

U.S. Naval Air Station,
Coal Shed (Building 27)
Pensacola
Escambia County
Florida

HABS No. FL-247

HABS
FLA,
17-PENSA,
67-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Architectural and Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

ADDENDUM TO:
U.S. NAVAL AIR STATION, COAL SHED
(Building No. 27)
499 South Avenue
Pensacola
Escambia County
Florida

HABS FL-247
FLA, 17-PENSA, 67-

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FLA
17-PENSA,
67-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
100 Alabama St. NW
Atlanta, GA 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to
U.S. NAVAL AIR STATION, COAL HOUSE
(U.S. Naval Air Station, Aviation Support & Storage)
(U.S. Naval Air Station, Building No. 27)

HABS No. FL-247

HABS
FLA
17-PENSA
67-

Location: 499 South Avenue
Pensacola
Escambia County
Florida

USGS Fort Barrancas Quadrant, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
Zone 16, 473911E, 3357087N

Present Owner: United States of America
Department of the Navy (DON)
Commander, Naval Installations (CNI)
2713 Mitscher Rd. SW
Suite 300 Anacostia Annex (Building No. 168)
Washington, D.C. 20373-5802

Present Occupant: Public Affairs Office (PAO) for Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola; U.S. Air Force (USAF) prior to Hurricane Ivan. The building is currently vacant.

Present Use: PAO photo lab and studio; USAF storage prior to Hurricane Ivan; but the building is not presently used.

Significance: Building No. 27, constructed as a Coal House at the Pensacola Navy Yard in 1872, served vital mission-support roles at both the navy yard and, later, at NAS Pensacola. Its original purpose was to store huge amounts of coal to fuel the steam-driven engines of naval vessels, which were supplied via a long wharf providing direct access from the Coal House to Pensacola Bay. The brick building also stored coal for powering the navy yard's machinery. The ability to safely store more than a year's worth of coal at the yard protected the Navy from sudden shortages or price increases that could cripple the yard and the naval squadrons dependent upon its resources. Prior to the closure of the yard in 1911, Building No. 27 stored lumber, while coal was kept in open bins near the wharf. After the Pensacola Navy Yard's closure in 1911 and the establishment of Naval Aeronautical Station Pensacola in 1914, the former Coal House was adapted to the new aeronautic mission of the station by conversion to a hangar for seaplanes and other early aircraft. During World War II, the building housed offices, workshops, and headquarters for aircraft squadrons, and later supported aviation operations as a workshop and storehouse until 1971, when the building housed the station's commissary warehouse and related offices. Building No. 27 supported NAS Pensacola operations in the 1980s and 1990s as office and administrative space, as well as an addiction treatment center. It later served as a photo lab and studio for the NAS Pensacola PAO and storage for the USAF water survival equipment. Despite interior and exterior changes made over the years to accommodate its changing mission, the building remained an excellent

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example of late nineteenth century industrial architecture, typical of other brick buildings constructed at the Pensacola Navy Yard. In 2004, Building No. 27 was seriously damaged during Hurricane Ivan, resulting in disuse.

Building No. 27 is an excellent example of the industrial buildings in use at the Pensacola Navy Yard and other military installations in the mid-nineteenth century. With its symmetrical form, engaged pilasters and brick cornice, it is similar in feeling to other utilitarian buildings at the heart of the old navy yard, including Building No. 1, Building No. 38, and Building No. 18. Building No. 27 is included within the Pensacola Naval Air Station Historic District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of erection: 1871-1872, according to official Property Record Cards from the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Archive, Port Hueneme, CA.
2. Architect: Bureau of Yards and Docks (BuDocks), DON
3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: DON; original use was as a coal storage house (1872-ca. 1906); lumber storage shed (1907-11); aircraft hangar and aviation support area (1914-69); commissary warehouse and associated offices (1970-ca. 1997); drug treatment facility (1997-ca. 2001); PAO photo lab and studio and USAF storage area (2001-04). The building is currently vacant.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Building No. 27 was likely built by civilian laborers under the direction of the Pensacola Navy Yard's Superintendent of Public Improvements. Specific contractors and suppliers are unknown.
5. Original plans and construction: Original correspondence and plans forwarded from Captain Daniel Ammon, Superintendent of Public Improvements at Pensacola Navy Yard, dated April 13, 1871, describe Building No. 27 as a coal shed to be erected on the site of a similar building destroyed during the Civil War. The rectangular-plan, load-bearing brick building with a wood-frame and gabled roof measured 60'-0" x 225'-0", with three interior spaces of unequal size—one intended to hold 3,200 tons of coal, another with capacity for 550 tons, and a third with a capacity of 550 tons. The building was constructed with a gabled roof covered with corrugated iron, and featured an interior elevated track running from the coal wharf at the south facade through the building and terminating on the north wall. The track was designed to hoist coal to and from ships at the wharf. A 1902 architectural plan held by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) shows an elevated central roof ridge to house the track, which was apparently never built. Although an estimate dated April 2, 1871, states that Building No. 27 would be built on the foundation of the previous building, the older stone foundation was apparently removed and replaced by a new masonry foundation. Some of the brick from the previous Building No. 27 was cleaned and reused in the new Coal House. The original estimate for construction was \$46,374.11, including all labor and materials.¹

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6. Alterations and additions: An extension to the coal wharf and unidentified alterations to the interior of Building No. 27 were completed in 1901 in preparation for re-opening the yard after a long period of disuse. After the establishment of the new aeronautical station at Pensacola in 1914, station labor made alterations to Building No. 27 to meet their new aviation-related mission. According to the Annual Report of the BuDocks for 1915, changes included installing one set of large rolling doors topped by a clipped-gable dormer in the east facade for aircraft access, removing the railroad track that previously ran through the building for transport of coal, and pouring a new cement floor. Exterior improvements included construction of a boardwalk linking the building to the shore. The work was completed on November 10, 1915.² According to plans dated October 12, 1915, from the NARA collection, another airplane door was added further south on the same facade. It was also topped by a clipped-gable dormer, but originally had two large wood, segmented hinged doors instead of rolling doors. Historic photos dated ca. 1919 from NAS Pensacola show that the hinged doors were removed and the original pilasters and brick cornice were replaced soon after the war ended.

Additional alterations were made in 1917, as the station increased aviation training activities resulting from World War I demands. The Annual Report of 1918 and concurrent photos reveal that a two-story, wood-frame radio control and observation station was erected on the south end of Building No. 27's roof to support aviation training activities over the Pensacola Bay.³ Plans from June 12, 1917 show that an exterior stair at the southwest corner of the building provided interior access. At the same time, a storm cellar was dug below the building. The work was completed by station labor on January 31, 1917.⁴ The coal wharf and at least one interior wall may have been removed at that time in order to facilitate the entry and storage of aircraft in Building No. 27. Photos from the NAS Pensacola PAO dated ca. 1918-19 also show that, by that date, numerous window openings were inserted into the formerly blank bays between pilasters on the facades of Building No. 27. The aerial photos do not reveal in detail the type of windows used.

An architectural plan for steam heating alterations ca. 1930 depicts the interior arrangement of Building No. 27 at that time. Both interior walls that originally formed the coal compartments in the south end of the building had been removed. A wide central corridor divided the building along its north/south axis, and a variety of offices, shops, and storage rooms lined each side. These included offices for Squadron Commander and Chief Flight Instructor among others, a lounge, an engine shop and carpentry shop, in addition to a machine gun room, and parachute room. An open space divided these rooms from the northern area of the building, in which were located an auditorium, game room, canteen, and toilet. Three door openings appeared on each of the long sides of the building, including the large airplane door on the east facade, now fitted with rolling doors. The north and south facades each had a single, central double door.

A number of alterations were made prior to and during the World War II era. The primary interior space of Building No. 27 was re-partitioned with wood-frame interior walls during the 1930s, according to plans from NARA, and the roofline of the original building was modified from a parapet to an overhanging eave, possibly during the removal of the original corrugated iron covering. A 1936 photo from NARA shows the work in progress. In 1940, a two-story, wood-framed addition with brick veneer and a low-slope roof was added to the

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south facade of the building to accommodate office space. It was supported on new poured concrete footings. Plans dated December 20, 1940, show that the first floor contained an entrance lobby inside the south entry, with an office on either side. The exterior south wall of the original structure divided the addition from the interior space of Building No. 27. The door of the old south entrance was removed to provide access to the new addition. The second floor of the addition, called the mezzanine level, contained a large ready and lecture room extending the full width of the building. The mezzanine floor extended beyond the old exterior wall to create a new upper level within Building No. 27. Reached via double doors from the ready and lecture room, it contained a locker room and a spiral stair leading down to the main floor, and up to the existing second and third floors of the observation tower. A 1942 plan for improvements to electric wiring shows a layout similar to the 1930s plan, with both the east and west sides of Building No. 27 lined with offices and other rooms, divided by a central corridor extending the length of the building. The observation/control tower was rebuilt as a single-story structure in 1942, but was removed between 1949 and 1956.

Proposed alterations in the 1950s included several interior and exterior renovations. A 1955 drawing details many interior changes. A new two-story structure containing restrooms on the first floor, stood in the northeast corner of the building, accessed by a straight-run stair with a small landing at the top. On the south end of the building, the central spiral stair connecting upper and lower floors was removed and replaced with a straight-run stair on the west side of the building. Some existing interior spaces on the first floor were enlarged to create classroom space on either side of the central corridor. Plans from 1958 show that, by that time, the two-story area in the north end of Building No. 27 was enlarged by one room. Almost all the classrooms in the east side of the building were gone, replaced by open space and a new paint spray booth. Several of the partitions on the west side were also demolished.

According to 1962 plans, all partitions were removed, except in two rooms along the west side of the building. These rooms, labeled "Room A" and "Room B," had dropped ceilings to accommodate new air-conditioning ductwork. An overhead monorail for the movement of goods was installed in 1966.

Building No. 27 underwent another renovation in 1971, when it was converted for use as the station's commissary warehouse and associated offices. The renovation included the addition of partitioned spaces at the first and second floors on the south side of Building No. 27, including a new retail clothing store, clothing office, and possibly a tailor shop near the center of the building. Much of the building's remaining space served as a warehouse, and the central monorail was removed. A stairhall with two new L-shaped stairs was added for access to the south mezzanine, which was re-partitioned for new offices, including rooms for the officer in charge of the commissary, a secretary, an assistant to the officer in charge, as well as a lobby, lounge, storage area, and men's and women's restrooms. On the first floor beneath the mezzanine, new rooms included a general office, conference room/lounge, and computer rooms, with a general office, accounting office, and waiting room to the south. In 1975, another renovation reconfigured the stairs at the south end as two opposing dog-leg stairs, one entered from the south and the other from the north.

According to plans drawn in 1981, all retail spaces within Building No. 27 were removed by that date. In 1981, further improvements included the installation of a new fire alarm and automatic sprinkler system. Architectural drawings from 1984 show that a labyrinth of newly

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partitioned offices filled the southern half of Building No. 27, serving as vending offices. The north half of the building, designated as a vending warehouse, retained several large, open floor spaces, in addition to the two-story suite in the northeast corner, which included toilet facilities. A program of alterations in 1988 included the addition of two new restrooms near the south end of Building No. 27's first floor, each equipped with two water closets and two lavatories. Two offices, a file room, a storage room, and a vestibule were also added near the center of the first floor in 1988.

In 1997, another major renovation to convert Building No. 27 for use as a drug treatment facility altered interior partitions throughout the building. Numerous small offices for counselors were erected in the western half of the building, according to plans dated July 18, 1997. A new electrical system, new carpeting, and dropped acoustical-tile ceilings with lay-in fluorescent troffer lighting were also added throughout, and exterior doors and windows were updated with new aluminum-frame doors. Existing window openings along the west facade were infilled with brick. The PAO and USAF later adapted the spaces for new needs. Most of the partitions and finishes from the 1997 renovation were still in place when Hurricane Ivan hit in 2004.

