

OREGON INLET COAST GUARD STATION
Northern end of Pea Island, East side of State Road 1257, 0.3 mile
North of North Carolina Highway 12
Rodanthe vicinity
Dare County
North Carolina

HABS NC-385
NC-385

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NC-385

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

OREGON INLET COAST GUARD STATION

HABS No. NC-385

Location: On The Northern End of Pea Island,
East Side of State Road 1257,
0.3 Miles North of North Carolina Highway 12,
Immediately South of the Current Location of
Oregon Inlet.

U.S.G.S. Oregon Inlet Quadrangle,
North Carolina, Dare County,
7.5 Minute Series (Topographic)
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
(A) 18.452645.3958300, (B) 18.452740.3958120,
(C) 18.452560.3958040, (D) 18.452460.3958220

Present Owner:

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The existing Oregon Inlet Station was a continuation of the original Bodie Island and Oregon Inlet Life Boat Stations. The Bodie Island Station (actually located south of Oregon Inlet) was one of the first seven stations commissioned by the Life Saving Service in 1874, for service on the North Carolina Outer Banks. By 1883, the number of established stations had expanded to twenty-nine. Also in 1883, the station known as Tommy's Hummock (located immediately north of Oregon Inlet, on Bodie Island) was renamed Bodie Island Station; and the "old" Bodie Island Station (south of Oregon Inlet) was renamed Oregon Inlet Station. All but four of the twenty-nine stations were on the Outer Banks, and several are still standing. However, most of these early buildings were converted into Life Saving Service Boathouses when larger stations were built and have been transferred to other government agencies, sold by the government, demolished, or destroyed by storms or fire.

PART I: LOCATION HISTORY

I. THE HISTORY OF THE OUTER BANKS:

Near Cape Point at Hatteras, North Carolina, the north bound Gulf Stream and the south bound cold currents from the Arctic North Sea meet with considerable disturbance. Sand, shells and sea life are forced to the bottom at the meeting point forming the shifting sandbars of Diamond Shoals. This location and others similar to it northward along the entire North Carolina coast have earned for the Outer Banks another name, the Graveyard of the Atlantic.

Since the earliest of the New World explorations, mariners identified the 'traps' along the banks' shore and held them in understandable awe, and through the centuries have still persisted in risking their vessels and their lives in its treacherous waters. In actuality, a combination of currents, winds, geography and economics have conspired to force many of them to sail along the North Carolina coast if they wanted to sail at all.

Following the initial growth of the New World and the young United States of America, vessels were constantly engaged in coastal trade, transporting cargoes from the vast productive lands of the South to the cities and towns of the Chesapeake and the manufacturing centers of the Central Atlantic States and New England. From the lands of the expanded New World, larger craft sailed along the banks, engaged in trade with South America, the West Indies and the Gulf Coast. Their cargoes of coffee and sugar, of salt and spice, of logwood (to dye cloth), phosphate, molasses, coal, iron ore, grain, lime, cotton, marble, and even crushed stone, have been consigned to the shoal-infested bights and capes and inlets along the banks.

To make the trip an economical one, it was learned (by the Spanish explorers before the English settlers first arrived) that considerable time could be saved by taking the gulf stream northward, out of the Caribbean, along the coast until sighting Cape Hatteras, then bearing east toward Europe for the shorter trip across the Atlantic. And when returning to this hemisphere, they sailed southward along the coasts of Europe and Africa until they reached the Canary Islands, crossed in the Equatorial Current to the West Indies, and finally moved up the coast again with the aid of the Gulf Stream. In either case, the first land across their path on the run northward was the lower areas of the Outer Banks jutting out like a huge net to trap the northbound voyagers.

The past history and even the present day life of the entire Banks' coast are closely influenced by shipwrecks. A great many of the present residents can trace their ancestry back to

individuals who were shipwrecked there. It seems that living on the narrow sand spit separating sound and sea was the next closest thing to being on the deck of a sailing vessel. Many seafarers thus chose to remain, build homes, marry and raise children there instead of proceeding to their original destination. Others were original settlers who came to be there as the direct result of the shipping and shipwreck businesses. Some served as pilots for the larger cargo vessels attempting to cross the bars, passing through the inlets to Currituck, Albemarle, Croatan, Roanoke, and Pamlico Sounds, and others came as customs inspectors or Militia sent down by the Royal Governor or Colonial Government.

The original occupants of the Banks, the native American Tribe of the Croatans (later known as the Hatteras Indians), befriended the Raleigh colonists and remained friendly to the white settlers. They too, told of shipwrecks; one around the year 1560 and another about 1564. Survivors of the first wreck stayed about three weeks but became restless and tried to leave in improvised native boats never to be heard from again. There were no survivors from the other wreck, but "some part of her, being cast upon the sand, out of whose sides they drew the nails, and spikes, and with those made their best instruments". It seems that the salvage business began early on the Banks!

Other tribes, residents of the islands in the sounds and of the nearby mainland, spent considerable time on the Banks. These included the Corees (Core Sound), the Woccons, the Neuse, the Machapungas (sometimes called the Mattamuskeets) who lived on the mainland between Albemarle Sound and the Pamlico River (probably the ones called "Roanokes" by the settlers), and the Poteskeets, who lived also on the mainland near North River, opposite Currituck Banks. By 1715, the Corees and the Machapungas were all but wiped out due to conflicts with one another and then by joining the Tuscarora Confederacy against the English in 1711. The Hatteras Indians were reduced to poverty by being driven out of their habitations by the warring tribes, and were supported by small donations of corn given them by the North Carolina Council. The Poteskeets complained that "the inhabitants of Corratuck Banks have and doe hinder ye said Indyans from hunting there and threaten them to break their guns, and that they cannot subsist without the liberty of hunting on those their usual grounds". As a result, the Council issued an order that the Bankers were not to interfere with the Poteskeets thereafter. By the Revolution, all natives were probably assimilated into Banks society.

During the years 1713 - 1718, another occupation was affecting the Banks, making the names of Captain Pain, Christopher Moody, John Cole, Robert Deal, Charles Vane, Richard Worley, Stede Bonnet, Anne Bonny, "Calico Jack" Rackam and Edward Teach (known as Blackbeard), pirates all, household words. These ex-privateers turned loose by the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, now rendezvoused behind the isolated islands of the Outer banks,

sailed out to attack merchant vessels, then returned again to celebrate and fight over the spoils. Blackbeard himself had four vessels, 400 pirates and captured at least twenty-five ships, but in a change of mood he sank two of his ships, marooned seventeen of his most troublesome men and transferred all booty to a small sloop. He then sought and obtained a royal pardon from Governor Eden, and later enjoyed the Governor's cooperation. Finally, after again engaging in piracy for several months in 1718, an expedition from Governor Alexander Spotswood of Virginia (asked for by the local people of North Carolina) sailed to Ocracoke and battled with Blackbeard and his men. Having subdued the pirates, the British ships commanded by Lieutenant Robert Maynard sailed into Pamlico Sound to Bath, with Blackbeard's head hanging from the bowsprit of the Ranger. This effectively ended piracy and opened the lower banks up to settlement.

By 1731, four-fifths of the inhabitants of North Carolina lived in the area served by Ocracoke Inlet and livings were made by whaling, fishing, shipwrecked cargo salvaging, hunting, stock raising and limited farming. Whaling was a dominant occupation for the thirty years from 1720 to 1750, along with salvaging.

Maintenance of law and order at the scene of shipwrecks was often a problem for authorities, and on at least one occasion an armed vessel had to be dispatched to recover property pilfered from a Spanish government ship's cargo.

The Spanish came again in 1741, 42 and 1748, but this time as plunderers during the war of Jenkins' Ear and the following King George's War and raided the Outer Banks almost at will. This brought the construction of forts and the stationing of garrisons to the Banks, beginning the first influx of public funds in the form of government pay and contracts for the Banks citizens, continuing even to the present.

In the hurricane of August, 1750 the vessels of Don Juan Manuel de Bonilla's Spanish Flotilla were scattered along the coast from Currituck to Topsail Inlet and the Banks inhabitants got a good measure of revenge upon the Spaniards by salvaging at least five shiploads of "cocoa, balsam and cochineal" along with valuable specie and plate.

During the Revolution Years (1775 - 1783), the Outer Banks defenses consisted of the temporary expedients of forming independent armed companies to serve there, the fitting out of armed vessels and the construction of Fort Hancock at Cape Lookout with the assistance of our French allies. Fort Hancock was garrisoned by a company consisting of a Captain, two Lieutenants, two sergeants, a drummer and fifty-two privates. All Outer Banks companies were to be paid same as the corresponding ranks of the Regular Continental Army. The Banks folks became accustomed to the British privateers, cruisers and raids upon

their cattle and sheep, but with their militia companies, except for a couple of isolated instances, they pretty well handled the situation.

In 1789 the U.S. Constitution was ratified, and North Carolina became a new and sovereign state. With the exception of the Ocracoke Inlet Pilots (thirty out of thirty heads of families), the Roanoke Island farmers and the Core Banks whalers, the Bankers raised garden vegetables for the table, owned stock which grazed on the open banks range, caught their own fish, dug their own oysters and clams, put up their own houses, built and sailed their own boats, and "everyone who could walk" became a beach comber when a vessel was wrecked in the vicinity. So many vessels were being wrecked on the Banks, and so many valuable cargoes salvaged by the alert Bankers, that it had become necessary to divide the entire coast into "wreck districts". Each had specially designated Vendue Masters whose job it was to take possession of all vessels, cargo or wreckage which came ashore and, after proper advertisement to conduct an auction or vendue of the materials.

It is probable that at this time the house style was developing which was to become dominant on the Banks in later years, the two-story house, one room deep usually with a one story appendage on the rear to house the kitchen. Many of these houses were built with lumber salvaged from wrecked vessels. Sailboats and skiffs provided the basic mode of transportation, though a distinctive high wheeled cart, with wide wheel bearing surfaces and drawn by beach ponies or oxen, was evolving.

At that time, there were densely wooded sections, sometimes with the forest growth extending most of the way across the beach to the sea, and scattered among these were low and barren stretches of "bald beach" which usually marked the sites of former inlets. There were high, wind-blown sand hills, forever changing shape; the smaller sand waves, moving steadily across the beach and engulfing forests in their way.

Here in 1794 the federal government authorized construction of two lighthouses on the Banks. The natural sandstone lighthouse at Cape Hatteras was completed in 1802, though work proceeded faster on the wood structure at Shell Castle.

In the War of 1812 the Banks provided protection against British raids on the mainland, and a base of operations for American privateers. One of the most successful privateers, Otway Burns, Captain of the Snap-Dragon, ranged from Newfoundland to the Caribbean, used Fort Hampton on Bogue Banks as his base and captured ten vessels, 250 prisoners and cargo valued at one million dollars in the first seven months of the War. A British attack did materialize in the summer of 1813, capturing two privateers, forcing a revenue cutter to retreat up the sounds, and collecting hundreds of cattle and sheep spending altogether

five days on the Banks. Upon leaving, they declared the entire coast of North Carolina under British blockade. However, the British never returned.

After the war, attention was once more turned to the subject of navigational aides along the coast. A lighthouse was completed at Cape Lookout. The Ocracoke Inlet channel shifted position so a small light vessel was provided and the Shell Castle Lighthouse was abandoned. The light vessel provided in 1820 was soon found to be inadequate, and in 1822 a permanent lighthouse was authorized for Ocracoke Island, and was completed in 1823. Buoys were placed in the shoals of Cape Hatteras in 1822 but were washed away in a storm. A light vessel was provided to guard Diamond Shoals in 1825, but was wrecked in a hurricane in August 1827.

By the time the first outlanders began spending their summers at Nags Head in the 1830's, the sea lanes off the Outer Banks were in such constant use that it was not uncommon for the vacationists to see as many as half a dozen vessels off the shore. On an average day dozens of ships would pass by of all rigs, shapes and sizes, carrying cargo and passengers to and from most of the leading ports of the world. The new steam packets were approaching their heyday and these slim side-wheelers, luxuriously furnished and equipped with auxiliary sails, were breaking all records on the passenger runs in their attempt to take trade away from the land stage routes and newly built railroads. Great public interest was shown in the use of steamboats on inland water routes as well and there was concern over the failure of the state government to provide "internal improvements" to make steamboat transportation possible.

Suggested by Archibald, D. Murphy was an all-weather inland waterway from the Chesapeake Bay through eastern North Carolina to Charleston, in addition to deep channels in all of the major rivers and stabilized inlets connecting the Atlantic Ocean. Nothing became of the suggestion although seven different surveys were authorized by the state or federal governments toward the realization of the waterway. Dredging of the channel at Ocracoke was attempted at a cost of \$133,732.40, but failed, the main channel (Flounder Slue) filling up almost as fast as the dredging machine could dig out the eight and one-half feet below the waterline.

To make matters worse, Currituck Inlet closed up once and for all in 1828, leaving Ocracoke the only navigable inlet through the banks above Beaufort, and maritime traffic was reaching new peaks. The 1842 Committee on Commerce of the U.S. House of Representatives issued a report which indicated that "Ocracoke Inlet is the outlet for all commerce of the State of North Carolina, from the ports of New Bern, Washington, Plymouth,

Edenton and Elizabeth City, and the whole extent of country for many miles around them;... more than two-thirds of the exports of the state of North Carolina pass out to sea at this point".

In 1840 the first federal post offices on the Banks were established at Ocracoke and Portsmouth. Prior to that time mail was entrusted to a friend or sea captain going in the right general direction, and even after the early routes were established, they extended no closer to the Banks than Edenton and New Bern.

In 1846 Congressional legislation provided funds for a hospital for sick sailors in "northeastern North Carolina", and it was built. A September hurricane that same year opened two new inlets. Hatteras Inlet opened midway between Old Hatteras Inlet and the village of Hatteras; and Oregon Inlet opened on Bodie Island - allowing much of the water which had been passing out through Ocracoke Inlet to be diverted by the new cuts. In 1848 the first of three Bodie Island lighthouses was built a short distance south of the newly opened Oregon Inlet.

So many visitors were coming to Nags Head for the "healing effects of the air and salt water bathing" that a public house providing room and board was well established by 1840. In 1849 one could leave Elizabeth City, travel 52 miles in five hours on a packet schooner for \$1.00 plus 25 cents for meals and be at a dance at the hotel ballroom by nine o'clock that evening. By 1851 one could take the train from Norfolk to Franklin Station, Virginia, catch a steamer on Saturday, and via the Blackwater River to the Chowan, to Albemarle Sound, and finally across Roanoke Sound arrive at Nags Head. The trip fare was \$2.50 and the steamer returned to make scheduled connections with the railroad at Franklin Sunday night. A piazza and an addition of 40 rooms enlarged the hotel, and in 1852 a railroad and boardwalks from the hotel to the ocean, a distance of 800 yards, was completed. The railroad was provided with horse drawn cars so that "persons preferring a ride to walking may be accommodated". Another vacation community was created at Sheppards Point on the mainland across the Newport River from Beaufort and in 1858 "a great commercial city" was opened in three days of celebration beginning April 29. It was named Morehead City.

The Confederate States of America was formed in February, 1861 and for the next three and one-half months North Carolina walked the tightrope of neutrality. In February the people voted down secession at the poles, but when President Lincoln demanded North Carolina's quota of troops "to suppress the rebellion" the people voted for secession in May, one month following Lincoln's call. The Confederates built a small ineffective fleet, fortified Oregon Inlet (Fort Oregon), Beacon Island (Fort Morgan), and Hatteras Inlet (Forts Hatteras and Clark) and Fort Macon at Beaufort Inlet; and Fort Johnston and Fort Caswell at the mouth

of Cape Fear were already established and were manned by North Carolina troops immediately following secession. In the fall of 1861, Forts Hatteras and Clark were lost to the Federals in early fighting, which forced a strategic evacuation of Fort Oregon as it was south of Oregon Inlet and could not be easily supported. The Confederate line of defense became Roanoke Island, the Confederate States Army occupied Nags Head and ex-Virginia Governor, now Brigadier General Henry A. Wise in charge of the Roanoke Island defenses made his headquarters in the resort hotel described above. Under attack from a large sea-borne federal force by land and water, Roanoke Island was surrendered by the Confederates on February 8, 1862. Wise and other survivors retreated north toward Virginia burning the hotel to prevent it being used by the Federals, and the Union fleet pursued the Confederate boats to Elizabeth City and captured the town. Havelock Station was captured March 18, Carolina City on March 21, Morehead City on March 22, Beaufort on March 23 and Fort Macon surrendered after siege on April 26, 1862. The Banks were now under complete union control, except for occasional Confederate raids which destroyed the Bodie Island Lighthouse, the old Cape Lookout Lighthouse, and damaged the newer Cape Lookout Lighthouse and others.

"Being mostly of a seafaring race ... they could not have much sympathy with the revolt against a government which had been their constant friend", the Outer Banks population was strongly pro-union in popular sentiment. The 1850 census showed 2,909 persons on the Banks and Roanoke Island, plus 503 slaves, and registering a total of 545 families. Four free Negroes were noted on Hatteras Island and there were probably others. Within ten days after the initial Federal landing nearly all of the adult males had taken the oath of allegiance to the Union cause.

As a result, their association with the Confederate sympathizers on the North Carolina mainland, to a large extent was terminated, and with their markets for fish and other seafoods cut off they no longer had the trading power to secure corn and other foodstuffs across the sound. Within two months of the federal occupation, supplies of salt, flour, and other foods were exhausted and there seemed no way to replenish them. However, through employment with the Union Army and Navy, and with the assistance of the "Committee of Relief" of New York which contributed \$8,238.56 plus dry goods, food and clothing, the Bankers considerably improved their plight.

So many contraband (escaped slaves) flocked to the Banks seeking protection that the Reverend Horace Jones was appointed to the "superintendency of the Blacks in North Carolina" and was ordered "to establish a colony of negroes upon Roanoke Island" ... "to settle colored people on the unoccupied lands, and give them agriculture implements and mechanical tools to begin with, and to train and educate them for a free and independent community." Roanoke Island's vacant lands were chosen as the site and a town

was surveyed and plots laid out and sold "and were speedily improved by the Freedmen". As of January 1, 1864 there were 2,712 blacks on the island and by January, 1865 there were 591 houses valued on average at \$75 each. By the fall of 1864 there were seven teachers male and female, sent by the American Missionary Association.

After the war, in 1865 an order which "necessitated the restoration to original owners who had received pardon, of all abandoned property to which they could prove title" was issued and by the following winter the Freedmen's Colony of Roanoke Island was broken up. As with the other wars which came to the Banks, the area soon returned to normalcy. The Bankers seemed to have little difficulty adjusting to the new order. Some of the former slaves remained and like the free blacks who had lived there for many years, they soon were living side by side with the white people, fishing the same kinds of nets for the same species of fish in the same places as their white neighbors, accepted as members of the Banks community, but not quite on an equal plane.

Almost as if the Bankers were being rewarded for their wartime loyalty, the Federal government prepared to distribute what would soon become a steady flow of vouchers and pay checks for full-time jobs in numerous new lighthouses, life saving stations, weather stations and post offices. Many more jobs were created by the construction projects and business men on the Banks, at Roanoke Island and Beaufort were usually awarded the contracts to provide fuel and other supplies, and it was not long before a steady flow of Federal money was filtering through the communities.

Coastal trade also flourished in the period immediately after the war, for peace brought with it a great demand for the civilian goods so long denied the participants in the late struggle. One immediate result was that a large number of war craft were hastily converted to commercial use; another was that coastal North Carolina was soon littered with the remains of ships lost in this scramble to catch up on lost time, and government concerns for safe navigation were becoming pronounced.

From 1867 to 1875 men worked steadily on the Banks constructing a chain of tall lighthouses designed to provide the most modern navigation aids for the North Carolina Coast. Included were a new light for Cape Hatteras and a third Bodie Island Lighthouse north of Oregon Inlet and one for Currituck Beach. In 1870 Dare County was formed from parts of the counties of Currituck, Hyde, and Tyrrell and included all of the Banks from Hatteras Inlet, north to Caffey's Inlet, plus Colington, Roanoke Island and part of the mainland.

The United States Life Saving Service extended its operations to include North Carolina in 1874 with seven original stations. This number grew to twenty-nine stations with dependency buildings and

patrol half-way houses established by 1883. The Bodie's Island Station was one of the original seven, but was actually located south of Oregon Inlet on the northern tip of Pea Island. Six U.S. weather stations were established from 1874 - 78, with many substations established in several other Banks communities. The U.S. Postal Service expanded rapidly from four offices in 1865, until "every little hamlet seemed to have one". Many names which duplicated existing North Carolina post offices, or were considered too long or too hard to spell were discarded and new names assigned. Thus many Banks communities received new names between 1874 and 1939. From an economic standpoint, these lighthouses, life saving stations, weather stations and post offices were of great importance, providing a stable economic base which would tide the communities through periods of recession. They have until recent time, as witnessed by the 1950 census for Dare County's Kennekeet Township: of 179 heads of families listed, 56 were retired from service and 36 were on active Coast Guard duty, a total of 93, or well over half of the families, receiving regular federal pay from this one branch of service.

Still at this time (1893 - 1918) shipwrecks provided the bulk of the income of the Banks communities. Hundreds of the coastal men, as noted above were employed as life savers, lighthouse tenders and weather station crewmen. Others were crewmen on wrecking schooners and almost every community had a wreck commissioner or underwriter's (insurance) agent. A man with business inclinations could make good profits buying and selling salvaged material, and frequent jobs were available removing cargo of vessels lost on the beach. In the six years from August 1893 to August 1899, an average of one ship per week was stranded on the North Carolina Coast. The majority were gotten off, but enough were totally lost to leave nine full shiploads of lumber, eight of phosphates, five of coal, two of shingles, and one each of iron ore, coffee, sugar, salt, grain, lime, molasses, cotton, marble and crushed stone. Others were lost carrying "General Cargoes" or were in ballast. Shipwrecking was big business and business was increasing.

The great hurricane of August 16 - 18, 1899 (San Ciriaco), forced several vessels ashore. Two each carrying coal, one with fish scrap, one with a general cargo valued at \$34,000, one with a cargo of railroad iron, coal and oil, one was a lay ship for the Norfolk and Southern Railroad's Company steamers, and one was Lightboat No. 69 from Diamond Shoals. The hurricane was spawned in the southern oceans near the equator, struck the islands of the Caribbean, spent most of its life on the coast of the U.S. and died slowly in the Azores a month after its beginning. It struck North Carolina with sustained winds of 100-120 miles per hour. Six other ships were lost at sea off of North Carolina's coast, fifty lives were lost, hundreds of homes were inundated with water, fishing nets, small boats, gardens and furniture were ruined and livestock washed away.

Sailing vessels were reaching the days of the climax of their influence. A hundred years after their appearance along the North Carolina coast steam ships were about to wrest away the bulk of the coastal trade from the sailing vessels. The prevailing winds of the Banks are from the southwest and they blow sometimes for weeks on end. Combined with the gulf stream currents coming up from the south the sailing vessels would be forced to remain north of Hatteras for weeks at a time. As many as seventy-five or eighty vessels could be viewed waiting for a change of winds, while the steamers could continue on. When the winds did change, usually from the north, they would often reach gale force before the ships could make their way around the cape, frequently resulting in shipwreck. From the Fall of 1899 to the Spring of 1918, 108 vessels were lost on the North Carolina coast. All, except fifteen, were sailing vessels with a large percentage being wrecked on Hatteras Island. It was an auspicious and deadly climax for the reign of the sailing craft.

The United States declared war on Germany and her allies on April 6, 1917, and by May of the following year had shipped an estimated two million fighting men overseas. To protect the transport lanes every available warship was pressed into service for patrol on convoy duty, with the result that our own shores were left unguarded.

To guard against attack by submarines, the U.S. Navy commanded innumerable small vessels - yachts, coastal freighters, fishing boats, and powerboats - and armed them as sub chasers and mine sweepers. Huge steel nets were spread across the entrances to the larger and more important harbors, and in certain sections aircraft units were assigned to antisubmarine patrol. However, three German submarines reached and operated along the North Carolina coast. U-151 operated along the Banks June 5-8, 1918 and sank four (ships having previously laid mines along the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay of Virginia and the Delaware Bay). The U-140 in August, 1918 sank three ships and the Diamond Shoals light ship No. 171. On August 14, 1918 U-117 laid her remaining nine mines near Wimble Shoals in a two and one-half mile line across the shipping lane, and on August 17 sank a bark off of Cape Hatteras. The Mirlo, loaded with gasoline, struck one of U-117's mines on August 16 resulting in one of the most dramatic rescue operations in the annals of the Coast Guard. Forty-two of the fifty-two crewmen were saved, all rescued in wooden surfboats from a huge inferno of sea water covered with burning gasoline. Six members of the Chicamacomico Lifeboat Station received gold lifesaving medals from the United States, and victory medals from the British.

In the years 1919 - 1941 fewer vessels were lost along the North Carolina coast (between the two World Wars) than in most comparable periods of the past, but when figured on the tonnage lost, or human lives lost, or thrilling rescues and attempted

rescues, it was a notable period. It was notable for other reasons as well, most of them economic. Shipwrecks were becoming rare and a decrease in the life saving operations was in prospect. More stringent hunting laws and a shortage of wild fowl affected the gunning clubs. The steamboat lines no longer operated on the sounds and maritime traffic through the banks inlets was reduced largely to small fishing vessels. There was no shipbuilding on the banks, no commercial outlet for yaupon (a bush of the holly family, native to the Banks. Its leaves were used to make a type of tea); no more shore whaling; no porpoise seining from the beach, commercial gunning was outlawed, and diamond back terrapin turtle (used for soups and stews and considered a delicacy) was practically extinct, and a blight was destroying the eel grass (dried and bailed it was used as mattress and furniture packing and putting the final polish on fine wooden furniture). Even the commercial fishermen were beginning to have difficulty. Many of the young men and women were leaving the Banks to seek a livelihood elsewhere. In spite of the bleak prospects and an absence of Government funding, a road was built from Stumpy Point in Dare Co. to Englehard in Hyde Co. in 1926. By early 1928 a bridge and causeway across Roanoke sound was operating and taking in tolls of \$1 per car. The causeway connected to the hard surface road built by the state in 1924 between Manteo and Wanchese. The Wright Memorial Bridge was built across Currituck Sound in late 1930, and finally the state constructed an eighteen mile long hard surface road from the Wright Memorial Bridge down to the Roanoke Sound Causeway. Construction on the Wright Brothers Memorial was begun in 1931 and ferry services were regularly running across Croatan Sound and Oregon Inlet.

The nation-wide Great Depression added to the problems with an all time high unemployment rate. Many areas of the Banks were also badly eroded and even the Cape Hatteras was threatened by the sea. In 1933 however a vast rehabilitation program for the Outer Banks was announced. First was to be an erosion control and reclamation effort using local labor, bringing immediate jobs. Next would be the establishment of a National Seashore Park from Oregon Inlet to Cape Lookout, all areas to be protected in their natural state. Then a coastal highway would be built from Nags Head to Beaufort to bring outsiders to the new park. Despite damage done by two back-to-back hurricanes in 1933 work on the plan progressed. The plan was even expanded to include the restoration of the "Cittie of Raleigh" on Roanoke Island, improvements to the Wright Brothers Memorial (taken over by the National Park Service in 1933), and mosquito control work all along the banks. The CWA promised funds in excess of a million dollars for the project. Between the bankers themselves, the CWA, the CCC, the National Park Service and the state of North Carolina all projects (except the actual establishment of the park) were completed, and the Outdoor Drama - The Lost Colony was first performed in 1937.

By 1940 the National Park Service assumed jurisdiction over the original Fort Raleigh site on Roanoke Island. By 1941 new hotels and tourist cottages at Nags Head and Kitty Hawk Beach were doing brisk business, lot sales showed a marked increase, attendance at The Lost Colony and the park service facilities at Fort Raleigh and the Wright Memorial were at an all time high. The first National Seashore Recreational Area for the Banks had been authorized and considerable land including Cape Hatteras itself and been donated. For the first time large areas were stabilized against erosion to make construction of a hard surface road feasible. Tourism was becoming big business.

On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked the U.S. Forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and war was declared upon the Axis Powers of Japan, Germany and Italy. By January of 1942 some 19 German submarines were operating in the Western Atlantic. To guard against them the U.S. had five sub-chasers, a non-descript collection of miscellaneous small craft, and a handful of shore-based airplanes. The situation was directly comparable to that in the early part of World War I, except this time the Germans had more submarines. During the first six months of 1942 residents of coastal North Carolina were closer to war than were most of our troops on overseas duty at that same time, and the Coastal Carolina war, during that period was a one-sided affair with the odds in the enemy's favor. The Erosion Control Program was discontinued, the Lost Colony was suspended for the duration of the war, travel was sharply curtailed, and the beaches were blacked out as the German submarine wolf packs took a terrific toll of Allied Shipping off the Banks, and hundreds of able bodied men left the Banks for the Armed Forces.

Over fifty ships were sunk in January through March and into April, 1942. By mid-April however, a change was in prospect, for the coastal communities were being blacked out and the British had transferred a number of armed trawlers to submarine patrol duty of North Carolina, additional planes and patrol vessels were made available, and a more efficient convoy system was put into practice. The German U-85 was sunk on April 14, but the subs sank three more allied ships that month. In May the tide truly turned as while the U-boats sank three British vessels the U.S. Navy sank three U-boats and the Coast Guard ran a fourth aground at Cape Lookout and captured her crew. Between the end of May and the middle of June, twelve more allied ships went down in exchange for one U-boat. From then until the end of the war in 1945, the U-boats sank only a handful of ships. More than 90 percent of the U-boat kills of allied shipping occurred in the first six months of 1942. Eighty-seven friendly vessels were lost on the North Carolina coast during 1942-45. Better than two-thirds were sunk by U-boat raiders, the remainder going down by result of striking mines, stranding or foundering at sea. In size and numbers of vessels lost, lives lost and cargo destroyed this period was the worst on record.

The greed for oil money caused many to reconsider the wisdom of the need for the National Seashore Park, but the oil companies came, drilled their test wells, found nothing and left, leaving the bankers wiser in their ways. By the summer of 1946 and the resumption of the Lost Colony, new hotels, motels, restaurants, retail stores and cottages opened for business at Nags Head, Kill Devil Hills and Kitty Hawk and many more were being planned. Land prices rose steadily and tourists and vacationers poured across Currituck Sound and Roanoke Sound bridges in throngs. In 1952 the national park became a reality with the help of a large private donation and a matching donation by the State of North Carolina. Since then the looked for hard surface highway has been completed from Nags Head to Ocracoke with the recent Bonner Bridge over Oregon inlet and a state-owned ferry service across Hatteras Inlet, and large government sums have been spent to repair the dunes and restore the vegetation not only in the Cape Hatteras Seashore area, but the North Banks as well. The growth of Hatteras and Ocracoke Island and the beach areas of Nags Head and Kitty Hawk as summer resorts has been phenomenal.

