

FORT RODMAN MILITARY RESERVATION, BAKE HOUSE
(Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Building P-17)
Along southernmost access road, directly north of
Fort Taber
New Bedford
Bristol County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1256-C

HABS
MASS
3-NEBED,
27C-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

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- Location:** Along southernmost access road, directly north of Fort Taber
Fort Rodman Military Reservation
New Bedford, Bristol County, Massachusetts
- USGS Quadrangle: New Bedford, South
UTM Coordinates: 19.341425.4606155
- Present Owner:** City of New Bedford
Municipal Building
133 William Street
New Bedford, 02740
- Occupant:** Vacant/Storage
- Significance:** Like most Army buildings of this period, the Bake House at Fort Rodman was built according to a standardized plan, in this case Plan No. 49-L. It is atypical, however, in that it is of frame construction rather than brick, which was much more common at New England coastal forts (Eastman 1988:36-41,49-51,56-59,69-76).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: 1903
2. Architect: Quartermaster General's Office
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: United States Army - City of New Bedford
4. Builder: United States Army
5. Original Plans: Constructed from Standard Plan No. 49-L, filed in the National Archives. Records of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Record Group 77. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., P.I. NM-19, E-411 - Standard Fort Plans, Plan No. 49-L
6. Alterations and Additions: Connected to buildings No. T-77 ca. 1942

B. Historical Context

The Bake House building (P-17) at Fort Rodman was constructed in 1903 as part of the Endicott Period development of the base. Fresh-baked bread was apparently a standard feature of Army forts of that period and a bakery was usually one of the first service buildings erected (Eastman 1988:12)

The Bake House continued to be used as a bakery until the early part of World War II: after 1942, however, when HABS No. MA-1256-E was constructed and attached to the east side of the Bake House, the use was later changed. In 1945 it was designated "post engineer's stock room"; in 1959 it was the post engineer's warehouse and office; and now it is used for storage.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. **Architectural Character:** The former Bake House building (P-17) at Fort Rodman is a good example of a standardized utilitarian structure built by the Army at the beginning of the 20th century.
2. **Condition of Fabric:** The building is generally in good condition, most features are intact.

B. Description of Exterior/Interior

The present building is a one-story, two-by-five bay structure with a gable roof

covered with slate, an end pilastered chimney, a hip-roofed vent at the ridge line, the exterior clad with clapboards, and an ashlar foundation. The front (west) side has a center double door with a relatively long, narrow six-by-six window on either side. One gable end has two vents in the gable and two windows; the other has the same vents and a side door with an adjacent window. At the back, the building is connected to HABS No. MA-1256-E, which was constructed in 1942. All rafter ends are scalloped, as are those on two other contemporary buildings, the fire apparatus building (P-9:1903) and the quartermaster's and commissary storehouse (P-21:1902), so apparently this was a characteristic feature of Quartermaster General's Office plans of this period. The original plans of the Bake House indicate that the exterior has been altered over the years. The front side of the building originally had a second door in the northwest corner, which is now sided over; the original roof ventilator was a circular metal one; the right-hand (south) gable end originally had the same vent and window arrangement as the north; and there was a one-by-one bay lean to on the back for fuel storage.

The plans also indicate the original arrangement of the interior space. The double doors opened into a large bake room with an oven at the south end near the chimney. The north end of the building had two smaller rooms; a store room, also accessible through the exterior door that has been removed, and a baker's room.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Drawings

National Archives. Records of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Record Group 77. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

E.393-Completion Reports. Box 222-Fort Rodman, MA
P.I. NM-19, E.411-Standard Fort Plans, Plan No. 49-L

Specifications

National Archives. Records of the Quartermaster General's Office. Record Group 92. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Blueprint File. Fort Rodman. #12 - Specifications of a Frame Bake House at Fort Rodman, MA.

Historical Information

Office of Public Archeology - Boston University

Architectural Inventory of the Fort Rodman Military Reservation in New Bedford, MA
Office of Public Archeology Report of Investigations No. 72, Nancy Seasholes-Author

Eastman, Joel W.

