

Fort Des Moines Historic Complex,
Building 83
(Cavalry Stable)
Des Moines
Polk County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-121-T

HABS
IOWA,
77-DESMO,
24-T-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

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Building No. 83. Stable

This structure, completed on January 23, 1904, at a cost of \$15,855.67, also fronted on Thayer Street. Built according to plan 139 in the Quartermaster General's Office for the accommodation of ninety horses, the structure's walls were of brick, its roof of slate, and its foundation of stone. The brick walls were joined in running bond with red-pigmented mortar. The building measured 67 feet wide by 165 feet long. Its gable roof had a monitor with paired fixed 9-light windows and louvered ventilators running the length of the ridge. The east and west sides of the structure each had two double hung windows located near the front, followed along the side by thirteen single sash windows and a door. (These latter windows were later altered to double hung size.) Each of the small windows contained six over six lights. At each end of the building was one double-wide sliding door and five double hung windows. All windows had 3-course segmental arches and plain limestone sills. Doorways had segmental arches. Inside, the floor was of concrete, and there were brick driveways. Floor space occupied 12,878 square feet, arranged thusly:

First floor:

4 rooms, 9' 8" x 10' 7"
1 room, 19' 6" x 42'
6 box stalls, 9' 11" x 10'
42 double stalls, 9' 11" x 10'

Attic:

Room, 9' 8" x 19' 6"

The interior of Building No. 83 exhibited construction that utilized 8" x 8" boxed wooden columns spaced 10 feet apart with dimensional lumber beams. The roof framing rafter was 2" x 6" and 16 inches on center. The beams and rafters used a moment connection.

The building had electric lighting but in 1941 was not heated. It had water line and sewer connections. Average annual maintenance costs between 1904 and 1939 stood at \$230. The building was connected to Building No. 81 via a frame runway. In December, 1940, major construction occurred converting the stables into a 26-vehicle motor transport garage at an expenditure of \$5,906.00. The work involved reconstructing the north and south ends with the addition of two rolling steel doors, 11 feet by 12 feet, and one rolling steel door, 11 feet by 16 feet, at each end.(34)

In 1942, with establishment of the WAAC training center, a rear addition of brick was erected on the south side of Building 83. It had a gable roof covered with asphalt and measured 66 feet 6 inches wide by 53 feet long. The interior of the addition contained bathtubs and tile shower stalls on the west side and toilets and washstands on the east side. Dividers were built of tongue and groove lumber. A 2" x 8" roof framing rafter runs the length of the addition, 2 feet on center. The frame walkway running between Building Nos. 81 and 83 was replaced by one of brick with an asphalt shingle roof, windows, and doors. Other changes to Building No. 83 include the covering of the roof monitor with horizontal boarding, so that only one window remains, the construction of a heating plant and chimney at the southeast corner of the original structure, the conversion of a double door to a window on the east side, and the conversion of the garage doors to smaller double doors on the north side (front). The loft entrance on the north side has been bricked in. In 1987 the former stable barn was utilized as a storage facility by the U.S. Army Reserve. Its condition was poor.(34)

34. Card for Buildings No. 81 and 83. "Historical Record of Buildings." NA, RG 77, Box No. 51; Field survey notes, February 20-22, 1987. QMG Plan No. 139 was not located in NA, Cartographic Archives Division.