

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

historic name: Smith's Castle (Amendment)

other name/site number: Cocumscussoc Site (RI-375)

## 2. Location

street & number: 55 Richard Smith Drive

not for publication: X

city/town: North Kingstown vicinity: N/A

state: RI county: Washington code: 009 zip code: 02852

## 3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: site

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of North Kingstown, R.I.  
(partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties) 1636-present

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria.

     See continuation sheet.

Frederick C. Williams

Signature of certifying official

24 March 1992  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria.

     See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

<u>    </u> entered in the National Register	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> <u>    </u> See continuation sheet.		
<u>    </u> determined eligible for the National Register	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> <u>    </u> See continuation sheet.		
<u>    </u> determined not eligible for the National Register	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> removed from the National Register	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u> other (explain): <u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic: COMMERCE/TRADE  
AGRICULTURE

Sub: trading (archeology)

Current: RECREATION AND CULTURE

Sub: museum

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification:

N/A

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation \_\_\_\_\_ roof \_\_\_\_\_  
walls \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X See continuation sheet.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Statewide

Applicable National Register Criteria: D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance: ARCHEOLOGY  
HISTORIC--NON-ABORIGINAL

Period(s) of Significance: 1637-late 19th c

Significant Dates: 1637

Significant Person(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder: \_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property: \*1.8 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	<u>19</u>	<u>295090</u>	<u>4606190</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:  See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification:  See continuation sheet.

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/Title: Patricia A. Rubertone and Robert K. Fitts  
Organization: Brown University - Dept. of Anthropology Date: 7/91  
Street & Number: Box 1921 Telephone: 4001-1863-7053  
City or Town: Providence State: R.I. ZIP: 02912

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 5

### Description

Smith's Castle is a privately owned historic property, located off Post Road in North Kingstown, Washington County, Rhode Island (see USGS sheet). The Cocumscussoc Association, which maintains the property as a museum, owns approximately 22 acres including Rabbit Island. In addition to Smith's Castle, the acreage owned by the Cocumscussoc Association also contains the Cocumscussoc archaeological site (RI 375) (Photo. 1). Both historic resources--Smith's Castle and the Cocumscussoc archaeological site--are located on lot 3, plat 139 as referenced in the land evidence records of the Town of North Kingstown.

### Historical Background

Little is known about the Native American occupation of Smith's Castle, but beginning with its English occupation in the late-1630s, information becomes abundant. Around 1637 Roger Williams (b. ca.1603, d. 1683), Richard Smith, Sr. (b. 1596, d. 1662), and John Wilcox established separate trading posts at Cocumscussoc to trade with the Narragansett Indians. The exact locations of these posts are unknown; however documentary evidence suggests that Williams' and Smith's trading posts are wholly, or partly, situated on the Smith's Castle property (Rubertone and Fitts 1990). By 1651 Smith had purchased both Williams's and Wilcox's posts and expanded his land holdings by purchasing large tracts from the Narragansetts. Richard Smith Sr. died in 1662 whereupon his son Richard Junior inherited the property and further developed it. By 1675, the property contained a block house, known as "the castle," and a dock; post and rail fences enclosed an unknown portion of the property. (Rubertone and Fitts 1990:20).

During King Phillip's war, Smith's Castle became an important strategic site given its proximity to the principal Narragansett villages. Smith relayed information concerning the Narragansett's military preparedness to the colonial authorities until the neighboring Indians decided to join the conflict. At that point, Smith's Castle became a military outpost from which the New England colonies launched the campaign against the Narragansetts. After the Great Swamp Fight, the colonial troops returned to Smith's Castle to rest and treat their wounded. Forty soldiers died during their stay, and are buried by the large rocks east of the present house where a monument marks their grave. In 1676, soon after the colonial troops left, the Narragansetts are said to have burned "the castle".

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 6

In 1677, or 1678, Smith returned to the site and rebuilt his house. The core of which survives in the standing structure referred to as Smith's Castle. By the time of Smith's death in 1692, the homestead was being transformed from a trading post into an agricultural plantation. This transition was completed by Smith's nephew Lodowick Updike (b. 1646; d. 1736) and was continued by the subsequent owners, Daniel Updike (b. 1693/4; d. 1757) and Lodowick Updike (b. 1725; d. 1804). During this time, the Updike plantation used slave labor to raise a variety of crops and cattle for export. Around 1740, Daniel made extensive alterations to the castle transforming its late seventeenth-century plan into its present Georgian pattern (Woodward 1971:77).

After the American Revolution, many of Rhode Island's slaves were emancipated and the state's slave plantations declined. The Updike plantation was no exception. Lodowick Updike freed most of his slaves in the 1770s and 1780s. When Wilkins Updike (b. 1784; d. 1867) inherited it in 1804, Smith's Castle was no longer a slave-holding plantation.

Wilkins Updike sold Smith's Castle in 1812 to Benjamin Congdon, and for the next one hundred and thirty-seven years, the site was used as a dairy farm. In the early twentieth century, Alice Fox (b. 1857; d. 1933) transformed the site into a modern dairy farm. This transformation involved a large amount of construction that consequently destroyed archaeological deposits, particularly to the north of Smith's Castle. Foundations of the dairy farm structures exist just to the east of the Smith's Castle property.

In 1949, the Cocumscussoc Association acquired 22 acres of the original Smith's Castle property including Rabbit Island. Over the years, the Association, which maintains the property as a historic site open to the public, has carried out a program of architectural restoration and has altered the surrounding landscape significantly.

### Architectural Resources

Smith's Castle today is a wooden two and one half story structure that is set on a slight rise above an inlet to Wickford Harbor known as Mill Cove (Photo. 2). The house was placed on the National Register in 1971. It was constructed in 1678 using materials which are believed to have been salvaged from the block house that was burned in 1676. The 1678 structure was probably a one-and-one half story house with a three room plan. It contained a room on both sides of a central chimney, and probably a rear kitchen lean-to. The house was enlarged and elaborated by the Updike

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 7

family in the 1740s. Further enlargement took place in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, before it was restored by Norman Isham and later John Hutchins Cady in the mid-twentieth century.

Daniel Updike apparently enlarged the house to a full five-room, two-story plan (adding the rear corner rooms and possibly extending from this new rectangle a small, newer, rear ell). He was responsible for rebuilding the chimney, adding the staircase and remodelling the existing principal rooms with panelling, and casing the beams. The principal remains of the salvaged structural parts of the pre-1676 building and of the original interior appearance of its immediate successor are contained within the southern end of the present (eighteenth-century) house.

The house is now a gable-roofed, two-and-one-half-story dwelling of farmhouse type set upon a stone basement; it has a strong timber frame, and its exterior walls are clapboarded (probably over inner siding of vertical boards). There is a wide moulded wooden water-table projecting prominently over the foundation. The entrance front, of five widely spaced bays, faces east. The house is deep from front to back, causing the end gables to be rather spreading. Window openings are spaced in four bays on the south and are irregularly spaced on the north and west. Updike's enlarged, massive, central brick chimney remains. Exterior trim is that of the eighteenth century in its most simple form. Windows set in frames projecting well out from the clapboard facing are capped by the simplest of mouldings except under the prominent entablature of architrave and cornice, which breaks forward over each east and west second-floor window frame. Windows doubtless had sashes with more and smaller panes than those (six-over-six) now in place. The present front entrance is of modest federal type (a typical later fashionable "improvement"); it has a three-part arrangement of door and sidelights contained between slim, panelled pilasters; above runs a horizontal wooden strip with a false fanlight, and this is contained between stubby unpanelled pilasters supported on the attenuated ones below. Running across all are architrave, frieze and a decisive cornice. Projecting from the north end of the house's west front is a small one-story gabled ell with a still smaller and later gabled ell tailed onto it. Also on the west front is a one-story nineteenth-century porch.

