
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
1998



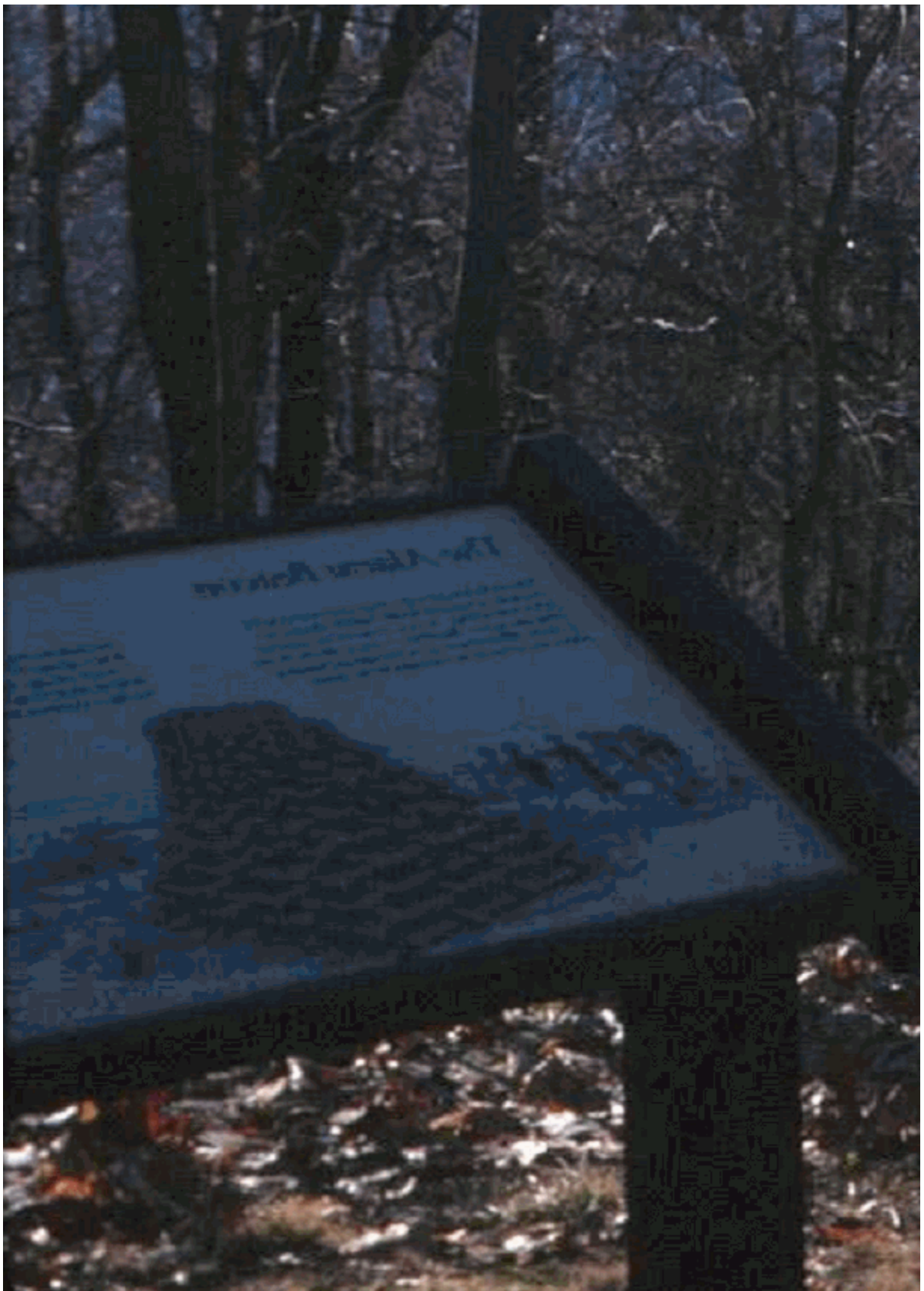


Table of Contents

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Concurrence Status

Geographic Information and Location Map

Management Information

National Register Information

Chronology & Physical History

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Condition

Treatment

Bibliography & Supplemental Information

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

The Fort Nonsense Unit of the Morristown National Historical Park is a 35-acre parcel on Mount Kemble near the center of Morristown, a small city located in the northern New Jersey suburbs approximately 31 miles west of Manhattan. This site of a Revolutionary War fortification has expansive views down to Morristown and east into the surrounding lowlands toward New York City. The Fort Nonsense Unit is centered along the ridge and upper slopes of the northeastern extremity of Mount Kemble. The high point of the unit is the site of the fort at an elevation of 595 feet above sea level and a mean elevation of 230 feet above the Morristown Green. Mount Kemble, which is part of the eastern edge of New Jersey's Appalachian Highlands region, is a long ridge with a number of rises that runs southwest to northeast.

Built in 1777, Fort Nonsense was a minor earthen redoubt that was fortified by the Continental Army until c.1780. The site of the fort on a steeply-sloped hill overlooking the small village of Morristown permitted immediate surveillance over the Continental Army's military stores and headquarters and more distant views east toward British-occupied New York City. Despite its strategic importance, the fort, which Washington referred to as the "upper redoubt," never saw military conflict. It is this aspect of its history that likely gave rise to the name Fort Nonsense. After the war, the fort was abandoned but its earthen walls survived in the landscape and the surrounding shady hillsides became a popular local retreat. The site remained largely undeveloped until the early 20th century, when the Town of Morristown created a public park there. The National Park Service acquired the site in 1933, and with the aid of the CCC built a complete reconstruction of Fort Nonsense in 1937. Today, the unit occupies a largely wooded, steeply-sloped site that features select open areas, a hiking path, picnic tables, interpretive markers, small parking lot, and a paved road. There are no maintained buildings or structures, and no aboveground remains from the 1777 Fort Nonsense or its 1937 reconstruction. The configuration of the original fort is outlined with granite blocks for visitor interpretation.

Historical Significance:

Morristown National Historical Park is nationally significant under criterion A for its association with the American Revolution and Criterion B for its association with George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. It is also significant under Criterion C for possessing distinctive architectural resources and under Criterion D for containing archeological resources associated with the American Revolution. The documented areas of significance include military, architecture, and archeology - non-aboriginal historic. The period of significance, as given in the National Register Information System (NRIS), is 1700-1799; the National Register form lists significant dates as 1744-1780. A recently completed General Management Plan (GMP), in Alternative C, recognized an additional period of significance, which the GMP identified as beginning in 1873, with the establishment of the Washington Society, and ending in 1942, with the completion of major park development. Alternative C was the selected action. The State Historic Preservation Officer stated that this is a significant period in the development of the park. (Letter to Superintendent Michael Henderson, March 4, 2004.)

Until this time the cultural landscape characteristics and features of the cultural landscape of Morristown NHP had not been fully evaluated. The statement of significance contained in the National

Fort Nonsense

Morristown National Historical Park

Register form (approved 2/27/1980) repeatedly notes the importance of the area's surviving topography, viewsheds, and vegetation, but does not reference specific landscape features. While the documented period of significance extends from 1744-1780, this CLI looked primarily at the Continental Army's Encampment Period of 1777-1782 and the Commemorative Period of 1873-1942 since significance of the cultural landscape of Morristown NHP directly relates to these time periods. These CLIs find that, in addition to those buildings, structures, sites and objects that are listed in the National Register, the overall landscape retains integrity to the periods of significance. Therefore, the cultural landscape should be considered a site which possesses historical value despite the absence of structures and changes in patterns of vegetation from the period of significance. In addition, those landscape characteristics and features that date to the periods of significance should be preserved since they contribute to the property's historic character.

Condition:

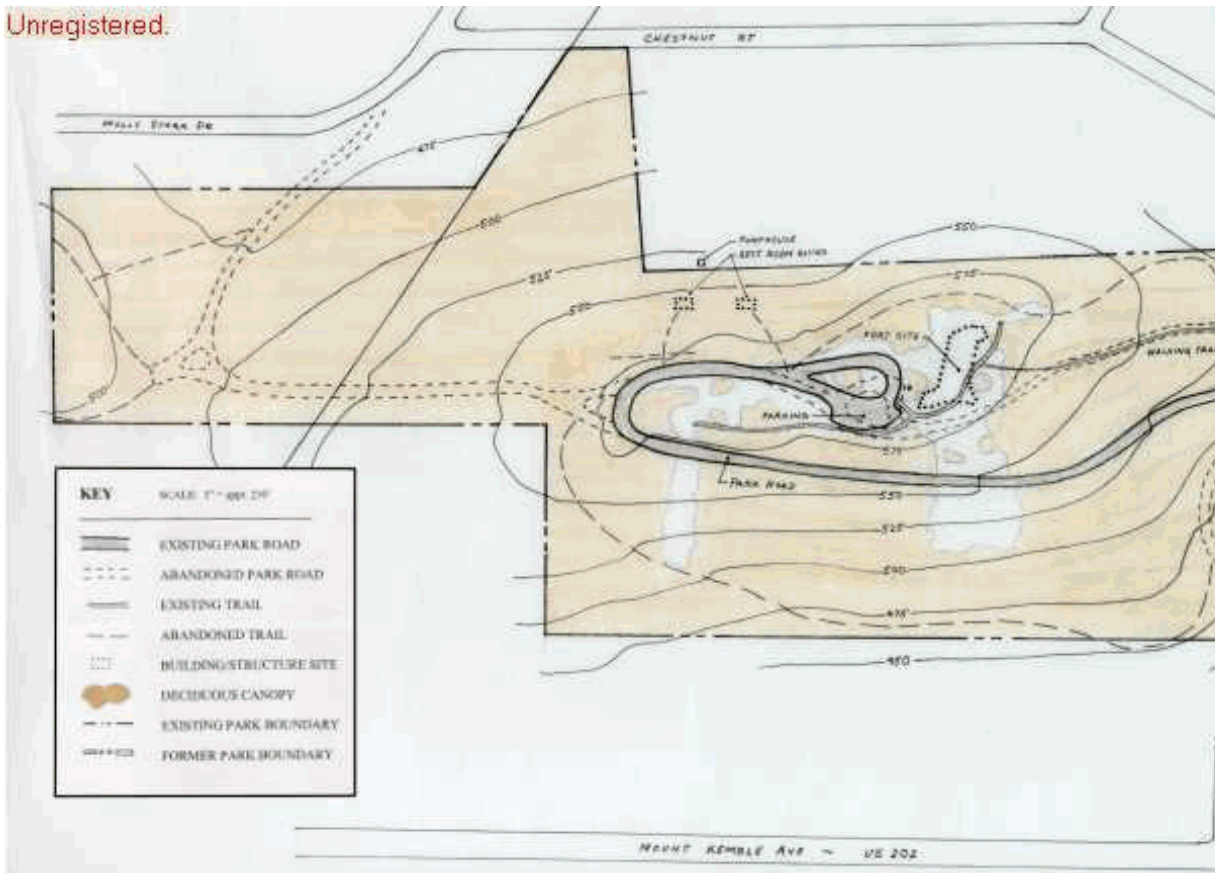
The Fort Nonsense Unit is in fair condition overall as defined by DO-NPS 28. While many of the site's features are in good condition, all three of the maintained views are currently threatened. Surrounding development and adjacent vegetation growth hampers the existing views. Many of the existing small-scale features in the park were installed or rehabilitated during 1990. The picnic tables, garbage receptacles, and park road are in good condition, and the woodlands appear to be generally healthy. Elements that may require repair in the near future include the gravel path, which is eroding, and the interpretive signs, which are beginning to fade.

Analysis and Evaluation Summary:

Fort Nonsense remains a contributing resource to the significance of Morristown in relation to both periods of significance retaining integrity to both periods. The primary elements of the site during the encampment were the fort, the topography of the site, and the views. While above-ground remains of the fort are gone, the topography and views (for which the site was chosen) are intact. The primary elements of the site during the potential commemorative period were the topography, views, park road and archeological value of the fort site. Though alterations have taken place, these elements remain, and the unit continues to convey its purpose as a passive recreation and interpretive area.

The primary built feature is the park road which dates, in part, to a residential development begun in c.1890 and was completed as part of a system of park roads constructed by the Town of Morristown between 1914 and 1933. The park road was subsequently altered by the National Park Service in the 1930s and 1960s. Nearly all buildings, structures, and small-scale features installed between 1888 and 1941 have been removed with the exception of the 1888 granite marker. Removed features include the earthen remains of the 1777 fortification, the 1937 reconstruction of Fort Nonsense, and two stone restroom buildings and picnic facilities. Following a period of decline and closure of Fort Nonsense after World War II, the park was reopened in the early 1960s with completion of projects to rehabilitate the road, clear vegetation, remove picnic facilities, and demolish buildings. The unit remained poorly interpreted until 1989-90, when the NPS, in cooperation with the Washington Association, installed interpretive signs, cleared two areas to open views, outlined the fort redoubt, and reintroduced picnic facilities.

