LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

NUMBER 12

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

See National Register file for Ft. Taber District Listed 2/8/73

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Leslie Fox - MHC - 1981

1. Clark's Point Light atop Ft. Taber

HISTORIC NAME: Clark's Point Light

TOWN: New Bedford

LOCATION: Wharf Road

COUNTY: Bristol CODE: 005

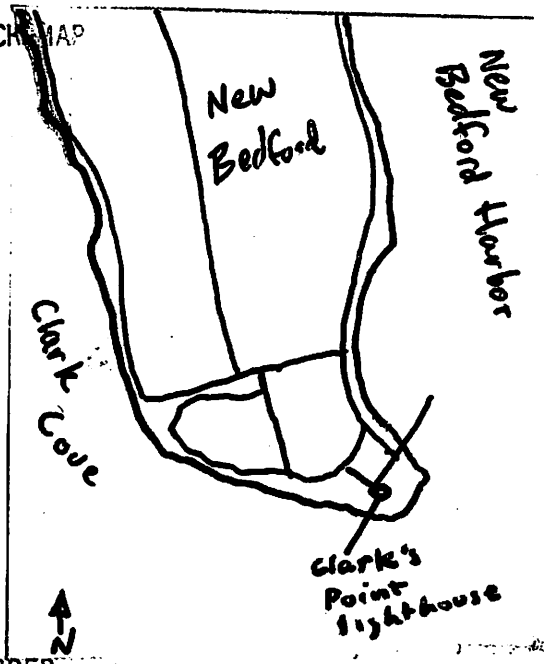
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 10

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

refer to NR nomination

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

SKETCH MAP



LAT./LONG.:

UTM COORDINATE: 19/341/400/4606/400

USGS QUADRANGLE: Prov.,RI., Mass., Conn.

SCALE: 1:250,000

ACREAGE: see NR

OWNER(S): City of New Bedford
Chairperson John K. Bullard
Board of Selectmen, 133
William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

STATUS:

RECORDED in NR nomination

ORGANIZATION: MHC

DATE: 1973

5/4/87

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries — complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts
COUNTY: Bristol
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE: —

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Fort Taber District
AND OR HISTORIC: Fort at Clark's Point

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Wharf Road (within Fort Rodman Military Reservation)
CITY OR TOWN: New Bedford
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: District 12
STATE: Massachusetts — CODE: 025
COUNTY: Bristol — CODE: 005

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☒ District ☐ Building	☒ Public	Public Acquisition:	☐ Occupied	Yes:
☐ Site ☐ Structure	☐ Private	☐ In Process	☐ Unoccupied	☒ Restricted
☐ Object	☐ Both	☐ Being Considered	☒ Preservation work in progress	☐ Unrestricted
				☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☒ Park	☐ Transportation	☒ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other (Specify)	now being
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		rehabilitated
☐ Entertainment	☒ Museum	☐ Scientific		for uses checked

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Custody of General Services Administration, Northeast Region
STREET AND NUMBER: Post Office and Courthouse
CITY OR TOWN: Boston
STATE: Massachusetts — CODE: 025

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Planning Department, City of New Bedford
STREET AND NUMBER: Municipal Building, William Street
CITY OR TOWN: New Bedford
STATE: Massachusetts — CODE: 025

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Fort Taber Historical Site
DATE OF SURVEY: August, 1972 ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☒ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Planning Department, City of New Bedford
STREET AND NUMBER: Municipal Building, William Street
CITY OR TOWN: New Bedford
STATE: Massachusetts — CODE: 025

STATE: Mass.
COUNTY: Bristol
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER:
DATE:

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	[ ] Excellent	[*] Good	[ ] Fair	[ ] Deteriorated	[ ] Ruins	[ ] Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	[ ] Altered	[*] Unaltered	[ ] Moved	[*] Original Site.		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Fort Taber District, located in Fort Rodman Military Reservation on Clark's Point, New Bedford, includes six significant structures--Fort Taber and five major gun emplacements. Wharf Road, the primary access to the district, parallels Battery Barton-Walcott (2), Battery Gaston and the fort itself; a macadam road gives access to Battery Cross, Battery Craig and Battery Barton-Walcott (1). The area surrounding the district consists of sea-level plain with scattered patches of grass and Austrian pine. A water treatment plant (not included in this submission) has recently been constructed at the tip of Clark's Point, directly south-east of the fort.

Fort Taber is a seven-sided structure with a five-sided interior court. It is three stories high, constructed of large, rectangular blocks of hand-cut granite set in regular patterns. The depth of the fort from the exterior to the interior wall is about forty-five feet; the terreplein consists of earth fill approximately two and one-half to four feet deep. The seaward elevations of the fort (north-east, south-east and south sides) are broken by "Totten-class" embrasures, believed to be the only example of this class of gunport in the New England region. The landward elevation of the fort (north-west side) is broken by musketry loopholes and a massive sally-port (the only entrance to the structure) which is flanked by pilasters supporting an entablature and a low pediment.

The interior wall on four sides of the court consists of a series of large arches each one forming one side of an interior room with granite walls and an arched brick ceiling covered with mastic. These rooms were used for artillery deployment and ammunition storage. The fifth (north-west) side, once used as barracks, has a rhythmic pattern of door and window openings which give out onto a balcony supported by fluted steel columns with leaf-like designs on the capitals. The interior walls of the fort are surrounded at the top by a steel cat-walk mounted on brackets. There are two interior spiral stairways, constructed of hand-cut triangular pieces of granite. The structure remains in good repair, though a few granite blocks in isolated sections have been pulled apart at the construction joints by the formation of ice during the winter months.

