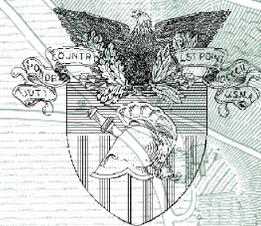


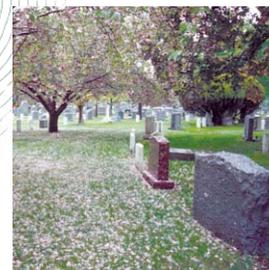
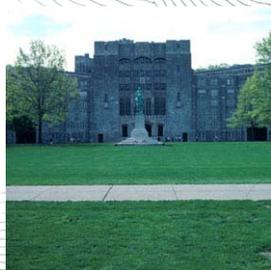


Historic Landscape Management Plan for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York



ERDC/CERL SR-02-1, February 2002

Prepared by the
U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center
Construction Engineering Research Laboratory
Champaign, Illinois



**HISTORIC LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY
at
WEST POINT, NEW YORK**



Prepared for

**WEST POINT, NEW YORK
CULTURAL RESOURCES OFFICE**

under the Supervision of

Patrice A. Halin, West Point Cultural Resources Manager and
Suzanne Keith Loechl, CERL Principal Investigator

by

Suzanne Keith Loechl, Megan Weaver, Susan I. Enscoe, and Gary B. Kesler

with contributions from

Diane Timlin, Beth Allen, Helen Siewers, Anne McCombe Spafford, Ken McCown, and Gordon L. Cohen

**Engineer Research and Development Center
Construction Engineering Research Laboratory**

P.O. Box 9005
Champaign, Illinois 61826-9005

**ERDC/CERL SR-02-1
February 2002**



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Development Center



Foreword

This study was conducted for the U.S. Military Academy (USMA), West Point, NY, under Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR) 0KCRL50110, dated 24 August 2000, entitled "Historic Landscape Management Plan,"; and MIPR1GCFL50102, dated 16 May 2001, entitled "Revision to Draft Historic Landscape Management Plan." The USMA technical monitor was Patrice A. Halin, Directorate of Housing and Public Works (USMA-MAEN-E-1).

The work was performed by the Land and Heritage Conservation branch (CN-C) of the Installations Division (CN), Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL). The CERL Principal Investigator was Suzanne Keith Loechl. Dr. Lucy A. Whalley is Chief, CEERD-CN-C, and Dr. John T. Bandy is Chief, CEERD-CN. The Technical Director of the Military Lands business area is Dr. William D. Severinghaus, CEERD-CV-ZT, and the Director of CERL is Dr. Alan W. Moore.

CERL is an element of the Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Commander and Executive Director of ERDC is COL John W. Morris III, EN, and the Director is Dr. James R. Houston.

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Executive Summary

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York has a 200 year history of Army officer education. It holds a central place in the history of the Army, and is associated with some of the most important individuals in our nation's military history. This report provides recommendations for preserving and maintaining the historic landscape at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. As an installation of primary national historic significance, West Point has a legal mandate to manage its cultural resources in a manner that recognizes and respects their value. The information contained in this management plan will assist the West Point Cultural Resource Manager in complying with the requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act as well as relevant Department of the Army regulations, while still meeting West Point's mission requirements. The Historic

Landscape Management Plan will be incorporated into West Point's Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan, which will itself become part of the installation's Real Property Master Plan.

This plan builds on the information gathered for the production by ERDC-CERL in 2000 of the *Historic Landscape Inventory for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York*. The historic periods outlined in the *Inventory* are used in this plan to provide a framework for discussing the treatment of contributing features found in each defined period of significance for major historic landscape areas.

This report identifies the following landscape areas at West Point to be historically significant in their own right and in need of historic preservation management practices:

The Historic District Landscape:

- The Plain
- The Academic Area
- Flirtation Walk
- Kosciuszko's Garden
- Superintendent's Garden
- West Point Cemetery

Housing Areas:

- Professors' Row
- Thayer/Wilson Housing
- Lee Housing Area
- Lusk Housing Area



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Introduction and Design Approach

West Point is located on the west bank of a narrow reach of the Hudson River, 50 miles north of New York City. Its unique geography made it an ideal location for surveillance up and down the river during the Revolutionary War. In 1802 it was designated the site of the U. S. Military Academy and has continuously operated under this mission for two centuries. It holds a central place in the history of the Army, having educated or been directed by some of the most important individuals in military history. Our most famous Army Generals, including Douglas MacArthur, George C. Marshall, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Omar Bradley, lived at West Point during their service.

This project represents a team effort among the West Point Cultural Resource Manager, CERL's Land and Heritage Conservation Branch, and the University of Illinois Department of Landscape Architecture. The primary objective is to make recommendations for preserving and maintaining West Point's historic landscape. The recommendations made within this document in no way obligate any funding resources on behalf of West Point. The recommendations will, however, assist the West Point Cultural Resource Manager in complying with the requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The NHPA provides requirements for consideration of historic properties by Federal agen-



"Military School, West Point," engraving by J. Archer, 1826.

cies. Historic properties are those properties that are either listed in, or are eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Section 106 of the NHPA requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and consult with preservation agencies (most commonly the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation) regarding these effects and

possible mitigating actions before spending federal funds on the undertaking. Section 110 of the NHPA requires Federal agencies to develop and implement plans for the identification, management, and nomination of cultural resources to the NRHP. West Point is already designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) and contains a registered NRHP historic district. An NHL designation is reserved for historic properties possessing national signifi-

USMA, Special Collections



cance in illustrating or representing the prehistory and history of the United States. To qualify for NHL status, the property must also contain high historic integrity. Section 110 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to undertake planning and actions as necessary to minimize harm to any designated NHL, and to consider all prudent and feasible alternatives to avoid an adverse effect to a NHL. West Point's greatest challenge is to maintain the historic integrity backdrop for tradition while moving forward to meet the mission of producing leaders of character for our Nation, with skills and tools that are state-of-the-art and on the cutting edge.

Guidance for implementing the NHPA requirements concerning treatment of eligible properties is found in 36 CFR Part 68, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. These standards address four treatment options: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Information on how to apply these standards is provided in *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (NPS, 1995) and *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (NPS, 1996).

Army Regulation AR 200-4 (Cultural Resource Management) contains the Army's policy for managing cultural resources to meet legal compliance requirements and to support the mili-

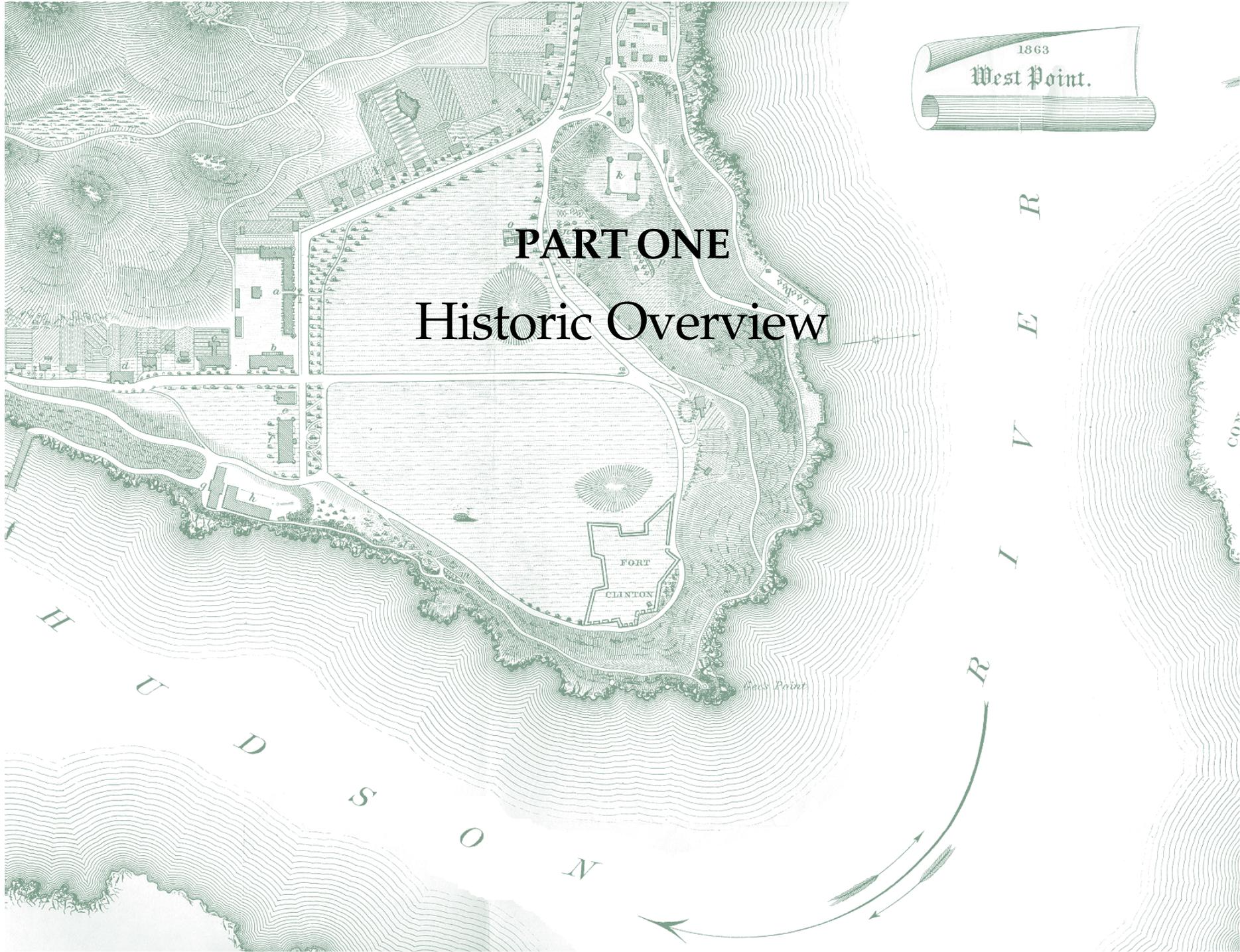
tary mission. Army compliance with the NHPA is required. Historic military landscapes are a cultural resource type identified by the Army Regulation AR 200-4 and need to be identified, evaluated and managed in compliance with Section 110 of the NHPA. A historic military landscape is a military landscape that is significantly associated with historically important persons or events, or is an important indicator of the broad patterns of history, or represents a significant example of design or construction. For the purposes of the National Register, a historic military landscape is a category of property potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic site or district. To be eligible for nomination to the Register, a historic military landscape must have sufficient integrity to convey its significance. The Army has guidance for documenting and evaluating historic military landscapes.