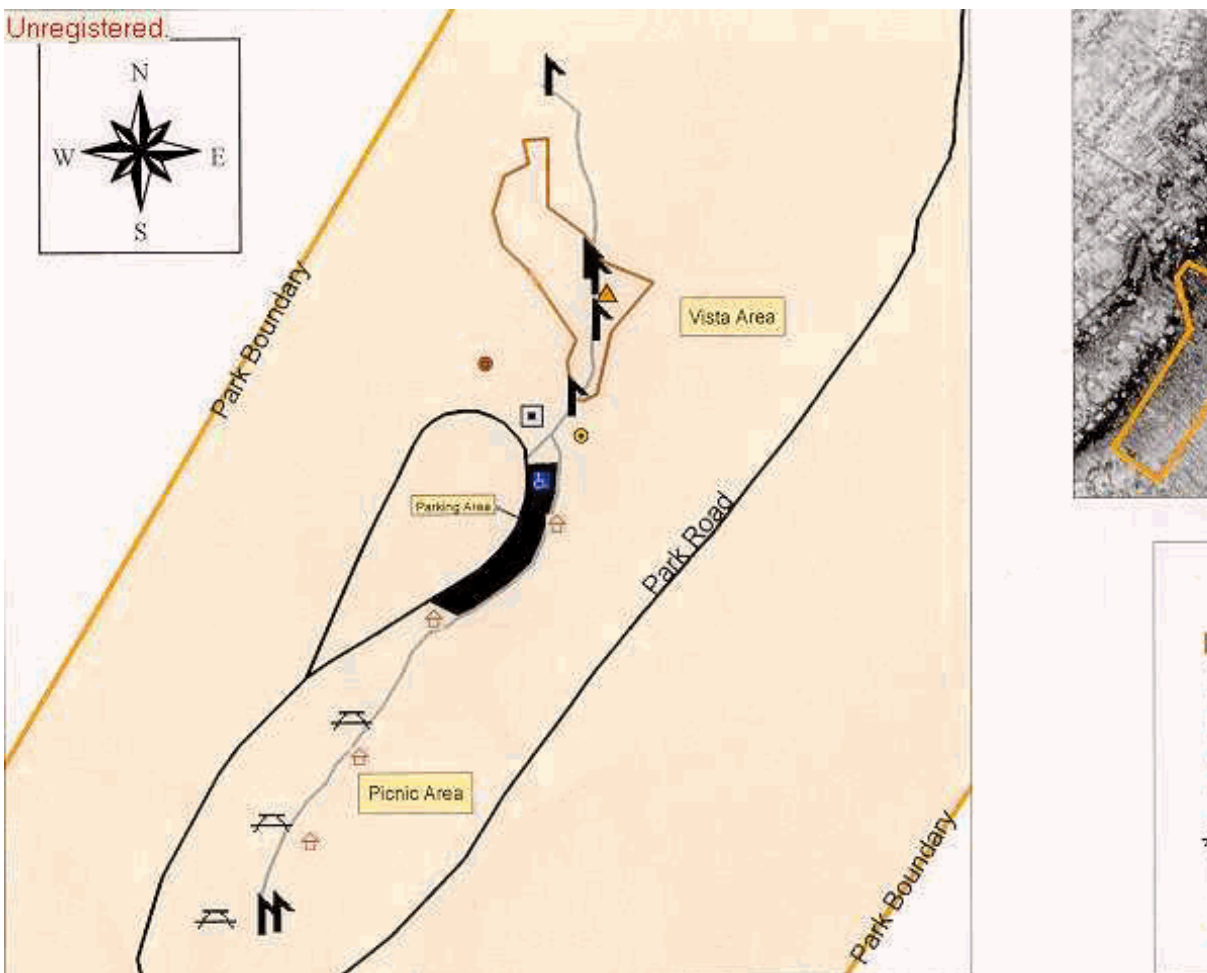
Site Plan



Fort Nonsense, Morristown NHP (OCLP, 1999).



Site Plan detail (OCLP, 1999).



Site plan (MORR GIS data, FTSC, 2000).

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Fort Nonsense
Property Level:	Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	650047
Parent Landscape:	650047

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Morristown National Historical Park -MORR
Park Organization Code:	1830
Park Administrative Unit:	Morristown National Historical Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

Morristown NHP in Morristown, New Jersey commemorates a vital phase of the American Revolution. It served as the site of George Washington's military headquarters and the main winter encampment for the Continental Army during the winters of 1777 and 1779-80. The area served additional encampment needs during the entire time period from 1777-82. Each of the park's four units (Fort Nonsense, Washington's Headquarters, Jockey Hollow, and the New Jersey Brigade) played a significant historical role during that time.

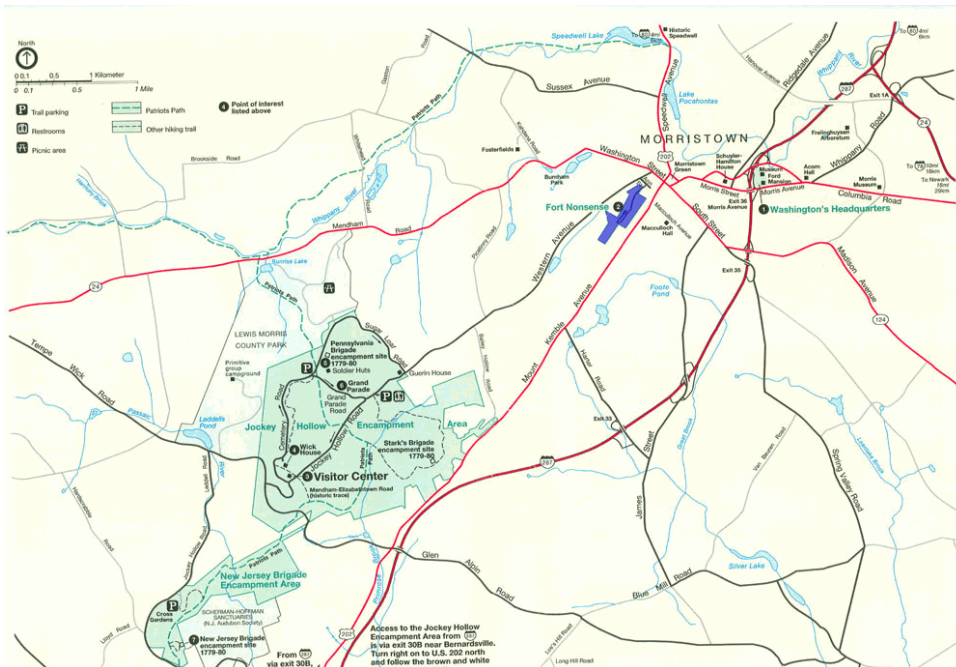
The park's units are widely separated, located along an axis running from northeast to southwest. Fort Nonsense consists of 35 acres located on a summit at the northeast end of Mount Kemble, overlooking the town of Morristown. Washington's Headquarters is about 10 acres surrounding the Ford Mansion within the town and includes the park museum and headquarters. Jockey Hollow is mostly wooded and encompasses 1320 acres 3.5 miles southwest of the town center. The New Jersey Brigade area is located at the southwest end of Jockey Hollow and covers 321 acres. The park as a whole encompasses approximately 1697.55 acres.

Due to the complexity of Morristown NHP, a hierarchy has been developed to divide the park into landscapes, which reflect the park's units, and component landscapes. Component landscapes are geographic areas that warrant individual documentation to adequately record the history and physical character of that particular landscape. Therefore, Morristown NHP has four landscapes; Fort Nonsense, Washington's Headquarters, Jockey Hollow and the New Jersey Brigade; and two component landscapes, Wick Farm and the Cross Estate. (see graphic)

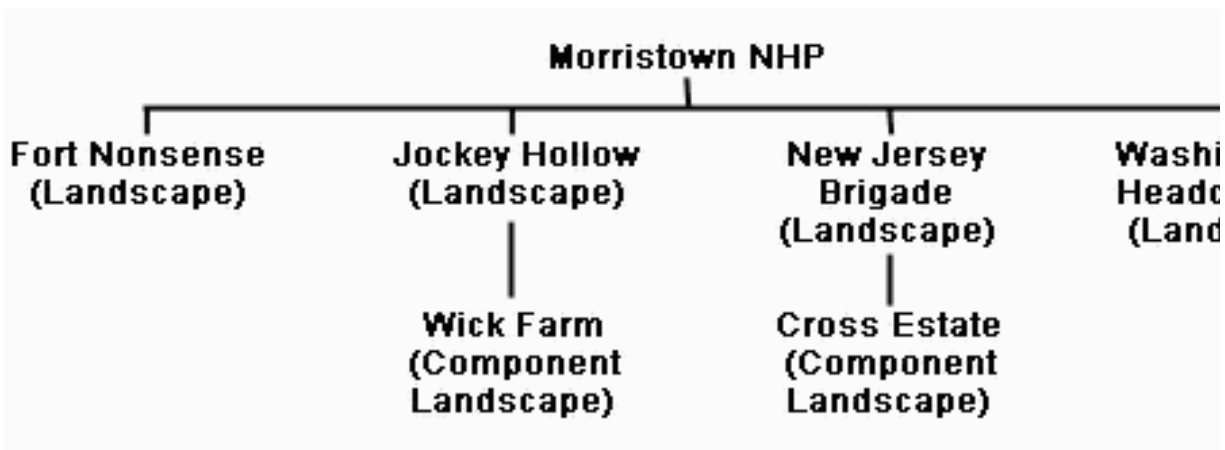
This Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) documents the historical development and existing conditions and evaluates the historical significance of the Fort Nonsense unit of the park. It is based on a synthesis of existing secondary sources and documentation of the site's existing condition. The CLI explores the documented historical significance of the site and evaluates other areas of potential significance, for which the landscape of this site, and the Morristown NHP district may contribute (based on Section 110(a)(1) of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Register of Historic Places guidelines).

Fort Nonsense

Morristown National Historical Park



Morristown NHP, the Fort Nonsense Unit is highlighted in blue (map adapted from Morristown NHP park brochure).



Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	08/05/2004
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	09/14/2004

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

National Register eligibility has been concurred with the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office (NJSHPO) regarding the findings and recommendations in this CLI. As a result of this CLI the landscape of the Fort Nonsense unit within the Morristown NHP is found to be eligible and contributes to the national significance of the property.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

**Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Condition Reassessment
2009**

Morristown National Historical Park
Fort Nonsense
Jockey Hollow
Washington's Headquarters
Wick Farm

Morristown National Historical Park concurs with the condition reassessments for Fort Nonsense, Jockey Hollow, Washington's Headquarters, and Wick Farm, including:

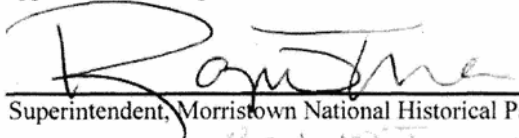
CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Fair – Fort Nonsense
Fair – Jockey Hollow
Good – Washington's Headquarters
Fair – Wick Farm

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The condition reassessments for Fort Nonsense, Jockey Hollow, Washington's Headquarters, and Wick Farm at Morristown National Historical Park are hereby approved and accepted.



Superintendent, Morristown National Historical Park Date 8/20/09
Randy W. Turner

Condition reassessment form, August 20, 2009.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Revision Date: 07/22/2004

Revision Narrative:

Revisions to select sections of the Cultural Landscape Inventory were completed in 2004 using updated information from the Cultural Landscape Report for Washington's Headquarters Morristown National Historic Park and from the park-wide Cultural Landscape Report for Morristown National Historical Park, both prepared by the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation. This revision was necessary to incorporate content from the CLRs in preparation for submission to the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office (NJSHPO).

Revision Date: 08/20/2009

Revision Narrative:

Condition reassessment completed as scheduled.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

Morristown NHP is located in north central New Jersey, approximately 31 miles west of New York City, and consists of 1697.55 acres of land encompassed in four separate units. The Fort Nonsense unit of the Morristown National Historical Park is a linearly shaped parcel composed of 35 acres near the center of Morristown. It is located 1 mile west of Washington's Headquarters. Located on the slopes of the northeastern extremity of Mount Kemble 320 feet above the Morristown Green, the property is largely isolated from public roads, but does extend in part to Chestnut Street on the northwest, Court Street on the northeast, and Entrance Avenue on the east. A small non-contiguous lot is on the north side of Chestnut Street Extension opposite the park entrance.

State and County:

State: NJ

County: Morris County

Size (Acres): 35.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000

Type of Point: Point

Datum: NAD 83

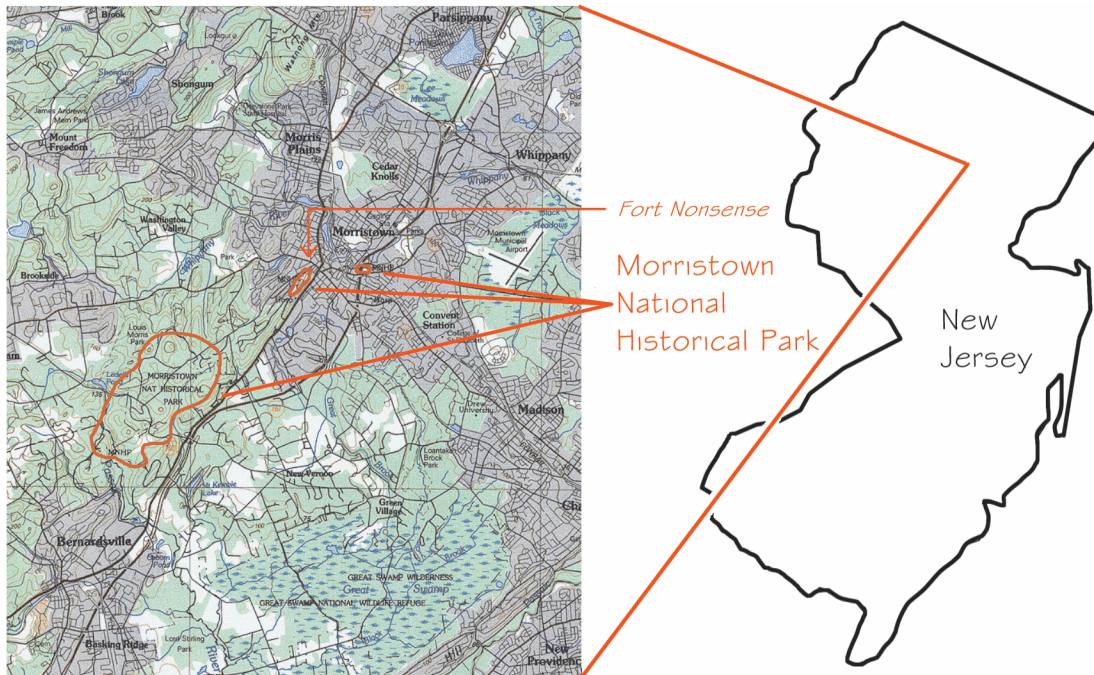
UTM Zone: 18

UTM Easting: 543,132

UTM Northing: 4,515,959

Fort Nonsense
Morristown National Historical Park

Location Map:



Morristown National Historical Park, northern New Jersey (OCLP, 2000).