1988 The Modern Defense of the Coast of Maine, 1891-1945. Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, ME.

Site Plans

Post Engineer's Office

1945 Fort Rodman: Water System. Map on file at the U.S. Army Base, Fort Rodman, New Bedford, MA

Quartermaster's Corps

1941 Fort Rodman: Sewer Systems and Drainage. Map on file at U.S. Army Base, Fort Rodman, New Bedford, MA

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The City of New Bedford entered into a consent decree with the Environmental Protection Agency, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and the Conservation Law Foundation in 1986 to construct a secondary wastewater treatment facility as a result of the city's violation of the Clean Water Act. The Project includes a new secondary wastewater treatment plant at Fort Rodman, decommissioning and demolition of the existing primary plant, improvements to historic Fort Taber and development of Taber Park, and rehabilitation of the existing 60-inch outfall. The majority of buildings comprising the Fort Rodman Military Reservation will be demolished; several will be retained or relocated and renovated for community purposes. Following completion of the plant, the existing primary plant will be demolished and the Fort Rodman site will be restored, including significant mitigation in the form of Taber Park. Taber Park will be a community recreational park, around the site's existing national register-listed fort and batteries. The park will provide an appropriate setting for the historical resources of Fort Taber and the batteries, as well as recreation opportunities such as picnic areas, multipurpose playfields, and trails and paths. The Memorandum of Agreement for the Project was developed between the City of New Bedford, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, the National Park Service, the Department of the Army, and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. EPA, as enforcer of the Clean Water Act, is the primary agency for ensuring NHPA compliance. The US Army Corps of Engineers is also involved as a holder of property restrictions on the site. The National Park Service is involved due to property restrictions.

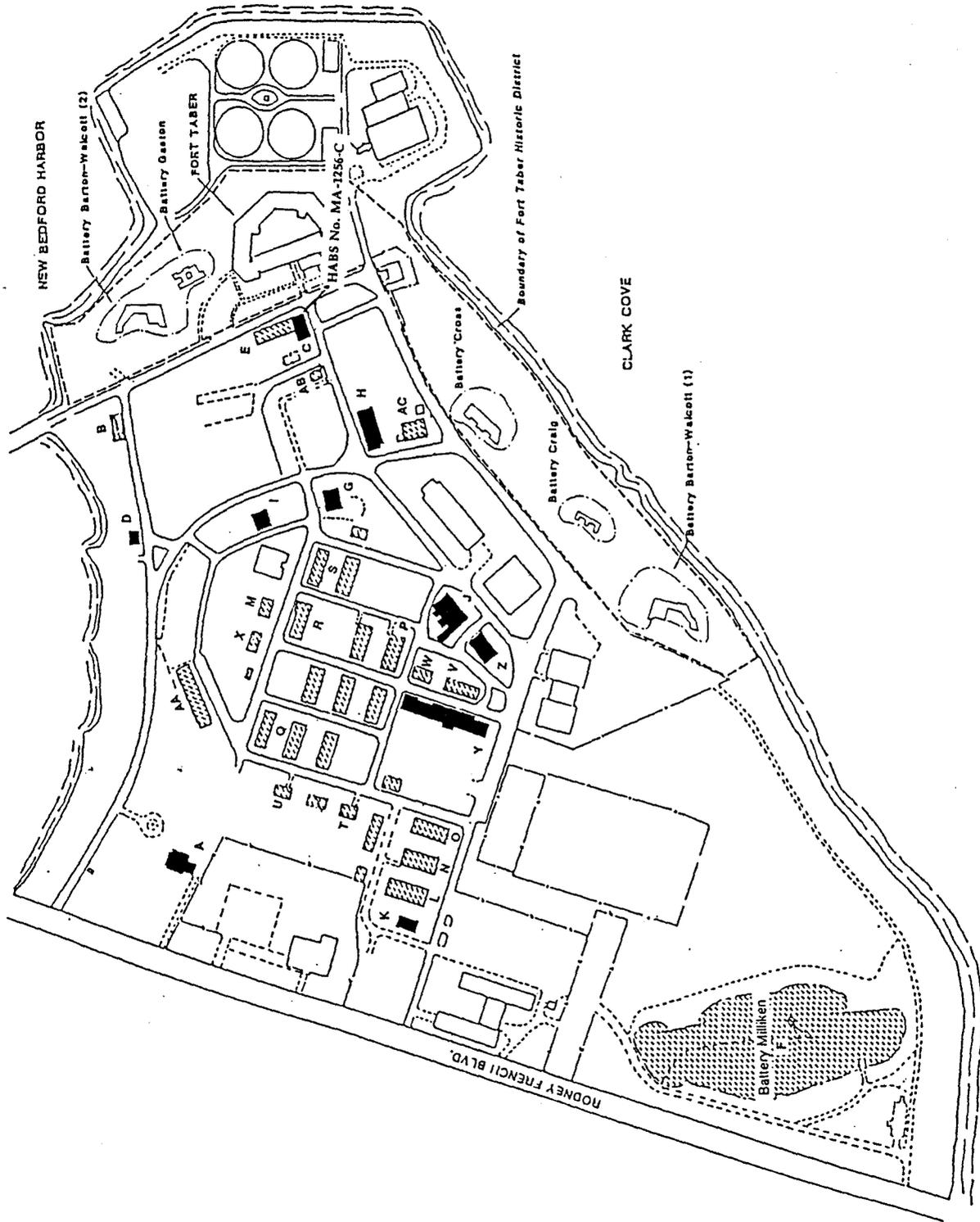
Prepared by: Elizabeth Beardsley, based on studies and documentation performed by Donald G. Jones and Nancy C. Seasholes, Office of Public Archaeology, Boston University (historical and archaeological research and analysis) and Martin Stupich (photography).