The Historic Landscape Inventory for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York (CERL, 2000) follows guidance set forth in the publication *Guidelines for Documenting and Evaluating Historic Military Landscapes: An Integrated Approach* (CERL, 1996). These Guidelines respond to NRHP guidance for evaluating historic districts and sites and for using an integrated archival and field research approach. The goal of the archival tasks is to develop an historic context based on the installation's mis-

sions, primary activities, historical associations, and periods of significance that will guide the determination of the most significant areas and landscape characteristics within the installation. The goal of the field research tasks is to identify, document, and evaluate the characteristics of the installation landscape. Researchers integrate the results of the archival and field research in order to make connections between the history of the installation and evolution of its landscape. The final step in the process involves the evaluation of the historic landscape to determine NRHP eligibility of individual landscape component areas.

Army management standards for historic buildings have been developed for use in the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic buildings at installations and should be applied in conjunction with, and in supplement to, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* and the *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.

The inventories and evaluations produced using the Army historic military landscape guidelines differ in purpose and detail from National Park Service Cultural Landscape Inventories (CLI) and Cultural Landscape Reports (CLR). A military landscape is one that has been uniquely shaped through human activity in support of single or multiple military missions



1863
West Point.

PART ONE
Historic Overview

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West Point

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of the United States Department of Defense or its antecedents. A military installation's primary function is to respond to the defense mission – all other functions and management practices are secondary. Due to ongoing missions, management practices must allow for some flexibility while preserving as much of the historic fabric as possible in these constantly evolving landscapes. Recommendations for managing historic military landscapes must include actions for enhancing quality of life and improving the military image. Although the resulting documents are not consistent with the NPS models, the level of documentation and management is appropriate for the level of concern.

This Historic Landscape Management Plan is a component part of West Point's Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan (ICRMP). AR 200-4 and Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 4715.3 require every military installation to have an ICRMP. Five-year ICRMPs are a component of the installation master plan and are the installation



Battle Monument, 1906.

NPS, FLOHS

commander's decision document for cultural resources management actions and for specific cultural resources compliance procedures. AR 200-4 and DoD Instruction 4715.3 require that an ICRMP contain a summary of known cultural resources information and a list and brief description of properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Army Regulation (AR) 210-20 requires Installation Real Property Master Planning offices to produce a Real Property Master Plan (RPMP) which charts a long-term investment

strategy for achieving the installation commander's plan for the orderly management and development of the real property assets of the installation, including land, facilities, and infrastructure. Along with other plans, the ICRMP is incorporated into the installation Real Property Master Plan.

This Historic Landscape Management Plan for West Point provides recommendations for managing and maintaining the historic landscapes identified in the *Historic Landscape Inventory* (CERL, 2000). A condensed version of the historical data contained in the *Inventory* is provided for context in Part I. Management recommendations set forth in the Plan respond to West Point's historic integrity, or the ability of the present day landscape to convey its historic significance. Every effort is made to maintain extant historic characteristics and features while accommodating current uses. The Secretary of the Interior's treatment standards are applied in this Plan. The chosen treatment options are discussed in detail under "Concepts and Design Vocabulary" in Part II of this plan.



Introduction to Historic West Point

Part I provides a summarized historical context for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York taken from the study entitled *Historic Landscape Inventory for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York* (CERL, 2000). Both the military mission and historical process have defined several stages of landscape change over the years of West Point's existence. Determining the physical appearance of West Point landscapes during these periods provides evidence for evaluating significance and integrity. The resulting changes over time serve as a framework for the development of management options regarding both the installation's historic landscape as a whole, and the individually significant landscape areas it contains.

Six periods of significance are documented for landscape development at West Point:

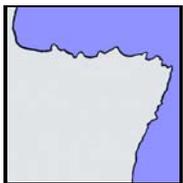
- Pre-Revolutionary War Period 1600s-1750
- Revolutionary War Period 1750 -1790
- Establishment Period 1790-1817
- Thayer Period 1817-1833
- Delafield Period 1833-1900
- Centennial Expansion Period 1900 – 1920s
- 20th Century Expansion Period 1930 – 1960s

For more historical information, please refer to the *Historic Landscape Inventory for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York* (CERL, 2000).



Aerial view of West Point, 1931.

USMA, Roth Collection

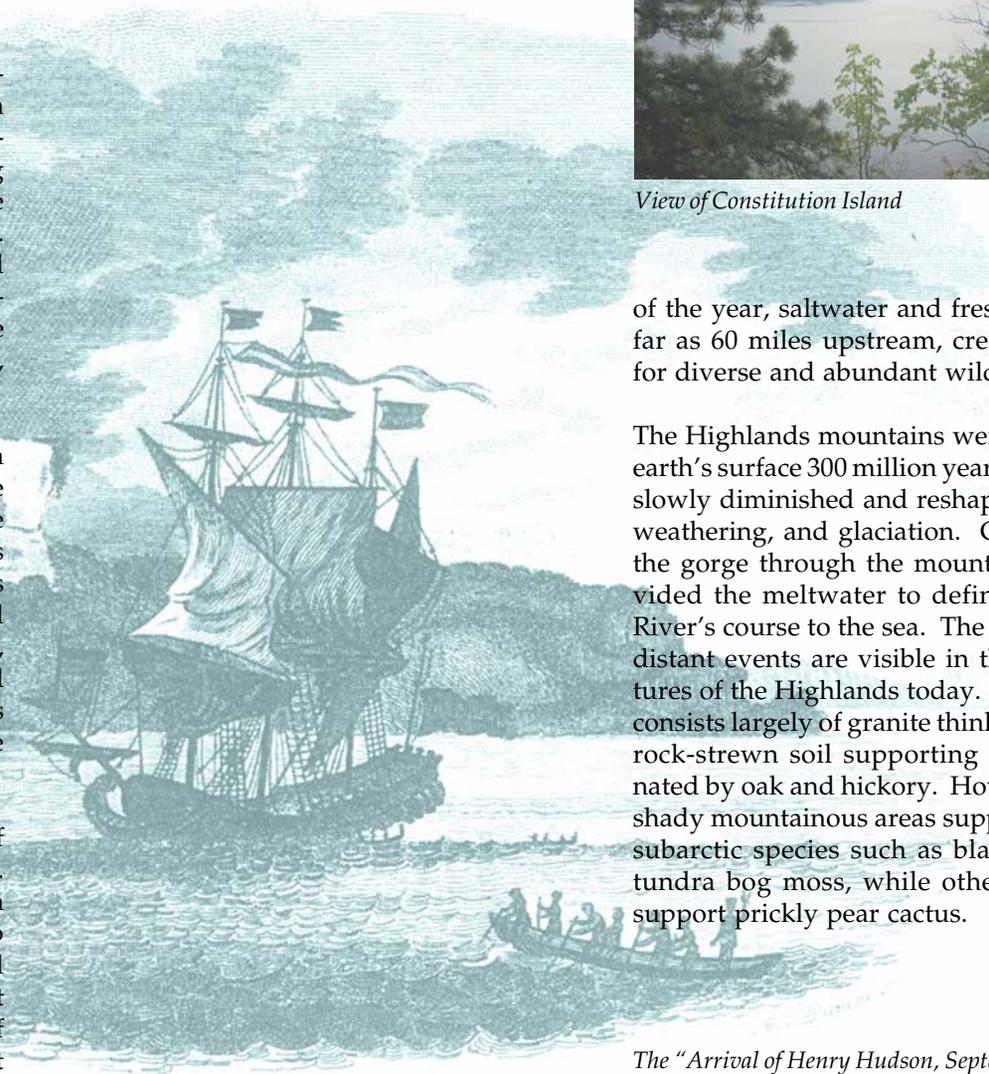


1600s - 1750

The Hudson River Valley has played an important role in shaping the history of both West Point and America. Its distinctive geographical qualities were key to establishing America as a nation and West Point as the nation's premiere military academy. Throughout history the region has inspired nationwide movements of art, literature, industrialism and environmentalism that have substantially influenced American identity, values, and culture.