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

With its historic town green, and a population of around 16,000 (1990 census), Morristown retains a distinct small town, largely 19th- and early 20th-century character, although c. 1970 high-rise towers dominate the skyline northeast of the Green.

The Fort Nonsense unit occupies a ridge overlooking the town's green on its west. During the Revolutionary War, the militia watched for signal fires to the east from this high vantage that would warn of British Troop Movements. On Washington's orders in 1777, the soldiers fortified with trenches and embankments, which today are traced by stone blocks. Visitors to the hilltop today are still offered sweeping views to the east and of the town below. Immediately to the northeast of Fort Nonsense are the historic Federal-style Morris County Courthouse and other county facilities. South and east of here stretches Morristown's substantial downtown business district. To the northwest is a neighborhood of detached late 19th-century houses. East of the unit along Mount Kemble Avenue (US 202) is mixed area of residential, light industrial, commercial, and institutional properties. Morristown Memorial Hospital borders the southeastern end of Fort Nonsense. Extending to the southwest is Kemble Mountain, which continues southwesterly to the Jockey Hollow Unit of Morristown NHP. The portion of the mountain south of Fort Nonsense has been substantially developed with suburban housing. Encroaching development and view obstruction remains a serious threat for the Fort Nonsense unit.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Morristown NHP is situated along the eastern edge of New Jersey's Appalachian Highlands. The various units of the park are located on or around Kemble Mountain, rising up to the southwest of the Morristown green. The area has a varied topography of rolling hills, stream valleys, swamps and small mountains. While much of the surrounding land is experiencing development, forest cover is still predominant.

The Fort Nonsense unit of Morristown NHP sits atop Mount Kemble, the eastern most extremity of Kemble Mountain. Mount Kemble is a ridge that runs southwest to northeast and terminates near the center of Morristown. The Fort Nonsense unit has an elevation of 595 feet above sea level, approximately 230' above the town green, which it overlooks. To the west and north of the Fort is hilly terrain and to the south and east is a broad, fairly level area, beginning the Triassic Lowland region. The lowlands extend approximately 15 miles east to the Watchung Mountains, parallel to the Hudson River.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Fort Nonsense

Morristown National Historical Park

Morristown NHP is situated in north central New Jersey, and is located 31 miles west of New York City. The four units of the park are located in or near Morristown and encompass almost 1700 acres within Morris County, New Jersey. Washington's Headquarters is within Morristown. Fort Nonsense is primarily in Morristown, but extends into Morris Township. Jockey Hollow crosses slightly into Morris Township but is primarily in Harding Township. The New Jersey Brigade is within Bernards Township.

Management Unit: Fort Nonsense

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must Be Preserved And Maintained

Management Category Date: 03/02/1933

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The preservation of the unit is specifically legislated and related to the park's legislated significance.

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

Significant viewsheds to the town of Morristown and east toward Manhattan remain. Substantial development threatens these views, but the sense of their strategic importance can still be conveyed.

National Register Information

Existing NRIS Information:

Name in National Register:	Morristown National Historical Park
NRIS Number:	66000053
Primary Certification:	Listed In The National Register
Primary Certification Date:	10/15/1966
Other Certifications and Date:	Additional Documentation - 2/27/1980

Significance Criteria:	D - Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history
Significance Criteria:	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values
Significance Criteria:	B - Associated with lives of persons significant in our past
Significance Criteria:	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1777 - 1782
Historic Context Theme:	Shaping the Political Landscape
Subtheme:	The American Revolution
Facet:	War in the North
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1873 - 1942
Historic Context Theme:	Transforming the Environment
Subtheme:	Historic Preservation
Facet:	Regional Efforts: Mid-Atlantic States, 1860-1900: Memorials To The Revolution;
Other Facet:	None

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Military
Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
Area of Significance Category:	Conservation
Area of Significance Subcategory:	Historic-Non-Aboriginal
Area of Significance Category:	Archeology
Area of Significance Subcategory:	Historic-Non-Aboriginal

Statement of Significance:

Statement of Significance

The following statement of significance is a combination of existing narratives and the findings of this CLI. Much of the information regarding the Revolutionary War significance has been adapted from the National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, Morristown NHP (Torres-Reyes 1980), Morristown National Historical Park Cultural Landscape Report (OCLP, 2004), Cultural Landscape Report for Washington's Headquarters (OCLP, 2004), and the Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, New Jersey, General Management Plan (NPS, 2004).

NPS policy requires historical significance of park units to be documented in a park-wide National Register nomination. This statement of significance addresses the entirety of Morristown NHP and various historic themes represented by its resources. While this CLI focuses on one unit of the park, this statement of significance looks at the entire park. A discussion of significance and integrity specific to each unit and how that unit relates to the park as a whole is contained within the Analysis and Evaluation Summary section of the CLI.

CURRENT PARK-WIDE NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS:

As a historic area within the National Park System, Morristown National Historical Park was administratively added to the National Register of Historic Places with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act on October 15, 1966. The most recent National Register documentation was completed in February 1980 and describes the park as having four geographically separate units encompassing a total of 1,674 acres. Washington's Headquarters, Fort Nonsense, the Jockey Hollow Encampment, and the New Jersey Brigade Encampment are described, as are the Ford Mansion and the Wick House.

The Morristown National Historical Park is nationally significant under criterion A for its association with the American Revolution and Criterion B for its association with George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. It is also significant under Criterion C for possessing distinctive architectural resources and under Criterion D for containing archeological resources associated with the American Revolution. The documented areas of significance include military, architecture, and archeology - non-aboriginal historic. The period of significance, as given in the National Register Information System (NRIS), is 1700-1799; the National Register form lists significant dates as 1744-1780. On October 31, 1996, the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the findings of the NPS List of Classified Structures inventory that the park monuments were not eligible for listing in the National Register because they did not meet Criterion Consideration F. A recently completed General Management Plan (GMP), in Alternative C, recognized an additional period of significance, which the GMP identified as beginning in 1873, with the establishment of the Washington Society, and ending in 1942, with the completion of major park development. Alternative C was the selected action. The State Historic Preservation Officer stated that this is a significant period in the development of the park. (Letter to Superintendent Michael Henderson, March 4, 2004.)

Until this time the cultural landscape characteristics and features of the cultural landscape of Morristown NHP had not been fully evaluated. The statement of significance contained in the National Register form (approved 2/27/1980) repeatedly notes the importance of the area's surviving topography, viewsheds, and vegetation, but does not reference specific landscape features. While the documented period of significance extends from 1744-1780, this CLI looked primarily at the Continental Army's Encampment Period of 1777-1782 and the Commemorative Period of 1873-1942 since significance of the cultural landscape of Morristown NHP directly relates to these time periods. These CLIs find that, in addition to those buildings, structures, sites and objects that are listed in the National Register, the overall landscape retains integrity to the periods of significance. Morristown National Historical Park retains integrity of location, setting, feeling and association. Therefore, the cultural landscape should be considered a site which possesses historical value despite the absence of structures and changes in patterns of vegetation from the period of significance. In addition, those landscape characteristics and features that date to the periods of significance should be preserved since they contribute to the property's historic character.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: AMERICAN REVOLUTION ENCAMPMENT PERIOD,
1777-1782:

Morristown National Historical Park is significant as the location of much Continental Army activity from 1777 to 1782 during the American Revolution. The park is primarily significant as the location of the Continental Army encampments during the winters of 1777 and 1779-80, with a smaller portion of the army returning in 1781-1782. The park commemorates an important phase of the Revolutionary War and General George Washington's leadership in overcoming starvation, disease, and mutiny to rebuild his army. The park's landscape of defensible ridges, wooded hillsides, and numerous water sources played vital roles. The four units of the park are thematically connected and are nationally significant under all four Register criteria.

The park is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the American

Fort Nonsense

Morristown National Historical Park

Revolution, under Criterion B for its association with George Washington, under Criterion C for possessing distinctive architectural resources that represent the period, and under Criterion D for containing archeological resources, both investigated and untouched, associated with the historic events that occurred. The different units of Morristown National Historical Park have experienced various levels of change since the American Revolution, but assessed as a whole, the park reflects integrity to its historical significance to the American Revolution.

Summary of Resources:

Fort Nonsense:

During the Revolution, the primary elements of the Fort Nonsense site were the fort itself, the topography of the knoll it sat on, and the views from that location overlooking the town and the entire region to the north and east. No above ground evidence of the fort exists but the topography remains unchanged and the views are somewhat intact. It is those features, the hills topography and excellent views to the surrounding area that led Washington to choose this strategic position for a fact. The fort itself deteriorated and was eventually destroyed, but archeological evidence of it remains an important feature of the site. Other features were added later such as an access road, parking, pedestrian paths and benches. Remains of early twentieth-century park structures also exist. These features do not contribute to the site's Revolutionary War significance.

Washington's Headquarters:

While the Ford family owned over 200 acres adjacent to their mansion, it was the area immediately surrounding the house that was important to the encampment. Washington used the large 1774 Georgian mansion as his Morristown headquarters and built a few small structures around it to serve his needs. The most important aspect of the site that remains today is the mansion itself with its formal appearance facing the road from its hilltop location and views across the tree-shaded front lawn. The Ford family offered the mansion to serve as Washington's quarters and it suited his needs well as the most impressive mansion in the town at that time. Many features were added to the site after the 18th century that do not contribute to its significance in this theme. Non-contributing features include the pedestrian paths around the grounds, the museum building, parking area, and neighboring structures. The existence of Interstate 287 along the site's west boundary and the substantial suburban development on all sides of the property compromise its integrity.

Jockey Hollow and New Jersey Brigade:

Before the Revolution, the Jockey Hollow and New Jersey Brigade areas were a combination of agricultural lands and wooded areas. Because of the encampments, these areas were completely cleared to allow the large army camp to be constructed. The felled trees were used for hut construction and firewood. Once the fields were cleared, Brigade areas were defined, roads were established and over 1000 soldier huts were constructed. Remnants of the three farm complexes on which the encampment took place also remained. Although the fields were mostly taken over for army activities, the farmhouses and outbuildings remained intact and were used by the army. These included the Wick (c1750), Guerin and Kemble farm complexes. The Wick Orchard was also left intact during the encampment. The Wick farm was constructed c.1750 and is an intact example of integral lean-to New England type structure (also referred to as a half Cape Cod style). While the overall character of the

Jockey Hollow and New Jersey Brigade areas has changed drastically since the Revolution, many features remain that contribute to the significance. Features within Jockey Hollow include the Guerin house, Wick farmhouse and orchard, scattered groupings of the remains of hut sites and several trails, roads or road traces. The New Jersey Brigade area is heavily forested today, but remains relatively undisturbed. The area has high archeological value as an encampment site.

Summary of Integrity for Morristown NHP: Encampment Period

The different units of Morristown NHP have experienced various levels of change since the American Revolution. Assessed as a whole, the park reflects historic integrity to its significance as a Revolutionary War encampment site. The overall character of the Morristown area has undergone substantial change. However, each of the individual units of the park retains at least some aspects of integrity to the 1777-82 period. Fort Nonsense, Washington's Headquarters and the Wick Farm retain the primary elements that defined the significance of those sites during the encampment period. Jockey Hollow possesses integrity since the unit is intact and retains many features from the period. The New Jersey Brigade area represents the least integrity due to the increase of wooded areas in the landscape where open encampments and agricultural landscapes once dominated. The unit remains undeveloped since the encampment and retains high archeological value. When the encampment sites are looked at overall, their thematic connection, strategic importance and overall relationship and "design" remain evident. Individually, each site may not retain integrity to the encampment period, but as a group, they continue to represent their significance to the American Revolution.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: COMMEMORATIVE LAYER, 1873-1942:

Morristown National Historical Park has an additional significant period, 1873-1942, as an early example of Revolutionary War commemoration and as the first national historical park. Preservation and memorialization began in 1873 when the Washington Association of New Jersey (WANJ) purchased and restored the Ford Mansion and improved the grounds. Through the diligent efforts of local citizens, the city of Morristown, and the federal government over the next seventy years, the major components of the encampments were acquired. This culminated in the establishment of the Morristown National Historical Park in 1933, the first national historical park in the United States. The period ends in 1942 with the termination of Depression-era conservation programs including the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC).

The park is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the national preservation movement to commemorate local features significant to the Revolutionary War, as it represents a turning point for the National Park Service's expansion into public history, living history, and historic preservation. The park's development strongly reflects NPS planning principles of the 1930s, which influenced the design of many historic sites, monuments and memorials. The park likely has significance under Criterion C, design, as an intact example of early preservation planning, particularly Washington's Headquarters and the Wick Farm in Jockey Hollow. However, the context for this area of significance has not yet been developed and a more thorough in depth context study is needed. Morristown possesses significant architectural resources that represent the preservation and commemoration layer and may also have significance for potential archeological resources associated

with the period.

