

WATERTOWN ARSENAL, BUILDING NO. 142  
Arsenal Street  
Watertown  
Middlesex County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1009-E

HABS  
MASS  
9-WATO,  
6E-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
WATERTOWN ARSENAL, BUILDING NO. 142

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6E-  
HABS No. MA-1009-E

**Location:** Arsenal Street, Watertown, Middlesex County, Massachusetts  
USGS Boston South, MA Quadrangle  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinate: 19.286210.4595450

**Present Owner:** U.S. Army Materials Technology Laboratory  
Arsenal Street  
Watertown, Massachusetts 02172

**Present Use:** Vacant Sentry Station

**Significance:** Built in 1939 as a replacement for an earlier sentry house at the South Gate, one of two main gates, the Sentry Station is significant as the only historic guard house at Watertown Arsenal. It is a contributing element in the Watertown Arsenal Historic District which is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

## **PART I        DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION**

Building 142, Sentry Station is located at the South Gate at the intersection of Talcott Avenue and North Beacon Street with its facade facing west. The nine ft. by eight ft., one-by-one bay, one-story, red brick building was constructed in 1939 and is essentially unaltered. It rests on a concrete slab foundation and rises to a slate-sheathed, slightly flared hip roof with projecting eaves, a copper finial, and copper gutters. Downspouts have been removed. The red brick walls are laid up in running bond with corner pilasters, a soldier course water table, and a single corbel course at the top and bottom of the recessed bay on each elevation. The single entrance, facing west, has a wood door with two lower panels and four-light glazing in the upper half, topped with a soldier course lintel. A metal gooseneck lamp overhangs the entrance. The three other elevations each contain one nine-light, fixed sash, metal frame windows with brick lug sills and soldier course lintels.

The interior of the building consists of a single room with painted concrete floor and brick walls. A small, wood, slant-top desk is attached to the north wall at the east corner, and a rounded, wood shelf is set in the northwest corner.

## **PART II        HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

Building 142 was built in 1939 as the Sentry Station for the South Gate. It replaced an earlier, wood-frame, Gothic Revival style sentry station that was situated on the opposite side (west side) of Talcott Avenue. Its architecture illustrates a picturesque aspect of the Arsenal's early-twentieth-century design. The Sentry Station stands in proximity to the last extant granite-post and wrought-iron-fence entrance gate topped by light fixtures, and, although no longer used, is the only historic guard house surviving at Watertown Arsenal.

## **PART III       SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

### **A.        Plans and Drawings**

Army Materials Technology Laboratory, Facilities Engineering, Watertown, Massachusetts. No drawings were found for this building.

### **B.        Historic Views**

Army Corps of Engineers, New England Division, Waltham, Massachusetts. Photographs (5 volumes: 1944 to 1970).

Army Materials Technology Laboratory, Library, Watertown, Massachusetts. Foster Notebooks, files, and historic photographs (nineteenth century to 1980s).

Army Materials Technology Laboratory, Photo Lab, Watertown, Massachusetts.

### **C.        Bibliography**

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the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC.

Baylies, Libby

1982 *Watertown Arsenal (Gun Carriage Manufacturing Complex) Draft National Register of Historic Places Nomination*. Unpublished typescript. Watertown: Army Materials Technology Laboratory, Library.

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1982 Historic American Buildings Survey of the United States Army Materials and Mechanics Research Center, Watertown, Massachusetts HAER No. MA-20. Washington, D.C.: Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Dickson, Tracy C.

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1988 USATHAMA (U.S. Army Toxic and Hazardous Materials Agency) Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection for the Army Materials Technology Laboratory. Idaho Falls: Idaho National Engineering Laboratory.

Foster, Laurence S.

1965 *U.S. Army Materials Research Agency Annual Historical Summary, 1 July 1964 -30 June 1965*. Unpublished manuscript. Watertown: Technical Information Center, AMRA, 15 August 1965.