West Point sits near the mid-point of a stretch of the Hudson River Valley known as the Hudson Highlands. Defined by its unique physical characteristics, the Highlands area is a 15-mile stretch of the river that passes through a deep and narrow gorge. Enclosed on either side by sheer cliffs and steep hills, this part of the river channel is sinuous and fast flowing unlike the shallow, placid waters and broad, straight channel that make up the rest of the river.

The Hudson River is an estuary — an arm of the sea where freshwater and saltwater mix. Because it is below sea level, its tidal portion extends as far as 150 miles inland. At ebb tide, the current flows south but during flood tide, the current reverses — a characteristic that earned the river its Native American name of "River-Which-Flows-Two-Ways". For most



View of Constitution Island

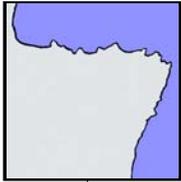
Photo: CERL, 1997

of the year, saltwater and freshwater mix as far as 60 miles upstream, creating a habitat for diverse and abundant wildlife.

The Highlands mountains were thrust to the earth's surface 300 million years ago and were slowly diminished and reshaped by erosion, weathering, and glaciation. Glaciers carved the gorge through the mountains then provided the meltwater to define the Hudson River's course to the sea. The effects of these distant events are visible in the natural features of the Highlands today. The landscape consists largely of granite thinly covered with rock-strewn soil supporting a forest dominated by oak and hickory. However, isolated shady mountainous areas support Arctic and subarctic species such as black spruce and tundra bog moss, while other sunny areas support prickly pear cactus.

Arist: Asher B. Durand, New York Historical Society

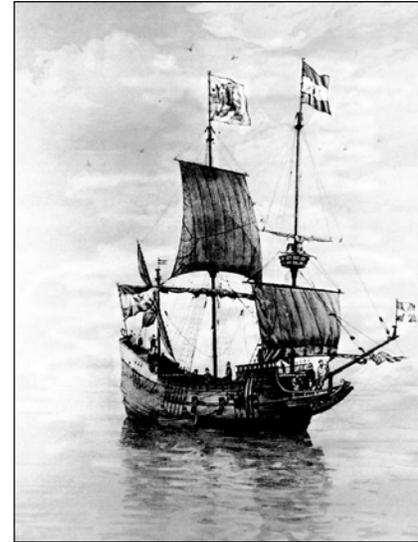
The "Arrival of Henry Hudson, September 4, 1609"



Edgar Mayhew Bacon, 1902

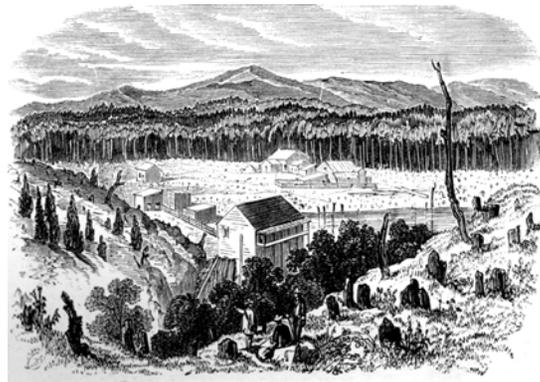
The Landing of Henry Hudson in 1609.

Numerous tribes of Algonquins were the first to settle along the banks of the Hudson where fish and game were plentiful and the soil yielded corn and other vegetables. By the time Henry Hudson sailed into New York Harbor on the Dutch ship *Half Moon* in 1609, the native civilization along the banks of the Hudson was a complex and ancient one. To Hudson and the many settlers from Holland, Germany, Scotland and France that followed him, the Highlands landscape with its mountains, changing currents, and sinuous water route seemed an untamable wilderness. But the river, though considered dangerous, was



Dumwell, 1991

The "Half Moon", Henry Hudson's ship.

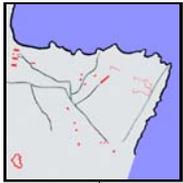


Lossing, 1866

First clearing on the Hudson River.

the primary means of travel throughout the area as road construction was difficult due to the rugged terrain. The Highlands' poor, thin soils were not ideal for cultivation making it one of the last areas of the Hudson to be settled, nearly 200 years after the colonial manors and patroonships to the north and south had been established.

The Highlands' features presented too many obstacles for most settlers, limiting the area to small continuous population growth throughout the 18th century.



1750 - 1790

The Hudson River Highlands was the focus of great attention for both British and American forces during much of the Revolutionary War even though it was not the location of its most decisive events. The mountainous Highlands, especially West Point, offered a strategically significant landscape setting for defending the vital Hudson River against British invasion and control. Both sides knew that control of the Hudson was key to maintaining communications and transport between the north and south colonies, and thus ultimately to their defeat or victory.

In 1775, two New York Provincial Convention members, Colonel James Clinton and Mr. Christopher Tappan, were instructed to select an ideal site for establishing fortifications to prevent passage of the British fleet up the river. They chose World's End, a narrow S-shaped channel of the river between high cliffs on both banks; the west bank was known as West Point, and the east as Martelaer's Rock. At this location, Clinton and Tappan deter-



West Point in 1789 by Colonel Walter Sturgill.

Crackel, 1991



View of Fort Putnum.

USMA, Archives

mined that, in addition to forts edging the river at World's End, a boom and chain should be stretched across the river to block British ships navigating the channel. Bernard Romans, a Dutch botanist, was hired to supervise these constructions. He decided to reject the Clinton/Tappan idea and moved the fortification site farther south to Anthony's Nose, but British troops easily captured them from behind.

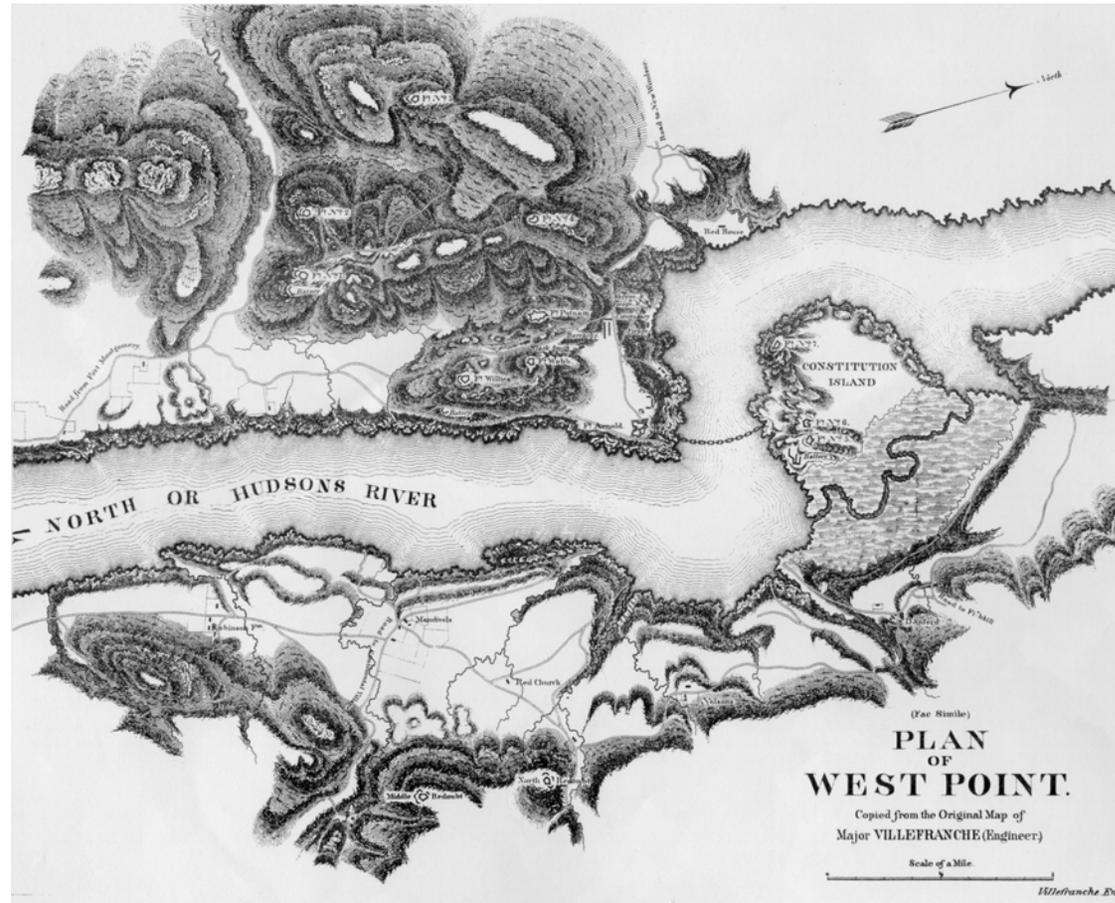
It was then decided to follow Clinton and Tappan's original recommendations for forts

at West Point. Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a Polish engineer, was hired to plan them, and it was under his supervision that the West Point fortifications were finally built. Kosciuszko's fortification system consisted of a network of mutually supporting strongholds. A series of batteries were located at the bottom edge of West Point along the river and were connected by a rough path called Chain Battery Walk. The main fort, Fort Clinton (originally called Fort Arnold after General Benedict Arnold), was located on a high flat area (known as the Plain) overlooking