Title: Engineer

Affiliation: Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.

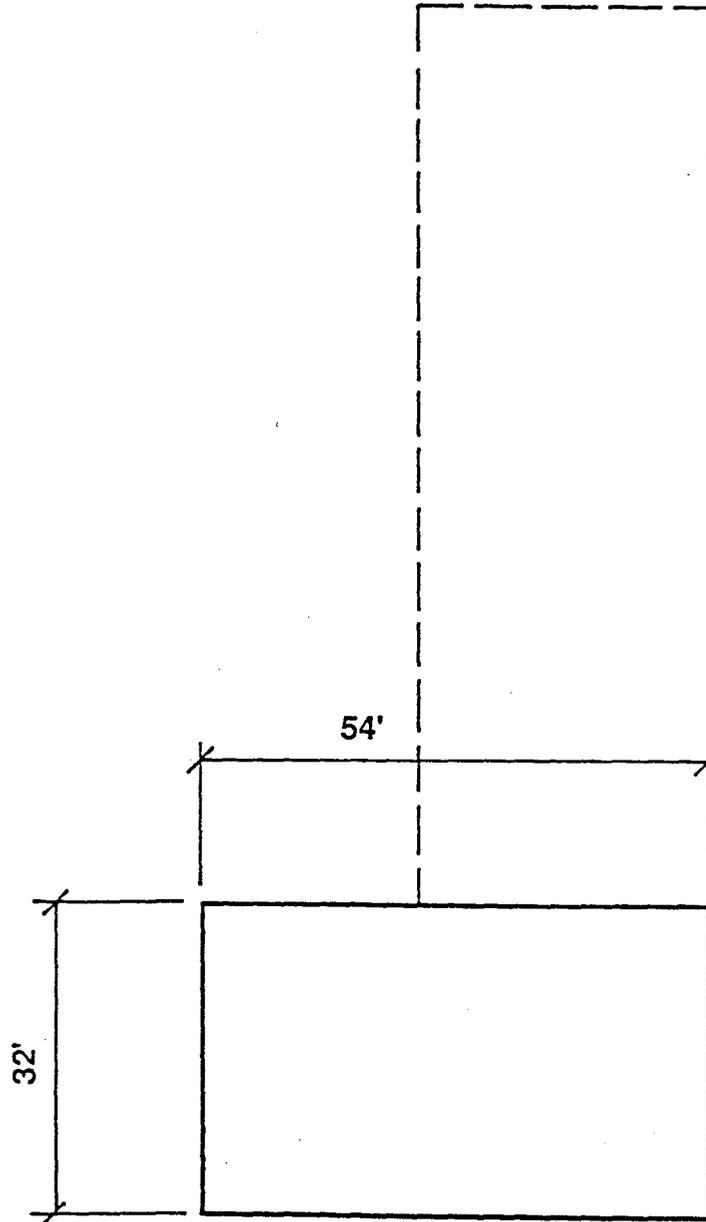
Date: 1992

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SCALE: 1"=20'