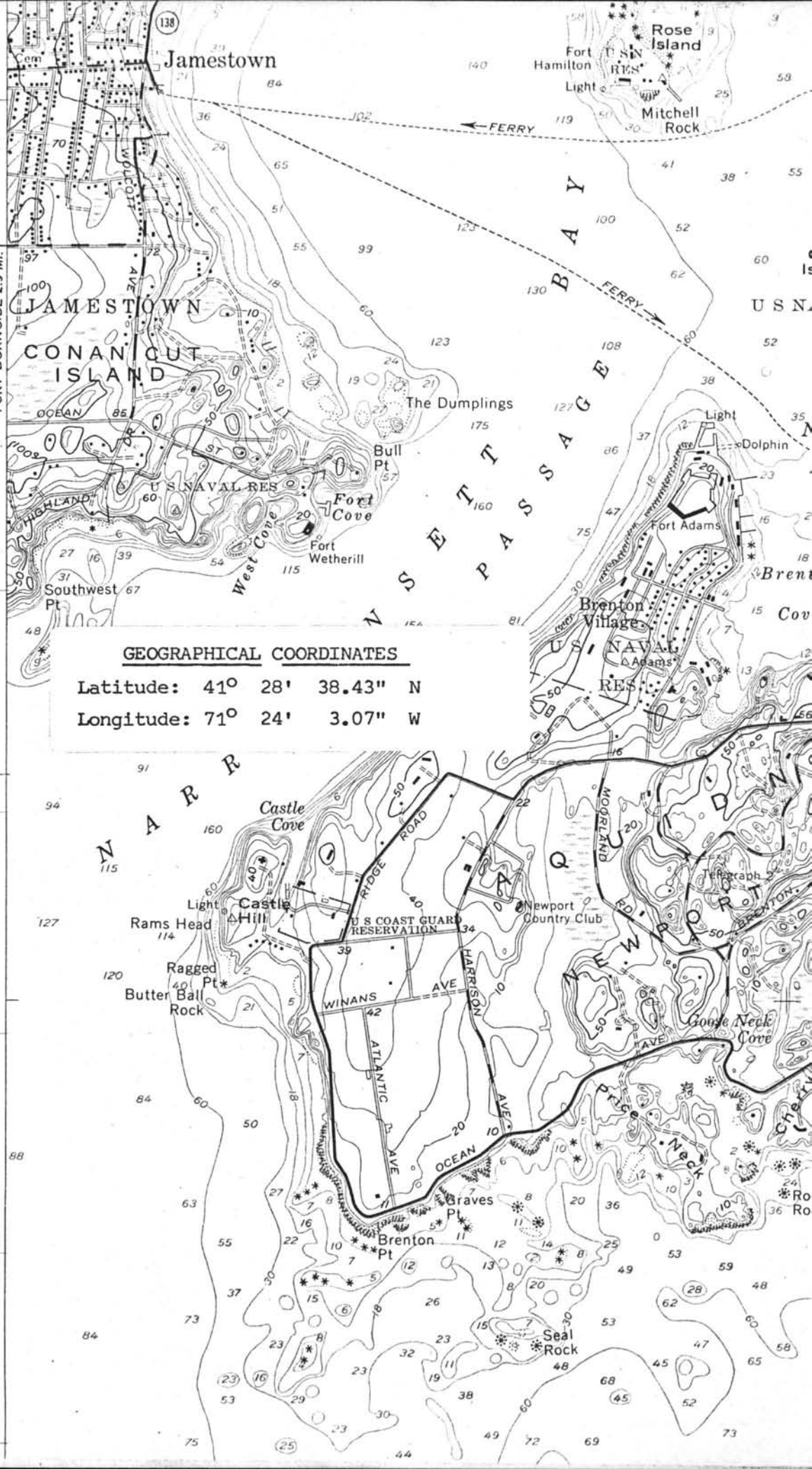
4596000m.N.

FORT BURNSIDE 2.9 MI.



27'30"

27



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

Latitude: 41° 28' 38.43" N

Longitude: 71° 24' 3.07" W

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

| | |
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| STATE Rhode Island | |
| COUNTY Newport | |
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| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| | |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Fort Dumpling

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

Ocean Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Jamestown

STATE:

Rhode Island

CODE

44

COUNTY:

Newport

CODE

005

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

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



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 Rhode Island | |
| COUNTY Newport | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| | |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

| | | | |
|--|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. NAME | | | |
| COMMON: Fort Dumpling | | | |
| AND/OR HISTORIC: | | | |
| 2. LOCATION | | | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: Ocean Street | | | |
| CITY OR TOWN: Jamestown | | | |
| STATE: Rhode Island | CODE 411 | COUNTY: Newport | CODE 005 |
| 3. PHOTO REFERENCE | | | |
| PHOTO CREDIT: Ross S. McElwee | | | |
| DATE OF PHOTO: 1971 | | | |
| NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, State House, 90 Smith Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903 | | | |
| 4. IDENTIFICATION | | | |
| DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. | | | |
| View from the east, showing surviving outline of original fort works and showing in background a harbour-defence building constructed during World War II. | | | |