B. Historical Context:

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Navy established NAS Pensacola (then called Naval Aeronautic Station Pensacola) in 1914, choosing as its site the old Pensacola Navy Yard, already steeped in its own long military history dating back to early Spanish occupation in 1698. Although European nations fought for control of the region because of the strategic value of the Pensacola Bay, and the U.S. Naval Yard stood on the site for eighty-six years, the naval station's most profound legacy is associated not with maritime traditions, but with aviation. The naval aeronautic station that eventually became NAS Pensacola was tasked with creating the Navy's first aviation program at a time when manned flight was scarcely a decade old. At first, the fledgling program vied with the Army's early aviators in logging spectacular (and sometimes fatal) flight records, training a select handful of military pilots, and improving on the simple mechanisms of the earliest airplanes. When, during the first months of the new station's existence, pilots demonstrated that they could take off and land from the deck of a ship, a unit was dispatched to the United States' intervention in Mexican Revolutionary activities at Veracruz. After successfully operating reconnaissance missions from the USS *Mississippi* and sustaining the first mark of rifle fire from combat experienced by military aviators, the future of naval aviation was assured. The flight school at Pensacola became the premier training ground for naval pilots in the United States. Additional training courses at NAS Pensacola multiplied rapidly, and the program provided hundreds of pilots and thousands of trained technicians for World War I. The arrival of the first aircraft carriers in the 1920s further enhanced the possibilities for aviation at sea, and training programs at NAS Pensacola evolved rapidly to keep pace with new developments. The station, improved and augmented through increased defense spending and New Deal public works programs in the late 1930s, was able to provide the Navy with a steady stream of pilots and other trained personnel to meet the demands of World War II. Today, NAS Pensacola continues to lead the Navy's flight training program, and it anchors the Pensacola community.

NAS Pensacola's physical plant has changed constantly to reflect its evolving mission. The current station

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incorporates remnants of the early Spanish forts, as well as the core of the old Pensacola Navy Yard complex, now listed as an NHL. In addition, the station retains structures from every major building period, all reflecting NAS Pensacola's important role in military history. One factor governing development at the station has always been the damaging hurricanes and windstorms that rise from the Gulf of Mexico and periodically strike the base, damaging buildings and infrastructure, and necessitating extensive repairs or rebuilding. The phases of construction related to storm damage are also evident in the structures present at the station today. This historic overview provides the background for placing Building No. 27 within a national, regional, and local context.

Building No. 27, the Coal House, was built on the site of another coal storage building that was destroyed by the evacuating Confederate army in 1862. The current Building No. 27 was completed in 1872, and served a vital role in the Pensacola Navy Yard's mission of supporting U.S. Navy vessels by supplying coal and other necessities. Building No. 27 was linked to a coaling wharf, constructed simultaneously, that extended into Pensacola Bay to facilitate the loading and unloading of coal to ships. Rail tracks were used to transport the heavy loads from the wharf through the Coal House and into the heart of the navy yard, where coal was also the fuel source for all machinery. After the closing of the navy yard in 1911 and the establishment of NAS Pensacola in 1914, Building No. 27 was converted to a hangar for seaplanes and other aircraft, and an observation tower was built atop its southern parapet for observation of flight activity over Pensacola Bay. The building continued to serve in support of NAS Pensacola's important aviation training mission until ca. 1970, when it housed the station's Commissary Warehouse and associated offices. In 1997, it became the home of a drug treatment center. When the building was damaged by Hurricane Ivan in 2004 it housed a photo lab and studio for PAO and provided storage for USAF's water survival equipment.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT AND FORTIFICATION IN THE PENSACOLA BAY AREA

NAS Pensacola occupies a peninsular spit of land projecting eastward into the broad Pensacola Bay in Escambia County, Florida. Entry to the bay from the Gulf of Mexico is protected by Santa Rosa Island and Perdido Key, forming an ideal defensive arrangement exploited as early as the seventeenth century by the Spanish, followed by French, British, and American forces. The first permanent settlement and military fortification in the immediate area was Fort San Carlos de Austria, built in 1698 by Spanish troops under the direction of Andrés de Arriola. Arriola maintained that the Gulf of Mexico—a vital link in the trade routes between Europe and Spanish colonies in Peru and Mexico—would be controlled by the nation that held the Bay of Pensacola.⁵ The simple, wood-and-earth fort stood until 1719, when it fell to invading French forces.

Domination of the Pensacola Bay alternated between Spanish and French forces during the following decades, during which the Spanish also built a small fort on Santa Rosa Island. After winning control of Florida following the French and Indian War, the British arrived at Pensacola Bay in 1763 and completed a new palisade fortification in 1771 to protect the growing town of Pensacola, just north of the military site, then called the Royal Navy Redoubt. A decade later, in 1781, the Spanish again regained control of the site, renaming the British palisade Fort San Carlos de Barrancas. This time, they fortified the entrance to the bay more securely, constructing Bateria San Antonio (San Antonio Battery) in 1797—a solid brick water battery of semicircular shape designed as a gun emplacement facing the bay.⁶ The Spanish remained in control of the Pensacola Bay area, despite skirmishes with the British and with American forces led by Andrew Jackson in 1814, until 1821, when Spain finally ceded Florida to the United States

via the Adams-Onis Treaty (*Figure 1*). Andrew Jackson presided over ceremonies in the Plaza of Pensacola on July 17, 1821, celebrating the surrender of the territory by the Spaniards. Jackson then dispatched four army infantry companies to Fort San Carlos and the San Antonio Battery, marking the first occupation of the site by U.S. military forces.⁷

THE U.S. NAVY YARD AT PENSACOLA

The creation of the Territory of Florida by act of Congress on March 30, 1822, with Pensacola as the seat of government, replaced the interim government created by Jackson.⁸ A Florida Legislative Council, formed to promote the interests of the new territory, quickly moved to petition the U.S. Senate and President James Monroe for new fortifications on the Pensacola Bay, to include a naval station at Pensacola. Both the president and Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard approved the plan, agreeing with the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs that the coast of Florida was the ideal site for a new naval depot. Southard commented that such an installation was “indispensable for the economical and efficient management of that portion of our navy which is employed in the West Indies and Gulf of Mexico.”⁹ Despite recommendations by the Board of Naval Commissioners to await the results of engineering studies on potential Gulf Coast sites, by March 3, 1825, both the House and Senate approved a bill authorizing construction of a navy yard at Pensacola. Objections to the Pensacola Bay site voiced by some military authorities included the shallowness of its channel, which precluded passage by some larger vessels, and its vulnerability to attack from the mainland. Notwithstanding these arguments, a party of three officers, including Commodore Lewis Warrington, Captain James Biddle, and Captain William Bainbridge, embarked for Pensacola in autumn 1825 to select the best location for the new navy yard. After surveying the bay and surrounding area, the three officers confirmed the depth of the channel at a consistent 21’-0”, and identified a point near Fort Barrancas, already owned by the U.S. government, as the ideal location.¹⁰

President John Quincy Adams approved the site selected a day after the report was delivered to him on December 2, 1825, and assigned Commodore Warrington as the first commandant of the Pensacola Navy Yard. Warrington arrived back at Pensacola in April 1826, and construction was soon underway. Construction materials, however, were difficult and expensive to acquire, as was skilled labor. Both had to be brought from the east at inflated prices, although southern slaves apparently provided menial labor at a lesser charge. Due to the high cost and delay in acquiring men and materials, as well as the onset of yellow fever epidemics in summer 1826 and 1827, construction proceeded slowly, and most facilities were left in a primitive state for some time.¹¹

The most urgent need was for a fully equipped hospital. A contractor from Boston charged with building the new wharf, Samuel Keep, complained that yellow fever patients were being cared for in “...a little house called by that inappropriate name, hospital...If the yellow fever comes to the Yard I shall not remain here unless I am absolutely obliged to do so.” Although the old Fort Barrancas hospital had been pressed into service, it was rapidly disintegrating, and the new commandant arriving in September 1826, Melancthon T. Woolsey, was forced to rent a two-story wood house near Fort Barrancas to serve the sick of the depot and of the West India Squadron.¹² The yard’s surgeon, Dr. Isaac Hulse, also worked to pressure lawmakers to provide a better facility for the squadron’s increasing number of sick seamen. Although a hospital was under construction by November 1828, lack of funding kept the work from proceeding. In a letter to Florida Congressman Joseph White, Hulse admonished that “...it is impolitic, as well as inhuman in a government to neglect [the needs] of its servants.”¹³ By summer 1828, construction

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had almost ceased at the yard, due primarily to a halt in funding engendered by new hopes of peace with the European forces that had so long beleaguered the Gulf.

Lacking even the most basic facilities needed for the comfort and health of the squadron, the navy yard was even less equipped to address its shipbuilding and repair needs. By the 1840s, the yard still had no permanent wharf, no dry dock, few workshops and even fewer skilled workers. Construction of the yard's infrastructure continued on a piecemeal basis, without any general plan of development, halting every summer when workmen returned to the east to avoid yellow fever, and whenever the scarce funds allocated by Congress were used up. "The decline in piracy and slave running had largely removed the need for a fleet to suppress such operations and had undoubtedly influenced congressional decisions on appropriations for Pensacola. Moreover, the West India Squadron was renamed the Home Squadron in 1841, and its cruising ground was extended farther into the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. Consequently, ships of the Home Squadron could make the larger and more adequate navy yards on the East Coast as easily as Pensacola."¹⁴

While the Pensacola Navy Yard stagnated, it was at least well defended. Between 1829 and 1859, the Army completed four defensive forts to protect Pensacola Bay. Fort Pickens stood on the extreme western tip of Santa Rosa Island, with Fort McRae on the western shore directly opposite. Fort Barrancas was built to the north, on the site of the old Fort San Carlos de Barrancas and next to the San Antonio Battery. The Advanced Redoubt to the north occupied the highland site that dominated Fort Barrancas. Most of the construction was supervised by Major William Chase, a U.S. Army engineer, who persevered in his task despite suffering the same scarcity of materials, manpower, and funding experienced at the navy yard. It would appear that the defensive forts benefited from a comprehensive design by the U.S. Corps of Engineers.¹⁵

Annual Reports from the BuDocks to the Secretary of the Navy reveal the slow struggle waged by the station's commandants against weather, yellow fever, contractors, and financial deficits. On November 19, 1844, the BuDocks Report took an optimistic tone on the progress of the navy yard:

At Pensacola, the sum of \$166,708 was granted at the last session of Congress for the commencement of works of importance, and for the purpose of gradually enabling that establishment to afford repairs and supplies to the vessels standing in need of them and to place it, as rapidly as circumstances permit, in a situation to become the secure resource of the navy in that quarter....A plan of the yard has been prepared and approved; and, as soon as materials can be procured in a sufficient quantity, the works will be commenced, and the yard have an organization corresponding with that of the others, by the employment of additional master mechanics, with the necessary workmen and laborers.¹⁶

An act of Congress dated July 1, 1844, authorized construction of the permanent wharf, although little action seems to have been taken afterward.¹⁷ Additional requests between 1842 and 1845 included such basic conveniences as officers' quarters, a permanent wharf, and a system of supplying fresh drinking water.

When the Mexican-American War broke out on May 11, 1846, Pensacola was the closest naval establishment to the blockading Home Squadron at Veracruz, 900 miles away. Without a dry dock, the yard was unable to provide more than minor repairs to vessels, and had little food, water, or other goods

on hand to supply the ships. A yellow fever epidemic in the squadron sent hundreds of diseased sailors to the Pensacola Naval Hospital, which struggled to support such a burden.¹⁸ The deplorable condition of the only Gulf Coast naval station finally caught the attention of the public and, more importantly, the legislators who could act to fund its improvement.