The first floor of the house contains a shallow entrance hall in front of the chimney, its shallowness caused by the stair to the second floor, which rises in three right-angled runs against the big chimney. (Beneath the second run of this stair is a door opening on stone steps to the basement.) Stair trim is one of the few elaborate features of the interior and is of expected mid-eighteenth-century type. There are rounded newel and angle posts, moulded at top and bottom and carrying square cushion

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 8

caps. The handrail is supported by three simply-turned baluster at each step. At the end of each tread is a moulding, and below it a flat, scrolled, sawn applique. The underside of the third run is panelled, the paired panels having arches, slightly indented from the outer corners of the panels, forming their tops. There are pendants of early type at the bottoms of the stair's angle posts.

Left of the entry is a large room, with fireplace, extending half-way to the rear of the house. Walls here are of matched and moulded sheathing, unpainted (though perhaps only one sheathing-board is original and the rest were made to match it during restoration); the crossed summer-beams show chamfering and lamb's-tongues. This room now displays its treatment as of the first rebuilding, for after much study by the late Norman M. Isham and the late John Hutchins Cady, Providence architects and architectural historians; later panelling, casing-in of beams etc. were removed in 1951-1956 so as to show and emphasize one portion of this house in its original appearance of structure and trim. To the rear, or west, of this room are a small and customary south-west corner chamber (now a lavatory) and a passage to the rear door.

North of this passage and taking up most of the rear of the house is the kitchen or "keeping room," thought to have been a lean-to in the seventeenth century. The deep hearth, about eight feet in width and with two beehive ovens at its rear, was made--with some rebuilding--its present size during the 1951-1956 restorations supervised by Cady. Beyond the north wall of this kitchen is a narrow stair running to second floor and garret; and beyond this is now a small modern kitchen from which the presently standing and much later ell (custodian's quarters) is entered. The north-east room, part of the seventeenth-century house, is now treated as a dining room. Here, the 1740 casings and overlay were not removed in the restoration of the 1950s. This room has raised, or bolection, panelling to dado height with plaster above on three sides; the fireplace (south) wall is completely panelled (1740s), with short stretches of bolection moulding between upper and lower panels, at dado or chair-rail height. Doors have moulded architraves.

The second floor plan is a duplicate of that below, except that there is no passage to a rear exit. On this floor the south-west chamber is panelled in a manner like that of the dining room, and corner posts were generally encased on this floor. However, one gunstock-shaped corner post in the south-west room has been partially uncovered to reveal a portion of the building's most ancient construction. In the undivided garret space, each rafter has a vertical brace (old, but perhaps not as old as the main roof structure itself) at a point about one-third of its run up from eave



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 9

to ridge; these props rest upon long horizontal timbers running the length of the garret's floor, and they may have become a necessity due to the aforementioned wide spread of the gables.

Over a long period of residential occupation the house did not suffer greatly from alterations (though at some time the gables were truncated or hipped, but have since been restored to original form). After acquiring the property in 1948, the Cocumscussoc Association soon began a program of repair and restoration under well chosen guidance. Appropriate paint colors have been used outside. A fenced eighteenth-century garden has been created at one end of an arbor that runs the length of the house's east front.

### Archaeological Resources

The Cocumscussoc archaeological site contains a wealth of information on the property's seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century occupations. The extensive landscaping that occurred from the late-eighteenth through the twentieth centuries has disturbed the majority of the area north of Smith's Castle; however, evidence of seventeenth or early eighteenth-century structures and associated deposits has survived in the yard area to its south. (Map 1) Likewise, deposits from subsequent phases of the site's occupation are contained in this area. These deposits may provide valuable information concerning the seventeenth-century trading post and block house, and the eighteenth-century plantation at Smith's Castle.

The Cocumscussoc archaeological site is situated in the homelot of Smith's Castle. It is bounded to the north by Roger Williams Drive, to the south by Mill Cove, to the west by Cocumscussoc Brook and to the east by the line separating the Cocumscussoc Association's property from the adjacent lot. (see Map 1) Today, the majority of this area is mowed grass; however, on both the eastern and western edges, belts of secondary regrowth are present. A rectangular depression (25x45 ft.) is demarcated by an earthen berm to the east, south and west. The steep drop of about one and a half feet to the south of the depression is the most striking feature of the landscape. This depression contains the most promising archaeological evidence at the Smith's Castle site.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 10

### Archaeological Investigations

There have been three separate archaeological projects conducted at Smith's Castle. The University of Rhode Island, under the direction of John Senulis, excavate a total of 31 units during 1972 and 1973. The excavation units were not aligned to a site grid, and decisions regarding where to excavated were made solely on the basis of judgement, rather than on any systematic or probabilistic sampling design. No structural remains nor significant archaeological deposits were identified in the yard area as a result of these investigations. Inconsistent and undetailed reporting made the fieldnotes practically unusable in preparing this nomination.

Excavations by Brown University, under the direction of Dr. Patricia Rubertone, have been on-going since 1989. Throughout the project three complementary field strategies were employed: (1) transects of shovel test pits (STPs) at twenty foot intervals were used to identify the site's stratigraphy and sensitive areas, (2) test units measuring 2x2 ft. were excavated where initial explorations indicated that a larger sounding was necessary to trace the stratigraphy or uncover possible features, (3) larger 3x2 ft. or 5x5 ft. (Figure 4) units were excavated where testing suggested the presence of a possible feature. During the 1989 and 1990 field seasons a total of 88 STPs, 41 2x2 ft. units, 1 3x2 ft. unit, and 3 5x5 ft. units were excavated (Map 2). Most of the data utilized in this section was provided by the Brown University project.

In 1990, New England Archaeological Resources, Inc. excavated limited areas north of the Smith-Updike House to determine feasible locations for a septic system for the Annex and a parking area. This project excavated a total of 66 STPs at 20 ft. intervals along transects laid out by the Brown University project. This study was valuable in identifying the extent of disturbance caused by the dairy farm and early museum periods of the site's occupation.

### Structure and Formation of the Archaeological Site

The stratigraphy of the area surrounding Smith's Castle is complex and varies greatly. Over the entire area, just underneath the sod, is a layer of brown loam (Munsell 2.5 Y 3/2). The depth of this level varies, but generally, it extends to approximately 1.5 ft. below the surface. Diagnostic ceramics suggest that this layer dates to the late eighteenth century (ca. 1778 to 1813). This suggests that it may be associated with landscape alterations conducted by Lodowick Updike. The property had a garden directly to the south of the house during the time of his ownership

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 11

(Map 3). At the present time, there is a replica of an eighteenth-century colonial garden situated to the west of Smith's Castle that was put in during the early 1950s.

To the east of this area between grid lines, E490 to E500 the brown loam stratum lies directly on top of a natural granite ledge. This evidence suggests that during the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries, the bedrock probably was exposed on this part of the landscape. Farther east, along the E525 grid line, a stratum of olive-brown silty-loam (Munsell 2.5 Y 4/4) separates the underlying bedrock from the brown loam. This stratum varies between a half foot and a foot in depth.

East of E525 the site's stratigraphy typically follows one of two sequences. Deviations from these patterns (discussed below) often denote the presence of a feature. South of N540 the stratigraphy usually consists of the sod level, followed by one to two feet of rich, dark-brown loam (Munsell 2.5 Y 3/2), and a deep stratum of dense, grey-green marine clay (Munsell 5 Y 3/2). The loam and the top of the clay stratum contain artifacts dating from prehistoric times through the nineteenth century. The mixing of these cultural deposits is most likely the result of coastal flooding and erosion. Over the years this process, combined with primary cultural deposition, has jumbled the artifacts. However, this section of the site contains a valuable collection of material culture associated with the colonial occupation of Smith's Castle.

North of N540, the stratigraphy generally consists of the sod layer, one to two feet of the brown, loamy soil (Munsell 2.5 Y 3/2), a half to one foot of olive-brown silty loam (Munsell 2.5 Y 4/4), followed by a subsoil of yellow-tan silty-clay (Munsell 2.5 Y 4/2). The brown loam dates to between ca. 1778 and 1813. The olive-brown stratum sometimes contains seventeenth and eighteenth-century artifacts.

