

NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT EARLE, PIER 3, BUILDING NO. 6A
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 3, Building 6A)
Sandy Hook Bay
Colts Neck vicinity
Monmouth County
New Jersey

HAER NJ-142-B-3
HAER NJ-142-B-3

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 6A
(Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 3, Building 6A)

HAER No. NJ-142-B-3

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: 18.580547.4478482

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: Ordnance Storage, Pier 3

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 6A on Pier 3 was constructed in 1944 as a gear storage facility. 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 6A (Ordnance Storage, Pier 3), located at the eastern corner of Pier 3, dates to the construction of the pier (1944). This building was constructed as a storage facility, and it continues to serve this purpose.¹

Building 6A 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 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.; 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; David Smith, Base Civil Engineer, 2003, conversation with authors, Naval Weapons Station Earle, Colts Neck, NJ, 2 April.

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 6A (Ordnance Storage, Pier 3) measures 33'-0" x 20'-0", and is an irregularly shaped, one-story brick structure located at the eastern corner of Pier 3. Constructed in 1944, Building 6A historically served as a gear storage facility. The building is in poor condition, and currently functions as an ordnance storage facility.

This flat-roofed building sits atop the concrete pier, but also appears to rest upon an additional narrow concrete slab. It is two bays wide and one bay deep, with brick walls constructed in a common bond. A narrow band of concrete coping appears at the roof-wall junction around the building's perimeter. The building's façade (southwest elevation) is broken so that the section containing the southeastern bay projects approximately 3'-0" south from the main block. Of the two bays that appear on the façade, the northwestern contains a wooden pedestrian door, while the southeastern contains a wooden pedestrian door and a narrow, corrugated metal overhead garage door that open onto a concrete apron. Rusted steel vertical and horizontal beams support the walls surrounding this opening, and a steel panel appears above the pedestrian door. Several sets of narrow metal pipes run vertically and horizontally along the projecting section of the building. Based on an inspection of areas where the pipes are broken, they appear to function as conduits for electrical wires. A steel-domed emergency light is mounted to the wall to the left of the pedestrian/garage door opening.

The southeast elevation of Building 6A contains one opening for a door, which is covered by a sheet of plywood. To the left of this opening a steel ladder is mounted to the wall, providing access from the ground to the roof. There are no additional openings or distinguishing features present on this elevation.

The building's northeast elevation faces the water and contains two window openings, each of which contains a wooden window frame with a concrete sill. A sheet of plywood covers the southeastern opening, while the northwestern opening contains a two-over-two, double-hung sash window with panes of frosted, textured glass. A plastic and metal sign with the words "WARNING

U.S. NAVY Restricted Area, KEEP OUT" is bolted to the wall between the windows.

Building 6A's northwest elevation lacks fenestration and architectural detail; however, slender PVC piping ascends the wall at the lower right corner, runs through a metal box, and continues horizontally to the northeastern end of the wall. As on the façade, this pipe most likely contains electrical wires. Thin aluminum straps secure the pipe to the wall. A fifth, northwest-facing wall lacking door and window openings is present between the northwest and southwest elevations.

Today, Building 6A appears much as it did on the 1944 plans.³ The major difference is that the restroom shown on the original plans was converted to a storage room (see historic plans in Photographic Documentation section of this report and current floor plans immediately following Part III of Written Documentation section).

No interior photographs of Building 6A are included in this documentation package because the building was too dangerous to enter. The interior floor was covered with pigeon droppings, rain, and sea spray, resulting in toxic and slick conditions.

³ Y & D Drawing No. 279447; Dewberry & Davis, *Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Plan, U.S. Naval Weapons Station Earle* (Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Weapons Station Earle, 1999), Building 6A, 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.