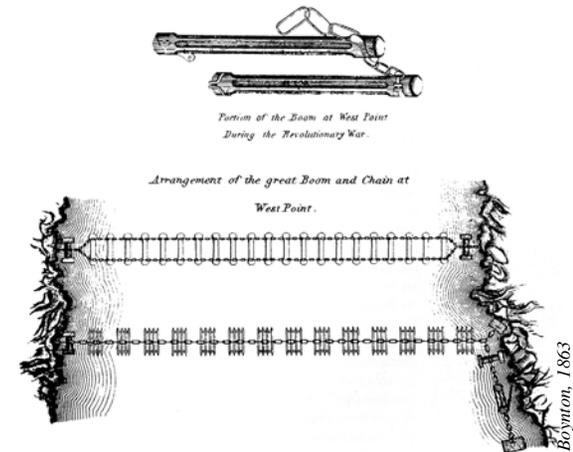
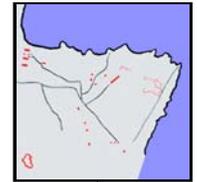


A view of West Point on Huson's River by Major L'Enfant, 1780.

Boymton, 1863



Plan of West Point and fortifications, engraving based on 1780 map by Major Villefranche.



Sketch of chain and boom from West Point to Constitution Island.

ing the river. Its purpose was to protect the river batteries below and the chain that stretched across to Constitution Island. Fort Clinton was protected from overland attack by a large fort and a series of small fortifications. Fort Putnam, located at the top of Mount Independence, overlooked the plain and commanded an excellent view up and down the river. Constitution Island also held a series of batteries and redoubts along its banks to protect the river and chain.

USMA, Archives



1790 - 1817

While a proposal for the establishment of a military school at West Point had been made as early as 1776 by General Henry Knox, and again in 1789 by President George Washington, it would take years before such a school would be created. It was not until 1802 with the Military Peace Establishment Act, that the Military Academy at West Point was created under the presidency of Thomas Jefferson.

For the duration of the Revolutionary War, the Hudson River Valley remained primarily an agricultural area with farming concentrated along the river and creek beds in the bottomlands. Other industries, however, became prominent as well. By 1797, lumbering was a major industry as tall straight trees were in demand for ship masts. Later with the coming of the steamboat, the Highlands were heavily logged to provide fuel for boats and make charcoal for the rising iron industry.

With the onset of its new role as a military academy, West Point's facilities changed very little at first. An old building on the western edge of the Plain that was once a wartime prison and post headquarters, was adapted to serve as the first Academy instruction building. Several officer's quarters were nestled along the southern and western edges of the Plain against the slopes rising up to Fort



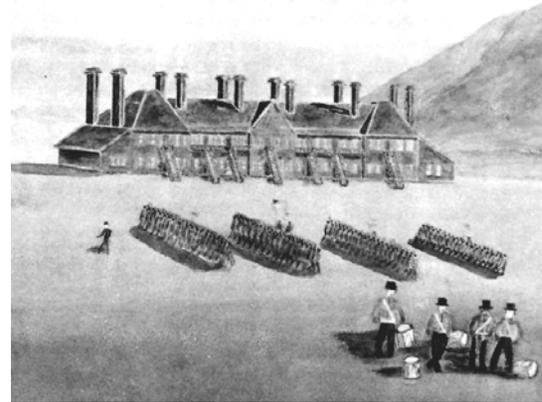
"View of the Hudson River," nineteenth century oil painting by Thomas Chambers.

Dunwell, 1991

Putnam. The most prominent building was Long Barracks which housed the cadets and was located just west of Fort Clinton. A few other storehouses and a hospital were located below the Plain. As the number of cadets grew from 44 to 200 by 1808, the need to improve and expand facilities became evident, and by 1815 a mess hall, the South Barracks, and a new Academy building were built.

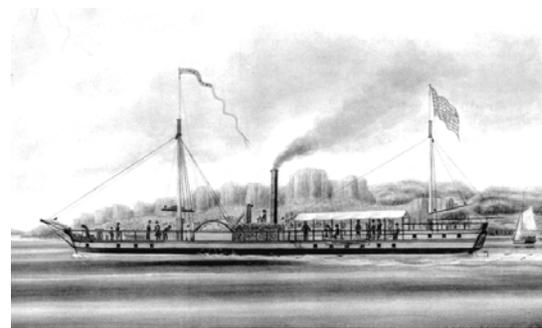
These three buildings were aligned along the southern edge of the Plain.

Major Jonathan Williams arrived at West Point as the Academy's first Superintendent in December 1801 and worked to establish a broad curriculum, acquire permanent instructors, and establish minimum standards for cadet acceptance. However, he strongly be-



Troops in front of the Long Barracks, by W. S. Sturgill.

USMA, Archives



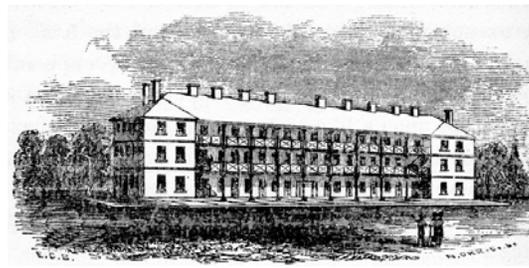
The Steamboat "Clermont" by V. de Witt, 1861.

Dunwell, 1991.



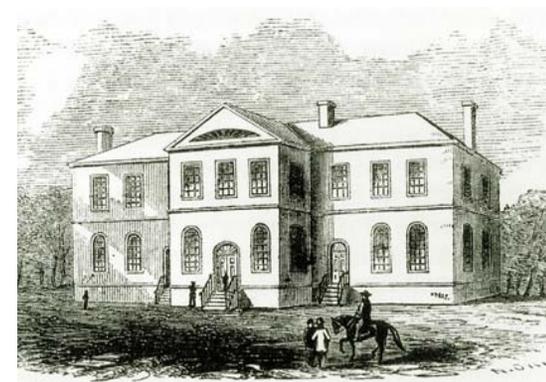
Storekeeper's house, 1802, by W. S. Sturgill.

USMA, Special Collections



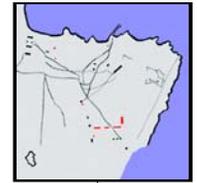
South Barracks, 1815.

Boynton, 1863



The Academy building built in 1815.

Boynton, 1863



lieved the Academy would operate better if located in Washington, D.C. Thinking of West Point only as a temporary location for the Academy, Williams did little to improve the condition of facilities or quarters. He repeatedly urged the President, Secretary of War, and Congress to approve the transfer, but in 1812 President Madison formally denied it. Frustrated, Williams resigned later that year.

Following Williams' resignation, the Academy operated under Colonel Joseph Gardner Swift, a recent Academy graduate. Aware of the poor condition of Academy buildings, Swift was instrumental in constructing West Point's new mess hall, barracks, and Acad-

emy building. However, Swift was also Chief of Engineers which often required him to be away from West Point.