The presence of an artifact-bearing layer (Figure 1) containing shell-tempered mortar was found sandwiched between layers of brown loam at a depth of about one foot below the ground surface along the southern half of the rectangular depression (Figure 2). It is estimated that this layer extended in a band of about 10 ft. in width and 50 ft. in length. It contained artifacts dated to the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Architectural debris such as lead window comes, pane glass, and brick fragments along with the shell-tempered mortar in this layer indicates the presence of a structure(s) in the vicinity. Fieldnotes from 1972 and 1973 suggest the presence of a mortar layer. However, at that time, this evidence was not considered to be indicative of structural remains at the site.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 12

Artifacts associated with the mortar layer include delftware, lead-glazed slipware and pipe stems with 6/64th-, 7/64th-, and 8/64th-inch bores. This evidence suggests that the mortar layer was deposited in the seventeenth or early-eighteenth centuries. Below the mortar level, pipe stems dating as early as 1620-1650 were found. It is unknown if the mortar layer represents a primary architectural deposit. It is possible that the mortar layer is associated with the destruction of the Smith trading post/block house.

In addition to the shell-tempered mortar layer, unusually deep pockets of loose, brown loam (in some cases up to 2 ft. in depth) also signaled significant deviations from the typical site stratigraphy. Pit features, mostly of recent vintage (i.e., twentieth century), and a structure at N580 E570 (see: Features) were identified by such deviations.

### Features

Three important features were located in the yard area. One was a stone foundation wall found in units N546 E588 and N546 E590 (Photo. 3). The foundation wall is constructed of large, flat fieldstones set in a trench that had been cut into the subsoil (Figure 3). The trench appears to be edged with smaller, oblong-shaped fieldstones. The larger fieldstones are at least two courses deep. Artifacts found in this trench include lead-glazed slipware, westerwald, and a 8/64th-diameter pipe stem. This suggests that the trench and wall were constructed in the late seventeenth century.

In units N568 E586, N568 E588 and N570 E588, a cluster of stones measuring about 3x1.5 ft at its widest point, was found (Figure 4). This feature lies on a mottled yellow-brown stratum. The dark soil discolorations suggest that this feature may be associated with a building. Artifacts found immediately above the feature include delftware and pipe stems with bores of 7/64th-inch (4) and 8/64th-inch (4). This evidence together with the absence of eighteenth-century ceramics suggests that this feature may date to the late seventeenth century.

A footing made of small, loosely-packed fieldstones was found in units N580 E570, N580 E575, and N582 E575 (Photo. 4). It is oriented north-south. A rock ledge was exposed at a depth of about 2 ft. below the surface in units N580 E575 and N582 E575 (Figure 5). This rock ledge seems to form a natural floor suggesting that the building extends to the east. Excavations in units N588 E573 and N588 E575 were carried out to trace the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 7

Page 13

footing to the north. Archaeological evidence suggests that the footing does extend in this direction. Artifacts with this feature date to the seventeenth century.

### Site Integrity

The front yard of Smith's Castle contains many well-preserved archaeological features and deposits. Among them is a late eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century stratum that was part of landscape alterations carried out during the later phases of the Updike occupation, including the construction of a garden. This landscape feature conceals earlier features that are buried beneath it. These earlier features dating to the seventeenth and possibly early eighteenth centuries are in an excellent state of preservation, especially when compared to other archaeological sites of the same period from this region. The clustered spatial arrangement of these features suggests that the configuration and layout of a complex of buildings, perhaps similar in plan to English bawns, may be recoverable at Smith's Castle (Rubertone 1990).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 8

Page 14

### Significance

Smith's Castle is an important, multicomponent historic site. It is qualified for the National Register in four areas of significance under Criteria D and in one under Criteria C. The presence of seventeenth-century features associated with Richard Smith's occupation of the property makes the site significant under Criteria D: Archaeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal: subcategories: Commerce and Exploration/Settlement. Smith's seventeenth-century block house played a major role in European-Native American trade and politics, and functioned as an entrepot for the English commerce in southern Rhode Island. In 1675 the site was used as the command headquarters for the Narragansett campaign during King Phillip's War, thus qualifying it under Criteria D: Archaeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal: subcategory military. By the eighteenth century, Smith's Castle was transformed into a major slave-holding plantation owned by members of an aristocratic Narragansett planter family. The site is, therefore, important for our knowledge of Northern slavery and plantations, and is eligible for the National Register under Criteria D: Archaeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal: subcategory agriculture. As one of the few remaining Narragansett plantation houses, the existing structure on the site is eligible under Criteria C Architecture. In sum, the various occupations of Smith's Castle make it an important site at the state, regional, and national level. Smith's Castle was listed on the National Register in 1971 under Criterion C, for the quality, character, and rarity of the house on the site. This nomination amends the 1971 nomination to include documentation of a recently excavated site (RI-375) on the Smith's Castle property under Criterion D. This document provides additional information about the house at Smith's Castle both as a convenient summary of the two nominations and as an explication of the possible relationships between standing structures and archeological sites

### Historic Context and Significance

In the 1630s trade relationships between New England colonists and Native Americans became more frequent as the Europeans constructed a number of permanent trading posts within Indian territories. At the close of the Pequot War, the Narragansett expressed their desire for a trading post to be established within their lands in present-day southern Rhode Island. Roger Williams and Richard Smith had trading posts at Cocumscussoc by 1637. Williams' correspondence shows that both men traded extensively with the Narragansett (LaFantasie 1988). Merchandise exchanged included corn, furs, wampum, and European manufactured goods. Archaeological materials

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 8

Page 15

recovered from nearby Narragansett cemeteries--West Ferry and RI 1000--suggest that the kinds of goods acquired through trade changed over the course of the seventeenth century. At the latter of these cemeteries, RI 1000, which dates from about 1650 into the 1670s, and thus falls within the Smith occupation, a variety of items suitable for consumption by the colonists was found in graves and not the sorts of things usually classified as trade goods (Rubertone and Gould 1991). This evidence is significant because it implies sustained interaction between the Narragansett and the colonists at Smith's Castle, and suggests the possibility that perhaps mechanisms in addition to or other than trade gave the former access to these goods.

The archaeological site at Smith's Castle is highly significant for the study of seventeenth-century European-Indian trade and exchange, and thus it is eligible for the National Register under Criteria D: Archaeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal: subcategory Commerce. The site is important because the remains of relatively few seventeenth-century trading posts have survived in North America, and fewer have been archaeological excavated. The excavation of this site can provide information on two important topics: colonial life at frontier trading posts, and European-Native American interaction. Interpretations of daily life at Smith's Castle can easily be derived from the material remains of the trading post/block house that lie in the front yard. The good condition of the deposits uncovered to date, suggests that information on diet, building techniques, and material life is recoverable. The proximity of this trading post to Narragansett burial grounds at West Ferry and RI 1000 offer a unique opportunity to compare material goods at their place of exchange and at their places of consumption. Such comparisons will provide further insight on the trading networks and inter-cultural exchanges in the seventeenth century. The potential of this site for comparative studies with other trading posts and with local Native American sites makes it a highly significant historical and cultural resource, and one that is eligible to the National Register.

Richard Smith's trading post became the first permanent English "plantation" or settlement in the area occupied by the Narragansett Indians. From his trading post, Smith acquired large tracts of land for future English settlement. The best known of these transactions was the infamous Atherton Purchase, which set off a seventy year long boundary dispute between Rhode Island and Connecticut. These purchases enabled the English colonists to slowly infiltrate the Narragansett Country, and with the Indians' defeat in King Phillips's War (1676), to quickly settle the region.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 8

Page 16

As the entrepot for the English settlement of the Narragansett Country, the archaeological site of Smith's Castle should be eligible for the National Register under Criteria D: Archaeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal: subcategory Exploration/Settlement. The archaeological site will provide information on the adaptations and on the lifeways of the first settlers on the Narragansett frontier. When the Smiths' occupied this site, the nearest English settlement was at least ten miles away. Archaeological evidence could inform us about their material lifeways, including their diet and housing. Important information could be revealed about patterns of land use and resource utilization, and about how the cultural landscape at Smith's Castle fits into the scheme of English plantations found throughout the globe. As few seventeenth-century entrepots in New England remain, Smith's Castle is an important site for the study of cultural adaptations on this frontier and in general, English colonial settlement.