All five gun emplacements are constructed of reinforced concrete with asphaltic expansion joints and are faced with earth; all have steel and iron hardware. Batterires Barton-Walcott (1) and (2) were built in 1898-99; ordnance consisted of one 8-inch disappearing rifle at each emplacement. Battery Gaston was built in 1899-1900; ordnance consisted of two 3-inch rapid-fire rifles on balanced-pillar mounts. Batteries Craig and Cross were built between 1899 and 1901; ordnance at each emplacement consisted of two 5-inch rapid-fire rifles mounted on barbette-carriages.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

[ ] Pre-Columbian	[ ] 16th Century	[X] 18th Century	[X] 20th Century
[ ] 15th Century	[ ] 17th Century	[X] 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1861, 1898-1901

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	[ ] Education	[ ] Political	[ ] Urban Planning
[ ] Prehistoric	[ ] Engineering	[ ] Religion/Philosophy	[X] Other *(Specify)* recreation
[ ] Historic	[ ] Industry	[ ] Science	
[ ] Agriculture	[ ] Invention	[ ] Sculpture	
[ ] Architecture	[ ] Landscape Architecture	[ ] Social/Humanitarian	
[ ] Art	[ ] Literature	[ ] Theater	
[ ] Commerce	[X] Military	[ ] Transportation	
[ ] Communications	[ ] Music		
[ ] Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Fort Taber District is representative of the development of American coastal fortifications from the Revolutionary period through the mid-20th century. Fort Taber itself is an example of the forts constructed in the northeastern United States during the Civil War and remains in a remarkable state of preservation.

The original fortifications at this site consisted of a series of earthworks built during the American Revolution and mounted with six 24-pound cannon. No improvements were made in these fortifications until the late 1850's when civil war appeared eminent. In 1858, the Federal government purchased the land at Clark's Point and in May, 1861, the War Department began construction of Fort Taber. The initial designs for the fort were drawn by Major Richard Delafield, author of The Art of War in Europe - 1854-56, which became a standard reference for American coastal fortifications in the period 1861-1880. Major Delafield was assisted in his work on Fort Taber by Captain Robert E. Lee, who as General Lee led the Confederate forces during the Civil War. Actual construction of the fort was supervised by Colonel Henry Martyn Roberts. While on duty here, he wrote Roberts' Rules of Parliamentary Procedure, the standard reference on this subject. New Bedford's "Great Stone Fleet", which assembled under the guns of Fort Taber, dealt a severe blow to the Confederacy with its blockade of the entrances to Charleston and Savannah Harbors in late 1861 and early 1862. A planned retaliatory attack by the Confederate Shenandoah failed only because the ship could not pass Fort Taber guns to enter New Bedford Harbor.

Following the Civil War, Fort Taber remained empty until 1892, when the City of New Bedford petitioned the War Department for use of the property. The request was granted and Fort Taber became Marine Park, a favorite recreation area for the city. However, at the outbreak of the Spanish American War in 1898, the Army reclaimed the fort, rehabilitated and garrisoned it. In the years from 1898 to 1901, five major gun emplacements--Batteries Barton-Walcott (1) and (2), Craig, Cross and Gaston--were constructed to add to the defenses of the fort. Further improvements were made in Fort Taber during World Wars I and II, but in 1947 the fort was declared obsolete as a defense installation. Since that time, Fort Taber has been used as a training center by the Army, Navy and Marine Corps and most recently served as a Job Corps Center.

The City of New Bedford is now in the process of acquiring Fort Taber from the Federal government and plans to rehabilitate the area for use as a military museum and park.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adjutant General's Office, [illegible] Correspondence of Military Posts and Stations, 1819, [illegible], [illegible] (unpublished).

National Archives, Fortifications Division. Plans and Elevations of the Fort at Clark's Point (later Fort Rodman), New Bedford, Massachusetts, 1846-1914.

New Bedford City Council Records, 1857-1898.

War Department Bulletin, Nos. 12, 14, 1920.

[illegible] Historical Data of the Establishment of Clark's Point, 1967.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY						OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE				LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	41 °	35 '	40 "	70 °	54 '	24 "		°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	41 °	35 '	40 "	70 °	54 '	03 "							
SE	41 °	35 '	32 "	70 °	54 '	03 "							
SW	41 °	35 '	32 "	70 °	54 '	24 "							

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 10.87

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Gerald W. Butler, Curator

ORGANIZATION
Fort Taber Historical Association, Inc.

DATE
January 22, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:
1 Wharf Road

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
New Bedford	Massachusetts	025

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☒

Name JOHN F. X. DAVOREN
Secretary of the Commonwealth,
Title Chairman,
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Date

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

GPO 931-894

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

FORT TABER
New Bedford, MA

CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY

1717	Old Road or Proprietor's Way to Clark's Point laid out.
1778	British Land at Clark's Cove and burn New Bedford.
1792	Re-survey of Old Road to Clark's Point
1800	Lighthouse at Clark's Point deeded to US by Francis Allen.
1846	Appropriation of $56,000 by Congress for fortifications at New Bedford.
1848 Dec	Plan of a Fort Projected by the Board of Engineers for the occupation of Clark's Point, New Bedford Harbor.
1853	Clark's Point Road, a pleasure drive, laid out by the City.
1857 July	Site Survey begun by Capt. H.W. Benham of US Engineers.
1857 Sept	Deed for Land at Clark's Point to US acquired for $78,000 for sixty acres from B.H. Bixby.
1858 May	Command assumed by Capt. G.W. Cullum, US Engineers "Present Operations don't justify the expenditure of public funds at current prices".
1858 June	Fortifications "will not soon be commenced" according to Cullum.
1859 June	Agreement for New Cut-Off allowing use of pleasure road by New Bedford citizens resolving the title and roads dispute--"the only matters which have deferred construction of the Fort at Clark's Point", says Cullum.
1859 July	Operations proposed to commence in August include construction of ..."the proposed new Road or Cut-Off, put up fences, build the

wharf for reception of materials, and perhaps make some excavations before winter ..."-Cullum.

1859 Aug — Assistant Engineer Capt. Charles H. Bigelow of Lawrence appointed.

1859 Dec — Pier proposed and bids for supply of stone for wharf. Hoists for erecting stonework sought in Bucksport, Maine.

1860 Jan — Expense of proposed piers for wharf call for revisions.

1860 April — Derricks ordered from Washington--sixty foot boom to be used on Fort, forty-foot Derrick used on wharf.

1860 May — Stone delivery and specifications negotiated with A. Simpson Quarries, Sullivan, Maine.

1860 June — Wharf Construction delayed by East wind. Derricks shipped from Washington.

1860 Sept — Report of Operations Ending June 30, 1860 Annual Report. New Cut-Off, Wharf, and Rail Bed finished, stone cut.

1860 Dec — Stone received at site as per voucher to Sullivan, Maine. Operations cease for winter.

1861 Jan — Operations minimal. Difficulty in procuring funds anticipated.

April — Earthwork fortification begun by City laborers under Superintendent Ashley.

