

FORT RODMAN MILITARY RESERVATION, WARD ROOM
(Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Building T-60)
Along the western edge of the fort complex,
 alongside the army property
New Bedford
Bristol County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1256-Y

HABS
MASS
3-NEBED,
27Y-

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

HABS
MASS
3-NEBED,
27Y-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

FORT RODMAN MILITARY RESERVATION, WARD ROOM
(Fort Rodman Military Reservation, T-60)

HABS No. MA-1256-Y

- Location:** Along the western edge of Fort Rodman, alongside the army property
Fort Rodman Military Reservation
New Bedford, Bristol County, Massachusetts
- USGS Quadrangle: New Bedford, South
UTM Coordinates: 19.341175.4606300
- Present Owner:** City of New Bedford
Municipal Building
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
- Occupant:** Classrooms
- Significance:** The Ward Room has retained its integrity of location, setting, materials and workmanship. It was built specifically for troops in World War II, a major event in the country's history. It is also a good example of a World War II "Temporary" building constructed according to a standardized plan and, although altered, is one of the few remaining examples of its type. In addition, the Ward Room was part of a coastal reservation during the final period of coastal fortifications and as such, contributes to the Fort Taber National Register District, which is significant because it "is representative of the development of American coastal fortifications from the revolutionary period through the mid-20th century."

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: March 6, 1991
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 Standardized plan 700 Series on file at the National Archives. Records of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Record Group 77, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. E.393 - Construction Completion Reports 1917-1943. Box 272 - Completion temporary housing. (1941)
6. Alterations and Additions: Additions on south facade (1941-45); addition on north side (since 1977)

B. Historical Context

The Ward Room at Fort Rodman was built according to standardized plans 700-462, 700-462.1, 700-463, and 700-463.1, all part of the "700-Series" of temporary buildings erected by the Army at the beginning of World War II. Most of the 700 Series buildings at Fort Rodman were built in the winter of 1940-41; the ward building was one of the last to be completed and was finished on March 6, 1941.

The Ward Room was designed for 33 beds and was located south of the hospital, which has been built in 1904. According to the specifications in the completion report, the Ward Room contained a 33-bed ward, two single-bed wards, an office, clothes room, linen room, serving kitchen (the hospital mess was in another building), utility room, toilets, laboratories, a solarium, and the covered porch.

Apparently, not many similar buildings are still standing. The Army's documentation study of World War II buildings indicates that there are only 32 Ward Rooms left, but since this figure includes 800 series structures as well as 700 and does not include building on the non-Army property, it does not give the exact number of comparable buildings. In Massachusetts, the survey of Camp Edwards did not locate any buildings of this type.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. **Architectural Character:** Although altered by many additions, the original core of this building is a good example of a World War II "temporary" structure built according to a standardized plan.
2. **Condition of Fabric:** The overall condition of the exterior and interior fabric is good.

B. Description of Exterior/Interior

The original form of this building is somewhat difficult to discern, but was apparently a long three-by-twenty-six bay one-story structure with a covered porch projecting on the south side. (The location of this original porch is today marked by eight posts that support an overhanging roof.) The gabled roof was covered with asphalt shingles, the exterior with wood drop siding (a type of tongue-and-groove boards laid horizontally), and the sill was set on concrete piers that were masked with a continuous wood "skirt".

The form of the original building was soon changed by subsequent additions on the south (front) side: a two-by-ten bay room on the east end and a two-by-four bay room immediately west of the original porch. A two-by-four bay room has also been added since 1977 on the north (back) side. All of the additions, however, are clad with wood drop siding and the building retains other original finishes: some doors with a four-paned light over three panels, six-over-six wood double-hung windows, and the central heating apparatus. On the other hand, the drop siding has in some places been covered with two courses of wide clapboards.

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.391 - Construction Completion Reports 1917-1943. Box 272 - Completion Report of Temporary Housing. (1941)

HABS (Historic American Building Survey)

1989 World War II Temporary Structures: The U.S. Army. Part II. The Historical Context of World War II Mobilization Construction. Draft Report, March 5, 1989.

Post Engineer's Office

1945 Fort Rodman: Water System. Map on File at 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.

Historical Information

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.

