Excavations at Castle Hill

by

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This is volume 6 of 7 volumes
ILLUSTRATIONS
Figure 1. Map of Newfoundland showing location of Placentia (a) and St. John's (b). Scale: 50 miles.
Figure 2. Map of Avalon Peninsula showing location of Castle Hill (a) and Placentia (b). Scale: 25 miles.
Figure 3. General view of Castle Hill looking toward the southeast. Cannon is on the modern platform on the remnant of the west gun platform.
Figure 4. General view of Castle Hill looking west from the Gaillardin.
Figure 5. View of the east side of the fort looking toward the southwest. Glacis and modern footbridge are on the left and the northeast bastion during excavation is on the right.
Figure 6. French plan of 1695. CL40, 1695 plan-H4/150. Map Division, Public Archives of Canada.
(Profil horizontal de la colline, en 2d, long, près de la ligne de la plante AB, pour le 1er mois)

Schéma vertical, sur prof de 50 mètres

(longeur en prof de 50 mètres)
Figure 7. French plan of 1701. Plan du Fort Royal. Public Archives of Canada.
Plan du fort Royal

Loin deux hautes qui ont la came et après de petites.

1. plan des murs
2. colonnes
3. esquisse des fonds
4. banquet
5. porte

6. esquisse pour dessiner l'figuration
7. esquisse pour montrer sur la plateforme
8. étalons pour monter les plateformes
9. plateformes pour deux portes mortes
10. profil par technologique à k.
11. profil par technologique C.D.
12. plans pour affaires sous colonnes
Figure 8. Plan of Fort Royal enlarged from the French plan of 1709. Features shown: L-shaped barracks (a), guardroom (b), hangar (c), magazine (d), stairs (e), gun platform (f), dry-wall around the site (g), battery for two mortars (h), ramp up to gun platform (i), ramp down to magazine (j), path down to Placentia (k), and unfinished ditch in front of the redoubt (l). Scale in toises. Plan du Fort de Plaisance et des environs. H1/140-Plaisance-1709, Map Division, Public Archives of Canada.
Figure 10. English plan of 1714, showing the fort as transferred from the French. Plan of the Fort, Castle, Outbatteries, and Settlement of Placentia as it was delivered to the Forces of Her Majesty of Great Brittain in the year 1714. Map Division, Public Archives of Canada.
Figure 11. English plan of 1762. A Plan of the Fort on Castle Hill. Cl40, 1762 plan-H3/140, Map Division, Public Archives of Canada.
Figure 12. Plan of Castle Graves enlarged from the English plan of 1762. Features shown: blockhouse (a), officers' guardroom (b), main guardroom (c), magazine (d), storehouse (e), line of stone dry-wall (f), palisade (g), picket line replacing parapet (h), path to nearby gun positions (i), path down to Placentia (j). Scale in feet. A Plan of the Fort on Castle Hill. Public Archives of Canada.
Figure 14. Sketch from the log of H.M.S. *Pegasus*, 1786. A view of Placentia harbour looking northeast from Quarry Hill. Castle Hill with its blockhouse is at the extreme left. Courtesy of Provincial Archives, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's.
Figure 15. Sketch from the log of H.M.S. Pegasus, 1786. A view looking southwest from the west gun platform of the fort. Flagpole and cannon in foreground, Pointe Verde in distance. Courtesy of Provincial Archives, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's.
Figure 16. Sketch from the log of H.M.S. *Pegasus*, 1786. A view looking south toward Placentia. Dry-wall bridge, south guardhouse and the south-east demi-bastion of the fort are shown. Courtesy of Provincial Archives, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's.
Figure 17. Enlarged section of air photo showing the site prior to excavation. L.S.C. Job P/2600/65 Area "B" ICAS-65-33 R.Q. 2923 Placentia, Nfld. A 18765 (27-49) 152.54 mm. lens AASL 2400' Date 27-6-65. National Historic Sites Service.
Figure 18. Contour map of Castle Hill. Features shown: masonry walls above surface (a, b), modern footbridge (c), modern cannon platform (d), flagpole bases (e) and dry-wall rubble on surface (f). Horizontal scale in feet. Contour interval, 1.0 ft.
FIGURE 18
Figure 19. Contour map of general site area showing park boundary. National Historic Sites Service, St. John's.
FIGURE 19.
Figure 20. Geohm Resistivity Meter Survey of the "Castle", Castle Hill, Nfld.  
A., B Medians of well defined high resistivity area.  C., relatively weak 
continuation of area A.  D., E., Medians of moderately well defined high resistivity areas.  
F. Median of poorly defined high resistivity area.  
(The wall along E1050, just above ground level, 
produced an anomaly of equally poor definition.)  
The survey was made by the four-probe method on 
lines running north at 2.0 ft. intervals.  Probe 
spacing was 2.0 ft. and probe penetration was 0.5 ft. 
or less.  Scale 1.0 in. equals 10.0 ft.
Figure 21. Plan of the excavations showing the location of operations, sub-operations and lots. sub-operation and lot numbers are shown.
Figure 22. Site plan showing architectural features.
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KEY to SYMBOLS

