



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

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Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary

Office of Archives and History
Division of Historical Resources
David Brook, Director

February 13, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gregory Thorpe, Ph.D., Director
NCDOT - Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch

FROM: Peter Sandbeck *Res for Peter Sandbeck*

SUBJECT: Phase II Historic/Architectural Survey Report, Proposed Interim Improvements for Protection of NC 12 at Hatteras Village, R-3116B, Dare County, ER 03-0682

Thank you for your letter of January 16, 2007, transmitting the survey report by Marvin A. Brown of URS Corporation, for the above project.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is State Study-listed, has been re-evaluated in this report, and remains eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

(DR 231) Creeds Hill Life Saving Station, NC 12, 1.9 mi. N of jct. with SR 1246, is eligible on the local level for the National Register under Criteria A for its association the U. S. Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard on the Outer Banks; and as an unusually intact representative of station house and mess room architecture.

The property's buildings stand-out among their peers because they been little altered, have not been moved, and retain their orientation to the ocean, sound, and to the road within a partially undeveloped site. The property retains all of seven elements of integrity - location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

We concur with the proposed National Register boundary as described and illustrated in the survey report.

We concur with the other findings of Not Eligible for the properties over fifty years old within the Area of Potential Effects as described in the report on Page 6.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763 ext. 246. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr
Marvin A. Brown, URS Corporation

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bc: Brown/McBride
County

**PHASE II INTENSIVE-LEVEL
HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY
OF PROPOSED INTERIM IMPROVEMENTS
FOR PROTECTION OF NC 12 AT HATTERAS VILLAGE**

CREEDS HILL LIFESAVING STATION

**DARE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
TIP NO. R-3116B**

Prepared For:

**Office of Human Environment
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation
and
Federal Highway Administration**

Prepared By:

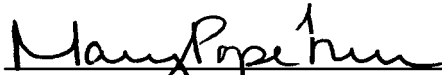
**URS Corporation – North Carolina
1600 Perimeter Park Drive
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**Marvin A. Brown
Principal Investigator**

December 2006



Marvin A. Brown, Principal Investigator **Date**
URS Corporation-North Carolina *12-28-06*



Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor **Date**
Historic Architectural Resources Section *1-16-2007*
North Carolina Department of Transportation

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

In August 2004 URS Corporation-North Carolina (URS) conducted a Phase I reconnaissance-level survey of architectural resources for proposed interim improvements for protection of NC 12 east of Hatteras Village in Dare County, North Carolina (TIP No. R-3116B). Within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE), URS identified three resources that appeared to be more than 50 years old. Two of these resources are located in the western third of the APE—a house on Queen Street and a cemetery on Burgobello Lane—and the third—the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station—is within the APE's eastern third.

On August 30, 2004, URS presented the results of its findings to representatives of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), the Federal Highway Administration, and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO). The parties agreed that, of the three resources, only the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station required a Phase II Intensive-Level investigation to determine whether it is eligible for National Register listing.

In March 2006, following receipt from NCDOT of a notice to proceed on the assessment of the Lifesaving Station, URS Senior Architectural Historian Marvin A. Brown conducted intensive-level fieldwork on Hatteras Island and associated research in Manteo, Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. As a result of that effort, reported herein, URS recommends that the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A, for its association with the history of lifesaving activities in the Outer Banks, and Criterion C, as in intact representative of a lifesaving station house and messroom.

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I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

This report was prepared by URS to support a study of proposed interim improvements for protection of NC 12 at Hatteras Village, Dare County, North Carolina (TIP No. R-3116B). The scope of work was devised after consultation with Mary Pope Furr of the Office of Human Environment, Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The fieldwork and research were conducted, and the report was prepared, by URS Senior Architectural Historian Marvin A. Brown.

A cultural resources survey within the Area of Potential Effects or APE associated with the proposed interim improvements project was necessary for compliance with the basic requirements of: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended; the Department of Transportation regulations and procedures (23 CFR 771 and Technical Advisory T 6640.8A); the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regulations on the "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR 800); and NCDOT's "Historic Architectural Resources, Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines."

In August 2004 URS conducted a Phase I reconnaissance-level survey of architectural resources for the proposed interim improvements project. Within the project's APE (Figure 1), URS identified three resources that appeared to be more than 50 years old. Two of these resources are located in the western third of the APE (Figure 2)—a house on Queen Street [A on Figure 2] and a cemetery on Burgobello Lane [B on Figure 2]. No resources are located along the sandy stretch of the central third of the APE (Figure 3). The third resource—the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station [C on Figure 4]—is within the APE's eastern third.

On August 30, 2004, URS presented the results of its findings to representatives of NCDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO). The parties agreed that, of the three resources, only the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station required a Phase II Intensive-Level investigation to determine whether it is eligible for National Register listing.

In March 2006, following receipt from NCDOT of a notice to proceed on the assessment of the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station, URS Senior Architectural Historian Marvin A. Brown conducted intensive-level fieldwork on Hatteras Island and associated research at the Outer Banks History Center and Dare County Courthouse in Manteo; the North Carolina HPO and the State Archives and Library in Raleigh; the Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill; and Perkins Library at Duke University in Durham. The efforts of maritime historian and preservationist Wick York were of particular help in preparing this report. His writings provided much of the general background, and his research at the Coast Guard Academy Library in New London, Connecticut, unearthed the numerous original drawings, some of which are included herein, of the Station. Also of assistance was Fred Peters, the Station's owner, who provided historical background assistance and arranged to have it opened for survey.

As a result of that effort, reported herein, URS recommends that the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A, for its association with the history of lifesaving activities in the Outer Banks, and Criterion C, as an intact representative of a lifesaving station house and messroom.

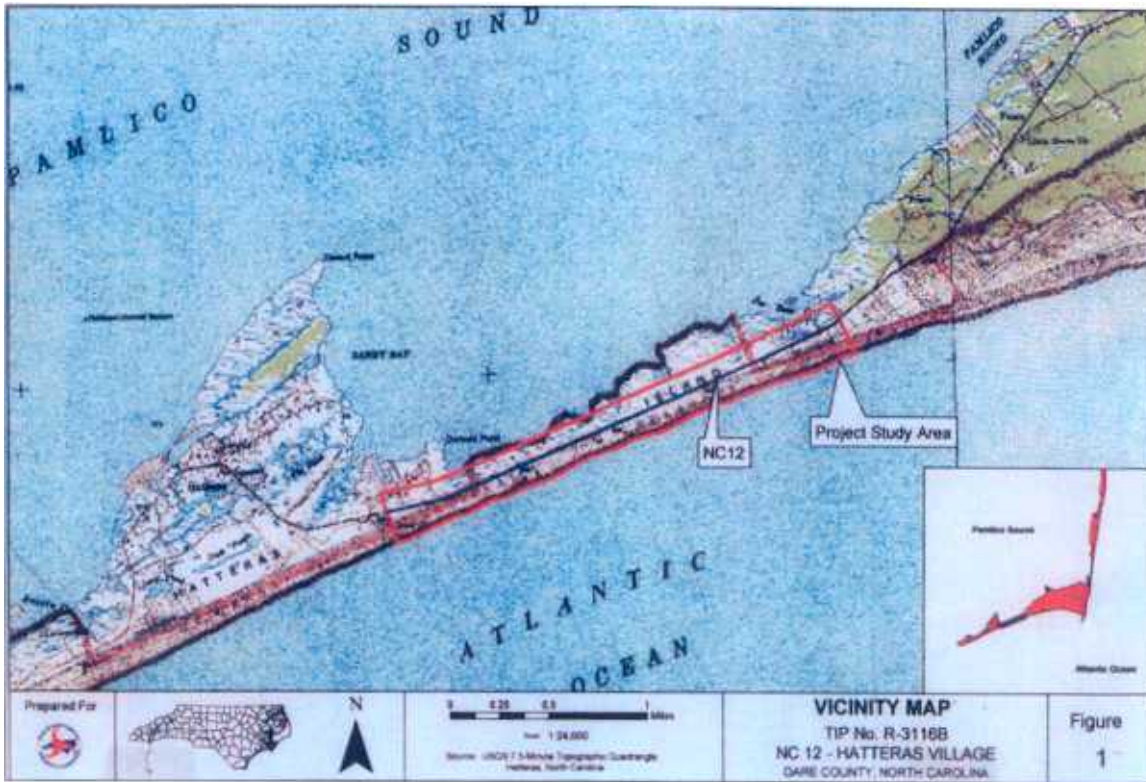


Figure 1: Project Locator Map – Note: Project Study Area is the Area of Potential Effects

