

World Situation, Oct 1943

The CBS Radio news announced on 17 October that weather reports will begin shortly - weather will no longer be considered military information. The two day weather forecast will resume in print and radio broadcast on 1 November.

Beginning 1 October, milk is now rationed. (*TIME: 4 Oct 1943, pg 59*)

For the first time the Eighth Air Force raided deep into Germany with about 500 bombers to strike Emden. (*TIME: 4 Oct 1943, pg 25*)

Army & Navy announces total casualties were 115,201 with 21,940 killed in action. Public told to expect far higher 1944 losses. (*NEWSWEEK: 11 Oct 1943, pg 40*)

U-boat packs are resurging in the Atlantic. Two destroyers and seven merchant ships were sunk by U-boats. Several convoys were attacked with significant losses in both warships and merchant ships. Eleven sinkings reported off the Brazilian coast. (*TIME: 11 Oct 1943, pg 23-24*) A Nazi U-boat with at least 10 deck guns damaged a B-24 Liberator. (*TIME: 11 Oct 1943, pg 25*) U-566 shoots down two PV1 Ventura patrol bombers over Cape Charles, VA during a bombing attack on 7 August 1943. The PV1s were based out of Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York. (<http://uboot.net/boats/u566.htm>)

The Navy announces that "Battleship X" is really the *USS South Dakota*, which shot down 32 Japanese aircraft in the Battle of Santa Cruz in October 1942 and sunk several Japanese ships in November 1942. (*NEWSWEEK: 11 Oct 1943, pg 20*)

Baseball - Yankees won the 1943 World Series four games to one, beating the St. Louis Cardinals. Third game brought the largest series attendance, 69,900 fans. General Eisenhower ordered a full play-by-play broadcast shortwave to the troops. (*NEWSWEEK: 18 Oct 1943, pg 94*)

College Football - Notre Dame vs Michigan 35-12; Army vs Temple 51-0; Iowa Seahawks vs Iowa State 25-0. (*NEWSWEEK: 18 Oct 1943, pg 96*)

Professional Football - Pittsburg Steelers and Philadelphia Eagles combine in 1943 to form "Steagles" due to lack of players. "Steagles" play NY Giants at the Polo Grounds in NYC on 24 October and lose 42 to 12. Steagles previously won against NY Giants 28 to 14 on 9 October. (<http://www.footballdb.com/seasons/nfl/1943>)



Guard at Entrance to HDCP, Ft. Hancock



HDCP Entrance (Mortar Battery)

Major Fort Hancock Gun Batteries (abbreviated listing)

<u>Tactical Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>CAL Inch</u>	<u>No & Model</u>	<u>Mount</u>	<u>Notes</u>
2	Lewis (Const. number 116)	16"	2-MK2M1	BC	Range 44,000 yards. Located at Navesink Highlands. Under construction 1 June 1942. Proof firing scheduled for December 1943.
4	Kingman (c)	12"	2-M1895M1	BC	Range 29,300 yards. Work on casemating started 12 August 1941. Casemating complete 30 April 1942. In Class "A" Feb 1943 for Training.
3	Mills (c)	12"	2-M1895M1	BC	Range 29,300 yards. Work on casemating started 13 April 1942. Casemating completed 31 October 1942. In Class "A" Feb 1943 for Training.
N/A	Richardson (O)	12"	2-M1895M1	DC	Range 17,300 yards. Restored to Class "A" 1 June 1941. In rust preventative August 1942. In Class "C" 3 November 1942.
N/A	Bloomfield (O)	12"	2-M888M1	DC	Range 17,300 yards. Restored to Class "A" 12 June 1941. In rust preventative Aug. 1942. In Class "C" 3 November 1942.
1	CONST. 219 (NC)	6"	2-M1903A2	BC	Range 26,000 yards. Located at Navesink Highlands. Proof fired August 1943.
N/A	Gunnison (O)	6"	2-M1903	DC	Class "A" in 1941. Placed in Class "C" on 3 November 1942. Dismantling started 8 March 1943 to become New Battery Peck. Carriages scrapped
5	Gunnison/New Peck (s)	6"	2-M1900	BC	Range 17,000 Yards. In Class "A" and fully operational by June 1943.
6	Urmston (s)	3"	2-M1903	RF	Range 11,000 yards. In Class "A" in 1941. Relocated end of 1942.
N/A	Morris (s)	3"	4-M1903	RF	Range 11,000 yards. In Class "A" in 1941 to present.

MOUNT = BC - Barbette Carriage; DC - Disappearing Carriage; RF - Rapid Fire
Tactical Number = N/A means it is not a permanent weapon in the defenses - disposal pending. Batteries Kingman and Mills in Class "A" status. This is primarily to train 265th Coast Artillery Regiment which is pending overseas deployment (Alaska).