- Surface: Mortar
- Topsoil: Loose Mortar
- Subsoil: Bedrock
- Sand: Brick
- Clay: Stone
- Gravel: Cut Stone

Ops. 2A2 & 2A1
Magazine & Guardroom
Figure 24. Operation 1. View to the north showing the doorway in the north end of operation 1.
Figure 25. Operation 1. View toward north, looking down on the threshold in the operation 1 doorway. Cut door stones in the upper right.
Figure 26. Operation 2 and sub-operation 6B. View toward the north with operation 2 in the background. Sub-operation 6B in foreground showing wall between 6B and operation 1 on the left, and eroded core of the east curtain wall(6C) on the right.
Figure 27. Sub-operation 6B. a. Elevation of wall at north end of sub-operation 6B. b. Floor plan of north end of sub-operation 6B showing paving stone in floor and butted wall joints. Scale in ft.
Figure 28. Operation 7. View toward the south showing the English hearth platform in the south end of the guardroom. West wall of room on right, remnant of east curtain wall on extreme left. Dirt pile in background. Scale in ft.
Figure 29. Operation 7. Looking south at profile showing English hearth platform and floor stratigraphy. Scale in ft.
Op. 2A7A
South Profile

KEY to SYMBOLS

- Surface
- Mortar
- Topsoil
- Loose Mortar
- Subsoil
- Bedrock
- Sand
- Brick
- Clay
- Stone
- Gravel
- Cut Stone

West wall

Op 10G
Hearth

English Floor Level

Hearth

Wooden Beam

Intermediate Floor

French Floor

1' 0 1'
Figure 30. Operation 7. View toward the south showing French fireplace as found beneath English hearth. (Morton 1970: Fig. 11).
Figure 31. Operation 2. Cross-section of the magazine showing fill stratigraphy and floor deposits. Layers identified on drawing. Scale in feet.
Op. 2A2A
Magazine

KEY to SYMBOLS

Surface
Topsoil
Subsoil
Sand
Clay
Gravel
Mortar
Loose Mortar
Bedrock
Brick
Stone
Cut Stone