May — Fort Taber earthworks officially dedicated by city. A forty-man artillery company mans three twenty-four pounders and two twelve pound rifled cannons. Cement being ordered for construction of main fort.

June — Stone discrepencies from drawings are cause for minor revisions "E" course.

July to Aug — Alterations to original design referred to Drawing 2 with explanations.

Sept — Bills of Lading for cement, stone, and iron referred to.

1861 Oct — Delay of stone shipment slows construction.

1862 March — Ill health of Capt. Bigelow causes request for relief from duty.

April — Delay of construction caused by Bigelow's critical illness.
Death of Bigelow causes suspension of construction while modification of plans are made to allow mounting of larger guns for upper levels.
Appointment of Lieut. H.M. Robert, Engineer to replace Bigelow.

May — Pipe for drains discussed. Cast Iron favored over galvanized. Brick Bids solicited for 500,000 bricks to be supplied to site.
Asphalt sample solicited for waterproofing.

June — Alterations explained ref. Drawing 2a re: ventilators, Magazine doors, roof surfaces, brick furring, gun embrasures, etc.

1862 July — Brick Contract awarded to James Harlow & Co. Brewer, Maine.

Dec — Stone Samples requested of Q. C. Sargent of Quincy, MA to match original material due to "unexpected termination of contract".

1863 Feb — Decision to Raise Second Tier of casemates is made.
Alterations to original design. Plans sent.
Report of Operations: Raising of Fort Derricks; cutting stone for interior casemate arches and magazine; making patterns and centers for casemate arches; hauling material from city; gathering concrete material.
Stone cutting at Simpson's quarry halted on scarp and arch stone ordered before changes in plans.

1863 March — Brick Bids solicited for supplying 600,000 bricks. Ad placed in "Boston Daily Journal".
Plans and Elevations "of work as it is the intention now to build it": Plans and Elevations of "K" and "L" courses, etc. sent to A. Simpson, stone quarry in Sullivan, Maine.
Report of Operations: Setting anchoring stone for Fort Derricks, laying flagging; cutting stone for interior casemate arches and magazines; making centers for casemate arches; hauling material from city.

1863 April — Tracings of plans, sections, and elevations received; plan of roof surfaces and barbette forthcoming.
Magazine Room: Answer to inquiry states: "there is 400 cubic feet in the field work outside the fort, and 400 cubic feet in City Powder House; none at the fort.
Report of Operations--Laying flagging and setting curbing in casemates; setting pier and service magazine stone; cutting stone for magazine and piers; making centers for casemate and communication arches; putting in forms for concrete; repairing tools and machinery; making concrete for flagging; hauling material from city.

1863 May — Temporary Barracks for 120 men reportedly are to be erected at Clark's Point by Quartermaster.
Report of Operations: Flagging casemates; laying scarp and pier stone; building service magazine; altering privy vaults; cutting stone for service magazine and piers; making Derrick and Crab; making centers for arches; concreting for flagging, scarp, and foundations of quarters on gorge; gathering and breaking concrete material and hauling material from city.

1863 June — Report of Operations: Laying service magazine and Pier Stone and loop hole stone on gorge; building partition walls in quarters; turning casemate and communication arches; arching Service Magazine; cutting stone for Service Magazine; Pier Stone; skewbacks for Communication Arches; making and putting in concrete for flagging, etc, receiving and moving material. One Service Magazine is completed and filled with ammunition, four Communication Arches completed and nine ten-inch Columbiads mounted.

1863 July — Report of Operations: Setting stone for main magazines, piers, scarp wall on gorge; making Fort Derrick and casemate centers; concreting top of casemate arches; flagging casemates; receiving and moving material. Five casemate arches have been completed and one gun mounted. All ten guns are now mounted.
Annual Report: The first tier of Embrasures has been constructed and 18 of the piers raised to full height to receive the casemate arches. On the gorge the sills of the loopholes have been laid, the scarp being at ref.(7'-2") and on all the other fronts (21'-2"). The piers and partition walls on gorge are nearly completed.

The casemate flagging is all laid for the first tier excepting a few feet about one derrick and all the traverse rails are laid. One Service Magazine has been constructed and the walls of the two main magazines are more than half completed. The foundation for the gorge parade wall was laid, then relaid when the depth of the gorge casemates was increased ten feet. The Boundary Wall has been completed. There has been laid during the year 1537 cubic yards of cut stone and 436 cubic yards of concrete and 100,000 brick ...The work is garrisoned with a company of Heavy Artillery.

1863 Aug — Report of Operations: Laying service and main Magazine and loop hole stone; turning casemate and communication arches and lining magazines with brick; making fort derricks and centers; concreting top of casemate arches and receiving and moving material. Four more casemate arches have been turned making in all, nine completed. There are ten guns now mounted.

1863 Sept — Report of Operations: Laying main magazine, pier and scarp stone "K" course; turning casemate and communication arches and arches over service and main magazines; lining magazines and completing brick piers on gorge; making centers for casemate and quarters arches; concreting top of casemate arches; materials. Five more casemate arches have been completed making fourteen in all now completed.

1863 Oct — Report of Operations: Laying main magazine, parade wall and scarp stone; turning casemate and bastion arches; turning inverted arch at gateway and lining main magazines; making centers for bastion and casemate arches; excavating and concreting about gateway; concreting top of casemate arches. The arches over all the casemates of the first tier (24 in number) are now completed with the exception of three which want the stone front on parade; as are also the arches over both main magazines. 10 casemates and one magazine arch turned during the month. The concrete is laid over all the arches but three, to the ref (23'-6") or the level necessary to receive the flagging for second tier. The ends of half the Arches at the scarp are closed... the remainder will be temporarily closed.

1863 Nov — Report of Operations: Laying casemate arch, main magazine; gateway, and scarp stone; cleaning and pointing casemate arches; laying quarter arches; covering work, erecting and removing centers; concreting top casemate and quarter arches. The stone fronts of all the casemates are now laid (casemates entirely completed); the ante-chambers to the main magazines and arches over three of the quarter casemates are completed. The concrete has been laid on all the arches that are turned to the level necessary to receive second tier of flagging. The entire masonry has been covered with a plank roof using 50,000 feet of one-inch boards. Under this roof is about 200 one-horse cart loads of seaweed spread over the concrete (24 gun rooms are now entirely ready for Columbiads and the two flank casemates ready. Columbiad test firing.)