As for shipwrecks, unless we become embroiled again in full-scale war, replete with submarine attacks on coastal shipping, there probably will be comparatively few. However, the North Carolina coast is still a prime target for the hurricanes during the late summers of each year. The gulf stream still sweeps northward past the coast, tangling with the cold arctic waters off Hatteras; and the strong and ever changing winds continue to buffet the sands banks which stretch out to form a barrier reef beyond the inland sounds. Today's shore-base life saving facilities are being so improved, so modernized that most of the Coast Guard Stations on the North Carolina coast have been abandoned. Four-wheel drive vehicles have replaced the foot and horse patrols; amphibious vehicles and aircraft have taken much of the work from the surf boat; radio, radar, loran and sophisticated ship to shore communications have simplified and enhanced communication and warning, and along with satellite weather information giving advance notice of storms have increased the capabilities of the Coast Guard and allowed it to concentrate on new police duties, for its new drug interdiction role.

It seems that tourism, and Government pay for guarding our shores, will continue to influence the future course of Banks History.¹

NOTES

1. The history of the Outer Banks presented here was liberally taken from the following published works. Additional highly detailed and specific information about the history of the Outer Banks and that regarding specific shipwrecks may be found in each of Mr. Stick's works.

Stick, David, The Outer Banks of North Carolina 1584 - 1958
Chapel Hill: 1958 (Hereafter referred to as Stick,
Outer Banks...)

Stick, David, Graveyard of the Atlantic, Shipwrecks of the
North Carolina Coast (Hereafter referred to as Stick,
Graveyard ...)
Chapel Hill: 1952

II. HISTORY OF THE OREGON INLET AREA:

1. Bodie Island: Mathew Midgett, who lived near Alligator River in 1712 was originally granted Bodie Island in the 1720's. At that time variously known as Bodys Island, Bodies Island, Body Island, Micher Island, and Cow Island, it was nine and one-half miles long, extending from Roanoke Inlet on the north to Drugg Creek or Inlet on the south, and it contained an estimated 1900 acres.

Another indication of the origin of the name Bodie Island appeared in Lawson's History of Carolina, written about 1700. Referring to a scarcity of English "coney" (rabbits), he said: "I was told of several that were upon Bodies Island by Ronoak, which came from that Ship of Bodies, but I never saw any".

The area immediately south of Bodie Island has been especially susceptible to the opening and closing of inlets, and at least six different inlets have been located at one time or another between the present Bodie Island Lighthouse and Rodanthe. Consequently the size, shape, and even the location of Bodie Island has changed several times, and when Oregon Inlet opened in the hurricane of September 7, 1846, part of the original island remained south of the new inlet, and today is considered to be a part of Pea Island. Three different lighthouses have been built at Bodie Island and have borne that name. The first, located south of Oregon Inlet, was constructed in 1847 and 1848. In less than ten years, however, the lighthouse was in such poor condition that it could no longer be operated, and in 1857 an appropriation was made for rebuilding the lighthouse and fitting it with an improved lens. The new lighthouse, also located south of Oregon Inlet, was completed and first lighted July 1, 1859.

During the Civil War the Confederate forces destroyed this second Bodie Island Lighthouse, and work was begun in November, 1871, on the structure which remains in service to this day. Because Oregon Inlet was gradually moving southward and by 1871 was within 500 yards of the site of the old tower, the new lighthouse was built north of the inlet. The structure was completed and lighted October 1, 1872.

The name "Bodie's Island" was given to one of the first Lifesaving Stations built on the coast in 1874, but that original station was actually located south of Oregon Inlet. When a second station was constructed north of the inlet in 1878 it was named "Tommy's Hummock", but later the original "Bodie's Island" station was changed to "Oregon Inlet", and "Tommy's Hummock" became "Bodie Island".

Several large gun clubs have been located in the Bodie Island area, including the Bodie Island Club which was adjacent to the lighthouse; Goosewing and Lone Cedar clubs, near Old Roanoke Inlet; and Duck Island and Off Island clubs, in the sound west of the lighthouse.¹

2. Pea Island/New Inlet: In 1837 Congress appropriated \$5,000 for construction of a lighthouse "on Pea Island, near New Inlet", but when Captain Charles W. Skinner inspected the site for the Navy Board, he found it unsatisfactory and recommended another location several miles up the Banks on Bodie Island, where the lighthouse was finally built ten years later.

This seems to have been the first printed use of the name Pea Island, but it must have been applied much earlier than that, for by 1837 it was not an island at all, since the inlet which had once separated it from Bodie Island had long since closed. Since Oregon Inlet now divides Bodie Island, the "southern" part of Bodie Island is today referred to as the northern part of Pea Island.

The name is said to derive from the wild peas which grow there in great profusion, and this may have had something to do with making it a favorite spot for hunting geese, ducks and brant. For a number of years the Pea Island Gunning Club was located there, but there before World War II the Pea Island National Wildfowl Refuge was established, and today it is a principal winter resting ground for the rare greater snow geese, as well as Canada geese and several types of ducks.

The Pea Island Lifesaving Station, built in 1878, was commanded by "Captain" Richard Etheridge, a Negro, and for a number of years it was the only all-Negro lifeboat station in the Coast Guard. The station was decommissioned following World War II, and the buildings are now used in conjunction with the Wildfowl Refuge.

At the southern end of Pea Island, New Inlet separated it from Chicamacomico Banks until 1922, and for a brief time after 1933.²

New Inlet: The schooner Fanny stranded on the north point of the inlet in 1789 with the loss of all hands, and in 1836 the large passenger steam-packet William Gibbons was lost there. By the time Oregon Inlet opened in 1846, New Inlet was in the process of closing, but it remained more or less open until 1922. The following year serious consideration was given by North Carolina authorities to artificially reopening the inlet, and this in fact was attempted in 1925, but in a short time it shoaled up and closed again.

New Inlet opened in the fall hurricanes of 1933 with two small but separate channels, and narrow wooden bridges were constructed across both to permit the passage of automobiles. Soon after the bridges were put in use, however, the inlet closed again, and though parts of the bridges still stand, traffic now moves along the newer hard-surfaced highway to the east.

Almost invariably when a severe storm hits the Banks, water passes through the old channels, flooding the state highway and usually causing some washouts. Recently the National Park Service and North Carolina Highway Commission have constructed extensive sand fences and have planted grass on the dunes formed behind the fences with hope of stabilizing the beach in the vicinity of the old inlet bottom.

A Lifesaving Station was constructed on the south side of New Inlet about 1882, but a few years later it burned and was never replaced.³

3. Oregon Inlet: The theory has been advanced that certain areas of the Outer Banks are "inlet prone" and that when new inlets form it is invariably in these areas. One such locality cited, by Gary S. Dunbar in his Geographical History of the Carolina Banks, is in the vicinity of Oregon Inlet, and certainly there have been enough inlet changes there to give some credence to the claim.

The maps of 1585 by John White, showed two inlets near there, the first named Port Fernando and also referred to as Hatarask, Hatoras, or Hatorasck, the second known as Port Lane. When the area was permanently settled, inlets continued to open and close between the present Bodie Island and Rodanthe, and some of those shown on maps or mentioned in written accounts were Gun, Gunt, or Gant Inlet, Chick, Chickinacommock or Chicamacomico Inlet, and Dugg Inlet.

In 1845 there were two inlets there, Loggerhead Inlet just north of the village of Rodanthe, and New Inlet at the south end of Pea Island. Then, on September 7, 1846, a hurricane struck the Banks and water piled over the beach from the sound, forming what was later to become Oregon Inlet. C.O. Boutelle, assistant superintendent of the U.S. Coast Survey, who was running a base line on Bodie Island that fall, wrote the following account of the opening.

"On the morning of the September gale the sound waters were all piled up to the southwest, from the effects of the heavy northeast blow of the previous days. The weather was clear, nearly calm, until about 11 a.m., when a sudden squall came from the southwest, and the waters came upon the beach with such fury that Mr.

Midgett, within three quarters of a mile of his house when the storm began, was unable to reach it until four in the afternoon. He sat upon his horse, on a small sand knoll, for five hours, and witnessed the destruction of his property, and (as he then supposed) of his family also, without the power to move a foot to their rescue, and, for two hours, expecting every moment to be swept to sea himself.

The force of the water coming in so suddenly, and having a head of two to three feet, broke through the small portion of sea beach which had formed since the March gale, and created the inlets. They were insignificant at first - not more than 20 feet wide - and the northern one much the deepest and widest. In the westerly winds which prevailed in September, the current from the sound gradually widened them; and, in the October gale, they became about as wide as they are now. The northern one has since been gradually filling, and is now a mere hole at low water ... [but the southern one] between high water marks, measured on the line, is 202 yards [wide, and] between low water marks, 107 yards."

Subsequent reports by Coast Survey engineers contained predictions that the new inlet would soon close up, but it enlarged instead and within a few years was one of the primary inlets on the Banks. The inlet was named for the first vessel to pass through - said to have been the side-wheeler Oregon, owned by William H. Willard.

During the early part of the Civil War, the Confederates built a small fort on the south side of the inlet which they named Fort Oregon. The fort was abandoned by the Confederates soon after Federal forces captured Hatteras Inlet in 1861, and at approximately the same time the Confederates destroyed the Bodie Island Lighthouse (second of that name and located south of Oregon Inlet). In 1874 a Lifesaving Station was constructed south of the inlet also and was named "Bodie's Island", but the name was later changed to "Oregon Inlet" and the Coast Guard Station bearing that name was active until December, 1988.

Since it opened in 1846, Oregon Inlet has moved steadily to the south as the result of the littoral current - the south shore being cut away and the north shore building up - so that the original sites of the Confederate fort, the early Bodie Island lighthouses, and the 1874 Lifesaving Station have washed away, and the inlet is now located where some of them once stood, or their sites are now exposed north of the inlet.

Oregon Inlet has been used primarily by small fishing vessels, and at one time a menhaden processing plant was located nearby. In recent years a rather extensive marina has been developed on the north side of the inlet, to provide docking facilities for the numerous sports fishing boats attracted there by the annual runs of channel brass and bluefish and for the offshore fishing in the Gulf Stream.

In 1924 Captain Jack Nelson of Colington Island inaugurated ferry service across Oregon Inlet, towing a small barge behind his fishing boat, and when Nelson quit a couple of months later Captain Toby Tillett of Wanchese began providing the same sort of service. Tillett stuck it out for more than twenty-five years, acquiring larger and better ferries, and finally sold out to the North Carolina Highway Department in the early 1950's. Using converted Navy landing craft, sometimes shuttling back and forth on half-hour schedules, the Highway Department was unable to satisfactorily handle the ever increasing traffic attracted to the Cape Hatteras Seashore, so the construction of the Bonner bridge across the inlet was begun and was completed around 1969.⁴

NOTES

1. Stick, Outer Banks ... pp 277-278.
2. Ibid., pp 282 - 283.
3. Ibid., pp 283.
4. Ibid., pp 279 - 281.

PART II: HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES ON SITE

I HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES LIFE SAVING SERVICE:

The origins of the service may be traced back to our Colonial period. Early salvage laws provided by many countries with maritime interests gave Governments the right to assess a portion of the goods from any vessel shipwrecked within their jurisdiction. Since the American colonies practiced English salvage customs, these customs later became enacted into the new state's laws. Regional officers usually were appointed, and with supervised crews of skilled surfmen were to ensure enforcement of the laws and to see that salvage operations took place in an organized and disciplined manner.¹

Underwriters (Insurers) of merchant vessels also appointed their own wreckmasters in areas of frequent disasters since they became the Owner's of a wrecked ships goods, and as much cargo as possible was desired to be recovered. Frequently the Government and underwriter wreckmasters risked their own lives to rescue vessel crewmen and passengers, as well as trying to salvage the cargoes.²

In the early 1800's various private organizations supported in part by ship owners and underwriters, formed to lobby the Government for better aids to navigation and to provide relief to victims in event of a disaster. These efforts were confined primarily to the New England States and Pennsylvania. Beginning as early as 1789, small one-room wooden huts, probably sheathed with wooden shingles and equipped with straw or hay, wooden bench, wood stove and some supplies of food and clothing, were established along the Massachusetts coast. Nearby residents were appointed to occasionally look after each hut. The huts were places where "shipwrecked seamen may look for shelter". Lifeboat stations, designed solely to house a surfboat and other rescue apparatus were also built, but were unmanned and were to be used by the local residents or wreckmaster in rescue efforts. By 1872 there were twenty-six lifeboat stations and eight shelter huts on the Massachusetts coast. These stations were pre-dated only by a few others of similar concept in England and China, outside of the United States.³

The U.S. Congress began appropriations in regard to life saving concerns, beginning in 1837 for naval vessels, and later Treasury Department revenue cutters, to cruise the coast during severe weather assisting distressed ships. In 1847, \$5,000 was appropriated "for furnishing the lighthouses on the Atlantic coast with the means of rendering assistance to shipwrecked mariners". When the appropriation remained unspent, it was given to the Massachusetts Humane Society to build and equip the New England stations noted above.⁴

In August of 1848, representative William A. Newell of New Jersey secured an appropriation of "a beggarly pittance of \$10,000.00, to be expended solely upon the coast of New Jersey". The Newell Act provided for the building of eight unmanned stations "cheaply erected and equipped with this sum". The expenditure was made under the supervision of the Secretary of the Treasury, who in turn directed the Department's Revenue Marine Division to find suitable locations for each and to superintend their construction. Little more than crude one and a half story frame boathouses, 16-feet wide by 28-feet long, with a single room at the first floor housing the surfboat and other rescue equipment, a loft above for storage, two or three layers of shingles covering the exterior walls and roof, the stations were painted or whitewashed.⁵

Other appropriations after the Newell Act allowed for the expansion of the service. Sixteen new stations, built from appropriations provided in 1849 were located in New York and New Jersey, and in 1850 three more stations were built in New York and one in Rhode Island, and twenty-six stations were constructed along the coasts of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Texas. In 1854 an appropriation allowed the first lot of forty-seven lifeboats to be located on the Great Lakes, primarily Lake Michigan.⁶

Also in 1854 fourteen additional stations were provided in New York and New Jersey, located between the existing stations which were on average 10-miles or so apart, thus decreasing by one-half the distances between the stations. Construction was again supervised by agents of the Treasury Department, and these buildings were slightly larger (17-feet wide by 36-feet long) and were covered with cedar boards rather than shingles. Some effort may have been made to consider nearby building appearances when the new stations were designed, especially in the areas of the more wealthy summer coastal resort communities, where some stations received more elaborate exterior trim.⁷

While it might not be said that the service from 1848 to 1871 was "discreditable, it certainly was not brilliant". While the number of stations had risen dramatically since 1849 there were many problems plaguing the system. The Government's complete lack of control over daily operations of the service and the reliance on volunteers to man the stations were two major shortcomings. Local residents of benevolent organizations were initially appointed to look after the stations and equipments, and most soon lost interest. The stations and equipment began to suffer from neglect. Untrained and unpaid volunteer crews were often difficult to gather at a time when the situation demanded quick and coordinated action. In sparsely populated areas response time was particularly slow. The results were a continued great loss of life from maritime disasters. By 1869 crews were employed at alternate station locations, but only part-time.⁸

During the Civil War period (1861-65) the stations along the southern coast of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Texas were almost completely neglected or in some instances probably ceased to exist due to the priorities of the exigencies required by the Confederate War effort. However, appropriations were made by Confederate Authorities to the Department of the Treasury, Lighthouse Bureau for the coastal lighthouses in Confederate controlled areas. The Outer Banks of North Carolina however, were dominated or controlled by Union Forces entirely after the first year of the war.⁹

In 1871 it was realized that the Service was in need of greater organization, expanded services and more stations. Public pressure resulting from a number of fatal shipwrecks along the Atlantic coast in the Winter of 1870-71 forced the Government to Act. Sumner I. Kimball, a Treasury Department lawyer from Main was nominated by President Ulysses S. Grant to head the Service, and without the usual reference to a committee, Sumner was unanimously confirmed by the Senate to be General Superintendent of the newly constituted Life-Saving Service. Congress also appropriated funds to provide for paid crews to live at the stations full-time for such periods as deemed necessary.

To better assess the present state and needs of the Service, one of Kimball's first orders was a thorough investigation of each station including its equipment and crew. The ensuing report revealed:

Absolutely no discipline was found among the crews, no care had been taken of the apparatus, some of the stations were in ruins, others lacked such articles as powder, rockets and shot lines [used in rescue attempts], every portable article had been stolen from many stations and the money Congress had appropriated had been practically wasted.

A complete reorganization of the Service was deemed necessary.

Kimball worked to institute change. Incompetent keepers were removed and quickly replaced with the most skilled and dedicated surfmen at each station. Repairs to buildings and equipment was effected. The first written guidelines, regulating and detailing the operations of the Service were instituted and included qualifications for employment, individual duties of the keepers and crews, and instructions for the proper care and use of the rescue equipment and buildings. Inspections of stations were to be made at regular intervals by an Officer of the Revenue Marine to insure property maintenance and drilled and disciplined crews. At night and during stormy weather, patrols were to walk the coast areas between stations, men from adjacent stations to meet halfway (in the hut called a "halfway house") often exchanging tokens as proof of completion of the patrols. Where stations were considered too far apart for station crews to mutually

support one another new stations were built, representing the first construction program since 1855. These new stations were the first designed to accommodate the live-in keeper, 6-surfmen crew and a limited number of rescued victims of shipwrecks.¹⁰

The new stations were twice as large as the earlier boathouses. Shingled on their roofs and sides they were often referred to as "red houses" as many were painted that color. In New Jersey twelve new stations and all twenty-eight existing stations were built or modified. In New York, six new stations were built and seventeen existing houses were removed and completely rebuilt.

In 1872 the Service was extended to include the coasts of Rhode Island and Massachusetts and ten new stations were built. All but one on the same plan as all the others previously noted, based on a single set of standardized drawings. The 1872 annual report of the Revenue Marine Bureau contained a detailed description:

All these houses have been constructed under plans and specifications carefully prepared with a view to durability, and affording proper accommodations for the apparatus and the means of providing comfortable protection to the crews and relief to those who may be rescued from shipwreck. They are 42 feet long by 18 wide, and each contains a lower and an attic story. Each story is divided into two apartments. The boats, a wagon, and other heavy apparatus occupy the large apartment below, while the smaller one is a living-room for the crew, provided with conveniences for cooking, &c. Above, one room is for the small articles of apparatus, and the other is provided with several cot-beds and suitable bedding.

The completion in early 1873 of these stations brought the total number established to eighty-two, a third of which had been placed in new locations. The effects of Kimball's reorganization had not only resulted in an increased building activity but also a dramatic drop in the number of lives lost from shipwrecks. During the two years following his appointment as Chief of the Revenue Marine Bureau there was only one fatality from a total of seventy-five disasters.

Kimball lobbied Congress for funds to build stations on all hazardous sections of the United States coast. In 1873, \$100,000.00 was appropriated to extend lifesaving activities to the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Virginia and North Carolina, with the construction of twenty-three stations based on a new design also from a set of standardized plans. In addition, for organizational purposes, the coast areas were to be divided into "districts".¹¹

The coasts of the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, Great Lakes, and the Pacific - Alaska not included - were divided into 12 Life-Saving Districts. The Sixth Life-Saving District would include the Virginia and North Carolina coasts from Cape Henry to Cape Fear. Each district would be in charge of a superintendent, selected for his knowledge of the "subject, business capacity, and executive ability". He would have to be a resident of his district, of good character, not less than 25 nor more than 55 years old when appointed. In addition, he must understand the use of surfboats and life-saving appliances, and be familiar with the shipping lanes and dangers of the coast under his jurisdiction.

The districts were subdivided into stations, to be numbered and situated with regard to the special dangers of the coast. These stations were built of wood without "much reference to architectural effect, but designed to withstand the tempest, and afford comfortable quarters for the surfmen and convenient rooms for the apparatus." On the first floor there was a boatroom, kitchen, keeper's office, and recreation room for the crew; on the second floor were found the sleeping quarters. A lookout tower for the day-watch was placed upon the roof or nearby, and there was a flagstaff for signaling. A drill pole was erected for the purpose of practice with the beach-apparatus. The equipments usually comprised two boats with outfits, a life-car, two sets of breeches-buoy, a mortar and cart, cork life jackets, heaving-sticks, Coston signals, rockets, signal flags, barometer, thermometer, and necessary furniture, all for the keeper (or "Captain") a crew of six surfmen and wreck survivors.¹²

A later Act passed on June 20, 1874 provided funds for an additional fifty-one stations to be built on the Atlantic Coast and all Great Lakes except Lake Superior. This Act also called for the classification of stations into three groups; complete life-saving stations, lifeboat stations and houses of refuge. All stations built since the 1871 reorganization fell into the complete lifesaving station class, and were distinguished by their regularly employed crews and their living quarters, and by their locations where local populations were sparse and aid upon occasion of shipwreck could not be improvised, and where shelter and subsistence for the rescued were thereby wanting.

Most complete stations were located on beach coasts. Because storms frequently altered shorelines, stations were often set back several yards from the expected high water mark, to the protection of the dunes. The gradual dropping off of the sea bottom from these shores required the use of a shallow draft surfboat which exited the building on a cart, along a full width sloping wooden ramp (called a boat incline) extending from the door sill to the ground. A rocky coast made it impossible to hand drag the boat cart to its launching site and in this case stations were built on the water's edge with a ramp from the boatroom door direct to the sea. Some designs allowed for either

condition to be used according to local conditions of the site. Most complete stations ranged in size from 18-20 feet wide by 40-45 feet long, with interior arrangements similar to the 1871, 1874 and 1875 designs.¹³

The Lifeboat Station class was designated for more densely populated coastal areas, generally along the Great Lakes and the Pacific Coast. These buildings were built on pilings just inside the harbor entrances, and employed a type of rescue boat that could be quickly and easily launched directly from the station, often in less than half a minute. The Pacific Coast with few natural harbors and relatively little maritime traffic, was less treacherous than the Atlantic, had a mild climate and few unexpected storms, and therefore had no need for an extensive network of lifesavers. Most stations were placed on prominent headlands or at river entrances near ports in areas prone to disasters.¹⁴

The particular condition of much of the Southern Atlantic coastline required the third class of station: houses of refuge. Occupied by the keeper and his family who did not attempt to gain access to a grounded ship, but instead patrolled the beach after storms looking for survivors. The average distance between these stations was twenty-six miles, and at each mile was a guide post indicating the distance and direction to the nearest refuge. The steep shores and deep waters of these locations enabled damaged vessels driven ashore by stormy weather to come up "almost high and dry, rendering comparatively easy the escape of their crews, whose chief liability under these circumstances, is to perish from hunger and thirst".¹⁵

In 1883, a seventh surfman was added to the crews, and the crews were to be employed for eight months each year beginning September 1, in contrast to the previous policy of being employed four winter months each year (December, January, February and March).¹⁶

Thereafter, throughout the fall, winter and spring - and later on a year-around basis, the Lifesaving Service maintained a constant patrol of the shorelines of the United States, ever searching for the vessel in distress. The Service continued to grow and improve both its buildings and its inventive lifesaving equipment. Its crews set the standard for ingenuity, training, skills, dependable surveillance, daring personal heroism and cool dedication, for the lifesaving systems of the world. At the climax of this period of service growth and paralleled maritime traffic growth, the Service constructed a special station for the Chicago World's Colombian Exposition of 1893, planned for recognition of the fourth hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus.¹⁷

Although small and simple in comparison to the classically inspired, monumentally scaled neighbors around it, the exhibition of the latest Lifesaving Station (designed by Architect George R. Tolman of the Service Staff) at the fair symbolized the recognition which the Service sought. The 1893 annual report proudly noted its appeal to the visitors:

The station, which Congress in the act authorizing the World's Colombian Exposition directed to be placed on exhibition on grounds to be allotted for the purpose, fully equipped with the apparatus, furniture, and appliances used in the Life-Saving Service, and subsequently provided should be continued as a permanent station, was duly established, equipped, manned and during the fair was visited by extraordinary numbers of our own citizens and foreigners, and examined with marked interest by the representative kindred institutions of other countries. The tri-weekly drills illustrating the methods of rescue were a special attraction, and never failed to gather upon the lake shore enormous crowds of interested spectators. While thus satisfactorily serving its original purpose, it had opportunity also, on several occasions, to provide its practical utility by effecting rescues from actual shipwrecks which occurred within the scope of its operations.¹⁸

Finally, on January 15, 1915 the Lifesaving Service was combined with the Revenue Cutter Service to form the United States Coast Guard and although the history of the Service became a part of the history of the Coast Guard, the record of vigilance and bravery continues.

NOTES

1. York, Eugene V., The Architecture of the United States Life-Saving Stations, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Boston University; 1983
2. Ibid., pp 1 - 2.
3. Ibid., pp 2 - 4.
4. Ibid., pp 4 - 5.
5. Ibid., pp 5 -6 and Bearss, Edwin C., Chicamacomico Study (R.S.P. C.A.H.A.-H-1) Parts I, II and III of Historic Structures Report, Historic Data; Cape Hatteras, N.S.; Sept., 1965, Vol I, Part III, Page 1.
6. York, Architecture ... pp 6 - 7.
7. Ibid., pp 7 - 8.
8. Ibid., pp 8 - 10.
9. Stick, Outer Banks ... pp 150 - 167 and Beers, Henry Putney, A Guide to the Archives of the Government of the Confederate States of America, National Archives Trust Fund Board, 1986, pp 113 - 115.
10. York, Architecture ... pp 11 - 13 and Bearss, Chicamacomico ... Vol I, Part III, pp 1 - 2.
11. York, Architecture ... pp 13 - 15.
12. Bearss, Chicamacomico ... Part III, pp 1 - 2.
13. York, Architecture ... pp 17, 21 - 23.
14. Ibid., p. 24.
15. Ibid., pp 25 - 26.
16. Stick, Outer Banks ... pp 170 - 173.
17. York, Architecture ... p 49.
18. Ibid., pp 49 - 50.
19. Stick, Outer Banks ... p 174.

II. THE LIFESAVING SERVICE ON THE OUTER BANKS:

With the Congressional appropriation of 1873 the new lifesaving service came to the Outer Banks of North Carolina as part of a program of expansion and reorganization. The sixth lifesaving district was established to include the Virginia and North Carolina coasts from Cape Henry, Virginia south to Cape Fear, North Carolina. Ten stations were to be built the following year. Mr. J.J. Guthrie was appointed district superintendent.¹

The construction must have been eagerly awaited by the local populations as a bright spot in the otherwise drab economic times since the end of the Civil War just eight years previous. In concert with the modernization of the existing lighthouses and the construction of new ones, the building of the new complete class of lifesaving stations would mean more construction jobs, employment as keepers and surfmen in the service, that local merchants would be awarded contracts for providing fuel and other supplies and the construction contracts, and it would not be long before a steady flow of Federal money would be flowing through the Banks' communities.

The stations were built in 1874 and commissioned as follows:

- Station No. 1 - Cape Henry, VA.
- Station No. 2 - Dam Neck Mills, VA
- Station No. 3 - False Cape, VA
- Station No. 4 - *Jones's Hill, NC
- Station No. 5 - Caffey's Inlet, NC
- Station No. 6 - Kitty Hawk Beach, NC
- Station No. 7 - Nag's Head, NC
- Station No. 8 - *Bodies Island, NC
- Station No. 9 - Chicamicomico, NC
- Station No. 10 - Little Kinnakeet, NC

*Jones's Hill was later known as "Currituck Beach" and "Whales Head". Bodies Island was changed to "Oregon Inlet" in 1883.

A contract to build all ten stations was awarded about August 23, 1873 to James H. Boyle, a New Bern builder. "Commencing at Cape Hatteras, the first I will finish at the first week of Sept., the ballance one every month or less ..." was Boyle's promise to the Government. He did not meet this completion date and after months of delays and legal wrangling (for which the Government shared some blame) Boyle's bondsmen lost confidence in his ability to complete his contract, and the Government terminated the contract after paying Boyle for the work completed to that time. Boyle was paid \$2,375 for the construction of Station No. 10 at Little Kinnakeet.²

New contracts were entered into on April 23, 1874 to have the nine remaining stations constructed. A.A. McCulloch of Norfolk, VA filed the low bid for Stations 1 through 6 and D. Simpson of

New Bern was awarded the contract for Stations 7, 8 and 9. Lieutenant Walter Walton of the Revenue Sloop Saville was designated as the Contracting Officer for the Treasury Department, and he made Elizabeth City the base of supplies and communications as it was "a more central point for operations than New Bern". At the end of the third week of October, Lt. Walton reported all nine stations satisfactorily completed, and that "these houses, along with the one at Little Kinnakeet", were ready to receive their equipments. Keepers were appointed at all stations December 4, 1874, except for Kitty Hawk Beach, whose keeper was appointed September 30, 1875.³

During the first Winter season of lifesaving activity on the Banks, each of the new stations was in charge of a keeper (usually referred to by a crew as "Captain") who received an annual salary of \$200, and each crew consisted of six surfmen employed for an average of four months - December, January, February and March - at a salary of \$40.00 per month. The surfmen were required to live at the stations during the active Winter season, and their services were also at the disposal of the Government at other times of the year upon occasion of shipwreck, for attendance at which they were paid \$3.00 each man, per incident.⁴

The qualifications sought for keepers and surfmen were articulated by Captain James H. Merryman in an article written for Scribner's Monthly, entitled The United States Lifesaving Service - 1880:

The keeper commands the crew of six surfmen. His position is one of grave responsibility, demanding long experience in his vocation and rare judgment in the execution of his important trusts. The selection of his men, upon whose fidelity and skill depend not only on his success, but oftentimes his life, as well as the fate of those whom he is expected to succor, is very properly confided solely to him. Both keeper and men are chosen from among the fishermen in the vicinity of the stations, who are most distinguished for their ability as surfmen. Drawing their first breath within sound of the surf, they pass through childhood viewing the sea in all its moods. In early youth they make their first essay in the breakers, and from that on to manhood advance from the least important oar through regular gradations, until the most skillful reach the command of the boat. This life gives them familiarity with the portion of the beach upon which they dwell, and its bordering upon which they dwell, and its bordering currents, eddies, and bars, and an intimate acquaintance with the habits of the surf. It is an erroneous notion that the experience of the sailor qualifies him for a surfboatman. The sailor's home is at sea. He gives the land a wide berth, and is never at ease except with a good offing. He is rarely called upon to ply an oar in a small boat, particularly in a high surf, and his vocation gives him little knowledge of the surfman's realm,

which is the beach and a portion of the sea extending but little beyond the breakers. The number of mariners who are annually lost in attempting to land from stranded vessels through the surf in their own boats, sorrowfully attests this fact. On the other hand, the most expert surfman may not be, and often is not, a sailor, though generally he has an excellent knowledge of every part of a ship and her apparel, gained in his occupation of stripping wrecks.

