

NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT EARLE, PIER 3, BUILDING NO. S-63
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 3, Building No. S-63)
Sandy Hook Bay
Colts Neck vicinity
Monmouth County
New Jersey

HAER NJ-142-B-6
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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 3, BUILDING S-63
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 3, Building S-63)

HAER No. NJ-142-B-6

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: 18.580238.4477883

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: Pump House, "Wye" Area

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 S-63 on Pier 3 was constructed in 1944 as a pump house to support fire fighting on 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 S-63 (Pump House, "Wye" Area) is situated between Trestles 2 and 3 in the area of the pier complex known as the "Wye" area, which is located where Trestles 2, 3, and 4 branch off from Trestle 1A. Building S-63 is commonly associated with Pier 3 and Trestle 3 due to its orientation toward these structures. Building S-63 has served as a pump house since its construction in 1944, providing water to fight fires on the pier. It may also provide fresh water for the workers and ships tied up at the piers.¹

Building S-63 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.²

¹ M.H. Bowers, Cultural Resource Survey Form-K, Building S-63/Pumphouse, in "Architectural Resources Survey Naval Weapons Station Earle, Monmouth County, New Jersey" (N.p.: The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, Inc., 1999, photocopied); 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), 73.

² 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.

Part II: Descriptive Information

Building S-63 (Pump House, "Wye" area) is a roughly triangular-shaped, one-story brick building located in the "Wye" area between Trestles 2 and 3. A rectangular main block with a shorter, one-story brick wing set back from the façade (northwest elevation) wraps around the southwest and southeast elevations of the building and gives the building its unusual shape. Constructed in 1944, Building S-63 historically functioned as a pump house, providing water for fire protection and possibly fresh water for crews working on the piers. The building is in fair condition.

This flat-roofed building sits atop the concrete pier. The rectangular main portion is six bays wide and two bays deep, with brick walls constructed in a common bond. The wing is also constructed of brick laid in a common bond. Building S-63 was designed to fit into the "V" created by the intersection of Trestles 2 and 3. The northwest elevation of the wing is parallel to the northwest elevation of the main block, but the southeast elevation of the wing runs at an angle from the northwest elevation. The result is a one bay wing on the southwest elevation widening to three bays on the northeast elevation. A narrow band of metal flashing appears at the roof-wall junction around the buildings' perimeter. All of the windows have concrete sills, but have been infilled with brick.

The façade contains nine bays. Metal double doors set in a metal frame are centrally located, with two infilled window openings to the left and three infilled window openings to the right. Below the sills of the windows located to the left of the doors are twelve cast iron valves for fire hoses. A red light is set left of the center above the double doors. A metal pipe and a vent project from the roof to the right of the center, with a flashing light projecting from the west corner. Metal and plastic box lights are set located at the top of the northeastern and southwestern ends of the wall.

The northwest elevation of the wing is set back from the façade of the main block and is three bays wide. The northeastern bay contains a filled in window with a large metal ventilator projecting from the upper right corner. Metal doors set in metal

frames fill the two southwestern bays. Centered above the two doors is a metal and plastic box light.

The southwest elevation of the main block is partially obscured by the wing, but is blank except for a brick chimney projecting from the roof of the wing where it abuts the main block. The northeast elevation of the wing is also blank except for a centrally placed metal fire box with a red light.

The southeast elevation of the main block is mostly obscured by the shorter southeast elevation of the wing, which is seven bays wide. Brick, infilled windows with concrete sills occupy the first, third, and fifth through seventh bays. The second bay has a square opening filled by metal louvers with a wire mesh cover. The fourth bay contains a metal door set in a metal frame. A stop sign projects from the southern corner of the building. Metal and plastic box lights are located at the tops of the northeastern and southwestern ends of the wall.