1863 Dec — Report of Operations: Cleaning casemate and magazine arches; underpinning Lighthouse Keeper's dwelling; making centers for second tier; building stone cutters shed, and repairing Lighthouse Keeper's dwelling. The scarp at the gateway has been laid this month to ref. (11'-10"), though cut, the stones were received too late to lay the entire gateway. The Lighthouse Keeper's residence has been moved and placed in a condition fully equal to that which it was in before.

1864 Jan — Report of Operations; Raising the derricks; cutting stone for main and service magazines and Pier stone for second tier; making patterns for second tier; repairing horse carts; building wall around Lighthouse Keeper's dwelling; hauling stone from Gutter's Ledge. (Ten of these casemates are now occupied with ten-inch Columbiads. One Service magazine is finished (temporarily) and filled with ammunition. The remaining service magazine and two main magazines are completed except woodwork--should have been in November Report).

1864 Feb — Report of Operations: Cutting magazine, pier, casemate, and Recess Arch Stone; repairing carts; making patterns for second tier; making Service Magazine doors; breaking stone for concrete; hauling stone from Ledge. Owing to impossibility of getting rough stone this

month and exhaustion of stock on hand, but little work has been done.

1864 March — Report of Operations: Laying stone about gateway; cutting stone for Magazines and Casemate arches; making doors for and flooring S. Magazine; making centers for second tier Casemate Arches, and stone patterns; uncovering work and moving material. There have been a few stone laid on the gateway and the work has been partly uncovered.

1864 April — Report of Operations: Laying side walls of Sally Port; Parade wall on gorge; scarp, "K" course; pointing scarp; concreting scarp and about gateway. The work has been entirely uncovered, the "K" course has been finished including the concreting, (with a slight exception) and the Parade Walls of the quarters nearly laid to a level with the top of the casemates of the first tier. There are 10 ten-inch Columbiads mounted. The first tier is ready for its entire armament. Garrison ordered to Washington but assumed it will be replaced.

1864 May — Report of Operations: Laying parade wall and embrasure stone for second tier; building piers on gorge; turning quarter arches and lining quarters (with brick). The tongue hole course of the embrasures of the second tier has been laid on all the water fronts excepting about forty feet. One quarter arch has been laid leaving three more yet to be laid...The work has been re-garrisoned by two companies. Ten guns mounted and fourteen casemates ready for use.

1864 June — Report of Operations: Laying embrasure and scarp stone for second tier and Parade wall of first tier; turning arches over quarters and Sally Port; cutting platforms in stair towers; Service magazine stone for second tier; concreting for scarp and top of arches. The quarter arches have been laid which completes all the arches for first tier, but in the Sally Port. About 5600 feet of embrasure stone have been laid.

1864 July — Report of Operations: Laying embrasure stone of second tier and stair tower stone of first

tier and pointing scarp; turning arch over Sally Port and pointing do; building flues in embrasures; cutting platforms in stair-towers; service magazine and pier stone for second tier. The Sally Port arch has been turned thus completing all the masonry of first tier excepting the stair towers, one only of which has been commenced. 5,000 feet of embrasure stone have been laid.

1864 Aug — Ill Health of Capt. Robert leads to his request for transfer.
Report of Operations: Laying of embrasure, pier, and flagging stone of second tier and stair tower of first tier; building flues and laying small arch in embrasures; cutting stone; making stone patterns and shingling roof of carpenter's shop; concreting for scarp. During the month about 2600 feet of embrasure stone has been laid, a part of one stair tower, of the casemate flagging, and of the coping over first tier of arches. The main magazines are at present in want of the flooring and doors...

1864 Sept — Report of Operations: Laying stair tower and circular steps of first tier; embrasure, Pier and flagging of second tier; cutting stone; shingling blacksmith shop and stone shed; concreting for scarp of second tier. Twelve of the embrasures of the second tier have been completed to ref: 36'-6"; 11 of the casemates have been flagged; nearly half of the piers have been started; one stair tower has been completed to the top of coping the first tier, and the permanent floor has been put into one main magazine. (There are temporary doors to it)
Annual Report for year ending June 30, 1864: During year ending June 30, 1864 the piers of the first tier have all been completed as well as the two main magazines. The 33 casemate arches have been laid and the top surfaces prepared to receive flagging of second tier. The scarp walls of the water front have been raised, on an average, 7 feet to ref. (28'-1") or above sill course of embrasures of second tier. The scarp of gorge has been raised from the sill course of the loopholes (14'-2") to include the cap course (23'-6"). The gateway has been erected. The gorge parade wall has been constructed

to the crown of the first tier of arches. The masonry of the first tier of the work is completed excepting the four stair towers. There remains to complete the first tier, the flooring, furring and finishing of the main magazines and the drawbridge...There has been laid during the year 3100 cu. ft. of granite, 6800 cu. ft. of concrete, and 720,000 bricks...Fort Taber (earthworks) has been rendered useless by the walls of the permanent work in front of it and it has been destroyed by the garrison.

1864 Oct — Report of Operations: Laying embrasure, pier stone and flagging of second tier; cutting stone; shingling blacksmith shop and stone sheds; concreting for scarp of second tier. The second tier of embrasures have been completed to ref. (36'-6") with the exception of three which are at ref (30'-3"). The flagging of the second tier has been completed in 21 casemates and one bastion. The first course of Piers have all been laid. Both Service and one main magazine of the first tier are ready for use.

1864 Nov — Report of Operations: Laying embrasure and pier stone and flagging of second tier; roofing port of work; concreting for scarp; covering work for winter. The second tier of embrasures have been completed to ref (36'-6"). The flagging of second tier of casemates has been completed. The first course of all the piers and both service magazines have been laid. All masonry laid in the past three months has been covered with seaweed and the northern half of the entire scarp and flagging has been roofed besides. Two twelve-pound flank howitzers have been received during the month making total armament 10 Columbiads mounted and 2 howitzers not mounted.

1864 Dec — Report of Operations: Laying pier stone of second tier; cutting stone and scarp (courses Q and R) of second tier; covering masonry for winter. About 600 more cu. ft. of pier stone has been laid besides the first course. All guns of second tier could now be mounted except 2 flank howitzers. Incorrect carriages for howitzers required relaying of the traverse rails. One flank howitzer has been mounted.