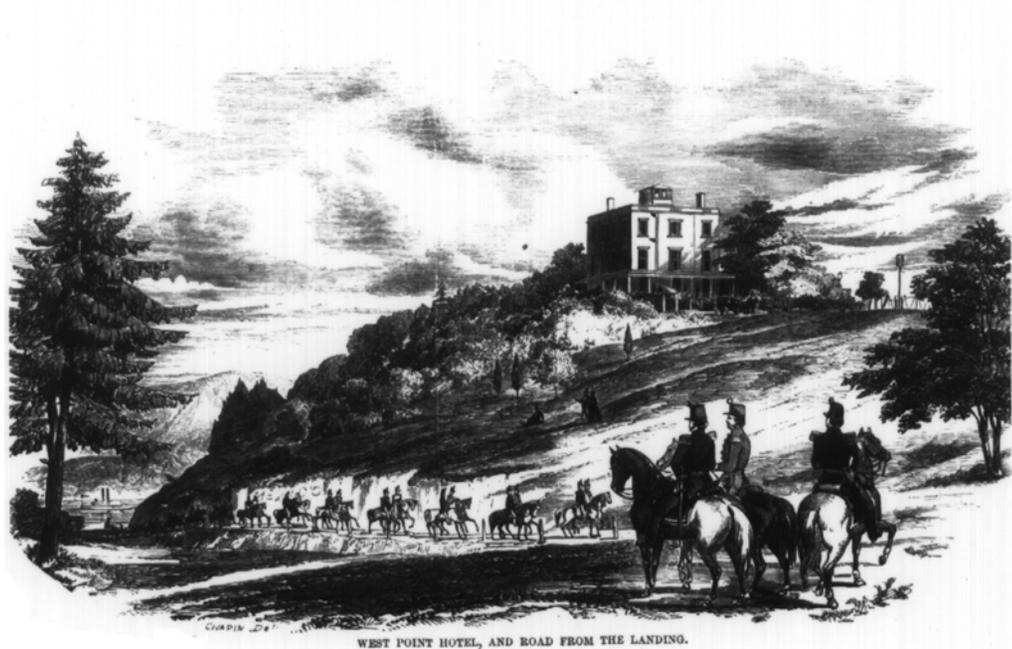
During this period the Hudson River continued to serve as the principal transportation corridor. Before the steamboat, most river travel was by sloop — efficient sailing vessels with a large carrying capacity. In 1807, the first successful trip of a steamboat, Robert Fulton's *Clermont*, began the era of steamboat travel that would soon dominate. By 1811, the first steam ferryboats were in operation on the Hudson which made river crossings much less difficult, dangerous, and time-consuming.



1817 - 1833

In July of 1817 Colonel Sylvanus Thayer took charge of the Military Academy. An 1808 graduate of the Academy, Thayer was now faced with supervising an Academy that had nearly collapsed under the supervision of his predecessors. With confidence and determination, Thayer arrived with a mission to “create, construct, to build up from the foundation under difficulties coming more from within than without; and then to preserve and defend what had been accomplished.” By working efficiently to establish a rigorous academic program, restore order and discipline, and improve physical conditions of the school, Thayer created a foundation on which the Academy would develop essentially unchanged for over 150 years. For this he has long been considered the “Father of the Military Academy.”

Thayer immediately recognized the poor physical condition of the Academy’s buildings and grounds. Housing was crowded and uncomfortable and more space was needed for infantry and artillery training. Thayer requested funds for urgent building repairs, and for new housing for the Superintendent and professors. In 1819, two brick professors’ quarters were completed followed by the Superintendent’s house in 1820. It was in this house that Thayer entertained many distinguished guests. To allow more space for train-



Engraving of the West Point Hotel, 1852.

USMA Archives

ing, the level Plain area was cleared of stones and boulders and became the central focus of the Academy landscape. The stones were used to build faculty houses in a row facing the river and known as “Professor’s Row.”

During this time West Point became nationally and internationally known as an important setting in the art world. The Hudson River Valley was the setting for the world-renowned era of painting known as the “Hudson River School of Landscape Painting.” In the early 19th Century, romanticism began to take hold in America and Americans developed intense nationalistic sentiments based on pride in their nation’s history and scenery. These sentiments were fueled by

painters who viewed nature as “God’s finest work”, and who painted romantic landscape scenes of the Hudson River Valley wilderness.

During Thayer’s superintendency, the new nation was searching for its identity. Compared to Europe, America had vast amounts of land untouched by white man, so the concept of “wilderness” seemed truly an American ideal. Americans became increasingly fascinated with the history and scenery associated with the Hudson Highlands as symbols of national pride. Thayer capitalized on this interest to gain public support for West Point which he knew was important for its long term survival. Three main events contributed to national focus on West Point as

not only a respected military academy, but also as a social and cultural center:

- Thayer's construction of the West Point Hotel
- The advancement of the "Hudson River School of Landscape Painting"
- The advancement of steamboat technology.

The faculty and board of the academy lured many influential people to the West Point Hotel over the years including Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, James Fenimore Cooper, painter Frederick Church and the Grand Duke of Russia. Charles Dickens wrote of West Point in his book *American Notes*: "Among the fair and lovely Highlands of the North River: Shut in by deep green heights and ruined forts...hemmed in, besides, all around with memories of Washington, is the Military School of America. It could not stand on more appropriate ground, and any ground more beautiful can hardly be."

Advancements in steamboat technology since its 1807 invention introduced an age of leisurely travel that was relatively fast, comfortable, and affordable. Tours through West Point and the Highlands became popular as they offered both history and spectacular scenery. Thayer's establishment of the West Point Hotel was one of his major contributions to the Academy. It provided a place for tourists to stay outside of the city where they could enjoy the "American Wilderness," ponder vestiges of the American Revolution, and watch the cadets' training activities. Completed in 1829, it was built at the northern edge

of the Plain overlooking the river. It's convenience contributed to West Point's popularity and recognition as a tourist destination.

The intensive interest in the Hudson River Valley was also reflected in and fueled by a group of authors known as the Knickerbocker Writers. These writers (the most famous being Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and William Cullen Bryant) wrote works such as Irving's *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* that dealt with the history, landscape and folklore of America that helped define a national identity. Influenced by the same romantic ideas as the Hudson River painters, they helped reinforce these ideas by expressing nature's moral and spiritual qualities in a way that painters could not.



USMA, Archives

Sylvanus Thayer, portrait by Robert W. Weir, 1844.



USMA, Special Collections

View of the Plain, hotel, and Fort Clinton summer camp by S. Eastman, 1835.



1833 - 1900

The period after Colonel Sylvanus Thayer's resignation as Academy Superintendent in 1833 to the end of the century saw a succession of superintendents with varying degrees of influence on the Academy's growth and development. Most notable of these was Major Richard Delafield, an 1818 Academy graduate who was Superintendent from 1838 to 1845, and again from 1856 to 1861. Delafield was instrumental in maintaining standards of academics and discipline established by Thayer, but it was his guidance of the Academy's physical development that is considered one of the most significant 19th century contributions to West Point. His building expansion plan for the Academy set the framework that would define the character of West Point, and guide its physical growth through the rest of the century.

A growing cadet corps and deteriorating facilities prompted Delafield to appoint a board of officers to assess the Academy's building needs and propose a general design for their improvement. Among the recommendations of the board was the relocation of the North and South Barracks in order to substantially increase the area of the Plain. This historic decision marked the first intentional planning effort to reserve the Plain as open space for cadet training activities and to concentrate all building outside of it – a decision that would



"West Point, 1850" by Robert Havell, Jr.

USMA Archives

significantly contribute to the West Point landscape as it appears today.

Delafield was concerned with establishing a definitive architectural style for the Academy, and was impressed with the Tudor-Gothic building designs submitted by the architect, Frederick Diaper. Delafield considered this style highly suited to the military mission of the Academy, and incorporated it into several of his own designs for Academy buildings including the library, new barracks, and Ordnance Compound. He also recommended the use of locally quarried granite in the new buildings which added to their distinctiveness. Delafield's expansion plans were the

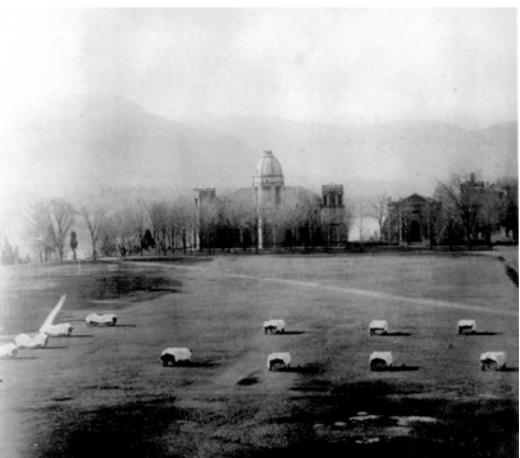
first efforts to give the Academy a distinct architectural identity described by one cadet as "a great stone castle."

By the 1890s, sports had become recognized as an important part of cadet training. The Plain served as the site for many of these activities. Baseball had been played since the 1820s, but had been limited to informal games. Modern football was introduced in 1890. Several games were played with visiting teams from Philadelphia and New York within the first year. In November 1890 midshipmen from the Naval Academy traveled to West Point for the first Army-Navy game. Other



USMA, Special Collections.

West Point 1840-41, watercolor by Augustus Kolmer.



USMA, Archives.

Baseball field, library, and chapel, 1850-1900.



NPS, FLONHS

Cadet Barracks, 1906.

