



## THE BERMUDA NATIONAL TRUST

*To protect and promote Bermuda's unique natural and cultural heritage forever.*

### OCEAN VIEW (Formerly East Camp)



East Camp in 1957.

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This is part of a series of architectural articles by the Bermuda National Trust that will highlight some of Bermuda's endangered historic buildings.

Tucked away off South Road in Warwick is an old farmhouse, one of the many properties that once belonged to Captain John Lightbourn. He lived at Fruitlands but maintained a residence and second family on Turks Island. In 1871 John's son, Robert Lightbourn, by order of the Bermuda Defence Act 1865, sold the southern four acres of land bounding on the Atlantic Ocean to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for War. In 1891 Robert's heirs sold the farmhouse and remaining eight and one-half acres to planters Samuel and John Frederick Ingham and in 1897 the brothers sold to the Secretary of State for War.

By 1911 the property was being used by the Bermuda Volunteer Rifle Corps (BVRC) who would march from Fort Hamilton and pitch their tents for both their annual and musketry camps. Various branches of the British military, such as the Royal Marines from HMS *Constance*, would also use the camp for

musket practice. It became known as Warwick East Camp or simply East Camp to differentiate it from Warwick Main Camp which was located a little further to the west. The Bermuda Cadet Corps was established in 1922 and they too held their annual week-long camps at East Camp until 1926. Unfortunately, that summer many of the boys became sick. The next summer the Cadet Corps moved to Warwick Main Camp where there were permanent buildings, cooking facilities, good sanitation and a certain amount of shade, all of which were lacking at East Camp.

The Bermuda Government acquired all of the British military property for £750,000 under the Crown Lands Act of 1954. East Camp was transferred to the Bermuda Housing Corporation in 1973.

The farmhouse, now called Ocean View and a Grade 2 listed building, was likely built in the late 1790s. It is a long one-room-wide cottage with chimneys at each of its gable ends. When photographed in 1957 its age was evident by the location of the windows placed directly under the wallplate, typical of a house built around 1800. The building has since been re-roofed, leaving a larger space between the windows and eaves, and doors and windows have been rearranged. Small additions have been added on the western and northern sides. When photographed in 2009 the farmhouse had been freshly painted and appeared in excellent condition.



**Aerial view of East Camp in 2009 (Courtesy of the Royal Navy).**

Today, however, Ocean View farmhouse has fallen into a sad state of disrepair. The last known legal occupant was James Edmund Smith who died in 2012. Originally from St David's, he had worked on the Queen of Bermuda and was happy in his retirement to be a tenant in such a charming cottage in such a wonderful location overlooking the South Shore. One wonders why, if the Housing Corporation has no use for the building or cannot maintain it, they do not sell it to someone who would appreciate and care for it. Alternatively, a long lease to someone who would restore it sensitively would save a very special building.





East Camp today.



East Camp today.



**East Camp today.**

**Sources:** Crown Lands Deeds filed with the Bermuda Archives as well as articles in both The Royal Gazette & The Recorder.

For more on John Lightbourn see the Bermuda National Trust's Architectural Heritage series, Warwick and The Letter Book of Captain John Lightbourn Sr and William Astwood by Adrienne Antoinette Lightbourn Butz.

