

FORT RILEY, CARPENTER COURT APARTMENTS
Carpenter Avenue & Carpenter Place
Fort Riley
Geary County
Kansas

HABS No. KS-78

HABS
KS-78

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MIDWEST SUPPORT OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FORT RILEY CARPENTER COURT APARTMENTS

HABS No. KS-78

I. INTRODUCTION

- Location: The Carpenter Court Apartments are located on Carpenter Avenue, Carpenter Place and Godfrey Avenue, in the Main Post District, Geary County, Fort Riley, Kansas. The base is located approximately 14 miles west of Manhattan, the seat of Riley County and about 4 miles east of Junction City, the seat of Geary County. Part of the military installation lies in Geary County and part in Riley County. The Carpenter Court Apartments are located in Geary County.
- Present Owner: United States Army
- Present Occupant: Military Personnel: Officers with the rank of, Captain, 1st Lieutenant, Warrant Officer, Major, Lieutenant Colonel.
- Present Use: Officers Family Housing (Original Use: Student Officer Housing)
- Significance: The Carpenter Court Apartments are significant for their representation of standardized plans developed by the Office of the Quartermaster General as part of a nationwide building program initiated in 1927 to upgrade living conditions for officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men. This building program was implemented using funds from the Army, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and the Public Works Administration (PWA). Designed by the Quartermaster General's Office in Washington, D.C. these standard plans were modified depending on the regional style. Fort Riley was one of several Army posts targeted for new construction, and the Carpenter Court complex was one of two complexes utilizing this standard plan in the Colonial Revival Style with brick and slate roofs (original). This style was generally built from Virginia northwards, westwards as far as Kansas, and in the Pacific Northwest.

Significance, cont'd:

Adaptations of these plans were generally chosen for the South, the Southwest as far north as Oklahoma and California.

The Carpenter Court Apartments are also significant for their strategic location, being situated within the historic Main Post District.

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FORT RILEY CARPENTER COURT APARTMENTS

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II. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. INTRODUCTION

This report, prepared for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), provides historical and descriptive data on the Carpenter Court Apartments at Fort Riley, Kansas located in central Kansas. The Carpenter Court Apartment Complex is comprised of ten brick building modules situated on Carpenter and Godfrey Avenues, and Carpenter Place, around a grass court in the Main Post Historic District. Construction began in 1928 and continued through 1934 and were designed by the Office of the Quartermaster General in Washington D.C. as part of a nationwide building program initiated in 1927 to upgrade living conditions for officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men. The buildings were built in an area that had previously been the site of the Hospital Training School which was razed in the late 1910s and early 1920s. The floor plans were modified depending on the regional style, and to incorporate additional square footage. This building program was implemented using funds from the Army, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Public Works Administration (PWA), and the Civilian Works Administration (CWA) and were allocated to the War Department allowing the Army to continue the building program until about 1940.

Fort Riley received many new buildings and facilities during the Army building program initiated in 1927. The goal of this program was to replace dilapidated temporary World War I structures with permanent structures for a peacetime army. As a part of this program, new construction was carried out at Fort Riley and at Army posts nationwide until about 1940. The Carpenter Court Apartments were not part of a specific expansion project, but more generally of a housing development plan to support the increase in training.

B. HISTORIC CONTEXT

Before 1800, northeastern Kansas along the Kansas (or Kaw) River was inhabited by the Kansa, who gave their name to the state (Richmond 1989:6-7). After intermittent early contacts with Spanish and French explorers (Richmond 1989:12-18), interaction with Euroamericans increased following purchase of the Kansas area by the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. One major effect of this purchase was

designation of Kansas as the northern part of "Indian Territory," the zone in which eastern Native American groups were to be resettled following their forced removal from their homes east of the Mississippi River. Following treaties with the Osage and Kansa in 1825, Otoe, Missouri, Iowa, Sac and Fox, Kickapoo, Delaware, Chippewa, Ottawa, Peoria, Shawnee, Kaskaskia, Wea, Piankeshaw, Potawatomi, Miami, and some small Native American groups from New York and Massachusetts were moved to eastern Kansas, at great cost in life, property and human suffering (Richmond 1989:28-32). The Fort Riley area, at the junction of the Republican and Smoky Hill Rivers, was included in the Kansa Reservation as established by the 1825 Treaty (Barry 1962:177; Richmond 1989:30). Following resettlement, missions were established on some Native American reservations by religious groups from the United States (Lees 1986; Richmond 1989:32-41).

By the late 1840s, Angloamerican settlement was beginning in eastern Kansas. The settlers, speculators, and would-be railroad promoters who desired Native American lands in eastern Kansas held little regard for the solution to the "Indian Problem" formulated by an earlier generation of Americans (Miner and Unrau 1990:139-140). They were, however, faced by the necessity of abrogating the earlier treaties which had granted eastern Kansas to Native American groups in exchange for their land east of the Mississippi River (Miner and Unrau 1990:55-80). By the early 1870s, the eastern Indians had again been removed from Kansas to the southern part of "Indian Territory," what is now Oklahoma (Miner and Unrau 1990:133-141). As elsewhere in eastern Kansas, removal of the Kansa and loss of legal title to their land opened the Fort Riley area for Euroamerican settlement.

Fort Riley was established by the United States Army in 1853. Colonel Thomas T. Fauntleroy of the 1st Dragoons (later called the 1st Cavalry), having returned to frontier duty from the Mexican War, wrote to the Army Quartermaster General recommending that a Post be established further west of Fort Leavenworth. The site selected by Colonel Fauntleroy was on the Smoky Hill Route, where the Republican and Smoky Hill Rivers join to form the Kansas River, and according to Colonel Fauntleroy, would be more ideally situated to campaign against the "Indians". The War Department General Order 17 of June 27, 1853, renamed the temporary Camp Center to Fort Riley after Major General Bennett Riley, a Mexican War hero who had led the first military escort along the Santa Fe Trail in 1829, who had died suddenly that same month. At this time permanent construction began. Construction of the first stone structures began in 1855, replacing temporary wooden buildings and tents.