CONSTRUCTION AND DESTRUCTION IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY AT THE PENSACOLA NAVY YARD

From 1847 through the 1850s, the Pensacola Navy Yard was abuzz with new activity. BuDocks requested funds for vital infrastructure, such as paving of roads, grading and leveling the yard, adding rail tracks to ease the movement of machinery, and finishing the permanent wharf. The station's commandant was also forced to ask for funds to repair the buildings that were already disintegrating because of the humid climate or poor maintenance.¹⁹ By 1853, a dry dock, a basin for loading and unloading ships, and a railway were in place; in 1856, dredging and the construction of a deep basin for larger ships was accomplished, although the permanent granite wharf was still unfinished. In 1858, shipbuilding finally began at the Pensacola Navy Yard, despite the lack of some important resources, such as a wet basin and fully functional foundry. Two sloops of war, the *Pensacola* and *Seminole*, were launched from the yard in 1859, marking the depot's coming of age after twenty-five years of struggle.²⁰

Just as the Pensacola yard was attaining the status of a truly functioning maritime facility, the Civil War put an end to its progress. When Florida seceded from the Union in January 1861, the seventy-man federal garrison at the naval installation was faced with defending itself using only a few operable guns. Therefore, when more than 600 Alabama and Florida troops arrived at the Pensacola Navy Yard on January 12, 1861, Commandant James Armstrong surrendered the yard to the Confederates. The company garrisoned at Fort Barrancas was able to quickly move all men and supplies across the bay to Fort Pickens, which they defended throughout the war, even bombarding the Confederate forces at the navy yard and causing considerable damage in winter 1862. When the Confederates evacuated the area on May 9, 1862, they burned the navy yard to the ground.²¹ The BuDocks Report to the Secretary of the Navy on November 4, 1862, states:

The yard at this place has also been repossessed by the government, but, like that of Norfolk, was found a mass of ruins, the buildings having been burnt and every effort made to destroy all the government property....A statement of the bids received and contracts entered into by this bureau, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1863, will be presented at as early a day as practicable.²²

In fact, little progress was made in rebuilding the navy yard in the following years. The BuDocks Report to the Secretary of the Navy for 1864 reads in part:

This yard was also almost entirely destroyed by the rebels, and thus far but little has been done to restore it to its former condition. Some small amount of machinery has been erected to meet the most pressing want of the Gulf Squadron, and it is now proposed to repair a few of the buildings for the accommodation of the officers, stores, &c....²³

Accommodation of the officers was in fact one of the most pressing needs at the navy yard in the late war years. When Commandant Ulysses Smith arrived at the destroyed navy yard in spring 1863, he was forced to find lodging in one of the ships docked at the wharf for repairs, for lack of shelter on land. In a

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letter to the Chief of BuDocks, he makes the first mention of repairing the kitchens, which later developed into the existing officers' quarters:

I shall endeavor before [ten days'] time to fit up for myself a residence in a kitchen, and for some of the officers a residence in a stable; these being the only two buildings which can at a reasonable cost and in a short time be made available for our use. All the dwelling houses have been destroyed."²⁴

A request to BuDocks sixteen months later by Smith's replacement, Commandant James Armstrong, revealed that previous requests for repairs had never been approved by the Navy. He asks for authority to make repairs to several kitchens, which "can be made to answer temporarily by roofing and flooring and closing them against the weather."²⁵ The terse reply of Chief of BuDocks James Smith indicates the Navy's general attitude towards the yard:

As yet, the Pensacola Yard is temporary, and therefore, the improvements [to officers' quarters] are to be made for temporary work only. You are authorized to make such accommodations as are *absolutely necessary for the officers, on the most economical plan* (emphasis in the original).²⁶

The struggle for funding to upgrade the temporary status of the yard is reflected during the subsequent years by ongoing requests for better officers' housing. In the meantime, officers assigned to the yard dealt with their poor housing by improvising small improvements to the surviving kitchens and stables of the destroyed quarters.

After the termination of the conflict, BuDocks encouraged the Secretary of the Navy to fully repair the station, which was needed by the Gulf Squadron. However, by 1869, the chief of BuDocks advised the Secretary of the Navy that he found the location of the Pensacola Navy Yard "objectionable" due to its exposure to long-range guns from outside the harbor. "The great importance of having a well-equipped yard on the Gulf of Mexico suggests that, before heavy expenditures are made toward reconstructing the yard, it is worth while to institute an examination to ascertain if some more favorable location cannot be found."²⁷ Although the Pensacola installation was not abandoned, work to repair the damage of the Civil War was again slowed by poor funding and an ambiguous status within the Navy. Appropriations were too small to permit large-scale building, although work on the commandant's quarters did continue. Commandant Woolsey was even permitted a trip to New York accompanied by the architect of BuDocks to choose prefabricated windows, doors, and other accessories for his new home. The other officers' quarters, however, still consisted of the brick kitchens of the old quarters with makeshift porches and sheds added for increased living space. In 1874 and 1875, BuDocks approved funding for permanent improvements to the quarters consisting of second-story additions and galleries, plus re-roofing, repainting and general repairs as needed to make comfortable family residences for the officers. Despite the improvements, one visitor to the yard in 1881 called the lower floors of the improved quarters "uninhabitable."²⁸

Despite Pensacola's status as the only Gulf Coast naval base, its poor equipment and isolation from East Coast materials and workers, added to its various faults of location, endangered the very existence of the yard. An act of Congress closed it on March 3, 1883, pending further investigation by the Navy. Basic maintenance on the public property was performed during its seventeen-year hiatus from active service.²⁹

Although no new work was performed at the yard in 1898, the Spanish-American War of that year once again focused attention on Pensacola, and by 1900 the navy yard re-opened with new energy.

The BuDocks Report of October 1, 1901, provides a summary of the Pensacola Navy Yard's status at the time:

Very few works of improvement have been made at this navy-yard since the civil war. At the time of the Spanish war, when it seemed probable that considerable service might be required of this yard, several appropriations by way of repairing and improving the buildings, wharves, dredging, and construction of better coaling facilities were made. The improvement of navigation from the Gulf to the yard has bettered the situation at this yard considerably, and the meager accommodations upon the Gulf coast have appeared to require better facilities for work at this station in case of emergency. Also, the board upon storing torpedo vessels has recommended that the yard be availed of as a site for one of the plants for housing such vessels....This is the only station of this kind recommended by the Board for the Gulf coast, and it is believed that provision should be made for storing a portion of those vessels in these waters.³⁰

In 1902 a new floating dry dock was purchased from Spain and hauled to the navy yard, and in 1905 the base served as a rendezvous point for all U.S. squadrons participating in training in the Gulf of Mexico.³¹ International developments in the Gulf region kept hope alive for Pensacola. French attempts to finance the construction of the Panama Canal during the 1880s and 1890s finally ended when the United States took over the project in 1904. Progress on the project, which did not end until 1914, elicited much anticipation for increased commercial trade from the Gulf to the Pacific, to be accompanied by more naval activity to protect American interests at sea. At NAS Pensacola, the closest U.S. naval facility to the canal, plans for development included the construction of several buildings. Despite the positive outlook, unforeseen circumstances once again took their toll on the Pensacola Navy Yard. A massive hurricane struck the Florida Panhandle on September 26, 1906, severely damaging the yard's infrastructure and most buildings. The new dry dock was damaged, and the older, smaller dry dock was completely destroyed, incapacitating the yard's repair functions. Worse still, very limited funds were made available for the rebuilding of the yard due to the financial obligations associated with the brand new Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Although some new structures were built in the years following the hurricane, the Pensacola Navy Yard was officially closed on October 20, 1911 (*Figures 2 and 3*).³²

THE CRADLE OF NAVAL AVIATION: NAVAL AERONAUTIC STATION PENSACOLA, 1914-18

The closure of the Pensacola Navy Yard provoked consternation in the town of Pensacola, whose residents still valued the yard for the jobs it provided and the income gathered from its activities, as well as for the sense of pride they felt at hosting a U.S. naval installation. Furthermore, the impending completion of the new Panama Canal held the promise of increased military and commercial activity in the Gulf of Mexico. In fact, while it was officially closed, the yard continued to host U.S. Marines performing experimental testing with torpedoes in the Pensacola Bay in 1913.³³

But while Pensacola's citizens fretted over the fate of the old navy yard, Navy officials looked toward a growing field of expertise that would soon revitalize the old base—naval aviation. Although wary of the experimental new technology, the Navy made tentative steps toward investigating the military applications of aviation by sending Annapolis graduate Lieutenant T. G. Ellyson to learn to fly with

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airplane manufacturer Glenn Curtiss at his Aviation Camp in San Diego, California, in December 1910. While at the camp, Ellyson assisted Curtiss in outfitting the first "hydroaeroplane," designed to take off and land from the water's surface. The Navy participated in these tests by providing the armored cruiser *Pennsylvania* to hoist the plane aboard after landing. The same month, civilian Eugene Ely was able to successfully take off from the deck of the *Pennsylvania*, proving that airplanes could easily be adapted to serve the Navy in conjunction with maritime vessels. In March 1911, a preliminary appropriation of \$25,000.00 was made for the establishment of the Navy's first aviation installation at Annapolis, Maryland.³⁴

With just a handful of planes and trained pilots in 1912 and 1913, plus a few enlisted mechanics, the aviation camp bounced between Annapolis and training locations including San Diego, California, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Aviators took advantage of Curtiss' offer to train one pilot for each airplane sold to the Navy, thus increasing the ranks of aviators until an official training program could be started. The experimental and record-breaking flights accomplished by the Annapolis pilots impressed Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels enough to appoint a board to create plans for the first Naval Aeronautic Service in 1913. Within weeks the board of officers responded with a recommendation of the old Pensacola Navy Yard as the site for a new naval aeronautic station, and suggested an appropriation of \$1,297,700.00 to implement the program. Once approved by Secretary Daniels, the Annapolis aviation group once more packed up their camp to move to Pensacola, arriving on January 20, 1914. The unit, consisting of

nine officers, twenty-three enlisted men, seven aircraft, and portable hangars and other gear...arrived at Pensacola on board the battleship *Mississippi* and the collier *Orion* to establish a flying school. Lieutenant John Towers was in charge of the unit, and Lieutenant Commander Henry C. Mustin commanded both the *Mississippi* and the aeronautic station.³⁵

Although the Pensacola Navy Yard had officially been closed since 1911, it had not been totally abandoned as previously mentioned. Less than two months before the arrival of the *Mississippi* with her cargo of aviators, 856 Marines had temporarily occupied the yard while performing torpedo exercises in the Pensacola Bay, and "...a considerable amount of work was done adapting buildings and quarters for their use." Several hundred Marines stayed on at the new aviation camp for training until at least 1915.³⁶ Nonetheless, upon his arrival, Lieutenant Commander Mustin reported that the beach was littered with stones, driftwood, and piling, and needed extensive work to clear it for the use of flying boats. In addition, he reported that, "the buildings in general are dilapidated and disreputable in appearance inside and outside."³⁷ Lacking adequate housing on base, the aviation unit made their home aboard the *Mississippi* and turned their attention to the work at hand. After clearing the beach, the men erected ten temporary canvas hangars along the beach, each with an individual wood runway extending down to the water to ease the planes over the thick sand. In less than two weeks, aviators made the first flight at the new aeronautic station.³⁸

The first months at the station were fraught with excitement and novelty, especially for Pensacolians who witnessed the first flights over the Pensacola Bay. Within weeks, they also witnessed the base's first aviation fatality when Lieutenant J. M. Murray crashed into the bay in a Burgess D-1 flying boat on February 15, 1914. The following month, five submarines and two transport ships from the Atlantic Fleet arrived in the bay for extended operations with the aviation unit to determine visibility of the submarines from the air. Later in the spring, nineteen destroyers converged on the former navy yard in response to rising tension with Mexico, which was suffering revolutionary upheaval. On April 21, 1914, a detachment

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from the Pensacola station, commanded by Lieutenant P. N. L. Bellinger, was sent aboard the *Mississippi* to assist American forces in seizing the Customs House at Veracruz, Mexico. Another detachment was dispatched to Tampico. At Veracruz, Pilot Bellinger, with three students and two airplanes, formed a unit that proved useful, flying observation missions daily over the city and attempting to locate the camps of enemy attackers. Bellinger even came under fire while flying low, and his plane bore the first marks of naval aviation combat.³⁹ Soon after the detachment's return to Pensacola, the handful of officers and students settled into their new home, and the base was officially designated as the Pensacola Naval Aeronautic Station (NAS) on July 1, 1914.⁴⁰

As Pensacola NAS's officers worked to develop a more extensive pilot training program, they also labored to improve the base and its equipment, constructing permanent facilities to replace early temporary ones. With a complement of nine officer-pilots and almost fifty enlisted men, the aviation school had a limited number of aircraft for use in training pilots and mechanics. According to a Navy historian in 1930, "The equipment of the Aviation School, at this time, consisted of 3 old Curtiss flying boats, 3 new Curtiss flying boats, 2 Curtiss pontoon-type planes, and 1 Burgess flying boat."⁴¹ In the Annual Report to BuDocks for 1915, Commandant Mustin reported:

During the year, the establishment and operation of the Station as an Aeronautic School were carried forward. The quarters were occupied by Naval Officers and a start was made at placing the shops in operation....There is no space on the reservation suitable for operation or practice with land aircraft. It is proposed to clear, grade, and surface the area North of the Navy Yard wall, and East of the electric railway; clearing out such residences and buildings [in the nearby town of Woolsey] as may be necessary, and extending on the water front so far as is practicable.⁴²