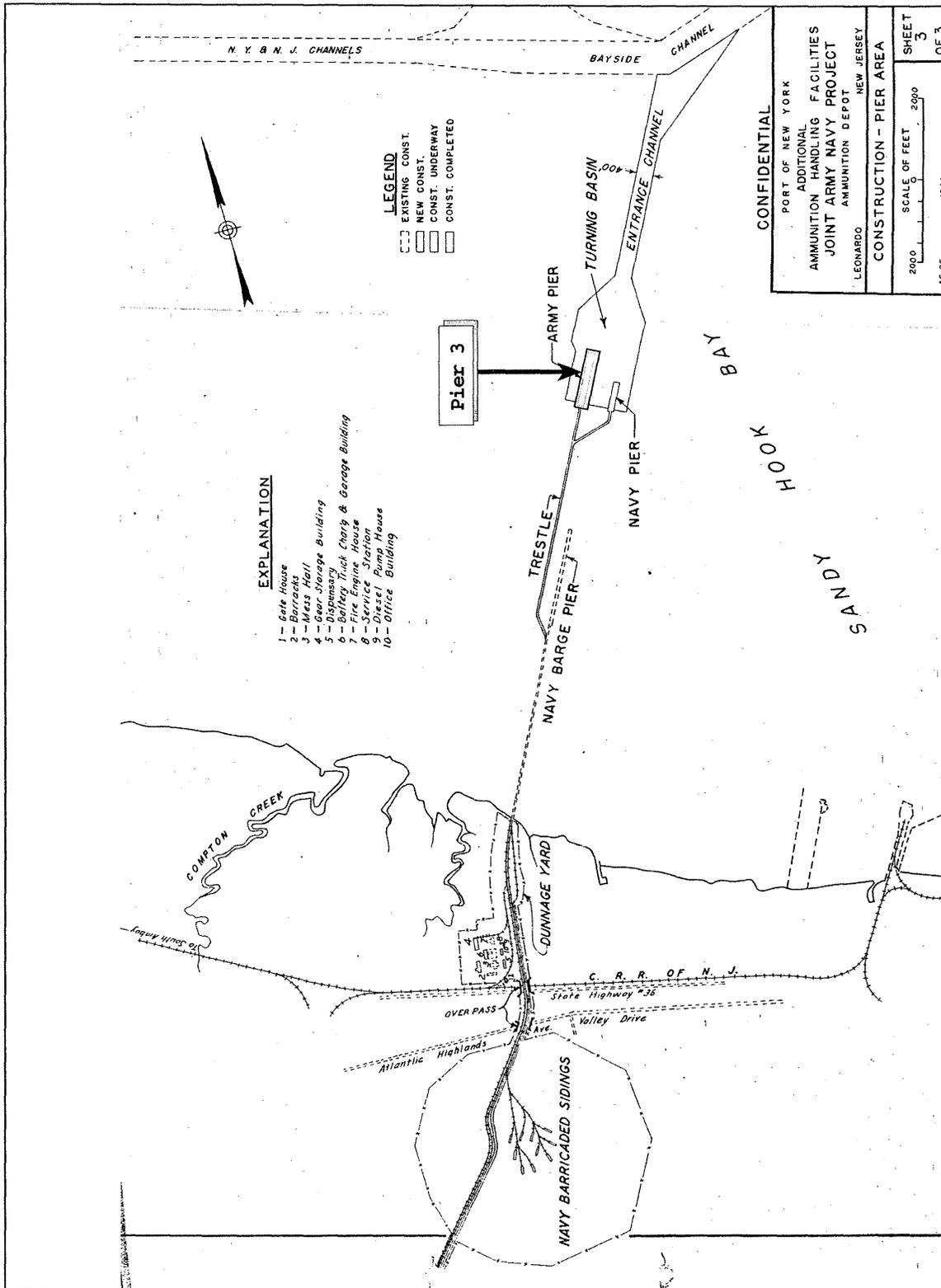
Lancaster, L. W. "Record Report, Contract NOy-7693, Ships Piers and Approaches." Colts Neck, NJ: Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, 1945. Photocopied.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

