

## 5 FRONT III

These rooms, called casemates, are protected by a vaulted and multi-arched roof structure that supports the massive weight of earth and cannon. The long walls are called Fronts and the overextending corners are called Bastions. The casemates of Front III were used by the fort's officers and by imprisoned Confederate officers from the 1860s to the 1890s, and typically had a parlor, bedrooms and kitchen. By 1900, officers had moved to new, healthier quarters outside the fort by the water, and the casemates were used for administration.

## 6 BASTION C

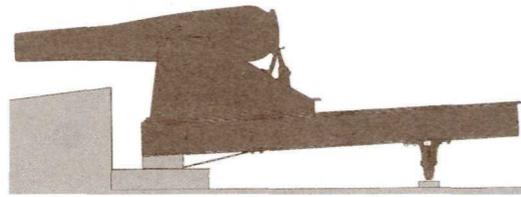
Enter the Bakery and tour through the bastion. Serving as the fort's bakery from the 1860s to c.1900, this room and others in Bastion C were used throughout the years for food storage, preparation, and serving. By WWI and II, new mess halls, kitchens, and barracks were built outside the fort. *Use the staircase opposite the bakery door to reach #7.*

## 7 OBSERVATION TOWER

Built c.1900, this tower first served to track incoming naval targets for gun Battery Stevenson located on Front I and described in Stop #10. During WWII, the tower coordinated the movement of friendly ships arriving or departing in the harbor through the explosive underwater minefields of The Narrows and Nantasket Roads channels. Various signaling flags and devices were displayed on the wooden pole nearby.

## 8 FRONT II TERREPLEIN

The terreplein (roof level of the fort) supported the main line of cannon. Both 32 pound (shot weight) rifles and 10-inch (ball diameter) Rodman smooth bore (barrel interior) cannons were stationed here. Conversion of the Rodmans to rifle bore began in the 1880s. A sleeve with spiral grooving was inserted in the barrel causing the projectile to spin, effecting an increase in distance and accuracy. The stone traverse arches in the rear of each platform allowed the carriage to swing on its wheels to track enemy ships.



Rodman cannon

## 9 BATTERY PLUNKETT

Battery Plunkett covered underwater mine fields during the Spanish American War and was named for the Civil War veteran, Sergeant Thomas Plunkett, 21st Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Militia. The two guns each fired 4-inch diameter, 33-lb. projectiles to a distance over 1½ miles. Designed for action against lightly armored, fast moving boats, they were called rapid-fire rifles because they could be loaded rapidly by hand. They were two of only four of this type of gun ever made.

## 10 BATTERY STEVENSON

Completed by the end of 1902, Battery Stevenson was named for Civil War veteran Brigadier General Thomas G. Stevenson, first colonel of the 24th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. These two massive steel reinforced emplacements protected the largest and most powerful guns ever placed at Fort Warren. The two 12-inch rifles on disappearing carriages each fired a 1076-lb. shot to a distance of 8 miles. The retracting carriage design protected both rifle and crew behind the concrete wall. *(Use staircase at far end of curved steps for #11.)*

## 11 FRONT I CASEMATES

Through the Civil War, these casemates were divided in half; two cannons in the outer room and the inner room used as living quarters for 24 to 30 soldiers. During this period, 8-inch Columbiad and 100-lb. Parrot Guns protected the shipping channel; the stone traverse arches are still visible in the floors. When Battery Stevenson was installed, these casemates saw new uses as magazines (storage for shot and powder),

machine shops, a plotting room, and a sub-power station.

## 12 BASTION A

Bastion A once had the same double room layout as Front I of the previous stop. Originally an open courtyard like Bastion D across the parade ground, Bastion A was covered over in the 1870s to provide for new gun emplacements on the terreplein. This construction created new rooms for soldiers to train indoors and provided the fort with a bomb-proof storage magazine. By the 1940s, Bastion A was a recreation hall, cinema and storage space.

## 13 POWDER MAGAZINE

The largest powder magazine at Fort Warren is a gothic style structure that was completed in 1863 and meant for limited access storage. Smaller service magazines were located around the fort, nearer the guns. The "climate" controlling wood lining that once covered the walls and ceiling has been removed.