Discussions regarding the adoption of a potential second period of significance have been ongoing for the last twenty years. The primary focus will obviously remain on the encampment period; however, recognition of commemoration efforts will preserve selected nineteenth and twentieth-century additions to the historic scene to illustrate the way previous generations have chosen to both create and remember the past.

At each site, the general commemoration intent remains. In addition, many of the individual features that defined those efforts are also still extant. Important landscape characteristics and most of the individual character-defining features are extant. As a whole, Morristown National Historical Park retains a high degree of integrity for its commemorative layer. Nearly all aspects of integrity are present at Washington's Headquarters and Jockey Hollow (particularly at the Wick Farm). The New Jersey Brigade was not added to the park until after this potential period, and therefore does not contribute to this significance.

Summary of Resources:

Fort Nonsense:

Fort Nonsense experienced a wide range of preservation efforts that included site surveys, road construction, viewshed management, and eventual reconstruction and demolition of the fort. Important existing resources contributing to the preservation period include the topography, views, circulation elements, and archeological remains of the fort. Although the reconstructed fort no longer exists, many of the features associated with the preservation of the site are extant and the Fort Nonsense site contributes to the overall park significance of the preservation period. Although the park access road has changed, the spatial organization that defined the preservation period still exists today. Vehicular access extends up the slope from the town below to a cleared area at the summit. The site's topography is integral to interpreting the defensive need and value of the fort. From this point, views to the town and to New York City are still possible. The Washington Association's monument is the only small-scale feature that contributes to this period. Remains from the 1937 fort reconstruction and the Town of Morristown restroom buildings (pre-1933) contribute to the historic preservation period.

Washington's Headquarters:

The Washington's Headquarters site retains many features that contribute to the preservation period. They include the restored Ford Mansion, historical museum, caretaker's cottage, semicircular drive, open lawn with scattered shade trees, and museum complex behind the house. While the axial and topographical relationship of the mansion to museum remains, many views are cluttered and interrupted, and no longer retaining the formal design intent. The planting pattern of canopy trees is reflective of the site during the 1930s, as is the pattern of shrubs around the Ford Mansion; however, some more recent plantings and removal of the main walkway have blurred the axis between the mansion and museum. The arrival of visitors to Washington's Headquarters has been completely re-routed from the 1930s approach, now from the opposite (north and rear) side through the parking lot. The surroundings of Washington's Headquarters have changed with the addition of I-287 and expanding suburbanization.

Jockey Hollow:

The Jockey Hollow area of the park is likely the most complex unit and has experienced the most change since the encampment. As preservation efforts were being initiated, the land became overgrown with forest. A more natural park emerged that did not reflect its use as an encampment site or an agricultural landscape. By the 1930s, Jockey Hollow was mostly forested with an overlay of circulation and interpretive elements in place. Most notably, the Wick farm had been “restored” by the CCC, to recreate its 18th-century appearance. While not completely accurate to the revolutionary period, the Wick complex was treated in a comprehensive manner intended for interpretation. A small portion of land remains in cultivation there. Its treatment within the context of the park is unique and of particular significance to the preservation efforts. Remnants of the aqueduct, a motivating reason behind commemoration efforts, are still in evidence. Four roads constructed upon the establishment of the park in 1933 are part of the existing circulation system. As a whole, the Jockey Hollow area continues to reflect the character of the commemorative period.

Summary of Integrity for Morristown NHP: Commemorative Layer

As a whole, Morristown NHP retains a high degree of integrity to the commemorative period. The results of the preservation and memorialization efforts are extant today. Many aspects of integrity are present at Fort Nonsense, Washington’s Headquarters and Jockey Hollow (particularly at the Wick Farm). The general intent of these efforts was to preserve and commemorate the encampment sites, not to restore the encampment. Overall, the results of this period are extant. At each site, the general commemoration intent remains as the overriding character. In addition, many of the individual features that defined those efforts are also still extant. The important landscape characteristics and many individual character-defining features are extant.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR INTERPRETATION:

The park’s mandated archeological focus has been on the encampment period and locating historic sites and structures to assist in restoration and reconstruction projects. However, portions of the park have the potential to yield information regarding other periods. Historic records provide evidence bearing Native American activity in the area and several sites have been discovered in the course of testing encampment-period sites.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Historic Site

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type of Name
Fort Nonsense	Both Current And Historic
Kinney's Hill	Historic
Upper Redoubt	Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted: No Survey Conducted

Ethnographic Significance Description:

No formal ethnographic survey has been undertaken for Fort Nonsense. No research has been undertaken to determine the significance of the Fort Nonsense Unit to either Native Americans prior to the European settlement of Morristown, or to other groups during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1710	Settled	First Europeans arrive in present-day Morristown; settlement called West Hanover. No record of development at future site of Fort Nonsense.
AD 1777	Built	Continental Army arrives in Morristown. Upper Redoubt (Fort Nonsense) constructed during spring of this year.
AD 1777 - 1782	Established	Continental Army uses Morristown area for encampment purposes.
AD 1779	Built	Warning beacon may have been built near Fort Nonsense.
AD 1780	Abandoned	Fortification of Fort Nonsense likely ceased after second winter encampment.
AD 1873	Memorialized	Washington Association of New Jersey acquires Ford Mansion, beginning first local memorialization efforts.
AD 1886	Memorialized	The Washington Association begins efforts to identify and commemorate Fort Nonsense.
AD 1887	Designed	Major Farley surveys remains of Fort Nonsense for the Washington Association and designs first plans for reconstruction.
AD 1888	Memorialized	The Washington Association dedicates a granite boulder memorializing Fort Nonsense.

Fort Nonsense
Morristown National Historical Park

AD 1895	Built	Entrance Avenue constructed up east slope to near fort site as part of proposed residential development.
AD 1896	Purchased/Sold	Property including Fort Nonsense purchased by Francis Woodruff with intent to preserve as a public park.
AD 1914	Land Transfer	Town of Morristown acquires Woodruff property with plans to develop it as a public park.
AD 1915	Developed	Town begins to construct park roads, picnic facilities, and comfort stations. Fort Nonsense partially restored.
AD 1933	Established	Morristown National Historical Park established. Legislation calls for the acquisition of Fort Nonsense.
	Land Transfer	Town donates 35-acre Fort Nonsense park to the National Park Service.
AD 1936	Excavated	CCC Project No. 13, "Reconnaissance and Investigation (archeological)" undertaken for Fort Nonsense and the other units.
AD 1937	Reconstructed	Fort Nonsense is reconstructed under CCC Project No. 51, per plans dated August 1936.
AD 1942	Maintained	Up to this year, Fort Nonsense Unit is maintained with aid of CCC and ERA funds.
AD 1943 - 1960	Neglected	Fort Nonsense begins to deteriorate during World War II. Inadequate funds available for security. Vandalism occurs and a 1950 hurricane causes extensive damage. Park closes to visitors until 1960.
AD 1960	Altered	New entrance constructed and several roads abandoned in effort to reopen Fort Nonsense to the public.
AD 1961	Rehabilitated	Vistas on the east, north, and southeast cleared.
AD 1965	Demolished	Comfort Stations and remains of CCC fort reconstruction demolished.
AD 1966	Built	County parking lot is built near park entrance.

Fort Nonsense
Morristown National Historical Park

	Memorialized	Morristown NHP, including Fort Nonsense, listed in National Register.
AD 1971	Excavated	Rutsch and Skinner undertake archeological investigation to locate outline of 1777 fort.
AD 1989	Excavated	Plukemin Archeological Project undertakes investigation of fort site.
AD 1990	Rehabilitated	With aid of Washington Association, NPS begins project to strengthen interpretation and increase use by adding picnic facilities, installing signs, opening viewsheds, and marking the site of the fort.

Physical History:

1710-1776: Early Settlement in Morristown

Situated along the edge of the Appalachian Highlands of New Jersey, Morristown occupies a sheltered location along the Whippany River. There is no record of Native American settlement or use of the site of Fort Nonsense, but the place was surely known and likely used by them.

It was near Water Street, not far from the foot of Mount Kemble, that Europeans first settled around 1710. They first came to exploit iron deposits in the area, but others soon followed and the small village of West Hanover, later renamed Morristown, grew around a central green. The Township of Morris was established with the creation of Morris County in 1739. While the area at the foot of Mount Kemble grew, there is no record of development on Mount Kemble at the site of Fort Nonsense before the Revolutionary War.

1777-1782: Morristown Encampments

By the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Morristown had grown into a small village of approximately 70 buildings based on a local economy of agriculture and iron. It was not the size or industry of the village, however, that attracted Washington to Morristown in 1777, but rather the town's location just 31 miles from the British in New York City and its easy access to Philadelphia. The hills of Morristown, which border the lowlands stretching east to the Watchung Mountains and the Hudson River, provided an easily defended refuge for Washington's troops.

On January 6, 1777, the Continental Army arrived for encampment in Morristown. They had suffered defeat in New York two months before, but had since gained victories at Trenton and Princeton. Morristown became a major resupply center for the army and several storehouses were erected in the area along with workshops to manufacture needed materials. It was during this time in the spring of 1777 that the Upper Redoubt (later to be known as Fort Nonsense) was built in order to protect these stores. The site chosen for the fort was the northeastern extremity of Mount Kemble overlooking the village of Morristown. Washington's correspondence only suggests the site of Fort Nonsense, noting its location "on the hill adjoining this place." The northern extremity of Mount Kemble provided the most logical defense point in the area as it provided clear views not only over the immediate area, but also over the lowlands that stretched east to the Watchung Mountains bordering New York City. Historic references to this fortification suggest that a lower redoubt and a warning beacon may also have been built on Mount Kemble. Other references by Washington to Fort Nonsense include one dated May 14, 1777, in which he orders a guardhouse be built in Fort Nonsense. On May 28th of the same year, Washington ordered Lt. Col. Olney to "Strengthen the Works already begun upon the Hill near this place . . . The Guard house in the upper Redoubt should be immediately finished . . ." [Quoted in Weig: 1956].

In 1777, Washington and his troops left Morristown, returning for encampment at Jockey Hollow in the winter of 1779-80. During this time, military activity in Morristown reached its

peak, and Fort Nonsense was maintained to secure stores and watch over the surrounding area. Troops continued to camp in the Jockey Hollow area into the winter of 1780-81, and it is possible that Fort Nonsense was still maintained during this period, but no documentation has yet been found to document further use. As with all of the Morristown encampment sites, Fort Nonsense saw no military action.

Moderate documentation exists on the appearance of Fort Nonsense during the encampment period. Based on comparison with contemporary fortifications, post-war accounts, photographs of the site, and archeological investigations, it is believed that Fort Nonsense was an irregularly shaped earthen fortification with an interior measurement approximately 110 feet long and 25 to 30 feet wide. It was constructed of low earthen and stone rubble parapet walls with bastions surrounded by a six-foot wide, two-foot deep ditch. Gates, gun platforms, and a guardhouse were constructed of timber. The surrounding hillsides were likely cleared of vegetation in order to maintain clear views.

1783-1885: Post-Encampment

After the war, Fort Nonsense was left to ruin, but apparently remained known in the local community. In 1795, Mahlon Dickerson noted in his diary a visit to “Fort Nonsense,” the first documented use of this name for the fort. The name supposedly came from a story, now discounted, that Washington had his troops build the fortification simply to keep them occupied. The story likely grew out of the reality that Fort Nonsense never saw military action.

Little detailed information has surfaced on the use of the site between 1781 and 1885, except that its shady, undeveloped woods became a popular summer retreat. The earthen walls of the fort eroded, but remained distinct in the landscape as noted by an account in Harper’s New Monthly Magazine of February, 1859. The illustration of Morristown in the Harper’s article shows the upper slopes wooded and lower slopes of Mount Kemble being used for agriculture. While the site remained undeveloped into the late 19th century, the immediate surroundings of Morristown grew into a densely developed village. During this time, the area became a favorite spot for country estates and Morristown boasted that it had more millionaires per square mile than in any other part of the country.

1886-1942: Preservation and Memorialization

Although the remains of Fort Nonsense were known by locals in Morristown throughout the 19th century, it was not until 1886 that a proposal was made to formally identify and commemorate the site. It was during that year that the Washington Association of New Jersey undertook the earliest known efforts to commemorate the site. The Washington Association was a private organization formed to memorialize sites in Morristown associated with the American Revolution. The Association was created in 1873, the same year it acquired the Ford Mansion, saving it from demolition. The creation of this organization reflected a growing national interest in American Colonial and Revolutionary War-era history on the eve of the country’s centennial in 1876.

In 1886, the Association turned its attention to Fort Nonsense and had Major Joseph Farley

survey the remains. Farley then drew a plan showing the fort's conjectured 1777 location and appearance. In 1888, the Association erected a memorial boulder of pink Waterloo granite at the site "...to mark and designate to future generations the location of its (the fort's) now rapidly disappearing lines" (Weig, 1956, p.41). The plaque on the boulder reads:

"This stone marks the site of Fort Nonsense / An earthwork built by the Continental Army in the winter of 1779-80 / Erected by the Washington Association of New Jersey / 1888"

The memorial boulder was dedicated in April that year. The large ceremony included a parade, band and reporters from New York and Newark (Weig, 1956, p.21).

The placement of the boulder marked an increased interest in the preservation of the fort site, which along with the surrounding Mount Kemble, had become a favorite local spot for outdoor activities. Around 1890, however, Samuel Syms proposed the wooded hill be developed as residential properties (Weig, 1956). Syms died before the project got much of a start, but the main entrance road was installed. It ran from Mount Kemble Avenue up the east slope and circled around to just below the crest, but leaving the crest unobstructed. Syms did propose setting aside a parcel containing the fort site as a park.