During King Phillip's War (1675-1676), Smith's Castle became an important military position. In the first part of the war, when the Narragansett were neutral, Smith's block house was a strategic observation point for the English settlers. The house's proximity to the Narragansett allowed Smith to determine their military preparedness and political leanings. This information was passed on to the colonial authorities in Boston (Rubertone and Fitts 1990:20). Once hostilities between the Narragansett and the colonists broke out, the block house was used by the colonial troops as the launching point for their attack on the Narragansett at the Great Swamp. Following the battle, the colonial troops retreated to the Castle. It remained a garrisoned post until it was abandoned and then burned by the Indians in 1676.

The importance of Smith's Castle in the Narragansett Campaign in King Phillip's War makes it a valuable site, and eligible for the National Register under Criteria D: Archaeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal: subcategory Military. Since the block house was destroyed by the Indians soon after the colonial garrison abandoned it, it is highly likely that deposits associated with the soldiers' occupation survive among the seventeenth-century archaeological remains of the site. This would provide invaluable data on the lifeways of the colonial troops during King Phillip's War. Little is known about how early military troops lived while on campaigns, and Smith's Castle may provide the only archaeological information of this kind. It is also possible that the block house site may contain important data on early military fortifications. The construction of the house itself may provide insight on the architecture of fortified seventeenth-century houses or field fortifications constructed by the garrison.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 8

Page 17

Between the years of 1700-1780 under the ownership of the Updikes, Smith's Castle developed from a trading post into an agricultural plantation. The following historic context for this period was set forth in 1979 by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission in the North Kingstown, Rhode Island Statewide Historical Preservation Report W-NK-1.

The Narragansett area had many favorable conditions for development--good soil, a climate tempered by open water, large landholdings, and a location along the bay which permitted relatively easy transportation. These conditions, combined with the liberal use of slave labor, brought into being a class of farmers known as the Narragansett Planters. In contrast to inland farmers, who worked closer to subsistence level, the Narragansett Planters were stock and dairy men and also traders and shipowners. Vast fields of grass and corn nurtured cattle, sheep, and hogs--which yielded commercial products in the form of butter, cheese, and wool--as well as a special breed of riding or saddle horse, the Narragansett Pacer, which was much in demand in the southern colonies and in the West Indies. The Planters created a society unique in New England, a slave-owning plantation system with a high degree of wealth and education concentrated in the plantation owner's family, frequent though not necessary identification with the Church of England, and a particular penchant for the law. Most of the great plantations of Rhode Island were in South Kingstown or Narragansett, but one at least, Cocumscussoc, emerged in North Kingstown and a few of the other large and smaller farms of the mid-eighteenth century shared at least some of the planter-society characteristics.

As a plantation, Smith's Castle was at its height between 1730 and 1760. During this period the Updikes owned at least eighteen African-American slaves, large quantities of cattle and sheep, and hired overseers to run the plantation while they lived in Newport. Besides livestock, the plantation produced corn, wheat and hay (Rubertone and Fitts 1990:22-23; Woodward 1971:63-65). With the emancipation of the slaves and the decline of the Newport merchants, Smith's Castle changed from a slave-holding plantation to a free-labor farm in the years following the American Revolution.

As the archaeological site at Smith's Castle contains deposits dating to the plantation period, it is eligible for National Register under Criteria D: Archaeology, Historic-Non-Aboriginal: subcategory Agricultural. Evidence suggests that the plantation's landscape can be reconstructed through archaeological excavation. Furthermore, material remains associated with this period can provide information on the lifestyle of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 8

Page 18

inhabitants of the plantation. These data may be used to compare the lifestyles of the Narragansett planters to the more typical New England farmers and to the Southern planters. To date no deposits associated with slaves have been identified, but in light of the many slaves who lived on the property, the existence of such deposits are possible. The archaeological site at Smith's Castle may provide valuable data on the little studied topic of slavery in New England.

Although the core of Smith's Castle dates to the seventeenth century, the house is significant for being one of the few surviving residences of the Narragansett planters. The planters used their houses and the surrounding landscapes to make statements concerning their social, economic, and political power. While their plantations served an economic function by producing livestock and food for export, they also were used as country estates since many planters owned homes in Newport or Wickford. These plantations, with their large Georgian houses, and ornamental gardens, were purposely reminiscent of the country estates owned by the English gentry. As one of the few surviving plantation manors, Smith's Castle is eligible for the National Register under Criteria C: Architecture.

The architecture of Smith's Castle is also significant for other reasons. First, it contains eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century additions to its seventeenth-century core. Thus, it exemplifies the development of a domestic structure over the course of four centuries. Second, the house was restored between 1951 and 1956 by John Hutchins Cady, a famous Rhode Island architect.

Smith's Castle and the Cocumscussoc archaeological site are important historic resources. The site can provide valuable information on European-Native American relations, frontier life, seventeenth-century military garrisons, and the lives of the masters and slaves who lived on Rhode Island's eighteenth-century plantations. The good condition of the Cocumscussoc archaeological site and Smith's Castle ensure that they will illuminate these poorly understood, but important, aspects of our national history.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 9

Page 19

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 9

Page 20

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Property name Smith's Castle

Section number 10

Page 21

### Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

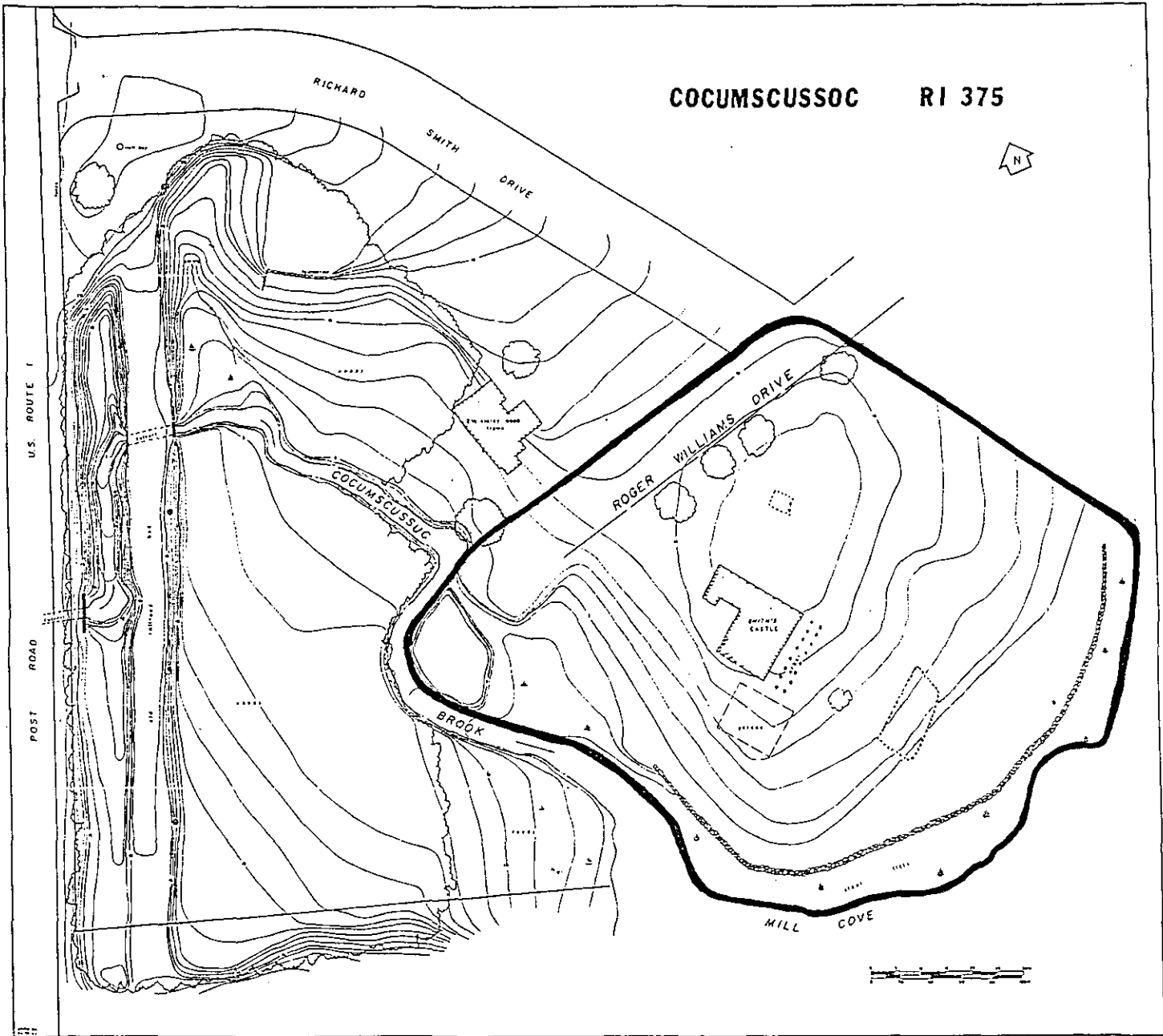
#### Verbal Boundary Description:

