FORT ROSECRANS NATIONAL CEMETERY, LODGE
Cabrillo Memorial Drive
San Diego
San Diego County
California

HALS CA-7-A
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

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HALS No. CA-7-A

Location: Cabrillo Memorial Drive, San Diego, San Diego County, California.

The coordinates for the Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, Lodge are 117.245795 W and 32.688704 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 the Veterans Administration.

The Veterans Administration took over management of Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1936.

Builder/Contractor: Unknown.

Description: The Southwestern Ranch style lodge is a one-story, front-gabled building that faces north. The materials used in its construction are concrete, hollow tile, and stucco. The gable roof is covered in straight barrel, Mission tile and so contributes to the Spanish Eclectic aesthetic selected for the cemetery building program. The office projects from the north (front) façade and is covered by a separate gable roof. The gable roof of the office extends over the entrance porch. Along the west side is the chimney stack, and four windows glazed with multiple lights. Possibly these windows are casements.

In 1955 alterations were made to provide space for another bedroom, but otherwise the maintenance records kept for the Veterans Administration merely indicate regular painting and cleaning of the building as well as systems upgrades in 1949 (oil burner) and 1951 (hot water heater). Several windows were replaced in 1967, and historic photographs reveal they differ in material and glazing from the multi-light windows originally installed in the lodge. There was a metal handrail at the entrance to the porch.

Site Context: Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery lies between the San Diego Bay and the Pacific Ocean and is divided by Cabrillo Memorial Drive. The rostrum and lodge complex are located to the east of the road, with the rostrum on axis with the entrance and the lodge to the south of the entrance and in proximity to the boundary wall. The building's principal elevation faces north. The flagstaff and administrative building (1950s) are on the ocean side of the drive. Fort Rosecrans reflects a cohesive design approach for the buildings of the cemetery, a uniformity first seen at Fort Sam Houston in Texas in the mid 1930s and made possible there by PWA funds. At Fort Rosecrans, the cemetery buildings, such as the lodge and its supporting utility and

garage structures, were erected in a Spanish Eclectic design and the lodge's Southwestern Ranch style one expression of that larger aesthetic.

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.

Regional revival building forms influenced the Quartermaster's design of a southwestern ranch house type in 1936. The Southwestern Ranch style of lodge was built in two cemeteries, Fort Rosecrans in California and Fort Bliss in Texas. The design called for a one-story building with a gable front made of stuccoed hollow-core tile construction and covered by Spanish tile roofs. The office was placed in a small projection off the front façade, and this space was covered by its own gable roof that extended over the entrance porch. Fort Rosecrans was the site of the first lodge in the Southwestern Ranch style, and included two bedrooms. In 1939 the other lodge constructed to this design was built in Fort Bliss. The Quartermaster adapted the plan so there could be three bedrooms as well as the separate office space.

The lodge in Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery is significant as the prototype for the Southwestern Ranch style of lodge design. It cost $11,263 to build in 1936. The Southwestern Ranch style was used in one other cemetery, Fort Bliss, for the lodge built there in 1939.

The post cemetery of Fort Rosecrans became part of the national cemetery system in 1934 as the cemetery grounds were opened to more burials and the need for space in San Francisco National Cemetery became acute. Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery is located on the military reservation, and it serves as the final resting place for Brigadier Stephen Watts Kearney's men who died in the Battle of San Pasqual (1840s) and for those sailors who died in the boiler explosion on board the *USS Bennington* (1905), among the others interred there.

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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.