

NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT EARLE, PIER 2, BUILDING NO. 4N
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 2, Building 4N)
Sandy Hook Bay
Colts Neck vicinity
Monmouth County
New Jersey

HAER NJ-142-A-2
HAER NJ-142-A-2

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 4N
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 2, Building 4N)

HAER No. NJ-142-A-2

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: 18.580608.4478117

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: Change/Relief House, Laundromat

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 4N on Pier 2 was constructed in 1944 as a decontamination and smoke house. 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 4N (Change/Relief House, Laundromat) was designed by Shaw, Naess and Murphy and Frank Grad and Sons, and was constructed at the same time as Pier 2 (1944). Building 4N historically served as a decontamination and smoke house, and provided a place for workers on the pier to clean up, rest, smoke, and change.¹ The building continues to function as a change/relief house, and contains a laundromat, which was upgraded in 1999.²

Building 4N 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.³

¹ 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. 279447. Hereafter, Y & D Drawing No.

² 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; Naval Weapons Station Earle, "Command History, 1999" (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1999), 8.

³ 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 4N (Change/Relief House, Laundromat), located at the southern corner of Pier 2, is a rectangular, one-story, brick building measuring 100'-0" long and 28'-6" wide. Constructed in 1944, Building 4N historically functioned as a decontamination building and a smokehouse, where military personnel could gather for breaks and to smoke.⁴ The building is in good condition, and currently functions as a change/relief house and a laundromat.

This flat-roofed building is nine 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 metal-framed, one-over-one, double-hung sash. The building's three pedestrian doors are metal and glazed; the two doors on the façade (northwest elevation) also feature single sidelights and concrete lintels. A steel pipe vent and a brick chimney with a concrete cap appear at the southwest end of the building. The building's façade is broken so that it appears as three sections. At the northern end of the building the wall is recessed approximately 3', and contains a central box air conditioning unit and a metal and plastic box light at the base of the wall. A steel ladder is mounted to the wall in the corner where this section adjoins the rest of the building. The ladder provides access from the ground to the roof. The central section of the building features the main entrance, which is included within a projecting concrete block. To the left of the entrance are three windows that are covered with heavy steel screens. Two metal and plastic box lights are positioned along the base of the wall below the windows. To the right of the door are two windows with concrete lintels and a metal pedestrian door. Two box lights appear at the base of the wall, one on each side of the door. To the right of the door, beyond the corner, the wall is recessed approximately 3'; however, a brick block with a concrete cap projects from the wall, beyond the central section of the building. The result is that the top wall of the third section (which contains a rectangular, wood-frame window with a concrete sill and a decorative band of concrete) is recessed from the plane of the center section, while the aforementioned

⁴ Y & D Drawing No. 279447.

block projects beyond the plane of the center section. A short, steel ladder mounted to the wall of the small block provides access from the ground to its roof. Finally, the southern section of the façade contains the third pedestrian door, two box lights, and two steel pipes that rise along the wall. A louvered vent appears at the base of the door.

The northeast elevation of Building 4N contains one glazed, metal pedestrian door and no windows. An electrical pipe is mounted to the wall above the door and runs the width of the building. A generator sits adjacent to the northeast elevation of the building.

The building's southeast (rear) elevation faces the water and contains ten window openings, nine of which are glazed and one of which is filled in with brick. Beginning from the left side of the elevation, bays one and two contain square, fixed-sash windows with concrete sills. Bays three through nine are filled with vinyl, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows, all of which have concrete sills. Additionally, bays seven and eight are covered with the same steel screens that appear on the façade. The tenth bay is filled in with brick; however, it retains a concrete sill.

The southwest elevation contains two vinyl, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows with concrete sills. A metal, louvered vent covered with wire mesh is positioned between the windows.

According to the original (1944) construction plans for the piers and their buildings, Building 4N was to be identical to the original Building 4A (no longer extant), located on Pier 3, and both would serve as smoking, lunch, and decontamination rooms (see plans in Photographic Documentation section of this report). The author of the Record Report for Contract NOy-7693 described Buildings 4A and 4N in the following manner:

. . . one story; 100 ft. x 28 ft. 6 in.; cubic space, 30,500 cu. ft.; the other features of this building are similar to the Pier Office Buildings, Nos. 3-A and 3-N.⁵