The northeast walls of the wing and main block are flush with each other, creating a five bay wide northeast elevation. The first three bays, starting from the southeast end of the elevation, each contain a metal door with a light near the top, an infilled window, and a smaller metal door located in the infill of a formerly larger opening. A light is located at the top of the infilled window. A metal ladder at the southeastern end of the northeast elevation provides roof access to the main block. The two window openings in the northeast elevation of the main block are filled in with brick. A metal louver has been placed in the infill of the right window. A pipe of unknown function extends halfway up the wall to the left of the ladder. A metal and plastic box light is placed high on the wall to the right of the ladder.

The original construction plans for Building S-63 depict the pumps housed in the rectangular main portion of the building (see plans in Photographic Documentation section of this report). The smaller, unusually-shaped portion of the building contained a heater room, coal room, restroom, office, transformer room, switch room, and battery room. The unusual shape of the building is reflected in the shapes of the interior rooms, which have at least one angled wall, except for the

rectangular transformer room.³ The Navy's Record Report for the construction of Building S-63 describes the Pump House in the following manner:

Utilities Building No. 2. Located at the intersection of the trestles to the ship piers; one story; roughly triangular in shape; 66 ft. x 47 ft. overall; cubic space, 22,700 cu. ft.; concrete slab floor (monolithic with the main deck slab); brick walls; built-up roofing on concrete roof slab; heated by a coal fire (manual) hot air furnace; with plumbing and electrical installations; containing a pump room for the fire protection system, a control room for the electrical facilities of the pier, and a transformer room; two timber cribs, 6 ft. x 13 ft. and 6 ft. x 14 ft., respectively, extending 7 ft. below mean low water protect the suction pipes of the pumps.⁴

The pumps located in the utilities building were described as:

One 2,000 gal. per min., at 125 lb. pressure, electrical driven deep well turbine pump; two stand-by 1,000 gal. per min., at 125 lb. pressure, gasoline engine driven deep well turbine pumps; a 700 gal. per min., at 50 lb. pressure, electrical driven deep well turbine pump to circulate water in the mains to prevent freezing; a 175 gal. per min., at 90 foot head, automatic electric driven centrifugal pump to supply water to plumbing fixtures when no other pump is operating; all located in the Utilities Building.⁵

³ 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), Y & D Drawing No. 279445. Hereafter Y & D Drawing No.

⁴ L. W. Lancaster, "Record Report: Contract NOy-7693, Ships Piers and Approaches" (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, 1945), 8-9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

The isolation of the Utilities Building, approximately 1200'-0", from the closest pier, is indicative of its importance in case of an emergency.

The most current plans for the building, dating from 1999, show minor changes from the original blueprints (see current floor plans immediately following Part III of Written Documentation section). The rectangular section is still the main pump room. The former coal and battery rooms now contain storage space, and the former transformer room is currently an electrical room. The former heater room was combined with the restroom to create a larger electrical generator room. The wall between the vestibule and office is gone, creating a large room. The switch room is not specifically identified.⁶

Only one interior photograph of Building S-63 is included in this documentation package. The main pump room was the only large room, and the only one containing valuable information. The electrical room was small, operational, and off limits due to dangerous conditions. The generator room was also too small to produce valuable photographs. The remaining rooms were tiny and featureless.

⁶ Dewberry & Davis, *Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Plan, U.S. Naval Weapons Station Earle* (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1999), Building S-63, no. 1 of 1.

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.

