

NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT EARLE, PIER 2, BUILDING NO. 3N  
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 2, Building 3N)  
Sandy Hook Bay  
Colts Neck vicinity  
Monmouth County  
New Jersey

HAER NJ-142-A-1  
*HAER NJ-142-A-1*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Custom House, 3rd Floor  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT EARLE, PIER 2, BUILDING 3N  
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 2, Building 3N)

HAER No. NJ-142-A-1

Location: Naval Ammunition Depot (NAD) Earle  
(currently Naval Weapons Station [NWS]  
Earle)  
Colts Neck Vicinity  
Monmouth County  
New Jersey

USGS Sandy Hook, NJ Quadrangle, 1:24,000  
UTM Coordinates: 18.580578.4478132

Construction Dates: 1944

Architect/Engineer: Shaw, Naess and Murphy, Architects/  
Engineers; Frank Grad and Sons, Architects

Contractor: J. Rich Steers, Inc.

Present Owner: Department of the Navy

Present Use: Port Service Bunk Room, Office

Significance: Funded in part by the Army, Naval Ammunition  
Depot Earle was commissioned in 1943 as the  
only major ordnance transshipment depot on  
the East Coast. Its mission was to  
facilitate the movement of ordnance from  
stateside production and storage facilities  
to the Navy and Army forces, then in the  
European theater of World War II. Building  
3N on Pier 2 was constructed in 1944 as the  
office and administrative center of the  
pier. The building contributed directly to  
the depot's primary function during World  
War II.

Project  
Information:

The Department of the Navy plans to replace Pier 2, Pier 3, Trestle 2, and Trestle 3 at NWS Earle. These structures, and many of their associated buildings, were identified as meeting National Register Criterion A during a cultural resources investigation conducted at NWS Earle in 1999. The Department of the Navy and the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office (NJ SHPO) have not reached an agreement concerning the specific definition or boundaries of the National Register-eligible architectural resources at NWS Earle to date; however, an assumption of eligibility for Pier 2, Pier 3, Trestle 2, and Trestle 3, as well as the historic buildings associated with these structures, was made for the purposes of this project. To mitigate the adverse effect of the proposed project to the piers, trestles, and associated buildings, the Department of the Navy, the NJ SHPO, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation entered into a Memorandum of Agreement stipulating written, graphic, and photographic documentation of the structures. This documentation was undertaken to fulfill these stipulations.

Historians:

Elizabeth Amisson, Sarah Farley, and Robert F. Panepinto, August 2003

## Part I: Historical Information

Building 3N (Port Service Bunk Room, Office) was designed by Shaw, Naess and Murphy and Frank Grad and Sons, and was constructed at the same time as Pier 2 (1944). Building 3N originally served as the office and administrative center for the pier.<sup>1</sup>

Building 3N complied with the standards established for buildings constructed at NAD Earle during the mid-1940s. Ernest J. Benshimol, author of *History of U.S. Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, New Jersey* (1945), described the buildings constructed under contract NOy-8780, the contract under which most World War II-era buildings located in the Mainside and Waterfront Areas were constructed, in the following manner:

### a. General

- (1) Administrative and Housing Buildings - concrete foundations, brick and tile walls, plastered, cast concrete sills, concrete floors, wood double hung windows, wood roof framing, plaster ceiling top floor, corrugated asbestos roof
- (2) Industrial Buildings - similar to above except 12" solid brick walls and some buildings have flat concrete framed roofs.<sup>2</sup>

In 1981, the Navy spent \$60,000.00 on the rehabilitation of Building 3N. The work consisted of remodeling the lunchroom,

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<sup>1</sup> Shaw, Naess and Murphy and Frank Grad and Sons, *Ships Piers and Approaches, U.S. Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, New Jersey* (n.p.: Shaw, Naess and Murphy and Frank Grad and Sons, 1944, printed from a CD provided by Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office), Bureau of Yards and Docks, Y & D Drawing No. 279447. Hereafter, Y & D Drawing No.; The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, Inc, "Architectural Resources Survey: Naval Weapons Station Earle, Monmouth County, New Jersey" (Colts Neck, NJ: The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, Inc., 1999), 74.