a
b
C
d
e
f

Fill
Fallen Arch
English Level
French Level
French Floor
Sub-floor Fill

0 2' 4'
Figure 32. Operation 2. View toward the southwest showing the doorway, stairs and southwest corner of the magazine. Doorway is in the centre of the south wall.
Figure 33. Operation 2. View toward the north, showing a section of the north interior wall of the magazine. Scale in ft.
Figure 34. Operation 2. View toward the southwest showing the remnant of the arch in the southwest corner of the magazine. Scale in ft.
Figure 35. Operation 2. View toward the east showing a portion of the east wall of the magazine. Remnant of the arch may be seen above the vertical wall. Scale in ft.
Figure 36. Operation 2. Floor plan of sub-operation 2C showing magazine stairway and door.
Features shown: operation 1 threshold (a), cut stones in doorway (b), threshold at top of stairs inside magazine (c), grey clay and wood stains (d), bottom stair tread (e), line of magazine wall (f), eyebolts on floor level (g), black stained sandy deposit (h), loose tan mortar (i). Scale in ft.
Figure 37a. Operation 10. View looking toward the southeast at sub-operation 10G. Rotted floor sleeper beam in centre near scale, hearth platform adjacent to west wall of operation 7 in background.
Figure 37b. View toward the northeast looking down in sub-operations 10C and D. Twin French hearth bases in lower right corner. English blockhouse foundation superimposed on French barracks wall in centre and blockhouse hearth platform in upper left centre.
Figure 38. Operation 10. Plan of operation 10 area showing various architectural features. Features shown: French brick fireplace (a), French barracks wall (b), French hearth base (c,d), English blockhouse foundation (e), French barracks wall adjacent to and beneath blockhouse foundation (f), English blockhouse hearth base (g), French barracks wall remnant (h), English storehouse foundation remnant (i), northeast revetment wall (j), southeast revetment wall (k), wooden floor beam (l), English hearth platform (m,n), masonry wall between stair area up to gun platform (on left side of wall) and operation 1 ramp down to magazine (on right side of wall) (o), wall between operation 1 and sub-operation 6B (p), mortar stain and rubble on bedrock in entrance area, probably footer for English stair into guardroom (q), pavement in entrance, operation 8, partly obscured by modern footbridge sleepers (r), English stair in 9E (s), rubble revetment (?) in 9E (t), modern monument in north revetment wall (u), unexcavated baulk, line of cross-section of site (v), west revetment wall (w), south revetment wall (x), east curtain wall, part of operation 7 (y).

Scale in ft.
Figure 39. Cross-section of the site. Profile, looking east, across centre of site, comprised of profiles in sub-operations 9B, 10D and 9C. Illustrates fill stratigraphy in interior of redoubt and relationship of curtain walls to bedrock knob core of the fort. Stratigraphic elements indicated on drawing. Scale in ft.
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Figure 41. Sub-operation 10B. Looking south at stratigraphic profile at east end of the sub-operation. Features shown: elevation of the south revetment wall (a), line of the revetment corner (b), southeast revetment wall section (c), hollow space in rampart fill (d), refuse deposit (e), and dark stained midden deposit in rampart fill (f). Scale in ft.
Figure 42. Sub-operations 10B and 10G. View toward the east showing wall elevation of operation 7 (wall footer masked by refuse deposits). English hearth platform above the French refuse deposit is in operation 10G and intrusive English stairs in operation 10B also continue into 9E. Scale in ft.
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Figure 46. Sub-operation 10F. Elevation showing remnant of west wall of English storehouse, looking toward east. Scale in ft.
Figure 47. Sub-operation 3A. Elevation of north curtain wall from re-entrant to salient angle. Scale in ft.
Figure 48. Sub-operation 3B. Elevation of the west flank of the northeast bastion. Features shown: Shoulder angle (a), line of re-entrant angle (b), stone in north curtain wall at re-entrant angle, in situ (c). Scale in ft.
Figure 49. Sub-operation 30. Elevation of north face of the northeast bastion from shoulder angle to salient. Shoulder angle at right, salient angle at left, partly collapsed and slightly out of original position. Scale in ft.
1861
Figure 50. Sub-operation 4A. Elevation of the west curtain wall at the salient angle of the southwest demi-bastion, showing wall footer. Scale in ft.
Op. 4A
West Curtain Wall