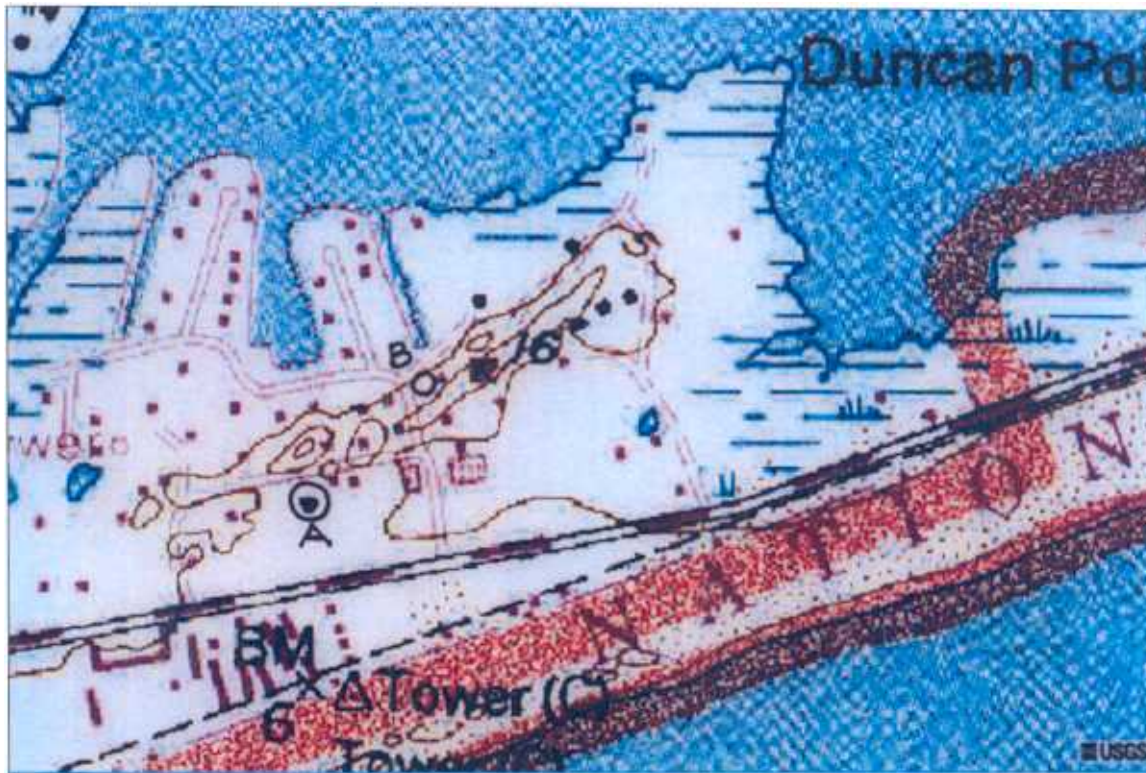


Figure 2: Western third of Area of Potential Effects

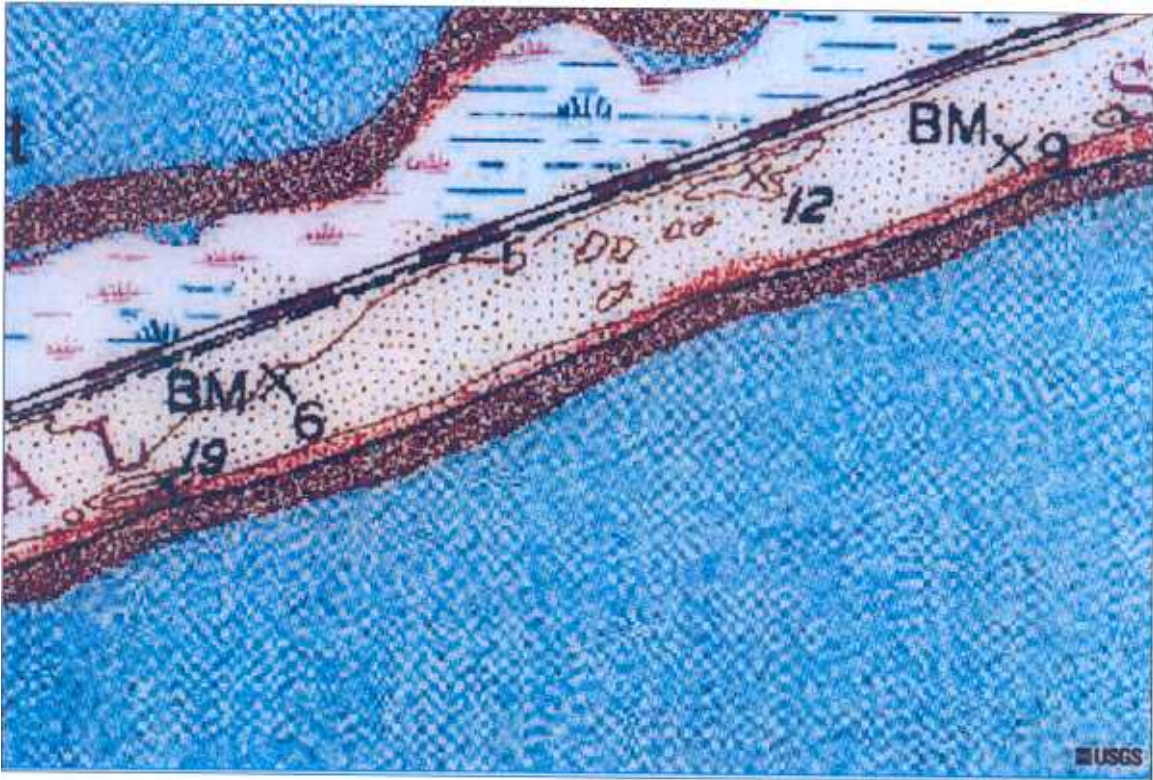


Figure 3: Central third of Area of Potential Effects

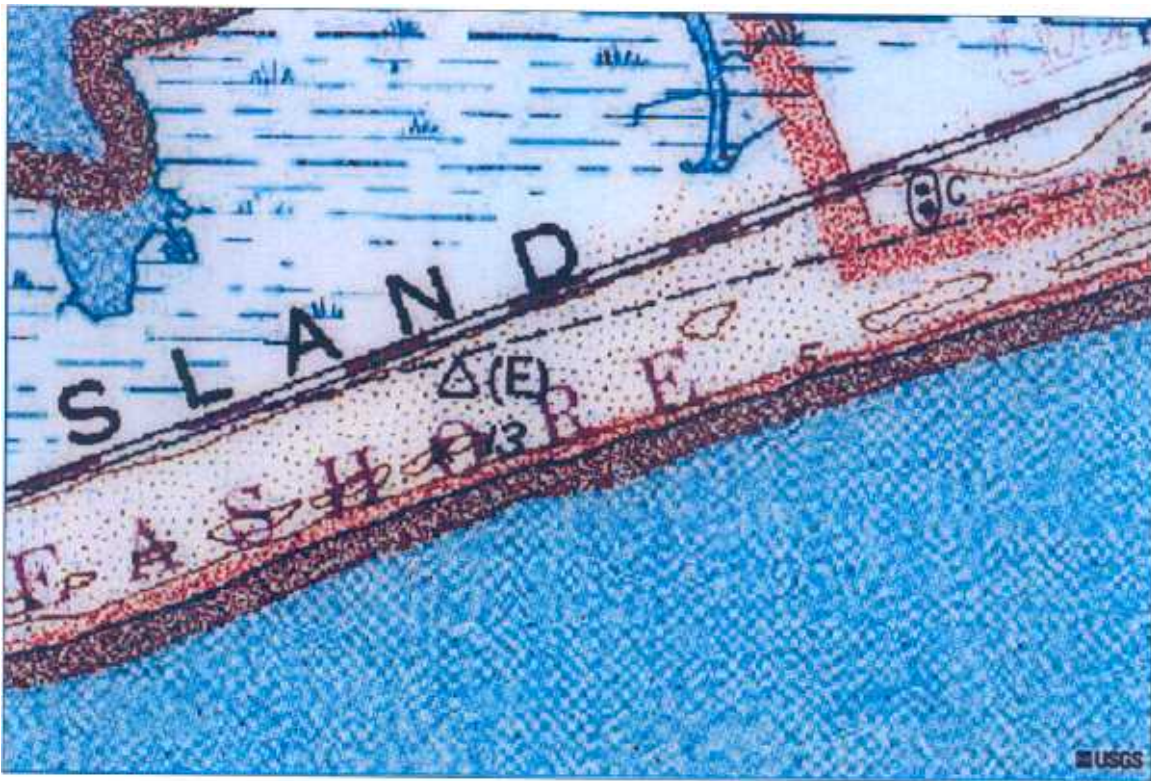


Figure 4: Eastern third of Area of Potential Effects

II. PROPERTY INVENTORY AND EVALUATION

CREEDS HILL LIFESAVING STATION

(South side of NC 12, 0.4 miles west of junction with Osprey Way,
Frisco vicinity, Dare County)

History

In response to the loss of salvable life and property, the federal government organized the United States Life-Saving Service within the Treasury Department in 1878. The Service soon established scores of life-saving stations, which “were designed to house paid crews with surfboats, a classic American life-saving approach.” In 1915, when the Life-Saving and Revenue Cutter services were joined as the U.S. Coast Guard, there were 279 lifesaving stations in the country (Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:13-17).