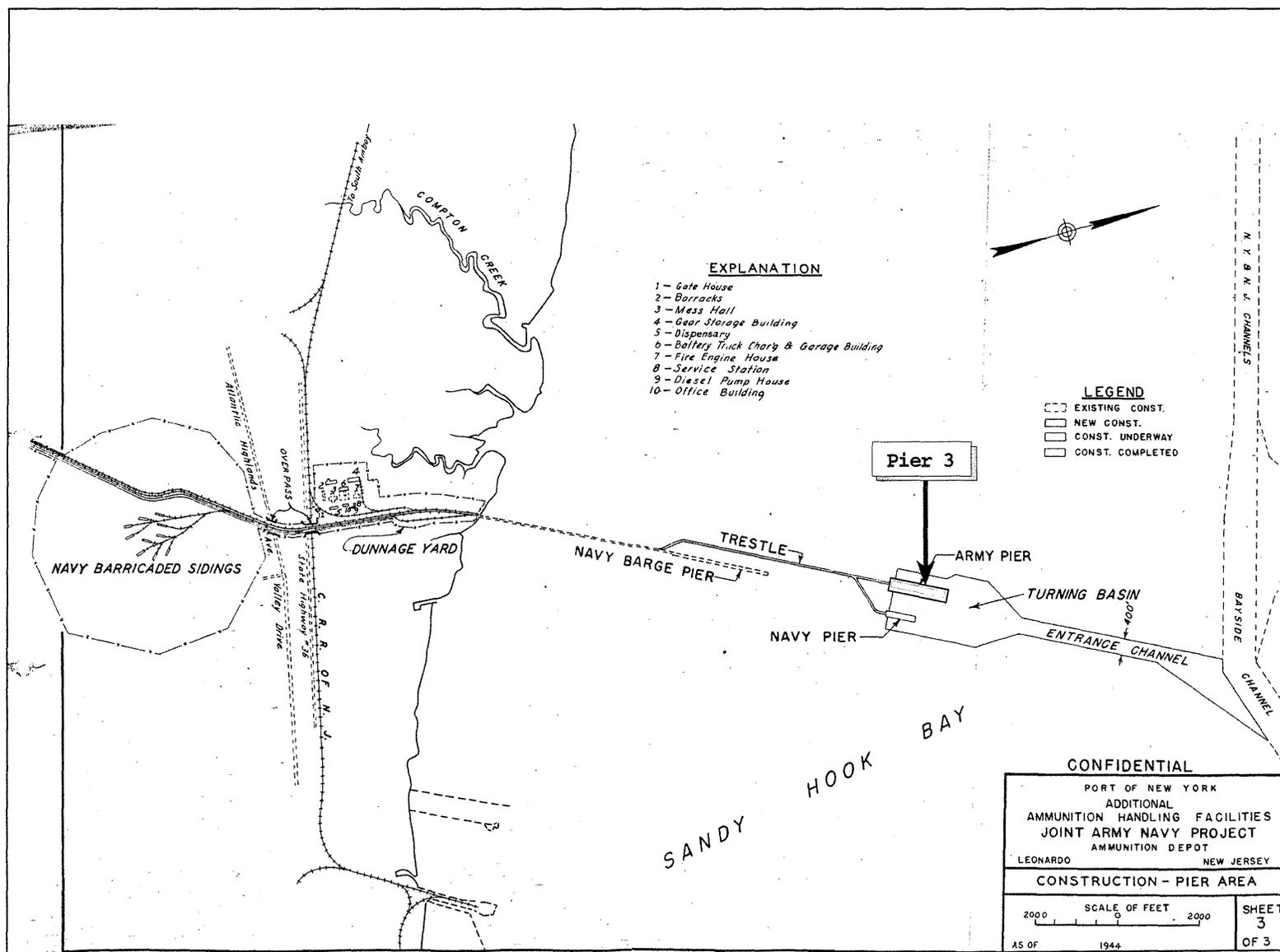
The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. "Architectural Resources Survey: Naval Weapons Station Earle, Monmouth County, New Jersey." Colts Neck, NJ: The Cultural Resource Group, Louis Berger & Associates, Inc., 1999. Photocopied.