<sup>2</sup> Ernest J. Benshimol, *History of U.S. Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, New Jersey* (August 1945) (Subject Files (ACC No. A-12-1(1)), Loc No. R-105-6-4-5, Box 422. RG 181, National Archives and Record Administration, Northeast Branch), 125.

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installing new heating and lighting systems, and exterior window and roof repairs.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Naval Weapons Station Earle, "Command History, 1981" (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1981), 12, 23.

Part II: Descriptive Information

Building 3N (Port Service Bunk Room, Office) is a rectangular, one-story brick building located at the western corner of Pier 2. Constructed in 1944, Building 3N originally served as the office and administrative center for the pier.<sup>4</sup> The building is in good condition, and currently houses an office, break/relief quarters, and the Reserve Security Force.

This flat-roofed building is eight bays wide and two bays deep, with brick walls constructed in a common bond. A narrow band of metal flashing appears at the roof-wall junction around the building's perimeter. All of the windows consist of one-over-one, double-hung sash, with a rectangular sheet of metal where the transom would be.

The building's façade (southeast elevation) is broken so that it appears as three sections. A metal pedestrian door with two small, louvered vents occupies the single bay in the southern section. Similarly, a metal pedestrian door and two detached, louvered vents appear in the center section of the block. Concrete sills located beneath the vents suggest that window openings (now filled in with brick) were present in the openings the vents now occupy. A metal and plastic box light is located above the door. A brick chimney rises from the roof between these two sections. A steel rail balustrade begins on the left side of the center section and continues along the roof for a short distance. A steel ladder ascends to a corner of the center wall providing access to the roof. The section of the building to the right of the center contains one metal pedestrian door with a transom, and three of the windows described above. A steel fire alarm is located adjacent to the door.

The northeast elevation of Building 3N contains one window opening. A round iron pipe ascends the wall and extends above the roof-wall junction. A large metal box with numerous plastic and rubber pipes is mounted on the wall. Small metal electrical boxes and a metal and plastic box light also are located on this elevation. A large, cylindrical plastic fluid tank, onto which a

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<sup>4</sup> Y & D Drawing No. 279445.

large metal box is attached, sits on a concrete platform that is attached to the base of the building.

The building's northwest (rear) elevation faces the water and contains eight window openings, each of which contains an aluminum-framed, one-over-one, double-hung sash window with a concrete sill. Four metal and plastic box lights appear on this elevation at the roof line, and a metal vent is located above the third bay. A small metal box, from which projects a conduit pipe, is mounted to the wall between bays six and seven.

The southwest elevation contains two windows with a box light positioned between them at the roof line. A steel pipe projects from the center of the wall and rises parallel to the wall at a 90-degree angle. A circular fire alarm is mounted to the wall behind the pipe. A steel rail fence runs along a narrow walkway parallel to the building.

The design of the building was described in the Record Report for Contract NOy-7693, written at the completion of the pier complex's construction. This description indicates that Building 3N was identical to the original Building 3A (no longer extant), located on Pier 3:

Two Pier Office Buildings, Nos. 3-A and 3-N. Each: one story; 90 feet x 28 ft. 6 in.; cubic space, 31,000 cu. ft. concrete slab floor (monolithic with the main deck slab); brick walls; built-up roofing on concrete roof slab; heated by a coal fired (manual) hot air furnace; with plumbing and electrical installations.<sup>5</sup>

The original (1944) construction plans for the pier and its associated buildings confirm this (see plans in Photographic Documentation section of this report). As originally designed, Building 3N had two large offices in the west side of the building--one for general office space, the other an inspector's office--each with its own restroom. Provisions were included in the plans for partitioning the larger office space for individual offices with a passageway along the southeast wall.