The Life-Saving Service was eventually divided into thirteen districts that bounded the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Great Lakes. The Seventh District served all of North Carolina and Virginia north to the Chesapeake Bay. Its 34 stations in 1914 were exceeded only by the Fifth District’s 41 stations, which dotted New Jersey’s shoreline. The Seventh District required so many stations because it served North Carolina’s Outer Banks, the “Graveyard of the Atlantic.” Twenty-nine of the Seventh District’s lifesaving stations served North Carolina’s coastline. Eleven, including Creeds Hill, were located on Hatteras Island (Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:133-43)¹.

There were two distinct Creeds Hill Lifesaving Stations located on different sites near the southwestern end of Hatteras Island. The first station was authorized in June 1878 and built in 1878-79. No longer extant, it was an 1876-Type station (Plate 1). The first station’s site was about two miles east of the current site on a rise of land, with woods to either side, called Creeds Hill. Though occupied by the station for about 30 years, the site was never officially acquired by the federal government (Harrison 1999; Chenery 2000:58).

The current Creeds Hill Station was placed on a narrower portion of Hatteras Island, allowing it to readily serve both sound and sea. The site was selected and title acquired in 1917, and the new station buildings were erected there in 1918. Buxton carpenter Rocky Rollinson, with a Joe Daily, reportedly built the Creeds Hill Station and, later, the Bodie Island Station (Baum et al. 1977:44-49). Historian Steve Harrison, who tabulated the US Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard accounts of Creeds Hill’s rescue and assistance activities from 1879 through 1931, notes that many of these activities provided “protection from coastal erosion... [and] occurred in the Pamlico Sound.” He continues:

It is also obvious that the life-saving crews performed a wide variety of duties, not all of them heroic but all of them very helpful to the vessel’s crew, passengers, and owners. One other point is that many of the station activities took place in the winter, partly because that is when the station was active in the early years, and partly because the Nor’easters which batter the Outer Banks were clearly more dangerous to shipping than hurricanes during the summer months.

¹ Hatteras’ 11 stations, heading south and west from Oregon Inlet to Hatteras Village, were Oregon Inlet (still extant); Pea Island (gone), famous as the only station in the country crewed from keeper on down by African-Americans; Chicamacomico (extant); New Inlet (gone); Gull Shoal (gone); Little Kinnakeet (extant); Big Kinnakeet (gone); Cape Hatteras (gone); Creeds Hill (extant); Durants (destroyed by Hurricane Isabel in September 2003); and Hatteras Inlet (gone).

The crew of the Creeds Hill station received numerous life-saving medals. Keeper Pat H. Etheridge was awarded a gold medal for the ocean rescue of nine members of the bark *Ephraim Williams* on December 22, 1884. For rescuing the crew of the steamer *Brewster* on the Inner Diamond Shoals on the evening of November 28, 1909, the German government awarded members of the Creeds Hill and nearby Cape Hatteras lifesaving crews watches and money: Creeds Hill Surfmen Horatio S. Miller and David E. Fulcher each received \$15, while Eugene H. Peel or Peele, the station's Keeper, was presented with a silver watch inscribed with the Imperial Eagle. In 1911 the federal government awarded lifesaving medals for the *Brewster* rescue: Peel received a gold medal and Surfmen Fulcher, Urias O. Gaskins, and Willie H. Austin received silver medals. Following the rescue of the five crewmen of the trawler *Anna May*, which sank on Diamond Shoals on December 9, 1931, Chief Boatswain Mates Monroe Gilliken and Erskine Oden were awarded silver lifesaving medals (Harrison 1999; U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office).

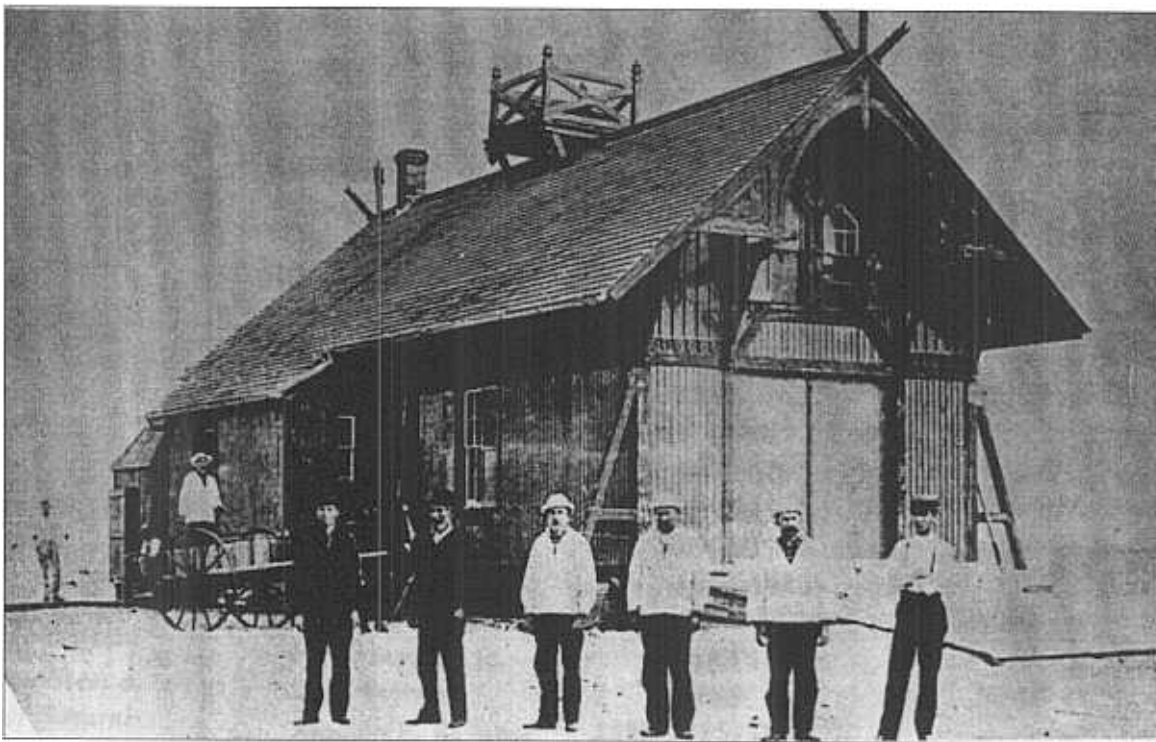


Plate 1: Crew and boathouse of first Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station (Source: Couch, Price, and Shawn 1977 (Sea Chest), p.60)

The federal government gave up its ownership of the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station in 1947. The Declaration of Abandonment, which was recorded at the Dare County Register of Deeds Office on June 6 (Dare County Deed Book 33/Page 18), avowed:

WHEREAS, the United States of America does not now use or occupy, and has no need for or intention of using or occupying the premises as above described:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, E.H. FOLEY, JR., Acting Secretary of the Treasury, finding that the interests of commerce and humanity no longer require the use and occupation of the hereinbefore described parcel of land, do hereby relinquish and abandon forever any right, title or interest that the United States acquired in and to said tract or parcel of land.

On that same day in June, U.L and Lois Rollinson, John and Pauline Rollinson, and ten other individuals—who bore the common Outer Banks’ surnames of Balance, Basnett, O’Neal, and Rollinson and who were likely all members of the Rollinson family—sold their interest in the lifesaving station property to Frederick H. Peters for \$10 and other consideration (Dare County Deed Book 42/Page 324). No deed indicates how the property came into the hands of the Rollinson family, but it may have reverted to them as previous owners.

Frederick H. Peters, Sr., was not a Banker. He lived in Richmond, Virginia. According to his son, Clint Peters, he regularly visited the Banks to hunt, reaching his temporary lodgings in Hatteras Village by the ferry from Engelhard across the Pamlico Sound. After he acquired the decommissioned station, he tore down its tower, but gave many of its buildings to local residents. Part of one of the complex’s original cisterns, Clint Peters notes, still stands adjacent to the Frisco Indian Museum, about a mile to the east (Peters 2006). The property remains in the hands of Fred Peters’ children, who, as did their father, maintain permanent residence in Richmond.

Description

Creeds Hill was a Chatham-Type station designed by Life-Saving Service architect Victor Mendleheff. (The first of the 30 to 40 known stations of this type was erected at Chatham, Massachusetts, hence its name.²) Little is known of Mendleheff, whose records and name are absent from Treasury Department files and architectural and biographical sources. He left a strong mark, however, with his numerous lifesaving station designs, which began with his Peterson Point-Type stations in 1897 and culminated about 1914 in his Chatham-Type stations (Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:237-41; Pinyerd 2000:74).

