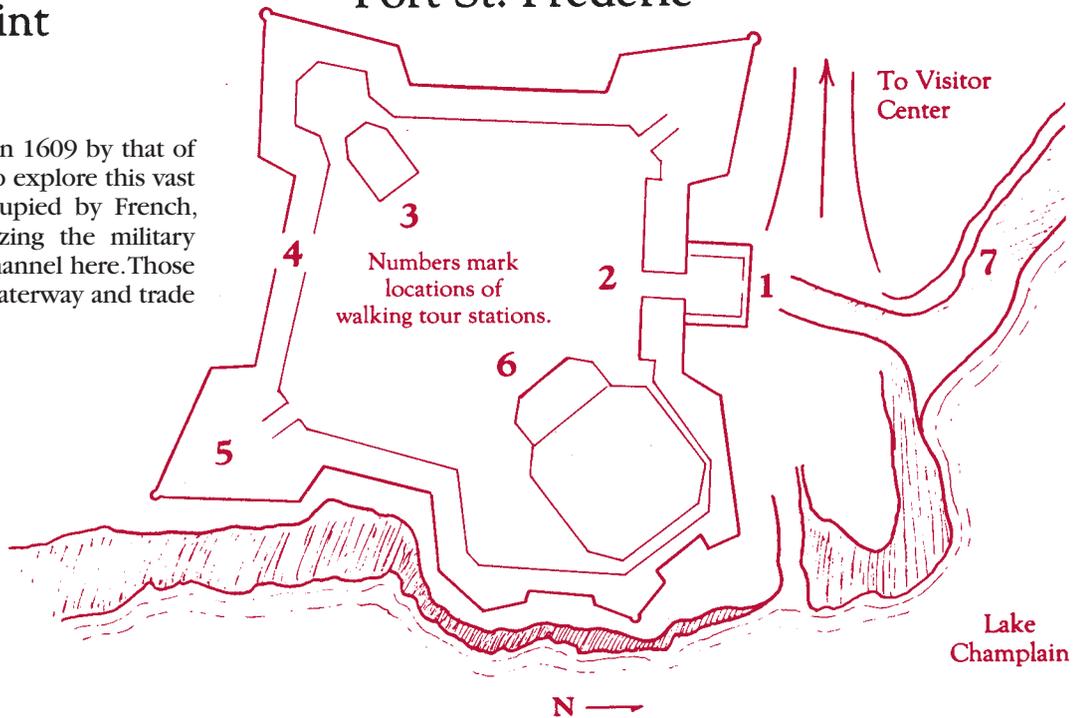


Welcome to Crown Point State Historic Site.

Your visit to this area was preceded in 1609 by that of Samuel de Champlain, the first European to explore this vast lake. Since 1731, this area has been occupied by French, British, and American troops—all recognizing the military importance of commanding the narrow channel here. Those that held the point controlled the major waterway and trade route between New York and Montreal.

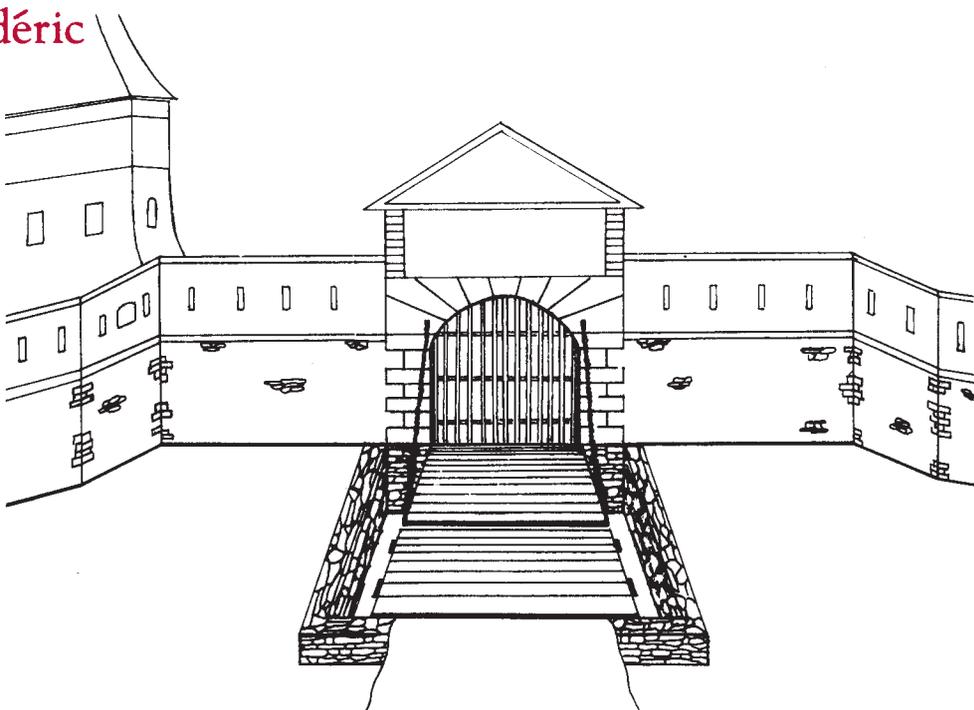
In 1734 the French built Fort St. Frédéric on Crown Point to protect their northern settlements. The fort became the center for the first European community of farmers, merchants, and soldiers in the southern Champlain Valley.

