

**Primary Battery File**

**National Archives, Washington D.C.**

**Record Group 77**

**Correspondence of the Chief of Engineers**

**Entry 103**

**File, Fort, Battery:**

98227

Ft Duxall

Btty Long

(as earlier 12-inch battery)

Address copy to  
CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, U. S. ARMY,  
Washington, D. C.

WAR DEPARTMENT.  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS,  
WASHINGTON.

form 11  
DCK-FF

November 22, 1915.

File No. 98227

MEMORANDUM for the Chief of Staff.

Subject: Locations for proposed new armament, Boston Harbor, Mass.

1. As the new armament proposed for Boston Harbor seems to have been definitely settled by the War Department Board of Review and approved by the Secretary of War, this new armament to be composed of two 16-inch rifles on disappearing carriages, and four 12-inch rifles mounted for long-range fire, it is recommended that the Board of Review now take up and definitely decide upon the exact location for these guns, for until this is done no detailed drawings can be prepared and no estimates of cost can be made other than those which should be considered as mere guesses.

2. After careful consideration, it is my opinion that the most advisable distribution of these guns would be as follows: two long-range 12-inch guns on Hog Island, immediately in rear of Nantasket Beach; two long-range 12-inch guns on the Nahant Reservation; and two 16-inch guns on disappearing carriages on Outer Brewster Island.

3. It is understood that the Nahant reservation and the Outer Brewster reservation are both owned by the United States and are available for construction purposes. ~~Hog Island is not owned by the United States. The island above high water is about nine acres in extent; the surrounding waters are very shallow, and there are fully twenty-eight acres above mean low water. It is understood that this Island can be purchased for about \$25,000 and can be improved by filling and seawall to a total area of twenty-eight acres at a total cost not exceeding \$150,000, including cost of purchase. If improved area be less, the cost will be less.~~

4. As an alternative to Hog Island, a site near Point Allerton would offer almost the same advantages, but here also a site must be purchased, as neither the reservation here nor at Fort Revere is large enough to provide a site for these guns.

*Dan G. Ingman*

Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army.

RECD. NOV 22 1915 C.A.DIV.

NOV 26 1915

OFFICE CHIEF OF STAFF  
RECD NOV 23 1915

THE BOARD OF ENGINEERS  
U. S. ARMY  
RECEIVED AUG 8 1918

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DEC 6 1916

RECD BACK OFFICE CHIEF OF ENGRS

APR 3 1917

98227

APR 7 1917

RECD BACK OFFICE CHIEF OF ENGRS

MAR 17 1917

APR 17 1917

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2345208

1st Indorsement.

War Dept., A. G. O., Dec. 1, 1915 - To the Comdg. Gen., Eastern Dept.,  
for remark and recommendation. By order of the Secretary of War:

*mm myls*  
Adjutant General.

5/12/16/15.

470.CD Boston.

2d Ind.

was-ar

HQ. EASTERN DEPT., Dec. 3, 1915.---To Comdg. Officer, C.D. of Boston, Ft.  
Warren, Mass., for consideration and recommendation. This letter to be  
returned through Comdg. Gen., N.A.C.A. District, for similar action. By  
comd. of Maj. Gen. Wood:

*W. A. Simpson*  
Adjutant General,  
Adjutant.



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

NOB-rgr

3rd Ind.

8476-H

H. C. D. OF BOSTON, Dec. 10, 1915.--To Comdg. General, Eastern Department (through Comdg. General, N.A.C.A. District). Returned.

1. Information on file at these headquarters is to the effect that, under date of June 7 and 9, 1915, the War Department Board of Review recommended that the existing armament in this coast defense command be supplemented by the installation of four 16-inch guns and eight 12-inch mortars, or their equivalent, which recommendation was approved by the Secretary of War.

2. In view of the differences between this proposed addition to the existing armament and that enumerated in the within letter of the Chief of Engineers and in view of the fact that the Chief of Engineers states that "the new armament for Boston Harbor seems to have been definitely settled" as stated, information is requested as to what additional armament has actually been approved for Boston Harbor, in order that the available sites may be intelligently allotted.

3. It is further requested that information be supplied as to just what is meant by a 12-inch rifle mounted for long range fire. This information is considered necessary to enable the proper selection of a site for same to be made.

*Thos. P. Riley*  
Colonel, Coast Artillery Corps.

RECEIVED HQ. N. A. C. A. DIST. DEC 14 1915

470.

4th Ind.

HQ. N. A. C. A. DIST., Dec. 14, 1915 - To C. O., C. D. of Boston.