1865 Jan — Convict Labor being discussed. No fit building for them. About 10 could be accomodated if temporary building erected inside.
Report of Operations: Cutting stone; making stone patterns. The remaining flank howitzer of the first tier has been mounted.

1865 Feb — Report of Operations: (same as January)

1865 March — Report of Operations: During the month one derrick has been raised 16 feet, its platform being now on a level with the second tier of embrasures: the remaining circular stair tower is nearly completed to level of floor of second tier of casemates: about 2000 cu. ft. more of pier stone have been laid which, with those previously laid, makes about ½ the entire stone piers of the second tier; one communication arch has been laid and the entire work has been uncovered and cleared of seaweed etc. There have been during the month 10 ten-inch Columbiads, model 1861, and 16 eight-inch do. together with 10 iron carriages and chassis for ten-inch Columbiads received...9 Iron chassis and carriages for eight-inch Columbiads were placed in position last month.

1865 April — Proposed Changes in circular stair received too late to adopt.
Report of Operations: During the month the remaining circular stair tower has been completed to the level of the second tier: about 3500 cu. ft. of pier stone, the stone fronts of 4 casemate arches, and about 400 cu. ft. of service magazine have been laid. 6 more communication arches have been turned ...1 ten-inch and 5 eight-inch Rodman Guns have been mounted; making the total number of guns mounted 11 ten-inch and 10 eight-inch Rodman Guns with two flank howitzers (mounted).
Ammunition Storage at Clark's Point all the Magazines for the first tier are completed except the flooring of one main magazine which will be laid soon. These magazines however, are not perfectly dry as there is no asphalt on them. The two service magazines (the only ones in use) have been kept dry by inclined coverings of concrete. The service magazines of the upper tier are being pressed on and when completed, the lower ones

will be perfectly dry. The same could be done for the main magazines, or if the Dept. think the expense justified they could be covered with a thin coat of asphalt...

1865 May — Report of Operations (missing)

1865 June — Report of Operations: During the month four casemates and one communication arch of the second tier have been turned making 6 casemate and 14 communication arches turned this season; the stone fronts of 4 more casemate arches laid making 12 of these now finished; the L & M (sill course of loop holes of second tier) have been laid on faces 7,8,9,10, and 11 and the interior scarp on water fronts of courses Q & R has been nearly finished. One service magazine of second tier is now finished except turning the arch over it. There has been received during the month 4 one-hundred pound parrot guns and iron casemate carriages.

1865 July — Report of Operations: During the month 4 casemate and 1 communication arch has been turned: one more course of scarp has been laid on the gorge: the arch has been turned over one service magazine of the second tier and the other has been lined. One of the derricks has been raised on a platform about 20 ft. concreting top of arches of second tier.
Discoloration of Stone due to iron and mineral deposits become apparent. A visit to Fox Island quarries is scheduled.
Change of Command: Major G.H. Mendell replaces Capt. Henry Robert.

1865 Aug — Report of Operations: During the month three casemate and eight communication arches have been turned, also the arch over the main service magazine. Nearly two courses more of the Gorge have been laid, which makes the whole scarp, with the exception of the flank embrasures and a few scattering stones on the gorge at the same level (34'-6")--Another derrick has also been raised on a platform some 20 ft. high. Concreting tops of arches of second tier.

1865 Sept — Stone Discoloration is cause for a visit

to Sullivan, Maine quarries.
Report of Operations: During the month three casemate arches have been turned, one of the derricks inside the fort has been raised on a platform 25ft hight, one of the flank embrasures of the second tier has been laid, and a number of stones on scarp of Gorge, together with several courses of main magazine next to stair tower. Concreting top of arches, breaking stone for conrete.

1865 Oct — Report of Operations: During the month the remaining flank embrasure of the second tier has been laid, the wall about one straight stair tower to ref (30'-6") and the stone front to 2 casemate arches. The last of the five fort derricks has been raised and will be in working order in a few days and the parade wall of Gorge for second tier of quarters has been started. Concreting top of casemate arches; hauling seaweed.

1865 Nov — Report of Operations: During the month the remaining fort derrick has been raised making all of them (5 in number) now raised and in working order. The wall about second straight stair tower has been laid to (30'-6") and the sill course of second tier of quarters laid. The two main magazines of second tier have been lined to the spring line of the arch and the piers next to the quarters in both laid to the same references. The arches have been covered with a thick layer of seaweed to protect them from the frost.

1865 Dec — Report of Operations: During the month here have been 9 ten-inch and 4 eight-inch Columbiads and 4 one-hundred pound Parrot guns mounted all on the second tier leaving on the ground not mounted 2 eight-inch Columbiads. Excavating for site of officers quarters and storehouses. A space about 100ft. square has been excavated to the ref. of foundation of officers quarters and storehouses. Strengthening wharf derrick.

1866 Jan — Report of Operations: The entire gorge has been roofed; cutting stone for arches in anteroom of main magazines: second tier of circular stair tower; parade wall of quarters, and scarp stone for water fronts'; excavating for site of officers quarters and store houses.

1866 Feb — Report of Operations: Cutting stone as in January; making centers and patterns; repairing wheelbarrows and tools; making and sharpening stone cutters tools; gathering and breaking concrete stone.

1866 March — Design Revision of scarp wall at roof level to utilize stone on hand.
Report of Operations: During the month the entire work has been unroofed and cleared of seaweed and the brick piers of Gorge and front wall of second tier of quarters started. Received 6 fifteen-inch guns.

1866 April — Report of Operations: During the month the cap course of loopholes on Gorge, the jambs and arches over both service magazines, two arches in the anteroom of main magazine, the "Q" course on four water fronts and the parade wall of quarters nearly up to caps of doors laid. Five brick piers on gorge have been laid including skewbacks for arches. Building flues in scarp.

1866 May — Report of Operations: During the month the "R" course of scarp has been laid on all the water fronts: the parade wall of quarters and walls about stair towers laid to ref (40'-6"). One casemate, one quarter and part of one Bastion Arch laid: all the brick piers of gorge completed and the scarp lined as far as laid; making magazine door frames and doors; fitting up about embrasures of second tier with ironwork.
Asphalting--request for drawings for proper application to work.