The training of the surmen as life-saving men is completed by officers of the Revnue Marine, whose own professional training, familiarity with the coast (acquired in their cruises along shore for the prevention of smuggling), and experience in assisting vessels in distress, especially qualify them for the duty.⁵

Merryman was Chief Inspector of the Board examining the crews of the life-saving stations at the time of the article, and earlier was one of the Superintendents of Construction of life-saving stations for the Service.⁶

However, in the beginning these qualifications were not always apparent in those appointed to positions at the stations, and the difficulty of securing competent keepers was pointed out during the 1875 - 76 season in the report of a special board which examined the personnel of lifesaving District No. 6, Stations 1 - 10. The examined seventy-nine keepers and surfmen, of whome sixty-four were accepted for service, and fifteen were rejected, four of the latter being keepers. Of these four keepers, two were rejected as having no knowledge whatever of the duties required of them, one being a blacksmith, and the other a teacher by occupation; the third as lacking experience as a surfman; and the fourth as physically disqualified.⁷

Of the eleven surfmen rejected, five were without experience of skill in the use of boats (four of them being by occupation farmers and one a carpenter). Four of these men also belonged to the station of the teacher/keeper noted above, leaving only two competent men in the entire crew. Of the remaining six rejected surfmen three were physically disqualified; one was a son of and one a brother of the keepers of the stations to which they were attached; the final man was listed as "insubordinate".⁸

All were immediately discharged and competent persons provided in their places, although on account of the inadequate compensation paid to keepers, it was some time before suitable candidates could be found to accept the positions. This report implied that all was not well in the newly formed sixth district, but the true state of affairs was not revealed until after the examination in the winter of 1876-77. Referring to the condition of the District the previous year, the Board reported:

"It's demoralization in 1876 is referable to ... the temporary control of its affairs gained by petty local politicians, whose aim was to subordinate the service to their personal ends; their method being to endeavor to pack the stations with their own creatures, without the slightest respect to use or competency. The success of these maneuvers would at once involve the utter ruin of the service; for what stranded crew, clinging to the shrouds of a vessel going to pieces in the breakers, could hope for succor in the hour of their bitter extremity, from life-saving stations recruited from the cross-roads grocery?

There is, however, abundant cause for gratulation, that not in a single instance have these attempts upon the integrity of a noble service ... proceeded from any representative man in our State or national politics ...

But, considering the criminal mischief and disaster their success would involve, they acquire a deeper baseness from the circumstance of their having been invariably resorted to for no better purpose than to further the election of some local nobody to an office of no higher dignity than that of town constable or pound-keeper."⁹

By the winter of 1876-77, however this same board reported that the incompetents had been weeded out, the influence of the politicians had been nullified, and the superintendent of the district had been "indefatigable in his efforts to perfect the discipline and efficiency of the stations under his charge, and the district now ranks well with the older ones."

If some of those early Banks' lifesavers lacked experience, it seems to have been compensated for in part by their willingness to risk their own lives in the attempt to save others, as was demonstrated at the wreck of the Italian bark Nuova Ottavia at Currituck Beach in early March, 1876. When the vessel struck on the bar in a rough sea, the lifesavers from Jones Hill Station immediately launched their surfboat in the darkness of night in an attempt to rescue the seven stranded seamen - and five of the station crew perished when the surfboat capsized. Surfman S. D. Gray made it to the vessel only to be drowned when the wreck was beat to pieces by the surf.¹⁰

Aside from the attempted interference of petty politicians, there were two serious defects in the lifesaving activities along the Banks in those early days of service. The first was that the stations were manned only during the four winter months and were locked up for the rest of the year. If a vessel came ashore in the spring, summer, or fall, there was no certainty at all that it would be sighted, the keeper located, and a lifesaving crew rounded up before it was beaten to pieces in the surf. The second fault was that the seven stations were located from twelve

to fifteen miles apart, and though an attempt was made during the active season for the crews to maintain constant beach patrols, it was obvious that the six surfmen assigned to a station could not properly patrol such an area on foot, and horses had not at that time been made available to them.¹¹

The loss of 188 lives in two shipwrecks within a thirty-mile area on the North Banks during the winter of 1877-78 was directly attributed to these two causes.

When the U.S.S. Huron stranded at Nags Head in the early morning of November 24, 1877, the nearby lifesaving station was deserted, for the season of active service had not yet begun. "The calamity, therefore, occurred and was almost over before, on that desolate coast, the tidings of the disaster had spread beyond a few fishermen," The superintendent of the Lifesaving Service reported later. Ninety-eight lives were lost in the wreck (plus five more in subsequent salvage efforts), and it was thought that if the station had been activated, the wreck would have been discovered at an early hour by the patrol, "and, considering the contiguity of the vessel to the shore, it is probable that every person on board might have been saved."

On the other hand, when the wooden-hull steamer Metropolis struck the Currituck Beach four and one-half miles south of Jones Hill Station at approximately 6:30 A.M. on January 31, 1878, more than five hours elapsed before news of the wreck had been sent to the station and the lifesavers had managed to tow their heavy apparatus cart over the soft sand to the wreck scene. Eighty-five lives were lost in the wreck of the Metropolis, and the superintendent stated later that "the fundamental cause of the loss of life upon this occasion was the undue distances which ... separated the stations."

The high loss of life in the wrecks of the Huron and Metropolis focused attention of the Congress on the need for additional stations on the North Carolina coast, and in an act passed June 18, 1878, several were authorized. By the winter of 1878-79 eleven new stations were in operation - Deal's Island (later named Wash Woods); Old Currituck Inlet (later named Currituck Inlet, and still later, Pennys Hill); Poyners Hill; Paul Gamiel's Hill; Kill Devil Hills; Tommy's Hummock (located north of Oregon Inlet and later named Bodie Island); Pea Island; Cedar Hummock (later named Gull Shoal); Big Kinnakeet; Creeds Hill; and Hatteras (later named Durants).

By 1883 most of the remaining voids on this stretch of coast had been filled in with the construction of stations at New Inlet (which was located between Pea Island and Chicamacomico and was later burned), Cape Hatteras, Ocracoke (just west of Hatteras Inlet and later named Hatteras Inlet), and Cape Fear. Still later additional stations were constructed at Ocracoke village,

Portsmouth, Core Banks (later named Atlantic), Cape Lookout, Fort Macon, Bogue Inlet and Oak Island, bringing the North Carolina coast total to twenty-nine, of which all but four were on the Outer Banks.¹²

Arrangements were made, also, for the surfmen to be employed for eight months each year beginning September 1, and in 1883 a seventh surfman was added to the crew. Thereafter, throughout the fall, winter, and spring - and later, on a year-around basis - the lifesavers maintained a constant patrol of the shoreline of the Outer Banks. Small structures, known as half-way houses were erected between the stations, and these marked the boundaries of each station's patrol area. Thus, at any given time of day or night on Hatteras Island, for example, there would be both a north and south patrol on the beach from each of ten different stations - a total of twenty men walking the beach in that one section of the Banks, on the lookout for vessels in distress. The total loss of more than 650 vessels on the Outer Banks of North Carolina has been verified, but the vigilance and bravery of the lifesavers have kept the loss of life remarkably small.¹³ On January 28, 1915, the Lifesaving Service was combined with the Revenue Cutter Service to form the U.S. Coast Guard, and the reader is referred to the narrative covering the following years under Part I, Section I - The History of the Outer Banks in this survey report.

The influence and political standing of the keepers or "Captains" of the lifesaving stations were as much an accepted part of the Banks life as the steady flow of government money. Many of the early lifesavers - and some of the later ones - were unlettered men, and in many instances their wreck reports doubtless took longer to compose than did the rescues they wrote about. But whether or not they possessed formal education, when problems arose in the community their neighbors most often turned to the keepers for guidance.

When Dan Yeomans of Harkers Island joined the lifesaving Service and was stationed at Portsmouth in 1899, he said the keeper there was receiving \$60.00 a month in salary. He was not only the number one man in the station, but in the community as well. "We looked on him as President," Yeomans said.

The minority political party was not at all pleased with this condition, however, as was indicated in a letter written at Buxton, September 16, 1898, in which A.W. Simpson complained to J.H. Small that Hatteras Island was solidly Republican because of the influence of the Lifesaving Service.

"Before President Cleveland placed the L.S. Service under Civil Service rules every young man in the neighborhood of a station was promised 'the first Vacancy,'" he said. "And when he came to vote he knew he must vote for the Keeper who had promised him the place, or lose it." He stated that the Republican majority

in the two townships on Hatteras Island was between 150 and 175 votes, but he added that "by the judicious use of proper means this majority can be reduced to less than 75". An indication of his definition of "proper means" is gathered from the further statement that "there are only 4 colored voters in the two townships-And \$5 will control them". Simpson, a staunch Democrat in an obviously alien land, complained that "the backbone of the Republican party here are 'political floaters'" since "A large percent of them are up ... 'For Value Received.'"¹⁴

NOTES

1. Bearss, Chicamacomico ... Vol I, Part III, pp 1 - 2 and 11.
2. Ibid., Part III, pp 1 - 9.
3. Ibid, Part III, p 10 and
Stick, Outer Banks ... p 170.
4. Stick, Outer Banks ... p 170.
5. Merryman, J.H., The United States Life-Saving Service - 1880, Scribner's Monthly, 1880, Reprint by Vistabooks, 1989, edited by William R. Jones, pp. 8 - 9.
6. Ibid., Title page, and
Bearss, Chicamacomico ... Part III, p 11.
7. Stick, Outer Banks ... p 170.
8. Ibid., pp 170 - 171.
9. Ibid., p 171.
10. Ibid., pp 171 - 171 and
Stick, Graveyard ... pp 66 - 104.
11. Stick, Outer Banks ... p 172.
12. Ibid., pp 172 - 173.
13. Ibid., p 173.
14. Ibid., pp 176 - 177.

PART III: HISTORY OF THE OREGON INLET STATION

I. THE 1874 LIFESAVING STATION

1. Background - 1871 - 1874

As an extension of the reorganization of the Service in 1871 the scope of operations of the service were intensified and expanded. New stations and reconstruction of existing stations in New Jersey totaled thirty-seven. On Long Island (New York) six new stations and seventeen existing stations were rebuilt. In 1872 the covered area was extended to Rhode Island and Massachusetts with the construction of ten new stations, bringing the total number of active stations to eighty-two. A direct benefit of the reorganization and construction program was the reduction of shipwreck fatalities. In 1871-73, there was only one fatality out of seventy-five disasters, which did much to persuade Congress to provide funds to build stations on all hazardous sections of the United States coast.

In 1873, \$100,000 was appropriated to extend lifesaving activities to the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Virginia and North Carolina with the construction of twenty-three new stations. The coasts of the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, Great Lakes and the Pacific had previously been divided into 12 lifesaving districts with the Virginia and North Carolina coasts from Cape Henry to Cape Fear designated as District No. 6, where ten stations (three in Virginia and seven in North Carolina) were to be built.¹

Standardized, newly designed plans and specifications were drawn up and as funds became available Secretary of the Treasury, William A. Richardson, had advertisements in the newspapers of eastern North Carolina and Tidewater, Virginia, calling for interested contractors to submit bids. During this time, the coast had been surveyed and sites chosen or recommended for the actual locations of the ten stations for District No. 6, by Lieutenant Lewis M. Stodder and Captain Faunce of the U.S. Revenue Service. Stodder was also appointed Assistant Superintendent of Construction for the Sixth District. The plans and specifications for the seven North Carolina stations were placed available for review at the U.S. Customs House in New Bern, North Carolina.²

B. Design of the 1874 House

Like the sixty buildings on the coast of New Jersey and Long Island in 1871 and the ten stations built in Rhode Island and Massachusetts in 1872, all twenty-three stations of the 1873-74 expansion were built from a standardized set of plans and specifications, but were different from the 1871 and 1872 designs. In the Secretary of the Treasury's Annual Report for 1878, it was noted "These new stations were built on an enlarged and improved plan, some regard for architectural taste also being had".³

The design successfully combined the elements of two architectural styles; Carpenter Gothic and the Stick Style. Inspired by the heavily detailed picturesque stone churches and public buildings constructed in England and the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century, Carpenter Gothic was a uniquely American phenomenon based on a strong carpentry tradition and a plentiful supply of high quality timber. It was a style readily distinguished by the frequent use of board and batten siding and an abundance of intricately sawn and carved wooden ornaments, all made possible largely by the introduction of the steampowered scroll saw.

By the 1870's Carpenter Gothic had declined in popularity. Evolving from it was another style of construction also commonly carried out in wood frame residences; the Stick Style. In keeping with the belief that architecture should be "truthful", its main characteristic was the expression of the structure's inner frame through exterior ornamentation. Such buildings were highlighted by functionally appearing wood bracketing in the roof gables and eaves, diagonal boards applied over horizontal or vertical siding and the occasional use of side buttresses. All elements worked to symbolize the structural skeleton within.

Slightly larger than the 1871-72 red houses (so called because they were painted that color), measuring 19' wide by 43' long and a story and a half high, the 1874 stations featured a strikingly lavish exterior treatment, particularly in the use of scroll work detailing beneath the eaves. Of all the lifesaving stations built to that time, this type was by far the most ornately detailed.

While each station closely resembled one another, there were some individual variations. Most exterior finishes combined Stick Style diagonal boarding at all four corners applied over a continuous run of beaded vertical siding at the first floor level. A more intricately cut Carpenter Gothic board and batten siding was used above. However, a few stations were instead sheathed entirely with shingles. While all featured decorative scroll work and bracketing beneath the gable and

side eaves, on some stations it was more extensive than on others. The number of side buttresses, designed to provide added support against strong winds, varied from three to a side on some stations to none on others.

Finally, all had a center roof observation platform where a constant watch of the coast was kept during the day. While most decks were built directly above the ridge pole a few were recessed about a foot below the peak into a hole cut out of the roof.⁴

3. Architect

Although no documentation has yet been found verifying the architect of the 1874 station plans, strong circumstantial evidence points to Francis Ward Chandler.⁵

In a letter dated December 27, 1874, A(lfred) B. Mullett, Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department discusses a request of Sumner Kimball that an architect from Mullett's office be appointed to design a station for Lakes Michigan and Erie. Mullett proposes that Frank W. Chandler, then Assistant Supervising Architect, be given the project.⁶

Francis Ward Chandler (1844-1926) began his career studying architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and as a student between 1864 and 1867 worked in the office of Ware and Van Brunt. This Boston firm, noted for their design of Memorial Hall in Cambridge (1870-8), was considered to be one of the leading proponents of high Victorian Gothic architecture in America. Leaving Boston in 1867 for two years of architectural studies in Paris, Chandler returned to M.I.T. in 1869 taking the position of assistant professor of architecture. This appointment lasted only one year for in 1871 Chandler joined Mullett's office in Washington.

Although Chandler did not sign the plans for the Lakes Michigan and Erie stations, a bill he submitted confirms his completion of the drawings during the winter of 1875, shortly after leaving Mullett's office.

The similarity of this plan to the 1874 station design is remarkable and the fact that Kimball had requested the drawings for the 1875 stations from the Office of Supervising Architect suggests that the 1874 plans and possibly the 1871-72 red houses may also have been designed in this office, probably by Chandler or under his direction.

Chandler left Washington during the winter of 1875 returning once again to Boston. There he joined in partnership with Edward C. Cabot to establish the firm of Cabot and Chandler, which during the late 1870's and 1880's designed numerous Queen Anne style residences in and around that city. In 1888

he went back to M.I.T. for a third time as chairman of its Department of Architecture, staying until 1911. Chandler was also distinguished by his appointment as a fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1889.⁷

4. The Construction of the First House 1873-74

In a lease recorded December 8, 1874 the site for Station No. 8 on Bodie's Island, Dare County, State of North Carolina in the 6th District, the Government Committed to a two-hundred feet by two-hundred feet plot of land to be leased for twenty years from Warren Burgess and his wife Anna beginning July 27th, 187(4).⁸

Initially the original seven North Carolina stations were to have been built by James H. Boyle (a northerner who moved south during the Civil War after Federal troops had occupied the area), a contractor in New Bern, for the sum of \$2,375 per house, all houses to be complete by September 30, 1874. Construction was to begin late August 1873.⁹

Due to bond difficulties, different sets of design drawings in the possession of Boyle and Lt. Stodder (Superintendent of Construction, Sixth District), personality conflicts between Boyle and Stodder, and Boyle and his work crews suspended work which delayed construction into the winter season (which further delayed the work), and due to some legal wrangling, only one house (Little Kinnakeet), which had even been taken down and rebuilt at government request, was complete as of March 15, 1874. As a result, Boyle was paid for the house at Little Kinnakeet and relieved of his contract. Lt. Stodder of the Revenue Service was relieved of the position of Superintendent of Construction, Sixth District and replaced by Lieutenant Walter Walton, Commanding the Revenue Sloop Saville.

New contracts were entered into on April 23, 1874 by the Secretary of the Treasury to have the nine remaining Sixth District stations constructed. A. A. McCulloch of Norfolk, Virginia filed the low bid for Stations One through Six, while D. Simpson of New Bern was awarded the contract for erecting Stations Seven, Eight, and Nine. This time to make certain that there would be no such misunderstanding as had occurred in the past, Lieutenant Walton reviewed with the builders all points that might be debatable. Simpson explained to the Lieutenant that the lumber for Stations Seven, Eight and Nine had been landed and Foreman T.J. Gardner and his working party were on the beach.

Walton, on June 13, requested the Secretary to authorize him to make Elizabeth City North Carolina, a base of supplies and communications for the Revenue Sloop Saville in connection with the completion of the Sixth District Life-Saving

Stations. Elizabeth City, he reported, was a more central point for operations than New Bern. Moreover, articles of "Ship Chandlery" could be secured more reasonably there. Permission was granted.

At the end of the third week of October, Lieutenant Walton reported that Contractor McCulloch and Simpson had satisfactorily completed the nine stations and that these houses, along with the one at Little Kinnakeet, were ready to receive their equipments.¹⁰

Station No. 8, known as Bodie's Island Station was commissioned on December 4, 1874 with the appointment of Edward Drinkwater as Keeper.¹¹

5. The First Ten Years, December 1874 - 1884

In July 1876 Superintendent J.J. Guthrie spent several weeks on the Outer Banks. At most of the stations visited, the superintendent found the wells had been filled by drifting sand. New wells had accordingly been dug. Even so, Guthrie found the "sand water very bad and injurious to health". He suggested that a small cistern be built at each station.¹²

On July 26, 1877, Guthrie wrote General Superintendent Kimball, regarding affairs in the Sixth District. Once again, he called his superior's attention to the need to have cisterns erected at each station. Water secured from the wells, Guthrie reported, was both revolting and unhealthy. Furthermore, the "intense heat" of the sun had started the pitch on the east and south sides, and so dried the paint on the Station Houses; that the superintendent felt a "little timely retouching" was in order.¹³

Superintendent Guthrie, on September 8, 1877, wrote Captain James H. Merryman (Merryman was one of the Superintendents of Construction of Life-Saving Stations) relative to painting the roofs of the houses vermilion, and lettering in white their names and numbers, so that they might be identified "the furthest distance at sea". Painters would charge the government \$2.50 per day for doing this work.

Permission to have the roofs of the houses painted with "two coats of vermilion red, and letter them in white" was granted.

In 1878, new stations for the Sixth District were authorized by Congress and by the winter of 1878-79, thirteen new stations were in operation, and the Bodie's Island Station was renumbered Station No. 16. The original ten stations were thereafter referred to as the "old" stations.

Superintendent Joseph W. Etheridge on October 16, 1878, wrote General Superintendent Kimball in regard to having the old stations painted red, the same color as the 13 new houses. He calculated that it would require 20 gallons of "James' Mixed Paint" for each house. With the paint selling for \$2.50 per gallon, it would cost \$500 for paint for the ten stations, to which should be added \$50 for transportation from Elizabeth City to the different houses.

Kimball was agreeable; permission to expend money to paint the ten old stations red was granted.¹⁵

Lieutenant Newcomb visited the Sixth District stations in the period January 25 - March 9, 1881. He was delayed by ice and tides, and a severe attack of chills and fever. "The ten old stations" in the district, he reported are provided with the International Code of Signals, and it is presumed that the rest will soon be supplied. Flagstuffs at the old stations were too short to admit proper display of more than two flags at a time. As most messages or communications of the International Code required three or four flag hoists, there was a need for new flagstuffs.

A.A. McCullough of Norfolk was willing to deliver new spruce or hard pine flagstuffs at each of the "ten old stations" for \$20 each. These staffs should be 42 feet 6 inches in length, six to seven inches in diameter for the first 12 feet and tapering to three inches at the top, filled with lignum vitae, and two sets of signal halyard, about 25 fathoms in all.

The flagstuffs at these stations "step on the second story floor, in the middle of the building, running up through the roof and lookout platform, a distance of 12 feet 6 inches, leaving 30 feet of pole outside". A four flag signal requires about 27 feet hoist, which would leave about three feet to spare between the bottom flag and the lookout platform.¹⁶

The ten old stations had been painted with red paint furnished the previous fall. The paint had hardly body enough, having been mixed with vermilion only, to get the shade required.¹⁷

Newcomb had intended to draft specifications for brick cisterns for stations No. 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 20, but he was unfamiliar with that type of work, so on April 7, 1882, he proposed to leave this task to a "more competent" individual. All these stations were in need of water tanks or cisterns to catch rainwater for drinking purposes. The beach water was unhealthy, and Newcomb felt that brick cisterns of about 3,000 gallons capacity should be built as soon as practicable. These were to be located at the north end of the stations to protect the water from the heat of the sun.¹⁸

Between 1882 and 1883, eleven new stations were added to the Sixth District giving it a total of thirty-four stations of which twenty-nine were in North Carolina. Of these twenty-nine, all but four were on the Outer Banks. In this period, the Bodie's Island Station name was changed to Oregon Inlet Station, its present identification.

Lieutenant Edwin L. Wade, who had replaced Newcomb as Assistant Inspector, wrote General Superintendent Kimball on April 18, 1883, in regard to the cost of repairs needed at the Sixth District Lifesaving Stations. As a result Voucher for Purchases, Etc. dated Sept. 1, 1884 and noted as authorized by telegram January 17, 1884, allowed \$60.00 to be paid "for services rendered, in employing carpenter and having Oregon Inlet L.S. Station repaired according to agreement with the District Superintendent. The repair work was listed as follows:

"Repairs consist in laying new floors in Mess Room, Keepers Room and Sleeping Room, running partition upstairs, repairing staircase, new braces on the outside of the house, new door steps, two new windows upstairs, three new doors, new lookout, one knob lock for door, 2 sets of butts (sic), 410 feet of heart lumber, nails to complete the work, and hauling the lumber from sound to the stations."

The Voucher was made out to M.L. Midgett, Manteo, Dare Co., N.C.¹⁹

Lean-To

Sometime in 1884-85, lean-to additions were provided on all of the original ten stations and perhaps on others. They extended out six feet from the house and were 20 feet in length. Besides giving access to the house, they provided two small rooms. To the right of the entrance was a pantry and to the left a "Dry Room for Wet Clothes". See "Plan of Ten U.S. Life-Saving Stations in the Sixth District. Stations of 1874: Superimposed on this plan is a caption reading, "Solid lines indicate additions & alterations". A note in the margin indicates that these plans had been corrected to indicate the appearance of the stations as of May 28, 1885. Copies of these plans accompany this report, which illustrate the appearance of the original Bodie Island Station.²⁰

Outbuildings and Structures:

Based upon correspondence concerning the other original ten stations, the original Bodie's Island Station probably had a cookhouse (recommended in Assistant Inspector's Report of October 5, 1891 for all Sixth District Stations), a drill pole, a privy, a cart house, a stable and perhaps a free standing flagpole.²¹

Estimates of materials and costs required for the standardized cookhouse plans survive, and the houses were to be built and finished by the station crews themselves. The drill pole was built to simulate the mast of a ship and was used as an aid in training the station crews in the accuracy of firing the rescue lines from the lyle gun to the ship, rigging the breeches buoy and "rescueing" the seaman in distress on the "mast" (drill pole). It is not determined at this time if horses were assigned to Station No. 16, but if they were, a cart house (to house the apparatus cart) would have been built as recommended by Assistant Inspector Failing in 1892 and a stable would have been built by the crews with materials furnished by the government. The flagpole at Chicamacomico Station was removed from the top of the house and a new freestanding one placed in front of the house around 1884 and probably Oregon Inlet and all of the other stations having the roof mounted poles had the same work done at this same time.²²

6. The Next Twelve Years 1885-1897

The most significant events in the history of the Station during this period were its relocation to a new site in 1888 and its decommissioning in 1897.

On a Voucher for General Expenses, dated Dec. 3, 1888, made out to Charles E. Babbitt, Jr., Chincoteague Island, Va. for \$1,750 work was described as follows:

"For furnishing the labor and materials and moving two lifesaving stations on the coast of North Carolina known and designated as the Oregon Inlet and New Inlet Life-Saving Stations to new sites, together with all apparatus, outbuildings, etc. and for properly placing the buildings, etc. under contract dated Sept. 24th, 1888."

Note the reference here to outbuildings.²³

There is a copy of a letter in the N.P.S. files, Fort Raleigh site in Manteo, which discusses the exposed locations of the stations, the danger to them from the sea and weather, the contractor's crew accommodations, the need to have the station crews on hand during the move, and the importance of properly set posts and "mud sills" to receive the houses and keep them plumb. Some areas of the letter are illegible, but it is hand written on stationery from the Office of Assistant Inspector of Sixth U.S. Life-Saving District, Elizabeth City, N.C. and is dated Sept. 1st, 1888. It is addressed to Friend(?) Read and is signed by (Lieutenant) Chaytor, who also designed and superintended the construction of stables at ten stations in 1885.²⁴ A brief reference also appears in the Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service - 1888 which says:

"It has been found necessary to move to new sites the stations at Coney Island, New York, and New Inlet and Oregon Inlet, North Carolina.

No other references as to why the station was moved have been found.

Less than nine years later, the original 1874 station, having been moved to a "safe" location from 400 feet off the ocean, westward toward the sound, 1 mile south of Oregon Inlet near a "creek to sound" (a copy of a sketch describing the site accompanies this report and was attached to Chaytor's letter above along with a sketch of the New Inlet site),²⁴ was decommissioned in 1898 in preparation of moving to a new station being built on a new site. It is assumed that either the old buildings themselves were condemned or the old site was condemned due to encroachment of the sea as Oregon Inlet itself shifted position steadily southward due to the actions of the littoral current. No references to justify the new station were found, only a brief reference in the Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service - 1897 which indicated that:

"Four stations, located respectively at Dam Neck Mills and False Cape, Virginia and Oregon Inlet and Caffey's Inlet, North Carolina, are now in process of reconstruction.

End of the 1874 Station:

In a report dated October 11th, 1901, Keeper M.W. Etheridge writing from "New Oregon Inlet Station" to District Superintendent P.H. Morgan at Shawboro, N.C. describes the end of the original Bodie's Island/Oregon Inlet Station:

Sir,

I have to report that the storm of yesterday and last night completely destroyed the old station and everything that was in it, the lumber of [the] station is broken up badly and scattered all over the beach the beds bedding (sic) and steads(?) are all broken up and are of no good, the old bridge that leads from the station to the sea is also washed away so badly that it cannot be used, what shall I do with [the] lumber of station it is of no use to U.S.L. Service that I can see. Pleas (sic) enforme (sic) me as soon as possible.

Respectfully,
M.W. Etheridge, Keeper²⁵

Sister buildings of the original 1874 station did survive, at least up to 1965 or so. The original 1874 Chicamacomico Station was moved to the site of the New Chicamacomico Station and used as a boathouse and storage building (recent photographs of it appeared in the Bearss Report of 1965). The original Nags Head Station also survived, (with its exterior decoration) as evidenced by photographs taken in 1949, appearing in The Outer Banks An Historical Adventure From Kitty Hawk to Ocracoke, by Martin R. Conway, Page 20.

NOTES

1. York, Architecture ..., pp 11 - 15 and Bearss, Chicamacomico ... Vol. I, Part III, pp 1 - 2.
2. Bearss, Chicamacomico ... Vol. I, Part III, pp 1 - 2 and p4.
3. York, Architecture ..., p 15.
4. Ibid., pp 15 - 17.
5. Ibid., p 20.
6. Ibid, P 17.
7. Ibid, p 17 - 20.
8. Refer to Exhibit 7A.
9. Bearss, Chicamacomico ..., Vol. I, Part III, pp 1 - 4.
10. Ibid., pp 4 - 9.
11. Stick, Outer Banks ..., pp 169 - 170.
12. Bearss, Chicamacomico ..., Vol. I, Part III, p 11.
13. Ibid., p 11.
14. Ibid., p 11 - 12.
15. Ibid., p 12.
16. Ibid., p 12 - 13.
17. Ibid., p 13.
18. Ibid., p 13.
19. Ibid., p 14. Refer to Exhibit 7B.
20. Ibid., p 32. Refer to Exhibit 1.
21. Ibid., p 34 - 47 and York, Architecture ..., pp 27 - 28.
22. Bearss, Chicamacomico ..., Vol I, Part III, pp 34 - 35 41, 43, and 47.
23. Refer to Exhibit 7D.
24. Refer to Exhibit 7C.
25. Refer to Exhibit 7I.