York and Shanks, in their history of the Life-Saving Service’s buildings (Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:241) note Mendleheff’s disappearance in the historical record, but continue: “While in the Service...he was the most prolific of all of its architects, staying the longest and producing the most designs.” Chatham-Type stations were generally two-story, frame, five-bay, gable-on-hip buildings with a Tuscan columned portico or enclosed three-bay entrance porch. However, as Pinyerd (2000:259) notes in his account of Oregon’s lifesaving stations, it is tough to buttonhole the appearance of the Chatham-Type station, for “Mendleheff tinkered with the Chatham-type plans continually. At first glance, the Chatham-type stations all look alike. But when compared in detail, there is tremendous variety.” In comparing the Siuslaw River Lifeboat Station in Oregon with the no-longer-extant Hatteras Inlet Station, Pinyerd (2000:259-60) identifies differences in porch width, entries, window sash, and floor plan. Of the importance, rather than just the appearance, of the Chatham-Type design, he notes:

The station marked a sudden departure from the one-and-one-half story stations that had been the hallmark of the Life-Saving Service and brought the station to a full two stories in height. This departure aligns with the decade by decade trend of giving the crew more livable space. The Chatham-type was used on both East and West Coasts marking the first time since the Marquette-type stations of a standard, nationwide architecture. The

² The number of Chatham-Type stations has not been precisely determined. In 1996 Wick York and Ralph Shanks (Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:241) reported there were 26, but David Pinyerd, in his later thesis on Oregon’s lifesaving stations, stated that “[a]t least 30” were built. Pinyerd notes that, due to the continuing categorization and inventorying efforts of York and Shanks, “the number of known Chatham stations is continuing to increase... (Pinyerd 2000:74, 259). Indeed, in a paper delivered at the 6th Maritime Heritage Conference in Wilmington NC in October 2001, York placed the number at “more than 40” (York 2001).

two-story Chatham design cast a new mold that was to dominate Coast Guard architecture through the 1940s (Pinyerd (2000:73)).

Seven of North Carolina's lifesaving stations were Chatham-Types, including the Hatteras Island stations of Big Kinnakeet, Hatteras Inlet, and Creeds Hill (Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:248).

The Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station was established on a 500-foot-wide lot that extended 1,100 feet from the high-water mark of the Atlantic on the south to the marshes of the Pamlico Sound on the north. Two 1917 site maps—one from January, the other from April—depict its original resources (Figures 5 and 6). Sixty feet above the ocean's high-water mark stood the boathouse. A lookout tower rose a short distance to the boathouse's west, also only 60 feet from high water. To their north 130 feet, further from the water, rose a flag tower. Well back on the beach, about 700 feet from high-waters' edge, were the station house and freestanding messroom, both of which still stand on their original sites. They shared a cesspool to their west and a privy to their north. Tucked into the northeastern corner of the lot, closest to the sound and across the road from the other buildings, was the stable. At least two round wooden cisterns, not depicted on the site plans but included in part on other drawings, stood just beyond the northeastern corner of the station house.

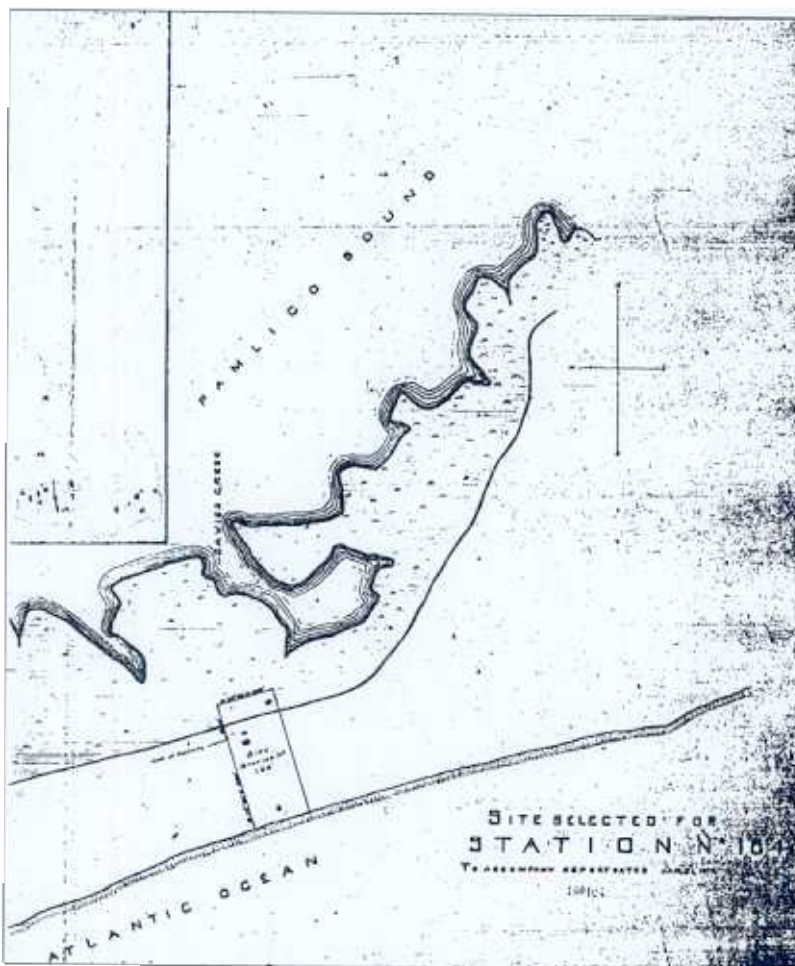


Figure 5: Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station site within rectangle at lower left, as drawn in January 1917, with boathouse at ocean, station house and messroom at road, and stable near sound (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)

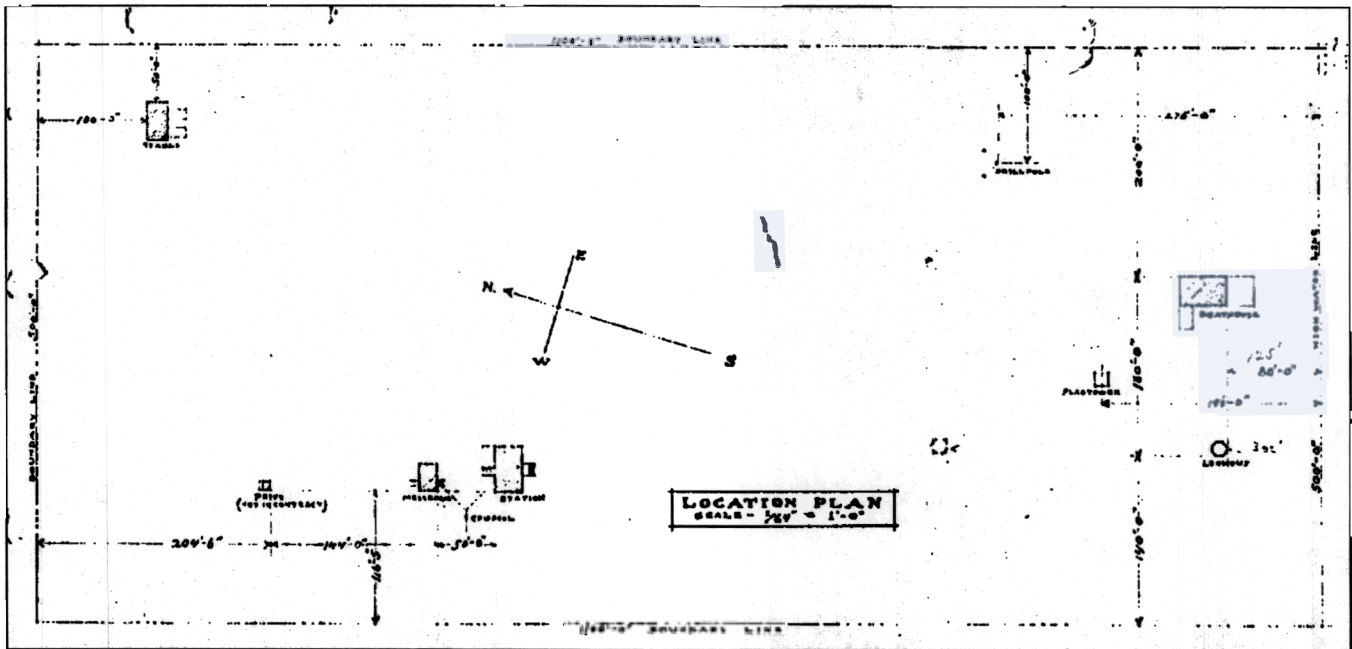


Figure 6: Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station plan as drawn in April 1917, with boathouse and round lookout tower at right at ocean; flag tower to their rear; station house beneath west arrow, with messroom and then privy to its rear; and stable at upper left (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)

Renderings and a few historic photographs memorialize the appearance of the no-longer-extant resources. The boathouse, according to the drawings, was a rectangular, frame, one-story building with six-over-two sash and a gable-on-hip roof like that of the station building (Figure 7). Whether the roof was built as designed or rebuilt following a storm is unclear, for a 1942 photograph of the northwest corner of the building depicts a gable-end structure. (That photograph also depicts a later frame shed to the north and three men and a paravane (Plate 2).³ The original lookout tower, as drawn, was about 45 feet tall. Its lookout room stood 27 feet above the sand on four steel beams. Its stair, which came up through its floor—it had no balcony—switched back through two landings between the beams. The lookout peered through windows of polished plate glass. A pointed tin roof splayed out over the windows and rose to a pointed peak crowned with galvanized sheet metal. By 1930 the tower had apparently been supplanted by one with a hipped roof and balcony standing just east of the station house and messroom (Plate 3). (Clint Peters believes the footings of the tower, which was removed by his father, remain in place beneath the sand (Peters 2006).)