1866 June — Report of Operations: During the month the scarp of the gorge has been carried up to level of waterfronts ref (38'-6") with the exception of a part of the "R" course. The parade wall of Quarters and about stair towers have been raised with the exception of part of the "T" course to ref (40'-6"). One circular stair tower to (34'-6") and some progress made in pointing scarp of water fronts. One brick bastion arch has been completed and two quarter arches laid of second tier.

1866 July — Magazine Wall thickness increase being considered.
Report of Operations: During the month the entire scarp has been completed to ref(38'-6"): the wall about straight stair tower and parade wall of gorge to (43'-6"): one circular tower with steps to (43'-6") and the other to (30'-6"): one casemate and ten quarter arches have been turned. The excavation for thickening the scarp wall of both main magazines have been made and the concrete foundations put in to level of floor of magazine of first tier.

1866 Aug — Annual Report as of June 30, 1866: during the year progress has been made to the following extent:
16 gun casemate arches turned
3 arches of quarters casemates turned
8 brick piers for casemate arches built (on gorge with fireplaces and flues)
2 anteroom arches of main magazine turned
2 anteroom arches of service magazine turned
10 stone fronts of casemate arches turned
The scarp of the water fronts has been raised from ref.(34'-6") to (38-6") being two courses, and the scarp of the gorge from (27'-8") to (38'-6") being 5 courses. The parade wall of the gorge (10 courses) from (24'-6") to (43'-6"). Two square stair towers from foundation to (43'-6"). One circular tower from (24'-6" to 34'-6"). In addition the scarp and interior have been pointed to a considerable extent and the plates and doors of a number of embrasures have been filled. All the large derricks, five in all have been raised 15' to 20' to their final position and the vallies of the arches of the second tier concreted to the top of the drainage pipes. During the year, the following amount of stone, brick and concrete has been laid: of cut granite--24831 cu. ft., rough granite--5365 cu. ft., rough brick--589,500, pressed brick--88300, concrete--8262 cu. ft...
Total number of guns mounted: 20 ten-inch Rodman Iron Carriages, 14 eight-inch Rodman Iron Carriages, 4 parrot 100lb. Iron Carriages, 2 twenty-four pound flank Howitzers: Total 40 guns. Casemates completed and vacant--7.
Also, about 34,000 cu. ft. of excavation were made during the year on the exterior of the gorge. One well has been dug and lined and another excavated but not lined.

1866 Sept — Magazine Scarp increase in thickness recommended by resolution of board of engineers. Report of Operations: Missing

1866 Oct to Nov — Report of Operations: Missing
Change of Command: Capt. Jared A. Smith replaces Maj. G.H. Mendell.

1866 Dec — Report of Operations: Cutting stone and breaking stone for concrete; cutting parade wall coping; relaying chimney at Smithy; making magazine doors and building stone shed; moving materials. One of the stone sheds has been rebuilt (after authorization).

1867 Jan — Report of Operations: Cutting parade wall stone; completing the cutting of the balcony stone except one stone; breaking stone for concrete.

1867 Feb — Bills of Lading for ironwork shipped by R.P. Parrott, Cold Spring, NY requested.
Report of Operations: Cutting breast height wall, scarp ("X"course), and parade wall; making magazine doors, flooring anterooms of main magazines; building boundary wall; breaking stone for concrete.

1867 March — Ironwork: request to substitute wrought for cast iron in balconies and stairways.
Report of Operations: Cutting stone for parade wall, stair tower, breast height and scarp walls. Making magazine doors, repairing derricks; gathering and breaking stones for concrete.

1867 April — Piazza and Stairways ordered to be built to original plan and balcony as shown in Wendell's drawing of June 30, 1866 letter.
Report of Operations: Cutting coping for scrap; completing one circular stair tower. Laying 3 courses of parade wall on faces 2 and 5, one course on faces 3 and 4, and scarp on gorge from ref (44'-3) to (46'-3). Interior of scarp lined with brick for flashing. 30 cu. yds of concrete laid in scarp, 450 cu. yds concrete on roof surfaces, 750 lbs cement and 118 tons gravel received on wharf and transported to the work.

1867 May — Terrepleine modification on terrepleine on front 3 between large magazine and parade wall is approved.
Balcony-extension-proposal to extend balcony on gorge to the other fronts approved. Large spaces at extremities of parade to be covered with open gratings of wrought iron so as not to affect ventilation of adjoining casemates.
Report of Operations: Completing parade wall except coping. The "X" course of scarp has been laid on fronts I and II and 50 linear feet of coping on the gorge. The lining of parade and scarp walls for flashing and c. is nearly completed. The valleys of arches on front V are ready for asphalting. The quarters in two casemates second tier have been lined with brick. 2036 cu. ft. of granite have been cut for scarp and 3 plinths for balcony columns. 1584 cu. yds. concrete have been laid on roofs of arches. Sand, gravel, and granite have been received at work.

1867 June — Report of Operations: Proposed, same as in May and in addition asphalting valleys of arches and turning valley arches.

1868 Aug — Lighthouse proposed to be relocated over stairway tower--recommended by Lighthouse Board.
Annual Report for year ending 30 June 1868: Flagging for stair towers, and the stone bases for balcony columns have been cut and laid: the foundations for the latter also having been completed. One main magazine and one service magazine with their anterooms have been floored and their doors hung. For 1st and 2nd tiers, shutters have been made for all the magazine ventilators and two "iron stairways have been made and placed in the towers on the gorge. reaching from ref (11' to ref 46'-6")
Second tier four heavy doors have been made completing the magazine doors for first and second tiers. Two casemates have been furred with brick for quarters. All the ironwork for the balcony has been constructed and put in position, the flagging has been laid and the balcony completed.
Third tier (for barbette guns) The roofs of two arches have been concreted and the foundations for gun platforms and b-h wall

have been faced with brick and concreted ready to receive the stone. All the valley arches have been laid, the stone for man holes cut and laid, and the covers cast, completing this portion of the work. A part of the coping for parade wall has been cut and the entire coping laid. The remaining stone on faces 2,3, and 4 of the scarp wall has been laid and the entire scarp completed. The two stair towers on gorge have been partly cut and entirely laid from top of parade wall ref (46') to completion (ref 55'-8"). All the stone for stairs, passageways and retaining walls of barbette service magazines has been cut and the entire masonry of the three magazines completed from their foundations, and stone walk in rear of the one near salient of work cut and laid. The entire iron work for the upper balcony has been constructed, the brackets set in parade wall, and the portion of balcony on gorge completed with a temporary flooring. The mastic covering the roof surfaces has been nearly completed...nearly all the remaining stone for work (save gun platforms) has been cut...all stone for gun platforms received and one center pintle platform cut.