II. THE 1897 LIFESAVING STATION:

1. The Construction of the Station - 1897-98

On May 6, 1897 the Treasury Department, U.S. Life Saving Service, Washington, D. C. announced that sealed proposals would be received due Thursday, May 27, 1897 for the construction of lifesaving stations at the following locations of the Sixth District: Dam Neck Mills of Virginia Beach, Va.; False Cape, Va.; Caffey's Inlet, North Carolina, and Oregon Inlet, North Carolina. Proposals to construct one or more of the stations would be considered. Plans, etc. were available from the Superintendents of Construction, New York City; Superintendent, Sixth Life-Saving District, Shawboro, N.C.; or the Assistant Inspector, Sixth Life-Saving District, Elizabeth City, N.C.¹

On June 16, 1897 a contract was awarded to Shull and Duncan of Beaufort, N.C. to "furnish the materials required for, and will construct, make, erect and build a life-saving house, flagstaff, outbuildings, etc. at Oregon Inlet, coast of North Carolina, 6th Life-Saving District." It was to be "furnished and ready for inspection on or before the first day of February, 1898." The agreed upon sum was \$6,860.70 for the work as described.²

On March 3, 1898 General Superintendent Kimball advised keeper M. W. Etheridge that "the completion of the new Oregon Inlet Life-Saving Station having been reported to this office, you are directed to take possession of the buildings and transfer your crew thereto, together with the apparatus and all the government property."³

2. Design and Architect of the 1897 Station

On January 2, 1891 George Russell Tolman was appointed Life-Saving Service architect, succeeding Ex-Service Architect Bibb. Born in 1848, Tolman entered into a partnership with George F. Moffette during the 1870's. Under the name of Moffette and Tolman, this Boston firm designed both residences and commercial buildings, including the 1876 Victorian Gothic Charlestown (Massachusetts) Savings Bank, still standing in Thompson Square. Tolman was also skilled as a water-colorist, illustrating in 1877 the Rev. Edward G. Porter's Rambles in Old Boston, New England. Prior to taking his position with the Service, Tolman worked for the Treasury Department as draftsman in two short term jobs. He resigned from the first at the Kittery, Maine, Navy Yard but completed a similar temporary position in 1889, designing the Marine Barracks for the Norfolk Navy Yard in Virginia. His brother, Albert J. Tolman, also served as draftsman for the Treasury working in the Office of Supervising Architect.

Tolman began his career with the Service designing in 1892 a station for Quonochontaug at Charlestown, Rhode Island. At least twenty others (including the 1897 Oregon Inlet Station) were built from the plan up until 1904. Covered entirely with shingles, this sparsely detailed one and a half story building featured a single gable roof pierced by a small dormer on each side and a large hipped roof tower at one end. A covered veranda, extending completely along one side and half of the adjacent two sides, was an early addition to many stations.

A modified plan of the Quonochontaug station was included in the Government exhibit at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Planned in recognition of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, the "White City" that arose on the fairgrounds was composed of classically inspired monumental structures. Although small and simple by comparison, the exhibition of the latest lifesaving station at the fair symbolized the recognition which the service sought. The station proved to be a popular attraction particularly for foreigners interested in the methods of the most extensive and only government supported lifesaving system in the world

In 1893 Tolman designed a second station for the service referred to as the Duluth type. However, the design reflected more a mixture of styles and shapes, combining the massing of the Shingle Style with the Colonial Revival detailing.

By the 1890s the Colonial Revival Style was beginning to gain greater acceptance. Reflecting a desire to revive the classical feeling of Georgian and Federal buildings, the style employed such elements as porticos, frontpiece entrances, Palladian and fanlight windows and large gambrel roofs. Often, the colonial features were oversized or exaggerated out of proportion with other parts of the structure.

Tolman drew his only unique design for a station at Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, which shared many concepts of the Duluth plan.

On July 16, 1896, Tolman was dismissed from the service over a personal matter. In a letter to his lawyer Tolman stated he had been relieved of his position for taking a sudden and unapproved leave of absence to escape a warrant for his recommitment to jail. Unfortunately, nothing in his personnel file explains why he was jailed in the first place.

Tolman's letter gives an insight into the workings of his office which helps to clear up the confusion surrounding where stations were designed. The 1884 and 1896 Revised Regulations of the U. S. Life-Saving Service states that one job of Superintendents of Construction was to prepare plans and specifications. As Superintendents were officers of the Revenue Marine Bureau, this suggested the stations would logically be designed at the

Bureau's headquarters in New York City, rather than at the Treasury Department in Washington, where the Life-Saving Service was located. In practice, however, the position of Superintendent involved supervising the construction of stations, not designing them. No drawings are signed by Superintendents and this position was not held by Chandler, Parkinson, Bibb or Tolman. While Parkinson, and possibly Bibb, was an Assistant Superintendent of Construction, as well as architect, it is likely that they worked out of the Treasury Building. This is confirmed by Tolman's letter in which he refers to his section as the Division of Construction and Repair, a part of Kimball's Washington office.

Tolman served during a period when many of the older stations needed replacement rather than repair. Although his six and one half year term was shorter than that of any other architect, over forty-seven of his stations were completed. If he had stayed longer Tolman's influence on Service architecture would perhaps have been greater than that left by his Quonochontaug, Duluth and Gay Head stations. Nevertheless, the honor of designing a building for the World's Columbian Exposition is an accomplishment few architects of Tolman's day could claim.⁴

Although no drawings for the 1897 Oregon Inlet Station are known to survive, a complete set of 12 sheets of drawings for the 1902 Amagansett, N.Y. station are on microfilm in the United States Coast Guard Academy Library. The design originated from Tolman, but the drawings were probably redrawn by Victor Mendleheff as he was working for the Service in 1900 when the drawings were dated, and he was Tolman's successor to the position of Service Architect. It is the most complete set of drawings for the Quonochontaug Style station, found by researchers to 1991, and probably illustrates the original Oregon Inlet 1897 station quite well. Copies of these drawings accompany this report (Exhibit 2), as well as a photograph of the front of the original 1897 station at Oregon Inlet, taken around 1900.⁵

Other stations of this district built on the Quonochontaug prototype under Tolman's tenure were Portsmouth (Portsmouth, NC, 1894) and Core Bank (Core Island off Atlantic, NC, 1895), and built under Mendleheff's tenure were Dam Neck Mills (Virginia Beach, VA 1897 - 98), False Cape (off Back Bay, VA, 1897 - 98), Seatack (Virginia Beach, VA, 1903), Currituck Beach or Whales Head (Corolla, NC, 1903) and Cape Henry (North Virginia Beach, VA 1904).⁶

3. The Early Years 1898 -1933

In 1890 Life-Saving District 3 was reorganized and became Districts 3 and 4, requiring all other districts to be renumbered up one digit. Thus Life-Saving District 6 was renumbered District No. 7.⁷

On February 19, 1901, permission was given for a "substantial and durable footway with handrail, across the marsh near the Oregon Inlet Life-Saving Station, at a cost not to exceed \$195.00, delivered on the station grounds".⁸

On October 11, 1901, Keeper Etheridge reported that the old (1874) station had been completely destroyed by the previous day's storm.⁹

In 1915, the Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter service were combined to form the U..S. Coast Guard.

The years 1917-18 kept the crew busy looking for German U-Boats and their victims, during our short involvement in World War I.

In an inspection report dated April 12, 1932, a crew of fourteen men were noted as present (9), absent sick (1) or absent on liberty (4). Coast Guard Inspector L.T. Doughty also noted:

Q-45 Part of the plastering overhead in crews sleeping room has fallen leaving the lath exposed; base boarding of station was damaged in a recent storm, a new chimney is needed in out-kitchen, also new floor. It is recommended that material to make the necessary repairs be furnished.

Q-51 A part of the fence was washed away during the storm of 6 March, 1932. It is recommended that material be furnished to make repairs. The aviation number platform needs painting.¹⁰

4. The Alterations of 1933-34

As part of a modernization program, the Oregon Inlet Station was extensively modified very much toward its present appearance. The floor plans were changed to accommodate new larger equipment, boats and apparatus. The small lookout was removed, along with the dormer at the north roof slope and a new full height boat bay was added at that end. The masonry chimney was removed and relocated behind the roof ridge toward the rear elevation. A new square four story watch or look-out tower with a square-hipped roof was placed on the front, where the original front dormer was, and adjacent to the front of the veranda. A third window was added to both the first and second floors of the south end elevation for symmetry. Four new single dormers were added to the front roof at the second floor; and three single and one double dormer were added to the rear roof at the second floor. The building was completely sheathed in wood shingles (probably heart cedar shingles) and the look-out tower had a wood catwalk and proudly displayed the coat of arms of the U.S. Coast Guard on its front elevation. On 5 June, 1934 a report by Assistant Inspector Lt. Cmdr. G.E. McCabe noted:

"Crew on station are now living on a 75-foot patrol boat. Station building is being modernized and what appears to be a lookout tower of adequate height is being constructed on the front of the building. This lookout tower is square and does not give the clear view that would be afforded if the house on top were hexagonal with five windows and one glass paneled door leading to outside platform. The roof of the building has been re-shingled with green dipped wood shingles. Why green was used, I cannot understand in view of the painting instructions. None of the major interior work has been finished."¹¹

Judging from the photographs taken in 1934 (accompanying this report) and the Inspector's comments, it appears that the station house and its outbuildings had their wall shingles painted white and the window and door trim painted white, but the doors and window sash frames were a darker color, probably green to match the roof shingles. However, the Inspector infers that green was contrary to instructions. What color were they supposed to have been? Red traditionally had been the accent color of choice for the stations since 1872, and the roof finish called for in the new Chicamacomico Station specifications dated 1910 was natural finish shingles. Red or natural may have been the intended color but regardless, the building received a green roof. However, it must be noted that red usually photographs dark, and it could be the color for the doors and window sash frames shown in these photographs. In absence of a specific paint color investigative survey, at this writing the suggestion of red is conjecture.

No known drawings for this modernization exist identified to Oregon Inlet, however, drawings for the modernization of the Virginia Beach Station do exist and accompany this report. The Virginia Beach Station was the same Quonochontaug prototype station and received the same modifications. The Virginia Beach Station is presently the Virginia Life-Saving Museum and is nearly identical in its present form to the Oregon Inlet Station. Even in 1934, the tradition of using standardized plans and specifications for construction programs was still strong. Interestingly, on some of the drawing sheets, the Virginia Beach Station name is lined out of the Title Block and the name Core Bank is substituted, suggesting that station likely received the same modifications. Core Bank Station's name was later changed to Atlantic Station.¹²

Drawings do exist for the Oregon Inlet out-kitchen building, for the wood stave cisterns and their platforms, and for wood framing shop drawings. The kitchen drawings appear to be largely illegible but accompany this report. The cistern drawing likewise is included herein. The shop drawings, however, were not complete nor properly referenced to the building and are not considered significant to the documentation. However, they do identify the general contractor as E.E. Weddle and Company, the

subcontractor as M.T. Blassingham and Co., Inc., Norfolk, Va., and they are dated February 6, 1934.¹³

A storm flag pole is mounted on the rear slope of the roof (1934 photo looking S.E.) and the drill pole is still a training aid visible just to the right of the porch, and beyond it (1934 photo looking n.e.). Another interesting detail is the wood "belt" designed around the look-out tower to create a shadow line, in line with the gutter at the main eave, indicating that the designer had a keen eye for subtle finishing details which tie facade compositions together (1934 photograph looking west).

5. The Architects of the Alterations

While the drawings for the modernization of the Virginia Beach and Core Banks Stations have survived, no clues as to the architect responsible are exhibited, except that the title blocks on sheets 1, 3, 4 and 6 are marked: Designed by C.Z.B.; while sheets 2 and 5 of 6 are marked: Designed by L.J.J. The title blocks are further marked U.S. Coast Guard, Office of Field Assistant M.P. Hite, C & R (Construction and Repair), Elizabeth City, N.C. The drawings are titled Proposed Alterations in Dwelling, and are dated October, 1933. (Same time-frame as the work done at Oregon Inlet.)

6. Recent Modifications 1935-Present

In July, 1934, a shipment of linoleum was unloaded from AB-21 at Rodanthe, N.C. The linoleum was to be used by the crews at the Coast Guard Stations at Oregon Inlet, Pea Island, Chicamacomico, Gull Shoal, Little and Big Kinnakeet to cover the kitchen floors. Linoleum paste and linoleum cement were to be used in the installation.¹⁴

In June, 1935, more battleship linoleum was planned to be requisitioned for the "living or mess room and bath room", and in March, 1936, it was recommended by inspectors for all lower floors in the stations. The linoleum would cover the existing wood and concrete floors shown on the 1933 modification drawings.¹⁵

Judging by requisitions being made upon the Seventh District's Norfolk, VA Storehouse, the station buildings were being painted white with all roofs painted green as standard procedure by 1940.¹⁶

Several photographs of the Oregon Inlet Station are in the collection of the Outer Banks History Center (OBHC) and the N.P.S. files at Fort Raleigh Site and shown the station in various progressive changes. Only one of the photographs is marked with a date, but the styles and designs of the automobiles appearing in the photographs do allow for some broad dating of changes since 1940 as follows:

1. Aerial photograph, 1940's, shows main building largely unchanged since 1934. Two large and one small wood stave cisterns are located on an enlarged raised platform at the north end elevation. Cisterns are painted white with dark roofs. Station number is noted as 176. (N.P.S.)
2. Aerial Photograph, 1950's, Station 176. Coast Guard coat of arms removed from tower front, with board signage as replacement on tower above lower front window. Station otherwise unchanged. Aviation Number Platform shows number 176. (N.P.S.)
3. Aerial photograph, dated 3-9-62. Square -hipped roof on tower removed and flat roof installed probably for antenna platform. Catwalk still in place. Tower windows altered to larger size. Front section of wood fence removed and replaced with masonry fence, same height, painted white. Another storage building has been built between original kitchen and first storage building. It is square, has a flat roof, is probably made of concrete masonry, and is painted white.
4. Aerial photograph, early 1970's, Bonner Bridge (1969) in background. Boat way doors have been removed and openings filled in (old boatrooms became enclosed living space) with siding to match. Four new windows were installed at the old boat door locations. Here the building took its present form for the front facade.
5. Aerial photograph, 1970's. Catwalk at tower removed. Original kitchen, storage house and garage removed. New storage building still in place. Wood fence removed. A trailer is on-site and could be either for the use of the general contractor or to house the station personnel during the renovation. (OBHC)
6. Photograph, ground level showing station at same time as Photo 5 above. Copy enclosed with report. (OBHC) Exhibit 8.

In 1977, the Coast Guard had contract documents provided for an addition to be constructed adjacent to and connecting with the north facade of the original building. This two story structure with clapboard siding and mansard roof was completed in 1979, and is presently (1991) in its original form. The original wood stave cisterns and their concrete platform were moved to the rear of the building to their present location.¹⁷

In December of 1988, the Oregon Inlet Coast Guard Station was decommissioned from active service.¹⁸

NOTES

1. Refer to Exhibit 7E.
2. Refer to Exhibit 7F.
3. Refer to Exhibit 7G.
4. York, Architecture ..., pp 48 - 53.
5. Letter, York to Wilburn, March 25, 1991, and Exhibit 2. York, Architecture ..., p 54. Photo of the original 1897 Oregon Inlet Station is Exhibit 3.
6. York, Architecture ..., pp 220 - 221.
7. Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service - 1900, Washignton, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900.
8. Refer to Exhibit 7H.
9. Refer to Exhibit 7I.
10. Refer to Exhibit 7J.
11. Refer to Exhibit 7K. It also has the Coast Guard Coat of Arms (or insignia as it was noted on the Nags Head Station Modification Drawings) on the letterhead, upper left corner, which design appears on the Oregon Inlet Tower in the 1934 photographs.
12. Refer to Exhibit 4. These drawings are on microfilm in the United States Coast Guard Academy Library. Copies of these drawings were made available by the Life Saving Museum of Virginia. Also in the Life Saving Museum's files is a copy of the "Alterations to Dwelling" of the Nags Head, NC station which shows the same tower design deing added to a Chicamacomico-type station. A photograph of the Nags Head Station after modification appears in: Conway, Martin R., The Outer Banks, Carabelle Books, 1985, Third Printing 1988, Page 20.
13. Refer to Exhibit 6, on microfilm at the USCGA Library.
14. Bearss, Chicamacomico ..., Vol. I, Part I, p 38.
15. Ibid., p 39.
16. Ibid., p 40.

17. Interview with James Freeman, Facilities Design and Construction Center (Atlantic), USCG Norfolk, March 27, 1991.
18. Interview with Lt. Call, Deputy Group Cmdr., North Carolina Group Hatteras, 5th District, March 27, 1991.

PART IV -SHIPWRECKS

A. SITE DESCRIPTION:

The area of the banks known as Bodie Island and Pea Island have changed over the time period covered by the History Of The Life Saving Service/Coast Guard. when Oregon Inlet opened in the storm of 1846, it divided Bodie Island into two parts, the Southern part of which was connected to Pea Island. This Southern part of Bodie Island eventually was referred to as the Oregon Inlet vicinity, and later became (and still is) referred to on maps as a part of Pea Island. The original Bodie Island Station was actually located south of Oregon Inlet on land contiguous with Pea Island.

In 1874 the nearest two stations to the Bodie Island Station were Nags Head to the north and Chicamacomico to the south. The Bodie Island crew could not easily assist the Nags Head crew due to being separated by Oregon Inlet, but the Bodie Island crew would have been able to assist the Chicamacomico crew during the times when New Inlet was shoaled up.

In 1878 the Pea Island Station was commissioned and manned. Located south of the Bodie Island/Oregon Inlet Station, they would have asked for assistance from, and given assistance to the Bodie Island/Oregon Inlet crew and also assisted Chicamacomico when New Inlet was shoaled up.

Finally, by 1883 the New Inlet station was commissioned and manned and was located south of the Pea Island station , separated from it by being south of New Inlet, and North of Chicamacomico.

Thus by 1883 on the stretch of the Banks defined by Oregon Inlet to the north and New Inlet to the south there were (north to south) the Oregon Inlet Station, and the Pea Island Station, both separated from the other banks stations, but within supporting distance of one another.

Following is a list of ship wrecks which occurred along the same stretch of the banks as described above, containing the location, name of vessel, type, date lost and lives lost. It must be noted that in absence of having access to the Oregon station Logbook that this list is conjectural and represents disasters at which the crew of the Bodie Island/Oregon Inlet Station may have been present for rescue efforts, either as the primary crew or as an assisting crew.

OREGON INLET COAST GUARD STATION
HABS No. NC-385 (page 59)

II. LIST OF VESSELS TOTALLY LOST NEAR SITE: 1874 - 1945¹

| <u>LOCATION</u> | <u>NAME</u> | <u>TYPE</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>LIVES LOST</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| BODIE ISLAND | WALTHAM | BRIG | MAY 4, 1874 | 0 |
| BODIE ISLAND | J. MEANS | SCHOONER | OCT. 12, 1874 | 0 |
| OREGON INLET | HATTIE L. FULLER | SCHOONER | APR. 13, 1877 | 0 |
| BODIE ISLAND | WESTERN STAR | SCHOONER | SEP. 11, 1877 | 0 |
| BODIE ISLAND | SUCCESS | BARK | JAN. 15, 1879 | 0 |
| NEW INLET | THOMAS J. LANCASTER | SCHOONER | OCT. 5, 1881 | 7 |
| NEW INLET | MARY L. VANKIRK | SCHOONER | FEB. 5, 1882 | 0 |
| NEW INLET | ANNIE P. BLACKMAN | SCHOONER | OCT. 14, 1889 | 6 |
| PEA ISLAND | J. W. GASKILL | SCHOONER | FEB. 16, 1891 | 0 |
| OREGON INLET | IRENE THAYER | SCHOONER | NOV. 19, 1892 | 0 |
| NEW INLET | JAMES WOODALL | STEAMER | JAN. 12, 1896 | 0 |
| PEA ISLAND | MAGGIE J. LAWRENCE | SCHOONER | FEB. 10, 1896 | 0 |
| OREGON INLET | JUNE | SLOOP | AUG. 11, 1899 | 0 |
| OREGON INLET | JANE C. HARRIS | SCHOONER | FEB. 25, 1900 | 0 |
| OREGON INLET | J.F. BECKER | SCHOONER | APR. 26, 1903 | 0 |
| PEA ISLAND | MONTANA | SCHOONER | DEC. 11, 1904 | 1 |
| PEA ISLAND | JENNIE LOCKWOOD | SCHOONER | FEB. 13, 1906 | 0 |
| PEA ISLAND | CHARLES J. DUMAS | SCHOONER | DEC. 27, 1911 | 0 |
| NEW INLET | JOHN MAXWELL | SCHOONER | NOV. 2, 1912 | 6 |
| PEA ISLAND | GEORGE H. REED | SCHOONER | JAN. 20, 1915 | 0 |
| NEW INLET | ELSIE A. BAYLES | SCHOONER | APR. 5, 1916 | 2 |
| OREGON INLET | BLACK HAWK | YACHT | NOV. 16, 1919 | 0 |
| OREGON INLET | DOROTHEA L. BRINKMAN | SCHOONER | MAR. 22, 1924 | - |
| OREGON INLET | *DESERT LIGHT | CARGO | APR. 16, 1942 | - |
| OREGON INLET | *EMPIRE DRYDEN | CARGO | APR. 19, 1942 | - |
| OREGON INLET | *LADY DRAKE | CARGO | MAY 5, 1942 | - |

*SUNK BY GERMAN SUBMARINES OR MINES.

NOTES

1. Stick, Graveyard ..., pp 244 - 250.

PART V: EXHIBITS

I. RECORD DOCUMENTS (EXHIBITS)

1. HISTORIC DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS (Exhibits 1-6) - The following drawings and photographs are each preceded by a description sheet with pertinent information about the item or item group, and are arranged in chronological order for the history of the station.
2. MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS (Exhibits 7A - 7L) - Available, significant documents directly relating to the history of the station are included here.
3. CONTEMPORARY FLOOR PLANS AND PHOTOGRAPHS - These floor plans and photographs taken in March of 1991 illustrate the current conditions of the modified 1897 Life-Saving Station, including the interior spaces and finishes and the exterior conditions.

EXHIBIT 1

DRAWINGS OF FIRST STATION - 1874 (DESTROYED BY STORM 1901)

Original drawings for the lean-to additions made to all Lifesaving Station Buildings of the 1874 type in 1884-85. Note on drawing indicates "appearances of buildings as of May, 1885". In the collection of the National Archives, Record Group 26. This copy is from the Chicamacomico Study by E.C. Bearss.

Strong evidence points to Francis W. Chandler, of the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department, as the probable designer.

An account of the time, described these buildings as:

..... Typically two-story houses, mainly built of tongued and grooved pine, with gable roofs, covered with cypress or cedar shingles [vertical boards were also frequently used] and strong shutters to the windows, and are securely bolted to a foundation of cedar or locust posts,, sunk in trenches four feet deep. Their architecture is of the pointed order, somewhat in the chalet style, with heavy projecting eaves and a small open observatory or lookout deck, on the peak of the roof, from which spires a flagstaff. The walls of the houses are painted drab, with darker color for the door and window trimmings, and the roofs dark red. Over the door is a tablet with the inscription "U.S. Life-Saving Station". The appearance of the houses is tasty and picturesque.¹

Following, is an enlarged copy of an engraved illustration of one of the 1874-type Stations, illustrating the "front elevation" showing the boat incline and the sliding boat room doors. This illustration is on Page 5 of the reprint of the J.H. Merryman article written for Scribner's Monthly, January, 1880 issue, and shows the Station building before the lean-to was added. Note also the lower right segment of the "circle frame" element, which identifies the site as Station No. 11, which would be the Paul Gamiel's Hill Station built in 1878 under the second 6th District Construction Program. This Station was located approximately 5 miles north of Kitty Hawk, but is quite representative of the initial Life-Saving Service buildings built in 1874 and 1878.

NOTE

1. York, Architecture ..., pp 22 - 23.

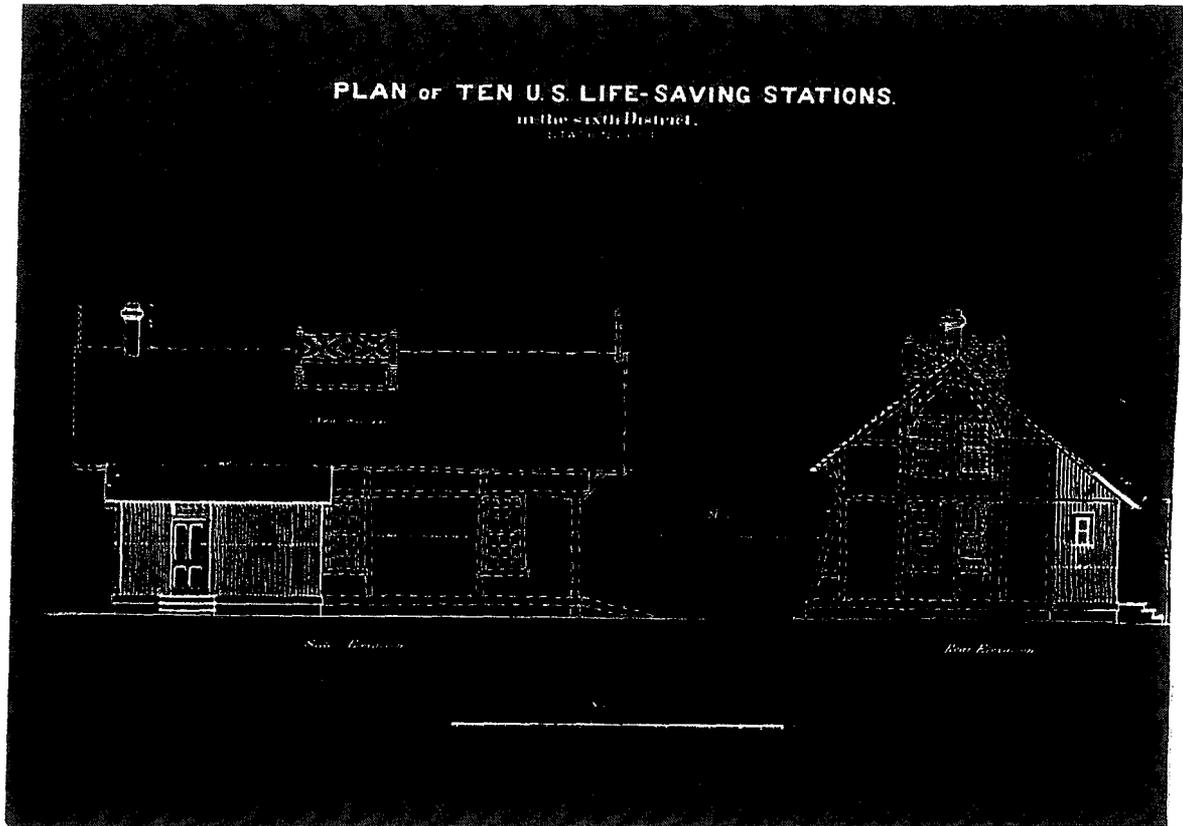


EXHIBIT 2

DRAWINGS REPRESENTING THE QUONCHONTAUG - TYPE STATION - 1900

These twelve sheets of original drawings represent the design of a "typical" Quonchontaug - Type station such as that constructed at the Oregon Inlet Site in 1897. Designed by George R. Tolman, and believed to have been redrawn by his successor Victor Mendleheff, these drawings were produced in 1900 for the Amagansett, N.Y. Life-Saving Station. Approximately twenty-one stations were built upon this prototype from 1892 to 1904.

From the collections of the United States Coast Guard Academy Library and Mr. Eugene Vanwyck York.

The differences between these drawings and the actual exterior appearance of the Oregon Inlet Station as it was built are as follows:¹

Front Elevation (Sheet 4): Same as drawn here, except porch deck and platform appear to be concrete, thus not requiring lattice-work at the foundation.

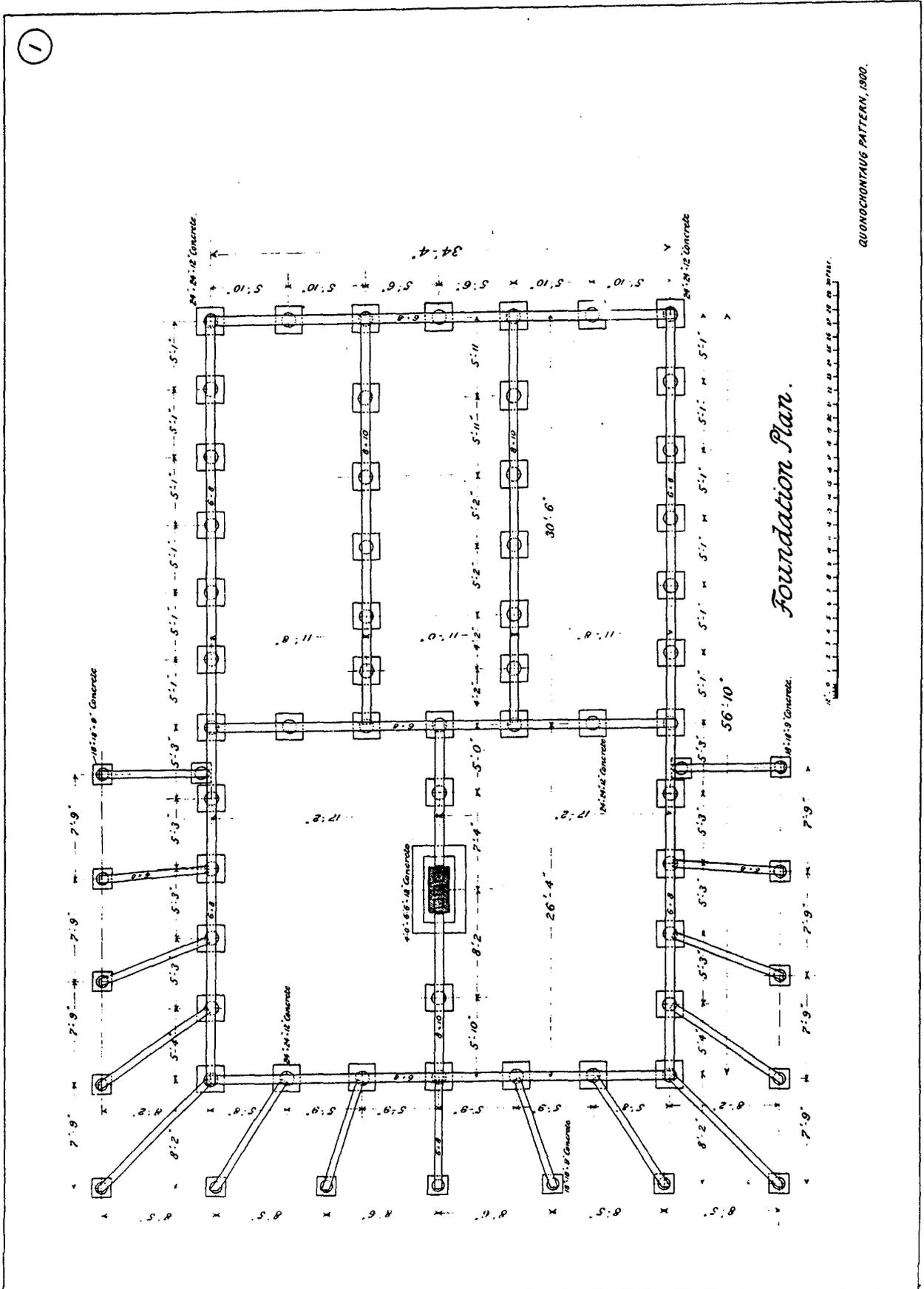
Side Elevation (Sheet 5): Rather than five windows at the first floor as drawn here, the Oregon Inlet Station exhibited (right to left): (1) A window equal in size to the shown upper sash only, at the height of the upper sash, (2) Door with transom light above, (3) and (4) Two closely spaced windows of design shown, and (5) one window of design shown. No lattice work at concrete porch.