Major hurricanes were reported on July 5, 1916, and October 18, 1916, both reaching wind speeds of over 100 miles per hour and causing extensive damage totaling \$420,000.00 for repair or replacement of government property.⁴³ America's declaration of war on Germany on April 6, 1917, however, ensured that the station received full funding for damage repair, new construction, and the enhancement of its training programs. At the advent of direct U.S. participation in World War I, the Pensacola station was the only naval aviation facility in the country. In 1921 Navy historian Earle Corliss wrote a detailed inventory of the early station: "Its facilities, though efficient, were limited, consisting of three seaplane hangars of steel construction, a brick structure used as a hangar, an airship shed mounted on a barge (capable of accommodating a small type of nonrigid craft), and a few service buildings."⁴⁴ In addition to the hangars and shops needed for aviation training, new structures were built for the new "lighter-than-air" dirigible program, and to accommodate maritime supply vessels and other ships visiting the port.⁴⁵ By the end of the war in November 1918, over 100 new buildings had been erected and four temporary camps established outside the bounds of the station to serve the needs of the growing training programs. A major extension to the original navy yard was made to the north, in compliance with Commandant Mustin's recommendation. In addition, Camp Bennett to the west, Camp Mustin to the south, Camp Saufley on Santa Rosa Island, and Camp Bronson north of Pensacola, were all established either to house and process incoming recruits or to serve as training grounds.⁴⁶ A 200'-0" observation tower was erected, and most of the hangars on the beach were painted in camouflage patterns to avoid detection by the enemy. Including a completely new 300-bed hospital unit with independent water and sewerage system, expenditures for building and maintenance for Fiscal Year 1918 amounted to the staggering sum of \$2.6 million.⁴⁷

With the war effort came ever increasing demands for more naval pilots and mechanics, necessitating changes in the training programs offered at NAS Pensacola (the aeronautical station was officially designated as Naval Air Station Pensacola in December 1917). Both elementary and advanced flight training were provided to officers until May 1918, when NAS Pensacola switched to providing only advanced flight training. "The mission of the station had changed from teaching beginners how to fly to teaching flyers how to fight in the air."⁴⁸ In fact, most naval aviators serving in Europe spent their missions patrolling coastlines for mines and submarines, and bombing submarine bases.⁴⁹ Training had changed for enlisted men, too. A historian commented in 1930:

In the early era of the Station each enlisted man was expected to be a jack-of-all-trades. He was expected to know something about such diversified things as motors, rigging, blacksmithing, balloons, and beach work. Naturally, with the widening of the scope of the Station's mission, schools were established to teach the men to be specialists in one given occupation.⁵⁰

To meet the demands of war, NAS Pensacola established new schools for carpenter's mates, radio operators, instrument men, machinist's mates, and specialized mechanics. Between April 1917 and November 1918, the station churned out 5,382 air "mechanicians." During the same period, 921 naval aviators trained at the station, plus sixty-three dirigible pilots and fifteen free balloon pilots.⁵¹ The pace of training accelerated even more rapidly in the final months of the war, when pilots were urgently needed in Europe. In the final frenzied nine months before peace was declared in Europe, NAS Pensacola witnessed eighteen student deaths from crashes and twenty-four serious injuries.⁵² Despite the losses, naval aviation had made enormous strides in an incredibly short amount of time, proving itself effective in both combat and observation duties. The station itself reflected the new specialization taking place in naval aviation, with many new shops, hangars, and classrooms to meet the needs of the more varied training programs (*Figure 4*).

DEMOBILIZATION: 1919-35

The population at NAS Pensacola plummeted quickly after the end of World War I. Within months, approximately 5,000 Pensacola servicemen were discharged, leaving much of the station vacant. The Annual Report to BuDocks in June 1920 stated that Camp Bennett had been closed; buildings at Camp Mustin were being used for storage of equipment from other stations; and the buildings at Camp Saufley were deteriorating from disuse. Some structures built especially for the war effort were allowed to disintegrate, since reduced funding limited maintenance capabilities.⁵³ Many legislators were reluctant to fund naval activities in the post-war climate of disarmament and demilitarization. Furthermore, factions within the Navy, itself, argued over the role of aviation in naval warfare, which depended upon the success of aircraft carriers over traditional battleships. When the USS *Langley* was converted to an aircraft carrier and sent to Pensacola for testing in 1922, the station's future looked bright. Nonetheless, the 1920s were characterized by a lack of direction within the Navy, perhaps characteristic of the United States' own confusion over its role in the world. Throughout the decade, the aviation school at NAS Pensacola dealt with low reenlistment and few new applicants, and even allowed enlisted men to train as pilots (the term Naval Aviator remained reserved for officers). The Navy tinkered constantly with the program to try to increase the number of aviators graduated annually, with disappointing results. Although 100 students completed the course each year by 1925, only half that number actually passed their flight qualification tests.⁵⁴ Officials were reluctant to simplify the tests, however, for fear that the already excessive accident rate would increase as a result.

In the 1920s, the concept of dedicated aircraft carriers began to revolutionize naval aviation. Instead of taking off and landing in water, aircraft could begin to rely on carriers as a home base, with more extensive runways than earlier battleships had provided for planes. Furthermore, new landplanes with increased flying range enabled pilots to make extended forays over land to carry out a variety of missions. Therefore, landplane training was added to NAS Pensacola's curriculum in 1922. With the landplanes came a new system of outlying fields radiating from the naval air station. These fields provided the extra space for take-off and landing required by conventional landplanes and relieved congestion in the air caused by growing numbers of student pilots in training. Since the dirigible program had been cancelled, the former dirigible and balloon field, Station Field (later called Chevalier Field), was enlarged and re-sodded in 1923 to accommodate landplanes. It was enlarged again in 1926.⁵⁵ Another landing field was carved out of the town of Woolsey to the north of the station and named Corry Field. Problems with the lease on Corry Field, however, caused the Woolsey airfield to be abandoned, and a new 250-acre Corry Field, donated by the residents of Escambia County, was located approximately three and one-half miles northwest of NAS Pensacola.⁵⁶

The geographical problems that had plagued the old navy yard for almost a century did not present a problem for the workings of the air station, but the base once again suffered from the effects of violent weather in the Gulf. The Annual Report for 1927 described the most recent devastation:

On September 20, 1926 a tropical hurricane of great intensity struck this station. This storm involved wind velocities of 110 miles per hour from the northeast with gusts much higher than this and it was accompanied by a rise in tide of 8 feet 4 inches above mean high tide, resulting in complete inundation of practically the entire station, and great damage to Public Works and Public Utilities.⁵⁷

Repair and rebuilding began once again, and in 1929 Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Aeronautics David Ingalls testified before the House Appropriations Committee, recommending a \$5 million "re-organization and re-modernization" of NAS Pensacola.⁵⁸ Although the onset of the Depression prevented the immediate implementation of the planned project, steps were taken to prepare the base for expansion. In 1930, the town of Warrington, established just west of the old navy yard in the nineteenth century, was razed to make room for a planned airfield, and to allow the station to continue growing to meet its training goal.⁵⁹

MOBILIZATION AND WORLD WAR II

After suffering budget cuts that effectively crippled the aviation training program from 1932 to 1933, NAS Pensacola effectively sprang back to life mid-decade. Legislators passed the Vinson-Trammell Act in 1934, authorizing the maximum buildup of naval forces allowed under the Washington and London treaties made following World War I. Although the government still had little funding for military projects, the act helped set the stage for future growth at U.S. naval stations. Then, in 1935, the Aviation Cadet Act of April 15 created the grade of Aviation Cadet in the Navy, opening up recruitment to a wider range of applicants. The Annual Report of 1936 stated:

The cadets are selected from graduates of various colleges and universities throughout the country. Classes of about 75 were received monthly, the first arriving July 20, 1935. They undertook an intensive twelve months' course in aviation training, including ground school

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work and rudimentary naval training. The graduates are assigned to fill aviation cadet quotas in the Fleet.⁶⁰

In addition to augmenting the training program, legislators also granted the station \$3,081,500.00 for a new building program in the Authorization Bill approved April 15, 1935.⁶¹ The principal items included in the program anticipated an expanded role for the station in the coming years and included two 500-man barracks, eleven individual married officers' quarters, two steel-and-brick hangars for Station Field, and new roads. All the major contracts were granted to a single firm, the Virginia Engineering Company of Newport News, Virginia. Commandant G. S. Burrell noted in 1936 that the selection of one firm for the whole program "...has greatly simplified the co-ordination of the work and minimized interferences, questions of junctures of work items, [and] duplication of submission of samples and drawings for approval. The Company's performance has been on the whole very satisfactory."⁶² Most of the buildings also featured similar massing and details, typified by Building 604 with its massive brick pylons and inset glass panels, providing a uniformity and sense of cohesiveness to the growing base. The construction program, which eventually included "26 modern brick buildings," was completed in 1937, "making it an outstanding year in the history of the Station."⁶³

A valuable construction program at NAS Pensacola was obtained by BuDocks through the Works Progress Administration (WPA)—a Depression-Era work relief program—in 1936 and 1937. The work, eventually valued at \$243,626.00, included the repair and improvement of buildings and the rail system at the station, in addition to "modernization of plumbing and improvement of sanitation and ventilation [at the] Naval Hospital."⁶⁴ In addition, the 457 workers employed on the job helped to prepare the new Corry Field on leased property northwest of the station.⁶⁵ Another WPA project completed in 1938 and employing 513 men provided for "a) the construction of an arch type magazine and barricade; b) concrete taxiway...; c) revamping and relocation of railroad tracks; d) slag-asphalt road-paving and parking areas; e) rehabilitation and painting of buildings; and f) miscellaneous items of grading and planting."⁶⁶ In 1938 and 1939, the WPA and the Public Works Administration PWA constructed a new marine barracks, new dispensary, steel and brick hangars at Corry Field and Chevalier Field (formerly called Station Field) (with structural steelwork provided by a non-WPA contractor), and two sets of cadet quarters. Part of the same WPA/PWA project included the construction of "a modern 3-story, 3-wing hospital of concrete, brick hollow tile and stone construction...provided to replace the inadequate war-time structure now serving that important activity."⁶⁷ Thus, the great public works programs initiated to relieve the economic catastrophe of the Depression also played an important role in preparing the nation's largest naval aviation center for the coming conflict in Europe.

In 1938 the Vinson Navy Bill gave an additional boost to naval aviation, and to NAS Pensacola in particular, by increasing the authorized number of planes to be maintained by the Navy to 3,000—up from only 1,000 aircraft. The bill also established a board of officers to report on the current readiness of naval stations to meet the national defense needs, and to advise on development plans where needed. The board, called the Hepburn Board after its senior member, Rear Admiral Arthur J. Hepburn, recommended a fifty percent increase in pilot training facilities at NAS Pensacola to meet defense needs. A new construction program beginning in 1939 and continuing throughout the war eventually left the station with eleven hangars and personnel facilities for 15,000.⁶⁸

As the United States entered World War II in 1941, NAS Pensacola stepped up training activities to meet the demand for new pilots, while still busily erecting both makeshift and permanent buildings. Although

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aviation in the First World War was still in a fledgling state, by 1941, technological advances and the development of combat flying techniques created the bombers and fighter planes that soon became familiar sights over European and Pacific skies. Four new training fields were opened between 1940 and 1942, including Saufley Field in 1940, Ellyson Field in 1941, and Bronson and Barin Fields in 1942.⁶⁹ With its six auxiliary training fields now in operation, the station qualified 28,562 fliers between 1941 and 1945. Pilots were trained in one of various schools operating at the base. There was a Naval Photography School, an aerial gunnery school, a flight instructor's school and the Navy's only School of Aviation Medicine to qualify flight surgeons. In addition, patrol maneuvers and scouting and observation from seaplanes were both important areas of instruction. In 1943, NAS Pensacola became the headquarters of Naval Air Training Command. By the end of the war, thousands of metalsmiths, machinists' mates and other technical crew were also trained at NAS Pensacola.

THE COLD WAR: 1946-89

At war's end, rapid demobilization again took its toll at NAS Pensacola. Barin and Ellyson fields were deactivated, while the other training fields were reassigned to new purposes. Naval Air Training Command was reorganized with a number of different subcommands including Naval Air Advanced Training, Naval Air Basic Training, Naval Air Reserve Training, and Naval Air Technical Training Command, which moved to NAS Memphis in 1946. NAS Corpus Christi took charge of basic training duties, while NAS Whiting Field also took on training responsibilities. Within a few years, however, naval organization changed again, and Naval Air Basic Training Command headquarters relocated to NAS Pensacola, where it stayed throughout the Korean War. In 1947, the old Fort Barrancas cantonment, operated by the U.S. Army since the nineteenth century, was officially deactivated and transferred to NAS Pensacola, marking the station's continued westward expansion.