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<sup>5</sup> L. W. Lancaster, "Record Report, Contract NOy-7693, Ships Piers and Approaches" (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, 1945), 9.

The boiler room was placed in the southern corner of the building, with a coal room to the right of the boiler room entrance.<sup>6</sup>

Building 3N continues to function as an office today, in addition to serving as a break/relief area for workers. Floor plans created by Dewberry & Davis in 1999 show the subdivision of both offices and changes in their function (see floor plans immediately following Part III). Carved from the larger office space are two dorm rooms with their own restrooms and a corridor with a utility room on the southeast wall. Created from the inspector's office are a lounge and a room of unknown function. The inspector's office restroom has become a kitchen; the current function of the general office space's restroom is unknown. The present function of the old boiler room in the southern corner is also unknown. The exterior coal room is not shown on these plans.<sup>7</sup>

Only one interior photograph of Building 3N is included in this documentation package because taking photographs in additional spaces would have interrupted security operations within the building. The building is the security center for the pier complex, and is operational twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It is altered to a large degree to accommodate security operations, bunking for around-the-clock staff, a small recreation room, and a meal preparation area. The building has dropped ceilings, added light timber frame walls covered with drywall, and retains little of its original fabric. A photograph in the hallway was the only view that showed any original architectural fabric, and was the only view that could be taken without interrupting building operations. The photographer did not avoid any important architectural details.

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<sup>6</sup> Y & D Drawing No. 279447.

<sup>7</sup> Dewberry & Davis, *Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Plan, U.S. Naval Weapons Station Earle* (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1999, printed from a CD provided by Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office), Building 4N, no. 1 of 2.

Part III: Sources of Information

A. Engineering Drawings

Dewberry & Davis. *Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Plan, U.S. Naval Weapons Station Earle*. Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1999. Printed from a CD provided by Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office.

Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office. *Building Use Location, Trestle & Piers, Waterfront Area Map*. Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office, 1994. Printed from a CD provided by Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office.

Shaw, Naess and Murphy, and Frank Grad and Sons. *Ships Piers and Approaches, U.S. Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, New Jersey*. N.p.: Shaw, Naess and Murphy and Frank Grad and Sons, 1944. Printed from a CD provided by Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office.

B. Historic Views

Danforth, Lew. "Loading Piers-N.A.D. Earle, N.J." 1951. Illustration filed at Naval Weapons Station Earle, Public Affairs Office.

Original photographs of pier complex at Naval Ammunition Depot Earle/Naval Weapons Station Earle. 1944-76. Filed at Naval Weapons Station Earle, Public Affairs Office.

C. Interviews

Smith, David, Base Civil Engineer. 2003. Conversation with authors, 2 April, Naval Weapons Station Earle, Colts Neck, NJ.

D. Bibliography

Benshimol, Ernest J. *History of U.S. Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, New Jersey*. August 1945. Subject Files (ACC No. A-12-1(1)), Loc No. R-105-6-4-5, Box 422. RG 181. National Archives and Record Administration, Northeast Branch. Also filed at NWS Earle, Public Affairs Office.

The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. "Architectural Resources Survey: Naval Weapons Station Earle, Monmouth County, New Jersey." Colts Neck, NJ: The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, Inc., 1999. Photocopied.

Lancaster, L. W. "Record Report, Contract NOy-7693, Ships Piers and Approaches." Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, 1945. Photocopied.

