



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

State Historic Preservation Office *Commission on Culture and Tourism*

August 6, 2004

Mr. Stephen E. Korta, II, Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 317546
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06131-7546

Subject: Central Vermont Railroad Pier

Location: State Pier Road
New London, Connecticut

Dear Commissioner Korta:

We are pleased to inform you that the subject property will be considered by the State Historic Preservation Board for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on October 14, 2004.

The members of the State Historic Preservation Board include professional archaeologists, architects, architectural historians, historical architects and historians. These professionals evaluate the historical significance of buildings, districts and sites in Connecticut. A vote by the board to approve a property's nomination to the National Register signifies that, in the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Board, the property meets the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places.

Written comments as to whether the above-named property meets the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places will be accepted up to the time of the meeting of the State Historic Preservation Board. However, it is requested that written comments be sent so as to arrive no later than five days in advance of the meeting. Oral presentations as to whether the above-named property meets the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places will be heard at the meeting of the State Historic Preservation Board which will be held at 9:30 a.m. on October 14, 2004, in the South Congregational Church, 277 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut. Persons wishing to make oral presentations are requested to inform the State Historic Preservation Officer at least five days in advance of the meeting.

The National Register is the Federal Government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register provides recognition and assists in preserving our Nation's heritage. Enclosed is a copy of the criteria under which properties are evaluated.

59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1901
Telephone: 860-566-3005 Facsimile: 860-566-5078

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COMMUNICATION# /

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Listing in the National Register results in the following for historic properties.

1. Consideration in planning for Federal, federally licensed, and federally assisted projects. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that Federal agencies allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on all projects affecting historic properties listed in the National Register. For further information, please refer to 36 CFR 800.
2. Eligibility for Federal tax provisions. If a property is listed in the National Register, certain Federal tax provisions may apply. The Tax Reform Act of 1986 revised the historic preservation tax incentives authorized by Congress in the Tax Reform Act of 1976, the Revenue Act of 1978, the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980, the Economic Recovery Act of 1981, and Tax Reform Act of 1984, and as of January 1, 1987, provides for a 20 percent investment tax credit with a full adjustment to basis for rehabilitating historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings. The former 15 percent and 20 percent Investment Tax Credits (ITCs) for rehabilitations of older commercial buildings are combined into a single 10 percent ITC for commercial or industrial buildings built before 1936. The Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980 provides Federal tax deductions for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures. Whether these provisions are advantageous to a property owner is dependent upon the particular circumstances of the property and the owner. Because tax aspects outlined above are complex, individuals should consult legal counsel or the appropriate local Internal Revenue Service office for assistance in determining the tax consequences of the above provisions. For further information on certification requirements, please refer to 36 CFR 67.
3. Consideration of historic values in the decision to issue a surface coal mining permit where coal is located, in accord with the Surface Mining and Control Act of 1977. For further information, please refer to 30 CFR 700 et seq.
4. Qualification for Federal grants for historic preservation when funds are available. Presently funding is unavailable. Contact the State Historic Preservation Office to determine the current status of such grants.

In Connecticut, listing in the National Register of Historic Places results in the following for historic properties:

1. Eligibility to purchase historical markers from the State Historic Preservation Officer.
2. Application of Connecticut General Statutes, Section 22a-19a. This statute directs that the provisions of Sections 22a-15 through 22a-19, inclusive, of the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, which permit legal recourse for the unreasonable

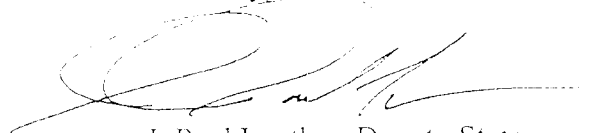
destruction of the state's resources, shall also be applicable to historic structures and landmarks of the state.

Such structures and landmarks are defined as those properties (1) which are listed or under consideration for listing as individual units on the National Register of Historic Places or (2) which are a part of a district listed or under consideration for listing on the National Register and which have been determined by the State Historic Preservation Board to contribute to the historic significance of such a district. If the plaintiff in a resulting legal action cannot make a prima facie showing that the conduct of the defendant, acting alone or in combination with others, has unreasonably destroyed or is likely unreasonably to destroy the public trust in such historic structures or landmarks, the court shall tax all costs for the action to the plaintiff.

Owners of private properties nominated to the National Register have an opportunity to concur or object to listing in accord with the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 60. Any owner or partial owner of private property who chooses to object to listing may submit to the State Historic Preservation Officer a notarized statement certifying that the party is the sole or partial owner of the private property and objects to the listing. Each owner or partial owner of private property has one vote regardless of what part of the property that party owns. If a majority of private property owners object, a property will not be listed; however, the State Historic Preservation Officer shall submit the nomination to the Keeper of the National Register for determination of eligibility of the property for listing in the National Register. If the property is then determined eligible for listing, although not formally listed, Federal agencies will be required to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment before the agency may fund, license, or assist a project which will affect the property. If you choose to object to the listing of your property, the notarized objection must be submitted to John W. Shannahan, State Historic Preservation Officer, 59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106 by the day of the scheduled State Historic Preservation Board meeting on which your property is to be evaluated.

Please call or write John Herzan, National Register Coordinator, if you have any questions regarding the proposed nomination of this property to the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Paul Loether', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

J. Paul Loether, Deputy State
Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure: National Register Inventory-Nomination Form

THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

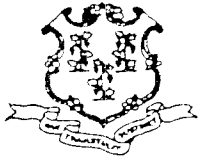
Criteria: The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- A. A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- B. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- C. A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or
- D. A cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- E. A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- F. A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance; or
- G. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

cc: The Honorable Gerald J. Gaynor, Jr.
City Manager
Planning and Zoning Commission
Development and Planning
Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
Historic District Commission
Municipal Historian
New London County Historical Society
New London Landmarks, Inc.
AHS, Inc.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION ON CULTURE AND TOURISM

August 11, 2004

Charlotte Shroeder
Assistant Director
Office of Development & Planning
111 Union Street
New London, CT 06320

Subject: Central Vermont Railroad Pier
New London, Connecticut

Dear Ms. Shroeder:

This is to remind you that the above property will be considered by the State Historic Preservation Board for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on Thursday, October 14, 2004 (see enclosed letter).

As you know, your community is one of several municipalities in Connecticut involved in the federal Certified Local Government Program for historic preservation.

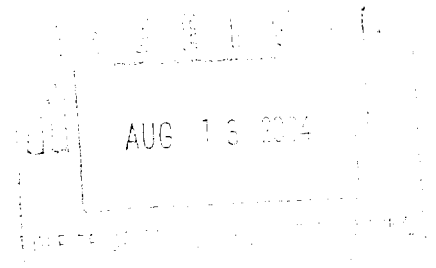
Please refer to the attached pages from Connecticut's "Certified Local Government Program" manual which outlines the National Register review responsibilities of your community's chief elected official and local historic district commission (pertinent sections are highlighted). Also enclosed is a form for use by the municipality's local historic district commission in filing its nomination review report with our office.

If you have any questions, please call Paul Loether, Certified Local Government Coordinator.

Sincerely,

J. Paul Loether, Division Director and
Deputy State Historic Preservation
Officer

Enclosures: Certified Local Government Program Procedures
Historic District/Property Commission Comment Form
Chief Elected Official's Comment Form
Copy of Inventory/Nomination Form
NR Notification Letter



Historic Preservation and Museum Division
Amos Bull House, 59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
860-566-3005 860-566-5078 fax

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM
PROCEDURES

Section 5 - Minimum Requirements

Subsection

- (d) Provide for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program, including the process of recommending properties to the National Register.

Procedure for Local Review of National Register Nominations

- (1) All meetings shall fulfill the responsibilities of the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 1-21 a-k, as amended.
- (2) The CHC and the CLG shall work together to provide ample opportunity for public participation in the nomination of properties to the National Register. All reports submitted by the CLG to the CHC regarding the eligibility of properties shall include assurances of public input. The CLG shall retain a list of all persons contacted during the evaluation period and note comments received. If a public meeting was held, a list of those attending shall be included in the report.
- (3) When a historic preservation review commission reviews a nomination or other actions which are normally evaluated by a professional in a specific discipline and that discipline is not represented on the commission, the commission shall seek expertise in the area before rendering its decision.

Timetable

- (1) Before a property within the jurisdiction of the CLG may be considered by the State Historic Preservation Board to be nominated to the Secretary for inclusion on the National Register, the SHPO shall notify the owner, the applicable chief elected official, and the historic preservation review commission at least 60 days prior to the scheduled consideration. The notification shall be accompanied by all information on the nomination that is provided to the members of the State Historic Preservation Board for their consideration, which information shall be available for public inspection.
- (2) The historic preservation review commission, after reasonable opportunity for public comment, shall prepare a report as to whether or not such property, in its opinion, meets the criteria of the National Register. Within 60 days of notice from the SHPO, the chief elected official shall transmit the report of the commission and his or her recommendation to the SHPO. Except as provided in (3) below

and the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, Section 101 (c)(2)(B), after receipt of such report and recommendation, or if no such report and recommendation are received within 60 days, the SHPO shall make the nomination. The SHPO may expedite such process with the concurrence of the CLG.

- (3) If both the historic preservation review commission and the chief elected official recommend that a property not be nominated to the National Register, the SHPO shall take no further action, unless within 30 days of the receipt of such recommendation by the SHPO an appeal is filed with the SHPO. If such an appeal is filed, the SHPO shall follow the procedures for making a nomination pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, Section 101(a). Any report and recommendations made under this section shall be included with any nomination submitted by the SHPO to the Secretary.

Certified Local Government Program
Historic District/Property Commission Comment Form
for Nominations to the
National Register of Historic Places

District/Property Name: _____

Address (for individual nomination): _____

The _____ reviewed
(Name of Commission)

the nomination of the district/property noted above to the National Register of Historic Places at its meeting on _____.

_____ It is the finding of the Commission that this property/district meets the National Register criteria.

_____ It is the finding of the Commission that this property/district does not meet the National Register criteria.

_____ Expertise in the discipline(s) defined in 36 CFR 61, Appendix A, appropriate to this nomination, is represented on the Commission.

_____ Expertise in the discipline(s) defined in 36 CFR 61, Appendix A, appropriate to this nomination, is not represented on the Commission but was obtained in the review of this nomination. Attached is a copy of the resume of the person(s) consulted on this nomination. Only the name(s) is listed for persons consulted who have been previously identified by the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office as meeting 36 CFR 61 professional qualifications.

