

FORT RODMAN MILITARY RESERVATION,
NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER'S QUARTERS
(Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Building P-26)
Centered within the Fort Rodman complex at the intersection
of several unnamed access roads, east of Building P-17
New Bedford
Bristol County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1256-I

HABS
MASS
3-NEBED,
27E-

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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FORT RODMAN MILITARY RESERVATION, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER'S QUARTERS
(Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Building P-26)

HABS No. MA-1256-I

Location: Centered within the Fort Rodman complex at the intersection of several, unnamed access roads - east of the other NCO Quarters, P-7
Fort Rodman Military Reservation
New Bedford, Bristol County, Massachusetts

USGS Quadrangle: New Bedford, South
UTM Coordinates: 19.341365.4606250

Present Owner: City of New Bedford
Municipal Building
133 William Street
New Bedford, 02740

Occupant: Low Tide Yacht Club (Private Boating Club)

Significance: The Non-Commissioned Officer's (NCO) Quarters (second of 2) retains its integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and, to some degree, setting. Its construction was associated with fortifications of the Taft Period, an important era in the history of the United States coastal defense. The NCO Quarters is a good example of such houses constructed according to standardized plans, but are unusual in that they are of frame construction rather than brick, which was much more commonly used for Army housing in New England during the Endicott Period.

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. 82-E, 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. 82-E.
6. Alterations and Additions: None

B. Historical Context

The Non-Commissioned Officer's Quarters (P-26) (and HABS No. MA-1256-G, P-7), were built according to a standardized plan produced by the Quartermaster General's Office. The plan for this house was No. 82-E, not surprising since the 82 Series of plans was one of the most commonly used for double set non-commissioned officer's quarters (Bethanie Grashof, personal communication). Plan 82-E is dated 1898; HABS No. MA-1256-G was erected in 1903. HABS No. MA-1256-G appears to adhere to the plan except for the porches: the plan included a porch on only the front elevation and also specified round Tuscan columns while those on HABS No. MA-1256-I (P-26) are square, chamfered, and pilastered, perhaps to emulate those on the Officer's Quarters house, HABS No. MA-1256-A (P-2) at Fort Rodman.

Although many of the 82 series and other plans for the non-commissioned officer's quarters are for frame houses (Grashof 1986: vols. 3,4), the NCO quarters built in New England during this period were usually made of brick. The Fort Rodman houses are thus not only reasonably well-preserved examples of Endicott Period NCO housing built according to a standardized plan, but are also some of the few, if not only, surviving frame structures of this type in New England.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. **Architectural Character:** The two Non-Commissioned Officer's Houses at Fort Rodman, both "double sets" or duplexes, are good examples of NCO standardized

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housing constructed by the Army at the beginning of the 20th century. Like most of the standardized plans produced by the Quartermaster General's Office, the plan for these houses reflects then-current architectural styles, although in this case the Colonial Revival influence is very muted.

2. **Condition of Fabric:** The NCO Quarters (P-26) is fair to poor condition.

B. Description of Exterior/Interior

The house, which is identical to HABS No. MA-1256-G (P-7), is two stories high, has four-by-two bays, and has cross-gabled roof covered with slate, the exterior is clad with clapboards, and an ashlar foundation. The front and back elevations are identical and are characterized by a double vent in the gable, two windows on the second floor, and, on the first, two five-panel doors on either side and two windows in between, a full porch, supported by pilastered and chamfered posts, extends across both the front and back; in addition, there are half Tuscan columns set into the wall at the junction of the porch roof and midway between the two windows. Other Colonial Revival finishes include the pilastered chimneys, pilastered cornerboards, and cornice moldings. The gable ends are mirror images of one another; each has two windows on the first floor and two on the second, one in the center and another smaller one at the back. On each side of the house, the front exterior doors opened into a hall with straight-run stairs; a sitting room was to the side and a kitchen, also reached directly through the back exterior door, at the rear. On the second floor there were two bedrooms and a bathroom.

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, Mass.

P.I. NM-19, E.411 - Standard Fort Plans, Plan No. 82-E.

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. #2 - Specifications for a Frame Quarters for Two Non-Commissioned Officers at Fort Rodman, MA

Historical Information

Grashof, Bethanie C.

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A Study of United States Army Family Housing Standardized Plans, 1866-1840. 6
Vols. Atlanta: Center for Architectural Conservation, College of Architecture, Georgia
Institute of Technology.

Seasholes, Nancy

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

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