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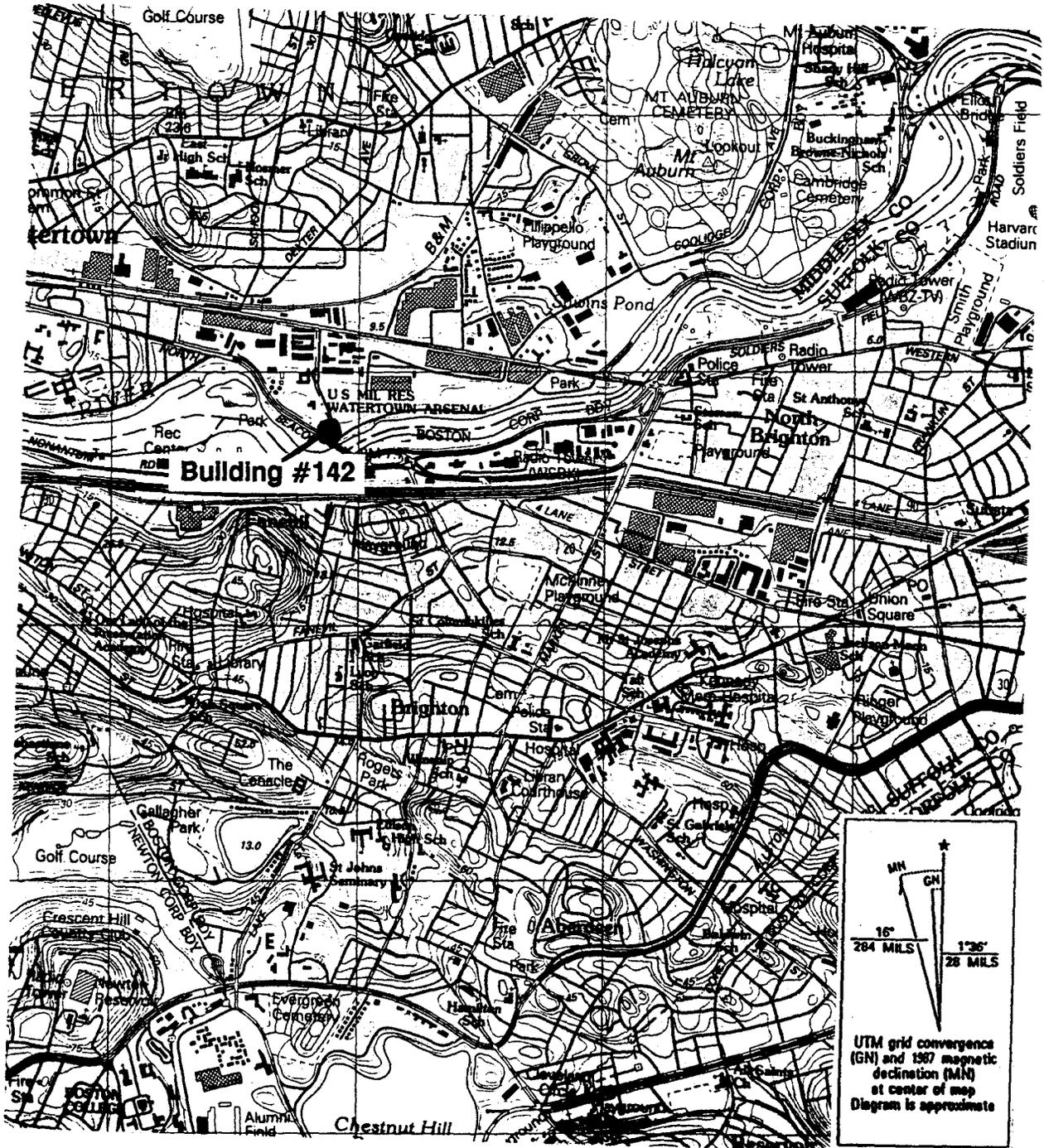
For additional sources, consult Burns and Bahr 1982, previously submitted to the Library of Congress as HABS/HAER documentation for Watertown Arsenal, HAER No. MA-20.

