

NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS,
MARION BRANCH, BUILDING NO. 34
(Director's House)
(Single Quarters)
1700 East 38th Street
Marion
Grant
Indiana

HABS IN-306-D
IN-306-D

PHOTOGRAPHS

PAPER COPIES OF COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

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

ADDENDUM TO:
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS – MARION BRANCH, BUILDING No. 34 (Director's House)

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Location: 1700 East 38th Street, Marion, Grant County, Indiana. Building No. 34 is just north of Steele Circle. Building No. 34 is also east/southeast of the main entrance gate on 38th Street.

The coordinates for Building No. 34 are 40.522422 N, -85.634571 W. These coordinates were obtained in January 2012 and with it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Significance: Building No. 34 was built in 1896 as residence for the Governor, or head administrative officer, of the Marion Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.

Description: Building No. 34 is two-and-a-half-story Queen Anne dwelling with a L-shaped plan and gambrel roofs. The house is brick at the first floor and wood frame above, with fish scale and other decorative shingles. The attic story has overhanging pent eaves and Palladian windows. Addition ornamental windows include the bay windows on the south and west façades. There is also a two-story inset porch on the south façade at the main entrance.

The interior finishes have been changed over the years, but the plan and many historic features are still extant. The front door provides access to a formal entrance hall with a paneled dogleg staircase rising to the second floor hall. A formal dining room with bay window and decorative fireplace is located at the southeast corner of the first floor, with the kitchen behind to the north. The living room, also with bay window and fireplace, is located on the other side of the stair hall to the west. Both fireplaces have neoclassical wood surrounds and colorful glazed tile at the firebox and hearth.

History: The NHDVS was a federal institution authorized by Congress in 1865 and charged with caring for Civil War veterans disabled by their military service. Congressman George Steele of the 11th Indiana Congressional District successfully promoted the creation of this Branch in Grant County with the promise of an on-site natural gas well for free heating and lighting. Founded in 1889 as the seventh NHDVS branch, the Marion Branch featured a picturesque campus of winding avenues and red brick Queen Anne buildings with wide porches and ornamental balustrades. By 1930 the NHDVS system had eleven branches and became part of the new Veterans Administration.

Building No. 34 was built as the residence for the Marion Branch Governor in 1896. Its placement and large size conveyed the importance of the Governor's position within the hierarchy of the Branch. Lesser ranking officers had smaller or duplex quarters. This dwelling was first occupied by Captain Justin Chapman, who served as Governor until his death in 1904. Congressman Steele then became Marion Branch Governor. In 1921, the Marion Branch became the Marion National Sanitarium, a facility dedicated to the treatment of World War I neuropsychiatric cases, including what was then called shell shock and other mental disorders. After 1930 the Marion Branch continued to specialize in psychiatric care as part of the Veterans Administration. With the ending of the NHDVS, the chief administrative officer was the VA Medical Center director. Building No. 34 served as the VAMC Director's house.

Sources: Hubbard, Nancy J. "Marion Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Historic District," Grant County, Indiana. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1999. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

Typescript, Marion VA Hospital Inventory (29 April 1936), Marion and Grant County File, Marion Public Library.

Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, HABS Historian, 2011

Project

Information: Documentation of selected buildings at the former Marion Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was undertaken in 2011 by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Documentation Programs division of the National Park Service, Richard O'Connor, Chief. The project was sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), Office of Construction and Facilities Management, Kathleen Schamel, Federal Preservation Officer. Project development was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS and by Douglas Pulak, Deputy Federal Preservation Officer, DVA. The field work was undertaken and the written histories were produced by Lisa P. Davidson and Virginia B. Price, HABS Historians. The large-format photography was undertaken by HABS Photographer Renee Bieretz; an initial photographic survey was completed by HABS Photographer James Rosenthal in 2008. Valuable assistance was provided by James A. Broyles, Project Engineer, Engineering Services, Marion Campus, VA Northern Indiana Health Care System.