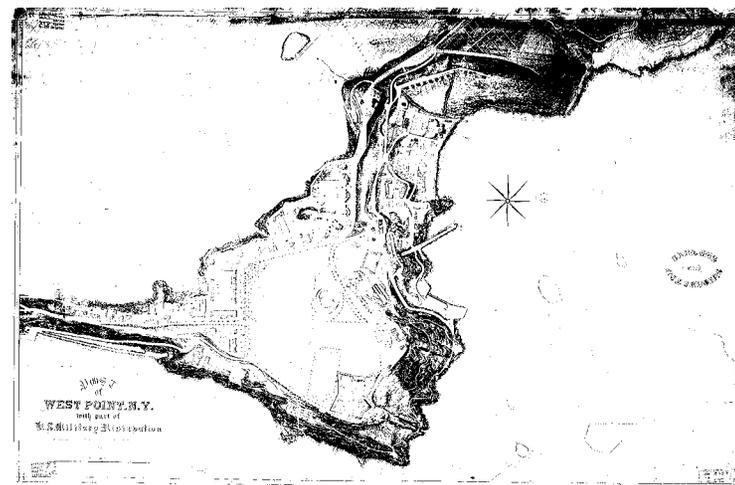
sports were also introduced including golf, polo and tennis.

By the mid-1800s West Point's popularity as a tourist attraction and Congress' recognition of many Academy graduates' distinguished service in the war with Mexico contributed to the ease with which funds could be acquired for the Academy. Liberal funds allowed Delafield's successors to make many alterations and building additions to the Academy. Unfortunately, most of the buildings constructed during the next twenty years were designed in a variety of clashing styles that disrupted Delafield's efforts toward architectural consistency.

However, many changes substantially improved the Academy's ability to function and the living conditions of its members. With the continued growth of the cadet corps, the need for an adequate water supply necessitated the construction of two reservoirs. Delafield Reservoir was constructed in 1879, and Lusk Reservoir

in 1895. A roadway program was begun, and the South Dock and its access road were built. With Superintendent Robert E. Lee's introduction of cavalry training to the curriculum, a new stables and riding hall (the largest in the country at the time) were built.

By the turn of the century many monuments had been erected at West Point in honor of past leaders and cadets of particular significance. These monuments, along with West Point itself, were symbols of America to the many tourists who traveled to see them.



USMA, Archives.

Map of West Point, 1877 - 78.





1900 - 1920s

Throughout the 19th Century, West Point maintained a small, park-like atmosphere with its arrangement of monuments, parade grounds, and living quarters around the open Plain. But by 1899, plans for increasing the number of cadets to 500 made the Academy aware that a large-scale expansion plan would be necessary to facilitate this growth. Concerned with a need for “a treatment worthy of the historic associations and natural beauty of the site”, it was decided to place the expansion plan design “in the hands of an architect of recognized ability.” In 1902, invitations were issued to ten prominent architecture firms to participate in a design competition for improvements at West Point. The firm of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson in collaboration with the Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm submitted the winning plan. Their Gothic scheme carefully integrated the new, the old, and the landscape, and changed West Point’s atmosphere to one of looming military mission and presence.

The invitations for the West Point expansion design competition stressed that new buildings should harmonize with existing ones and the overall plan should respect the historic associations and natural beauties of the site. The invitation, which called for development of an integrated plan of structures, roads, utili-

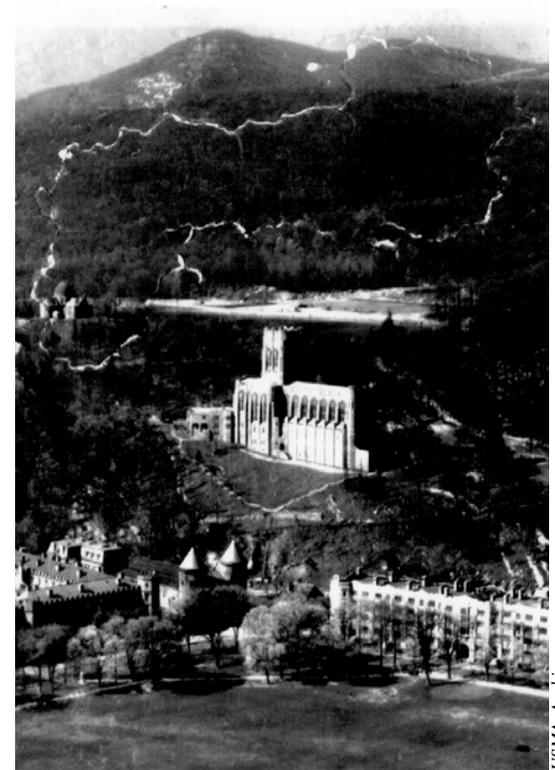


Aerial view of Plain, date unknown.

USMA, Archives

ties, and landscaping, also outlined the following criteria for judging the design:

- Consideration for future growth and improvements
- Clustering of buildings used by cadets to improve efficiency
- Maintenance of the Plain as open space for infantry instruction
- Integration of new buildings with existing structures
- Capable of execution for under \$5,000,000.

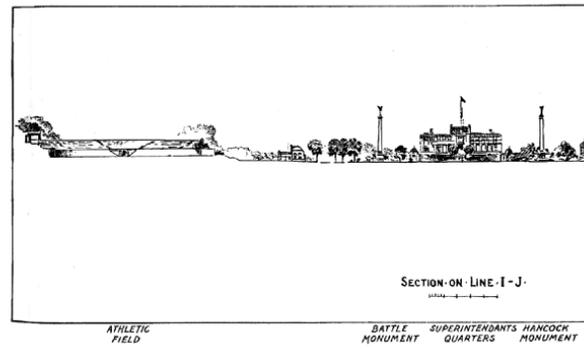
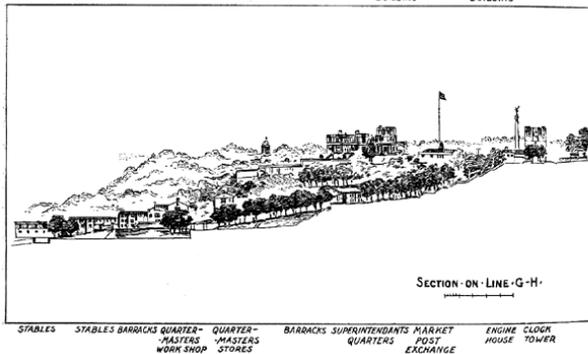
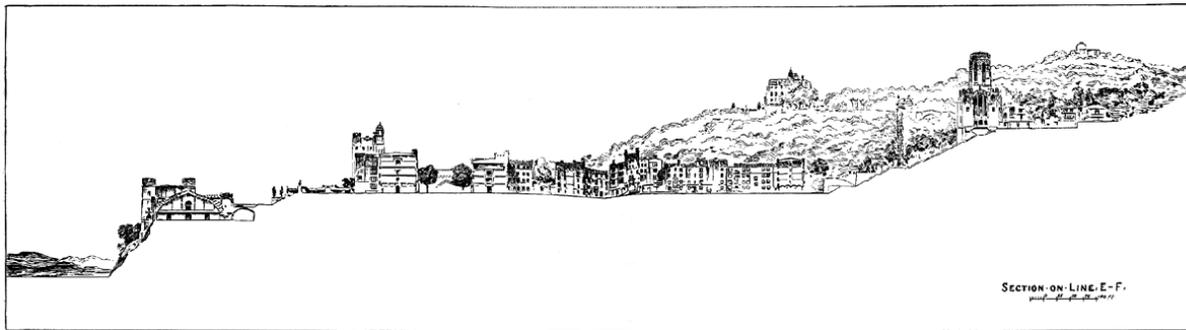


View of Plain and chapel, 1924.

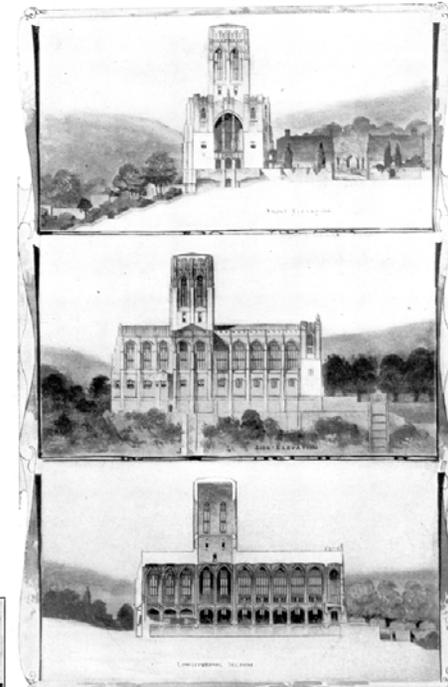
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The selection of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson’s Gothic plan was unanimous. It was clear to the judges that their plan successfully harmonized with West Point’s existing buildings, and “emphasized the picturesque natural surroundings of rocks, cliffs, mountains, and forests.” This success is clearest in their design of the Cadet Chapel, which towers over the Plain from its hillside setting.

Cram, Goodhue, & Ferguson collaborated with the Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm on the West Point plan. Partners Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and John Charles



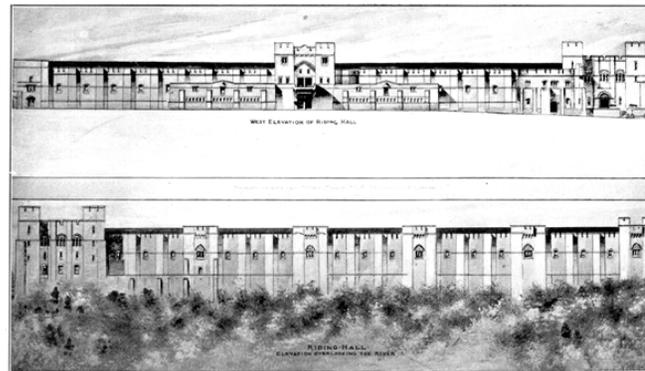
Architectural Record, December 1903



Architectural Record, December 1903 (immediate left and lower left)

Selections from the accepted design entry submitted by the firm of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, Architects, in the 1902 design competition for improvements at West Point.

