Draft

Fort Jay Gate

Historic Structure Report

Governors Island National Monument
New York, New York

By

Barbara A. Yocum, Architectural Conservator
Historic Structure Research & Documentation Branch
Historic Architecture, Conservation & Engineering Center
Northeast Region, National Park Service
Lowell, Massachusetts

2013
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES and CREDITS .................................................................................................................. vii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .............................................................................................................................. xv

I. **INTRODUCTION** .................................................................................................................................. 1

   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ............................................................................................................................ 3
   ADMINISTRATIVE DATA ........................................................................................................................... 8

II. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND** ........................................................................................................ 11

III. **ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY** ......................................................................................................... 17

   1795: FORT JAY GATE CONSTRUCTED .............................................................................................. 19
       Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 19
       New York Commissioners of Fortifications ...................................................................................... 19
       Planning ........................................................................................................................................... 19
       Charles and Joseph Mangin .............................................................................................................. 20
       Construction ................................................................................................................................... 22

   1798-1801: ADDITIONAL WORK ........................................................................................................ 23

   1806-09: FORT JAY PARTIALLY REBUILT ............................................................................................. 30

   1831 & 1834: LATER PLANS ............................................................................................................... 30

   1830s: NEW GUARDHOUSE ............................................................................................................... 33

   1856: BRIDGE REBUILT ....................................................................................................................... 39

   1860s-70s: EARLY VIEWS and PLANS .............................................................................................. 39

   1890-1900: MORE DETERIORATION ................................................................................................. 48
1890-1913: LEGENDS OF THE GATE SCULPTURE ..............................................48
1903: GATE and SCULPTURE RESTORED ...................................................53
1920-21: NEW WINDOW WELLS at EAST BARRACK ...................................58
1934: RECORDING BY THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY (HABS) .......................................................... 58
1934-37: BRIDGE REPAIRS ........................................................................69
1938-39: GATE RENOVATIONS ................................................................69
1940: BUILDING INVENTORY ......................................................................69
1952: NEW BRIDGE and COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE .............................77
1966: DEPARTURE OF THE U.S. ARMY ....................................................80
1974: NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING ..........................................................80
1976: SECOND PLAQUE INSTALLED ............................................................80
1982-83: HABS RETURNS ...........................................................................80
1985: NATIONAL LANDMARK DESIGNATION ...........................................81
1992: MASONRY RESTORATION PLANS ...................................................82
1996: NEW YORK HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT and DEPARTURE OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD ...........................................83
2003: OWNERSHIP TRANSITION ..............................................................87
Preservation and Design Manual .................................................................87
National Park Service ................................................................................87
2005: HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT and PARK PROJECTS .................88
Fort Jay Historic Structure Report ..............................................................88
New Gate Doors .......................................................................................88
Bridge Repaved .........................................................................................89
2006: PRESERVATION PLANS for the STONE ARCH ...............................89
2007: ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL RESEARCH ........................................90
LIST OF FIGURES
AND CREDITS

Cover


Figures

For key to abbreviations, see page 154 of the Bibliography. Note that general maps and plans are detail views featuring Fort Jay/Fort Columbus.


3. Plan of proposed fortification on Governors Island, circa 1794. This may be the preliminary plan for the fortification submitted to Congress by Engineer Charles Vincent in December 1794. Reproduced in Edmund B. Smith, Governor’s Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637-1913 (New York: 1913), follows p. 54. The original map was then Noted to be “in possession M.S. Institution.” ................................................................. 25


5. Insignia of the New York Artillery on an early-19th century shoulder belt plate by J & A Simmons, Silversmiths, New York City, in the collection of Richard
6. “Plan of Fort Jay on Governor’s Island, State of New York, as it was in 1800,” by Joseph Mangin, 16 Jan. 1801. Drawer 36, Sheet 16; RG 77; CAB/NACP. ................................................................. 28

7. “A Map of Governors Island,” by Joseph Mangin, 1813. Drawer 37, Sheet 1; RG 77; CAB/NACP. ........................................................................................................... 30

8. “Plan of Fort Columbus” enclosed with a letter from Major R.E. DeRussy at Fort Hamilton dated June 19, 1831. Drawer 37, Sheet 7; RG 77; CAB/NACP. ................................................................. 31

9. “Plan of Fort Columbus,” 1834—prior to alterations (note: the date “1834” is written on the drawing in pencil, although is recorded by the National Archives as 1839). Drawer 37, Sheet 9; RG 77; CAB/NACP. ................................................................. 32

10. Alterations were made to Fort Columbus around 1834, based on a “Plan of Fort Columbus showing existing conditions and proposed Alterations,” 17 Oct. 1832. From a “Plan of Fort Columbus, Governor’s Island, N. York—Divided into Two Sections. The First Showing the Original Work. The Second, Exhibiting the Repairs and Alterations Proposed to be Adopted in Completing the Authorized Repairs,” signed by Major R.E. DeRussy. Drawer 37, Sheet 8; RG 77; CAB/NACP. ................................................................. 34

11. “Plan of Fort Columbus Showing Recent Alterations in Barracks and Terreplein,” 24 April 1839,” enclosed with a letter from Major Smith Dated 27 April 1839. Drawer 37, Sheet 10; RG 77; CAB/NACP. ................................................................. 35


13. Drawings comparing the existing low-pitched roof of the guardhouse with the original low-pitched roof of the barracks (later altered in 1855). Guardhouse drawing by the Historic American Buildings (HABS) Survey, 1934; Sheet 5, Survey number HABS NY-4-6 (LC: http://memory.loc.gov). Barrack drawing from “Officers Quarters in Fort Columbus, Governor’s Island, NY, with Proposed Alterations,” 1855; included in HABS 1982 report, “Building #202: Written Historical and Descriptive Data,” 1984 (original source: Drawer 37, Sheets 39 and 40; RG 77; CAB/NACP). ........................................................................................................ 37


16. Earliest known photograph of the gate at Fort Jay, then called Fort Columbus, entitled “Garrison Quarters, Main Sally Port,” 28 Sept. 1864. Image #165-C-236; SPB/NACP .................................................................................... 42

17. “Map Showing the Position of all Buildings on Governor's Island, 1st December 1867, from a Survey Made Under the Direction of Major John G. Barnard, Corps of Engineers. Major Nicholas Bowen.” Drawer 37, Sheet 55; RG 77; CAB/NACP ........................................................................... 43

18. “Sketch Illustrating the Proposed Introduction of Water Supply and Drainage for Fort Columbus,” 1877. #10, Series B, Miscellaneous Fortifications File, Fort Columbus, New York; RG 77; CAB/NACP .................................................................................. 44

19. “Map of Governors Island NY, Surveyed by 1st Lieut. Eugene Griffin, Corps Engrs., and Frederick N. Owen, Assistant Engr., 1879.” Drawer 37, Sheet 63; RG 77; CAB/NACP ................................................................................... 45

20. “Map showing location of Water, Drain and Sewer Pipes on Governors Island, 1879,” and “Office of the Post Quartermaster, Fort Columbus,” 30 Aug. 1879. #13, Series B, Miscellaneous Fortifications File, Fort Columbus, New York; RG 77; CAB/NACP ...................................................................................... 46


22. The gate of Fort Jay, then called Fort Columbus, circa 1890. Photograph published in The Illustrated American, “Historic America: Governor’s Island, NY,” 1890. Park museum/reference collection, Governors Island NM ...................................................... 50

23. The gate of Fort Jay, then called Fort Columbus, 1896. Park museum/reference collection, Governors Island NM ........................................................................................................... 50

24. “Entrance to Regular Fort” 1898. U.S. Military Posts of The Late 19\textsuperscript{th} Century, Fort Columbus, NY; Records of the Quartermaster General, Still Pictures Branch, CAB/NACP. .................................................................................. 51

25. The gate of Fort Jay, then called Fort Columbus, circa 1900. Photograph #90.44.1.26 courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York (http://www.mcny.org/home.html). ................................................................. 52

26. Photograph of Secretary of War Elihu Root, 1902. www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c00792. .................................................................................................................. 53

ix
27. Four photographs of Fort Jay’s sculpture, annotated with measurements and restoration plans, 13 & 17 June 1903. Entry 84, Files 134634 and 193231; RG 92; NAB. ..........................55


32a-g. Architectural drawings of Fort Jay and gate details by the Historic American Buildings Survey. Sheets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10. Survey no. HABS NY-4-6. LC: http://memory.loc.gov. ..........................61-67


34a-b. Elevation and plan of the “Monumental Entrance,” annotated with proposed repairs, 1938. Drawing 201-7; copies in the drawing files at Governors Island NM. ..........................71-72

35a-b. “Proposed Alterations to Archway,” 13 June 1938. Drawing 201-6; copy in the drawing files at Governors Island NM. ..........................73-74

36. Photograph of the guardhouse in the building inventory of the War Department, Quartermaster Corps, Aug. 1940. Office of the Chief of Engineers, “Historical Record of Buildings” and “Records of Equipment And Condition of Buildings” at Active Army Posts, 1905-41; Box 102, Entry 393; RG 77; NAB. ..........................75

37. Distant view of the guardhouse in a photograph showing a “cannon being removed from Fort Jay,” 1942. Photograph from the Cultural Landscape Report for Governors Island National Monument, New York, New York, by Lisa Nowalk (Boston:  

x
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 2010), 132; original source is the Center for Military History, RG 239, S. Grunert Collection, 43 (1) .................................75


40. Fort Jay's gate, 1965. Photograph published in the Newark Sunday News, 4 July 1965; Records of the U.S. Coast Guard Historian’s Office, Station History Files, ca. 1890-2001, 3rd District (Governor's Island); Box 24, A-1 Entry 454; RG 26; NAB ..............................................................................79

41a-c. Fort Jay’s gate, 1982-83. Photographs by Jet Lowe for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS); HABS survey no. NY4-6; negative numbers NY-4-6-16, 17, 18, 23, and 32. .................................................................................84-86

42. Front elevation of Fort Jay’s stone arch. Photograph by Judy Jacob, 2005. ..........................92

43. Front elevation of the guardhouse. Photographs by Barbara Yocum, 2005.................................................................93

44. North and south elevations of the stone arch and guardhouse. Photographs by Barbara Yocum, 2005.................................................................94

45. Fort Jay’s bridge in 2005, showing deteriorated condition of the concrete deck and sidewalk. Governors Island NM photograph, 2005 ..............................95

46. Reroofing of the guardhouse in February 2008, showing: (a) “Wheeling” stamp on existing sheet-metal roofing; (b) reinforcement of roof framing; (c) new roll roofing and sheathing boards; and (d) new copper flashing and gutters. Photographs by Judy Jacob, 2008. .............................................96

47. Front and back elevations of the Fort Jay’s stone sculpture. Photographs by Christopher Payne Photography, 2011 .................................................100


49. Drawing illustrating the numbered stones of Fort Jay’s sculpture. From the 2012 “Condition Assessment” report by Lorraine Schnabel, Appendix C.................................................................102
50. Fort Jay's sculpture “before” and “after” Hurricane Sandy. Photographs by Judy Jacob, Oct. 2012


52. Detail of the stone sculpture. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013.


55. Rear elevation of the stone arch in the south room of Fort Jay's guardhouse, following removal of the plaster wall in Sept. 2013. Physical remnants of an earlier guardhouse preserved at this wall include white staining at the former roof, and staining/broken masonry at the missing south wall. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013.


58. Circa-1830s board-and-batten doors of Fort Jay's postern, which may have resembled the doors of the main gate. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Aug. 2005.


60. View looking east of the concrete bridge deck that was repaired in 2011. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013.


62. Concrete steps accessing the dry ditch are contemporary with the 1951-52 concrete bridge. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013.

63. Partially exposed subterranean iron pipe on the west side of the guardhouse housing the south chain of Fort Jay’s former drawbridge. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013.

64. Obsolete chains and heavy iron hinges of the now missing drawbridge deck at Fort Jay’s sally-port entrance. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013.

65. Drawbridge machinery in the west portion of Fort Jay’s sally port, constructed as
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Photographer(s)</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>Fort Jay’s sally port, view looking west.</td>
<td>Photograph by David Bittermann,</td>
<td>October 2013</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>Brick-vaulted ceiling at the east end of Fort Jay’s sally port.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68.</td>
<td>View of Fort Jay’s sally port looking east, showing the circa 1834-37 portion that passes through the east barrack, and the circa-1790s portion on the far side. Photos by David Bittermann and Barbara Yocum, Sept. and Oct. 2013.</td>
<td>Photographs by David Bittermann and Barbara Yocum</td>
<td>Sept. and Oct. 2013</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.</td>
<td>Early sandstone walls of Fort Jay’s postern.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Aug. 2005</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.</td>
<td>West elevation of Fort Jay’s guardhouse.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.</td>
<td>West entrance of Fort Jay’s guardhouse.</td>
<td>Photograph by Kathleen J. Johnson,</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.</td>
<td>South elevation of Fort Jay’s guardhouse.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.</td>
<td>North and west elevations of Fort Jay’s guardhouse.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.</td>
<td>South room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse, view looking north.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.</td>
<td>West wall in the south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.</td>
<td>South wall in the south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.</td>
<td>East wall in the south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse, prior to removal of plaster wall.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78.</td>
<td>East wall in the south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse, following partial removal of plaster wall.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum</td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.</td>
<td>Ceiling in the south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2013</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.</td>
<td>Floor in the south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse, showing two cellar hatches.</td>
<td>Photograph by Barbara Yocum,</td>
<td>Sept. 2014</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
81. Two U.S. Coast guard rescue sleds found on the floor of the south cellar room in Fort Jay’s guardhouse. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013.................................142

82. West wall in the south cellar room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse, featuring an early brick arch in the lower northwest corner. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013............................................................................................................................142

83. Four views of the walls in the north room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013..................................................................................................................................143

84. Ceiling in the north room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013..............................................................................................................144

85. Rotted floor in the north room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013..............................................................................................................144

86. North wall in the north cellar of Fort Jay’s guardhouse. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013..............................................................................................................145

87. West wall in the north cellar of Fort Jay’s guardhouse, featuring an early brick arch in the lower southwest corner. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Sept. 2013........145

88. Brick-wall outcroppings west of the guardhouse in the vicinity of the original missing wings. Photograph by Barbara Yocum, Jan. 2013.........................................................146
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following people are gratefully acknowledged for their assistance with this Historic Structure Report.

Governors Island National Monument

Patti Riley, Superintendent
Collin Bell, Park Ranger
Edward Lorenzini, Facility Manager
Noah Lumsden, Student Trainee, Facility Management Specialist
Dena Saslaw, Administrative Officer
Mike Shaver, Historian

Historic Architecture, Conservation and Engineering Center, Northeast Regional Office, National Park Service

David Bittermann, Chief, Design & Preservation Planning Branch
Eric Breitkreutz, Chief, Historic Structure Research & Documentation Branch
Judy Jacob, Architectural Conservator
Kathleen J. Johnson, Historical Architect
Craig Oleszewski, Exhibit Specialist
National Park Service, Washington, DC

Robert K. Sutton, Chief Historian, National Park Service

Emily Tragert, Intern, Chief Historian's Office

Other

Randall Biallas, Assistant, Park Cultural Resources Programs, National Park Service

Christine Djuric, Monuments Conservation Manager/Conservator, New York City Parks and Recreation, Art and Antiquities

Alex Herrera, Director, Technical Services Center, the New York Landmarks Conservancy

Steve Lorenzetti, Deputy Superintendent, National Mall & Memorial Parks, National Park Service

Larry Lowenthal, Contract Historian

Lorraine Schnabel, Manager, Schnabel Conservation LLC

Giles Parker, Chief of Staff, Office of the Commissioner, National Parks of New York Harbor

Sally Webster, Professor of American Art, City University of New York

Warren Wilford, Stone and Laser Scanning Survey Consultation
I. INTRODUCTION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Abstract

This historic structure report updates the 2005 Fort Jay Historic Structure Report by providing in-depth information on the “gate,” or main entrance, of Fort Jay. Components of the gate are a monumental stone arch surmounted by a stone sculpture, a bridge, sally port, and guardhouse.

The gate dates to the reconstruction of the revolutionary-era fortification by the State of New York in 1794-95, under the direction of French engineers Charles and Joseph Mangin. Surviving elements from that time are a sally-port tunnel entered through a monumental arch made of sandstone. A contemporary sandstone sculpture adorning the arch depicts the military insignia of the New York Artillery. Major improvements by the U.S. Army in the mid-1830s extended the sally port through a new barrack to the west, lined the original sally port with granite stones, and replaced an early guardhouse with the existing brick structure. Drawbridge machinery of 1830s vintage and sandstone piers are all that remains of an early wooden bridge that was replaced in 1951-52 by an existing concrete bridge.

Renovation of the guardhouse by the U.S. Army in 1938 installed new floors and replaced or recoated plaster walls and ceilings. The U.S. Coast Guard may have been responsible for the installation of exterior metal doors and installation of brick blocking at the windows sometime between 1966 and 1982-83.

Several improvements have been made to Fort Jay’s gate since creation of Governors Island National Monument in 2001. The National Park Service hung new steel-tube doors at the sally-port entrance in 2005, installed a new roof on the guardhouse in 2008, and repaired the concrete deck of the bridge in 2011. Plans are currently underway to stabilize and repair the stone arch and its sculpture following damage inflicted by Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

Scope of Work

The purpose of this report was to provide baseline information for proposed work on a component of Fort Jay’s gate. Funding was provided by a PMIS project #152402 to “Stabilize and Preserve Guard House at Fort Jay.”

Research Methodology

Site Visits

Two site visits were made to Governors Island National Monument in 2013 for this report: one in January, the other in September.

Documentary Research

This report builds on archival information on Fort Jay’s gate compiled in the 2005 Fort Jay Historic Structure Report. Recent scholarship incorporated into this study includes the following:


city of New York and Its Vicinity;" and "Selected Audited Accounts of State Civil and Military Officers, 1780-1858."


Emily Tragert, “Summary of Documents on the Coat of Arms and Sally Port at Fort Columbus, New York, National Archives Record Group 92, Entry 89, Files 134632 and 193231,” 2010.

In addition, various primary and secondary sources provided information on engineers Charles and Joseph Mangin. For details, see the bibliography of this report.

**Physical Investigation**

A detailed physical investigation of Fort Jay’s stone arch and sculpture were undertaken by contractor Loraine Schnabel, who produced a “Condition Assessment” report in 2012. These gate elements, along with the bridge, sally port, and guard house, were also documented with photographs and written notes by the author of this report in 2013. Building materials were closely examined for stylistic and manufacturing clues, and compared with other structures of known date at Fort Jay. Samples of paint, mortar, and plaster were removed and analyzed at the laboratories of the Northeast Regional Office in Lowell, Massachusetts. Findings of the physical investigations are included in the “Physical Descriptions” and “Appendices” sections of this report.

**Terminology and Names**

**Terminology**

The subject of this report is the “gate” at Fort Jay on Governors Island. The gate is the main entrance of the fortification, located in the east scarp or curtain wall. The gate is made up of several parts, illustrated in figure 1. These include:

- a stone arch adorned with a patriotic sculpture (A),

- a bridge that crosses the dry ditch in front of the arch (B),

- a sally-port leading to the fort’s interior courtyard (C), and

- a guardhouse behind the stone arch that straddles the sally port (D).

The gate and its parts have been called by various names over the years. The term “gate” has been used to refer to the stone arch and its now missing doors. Other names include the “main gate,” “archway,” “gateway,” “sally-port gate,” and “monumental entrance.” The sculpture above the stone arch is also known as the “trophy of arms,” the “trophée d’armes,” or simply “the eagle.” The sally port has been called a “tunnel,” and the guardhouse a “gatehouse.” In this report, historical
Figure 1. Section-elevation of Fort Jay’s gate looking north showing its various parts, including:

A. Stone arch  
B. Bridge spanning the ditch  
C. Sally port  
D. Guardhouse

The east barrack (E) is within close proximity of Fort Jay’s gate, and incorporates the west end of the sally port.
usage is preserved in quotes and excerpts. Otherwise, the terms presented at the beginning of this section are employed to minimize confusion.

**Historical Names**

Fort Jay and the island on which it is located have undergone changes in both name and spelling throughout the years. A brief summary of these changes follows. Note that historical spellings are preserved in this report when quoting from original source documents.