Side Elevation (Sheet 6): No change

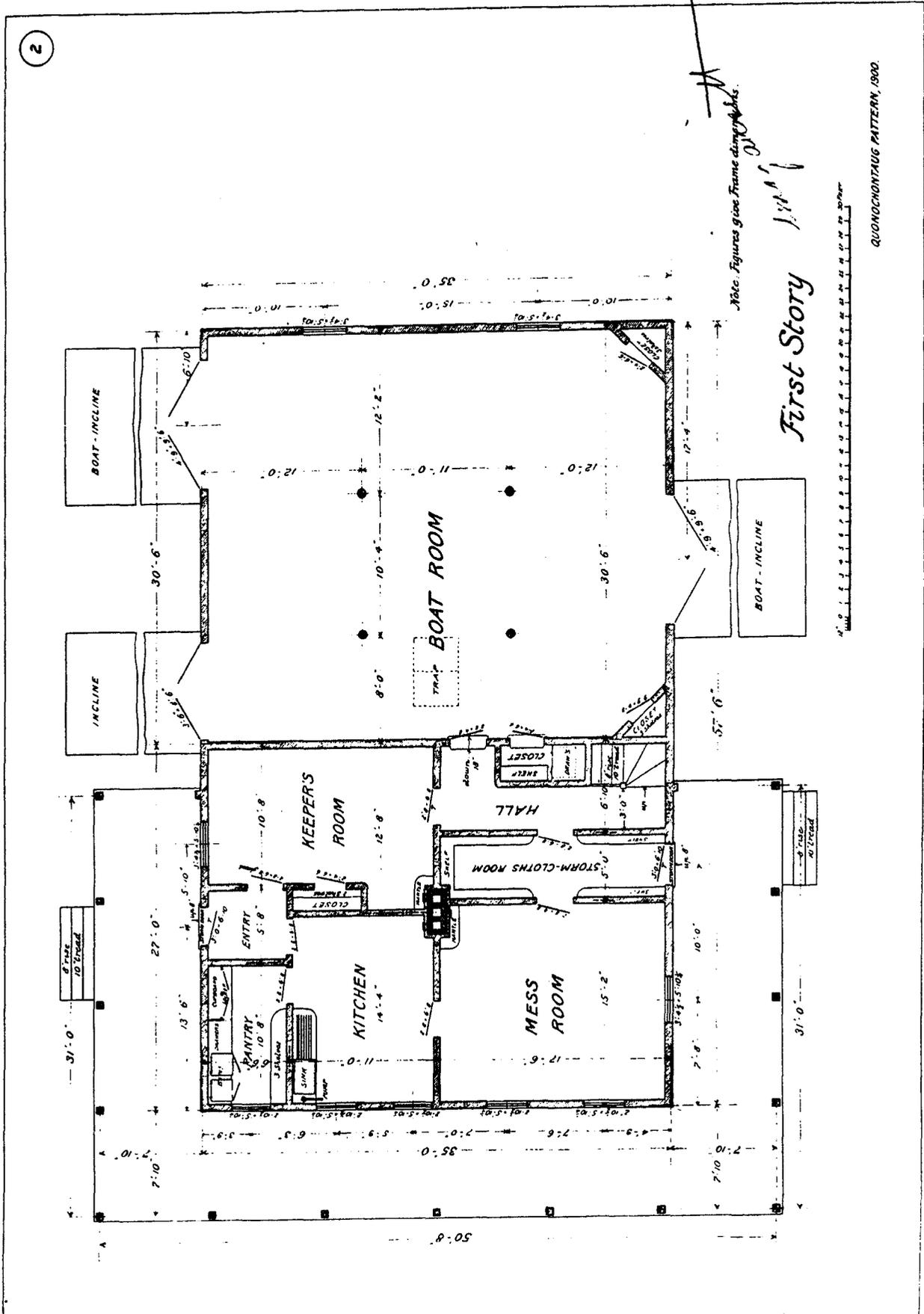
Rear Elevation (Sheet 7): Same as drawn here except the door and transom light were omitted and a window identical to the design shown was provided in the door's place. No lattice-work at the concrete porch.

NOTE

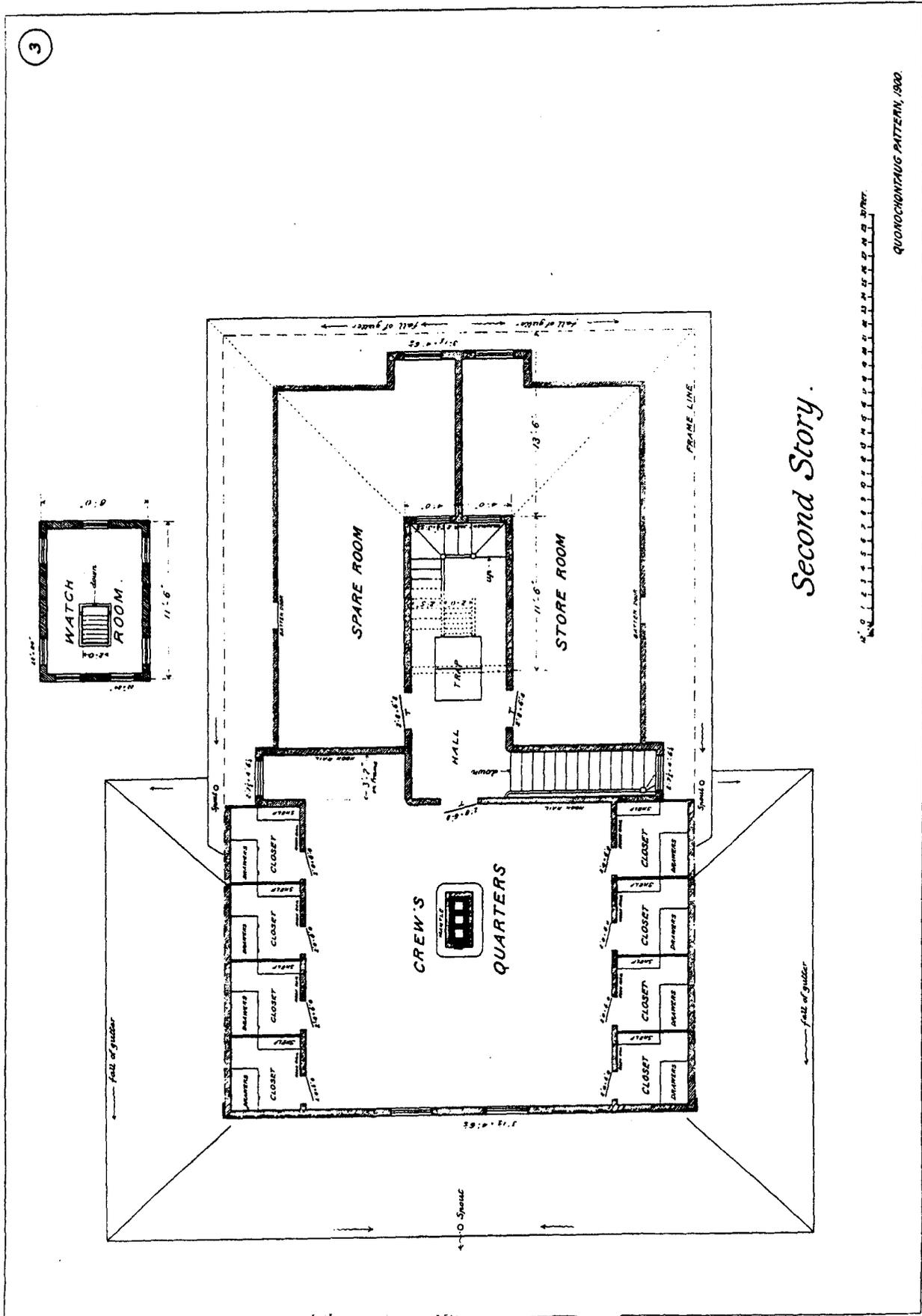
1. The photograph shown in Exhibit 3 and a series of post card size photographs dated July 17, 1917 of the Oregon Inlet Station (NPS files, Fort Raleigh NHS, Manteo, NC) were used for comparative purposes. The NPS photographs also show two small outbuildings, one of which is nearly identical to the one shown here on Sheet 11. The other appears to be a small kitchen. These photos also show a wood stave tank at the rear elevation, between the boat incline and the porch, which does not appear in Exhibit 3.

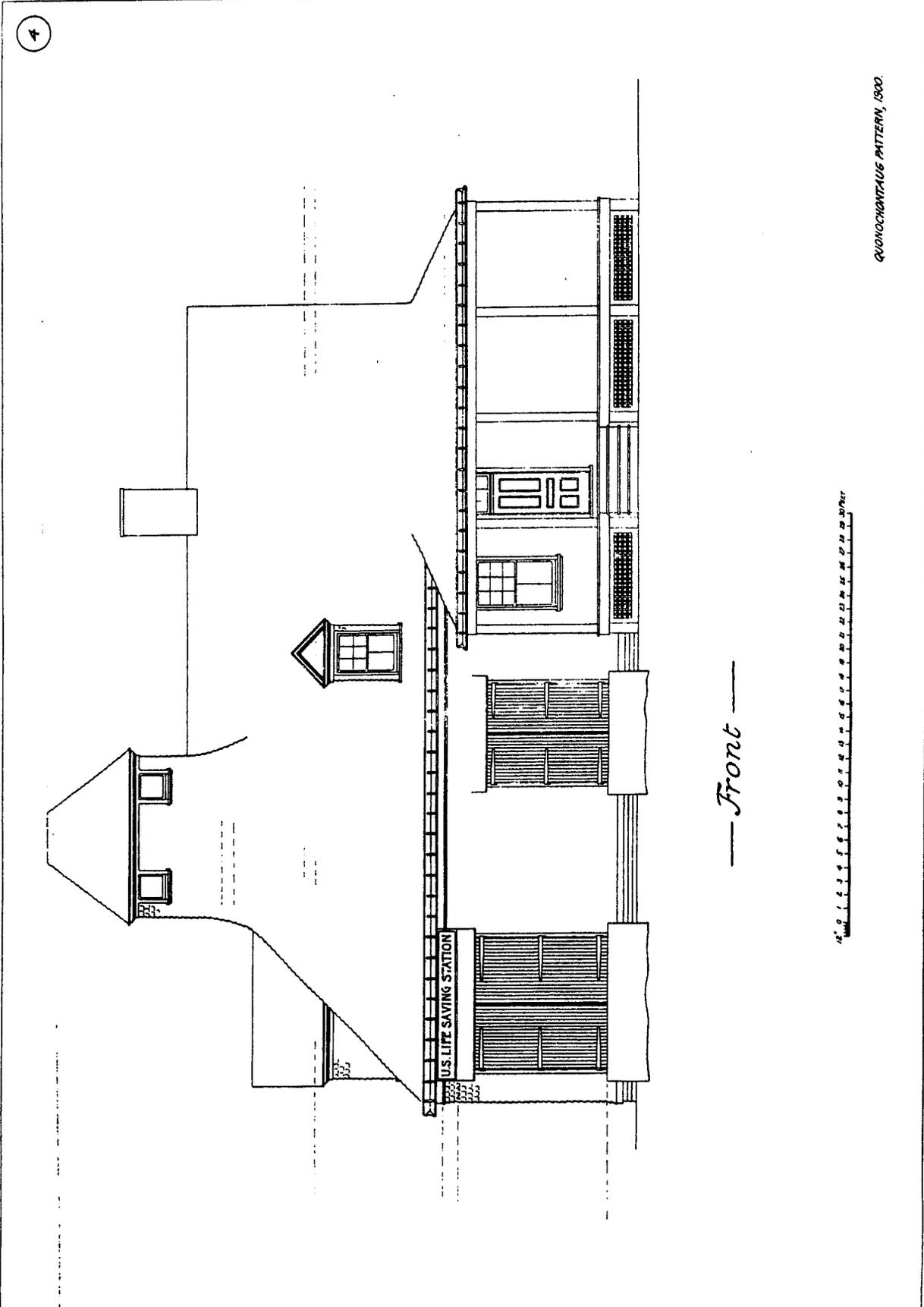


QUONHONTAUG PATTERN, 1800.



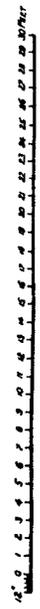
QUONOCONTAUG PATTERNS, 1900.



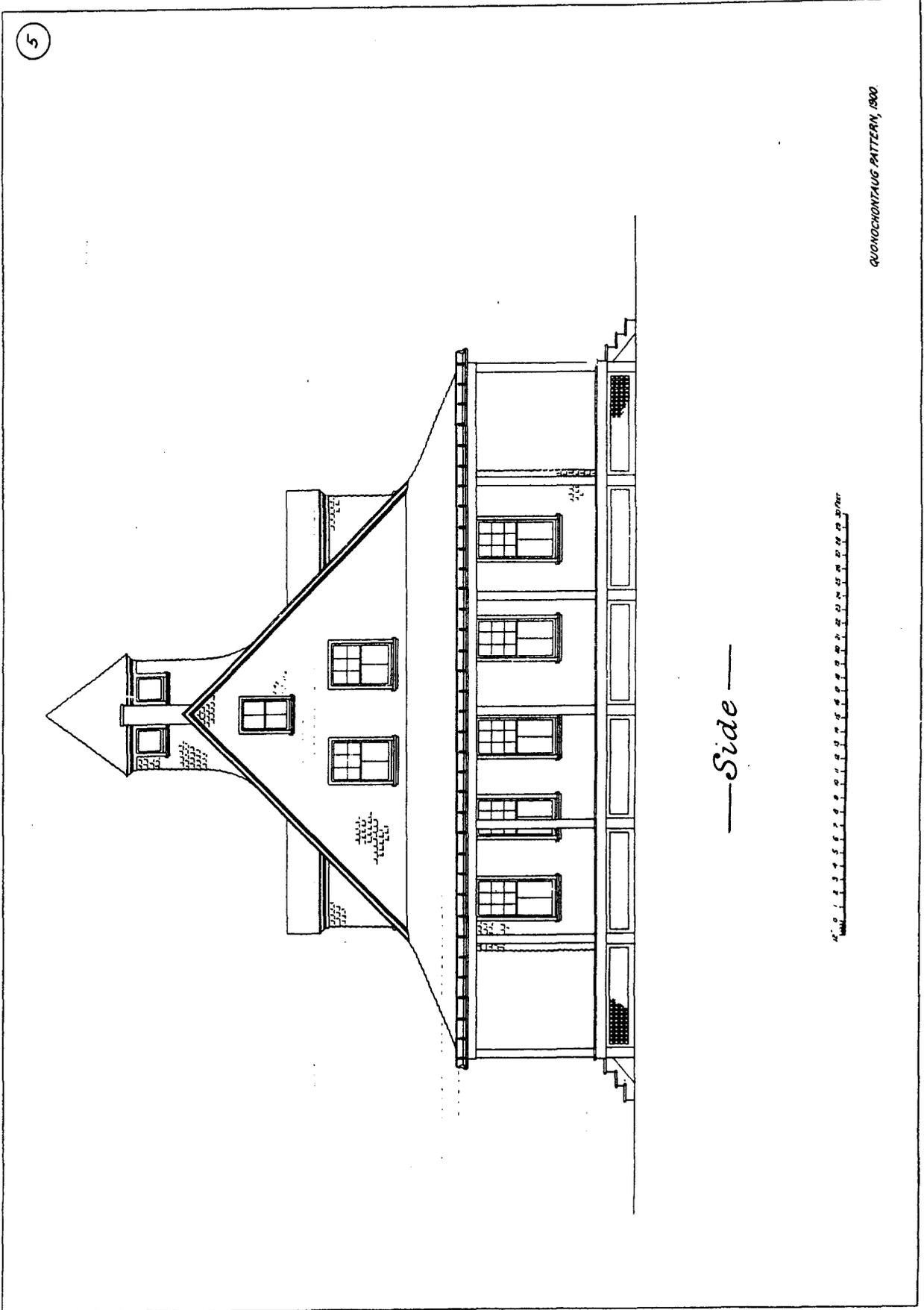


QUONOCHEMONTAUS PATTERN, 1900

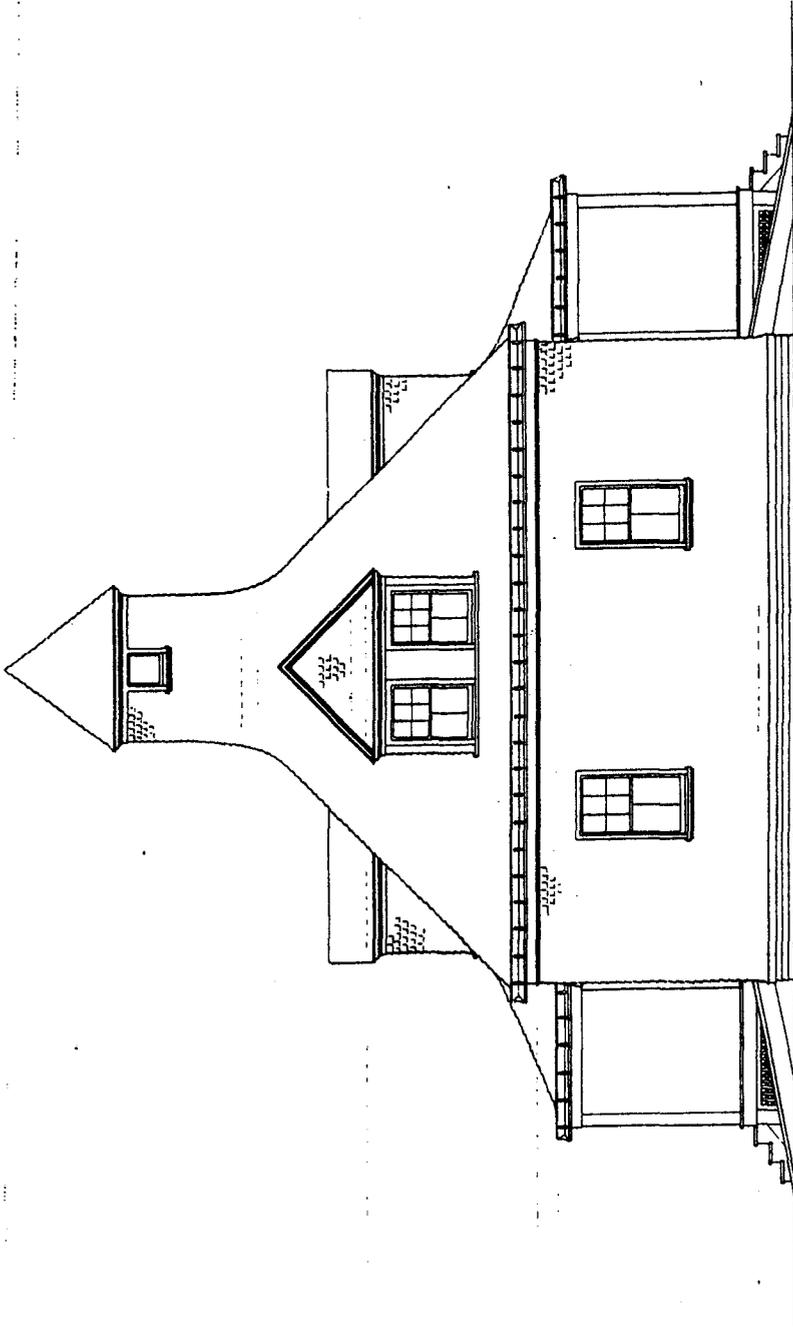
— Front —



OREGON INLET COAST GUARD STATION
HABS No. NC-385
(page 69)



6

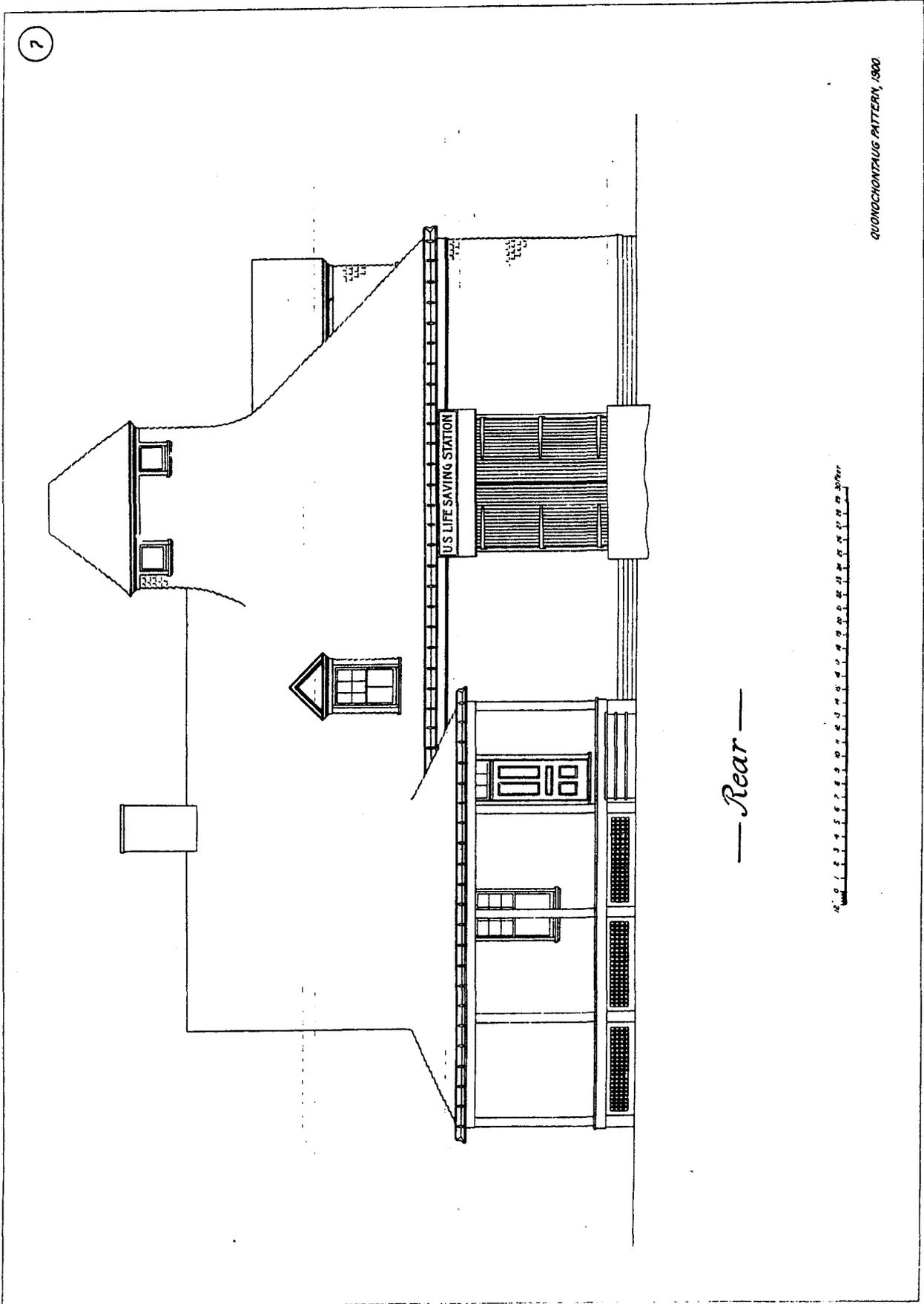


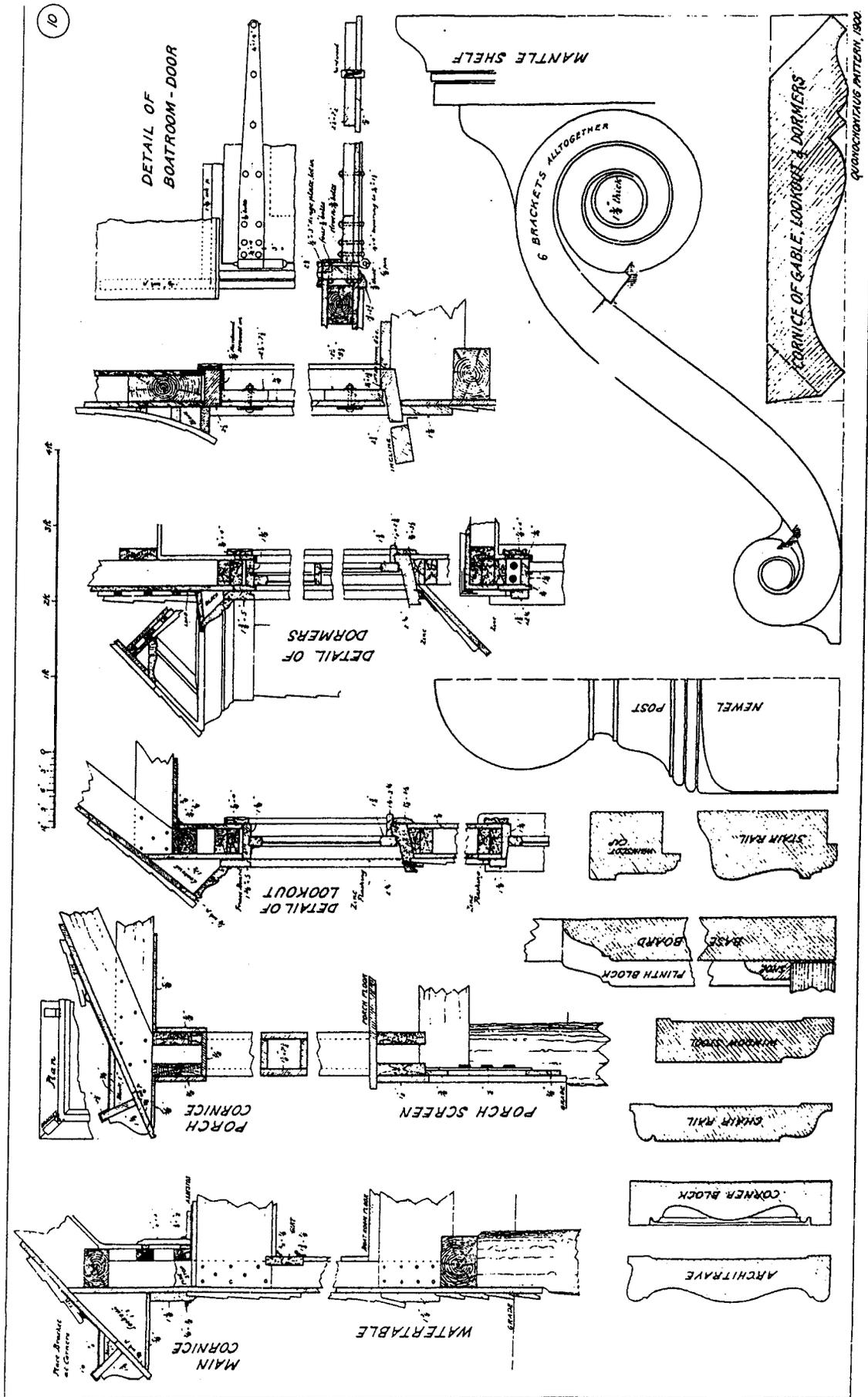
Side



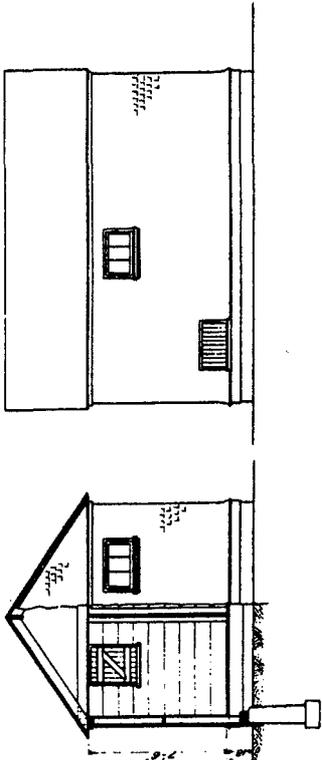
QUONOCONTAUS PATTERN, 1900.

OREGON INLET COAST GUARD STATION
HABS No. NC-385 (page 71)

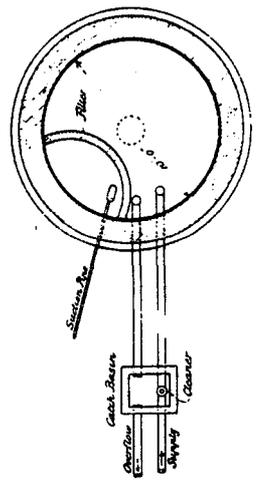
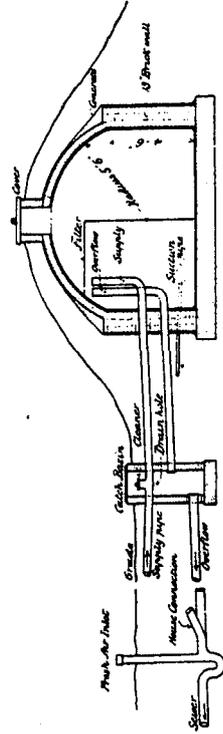
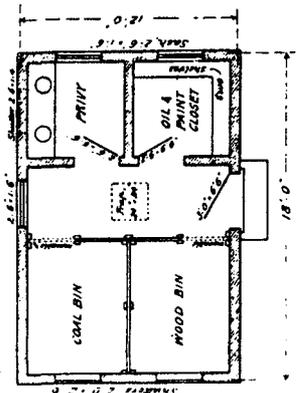




11



Outbuilding



Cistern.



QUONOCONTAUG PATTERNS, 1900

EXHIBIT 3

PHOTOGRAPH - OREGON INLET STATION, CIRCA 1900 - 1915

This photograph shows the second (1897) Oregon Inlet Station in its original Quonochontaug prototype design appearance, along with its crew.