Olmsted worked with the architects providing suggestions for organization, building and road placement, and landscaping. The Olmsted Brothers' firm grew out of the practice of the world-renowned landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted who was famous for his work on projects such as New York's Central Park. The Olmsteds worked with Cram, Goodhue, & Ferguson for ten years on the placement of buildings to prevent destruction of vegetation and preserve views of the Hudson River. They also proposed a system of scenic drives throughout the Academy grounds.



Section and elevation of Chapel design (above), and elevations of the Riding Hall design (left).



1930 – 1960s

Further improvements throughout the early twentieth century were isolated projects rather than systematic planned expansions. To meet increasing tourist demands, the new Hotel Thayer was built in 1925 and the old hotel was demolished in 1932. Washington Hall (a new cadet mess), Grant Hall (a barracks and visitor reception lounge), and a new barracks were also constructed. New faculty housing was built during the thirties in sets of brick duplexes and organized in clusters typical of 1930s suburban development.

Athletic activities constantly increased during this period. As more space was needed for playing fields and courts, the Plain was altered and subdivided to accommodate them. Nearly half of the historic parade and drill area was overtaken by these fields. Having used as much of the Plain as possible, the Army Athletic Association decided to level a large hill and use the earth to create infills for athletic fields north and south of the Plain.

West Point's historic significance and military excellence have contributed significantly to



View of 1960's Expansion, 1977.

USMA Archives

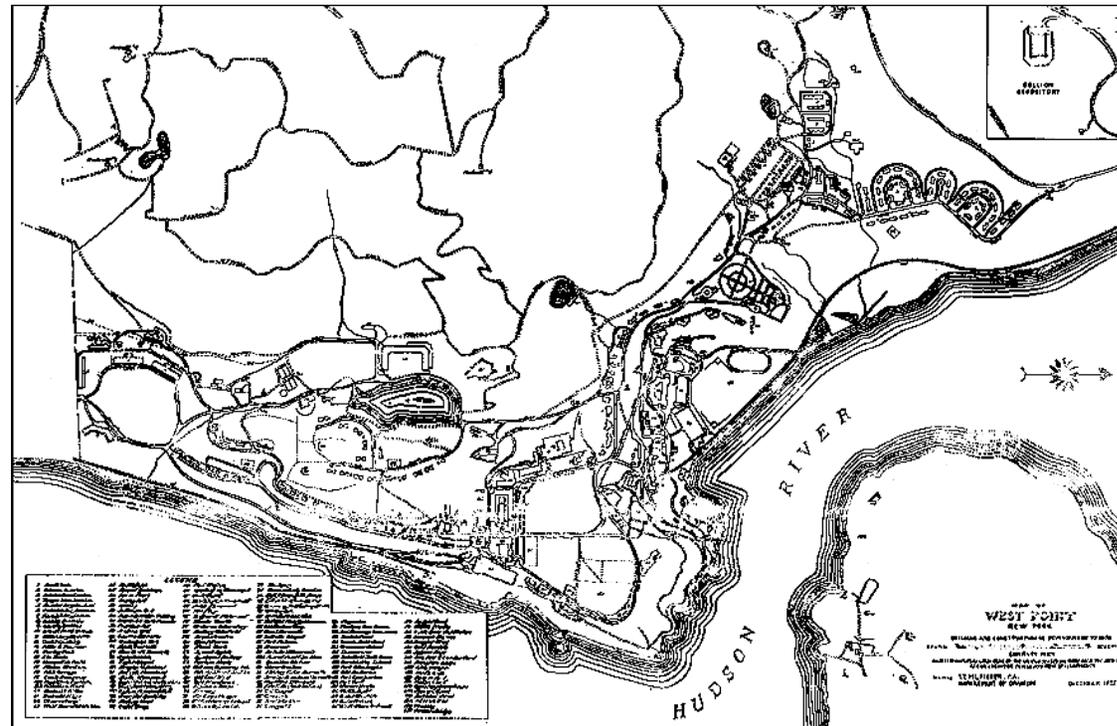
the Hudson River Valley's renown as a focus of American pride and values. In the second half of the 20th Century, citizens of the Hudson River Valley region began to increasingly value ecological and cultural resource management in balance with industrial progress. This shift of values led to growing support for laws

that protect and restore the resources of the area. Today, New York State dedicates enormous efforts toward protecting the river's ecosystems and revitalizing its waterfront communities. Protecting the river and its resources into the future will require continual attention to this balancing of society's needs and nature.



Lusk Housing Area.

USMA, Archives



Map of West Point, Building and Construction Development to 1938.

West Point Archives



Washington Hall.

CERL, 1997



Lee Housing Area.

West Point Archives



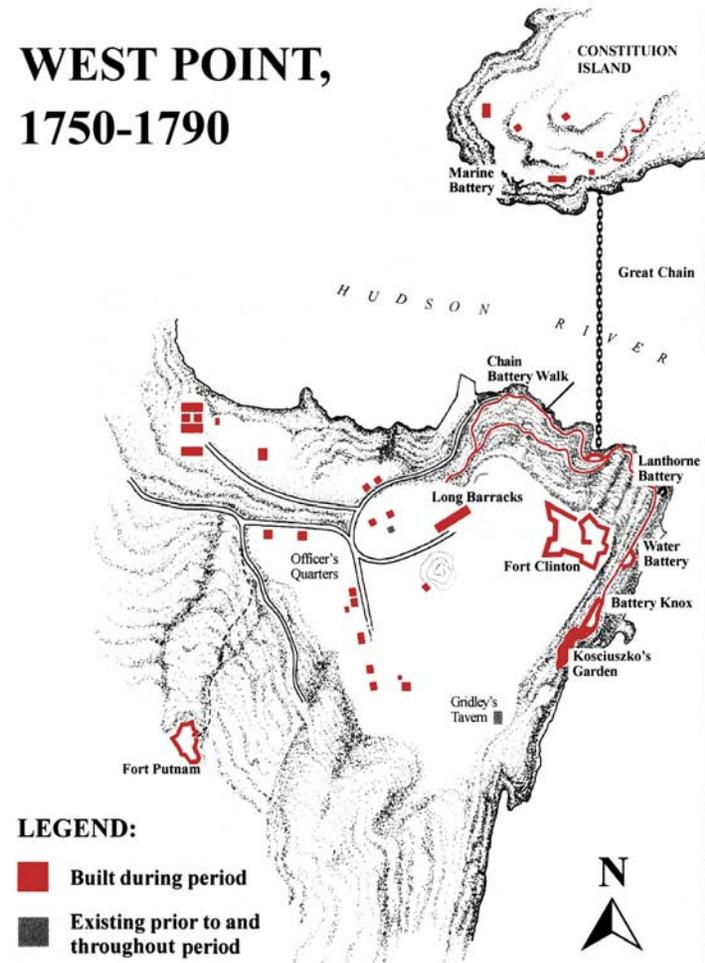
Pre-Revolutionary War and Revolutionary War Period (1600-1790)

- 1775 Colonel James Clinton and Mr. Christopher Tappan survey the banks of the Hudson and select West Point as the best site for a fortification to defend the Hudson against the British.
- 1778 Work begins on fortifications, and Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko arrives to take command of the construction.
- 1778 The level topographic feature above the bluffs known as the Plain begins to be cleared for training and construction purposes. Batteries along the river are accessed along a path known as Chain Battery Walk (later renamed Flirtation Walk).
- 1778-1781 Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko creates a garden on the eastern cliff.
- 1780 Forts Arnold (renamed Fort Clinton) and Putnam completed, along with four smaller forts and a series of batteries. Within a few years, quarters, barracks, offices, and supply shops appear, mostly along the north, west, and south edges of the Plain.
- 1781 British Army meets defeat at Yorktown.
- 1790 Congress purchases West Point.

The Establishment Period (1790-1817)

- 1801 First cadets arrive at West Point and Major Jonathan Williams arrives as first Superintendent of West Point.
- 1802 Military Academy at West Point is created by Congress.

**WEST POINT,
1750-1790**





- 1813 Under the management of Superintendent Swift, approval finally arrives for expansion of the Academy. Within two years, a new mess hall, the South barracks, and the Academy building are completed, followed by another barracks and three sets of quarters.
- 1816 West Point Cemetery is established in the northwestern part of the Post for officers, cadets, enlisted men, and resident civilians.