During the following decades, military conflicts in Korea and Vietnam ensured that naval aviators remained in demand. Between 1950 and 1953, NAS Pensacola produced 6,000 aviators at a cost of almost \$70,000.00 each.⁷⁰ NAS Pensacola's auxiliary fields were reopened in 1951, and helicopters made their first appearance at Pensacola the same year. The first class of helicopter pilots was trained at Ellyson Field beginning in January. The most dramatic development in naval aviation training was the introduction of jet aircraft to the advanced training syllabus in 1955. Sherman Field was built in 1954 on over 900 acres near the old Fort Barrancas cantonment west of NAS Pensacola to accommodate the new jet requirements. In 1955, the Blue Angels jet fighter demonstration team, originally formed in 1946 to demonstrate the capability of naval aviators, relocated from NAS Corpus Christi to NAS Pensacola, where their air shows are still a popular attraction.

During the Cold War period, the U.S. military raced to develop new technologies to maintain heightened strategic advantages over the Soviets. Naval aircraft achieved supersonic flight, adopted complex computerized navigational systems and missile systems, and took off from nuclear-powered aircraft carriers. Aerospace medicine became part of the studies undertaken at the Naval Aviation Medical Center, originally commissioned in 1957. In addition to studying the effects of gravity forces and disorientation on pilots in combat, scientists worked to understand the potential effects of space travel on humans. In the early 1960s, astronauts from the Mercury and Gemini programs all underwent physical testing and training for water landings at NAS Pensacola.⁷¹

After the conflict in Vietnam escalated in 1964, pilot training again increased in response. "Pilot

production had been as low as 1,413 [annually] in 1962, and as high as 2,552 in 1968, increasing and decreasing with the heat of battle involving carrier deployments in the Far East.⁷² Despite financial limitations instituted as the Vietnam War dragged on, NAS Pensacola grew in both size and responsibility as more training and study were needed for highly specialized systems (*Figure 5*). Major damage incurred during Hurricane Camille in August 1969, was quickly repaired and some buildings rebuilt. By 1971, the station covered over 5,500 acres. New training centers were commissioned in the early 1970s, including the Naval Technical Training Center (formerly Naval Communication Center), which was the Navy's locus for electronic warfare and photography training, and the Naval Education and Training Program Development Center, established at Saufley Field in 1974.⁷³

Following the Vietnam conflict, Navy budgets fell victim to a large-scale demilitarization campaign in the U.S. government. Nonetheless, NAS Pensacola persevered in its training mission, instructing 1,697 officers and 2,188 enlisted men in 1982. The station also continued as a major contributor to the local and regional economies, with a military payroll of \$144,352,908.00, a civilian payroll of \$187,635,344.00, and almost \$10 million in supply purchases in the same year.⁷⁴

In 1988, the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) was formed to recommend base closures in order to streamline the military base structure worldwide. BRAC reflected the general trend toward military downsizing in the 1980s, when long-range nuclear missiles and subsequent arms control talks were the focus of many military leaders. In the 1990s, the end of the Cold War caused further financial cutbacks for the U.S. military, resulting in a greater rate of base closures. NAS Pensacola successfully avoided closure due to its vital position in the Navy's aviation program and its important tenant commands.

Today, NAS Pensacola occupies 8,423 acres, including Corry Station, Saufley Field, Bronson Field, and Sherman Field. The station hosts over ninety defense-related tenant commands, including the Chief of Naval Education and Training, Training Air Wing Six, Naval Aviation Schools Command, the Naval Aerospace Medical Research Lab, and the Naval Air Technical Training Center. The military population consists of over 16,000 people, in addition to 6,000 civilian employees. The station continues to provide top qualified naval aviators and other personnel; over 25,000 Navy and Marine students passed through the various training programs housed at NAS Pensacola, in addition to 1,300 officer candidates.⁷⁵

The considerable history of military occupation in the Pensacola Bay remains evident at NAS Pensacola in structures such as the Fort Barrancas cantonment and the NHL Pensacola Naval Air Station Historic District at the heart of the station. The presence of these early buildings has exerted a significant force in shaping the modern base, as have external factors including periodic destructive hurricanes and legislative favor. Most importantly, the change from a traditional naval shipyard to a modern naval aviation installation with associated technological advances and demands produced a gradual metamorphosis that has resulted in the modern NAS Pensacola. The shift from maritime vessels to aircraft likely saved the Pensacola base from abandonment and led to the development of an active installation vital to the regional economy and to the Navy's aviation program.

DETAILED BUILDING HISTORY

Construction of Building No. 27, the Coal House, began in 1871 and was completed the following year. It lies near the center of the southern waterfront of NAS Pensacola, and occupies the site of the original coal

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storage building, also designated Building No. 27, which stood from 1850 until it was burned by the Confederate army in 1862 (*Figure 6*). Archival records show that bricks from the original building were cleaned and reused to erect the current Coal House. The building was originally intended to be built atop the remaining granite foundations of the previous building, but was finally constructed on a new brick foundation following removal of the previous structure. Building No. 27 was built of brick, with load-bearing brick walls and columns extending from brick foundation footings. The rectangular-plan building (which originally lacked the addition at the southern end) measured 225' x 60' as designed. The gabled roof, originally sheathed in corrugated iron, has a wood-truss framing system and was designed to include an elevated track for the movement of coal through the building. The Coal House stood just a few yards from the coal wharf, also rebuilt in 1872, which was used to ferry coal to and from the ships lying in the Pensacola Bay. The supply of coal and other goods to visiting ships of the Gulf Squadron was a major part of the Pensacola Navy Yard's mission. The structure's capacity for storing large quantities of coal (usually enough for at least a year) was important in maintaining security from the price hikes or fuel shortages that often affected the Gulf region. Building No. 27 was designed to have three internal chambers. The largest was reserved for the use of the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting, and held approximately 3,200 tons of coal. A second, for the Bureau of Steam Engineering, held 550 tons; the final chamber, for the use of the Bureau of Construction and Repair, likewise held 550 tons. Later drawings made after the building's completion in 1872 illustrate that those capacities increased considerably.

When federal forces re-occupied the Pensacola Navy Yard following the Civil War, a new coal storage facility was vital to renewing naval activity in the Gulf region. However, Navy officials considered the Pensacola yard temporary, due in part to the total destruction of the facilities rendered during the war, and were reluctant to approve funds for permanent building. Requests for funding to build a new Coal House were made in both 1866 and 1869, before approval was eventually granted.⁷⁶ BuDocks gave initial authorization for the construction of a Coal House to replace that ruined during the Civil War early in 1871. According to a letter from Commandant Middleton to the Chief of BuDocks dated May 2, 1871, laborers had already begun the task of clearing the old "ruins and foundations, and cleaning the bricks of the old Coal House..." but "...the work was suspended under subsequent instructions and nothing further has been done in the premises."⁷⁷ The construction was substantially complete by June of the following year, when a monthly report from the superintendent of improvements noted that "the work for the month has been upon the partition wall [within] Coal House No. 27..."⁷⁸ The completed building apparently cost \$44,891.00, somewhat less than the \$46,374.11 originally estimated.⁷⁹

After Building No. 27's completion in 1872, several improvements in the yard's coal-handling facilities were needed. In 1882, officials at the Pensacola Navy Yard proposed an extension to the existing coal wharf, since ships were unable to reach it due to the shallow depth of the bay at that point. In the BuDocks Annual Report to the Secretary of the Navy for 1882, the yard's commandant complained that coal had to be hauled an extra 1,200 feet from the Coal House to the nearest point of sufficient depth to load it onto visiting ships.⁸⁰ However, the yard was temporarily closed the following year, and spent the next seventeen years in caretaker status. The requested wharf extension was funded under an act passed by Congress on July 7, 1898, in preparation for the re-opening of the yard, but was not completed until 1901, when unidentified repairs to Building No. 27's interior were also accomplished. In 1900, a request for further appropriations for fiscal year 1902 was included in the BuDocks Annual Report, noting that the current improvements did not augment coal storage capacity, which was needed by the Bureau of Equipment.⁸¹ In 1905, storage capacity was increased with the addition of an "open coal storage bin of 5,000 tons capacity," presumably outside of Building No. 27, since no exterior additions are visible in

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photos of the period. The same year, officials at Pensacola requested a \$200,000.00 appropriation for an all new coal Storage and Handling Plant, implying that Building No. 27 was already inadequate to handle the growing fuel demands of the yard and its ships.⁸²

By 1907, all coal was removed from Building No. 27 and stored in open coal bins near the coaling wharf. However, in his 1907 Annual Report, the yard's chief of BuDocks complained that, "[t]he present facilities for coaling vessels at this yard due to the lack of appropriations are embryonic and crude, and because of their construction and difficulty of handling material [they are] costly...."⁸³ The chief also noted that the current facilities could supply only small boats, and that in case of important maneuvers in the Gulf, coaling large vessels would be so slow as to delay activity. He recommended improvement of the pier by the dredging of pockets on each side to accommodate deep-draft vessels such as battleships, and called for housing and machinery for 25,000 gross tons of coal.⁸⁴ Although building activity continued at the yard during the following years, the Navy never succeeded in improving the coaling facilities at the Pensacola Navy Yard.

After the Pensacola Navy Yard officially closed in 1911 and reopened three years later as NAS Pensacola, aviators were quick to make new use of the existing buildings. In 1914 and 1915, changes made to Building No. 27 for its new mission included installing two new sets of rolling aircraft doors in the east facade, removing interior railroad tracks and pouring a new cement floor (*Figure 7*). In addition, a boardwalk was built linking the building to the shoreline, and a seaplane runway was completed nearby.⁸⁵ The work was completed on November 10, 1915. Additional alterations were made in 1917, as the station increased aviation training activities due to World War I demands. A wood-framed control station was erected on the south end of Building No. 27's roof to support aviation training activities over the Pensacola Bay. At the same time, a storm cellar was dug below the building. The work was completed by station labor on January 31, 1917.⁸⁶

In the 1920s, Building No. 27 functioned as a storage area for aircraft and parts, and in the 1930s, the space was converted to offices and shops for various squadrons (*Figure 8*). It continued to function in this capacity, with the control and observation tower on its roof, throughout the World War II period. The building housed classrooms and instructional activities for a brief period in the early 1950s before conversion to a Maintenance and Aircraft Assembly Facility, with workshops including a spray paint booth and engine repair shop. The control tower was removed in the mid-1950s. Building No. 27 continued in an aviation-support capacity until ca. 1971, when it was renovated for its new role as the station commissary warehouse and associated offices. Another renovation in 1997 prepared the building for use as a drug treatment facility, operated by the Naval Hospital, and subsequently as general station support offices. When Hurricane Ivan struck in 2004, Building No. 27 housed the PAO photographic laboratory and studio, as well as storage space for USAF's water survival equipment. The building currently stands vacant.