**Governors Island.** The name “Governor’s Island” came into use in the late 17\(^{th}\) century, when the island was designated for use by the governors of the new British colony of New York. The name was officially changed from the Dutch “Nutten” or “Nooten” Island to “Governor’s Island” by an act of the New York Legislature March 29, 1784. Use of the apostrophe was discontinued in official papers of the U.S. Army’s Eastern Department, Division of the Atlantic, following its transfer to the island in 1878, although the earlier punctuation endured. Today the island is known as “Governors Island.”

**Fort Jay.** The main fortification on Governors Island assumed the name “Fort Jay” in 1798.\(^1\) Prior to that time, earthen works on the island were generally referred to in Congressional records as “the works,” “the defences,” or “the forts at Governor’s Island.” The fort was named “Jay” for New York Governor John Jay upon its reconstruction during the years 1798-1801.\(^2\)

It retained this appellation until 1806-1807, when it assumed the name “Fort Columbus.” Secretary of War Elihu Root restored the name “Fort Jay” in 1904 by General Order No. 18, signed on January 25 of that year. The order reads as follows: “The fortification on Governor’s Island, New York Harbor … now known as Fort Columbus, is hereby restored to its original name of Fort Jay; and the said fortification and the Military post located on the said Island will hereafter be known and designated as Fort Jay.”\(^3\) The fort, although no longer a military installation, retains this name today.

**Fort Columbus.** The fort and military post were renamed “Fort Columbus” sometime after December 15, 1806, and before July 21, 1807, presumably for 15\(^{th}\)-century explorer Christopher Columbus. Edmund Banks Smith opined that this change was “supposed to have been due to Jay’s temporary unpopularity with the Republican party, which was not satisfied with the Jay Treaty with England (1794).”\(^4\) Whether or not this was in fact the case has yet to be substantiated, as the original orders for this change have not been found. The fort retained the name “Columbus” throughout the remainder of the 19\(^{th}\) century, finally reclaiming the name “Fort Jay” in 1904.

**Recommendations**

The recommended treatment of Fort Jay’s gate is preservation, as suggested by the 2008 General Management Plan.

---

\(^1\) Notice of the new name was posted in *The Daily Advertiser* on October 19, 1798. www.genealogybank.com.

\(^2\) John Jay (1745-1829) served as Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1784-89, as first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 1789 to 1794, as presidentially appointed statesman to Great Britain 1794-95, and as Governor of New York from 1795 to 1801.

\(^3\) Edmund B. Smith, *Governor’s Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637-1913*; New York: published by the author, 1913,112.

\(^4\) Smith, *Governor’s Island*, 112-113.
for Governors Island National Monument, and the National Park Service’s List of Classified Structures. Every effort should therefore be made to retain the historic character-defining features of the gate that existed during the site’s period of significance: 1794 to 1966. For details, see the “Conclusions” section of this report.

Any work on Fort Jay’s gate should be photographed and recorded in a written completion report. Work that disturbs the ground in the vicinity of the gate, or the cellar floor of the guardhouse, should be closely monitored and recorded. These are archeologically sensitive areas that may hold clues to the earlier physical appearance of the fort’s 18th-century terreplein, parapet, and guardhouse. Archival records may also be found that reveal additional documentation on the construction, evolution, and maintenance of Fort Jay’s historic gate. This data should be maintained in a file at Governors Island National Monument and eventually incorporated into an updated historic structure report on the gate.
Governors Island National Monument

Governors Island National Monument is a unit of the National Park Service that was established by Presidential Proclamation on January 19, 2001 (revised February 7, 2003). The national monument encompasses 22.78 acres of the 172-acre island in New York Harbor, located one-half mile from the southern tip of Manhattan. The remaining 150 acres were transferred to the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC), a joint city/state entity, to manage and redevelop. A successor organization, the Trust for Governors Island managed by the City of New York, replaced GIPEC in April 2010.

Two fortifications, Fort Jay and Castle Williams, are the primary historic resources of the national monument. Governors Island has historically been administered by the U.S. Army (1800-1966), and later by the U.S. Coast Guard (1966-1997). A skeleton crew of Coast Guard personnel provided security, fire protection, and facility maintenance from 1997 until the sale of the national monument by the Government Services Administration to the National Trust for Historic Preservation on January 31, 2003. The National Trust subsequently conveyed the national monument area to the Secretary of the Interior, United States of America, and the remainder of the island to GIPEC.

Fort Jay and Castle Williams are masonry fortifications on Governors Island that date to the late-18th and early-19th centuries. Fort Jay was constructed of earth in 1794 on the site an earlier earthen work erected during the Revolutionary War. This was part of a national effort to fortify coastal ports, now known as the First American System of fortifications, in response to renewed tensions with Great Britain. A second phase of the First System improved and completed the works, including Fort Jay, during the years 1797 and 1802. Fort Jay was rebuilt in masonry between the years 1806 and 1809, and Castle Williams was erected between the years 1807 and 1811. The two works differ considerably in form and appearance. Fort Jay is a square, four-bastioned work with one ravelin surrounded by a wide dry ditch. Castle Williams is a circular casemated work built of red sandstone. Both held important strategic defense positions at the entrance to New York Harbor.

Historic Designations

The gate is a historic feature of Fort Jay. Fort Jay was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on March 27, 1974 (#74001268). The fortification is also a contributing resource in a National Historic Landmark District for Governors Island designated February 4, 1985 (#85002435), and a New York City Landmarks Historic District designated June 18, 1996.

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) recorded Fort Jay with measured drawings, photographs, and written report in 1934. The HABS record was updated between 1982 and 1984 with additional photographs and an addendum to the report.

List of Classified Structures
Fort Jay is listed in the National Park Service’s List of Classified Structures (LCS) as number 233500 and structure number eight (8). No individual designations are assigned to gate and its components, such as the stone arch, bridge, sally port, or guardhouse. The LCS management category specifies that Fort Jay “must be preserved and maintained.” Management treatment is “preservation.”

**Related Studies**


II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
Brief History of Fort Jay

Fort Jay is located on Governors Island in New York Harbor, one-half mile from the southern tip of Manhattan. Governors Island was among the lands occupied in the early 17th century by the Manahatas Indians who called it “Pagganack.” It became a Dutch holding in 1637, when the Manahatas conveyed the island to the Director and Council of New Netherland, a Dutch colony first settled in 1623. The Dutch called the island “Nooten” or “Nuten” for its abundant nut trees, and pastured cattle and goats there. It was also the site of an early windmill and a house erected by Wouton Van Twiller, second director-general of New Netherlands.

Dutch rule ended in 1664 with the capture of New Netherland by Great Britain, which renamed the colony “New York.” The island acquired the name “The Governor’s Island” following the passage of an act by the New York Assembly in 1698 to set aside the island “for the benefit and accommodation of his Majestie’s Governors,” although the more common “Nutten Island” survived well into the 18th century. New York Governor Cornbury is said to have constructed a “pleasure house” there during his tenure 1702-08. The island was later used as a quarantine station and as a sanctuary for English pheasants. Although Major General William Pepperell’s regiment encamped on the island in 1755, no defensive works appear to have been constructed at that time, nor do plans by Captain John Montréser to fortify the island in 1766 appear to have been implemented.

Defensive earthen works were first erected on the highest point of Governors Island by Continental troops in 1775-76. The island and its fort were occupied by the British during the American Revolution until 1783, when it was surrendered, along with several buildings, to the Governor of New York.

More than 10 years passed before renewed tensions with Great Britain resulted in funding from both the New York Legislature and the United States Congress in 1794 to reconstruct the works on Governors Island. This was part of a larger national effort to fortify ports that later became known as the First American System of coastal fortifications. Design of the New York Harbor defenses was assigned to French engineer Charles Vincent, who was later replaced by Charles Nicholas Mangin. The works on Governors Island had been completed by 1796, described in January of that year by the Secretary of War as “a fort made of earth, and two batteries under its protection, partly lined with brick masonry, two air furnaces, a large powder magazine, and a barrack for the garrison." Fears of a French invasion in 1797 resulted in a renewed effort funded by additional Congressional appropriations to complete and enhance the coastal fortifications, including those on Governors Island, from 1798 to 1801. The fort was named “Fort Jay” in 1798—presumably for John Jay, then Governor of New York State.

---

5 This brief history is adapted from the 2005 Fort Jay Historic Structure Report by Architectural Conservator Barbara Yocum. Full citations for this material can be found in that report.
6 Edmund Banks Smith (Chaplin of Governors Island), Governor’s Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637-1913 (New York: Published by the Author, 1913), 11 & 33.
9 The New York Daily Advertiser noted on October 19, 1798: “We are happy in announcing, this day, that the Fort on Governor’s Island has assumed the appellation of ‘Fort Jay.’” www.genealogybank.com.
Governors Island and its fort were conveyed to the federal government in 1800 by an Act of the New York State Legislature. A plan of the fort as it existed that year shows it as a four-bastioned form surrounded by a ditch with a parapet having 51 embrasures, a gate and bridge on the east side, and a large magazine in the northeast bastion. The fort was still incomplete and incapable of defense in 1802, according to a written report, although it was then equipped with a “handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde,” or guardhouse, that survives today.\textsuperscript{10}

Fort Jay had fallen into ruinous condition by 1806. Congress responded with a second national campaign to strengthen the coastal defenses of the country, now known as the Second American System of fortifications. This effort differed from the first by employing American engineers and using more durable masonry construction. Colonel Jonathan Williams, Chief Engineer of the Corps of Engineers and first Superintendent of the Military Academy at West Point, was chosen to design and oversee the defenses of New York Harbor. Reconstruction of Fort Jay, renamed Fort Columbus about this time, began in July 1806 and was completed by December 1809. The only components of the old fort then judged worth saving were “the walled Counterscarp, the Gate, the Magazine, and the Barracks,” according to Colonel Williams in a report dated November 1808.\textsuperscript{11} The completed fort was described in a later report to Congress as “an enclosed pentagonal work, with four bastions of masonry, calculated for one hundred guns, fifty-five mounted, with brick barracks for two hundred and thirty men, including officers ... [and] a stone and brick magazine....”\textsuperscript{12} Also constructed at this time was Castle Williams, a circular defensive work made of red sandstone erected on the west point of the island between 1807 and 1811. The earliest known plan of the completed fort is a plan by engineer Joseph F. Mangin drawn in 1813 (fig. 7).

The first significant repairs and alterations were made to Fort Columbus in the 1830s, resulting in the overall appearance of the fort as it exists today. The stone retaining walls were extensively rebuilt at this time, including the scarp that was extended, faced with granite, and topped with a new brickwork parapet. The old brick magazine in the northeast bastion was demolished and replaced by four new magazines erected in the north ravelin. Finally, the interior courtyard was enlarged and four new brick barracks constructed with flanking triangular structures.

Later changes have been made to the barracks by the U.S. Army over the years, including interior remodeling and replacement of the flat roofs with hipped roofs in 1855-57, incorporation of five of the triangular buildings as additions in the 1860s and 1898-99, and reconfiguration of the buildings as officers’ apartments in 1921-22 and again in the 1930s. Paint was stripped from the exterior brick buildings in the 1930s; the sodded glacis of the fort was converted to recreational use as a golf course by 1940; and the flagstaff was moved from the northwest bastion to the north ravelin by 1953.

\textsuperscript{10} The New York State Act conveying Governors Island to the federal government is dated Feb. 15, 1800. The 1802 report by Major D. Wadsworth is in the Jonathan Williams Papers, Manuscripts Department of the Lilly Library, Indiana University.

\textsuperscript{11} Jonathan Williams, “Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War Relative to the Progress & Present State of the Fortifications in the Harbour of New York,” Nov. 1808. This hand-written document is in the Jonathan Williams Papers of the Lilly Library, Indiana University.

\textsuperscript{12} Report of Secretary of War William Eustis Dec. 19, 1809, regarding “the state of the fortifications for the defence of the ports and harbors of the United States,” ASP, 11\textsuperscript{th} Congress, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Session, Military Affairs, Vol. 1, 245-46, Library of Congress (LC).
Governors Island more than doubled in size between 1901 and 1912, with fill from New York’s subway excavations. Jurisdiction of the island passed from the U.S. Army to the U.S. Coast Guard in 1966. Improvements made by the Coast Guard to Fort Jay, whose name was officially reinstated in 1904, included expansion of the golf course; remodeling of the barracks with new kitchens, bathrooms, heating and electrical systems, and storm windows and doors; and erection of chain-link fencing on the glacis. Fort Jay has sat vacant with minimal upkeep since closure of the Coast Guard base in 1997.

The Historic American Buildings Survey recorded Fort Jay in drawings and photographs in 1934 and 1982-83. The fort was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. It was included in a National Historic Landmark District in 1985, and a New York Historic District in 1996. The fort is also located within the boundaries of Governors Island National Monument, created by Presidential Proclamations signed in 2001 and 2003. The period of significance for Fort Jay spans the years 1794 to 1966, as defined by its listing as a National Historic Landmark district in the National Register of Historic Places.
III. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY
1795: Fort Jay Gate Constructed

Introduction

The “gate,” or main entrance, is an early surviving feature of Fort Jay. The gate consists of four elements: a neoclassical stone arch with center entrance surmounted by a patriotic sculpture, a bridge spanning the ditch, a sally-port tunnel, and a guardhouse that straddles the tunnel. Of these, the only remaining portions dating to 1795 are the stone arch and some portions of the sculpture, sally port, and foundation walls of the guardhouse. The upper walls of the guardhouse were rebuilt in the 1830s and the bridge in 1951-52.

New York Commissioners of Fortifications

Post-revolutionary concerns about relations with England prompted the New York State legislature to pass an act “Authorizing the Erecting of Fortifications Within this State” on March 26, 1794. A seven-member Commission of Fortifications for the City of New York oversaw the effort for New York Harbor. These were Governor George Clinton, Matthew Clarkson, James Watson, Richard Varick, Nicholas Fish, Ebenezer Stevens, and Abijah Hammond. The commission worked with a budget that was jointly funded by the New York Legislature and the United States Congress. Commissioners supervised several significant projects, including rebuilding of a Revolutionary-era earthen fortification, then called the “main work,” on Governors Island. Their accomplishments were recorded in hand-written “proceedings,” which are preserved today in the archives of the New York Historical Society. Additional information can be found in “Selected Audited Accounts of State, Civil, and Military Officers, 1780-1858,” in the records of the New York State Comptroller, New York State Archives, in Albany, New York.\(^\text{13}\)

Planning

French engineer Charles Vincent submitted three plans for rebuilding the fortification on Governors Island in May 1794. Of these, the New York commissioners chose Plan B, “being a regular work in the same spot [as the old fortification] and covering about 1/3 more ground," to be “constructed by volunteer labor."\(^\text{14}\) A drawing that may be Plan B was later published as “The Jay Plan" in 1913 (fig. 3).\(^\text{15}\) While lacking in details, this depiction is important for establishing the location of the fort’s primary entrance in the east curtain, where it exists today. No significant work appears to have taken place on the gate during the tenure of Charles Vincent, who superintended the works through November 1794.\(^\text{16}\)

Charles Nicholas Mangin next assumed the job of engineer on December 1, 1794. He was assisted by his brother, junior engineer Joseph François Mangin. The New York commissioners referred to the Mangins in

\(^{13}\) Information from these sources was transcribed by historian Larry Lowenthal in 2007 and is on file at Governors Island National Monument (NM).


\(^{15}\) Edmund Banks Smith (Chaplin of Governor’s Island), Governor’s Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637-1913 (New York: Published by the Author, 1913), follows 54.

\(^{16}\) Entry for 16 Apr. 1795, “Selected Audited Accounts of State Civil and Military Officers, 1780-1858,” NY State Archives, Albany, NY.
their proceedings and financial accounts as engineer “Mangin the elder” and “Mangin cadet [junior] ingenier.” One of the Mangin engineers submitted a design proposal for the gate on June 11, 1795:

The engineer having exhibited a plan of a Gate and Drawbridge at the entrance of the main work on Governor’s Island the same being duly considered. Requested £2000 for this work.17

Construction of the gate may have followed shortly after, given the following suggestion made to the commissioners on July 31, 1795:

The engineer having reported to the board the ceremonies usually observed in laying the foundation stone of a new fortification and the same being considered. Resolved: Inexpedient to spend money on anything not indispensable to the fortification.18

Charles and Joseph Mangin19

The Mangin’s plan for the gate at Fort Jay has unfortunately not survived. More is known, however, of the civilian architectural work and accomplishments of Charles Mangin and his brother Joseph. That the siblings had professional training and experience is evident from an advertisement posted in two New York newspapers in 1796:

JOSEPH MANGIN & BROTHER

Late Engineers of the Fortifications, acquaint their friends and the public in general, that the former has been appointed by the common council, Surveyor for the city of New-York, and has his Office in his house, No. 68 Chamber street. Both he and his brother carry on every kind of business related to Architecture, copy neatly maps and charts, give plans for private or public buildings, put them into execution by inspection, or undertaking, give directions for making or improving every kind of machinery, and shortly can do whatever depends on Surveying, Drawing, and Architecture, civil, military & hydraulic.20

Charles and Joseph Mangin were the architects of two notable commissions in New York City for the Park Theatre (1795-98, fig. 4), and the New York State prison (1796-98). Joseph Mangin later won a design competition with architect John McComb, Jr., for the New York City Hall (1803-12).21 He was also the designer of Old Saint Patrick’s Cathedral (1809-15), described in 1815 as “built in the Gothic

19 For general source materials on Charles and Joseph Mangin, see the Bibliography at the end of this report.
20 The Daily Advertiser, 28 May 1796, and 8 June 1796; and The Minerva & Mercantile Evening Advertiser, 1 June 1796, and 7 June 1796. www.genealogybank.com.
21 This building is still in use today as New York’s City Hall.
style, and executed agreeably to the design of Mr. Joseph Fr. Mangin, the celebrated architect of New York.  

Previous studies have asserted that Charles and Joseph Mangin were of French descent, possibly refugees of the French Revolution. Fellow architect Henry Benjamin Labrobe, whose design for the New York City Hall competition lost to Mangin and McComb, described Joseph Mangin as “a St. Domingo Frenchman” in a letter to his brother in 1804. More recent descriptions of Joseph Mangin as a former slave from the French West Indies are unsubstantiated.

In addition to architectural commissions, Joseph Mangin’s interest and expertise in stone structures are displayed in two early U.S. patents that bear his name. One, dated July 2, 1796, was for “Marble and other stones, improvements in sawing and polishing.” The other, dated February 16, 1797, was for “Marble, improvement in cutting and polishing.”

Joseph Mangin’s mainstay, however, appears to have been his position as a surveyor for the City of New York from 1796 through 1805, and again from 1810 to 1818. Joseph François Magin, Engineer, was “admitted and sworn a Free Man of this City” on May 9, 1796, and “appointed a Surveyor of the City” on May 16 of that year. He is best known for his official map of the City of New York (1799-1803), produced with fellow engineer Casimir Goerck, who had also worked on the fortifications on Governors Island. Two streets in New York, “Mangin” and “Goerck,” are the namesakes of these two mapmakers.

In later years, an unknown turn of events left Joseph Mangin destitute. He petitioned New York City’s Committee on Charity for assistance in 1818. The Committee responded to his plea as follows:

That your Committee believe Petitioner to be very poor, and unless he receives some small assistance will be compelled to take refuge in the Alms House. He is however willing to avoid this alternative if possible, and hopes, if he receives a temporary relief, from the Corporation, he will be enabled, during the Summer at least, to maintain himself and family from the fruits of his labour,... The Committee therefore recommends, in consideration of the circumstances of the petitioner, together with his age and infirmities, that the sum of fifty dollars be appropriated to the relief of the Petitioner under the direction of this Committee and that a Warrant pass for said amount accordingly.

What finally became of Joseph Mangin, who had contributed so much to the City of New York and the fortification of Governors Island, is unknown. Even more illusive is his brother Charles, who vanishes from the New York scene after 1798.

Construction

Back at Governors Island, the historical record suggests that construction of Fort

24 This misinformation has been posted to unscholarly web sites.
Jay’s monumental gate commenced in the summer of 1795 without ceremony or fanfare.\textsuperscript{27} Work appears to have been completed in the fall, most likely executed by local contractor Gosman & Moore. Financial records indicate that this contractor not only supplied the stones that were obtained from various providers at this time, but also the masons who worked and laid them.\textsuperscript{28} George Gosman and John Moore were responsible for many construction projects in the City of New York from 1793 to 1801, in addition their work on the fortifications at Governors Island.\textsuperscript{29}

Separate arrangements were made by the Commissioners for a stone carver employed at Governors Island, who may have carved the sculpture atop the gate’s stone arch. A total of $200.00 was allotted for the carver identified in the financial records as “Le beau.” Payments were made in installments to the Mangin engineers, who oversaw the sculptor, between September 1795 and January 1796.\textsuperscript{30} Such discrete accounting suggests that Le beau was hired for a specific specialized project, such as the gate sculpture. The sculptor carved his creation from blocks of pink-hued sandstone, the same material used to construct the supporting monument. That it was executed before 1800, when Governors Island was acquired by the federal government, seems certain based on its depiction of the New York Artillery’s insignia (fig. 5). Clutched in the claw of a center spread-winged eagle was a shield bearing the seal of the State of New York, backed by flags and fasces topped with a liberty cap. These were surrounded by various items of artillery, including a mortar, guns, a large petard, and piles of small and large shot.