The archaeological site at Smith's Castle is bounded by Cocumscussoc Brook on the west, Roger Williams Drive to the north, by the line separating the Cocumscussoc Association's property from the adjacent lot to the east (i.e., lot 35), and Mill Cove to the south.

#### Boundary Justification:

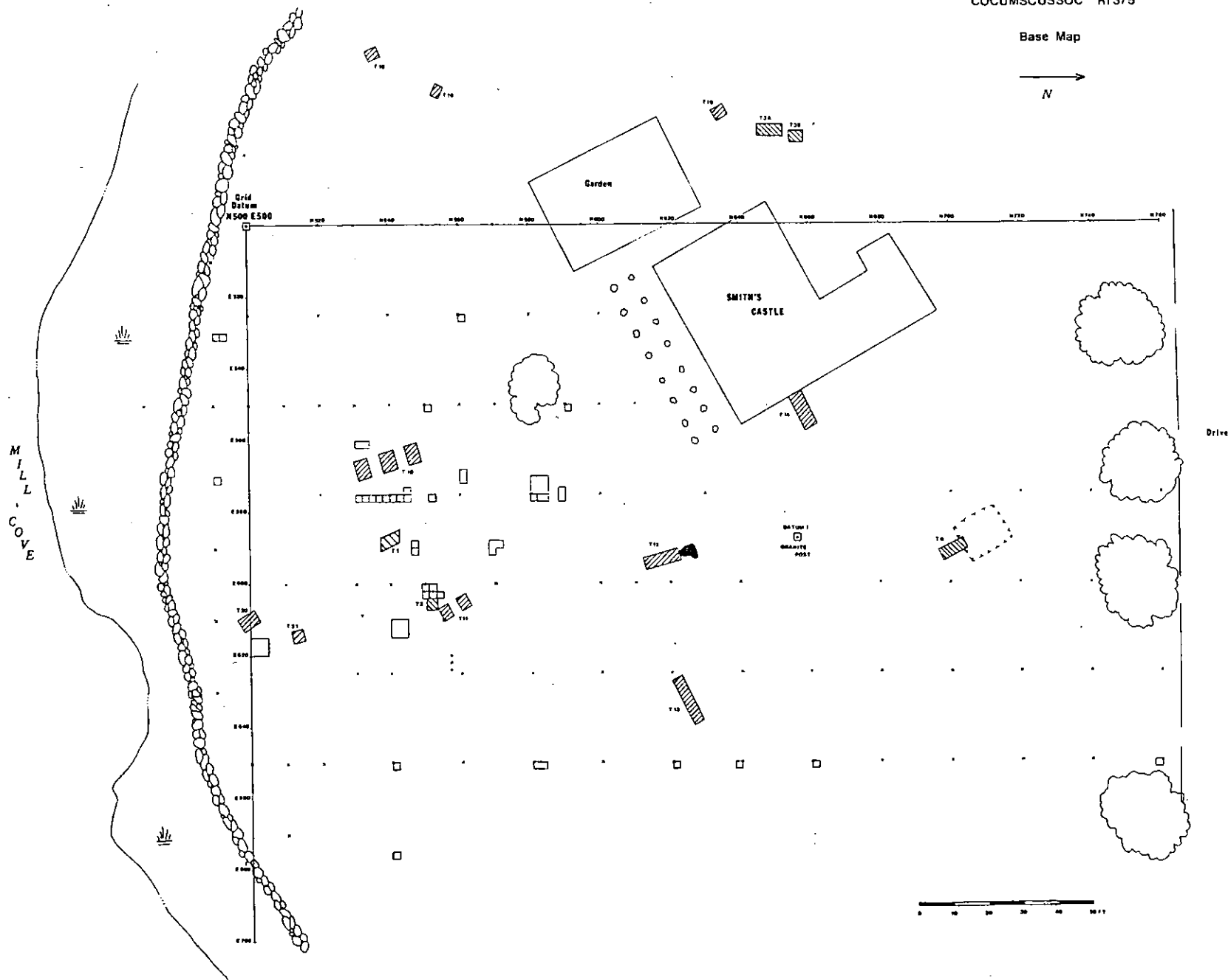
The above boundaries for the archaeological site at Smith's Castle were determined through systematic archaeological testing by Brown University from 1989 to 1990. Significant archaeological deposits were located only within the boundaries described above. Moreover, within these boundaries, seventeenth-century archaeological features and deposits were concentrated in the yard area immediately south of Smith's Castle.

\*The nominated site encompasses 1.8 acres of land which is completely included within the boundaries of the original Smith's Castle National Register nomination. No new acreage is being added to the National Register.



MAP 1

Base Map



KEY

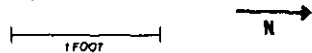
- Stone marker
- Depression
- ▨ 1972 excavation unit
- ▩ 1973
- 1989-90
- × Shovel test pit