Prepared by: Olivia Chacón, Architectural Historian
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Date: November 2005

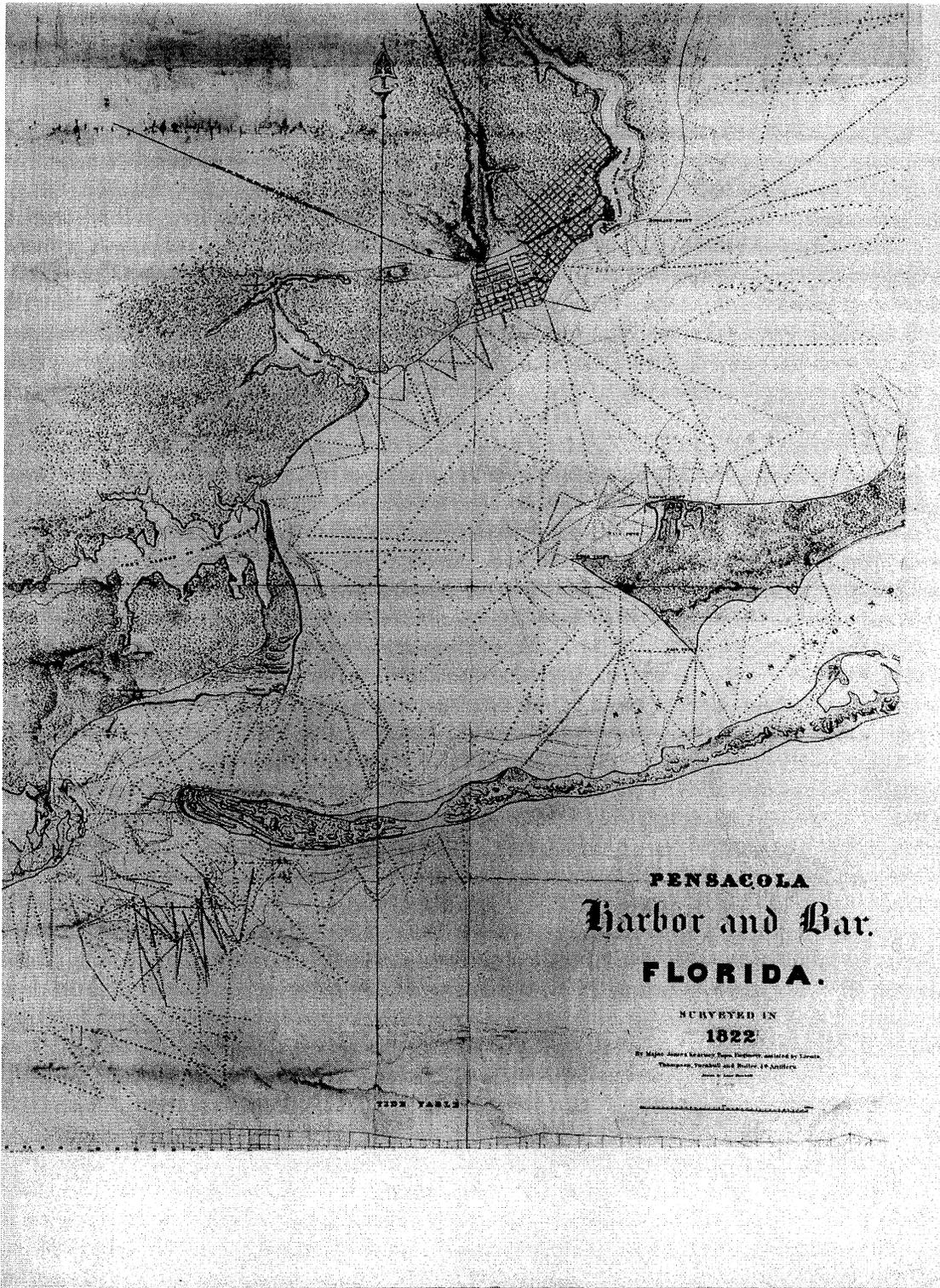
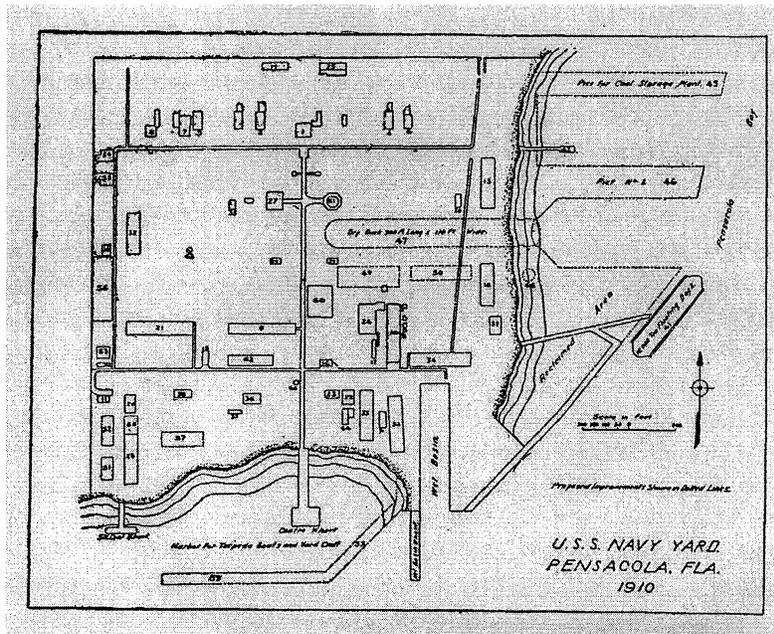


Figure 1. Map and Tide Table of the Pensacola Bay surveyed by the U.S. Army 4th Artillery in 1822, a year after Spain's transfer of Florida to the United States (Map courtesy of the Public Affairs Office, NAS Pensacola, Florida).

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Figures 2 and 3. Hand-drawn plan and index showing the state of the Pensacola Navy Yard in 1910, one year before it was officially closed. (Map and index courtesy of the Public Works Center, NAS Pensacola, Florida).



INDEX TO BUILDINGS

U. S. NAVY YARD, 1910

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Commandant's Quarters | 36. Sawmill |
| 2. Captain's of Yard Quarters | 37. Dry Kiln |
| 3. Doctor's Quarters | 38. Locomotive shed |
| 4. Naval Constructor's Quarters | 39. Paint Shop |
| 5. Civil Engineer's Quarters | 40. Pump house for cess pool of sewer system |
| 6. Paymaster's Quarters | 41. Floating steel dry dock, 10,000 tons capacity |
| 7. Engineer Officer's Quarters | 42. Bath House |
| 8. Pay Clerk's Quarters | 43. 100,000-gallon water tank, 150 feet elevation |
| 9. Joiners, Boatshop and Shipwrights | 44. Coal and coke storage |
| 10. Foundry and Boilershop | 45. Proposed Pier for coal storage plant |
| 11. Prison | 46. Proposed Pier No. 1 |
| 12. Guardhouse | 47. Graving Dry Dock |
| 13. Now used as storage | 48. Proposed Pump Pit for Dry Dock |
| 14. S. & A. Paint and Oil Room | 49. Proposed building, machine shop |
| 15. Fire Engine House | 50. Proposed building, plumbers and allied trades |
| 16. Not used | 51. Proposed building, storage of combustible material |
| 17. Not used | 52. Proposed building, storage cement |
| 18. Marine Barracks | 53. Proposed building, guardhouse |
| 19. Carriage House | 54. Proposed building, Marine Officers' quarters |
| 20. Cement Storage | 55. Proposed building, Marine Officers' quarters |
| 21. Seamen's Barracks and general storekeeper's storehouse | 56. Proposed building, Marine Barracks |
| 22. Foundry, not used | 57. Proposed building, Sailors' Barracks |
| 23. Copper shop | 58. Proposed extension of timber shed |
| 24. S. & A. lumber shed | 59. Proposed extension of Sea Walls. |
| 25. Stables | 60. Central Power House |
| 26. To be used as Foundry | 61. Dispensary |
| 27. Administration Building | 62. Boat Storage Shed |
| 28. Not used | |
| 29. Cisterns Nos. 1 and 2 | |
| 30. Machine shop | |
| 31. Power House | |
| 32. General storekeeper's storehouse and offices | |
| 33. Shipfitter and blacksmith shop | |
| 34. Electrical, plumbers, ordnance stores, rigging loft; offices and sail loft | |
| 35. Wireless Station | |

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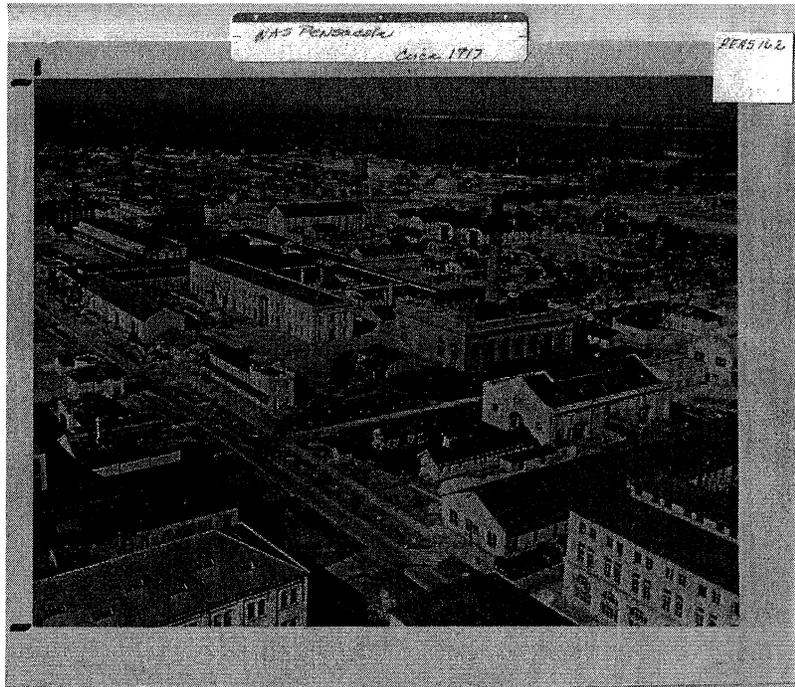
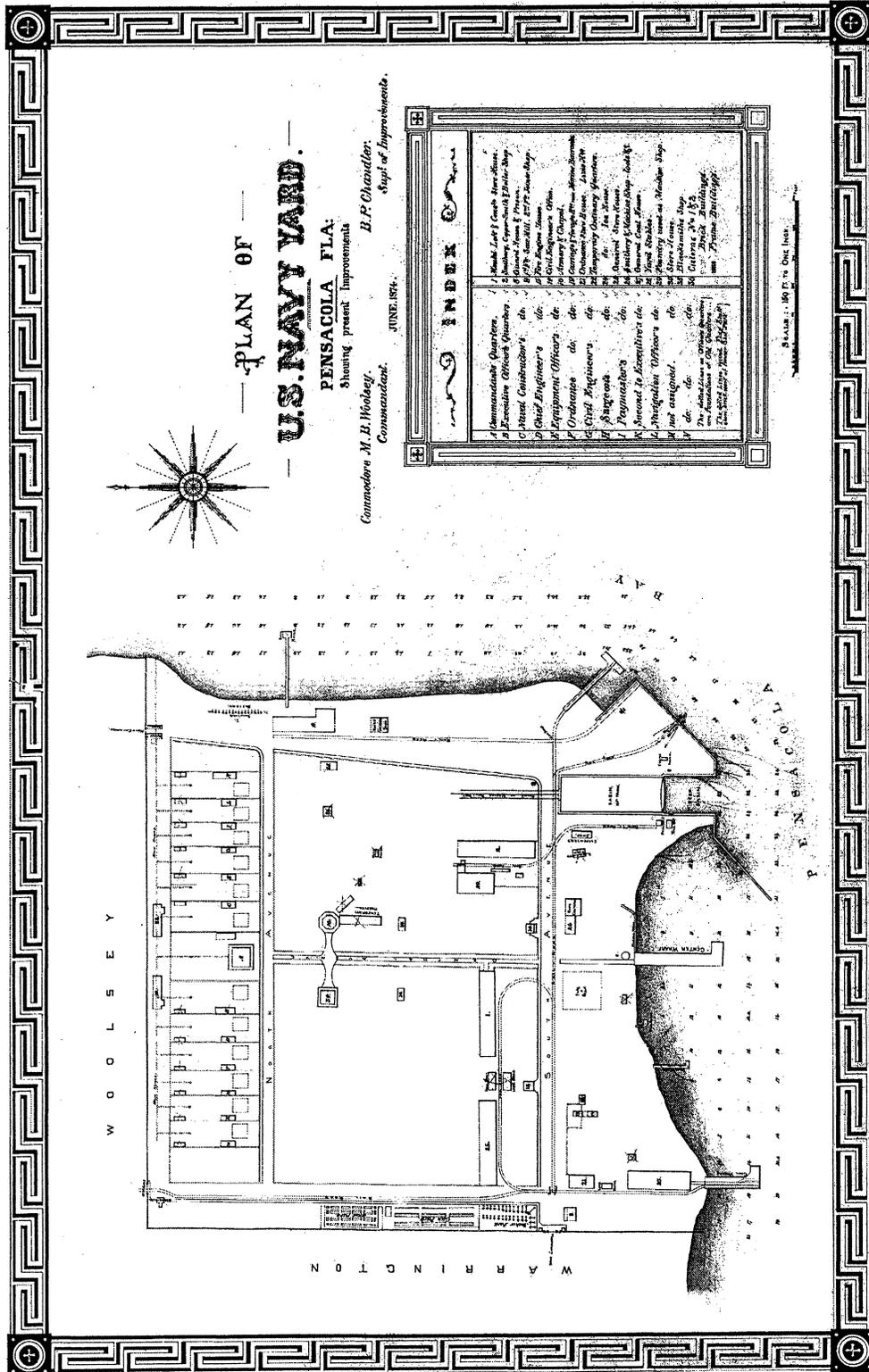


Figure 4. Bird's-eye view of NAS Pensacola ca. 1917 (Photo courtesy of the Naval Aviation Museum, NAS Pensacola, Florida).