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

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

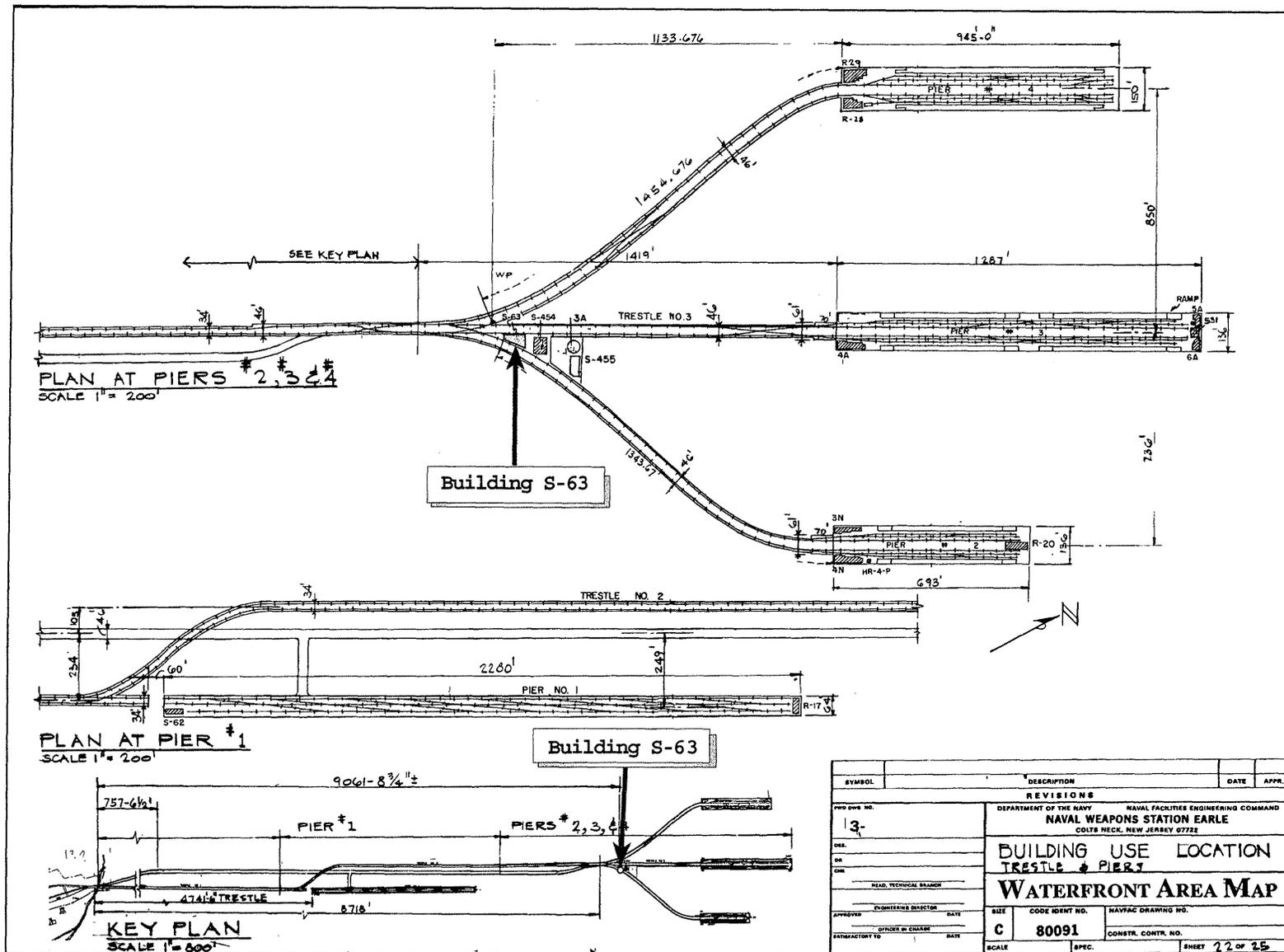
Records of the Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, 805 Kidder Breese Street SE, Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20374-5060.