COCUMSCUSSOC RI 375

N534 E575 — N544 E575, N544 E573

Top of Mortar Level



- KEY:
-  MORTAR
  -  BRICK
  -  ROOT
  -  SHELL
  -  IRON
  -  GLASS
  -  TAN NOTTLE

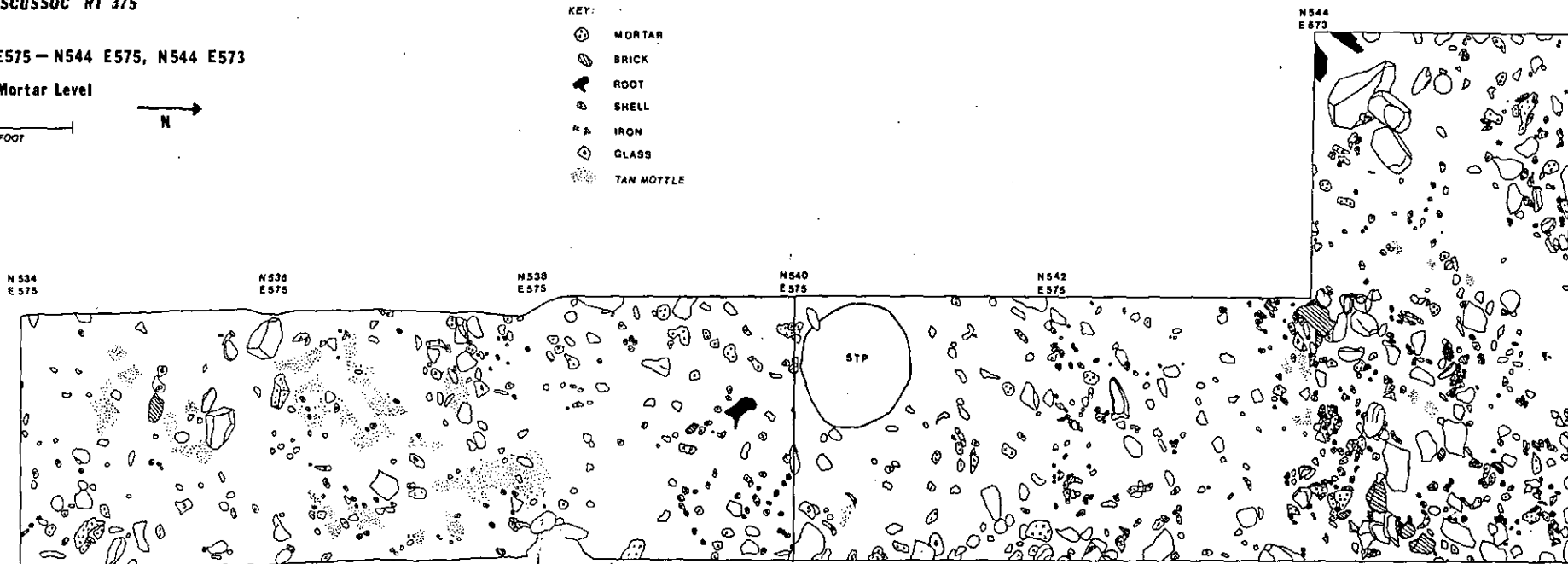
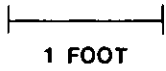


Figure 1



**COCUMSCUSSOC RI 375**  
**PROFILES OF N 540 E 575**

SCALE



KEY:

