

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

U.S. NAVAL AIR STATION,

BARRANCAS NATIONAL CEMETERY, SUPERINTEDENT'S LODGE

This report is an addendum to four data pages previously transmitted to the Library of Congress.

Location: Naval Air Station, 80 Hovey Road, Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida.

The coordinates for Barrancas National Cemetery are 87.285446 W and 30.352588 N, and they were obtained in August 2012 with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Present Owner: National Cemetery Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Prior to 1988, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs was known as the Veterans Administration.

The Veterans Administration took over management of Barrancas National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1906, razed 1996.

Builder/Contractor: Unknown.

Description: There were two lodges constructed in Barrancas National Cemetery, the first in 1868 and the second, its replacement, in 1906. The second lodge was built as a Four-Square, and was razed in 1996. It was one of two buildings that the Quartermaster's department erected in wood to the Four-Square plan in 1906. The other wood-frame, Four-Square was constructed in Florence, South Carolina, in 1906 and was demolished in 1976.

Students from the photography school at the U.S. Naval Air Station recorded the exterior of the 1906 lodge for HABS before its demolition, and photographs confirm the presence of a two-story building with a Four-Square plan. It was made of wood frame on a foundation of brick pillars. The roof had low-pitch and the front (west) and rear (east) elevations had double porches. The windows were shuttered and screened. In the photographs associated with the maintenance ledgers, the windows appear to be double-hung sash glazed with multiple lights in the upper sash, although whether or not the upper sash was operable is unclear in the images. In the photographs for HABS, the windows appear to be glazed with one-over-one lights, but what is

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visible could also be storm windows. The front façade faced west. The interior featured plastered and painted walls and hardwood floors. By the time of the HABS documentation, the exterior of the building had been covered in aluminum siding and the roof was tinned.

Maintenance records from the 1930s to the 1960s indicate the wood building was periodically painted, the roof and gutter system routinely repaired, and various mechanical systems, such as heating, electrical, and plumbing, were updated and replaced. Records begin in 1931 with the notation for painting the exterior and interior of the lodge as well as the renewal of the sills. In 1932, attention turned to the roof and guttering, but it was 1934 that saw further repairs and painting and the addition of 20 new window shades as well as the installation of a flush toilet and of a steam heating system. This work held until 1941 when the lodge was again painted, its plaster repaired, its roof repaired, and its gutters replaced. The plumbing and fixtures were upgraded in 1941, bringing new water pipes, plus a new kitchen sink, bath tub, wash stand and toilet.

Other material changes to the building came in the mid 1940s including Venetian blinds, improvements to the kitchen bathroom and mechanical systems, and the painting of six interior rooms. The kitchen and office floors received a cover of linoleum in 1944. Storm damage prompted some repair work to the lodge in October 1947, primarily to the roof of the lodge but also to the tool house. The roof of the lodge was replaced in 1952. The porches required maintenance work in the early 1950s, including the replacement of the wood steps with concrete in 1951 and the replacement of the floors and screen doors in 1953. In 1956, the lodge was re-wired, the heating system was repaired, new cabinets were installed in the kitchen, and the lodge was painted inside and outside. In 1958 the eaves and downspouts were replaced, while the interior was improved with the installation of vinyl tile flooring in the office, kitchen, and bathroom. Likely the vinyl tile was laid over top of the existing wood floors. Electrical maintenance took place in 1959. Also in that year, cracks in the interior plaster were repaired, the interior was repainted, and the hardwood floors were refinished. In the mid 1960s, the kitchen floor was replaced, the Venetian blinds were replaced, and a map cabinet acquired for the office. The “old fireplace and paneling” in the dining room were removed in 1964 and the porches were rebuilt in 1966.

Changes to the floor plan came early in this era, and included a door cut into the wall between the northwest room and the pantry in 1934. The partial basement was upgraded that year as well, with concrete and paint, perhaps indicating its use for domestic tasks or just a need to monitor waterproofing in a coastal climate.

Site Context: The main elevation of the lodge faced west, and likely toward to the entrance drive to the cemetery grounds. The HABS photograph of the south elevation of the lodge also includes the cast iron and brick perimeter wall and so further suggests the building faced west to the drive from a location near the gates. Today, the wall remains and arguably a grassy area to the east of the drive by the entrance marks the location of the lodge until its demolition in 1996. This would be in keeping with the placement of the lodge and office near the entrance, for ease of public

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access and for accommodating the superintendent's residential needs while respecting the sanctity of the burial ground.