Battery Bloomfield 1941



Battery Kingman casemate firing 1943

Harbor Entrance Control Post (HECP)

On February 24, 1943 at a meeting of the Joint Army and Navy Planning Committee at Governors Island, it was decided to activate an additional two HECPs to support the one at Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island.

The first HECP activated on 1 May 1943 at Fort Hancock on top of Battery Potter. The second activated in August 1943 at Fort Tilden on Breezy Point in Long Island.

The relationship between the three (3) Harbor Entrance Control Posts was that of three (3) separate stations, each maintaining local shipping plot and full control of shipping in contiguous waters.

Personnel assigned to the HECP #1 were as follows:

- Senior Officer - Lieutenant Colonel
- Four (4) Duty Officers - Majors
- One (1) Sergeant Major - Technical Sergeant
- Four (4) Chief of Sections - Sergeants
- Four (4) Clerk Typists - Corporals
- Four (4) Switchboard Operators - Private First Class
- Four (4) Signalman Observers - Corporals
- Four (4) Plotters - Corporals
- Four (4) Messengers - Privates First Class

The mission of the Harbor Entrance Control Post is to collect, evaluate and disseminate information of activities in the defensive sea area, control of merchant ships in the defensive coastal area, and to take prompt and decisive action to operate elements of the Harbor Defenses to deny enemy action within the defensive coastal area.

Major Duties and Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) included:

Action on Submarines

Action on Vessels in Prohibited Areas

Action on Mine Armings and Hydrophone Signatures

Action on Sound Searches

Challenging Procedure for Ships Entering New York Harbor.

Radar Procedure for Plotting and Tracking Vessels entering New York Harbor

Ships Anchored in Ulna Field and Submarine Telephone Cable area

Duties of Army Signalman Observer

Duties of Army Plotter

Examination Battery Employment



HECP #1 (Btry Potter), Ft. Hancock



Switchboard Room, HDCP, Ft. Hancock

Exam Battery Duties

1. Alerting of Batteries - The Examination Battery Maintains one (1) gun crew and sufficient range personnel to secure necessary firing data on a twenty-four (24) hour alert basis. The gun crew remains at ease in tents or surrounding area of the Gun emplacement. If the Harbor Entrance Control Post (HECP) Duty Officer observes that the Navy is having difficulty during challenging operations, he will order the range crew to track the ship being challenged. When the Navy gives the ship orders to halt, the gun crew will be alerted to man the gun.

2. Assignment of Target - the Guardship notifies the HECP at Ft. Wadsworth and Advanced HECP #1 by radio of ships failing to stop when ordered. A brevity code is used giving the class of ship and its location (Local Grid code). The HECP #1 Duty Officer immediately relocates the target and gives the position to the battery in azimuth and range. When possible, by observation, the following additional information is given:

a) Hoist being flown, direction of sailing, if there is more than one (1) ship in the area, and the position of the ship in the column. In order to assist other personnel of the battery not having oriented instruments, the number of the nearest buoy to the ship is also given. A typical order is as follows:

"Target 1 YMS azimuth 3600 mills, Range 6000 yards as of 1300, inbound Ambrose Channel, near buoy #7, Hoist JAS, fire 1 bring-to shot with inert ammunition".

b) In the event the target has previously been assigned to the range crew, the description and location of the target are not repeated. For destruction fire, the order given is:

"Destruction fire with armor piercing (high explosive) ammunition, begin firing".

3. During the process of tracking, the position of the target was verified by securing simultaneously plots from Advanced HECP #1, the Examination Battery, and if possible, the Guard Ship.

4. The Battery has a standing order to immediately track fast moving targets, PT's, submarines and amphibious craft. The observer must keep the Guardship under surveillance for any type of signal at all times.

5. Actions of the Exam Battery at Fort Hancock in October 1943 from the History of the HDCP/HECP published by the NY/Philadelphia Sector HQ, Eastern Defense Command in 1945.

20 October 1943 - Two (2) minesweepers failed to stop upon orders of the Guardship. Two (2) "Bring-To" shots were fired from Battery Gunnison/New Peck. Ships did not stop. As the Mine Sweepers were expected, 3rd Naval District issued orders to the Navy Officer, Harbor Entrance Control Post to request discontinuance of fire from the shore batteries. The Mine Sweepers were challenged by the Gate Vessel and received a proper reply.

20 October 1943 - A "Bring To" shot was fired on a merchantman to slow its travel speed. The freighter stopped for a second, and then resumed its course at a slow speed.