● ROOT

⊕ MORTAR

◊ SHELL

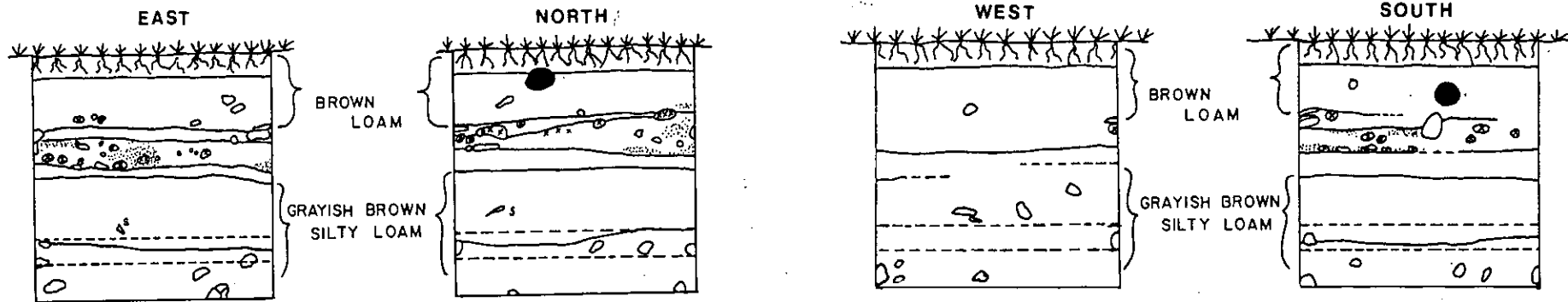


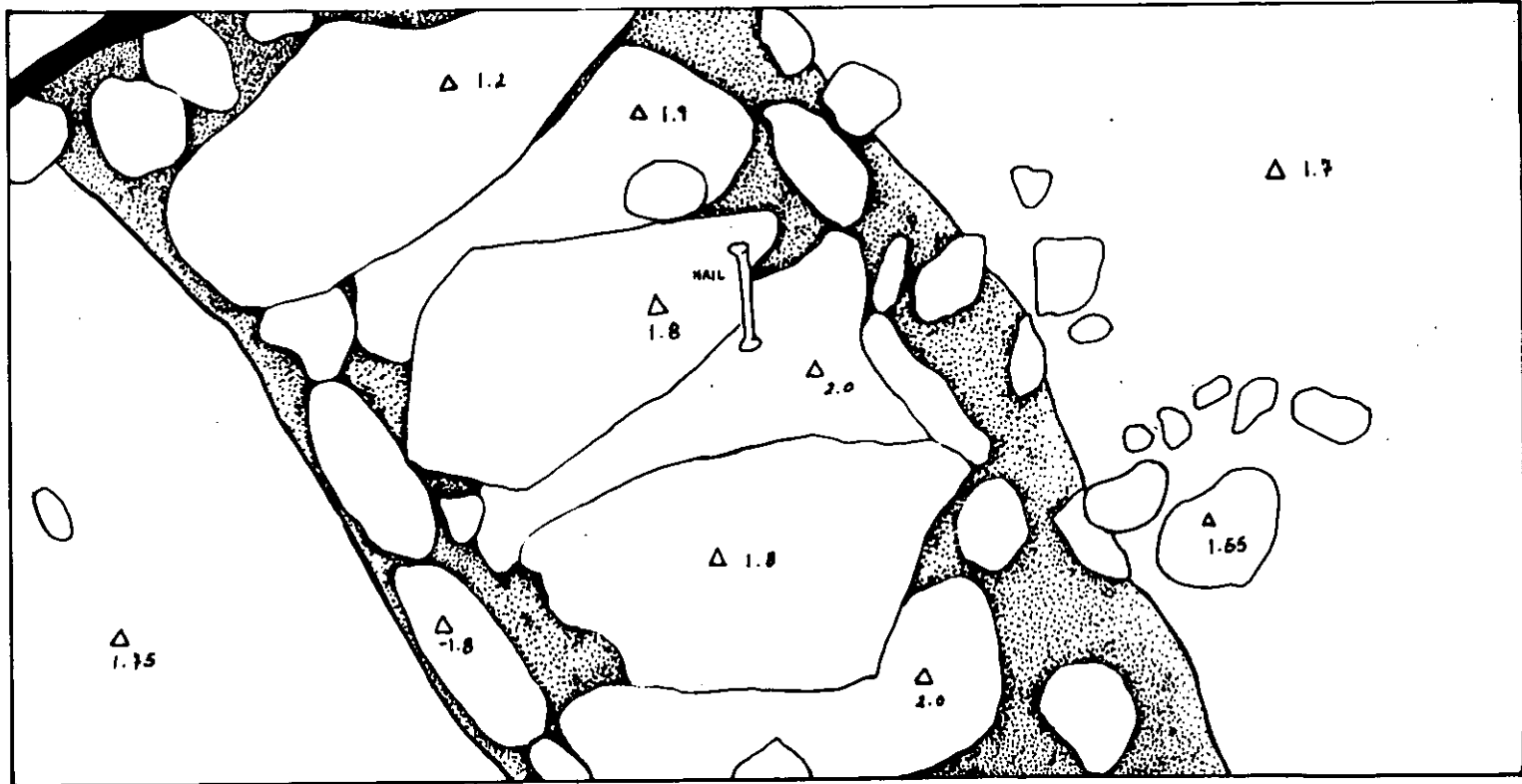
Figure 2

# COCUMSCUSSOC RI 375

## Plan of N546 E588 and E590

N 548  
E 588

N 548  
E 592



N 546  
E 588

N 546  
E 592

1 FOOT






-  STONE
-  ROOT
-  TRENCH

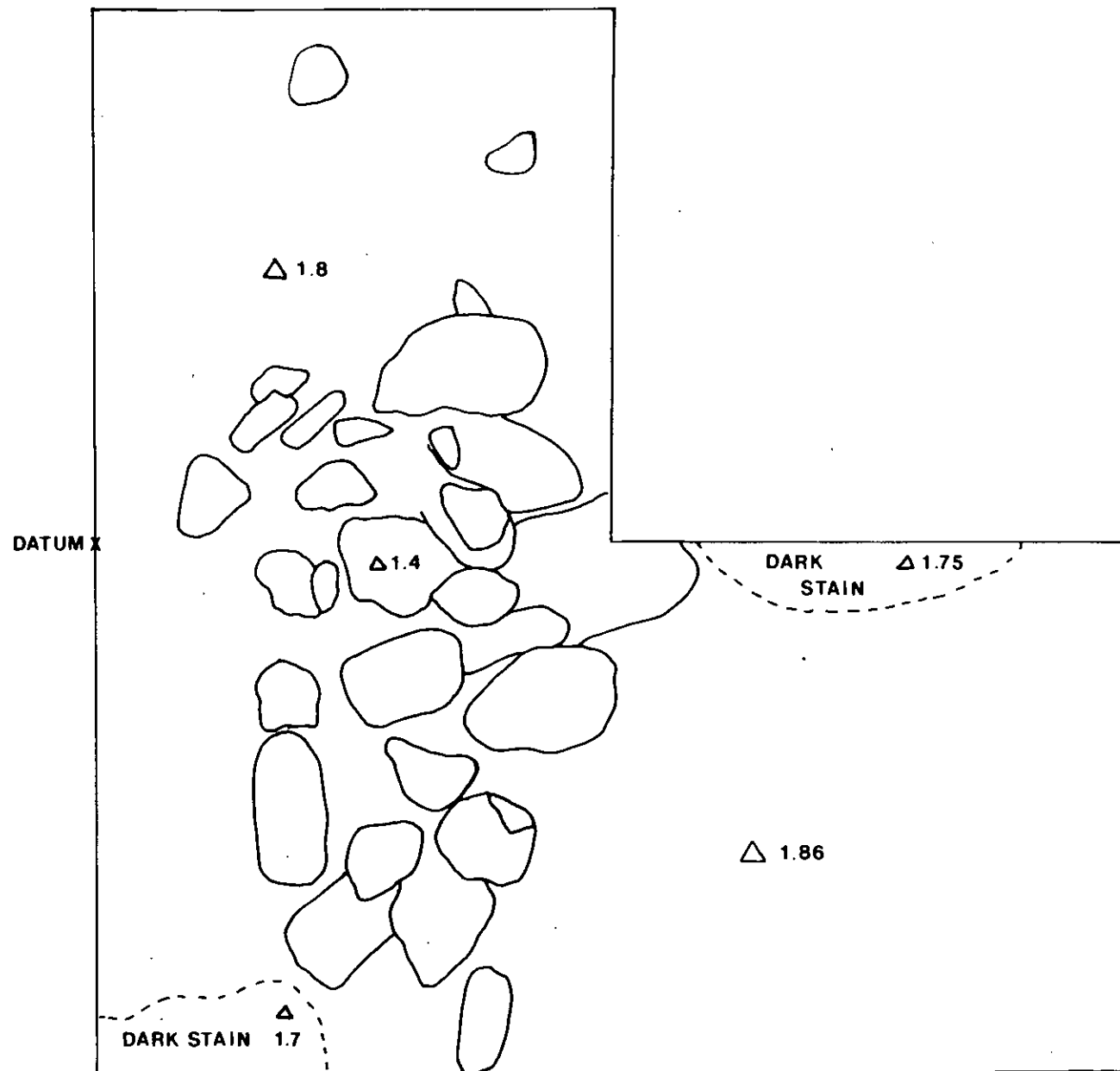
Figure 3.

COCUMSCUSSOC RI 375

N568 E588

1 FOOT

N ↑

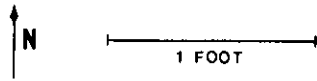


N568  
E588

Figure 4.

COCUMSCUSSOC RI 375

N 580 E 570



DATUM  
N 580  
E 570

Figure 5



Smith's Castle and Cozumscuscoc Archaeological Site  
(RI 375)

55 Richard Smith Drive  
North Kingstown, Rhode Island

Photographer: Richard Gould

Date: April 1991

Negative:

View: looking northwest

Photo # 1



Smith's Castle & Coconongood Archaeological Site (RI 375)  
55 Richard Smith Drive  
North Kingstown, Rhode Island

Photographer: unknown

Date: 1957

Negative:

View: Looking to the northwest

Photo. # 2





Smith's Castle & Cocumscussoc Archaeological Site (RI 375)

55 Richard Smith Drive

North Kingstown, Rhode Island

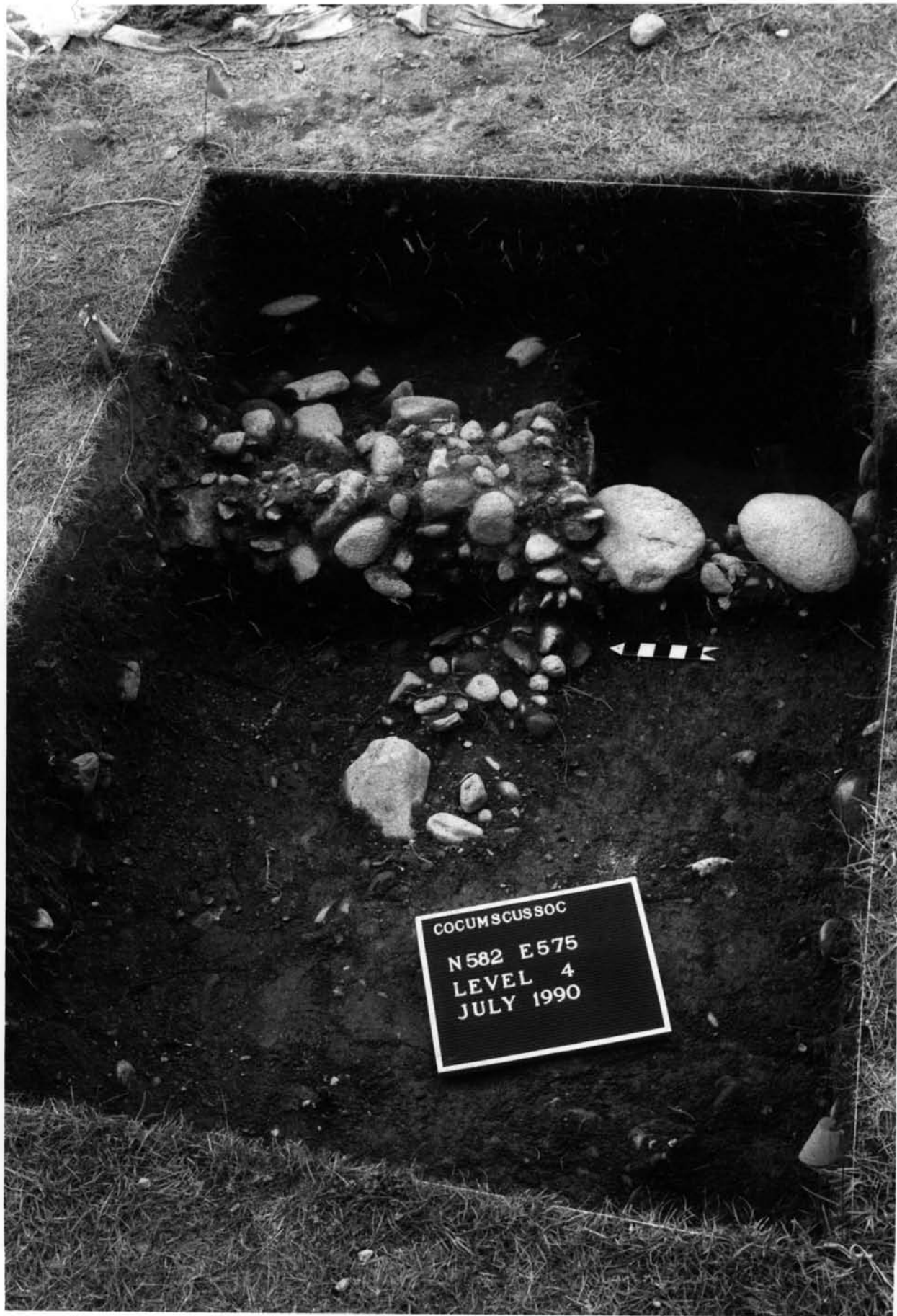
Photographer: Patricia Rubertone

Date: August 1990

Negative: # 15

View: looking north

Photo. # 3



COCUMSCUSSOC  
N 582 E 575  
LEVEL 4  
JULY 1990

Smith's Castle and Cocumscussoc Archaeological Site (RI 375)  
55 Richard Smith Drive  
North Kingstown, Rhode Island