This proposed development apparently spurred interest in creating a public park on the entire hilltop. In January, 1895, the Banner published an editorial in support of the park (Weig, 1956), noting that "...while Pennsylvania has her camp and Valley Park, New Jersey will have her Fort and Mountain Park..." The editorial went on to describe the site as

"...a beautiful, leaf-covered, breeze swept mountain, from the highest point of which the piers of the Brooklyn Bridge may be seen and a spot that every Summer for as many years as the oldest inhabitant can remember has been the resort of thousands who are drawn to it by its natural advantages, rough though the paths have been and unsatisfactory the rich views, glimpses only of which can be obtained through the forest trees that cover the place."

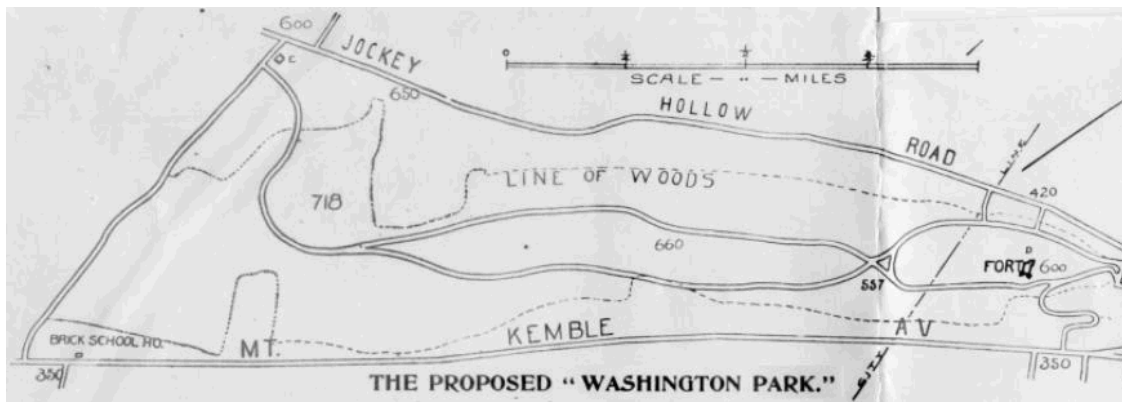
In February of 1895, the Banner published a detailed article on the proposed 300-acre "Washington Park" which was intended to preserve the site of the fort and to provide a public pleasure ground. It called for the "old earthwork" to be rebuilt along the original lines per the 1887 Farley plan. Morristown however, did not immediately act on the plan. The property was soon acquired by Hon. Francis E. Woodruff, who drew a will that provided for the preservation of the property as a public park. He died in 1914, leaving the property to the Town of Morristown along with a maintenance fund.

At some time following 1914 and prior to 1933, the Town of Morristown developed the property into a public park. Little documentation has been found to describe the details of the improvements. However, the town did improve the existing road system begun by Syms, constructed trails, two restrooms and a pumphouse, stone fireplaces, and added picnic tables. The Town also added soil to the remnants of the fort to emphasize its outline. It is believed that a flagpole, sundial, and the Washington Association memorial boulder were located inside the reconstructed fort during this period. (Weig, 1956).

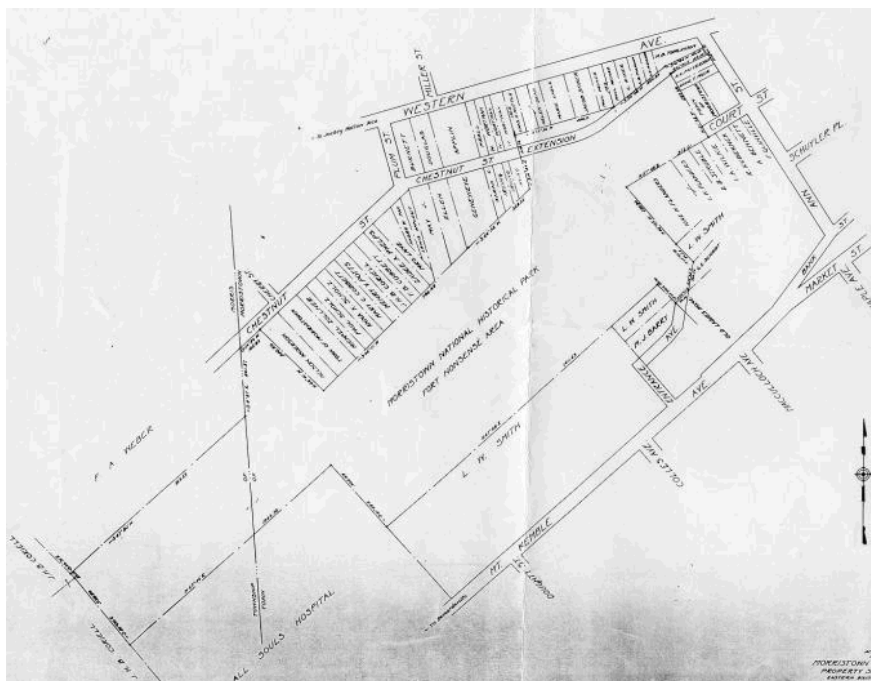
Interest in Colonial and Revolutionary War-era history continued to grow during the 1920s and 30s. Interest in preserving more of Morristown's sites from the War continued to grow, but the Depression brought about hard times for both the Washington Association and municipal government which found it increasingly difficult to commit resources to park maintenance. By the early 1930s, the federal government, including the NPS, was taking on an increasingly expansive role in historic site management, monuments and memorialization efforts. The impact of this change, NPS Director Horrace Albright's personal interest in the Morristown resources and the local efforts to preserve Morristown Revolutionary War sites all led to the creation of Morristown National Historic Park. Established in 1933, it was the first park to be designated a National Historical Park in the country. As per the federal legislation the Washington's Headquarters, Jockey Hollow, and Fort Nonsense were all acquired by the NPS as units of the new park.

The NPS apparently did not undertake any immediate changes at Fort Nonsense, instead focusing their initial efforts on the Washington's Headquarters site and constructing a large museum there. Studies at Fort Nonsense were soon initiated including an archeological investigation in 1936 conducted by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC project #13). Headed by NPS fortification expert Thor Borresen from Colonial NHP, the archeological findings were not well documented. Two items, a three sheet "Survey of Fort Nonsense" (drawing MORR-NHP-8019) and a three page "Report on the Proposed Restoration of Fort Nonsense" by Borresen and a comparison of other period fortifications became the basis for the fort to be reconstructed in 1937.

The CCC, reconstructed the fort in the summer of 1937. The reconstructed fort included earthen parapet walls, timber picket gates and a small timber guardhouse. The earthen walls were grassed and a timber flagpole was installed within the fort. Cannons and gun carriages were proposed but never installed. While the reconstruction was well documented, other improvements were not. Melvin Weig, who was the park historian during this time, refers in his 1956 report to "narrative signs and attractive trailside exhibits" (p.27) and a timber guardrail along the road (p.29). He also notes that NPS, CCC, and WPA guides staffed the site. Many of the elements installed by the town of Morristown were retained, including the comfort stations and picnic facilities. The 1888 memorial boulder was placed within the fort. A new roadway system was designed but not fully carried out. The winding entry road from Entrance Avenue was closed and a new entry built from Court Street. Some of the woods were cleared (or re-cleared) to open vistas to the east and north. From 1937 to 1942, the site was well maintained, primarily with CCC and ERA funds. It was interpreted as an important part of the Morristown encampment and was well visited (13970 visitors in 1939).



Proposed Washington Park, 1895 (Weig, 1956; MORR NHP Library).



Property survey of Fort Nonsense area, 1934 (MORR NHP Library).



CCC Reconstructed Fort Nonsense timber picket gates and earthen parapets, 1937 (CCC Photo Scrapbook, MORR NHP Archives).

1933-Present: National Park Service

With the country's entry into World War II, the federal work relief programs were terminated and park funding was cut beginning in 1942. Without staffing and with limited maintenance, the Fort Nonsense Unit fell into disrepair. Vegetation grew up to obscure the vistas and the fort and other built features were vandalized.

After the war, funding was restored to the park and maintenance was improved somewhat. Staffing for protection, however, was not and Fort Nonsense continued to be vandalized. In an effort to curtail this, the timber gates and guardhouse were removed from the fort, and it was likely at this time that the restroom buildings were permanently closed and the picnic tables removed. In November, 1950, a severe hurricane struck the area resulting in major tree damage. After the storm, the park decided to temporarily close Fort Nonsense to the public. By the time of Weig's 1956 report, the unit remained closed and in very deteriorated condition. The park's interest in Fort Nonsense was waning, and it was considering returning the unit to the Town of Morristown.

Fort Nonsense was not returned to Morristown and the unit continued to languish. In 1959, a

Dr. Bradford completed a reassessment of the history of Fort Nonsense for NPS. He maintained that there was no firm data to support the existence of the original fort at the site. Despite this report, the park soon took some action beginning in 1960 to reopen the unit, beginning with a project to reconstruct the park road, build a new entrance off Chestnut Street, and add a new parking area and turn around at the summit. It was likely at this time that the section of park road that led south of the switchback and then west to Jockey Hollow Road was abandoned. Plans were also underway to reopen vistas on the west, north, and east sides. In October, 1960, Assistant Regional Director George A. Palmer visited the site and produced a memorandum supporting the retention of Fort Nonsense in the park due to its landscape. In this memorandum, he wrote: "I believe that with the opening of the vista toward Morristown, the open space between the parking area and the restored Fort offers a scenic overlook that deserves historical interpretation and will contribute to the over-all story of the Park."

After this time, there is no further evidence that NPS was considering the return of Fort Nonsense to Morristown. Work continued in the park into the mid-1960s. In 1965, a project was undertaken to demolish the deteriorated restroom buildings and picnic facilities. As part of this project, the 1937 fort earthworks were leveled to grade, purportedly by mistake of the contractor. After this project, there was little left at the unit except for the park road and woodlands. In 1966 or soon after, Morris County built a parking lot on the lower north slope near the entrance under a lease agreement with the park. Also in 1966, Morristown NHP was automatically listed on the National Register as a result of the National Historic Preservation Act. Fort Nonsense was described, but noted as historically inaccurate and intentionally listed as not being a contributing resource.

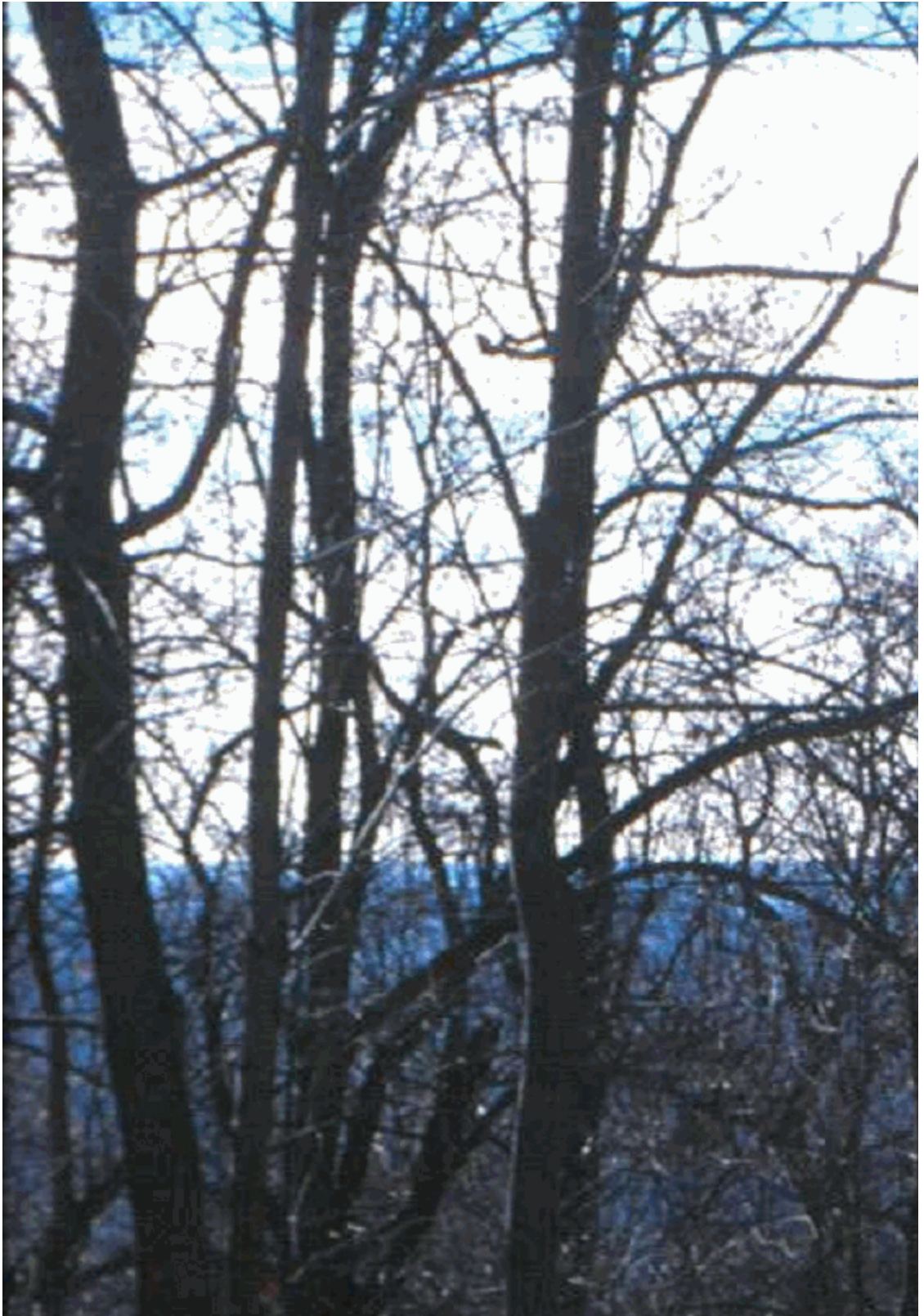
After these changes, little was done to the unit over the next two decades and the interpretive experience remained weak. Without any visible evidence of a fort, questions concerning the historic accuracy of the unit as the site of Fort Nonsense continued. In a response to these questions, a 1971 contract was awarded for archeological work to be carried out under the direction of Edward Rutsch. Partly due to the lack of record keeping from the 1936 archeological work and through errors in mapping, the team found remains only from the 1937 reconstruction. This further fueled skepticism about the existence of the 1777 fort. In 1978, a National Register nomination form was prepared for all units of the already listed Morristown National Historical Park. In the brief paragraph on Fort Nonsense, the nomination gave further credence to questions about the historical accuracy of the site first raised in Bradford's 1959 report and suggested in the 1971 archeological investigation. The nomination form states that there "... is no sound historical basis for the present Fort area ... " Despite continued questioning, the park retained the Fort Nonsense unit.