The entrance drive runs on a north-to-south axis to the flagstaff roundabout, and then extends east to connect to Cemetery Drive, placing the likely lodge location and entry gates in the southeast quadrant of the grounds.

History: Please see the contextual report for an analysis of the architectural development of the lodge as a building type for the national cemeteries and its place within this prescribed landscape (HALS No. DC-46).

In 1862 Congress authorized the appropriation of land for use as national cemeteries so that the Union soldiers who perished in service to their country could be buried with honor. These became the first cemeteries in the national cemetery system; by the end of the decade almost 300,000 men were buried in seventy-three national cemeteries. By that time the Office of the Quartermaster General, and the Quartermaster Montgomery C. Meigs in particular, had developed an architectural program for the cemetery. The program created for the national cemeteries included an enclosing wall demarcating the grounds and ornamental iron gates cast to instill reverence to those who entered and calm the wrought emotions of a nation in mourning for its lost sons. Specific plantings, such as the Osage-orange hedge and various trees, were selected to give a pleasing appearance and, likely, to screen outbuildings - the business of cemetery maintenance - from public view. Less a commemorative architectural statement, the superintendent's lodge combined practicality with a respectful presence.

Lodge plans first evolved from expedient wood-frame "cottages" to masonry buildings one-story in height and with a three-room floor plan. Construction of the temporary wood-frame lodges took place in the years 1867 to 1869, and overlapped with the construction of the first permanent masonry lodges built to a standard, single-story design from 1868 to 1871. Officers in charge of the cemeteries soon found the floor plans of the temporary wood lodges and the first permanent masonry lodges inconvenient and, increasingly, unattractive.

Moreover, representatives from the Quartermaster General's Office noted these three-room models were often too small for a superintendent and his family, and so in 1869, plans for a six-room, one and one-half story type were acquired from Edward Clark, Architect of the Capitol Extension. The design was refined over the next two years and in 1871 drawn for the Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs's approval. This standard plan featured a mansard roof and so became associated with the French or Second Empire style. Contemporary buildings, domestic and civic, exhibited this aesthetic and so the choice of the Quartermaster for a Second Empire style lodge is in keeping with national architectural trends as well as the personal taste of Meigs whose house also was erected in the Second Empire style. On the national stage, Alfred Mullet designed the Old Executive Office building in Washington, DC, a building whose construction in the 1870s coincided with the building of lodges in the Second Empire style in many of the national cemeteries.

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The National Cemetery Administration identifies the Second Empire style lodge, referred to in the 1880s as the “usual” type, or even the “full Meigs plan” likely in reference to the Quartermaster’s endorsement of the design, as the first generation of permanent lodges. It reflects a concerted effort to standardize what a national cemetery, including the lodge, should look like. The last cemeteries for which the Quartermaster contracted for this style of lodge were for Mobile, Alabama, and Beaufort, South Carolina, in 1881.

The L-plan was revised in 1885 for the lodge in San Francisco, and then employed for the lodges in Mound City and Loudon Park. The revised plan was further improved for the construction of the lodge at Cypress Hills. The revision to the standard L-plan primarily included a change in roof form from the mansard to a cross-gable and the use of banded brick in the exterior walls. Cypress Hills was a simpler expression of the type, with segmental arches over the windows instead of stone lintels and having no banded exterior brick in the walls. In the 1890s, the plans called for an elongated office wing. This change to the L-plan accommodated an entrance hall in the middle of the building; the elongated L-plan was built in Santa Fe, Fort Smith, and Fort Leavenworth.

By the century’s end, standards of living called for conveniences the L-plan lodges lacked. Advances in plumbing and heating technologies, in particular, made the L-plan outdated as expectations about the appropriate level of domestic sanitation that the government should provide to its employees changed. Even so, the Quartermaster omitted indoor toilets from the lodge floor plans until 1905. Maintenance of the existing lodges, as well as ell additions, addressed some of the inconveniences of the older buildings, and made the lodges more comfortable as living spaces. Between the 1880s and 1940s, improvements to the existing lodges included the installation of indoor plumbing and bathrooms, central heating, closets and cupboards; adding a kitchen ell and converting the original kitchen into a dining room; and maintenance of windows, shutters, and porches.