1868 Oct — Steam Engine and boiler for hoist obtained.

1868 Nov — Present Appropriation to be used only for completion of terre pleine, barbette magazines, asphalting, brick covering, filling with earth, and similar unfinished work. Impossible to anticipate further appropriations.

1868 Dec — Lighthouse relocation to stair tower approved. Designed to be removable if necessary.

1869 March — Operations being pursued to extent of available funds.

1869 May — Final Report of Operations: For protection of the masonry, the pointing should be completed. All the roof surfaces (save a single magazine which is ready to be covered) being covered with mastic, the terre-pleine and parapet are needed, to protect them from the extreme temperatures of this latitude, and the steep slopes of earth will in turn need protection by sodding.

All the iron work of the upper balcony being completed, and the supporting brackets set in parade wall, it should be put together, and covered with at least a temporary flooring. In this connection, the iron work for gratings adjacent to the balcony, and near the ends of parade wall of gorge, should be completed. Both the stone and iron stairways require to be permanently covered and the doors, windows and loopholes of quarters at least temporarily closed. The openings left in parade wall over outer doors of magazines are found extremely injurious and should be closed with shutters. The raising of materials for barbette tier of guns being nearly completed, the large derricks should be removed and stored as well as other tools and machinery used on the work.

1869 June — Windows and Doors in stairtowers being put in.

1869 Aug — Inspection Report: "The store rooms in this fort are so very damp that it is impossible to use them: the Ordnance stores have to be kept in a room of the old Barracks outside of the Fort: Those Barracks leak badly but are better than the storerooms in the Fort."

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE FORT TABER HISTORIC DISTRICT

In 1794, the United States began a program of defensive construction designed to protect its coastal area from naval attack. This program was the first of a series of harbor defense programs that continued until shortly after World War II. According to Dr. Raymond Lewis, a noted historian of U.S. coastal defenses, the numerous coastal fortifications built during this century and a half "constituted the United States' principal expression of military architecture during that period" and are "some of the most prominent and interesting relics of the nation's past." The history and structures of the Fort Taber Historic District reflect this aspect of military history.

Early Local Efforts

The failure to fortify Clark's Point was a principal cause of Bedford Village's inability to defend itself during the British raid of 1778. The destruction wrought by the British troops clearly established the need to include the peninsula in any area defense system. Thus, when war erupted in 1812, local citizens erected an earthwork battery on Clark's Point. Built on land donated to the federal government in 1800 for use as a light house, this battery of six-muzzle-loading cannon fell into disrepair after the war. However, as New Bedford grew in size and importance, it became apparent that a more effective and permanent defense structure was necessary to protect the city from naval attack.

Federal Plans

Recognizing this need a U. S. Army Board of Engineers in 1840 included New Bedford in a plan for an Atlantic Coast defense system. Colonel Joseph Totten,the Chief of Engineers, remarked in 1842 that the old earthwork battery "deserves no further expenditures as it must ere long give place to a work better adapted to defend this very important harbor." Captain Robert E. Lee and Major R. Delafield completed the plans for a fortress on Clark's Point by 1846, although it was not until December of 1848 that a Board of Engineers, meeting in Boston, reviewed the plans and recommended authorization and appropriations for construction of a permanent coastal defense installation on Clark's Point.

Construction of the Fort at Clark's Point

Known officially as the Fort at Clark's Point, this massive, vertical walled granite fortress, combining structural durability, high concentration of armament, and enormous firepower, was typical of Third Period forts. The Fort, constructed of Maine granite supplemented with brick arches and vaults, was designed to bear all ordinance on the main shipping channel approaching New Bedford. Cannon and flank howitzers covered the exterior points,while the rearward defenses included battlements for riflemen. Construction on the proposed three tier fortress began in 1857, continued throughout the Civil War, and terminated in 1871 after the completion of only two tiers.

Because of slow progress during construction, the granite fortress was incapable of serving its defensive purpose at the outbreak of war in 1861. As a result, area residents led by Mayor Isaac Taber built an earthwork battery adjacent to the fortress. This battery became known as Fort Taber in honor of the Mayor and was manned by the New Bedford Home and Coast Guard. The battery's presence helped to improve area morale, although its effectiveness was never tested. In 1863, after the mounting of 24-pound guns and 10-inch Rodman cannon inside the federal fort, the earthwork battery was demolished. Area residents, however, transferred the name "Fort Taber" to the granite fortress. This name has been associated with the federal structures throughout the decades, although it was officially ignored by the federal government.

In early 1862, Captain Bigelow, the officer in charge of construction, passed away and was replaced by Lt. Henry M. Robert who was recuperating from illness incurred while on duty with the Army of Potomac. In 1863, while chairing a meeting on harbor defenses, Lt. Robert, dismayed at the chaotic proceedings, conceived of the need for a parliamentary guide, an idea that eventually emerged as Robert's Rules of Order.

Under Robert and Major Jared A. Smith, his successor, work on the fortress progressed to where it obstructed the Clark's Point Light. As a result, in 1869, the light was moved to the fort. A contemporary account described the addition as follows:

> A rectangular tower, 11 x 20-1/2 feet and 8 feet high, has been built in the northerly staircase tower of the fort adjoining the old site by flooring over the stone-work, carrying up the walls with woodwork, putting on hipped roof cover with tinned iron, with a circular wooden parapit for the lantern, surrounded with an iron railing. To this the lantern, illuminating apparatus, and fixtures were removed, and the light exhibited from its new position on the 15th of June last. Six panes of lantern glass and oil-cloth for lantern, a new cooking stove, and wallpaper for two rooms of dwelling, have been supplied.

This lighthouse remained in service until 1898 when it was replaced by the Butler Flats' light.