Fort St. Frédéric

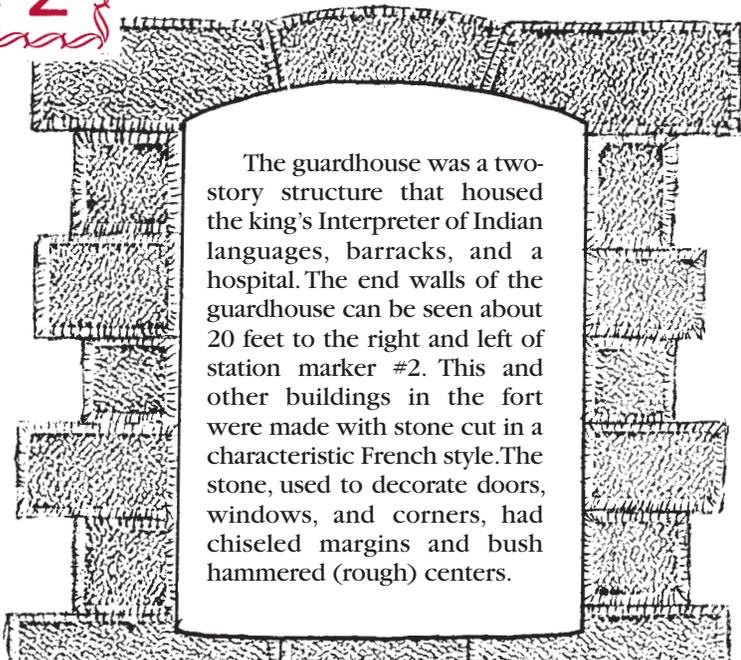


1 Entry to Fort St. Frédéric

This rectangle of stone marks the location of the dry moat or ditch that protected the entrance to Fort St. Frédéric. The ditch was about 12 feet deep. It has been filled to preserve the walls. Entry was controlled by a drawbridge that spanned the ditch and by an iron gate (portcullis) that could be dropped to seal the entrance. The guardhouse was located just inside the fort wall. The entryway passed through the guardhouse and led into the fort's main yard (parade ground).



2 French Stonework



The guardhouse was a two-story structure that housed the king's Interpreter of Indian languages, barracks, and a hospital. The end walls of the guardhouse can be seen about 20 feet to the right and left of station marker #2. This and other buildings in the fort were made with stone cut in a characteristic French style. The stone, used to decorate doors, windows, and corners, had chiseled margins and bush hammered (rough) centers.

Look below the inside wall to see the remains of four beehive ovens where bread, a staple in the diet of military men, was baked. These structures were probably enclosed in a building. The stone ovens were lined with brick. To heat an oven, a fire was first built inside. After the fire died down, the ash was raked out. Heat retained by the brick kept the oven warm for hours of baking. In a single day, 900 loaves could be baked. These ovens were built by British troops following the capture of Fort St. Frédéric in 1759. Archeological excavations conducted prior to stabilization of these remains revealed evidence of earlier French ovens beneath them. Following the British capture of Crown Point, the British used the French ovens until they collapsed and had to be replaced.