By the late 1980s, park staff determined that despite questions of authenticity, something had to be done to improve the visitor experience at Fort Nonsense, which for years had been the weakest unit of the park. Once again, the Washington Association of New Jersey came to the aid of Fort Nonsense and provided support for a project to improve interpretation. Plans for this project were drawn up in 1988. The first phase of the project was an archeological investigation begun in 1989 under the direction of John Seidel of the Pluckemin Archaeological Project. Excavation was completed where ground-disturbing activities were proposed, which

amounted to a small portion of the fort site. The findings unexpectedly revealed evidence of the 1777 fort, thereby quieting long-standing questions. The report also provided a sound historic overview that discounted the 1959 Bradford report and gave reasons why the 1971 investigation had not uncovered 1777 material.

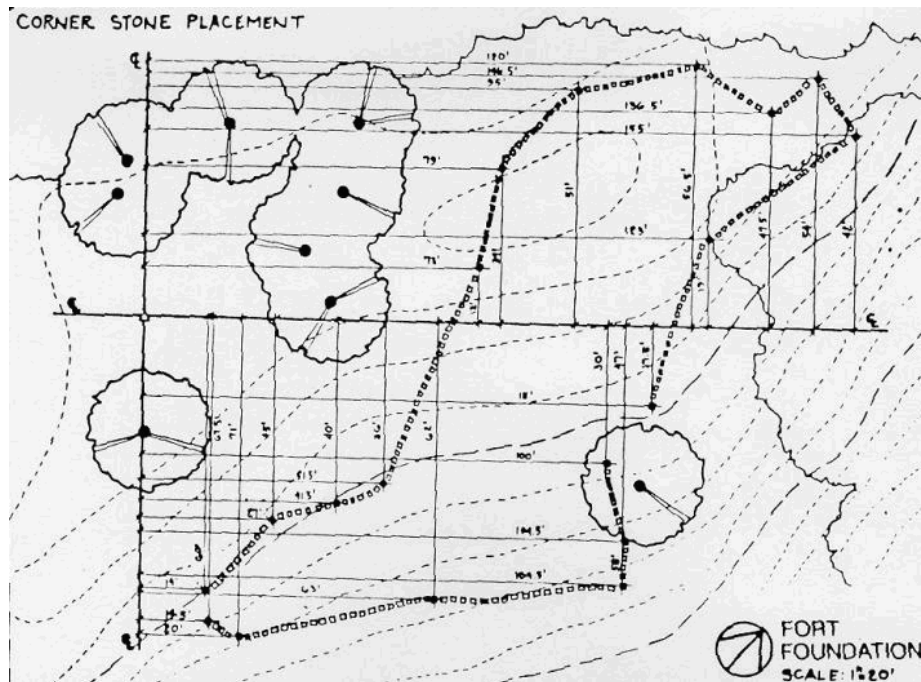
Archeological investigation conducted in 1989-1900 confirmed the existence of the eighteenth-century fort. A rehabilitation project, completed around 1990, included the following improvements: outlining the site of the fort walls in Belgian-block pavers and Andropogon grass; installing interpretive signs along a handicapped-accessible gravel path across the fort site and at the conjectured location of the warning beacon; and clearing vegetation to open two vistas from the east slope and one from the north slope. A canon was brought from Saratoga National Historical Park. In addition, the park installed picnic tables, trash cans, and a new timber guard rail along the park road.

Aside from routine maintenance that includes removing vegetation from the viewshed clearings, mowing, trash collection, and current conservation work on the cannon, the 1990 project remains the last improvements made to Fort Nonsense. Although the unit does not have visitor facilities and is not staffed, it remains an integral, although lightly visited, part of the interpretive experience at Morristown National Historical Park.

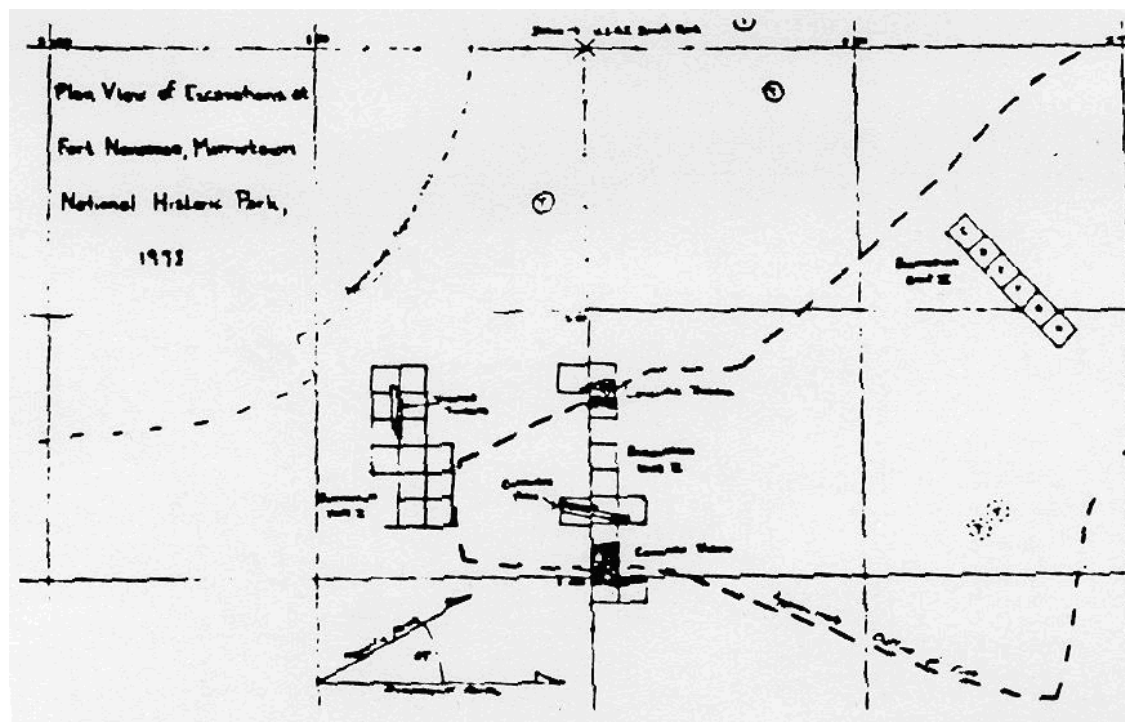




View east, toward Manhattan (OCLP, 1998).



Belgian Blocks outlining Fort Nonsense footprint, 1989 (Seidel, 1990).



Rutsch's archeological excavations at Fort Nonsense, 1971 (Seidel, 1990).

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Analysis and Evaluation section identifies the landscape characteristics and character-defining features of the landscape that are important to Fort Nonsense's contribution to the park's two periods of significance. By identifying the larger, overall landscape characteristics and individual character-defining landscape features, the historic integrity of the landscape is also assessed. This process is done separately for each period of significance.

American Revolution Encampment Period, 1777-1782

Historical Significance:

This CLI supports that the Fort Nonsense Unit is historically significant under National Register Criteria A and B in the area of military history as the site of Washington's Upper Redoubt built in 1777 and maintained through c.1780. In addition to significance under Criterion A, the landscape of Fort Nonsense may have significance under Criterion D in the area of archeology related to the remains of the 1777 fortification, as suggested by the 1990 Pluckemin/Seidel archeological report. These remains, possibly limited in extent due to disturbance from the 1937 reconstruction and 1965 demolition work, have the potential to reveal information about the construction of the fort and military activities there between 1777 and c.1780, for which there is presently very limited information available. The integrity of the landscape for this significance should be assessed by a qualified archeologist.

Integrity:

The Fort Nonsense Unit retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance for its association with the American Revolution. The dominant physical characteristic of Fort Nonsense is its siting on Mount Kemble. While there are no visible remains from the 1777 fortification, it is the setting of Mount Kemble that was key to constructing the fort in this strategic location. The topography and views were the key factors to this location. Both of these characteristics remain today.

Several landscape features exist that were not present during the 1777-c.1780 period, including the park drive, gravel walks, and the Washington Association monument. These features, however, do not significantly detract from the overall historic setting. In sum, the Fort Nonsense Unit retains historic integrity through the aspects of location, setting, feeling, and association sufficient to convey its historic association to the American Revolution.

Commemorative Layer, 1873-1942

Historical Significance:

Fort Nonsense is also historically significant under National Register Criterion A for its role in the early preservation and memorialization efforts to commemorate the Revolutionary War sites around Morristown. Part of a larger national trend, the efforts in Morristown represented a very early example of preservation and memorialization, culminating in the establishment of the National Historical Park. Fort Nonsense became part of this effort in 1886 when it was first investigated and

surveyed as the fort site. This significance is related to early private efforts by the Washington Association of New Jersey; local municipal efforts by the Town of Morristown; and federal efforts by NPS (and the CCC). The CCC reconstructed the fort in 1937 and maintained it until their disbandment in 1942. The landscape evolved greatly during this 69-year period, with development of the landscape as a public park. Important landscape characteristics and features included the panoramic views it provided, the park access roads, picnic facilities, and interpretive signs.

Integrity:

The Fort Nonsense Unit retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance under Criterion A, for its association with the Commemorative Layer. Although the reconstructed fort no longer exists today, many of the features associated with the preservation of the landscape are extant. Although the park access road has changed, the spatial organization that defined the preservation period still exists today. Vehicular access extends up the slope from the town below to a cleared area at the summit. The landscape's topography is integral to interpreting the defensive need and value of the fort. From this point, views to the town and to New York City are still possible. The Washington Association's monument is the only small-scale feature that contributes to this period.

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

Fort Nonsense has been the subject of several archaeological investigations (See Seidel, 1990 Pluckemin report for detailed summary). The early efforts were undertaken to document the fort remains and prepare for reconstruction. The first documented effort was in 1887 when the Washington Association asked Major Joseph Pierson Farley, a United States Army officer, to survey the remains of the fort. Farley produced a plan showing a conjectured restoration of Fort Nonsense based on his survey and knowledge of period earthen fortifications.

The National Park Service and CCC undertook the first formal archeological investigation of Fort Nonsense in 1936 in preparation for the possible reconstruction of the fort. At this time the NPS brought in Thor Borresen, a fortifications expert stationed at Colonial National Historical Park to undertake further investigation and aid in the reconstruction effort. Large areas of the hilltop were cleared in archeological stripping operations. The only documentation found for this 1936 work is the reconstruction summary report by Borresen, which includes maps of the excavations. Apparently no notes on the work were kept, and Borresen provided no discussion of the archeological evidence used to reconstruct the fort. The 1937 fort reconstruction was based on these efforts.

Following World War II, The NPS began to question the authenticity of the site as the location of the 1777 Upper Redoubt. This questioning came about due to the lack of documentation from the 1936 archeological work, deterioration of the reconstruction, and finally its demolition in 1965. In order to resolve this question, an archeological survey was undertaken by Rutsch and Skinner in 1971 with the goal of locating the outline of the 1777 fort. This survey, however, presumed an inaccurate location for the 1777 fort outline and only uncovered material from the 1937 reconstruction.

Given these findings, there was no call for additional work and the Fort Nonsense unit remained a little-visited and largely uninterpreted site. In 1988, NPS staff finally determined that interpretation should be improved, and a project was planned to add an interpretive path, clear vistas, and outline the site of the fort. Because disturbance was required for construction of the path and fort outline, an archeological investigation was undertaken for these areas in 1989 under the direction of John Seidel of the Pluckemin Archaeological Project. The report for this project, dated March 1990, summarizes past investigations and finds that the 1971 conclusions were inaccurate due to mapping problems. Most importantly, the 1990 report concludes that there remain deposits from the original fort despite the limited scope of the project and extensive disturbance that occurred in the 1930s and 1960s. This report also notes that the cleared area near the entrance formerly used as a county parking lot should be investigated to determine if it was the site of the lower redoubt mentioned in Washington's correspondence.

Summary of Findings

The 1989 Pluckemin investigation provided documentation that the present site was indeed the location of the 1777 Upper Redoubt, thus setting aside long-standing questions about the site's authenticity. The bulk of the investigation, however, uncovered material related to the 1937 reconstruction. The 1990 report of this investigation does suggest that the site contains archeological remains that with further investigation will provide additional insight both into the original construction of Fort Nonsense and military activity there. Any intact remains from the 1777 fort are considered contributing to the historic significance of the property. The report also suggests the former county parking lot may be the site of the Lower Redoubt. No investigation has been undertaken to verify this.