Drawings of the privy depict a one-story, frame, gable-end, board-and-batten building with two doors. One door led into the “crew’s toilet,” which had two side-by-side galvanized containers. The other opened in the private “keeper’s toilet.” A historic photograph depicts the doors of the privy facing the station building (Plate 4). The stable survives only in drawings. It was a gable-end, rectangular, board-and-batten, frame building with three principal rooms—two box stalls and a cart room (Figure 8).

³ Reflecting the increased duties and dangers of wartime service at lifesaving stations is the paravane, “a torpedo-shaped protective device with serrate teeth in its forward end used underwater by a ship in mined areas to sever the moorings of mines” according to Webster’s *Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.

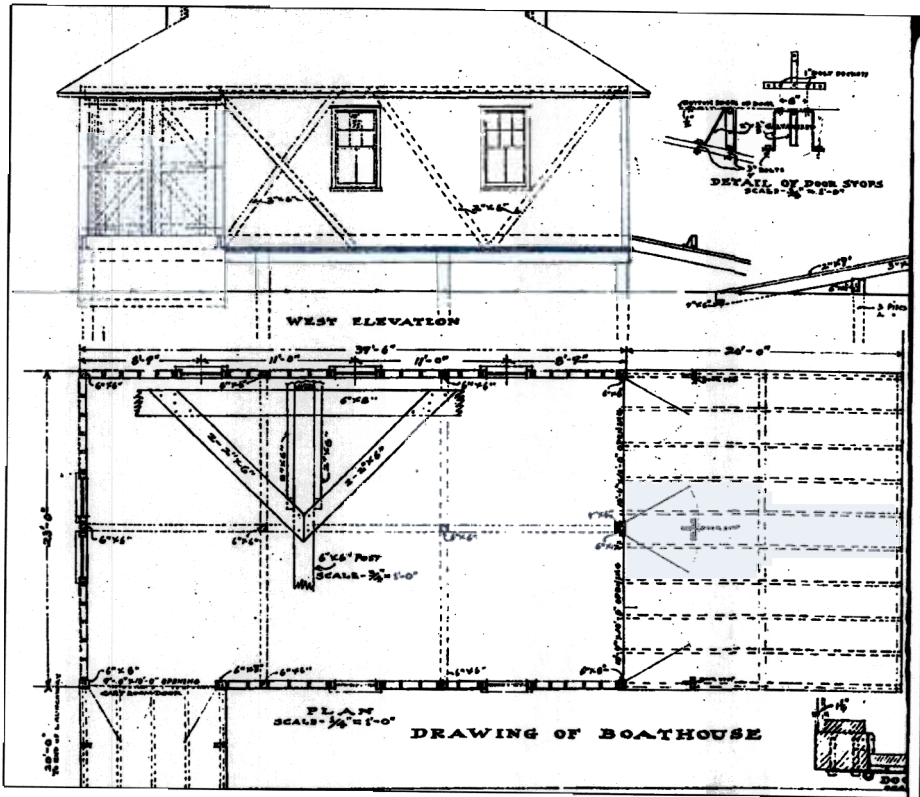


Figure 7: Original drawing of west elevation of boathouse (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)

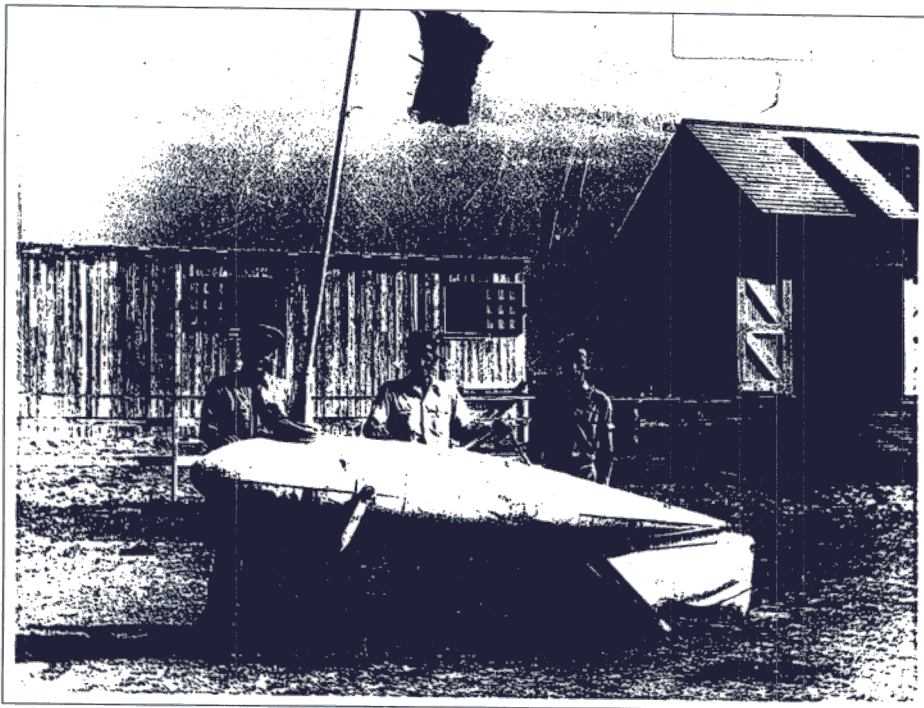


Plate 2: 1942 image of boathouse at left, later-constructed shed at right, and paravane with crew at center (Source: Outer Banks History Center)



Plate 3: 1930 image of front (ocean) elevation of station house at right with later lookout tower at left (Source: Chenery, *Old Coast Guard Stations*, p.57)



Plate 4: Undated image of later lookout tower at left, station house at center, cisterns at right center, and privy at right (Source: Outer Banks History Center)

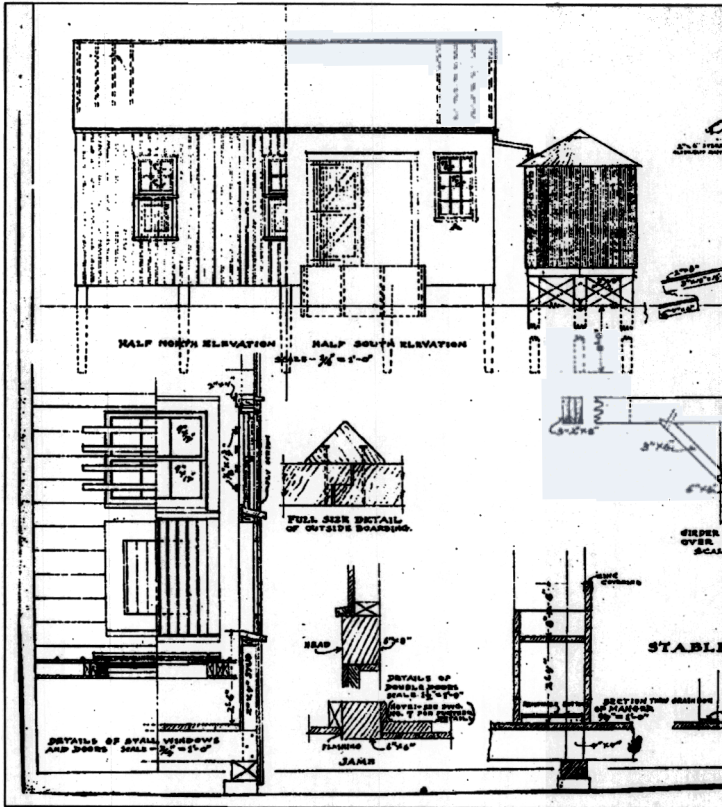


Figure 8: Original drawing of stable (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)

Fortunately drawings and historic photographs of the two extant buildings—the station house and the messroom—survive. They were apparently built as drawn and have been very little altered. The station house is a five- (and six-) bay wide, two-bay deep, two-story frame building (Figures 9 and 10). It is raised off the sand on brick piers, sided with weatherboards, and topped by a gable-on-hip, asphalt-shingled roof. Its “front elevation,” as described in the plans, faces south toward the ocean. The elevation’s centered porch, which is edged by square columns and topped by a hipped roof, was originally enclosed with thin glassed and/or screened walls. These were apparently designed to be removable, for slots for their framing are visible at the porch columns and entablature, and two historic photographs alternatively depict them in and not in place. (Also removed from the porch, or worn away by the weather, is the legend “U.S. Coast Guard.”) The remainder of the front elevation is simply marked by weatherboards, a board slightly raised at the level of the second-story window sills, and original six-over-two sash (Plates 5 and 6).