"Beehive" Ovens

3 The Parish of St. Frédéric

The stone chapel that stood here served the soldiers and the settlers from the surrounding country. Records of births, deaths, baptisms, and marriages in the parish from 1731 to 1759 have been preserved, providing historians with valuable information about life in this area in the 18th century.

Retired soldiers, their families, and a small number of civilians established a village around the fort. French soldiers usually retired at age 40 and were then granted land near the fort. Other settlements dotted both shores of the lake for several miles above and below the fort.

4 Terreplein and Bakery

You are standing on the terreplein (pronounced tear-a-plane)—the grass-covered walkway between the fort's inner and outer walls. This is where cannons were placed and where soldiers stood to fire muskets through slits in the outer wall. Originally, the outer wall was seven feet higher than it is today.

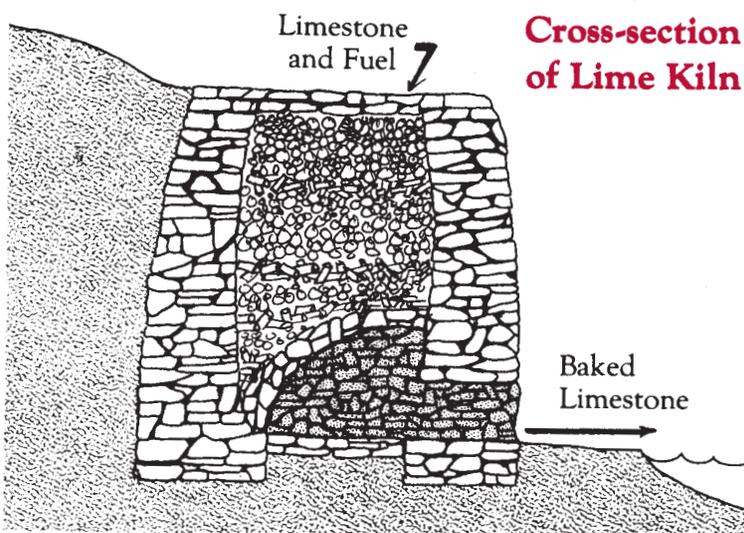
5 Bastion du Moulin

The French built a stone windmill across the bay where the Champlain Memorial now stands. This corner of the fort was called the Bastion du Moulin. "Moulin" is the French word for "mill." The mill was used for grinding grain for flour, and it was fortified with several cannons to serve as an outpost fort. The wind blades and a long arm or rudder were attached to the wooden dome. The rudder was pushed to turn the dome so the blades would catch the prevailing winds.

Both the French and the British used the bay that lies between this bastion and the Champlain Memorial as a harbor. The first sailing vessel on Lake Champlain was the French *la Vigilante*, a 45-ton sloop about 50 feet long. After 1759, the British built wharves and warehouses on the bay for transporting and storing cannons and supplies.



ovens called limekilns that were built into the banks along the shore. The round, stone-lined hole below was once a limekiln. Chunks of limestone and wood were packed into the kiln from the top. The baked lime was removed from below.



6 The Tower Redoubt

This sandy area marks the dry ditch that protected the entry to the redoute - a four-story tower that contained a bake oven, well, guard room, storerooms, armory, dungeon, and commanders quarters. The redoute's stone walls were 12 feet thick, making it the most secure structure in the fort. A drawbridge controlled passage across the dry ditch.

The French, threatened by the approach of the British army, commanded by General Amherst in 1759, blew up the citadel and the windmill before withdrawing to Canada. The rest of Fort St. Frédéric was intact when the British occupied the site that same year.