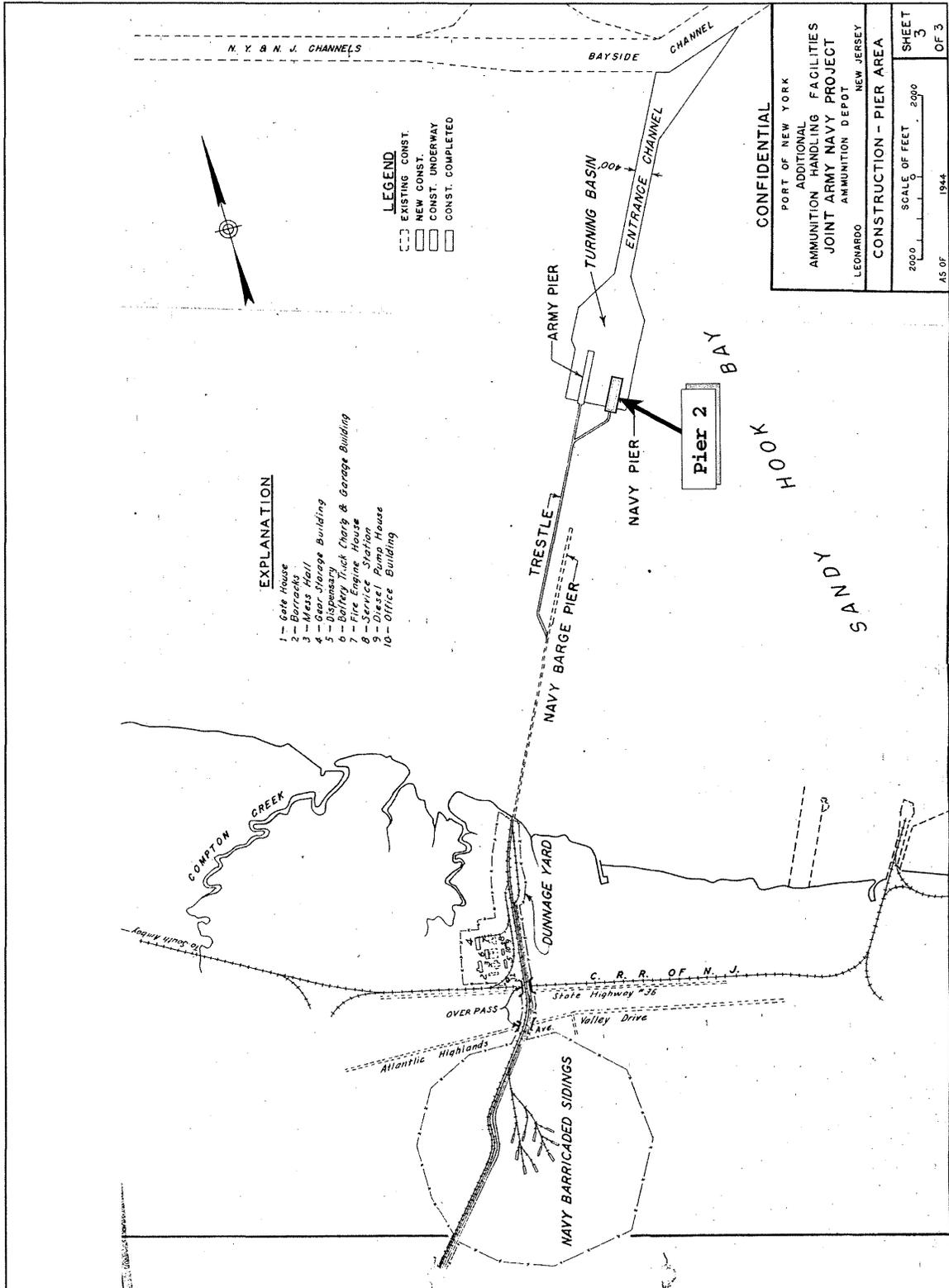
Naval Weapons Station Earle. "Command History, 1981." Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1981.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