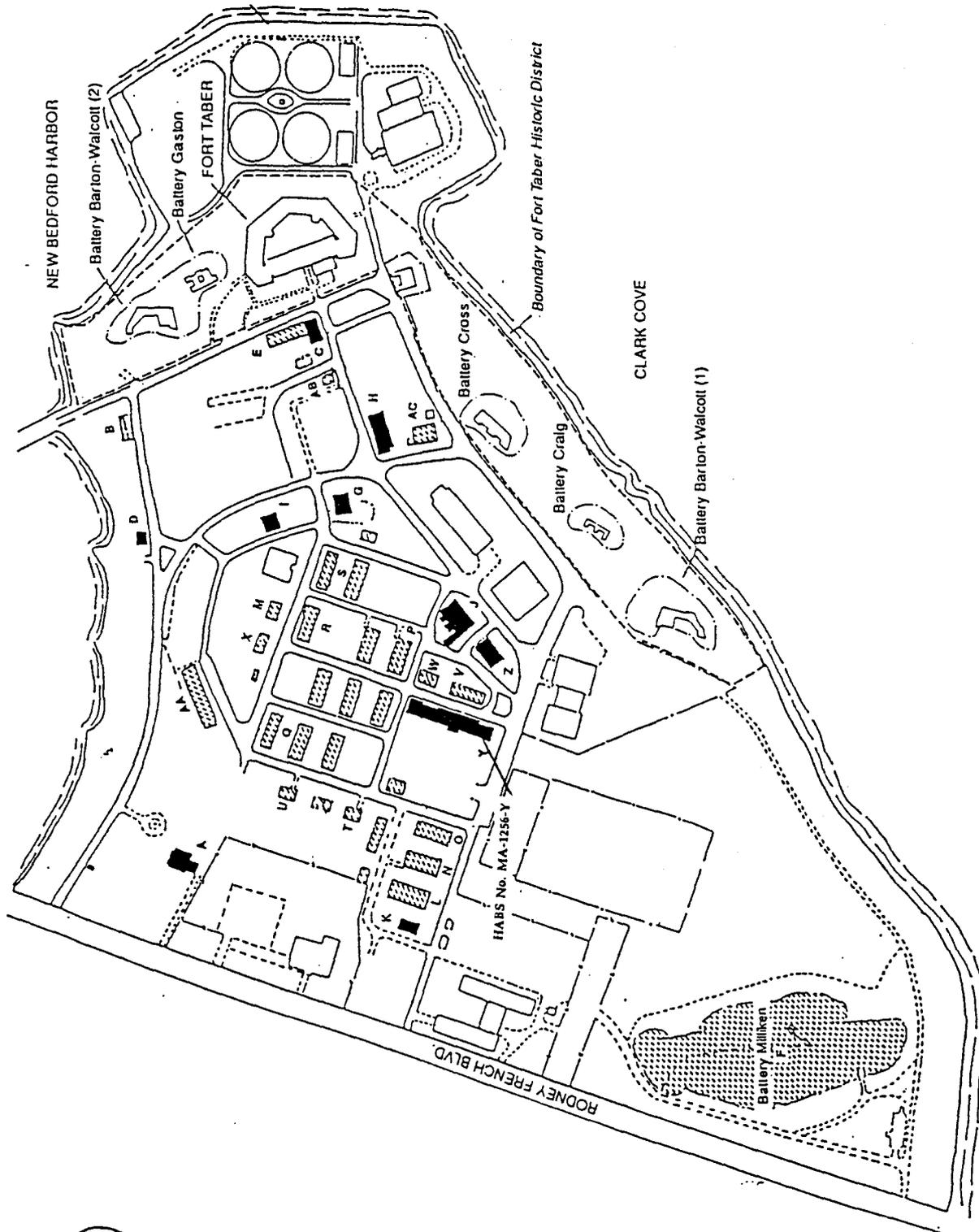
Prepared by: Elizabeth Beardsley, based on studies and documentation performed by Donald G. Jones and Nancy C. Seasholes, Office of Public Archaeology, Boston University (historical and archaeological research and analysis) and Martin Stupich (photography).

Title: Engineer

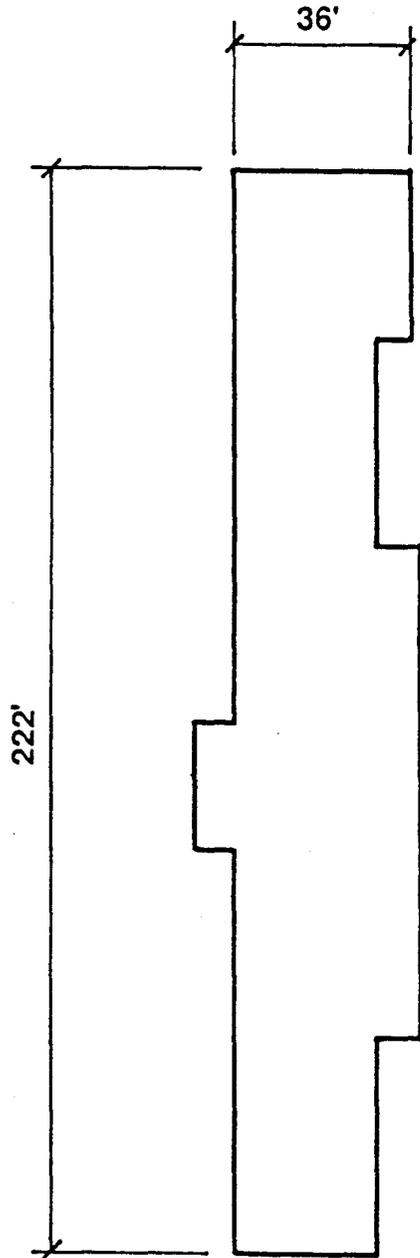
Affiliation: Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.

Date: 1992

Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Ward Room
(Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Building T-60)
HABS No. MA-1256-Y (Page 5)



Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Ward Room
(Fort Rodman Military Reservation, Building T-60)
HABS No. MA-1256-Y (Page 6)



SCALE: 1"=40'