(For additional comments, please use reverse.)

ATTEST:

BY _____

DATE: _____

Secretary/Clerk of the Commission

Certified Local Government Program
Chief Elected Official's Comment Form
for Nominations to the
National Register of Historic Places

District/Property Name: _____

Address (for individual nomination): _____

As the Chief Elected Official for _____
(Name of Municipality)

I hereby

_____ approve

_____ do not approve

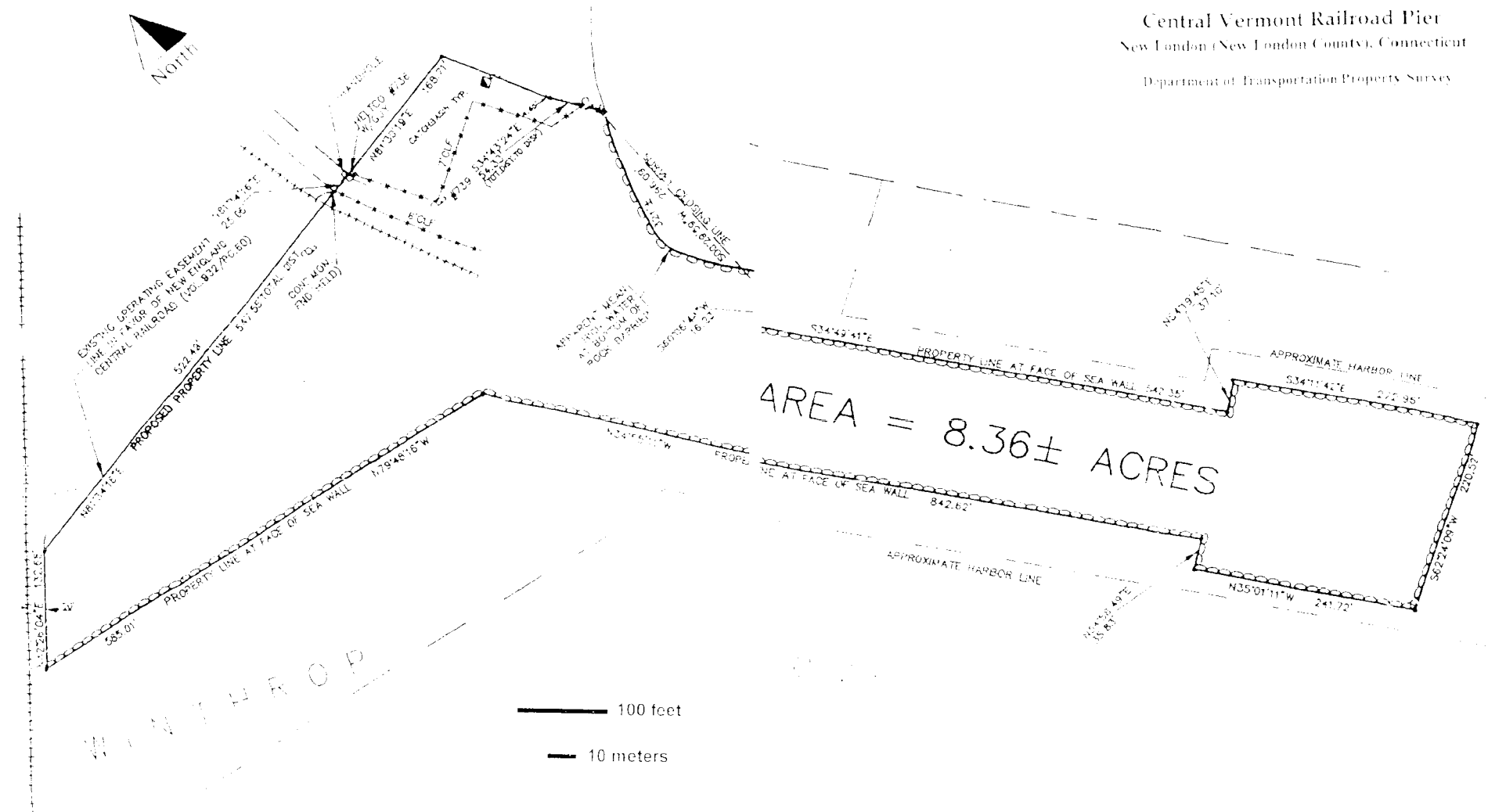
of the submission by the State Historic Preservation Officer of the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the district/property noted above to the National Park Service for review and listing of the resource on the National Register of Historic Places.