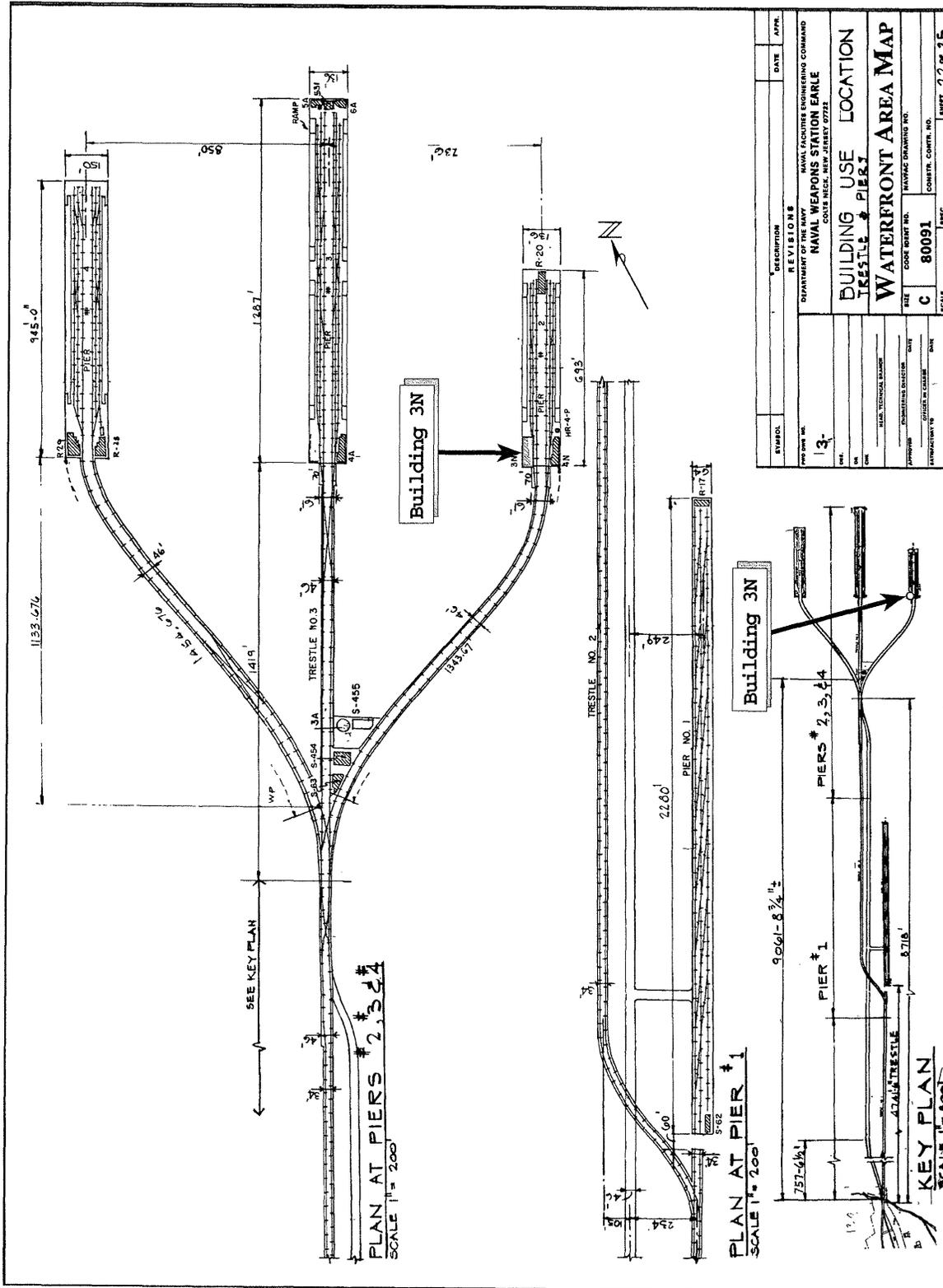
Records of the Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, 805 Kidder Breese St. SE, Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20374-5060