Photographer: Patricia Rubertone

Date: July 1990

Negative: # 26

View: looking to the northeast

Photo. #4

The most  
WESTERLY part of the PLAT is  
the best part of LAND  
UPON the Bay of NORTHAMPTON  
and contains by actual survey  
Three Hundred and Ninety five  
Acres and an Half including  
QUEEN'S ISLAND  
Eight Acres and an Half  
Surveyed July 2<sup>d</sup> 1662.  
Done by JOHN ROBERTSON  
and his By

A Plat  
of the Farm called the SAUGO  
FARM belonging to LEONARD  
UPDIKE Esq. containing Three  
Hundred and Forty Acres  
including CORNELIUS'S  
Wood which contains 10  
Acres and an Half  
Surveyed July 2<sup>d</sup> 1662.  
Done by JOHN ROBERTSON  
and his By

Field Book for Home Farm

Year	Acres	Rods	Furrows
1662	100	10	10
1663	100	10	10
1664	100	10	10
1665	100	10	10
1666	100	10	10
1667	100	10	10
1668	100	10	10
1669	100	10	10
1670	100	10	10
1671	100	10	10
1672	100	10	10
1673	100	10	10
1674	100	10	10
1675	100	10	10
1676	100	10	10
1677	100	10	10
1678	100	10	10
1679	100	10	10
1680	100	10	10
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1682	100	10	10
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1686	100	10	10
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1694	100	10	10
1695	100	10	10
1696	100	10	10
1697	100	10	10
1698	100	10	10
1699	100	10	10
1700	100	10	10

FIELD BOOK for SAUGO FARM

Year	Acres	Rods	Furrows
1662	100	10	10
1663	100	10	10
1664	100	10	10
1665	100	10	10
1666	100	10	10
1667	100	10	10
1668	100	10	10
1669	100	10	10
1670	100	10	10
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1681	100	10	10
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1683	100	10	10
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1689	100	10	10
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1691	100	10	10
1692	100	10	10
1693	100	10	10
1694	100	10	10
1695	100	10	10
1696	100	10	10
1697	100	10	10
1698	100	10	10
1699	100	10	10
1700	100	10	10

Field Book for SAUGO FARM

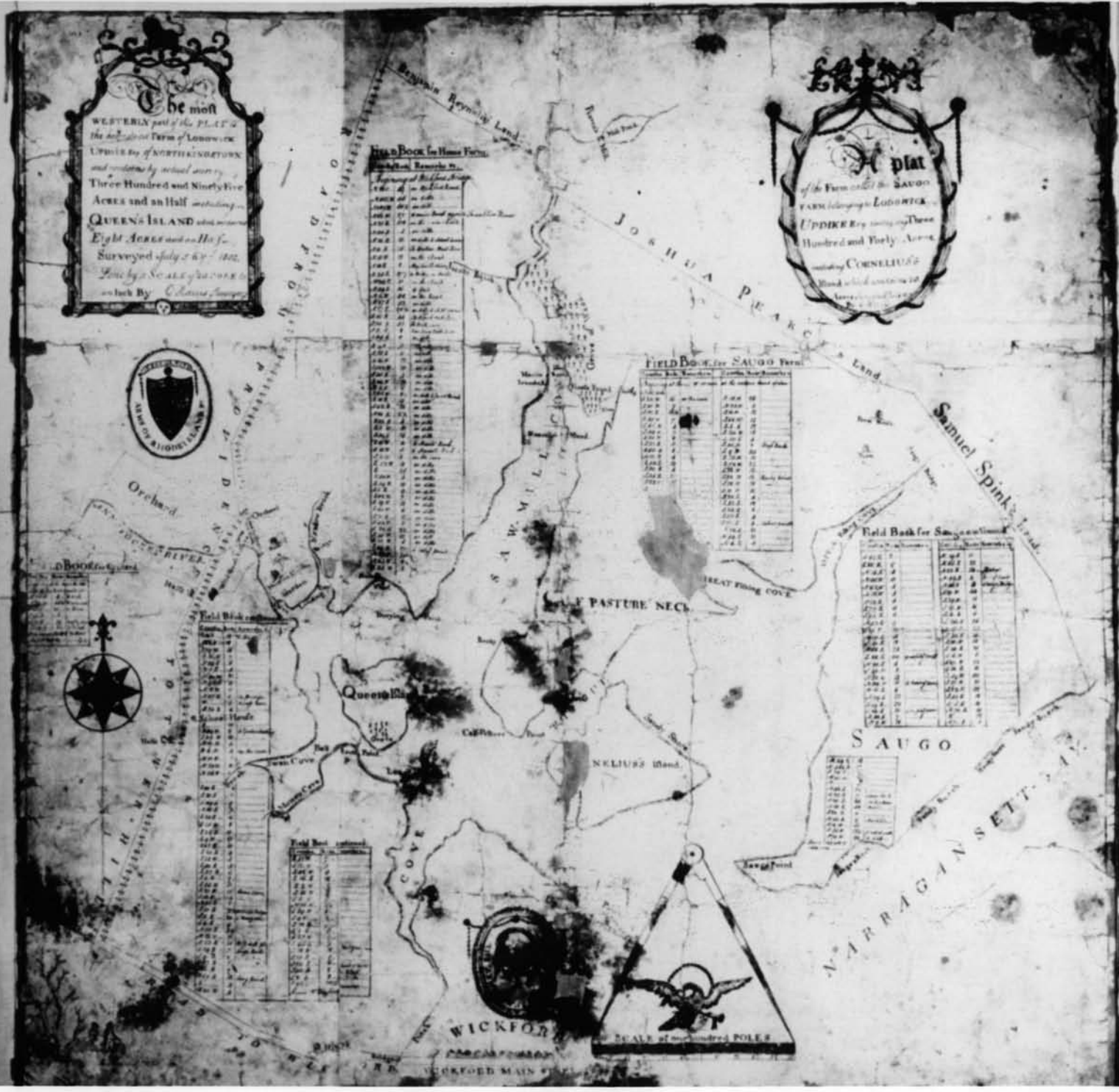
Year	Acres	Rods	Furrows
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1663	100	10	10
1664	100	10	10
1665	100	10	10
1666	100	10	10
1667	100	10	10
1668	100	10	10
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1694	100	10	10
1695	100	10	10
1696	100	10	10
1697	100	10	10
1698	100	10	10
1699	100	10	10
1700	100	10	10

Field Book for SAUGO FARM

Year	Acres	Rods	Furrows
1662	100	10	10
1663	100	10	10
1664	100	10	10
1665	100	10	10
1666	100	10	10
1667	100	10	10
1668	100	10	10
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1693	100	10	10
1694	100	10	10
1695	100	10	10
1696	100	10	10
1697	100	10	10
1698	100	10	10
1699	100	10	10
1700	100	10	10

Field Book for SAUGO FARM

Year	Acres	Rods	Furrows
1662	100	10	10
1663	100	10	10
1664	100	10	10
1665	100	10	10
1666	100	10	10
1667	100	10	10
1668	100	10	10
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1692	100	10	10
1693	100	10	10
1694	100	10	10
1695	100	10	10
1696	100	10	10
1697	100	10	10
1698	100	10	10
1699	100	10	10
1700	100	10	10



Map 3

Smith's Castle  
(Amendment)  
Cocumscussoc Site  
RI-375  
North Kingstown  
19-295090-4606190