Other integral elements of the gateway not mentioned in the early records were a sallyport tunnel and guardhouse. The sally port was entered through an opening in the stone arch and provided access to the interior of the fort. Comparison with the less altered west sally port suggests the walls of the tunnel were sandstone and the vaulted ceiling brick.

A building that is mostly missing today, called the guardhouse, straddled the tunnel and abutted the back side of the stone arch, providing structural support to the arch. Two lower-story rooms of the guardhouse flanking the tunnel were constructed of sandstone blocks, some portions of which survive today. The now-missing upper walls of the guardhouse were brick, as shown in later plans dated 1831 and 1834 (figs. 8 and 9). Other brick structures built at this time were a three-story barrack the east side of the parade and a powder magazine at the northeast bastion. The lower rooms of the guardhouse connected with two wings, shown in early plans of the fort dated 1800 through 1834 (figs. 6-9). Gable roofs covered the main structure and its wings, as illustrated in the plans of 1800 and 1813 (figs. 7 and 8). A shadow outline of the now-missing main roof is also preserved today on the back side of the stone arch.

\textsuperscript{27} This was presumably after the plan of the Gate and Drawbridge had been approved by the commissioners 11 June 1795, and the engineer’s suggestion for a foundation-laying ceremony had been denied on 31 July 1795, as recorded in the “Proceedings” of the New York Commissioners, NY Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{28} Gosman & Moore account for May-July 1795 in the Selected Audited Account of State Civil and Military Officers, 1780-1858, NY State Archives, Albany, NY.

\textsuperscript{29} Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York, 1784-1831, Vol. II: 8 April 1793 to 12 June 1801 (City of New York, 1917).

later covered by modern building materials (fig. 55).\(^{31}\)

Secretary of War Timothy Pickering reported on the “State of the Fortifications of the United States” to the United States Senate on January 16, 1796. Pickering described the rebuilt fort on Governors Island, but curiously made no mention of its new gate, perhaps due to the succinct nature of the statement:

New York.—Governor’s Island has been fortified with a fort made of earth, and two batteries under its protection, partly lined with brick masonry, two air furnaces, a large powder magazine, and a barrack for the garrison; the whole completed.\(^{32}\)

1798-1801: Additional Work

More federal appropriations to enhance the nation’s coastal works from 1798 to 1801 included the fortification on Governor’s Island, named “Fort Jay” in 1798. Two years later, an Act of the New York State Legislature conveyed the island and its fort to the federal government on February 15, 1800. Engineer Joseph F. Mangin returned in 1798 to supervise construction of the batteries in New York and to fortify Governors Island. Working with him were fellow engineer and Frenchman Jean-Xavier Bureau de Pusy, and superintendent of construction Marinus Willett. One of Mangin’s assignments was to prepare a plan of Fort Jay "as it was in 1800." This plan includes the earliest-known detailed depiction of the fort’s gate (fig. 6).

That additional work remained to be done on Fort Jay’s entrance we learn from a letter penned by Ebenezer Stevens to a War Department official on June 20, 1800:

It appears to me necessary that the Gate-way on Governor’s Island be completed ….\(^{33}\)

Stevens, who was involved with the New York harbor defenses as an agent of the federal government, omitted any descriptions of the gate’s existing condition or details of proposed work. Perhaps he was referring to the drawbridge that was still incomplete in 1802, as noted in a status report on Fort Jay from Major D. Wadsworth to Major Jonathan Williams, Inspector of Fortifications. A description of the gate appears in the introductory paragraph of this detailed document:

Fort Jay is a regular square Fort with Bastions…. There is a handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde [guard room], Drawbridge not yet finished, and in the opposite Curtain a Sally Port carried under the Rampart. The Banquet of the Parapet has not yet been constructed nor have the Platforms of the Guns been laid. Of consequence it is not capable of any Defense in its present state.\(^{34}\)

---

\(^{31}\) A white stain delineating the former roof line was revealed upon the removal of circa-1930s lath and plaster in September 2013 (fig. ).


Figure 3. Plan of proposed fortification on Governors Island, circa 1794.
Figure 4. Architectural rendering of the Park Theatre in New York by Charles and Joseph Mangin, 1795-98 (burned 1820).
Figure 5. Insignia of the New York Artillery on an early-19th century shoulder-strap plate, by silversmiths J & A Simmons of New York City.
Figure 6. Details from a “Plan of Fort Jay on Governor’s Island, State of New York, as it was in 1800,” by engineer Joseph Mangin, January 16, 1801.

Key:
A “the Bridge”
B “the Draw Bridge”
C “the Gate”
D “the Ditch”
E “the Caserns [military barracks]"
1806-09: Fort Jay Partially Rebuilt

Colonel Jonathan Williams undertook a major overhaul of Fort Jay on Governors Island (renamed Fort Columbus about this time) from 1806 to 1809. He retained only a few of the fort’s existing elements, including the gate. Williams described the situation in a report to the Secretary of War in November 1808:

It will be recollected that it was only in the Spring of 1806 that the demolition and renewal of the Works on Governors Island was determined on and that these Works were at that time in a State of absolute ruin. The sodded ramparts … were subject to continual depredation by successive rains; the rotten fraises were daily falling by their own weight, and the wooden Parapet which surmounted this decaying Base was become a mass of ligneous putrification. In this State repair of any kind was totally out of the Question, and consequently no part of the old Fort except the walled Counterscarp, the Gate, the Magazine and the Barracks could be preserved. All the rest it became necessary to remove as rubbish, to give place for a Work composed of durable materials and in July of that year [1806] its corner stone was laid.35

Although Williams did not specifically mention the guardhouse, it was presumably part of “the Gate” and retained, along with the brick barracks and powder magazine.

Changes to the terreplein and parapet did impact the existing gate, however. Williams had the terreplein widened by 14 feet and the parapet repositioned farther to the east. Thus the stone arch that had formerly sat proud of the east curtain was now recessed within it. Joseph Mangin illustrated this change in an updated plan of the fort prepared in 1813 (fig. 7). Proportions of the guardhouse and its wings appear to be different on this plan than on Mangin’s earlier plan of 1800 (fig. 6), suggesting an enlargement of the main building. Whether this was due to an alteration of the building, or imprecise rendering of the plans, is unknown.

1831 & 1834: Later Plans

No significant changes appear to have been made to the gate through the early 1830s, judging by plans dated 1831 and 1834. Only one addition is shown on these plans: two flights of brick steps abutting the north and south walls of the guardhouse. These provided a foothold in the upward-sloping terrain to access sentry posts in the rebuilt parapet (figs. 8 and 9).

---

35 Yocum, Fort Jay Historic Structure Report, 47.

Figure 7. Details from “A Map of Governor’s Island,” by engineer Joseph Mangin, 1813.

Key:
A. Fort Jay
D. Powder Mag[azine]
E. Officer’s Pavil[ions]
F. Barracs [sic]
Figure 8. Details from a “Plan of Fort Columbus,” 1831.
Figure 9. Details from a “Plan of Fort Columbus,” 1834.
1830s:
New Guardhouse

The U.S. Army made significant repairs and alterations to Fort Columbus beginning in 1834, including the main gate. All the fort's brick structures and magazine were demolished at this time. Four new brick barracks of uniform massing and scale replaced the old buildings between 1834 and 1837, and a new magazine was constructed beneath the north ravelin. New quarters were repositioned closer to the terreplein to increase the size of the interior courtyard. This necessitated removal of the guardhouse wings to make room for the adjacent east barrack. The gate's sally-port tunnel was extended through the new east barrack and incorporated new machinery for the draw bridge. The existing tunnel was also upgraded with a lining of durable granite blocks, similar to those installed at the scarp walls. The earliest plan illustrating the renovated fort is dated 1839 (fig. 11).

While documentation is plentiful for most of the improvements described above, references to the guardhouse are scarce. Proposed removal of the two wings is shown on a plan dated 1832 (fig. 10). That the entire building was in fact demolished and rebuilt on the old foundation is learned from a physical investigation of the building itself. First, there are many similarities in both construction materials and design between the guardhouse, the 1830s barrack buildings, and adjacent (contemporary) triangular buildings. These include the color and size of the sandstone foundation blocks, brick walls laid in Flemish bond, brick jack arches over window openings, cornice designs, and original low-pitched roofs (figs. 12-14). Second, the presence of a construction seam between the stone arch and upper walls of the guardhouse is suggestive of a later construction date. Third and most compelling are the lower rooms of the guardhouse that were filled with earth, burying what appear to have been doorways in the west foundation walls that had previously connected with the former wings (figs. 82 and 87).

Like the old guardhouse, the new neoclassical-style building abutted the back side of Fort Jay's stone arch, with the stone wall serving as its east wall. A recessed doorway centered in the symmetrical west façade was accessed by a wide flight of sandstone steps. Windows flanking the doorway and in the sidewalls of the upper story were set in arched and recessed secondary planes of the brick wall. Windows in the sidewalls of the lower story were smaller, with two blind openings in the front façade. A low-pitched gable roof was presumably covered with the same “tin” roofing as the barracks buildings. This low roof left the flat back side of the gate's sculpture curiously exposed, making it vulnerable to damage from the elements. The interior of the building was partitioned into two rooms in the upper story, separated by a brick partition wall. Two small storage rooms were in the lower story, accessed by hatches in the floor. These lower rooms straddled the sally-port tunnel, sharing its stone walls.

---

36 Yocum, Fort Jay Historic Structure Report, 79. Note that the roofs of the barracks were rebuilt in their current configuration in 1855. Original source: Memoir of repairs for the year ending 30 Sept. 1855, press copies of letters sent 1855-59; Entry 741; RG 77; National Archives, Northeast Region, New York City (NARA).
Figure 10. Alterations made to Fort Columbus around 1834 were based on this “Plan of Fort Columbus, Governor’s Island, N. York—Divided into Two Sections. The First Showing the Original Work. The Second, Exhibiting the Repairs and Alterations Proposed to be Adopted in Completing the Authorized Repairs,” October 17, 1832.
Figure 11. Details of a “Plan of Fort Columbus Showing Recent Alterations in Barracks and Terreplein,” April 24, 1839.
Figure 12. Photographs illustrating similar construction details of the circa-1834 Fort Jay guardhouse (above) and corner building at the north barrack (below). These include:

* Sandstone-block lower walls with narrow water table;

* Brick upper walls laid in Flemish bond;

* Brick jack arches over window openings;

* Simple projecting brickwork at cornices; and

* Low-sloping roofs.
Figure 13. The low pitch of the guardhouse roof (upper drawing) is similar to the original tin-covered roofs of the existing 1834 barracks (lower drawing), which were later heightened in the 1850s.
Figure 14.
Photographs illustrating similar sandstone blocks used for the lower walls of the circa-1834 guardhouse (a) and parapet (c), which differ in color and scale from the sandstone blocks of the circa-1795 arch (b). Also note the gap between the arch and guardhouse (at arrow, below).
1856
BRIDGE REBUILT

The U.S. Army rebuilt the wooden bridge of Fort Jay, then called Fort Columbus, in 1856. This, along with other work, was reported in a “Memoir of the progress of operations connected with the construction and repairs of barracks and quarters and the repairs of Fort Columbus and Castle Williams on Governors Island, NY Harbor, for the year ending September 30, 1856.” This noted:

In April the roadway leading across the Ditch into Fort Columbus was thoroughly repaired, the greater part requiring to be put down new owning [to] the decayed state of the timbers.37

No mention was made of the stone piers supporting the bridge.

1860s-70s
Early Views and Plans

The 1860s are significant as the time when the earliest-known views of Fort Columbus and its main entrance were produced. These include an engraving published in Harper’s Weekly in 1861, and a photograph taken in 1864 (figs. 15 and 16). The engraving shows the stone arch and the south elevation of the circa-1830s guardhouse, while the photograph features the front elevation of the arch and a wood bridge. Both the engraving and photograph clearly document the stone arch as essentially unchanged in design from its appearance today. Prominent features are four Doric pilasters framing the arched entrance to the center sally-port tunnel, and supporting a heavy entablature topped by a raised platform for the gate sculpture.

The sandstone sculpture had been damaged by 1864, perhaps as early as the 1840s when two powerful hurricanes struck New York City and vicinity.38 The 1864 photograph clearly shows both wings of the eagle as missing, along with the upper portion of the south flag. A contributing factor may have been the low roof of the rebuilt guardhouse that left the sculpture vulnerable to extreme weather. Curiously, the sculpture remained in this decrepit condition for the remainder of the 19th century.

Also seen for the first time in the 1864 photograph is a bridge spanning the dry ditch in front of the gate. Wood planks comprised the decking of the bridge, flanked by elevated plank sidewalks. A short span of decking immediately adjacent to the stone arch could be drawn up by chains, thus securing the interior of the fort in case of attack. This is clearly illustrated as a narrower section of the bridge on plans dated 1867, 1877 and 1879 (figs. 17, 18, and 20). The bridge also had wood side railings with latticework between the upper and lower rails. Although a bridge must have crossed the ditch in this location as early as 1794, there is little doubt that the bridge photographed in 1864 was a later replacement, perhaps dating to the significant repairs and alterations of the 1830s.

A visitor to Governors Island in 1872 described the entrance to Fort Columbus as follows:

A sudden turn in the path brings the visitor through a cutting in the glacis to

37 Yocum, Fort Jay Historic Structure Report, 81-82. A copy of the report is in the New York branch of the National Archives.

38 The “Great Havana Hurricane” of 13 Nov. 1846 is said to have washed away 100 yards of New York City’s battery, while the hurricane of 6 Oct. 1849 caused considerable structural damage in the city. Source: http://www.weather2000.com/NY_Hurricanes.html.
the covered way in front of the drawbridge and the entrance to the Fort.... The gate of the work is a massive structure of brown stone, surmounted by a dilapidated trophy of arms. Spanning the ditch is a bridge supported on stone abutments. The gate is provided with the usual drawbridge, passing over which we arrive at the square on the interior of the Fort.\textsuperscript{39}

Figure 15. Engraving of “Recruits Drilling in Squads on Governor’s Island, New York,” from an 1861 issue of Harper’s Weekly.
Figure 16. Earliest known photograph of the gate at Fort Jay, then known as Fort Columbus, entitled “Garrison Quarters, Main Sally Port,” September 28, 1864.
Figure 17. Details of a "Map Showing the Position of all Buildings on Governor's Island," December 1, 1867.
Figure 18. Details of a “Sketch Illustrating the Proposed Introduction of Water Supply and Drainage for Fort Columbus, Governor’s Island, N.Y. Harbor,” February 17, 1877.
Figure 19. Details of a “Map of Governor's Island, N.Y.H. [New York Harbor],” 1879.
Figure 20. Details of a "Map showing location of Water, Drain and Sewer Pipes on Governors Island," August 30th, 1879.
Figure 21. The "sally port," or main entrance, of Fort Columbus in 1881, showing the wooden bridge, stone arch, sculpture, and north elevation of the guardhouse.
Circa 1890-1900:
More Deterioration

Photographic documentation of the main entrance to Fort Columbus is rich for the latter decade of the 19th century (figs. 22-25). As in the 1860s, the photographer’s focus was the front elevation of the gate, with only a side glimpse of the guardhouse provided in a view published in 1890 (fig. 22). The sculpture continued to deteriorate, losing its north flags sometime between 1890 and 1896. This may have been the work of another storm, such as “Hurricane #4,” that swept away nearby Hog Island in August 1893. Efflorescence, or white staining, is also evident on the stonework of the arch in the photographs of circa 1896 and 1898, suggesting progressive problems with water infiltration (figs. 23 and 24).

The latticework railings of the gate’s plank bridge, most likely dating to 1856, remained until as late as 1896 (figs. 22 and 23). These were finally replaced around 1900 by railings with a chord-truss design (fig. 25).

1890-1913
Legends of the Gate Sculpture

Fanciful stories about the gate sculpture began appearing at the end of the 19th century. Interestingly, no accounts mentioned its poor condition as clearly documented in contemporary photographs. The Illustrated American published the following in 1890:

Notice the carving over the entrance to the fort: a pretty bit of romance is connected with it. A young Tory spy confined in the fort during the war of 1812, not wishing to be idle asked the colonel in command to furnish him with the necessary materials, and he would make a suitable ornament to be placed over the gateway of the fort. He was given what he wanted and he set to work energetically. But in the mean time he was tried by a court-martial and sentenced to be shot. One bright afternoon, while the condemned prisoner was hard at work, the colonel’s daughter often came out to watch him make the rough stone assume definite form and shape. Quite a friendship thus grew up between the two. The day appointed for the execution drew near, but seeing that the carving was yet uncompleted, the girl induced her father to ask that the time might be extended until the condemned had finished his work. The request was granted. The bond of sympathy between the two young people was now strengthened, and each looked forward with dread to the finishing of the carving. Finally the brave lad pronounced it completed. The Colonel, however, had made a full report of the case to the Secretary of War, and had obtained a pardon. This the colonel gave to his daughter. Away she hastened to tell her friend the glad news. The sequel may be guessed. They were married and long lived to bless that carving.

A description of the sculpture was included in another version published in The Brooklyn Daily Eagle in 1891:

The entrance gate is very imposing, a sort of triumphal arch, and it claims a little bit of romance for its own. Surmounting the gateway of granite [sic] is a fine piece of carving done from red sandstone. During the late war a prisoner incarcerated here, who was a bounty jumper as well as a deserter, was about to pay the penalty of his crimes according to military discipline. Earnestly requesting that he might be


41 “Historic America: Governor’s Island,” The Illustrated American, 15 Mar. 1890, 82.
permitted to leave something worthy of remembrance, and possibly blot out the stain in a measure resting upon him before he paid the forfeit of his misdemeanors, he was provided with a block of stone, and lo! He wrought from out the unwieldy mass these wonders. Day after day he worked with chisel and mallet, and now there rests upon the entablature of the arch a graceful and symmetrical piece of work, comprising the equipments of war, the crest of the United States, the cap of liberty resting upon the closely bound fasces, the emblematic eagle and the miniature fortress. It is needless to add that when the knowledge of this artistic piece of work came to the governor he pardoned the erring man.42

The commander of Governors Island, Major General Adna R. Chaffee, related in 1903 that construction of the arch on which the ornamental sculpture rested had begun in 1794. About the sculpture itself, he noted:

There is a story in effect that this figure was designed and its construction supervised by a prisoner who was confined in the fort, but there seems to be no record of the latter instance.43

The legend persisted, however, with a slightly different version recounted by Reverend Edmund Banks Smith in his book on the history of Governors Island published in 1913:

In 1801 Fort Jay had a “handsome gateway with a corps de garde drawbridge.” In connection with this gateway there is a pretty legend which, though persistent, cannot be verified as to time or person. The story is that a prisoner who was a stonecutter by trade was detailed to make the fine carving which adorns the gateway. During the progress of the work one day the commanding officer’s little daughter stood under the gateway with the stonemason who was inspecting his work from below. Just then a heavy block of stone or a stone cannon ball fell and would have killed the child, but the prisoner, too late to pull her aside, interposed his own body and saved her life with serious injury to himself. His reward for the gallant act was pardon. If the story cannot be proved, neither can it be disproved, and it has been told long enough to entitle it to a respectful hearing and a willing acceptance.44

42 “To Governor’s Island: A Trip in the Little Steam Tug to Castle William,” The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 2 Aug. 1891.
43 Endorsement of Maj. Gen. Commanding Chaffee, attached to a letter from the Governor’s Island Quartermaster’s Office, 8 June 1903, requesting approval to repair and restore “the ornament over the sally port of Fort Columbus.” File 134634; RG 92; National Archives Main Building, Washington, DC (NAB).
44 Edmund Banks Smith, Governor’s Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637-1913 (New York: Published by the Author, 1913), 54-55.
Figure 22. The gate of Fort Columbus published in *The Illustrated American*, March 15, 1890.