Records of the National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001

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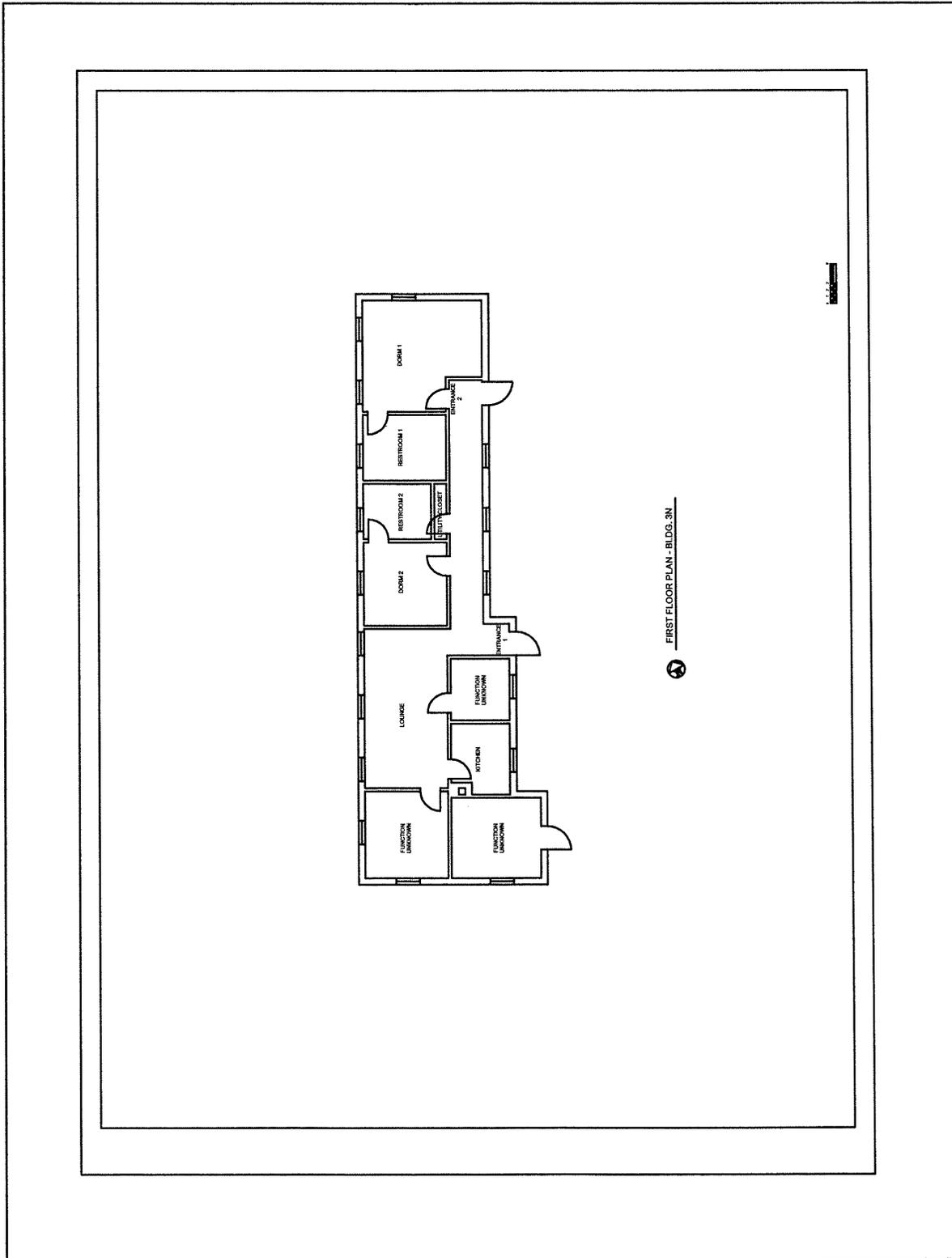


General Construction Map, Pier Area, 1944  
 (source: Lancaster 1945)