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

The central portion of the building was a large, open, multi-use space with built-in benches along the northwest and southeast walls, built-in shelves, a refrigerator, cabinets, sinks, and tables along the northeast wall and a door in the southwest wall leading to a large, adjacent toilet room. One entered via the door in the projecting concrete block in the façade. A transformer room was located at the northeastern end of the building, and access was gained only from the exterior. The boiler room, also accessible only from the exterior, was located at the western corner. A small room located immediately northeast of the boiler room served as a coal room.⁶

Building 4N currently functions as a change/relief building and Laundromat (see floor plans immediately following Part III). The large, multi-purpose room was split in half to better serve these functions. The northeastern half of the space, located off a central lobby, contains a game room, and the southwestern half contains a laundry room. A door was added to the façade to provide access to the laundry room directly from the exterior. The large toilet room was reconfigured to allow for separate men's and women's rooms. The transformer and boiler rooms are accessible only from the exterior. The coal room also remains.⁷

Only one interior photograph of Building 4N was required to reveal the sense of space within the building, and to show its use, scale, and details. The laundry room was easily accessible and seemingly little used. The building appeared to have been segmented in recent times with block partition walls in order to create a small vestibule in its middle section. There were restrooms at one end of the interior, but the interior was otherwise uniform.

⁶ Y & D Drawing No. 279447.

⁷ Dewberry & Davis, *Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Plan, U.S. Naval Weapons Station Earle* (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1999), 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.

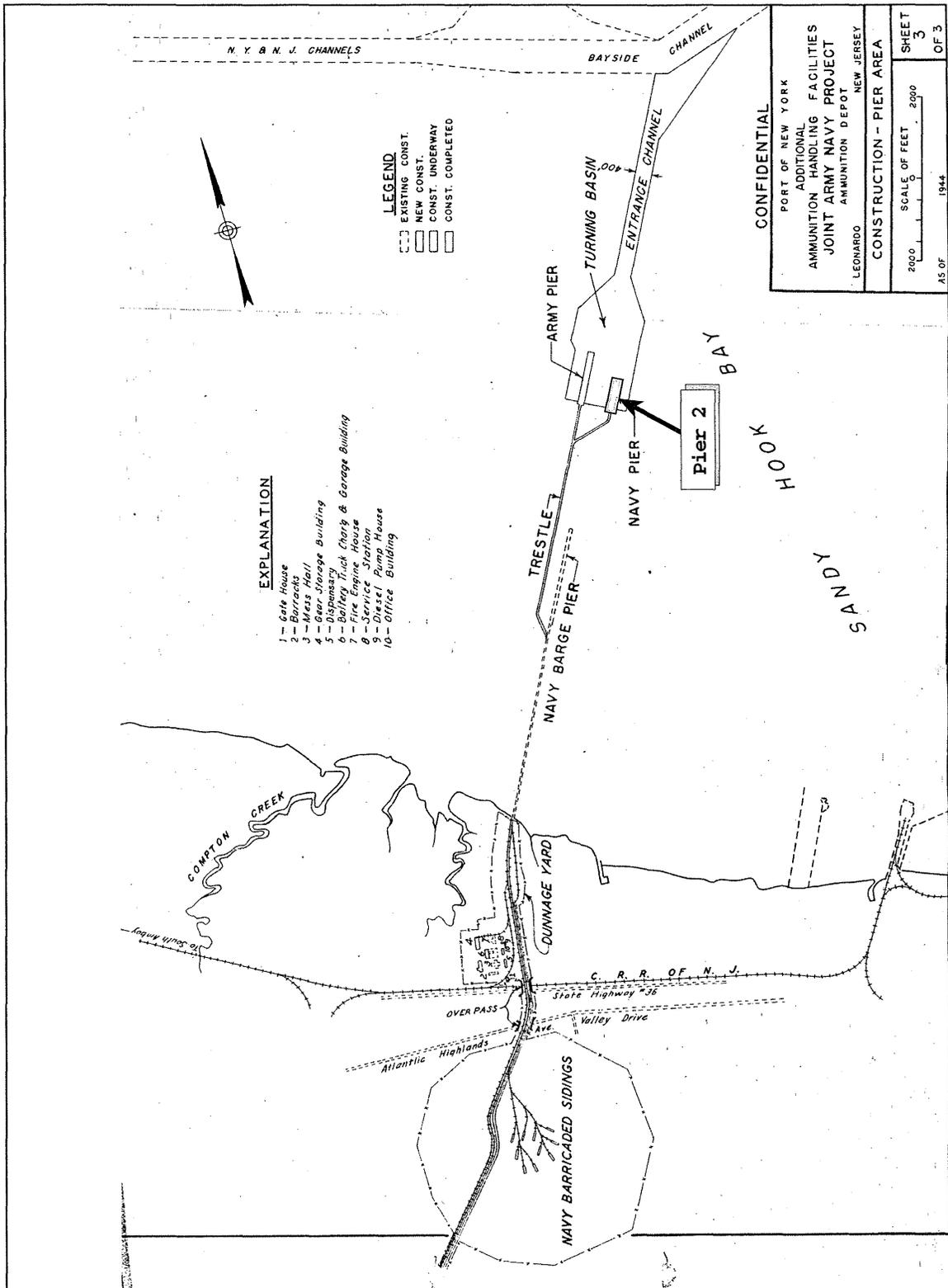
Naval Weapons Station Earle. "Command History, 1999." Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1999.