While Morristown NHP is documented to have historical significance under National Register Criterion D for its archeological value (NRHP, 1980), that significance had not yet been connected to the Fort Nonsense unit. Until the 1989 Pluckemin investigation. Archeological resources contributing to the encampment period include the site of the 1777 fort. The presumed sites of the warning beacon and lower redoubt should be further studied. Remains from the 1937 fort reconstruction and the Town of Morristown restroom buildings (pre-1933) are contributing resources to the Commemorative Layer (1873-1942).

Character-defining Features:

Feature: 1777 Upper Redoubt site. Contributing to 1777-82 and 1873-1942.

Feature Identification Number: 93128

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: 1914-33 restroom remains. Contributing to 1873-1942.

Feature Identification Number: 93129

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: 1937 Upper Redoubt reconstruction site. Contributing to 1873-1942.

Feature Identification Number: 93130

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Restroom foundation (OCLP 1998).

Buildings And Structures

There are presently no maintained buildings or structures within the park boundaries of Fort Nonsense. The original 1777 Upper Redoubt and the 1937 reconstruction are gone, as are the several small buildings and structures built under the park development by the Town of Morristown between 1914 and 1933.

During the encampment, the major structure at the unit was the Upper Redoubt (later referred to as Fort Nonsense), a small earthen fortification built in 1777 and maintained through c.1780. Details of the original construction have never been found, although archeological evidence of this original fort was uncovered in investigations undertaken in 1989 (Seidel, 1990).

The earthen remains of the fort were evident in the landscape into the early 20th century. Between 1914 and 1933, when the Town of Morristown developed the northeastern end of Mount Kemble as a public park, the remains of Fort Nonsense were partially "restored". Approximately one foot of earth was added to the remains of the earthen walls, and a flagpole and sundial were installed. In 1937, under CCC Project No. 51, a more thorough "reconstruction" of Fort Nonsense was undertaken. Based on archeological work undertaken by the NPS and CCC in 1936, this project rebuilt the fort walls to their conjectured 3-foot

height, re-established ditches and glacis, and constructed timber gates, log traverses, and a small timber guardhouse. This reconstruction was maintained through 1942. It deteriorated during the post-war period and was demolished in 1965, although presumably by mistake of the contractor. Based on the 1989 archeological findings, outline of the 1777 fort walls was marked with Belgian block and the interior planted with Androgen grass.

In addition to Fort Nonsense (Upper Redoubt), Washington's correspondence implies a lower redoubt. A possible location for this structure may have been the level area near the park entrance, formerly used as a county parking lot (Seidel 1990). Little research has been undertaken to substantiate the existence of a lower redoubt.

Another structure believed to have been on or near the site during the 1777-c.1780 period was a warning beacon, part of a larger system of beacons that stretched southwesterly from West Point on the Hudson River. No documentation has been found to substantiate the exact location of this beacon (Weig 1956: 7-13). The site of the warning beacon is presently interpreted from a clearing on the eastern slope near the picnic area and switchback.

The next record of buildings and structures does not occur until development of the site as a public park by the Town of Morristown between 1914 and 1933. There is one extant building left from this period: a small concrete-block shed-roofed pumphouse on the west slope just off NPS property. This pumphouse serviced two comfort stations that were located farther uphill. These two small buildings, which were located on walks leading off of the park road, had stone-faced walls and rested on poured concrete foundations. After years of vandalism and neglect during closure of Fort Nonsense throughout the 1950s, the restroom buildings were demolished by NPS in 1965 (as part of a project to reopen the unit). The concrete foundations and debris from these two buildings remain on the hillside.

In addition to these comfort stations, the 1947 USGS map indicates there was a building located on the east side of the park road halfway between the fort site and the old entrance on Court Street. No further information on this building has been found.

Summary of Findings

There are no structures on the Fort Nonsense site that contribute to its historical significance for the encampment period. The only extant building or structure is the pumphouse constructed around 1920 as part of the Town of Morristown's development of Fort Nonsense as a public park. This building is thematically linked to the Commemorative Layer. However, this building was part of a larger development that included two restroom buildings (now gone) and it is located off NPS property.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Restroom pumphouse (OCLP, 1998).

Circulation

Circulation elements existing during the encampment period have not been documented. Although roads or paths may have followed the same route as those documented for later periods, this has not yet been proven. The earliest evidence of formal circulation at Fort Nonsense is a 19th century road extending up the hillside from Mount Kemble Avenue. An 1895 Banner article, “The Proposed Washington Park” (Weig 1956) describes this road, which was begun around 1890 by Samuel Syms for a proposed residential development on Mount Kemble. The article states: “The main entrance road was begun and built to a point a little beyond the monument (1888 Washington Association monument), following the slope of the hill a little below the summit, leaving the crest unobstructed.” A segment of Entrance Road is still shown on current tax maps, and a trace of the roadbed is still evident in the hillside.

After the demise of the proposed residential development, the town developed access roads for its new park (post-1915). A 1934 USGS map of Fort Nonsense (Weig 1956) and an NPS plan and profile of Fort Nonsense dated June, 1935 show the system of roads on the site as they had been developed by the town. This system of roads was very similar to that proposed for Washington Park in 1895. These roads were likely earth or gravel, indicated by a note on the 1935 NPS plan stating that the “present graded width” of the roads is shown. This road system incorporated the c.1890 Entrance Road looping up the east slope from Mount Kemble Avenue to the summit. A road along the north-south axis of the ridge was added. This road began near the Entrance Avenue loop and followed the ridge of the north slope past the fort site and continued south to a point where it descended the west slope to join the southwest end of

Chestnut Street. This road intersected the existing park drive at an “islanded” intersection (present switchback), and included an “islanded” turn-around just south of the fort site.

After the site was transferred to the NPS, a June 1935 plan called for abandonment of all existing roads except the present park road, which was to be terminated at the switchback, resurfaced, and widened to 18 feet. This plan also proposed a new entrance off Chestnut Street Extension. The 1954 USGS map (Morristown Quadrangle) indicates, however, that only the Entrance Avenue road and the road up the north slope were abandoned under this 1935 plan. The park road was not widened to 18 feet, but kept at 14-16 feet wide. All other roads appear to have been maintained during NPS development of the site in the 1930s. Some of these roads, such as the ridge road extending south from the switchback, were paved in asphalt.

A 1936 NPS plan entitled “Park Entrance Road (Parkway)” indicates that an automobile road was planned to run along the ridge of Mount Kemble, probably to connect with the Jockey Hollow Area which was also on Mount Kemble, approximately three miles to the southwest. Although a road was built, in part, along this alignment during development of the park by the Town of Morristown, a parkway was never constructed as intended under this plan.

In 1959 and 1961, the NPS drew up a new set of plans for the park roads as part of its effort to reopen Fort Nonsense. These plans once again called for abandoning the Court Street entrance and the north-south ridge road extending south from the switchback to Chestnut Avenue; constructing a new entrance from Chestnut Avenue Extension (present entrance); and resurfacing and widening the park road to 18 feet. The remaining park roads were likely abandoned at this time. The plans also called for adding a 10-car parking lot and a new curbed turn-around at the summit. According to a memorandum from Assistant Regional Director George Palmer, the new entrance and parking lot were completed in fall, 1960. In 1966, plans were drawn for a “temporary” parking lot near the park entrance to be used by Morris County under a lease agreement with NPS. The only changes to the circulation system at the Fort Nonsense Unit since 1966 include removal of the lower parking lot upon expiration of the lease around 1990 and installation of a new timber guiderail along the park drive.

Aside from vehicular circulation, the site includes one maintained path leading from the park entrance to the fort site along the north ridge, and a gravel path with interpretive markers along the ridge leading from the parking area north through the fort site and south to the warning beacon site. The hiking path appears to follow the alignment of the north-south ridge road that was constructed during the Town of Morristown period, 1914-1933, and abandoned during the late 1930s. The interpretive path, installed during the 1990 rehabilitation project, is surfaced in gravel and lined with interpretive markers. In addition to these paths, there were several paths running along the lower eastern and western slopes of the site and to the comfort stations according to the 1934 USGS site plan map. These have been abandoned.

Summary of Findings

None of the existing circulation contributes to the site's American Revolution period of significance. While some of these circulation routes may have existed during the encampment, it has not been documented. The existing park road at Fort Nonsense contains segments of several development stages. It dates, in part, to the c.1890 Syms development, the 1914-1933 Town of Morristown park development, and a 1960 NPS rehabilitation. It is only a fragment of a once-larger system and has been substantially altered since the 1873-1942 Commemorative Period. Traces of abandoned roadbed are evident in various places. While the existing park access road is only a fragment of the more substantial system that once existed, it does primarily reflect the alignment of the park road that existed at the end of the Commemorative Period (1942) and does contribute to that period. The primary differences today are the new entrance on Chestnut Avenue and the change in width from 14-16 feet to 18 feet. See CLI Site Plan for abandoned and existing circulation elements

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Park access road (portions).
Contributing to 1873-1942 period.

Feature Identification Number: 93131

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Paths and Parking Lot. Contributing to 1873-1942 period

Feature Identification Number: 93132

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Road traces

Feature Identification Number: 93133

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View south from switchback to remnant park road (OCLP, 1998).



Gravel pedestrian path (OCLP, 1998).



Road trace, Entrance Avenue (OCLP, 1998).



Parking area at summit (OCLP, 1998).

Small Scale Features

No small-scale features have been documented to the encampment period. Only one extant feature contributes to the Commemorative Period--the Washington Association of New Jersey monument (park structure #13). This monument is one of the earliest examples of the Revolutionary War memorialization that took place in and around Morristown.

The monument is a simple, roughly-finished, rectangular, 4-foot high piece of pink Waterloo granite dedicated in 1888. The inscription on the monument reads: THIS STONE MARKS THE SITE OF / FORT NONSENSE / AN EARTH-WORK BUILT BY THE / CONTINENTAL ARMY IN / THE WINTER OF 1779-80 / ERECTED BY THE / WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY / 1888. The monument is located at the beginning of the gravel interpretive path near the parking area, and was formerly located within the walls of the reconstructed fort. Its exact 1888 location is unknown.

During the early years of the park's establishment, between 1914 and 1942, there were many small-scale features, all of which are now gone. These include the following added by the Town of Morristown between 1914 and 1933: 3 stone fireplaces, an incinerator, 2 water taps, picnic tables, and a flagpole and sundial within the fort walls. Under NPS ownership, the sundial appears to have been removed, but the other features were retained until the post-World War II period. The last of the town picnic facilities were removed between 1961 and 1965. NPS may have maintained narrative signs and trailside exhibits in the 1930s (See Weig, 1956).

Many contemporary small-scale features (non-contributing) date to the 1990 rehabilitation project. These include 7 metal-frame markers along the interpretive gravel walking path at the fort and beacon sites, 3 wood/metal picnic tables, 2 wood/metal trash bins, an NPS sign and gates at the entrance, and Belgian-block paving stones that outline the site of the fort walls. The heavy timber guard rail along the park road was also installed around 1990, replacing an earlier timber guard rail.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Washington Association Monument. Contributing to the 1873-42 period.

Feature Identification Number: 93138

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Metal Frame Markers

Feature Identification Number: 93135

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Wood/Metal Picnic Tables

Feature Identification Number: 93139

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Wood/Metal Trash Bins

Feature Identification Number: 93140

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: NPS Sign & Gates

Feature Identification Number: 93136

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Belgian Block Fort Outline

Feature Identification Number: 93134

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Timber Guard Rail

Feature Identification Number: 93137

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Washington Association monument (OCLP, 1998).



Timber guard rail along park access road (OCLP, 1998).



Typical interpretive marker (OCLP, 1998).

Spatial Organization

During the encampment, the spatial organization of Fort Nonsense was defined by its relationship to the other encampment areas and by its location on the end of the Mount Kemble ridge. On the large scale, the site was strategically located to overlook the town, but also the area east of Morristown toward New York City. On the smaller scale, the organization of the fort site itself is less clear. The fort was clearly built on the edge of this ridge, and likely the surrounding ridge was cleared of vegetation, but little is known beyond that. It is believed that the ridge also contained a "warning beacon" and a "lower redoubt" making the Fort Nonsense area a complex of monitoring and defensive operations. The operational connection to these other defensive features was likely important, as was the fact that the ridge was likely clear of vegetation.

Without being wooded, the hilltop would have lacked vertical enclosure, and the ground plane would have noticeably dropped off on three sides. The fort itself was a low earthen work that would have provided little enclosure to the surrounding landscape.

After the encampment period, the area returned to woodland until the late-19th century. In the 1890s, the first formal road was constructed and soon followed by park development. During this period, the site was connected to surrounding areas by several access roads and had a cleared area at the summit. The majority of the hillsides remained wooded, somewhat enclosing the area (Weig 1956). In any event, the area would have had a very different character than the cleared openness of the encampment.

During the Commemorative Period, the formal appearance (park-like setting) became more emphasized. Although the conjectured fort was reconstructed, the area became a maintained public park (not necessarily manicured in character, but certainly maintained). Roads were paved, a parking area established, picnic areas installed and outlined views cleared. By the end of this period, any physical connection with the Jockey Hollow area (via paths/roads) had been lost as only the formal park road was being maintained. The site retained its visual relationship to the town below, and to NYC, but the views were framed, not fully open.

Today the spatial character of the site remains virtually the same as at the close of the Commemorative Period. The access road leads to an open area at the summit where a formal parking area sits and gravel paths extend from the fort site to the area thought to be the warning beacon. A loosely defined picnic area borders the parking area. Three views are maintained by means of vegetation management.