Figure 23. The gate of Fort Columbus 1896.
Figure 24. Photograph of the “Entrance to Regular Fort,” in the Records of the Quartermaster General, 1898.
Figure 25. The gate of Fort Columbus, circa 1900.
**1903: Gate and Sculpture Restored**

The Quartermaster’s Office of Governors Island oversaw restoration of the gate sculpture at Fort Columbus in 1903. Captain Traber Norman of the Quartermaster’s Office noted in a letter soliciting support for the project that “unless this work is undertaken soon, it will likely be impossible to restore the ornamentation, as it is gradually crumbling away.” Photographs were attached showing the existing condition of the sculpture, annotated with sketches for its repair (fig. 27). Norman also observed, “the top and sides of [the] entrance are also in a bad condition and require considerable work to renew the same and place them in first-class condition.”

The project had been instigated at the “personal suggestion of Secretary of War Elihu Root” following a visit to the post in the spring of 1903 (fig. 26). Root had made a commitment to preserve the old fortifications of Governors Island as part of a significant project to enlarge the island in the early-20th century. Other endorsements included the following:

---

45 Letter from the Governor's Island Quartermaster's Office, 8 June 1903, requesting approval to repair and restore “the ornament over the sally port of Fort Columbus.” (File 134634, RG 92, NAB). In an earlier solicitation for documentation of the sculpture, Norman observed, “The stone has crumbled away so that it is impossible to tell what the original design really was.” Two photographs and two papers “bearing on the subject” were all that was then found in the office of the New York City Corps of Engineers. (Letter dated 13 April 1903; File 46768, Entry 103, Box 1118; RG 77; NAB). Research on the 1903 restoration by Emily Tragert, Intern in the Chief Historian’s Office, National Park Service, Washington, DC, 2010.

46 Letter dated 8 June 1903; File 134634, RG 92, NAB.

47 Ibid, statement included in the endorsement of Adna R. Chaffee, Major General, Commanding.
restoring the ornament over the sally port at Fort Columbus, NY. Department authorities recommend that this ornament be repaired and restored, and its repair is considered necessary by this office, if it is to be preserved.

Charles F. Humphrey, Quartermaster General, U.S. Army

Charles F. Humphrey, Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army, authorized the expenditure of $1,250.00 for “repairing and restoring the ornament over the sally port, Fort Columbus, N.Y.,” in a letter dated July 9, 1903. The Stone Renovating Company of New York City competitively bid the project and was awarded the contract on August 5, 1903. The specifications outlined the following work:

All loose and decayed stone to be removed to such a depth as will expose a hard, sound surface, and all joints raked out to a depth of not less than three-fourths of an inch.

The face, top and sides of sally port are to be built up so as to restore them to their original formation and appearance.

All ornamental work forming the coat of arms is to be restored to its original formation and appearance, using heavy wire netting stretched on iron frames, to form the outlines of figures where necessary. The irons of frames to be securely leaded into present stone work and braced as required.

The material used in restoring the stone work is to be a brown stone composition equal in quality to that used by the Fordham Stone Renovating Company. When work is completed, the color of old and new work must be alike.

These specifications contemplate the thorough repair, reconstruction and cleaning of face and sides of sally port entrance, and all work not particularly mentioned, but necessary to complete the job to the satisfaction of the officer in charge, must be done by the contractor without extra charge.

The contractor will be furnished with photographs showing the present and the original form of ornamental work. He must make his own drawings, and any plaster moulds required to have the work done. All drawings are to be submitted to the officer in charge for approval.

The contractor must agree to guarantee the work for a period of two years, and to replace any defective workmanship or material during this period free of charge.

Transportation for men and material will be furnished by the United States from New York city to the place where work is to be done, the contractor to load and unload material, if required.

The work was presumably completed within the $1,250 budget and the 60 days promised in the bid of the Fordham Stone Renovating Company. The name “Fort Jay” was reinstated the following year, in 1904. The earliest known photograph showing the repaired sculpture is dated 1909 (fig. 28).

---

48 Ibid, attached endorsements.
49 File 134634, RG 92, NAB.
Figure 28. Company C of the 12th Infantry posed in front of Fort Jay’s gate with restored sculpture, 1909.

Figure 29. Post card featuring the “Sally Port, Fort Jay, Governor’s Island, N.Y.,” circa 1910.
Figure 30. Photograph of the “Fort Jay – Drawbridge, Sally Port and Moat,” published in Governor’s Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, in 1913.
1920-21: New Window Wells at East Barrack

The constrained site of the guardhouse became even smaller when the U.S. Army excavated long light wells on the back side of the east barrack in 1920-21. The light wells replaced former subterranean cisterns dating to the 1830s. This work was done in conjunction with the renovation of the barrack for officers' housing. Rooms for support staff, such as cooks and maids, were located in the basement. New windows opening onto the light wells provided both light and ventilation.\(^51\)

1934: Recording by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documented Fort Jay in 1934 with black-and-white photographs, measured drawings, and a written report. Included in this recording were the main gate with its wood-plank bridge, stone arch, sally-port tunnel, and guardhouse (figs. 31 and 32a-f). No photographs featured the guardhouse, although it was recorded in measured drawings as a small stone-and-brick building with two rooms in the main story finished with lath-and-plaster walls and ceilings, and two small rooms in the lower story. Windows and doorway openings were rendered but lacking details of sashes and doors. The "guardhouse" was also mentioned in a brief report on the history and buildings of Fort Jay:

No record has been found, nor any conclusive conjecture offered as to the use for the brick building behind and attached to the upper part of the gate at the East sallyport. The upper part may have been a guard room or sentry house. The low basement story shows signs in the floor of an opening which may have given access to this house from the basement of the East building of the quadrangle without going out of doors. This building shows an unbonded joint between its walls and the sandstone of the gate, and is possibly of the same date as the quadrangle buildings, (the gate was finished in 1801).\(^52\)

The "opening" in the floor is shown in a floor plan of the lower story as located in the southeast corner of the north room. A note describes the feature as a "stone curb, hole filled in, brick fl[oor]" (fig. 32b).

HABS also recorded the painted exterior finishes of the barracks and guardhouse. Yellow paint was noted on the brick walls, and gray paint on the stone foundations, doors, windows, and trim (fig. 32e).


Figure 31a. Two views of Fort Jay's gate by photographer F.P. McFarland for the Historic American Buildings Survey, March 15, 1934.
Figure 31b. Interior view of Fort Jay’s sally port looking east by photographer F.P. McFarland for the Historic American Buildings Survey, March 15, 1934.
Figure 32a. Drawing 1 of Fort Jay by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934. Detail shows the gate (labeled the “East Sally Port”) and surrounds.
Figure 32b. Drawing 2 by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934. Detail is a plan of the east sally port tunnel.
Figure 32c. Drawing 3 of Fort Jay by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934. Detail is a “Basement Plan of Guardhouse.”
Figure 32d. Drawing 4 of Fort Jay by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934. Detail is the main-floor plan of the “Guard House.”
Figure 32e. Drawing 5 of Fort Jay by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934. Detail shows three elevations of the “Guardhouse.”
Figure 32f. Drawing 6 of Fort Jay by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934. Detail is a section-elevation view of the gate looking north.
Figure 32g. Drawing 10 of Fort Jay by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1934, featuring design details of the gate (labeled the “East Sallyport.”)
Figure 33. “New York’s Own, 16th U.S. Infantry Colors Emerge from Main Gate,” 1937.
1934-37: Bridge Repairs

The bridge at the Fort Jay gate received a new wooden railing sometime between 1934 and 1937 (fig. 33). The drawbridge also appears to have been replaced with a concrete slab about this time, as seen in a later drawing dated 1938 (fig. 34c).

1938-39: Gate Renovations

The U.S. Army and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) undertook an extensive renovation of the buildings and structures of Fort Jay, including the gate, between 1934 and 1939. Work on the gate was a later project, judging by sketches and drawings prepared in 1938-39 (figs. 34 and 35). These proposed the following:

- Replace the gate’s stone arch with a steel lintel.
- Replace the sally port’s brick-arch with new brickwork, capped on the exterior (upper) side with 5-ply waterproofing and 2” of cement concrete.
- Install new wooden floors and new plaster walls and ceilings in the two rooms of the main story [of the guardhouse].

A separate set of five drawings by the WPA in 1939 delineated a new concrete bridge spanning the ditch at the main gate, in place of the old wooden bridge. The drawings show the new bridge supported on existing stone piers with a concrete deck, concrete railing posts, a wood railing made of white American oak, and two electric lights on the far side.

It is difficult to know how much of this work was actually carried out, lacking follow-up documentation. That the guardhouse was improved with new flooring, plaster walls, and ceilings seems certain, based on existing conditions today. Other work undertaken at the barracks that may also have been carried out at the guardhouse in the 1930s included stripping paint from the exterior masonry walls and installing new doors with 5 horizontal panels, new window sashes, and new roofing. The concrete bridge was not built in 1939, based on later photographs and a project description in 1951 for replacing the existing “wood” bridge with one made of concrete. It is also doubtful that a steel lintel was installed at the stone arch, or that the brick arch of the sally port was replaced with new brickwork.

1940: Building Inventory

The Quartermaster Corps inventoried the buildings of Fort Jay, including the guardhouse, in 1940. The building was then identified as “Building No. 77,” measuring 328 square feet. The forms lists the building as unheated and used as a “Storehouse.” The completion date was “unknown,” with an estimated construction date of “1807-9.” Some building materials were inaccurately recorded, such as the “granite” foundation and slate” roof. Other

---

53 Several drawings relating to WPA project no. 765-97-2-15 are for work on the gate. These include: Drawing No. 201-3, “Elevation of Monumental Arch” and “Plan of Entrance,” 6 June 1938; Drawing No. 201-7, “Plan of Monumental Entrance & Arch,” 1938; and Drawing No. 201-2, “Quadrangle Arch Detail and building No. 201, Second Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governors Island,” 14 July 1939. Copies in the drawing files at Governors Island NM.
54 Notes on Drawing No. 201-7 (figs. 34 & 35).
55 “Concrete Bridge Over Moat at Quadrangle Entrance,” WPA project no. 765-97-2-15, City of New York, 2 Aug. 1939. Copies in the drawing files at Governors Island NM.
descriptions, like the interior walls finished with “plaster on brick,” were more truthful. The foundation was sandstone, the roofing sheets of metal, and the interior walls finished with plaster on brick and wood lath. A photograph of the guardhouse included with the inventory is a rare view showing the south elevation and a partial glimpse of the west facade. This shows the exterior walls as unpainted and the windows in the main and lower stories outfitted with 4-light sashes (fig. 36).

56 Building Inventory, War Department, Quartermaster Corps Form 117, Office of the Chief of Engineers. “Historical Record of Buildings” and “Records of Equipment and Condition of Buildings” at Active Army Posts, 1905-41; Box 102, Entry 393; RG 77; NAB.
Figure 34a. “Elevation of Monumental Entrance,” 1938.
Figure 34b. “Plan of Monumental Entrance & Arch,” annotated with proposed repairs, 1938. Note that the U.S. Army changed the building number to “201” around 1964.
Figure 35a. Details from “Proposed Alteration to Archway,” June 13, 1938. Building numbers were updated around 1964.
Figure 35b. More details from “Proposed Alteration to Archway,” June 13, 1938. The building number was changed to “201” around 1964.
**Figure 36.** Rare view of Fort Jay’s guardhouse showing the south elevation and west facade, August 1940.

**Figure 37.** Distant view of the guardhouse and arch behind a “cannon being removed from Fort Jay,” 1942.
Figure 38. Photograph of the main gate and bridge of Fort Jay, published in 1951.
1952: New Bridge and Commemorative Plaque

Concrete Bridge

The Works Progress Administration prepared a plan to replace the existing wooden bridge at the main entrance to Fort Jay with a concrete bridge in 1939. However, it was not until 1951-52 that the U.S. Army constructed a new bridge. The revised project is documented by a drawing and scope of work dated March 30, 1951. The scope notes:

It is proposed that existing wood bridge be removed and to be replaced with new reinforced concrete. Existing five (5) stone piers remain as same are found to be in good condition.

The concrete bridge had a new metal railing of simple design and a capacity of 20 tons to accommodate vehicular traffic.

The U.S. Army had designated the concrete bridge as structure number 219 by 1964 (fig. 39). The Newark Sunday News later published a photograph of Fort Jay’s gate, with concrete bridge, on July 4, 1965 (fig. 40).

Commemorative Plaque

The U.S. Army bolted a bronze plaque to the south pier of the stone arch at Fort Jay’s gate in 1952. This plaque commemorates Columbia University students and faculty who helped construct Fort Jay in 1794. Writing on the plaque reads as follows:

STUDENTS AND SOLDIERS OF FREEDOM

In keeping with the American tradition that men will defend freedom with both ideas and arms, this plaque is presented to Fort Jay by the Association of the Alumni of Columbia College to memorialize the fact that in 1794 students and faculty of Columbia worked with shovel and barrows to help erect this fort, named after John Jay, Columbia graduate of the class of 1764, whose life exemplified the best traditions of free men.

Erected May 13, 1952

---

58 Set of five drawings for construction of the “Concrete Bridge Over the Moat at Quadrangle Entrance,” by the Works Progress Administration, City of New York, 2 Aug. 1939, Project No. 765-97-2-15. Copy in the drawing files at Governors Island NM.

59 “Alt[eration] to Bridge at Quadrangle, Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY,” by the Office of the Post Engineer, 30 March 1951. Copy in the drawing files at Governors Island NM.

60 The number for the gatehouse was also changed to 201 about this time.
Figure 39. Sept. 1964. “Site Plan, Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York.”
Figure 40. Fort Jay’s gate, published in the *Newark Sunday News*, July 4, 1965.
1966: Departure of the U.S. Army

The U.S. Army left Governors Island in 1966, handing over jurisdiction of the entire property to the U.S. Coast Guard in June of that year. What use the Coast Guard made of Fort Jay’s guardhouse is not known. Presumably it remained a storage building, as suggested by two rescue sleds found stored in the south basement room in 2013.

1974: National Register Listing

Fort Jay was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a site of national military significance in 1974. The nomination described the gate as one of the fort’s significant historic features:

The Federal style stone entrance gateway shows French influence. A low-arched opening set within a tall blind arch is flanked by four large Doric pilasters, supporting a massive entablature. Surmounting the gate is a trophée d’armes. Military in character, it is composed of flags, cannon, small weapons, banded fasces with liberty cap, and a dominating spread eagle.61

The nomination generally mentions the “bridge” at the dry moat, and completely omits any reference to the guardhouse.

1976: Second Plaque Installed

The U.S. Coast Guard, which had assumed jurisdiction of Governors Island in 1966, placed a second plaque on the stone arch of Fort Jay’s gate in 1976. The bronze marker was provided by the New York Community Trust to commemorate Fort Jay as a designated New York City historic landmark:

FORT JAY

This important example of military architecture is a dramatic reminder of the early defenses erected in New York harbor to protect the City from invasion by sea. Like so many other early fortifications in this country, its star-shaped plan was inspired by the designs of Sebastien de Vauban, the great French military architect. The fort was completed in 1798 and named after John Jay, then Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Strengthened in 1806-1808, the massive walls, bristling with a hundred guns, helped to deter the British from attacking the City during the War of 1812. Today, it is under the jurisdiction of the United States Coast Guard.

Plaque provided by the New York Community Trust, 1976.

1982-83: HABS Returns

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) returned to Governors Island in 1982-83 to update its earlier documentation of Fort Jay and Castle Williams. Additional black-and-white photographs were taken at this time, including four of the Fort Jay’s gate (figs. 41a and b). These illustrate several changes from 1934, such as the concrete bridge constructed in 1951-52. A luxuriant growth of vines now covered the gate and bricked-in windows of the guardhouse, imparting a derelict appearance. Contributing to the general sense of decline was the condition of the

gate sculpture, now missing its north wing and lower north flag.

HABS also updated its descriptive-data report on Fort Jay, producing the following narrative on the gate (called the “east sallyport”):

The monumental east sallyport, approached by a concrete vehicular bridge, is constructed of dressed coursed red sandstone ashlar. Paired Doric pilasters support a plain entablature with prominent cornice. Two courses of sandstone surmounting the entrance from the base for a large sculpture featuring an eagle, a shield, weaponry and flags. The eagle's left wing and one of the flags are missing. The sandstone walls of the sallyport are pitted by vegetation which formerly grew on them. Access to the interior of the fort is through a barrel vaulted arch which is continuous with the postern bisecting Building #202 [the east barrack]. Machinery for the drawbridge that formerly stretched across the ditch [sic: the "drawbridge" was only a small portion of the bridge] is housed in niches on the north and south sides of the passageway. The drawbridge chains still hang from holes in the exterior wall of the sallyport.

A small, one-story structure (Building #201) located directly behind the east sallyport was originally used as a guard house. The 1813 cross section of the Island shows what may have been this structure [sic: the building shown in the cross-section is outside the fort]. It is constructed of red brick laid in Flemish bond and has a red sandstone ashlar foundation. The north and south walls have brick arches with former windows. The infilled window openings have brick jack arches and stone lug sills. The three bays on the west side are defined by arches, two of which contained windows with brick jack arches and stone lug sills. The window openings have been filled with brick. The center arch contains the door which has been covered with plywood. The walls are largely obscured by vegetation. The roof is gabled with a copper cornice and asphalt covering.\textsuperscript{62}

Previous architectural drawings prepared by HABS in 1934 were not updated in 1982-83.

\section*{1985: National Historic Landmark Designation}

Fort Jay was listed as a contributing resource in a National Historic Landmark (NHL) District for Governors Island, entered on February 4, 1985. It is this document that establishes the district's period of significance as encompassing the years 1794, when Fort Jay was substantially rebuilt, to 1966, when the U.S. Army left the island.

Fort Jay's stone arch and guardhouse were characterized in the NHL nomination as contributing to the historic district. These were described in the nomination as:

The handsome classically-styled gate … of red sandstone. Above the gateway is an impressive sandstone sculpture, a \textit{trophée d'armes} with large eagle and military symbols.

Building #201: Army records give 1809 [as] the date for construction of this small one-story brick structure, which is sited behind the monumental entrance to Fort Jay atop the vault of the sallyport. The building, which was divided into two rooms entered from the west, served as a guard house. The door has been boarded, and the walls are largely obscured by vegetation.\textsuperscript{63}

The concrete bridge, on the other hand, was considered to be non-contributing to the historic district, even though it falls within the nomination’s defined period of significance (1794-1966). This was described as:

Structure #219: Concrete vehicle bridge on sandstone piers constructed at the east entrance to Fort Jay in 1952 to replace an earlier bridge.\(^{64}\)

1992: Masonry Restoration Plans

A major project to repair the masonry walls of Fort Jay and its gate is documented in a set of 15 drawings prepared by the Civil Engineering Unit of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1992.\(^{65}\) The proposed work repaired cracked stones, replaced missing stones, and reset displaced stones. Missing and deteriorated brickwork was to be replaced with new brickwork to match the original as closely as possible. Graffiti and obsolete electrical equipment were to be removed from the walls.

The deteriorated sculpture on top of the gate was also to be removed and replicated in a cast-stone material. Detailed instructions included the following:

- Replicate eagle statue atop Gatehouse in cast stone material. Fully document existing deteriorated eagle sculpture using photographs, drawings, molds, and any other means necessary to fully replicate all details. Documentation is to include historical research on original appearance of sculpture. Government to provide all historical materials available on Governors Island. Review all documentation with Contracting Officer’s Representative prior to beginning any demolition… statue is to be fully replicated from top of Gatehouse cornice level. Completely disassemble and rebuild base area. Repoint 100% of mortar joints in base area and prepare base for anchorage of new replicated sculptural elements. All salvaged sandstone statue elements are to be saved.\(^{66}\)

How much, if any, of these repairs were carried out is not known. Certainly no work was done on the sculpture that remained in its sadly decrepit condition.\(^{67}\)

---


\(^{64}\) Ibid.

\(^{65}\) "Rehabilitation of Moat Walls," August 6, 1992; Drawing no. NY-0325, copy in the drawing files at Governors Island NM.


\(^{67}\) Yocum, Fort Jay Historic Structure Report, 181 and 244.
**1996: New York Historic Landmark District and Departure of the U.S. Coast Guard**

The City of New York designated a local historic district on Governors Island in 1996, with boundaries corresponding to those of the 1985 National Historic Landmark District. This new status was signified with a “Designated New York City Landmark” medallion added to the existing historical plaque on the north pier of Fort Jay’s stone arch. The year 1996 is also when the U.S. Coast Guard departed Governors Island, leaving the property in the hands of the General Services Administration. All the buildings of Fort Jay were left vacant at this time, including the guardhouse.