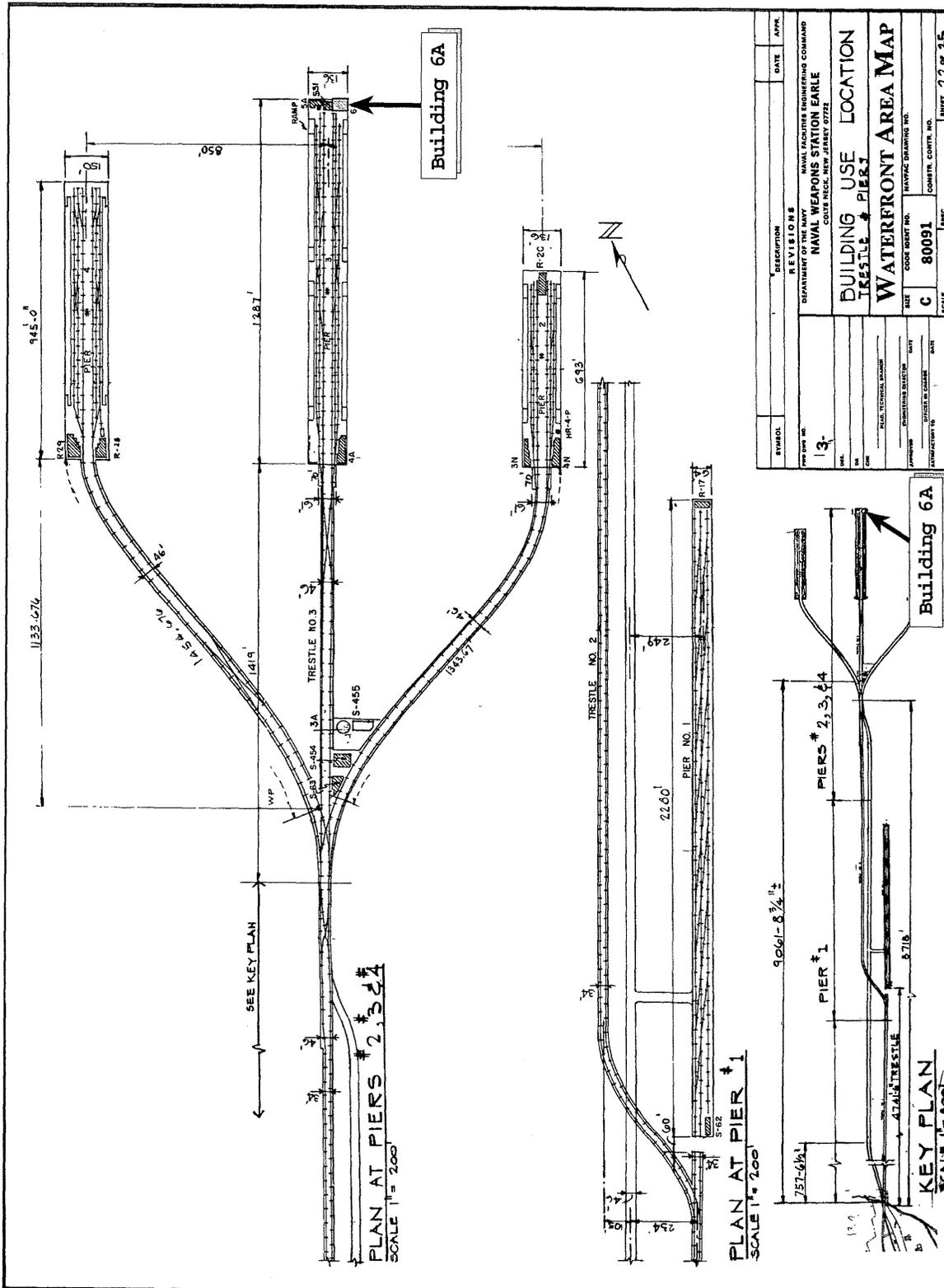
Records of the Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center, 805 Kidder Breese Street SE, Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20374-5060.