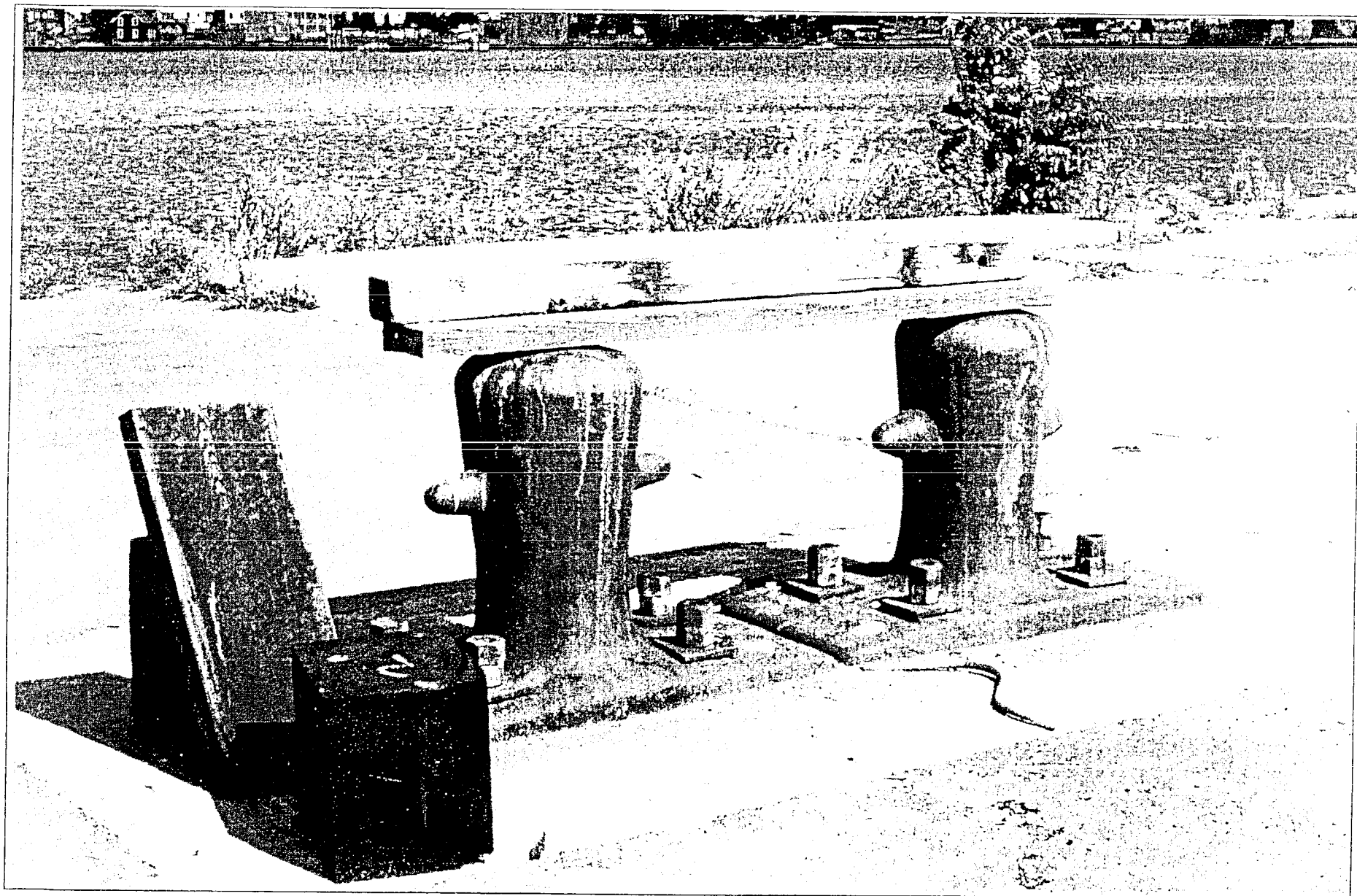
Name

Title

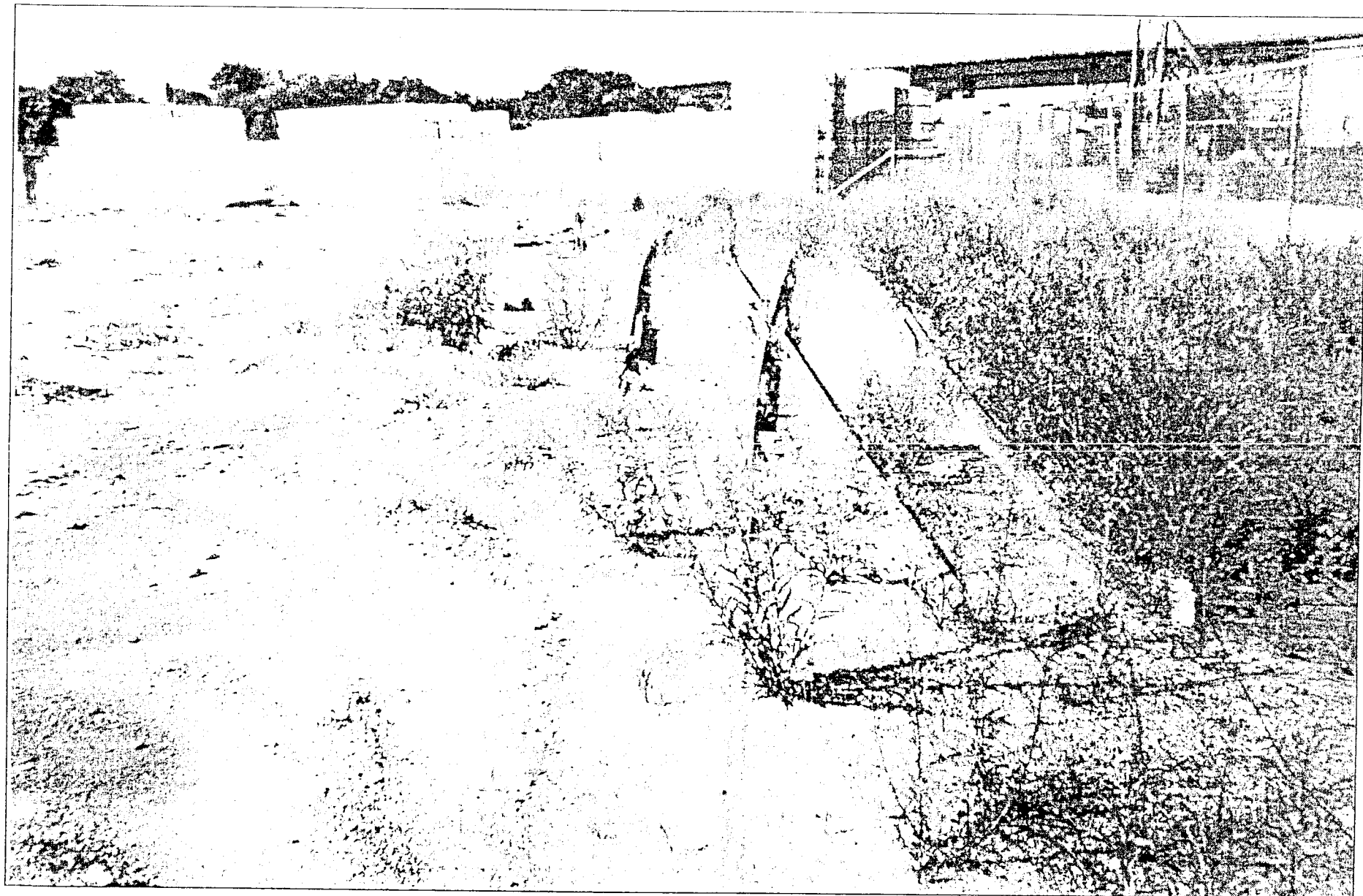
Date

Department of Transportation Property Survey





Detail of one type of bollard, east side of pier, camera facing east.
Photograph 9 of 10




Remnant of railroad tracks visible at the northeast corner of the property, camera facing north.
Photograph 10 of 10

CITY OF NEW LONDON
INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 7, 2004

TO: Richard M. Brown, City Manager
Historic District Commission

FROM: Charlotte M. Schroeder, Assistant Director, ODP 

SUBJECT: CENTRAL VERMONT RAILROAD PIER
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

Attached is a DRAFT copy of the National Register Nomination Form packet submitted for the subject property.

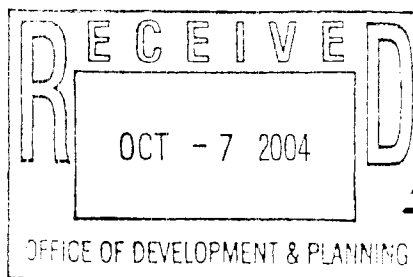
This follows the notification of the nomination to be presented to the Connecticut Historic Commission Board for consideration at their meeting of October 14, 2004.

This is provided for your information and use in responding to the SHPO regarding the nomination. If you have any questions, please call me at 437-6392.

CMS:S

attachment

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



DRAFT

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name CENTRAL VERMONT RAILROAD PIER

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number State Pier Road

☐ not for publication

city or town New London

☐ vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county New London code 011 zip code 06320

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ 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 ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.

☐ removed from the National
Register.

☐ other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Central Vermont Railroad Pier
Name of Property

New London County, CT
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☐ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☒ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: water-related
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: earth-filled masonry pier

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A
walls Granite

roof N/A
other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Central Vermont Railroad Pier
Name of Property

New London County, CT
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark an "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION
ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1876-1946

Significant Dates

1876

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 Building 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

Name of repository:

State Historic Preservation Office,
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106

Central Vermont Railroad Pier

Name of Property

New London County, CT

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 8.36 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 19 743220 4582380

Zone Easting Northing

3

Zone Easting Northing

2

4

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bruce Clouette, Historian

organization Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. date May 13, 2004

street & number P.O. Box 543 telephone 860-429-1723

city or town Storrs state CT zip code 06268

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Connecticut Department of Transportation

street & number 2800 Berlin Turnpike telephone 860-594-3000

city or town Newington state CT zip code 06131-7546

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Central Vermont Railroad Pier
New London, New London County, CT

Description:

The Central Vermont Railroad Pier (Photographs 1 and 2, Figure 4) is an 1,100-foot-long earth-filled granite masonry structure that was completed in 1876. It lies just west of the Connecticut State Pier on the west bank of the Thames River, which is tidal at this point and forms part of New London Harbor. The general area was formerly one of warehouses and railroad yard tracks but today is mostly open and used for outdoor lumber storage. The pier property includes an onshore portion that is 850 feet wide and varies in depth from about 100 to 300 feet. Formerly, a frame office building from 1937 and a modern cylindrical storage tank stood on the land portion of the property, but these have been demolished. To the north of the property are Amtrak's electrified Northeast Corridor rail line and, beyond that, the high-level Gold Star Bridge carrying Interstate 95.

The pier is 150 feet wide for most of its length; the final 250 feet, however, is 220 feet wide, giving the pier a hammer-head shape. Currently the pier's surface is covered with asphalt (Photograph 3), with the paving flush with the tops of the masonry perimeter walls. Along the length of the pier's west wall and the head wall of the west slip is a shelf that appears to have accommodated a timber fender of some sort, held in place by iron rods pinned into the masonry, only a few of which survive (Photographs 4 and 5). The walls themselves consist of a coursed ashlar of roughly shaped gray granite blocks typically about 18" thick and 4 feet in length, finished with flat capstones joined with iron staples. The walls rise about four feet above the high water mark, but because the tides in New London rise and fall an average of 2 ½ feet, the exposure of the walls constantly varies. The portion below the high water mark is dark colored and partly covered with algae (Photograph 6). The east side of the pier is similar, but because of greater deterioration the masonry is less well defined (Photograph 7). Wooden pilings form a protective barrier along part of the east side. Although the substructure is not visible, it can be assumed from contemporary construction practice that the stone perimeter walls become thicker toward the bottom, continue well below the level of the harbor bed (which was 22 feet below high water at one point), and rest on a dense grid of timber piles. There appears to be some minor subsidence of portions of the west wall.

Objects on the pier are currently limited to three types of mooring appliances, all of which are set within concrete footings (Photographs 8 and 9). In the period of significance, several parallel railroad tracks extended the length of the pier, of which only a remnant at the extreme northeast corner of the property remains visible (Photograph 10). The arrangement of buildings and structures atop the pier has changed with the various purposes it has served. When it was built, it had coal-loading equipment and storage bunkers to service a fleet of Reading Railroad coastal freighters that off-loaded coal for New England markets. In 1904 the Central Vermont Railroad decided to use the pier for another purpose, transporting freight and express between New York City and the communities along its inland New England route. To that end, a large freight shed was built along the east side of the pier, with the coal hoist remaining on the west side for some time. Over the years additional buildings

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Central Vermont Railroad Pier
New London, New London County, CT

appeared, including an office and a tool house. After freight transfer ended in 1946, the pier was mostly used as storage tracks for freight cars, and the buildings were taken down around 1970. At one time, only the administrative office building, a two-story frame building built in 1937, remained standing, but it too has now been demolished.

The slips on either side of the pier originally had a depth of 16 feet, increased by additional dredging to 21 feet in the early 20th century (Figure 3). When it was in operation, the pier was connected to the New London waterfront by a 20-foot channel and to the middle of the Thames River by the 35-foot channel (depths as of June 30, 1921) that also served the adjacent State Pier. Because of natural forces such as siltation from sediment by the Thames River, the depth has changed over time.

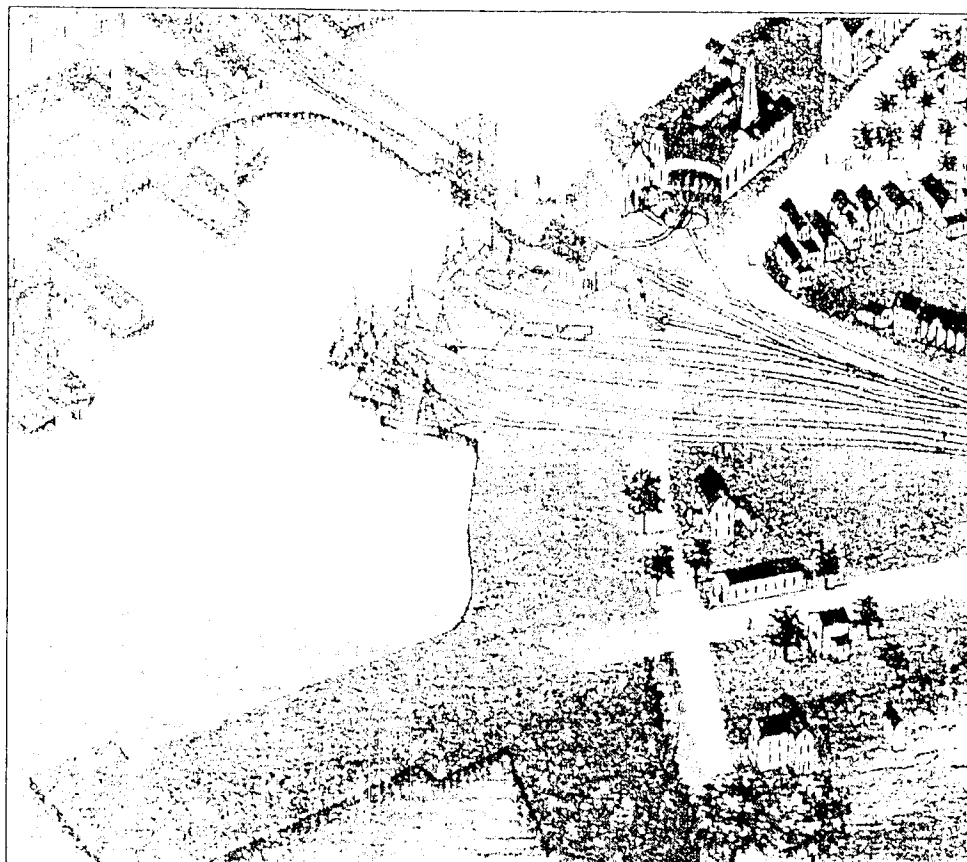
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Central Vermont Railroad Pier
New London, New London County, CT

Figure 1: Engraving of the pier (lower left) shortly after completion in 1876, before any buildings, tracks, or structures were added (*New London, Connecticut, 1876*). The railroad's earlier wharves are visible in the upper center of the view, as is the rail line and drawbridge leading to New London's commercial center.