Summary of Findings

The cleared area at the summit of the ridge likely existed during the encampment. However, it is also likely that the entire ridge was cleared, not simply the summit. In addition, other than the views to the town and beyond, the site shows no connection to anything beyond its borders. The formal access road is the only current access. The formality of that circulation, and lack of interpretation of other trails further negates any physical connection that may have existed

with Jockey Hollow. No elements of the spatial organization contribute to the encampment period.

Although the park access road has changed somewhat, the spatial organization that defined the Commemorative Period (at its close) still exists today. Vehicular access extends up the slope from the town below to a cleared area at the summit. From this point, views to the town and to NYC are still possible, retaining the visual connection with these areas.

Topography

The topography of Mount Kemble and the Fort Nonsense site is likely the most important landscape characteristic of the unit. It was the topography of this site that allowed the views and defensive capabilities for which Washington chose it to construct the fort. The site is situated on the northern edge of the Mount Kemble ridge. Mount Kemble is part of a long ridge that runs southwest to northeast and extends into the center of Morristown, providing an ideal vantage point over the town and on toward the Hudson River and New York City, approximately 31 miles distant. The Fort Nonsense site is at an elevation of 595' above sea level and 230' above the Morristown Green.

The Fort Nonsense site is a relatively flat area at the northern end of the Mount Kemble ridge. The ridge drops down steeply (approximately 200') at an average slope of approximately 35%. The north slope, where the hiking path descends, has a gentler slope. Level areas along the side slopes are found at the existing and abandoned roadbeds and at the old county parking area near the entrance.

The earthworks of the 1777 Upper Redoubt would have provided a small-scale topographical feature on the hilltop, with the earthen redoubt walls rising to a conjectured height of 3 feet. These walls eroded over time, but still provided visible undulations into the 20th century. When the Town of Morristown acquired the hill as a public park, they added approximately one foot of earth to the redoubt remains in order to make the fort more prominent. In 1937, the NPS and CCC reconstructed the fort, restoring the earthen redoubt to its conjectured 3' height. Following World War II, the reconstructed earthworks were allowed to deteriorate, and in 1965 they were leveled. Today, there is no topographical trace of the 1777 or 1937 earthworks.

Summary of Findings

The topography of the Fort Nonsense site is integral to interpreting the story of the Morristown encampments, particularly to the defensive need and value of the fort. The topography of this site, as the ridge ends and views of the town and beyond are possible, is one of the most important characteristics of the site. The overall topography contributes to the 1777-82 and the 1873-1942 periods of significance.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Mt. Kemble Ridge. Contributing to 1777-82 and 1873-1942 periods.

Feature Identification Number: 93141

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Vegetation

During the encampment period, it is likely that the entire summit of Mount Kemble was cleared for construction of the upper redoubt, warning beacon and lower redoubt. The vegetation would have been cleared so that the timber could be used in the fort's construction, for firewood, and to allow views. However, this fact has not been proven through research.

After the war was over and the fort abandoned, the forest growth returned to the hillside surrounding the fort. The forest consisted of central hardwoods, primarily oak, tulip, black cherry, and hickory. When the park was developed, the area at the top of the ridge, surrounding the fort ruins was cleared and viewsheds to the town and to Manhattan were opened. Once the site was established as a park, the crest of the ridge surrounding the fort was maintained as an open area with mature shade trees bordered by forest growth.

Today, the fort site is maintained in a park-like setting. A large open area at the top of the ridge is maintained as open lawn with scattered mature shade trees, primarily oak (*Quercus alba*, *rubra*, *velutina*, and *prinus*), plus hickory (*Carya glabra*) and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). Many of these trees are in the range of 20" to 40" diameter breast height (1986 vegetation study, John Donahue).

The cleared area surrounds the fort site and is bordered by woodland growth along the ridge slopes. Two viewsheds are kept clear along the eastern slope, cut on a regular basis to limit growth of exotics, including tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), moonseed (*Menispermum canadense*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), and barberry (*Berberis*).

At the bottom of the hill near the park entrance is an open area that had been used as a parking area by Morris County. The pavement was removed around 1990 and lawn was established. There are few formal plantings at the site. Two large clumps of rhododendron at the switchback in the park road likely pre-date the c.1961 abandonment of the road leading south-west of the switchback, since one clump is planted in what was an island in the road. These rhododendrons may date to as early as the 1914-1933 Town of Morristown period, when the roads were built. Hedges of azaleas were planted east of the fort site along the vista clearing, probably at some point after 1961, and were removed during the 1990 rehabilitation project. Modern plantings include *Andropogon* around the Belgian-block outline of the fort (planted 1990; present condition undetermined), and several oaks at the north end of the former county parking lot planted when the pavement was removed around 1990.

Summary of Findings

Since the state of vegetation present during the encampment period is more conjecture, an analysis of the existing vegetation is difficult. However, the existing forest cover has only been in existence since the early 19th century. This adds to the presumption that the fort site was not wooded during its military use. Therefore the existing vegetation detracts from the historic character of the site for the encampment period, particularly as it obstructs views from the fort

site.

However, the overall character of the site's vegetation is likely quite close to that of the end of the Commemorative Period. The park-like setting with a maintained lawn and scattered shade trees, surrounded by woodlands still remains.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Informal areas of lawn, shrubs and shade trees. Contributing to 1873-1942 period.

Feature Identification Number: 93142

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Views And Vistas

Combined with the site's topography, the views and vistas were the primary strategic characteristic that made this site a compelling location for defensive fort. The expansive views from the northeastern end of Mount Kemble provided the strategic basis for the location of Fort Nonsense. From here, the Continental Army could keep watch over its stores and headquarters in Morristown and also monitor the natural barrier to the British in New York City formed by the Watchung Mountains to the east. During the encampment period, it is likely that the woods on Mount Kemble around Fort Nonsense were cleared in order to maximize views.

After the war and by the 19th century, the woodlands had regrown, and Mount Kemble became a favorite spot for summer outings (see discussion under "Spatial Organization"). There is no record of clearings in the woods for views at this time. Around 1890, Samuel Syms proposed a residential development on the hill. The natural setting of the property, including its potential for views, was likely an important asset for this development. Between 1914 and 1933, the Town of Morristown developed the site as a public park, and may have created a clearing in the woods for views out from the site of Fort Nonsense (see "Spatial Organization").

As part of the 1937 reconstruction of Fort Nonsense, NPS maintained a clearing along the eastern slope from the fort to allow views of Morristown and east to Washington's Headquarters. This view was allowed to close during the war, but was cleared again afterwards, only to vanish again during closure of the unit during the 1950s. As part of the project to reopen the unit in the early 1960s, two clearings were established in 1961: one to the southwest of the fort toward the Watchung Mountains and one to the east of the fort toward Washington's Headquarters. In 1986, another project was undertaken to re-establish clearings in the woodlands for views. This project maintained the view from the fort site to Washington's Headquarters and established a new vista to the north of the fort site. The southwest view to the Watchung Mountains was not maintained. In the 1990 rehabilitation project, a new clearing was established on the east slope near the switchback and picnic area in the conjectured location of a Revolutionary War-era warning beacon.

Today, there are three clearings at Fort Nonsense maintained for views. The minor clearing north of the fort site at the end of the interpretive walk was established in 1986 and allows views from the fort site down to Morristown and towards Washington's Headquarters and the Watchung Mountains. The most substantially maintained view is east to Manhattan. The third clearing is on the east slope at the conjectured warning beacon site.

While it is likely the entire hilltop was cleared during the encampment period, it is unconfirmed. During the Commemorative Period, various views existed at different times. The three maintained views existing today highlight the three key views that would have certainly existed during the encampment. However, it is likely that the minimal clearings that exist merely hint at the views that likely existed.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: View east from fort site to Morristown and Manhattan. Contributing to 1777-82 and 1873-1942 periods.

Feature Identification Number: 93143

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View east from warning beacon site. Contributing to 1777-82 and 1873-1942 periods.

Feature Identification Number: 93144

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View north from fort site to Morristown and towards Washington's Headquarters. Contributing to 1777-82 and 1873-1942 periods.

Feature Identification Number: 93145

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View north towards Washington's Headquarters (OCLP, 1998).



View east to Manhattan (OCLP, 1998).

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment:	Fair
Assessment Date:	09/30/1998
Condition Assessment:	Fair
Assessment Date:	07/24/2003
Condition Assessment:	Fair
Assessment Date:	08/20/2009

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The Superintendent, in consultation with Jude Pfister, Chief of Cultural Resources, agreed with this assessment. Hazardous trees and overgrown viewshed continue to be issues at the site. A "fair" assessment indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Deferred Maintenance
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	Views, as a primary characteristic of Fort Nonsense, are in danger of being lost. Both external (building development) and internal (vegetation growth) have been encroaching on the site's views for many years. Efforts are taken by the park to keep some vegetation clear of two key views, but resources to do so are limited.

Stabilization Costs

Landscape Stabilization Cost: 98,000.00
Cost Date: 01/22/2004
Level of Estimate: B - Preliminary Plans/HSR-CLR
Cost Estimator: Park/FMSS

Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

Views \$15000

Three historic views - Stabilize views currently threatened by woodland by clearing encroaching growth along edges of specified viewsheds, remove woody growth from slope below vista to Manhattan

Historic Road Trace \$15000

Threatened by woody vegetation growth within historic/abandoned roadbeds - remove trees and vegetation.

Prevent Spread of Invasive Plants \$68,000

PMIS 97500, estimate includes Jockey Hollow Unit

A preservation maintenance plan should be prepared to guide park staff in maintaining the views once they are stabilized.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Rehabilitation
Approved Treatment Document: General Management Plan
Document Date: 06/09/2003
Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Costs

Landscape Treatment Cost: 125,000.00
Cost Date: 06/09/2003
Level of Estimate: B - Preliminary Plans/HSR-CLR
Cost Estimator: Regional Office

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

The cost listed above include projects specific to Fort Nonsense: Stabilize archeological evidence of the 1777 fortification, \$50,000; Expand the parking area and create a bus turnaround, \$50,000; Develop a larger picnic area with a comfort station, \$25,000.

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

Citation Title:	Development Concept Plan, Jockey Hollow, Fort Nonsense and New Jersey Brigade Site Units
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	CRBIB
Citation Number:	010456
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Citation Title:	Final Master Plan, Morristown NHP
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	CRBIB
Citation Number:	401619
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Cultural Resources Management Studies Collection, Charlestown Navy Yard, Charlestown, MA
Citation Title:	Fort Nonsense 1989 Archaeological Investigations
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	CRBIB
Citation Number:	401629
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	NPS, Boston Support Office
Citation Title:	Historical Base Map, Morristown National Historical Park
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	CRBIB
Citation Number:	000620
Citation Type:	Narrative
Citation Location:	Morristown NHP Library

Citation Title: Historical Report on the Fort Nonsense Area, Morristown National Historical Park

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: CRBIB

Citation Number: 000655

Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative

Citation Location: NPS, Harpers Ferry Center

Citation Title: Inventory of Structures, Morristown National Historical Park

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: CRBIB

Citation Number: 013561

Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative

Citation Location: Cultural Resources Management Studies Collection, Charlestown Navy Yard, Charlestown, MA

Citation Title: Morristown Winter Encampment, 1777

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: CRBIB

Citation Number: 010431

Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative

Citation Location: Cultural Resources Management Studies Collection, Charlestown Navy Yard, Charlestown, MA

Citation Title: Report on Fort Nonsense, Morristown National Historical Park

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: CRBIB

Citation Number: 000654

Citation Type: Narrative

Citation Location: Cultural Resources Management Studies Collection, Charlestown Navy Yard, Charlestown, MA

Citation Title:	The Building of Fort Nonsense
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	CRBIB
Citation Number:	013765
Citation Type:	Narrative
Citation Location:	Cultural Resources Management Studies Collection, Charlestown Navy Yard, Charlestown, MA
Citation Title:	Morristown and Morris Township, A Guide to Historic Sites
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	Other
Citation Author:	Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
Citation Title:	Cultural Landscape Report for Morristown National Historical Park, Park-wide Site History, Existing Conditions and Analysis, Review Draft, February 2004
Year of Publication:	2004
Citation Publisher:	Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
Source Name:	Other
Citation Author:	Northeast Region Planning Office
Citation Title:	General Management Plan for Morristown NHP
Year of Publication:	2003
Citation Publisher:	National Park Service
Source Name:	Other

Supplemental Information

Title:	"Construction of Stockade at Fort Nonsense, 1937"
Description:	Photograph in CCC album, MORR park archives
Title:	Fort Nonsense Entrance road (I-23-1961)
Description:	Plans showing proposed changes to circulation and existing features
Title:	Layout Plan / Fort Nonsense Area (December 1959)
Description:	Plans and profile for proposed rehabilitation of park circulation
Title:	Morris County / Temporary Parking Lot / Lower Fort Nonsense (March 1966)
Description:	Plans for parking lot
Title:	Park Entrance Road (Parkway) (1936)
Description:	Plan of proposed park road system
Title:	Plan and Profile Fort Nonsense Road (June 1935)
Description:	Proposed plan; shows existing roads and facilities built by Town of Morristown
Title:	Property Survey of Fort Nonsense Area (August 1934)
Description:	Shows park property lines; surrounding lots and roads
Title:	Site Improvements (August 1988)
Description:	Showing interpretive elements installed c. 1990
Title:	Topographic 0 Survey of Fort Nonsense Area (1939)
Description:	Also shows building, fort, and road footprints
Title:	USGS Maps: Mendham Quad 1954; Morristown Quads 1943 & 1954
Description:	Shows topography, roads, buildings, and property lines