7 Lime Kilns

Fort St. Frédéric was constructed with locally quarried stone held together with mortar. Mortar was made by baking chunks of limestone, crushing it into powder, and mixing the powder with sand and water. The limestone was baked in

8

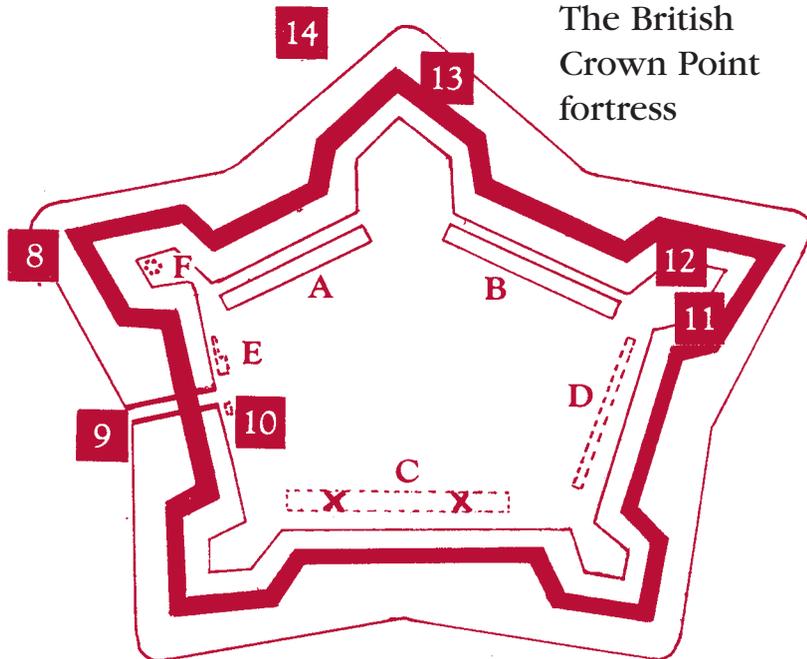
The British Occupation

The British chose this site to build their fort because it was the highest point on the tip of the peninsula. It was one of the largest forts constructed by the British in colonial North America; its walls enclosed about six acres of land. At times, more than 3,000 people were at work on its construction.

The stone wall directly ahead is the corner of the bastion where the well was located. The British built walls of squared logs that rose 27 feet above the stone foundation. A dry ditch was cut and blasted into the bedrock around the entire fort. A long section of the ditch can be seen to the left of the stone wall.

Numbers mark locations of walking tour stations.

- A. Officers' Barracks
- B. Soldiers' Barracks
- C. Unfinished Barracks
- D. Armory
- E. Guard House
- F. Well Bastion

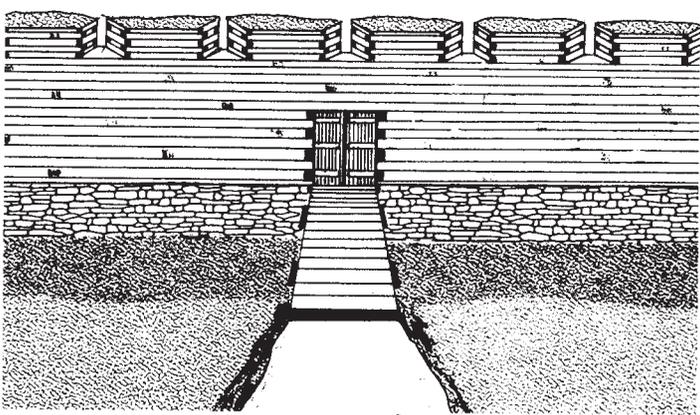


The British
Crown Point
fortress

9

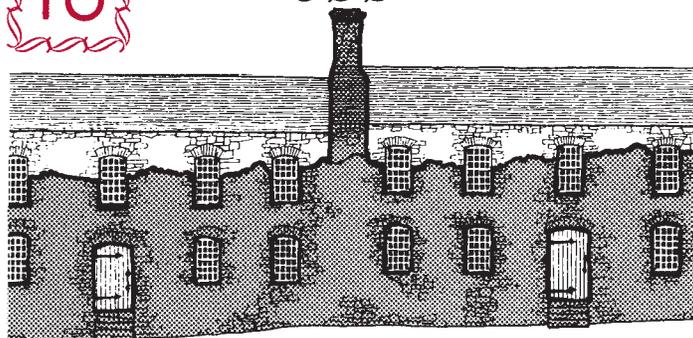
Entrance to the Fort

A wooden bridge spanned the ditch to provide access to the fort. The ditch, which was 12 feet deep, has been filled here to accommodate the road. A wooden gate sealed the passageway through the walls.