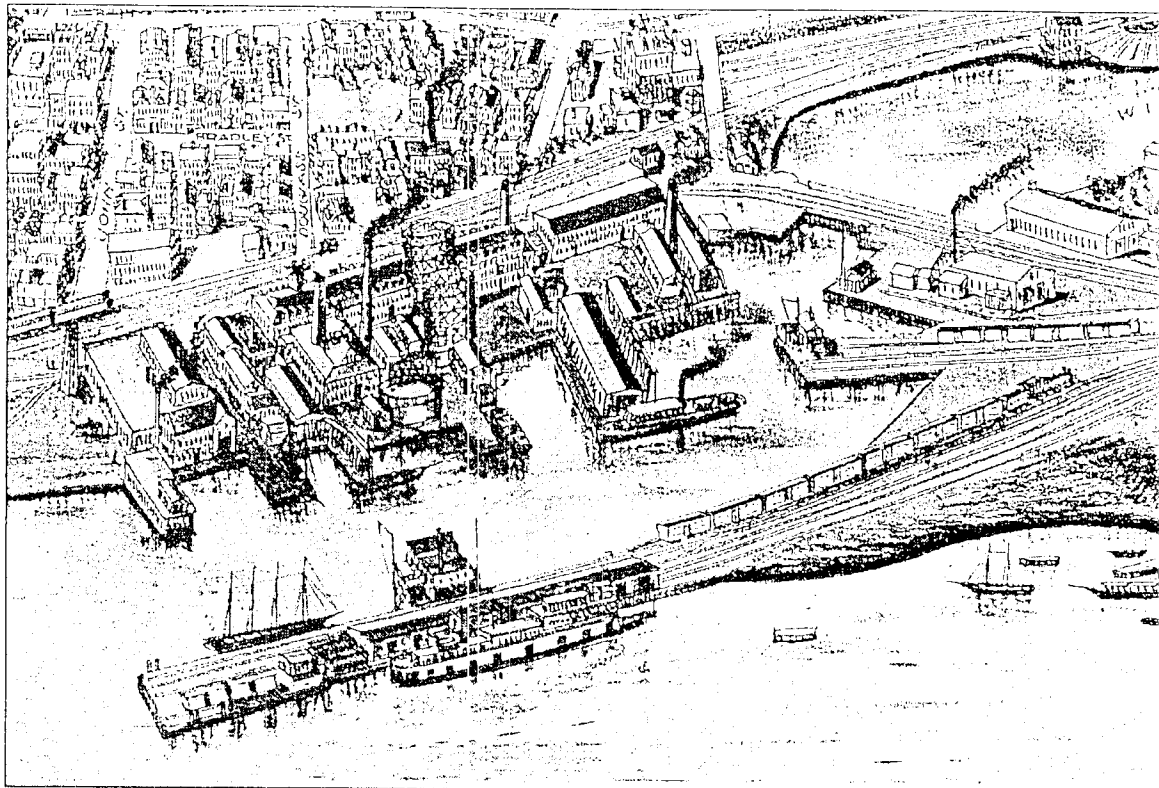
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Central Vermont Railroad Pier
New London, New London County, CT

Figure 2: Engraving of the pier in 1911, showing one of the railroad's freighters alongside. The buildings include a freight house on the east side and a coal elevator on the west side (*Aero View of New London*). One of the earlier small wharves is still in use.



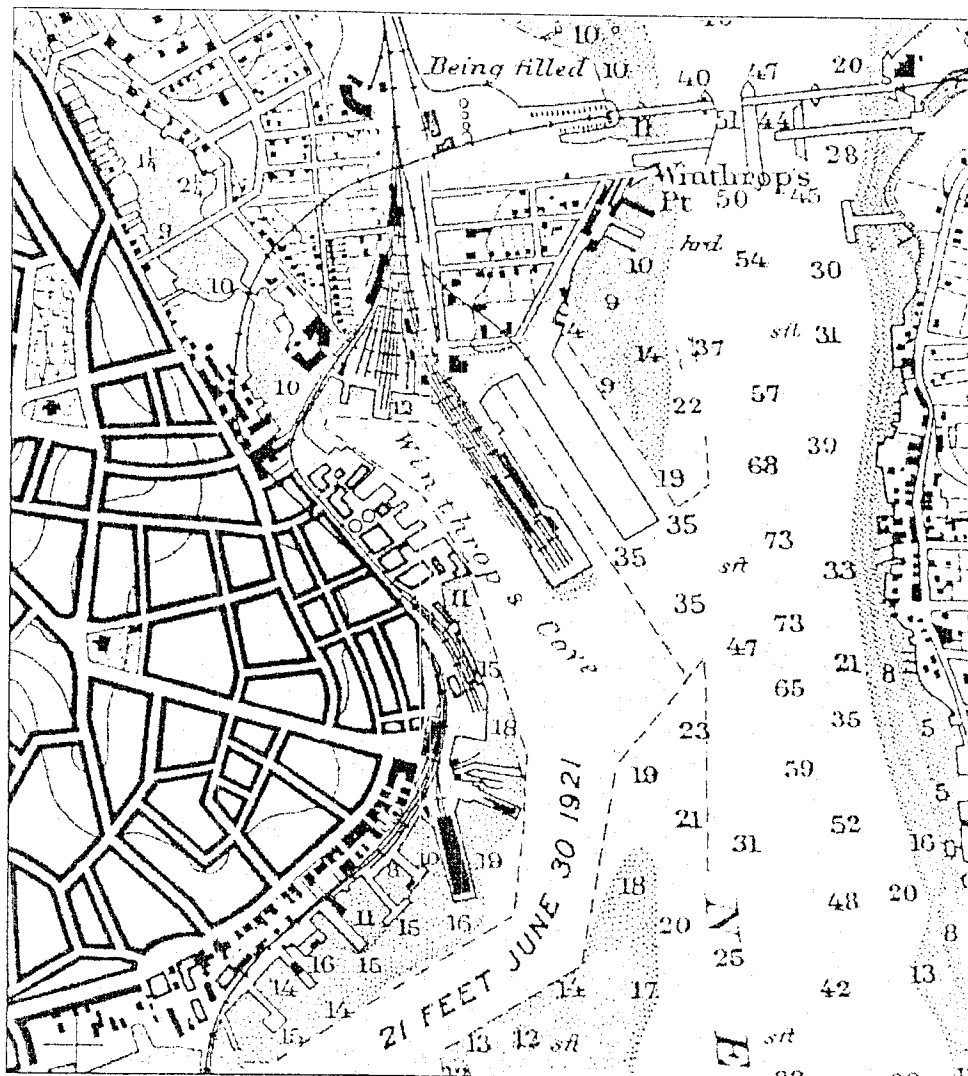
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Central Vermont Railroad Pier
New London, New London County, CT

Figure 3: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey chart of New London Harbor, 1929.



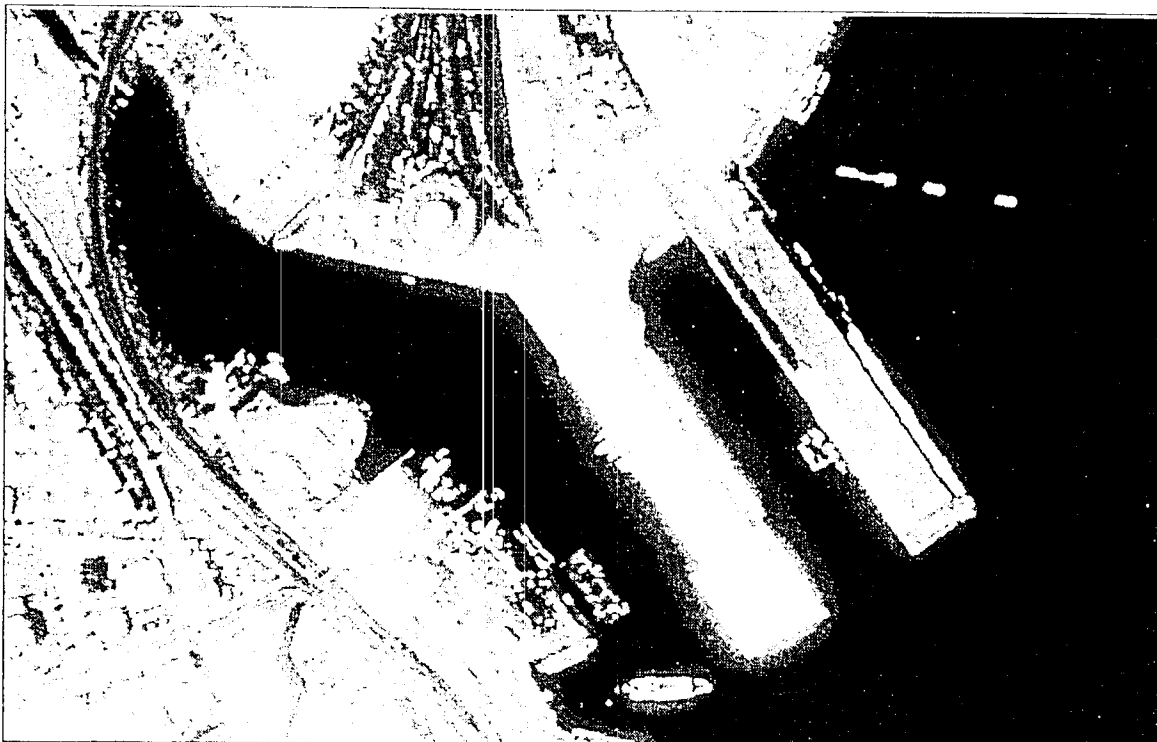
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Figure 4: Aerial view of pier (left, with Connecticut State Pier on right), 1995. The tank onshore and the administration building are no longer standing (Connecticut D.E.P.).



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Statement of Significance:

Summary

The Central Vermont Railroad Pier in New London, Connecticut, is a significant resource because it illustrates the important role that rail-water interchange played in the state's 19th-century transportation history (National Register Criterion A). At one time, virtually every Connecticut railroad had some connection with coastal freight and passenger shipping. Before an all-rail route was completed between Boston and New York, passengers could choose to complete their journey via steamship from Fall River, Providence, Stonington, Groton, New London, or Old Saybrook. Coal for Connecticut's industries was brought in by water and transferred to railroad cars well into the 20th century. Even the inland routes interchanged freight and passengers with steamship service on the Thames and Connecticut rivers. This large pier was built by the Central Vermont Railroad as a means of bringing in first coal and then general freight and express shipments and was active from 1876 to 1946. The Central Vermont Railroad ran from New London through eastern Connecticut to Palmer, Massachusetts, a major railroad junction, and then continued onward to Vermont and Canada.