Figure 5. View of NAS Pensacola ca. 1967 facing east into the National Historic Landmark District. Chevalier Field is to the north (Photo courtesy of the Public Affairs Office, NAS Pensacola).



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 800-3-36
 Maps

Figure 6. The recently completed Building No. 27, the Coal House, is shown at the bottom of this 1874 map. ("Title," Record Group 71, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, Cartographic and Architectural Unit, NARA, College Park, Maryland)

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Figure 7. In this 1916 photo (facing west), the two airplane doors with dormers added to the east facade in 1915 are evident. (Photo Courtesy of the NAS Pensacola Public Affairs Office)

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Figure 8. This ca. 1919 aerial view (facing west) shows Building No. 27 (at center) in the row of new aircraft hangars. It is distinguished by its radio control/observation tower on the roof. (Photo Courtesy of the NAS Pensacola Public Affairs Office)

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Building No. 27, completed in 1872, is a rectangular-plan, load-bearing masonry building with a two-story, wood-frame addition on its south end. Its brick walls support a heavy timber-framed roofing system. Remaining exterior ornamentation is limited to brick engaged pilasters on the north, east, and west facades, dividing the north facade into three bays, and the long east and west facades into fifteen bays each. In addition, brick corbels define the roofline on all four sides of the building. The original gable roof with six skylights originally had a parapet roofline on the north and south ends. The roofline was later punctuated by two large clipped-gable-roof dormers on the east side, which housed the framing for the enlarged doors necessary to accommodate aircraft.
2. Condition of fabric: Building No. 27 sustained extensive damage from Hurricane Ivan in 2004. Large portions of the roof covering and many rafters are missing, exposing the interior walls and floor to water damage. In addition, portions of the brick veneer on the southern addition were lost in the storm, exposing wood studs and sheathing. Many windows and doors are also missing due to the storm. However, the load-bearing masonry walls of the original building remain structurally sound. The building's interior spaces, which were partitioned into numerous smaller rooms, were also heavily damaged. Winds and water destroyed many partition walls and finishes including gypsum board wall surfaces, suspended acoustical-tile ceilings, carpeting, and vinyl floor tile.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The original portion of Building No. 27 is 60'-0" x 225'-0", with the current overall dimensions including the addition at the south end measuring approximately 60' x 237', with a height of 36'. The rectangular-plan building contains a total of 13,560 square feet of usable space, which includes the one-story main block and the two-story addition on the south. The primary south facade and the north facade have three bays each, while east and west facades are each divided into fifteen bays.
2. Foundations: Although the foundation could not be observed directly, original 1872 architectural drawings indicate that Building No. 27's original foundation consists of continuous stepped masonry footings, likely made of brick, with 4'-0" bases. In 1940, a continuous reinforced concrete perimeter wall on concrete footings was constructed approximately 12' from the original south facade to support a new addition.
3. Walls: The original building has solid 2'-0" thick load-bearing brick walls set in common bond, with masonry buttresses measuring 4'-3" at their bases built into the walls at truss bearing points. Header rows are located every sixth course.

The exterior walls of the south addition are wood-framed with wood sheathing and brick veneer set in common bond. The veneer is tied to the sheathing by steel tie rods, and the facade has a stepped wood cornice beneath its flat roof. The original building's gabled brick parapet on the south facade is still visible above the 1940 addition.

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The north, east, and west facades have brick pilasters dividing the long facades into fifteen bays each, and the north facade into three bays. In addition, the building features a corbelled brick cornice beneath eaves on the east and west facades, and gabled brick parapets on the north and south end walls. The roofline of the south facade has a stepped wood cornice beneath its low-slope roof.

4. Structural systems, framing: According to architectural drawings, Building No. 27 stands on a 4'-0" stepped masonry, continuous-perimeter foundation, with load-bearing 2'-0"-thick brick walls. Additional support is provided by interior brick buttresses at truss bearing points, measuring 4'-3" at their bases. The thirty-two buttresses supporting the outer walls and roof correspond with the brick pilasters that divide the building's facades into bays. The gabled roof has a heavy timber truss structure, originally intended to support a corrugated iron covering. The trusses are modified Queen post with iron tie rods connecting the top and bottom chords.

The 12'-0" long 1940 addition abutting the south facade has a wood-frame structure, including a second story/mezzanine supported on 2" x 10" joists, spaced at 16" on center (o.c.), and anchored to the load-bearing masonry wall of the original building. The walls of the 1940 addition are supported on a reinforced concrete continuous-perimeter foundation on 3'-0" x 3'-0" concrete footings. The addition is covered with brick veneer over wood sheathing, and has a low-slope roof supported on 2" x 8" wood joists spaced at 16" o.c.

5. Porches, stoops: Building No. 27 has an exterior straight-run metal stair with a landing near the southwest corner of the building, accessing a second-floor door at the west facade. The stair consists of metal treads with open risers, with a tubular metal pipe handrail. The landing is supported on four round metal columns.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: According to original drawings, Building No. 27 was constructed with only three doorways—one in the south facade and two in the south end of the west facade for access to individual coal storage compartments. It is likely that another, similar entry existed on the north facade to facilitate movement of coal via the rail tracks that connected Building No. 27 to the rest of the yard. Each entry had a pair of hinged wood panel doors. In 1915, a set of metal rolling doors was inserted beneath a clipped-gable dormer over the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth bays on the east facade to accommodate aircraft. A similar dormer was built north of the other dormer, over the fourth, fifth, and sixth bays on the same facade, but covered only a single door filling one bay. Around the same time, new single door openings were cut into the blank bays on both the east and west facades. The southernmost of the two large aircraft openings was infilled ca. 1918 and a double door was installed in a single bay. This door was subsequently removed ca. 1940, and the opening was infilled. Building No. 27's doors were replaced several times in the 1940s and 1950s, replacing wood doors with steel or aluminum-frame doors, and filling in some extraneous openings. Prior to Hurricane Ivan, the primary entrance on the north facade featured an overhead rolling metal door. The west facade had two overhead doors and three single doors. The south facade featured one door, while the west facade had two entry doors on the first floor and one door at the second floor. Principal entries

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included large openings in the north and south facades, one single opening and one opening for an overhead rolling metal door in the east facade, and a single opening in the west facade. At the time of writing, only one exterior door remained in place—a single flush metal door with metal hardware on the second level of the south addition, on the west side of the building. Other doors were destroyed or lost in Hurricane Ivan.

- b. Windows and shutters: Building No. 27 was originally built with only two window openings, both shuttered, arched openings in the north and south facades to provide interior light and access to the coal storage area. Both have been infilled; however, four batten doors with diagonal bracing are at the interior of the south gable-end wall at the original window opening. Six skylights in the gabled roof also provided light. In about 1917, window openings were punched into each bay on all sides of the building. Original four-light wood windows remain at the southern clipped-gable dormer, although they have been covered with plywood on the exterior.

In the south facade addition, completed in 1940, windows included seven bays of paired casement windows in the upper level of the south facade and six identical bays in the lower register. These casement windows were later replaced by paired, single-hung, two-over-two aluminum-sash windows on the south facade, and a triple, two-over-two window unit at the east facade. Only the second floor windows remain.

Most existing window units were destroyed during Hurricane Ivan. A single-hung aluminum window unit remains on the east facade; however, the glazing is missing. A fixed, six-light wood window unit is located at the south portion of the west facade. Most of the glazing is missing from this unit, and a vent has been inserted at one of the window lights.

8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Building No. 27 has a gabled roof covered with composition shingles, with two clipped-gable dormers projecting over the east facade. Most of the shingles and underlying sheathing were severely damaged during Hurricane Ivan. The south addition has a shed roof with built-up roofing.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: North and south facades feature brick parapet end walls with masonry copings. East and west facades have overhanging open eaves with exposed rafter ends, sheltering corbelled brick cornices of two registers. The cornice is elaborated at the building's corners with bracket-like brick projections. The south addition has prominent closed overhanging eaves over a wood cornice. A hung gutter and external downspouts were destroyed during the hurricane.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Building No. 27 has two prominent clipped-gable dormers on its east facade. Both were apparently constructed ca. 1915 when wide door openings were inserted for airplane access. The southernmost dormer has two window openings, both now covered with plywood.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Significant alterations to the building's interior space have occurred since its

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completion in 1872. Many of the partitions remaining from the most recent renovation were badly damaged or destroyed during Hurricane Ivan.

- a. First floor: The original floorplan was predominantly open, with two compartments built into the southern half of the building. The buttress walls supporting these coal compartments were removed prior to the 1930s, and possibly as early as 1915. This area was repeatedly subdivided using wood-frame partitions throughout the twentieth century. Plans dated ca. 2004, provided by the NAS Pensacola Public Works Department, show that the southern half of the building was divided into office and storage spaces, in addition to maintenance areas and restroom facilities and a central north/south corridor. An entrance lobby and lounge was located in the 1940 addition to the south facade. A laundry room at the northeast corner of the building was topped by second-floor offices. The north side of the building contained larger, more open spaces, used for equipment storage and repair.
 - b. Second floor: There are two areas of Building No. 27 with second floors. One, located at the northeast corner of the building, contains a storage room and a stair landing above a first-floor laundry room. A more substantial second-floor area, called the Mezzanine, was added at the same time as construction of an addition at the south facade in 1940. According to NAS Pensacola Public Works ca. 2004 plans, the second story contained only four partitioned rooms, two restrooms, and a stair landing.
2. Stairways: The building's main interior stairway in the southern part of the building, connecting the upper level of the 1940 addition to the main floor level, was severely damaged in Hurricane Ivan. The enclosed, straight-run wood stair has nineteen treads and risers covered with rubber and a single landing. Another stair located in the northeast portion of the building is a painted wood, straight-run, open riser stair with sixteen treads. It has square wood railings and wood balusters.
 3. Flooring: Building No. 27's current flooring on the primary level is carpeting and off-white vinyl composition tile over smooth concrete. Remaining flooring on the second floor south addition is carpet over wood flooring. Additional flooring finishes included exposed concrete in the large equipment storage rooms on the first floor, and 12" x 12" brown ceramic tile in the restrooms. Much of the water-damaged flooring in the building has been removed.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Partitioned interior spaces are predominantly finished with painted gypsum board, and the original brick walls are painted. Other interior finishes include unpainted plywood paneling in the south addition and second floor rooms, and wood beadboard on the wall of the enclosed two-story area in the northeast corner. Most interior wall finishes were badly damaged by Hurricane Ivan. According to 1997 architectural plans, dropped acoustical-tile ceilings were present throughout the building, but were destroyed in the hurricane. Other ceiling finishes included painted gypsum board in the large equipment storage rooms and painted wood beadboard in a first floor enclosed storage room.
 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Currently, most of the remaining interior doors are located on the second floor of the south addition. Typical doors include flush wood doors in wood frames with metal hardware and paired wood rail-and-stile doors with louvered panels

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and vision panels with six glass lights per door. Several hollow-core, flush-panel wood doors remain at the first floor of the original building. The door units have wood frames and feature either knob or level hardware. A five-panel wood door is located at the entrance to the second-floor storage room at the northeast corner of the original building. This door has a louvered vent inserted into the bottom panel and also features a knob with escutcheon and a metal hasp (with no lock).

- b. **Windows:** One fixed, wood-frame, four-light window is located in the first-floor laundry room addition, near the northeast corner of the east facade. Two fixed wood-frame, four-light windows are located in the northernmost clipped-gable dormer on the east façade. These windows are infilled on the building's exterior, but are visible from the interior.
6. **Mechanical equipment:**
- a. **Heating, air-conditioning, ventilation:** The HVAC system in Building No. 27 consists of a split-system heat pump system with a remote condenser unit located outside the building in the center of the west facade. Ceiling-mounted heating units are also located throughout the building.
 - b. **Lighting:** Typical lighting in Building No. 27 consisted of suspended fluorescent troffers, most of which were destroyed during Hurricane Ivan. Other types of fixtures include surface-mounted fluorescent units in the large equipment storage rooms and lay-in fluorescent units in the suspended acoustical ceiling throughout the building.
 - c. **Plumbing:** Restrooms were not accessible during the field survey. Most restrooms were destroyed or severely damaged in the 2004 hurricane; however, 1997 drawings indicate that Building No. 27 contained four restrooms—two on the first floor and two on the second floor. At that time, the first-floor women's restroom, near the center of the east side of the building, contained two water closets and one lavatory; the adjacent men's restroom contained one water closet, one wall-mounted urinal, and two lavatories. The second-floor restrooms were located at either side of the south addition. The restroom at the east side of the building contained two water closets and two lavatories, while that at the west side contained a single water closet, a single lavatory, and a shower.