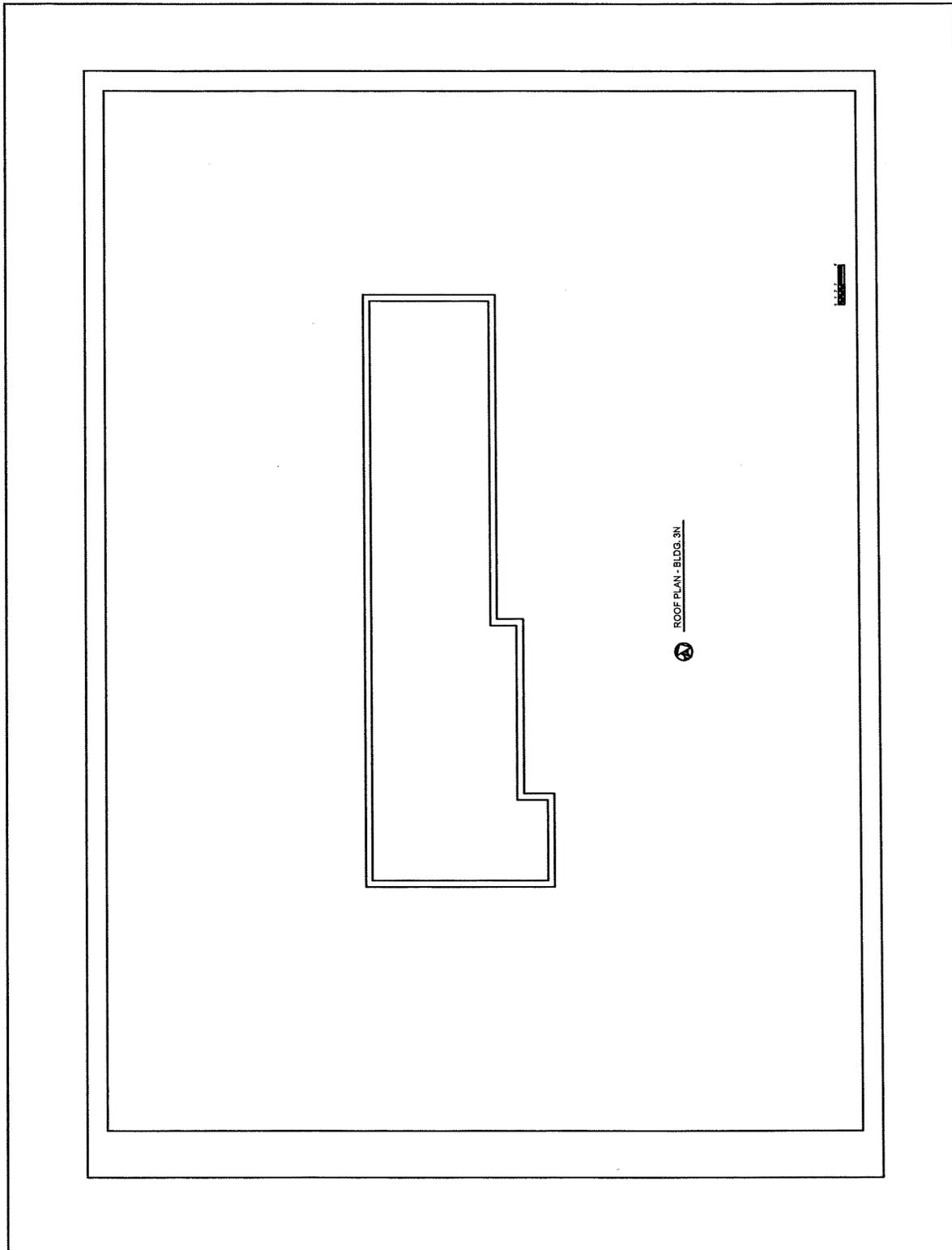
Location Map and General Plan, Pier Area, 1994  
 (source: Naval Weapons Station Earle, Base Civil Engineering Office 1994)

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FIRST FLOOR PLAN - BLDG. 3N

First Floor Plan, Building 3N, 1999  
(source: Dewberry & Davis 1999)



Roof Plan, Building 3N, 1999  
(source: Dewberry & Davis 1999)