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

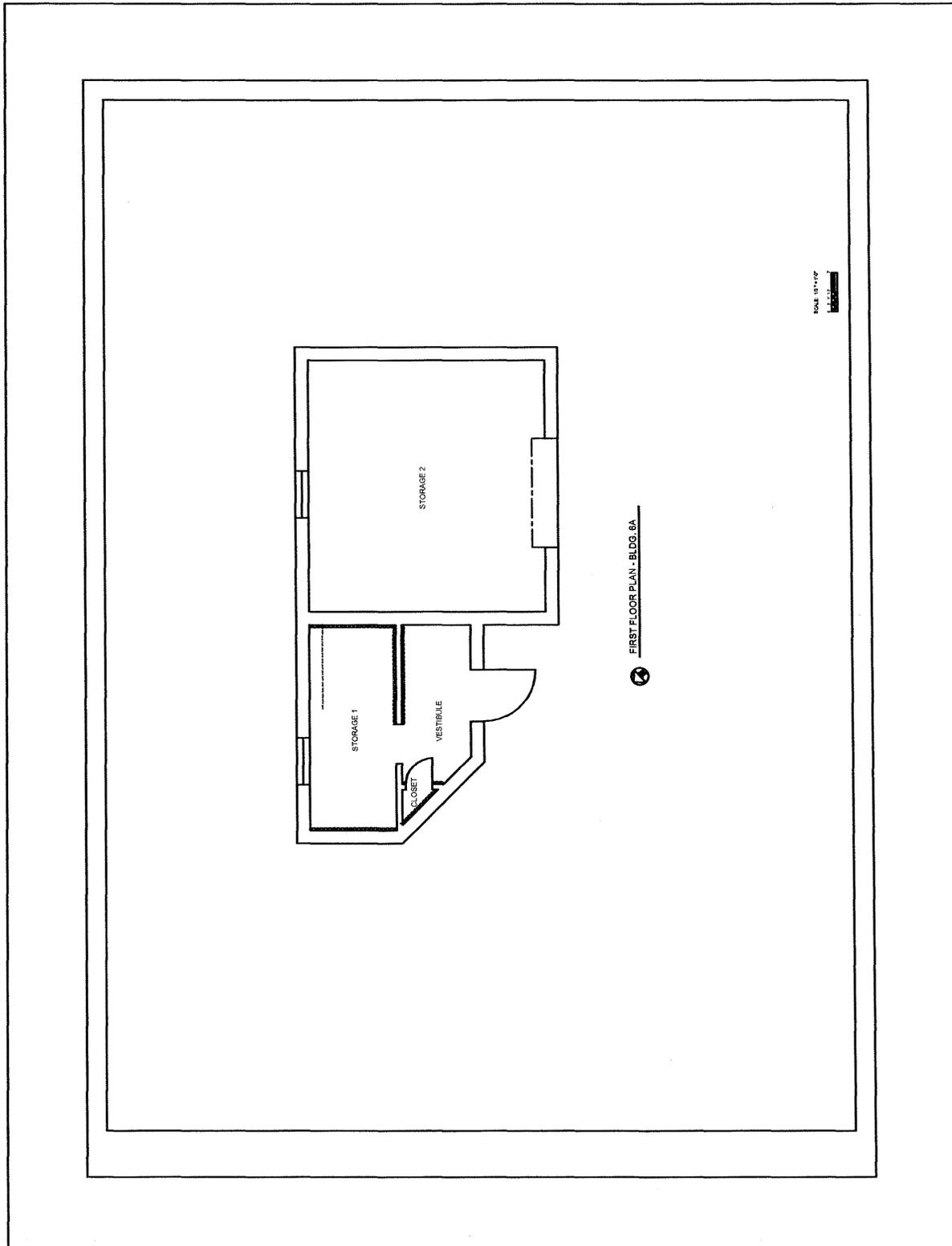
NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT EARLE, PIER 3, BUILDING 6A
 (Naval Weapons Station Earle, Pier 3, Building 6A)
 HAER No. NJ-142-B-3
 (page 8)



