

Chapter Three:

Construction, U.S. Weather Bureau Station, Hatteras, N.C.



Hatteras Weather Bureau, ca.1900's . Photo: National Park Service

By 1901, the U.S. Weather Bureau sought much larger quarters for the station. The land selected was acquired from W.H. Rollinson for the sum of \$110.35. The property was near the main road about three-quarters of a mile from the ocean and three hundred yards from Pamlico Sound.

On July 11, 1901, Secretary James Wilson, U.S. Department of Agriculture, requested proposals for the erection a two-story Cellar Frame and Brick building for the Weather Bureau, U.S. Department of Agriculture, at Hatteras, N.C. The Chief of the Weather Bureau, U.S. Department of Agriculture, awarded contract to C.L Harding, Architect, Washington DC. To design and supervise the first official building constructed for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, US Weather Bureau Station, Hatteras, N.C.

The cost was \$5,194 to build the station and the purchase cost of the land was \$110.35. On the back of the specification was a list of other Weather Bureau Station to be constructed, Hatteras, Taloosh, Canley, Criescent, Point Reyes, Bismarck N.D.

The Official Hatteras Weather Bureau Station was commissioned and occupied on January 1, 1902.

In 1902 the weather bureau added another forty feet of land to the property already held. One inspector of the Weather Bureau upon seeing the station for the first time thought “The building is very well situated for Weather Bureau purposes”.



Hatteras Weather Bureau, ca.1900's . Photo: NC Museum of History

The design included a prefab structure that can be delivered by railroad, and steam ship to Hatteras Island. The building was to be located at the intersection know today as Kholer and Saxton Cut Street, Hatteras North Carolina.



Hatteras Weather Bureau, ca.1900's. Photo: Homer Styron, Hatteras , NC.

The original building was a wood frame structure on masonry piling. The first floor had seven rooms including a living room, dining room, kitchen, store pantry, and three bedrooms for the weather observer and family. The second floor had a large observation room/office with a ship's ladder leading to a walk on the roof. Porches extended across the front and westside.¹⁰



Hatteras Weather Bureau, ca.1925. Photo: National Archives

Other structures include two wooden storage outbuildings with gable roofs with cedar-shingled. The storage shed was 22 by 14 feet, the other was 18 by 12 feet, On-site was a cistern, and a metal signal tower for displaying weather flags, and a privy. The Weather Bureau operated there from 1902 until 1946.

¹⁰ "Brimley Collection, Box 7, Cape Hatteras, F-10, Weather Station, Hatteras, ca. 1900" NC State Archives.