From the collections of the Outer Banks History Center, and the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, NPS Files.

The designs of Victor Mendleheff built in the 6th/7th District were strongly influenced by Tolman's Quonochontaug prototype (such as the Oregon Inlet Station) at this time. The specifications for the Chicamacomico Station, dated 1910 called for "extra" cedar shingles, strictly heart, random widths, to be left unfinished.

Porch ceilings were to be painted "warm olive green, like Harrison Bros. No. 190; treads of steps and floors of porches, warm grey, like Harrison Bros. No 74 sign to be neatly lettered by expert sign painter, in dark olive green, on white ground".¹

In the following photograph, the 1897 Oregon Inlet Station appears to have similar finishes, with the exception of all exposed exterior door and window woodwork which is dark (olive green?) as are the porch posts, the mud sill boards at the foundation, and the ridge cap shingles on the roof, dormers and lookout.

NOTE

1. Bearss, Chicamacomico ... Section: Specifications and Drawings for Life-Saving Stations at Chicamacomico, North Carolina and Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Seventh District. 1910., p VII and p XV.

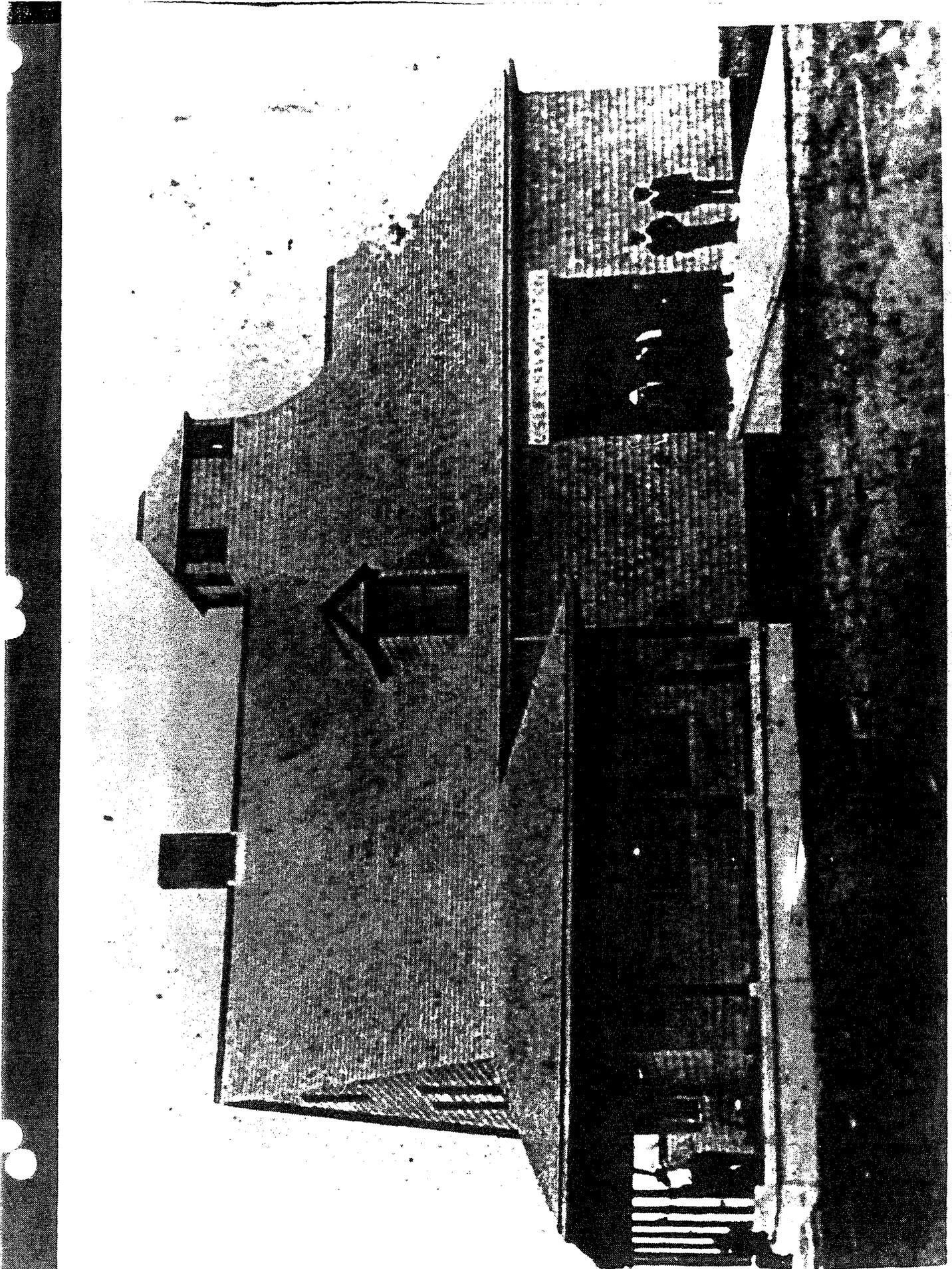


EXHIBIT 4

DRAWINGS - MODIFICATION OF SECOND (1897) STATION, DATED 1933

It appears that several of the originally designed Quonochontaug-Type Stations in the seventh District were modified using the same set of drawings. The Virginia Beach Station, Core Bank and Oregon Inlet Stations at least shared the same alterations. Following are sheets 1 of 6 through 6 of 6, of those standardized drawings. The designers are not known, except by their initials.

From the collection of the United States Coast Guard Academy Library and the Life-Saving Museum of Virginia.

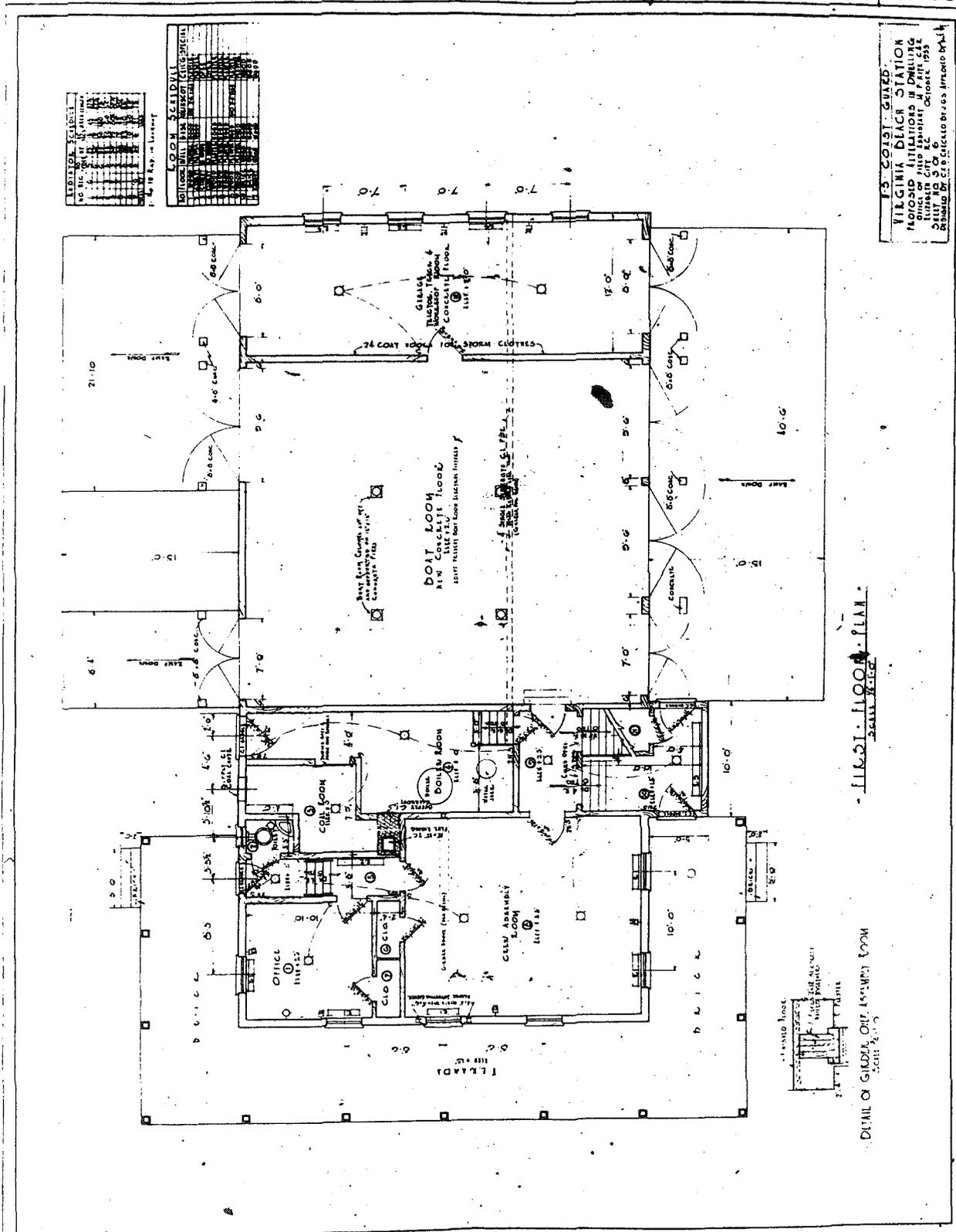


EXHIBIT 5

PHOTOGRAPHS - THE SECOND (1897) STATION AFTER MODIFICATION - 1934

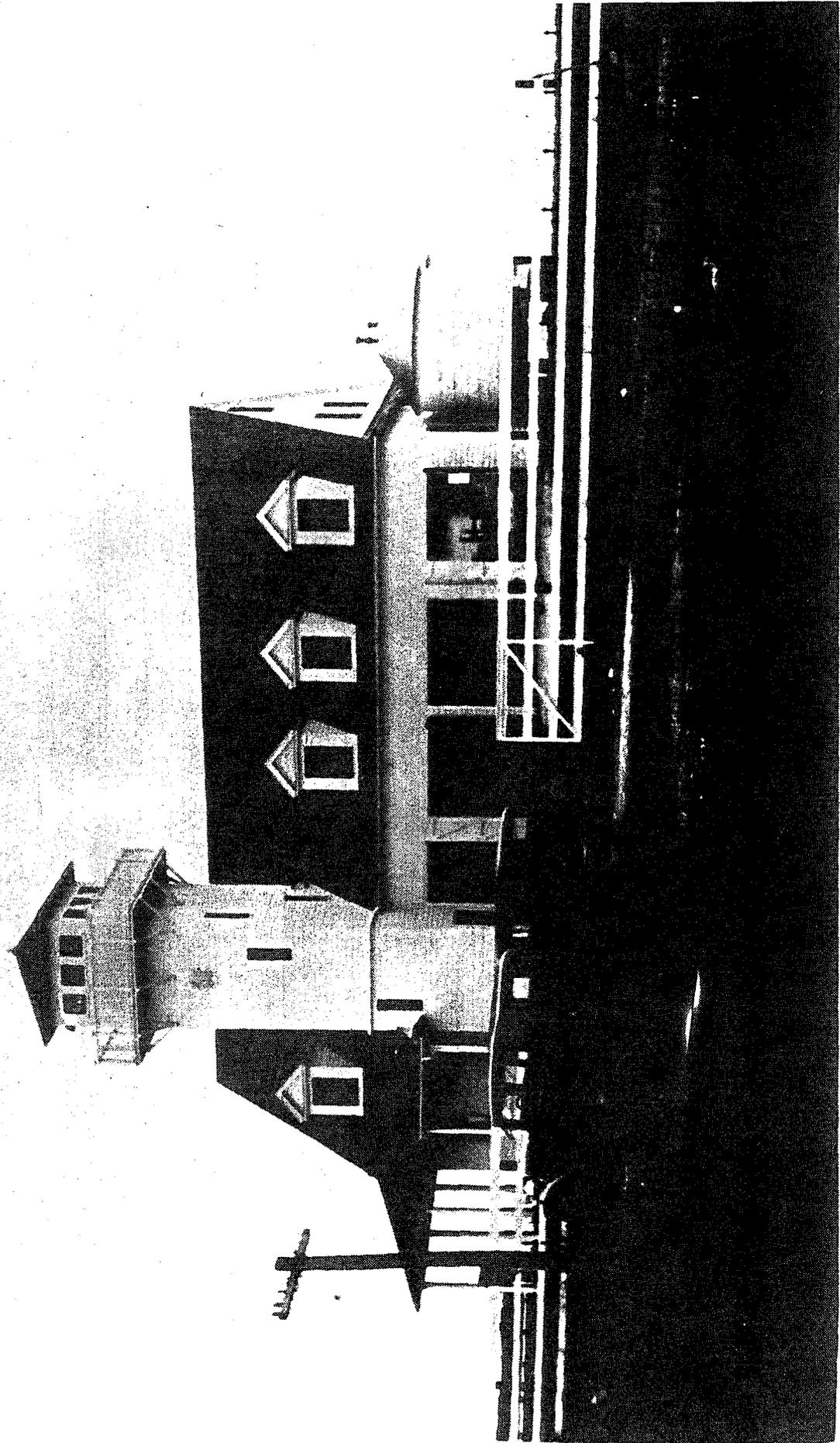
These photographs of the Oregon Inlet station, dated September, 1934 illustrate the modifications shown in the previous drawings.

From the collection of the NPS Files, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site.

OREGON INLET

LOOKING WEST

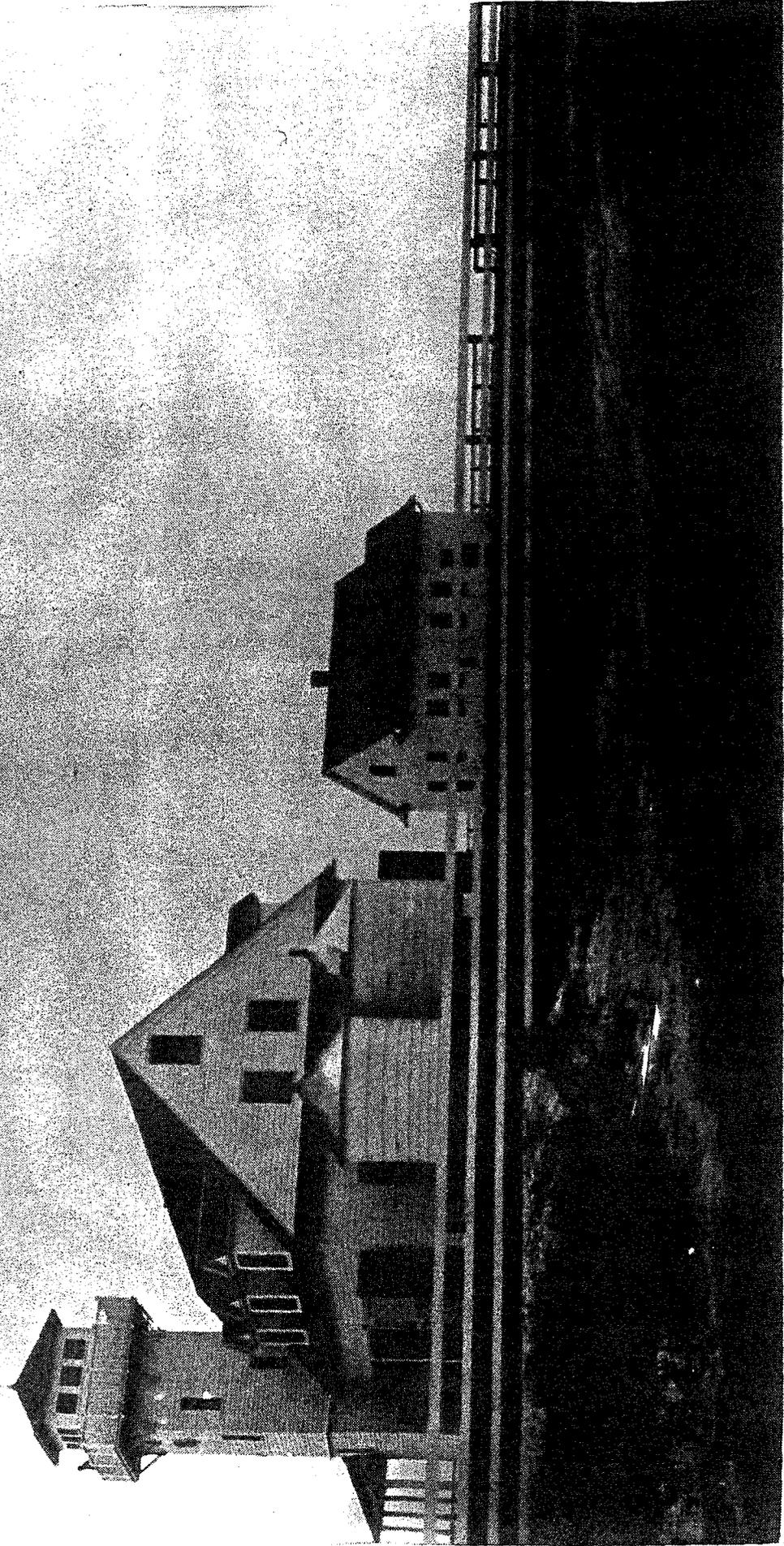
9/20/34



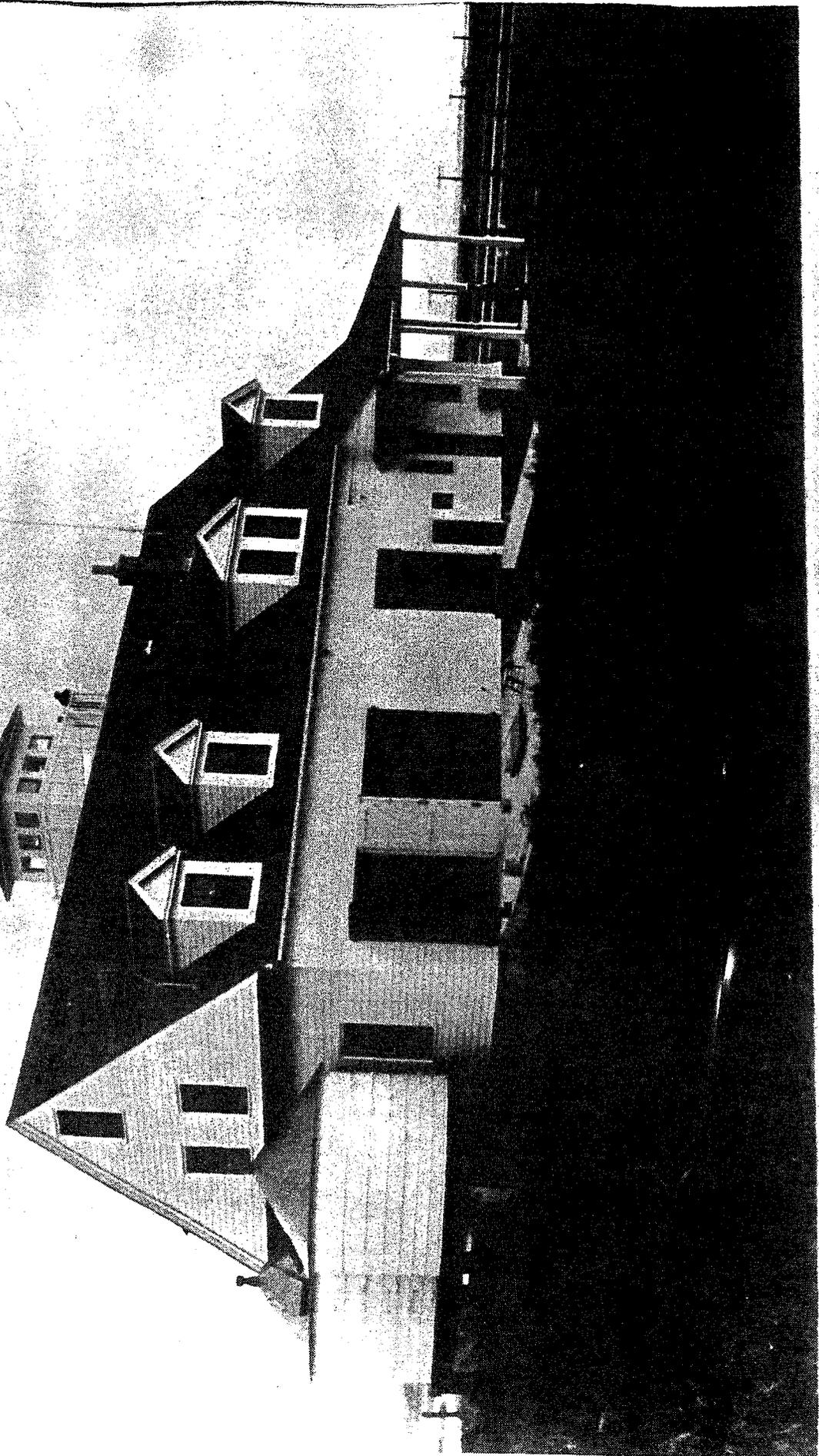
9/20/01

LOOKING SW

OREGON INLET



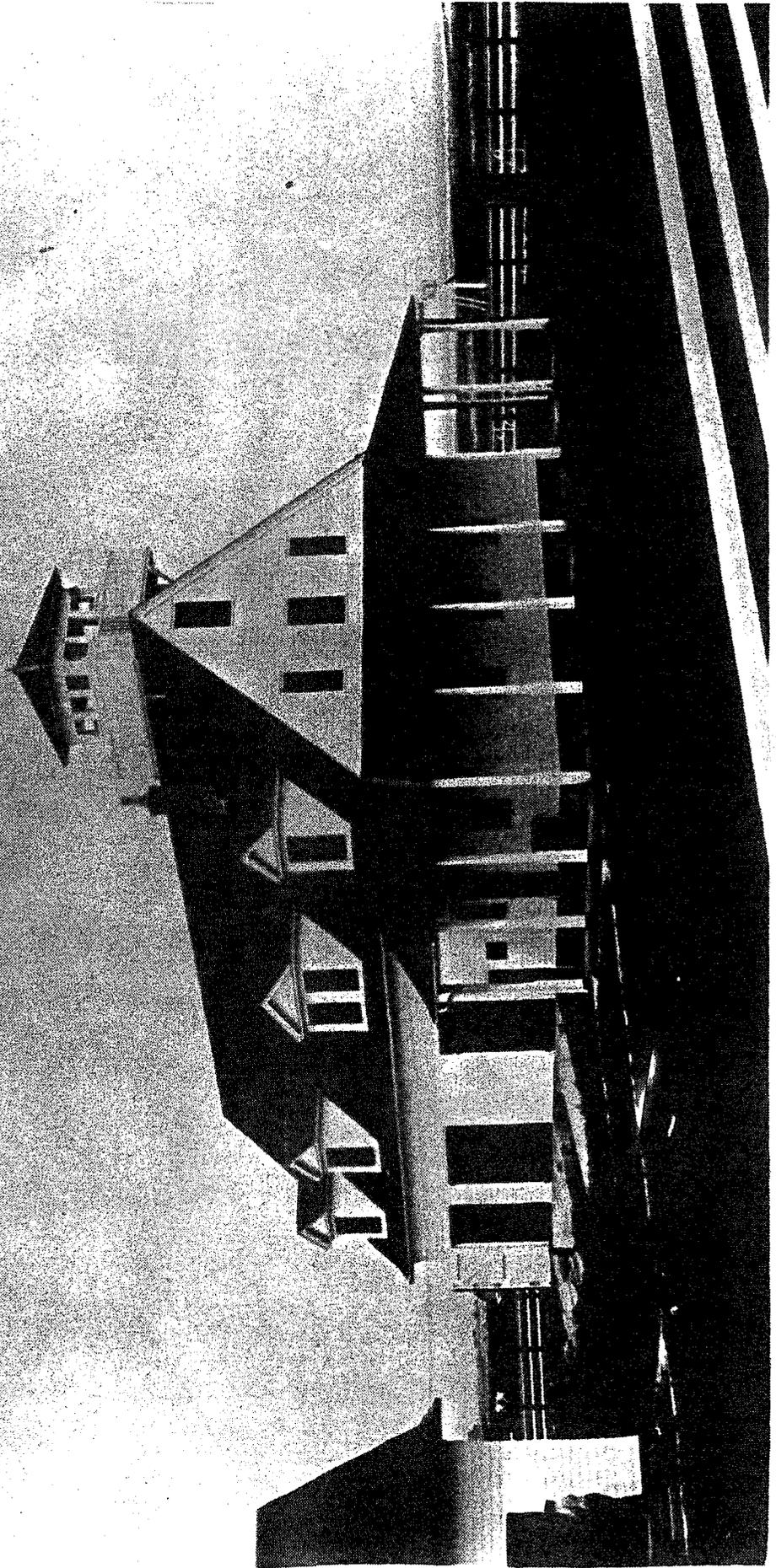
Oregon Inlet Coast Guard Station



9/20/34

LOOKING NE

OREGON INLET





LIFE-SAVING STATION ON THE NORTH CAROLINA BEACH.

EXHIBIT 6

DRAWINGS - IDENTIFIED TO OREGON INLET STATION, (Circa) 1934

Following are two drawings identified to the Oregon Inlet Station by the United States Coast Guard Academy Library. The first drawing appears to be titled "Supplementary Storm Damage Repairs" and are for the kitchen out-building.

The second drawing is for "Standard Wood Stave Tanks for United States Coast Guard Stations. The items represented here are similar to, but not exactly like the tanks shown in the 1934 photographs.

Both drawings are from the microfilmed collection of the U.S.C.G. Academy Library.

EXHIBIT 7

MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS - 1874 - 1934

The following documents are from the NPS Files, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site:

- A. Lease For Original 1874 Station Site
- B. Voucher - 1884
- C. Letter from Chaytor to "Friend Read" - 1888, with Sketch
- D. Voucher - 1888
- E. Invitation For Bids for Second (1897) Station - 1897
- F. Partial Agreement with Contractor - 1898
- G. Order to Occupy Second Station - 1898
- H. Approval for Footway - 1901
- I. Report of Destruction of Original (1874) Station - 1901
- J. Inspector's Report - 1932 (Partial Copy)
- K. Inspector's Report - 1934 (Partial Copy)
- L. Maps Illustrating the History of the Outer Banks and Stations.*

* These maps are from David Stick's two publications noted in the bibliography, Section C, Published Works, of this report.

^{ie's} ~~Body's~~ ^{island} Island

Dare County, State of North Carolina

6th District

Lease for twenty years, beginning July 27th 1874,
from Warren Burgess and his wife Anne Burgess
Recorded December 8th 1874.

Description:

1 Beginning at a stake set in the ground,
and running thence (1st) due north (200) two
hundred feet to a stake; thence (2nd) due east
(200) two hundred feet to a stake; thence (3rd)
due south (200) two hundred feet to a stake;
thence (4th) due west (200) two hundred feet to
the place of beginning.

(FORM 1814.)

VOUCHER FOR PURCHASES, ETC.

The United States, To M. L. Midgett Dr.
Mantis, Areleo, N.C.

| DATE OF PURCHASE. | | DOLLARS. | CTS. | Sub-voucher No. |
|--|---|----------|------|-----------------|
| 1884. | Authorized by Telegram Jan'y 17, 1884. | | | |
| Sept. 1 | For services rendered in employing carpenter ^s having Oregon Inlet L.S. Station repaired according to agreement with the District Superintendent \$60 00 | | | |
| <p>Repairs consist in laying new floors in mess room, kitchen room^{and} sleeping room, running partition up stairs, Repairing staircase, new braces on the outside of the house, New door steps, two new windows up stairs, Three new doors, New look-out, one knob lock for door, 2 sets of butts, 410 feet heart lumber, Nails to complete the work. ^{and} hauling the lumber from sound to the station.</p> | | | | |

I hereby certify that the above-named account is correct and just; that the work charged therein has been actually and satisfactorily performed; that the several articles purchased have been duly inspected and accepted, and that they were delivered on the 1 day of September, 1884. I further certify that they were necessary for, and have been or will be used for, the Life Saving Service; that they are of good quality, and the prices just and reasonable.*

APPROVED: _____ Inspector. J. W. Etheridge Superintendent.

APPROPRIATION: "Life-saving Service 1885"

APPROVED: _____ Assistant Secretary

RECEIVED at Washington, D.C., this _____ day of Dec., 1884,
of J. A. Bartlett, Disbursing Clerk, the sum of
Sixty _____ #

dollars, in full of the above account.
\$ 60.- M. L. Midgett

WITNESS: _____
* When there is a written contract, the Purchasing Officer will add—"and in every respect according to contract."
† To be receipted in black ink in all cases. †† The price per unit of weight or measure should be stated in all cases.
[Ed. 10-20-'82-2,000.]

OFFICE OF

Assistant Inspector of Sixth U. S. Life-Saving District,

C. City, N.C. Sept 16, 1888.
Norfolk, Va.,

Friend Read,

On my arrival, I found your letter asking if in my opinion there will be any danger from the sea, if it is determined to remain the Oregon and New Inlet Stations this season. I can safely say no, if they are moved at all, but it is my opinion they will be in danger from the sea, if they remain where they are, and have to weather the winter storms. I am positive the stations can be moved with the crews in them. I consider it advantageous to have the crews at the stations while the work is going on.