The station house’s other elevations are marked in a fashion almost identical to that of the front (Plates 7 through 9). The watertable board continues around their second stories. They are weatherboarded. The east and west side elevations have two bays, down and up, filled with six-over-two sash. And five bays with six-over-two sash cross the second story of the north rear elevation. The first-story of the rear elevation differs in a few details from that of the front. It is six bays wide, with six-over-two end windows; three smaller, interior, four-over-one windows; and a narrow, enclosed, off-center porch that shields the entry into the rear of the house. The porch is topped by a hipped roof that extends, on triangular knee braces, over its replaced exterior door. Two interior, corbelled, brick chimney stacks are centered at the ridge of the house’s gable-end, asphalt-shingled roof. Fixed windows are tucked into the clipped gable peaks.

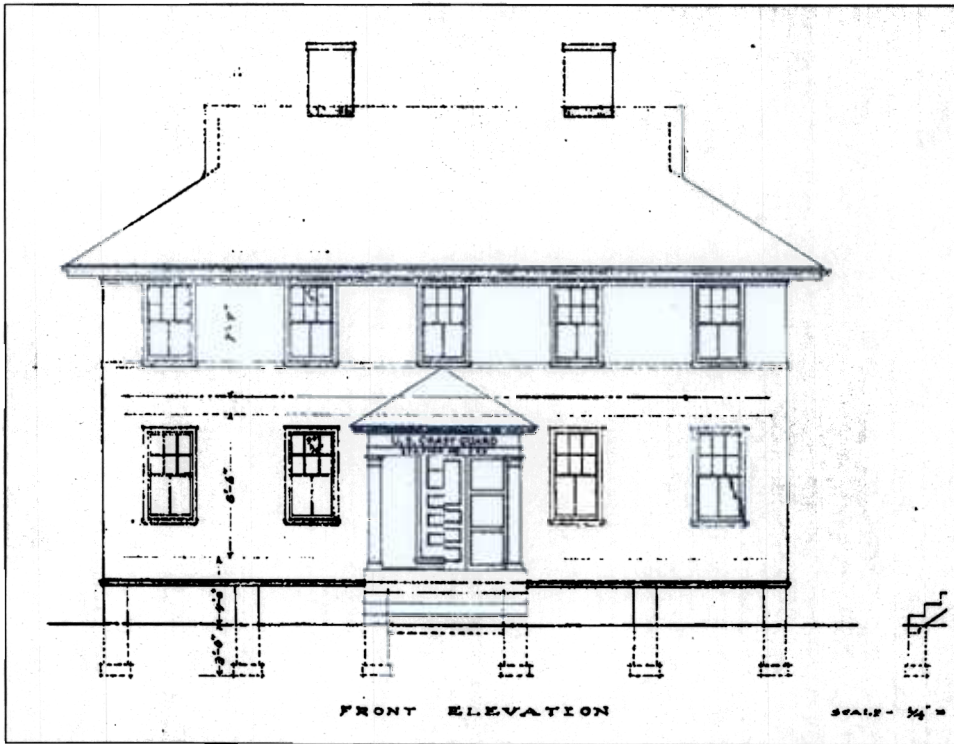


Figure 9: Original drawing of front (south ocean-facing) elevation of station house (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)

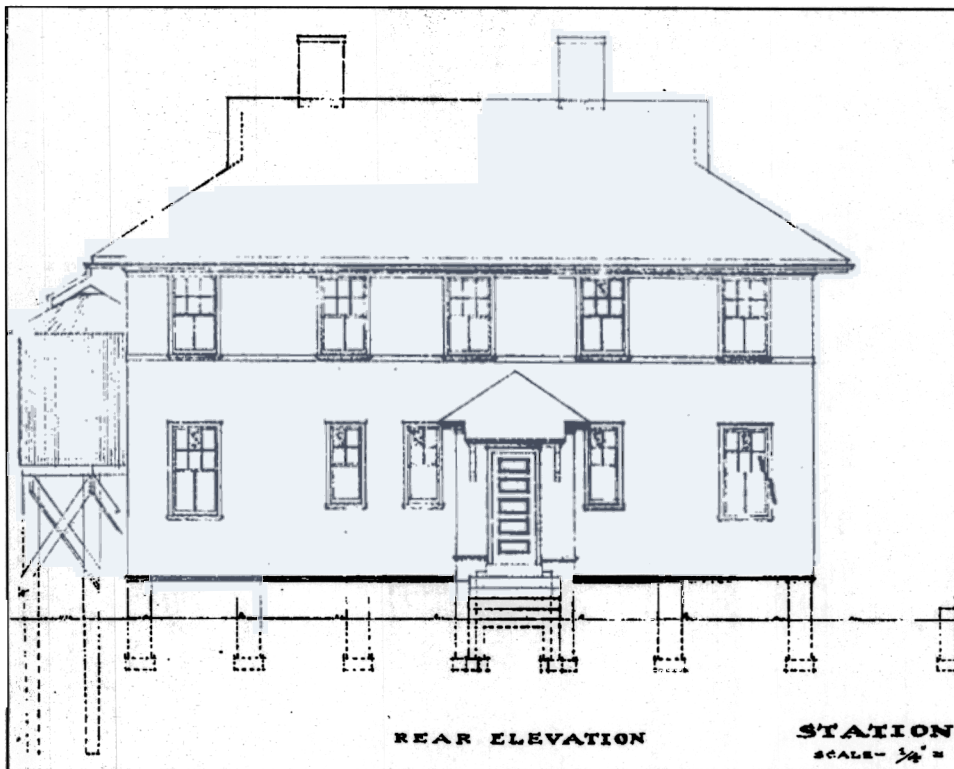


Figure 10: Original drawing of rear (north sound-facing) elevation of station house; note cistern at left (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)

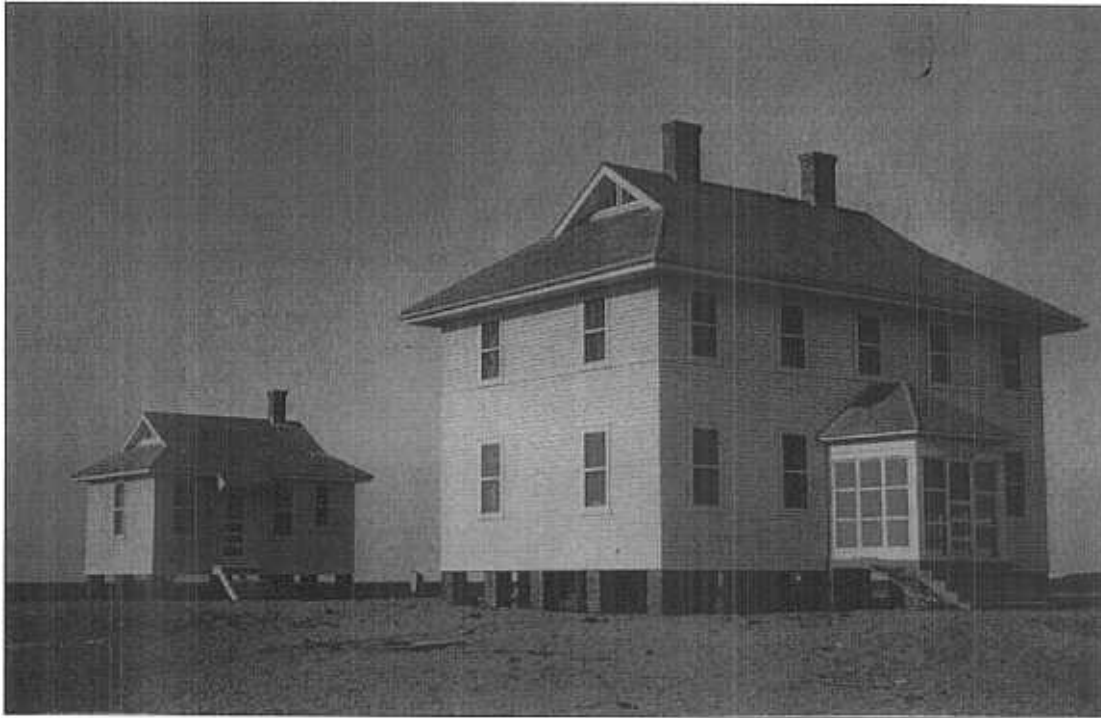


Plate 5: Undated image of south front and west side elevations of station house and messroom; note enclosed front porch (Source: unidentified)



Plate 6: December 2004 image of south front and west side elevations of station house and messroom



Plate 7: December 2004 image of south front and east side elevations of station house and messroom



Plate 8: December 2004 image of north rear and east side elevations of station house



Plate 9: December 2004 image of north rear and west side elevations of station house

The station house's interior is little altered (Figures 11 and 12). The Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard maintained it as it was and its only subsequent owners, the Peters family, have found the arrangement largely in keeping with their use of the building as a beach retreat. The plan of the first floor, including a front and rear hall and the rear mud room, depicts 11 numbered rooms. It does not label the rooms, but a labeled plan for the similar, contemporary Chatham-Type Hatteras Inlet Station on Ocracoke Island suggests their use. (Room names following are taken from the Ocracoke plans.)