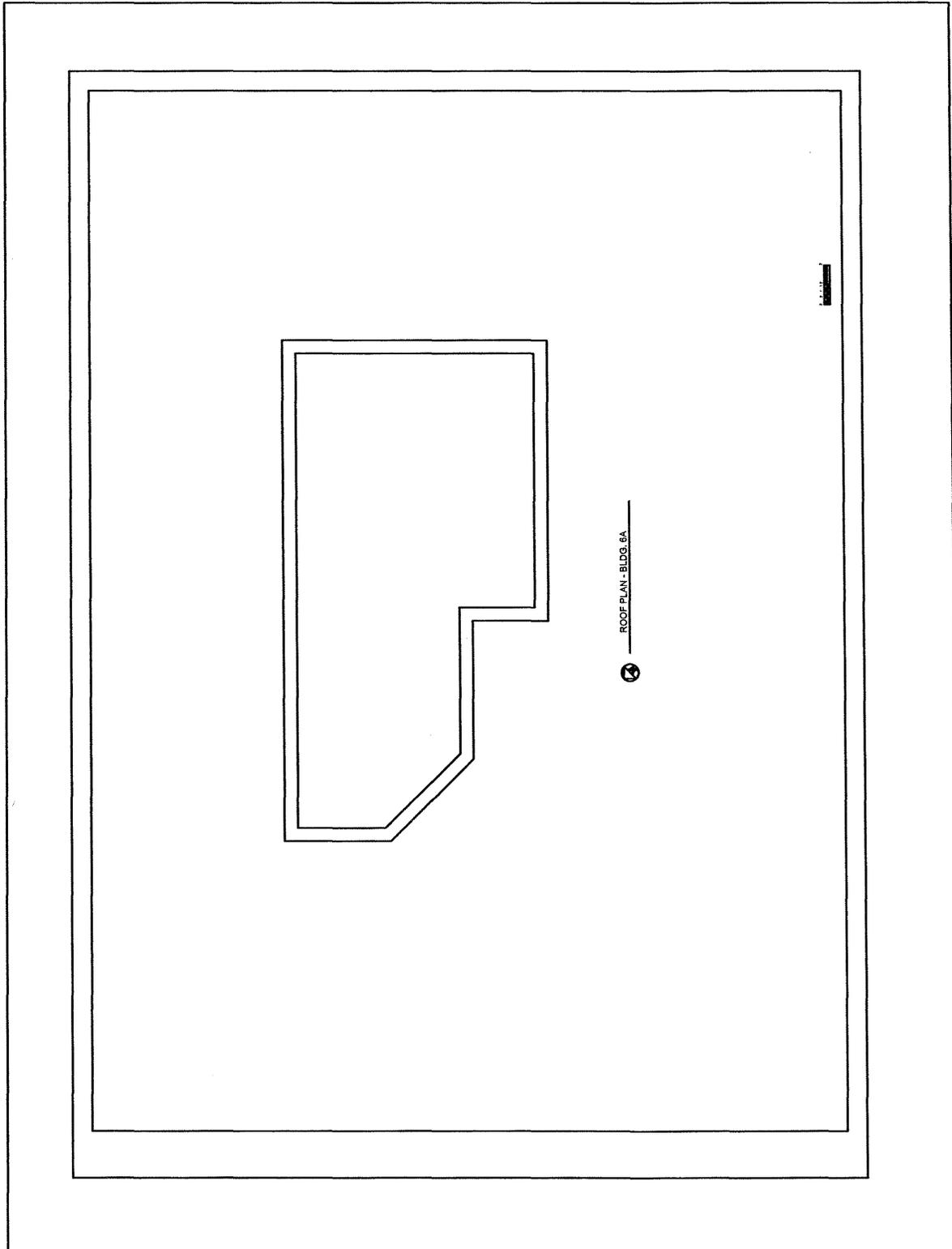
General Construction Map, Pier Area, 1944
 (source: Lancaster 1945)



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



First Floor Plan, Building 6A, 1999
(source: Dewberry & Davis 1999)



Roof Plan, Building 6A, 1999
(source: Dewberry & Davis 1999)