I don't believe the contractor will

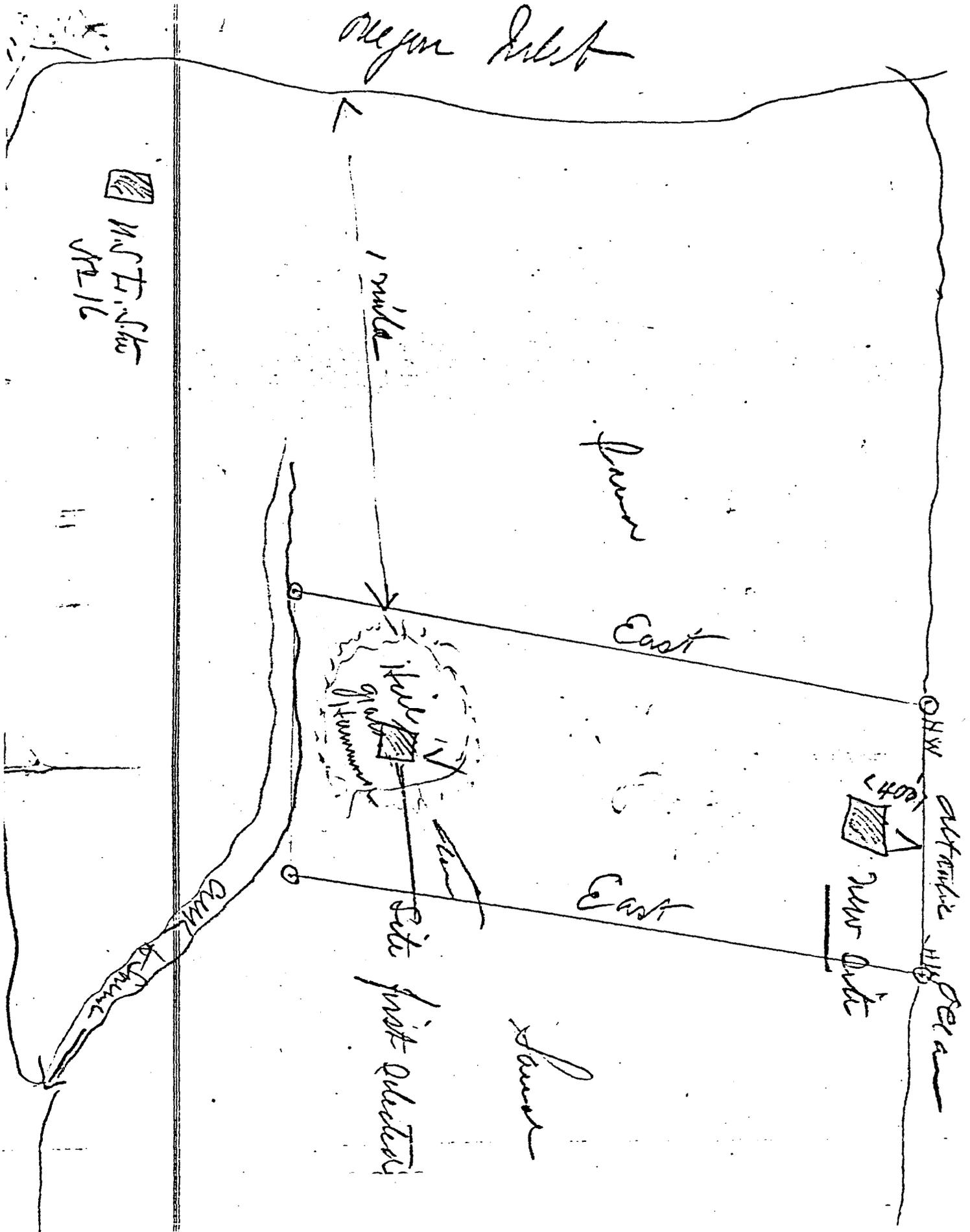
have and difficulty in procuring accommodations for his men. Near Oregon Inlet station there are several small houses belonging to the crew of that station, and within a short distance of New Inlet is the village of Chicomincos, Mr. Mariner called to day and seemed anxious to defer the removal of the station until next spring, from his conversation, it would lead one to believe that the danger of the sea was not the difficulty, but the fact of having other work on hand.

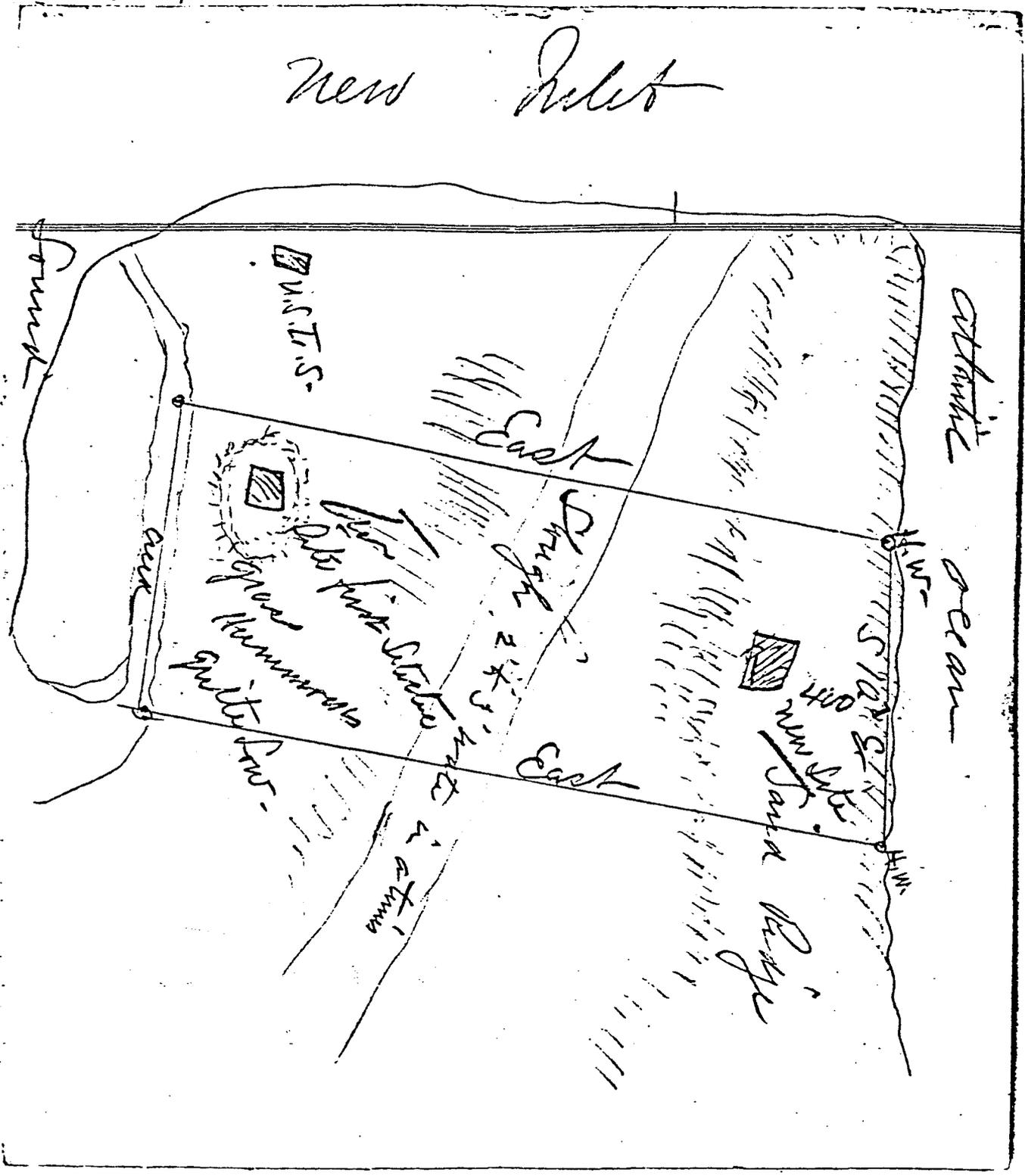
In reference to the impossibility of sinking the mud sills 8 feet, I believe Mr. M. is right, when I made the recommendation my idea was to drive the posts thick and secure the house to them, and not on mud sills, but I ^{think} find that idea is

refused, as the station will not
remain firm without mud sills
to rest on, but I do believe the mud
sills can be sunk 3 feet, which will
be sufficient in my opinion to secure
the house.

We had a glorious time at the Springs,
and my little Palmy seem much
benefited from the trip, we wish
you and Mrs Reed could have been
with us, I am looking daily for
letters from Mr. Burnett in reference
to the sale of the "Saville", which will
cause me to defer my inspection until
the 15th inst. My much better half,
and the kids, join me in kind remembrance
to you and Mrs Reed.

As ever yours
Chaytor.





(FORM 1814.)

VOUCHER FOR GENERAL EXPENSES.

The United States, To Charles E. Babbitt, Jr., Jr.
Chimney Island, Va.

DATE EXPENSE WAS INCURRED. AUTHORIZED BY LETTER DATED _____, 188 . DOLLARS. Cts. Sub-voucher No.

1888.
Dec 3^d,

For furnishing the labor and material and moving two life-saving stations on the coast of North Carolina, known and designated as the Oregon Inlet and New Inlet Life-saving Stations to new sites, together with all apparatus, outbuildings, etc. and for properly placing the buildings, etc. under contract dated Sept. 24th, 1888 1750 00

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

[Articles or services.]

[Received or performed.]

CERTIFY that the articles services above enumerated have been received performed that they have been duly inspected and were delivered and accepted on the 19th day of November, 1888, that they were necessary for, and have been, or will be, applied to the use of the Life-Saving Service, and in all respects according to contract.

11/18/89. J. M. Merriam
George W. Moore,
Captain U.S.R.M. Superintendent.

APPROPRIATION:

APPROVED:

Assistant Secretary.

RECEIVED at _____, this _____ day of _____, 18 _____, of _____, Disbursing _____, the sum of _____ dollars, in full of the above account. 100

\$ 1750[#]

WITNESS: J. E. Johnson

++ Charles E. Babbitt, Jr.

Paid by check on _____, No. _____, dated _____, 18 _____,

‡ drawn to the order of _____

* The price per unit of weight or measure should be stated in all cases.
† Insert here "and in all respects according to contract," or "and that the exigency of the service required the immediate" and that the prices charged are just and reasonable, and do not exceed the current market rates."
‡ To be receipted in black ink in all cases.
‡ This blank to be filled when the bill is in favor of a corporation. [Purchase or performance.]

7

Treasury Department, U. S. Life-Saving Service, Washington, D.C.,
May 6, 1897. Sealed proposals will be received at this office until 2
o'clock, P.M., of Thursday, May 27, 1897, for the construction of life-
saving stations at the following points on the coasts of Virginia and
North Carolina, 6th Life-Saving District: Dam Neck Mills, on Virginia
Beach, Va., 10 miles south of Cape Henry Light; False Cape, about 3
miles north of the line dividing Virginia and North Carolina; Caffey's
Inlet, ^{about} 10-3/4 miles south of Currituck Beach Light, N.C.; and Oregon
Inlet, near Oregon Inlet, N.C. Proposals to construct one or more of
the stations will be considered. Forms of proposal, together with
plans and specifications, can be obtained upon application to this
office; to the Superintendents of Construction, Life-Saving Stations,
24 State Street, New York City; to the Superintendent, 6th Life-Saving
District, Shawboro, North Carolina; or to the Assistant Inspector, 6th
Life-Saving District, Elizabeth City, North Carolina. *C. E. Merrill*
General Superintendent.

1 This Agreement, made and entered into by and between W. D. Shull
2 and Chas. L. Duncan, doing business under the
3 firm name and style of Shull & Duncan,
4 Beaufort, North Carolina,
5

6
7 parties of the first part, and the United States, by The Secretary of the Treasury,
8
9 _____, party of the second part:

10 Witnesseth, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the covenants,
11 stipulations, and agreements hereinafter contained, to be kept and performed by the said party of the second
12 part, and the money to be paid hereunder, do hereby covenant and agree to and with the said party of the
13 second part that they, the said parties of the first part, will furnish the materials required for, and will
14 construct, make, erect, and build a life-saving station house, flagstaff outbuilding,
15 etc., at Oregon Inlet, coast of North Carolina, 16th
16 Life-Saving District,
17

18
19 _____, the exact site therefor to be pointed out and shown to the said
20 parties of the first part by some person duly authorized thereto by the Secretary of the Treasury; said life-
21 saving station house, etc. to be completed in all respects agreeably to, and in conformity with, the specifications
22 and plans therefor hereto annexed and forming a part of this contract, and finished ready for the inspection of
23 such person or persons as may be designated for that duty by the Secretary of the Treasury, on or before the
24 first day of February, 1898,

25 And the said party of the second part, in consideration of the foregoing, and the further stipulations
26 hereinafter contained, to be done and performed by the said parties of the first part, doth covenant and agree
27 to and with the said parties of the first part, that there shall be paid unto them from the Treasury of the
28 United States, in lawful money of the United States, for the above-named house, etc., when built and completed
29 in conformity with the foregoing, and the specifications and plans therefor hereunto appended, the same having
30 been first duly inspected by the properly authorized inspecting officer or officers and found satisfactory, the
31 sum of six thousand eight hundred and sixty dollars
32 and seventy cents (\$6860.70) for said station house, etc. so constructed,
33 and completed as herein stipulated: Provided, however, that no payment shall be made under this contract

O. E. & M.

CARBON

L. S. vol. 6 p. 777



Treasury Department,
Office of the General Superintendent
Life-Saving Service.

L. R. 60468

49

Washington, D. C., March 3, 1898.

Return this figure to
the office hereto.

Keeper,

Oregon Inlet Life-Saving Station,
Manteo, North Carolina.

Sir:

The completion of the new Oregon Inlet Life-Saving Station
having been reported to this office, you are directed to take
and
possession of the buildings, transfer your crew thereto, together
with the apparatus and all the government property.

Respectfully yours,

[Handwritten Signature]
General Superintendent.

A. W. T.



TREASURY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE
GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT OF LIFE-SAVING SERVICE

643

L.R. 72952²

Position these figures in
any reply hereto.

Washington, Feb. 19, 1901.

Superintendents of Construction,
Life-Saving Stations, Atlantic and Lake Coasts,
17 State St., New York City.

Gentlemen:

As recommended in your letter of the 15th instant, and in view of the statements contained therein, the authority given you by letter of this office of January 3, 1901, to procure the material to construct a substantial and durable footway with hand-rail, across the marsh near the Oregon Inlet Life-Saving Station, at a cost not to exceed \$141.00, is hereby so amended as to allow you to procure the material at the lowest cost obtainable, not to exceed \$195.00, delivered on the station grounds, the price named in your letter above referred to, and which price you state is considered just and reasonable.

Respectfully,

(Signed) S. I. KIMBALL.

General Superintendent.

The travel of your Assistant necessary to carry out the foregoing instructions is hereby authorized.

(Signed) O. L. Spaulding,

Assistant Secretary.

S. I. K.

S.



LIFE-SAVING SERVICE,

7TH DISTRICT,

Oregon Inlet STATION,

October 11th, 1904.

P. H. Morgan Supt 7th Life Saving Dist
Shawano Wis

Sir

I have to report that ^{the storm} of yesterday
and last night completely destroyed
the old station and every thing that
was in it, the lumber of station is
broken up badly and scattered
all over the beach the beds bedding
and stoves are all broken up and
are of no good, the old bridge that
leads from station to the sea is also washed
away so badly that it can not be
used, what shall I do with ^{that I can see}
of station it is of no use to the ^{station}

Please inform me as soon as possible,

Respectfully
M. E. Morgan

102. What is the year of manufacture, serial number, and condition of each Lyle gun at station? 1-year 1894, No. 345; Good.
1-year 1895, No. 666, Very good.
103. What is the number, type, and condition of small arms supplied this station (include serial number)? 6-rifles, .30 caliber,
Nos. 511483; 474662; 475391; 1328652; 592923; - 1-rifle, 22 caliber, No. 128566; - 6-automatic pis-
tols, .45 caliber, Nos. 11458; 249307; 195161; 360610; 562452; 121435; - 1-Lewis machine gun,
No. 67152; condition as to stability; good, but they need thorough cleaning and oiling.
104. Condition of belts and other accouterments? 6-rifle belts, 6-pistol belts and holsters, 6-bayonets
and scabbards, 545 rifle cartridges, .30 cal., 95 pistol cartridges, 20 bandoliers; Good.
105. Orally examine and mark on scale of 4.0, each warrant officer, chief petty officer, and petty officer, first class, in the following subjects:

| NAME | GRADE OR RATING | RULES OF THE ROAD | ELEMENTARY NAVIGATION | LEGAL POWERS OF THE COAST GUARD | NAVIGATION AND CUSTOMS LAWS |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| John Wescott | CBM(L) | AS | AS | AS | AS |
| Damon E. Meekins | BMLc(L) | 35 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| Frank H. N. Midgett | BMLc(L) | 35 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| Nelson H. Midgett | MoMMLc(L) | AL | AL | AL | AL |

NOTE.—When sufficient space is not allowed in the form for the answer to any question, it may be answered here by reference to its number on the form. Irregularities not covered by the questions should also be noted here as well as suggestions and recommendations. If more space is required, use blank sheets of this size.

Q-17 Surfmen Garland A. Hooper, Moris J. Meekins, Cecil L. Midgett, and MoMMLc(L) William W. Midgett are not proficient in the use of hawser cutter.

Capsize drill omitted; temperature of air and water considered too cool.

Q-45 Part Of the plastering overhead in crews sleeping room has fallen leaving the laths exposed; Base boarding of station was damaged by a recent storm, a new chimney is needed in out kitchen also new floor. It is recommended that material to make the necessary repairs be furnished.

Q-51. A part of the fence was washed away during the storm of 6 March, 1932. It is recommended that material be furnished to make repairs. The aviation number platform needs painting.

Q-69(a) General Orders No. 3 and 4, Circulars Nos. 64, 77, 97, 100, 101, 104, 105, 106 are missing.

Pay and personnel record cards are poor and are not kept up to date.

Q-80(a) All boats need thorough overhaul and painting.

Q-81 Motor S/B Surfboat No. 1112 not equipped fully. S/B Surfboat No. 535 needs electric torch, and wigwag flag to complete equipment. The drogue in the bow of the latter boat is bursted and the semaphore flags are poor.

L. T. Foughty
L. T. Foughty Inspector.



OFFICE OF
THE DIVISION COMMANDER
NORFOLK DIVISION

Assistant Inspector,
Eastern Area.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

NORFOLK, VA.

U. S. COAST GUARD

5 June, 1954

REC'D AUG 4 - 1934

ANS'D

From: Lieutenant Commander G. E. McCabe, Assistant Inspector,
Eastern Area.
To : Inspector, Eastern Area.
Subject: Oregon Inlet Station; inspection of.
Inclosure: 1. Form, preference of crew of station for general mess
or commuted ration.

1. Arrived at subject station at 9:30 am, 28 May, 1934, for the purpose of inspection and departed at 3:20 pm, same date. Comments resulting from this inspection are given in the following paragraphs.

2. Crew of station are now living on a 75-foot patrol boat. Station building is being modernized and what appears to be a lookout tower of adequate height is being constructed on the front of the building. This lookout tower is square and does not give the clear view that would be afforded if the house on top were hexagonal with five windows and one glass paneled door leading to outside platform. The roof of the building has been re-shingled with green dipped wood shingles. Why green was used, I cannot understand in view of the painting instructions. None of the major interior work has been finished.

3. Vehicles and miscellaneous equipment were inspected and the following comments made thereon:

Truck No. 1354 (Chevrolet) - This truck has been driven a little over 5,000 miles and is in fair condition. No Drivers Report of Accident kept in truck.

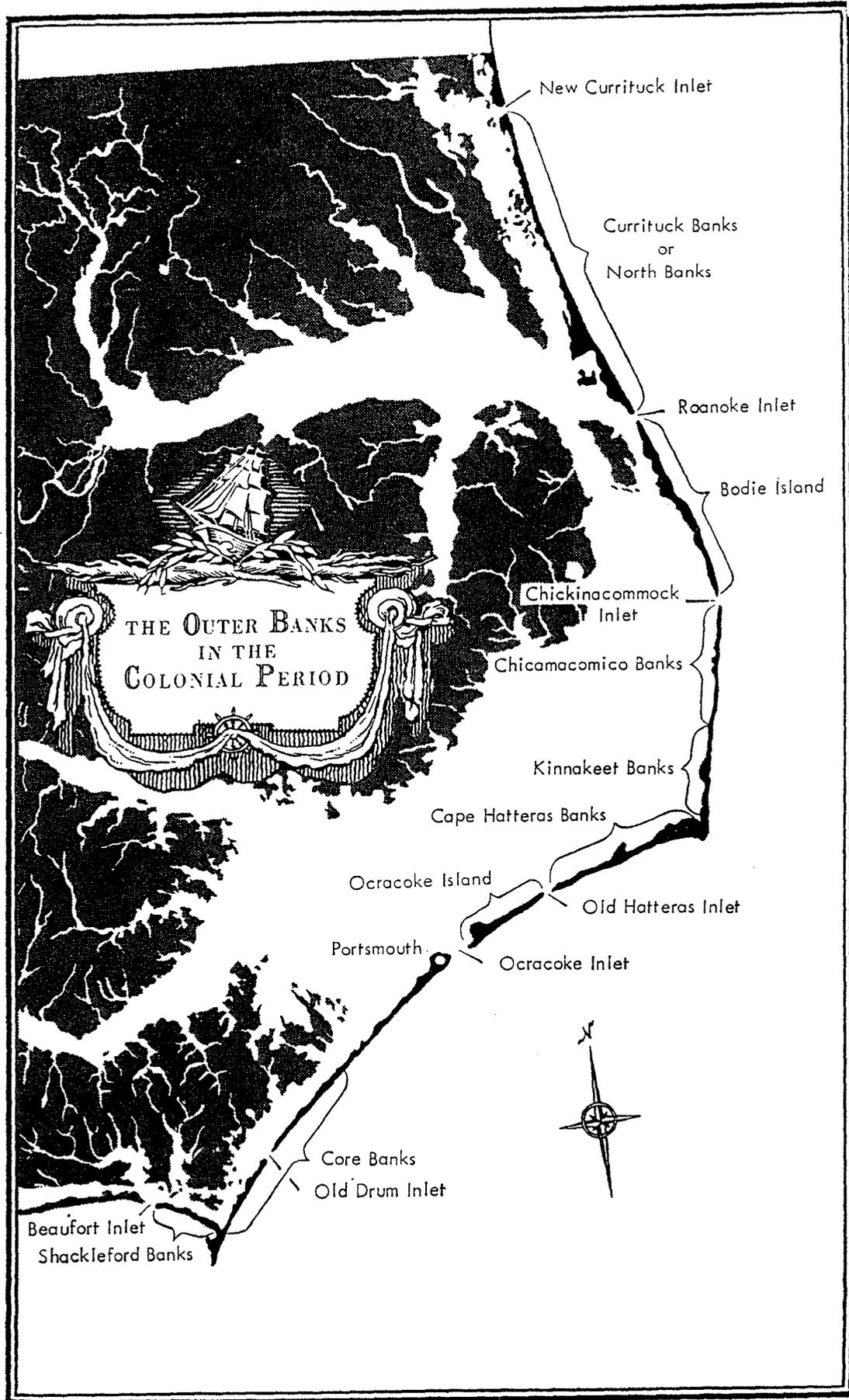
Tractor No. 1274 (Fordson) - In good condition.

Boat wagons (2) - One good and one old and in fair condition.

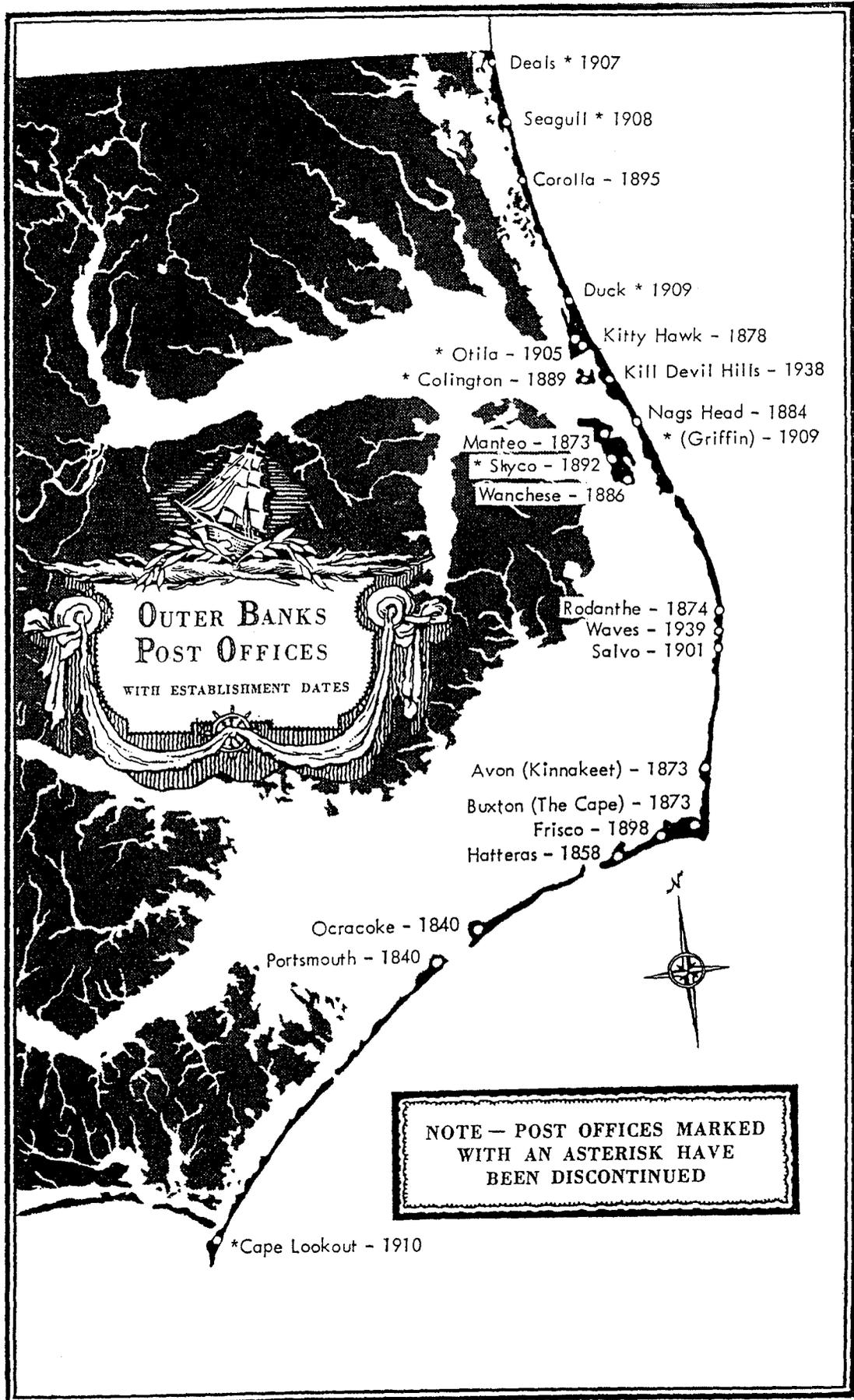
Beach carts (2) - Both service and drill in good condition and well equipped.

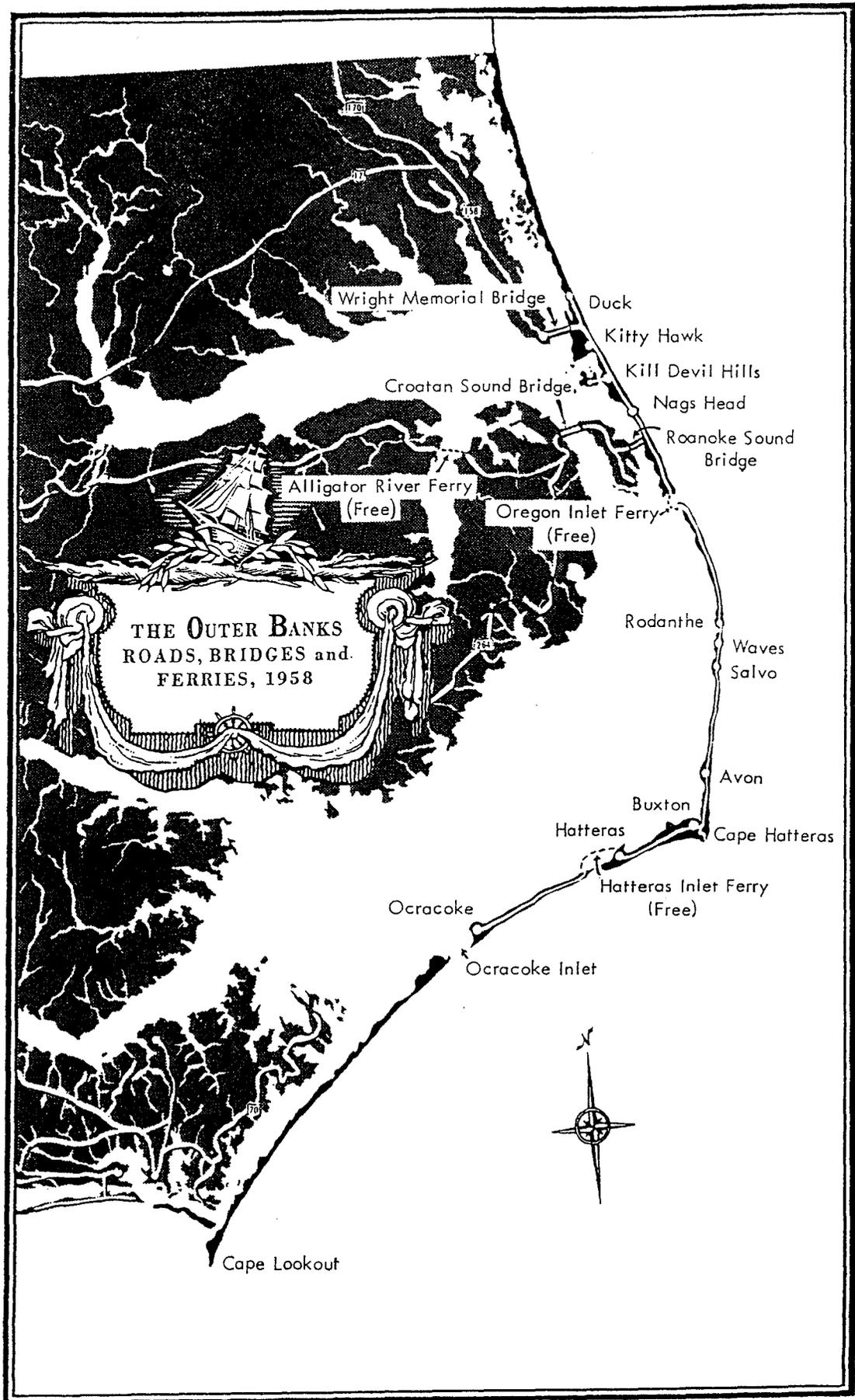
Beach lights (2) - One Milburn and one Carbic Flood Light; both in good condition and provided with carbide.

Typewriters (2) - One L. C. Smith and one Underwood; both in good condition but showing some rust.