D. **Site:**

1. **General setting and orientation:** The long north/south axis of Building No. 27 is perpendicular to the southern waterfront at NAS Pensacola, near the heart of the industrial section of the former navy yard. It lies within the boundaries of the Pensacola Naval Air Station Historic District. Today, the building is bounded by parking lots on the east and west, the waterfront on the south, and South Avenue on the north. Closest adjacent buildings are Building No. 73 (Seaplane Hangar, HABS No. FL-242) to the east and Building No. 74 (Seaplane Hangar, HABS No. FL-513) to the west.
2. **Historic landscape design:** Historic maps, drawings, and photos indicate that Building No. 27 was originally somewhat isolated from the industrial buildings immediately to the east, due to the long coal wharf built directly in front of the building for loading ships in Pensacola Bay. The construction of Hangars 73 and 74 after 1916 linked the former Coal House to a chain of waterfront facilities. Little or no landscaping has been done in the vicinity of Building No. 27, with the exception of paved sidewalks at the south entrance. A railroad

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track adjacent to the west facade once linked to an extensive rail system at the station.

3. Outbuildings: None.

NOTES

¹ Commandant, Pensacola Navy Yard to Chief of BuDocks Daniel Ammon (with attachment), April 13, 1871, Record Group 71, Entry 5, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, Correspondence with Commandants of Pensacola Navy Yard. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.

² Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks, NAS Pensacola, June 30, 1915. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

³ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks, NAS Pensacola, June 30, 1918. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁴ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks, NAS Pensacola, June 30, 1918. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁵ Coleman, James C. and Irene S. *Guardians on the Gulf: Pensacola Fortifications, 1698-1980* (Pensacola: Pensacola Historical Society, 1982), 7; Pearce, George F. *The U.S. Navy in Pensacola: From Sailing Ships to Naval Aviation (1825-1930)* (Pensacola: University of West Florida Press, 1980), 1.

⁶ Coleman, *Guardians on the Gulf*, 26-28.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁸ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 3.

⁹ Coleman, *Guardians on the Gulf*, 5.

¹⁰ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 5-10.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11-13.

¹² *Ibid.*, 13, 18.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁴ Pearce, George F. "NAS Pensacola, Florida," in *U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Bases*, 465-466, ed. Paolo Coletta, 466 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985).

¹⁵ Coleman, *Guardians on the Gulf*, 33-37.

¹⁶ Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, November 19, 1844. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

¹⁷ Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 17, 1849. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

¹⁸ Pearce, George F. "NAS Pensacola, Florida," in *U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Bases*, 466.

¹⁹ Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 25, 1847. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

²⁰ Pearce, George F. "NAS Pensacola, Florida," in *U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Bases*, 466.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 466-467.

²² Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, November 4, 1862, NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

²³ Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 15, 1864, NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

²⁴ Commandant Smith to Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, May 15, 1863, Record Group 71, Entry 5, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, Correspondence with Commandants of Pensacola Navy Yard. NARA, Washington, D.C.

²⁵ Commandant Armstrong to Chief of BuDocks, November 23, 1864, Record Group 71, Entry 5. NARA, Washington, D.C.

²⁶ Chief of BuDocks Smith to Commandant Armstrong, December 10, 1864, Record Group 45, Collection of the Office of Naval Records, Subject File U.S. Navy 1775-1910, Navy Yards, NARA, Washington, D.C.

²⁷ Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 1, 1869. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

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- ²⁸ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 95; 98.
- ²⁹ Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 26, 1883. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ³⁰ Annual Report of Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 1, 1901. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ³¹ Pearce, George F. "NAS Pensacola, Florida," in *U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Bases*, 468.
- ³² *Ibid.* 468-469.
- ³³ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 123-125.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 128-129.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 132.
- ³⁶ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from U.S. Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1914. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ³⁷ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 134.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 135.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.
- ⁴¹ *Air Station News, Pensacola, Florida*. 1930. "An Historical Note," November 20, 4.
- ⁴² Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1915, 40, 18. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ⁴³ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1917, NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ⁴⁴ Corliss, Earle. *Activities of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, Navy Department, World War: 1917-1918* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1921), 395.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 153.
- ⁴⁶ Pearce, George F. "NAS Pensacola, Florida," in *U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Bases*, 470.
- ⁴⁷ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1918, NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ⁴⁸ *Air Station News, Pensacola, Florida*. 1930. "An Historical Note," November 20, 4.
- ⁴⁹ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 159.
- ⁵⁰ *Air Station News, Pensacola, Florida*. 1930. "An Historical Note," November 20, 4.
- ⁵¹ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 158.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, 157.
- ⁵³ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1920. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ⁵⁴ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 165.
- ⁵⁵ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1923. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme; Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1927. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ⁵⁶ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1927. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁸ Pearce, *U.S. Navy in Pensacola*, 177-178.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 178-179.
- ⁶⁰ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1936, 32. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.
- ⁶¹ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1936. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme. In the report, NAS Pensacola's commandant attributes funding of the new building program to the "Authorization Bill approved April 15, 1935." He also notes that "Two million dollars of funds were carried in the Deficiency Act, approved August 12, 1935, while \$1,081,500 was made available from the continuing

appropriation 'Public Works, Bureau of Yards and Docks.'" The Annual Report contradicts the authoritative U.S. Government Printing Office publication *Building the Navy's Bases in World War II of 1947*, which states that in 1935 "the Congress made no appropriation for naval public works, and such work as could be done was financed out of the ends of appropriations made in earlier years and by allocation from the funds provided by the 1935 Emergency Relief Appropriation Act" (p. 25).

⁶² Ibid, 33.

⁶³ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1937. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 48.

⁶⁵ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1936. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁶⁶ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1938, 54. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁶⁷ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, Florida, June 30, 1939, 19. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁶⁸ U.S. Government Printing Office, *Building the Navy's Bases in World War II: History of the Bureau of Yards and Docks and the Civil Engineer Corps, 1940-1946, Volume I* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), 229.

⁶⁹ Shettle, 177.

⁷⁰ Delaney, Michelle M., ed. *The Cradle: Naval Air Station, Pensacola*, (Pensacola: Pensacola Engraving Company, 1989), 127.

⁷¹ Ibid., 136.

⁷² Ibid., 149.

⁷³ Pearce, George F. "NAS Pensacola, Florida," in *U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Bases*, ed. Paolo Coletta, 474 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, "NAS Pensacola: The Cradle of Naval Aviation," electronic document, www.pensacolachamber.com. Accessed February 18, 2005.

⁷⁶ Annual Report of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 18, 1866; October 1, 1867. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁷⁷ Commandant Middleton to Chief of BuDocks, 2 May, 1871, Record Group 71, Entry 5. NARA, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁸ Report Forwarded by Commandant Middleton to Chief of BuDocks, 8 July, 1872, RG 71, Entry 5. NARA, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁹ Ibid., and *Public Works of the Navy Data Book, Part II*, 1939. p. 382.

⁸⁰ Annual Report of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 9, 1882. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁸¹ Annual Report of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 1, 1898; October 1, 1900; October 1, 1901. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁸² Annual Report of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 1, 1905. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁸³ Annual Report of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to the Secretary of the Navy, Pensacola Navy Yard, October 1, 1907. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, June 30, 1914; June 30, 1915. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

⁸⁶ Annual Report to the Bureau of Yards and Docks from NAS Pensacola, June 30, 1918. NAVFAC Archive, Port Hueneme.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings: Original and early architectural drawings are held at the National Archives and Records Administration Cartographic and Architectural Unit, College Park, Maryland. They are found within Record Group (RG) 71, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Plans used for this documentation effort include the following:

1. Drawing No. 800-35-1 and 800-35-2, "Plan of Coal House No. 27, Pensacola Navy Yard," 1872. The first drawing seems to be a preliminary version, while the second, more detailed version may have been made after completion of the building. The two drawings vary in details, such as capacity of the coal compartments and the inclusion in the later drawing of a reduced-scale elevation of the building with the adjacent coal wharf and a plan of the coal wharf's trestle. The latter drawing also lists beginning and completion dates for the building's construction, and bears Bureau of Yards and Docks No. 2842.

Alteration and renovation drawings for Building No. 27 are on file with contractors Hill-Griffin at Building No. 458, NAS Pensacola, Pensacola, Florida. Plans for major alterations include the following:

1. Original drawings for the 1940 addition to the south facade of Building No. 27 are dated December 20, 1940, and include NAS Drawing Nos. 6793 and 6794.

B. Historic Views: Photographs are archived at the NAS Pensacola Public Affairs Office, Building No. 624; NAS Pensacola Public Works Center, Building No. 3560; the National Museum of Naval Aviation at NAS Pensacola; the University of West Florida Library, Special Collections; the NAS Pensacola Photograph Collection and the Navy Yard at Pensacola Photograph Collection, Pensacola, Florida; and Record Group 71, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, at the Still Pictures Unit, NARA, College Park, Maryland.

C. Interviews: None conducted.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library. Series 464, Subject Files 1775-1910: Bases, Pensacola, Construction, etc., 1860-1910. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 71, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Entry 5, Letters Received 1842-1885. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 71, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Entry 42, Contracts 1842-1896. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 71, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Records relating to the design and construction of shore establishment facilities, 1824-1963: Drawings 800-3-15 to 800-45-18. Cartographic and Architectural Unit, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland.

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Record Group 71, Records of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. Still Pictures (General) 1876-1955: Still Pictures Unit, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Archive, Port Hueneme, California. Annual Reports of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, NAS Pensacola, Florida, 1842-1939.

Construction Contracts, NAS Pensacola, Florida, various dates, Record Group 2.

Detailed Inventory of Naval Shore Facilities, NAS Pensacola, Florida, various dates, Record Group 2.

Property Record Cards, NAS Pensacola, Florida, various dates, Record Group 2.

NAS Pensacola Public Works Center, Pensacola, Florida.

Facilities Files, General.

Facilities Files, Photographs.

Installation Maps, NAS Pensacola, Florida, various dates.

NAS Pensacola Public Affairs Office, Pensacola, Florida.

Photograph Collection.

National Museum of Naval Aviation, Pensacola, Florida.

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2. Secondary and published sources:

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E. Likely sources not yet investigated:

Additional records for the history of the Pensacola Navy Yard and NAS Pensacola may yet be found in other series and subgroups within Record Group 71, in Record Group 72, "Records of the Bureau of Aeronautics" (1911-46), and for later periods, Record Group 181, "Records of Naval Districts and Shore Establishments."

F. Supplemental material:

None provided.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The mitigative documentation of Building 27 at NAS Pensacola, Florida, was undertaken from July to October 2005 by HHM Inc, of Austin, Texas, in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement among DON, NAS Pensacola, and the Florida State Historic Preservation Officer. The project was sponsored by DON, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Engineering Field Division South (NAVFAC EFD SOUTH), Charleston, South Carolina, and managed by Ron N. Johnson, Registered Preservation Architect, Head of Cultural Resources Branch, and Historic Preservation Officer for NAVFAC EFD SOUTH. The principals involved in managing the documentation included Rick Mitchell (HHM), Project Director; Laurie A. Gotcher (HHM), Project Manager; and David Moore (HHM), Quality Assurance Manager. The fieldwork was conducted by Jennifer Ross (HHM), Senior Architectural Historian, and Leah Roberson (HHM), Field Technician. Olivia Chacón (HHM), Architectural Historian, prepared the significance, architectural, and building history documentation sections. Ms. Chacón also prepared the

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general historic context. Ms. Ross, S. Elizabeth Valenzuela (HHM), Intern Architect, and Anna Madrona (HHM), Senior Historian, conducted technical reviews. Editing, report layout, and graphics were managed by Lori Smith (HHM), Copy Editor and Production Manager, and Julio Chacón (HHM), Graphic Artist. Large-format photography was undertaken by Karen Hughes (HHM), Senior Architectural Historian, and Justin Edgington (HHM), Historian.