---

68 The medallion is missing today, having been removed sometime before 2005. A similar medallion remains at the entrance to Castle Williams.
Figure 41a. Two views of Fort Jay’s gate by photographer Jet Lowe for the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1982-83.
Figure 41b. The guardhouse at Fort Jay (above), and a distant view of the gate (below), by photographer Jet Lowe for the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1982-83.
Figure 41c. View looking east through Fort Jay’s sally-port tunnel, by photographer Jet Lowe for the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1982-83.
2003: Ownership Transition

Preservation and Design Manual

The General Services Administration (GSA) developed a *Preservation and Design Manual* in 2003 to provide guidance in the federal decommissioning and sale of Governors Island. Its purpose was to guide the development of Governors Island Historic District to ensure preservation of its now vacant historic buildings and fortifications. “Building Property & Summary Sheets” were one component of this manual, which recorded individual historic properties within the district. Fort Jay was then characterized as “one of the most significant structures on Governors Island.” The fort’s gate elements were described as follows:

Inside the bastion walls the entry gate is of red sandstone. Above the gate is a large and elaborate sandstone sculpture of an eagle with military symbols…. The gatehouse includes the remains of the original drawbridge and gate.

The property sheets also noted historic features of Fort Jay that were important to preserve, such as its form, scale and setting. In addition, several specific elements were identified as warranting preservation, including “the gatehouse with sculpture above.”

National Park Service

National monument status was conferred on a portion of Governors Island Historic District upon the signing of Presidential Proclamation 7402 by President William J. Clinton on January 19, 2001. This designated approximately 20 acres of the island as the Governors Island National Monument, which included Fort Jay and Castle Williams. Governors Island was cited in the proclamation as providing “an excellent opportunity for the public to observe and understand the harbor history, its defense, and its ecology.” The national monument property was actually conveyed two years later, on January 31, 2003, from the United States of America, acting through the General Services Administration, to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Trust subsequently conveyed the same property to the Secretary of the Interior. Fort Jay and its historic gate thus became part of the National Park Service, administered as Governors Island National Monument.


---

70 The design manual was prepared in consultation with the New York City Planning Department, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, the New York State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.


72 Ibid., 89 and 90.

73 Ibid, 90.

Fort Jay Historic Structure Report

The National Park Service commissioned Historic Structures Reports (HSRs) for the fortifications of Governors Island in 2003. The purpose of these studies was to provide baseline historical information for a General Management Plan being prepared for the new park. Architectural Conservator Barbara Yocum researched and wrote the HSRs for Fort Jay and Castle Williams, which were printed by the Government Printing Office in 2005. These studies documented the structural and architectural history of the fortifications, described their character-defining features, and made general recommendations for treatment.

Documentation of the Fort Jay’s gate and guardhouse were included in the 2005 HSR for Fort Jay. Details of these fortification elements were necessarily limited due to the broad scope of the project. The stone arch and guardhouse were identified as some of the earliest surviving remnants of the fort, constructed between 1797 [sic: 1795] and 1802. These were described as historic character-defining features warranting preservation treatment.

Many years of deferred maintenance were evident at the stone arch and guardhouse in 2005. White efflorescence covered the stones of the arch and significant portions of the sculpture were missing (fig. 42). The gate doors were completely missing, and the drawbridge chains hanging loose on either side of the sally port. The guardhouse appeared to have been abandoned and unused for some time (figs. 43 and 44). Metal exterior doors had replaced earlier wood doors and all the window openings were enclosed with brickwork. Stored inside were detached 5-panel doors and storm window sashes. The floor was littered with fallen plaster, bricks, dead rodents and other debris, and floorboards had rotted through on the north side. There were no heat fixtures or electrical equipment, suggesting the building had most recently served as cold storage.

New Gate Doors

Governors Island National Monument commissioned a pair of open ironwork doors for Fort Jay’s main gate in 2005. All that remained of the former doors were the heavy iron pintles of the former strap hinges preserved in the stone sidewalls. The U.S. Army had removed the doors sometime before 1934, according to HABS documentation. The park provided the following written justification and description of the new doors:

To protect this historic asset, an entrance gate made of steel tube is proposed. The gate will fill the space of the main entrance, 8’6” x 9’6”. The top of the gate will replicate the radius of the existing structure; 3/8” horizontal stiffener will be punched to accept 5/8” solid bars. Cane post and hasp locking mechanism with post hanger will lock the gate and there will be 3/8” steel plates to accept weld on hinges attached to the mortar joints.

Design of the doors was modeled on existing non-historic doors at two other New York Harbor fortifications: Fort Wadsworth and Fort Tompkins. Whitehall East Contracting Corporation of Brooklyn, New

---

75 The Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Governors Island was finally issued in 2008.
77 Section-106 compliance project #12586, "Fort Jay Entrance Gate," 6 June 2005. Funding source: Operations of the National Park System (ONPS).
York, supplied and installed the doors at a cost of $3,050.00.\footnote{87}{Emails exchanges 22 July 2013 from Governors Island NM Facility Manager Ed Lorenzini and Superintendent Patti Reilly to Barbara Yocum.}

**Bridge Repaved**

The National Park Service repaired and repaved the concrete decking and sidewalks of the bridge at Fort Jay’s gate in 2005. The park contracted this work at an approximate cost of $84,000. The job was completed by November 30, 2005.\footnote{89}{Section-106 compliance project #12801, “Repaving Projects at GOIS,” 27 June 2005; PMIS #95610, “Resurface Parking Lot #504 [sic]”; and FMSS #726706.}

**2006: Preservation Plans for the Stone Arch**

Concerns about the ongoing deterioration of Fort Jay’s monumental stone arch prompted Governors Island National Monument to devise a phased preservation plan in 2006. Proposed work included the following:

- Perform critical vegetation removal from Eagle Sculpture and cornice of Sally Port [i.e., stone arch].

- Fill upward facing joints with backer rod or other easily removable material to reduce water infiltration.

- Inject grout or other adhesive into voids in shield of eagle sculpture to retard rate of stone loss.

- Perform additional vegetation removal from eagle sculpture and cornice of Sally Port [i.e., stone arch]

- Point all open joints with appropriately formulated mortar, recessed slightly from the surface.

- Install additional grouting as necessary.

- Remove material in danger of falling. Extensive alteration of appearance is not anticipated.

- Apply roofing membrane to upward-facing flat surfaces on top of Sally Port [i.e., stone arch] to prevent water infiltration. Membrane material will be applied to temporary substrate that is anchored to the mortar joints only. Installation will be minimally visible from the ground.

- Prepare text and fabricate “Preservation Work in Progress” signs.

- Remove cementitious patches in select[ed] locations to identify substrates and determine typical conditions.

- Procure one-day site consultation with stone conservator/carver to evaluate mobilization and logistical concerns for a range of long-term treatment options.\footnote{80}{Section-106 compliance project #15779, “Phased Preservation of the Sally Port Gate and Eagle Sculpture at Fort Jay,” 2 May 2006.}

National Park Service Architectural Conservator Judy Jacob subsequently cleaned and filled selected mortar joints in 2006. No treatment plan or report exists for this project. Ms. Jacob later summarized the work as follows:

Crumbling mortar and dirt were removed from skyward-facing joints of the cornice, to a depth of two-three inches. After several days (to allow for drying of masonry), joints were filled with fine dry sand (“play sand”) and tamped. Lead wool was pounded into the tops of joints and around the nosing to the bottom of the stone block (about a 1/8-1/4-inch depth).\footnote{81}{Email from Judy Jacob to Barbara Yocum, 12 June 2013.}
2007: Additional Historical Research

Governors Island National Monument hired contract historian Larry Lowenthal to conduct additional research on the gate sculpture at Fort Jay in 2007. Mr. Lowenthal examined two collections of primary source documents: the "Proceedings of the Commissioners of Fortifications for the City of New York and Its Vicinity," in the New York Historical Society, and the "New York State Comptroller: Selected Audited Accounts" in the New York State Archives in Albany, NY. In addition, various secondary and internet sources were consulted. Found within these collections was previously unexplored information on the rebuilding of the main fortification on Governors Island (Fort Jay) during the years 1774-1800, when the island was still owned by the State of New York. Most compelling were references in 1794-96 to the collaborative efforts of French engineers Charles Nicholas Mangin and Joseph François Mangin, New York City contractor Gosman & Moore, and a stone carver named "Le beau."[82]

Research into the iconography of the sculpture was also undertaken at this time by Architectural Conservator Judy Jacob. Ms. Jacob identified an unmistakable resemblance to the insignia of the New York Artillery (fig. 5). This, together with the new discovery of stone carver Le beau, provided virtually irrefutable evidence of the sculpture's creation sometime before acquisition of the fort by the federal government in 1800.[83]

2008: Guardhouse Roofing Replaced

A contractor working under the direction of the National Park Service’s Denver Service Center replaced the existing roofing, flashing, and gutters on the guardhouse with new materials in 2008.[84] Materials removed at this time included flat-seam metal roofing beneath roll roofing, lead flashing, copper gutter liners, and copper downspouts. A sample of metal roofing, and the wire nails that secured it, were saved and are now in storage at park headquarters (Building 107). The words “Wheeling” and “Old Method Hand Dipped Cop-R-Loy” stamped in the metal roofing identify the manufacturer as the Wheeling Steel Corporation of Wheeling, West Virginia. “Cop-R-Loy” is a copper-alloyed steel that was trademarked from 1928 to 1989 (fig. 46a).[85]

Pressure-treated stock stabilized the existing roof framing in 2008 (fig. 46b). Other new materials installed in 2008 were wood sheathing boards, roll roofing, and copper flashing, gutters, and downspouts (figs. 46c and d).

2011: Bridge Repairs


[84] The gatehouse was a later add-on to a larger roofing project at Fort Jay. See Section-106 compliance project #22927, “Reroof Buildings at Fort Jay,” and PMIS #105620.
Governors Island National Monument proposed repairs to the east bridge in 2011 to address progressive deterioration of the concrete (fig. 45):

This project will repair the spalling concrete, patch deck, clean existing bearing plates, clean expansion joints, steel angles and install new expansion joints on the bridge.

The deck was renewed with a new surface of concrete. No repairs were made at this time to the stone piers or structural underpinnings.

---

86 Section-106 compliance project #36628, “Repair Moat Bridge at Fort Jay,” 27 April 2011.
Figure 42.
Front elevation of Fort Jay’s stone arch, 2005.
Figure 43. West elevation of the guardhouse, 2005.
Figure 44. North elevation (left) and south elevation (below) of the stone arch and guardhouse, August 2005.
Figure 45. Fort Jay’s bridge in 2005, showing deteriorated condition of the concrete deck and sidewalk.
Figure 46. Re-roofing of the guardhouse, February 2008:
(a) “Wheeling” stamp on existing sheet-metal roofing that was removed,
(b) reinforcement of roof framing with pressure-treated stock,
(c) new roll roofing installed over new wood sheathing boards, and
(d) new copper flashing and gutters.
**2011-12: Stone Arch and Sculpture Condition Assessment and Charrette**

**Introduction**

Governors Island National Monument commissioned a professional condition assessment of Fort Jay’s stone arch and sculpture in 2011.\(^{87}\) This assignment was contracted to architectural conservator and masonry specialist Lorraine Schnabel of Schnabel Conservation, LLC. The objective was to “define the existing construction and document the existing conditions to facilitate preservation planning for the gateway and sculpture.” Ms. Schnabel submitted a final report, entitled “Condition Assessment for the Fort Jay Gateway and Trophée d’Armes,” in 2012.\(^{88}\)

**Methodology**

Ms. Schnabel obtained information on the arch and sculpture primarily by visual inspection. In some areas (most notably on the back side of the sculpture), repair materials were removed, or probes employed, to locate joints and evaluate the underlying stones. A metal detector aided identification of original iron straps embedded in the stone with lead.

Petrographic analysis provided more information on the sandstone, such as possible quarry locations. Mortar analysis separated the mortar into its component parts of lime, sand and fines. Films and coatings on the stones were identified by X-ray diffraction analysis and FTIR analysis (Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy).

**Documentation**

The “Condition Assessment” report documents both the existing exterior appearance and condition of the arch and its sculpture. The west side of the arch, covered by the guardhouse, was not included in this study. Recorded information included:

1. Hand-written notes produced on site describing the condition of each stone and its associated mortar joints.

2. Photographs documenting the exposed face of each stone.

3. A digital database summarizing the results of the condition survey.

4. Drawings graphically illustrating the individual numbered masonry units of the gate and sculpture (figs. 48 and 49).

5. Charts summarizing the condition of each numbered stone.

\(^{87}\) The project was funded by PMIS 125670, “Emergency Eagle Restoration—Scoping and Project Staging,” for $132,950.00.

Observations

Ms. Schnabel identified and described the original 1795 stonework, along with four campaigns of later repairs in 1903, 1937-51, post-1951, and 2006. These are summarized in the “Physical Descriptions” section of this report.

Problems

The “Condition Assessment” report recorded the following problems with the stonework of the arch and sculpture:

- Stone deterioration such as flaking, disintegration, cavity erosion, chipping, spalling, cracking, and loss, caused by freeze-thaw, salt crystallization (efflorescence), repointing, use of inappropriate mortars, corrosion of the iron straps, and other factors.

- Surface accretions of a think black film caused by industrial pollutants, biofilms, and reworking/removal of lead at the metal straps.

- Biological growths, such as lichen, algae, plants, and vines.

- Areas of later repairs consisting of cementitious materials and coatings of black and red paint.

Conclusions

Ms. Schnabel concluded the following about the stonework of Fort Jay’s arch and sculpture:

The intensive observation necessitated by the stone-by-stone condition assessment of the gateway and sculpture revealed a structure that has withstood the test of time in a remarkable fashion. Despite the use of brownstone [i.e., sandstone] installed in ways that would normally cause widespread and catastrophic stone failure, required remedial work at the gateway is moderate. Despite comparatively aggressive efforts in the early 20th century, the sculpture retains significant amounts of historic material. However, the gateway is at a critical point where if the necessary remedial work is not done soon, deterioration will accelerate. The early 20th century repairs to the sculpture are not only deteriorating, but did not fully resolve some stone problems which have since become exacerbated. Prompt action is required to preserve not only the sculpture, but also the gateway for future generations.89

Recommendations

The “Condition Assessment” report proposed the following treatment of the stone arch and its sculpture:

Stone Arch

- Provide a temporary sidewalk bridge to prevent injury to pedestrians by falling debris.

- Provide supplemental structural support to the entablature stones.

- Remove loose patching material from the pilaster capitals.

- Waterproof the top of the gate, which serves as the base of the sculpture, by repointing masonry joints and installing a barrier, such as a flat-seam metal roof.

Sculpture

89 Ibid, 74.
- Assemble a team to undertake restoration of the sculpture (including masons and riggers), to be overseen by a conservator with experience in outdoor sculpture and architecture.

- Stabilize the sculpture by removing selected damaged elements, such as the right (north) flag.

- Preserve selected elements of the sculpture, such as the flag and shield, by removing them indoors for display.

- Retain existing repairs where they still have utility; apply a coating to improve visual integrity.

- Use carved stones and Dutchmen for new repairs, where possible.

- Replace existing exposed metal straps with another material that will not damage the stones.

- Fill open joints in the sculpture.

Following two days of discussions, the group unanimously agreed that the gate and sculpture are valuable historic artifacts that should be preserved. The following was also concluded:

1. The issue of water infiltration needs to be addressed by repointing joints and adding a waterproof membrane to the top of the gate.

2. The sculpture should remain in place, as potential problems of disassembly are too great.

3. Augmentation of the sculpture would improve its overall sense of completion.

---

**Charrette**

Governors Island National Monument hosted a charrette at the park September 27-28, 2012, to discuss the findings of the “Condition Assessment” and chart a course for the future treatment of the stone arch and sculpture. Participants included representatives from the National Park Service, the City of New York, and the private sector.  

---

90 For a transcript of the proceedings, including a list of participants, see “Governors Island National Monument Eagle Charrette, Minutes of Meeting,” Vols. I and II, by Terri Fudens; Atkinson-Baker, Inc., Court Reporters (New York: Governors Island, 27-28 Sept.2012), in the files of Governors Island NM.
Figure 47. Patriotic sculpture at the stone arch of Fort Jay’s gate, 2011.
Figure 48.
The masonry elements of Fort Jay’s arch, annotated with numbers by architectural conservator Lorraine Schnabel, 2012.
Figure 49.
The masonry elements of Fort Jay’s sculpture, annotated with numbers by architectural conservator Lorraine Schnabel, 2012.
2012: Hurricane Sandy

Hurricane Sandy, a Category-2 storm, struck the east coast of the United States on October 29, 2012, causing an estimated $68 billion in damage. High winds and tidal flooding slammed New York Harbor and its environs, including Fort Jay on Governors Island. Winds damaged the gate sculpture, toppling the already precarious north flags onto the roof of the adjacent guardhouse (fig. 50). The fragments were later lowered from the roof in January 2013 and stored inside the guardhouse, where they remain today.

The National Park Service anticipates that repairs will be partially accomplished with project funds to “Stabilize and Preserve Stone Façade of [the] Monumental Sallyport Entrance at Fort Jay.” The project description states:

The project will address the stone masonry deficiencies of the monumental sallyport or main entrance of Fort Jay, including cementitious and pieced-in repairs, full-unit replacement, repointing, cleaning, and to the extent possible, reducing salts within the sandstone structure. 91

This project has also funded the expenses associated with the preparation of this historic structure report on the Fort Jay’s historic gate.

91 PMIS #152387. The project is funded for $118,787 in fiscal years 2012 and 2013.
Figure 50. Fort Jay’s gate sculpture “before” (upper left) and “after” (upper right and below) damage by Hurricane Sandy, October 2012.
IV. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS
Introduction

This section provides physical descriptions and historical assessments of the gate at Fort Jay, Governors Island National Monument. It is a record of the gate’s remaining building fabric and historic integrity, achieved by integrating information from documentary sources and physical examinations. Components of the gate are the stone arch and sculpture, bridge, sally port, and guardhouse. The following written descriptions are accompanied by digital photographs taken by the author and others in 2013.

Not included in this section are descriptions of the existing state of repair of the building materials, as would be found in a conditions assessment report.

Stone Arch

Historical Summary

The stone arch of Fort Jay’s gate is one of the oldest surviving features of the fortification, dating to 1795 (fig. 51). The arch serves as the main entrance to the fort, with a center opening to the sally port. Historical sources suggest the arch was designed by French engineers Charles and Joseph Mangin, and constructed by New York contractors George Gosman and John Moore (doing business as Gosman & Moore). A patriotic sculpture adorning the top may have been carved by a Frenchman named “Le beau,” according to surviving financial records. Although no original drawings of the arch and its sculpture survive, an early plan from 1800 shows that it sat proud in the ditch at the east curtain and was backed by a guardhouse (fig. 6). Colonel Jonathan Williams retained “The Gate” and its arch during a substantial reconstruction of the fort in the early-19th century (1806-09). The U.S. Army rebuilt the adjacent guardhouse in the 1830s, restored the damaged sculpture in 1903, and removed a pair of heavy doors from the sally-port opening sometime before 1934. Few other changes have been made over the years, with the exception of repairs and two commemorative plaques installed on the east façade in 1952 and 1976.

Design

The stone arch was designed to present a monumental entrance to the main fortification of Governors Island in 1795, later named Fort Jay. The three-story arch incorporates an opening to the fort’s sally port and is abutted by a guardhouse on the back (west) side. The design of the stone arch is a simplified version of the freestanding commemorative arches of ancient Rome. A center arched opening is flanked by paired Doric pilasters supporting a flat entablature and a projecting cornice. Other details include a recessed arch above the sally-port tunnel. An upper platform supports a patriotic sculpture that is contemporary with the arch (fig. 52). No significant changes appear to have been made to the design of the stone arch since its construction in 1795.

Dimensions

The stone arch rises 30’ 5” high above the deck of the bridge, and measures 35’ 10” wide. The depth of the arch at the north and south elevations is 3’ 9”, not including projections of the pilasters and cornice.

Wall

The stone arch is a single massive wall constructed of a combination of sandstone blocks, rubble sandstone, and handmade bricks. Sandstone blocks were used for all
elements of the front (east) façade and the north and south elevations. These were described by architectural conservator Lorraine Schnabel in 2012 as follows:92

* Stone blocks range in size from small to very large. The largest stone is located in the architrave (#135), measuring 16 feet long by approximately 8 inches deep.