The pier also has significance in engineering history as a large and relatively intact example of 19th-century harbor-facilities engineering (Criterion C). The form and method of construction reveal much about the period: the pier's large size significantly exceeded the length of facilities built for coastal sailing vessels and clearly was intended to address the needs of larger steam-powered freighters. The method of construction—earth-filled masonry perimeter walls—was also a product of the age of steam; although there exists little in the documentary record describing the process of this pier's construction, it is apparent that without steam-powered pile drivers, pumps, and earth-moving equipment, a pier on this scale would have been beyond the means of a small railroad company. Although no formal survey has been made of this type of resource, it can be said with confidence that this is the only large 19th-century pier remaining in Connecticut. Other comparable examples, such as Belle Dock and the New Haven Railroad piers in New Haven, are known to have been destroyed or embedded in later harbor improvements.

Although not primarily being nominated for its information potential (Criterion D), the pier as an artifact could prove illuminating about some aspects of 19th-century civil-engineering practice. For example, it would be interesting to know how the depth and density of pilings compare with modern standards, which might become apparent if repairs are made to the east wall, and one could determine through laboratory testing the source of the granite.

The fact that none of the historic buildings and structures that once stood on the pier remain does not constitute a serious issue of integrity. The pier itself is the core of the resource and, when placed in operation, accounted for nearly 80% of the cost of construction. The various appurtenances changed over time as the pier's use changed, but the masonry and fill itself remained constant.

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Central Vermont Railroad Pier
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Historical Background

New London was a prosperous seaport in the 18th and early 19th century, but its leaders fretted that railroad construction would pass the place by, turning New London into a backwater. New London merchants and civic leaders were therefore active proponents of the New London, Willimantic, and Springfield Railroad, chartered in 1847 and completed, not to Springfield, Massachusetts, but instead to Palmer, some fifteen miles to the east. In 1852 a drawbridge was built across Winthrop Cove so the line could connect with the downtown area of New London, where it joined up both with the just-opened rail line from New London to New Haven and with steamboat service to New York City.

In 1861, a new corporation, the New London Northern Railroad, took over the New London, Willimantic, and Palmer Railroad (as it had been re-named). The New London Northern undertook a program of improvements on the line, including repairing and enlarging its New London wharf facilities; for a time it operated its own steamboats to New York. Equally important, it extended the line from Palmer to Miller's Falls, Massachusetts, where it connected with rail lines serving Vermont and, ultimately, Canada. Although it survived as a corporate entity until 1951, the New London Northern effectively lost its separate identity starting in 1871, when it became a leased property of the Central Vermont Railroad. The Central Vermont itself soon came under the control of Canada's Grand Trunk Railway, thereby establishing New London as a major terminal for shipping to and from Canada. In 1922 the Grand Trunk and Central Vermont were reorganized as subsidiaries of Canadian National Railways.

The wharves that had been built by its predecessors were too small for the role serving all of inland New England and Canada envisioned by the Central Vermont Railroad (though those wharves remained in service well after the current pier was built - see Figure 1). In 1874 the railroad began construction on a facility of exceptional size, one that could accommodate ocean-going vessels more than 500 feet in length. The wharf cost a total of \$225,000, an impressive sum at that time, of which \$45,000 was for coal-handling facilities and \$175,000 for the pier itself. The coal facilities, finished in 1877, included a steam-powered hoist that could unload more than 100 tons of coal an hour from the Reading Railroad freighters in the slips into the Central Vermont's rail cars and coal bunkers. Because of this investment, the railroad was one of few Connecticut lines that showed a profit in 1878. Operation of the pier was aided over the years by channel dredging projects undertaken in New London Harbor by the U.S. Government, though the railroad itself was responsible for keeping the slips to their proper depth.

In 1904 the railroad reconfigured the pier to serve a new role, freight and express service to New York City. Two steamers, *New London* and *New York*, were purchased, covered platforms were built over the tracks along the pier, and a large freight house was erected on the pier's east side (Figure 3). The two freighters, later joined by a third vessel, *Vermont*, were 268 feet in length and had a cargo capacity of 1,900 tons; they were operated by a subsidiary, the Central Vermont Transportation

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Company. Freight headed to New York City or for export through New York harbor was carried by rail to New London, where it was loaded onto one of the company's freighters for an overnight trip to New York's Pier 29. The freighter would then pick up a return cargo bound for New England or Canada. Some cargoes, such as coffee beans, sisal, hides, hemp sugar, tapioca, and crude rubber bypassed the pier and instead were transferred via lighters to and from ocean-going ships waiting in New York Harbor. The railroad's southern division became popularly known as the "Banana Belt."

One of the more interesting aspects of the Central Vermont's New London pier operation was the express service that was offered between New York and the larger towns in the railroad's service area. Special baggage cars marked "New York Fast Freight - Over Night Service" ran in the railroad's passenger trains and sometimes outnumbered coaches. Small shipments could be brought to certain stations along the route, where they would be loaded into the baggage cars, carried to New London, transferred to a freighter, and brought overnight to New York. The route also worked in reverse, allowing rapid delivery from the metropolis to eastern Connecticut, central Massachusetts, and Vermont.

After World War II, a brief economic slump, competition from truck traffic, and the aging of the railroad's freighter fleet combined to make operation of the pier uneconomical. Service was suspended in November 1946 during a strike of New London's dock workers and never resumed. The vessels were tied up at the pier until they were sold for scrap in 1948. Thereafter, the railroad used the pier only for railroad-car storage tracks and as an administrative center for its southern operations. The railroad retained the pier after the line itself was sold to the Connecticut Central Railroad. It was sold to the State of Connecticut in 2001; long-term planning for the facility is still under way.

Engineering Significance

Pier engineering is straightforward in principle but demanding in the details. Massive masonry retaining walls, the height and width of which we today see only a small portion, define the shape of the pier and contain the earth fill that provides the pier's surface. The walls had to be designed so as to resist the outward pressure of the fill, the erosive action of the sea, and damage from the inevitable collisions. Also critical were the piles driven into the harbor bed and cut off to form a level surface on which to place the masonry. The piles had to be of sufficient depth so as to reach densely compacted sediment or rock, and they had to be spaced properly so as to bear the load of the walls. On either side of the pier, slips had to be dredged to a consistent depth as close to the walls as was practical.

Until it was joined by the adjacent Connecticut State Pier (1914), the Central Vermont Railroad Pier was by far the largest pier in New London harbor and ranks among the largest ever constructed in

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Connecticut. New Haven had several large piers, including its celebrated Long Wharf, Belle Dock, and the railroad piers operated by the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad Company, but harbor improvements have destroyed or buried these structures. The smaller steamship docks built by the railroads in Connecticut's smaller harbors have also disappeared. The Central Vermont Railroad Pier can therefore be considered not only a typical example of 19th-century rivers and harbors engineering but also as an increasingly rare survivor of the type.

Piers of this type do not require industrial methods, but they become far more feasible in the industrial age. The creation of the huge granite blocks, for example, almost presupposes steam-powered drills and hoists in the quarry. Similarly, pile-driving, the lifting and positioning of the blocks, and the pumping of water from the work area all become more practicable with steam power, and the delivery and dumping of fill could be accomplished more readily with railroad cars than just about any other method. Dredging was another steam-powered operation that was essential to create the deep slips and channels required to accommodate the larger vessels of the late 19th century.

Information Potential

The greatest challenge for any engineering work in New London harbor was the creation of stable foundations: the bedrock that is exposed on the point just north of the railroad pier drops off very sharply, so that it can be reached only after going through 70 feet or more of sedimentation on the harbor floor. For example, the predecessor to the current railroad bridge just north of the pier, constructed in the 1880s, began subsidizing almost immediately because of inadequate footings. The pier seems to have fared better. It would be interesting to know how deep and how close together the pilings were placed. Also, what is the cause of the minor subsidence along the west side (the east side damage is from collision)? Pile decay, deterioration in the wall itself, or some other cause?

It would also be informative to know the source of the granite that was used in the pier. The railroad had access to a large granite quarry on its line in Munson, Massachusetts, but there were much closer sources of superficially similar gray granite on the coast, including quarries in Groton and Waterford, Connecticut, and Westerly, Rhode Island. Which was more advantageous for the railroad, carrying it some distance on its own line, or paying for it to be shipped a shorter distance by water?

These are questions that could be answered from a scientific analysis of the pier itself.

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Central Vermont Railroad Pier
New London, New London County, CT

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U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. Charts of New London Harbor, 1889 - present.

U.S. Engineer, Office of. "New London Harbor, Connecticut, Condition of Improvement, June 30th, 1885, to Accompany Annual Report." House Executive Document No. 1, part 2, 49th Congress, 1st Session, 1885 (Serial Set No. 2370, p. 642.). Map showing dredging program.

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Central Vermont Railroad Pier
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Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is recorded in the New London Assessor records as Map G10, Block 245, Lot 3. It is described in a deed to the State of Connecticut dated May 15, 2001 and recorded in the New London Land Records, Volume 1201, page 267.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the entire pier structure and the immediately adjacent portion of the shore that was railroad property.