1. It is understood that the new armament mentioned in this letter does not agree with the copy of the approved project of the War Department Board of Review furnished, but the Department Commander desires to carry out the instructions of the War Department and obtain a recommendation as to the location of the new armament mentioned herein.

2. The 12-inch rifle referred to will be mounted on a barbette carriage and will give a range of 30,000 yards with 700-lb. projectile and 27,300 yards with 1070-lb. projectile.

By cmd. of Brig. Gen. Hodges:

*J. P. Smith*  
Capt., C. A. C., Actg. Adjt.

8th Ind.

HQ.N.A.C.A.DISTRICT, Jan.3,1916 - To Comdg. Gen., Eastern Department.

1. Prior to this correspondence the latest information as to the action of the War Department Board of Review received at these headquarters was contained in the letter from The Adjutant General of the Army, dated September 4, 1915, which stated that the project for additional armament adopted at Boston consisted of four 16-inch rifles and eight 12-inch mortars, or their equivalent. If, as stated in the within memorandum of the Chief of Engineers, only two 16-inch rifles are to be mounted, these should be emplaced on Great Brewster.

2. If the four 12-inch rifles, mounted for long-range fire, are to replace the other two 16-inch rifles, and are to be designed for indirect fire only, as indicated in the report herewith (page 6), the suggested sites on Hog Island and Nahant Reservation will answer the purpose as well as any others. However, I concur in the opinion of the Board as to the advantages that will be sacrificed by mounting these guns for indirect fire only. If mounted for direct as well as long-range fire, I would put them on Deer Island.

3. If two 16-inch guns are to be emplaced on Great Brewster, I am of the opinion that smaller guns of 6 and 3-inch caliber should also be located on that Island for the protection of the major caliber guns against small vessel at short range.

*Lt. T. Lodge*  
Brig. Gen., Comdg.

3 incls.

H

Rec'd Bk. Hq. Eastern Dept. JAN 5 1916

→ 1 Incl. (in dupl.) Recd. (Dupl. withdrawn)

470. C.D. Boston.  
(Armament).

9th Ind.

CEK/McC

HQ. EASTERN DEPT., Jan. 8, 1916- To The Adjutant General of the Army.

1. It is recommended that the proposed armament be emplaced as follows:
  - (a) Two 16 inch and two 12 inch on Great Brewster Island.
  - (b) Two 12 inch guns on Deer Island.

2. The 12 inch should be capable of direct fire. This is not so important for those at Deer Island but is vital for those mounted on advanced sites such as Great Brewster where the maximum fire to oppose a close in attack, made under weather conditions which would minimize the effect of the supporting forts, should be available.

3. The necessity for smaller supporting guns on Great Brewster, noted by the District Commander in the preceding indorsement, has been reported upon before. They should be included in the project, transferring them from retired points if necessary.

4. The proposed increase in armament is felt to be entirely inadequate for a certain defense. This is evident from every study made by the local board, by the District Commander and at these headquarters. I cannot too strongly urge the reinforcement of the proposed armament by at least 8 of the most powerful mortars, 4 at Nahant and 4 at Great Brewster, and by one additional 16 inch gun on Deer Island.

5. The importance of a reserve of long range armament on Deer Island has been reported upon before. This site is comparatively safe from land attack, it cannot be surprised and reduced by a close in attack under weather conditions favorable for such an attack on account of the many 12 and 10 inch guns bearing on the waters a fleet would have to essay to make such an attack, and it is still far enough in advance of the most important utility (the navy yard) to render hazardous any attempt at long range bombardment of that station.

6. At Boston we must advance the main defensive line in order to cover a debouching area for our fleet. This we secure by the occupation of Great Brewster. We must prevent the long range bombardment of the city and harbor. This also will be ensured as long as Great Brewster holds out, and will be prevented, in all probability, by long range armament of Deer Island, even if the Brewster batteries are silenced. But the lack of mortars, with comparative invulnerability, on the advanced line seriously weakens it. And the lack of at least one 16 inch gun, with its heavy projectile and destructive effect at extreme range, on Deer Island, greatly reduces the effectiveness of this last resort.

7. I urgently recommend consideration of these conditions, and that we do not commit ourselves to final approval at this time of a defensive scheme which, in the opinion of all in this department is unreliable and unsafe, and which ultimately will have to be changed. If appropriations limit the armament which can now be asked for, we should, in submitting our plans, call attention to the fact that increase will be requested at a later date.

1 incl.

*James D. Smith*  
Major General, Comdg.

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