* Many of the stone blocks are face-bedded, with their bedding planes oriented parallel to the face of the wall.

* Exposed stones have a tooled finish of narrow parallel lines.

* The overall quality of the stone blocks is high, “with a preponderance of medium to fine and uniformly grained stone containing minimal amounts of mica.”93

* The red-brown-colored sandstone is typical of stones quarried from a large belt of Triassic sandstone in the area of New Jersey and southern New York (geologically known as the Newark System or Group, the Stockton Formation, and the Brunswick Formation), based on petrographic analysis of two original stones and comparison with available databases.94

* Original joints between stones are narrow, measuring 1/8 inch or less. Some joints retain early lime mortar with a fine white aggregate.95

Schnabel also documented many episodes of repairs and repointing using mortar, some pigmented to match the sandstone. Two comprehensive campaigns carried out circa 1903 and 1934 were identified, with other repairs taking place between 1937 and 1951 and after 1951.

The best preserved portion of the stone arch is its back side, or west elevation, that is mostly covered by the brick guardhouse. Building materials of this wall include cut stones, bricks and rubble sandstones. Cut stones comprise the upper tier and north and south sides, while bricks and rubble stones are used for the lower wall covered by the guardhouse. The south portion of the lower wall was revealed in September 2013, when a covering of plaster was removed from the east wall of the guardhouse’s south room (figs. 55, 77 and 78). The wall was found to be configured with bricks piers and a center arch (for structural stability), and infilled with rubble and lime plaster. This wall has always been covered by an abutting guardhouse, thus explaining the use of inferior building materials. The wall also bears the marks of an earlier, presumably original (circa-1795) building, described in the section on the “Guardhouse.”

A sample of mortar removed from the back (west) wall is presumably original, dating to 1795. It is a white/light-pink color with inclusions of undissolved lime. The mortar is found in both the narrow joints between the cut stones, and in larger quantities cementing the rubble stones and bricks. It is a soft, lime type with an aggregate consisting of both fine white quartz and crushed white sea shells.96

---


93 Ibid, 8.

94 The stones may have come from “the Newark Quarries” in New Jersey, which supplied the stones for the fortifications on Ellis Island in 1794, according to financial records in the New York State Archives in Albany, New York.

95 No detailed mortar-analysis results of the original mortar are described by Schnabel in the “Condition Assessment” report.

96 Sea shells may have been used in the lime component of this original mortar. See Appendix A, “Mortar Analysis,” for more information.

---

Doors
The National Park Service installed the existing steel-tube doors at the opening of the stone arch in 2005 (fig. 56). The purpose of the doors was to provide security to the interior of Fort Jay; their design is not based on historical precedent. The doors were procured from, and installed by, Whitehall East Contracting Corporation of Brooklyn, New York, at a cost of $3,050.00.

Remnants of earlier doors include a pair of heavy iron pintles on either side of the upper opening (figs. 56 and 57). These formerly supported two doors with strap hinges that were removed sometime before 1934. The design of the now-missing doors may have been similar to those at the west postern (rear entrance). The postern doors are made of two layers of vertical boards clench with spikes and hung on iron-strap hinges (fig. 58). While the exact date of the postern doors is not known, they are thought to date to a building campaign in the 1830s, when the fort's existing barracks were constructed. The earliest known photograph of the postern doors was taken by HABS in 1934; doors had been removed from the east sally port by this time.

**Sculpture**

A sculpture atop the stone arch is made of the same sandstone as the arch on which it sits. Historical records suggest the sculpture is contemporary with the arch, having been carved in 1795 by a sculptor named “Le beau.” Although Le beau appears not to have signed or dated his creation, three other initials, “VRK,” were found inscribed by some unknown person in a protected area. The sculpture is a depiction of the New York Artillery insignia that features a spread-winged eagle surrounded by military symbols.

Architectural Conservator Lorraine Schnabel, who conducted a thorough conditions assessment of the stone arch and sculpture in 2011, described the sculpture as follows:

> Above the cornice [of the stone arch] the masonry steps back to form a platform for the *trophée d’armes*. The focal point of this sculpture is an eagle supporting a shield with the state seal of New York. The eagle is flanked by a mortar to the left and a gun to the right. The backdrop to the eagle consists of flags, one to the left and three to the right of a central banded bundle of rods or “fasces” that is topped by a liberty cap. Various items of artillery surround the other elements at the sculpture’s base, including a large petard to the right, several piles of shot to the right and center front, the barrel of another gun at the center front, and three large cannon balls to the left.97

The existing sculpture is an assemblage of original materials and later repairs. Original elements are sculpted sandstones that are set in lime mortar and joined with iron straps secured with molten lead. Repairs dating to 1903 replicated missing elements with a

pigmented mortar containing Portland cement. A chart summarizing surviving original elements of the sculpture and 1903 recreations is presented in the following chart.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circa-1795 Sculpture Elements</th>
<th>1903 Restoration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raised platform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle: body and head</td>
<td>Eagle: south wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York shield</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South flag: lower portion</td>
<td>South flag: upper portion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortar and gun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piles of shot and cannon balls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty cap</td>
<td>Pargette on the back side of the sculpture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sculpture is also missing several elements on the north side. These include the eagle’s wing and three flags—all reconstructions dating to 1903. The wing and lower flag disappeared sometime between 1965 and 1985; the upper two flags were recently destroyed by Hurricane Sandy in October 2012 (fig. 50). Also missing is a rod that once held the liberty cap above the fasces, which was removed sometime between 1934 and 1951.

Repairs post-dating 1903 have mostly entailed repointing using Portland-cement mortars. More recent stabilization work by National Park Service Architectural Conservator Judy Jacob in 2006 used fine dry sand and lead wool to replace the crumbling mortar in skyward-facing joints. The National Park Service is currently planning a larger preservation effort to stabilize the sculpture and its stone arch.

---

98 For a detailed accounting, see the 2012 “Condition Assessment” report by Lorrain Schnabel.
Figure 51. East elevation of Fort Jay’s stone gate and sculpture, September 2013.

Figure 52. Detail of the stone sculpture, September 2013.
Figure 53. South pier of the stone arch, September 2013, showing drawbridge chain and commemorative plaque installed in 1952.

Figure 54. North pier of the stone arch, September 2013, showing drawbridge chain commemorative plaque installed in 1976.
Figure 55.
Back elevation of the stone arch in the south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse, following removal of the plaster wall in September 2013. Original building materials dating to 1795 include stone blocks, stone rubble, and brick piers and arches. Physical remnants of an earlier guardhouse are also preserved at this wall, such as white staining at the former roof (above right, at arrow), and broken bricks at the missing south wall (circled, at right).
Figure 56. Steel-tube doors installed at the stone gate of Fort Jay in 2005. Remnants of early hinges at the stone side walls are shown at arrows in these photographs taken in September 2013.

Figure 57. Details of antique iron hinges (circled), which are not connected to the existing modern doors, September 2013.
Figure 58. The missing doors of the main gate may have resembled these existing circa-1830s board-and-batten doors at the postern of Fort Jay, as seen in August 2005.
Bridge

Historical Summary

A concrete vehicle bridge supported by early sandstone piers crosses the ditch on the east side of the fort at the main entrance. Architectural plans for a new concrete bridge to replace an existing wooden bridge are dated March 30, 1951. The bridge is said by the National Register district nomination of 1983 to have been constructed in 1952. This replaced a wooden bridge of circa 1934-37 vintage in this same location. Machinery and chains for an early, now-missing drawbridge survive today at the stone arch at the entrance to the sally-port tunnel.

The earliest documentation of the bridge is a plan of Fort Jay as it was in 1800 by engineer Joseph Mangin dated January 16, 1801 (fig. 6). This depicts a “Bridge” with “Draw Bridge” crossing the “Ditch” in front of the “Gate.” Major D. Wadsworth later reported on February 15, 1802, that the fort had “a handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde [guard room], Drawbridge not yet finished.” A plan of the fort dated April 1839 shows a narrowing of the bridge at the gate, which was most likely the movable, or “drawbridge,” portion (fig. 11). The wooden bridge was extensively rebuilt in 1856, as described in a letter dated September 30 of that year that noted the decayed state of the timbers.

The earliest known pictorial view of the wooden bridge is a photograph dated 1864 that shows a plank deck flanked by raised-plank sidewalks, drawbridge chains, and latticework railings (fig. 16). Few changes appear to have been made as late as 1881, based on an engraving published in Scribner's Monthly magazine in February 1881 that also depicted stone piers supporting the bridge (fig. 21). Not until sometime between 1896 and 1900 was the lattice railing replaced by a simplified design (figs. 23 and 25).

Measured drawings of the bridge and surviving drawbridge machinery were prepared, and photographs taken, by the HABS in 1934 (figs. 31 and 32a, f and g). The bridge was then noted to be “stationary,” with wood planking supported on 4- by 12-inch joists, a simple wood railing, and red sandstone piers. A “concrete slab” had been poured in the location of the former drawbridge by 1938, as shown on a “Plan of Monumental Entrance & Arch” (fig. 34b). It was not until 1952, however, that the entire bridge was rebuilt with concrete decking and metal railings.

The bridge was labeled as structure number “219” on a site plan of Fort Jay dated September 1964 (fig. 39). HABS updated its documentation of Fort Jay, including the bridge, with new photographs taken in 1982-83 (figs. 41a and b. Most recently, the National Park Service restored the deteriorated concrete decking of the bridge in 2011 (figs. 45 and 60).

Stone Piers

Four masonry piers support the concrete bridge in the dry ditch. The piers are battered walls made of sandstone blocks that span the width of the bridge; the west end of the bridge is supported by the fort’s counterscarp. These supports are the oldest component of the bridge, most likely dating to the 1830s when the counterscarp was rebuilt using similar sandstone blocks. The earliest documentation of the supports is an engraving published in Scribner’s Monthly in 1881 that shows the two east piers (fig. 21). The earliest-known photographs of the piers are dated 1890 and 1913 (figs. 22 and 30). The bridge and its piers were later documented by the HABS in 1934 (fig. 31). They were later noted to be in “good condition” in a 1951 scope of work for rebuilding the bridge in
concrete. The piers and drawbridge hardware are all that remain today of Fort Jay's 19th-century bridge.

**Deck**

The deck of the bridge is concrete today, having replaced wood-plank decking in 1934-38 and 1952; the main portion of the bridge was recently repaved by the National Park Service in 2011. A concrete slab first replaced the moveable (drawbridge) portion of the deck, adjacent to the stone arch, in 1934-38. The main deck of the wooden bridge was later replaced by concrete, supported by reinforced concrete beams, in 1952. Elevated sidewalks, also paved with concrete, flank the main roadway (fig. 60).

**Drawbridge**

Only a small portion of the bridge deck closest to the stone arch could be drawn up to protect the fort. The drawbridge is obsolete today, having been replaced by a “concrete slab” sometime between 1934 and 1938 (figs. 32f and 34b). Fort Jay had a “Draw Bridge” as early as 1800 (fig. 6), which was rebuilt in 1802. Significant rebuilding projects at Fort Jay in the 1830s may have included the drawbridge.

All that remains of the drawbridge today are two heavy iron hinges, formerly attached to the drawbridge deck, and machinery that lifted the deck (figs. 63-65). The hinges may be as early as 1802; the machinery dates to the 1830s. The two hinges are bolted to the lower east face of the stone arch. Components of the machinery include chains, cast-iron pipes that serve as conduits for the chains, and a hoisting mechanism in the sidewalks of the sally port. Operation of the drawbridge appears to have been from a south cellar room in the circa-1830s east barrack that adjoins the sally port, judging by a later wall brick patch in the south cellar that corresponds with the location of the cast-iron hoist.

**Railings**

Metal railings of simple design flank the bridge deck. The railings date to rebuilding of the bridge in concrete in 1952. The bridge historically had wooden railings, the earliest-known design being a lattice-type as seen in a photograph dated 1864 (fig. 16).

**Steps**

Concrete steps on the north side of the bridge, adjacent to the stone arch, provide access to the dry ditch (fig. 62). The steps are contemporary with the 1952 concrete bridge.

---

99 “Alt[eration] to Bridge at Quadrangle, Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY,” by the Office of the Post Engineer, 30 March 1951. Copy in the drawing files at Governors Island NM.
100 Section-106 compliance project #36628, “Repair Moat Bridge at Fort Jay,” 27 April 2011.
101 Ibid.
Light

A street light on the north side of the bridge illuminates the bridge at night (fig. 59). A light with single lamp was first installed in this location sometime between 1965 and 1982-83. It was later altered to its current two-lamp configuration that includes a floodlight.
Figure 59. The concrete bridge at Fort Jay’s gate replaced a wooden bridge in 1951-52. Photograph September 2013.

Figure 60. Bridge deck, view looking east, September 2013. The concrete was recently repaired in 2011.
Figure 61. Underside of the concrete bridge, September 2013. Note the early stone piers and reinforced concrete beams dating to 1951-52.

Figure 62. Concrete steps accessing the dry ditch, September 2013. The steps are contemporary with the 1951-52 bridge.
Figure 63. Partially exposed subterranean iron pipe (at arrow) on the west side of the gatehouse houses the south chain of Fort Jay’s former drawbridge. Photograph September 2013.

Figure 64. Obsolete chains (upper arrows) and heavy iron hinges of the now missing drawbridge deck (lower arrows) at Fort Jay’s sally-port entrance. Photograph September 2013.
Figure 65. Drawbridge machinery in the west portion of the Fort Jay's sally port, September 2013. This equipment is presumably contemporary with the 1834-37 east barrack.
Sally Port

Historical Summary

The sally port is the main entrance of Fort Jay that leads from the bridge to the interior courtyard or quadrangle. The sally port is entered through an arched opening in the stone arch and consists of three portions: a wide area adjacent to the stone arch that accommodates the swing of two large doors; a low arched passage beneath the terreplein; and a taller passage that passes through the east barrack on the west side. Of these three parts, the first two are the oldest, as illustrated on a plan dated 1801 (fig. 6). The west portion of the sally port is contemporary with the east barrack that replaced an earlier barrack in 1834-37 (fig. 11). Machinery for the now-missing drawbridge, also thought to date to the 1830s, is located in this section.

Floor

The floor of the entire sally port is concrete covered with asphalt. Concrete flooring existed by 1934, as surmised by a photograph of that date by HABS (fig. 31b). Asphalctic paving was later applied sometime before 1982-83, as seen in an updated photograph by HABS (fig. 41c). Additional physical investigation is required to determine the 19th-century flooring material(s).

Walls

East Entry and Tunnel

The walls of the older, eastern, portion of the sally port are lined with blocks of granite. This material is thought to have replaced earlier red sandstone in the 1830s, when the scarp walls of the ditch were faced with the same durable material. Most of the tunnel is 10’ wide, similar to the postern on the west side of the fort that retains its early sandstone walls (fig. 69). A wider section of the sally port at the stone arch would have accommodated two large doors, the cast-iron hinges for which survive in the granite side walls. A horizontal stone patch at the north wall of the tunnel was identified by HABS in 1934 as a “6’ recess for wood beam used for barrier and barring gate” (fig. 32f). HABS misidentified the walls of the sally port as “red sandstone” in 1934, perhaps due to their coating of white paint. Paint was subsequently removed from the sally-port granite and the exterior walls of the guardhouse and barracks in the later 1930s.

East Barrack

The west portion of the sally port is contemporary with the 1834-37 east barrack through which it passes. Granite is used on the lower north and south walls. The upper walls are brick on the north and south sides of the sally port and above the tunnel opening on the east side (fig. 68). Only the brick walls are painted white today; the lower granite walls were stripped of paint in the 1930s.

Ceiling

103 Drawing 6 of Fort Jay by HABS, 1934.
104 Ibid.
East Entry and Tunnel

The ceiling of the older eastern portion of the sally port is two different heights, being higher in the area adjacent to the stone arch to accommodate the swing of two large doors. Both ceilings are arched and made of bricks that presumably date to the original construction of Fort Jay’s gate in 1795. Plans to rebuild the lower brick arch of the tunnel in 1938 appear not to have been carried out (figs. 35a-b). Rather, an existing pargette of mortar was most likely applied to the existing bricks at that time. Earlier exposed brickwork is documented in a photograph by the HABS in 1934 (fig. 31b); the pargette coat was in place by 1982-83 (fig. 41c).

East Barrack

The ceiling of the later west portion of the sally port is a component of the east barrack that was constructed in 1834-37. The ceiling here is approximately two-stories tall, flat, and framed with wood. The exposed finish appears to have been wood planks oriented east-west, as seen in a 1934 photograph by HABS (fig. 31b). The ceiling is currently sheathed with panels of unknown composition (fig. 68). A boxed enclosure with hinged sides, installed sometime between 1934 and 1982-83 (figs. 31b and 41c), is at the east end of the ceiling—its function has not been determined.

Lights

The sally port is illuminated today by a single light fixture mounted to the wall above the arched opening of the stone arch (fig. 67). The lamp is a carriage-style, with a single bulb enclosed in a sheet-metal housing with glass sidewalls. Electrical wiring for the light is in an exposed metal conduit that runs the length of the sally port at the north wall. The date of this light fixture is not known.

Wiring for a missing ceiling light in the west end of the sally port also exists today, now capped by a metal cover. A photograph taken in 1934 shows the light as an industrial style with exposed bulb and metal reflector (fig. 31b). It was removed sometime after 1934.
Figure 66. Fort Jay’s sally port, view looking west, October 2013.

Figure 67. Brick-vaulted ceiling at the east end of Fort Jay’s sally port with electric light, September 2013.
Figure 68. Fort Jay’s sally port looking east. The west portion of the tunnel passes through the 1834-37 east barrack (upper view); the earlier portion on the east side dates to the 1795. Photographs September and October 2013.
Figure 69. The early walls of the sally port were most likely sandstone, similar to the existing walls of Fort Jay’s postern (above), as seen in August 2005.
Guardhouse

Historical Summary

A brick guardhouse abuts the upper stone arch of Fort Jay on the back (west) side, above the sally-port tunnel. Construction of the stone arch and guardhouse may have begun as early as 1795 and had been completed by February 1802, when Major D. Wadsworth described “a handsome Gateway with a Corps de Garde [guardhouse].” Colonel Jonathan Williams noted in his “Draft of a Report to the Secretary of War” dated November 1808 that “the Gate” was one of the few structures retained during the reconstruction of the fort beginning in 1806. Williams may have neglected to mention the guardhouse because it was considered to be a component of the gate. Plans depicting the arch and attached building are dated 1801, 1813, 1831, and 1834 (figs. 6-9). These show the guardhouse as a gable-roofed building with two wings on the west side.

No mention was made of the guardhouse when other brick buildings of the fort, including the barracks and powder magazine, were replaced by new structures in the 1830s. Physical evidence clearly indicates, however, that the original guardhouse and its wings were demolished and replaced by the existing structure at that time. The new guardhouse was also built of brick but had no wings. This was due to space constraints from repositioning of the adjacent east barrack to enlarge the interior courtyard. The earliest views of the completed new building are provided by a plan dated 1839, an engraving published by Harpers Weekly in May 1861, and a photograph taken in 1890 (figs. 11, 15, and 22).

Numbers were assigned by the U.S. Army to the buildings and structures on Governors Island by 1879. It was not until the mid-20th century, however, that the small guardhouse received its own number. The Quartermaster Corps used number “77” in a 1940 inventory of the fort’s buildings. The numbering system had changed by 1964, with the building then labeled as number “201.” The U.S. Coast Guard retained this system during its tenure on Governors Island from 1966 to 1997. Today, the number “201” refers to the entire Fort Jay in the National Park Service’s List of Classified Structures.

The use of Fort Jay’s guardhouse has changed over the years. The new (1830s) building had two main rooms, two cellar rooms with inconvenient access, and no wings. It may have provided shelter to sentries posted at the parapet overlooking the bridge. By 1940, the guardhouse was being used by the U.S. Army as unheated storage space. The exterior doorway was boarded over and the windows bricked in by 1982-83, suggesting the building had been abandoned. It was thus found by the National Park Service (NPS) in 2005, and remained in this condition until recently. NPS removed debris from the south room in 2013 to make room for fragments of the stone-arch sculpture damaged by Hurricane Sandy in October 2012.

Structure

The guardhouse is a masonry structure made of brick and stone with a wood-framed gable roof. Sandstone foundation walls visible in the two cellar rooms are a combination of red-pink sandstone blocks and unshaped sandstones dating from two periods: 1795 and 1830s. Remnants of the earlier foundation are believed to comprise the entire east wall (the stone arch), and lower portions of the north, south, and west walls. The early walls project slightly into the building’s cellar rooms, creating a narrow ledge. Two early brick lintels for obsolete openings survive today in the lower west wall, providing physical evidence of the wall’s antiquity (figs. 82 and 87).
Various episodes of repointing have mostly replaced the early mortar in the cellar rooms (see Appendix A, “Mortar Analysis”).