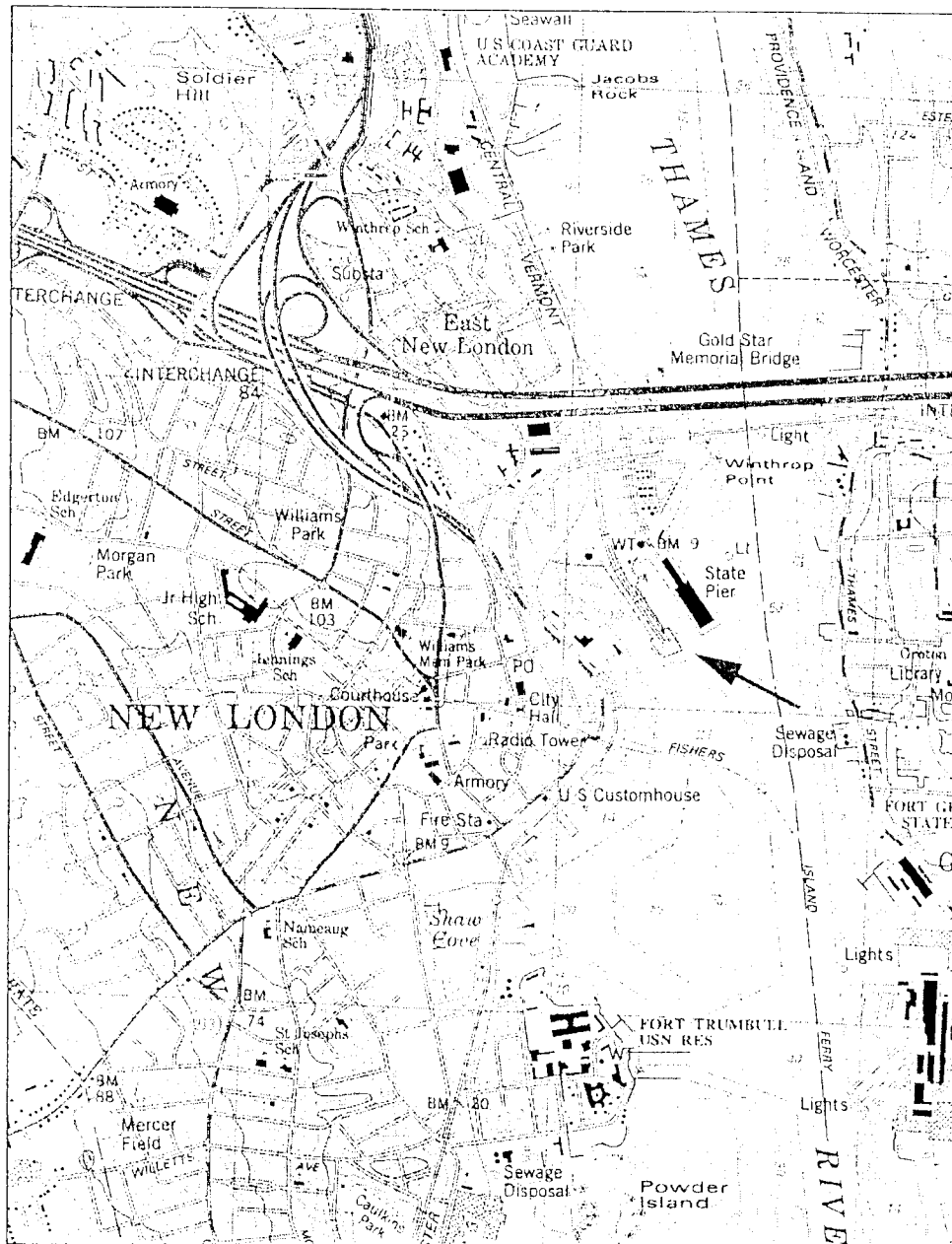
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Location of pier plotted on USGS New London Quadrangle, 7.5-Minute Series, scale 1:24000 (one inch = 2000 feet):



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All Photographs:

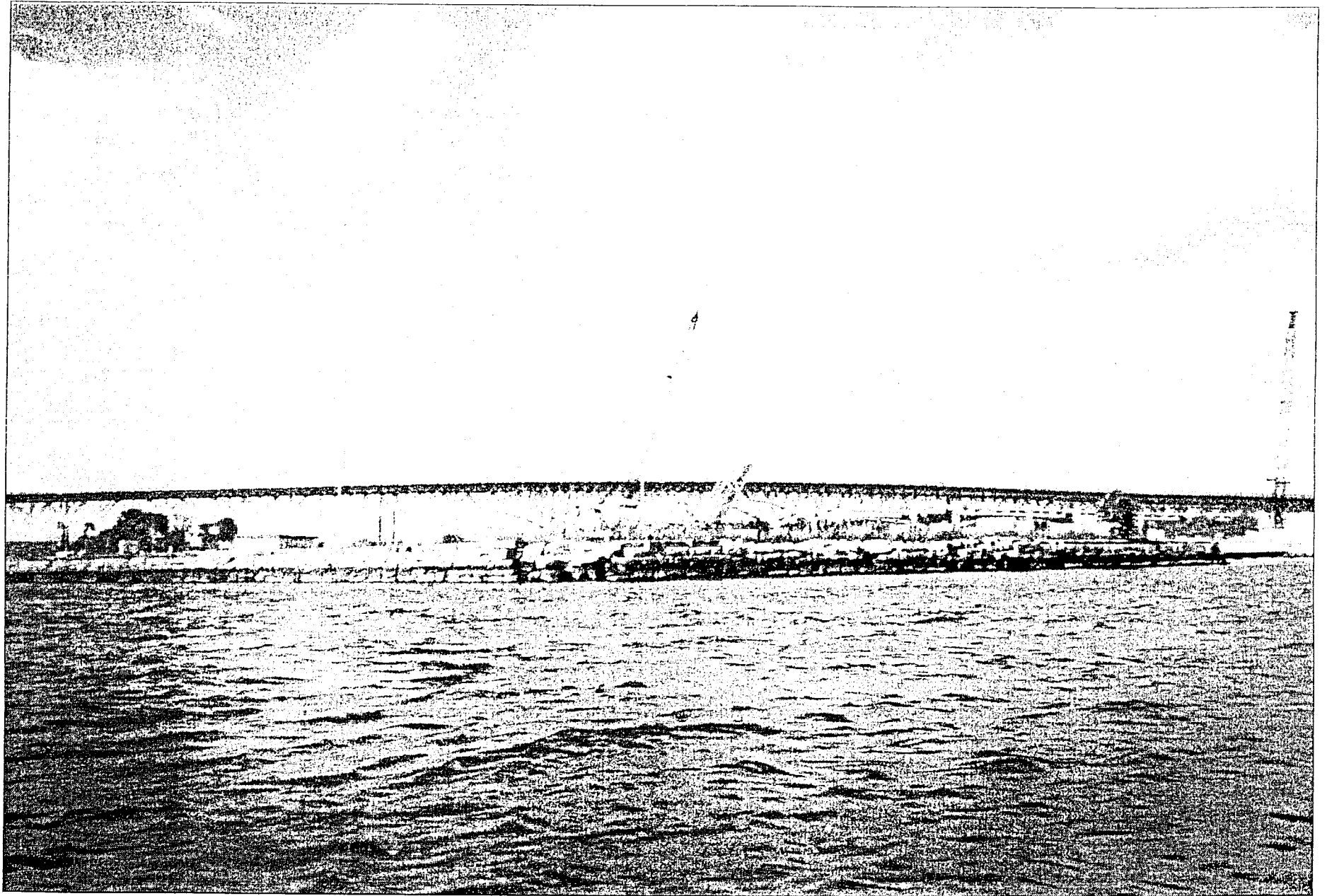
1. Central Vermont Railroad Pier
2. New London, New London County, CT
3. AHS, Inc. Photo
4. October 2003
5. Negative filed with AHS, Inc.

Captions:

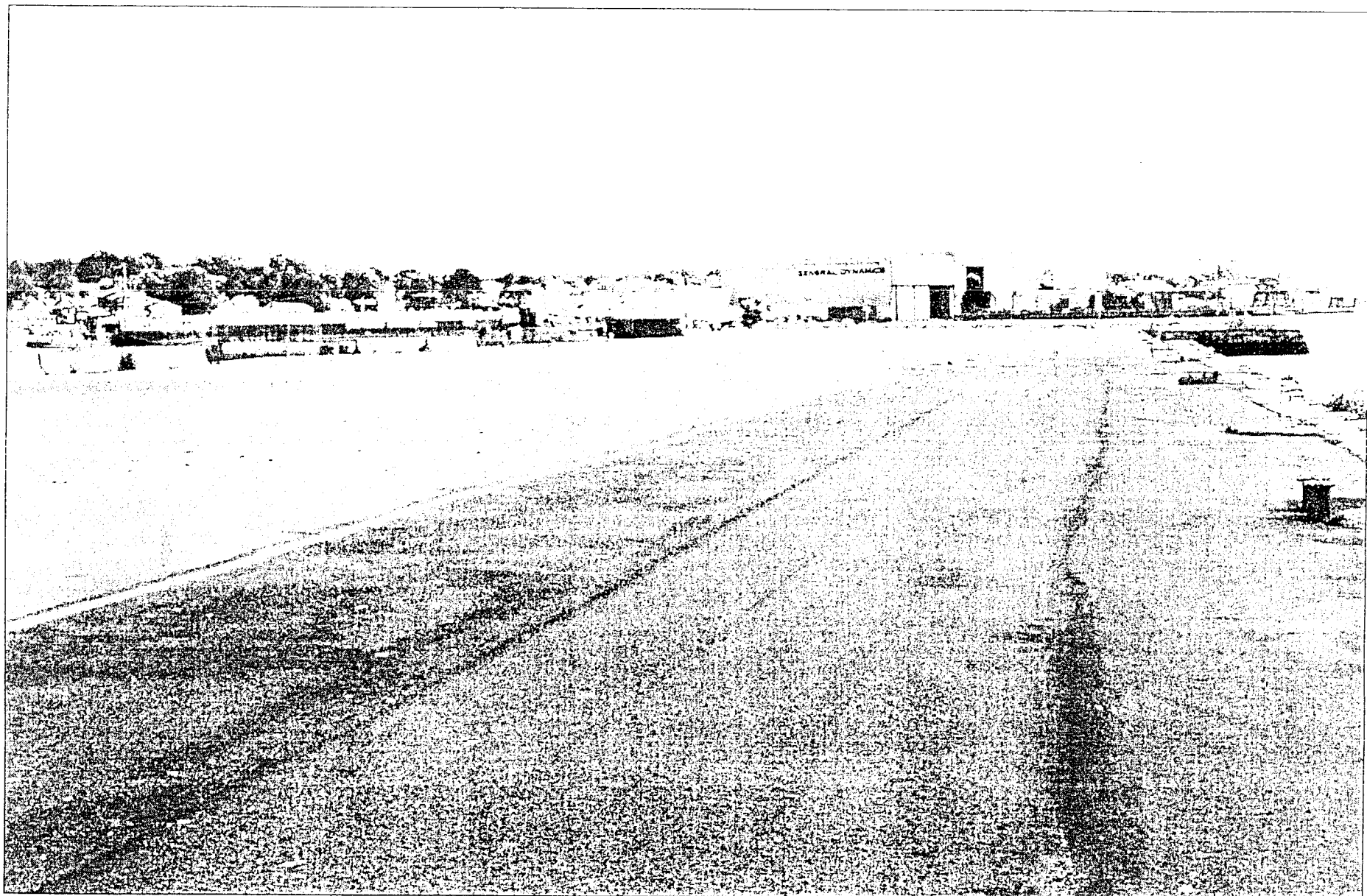
- 1: Overview of pier from land, showing west side, camera facing southeast.
- 2: Overview of pier from the water, camera facing northeast.
- 3: View of paved surface of pier, camera facing southeast.
- 4: Detail of masonry, west side, showing shelf along the wall that probably accommodated a timber fender structure; camera facing southeast.
- 5: Detail of masonry, head of west slip, showing iron rods that probably supported a timber component; camera facing east.
- 6: Close-up of masonry from the water, west side, camera facing northeast.
- 7: Detail of deteriorated masonry on east side of pier, camera facing northwest.
- 8: Detail of typical mooring cleat, west side of pier, camera facing east.
- 9: Detail of one type of bollard, east side of pier, camera facing east.
- 10: Remnant of railroad tracks visible at the northeast corner of the property, camera facing north.



