

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
CITY POINT NATIONAL CEMETERY, LODGE

HALS No. VA-8-A

Location: 10th Avenue and Davis Street, Hopewell, (Independent City), Virginia.

The coordinates for City Point National Cemetery, Lodge are 77.296918 W and 37.306060 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 City Point National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1928.

Builder/Contractor: Unknown.

Description: There were three lodges constructed for the superintendent's use at City Point National Cemetery. The first lodge was a temporary structure made of wood-frame. It was one story, and moved for re-use as a kitchen and storeroom to the lodge built in 1871-72. The lodge erected in 1871-72 was an L-plan lodge in the Second Empire style. It was one floor initially, and the attic and mansard roof were added in 1874. This lodge was built by Kyran A. Murphy and Miller. The present lodge in the Dutch Colonial Revival style dates to 1928.

Like the Second Empire style lodge, the lodge at City Point National Cemetery is distinguished by its roofline. Here, the pronounced gambrel roof defines the building as an expression of the Dutch Colonial Revival style. The principal elevation of the lodge faces east. A walkway connects the pedestrian gate on 10th Avenue to the porch of the lodge that serves as its front entrance.

The lodge is one and one-half story, with the second floor under the gambrel roof. Dormer windows punctuate the roof plane; semi-circular windows are found in the gables. Although the roof has modern asphalt-based shingles today, originally it was covered in wood shingles. The foundations are granite and the sills of the first-floor windows are stone. The windows are wood sash, likely double-hung, with glazing that varies, including nine-over-two lights, eight-over-two lights, and six-over-two lights. Predominantly, the sash windows are paired, including the sash of the shed-roofed dormer windows. The chimneys are brick, and were stuccoed above the roofline. There are two exterior entries to the main floor, in the front and rear elevations, as well as external access to the basement or cellar. The walls are plaster and the floors are wood.

Maintenance ledgers from 1928 to 1969 detail the largely cosmetic changes to the building, such as painting and replastering walls and ceilings or refinishing the wood floors when necessary. Weatherproofing considerations prompted the installation of weatherstripping (1939, gutters and screens (1952, 1957, 1969), storm doors and windows (1953), and awnings (1956). The bathroom was redone in 1967-1968, just after the kitchen remodeling was completed in 1966. Parquet flooring was put down in the living room (1968) and linoleum in the office (1954). The basement windows were replaced in 1966.

Site Context: City Point National Cemetery occupies approximately seven acres and is laid out in an almost square plan with an apse-like projection on its eastern boundary to accommodate the lodge. A low fieldstone wall encloses the perimeter and a walkway connects a pedestrian gate in the wall to the lodge entrance. The lodge faces east, and it is located just north of the main entrance at the intersection of Davis Street and N. 10th Avenue.

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.

Of the twentieth-century lodge forms, the design in the Dutch Colonial Revival oeuvre was selected most often. Fourteen lodges were built using this plan between 1921 and 1934. The design called for a one and one-half story building with masonry construction at the first floor and wood-frame gambrel roofs enclosing the upper floor. The building footprint was rectangular and included an enclosed porch and office in the front, a living room and stair in the middle, and a dining room and kitchen at the rear. The second floor contained three bedrooms and a bathroom opening off of a central hall. Three versions of the design were used. The first in four lodges erected between 1921 and 1928, with hollow core tile walls covered in stucco, shingled roofs and gable ends, and dormers two windows in width on the front and rear. The second version expanded the dormer from two windows to four, adding more light the upper floor. This plan was used twice, for lodges in Nashville and Chattanooga, in 1931. WPA funds paid for the construction of lodges in 1934, including eight built to a third rendition of the Dutch Colonial Revival design. In 1934, the building materials included brick construction on the first floor and faux half-timbered or brick gables.

The lodge at City Point is significant as an example of the Dutch Colonial Revival plan first used in 1921 in Marietta, Georgia. In 1928, the Quartermaster's department built three more lodges using this initial version of the one and one-half story, Dutch Colonial Revival design. One lodge was for City Point, while the other two were erected in Danville, Virginia, and Vicksburg, Mississippi. The lodge at City Point cost \$10,240 to construct.

City Point National Cemetery is one of several cemeteries in the vicinity of Richmond, Virginia, and it is located on the south side of the Appomattox River in Prince George County. The Union Army established a supply depot here, both for troops and materials, in support of its effort to capture the capital of the Confederacy. The siege of Petersburg and Richmond in 1864 and 1865 and resultant casualties in the attempts to take Richmond landed many soldiers in area hospitals, including that at City Point. The mortality rate was high and many of the dead were buried near the hospital site. That impromptu graveyard became part of City Point National Cemetery in 1866. Seven acres were purchased in 1868 from Edward Comer, and remains from other cemeteries were reinterred at City Point. Roadwork and excavations in Hopewell uncovered the remains of Civil War soldiers in the 1950s, and these were also reinterred at City Point. The first

superintendent for the cemetery was John Delacray and likely it was he who was there in the 1870s as the stone wall was constructed and to whom references were made in the Quartermaster General's correspondence regarding his living arrangements at that time.

Although City Point National Cemetery was established early in the emergence of the cemetery system, housing for the superintendent took longer to finalize. The lodge was to be situated near the entrance of the cemetery, in the apse-like projection to the east side of the rectangular plot used as the burying ground. A temporary frame lodge was built immediately for the superintendent. By 1871 it was described as the "old lodge" when it needed to be moved in order to make room for construction of a new, single-story, stone lodge on the L-shaped "Meigs plan." A second floor under a mansard roof was added in 1874. In 1873, inspection reports for the cemetery revealed that contractors working on the stone enclosing wall were living in the new lodge and the superintendent were residing in the old lodge to the rear. The kitchen was blackened, and the interior "wanted keeping." The Quartermaster General's Office recommended that the superintendent terminate this unauthorized, and improper, living arrangement and that he be asked to restore the lodge to good order at his own expense. Of the lodge's architecture the inspector described it as a one-story building made of stone with a flat roof. The mortar used was too sandy and the plaster was applied to the walls without furring, inviting dampness and damage to the fabric. The contractors for this lodge also erected the one at Poplar Grove; that lodge was of the same size and character. The lodges each had three rooms. At the inspector's next visit he noted the superintendent had evicted the workers and cleaned up the lodge. He recommended the addition of an attic story and attention to drainage around the building. By 1889, the lodge received its mansard addition and had another three rooms of living space afforded by the second floor. Also, nearby, was a brick tool house. In the tool house were rooms for the tool house, shed, stable, and privy. The tool house measured 12' x 29', but no comment on its appearance was offered. By 1909 an ell was attached to the west wall; this was added in 1896 and likely was for a kitchen.

Historic photographs show a stone lodge, with a mansard roof and dormer windows in line with the sash below. There were also shutters affixed to the sash. Two brick chimneys pierced the roofline, and the front porch remained in-situ. The small ell is just visible to the rear of the building. Maintenance records note an addition to the kitchen in 1924, as well as the installation of gutters and downspouts, and electrical fixtures. This evidently was a stop-gap measure for the building was demolished in June 1928 and the present lodge constructed. Accompanying the lodge was a new tool house, also gambrel roofed, that accommodated the tool or utility shed and a garage.

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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.