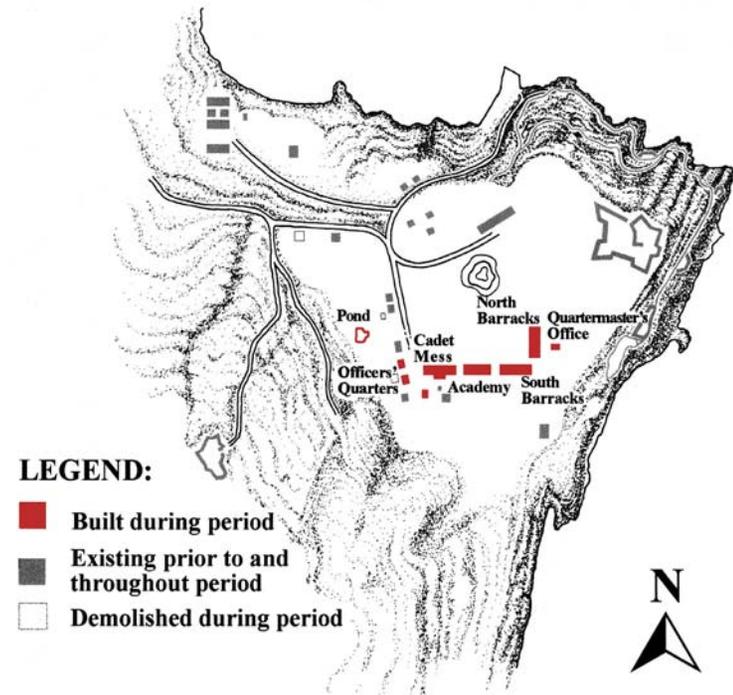
The Thayer Period (1817-1833)

- 1817 Colonel Sylvanus Thayer becomes Superintendent of the Military Academy.
- 1820-1821 Housing construction includes Superintendent's quarters, Commandant's quarters and beginnings of Professors' Row. This construction marks the first intentional placement of a distinct line of buildings along the Plain.
- 1820-1822 Area known as the Superintendent's Garden begins to take form.
- 1828 West Point Hotel is constructed to house the increasing number of tourists drawn by the Academy and the Hudson River landscape.

The Delafield Period (1833-1900)

- 1836-1838 The Cadet Chapel and the Academic and Exercise Hall are constructed on the south side of the Plain, establishing the Plain's southern edge as the center of cadet activities.

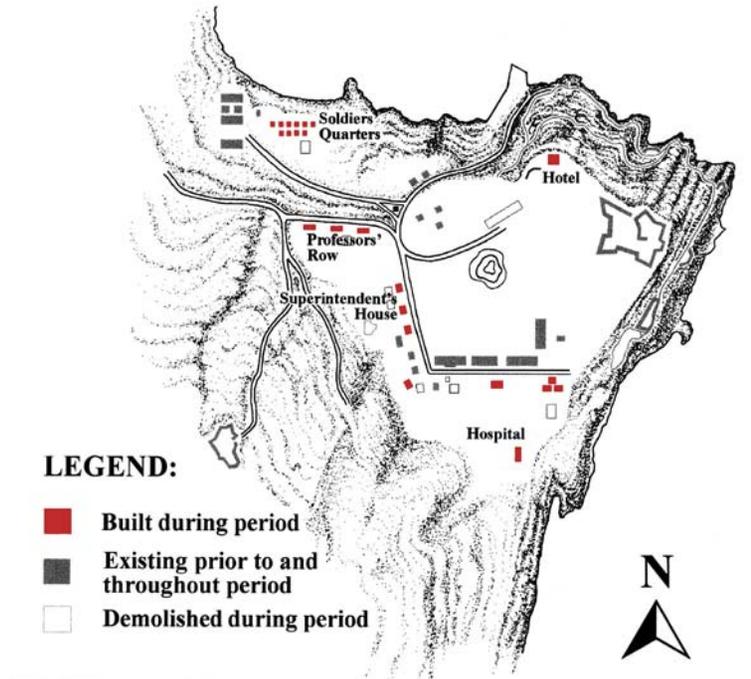
WEST POINT, 1790-1817





- 1838** Major Richard Delafield is appointed Superintendent of the Military Academy, and actively guides the installation's physical development.
- 1837** Officer Review Board decides to clear buildings off the Plain. This marks the first intentional planning to preserve the Plain as open space for cadet training activities, with new buildings to be placed on the Plain's periphery.
- 1839-1844** Construction of the first library, and an ordnance area, as well as plans for new barracks establish an architectural motif of granite Tudor-Gothic for the Academy. New roads appear from the Post to the cemetery, and to the Plain from the south.
- 1845-1856** Under Superintendents Henry Brewerton and Robert E. Lee, the building program continues largely implementing Delafield's ideas. The Academy's infrastructure is expanded and upgraded, and barracks, houses, and cavalry buildings are constructed.
- 1884-1900** A new academic building, hospital, mess, memorial hall, and gymnasium are constructed in varying architectural styles, and permanent buildings appear on the bluffs flanking the eastern edge of the Plain.
- 1890-1895** Organized sports become an important part of Cadet training, including baseball, football, golf, polo, and tennis. Most sports activities occur on the Plain.
- The Centennial Expansion Period (1900-1920s)**
- 1902** Architectural design competition is initiated to select a firm for the planned large-scale expansion of the Military Academy.

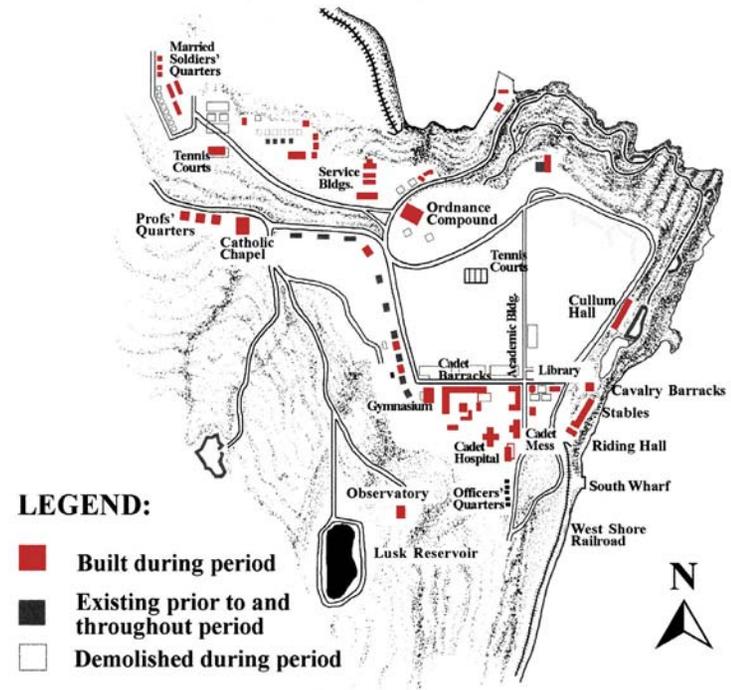
WEST POINT, 1817-1833





- 1903 The firm of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson's Gothic style design for the Academy is selected and the firm is contracted to oversee the expansion. The landscape components of the winning entry are designed by the Olmstead Brothers firm, which is also contracted by the Academy for the expansion work.
- 1904-1905 Plans for specific building designs are completed, and the general landscape design for placement of buildings, roads, paths, and other features begins to develop.
- 1908-1911 Although a few expansion buildings were completed between 1905-1907, the majority (19 buildings) are constructed during these years. The buildings are sited and designed to blend in with the landscape and the existing architecture. The Olmstead Brothers final general plan is accepted in 1911, and emphasizes woodland management, road placement, and development of scenic views.
- 20th Century Expansion Period (1930-1960s)**
- 1930s A large Cadet expansion necessitates new barracks, mess hall, faculty quarters, and assorted facility buildings.
- 1936 Ellen Biddle Shipman designs a formal planting plan that is subsequently implemented for the Superintendent's Garden.
- 1924-1950 Athletic facilities are increased to include Michie Stadium, Buffalo Soldiers Field, the North Athletic Fields, and Target Hill Field, and the South Fill area. The Plain is slowly and continuously altered and divided for sports facilities and associated elements such as bleachers.

WEST POINT, 1833-1900





Chronology and Maps

- 1960-1964 The old Delafield era library is demolished and a new library is built on the same site.

- 1960 Major General William C. Westmoreland becomes Superintendent of the Military Academy, and immediately begins plans for a massive expansion. The plan focuses on modernizing and expanding the Cadet Zone.

- 1964 Congress approves a cadet corps expansion of almost 100%, and the architectural firm of O'Connor and Kilham designs new buildings.

- 1965-1969 The centerpiece of the expansion program, Washington Hall, is constructed to significantly enlarge the mess hall and new barracks. The Plain's historic integrity is affected by this new structure as it encroaches onto the Parade area and eliminates historic buildings marking the Plain's border.

- 1965-1990 Sometime during the period, Thayer Road ceases to cross the Plain, and numerous walkways appear on the Plain in conjunction with expanded athletic facilities.

WEST POINT, 1900-1960