Room 1 of the Creeds Hill station house was the front hall, which opened to a stair with closely spaced stick balusters (Plate 10). Room 2 was likely the "Crew's Room" and Room 3 the "Spare Room" (Plate 11). Number 4 was likely the "Storm Clothes Room." Rooms 5 and 8, which have had their fixtures upgraded, were bathrooms, literally, each with a tub and sink. Rooms 6 and 7, which were not present at the Hatteras Inlet Station, were a mudroom/storage room on the porch and a rear hall room (Plates 13 and 14). Room 9 was likely the keeper's room (the adjacent bathroom was likely his alone). This room has been converted into a kitchen (Plate 12). The functions of Rooms 10 and 11 are not clear (Plate 15). At the Hatteras Inlet and Wash Woods stations this corner of the building was occupied by a single room that served as the station's office. One of the rooms likely served this function; the other was probably used for storage. The second story of the station house, like that of the Hatteras Inlet Station, has five rooms. Room 12 was (and is) a hall (Plate 16). Rooms 13, 14, 15, and 16 were each a "Surfmen's Room" (Plates 17 and 18). Stairs continue from the hall to a floored, but otherwise unfinished, attic.

The interior finish of the station house appears to be original. It is marked by plastered walls and ceilings, but for the beaded walls of the mudroom, and wooden floors, baseboards, and plain surrounds. Upstairs are five-panel doors and downstairs, generally, doors with three panels topped by a tall panel of "obscure" or opaque glass, now painted over. The panels and glazing, as depicted in the drawings, are set one above the other.

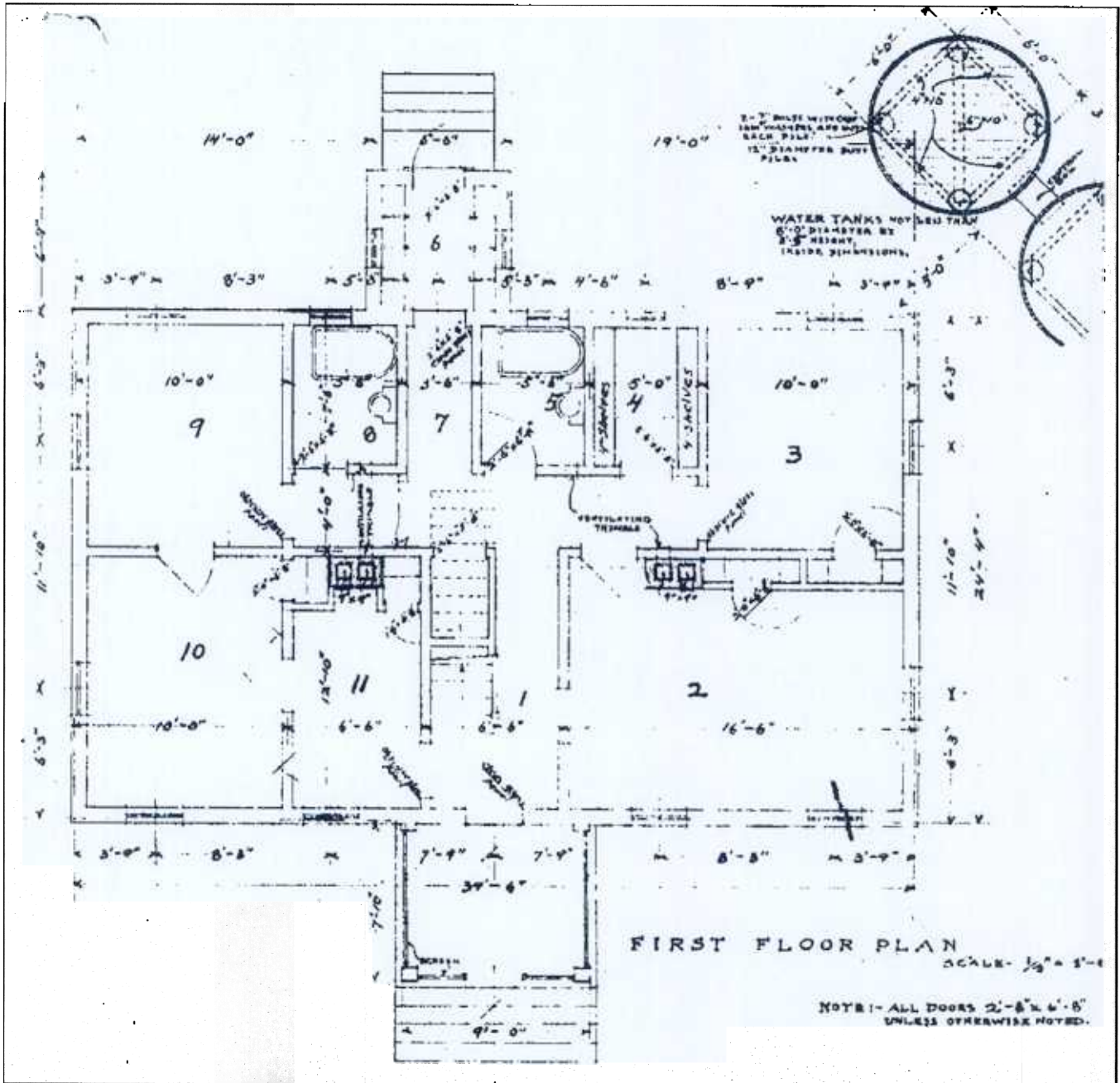


Figure 11: Original drawing of first-floor plan of station house (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)

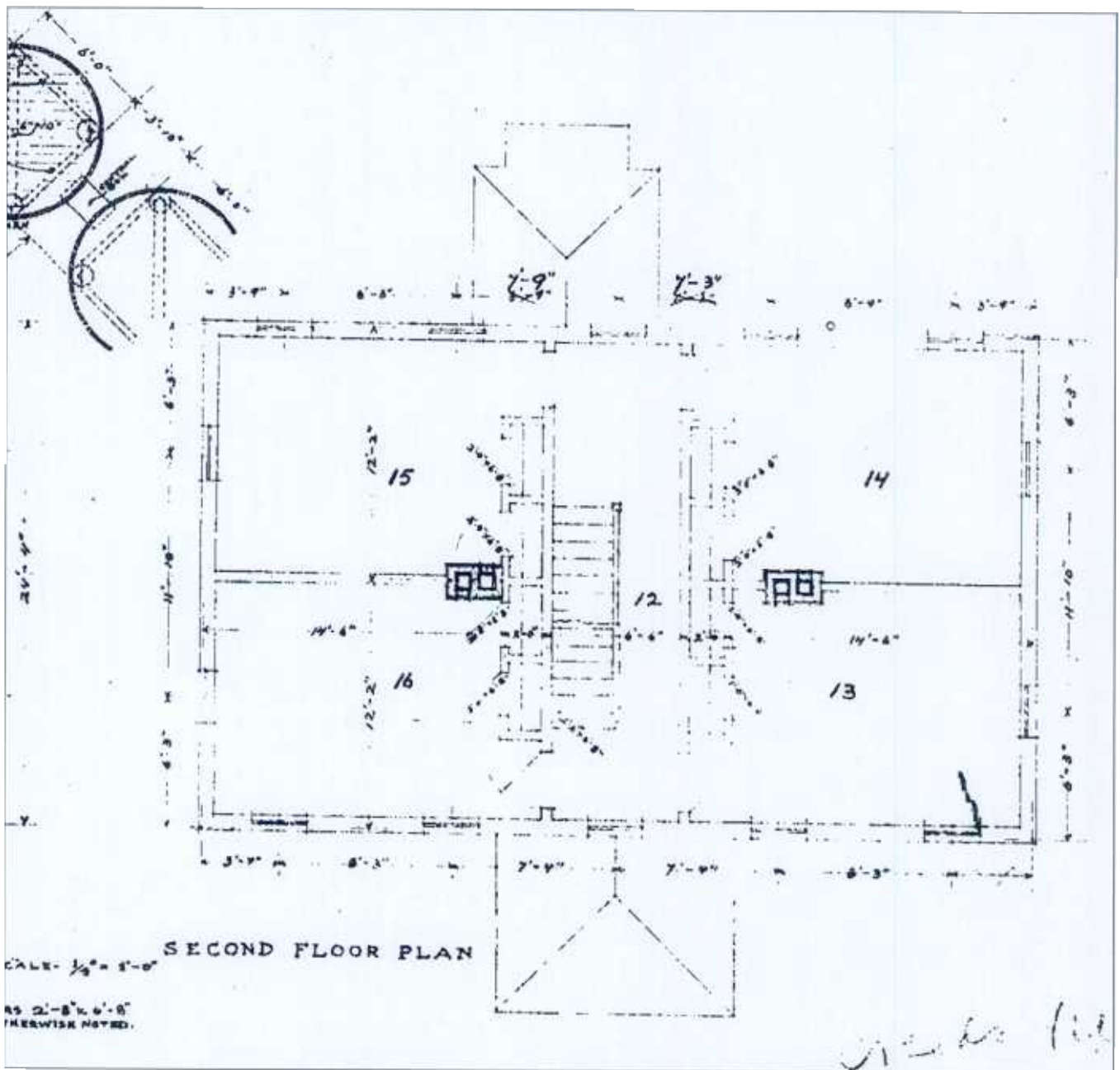


Figure 12: Original drawing of second-floor plan of station house (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)