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

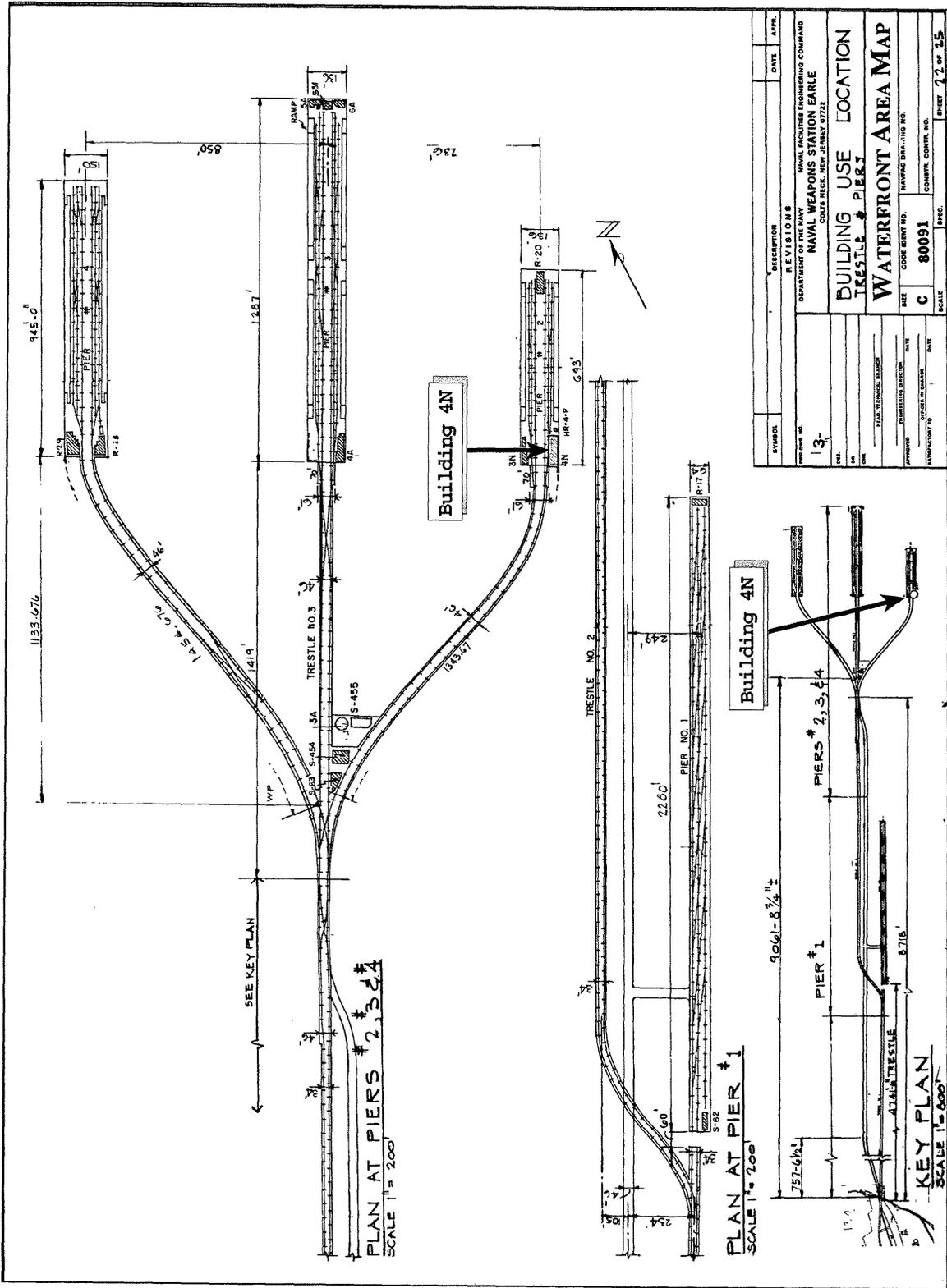
Records of the National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001