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



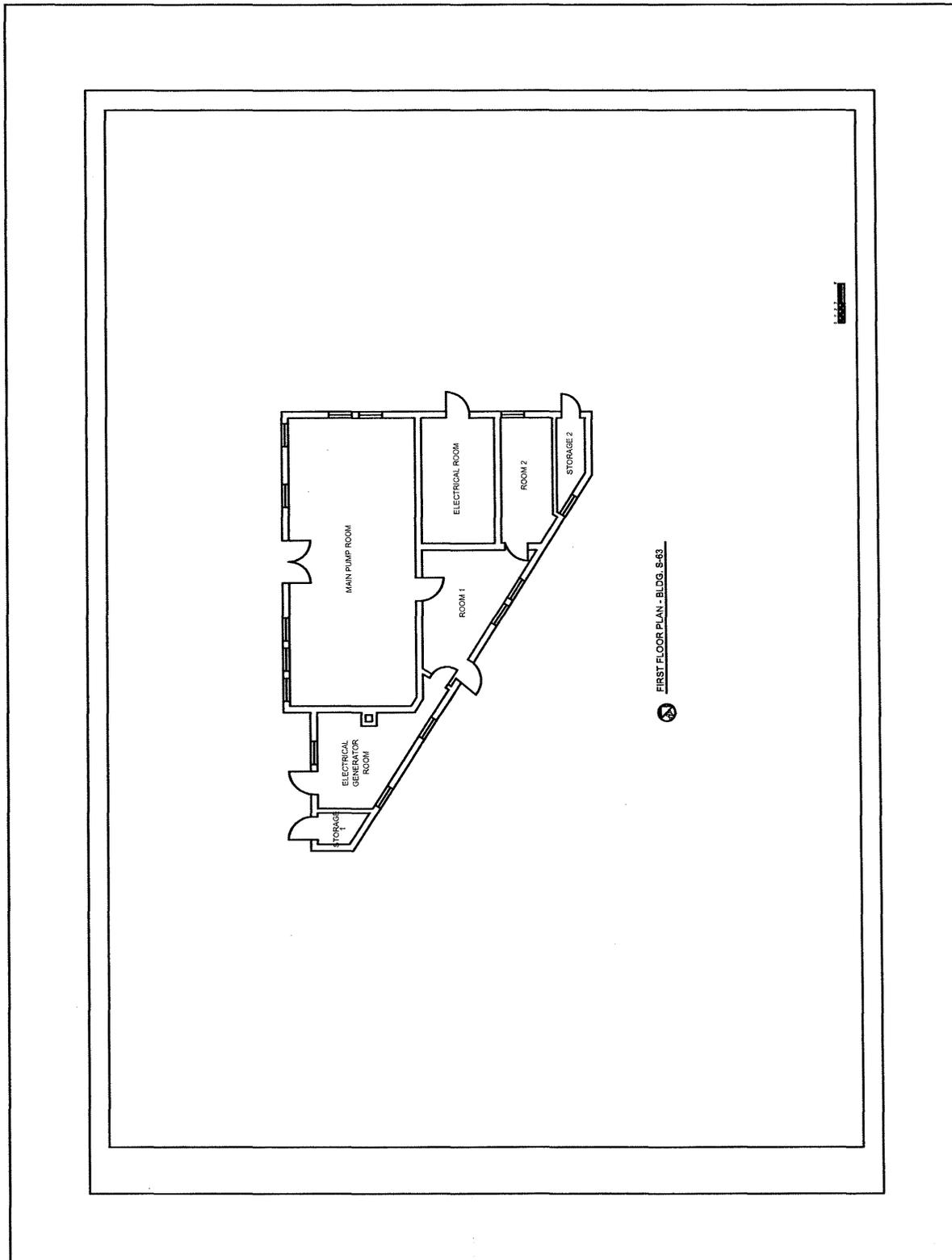
General Construction Map, Pier Area, 1944
(source: Lancaster 1945)

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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. S-63

First Floor Plan, Building S-63, 1999
(source: Dewberry & Davis 1999)