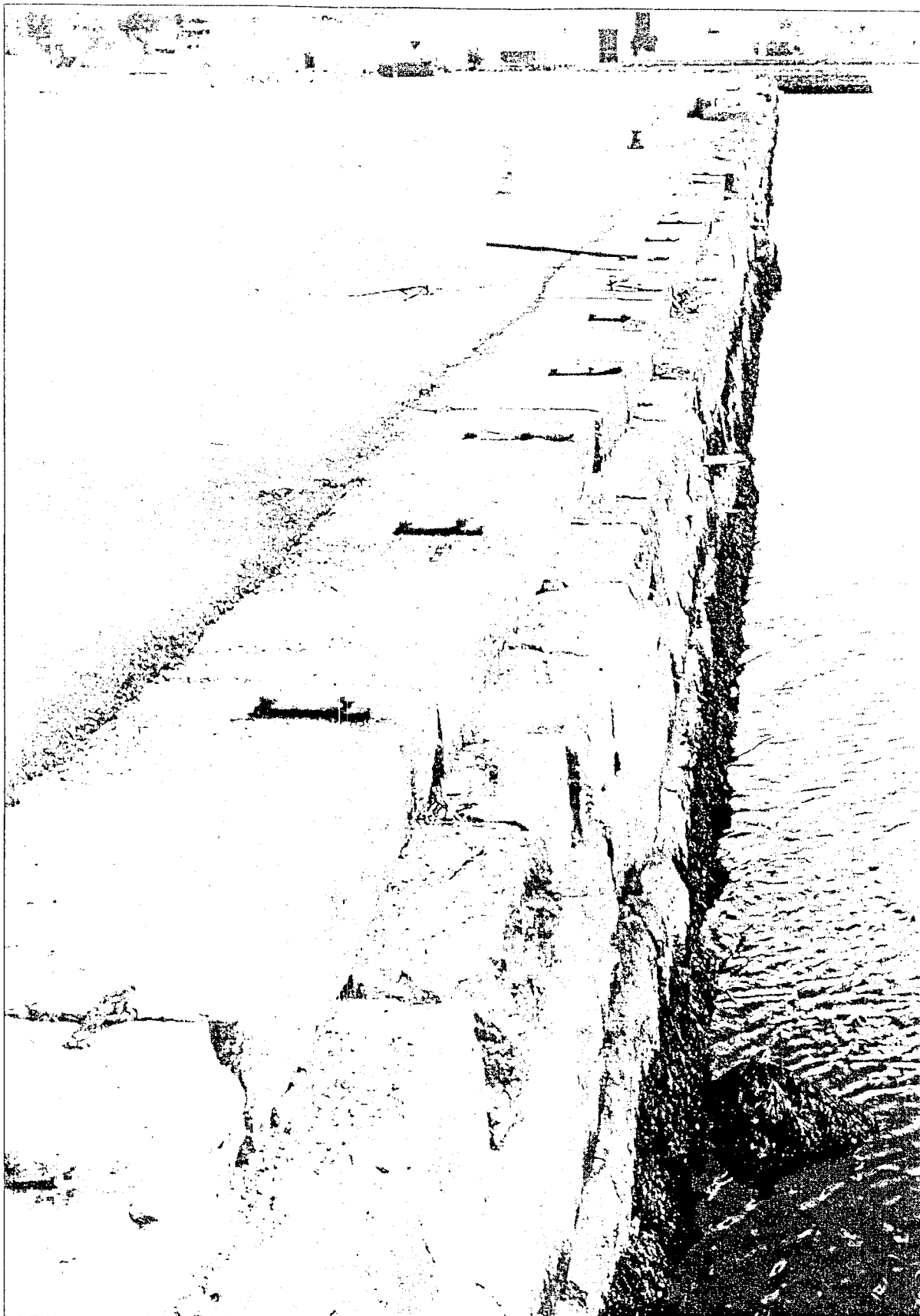
Overview of pier from land, showing west side, camera facing southeast.
Photograph 1 of 10



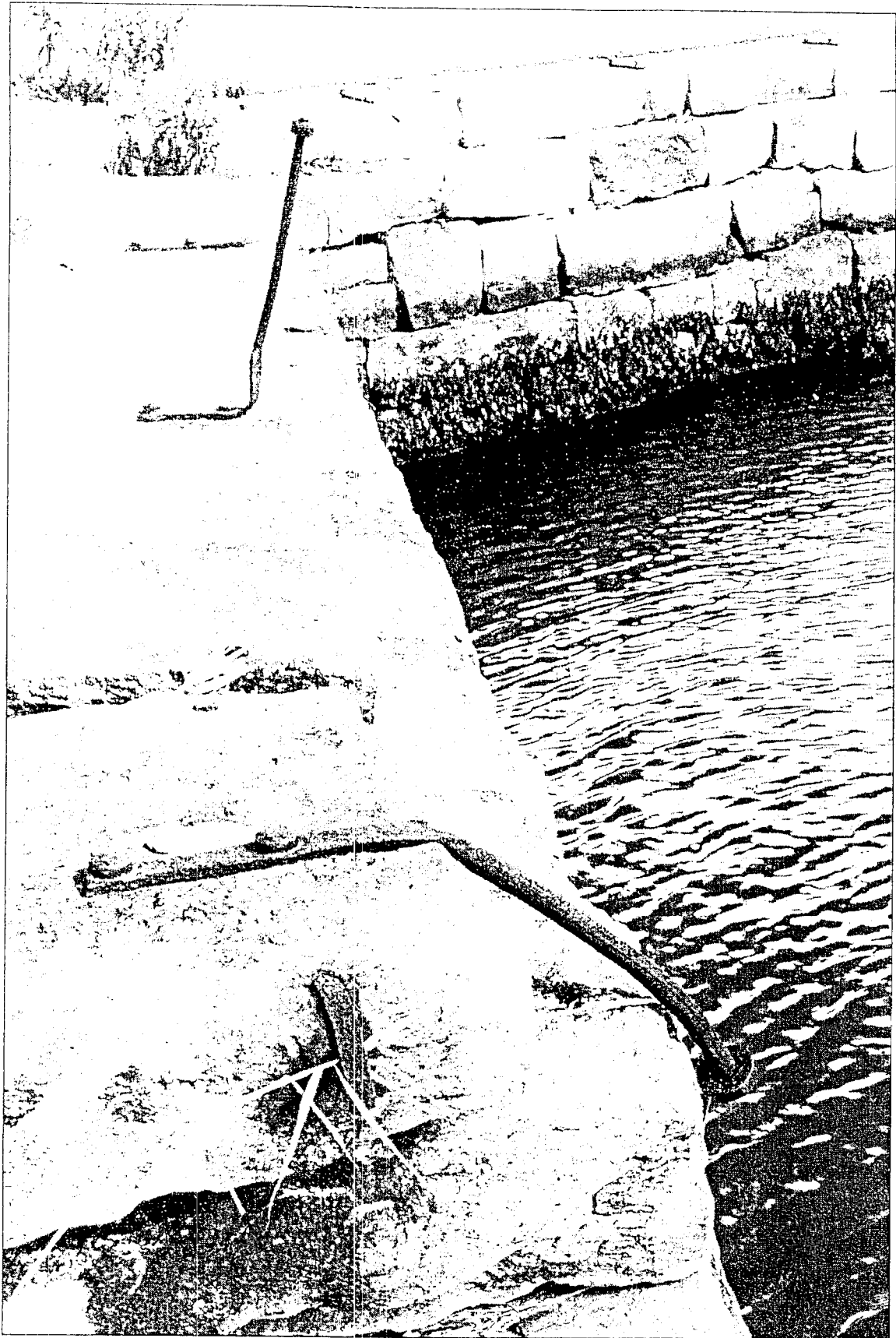
Overview of pier from the water, camera facing northeast.
Photograph 2 of 10



