

**HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY**  
**BALTIMORE NATIONAL CEMETERY, LODGE**

**HALS No. MD-4-A**

Location: 5501 Frederick Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland.

The coordinates for the Baltimore National Cemetery, Lodge are 76.708489 W and 39.277400 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 Baltimore National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1938.

Builder/Contractor: Unknown.

Description: The Federal Revival style lodge was constructed in 1938, after the ca. 1810 country house on the estate known as Cloud Capped was demolished. Materials from that building were used in the construction of the cemetery lodge. The ca. 1810 house provided a model for the lodge design, as suggested by photographs from the early twentieth century. Like the wing it emulated, the side-gable, brick lodge was two stories in height with a long porch along the first floor of the principal elevation. The main elevation faces northeast. In Cloud Capped, the porch wrapped around the side of the structure, but in the simpler expression of the form taken by the lodge, the porch extended only along the northeast front elevation and the fluting on the columnar supports was omitted.

The rectangular footprint of the lodge measures approximately 20' x 50'. The side gable roof is covered in standing seam metal, however, records suggest it was originally covered in slate. There are two interior chimneys. The foundation is concrete, and the floors are oak. The wood sash windows have shutters, and the center door has a transom and sidelights. The placement of the entry door in the five-bay, northeast front façade suggests the building had a center hall plan with a room to either side.

There is a one-story, one room extension to the southeast side of the building. It has a low hipped roof. In contemporary aerial photographs there also appears to be an addition on the southwest (rear) elevation; the view from Taylor Street reveals that the one-story addition included a garage. The northeast side elevation has a pediment with a full return and three double-hung

wood sash windows glazed with six-over-six lights. Two of the sash windows are on the second floor, while the first-floor window is centrally located in the wall.

In 1941 finishing touches were put on the Federal Revival style lodge, including painting and mechanical systems (boiler). After an interlude imposed by the Second World War, work on the cemetery lodge continued. The post-war years saw the installation of a heating system, repairs to the gutters, and additional painting on the exterior. In 1948 Venetian blinds were installed. The next two years saw more painting, gutter and downspout maintenance, and replacement appliances in the kitchen. In 1954 the first floor and upstairs hall were painted. At the end of the decade, the gutters and roof were repaired, electrical upgrades completed, aluminum storm windows and screens put in, and the broken glass around the doorway replaced. In 1962 the dining room ceiling was tiled, and similar redecorating occurred in the office the following year. At this time, damaged sills were fixed, broken balusters repaired, a glass shower was installed on the bathtub, the windows were caulked, and painting was done. Throughout the 1960s, careful attention was paid to the gutters and to keeping the lodge painted. Window shades were added in 1966.

Site Context: The lodge faces northeast toward the entrance or portal drive and is visible from the main entrance gates on the northern boundary of the cemetery at Frederick Avenue. It was constructed in the location of the ca. 1810 country house on the estate known as Cloud Capped. The grounds of the cemetery are primarily east and south of the lodge, and the lodge's presence near the main gate is in keeping with cemetery plans throughout the system.

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 lodge in Baltimore National Cemetery is significant as the only lodge building constructed through WPA funding, although other structures and lodges, including what became the Assistant Superintendent's Residence in Baltimore, were renovated with money provided through the program. The lodge cost over \$26,000 to build in 1938. The lodge in Baltimore is also important as the single example of the Federal Revival style as it was adapted for use in the national cemeteries.

Baltimore National Cemetery was established when space for interments in Loudon Park National Cemetery (HALS No. MD-5) threatened to run out. Located close to Loudon Park, Baltimore National Cemetery is in southwest Baltimore and occupies a parcel once known as Cloud Capped. The terrain is steep and the view of the Baltimore harbor clear. Allegedly those at Cloud Capped saw the British fleet sail into the harbor during the War of 1812. They dispatched a messenger to warn the city just before the bombardment of Fort McHenry.

The dwelling became the summerhouse of the Randall family around 1890; the Randall family conveyed the property to the government in 1936. The first superintendent was appointed in 1937 and the cemetery was formally dedicated in 1941. Work on the cemetery grounds was funded in part through the Works Progress Administration, and the WPA laborers salvaged materials from the ca. 1810 house to reuse in the cemetery buildings. The architectural form of the Federal Revival style lodge was derived from a wing of the Randall house.

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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.