

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
MILL SPRINGS NATIONAL CEMETERY, LODGE

HALS No. KY-5-A

Location: 9044 West Highway 80, Nancy, Pulaski County, Kentucky.

The coordinates for the Mill Springs National Cemetery are 84.763262 W and 37.082417 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 Mill Springs National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1920, demolished after 1969.

Builder/Contractor: Unknown.

Description: There were three lodges constructed for Mill Springs National Cemetery, including a temporary wood-frame lodge, a Second Empire style brick lodge, and a bungalow. The bungalow was built in 1920 and razed after 1969.

The bungalow was wood-frame with shingle siding, and it was one and one-half story in height. It had a side gable roof and foundations of concrete. The lodge measured 30' x 36' with a 10' x 20' kitchen. There was a low dormer with a shed roof in the front slope of the side gable; the windows were wood sash and glazed with six-over-one lights. The sash windows in the front façade were paired, and the door occupied the center bay of the three-bay wide façade. A porch, with a shed roof extending from the front slope of the side gable roof, covered the entry and was accessed by a flight of concrete steps. The side-gable, with its low dormer and exposed rafters, was one element of the bungalow house type used in the lodge; the shingled walls and porch entry were other features of the vernacular employed here.

There were seven rooms in the lodge, including the basement. There was one bedroom on the second floor, while the first floor housed the living room, dining room, a bedroom, and the office. The kitchen and pantry were behind the dining room, at the rear of the building, in plan. The basement was primarily for storage: of coal, of wood, of potatoes. The floors were pine, and the shingles were asphalt-based. Linoleum was installed in the kitchen in 1941.

Maintenance records for the cemetery account for improvements to the lodge from the time of its construction to the 1960s, when the entries in the ledgers cease. The lodge was demolished

sometime after 1969. Between 1920 and 1969 the lodge was remodeled twice. The first change occurred in the late 1940s when the kitchen and bathroom were redone, and the second took place in the 1960s. In 1960 the room with the dormer window was converted into a bathroom and storage area, and in 1966 and 1967 the makeover spilled downstairs. Paneling was put in the living room and dining room, dropped ceilings were created, the office was remodeled, additional work was done in the kitchen including replacing the door, and the wood sash was switched out for aluminum.

Repairs took place steadily throughout this time period. Mechanical systems were checked and upgraded, insulation was added, paint was applied, and floors were refinished. The brick fireplace was repaired, and so too the chimney. The roof was redone twice, first in 1951 and again in 1966. The later job also involved the installation of six ventilators in the roof. Termites were discovered in the stair leading to the basement, and the damaged portions were replaced. A flagstone patio was put in behind the lodge and safety railings were installed on the front steps and porch.

Site Context: The original cemetery grounds consisted of just over six acres and was laid out in a rectangular form with the northeast and northwest corner clipped. The flagpole was placed on the highest ground, in the center of the cemetery, and pathways traversing the grounds intersected at the flagpole. The graves were laid out in rows on a east-to-west axis. Wrought iron gates were placed at the main entrance, on the southern boundary of the cemetery and portions of the original (1868) stone wall survive on the south and east sides. In 1892, the lodge – then a building in the Second Empire style – was shown outside the cemetery walls. It was west of the cemetery proper. Likely the bungalow built in 1920 was also placed in this location.

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.

In the 1910s, the Quartermaster's department tried a bungalow design for the national cemeteries in keeping with trends in domestic architecture at the time. Only two lodges were built using the bungalow design which specified a one and one-half story wood frame building with shingle siding. The floor plan accommodated four rooms on the main floor and a bedroom tucked under the side gable roof. The first of the bungalows was constructed in New Bern in 1916 to replace the Second Empire style lodge on-site, and the second was erected in Mill Springs in 1920. The Mill Springs lodge was slightly smaller than the New Bern example. Both lodges are significant as early twentieth-century examples of a residential architectural form adapted for use in the national cemetery system, although the example in Mill Springs is no longer extant.

Mills Springs National Cemetery was established in 1862 and is located on the site of a battle between Union forces led by Major General George Thomas and Confederate troops under the command of General Felix K. Zelicoffer in January of that year. Thomas's troops forced the Confederates to retreat, and Zelicoffer was killed in action. The fallen Union soldiers were buried on land that is now the national cemetery. After the war, remains of those located within 40 miles were exhumed and reinterred at Mill Springs.

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General reveal that a one-story, temporary frame lodge with three rooms was built in the cemetery in 1867 or 1868, and that the Quartermaster replaced the temporary wood-frame lodge with a brick lodge in the Second Empire style in 1875-76. The contract for the brick lodge was let to Job Winans Angus and the estimated cost of

construction was \$4600. The L-shaped, brick lodge had a stone foundation. The interior woodwork was predominantly pine, although some poplar was used as well. There was a full cellar. By 1888 the concrete coating of the cellar floor had worn off, leaving the brick exposed. Similarly, the exterior brick was painted but the job was done poorly that the paint soon faded. In 1890 lumber for repairing the lodge and rebuilding some fencing was approved and acquired; in 1891 the improvements were authorized. The Second Empire style lodge burned in May 1916. The bungalow lodge cost \$8800 to build and was completed in 1920.

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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.