Three above-grade walls of the guardhouse are stone in the cellar story and brick in the main story, all dating to the 1830s. The north and south sidewalls of the building abut the 1795 stone arch of Fort Jay’s gate, which serves as the east wall of the guardhouse. No physical ties join the walls of these two structures. This differs from the original brick building, remnants of which are preserved on the west side of the stone arch. Here a small fragment of the early south wall can still be seen in the north room of the existing guardhouse, its bricks securely integrated with the stonework of the arch.  

The wood framing of the gable roof may retain some original (1830s) materials. Substantial repairs by NPS in 2008 introduced pressure-treated stock to reinforce the roof framing and new plywood sheathing boards (fig. 46).

Exterior

Design

The overall design of the 1830s guardhouse can best be described as neoclassical, or more specifically Greek Revival. The temple form of the building, with gable end facing front, is a hallmark of this design. Other neoclassical characteristics are a symmetrical façade, low-sloping gable roof, and windows set in a secondary plane within brick wall arches.

Walls

Three walls of the guardhouse date to

---

105 This physical evidence was revealed when lath and plaster was removed from the east wall of the south room in 2013.

---

reconstruction of the building in the 1830s; the east wall is the 1795 stone arch of Fort Jay’s gate described in the previous section. The guardhouse walls are made of two materials: sandstone and bricks. Sandstone blocks of red-brown hue are in the cellar story, precisely cut and tooled with a textured pattern (fig. 14). Narrower projecting stones also serve as gutters on the north and south sides and form the bottom portion of the pedimented gable in the front façade (fig. 70). Red bricks comprise the upper walls and front gable of the building. The hand-molded bricks are similar in color, size, and shape to Fort Jay’s barracks buildings, also built in the 1830s. The one-story walls are 12” thick, laid in a Flemish bond.

Doorway

The guardhouse has one exterior doorway that is centered and recessed in the front (west) façade of the building. This is a wide, arched opening, the upper portion of which is filled with recessed brickwork supported by an iron bar. Two metal doors, of two panels each, were installed sometime after 1938. These replaced doors with 5 horizontal panels of circa-1938 vintage (fig. 35b). Earlier doors dating to the 1830s most likely had 4 or 6 panels, similar to those installed in the barracks buildings.  

---

Steps

Three wide steps lead to the front doorway of the guardhouse in the west façade. These steps are made of the same sandstone as the adjacent stone walls. Both walls and steps are thought to date to reconstruction of the guardhouse in the 1830s.

Windows

The guardhouse has eight windows dating to the 1830s: four in the main story, and four in the cellar story. All window openings were bricked in sometime between 1940 and 1982-83—possibly after the U.S. Coast Guard displaced the U.S. Army on Governors Island in 1966.

Cellar Windows. Four windows are in the sandstone walls of the cellar story: two in the front façade, and one each in the north and south elevations. The two front windows are “blind” recesses in the sandstone wall that served as a decorative feature to balance the windows in the main story (fig. 70). Windows in the side walls provided natural light to two small rooms in the cellar story. It is not known what type of sash was in the cellar windows in the 1830s. Only one photograph taken in 1940 shows the south cellar window with what appears to be pair of side-hinged casement sashes (fig. 36). These had been removed, and the openings enclosed with existing brickwork, by 1982-83.

Main-Story Windows. Four windows are in the main-story brick walls of the guardhouse. Two windows flank the center doorway in the front façade, one is in the north elevation, and one in the south elevation. Each window is centered within an arched recess of the brick wall—a neoclassical treatment dating to the 1830s. Original features of the window openings are their sandstone sills and brick jack arches. The window sashes are missing, having been removed sometime between 1940 and 1982-83; brickwork fills the openings today. No information has yet been found on the 1830s sashes, which may have resembled 12-over-12 double-hung sashes photographed in the east barrack in 1864 (fig. 16). Replacement 4-light sashes had been installed in the guardhouse windows by 1938 (figs. 35b and 36).

Cornice

The cornice of the 1830s guardhouse is a simple affair consisting of a double row of projecting brick headers in the upper north, south and west walls. This is an original feature that is similar to the cornice of the 1830s triangular buildings adjacent to Fort Jay’s barracks (fig. 12).

Roof

The roof of the guardhouse is covered today with asphaltic roll roofing on plywood sheathing with copper flashing, all newly installed in 2008 (fig. 46). Asphalt roofing has been on the guardhouse since sometime between 1934 and 1982-83, according to descriptions of the building by HABS. It was found applied over “Cop-R-Loy” sheet-metal roofing, patented by the Wheeling Steel Corporation of West Virginia in 1928.107 The Cop-R-Loy roofing was removed in 2008, except for a salvaged sample retained for the building-artifacts collection at Governors Island National Monument (fig. 46). The guardhouse most likely had a “tin” roof in the 19th century, similar to the original roofs on Fort Jay’s 1830s barracks (fig. 13).108 A “tin roof” was still on the guardhouse in 1934, as noted by

---

107 A copy of the Cop-R-Loy patent application, with registration renewals, can be viewed at http://img02.mar.cx/us/254066.png.
Gutters

Original stone gutters dating to the 1830s are on the north and south sides of the guardhouse. These channel water through copper downspouts in the northeast and southeast corners, where the building abuts the stone arch. The gutter is documented in a detailed drawing by HABS in 1934 (fig. 32g). Copper gutter liners and leaders are contemporary with asphalt roofing installed in 2008 (fig. 46).

Chimney

The guardhouse has no chimney today, nor was any documentary or physical evidence found for a missing historic chimney.

Figure 70. Fort Jay guardhouse: west elevation, September 2013.

Figure 71. Fort Jay guardhouse: west entrance, 2012.
Figure 72. Fort Jay guardhouse: south elevation, September 2013.

Figure 73. Fort Jay guardhouse: north and west elevations, September 2013.
Interior

Layout

The interior of the guardhouse is partitioned into two rooms of equal size in the main story: one on the north side, the other on the south side. Each is entered by a doorway in the front façade, and has a connecting doorway in the center partition. Each room also has a small cellar accessed through an opening in the floor. The unfinished cellar rooms straddle the sally-port tunnel and have no exterior access.

Use

The south room of Fort Jay’s guardhouse is used today by the National Park Service to store fragments of the damaged gate sculpture, caused by Hurricane Sandy in October 2012. The north room holds large storm windows and two detached 5-panel doors. The building has been an unheated storehouse since as early as 1940, when it was so described in an inventory by the Quartermaster Corps of the U.S. Army (fig. 36). No information was found on the previous use of this 1830s building. Although it has been referred to over the years as a “guardhouse,” no documentation has yet been found to substantiate this appellation.

Cellar Rooms

Floor. The floors of the north and south cellar rooms are believed to be dirt fill dating to the 1830s. This is based on the presence of two brick lintels at the lower west wall that may be the remnants of doorways that connected with the now-missing wings of the original (1795) guardhouse. Archeological investigation would undoubtedly provide more information on the floor and its associated features.

The dirt floor of the north cellar is paved with handmade bricks. It also features an opening in the southeast corner curved with stones. HABS recorded this brick floor and its mysterious stone-curbed “hole” in 1934 (fig. 32c).

The dirt floor of the south cellar is covered with loosely laid boards, each measuring 3-5/8” wide by 1-5/8” thick. These appear to post-date the 1830s guardhouse, based on their smooth finish and remnants of a white-painted finish that indicate their reuse from some other location.

Walls. The walls of the north and south cellar rooms are exposed sandstone dating from two periods of construction: 1795 and 1830s (figs. 81, 82, 86, and 87). Similar sandstone blocks and rubble were used in both building episodes, some possibly reused in the 1830s. Original lime mortar appears to have been mostly replaced by later episodes of repointing.

Most of the cellar walls are thought to remain from the original (1795) gatehouse. These include the entire east wall, the interior walls at the sally-port tunnel, and the lower portions of the exterior north, south, and west walls. Remnants of two early brick lintels in the lower west wall, possibly for doorways, attest to the antiquity of this wall (figs. 82 and 87).

The upper portions of the exterior walls, set back from a shallow ledge, are later (1830s). These are the north and west walls of the north cellar, and the south and west walls of the south cellar.

Ceilings. The ceilings of the cellar rooms are the exposed floor framing and undersides of the subflooring in the main-story rooms. Many of the floor joists are crudely finished, most likely dating to the 1830s. Circular-sawn subflooring dates to a renovation of the building in 1938 (fig. 35b). Hatches in the ceilings provide the only access to the first-story rooms.
Doorways. There are no existing doorways in the cellar rooms. Two brick lintels, one each in the lower west wall of the north and west cellars, may be the remnants of original (1795) doorways that formerly connected with wings demolished in the 1830s. Access to the cellar rooms is through hatches in the floor of the rooms above: one in the north room, and two in the south room (figs. 80 and 85). These hatches are presumably contemporary with the flooring in the main-story rooms installed in 1938. There are no built-in steps or ladders. This new flooring destroyed any physical evidence of the earlier (1830s) cellar access.

Windows. Each cellar room has one window: one in the upper north wall of the north cellar (fig. 86), and one in the south wall of the south cellar. Both openings were enclosed with bricks sometime between 1940 and 1982-83. Little is known of their earlier appearance, other than a 1934 plan by HABS showing “iron bars” in the south window (fig. 32c), and a photograph taken in 1940 that shows the same window with what appear to be casement sashes (fig. 36).

Painted Finishes. There are remnants of a worn, white-painted finish on the stone walls and early ceiling framing of the cellar rooms. This is most likely a lime-based whitewash commonly used in cellar rooms.

Main-Story Rooms

Floor. The floor in the two rooms of the main story consists of two layers of floorboards supported by wooden joists. Many of the joists are crudely finished, most likely dating to the 1830s. No early flooring appears to survive, based on a note to “lay new wood floor” in a drawing dated 1938 (fig. 35b). This is confirmed by the milled stock of a selected few floor joists and flooring that bears the marks of modern circular sawing. Wide floorboards with tongue-and-groove joinery are topped by narrow finish floorboards, all dating to the 1930s.

Hatches in the floor provide access to the cellar rooms below: one in the north room, and two in the south room. These are later openings thought to be contemporary with the 1938 floorboards.

Walls. The walls of the main-story rooms date from two construction periods: 1795 and 1830s. The east wall is the back of Fort Jay’s stone arch constructed in 1795. This wall is composed of sandstone blocks, sandstone rubble, and bricks. Sandstone blocks are located on the sides and upper portion of the wall, while brick piers and a center arch provide structure to rubble fill in the center. Mortar used in this early wall is a lime type with fine-grain quartz aggregate and crushed white sea shells (see Appendix A, “Mortar Analysis”). All other walls of the two rooms are brick dating to the 1830s construction of the existing building. The exterior brick walls are 12” thick; the interior brick partition is 9” thick.

Plaster finishes the walls of both the north and south rooms. Two episodes of plastering have been identified: 1830s and 1938. The earlier plaster is a lime type that is applied directly to the brick walls. Later plaster is adhered to this early plaster in the south room, and to newer circular-sawn lath and studs at the east wall and the recessed exterior doorway. This has been dated 1938 based on plans of that date to “replace plaster on ceiling & walls” (fig. 35b). The 1938 plaster contains gray Portland cement, hair binder, and is finished with a thin white skim coat. Failing plaster and its substrate were completely removed from the east wall.

110 Circular saws for large stock, such as the floor joists and subfloor boards, came into use in the 1850s.
111 The subfloor boards are 9” wide; finish floorboards are 2-1/2” wide.
of the south room in September 2013 due to safety concerns (figs. 55, 77 and 78).

Plain wood baseboards trim the lower walls of the room. Paint analysis suggests these boards are of later vintage, most likely installed at the same time as the 1938 plaster.

**Ceiling.** The ceiling of both rooms is finished with Portland-cement plaster on circular-sawn lath dating to 1938 (see “Walls”). The original 1830s, lime-plaster ceiling was presumably removed at this time. Large areas of the later ceiling plaster are missing today in both the north and south rooms, exposing the lath substrate.

**Doorways.** Each of the north and south rooms has two doorways: one in the west wall to the outside, and an interconnecting opening in the center partition. The two exterior doorways have been modernized since 1938 with sheet-metal casings and two-panel metal doors (fig. 71). Wood casings and doors with 5 horizontal panels previously filled these openings, possibly dating to 1938 (fig. 35b). Two detached doors matching this description are stored today in the north room, possibly removed from these openings. The historic 1830s doors may have had 4 or 6 panels.

The interior doorway is more intact, retaining its 1830s wood jamb and casing; the door is missing. Moldings applied to the north side of the casing are later (circa 1938), based on attachment with wire nails and absence of early paint finishes. No descriptions or drawings of the missing door have been found.

**Windows.** Both the north and south rooms have two window openings dating to the 1830s: one in the west wall, and one in the exterior north or south wall. All four windows were bricked in sometime between 1940 and 1982-83. Window casings,

jambs, stools, and sashes were removed at that time. The historic casings most likely matched the surviving doorway casings in the center partition. Sashes may have been double-hung with multi-light sashes, similar to those in Fort Jay’s barracks. For more details, see descriptions of the exterior windows.

**Painted Finishes.** The interior rooms of the guardhouse were most recently painted around 1966. The remaining paint is worn, dingy, and failing today. Paint analysis in 2013 identified the existing paint scheme as follows:

- White: Plaster walls & ceiling;
- Red-brown: Casing of the interior doorway;
- Green: Casing and doors of the exterior doorway.

The paint analysis also identified the 1830s interior paint scheme as a cream-color, oil-based paint applied to the plaster walls and woodwork trim. For details, see Appendix B, “Paint Analysis.”

**Building Systems**

**Heating.** There is no documentary or physical evidence of a heating system in the existing 1830s guardhouse. The building appears to have never had a fireplace, stove, furnace, boiler, or chimney.

**Lighting.** No functional lighting is available in the guardhouse today. Electric lighting was first introduced on Governors Island around 1904, although no documentary or physical evidence suggests that this early amenity was installed in the guardhouse. One modern light fixture mounted to the ceiling of the south cellar was installed at some later date.

**Missing Guardhouse**

---

112 Analysis of the doors’ painted finishes was inconclusive in determining their original locations; see Appendix B, “Paint Analysis.”
Fort Jay’s original brick guardhouse is believed to have existed from 1795 until its replacement by the existing building in the 1830s. Major D. Wadsworth referred to the structure as a “Corps de Garde,” or guardhouse, in 1802. The location of the guardhouse is a curiosity, however, being perched atop the sally port and thus removed from the fort’s main entrance. One theory is that the original building housed a pair of stairs connecting the sally port with the upper terreplein and parapet. Another is that the building provided stability to the stone arch that it abutted. Two attached wings may have served as quarters for the guards. This early building is documented in several early plans of Fort Jay; no elevation drawings or detailed written descriptions of it have been found (figs. 6, 7, 8 and 9).

Surviving physical remnants of the original 1795 guardhouse include its stone foundation and monolithic stone arch that served as its east wall. Jagged bricks preserved on the west face of the arch are remaining fragments of the building’s former south wall; a white stain defines the position and slope of the missing gable roof (fig. 55). Two brick lintels in the lower west wall of the cellar rooms may be the lintels of two early doorways that connected with two wings appended to the west elevation (figs. 82 and 87). Remnants of the wings themselves may be buried beneath the terreplein, where outcroppings of sloping brick walls can be seen today (fig. 88)
Figure 74. Fort Jay guardhouse: south room, view looking north, before removal of unstable plaster from the east wall, September 2013.

Figure 75. Fort Jay guardhouse: west wall of the south room, September 2013.
Figure 76. Fort Jay guardhouse: south wall of the south room, September 2013.
Figure 77. Fort Jay guardhouse: east wall of the south room, prior to removal of plaster in September 2013.

Figure 78. Fort Jay guardhouse: east wall of the south room, following partial removal of plaster in September 2013.
Figure 79. Fort Jay guardhouse: ceiling of the south room looking north, September 2013.

Figure 80. Fort Jay guardhouse: floor of the south room looking south, showing two floor hatches (at arrows), September 2013.
Figure 81. Fort Jay guardhouse: two U.S. Coast Guard rescue sleds found on the floor of the south cellar room, September 2013.

Figure 82. Fort Jay guardhouse: west wall of the south cellar room, showing brick arch in the northwest corner (at arrow), September 2013.
Figure 83. Fort Jay guardhouse, north room: (a) southwest corner, (b) northwest corner, (c) northeast corner, and (d) east wall, January and September 2013.
Figure 84. Fort Jay guardhouse: ceiling of the north room looking south, September 2013.

Figure 85. Fort Jay guardhouse: rotted floor of the north room, northeast corner, September 2013.
Figure 86. Fort Jay guardhouse: north wall of the north cellar, September 2013.

Figure 87. Fort Jay guardhouse: west wall of the north cellar room, showing brick arch in the southwest corner (at arrow), September 2013.
Figure 88. Outcroppings of sloping brick walls adjacent to the east barrack, in the vicinity of the missing west wings of the original guardhouse. Photographs above are on the north side of the sally port tunnel; photographs below are on the south side of the sally port tunnel, January 2013.
V. CONCLUSIONS
CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES (CDFs)

Definition

Character-defining features (CDFs) are defined in the National Park Service’s D.O./NPS-28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline as follows:

A prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a historic property that contributes significantly to its physical character. Structures, objects, vegetation, spatial relationships, views, furnishings, decorative details, and materials may be such features.113

By this definition, a CDF can date from any period in the history of the property. In the case of Fort Jay’s gate, this spans the time period from its construction in 1795 to the present day.

A more restrictive explanation is cited in The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, in which CDFs are tied to the “historic character” of a building or structure:

Character-defining features … [are] those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the building’s historic character and detailing of exterior materials, such as masonry, wood and metal; exterior features, such as roofs, porches, and windows; interior materials, such as plaster and paint; and interior features, such as moldings and stairways, room configuration and spatial relationships, as well as structural and mechanical systems.114

“Historic character” is thereby tied to historical significance, which D.O./NPS-28 defines as “the meaning or value ascribed to a structure, landscape, object, or site based on the National Register criteria for evaluation. It normally stems from a combination of association and integrity.”115

The aspects of integrity including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.116

An excerpt of the statement of significance for the National Historic Landmark District nomination for Governors Island, which includes Fort Jay and Castle Williams as significant contributing resources, reads as follows:

The Governors Island historic district derives its significance largely from the island’s role as a major component in the defense system of one of the country’s most important harbors, New York Harbor ….  The present fortifications, Fort Jay, a square four bastioned fort, and Castle Williams, a circular casemated work, erected as part of the second American System of fortification in the years preceding the War of 1812, were two of the harbor’s largest defense works….  The island is also significant for its role as a major Army administrative center for nearly a century. Beginning in 1878 when the Military Division of the Atlantic and the


Department of the East were transferred to the island, the post served as headquarters for major Army commands until 1966.\textsuperscript{117}

The period of historical significance for Governors Island as defined by the National Register nomination therefore spans the years 1794, when Fort Jay was substantially reconstructed, to 1966, when the U.S. Army relinquished the island to the U.S. Coast Guard.

**Historic Character-Defining Features**

Virtually all the existing building fabric and features of Fort Jay's gate can be considered historic. This is because little has changed since the U.S. Army departed Governors Island in 1966, the end date of the period of significance as defined in the previous section. All existing elements and features of the gate should therefore be considered as historic and character-defining unless specifically mentioned in the following section.

\textsuperscript{117} National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, "Governors Island," entered Feb. 4, 1985.

**Non-Historic Character-Defining Features**

The following are character-defining features (CDFs) of Fort Jay's gate that are not historic. These features do not contribute to, and in some cases detract from, the historic character of the gate. As such, they could be removed with no adverse effect on historic character. For the purposes of this discussion, “non-historic” is defined as post-dating 1966. Non-historic character-defining features include the following:

- Bridge floodlight (post-1966).
- Commemorative plaque on the north pier of the stone arch (1976).
- Steel-tube doors at the sally-port entrance of the stone arch (20005).
- Existing materials of the guardhouse roof and gutters including: pressure-treated roof framing, plywood sheathing, asphalt roofing, copper flashing, and copper gutters and downspouts (2008).