Plate 10: Front stair hall (Room 1) in March 2006



Plate 11: Spare room (Room 3) in March 2006



Plate 12: Former keeper's room, now kitchen (Room 9) in March 2006



Plate 13: View from mudroom (Room 12) into rear hall (Room 7) March 2006



Plate 14: View from former keeper's room (Room 9) through rear hall (Room 7) to spare room (Room 3) in March 2006



Plate 15: Former station office (?) (Room 10) in March 2006



Plate 16: Second-floor hall (Room 12) in March 2006



Plate 17: Surfmen's room (Room 14), including original closets and doors, in March 2006



Plate 18: Surfmen's room (Room 15), including original closets, doors, and sash, in March 2006

The frame, freestanding messroom is a small version of the station house (Figure 13 and Plates 19 through 21). It is raised on brick piers; sided with weatherboards; lit by six-over-two and smaller four-over-one sash; and topped by a gable-on-hip roof with a single, corbelled, brick chimney stack. Its two exterior doors have been replaced. Inside, the messroom retains its original three rooms—the larger “mess room” into which the doors open, and a back-to-back storeroom and pantry to one side (Plate 22). It also retains its beaded-board walls and ceiling and, in the mess room, its original ceiling scuttle. (The former Wash Woods Coast Guard station, just south of the Virginia border, retains its messroom as well (Sandbeck 2001).)

One surprising inconsistency between drawings and historic photographs of the station house and messroom, and their current appearance, is the presence, or lack thereof, of shutters. They are not depicted in the early images and there is no evidence for the presence of interior shutters. Yet, not surprisingly, the buildings as they currently stand are served by weather-tight exterior wooden shutters.

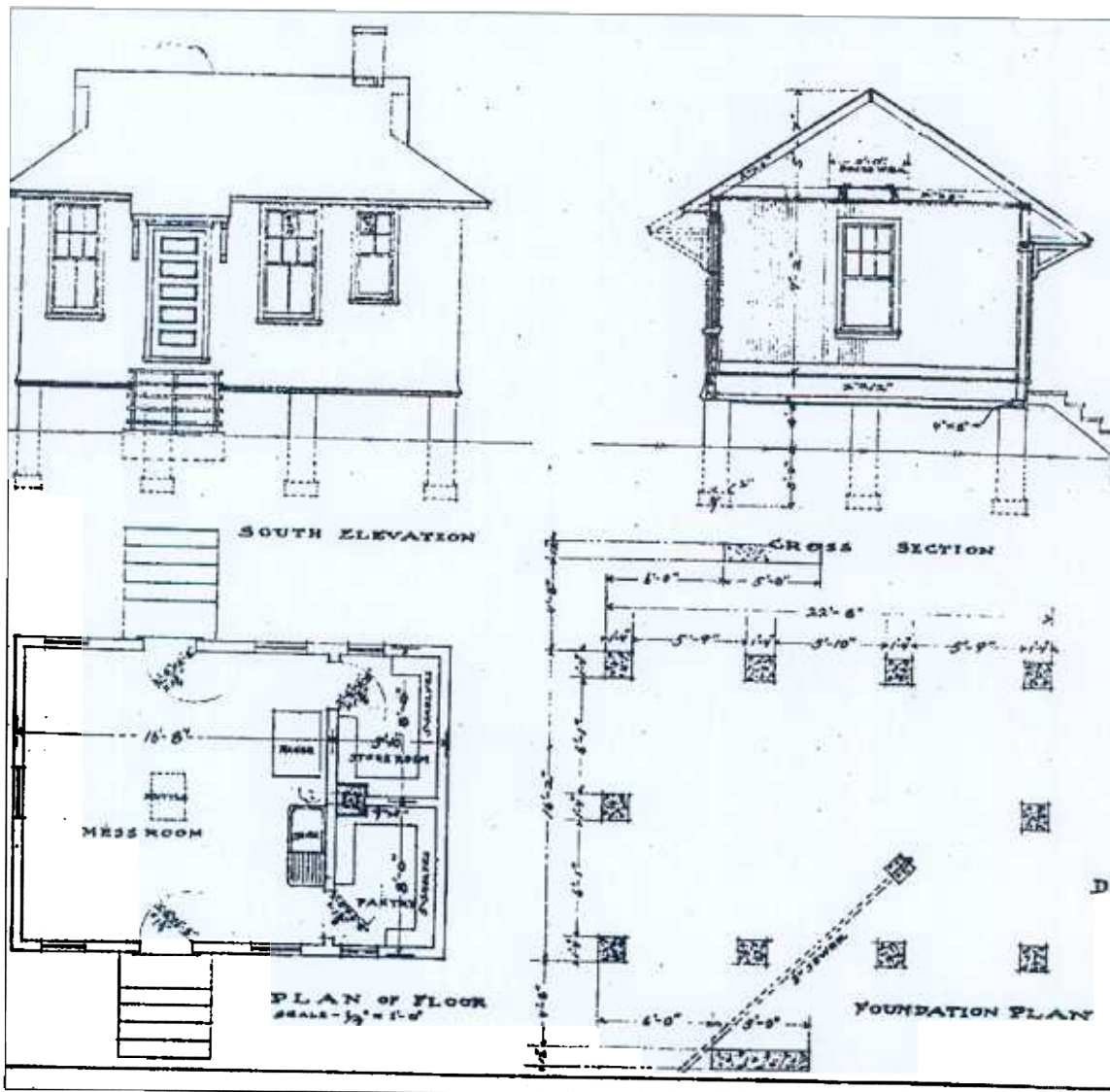


Figure 13: Original drawing of messroom (Source: Coast Guard Academy Library)



Plate 19: North rear and west side elevations of messroom in March 2006



Plate 20: North rear and east side elevations of messroom in March 2006



Plate 21: South front and west side elevations of messroom in March 2006



Plate 22: Looking from mess room toward storeroom at left and pantry at right in March 2006

Significance

York and Shanks summarize the significance, in general, of the U.S. Life-Saving Service and its stations in North Carolina:

The Life-Saving Service would become an honored way of life on the Outer Banks. Large extended local families—the Midgetts, Etheridges and other—produced numerous sons who became surfmen and keepers. The Life-Saving Service became a part of the local heritage, a very symbol of the region (Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:133)

On Hatteras Island, four stations with various degrees of integrity are extant: Oregon Inlet, Chicamacomico, Little Kinnakeet, and Creeds Hill. The two surviving buildings of the Creeds Hill Station—the station house and messroom—have been little altered, have not been moved, and retain their orientation to the ocean, the sound, and the road within a partially undeveloped setting. They therefore retain all of their seven elements of National Register integrity—location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. They have not been moved, they still look out on the Atlantic in one direction and the Pamlico Sound in the other, they have been little altered, and they strongly evoke the Life-Saving Service by their very presence. (The removal of the other buildings on the property does not diminish the overall integrity of the resource.) The Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station is, accordingly, recommended as eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A, for its association with the U.S. Life-Saving Service and Coast Guard on the Outer Banks, and under Criterion C, as an unusually intact representative of station house and messroom architecture. Although the men who lived at and served the Station were important figures within the community of Hatteras Island, and were often heroic, they are not believed to have achieved the significance necessary for eligibility of the resource under Criterion B. The Station is also not believed to be eligible under Criterion C as part of any historic district, as its nearest neighbors are modern beach houses. The resource is recommended as National Register-eligible under the particular Areas of Significance of Architecture and Maritime History. This significance is believed to be Local. Its significant dates are recommended as the years from 1918, when it was constructed, to 1946, when it was decommissioned.

Boundaries

The proposed National Register boundary for the Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station (Figure 14) comprises:

- (1) The parcel, which extends to either side of NC 12, upon which the station house and messroom are located. This parcel is Dare County parcel number 015609000;
- (2) The section of NC 12 that divides parcel 015609000; and
- (3) A section of Dare County parcel number 015610000, immediately to the south of parcel 015609000, which extends to the edge of the ocean.

This boundary essentially encompasses the same 1,100'-x-500' parcel (approximately 12.6 acres) that was originally associated with the Station (Plates 23 through 26).



Figure 14: Proposed National Register boundaries in red; note Atlantic Ocean at south and Pamlico sound at northwest, and station house and messroom at left below NC 12 (Source: Dare County tax maps)



Plate 23: Looking northeast from ocean strand toward station house and messroom at left, and modern development on both sides of NC 12 at right, in April 2006



Plate 24: Looking north from messroom to sound side of property, on opposite side of NC 12, in March 2006



Plate 25: Looking southwest toward messroom, station house, and ocean from sound side of property, on north side of NC 12, in March 2006



Plate 26: Looking south from approximate location of stable on sound side of property toward station house in March 2006

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