KEY to SYMBOLS
- Surface
- Topsoil
- Subsoil
- Sand
- Clay
- Gravel
- Mortar
- Loose Mortar
- Bedrock
- Brick
- Stone
- Cut Stone
Figure 51. Sub-operation 4A. View toward the north showing the profile of stratigraphic deposits along the west curtain wall at the salient angle. Scale in ft.
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Figure 53. Sub-operation 5B. Elevation of the east flank of the southwest demi-bastion.
Features shown: line of the south curtain wall at the re-entrant angle (a), shoulder angle (b). Scale in ft.
Figure 54. Sub-operation 5C. Profile of talus rubble along the south curtain wall; looking west, near the salient angle. Features shown: south curtain wall in profile (a), 5C1 (b), 5C2 (c), 5C4 (d), 5C6 (e), 5C7 (f), operation 9A (g). Scale in ft.
Figure 55. Sub-operation 5C. Elevation of the south curtain wall from the re-entrant to the salient angle. Scale in ft.
Figure 56. Sub-operation 6A. Elevation of the east face of the southeast demi-bastion. Features shown: bedrock core with face stones missing (a), eroded core of wall (b), approximate shoulder angle line (c), salient angle and line of the south curtain wall (d). Scale in ft.
Figure 57. Sub-operation 6E. Elevation of the east face of the northeast bastion. Features shown: eroded wall core (a), limestone block in wall (unique case) (b), collapsed salient angle slightly out of original position (c). Scale in ft.
Figure 58. Sub-operation 6E. East profile and elevation of the dry-wall counterscarp. Scale in ft.
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East-west cross-section showing the east curtain wall, ditch fill stratigraphy (6U) and the glacis (11). Stratigraphic elements identified on drawing. Scale in ft.
Figure 60. Sub-operation 6D. Profile showing the stratigraphic sequence of strata block A, north profile after excavation (e.g., the face of strata block B). Features shown: 2A6D5 (a), 2A6D6 (b), 2A6D7 (c), 2A6D8 (d), 2A6D9 (e). Scale in ft.
Figure 61. Sub-operation 9E. West profile of sub-operation 9E showing rampart fill stratigraphy. 2A9E2 (a), 2A9E11 (b), 2A9E15 (c); three major layers of midden debris in the fill. Scale in ft.
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Figure 64. Sub-operation 9E. View to the south showing the elevation of the interior side of the south curtain wall at the interior corner of the southeast demi-bastion. Line of the east face wall is on the left; unexcavated rampart fill on the right. Scale in ft.
Figure 65. Sub-operation 9E. Plan showing the English stairs in sub-operation 9E. Features shown: mortar path, lowest step (a), stones in situ, 9E5 step (b), stones in situ 9E6 step (c), rock rubble and mortar traces, possible revetment (d), interior of operation 7 (e), masonry wall of operation 7(f). Scale in ft.
Figure 66. Sub-operation 9D. Looking south at the profile of the trench showing stratified deposits in the fill of the west gun platform. Scale in ft.
Op. 2A9D
5 Profile, West Gun Platform

KEY to SYMBOLS

- ↑ Surface
- ↓ Topsail
- → Subsoil
- + Sand
- × Clay
- ♦ Brick
- ♧ Cut Stone

Profile, West Interior Wall

Refuse

Excavation Limits
Figure 67. Sub-operation 9F, 9G. Looking toward the west at profile of rampart fill deposits. Features shown: the interior corner of the west curtain wall at the re-entrant angle of the southwest demi-bastion (a), red brown fill (b), angular rubble (c), dark grey rubble (d), dark purple clay with little rubble (e), black clay and refuse (f), clay (g), red brown clay over bedrock (h). Scale in ft.
Figure 68. Sub-operation F and 9G. Looking east at an elevation of the exterior side of the west interior revetment wall and at rampart fill of the north gun platform shown in section on the left. Scale in ft.
Figure 69. Sub-operation 9H. East profile showing stratigraphic deposits in rampart fill. Features shown: north curtain wall in cross-section (a), turf layer (b), 9H2 clay (c), 9H7 (d), 9H8 (e), 9H9 (f), 9H10 (g), 9H11 (h), 9H12 (i), 9H13 (j), 9H14 (k). Scale in ft.
Figure 70. Sub-operation 9J. West trench profile showing stratified deposits in the north rampart fill. Features shown: corner of north interior revetment wall (a), 9J1 (b), 9J2 (c), 9J5 (d), 9J3 (e), 9J6 (f), 9J4 (g), inside line of the north curtain wall (h). Scale in ft.
Figure 71. Operation 12. South trench wall profile showing stratigraphy. Features shown: area of stone wall visible on the surface (a-a), refuse layer beneath wall (b). Scale in ft.
FIGURE 71
Figure 72. Operation 13. West trench profile.
Scale in ft.
Figure 73. Plan of excavations showing features identified as French period structures. Scale in ft.
Figure 74. Plan of the excavations showing features identified as English period structures. Scale in ft.