By 1905, the Quartermaster determined some lodges warranted a complete overall, rather than renovation, and the department began to replace some of the buildings in the national cemeteries. For the new lodges, it created a succession of twenty-two different plans between 1905 and 1960. Nine of these plans were used to build multiple lodges, but thirteen were unique designs, used only once. Compared to the extended popularity of the L-plan, which lasted from 1870 to 1881 in its mansard-roof form and to 1904 in its later variations, the rapid succession of designs in the twentieth century suggests a new awareness among those directing the cemeteries of the need to construct lodges that were aesthetically and technologically up-to-date. Over five decades, the Quartermaster endorsed a progression of plans from four-squares to bungalows to Colonial Revival designs and then to suburban ramblers. This progression paralleled the changes in form, style, building materials, and construction practices that occurred in the private housing market.

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Most of the lodges built in the twentieth century are indistinguishable from typical American middle-class and upper-middle-class suburban dwellings, with the exception of a second entrance for the superintendent's office. In some instances, such as in Hampton, Virginia, and in Annapolis, Maryland, the army made a particular effort to match new lodges to their local surroundings, usually by building period-revival designs in places where those designs would have particular resonance. In a nod to the colonial heritage of the Chesapeake, the Quartermaster built one-and-one-half-story brick lodges in a Colonial Revival style at these cemeteries in 1940. In another example, the desire to match designs to localities prompted the alteration of the L-plan lodge at San Francisco into a Spanish Mission Revival building in 1929 and the similarly extensive reconstruction of the Santa Fe lodge into the Pueblo Revival style in 1942.

The Quartermaster's department used the Four-Square plan in lodges made of wood frame, here in Barrancas and also in Florence, in 1906 and then for brick lodges located in six other cemeteries between 1907 and 1910: Gettysburg, Knoxville, Camp Butler, Little Rock, Andrew Johnson, Tennessee, and San Antonio. The Four-Square plan provided space for the hall, office, parlor, dining room, pantry and kitchen on the first floor, and space for the hall, four bedrooms and bathroom on the second floor. As seen in Florence, the Barrancas lodge had the eight primary living spaces, with four bedrooms on the second floor and the office, living room, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor, as well as the circulation spaces and secondary spaces that made the lodge more comfortable, such as the hallways, pantries, and bathroom. Because of the nearly identical expression of the Four-Square seen in these lodges, the buildings derive their significance as a collective example of an early twentieth-century house form adapted by the Quartermaster for use in the national cemeteries. They also mark a point of departure from the L-plan.

Located within the Pensacola Naval Air Station today, Barrancas National Cemetery was opened as a small burying ground for the marine hospital and then expanded in 1838 as a naval cemetery. Of the garrisons guarding Pensacola Bay – Fort Pickens, Fort McRae and Fort Barrancas – McRae and Barrancas were abandoned in favor of Fort Pickens on the day of Florida's succession from the Union in 1861. The small force stationed in the area could not cover and defend all three, so Lieutenant Adam Slemmer blew up the ammunition and spiked the guns, and battened down in Fort Pickens. After Fort Sumter, reinforcements from the army arrived in Pensacola but not in time to prevent the surrender of the Navy yard on April 12th. A year later the Confederate forces left the Naval yard and the forts to the Union troops. However, in that interval, many men were lost in the skirmishes that occurred around Pensacola Bay. In 1868 Barrancas was declared a national cemetery, and the lodge for the superintendent was built. It was a one-story, brick building erected along the three-room linear plan with piazzas on the east and west sides. The Quartermaster replaced this lodge in 1906 with the Four-Square. The 1906 lodge retained the east-to-west site orientation of the earlier lodge and continued the use of piazzas to make the lodge more comfortable as living quarters in the summer months.

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Historian: Virginia B. Price, 2012.

Project Information: The documentation of the lodges and rostrums in the national cemeteries was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), one of the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service, Richard O'Connor, Chief. The project was sponsored by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Sara Amy Leach, Senior Historian. Project planning was coordinated by Catherine C. Lavoie, Chief of HABS. Historical research was undertaken by HABS Historians

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Virginia B. Price and Michael R. Harrison. NCA Historians Jennifer Perunko, Alec Bennett, and Hillori Schenker provided research material, edited and reviewed written reports. Field work for selected sites was carried out and measured drawings produced by HABS Architects Paul Davidson, Ryan Pierce, and Mark Schara.