

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

MARIETTA NATIONAL CEMETERY, LODGE

HALS No. GA-1-A

Location: 500 Washington Avenue, Marietta, Cobb County, Georgia.

The coordinates for the Marietta National Cemetery, Lodge are 84.542605 W and 33.951978 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 Marietta National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1921.

Builder/Contractor: Unknown.

Description: The lodge built in 1921 for Marietta National Cemetery is the first example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style lodge constructed in the national cemetery system. The principal elevation is to the west. The lodge has a gambrel roof and a low, shed-roofed dormer in the front and rear slopes of the main roof. There is an interior chimney on the north side elevation, and the stack has been stuccoed above the roofline. The first-floor windows are paired in the front façade; the upper sash is glazed with nine lights on the first floor and in the gables, while the dormers appear to have double-hung sash glazed with six-over-six lights. There is an integral porch to north end of the west front elevation. The porch is screened and the door into the lodge proper is accessed via this porch. The walls of the lodge are stuccoed, the foundations are concrete, and the roof has asbestos-based shingles. Inside, the floors are pine.

Maintenance records for the cemetery enumerate mechanical system upgrades as well as the acquisition of new appliances, new fixtures, laundry tubs, bathtubs, and sinks. The floors were varnished and the walls in the basement were whitewashed in 1931. Aluminum screen doors were installed in 1959, and the screens of the front porch were replaced in 1965. The roof was redone twice, once in 1931 and then again in 1968. The window wells were built up to help direct water away from the house. Inside, the sliding doors were replaced (1961), aluminum Venetian blinds were installed (1959), linoleum tile supplanted the rolled linoleum in the office (1959), and acoustical tiles were placed in the kitchen (1961).

In 1928 work was done on the chimney top, on the south side; and in 1930, work on the double-flue at the chimney top, on the north side, was done. It is not clear from the maintenance ledgers what those projects entailed.

Site Context: Marietta National Cemetery covers over twenty acres and is laid out in a rectangular plot bounded by a stone wall. Inside, the pathways take curvilinear routes through the grounds and subdivide the cemetery into burial sections. The main entrance is at the northwest corner of the cemetery at the intersections of Washington Avenue and Cole Street. A monumental arch marks this entry; the arch was one of five built in the national cemetery system and was completed in 1883. The lodge faces west to Cole Street, and is located near the arch at the main entrance and to the north of the main drive or path into grounds from that archway.

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 a brick construction on the first floor and faux half-timbered or brick gables.

The lodge in Marietta is especially important as the first lodge built in the Dutch Colonial Revival style in the national cemetery system. The Marietta lodge cost \$10,250 to construct of stuccoed hollow tile and frame. This lodge, completed in 1921, replaced an early lodge type that was significant as an example of the linear plan lodge initially one-story and then raised to two stories.

Marietta National Cemetery was established in 1866 and is the final resting place of over 10,000 Union soldiers, many of whom died during the march from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Atlanta, Georgia, in 1864 to 1865. The owner of the land, Henry Cole, hoped the cemetery would be open to soldiers from both Union and Confederate armies but neither side shared his vision. Cole ceded the property to the government and construction on the cemetery landscape began.

An important part of the cemetery landscape was the one-story brick lodge with a linear plan built in 1868. The lodge had three rooms, plus verandas or piazzas along the front and rear that expanded the living area and likely made the interiors more comfortable in the humid climate. The contractors for the project, Wallis & Henderson, completed the lodge at a cost of \$1820. The kitchen was originally located in the basement, but an addition to the building provided kitchen and dining spaces on the first floor. The date of this expansion is not known. In 1882, a second floor was added to the lodge to better accommodate the superintendent and his family. With the

second floor, the lodge offered six rooms and so was comparable to the newer buildings constructed for the national cemeteries as well as to early lodges in Annapolis, Fort Smith, Vicksburg, Natchez, and Barrancas, that shared a similar floor plan.

The walls of the Marietta lodge were one-brick (9”) thick at the first floor and not built to support a second floor, since that addition came some years later. The extra load caused some cracks to appear in the walls, and by 1888, inspectors for the Quartermaster derided it as “poorly built.” In the 1909 survey, the condition of the lodge was described in similar terms and likely influenced its replacement in 1921 with the Dutch Colonial Revival lodge.

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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.