

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

CAVE HILL NATIONAL CEMETERY, LODGE

HALS No. KY-8-A

Location: 701 Baxter Avenue, Louisville-Jefferson County, Jefferson County, Kentucky.

The coordinates for the Cave Hill National Cemetery are 85.717232 W and 38.245412 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 Cave Hill National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1877; sold at auction, 1938.

Builder/Contractor: William T. Foster.

Description: The one and one-half story, Second Empire style lodge is brick over a stone foundation. The brick walls are painted grey. The mansard roof is covered in slate, while the shallow hip roof above is covered in tin. The principal elevation faces southwest to Baxter Avenue and the entrance porch is in the south corner of the building. The double-hung, wood sash is glazed with six-over-six lights and the first-floor windows have shutters.

Sometime before 1934 a kitchen, porch, and radiators were added. Contemporary aerials reveal the addition of an exterior, wood staircase at the north end of the northwest elevation.

Site Context: The lodge faces Baxter Avenue (State Route 316) and overlooks a parking lot. It is flanked by commercial development. To the east are the burial grounds, and south along Baxter Avenue the burial grounds begin to be visible from the street through the iron fencing. At this juncture, a secondary entrance gate leads into the Cave Hill Cemetery from Baxter Avenue. Further south from the lodge on Baxter Avenue is the main entrance to Cave Hill Cemetery; this entrance is marked by a clock tower. The national cemetery lies within the Cave Hill Cemetery boundaries.

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.

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.

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 oversaw the construction of three lodges in 1877, and the one for Cave Hill National Cemetery was the only one of the three built in brick. The other two lodges built that year were in Grafton, West Virginia, and Finn's Point, New Jersey. The Cave Hill lodge is significant as an example of the L-plan design rendered in brick over a stone foundation, and is significant as part of the Quartermaster's architectural repertoire that saw a standardization of building form and plan in the late nineteenth century. The survival of the

lodge for Cave Hill National Cemetery is, perhaps, tied to this definitive design, one that continued to identify the building with the cemetery and the national cemetery program despite its location outside the premises and subsequent sale. The auction of the Cave Hill lodge also speaks to the Quartermaster's modernization campaign that saw many of the Second Empire style lodges renovated or razed, as recognition of changing living conditions also ushered in views of obsolescence.

Cave Hill National Cemetery is located in Louisville, along the streetcar line and was highly visible to residents of the city in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The first burials in the cemetery occurred in 1861, and the grounds were established as a national cemetery in 1863. After the war, the remains of those who had died on the battlefields and in the Union hospitals from their wounds and hastily buried were reinterred in Cave Hill.

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General reveal that there were two lodges built for Cave Hill National Cemetery, a temporary wood-frame structure erected about 1867 and a Second Empire style, brick building constructed in 1877. Both were located outside the cemetery grounds and adjacent to it. The lodge lot was 180' long and 55' wide and enclosed with a picket fence. The temporary frame lodge was one story, and had a footprint about 36' x 16'. The floor plan accommodated just three rooms. It was rented in 1869 because there was no superintendent assigned to the cemetery at that time. When time came to replace the temporary wood-frame structure with a permanent lodge, cemetery officials planned to reuse the wood building as a tool house and so moved it to clear the site for construction. They noted the building was of the "old style" was in fair condition "given its age."

The Quartermaster contracted with William T. Foster of Jeffersonville, Indiana, to move the frame building and retrofit it for a tool house as well as to construct the one and one-half story brick lodge in the Second Empire style in 1877. His cost estimate for the project was \$2440. In June 1877 a request to insert shutters on the inside of the dormers was made and approved. Although the records are largely silent, maintenance on the building continued into the twentieth century and it remains on Baxter Avenue today albeit with a commercial rather than commemorative context.

Sources:

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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 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.