Less certain are the exterior metal doors and bricked-in windows of the guardhouse. Additional research may determine if these were installed after 1966, and therefore lack historic integrity.
TREATMENT

Introduction

Governors Island National Monument commissioned this Historic Structure Report to document and guide the future treatment of Fort Jay’s gate. Treatment guidance is also provided by the park’s 2008 General Management Plan (GMP), and the National Park Service’s List of Classified Structures (LCS). The GMP calls for “rehabilitation” of Governors Island’s fortifications as a Harbor Center, but specifically notes that Fort Jay’s guardhouse (called the gatehouse) “must be preserved.” The LCS lists the management category of Fort Jay as “should be preserved and maintained,” with an ultimate recommended treatment of “preservation.”

“Preservation” is defined by the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as follows:

Preservation is …the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project. 118

Any treatment of Fort Jay’s gate should follow the guidance provided by the 2008 General Management Plan for Governors Island National Monument and the List of Classified Structures. Every effort should be made to preserve historic character-defining features of the gate that existed during the period of significance: 1794 to 1966. Note that most elements of the gate are considered to be historic and character-defining, except those listed in the section “Non-Historic Character-Defining Features.”

Preservation of Fort Jay’s gate would retain historic elements in their current appearance and configuration. Ongoing maintenance and repair would continue, emphasizing the retention of historic character-defining features. More extensive work should follow the philosophy of replacement-in-kind.

Any work on the Fort Jay’s gate should be photographically documented and included in the park’s building files. Extensive work should be documented by both photographs and a written completion report. Every attempt should be made to replicate the size, scale, and other details of original deteriorated materials (“replacement in kind”). Representative samples of historic materials that are removed should be saved, cataloged, and placed in the building’s artifact collection. New replacement materials should also be date-stamped so as to distinguish them from surviving historic building fabric.

General Treatment

118 http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/
Abbreviations

ASP   American State Papers
BPL   Brooklyn Public Library
CAB/NACP
   Cartographic and Architectural Branch, National Archives at College Park
HABS   Historic American Buildings Survey, Washington DC
LC    Library of Congress
NAB   National Archives Main Building, Washington, DC
NACP   National Archives at College Park, MD
NARA - Northeast Region (NY)
   National Archives, Northeast Region, New York City
RG    Record Group
SPB/NACP
   Still Pictures Branch, National Archives at College Park, MD
Architectural History


Charles and Joseph Mangin


**Drawings and Maps**

1800  “Plan of the Fort Jay on Governor’s Island, State of New York, as it was in 1800.” Noted on the drawing: “New York, January 16, 1801, by Joseph Mangin.” (Drawer 36, Sheet 16; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1813  “A Map of Governors Island,” by Joseph L. Mangin, 1813, showing plans of Castle Williams and Fort Columbus. (Drawer 37, Sheet 1; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1831  “Plan of Fort Columbus.” Noted on the drawing: “Fort Columbus, New York,” and “Engineer Dept., June 23, 1831, Rec’d from Major R.E. DeRussy with his letter dated Fort Hamilton June 19, 1831.” (Drawer 37, Sheet 7; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1832  “Plan of Fort Columbus, Governor’s Island, N. York—Divided into Two Sections. The First Showing the Original Work. The second, Exhibiting the Repairs and Alterations Proposed to be Adopted in Completing the Authorized Repairs.” Noted on the drawing: “Maj. R.E. De Russy, Oct. 17, 1832.” (Drawer 37, Sheet 8; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1834  “Plan of Fort Columbus,” 1839 [sic: written lightly in pencil on the drawing is “1834”; misrecorded by the National Archives as 1839. (Drawer 37, Sheet 9, RG 77; CAB/NACP.)
1839
“Plan of Fort Columbus Showing Recent Alterations in Barracks and Terreplein, April 24, 1839.” Noted on the drawing: “Ltr. Of Maj. Smith April 27, 1839,” and “Rec’d from Major Smith April 27, 1839.” (Drawer 37, Sheet 10; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1849

1867
“Map Showing the Position of all Buildings on Governor’s Island 1st Dec. 1867, from a Survey Made Under the Direction of Maj. John G. Barnard, Corps of Engineers, Major Nicholas Bowen.” (Drawer 37, Sheet 55; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1879
“Map showing location of Water, Drain and Sewer Pipes on Governors Island.” Noted on the drawing: “Office of the Post Quartermaster, Fort Columbus, NYH, Aug. 30th, 1879,” and “This tracing was furnished by Col. A.J. Perry Nov. 15, 84.” Office of the Post Quartermaster, Fort Columbus, NYH. (Drawer 13; RG 77; CAB/NACP.)

1934

1934-35
East Barrack (Building 202). Set of drawings for alteration of the east barrack by the U.S. Army, no title blocks. The building was then numbered 51, later updated on the drawings to number 202.
- Basement Plan, drawing no. 202-6, May 23, 1934.
- First Floor Plan, drawing no. 202-7, May 23, 1934.
- Second Floor Plan, drawing no. 202-8, May 23, 1934.
- “Alterations to Building 202,” drawing no. 42-10, April 6, 1935.
(Copy in the drawing files, Governors Island NM. Note that the plans of the basement, first, and second floors were photographed by HABS in 1982-83 and included in the report “Governors Island, Fort Columbus (Fort Jay), Building #202.” Survey number HABS NY-5715-1A, negative numbers NY-5715-1A-6, NY-5715-1A-7, and NY-5715-1A-8. LC: http://memory.loc.gov.)
1938  Gate and Guardhouse (Building 201). Set of drawings for repairs and alteration of the gate and guardhouse at Fort Jay, Governor's Island, NY.
   - “Fort Jay, NY, Monumental Arch, Building No. 201,” drawing no. 201-3, June 6, 1938.
   - “Proposed Alteration to Archway,” drawing no. 201-6, June 13, 1938.
   - “Plan of Monumental Entrance & Arch,” drawing no. 201-7, 1938.
   (Copy in the drawing files, Governors Island NM)

1939  Gate and Guardhouse (Building 201). “Quadrangle Arch Detail and Building No. 201,” by the Works Progress Administration, City of New York, for the Second Corps Area, Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY, July 14, 1939. Project number 765-97-2-15, drawing no. 201-2, (Copy in the drawing files, Governors Island NM.)

1939  Concrete Bridge (Structure 219). Set of five drawings for construction of the “Concrete Bridge Over the Moat at Quadrangle Entrance,” by the Works Progress Administration, City of New York, Aug. 2, 1939. Project No. 765-97-2-15. (Copy in the drawing files, Governors Island NM.)

1951  Concrete Bridge (Structure 219). “Alt[eration] to Bridge at Quadrangle, Fort Jay, Governors Island, NY,” by the Office of the Post Engineer, March 30, 1951. (Copy in the drawing files, Governors Island NM.)


   - Sheet 1. Cover Sheet, Location Map, Site Plan.
   - Sheets 3-6. Architectural: Scarp/Parapet Wall Elevations.
   - Sheet 12. Architectural: Scarp, Counterscarp and Moat Wall Details.
   (Copies in the drawing files, Governors Island NM)
Fort Jay/Columbus


Tragert, Emily (Intern, Chief Historian’s Office, National Park Service, Washington, DC). “Summary of Documents on the Coat of Arms and Sally Port at Fort Columbus, New York; National Archives, Record Group 92, Entry 89, Files 134 and 193231.” Copies of these documents are in the files of Governors Island NM.

Governors Island


Smith, Edmund Banks (Chaplin of Governors Island). Governor’s Island: Its Military History Under Three Flags, 1637-1913. New York: Published by the Author, 1913. (Note: One source for this book was the oldest inhabitant of Governors Island, Sergeant David Robertson, Hospital Steward, who entered the Army in July 1854. Smith expressed his thanks in the book to Robertson, "for many notes of historical interest.")


Historic Preservation


National Archives Records

Office of the Chief of Engineers, Historical Record of Buildings and Record of Equipment and Condition of Buildings at Active Army Posts, 1905-42. (Box 102, Entry 393, RG 77, NAB.)

Records of the U.S. Coast Guard Historian’s Office, Station History Files, ca. 1890-2001, 3rd District (Governor’s Island). (Box 24, A-1 Entry 454, RG 26, NAB.)

Restoration of the Coat of Arms and Sally Port at Fort Columbus, New York, 1903. (Entry 84, File 134634, RG 92, NAB.)

1. Letter from the Quartermaster’s Office of Governors Island to the Adjutant General, Dept. of the East requesting that ornament over sally port, Fort Columbus, be repaired, 8 June 1903. Receives six endorsements dated June 9-26, 1903.

2. Four photographs of the condition in 1903 of the “ornament” above the sally port. Includes proposed restorations, drawn onto photographs in pen. Captions provided on the reverse of each photograph are:
   (1) “Present condition of the Figure,” 17 June 1903.
   (2) [no caption], 17 June 1903.
   (3) “Figure with Standards restored,” 17 June 1903.
   (4) “Completed Figure after restoration,” 13 June 1903.

3. Onion-skin copy of 5th endorsement of request for repairs of the “ornament,” 26 June 1903.

4. Letter from the Quartermaster General to the Chief Quartermaster, Dept. of the East, authorizing expenditure of $1,250 for repairs to the “ornament,” 9 July 1903.

5. Letter from the Quartermaster’s Office of Governors Island to the Chief Quartermaster, Dept. of the East, announcing bids made on the repairs and recommending the contract be awarded to Fordham Stone Renovating Company, 22 July 1903.

6. Proposal of the Fordham Stone Renovating Co. of New York, NY, for “repairing and restoring stone work of sally part entrance and coat of arms, Governor’s Island,” for $1,250, to be completed in 60 working days, 22 July 1903.
7. Proposal of A.V. La Ruee for “repairing and restoring stone work of sally port entrance and coat of arms, Governor’s Island,” for $1,400, to be completed in 100 working days, no date.

8. Abstract of proposals for “repairing and restoring coat of arms and sally port,” includes information about the Fordham and A.V. La Ruee proposals, 24 July 1903.

9. Letter from the Quartermaster’s Office of Governors Island to the Chief Quartermaster, Dept. of the East, requesting authorization to award the contract to the Fordham Stone Renovating Co., 1 Aug. 1903.

10. Letter from the Quartermaster General to the Chief Quartermaster, Dept. of the East, authorizing the awarding of the contract to Fordham Stone Renovating Co., 1 Aug. 1903.

11. Letter from the Quartermaster’s Office of Governors Island to the Chief Quartermaster, Dept. of the East, presenting the contract entered into with Fordham Stone Renovating Co. Includes a copy of the contract as furnished by the Office of the Quartermaster General, 5 Aug. 1903 (contract) and 4 Sept. 1903 (letter).

12. “Specification for Repairing Stone Work and Restoring Coat of Arms of Sally Port at East Entrance to Fort Columbus, Governor’s Island, N.Y. Harbor.”
APPENDIX A

Mortar Analysis
Objective

The reason for undertaking mortar analysis at Fort Jay’s gate was to inform the historic structure report with data provided by mortar evidence. To that end, four (4) mortar samples were examined by Architectural Conservator Barbara Yocum in 2013. Samples included mortar and plaster from the guardhouse, which shares an exterior wall with the stone arch.

Methodology

Mortar samples were extracted from representative locations of the guardhouse at Fort Jay’s gate using an Xacto knife and placed in labeled zip-lock bags. These were transported to the laboratory facilities of the NPS Historic Architecture Program, Northeast Region, located in the Boott Cotton Mills Museum Building of Lowell National Historical Park in Lowell, Massachusetts. Each sample was assigned a three-part log number which identifies the site, the building from which the sample was taken, and the sample number. The first sample, for example, was assigned log number “GOIS  201 (Gatehouse) M001.” “GOIS” signifies Governors Island National Monument, “201” is the List of Classified Structures building number for Fort Jay, and “M01” is the first mortar sample.

The four mortar samples were first examined with a binocular microscope. Three of the mortars identified as lime, based on visible lime inclusions, were then processed by pulverizing with a mortar and pestle. Each was then swirled in a diluted solution of water and hydrochloric acid. The liquid and fine material were decanted, leaving the sand component that was washed with water and dried under heat lamps. The resulting sand samples were visually compared and viewed under magnification. All processing and evaluation was done by Architectural Conservator Barbara Yocum, assisted by Architectural Conservator Rebekah Krieger.

One sample was identified as containing Portland cement, based on its characteristic gray appearance and hardness. No analysis was undertaken of this obviously later material.

Mortar Sample Locations

Mortar samples were removed from the following locations of Fort Jay’s gatehouse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mortar Samples</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Mortar Type</th>
<th>Circa Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Gatehouse) M01</td>
<td>East stone wall of south first-story room, behind existing plaster wall</td>
<td>Mortar</td>
<td>1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Gatehouse) M02</td>
<td>East plaster wall of south first-story room, covering the Plaster on sawn lath</td>
<td>Plaster on sawn lath</td>
<td>1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortar Samples</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Mortar Type</td>
<td>Circa Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Gatehouse) M03</td>
<td>North plaster wall of north first-story room</td>
<td>Plaster on brick</td>
<td>1835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Gatehouse) M04</td>
<td>West foundation at brick header of former doorway in north basement room</td>
<td>Mortar</td>
<td>Later 19th century?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results**

The following observations were made of mortar samples M01 through M04:

- Sample M001 is a soft lime-and-sand mortar. It is a light-pink/white color with white lime inclusions. Analysis found the aggregate to be a fine, white-quartz sand, along with pieces of crushed white sea shells. Crushed shells may have been used to produce the lime.

- Sample M02 is a hard plaster containing gray Portland cement and hair binder, finished with a white skim coat, that is applied to sawn lath. No analysis was done on this sample.

- Sample M03 is a brittle lime plaster. It is a tan-pink color with white lime inclusions. Analysis found the aggregate to consist of fine-to-medium grains of sand with an overall color of brown; it contains no hair binder.

- Sample M04 is a brittle lime mortar. It is a light-gray / white color with white lime inclusions. Analysis found the aggregate to consist of fine-to-medium grains of sand with an overall color of light brown.

**Conclusions**

Mortar / plaster dating to four building episodes were identified by the analysis: 1795, 1830s, later 19th century, and 1938. The analysis confirmed that the stone arch, which serves as the west wall of the current gatehouse, retains early mortar (M01). Plaster of circa-1830s vintage, applied directly to the brick walls of the first-story rooms, is contemporary with the existing gatehouse (M03). Repointing of the foundation walls with lime mortar using a different sand aggregate may date to the later 19th century (M04). Finally, modern plaster containing Portland cement and hair binder was applied to sawn lath in 1938 (M02).
APPENDIX  B

Paint Analysis
**Objective**

The reason for undertaking paint analysis at Fort Jay’s guardhouse was to inform the historic structure report with data provided by paint evidence. To that end, paint samples were extracted from painted elements of the building by Architectural Conservator Barbara Yocum in 2013.

**Methodology**

Eleven (11) paint samples were removed from representative architectural elements of Fort Jay’s guardhouse using an X-Acto knife with a No.-18 blade. Each sample was placed in a separate coin envelope labeled with the sample location.

Microscopic analysis of the paint samples was undertaken at the office and laboratory facilities of the NPS Historic Architecture Program, Northeast Region, located in the Boott Cotton Mills Museum Building of Lowell National Historical Park in Lowell, Massachusetts. Each paint sample was first assigned a three-part log number which identifies the site, the building from which the sample was taken, and the sample number. The first sample, for example, was assigned log number “GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P001.” “GOIS” signifies Governors Island National Monument, “201” is the List of Classified Structures building number for Fort Jay, and “P01” is the first paint sample.

All samples were viewed using a binocular microscope illuminated with reflected tungsten light. Certain characteristics of each paint layer in a sample were noted and recorded, such as paint color and appearance. Finish layers were distinguished from primer layers by the presence of dirt and/or poor adhesion between paint layers. Dating of paint layers was surmised based on the known evolution of the building, substrate, and number of paint layers. Information on the painted finishes of the guardhouse was also learned from archival research for the historic structure report.
## Paint Sample Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paint Samples Exterior</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Substrate</th>
<th>Circa Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P01</td>
<td>South room: metal casing of exterior doorway</td>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P02</td>
<td>South room: wood casing of interior north doorway</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1830s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P03</td>
<td>North room: west plaster wall</td>
<td>Plaster</td>
<td>1830s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P04</td>
<td>North room: south baseboard</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P05</td>
<td>North room: wood casing of interior south doorway (molding)</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P06</td>
<td>North room: wood casing of interior south doorway (beneath molding)</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1830s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P07</td>
<td>North room: wood casing of interior south doorway</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1830s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P08</td>
<td>Detached 5-panel door (1) in north room, side “a”</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1920s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P09</td>
<td>Detached 5-panel door (1) in north room, side “b”</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1920s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P010</td>
<td>Detached 5-panel door (2) in north room, side “a”</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1920s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIS 201 (Guardhouse) P011</td>
<td>Detached 5-panel door (2) in north room, side “b”</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1920s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Paint Analysis Results

The results of the Fort Jay guardhouse paint analysis are summarized in the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paint Sample Number</th>
<th>P01</th>
<th>P02</th>
<th>P03</th>
<th>P04</th>
<th>P05</th>
<th>P06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South room: metal casing, exterior doorway</td>
<td>South room: interior doorway casing</td>
<td>North room: west plaster wall</td>
<td>North room: south baseboard</td>
<td>North room: molding of interior doorway casing</td>
<td>North room: interior doorway casing, under molding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substrate</strong></td>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Circa Date</strong></td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>1830s</td>
<td>1830s</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>1830s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830s</td>
<td>Cream</td>
<td>Cream</td>
<td>Cream-white</td>
<td>Cream</td>
<td>Cream-white</td>
<td>Cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Beige-Yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Beige-Yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Cream-white</td>
<td>Cream</td>
<td>Cream-white</td>
<td>Cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Cream-Red</td>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Cream-yellow</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Cream-yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Beige-Yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Beige-Yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream-yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Beige-Yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Beige-Yellow</td>
<td>Beige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Orange Primer, Green</td>
<td>Red-Brown</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Gray (?)</td>
<td>Red-Brown</td>
<td>Red-Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint Sample Number</td>
<td>P07</td>
<td>P08</td>
<td>P09</td>
<td>P10</td>
<td>P11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North room:</td>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doorway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>casing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detached 5-panel</td>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1), side a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detached 5-panel</td>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1), side b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detached 5-panel</td>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2), side a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detached 5-panel</td>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2), side b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substrate</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circa Date</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream</td>
<td>Cream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-varnish-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beige</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-varnish-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beige</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Cream-Yellow</td>
<td>Cream</td>
<td>Cream-Yellow</td>
<td>Cream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Cream-Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cream-Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beige-yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-Brown</td>
<td>Black-Dark</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(varnish?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paint Analysis Conclusions

Historical sources on the painting of Fort Jay’s gate are scarce, except for information provided by exterior black-and-white photographs and descriptions by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1934. It appears the stone arch has never been painted, while the sally-port interior has been lightened with coats of white paint over the years. The exterior walls and windows of Fort Jay’s brick buildings were painted a light color by 1864, which presumably included the guardhouse (fig. 16). Window sashes and casings were later finished with a dark-color paint by 1890. The earliest photograph that clearly shows the guardhouse with light-painted walls and dark windows is dated 1913 (fig. 30). HABS described the exteriors of the guardhouse and east barrack in 1934 as painted “grey” and “yellow.”1 The U.S. Army subsequently stripped paint from all Fort Jay’s brick buildings by 1940 (fig. 36). Today, the only exterior paint at the guardhouse is a worn green finish on later metal doors; all window openings have been bricked in.

Eleven paint samples were removed from interior elements of Fort Jay’s 1830s guardhouse for this study. The analysis was useful in distinguishing interior building materials that are contemporary with the guardhouse from later materials introduced in 1938. The earliest paint in the guardhouse, dating to the 1830s, is a cream-color oil-based paint. This was observed on the casings of the interior doorway connecting the north and south rooms in the main story, and on lime plaster that is adhered directly to the north brick wall of the north room. The presence of varnish on the casing of the interior doorway around the 1850s may have been for a “grained” finish simulating the appearance of wood. Later paint of circa-1938 vintage was found on the baseboard in the north room, two detached 5-panel doors, and moldings applied to the interior doorway casing in the north room. The paint scheme of 1938 used cream-yellow, gray, and red paints. The most recent painting may have coincided with the installation of exterior metal doors around 1966.

1 Gray paint was applied to the lower stone walls, doors, and windows; yellow paint finished the exterior brick walls. Source: written descriptions on drawing 5 of “Fort Jay, Governor’s Island, New York Harbor, New York,” 1934.