Post 1870 Period

The Civil War exerted an enormous influence on the development of coastal defense systems. Greater mobility and metallic armor reduced naval vulnerability to land defenses at the same time that rifled artillery improved the effectiveness of naval armament. These advances immediately rendered stone fortresses obsolete, and the Army halted construction of the granite fort on Clark's Point in 1871 without completing either the third tier or the rearward defenses.

Staffed only by a caretaker (also the lighthouse keeper) and an ordnance sergeant, the military reservation remained inactive during the 1870's and 1880's. An 1887 inspection report describes the fortress' form as:

a position of a regular octagon, having four channel faces of 105 ft. 2 inches in length, and two of 46 feet 9 inches in length, with a gorge connecting the two short faces, the gorge being flanked by a demi-bastion at each end. The scarp wall, parade wall and tiers are built of granite, the arches of brick except where they extend through the parade wall, where they are of stone. There are twenty-four gun casemates and four flanking casemates in each tier, all of them ready for armament. The embrasures are of the "Totten" pattern. The gorge casemates are arranged for quarters and for two large magazines in each tier. Two smaller or Service Magazines are in each tier of gun casemates. Four stone stairways connect the upper tier of casemates and the barbette with the parade. A balcony consisting of stone flagging supported by iron columns and girders runs in front of the gorge casemates, at the level of the second story, and one supported by iron brackets in the parade walls runs around the work at the level of the terreplein. The barbette tier is unfinished, the foundations only of the gun platforms are completed, the parapet and ...height wall are not built.

Spanish-American War Period

In 1892 the Army gave the entire military reservation to the City of New Bedford for use as a public park. With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, however, the Army reacquired the military district, named it Fort Rodman in honor of a Massachusetts soldier who fell during the 1863 Union attack on Port Hudson, Louisiana, and began to modernize the defense installation.

The fortress' obsolete armament was cleaned and readied for action as a temporary defense measure. In addition, a seacoast surveillance station, a searchlight unit, and a concrete casemate from which to detonate the electrically controlled mines placed in New Bedford Harbor were built on or in the stone fort. A Newport, Rhode Island artillery unit and a contingent of Massachusetts Volunteers garrisoned Fort Rodman during this period.

The Army also began construction of several batteries on land adjacent to the fortress. Batteries Walcott and Barton each mounted one 8-inch Rifle, M-1888, mounted on an M-1869 disappearing carriage. Battery Craig had two 3-inch rapid-fire guns on pedestal mounts while Gaston had the same armament, but on balanced pillar mounts. The remaining armament consisted of Battery Cross' two 5-inch rapid-fire guns on pedestal mounts. All of these batteries were completed by 1905.

The physical changes in seacoast defense systems built in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, due to a shift in emphasis from the fortification structures to the weapons contained within, are evident in these batteries which, although massive, are relatively simple in form. In sharp contrast to the vertical-walled granite fortress, the adjacent gun batteries of reinforced concrete are de-emphasized by being designed to blend into the surrounding landscape.

Twentieth Century Period

Despite this construction work, the period following the Spanish-American War witnessed a decline in the military activities at Fort Rodman. In 1900, the obsolete casemated cannon and carriages were removed from the granite fortress and a small body of troops assigned to protect the area. Ordnance troops replaced the Massachusetts Volunteers.

However, during World War I, Fort Rodman underwent a large expansion in order to provide a seacoast defense installation as well as a base for soldiers training in Boston prior to their shipment overseas. In addition to the surveillance, searchlights, and mining units, the granite fortress housed the generating unit that provided power to the gun batteries. The Army also stored tanks and other military equipment within Fort Taber's granite walls.

Fort Rodman's armament was brought to combat readiness, but the main physical alteration during World War I was the construction of wooden barracks buildings. Numerous tents also were erected to house the military personnel. During this period, the Army began to build Battery Milliken, a massive concrete emplacement containing two 12-inch guns and underground magazines. The Army completed the structure in the early 1920's, but by that time, Fort Rodman was maintained only on a caretaker basis. P-40, the small building adjacent to Fort Taber, also was built during this period and used for storage purposes.

New Bedford made numerous attempts to acquire the Fort Rodman property in the years following World War I for use as a public park and as a possible site for the United States Coast Guard Academy and the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. Although it had often declared the property surplus, the War Department firmly repulsed these attempts by the City to regain the land. In 1935, the WPA recommended that the old stone fort be dismantled and its granite used for cemetery walls. Led by Mrs. Phil Sheridan, local efforts to save the fortress were successful.

World War II witnessed a revival of Army interest in Fort Rodman. In 1940, the Army authorized the construction of a "200-series" 6-inch gun together with supporting units and casemated Milliken's 12-inch guns under sixteen feet of reinforced concrete and tons of earth.

National Guard and Coastal Artillery units, activated in August 1940, manned the various batteries of Fort Rodman. Once again, the shortage of wooden barracks caused many of these soldiers to be housed in tents. However, this increased activity proved to be short-lived.

By the end of 1942, the government removed the post's secondary and supplementary armament. Barton and Walcott's two 8-inch rifles were removed to a government arsenal and the carriage and accessories sold. At the same time, the Army assigned the 6-inch gun battery authorized for Fort Rodman to Mishaum Point in South Dartmouth. Beach patrols and other military assignments were curtailed as the war neared its end. After the conflict ended, the Army removed and salvaged Milliken's rifles and transported the fort's 155 MM guns to Fort Banks in Winthrop.

Since the end of World War II, Fort Rodman has been confined to duty as an Army and Navy reserve post. However, many people recognized its value to the City of New Bedford and during the 1950's and 1960's, the City again made several attempts to acquire the property. These efforts finally were successful when the General Services Administration leased or deeded most of the Fort Rodman property to the City of New Bedford in 1970 to be used for historical, educational, and recreational purposes.

The City organized the historic area as the Fort Taber Historic District as a means of protecting and perpetuating this aspect of local history. The National Park Service recognized the architectural and historical importance of the District and on February 8, 1973, listed it in the National Register of Historic Places. In order to preserve the District, the City leased it to the Fort Taber Historical Association, Inc., a non-profit organization of concerned citizens formed to "preserve, restore, and perpetuate Fort Taber and the surrounding military-historic district as part of New Bedford and the surrounding communities." The Association presently operates and maintains the Historic District and carries out an educational program designed to make people aware of this part of their heritage.