10

Living Quarters



Officers' Barracks as it stood in 1762 and as it appears today.

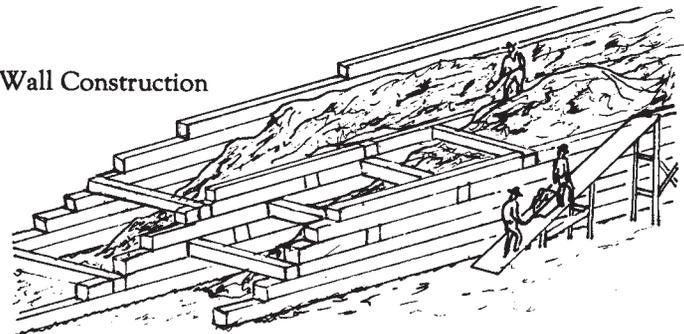
The officers' barracks, to the left of the sign, had brick fireplaces and chimneys. The stone structures, to the right of the sign, were part of an officers' barracks that was never completed; they are now covered for protection. This barracks had a brick front wall that was removed in the early 19th century, as were the chimneys in the other officers' barracks. A two-story wooden armory was located across the parade ground directly ahead.

11

Village

The commanding view this site provided of both land and water is certainly evident here. Outside the wall to the southwest (look to your right across the field) was a village bustling with activity. The village of a few dozen buildings, including homes, a tavern, an apothecary (pharmacy), a store, and a blacksmith shop, was inhabited by many retired soldiers and soldiers on active duty living outside the fort. Far across the field stands an 1876 limekiln. Beyond it is the site of Gage's Redoubt - a small fortification built in 1759.

Wall Construction

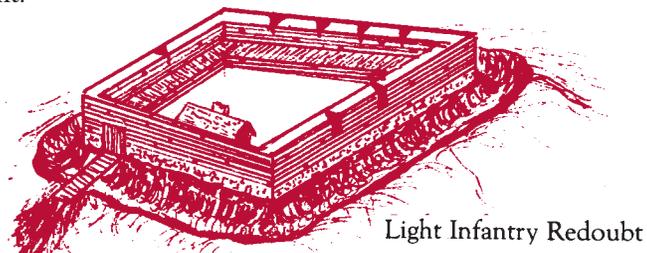


14

Redoubts

The land approaches to the fort were protected by smaller fortifications called redoubts. The Grenadier Redoubt was located where the French windmill stood. Gage's Redoubt was located southeast of the British village. The Light Infantry Redoubt is still evident across the highway from the entrance to the state historic site. The U-shaped, stone-lined ditch is the remains of this redoubt. Each redoubt was made of logs and had a barracks, approximately 10 cannons, and a force of 100 men.

Three miles beyond the redoubts were three blockhouses built across the neck of the point. These smaller outposts served as the first line of defense and controlled land access to Crown Point.



Light Infantry Redoubt

12

Walls and Bombproofs

The walls of the British fort here were constructed of three parallel walls of squared logs supported by beams running through them. The space between the walls was filled with soil. Rooms called bombproofs were located within the inner sections of wall. Today, rounded depressions in the ground mark the places where bombproofs were located.

The powder magazine (storeroom) was located in this bastion close to the soldiers' barracks. In 1773, a chimney fire started in the barracks. It spread through the log walls to the powder magazine, causing an enormous explosion that destroyed the bastion.

13

Flag Bastion

This section of dry ditch is approximately the same depth as it was in the 18th century. The log walls were originally three times the height of the earth now on top of the stonework. Timber bracing has been added temporarily to support and protect this section of the wall.

After the fire of 1773, Crown Point continued to play a prominent role in our nation's history. It was occupied by the Americans in 1775-76, then recaptured and held by the British until the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. Since 1976, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, which preserves the forts and interprets their place in history, has administered this site. The staff at the site's museum will be happy to provide additional information regarding any aspect of Crown Point State Historic Site.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

CROWN POINT

State Historic Site

Walking Tour