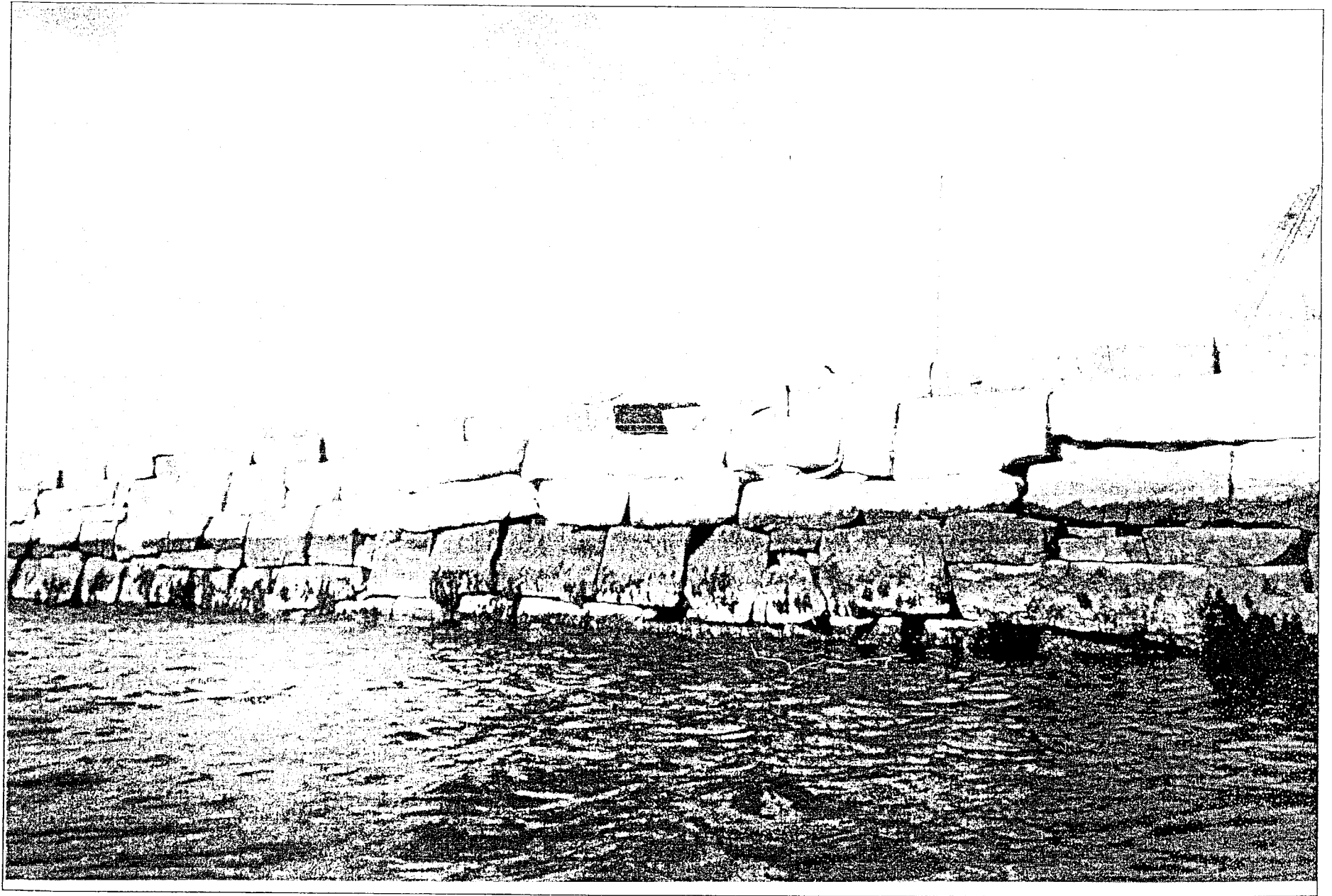
View of paved surface of pier, camera facing southeast.
Photograph 3 of 10



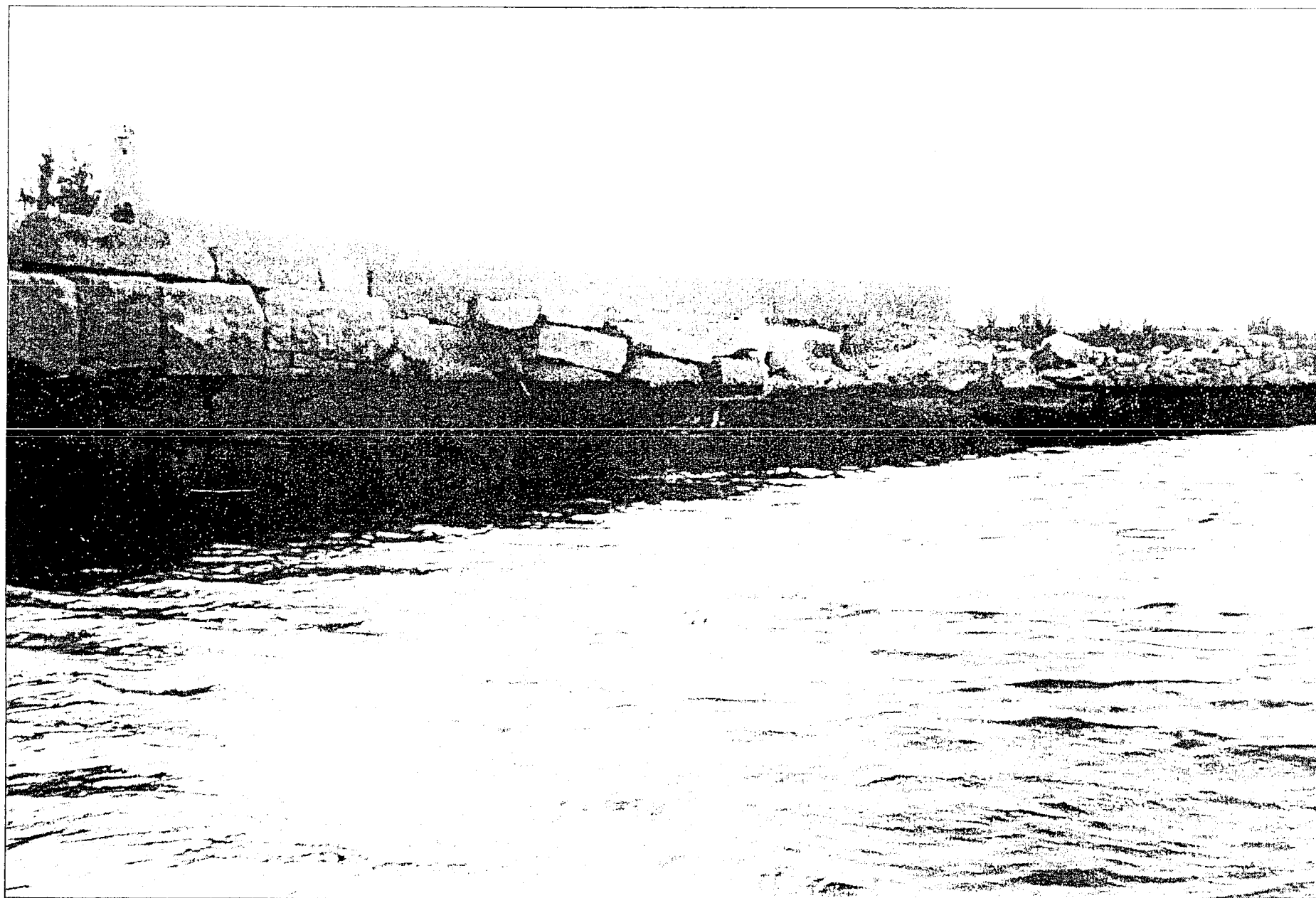
Detail of masonry, west side, showing shelf along the wall that probably accommodated a timber fender structure; camera facing southeast.



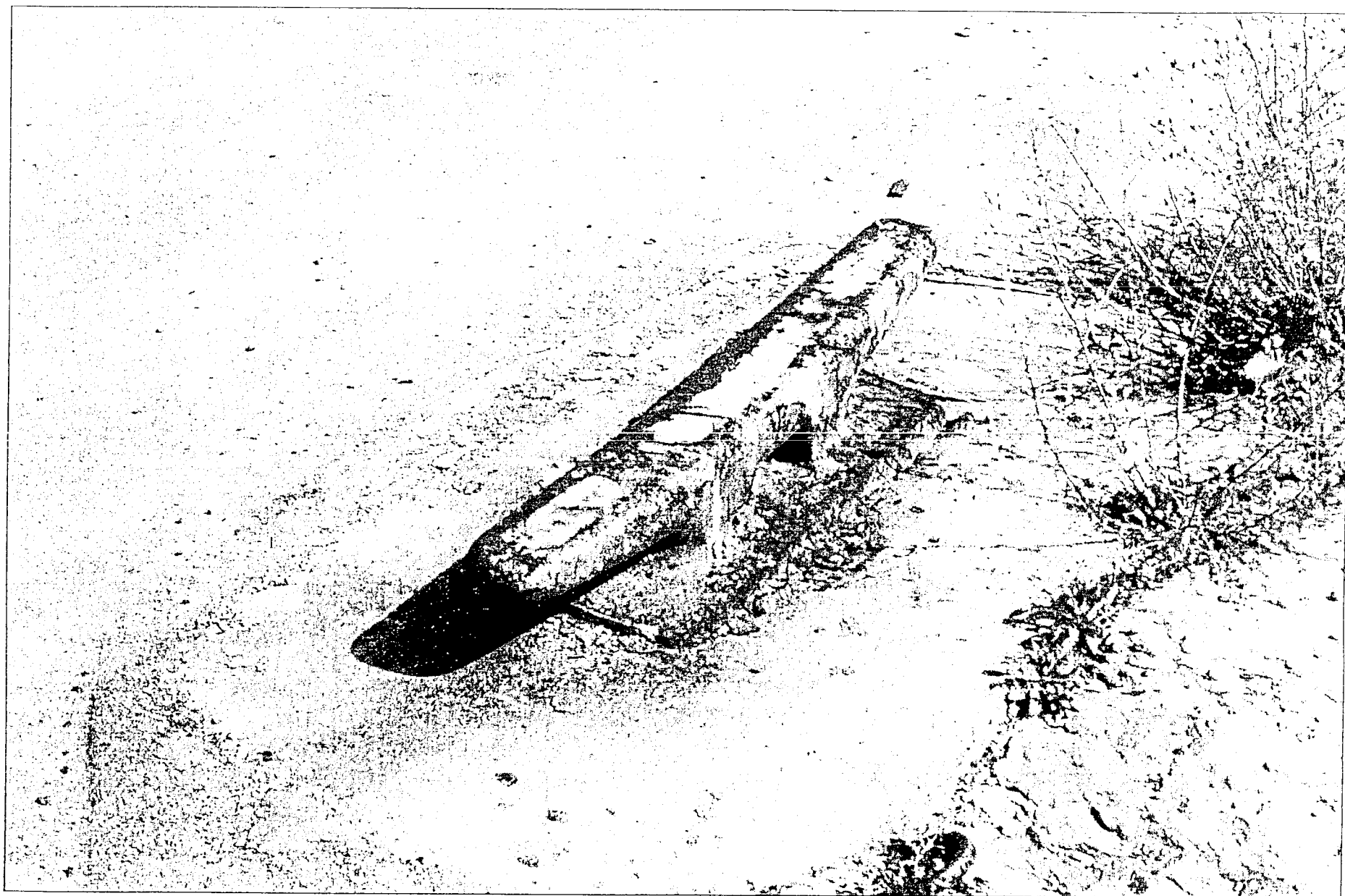
Detail of masonry, head of west slip, showing iron rods that probably supported a timber component; camera facing east.
Photograph 5 of 10



Close-up of masonry from the water, west side, camera facing northeast.
Photograph 6 of 10



Detail of deteriorated masonry on east side of pier, camera facing northwest.
Photograph 7 of 10



Detail of typical mooring cleat, west side of pier, camera facing east.
Photograph 8 of 10