The Coast of North Carolina

CHART OF SHIP, MAST, and RIGGING TYPES

SKYSAILS
ROYALS
TOPGALLANTS
TOPSAILS
COURSES

FORE AND AFT SAIL
SQUARE SAIL

SLOOP
4 5 3 2 1

TWO MAST SCHOONER
6 4 5 3 2 1

THREE MAST SCHOONER
3 2 1

FOUR MAST SCHOONER
4 3 2

FIVE MAST SCHOONER
4 3 2 1

SIX MAST SCHOONER
4 3 2 1

SHIP

BRIGANTINE

BRIG

JACKASS BARK

FOUR MAST BARKENTINE

FOUR MAST BARK

TYPES OF MASTS

1. FOREMAST 4. SPANKERMAST
2. MAINMAST 5. JIGGERMAST
3. MIZZENMAST 6. PUSHERMAST

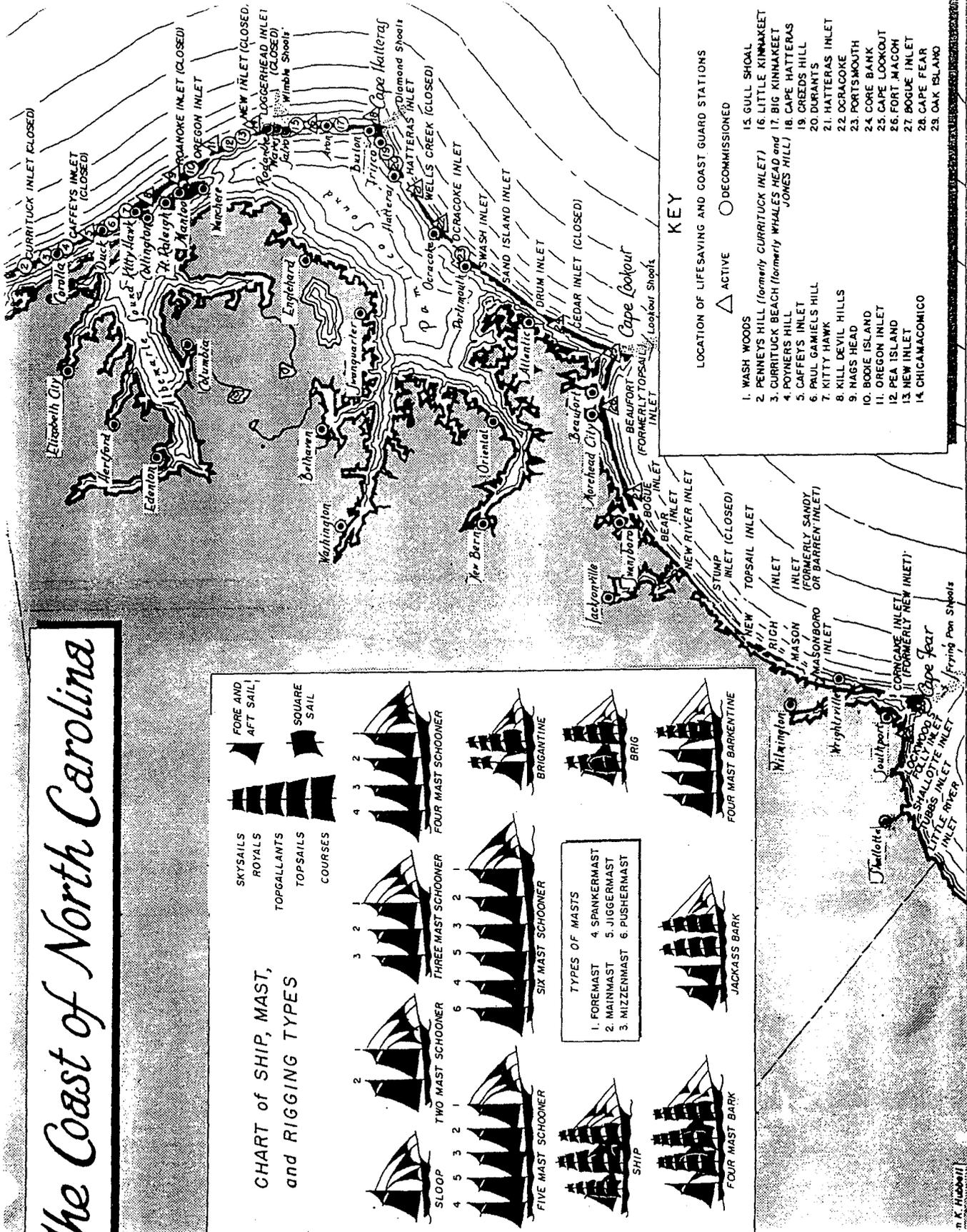


EXHIBIT 8

PHOTOGRAPH - ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS, CIRCA 1970'S

This photograph, while not dated, shows the modifications to the station just prior to the most recent addition to the building. These modifications probably came about as a result of moving the Lifesaving vessels out of the building, due to a change in equipment.

From the Collection of the Outer Banks History Center.

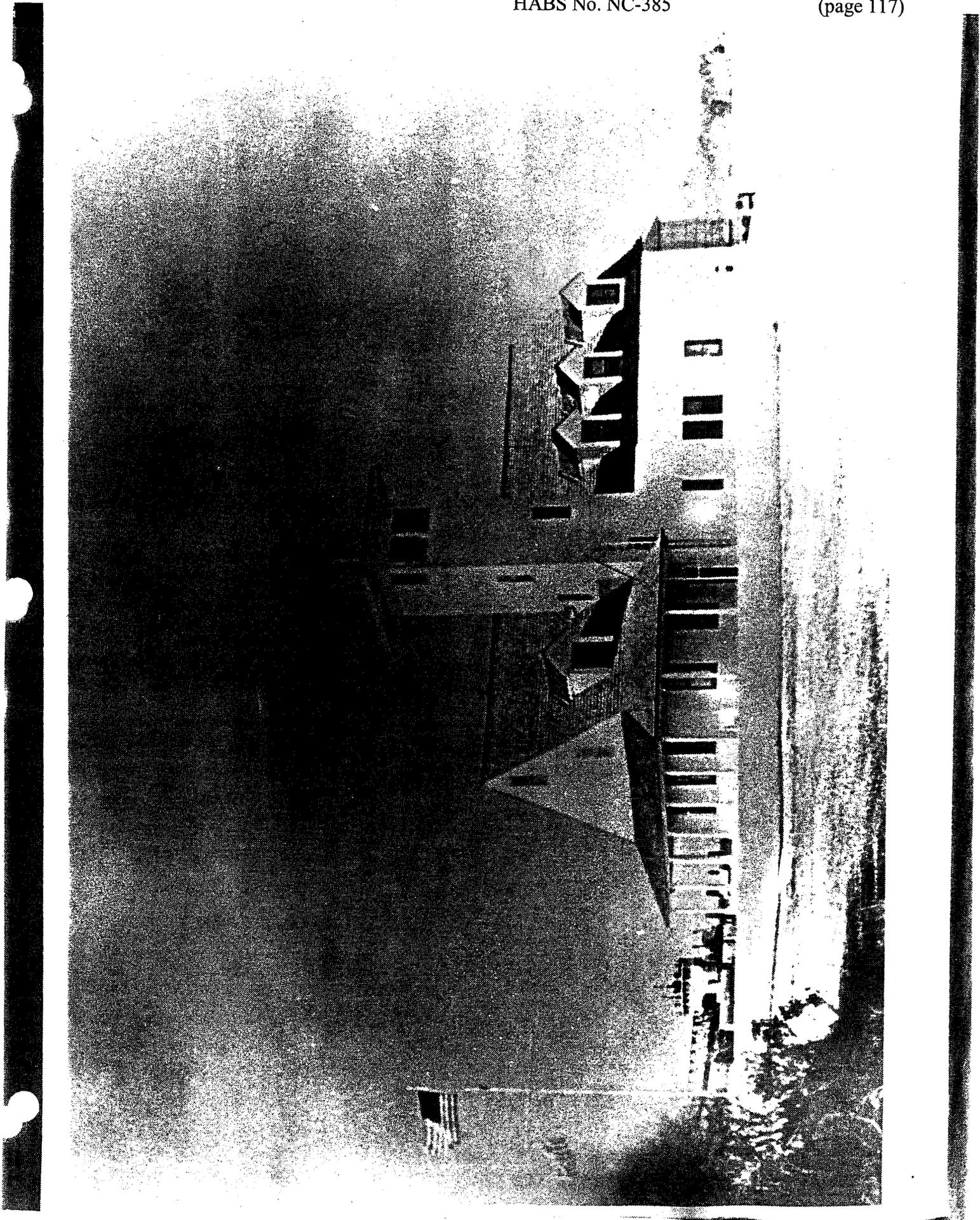
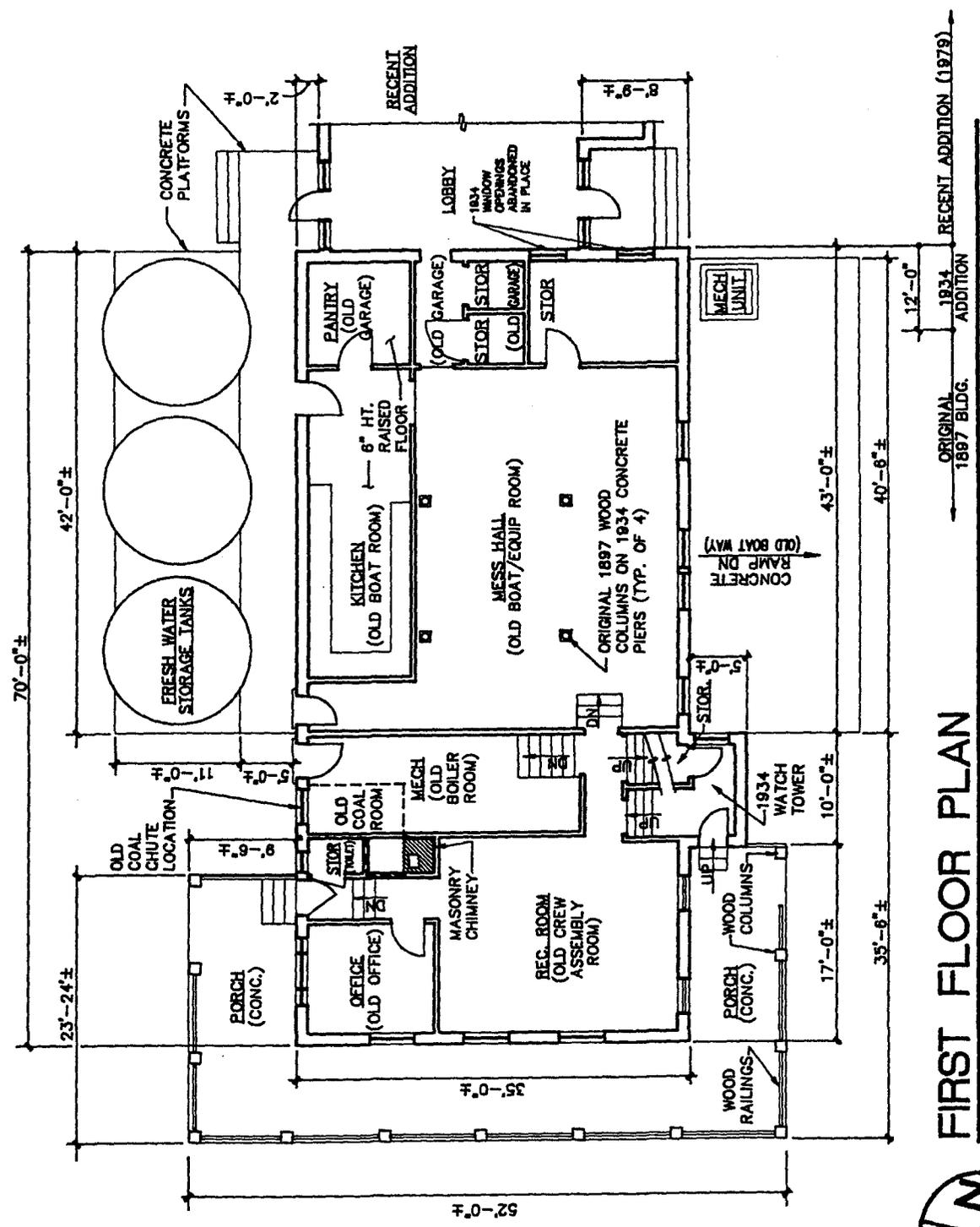


EXHIBIT 10

EXISTING PLANS - MARCH, 1991

These drawings reflect the results of a field survey conducted by CEGG Partnership, Architects and Engineers, on March 12, 1991.

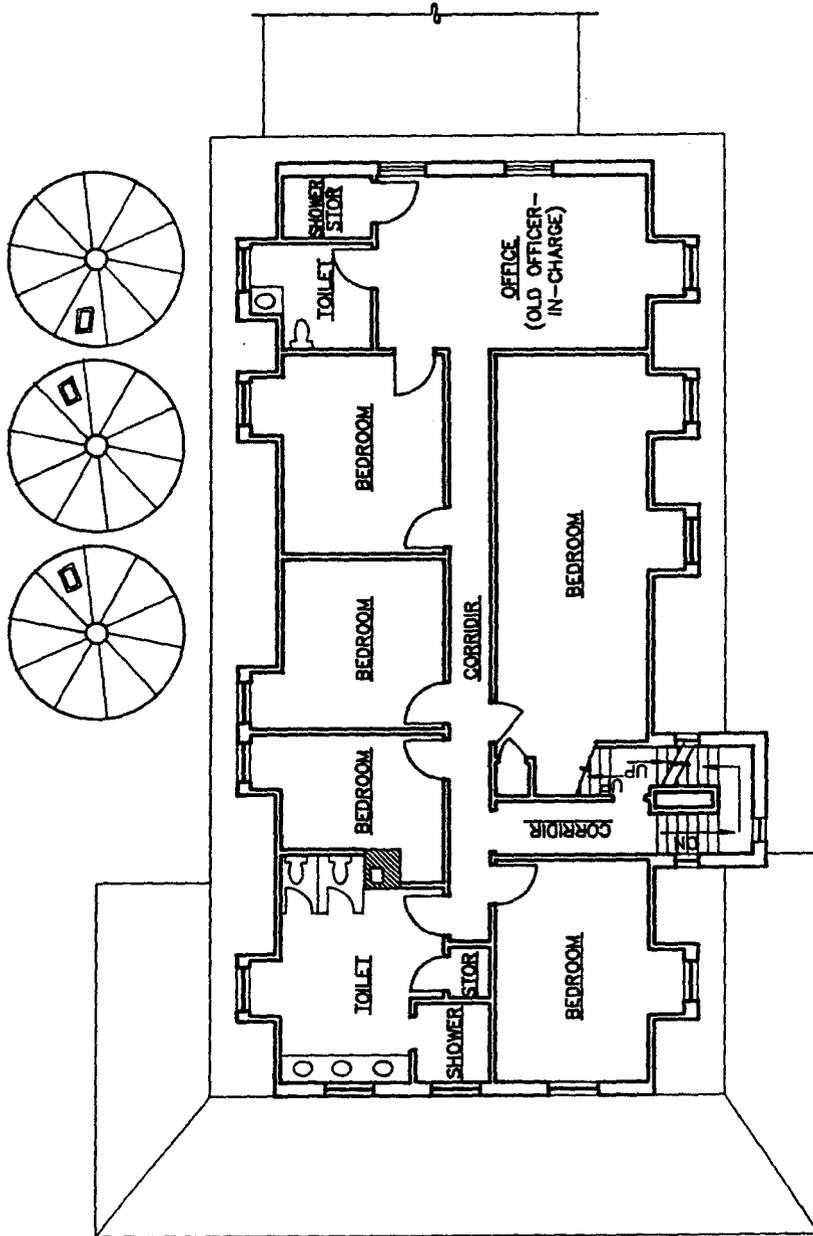
Comparison and contrast may be made with the original plans of the modifications of 1933 in Exhibit 4, sheets 3 of 6 and 4 of 6.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

SURVEYED BY: THE CEGG PARTNERSHIP
 ROBERT A. WILBURN, JR.
 DATE: MARCH 12, 1991

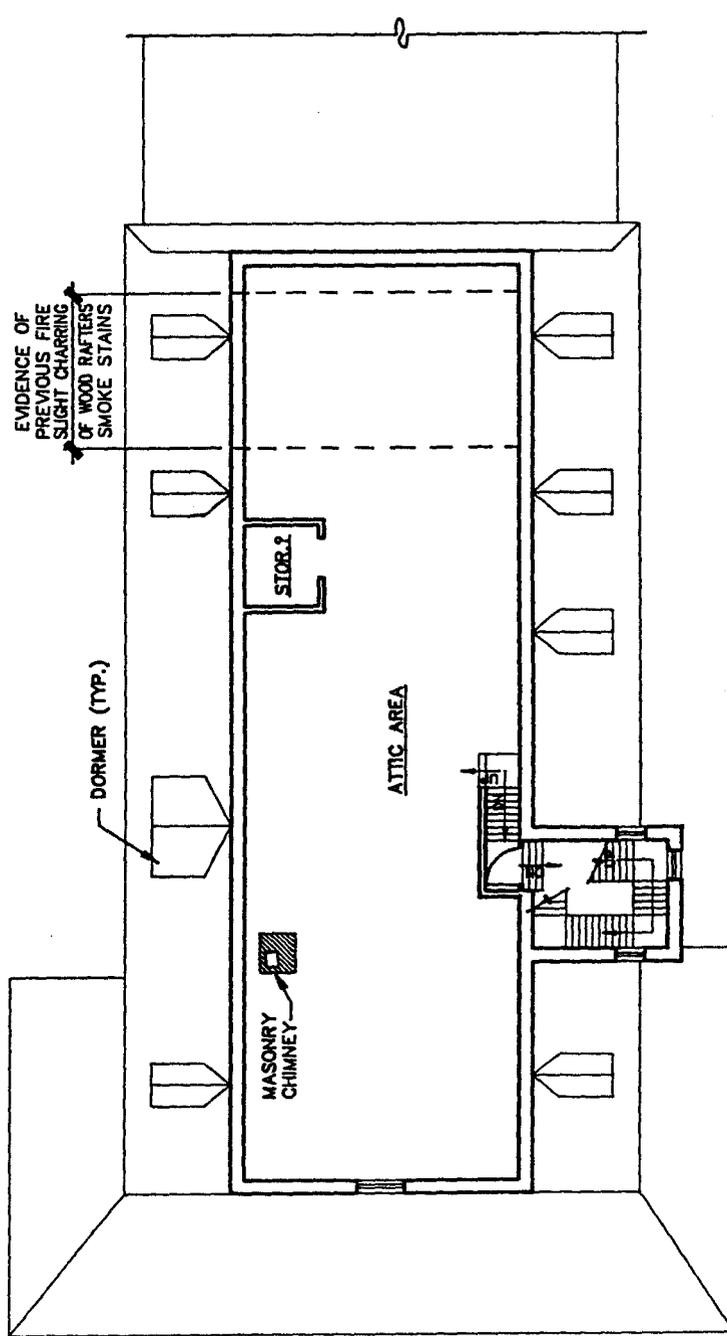
U.S. COAST GUARD STATION, OREGON INLET
 DARE COUNTY, (PEA ISLAND/BODIE ISLAND)
 NAGS HEAD - RODANTHE VICINITY
 NORTH CAROLINA



SECOND FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

SURVEYED BY: THE CEGG PARTNERSHIP
ROBERT A. WILBURN, JR.
DATE: MARCH 12, 1991

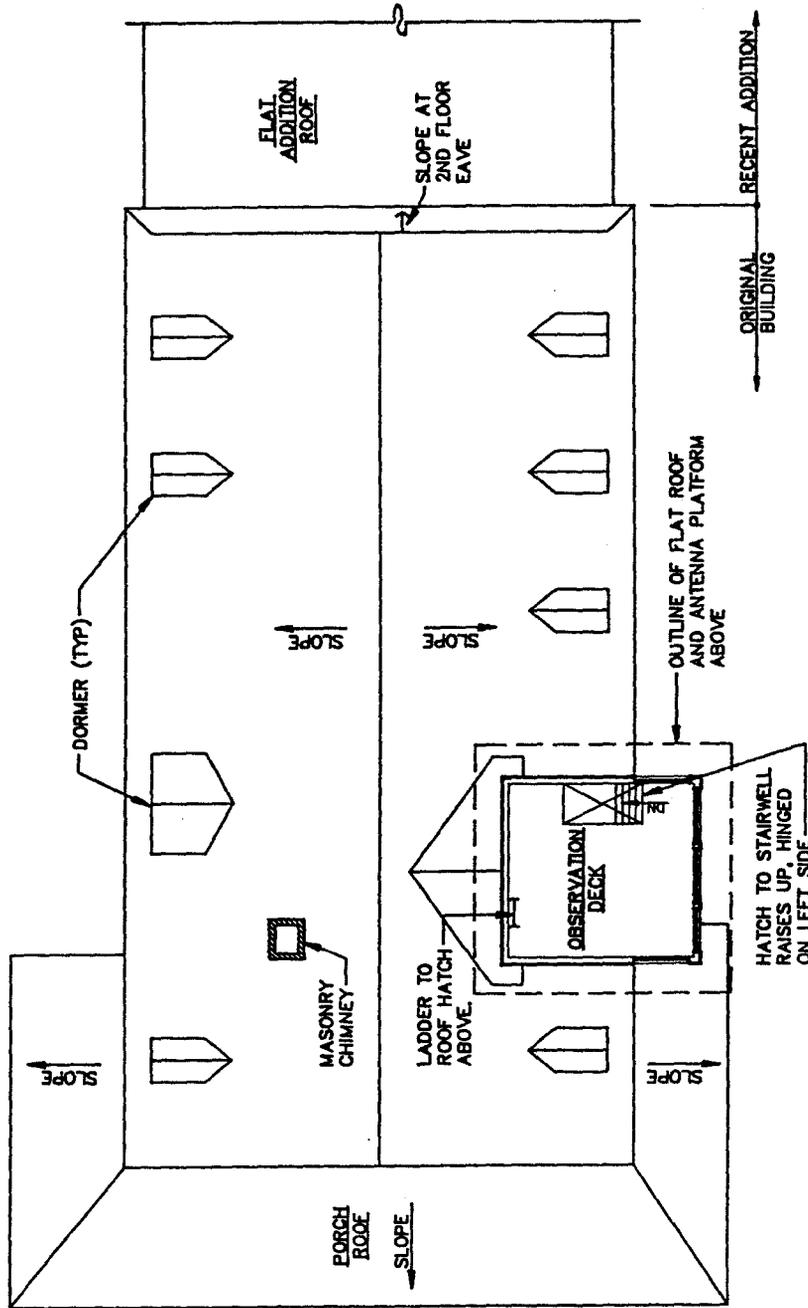
U.S. COAST GUARD STATION, OREGON INLET
DARE COUNTY, (PEA ISLAND/BODIE ISLAND)
NAGS HEAD - RODAN THE VICINITY
NORTH CAROLINA



ATTIC PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

U.S. COAST GUARD STATION, OREGON INLET
DARE COUNTY, (PEA ISLAND/BODIE ISLAND)
NAGS HEAD - RODANTHE VICINITY
NORTH CAROLINA

SURVEYED BY: THE CEGG PARTNERSHIP
ROBERT A. WILBURN, JR.
DATE: MARCH 12, 1991



ROOF PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

U.S. COAST GUARD STATION, OREGON INLET
DARE COUNTY, (PEA ISLAND/BODIE ISLAND)
NAGS HEAD - RODANTHE VICINITY
NORTH CAROLINA

SURVEYED BY: THE CEGG PARTNERSHIP
ROBERT A. WILBURN, JR.
DATE: MARCH 12, 1991

II. Sources

1. Primary Sources:

Correspondence of the United States Life-Saving Service. Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Record Group 26, Judicial, Fiscal and Social Branch, Civil Archives Division, The National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Photographs, files of the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina.

Photographs, files of the Outer Banks History Center, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Manteo, North Carolina.

United States Coast Guard Civil Engineering Tracings [microfilms], Lifeboat Stations, Library Archives, United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT.

United States Life Saving Service Plans and Drawings, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Record Group 26, Cartographic and Architectural Branch, The National Archives, Washington, DC.

United States Life Saving Service, Station Plans and Related Material. Private collection of Eugene V. York, Stonington, CT.

2. Secondary Sources:

A. Copies of Original Documents:

1. Photostatic copies of copies of original documents shown in Exhibits 7A - 7L are from the Oregon Inlet Lifesaving Station File, Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina.

B. Unpublished Manuscripts:

1. Bearss, Edwin, C., Resource Studies Project CAHA-H-1, Chicamacomico Lifeboat Station, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, September 1965, from the Library of the Life-Saving Museum of Virginia, Virginia Beach, VA.
2. York, Eugene, V., The Architecture of the United States Life-Saving Stations, Graduate School (Thesis) of Arts and Sciences, Boston University, 1983, courtesy of Mr. York, Stonington, CT.

C. Bibliography (Published Works):

Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service.

U.S. Government Printing Office, 1876 - 1901.

Beers, Henry Putney, A Guide to the Archives of the Government of the Confederate States of America,

National Archives and Record Administration, Washington, DC, 1986.

Conway, Martin R., Te Outer Banks, An Historical Adventure from Kitty Hawk to Ocracoke,

Carabelle Books, Shepherdstown, WV, 1985.

Merryman, James H., "The United States Life-Saving Service - 1880", Scribner's Monthly, Vol 19, No. 2 (January, 1880), pp 321 - 338, reprinted in book form by Vistabooks, Grand Junction, CO., 1989, William R. Jones, Editor.

Stick, David, Graveyard of the Atlantic, Shipwrecks of the North Carolina Coast

Chapel Hill: 1952.

Stick, David, The Outer Banks of North Carolina - 1584 - 1958

Chapel Hill: 1958.

3. Interviews:

Call, Lieutenant; Deputy Group Commander, North Carolina Group Hatteras, Fifth District, United States Coast Guard, March 27, 1991.

Dough, Wynne; Curator, Outer Banks History Center, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Manteo, NC, March 13, 1991.

Freeman, James; Architect, Facilities Design and Construction Center (Atlantic) United States Coast Guard, Norfolk, VA, March 27 and 28, 1991.

Murdock, Angus; Curator, Life-Saving Museum of Virginia, Virginia Beach, VA, March 28, 1991.

Woody, Bebe; Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina, March 13, 1991.

York, Eugene V.; Preservation and Restoration Consultant, and Collections Department of Mystic Seaport Museum, Stonington, CT, March 15 and 20, 1991.

We especially wish to acknowledge the following persons and to express our appreciation for the assistance and support given by them toward the completion of this Historic American Building Survey Report, and for sharing their personal and respective institutional time and collections:

Mr. Wynne Dough, Curator, Outer Banks History Center.

Ms. Bebe Woody, National Park Service, Fort Raleigh Historic Site.

Mr. "Wick" York, Consultant, Stonington, CT

Mr. Angus Murdock, Curator, Life-Saving Museum of Virginia

Thank you,

THE CEGG PARTNERSHIP

Robert A. Wilburn, Jr.

4. Report Correspondence:

Following are copies of the correspondence conducted with the consultants and institutions who contributed significant information or graphic documentation toward the content of this report.

1. Letter: McNulty (Head, Public Services, USCG Academy Library) to Wilburn (CEGG Partnership), dated March 25, 1991.
2. Letter: York (Consultant) to Wilburn dated March 25, 1991.
3. Letter: Sherman (Civil Reference Branch, National Archives) to Wilburn dated April 4, 1991.

OREGON INLET COAST GUARD STATION
HABS No. NC-385 (page 127)

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**United States
Coast Guard**



Superintendent (dl)
U.S. Coast Guard Academy

New London, CT 06320-4195
Phone: (203) 444-8515

5070

THE LIBRARY
March 25, 1991

Mr. Robert Willburn
CEGG PARTNERSHIP
Corporate Center 2, Suite 240
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462

Dear Mr. Willburn:

Enclosed are the photocopies of several frames relative to Oregon Inlet, ca. 1934. Unfortunately, these are not among the better reproducible sections of the civil engineering plans but I hope that you will be able to piece enough of what is here together to produce the end result that you are aiming for. Good luck.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela McNulty".

Pamela McNulty
Head, Public Services

enclosures
cc: File

RECEIVED
MAR 26 1991

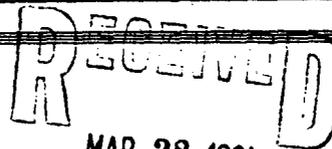
THE CEGG PARTNERSHIP



WICK YORK
Consultant in Historic Preservation
and Building Restoration

(203) 535-1409
P.O. Box 334 • Stonington, CT 06378

March 25, 1991



Bob Wilburn
The CEGG Partnership
Corporate Center Two, Suite 240
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

THE CEGG PARTNERSHIP

Dear Bob:

Enclosed is the material you requested for your HABS study of the Oregon Inlet Lifesaving Station. From my thesis, this includes:

Pages 1-28
Pages 48-53: George Tolman and related figures
Pages 54-60: Victor Mendleheff and related figures
Pages 253-266: Bibliography

The drawings of the Quonochontaug Style station that's included in my thesis is from the microfilm collection at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy Library. I mentioned to you that I was unable to find a set of plans for a Quonochontaug station in the National Archives collection, except for the Jackson Park (Chicago) Station, which is a modification of the basic plan.

After I did my thesis, I found a 12-sheet drawing for the Quonochontaug Style of the 1902 Amagansett, NY Station in the USCGA Library (see the bibliography for full citation of this collection). I'm sending this to you in this mailing. Although the Amagansett plan is far more complete, I think it was actually redrawn by Mendleheff, as he was working for the Service when it was produced in 1900, and it is named Quonochontaug "Pattern," a term he often used for his designs instead of "Type." Even though he may have redrawn it, it did originate from Tolman, and is the most complete drawings for this style I've found.

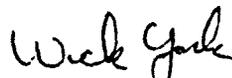
I thought you might also be interested in the photo of the Nags Head Lifesaving Station. It has the same tower as the Oregon Inlet and Virginia Beach stations, but the station itself is of a different design, probably a Chicamacomico Type, although I have not determined this for certain. This practice of adding a standardized tower design on different type stations as a later modification was not unusual. I'm not sure when this was added, but it was probably around 1932 or '33, at least before 1934 when this photo was taken. It was probably added about the same time as the tower for Oregon Inlet and Virginia Beach stations.

Finally, because we spoke about stations with numbers on their roofs, I'm enclosing a photo of the Little Kinnakeet Station showing this. You'll note that the photos of the Nags Head and Little Kinnakeet stations are from the same collection as the 1934 photos of the Oregon Inlet station you sent me from the NPS.

Bob Wilburn
3/25/91
Page 2

I hope this is useful to your work. If I can be of any further help let me know. I would be interested in having a copy of your report when it is finished, and if you can credit me for any of my research you use, I'd greatly appreciate it.

Sincerely,


Wick York

P.S. If you need to reach me on a Monday or Tuesday, you can call me at Mystic Seaport Museum at (203) 572-0711, ext. 370, where I work in the Collections Department.