## 14 PARADE GROUND

This large field provided space for support buildings and tents during wartime expansion. Infantry training, marching exercises and inspections were carried out here. At other times, both on- and off-duty recreational activities such as races, calisthenics, and baseball games were scheduled. From here you can also see the large windows on the fort's interior walls that increased the airflow and light of the rooms as compared to the windowed musket loopholes on the exterior.

## 15 OLD HOSPITAL

Bastion D housed the fort's hospital from the Civil War until 1906. *(Enter through the middle door at the rear of the bastion.)* This large room served as the main ward. Examinations and operations were conducted in the adjacent room. When replaced by a new hospital outside the fort, the old ward area became the fort's library. By the 1940s, a Post Exchange here provided supplies, personal items, and

souvenirs for the garrisoned soldiers. *(Exit the rooms to the left through the doorway at the far end. Then turn right and duck your head under the low granite postern gate to exit the fort.)*

We hope you have enjoyed this tour of Fort Warren, and that you'll explore some of the other islands in the park as well. Please visit the Information Booth if you have questions.



Civil War era soldiers

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RAINFORD ISLAND  
SAND ISLAND  
SHEEP ISLAND  
SLATT ISLAND  
SPECTACLE ISLAND  
THOMPSON ISLAND  
WORLD'S END

# Georges Island

A SELF-GUIDED TOUR  
OF FORT WARREN



**WELCOME TO GEORGES ISLAND . . .** Located seven miles from downtown Boston, this 39-acre island is home to Fort Warren, a national historic landmark.

Georges Island provided a strategic location for defending Boston's seaport. The French were the first to fortify the island, in support of the American Revolution, with cannons placed upon the hill overlooking the harbor entrance. Construction of the fort began in 1833. It was named for Dr. Joseph Warren, Major-General of the Massachusetts Militia, who died at the battle of Bunker Hill. In 1858, the fort was first used as a training camp and by 1862 as a Civil War prison for Confederate soldiers, sailors and political leaders. Modifications were made to the fort for subsequent uses during the Spanish-American War and World Wars I and II. After its final decommission in 1951 the island was purchased by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and opened to the public in 1961. It is now part of the Boston Harbor Islands national park area.

During the construction of the fort, the island's original drumlin landform changed drastically. Although no native plants survive, evergreen, fruit and shade trees have been planted over the years and red sumac and wildflowers have spread naturally. Red-winged blackbirds and swallows inhabit the island while owls, hawks, and rare falcons frequent as well.

Georges Island offers a large dock, information center, rest rooms and snack bar. Guided tours of the fort are available. Please note that alcohol, pets, and food within Fort Warren are prohibited; please also carry off the island what you carry on. This self-guided tour of Fort Warren takes approximately 50 minutes to complete.

### 1 WHARF AREA

The wharf was designed to receive the massive stone blocks used in the fort's construction. A tool house, scales, and line (cordage) house are a few of the original structures. Inset on the wharf's north side are stone steps for landing passengers from small boats. The brick building facing the pier dates from 1906 and served in maintaining the explosive underwater mines placed in the harbor entrance channels for defense.

### 2 GUARDHOUSE

Fort security was managed from the Guardhouse. The first station was built into a coverface, which is the term used to identify a high and long mound of earth built to provide defensive cover for the fort structure. Enter the rooms for viewing and read interpretive plaques about the design and construction of Fort Warren.



Additional sentry posts were located strategically throughout the fort.

### 3 OUTER DEFENSES

The earthen coverface overlooks Gallops and Lovells Islands and provides defensive cover by concealing Fronts II and III of the fort's granite walls. The coverface does not extend to Front I facing the main channel, Nantasket Roads, or to cover the Fronts facing the inner harbor. Attacking cannon fire from a ship could not be consistent or powerful enough to damage the eight foot thick fort walls. Cannons placed on the coverface created a second and important lower firing angle in addition to the higher firing angle of the main gun battery on the fort remparts. The area between the coverface and the fort is the ditch that was defended by crossfire from the corners of the fort or bastions.

### 4 SALLYPORT

The entrance into the fort is called the sallyport and was once served by a drawbridge. Attacking soldiers who survived to reach this point would be faced with a sloped floor, interior musket loopholes and a portcullis gate cutting off retreat. The protruding iron rods fastening the inner oak doors deter attempts at breaking through with an axe.