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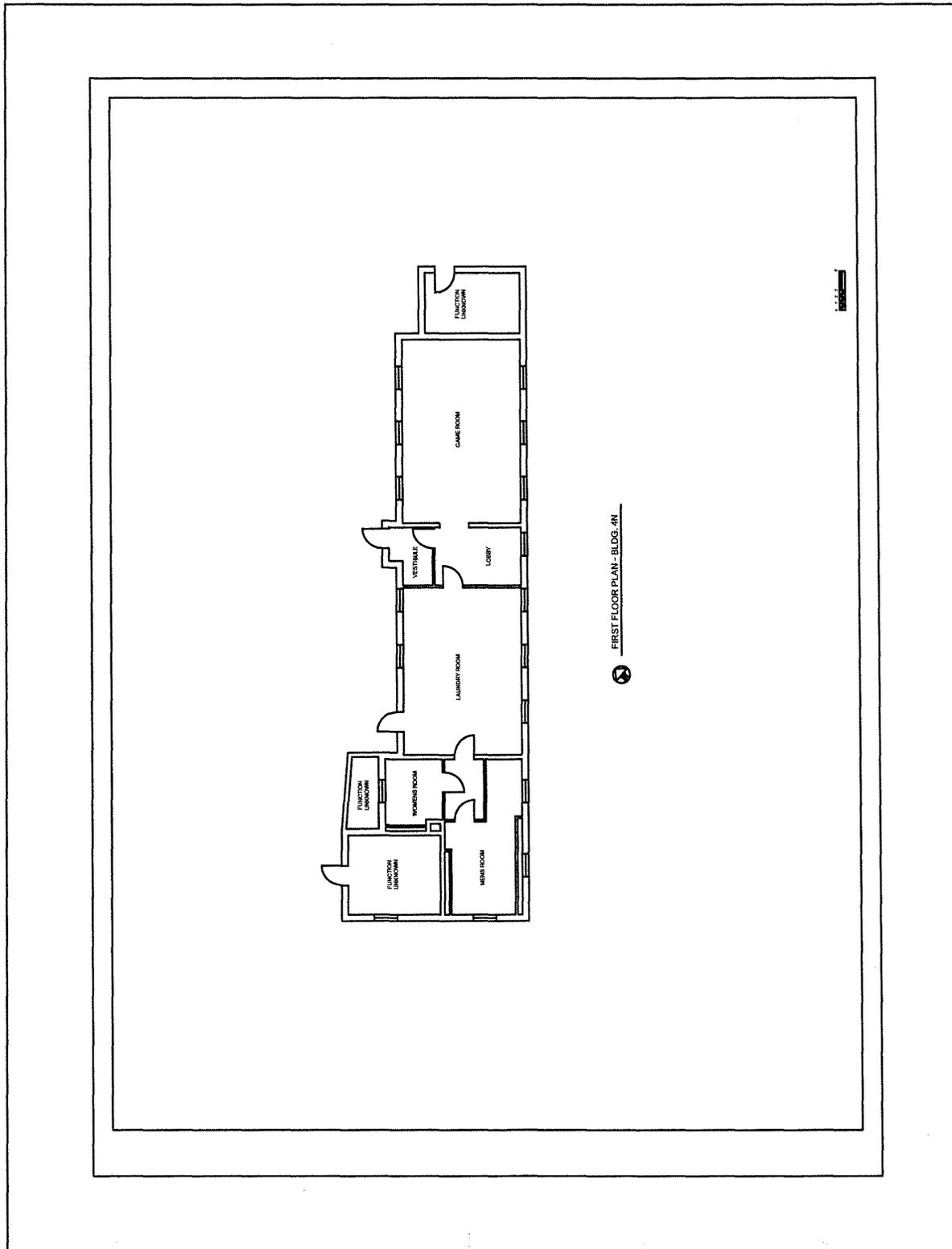
General Construction Map, Pier Area, 1944
 (source: Lancaster 1945)

NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT EARLE, PIER 2, BUILDING 4N
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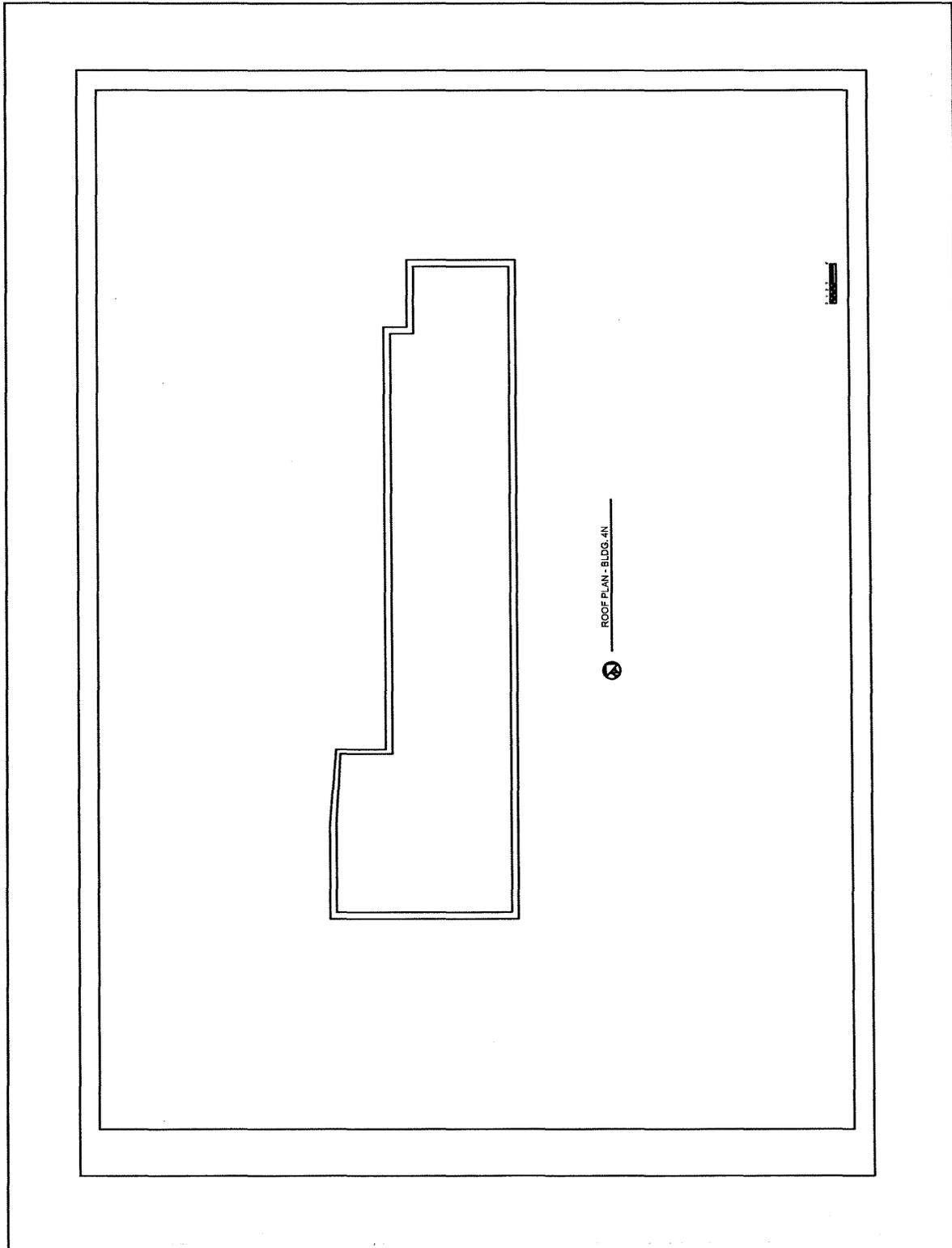


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| REVISED | DESCRIPTION | DATE | APPR. |
| 13- | REVISIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND NAVAL WEAPONS STATION EARLE DUNEL BECK, NEW JERSEY 07722 | | |
| BUILDING USE LOCATION TRESTLE # PIER 2 | | WATERFRONT AREA MAP | |
| PROJECT NO. | CODE BENT NO. | NAVAE DRAWING NO. | CONTR. CONTR. NO. |
| | C | 80091 | |
| APPROVED | DESIGNED | DRAWN | CHECKED |
| | | | |
| DATE | SCALE | SHEET 12 OF 25 | |
| | | | |

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



First Floor Plan, Building 4N, 1999
(source: Dewberry & Davis 1999)



Roof Plan, Building 4N, 1999
(source: Dewberry & Davis 1999)