#### PART IV PROJECT INFORMATION

The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL Inc.) was retained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England Division to prepare HABS and HAER documentation for the Watertown Arsenal. The documentation was conducted in April, May, and June 1995 by the PAL Inc. project team including Virginia H. Adams, Senior Architectural Historian, Catherine Vieth, Assistant Architectural Historian, and Maureen A. Cavanaugh, Preservation Planner. The large format photography was completed in May and June 1995 by Robert Brewster of Warren Jagger Photography, Inc., Providence, Rhode Island.

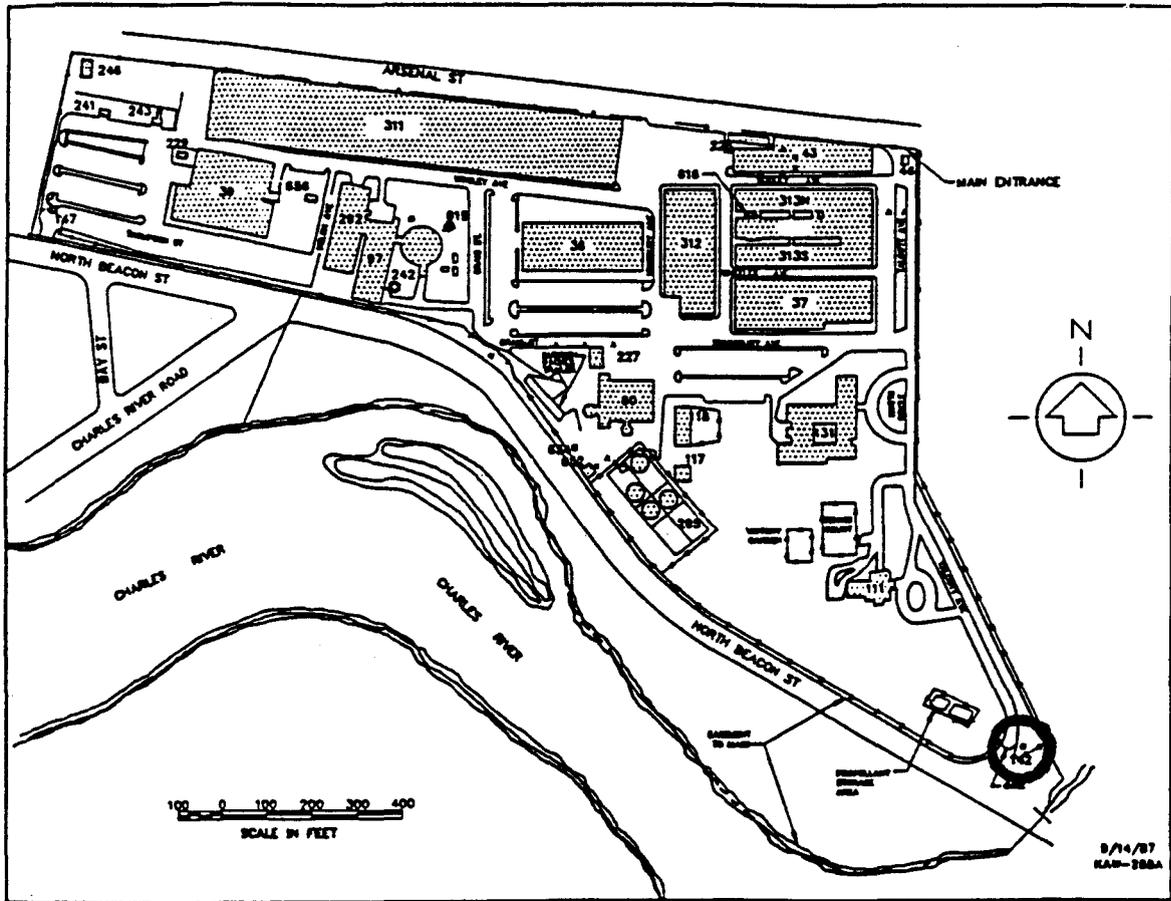
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LOCATION MAP (USGS BOSTON SOUTH, MA)  
Scale: 1:25,000



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LOCATION MAP WITHIN WATERTOWN ARSENAL  
(Source: E.G. & G. USATHAMA report, 1988)



FLOOR PLAN SKETCH