Located between Junction City and Manhattan in the Flint Hills region of northeastern Kansas, Fort Riley supplemented Fort Leavenworth and extended the U.S. military presence further west into the Central Plains towards land conquered from Mexico (Andros et al. 1993:8-9). Fort Riley soon became established as the protector of the Leavenworth Military Road and the Santa Fe and Mormon Trails. The Fort Riley area, along with the rest of Kansas Territory, was formally opened to Euroamerican

settlement by the Kansas-Nebraska Act, passed by Congress in 1854 (Richmond 1989:68). The initial spur to settlement in this area was establishment of Fort Riley. The fort provided protection from remnant Native Americans and from civil disorder during the border troubles over pro-slavery, or the “Bleeding Kansas” period (Jeffries 1963:147; Richmond 1989:66–85). It also provided a focus for the local economy and a market for surplus farm products before the development of an extraregional transportation network. Most importantly, Fort Riley brought people to the project area and provided employment, especially for the approximately 500 contractors, masons, carpenters, and laborers who came to build the first stone buildings of the fort in 1855 (Andros et al. 1993:10–13; Pride 1987:65–66). (Sherow and Reeder 1998: Vol. 21 No.1)

Between 1853 and 1867 Fort Riley was enlarged and became a compound of stone buildings in the southwestern part of a 23,899-acre reservation, but was later reduced in 1867 to approximately 20,000 acres. In 1942 it was expanded to the north and east through the purchase of approximately 31,720 acres, and in 1965 it was expanded north and west by 46,065 acres (Andros et al. 1993:34–35), reaching its present size. The 1965 purchase also included 3,435 acres leased from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along the shore of Milford Lake (Andros et al. 1993:35). These “lease lands” are not usually included in the total acreage of the fort.

Historic period military sites in the Fort Riley project area are those sites related to the military occupation and use of Fort Riley from 1853 through 1945. These sites include both sites which are completely archaeological (i.e., lacking standing structures) and the far larger category of sites defined as the archaeological component or components of a standing building or buildings. Such sites include The Main Post, the center of Fort Riley from 1853 to present that consists of a collection of sites surveyed by Barr and Rowilson (1977); outlying sites, associated with the U.S. Cavalry School (e.g., the Packer’s Camp, 14RY3173), World War I, and World War II; major training camps, especially Camp Funston (14RY2169), Camp Forsyth (14GE1120), and Camp Whitside (14GE1110); training ranges, such as the Old National Rifle Range (14GE1121); and Marshall Airfield (14GE1112).

After its establishment, Fort Riley functioned as a support base for Army operations (principally, cavalry) in Kansas and the Central Plains except during the Civil War, when the fort was lightly garrisoned by Kansas volunteer units and was far from any Confederate action. (Andros et al. 1993:14). Organized by Colonel Andrew Smith and Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer in 1866, Fort Riley remained the operational home of the Seventh Cavalry until the Battle of Little Big Horn in 1876, where part of the unit was destroyed and its commander (Colonel Custer) was killed. Later operations employing troops from Fort Riley included the “battle” of Wounded Knee in 1890 (Pride 1987:208), extensive deployment of officers from the Cavalry School in Cuba and the Philippines during the Spanish-American War of 1898 (Pride 1987:225–226), and deployment to the Mexican border in 1914 and 1915 in response to raids by Pancho Villa (Andros et al. 1993:22).

Fort Riley was too far removed from the active zone of war against resistant Native Americans and was in danger of being abandoned during the 1880s, as were other Army posts in Kansas including Forts Dodge, Hays, Scott, and Zarah (Andros et al. 1993:14–15). Establishment of the Army School for Application of Light Artillery at Fort Riley in 1869 began to change this, although not permanently or immediately since the school was disbanded in 1871 (Andros et al. 1993:15). This school, however, points the way toward the next phase of Fort Riley's development, as a school and training base for the Cavalry and the Army as a whole.

The second major phase of development for Fort Riley was the period between 1886-1955, when in 1884 General Philip Sheridan recommended that the headquarters for the U.S. Cavalry be established at Fort Riley (Andros et al. 1993:15). In 1886, the Kansas Legislature voted to establish a Cavalry school at the fort. Congress authorized establishment of schools for cavalry and light artillery (which functioned in support of cavalry) at Fort Riley in 1887 and appropriated \$200,000 for reconstruction of the post. (Andros et al. 1993:16). Construction began in 1887, and consisted of buildings positioned in a biaxial design around the Cavalry and Artillery Parades. All of the original fort buildings were demolished to make way for this new construction, with the exception of four buildings: Saint Mary's Chapel (Building 3); the parsonage (Building 123); the Custer House and Museum (Building 24); and the modified old hospital (Building 205, now the U.S. Cavalry Museum)(Andros et al. 1993:13).

After opening in 1893, the Cavalry and Light Artillery Schools standardized training, practice, and tactics for the most active operational branch in the military at that time. The Schools earned worldwide recognition, and in 1907 were combined into the Mounted Service School, which remained active until 1946 when it was disbanded. In addition, Fort Riley continued to expand services and training missions through the early 1900's, including A Farrier's and Horseshoer's School, School for Bakers and Cooks, and National Guard maneuvers.

World War I led to Fort Riley's largest expansion as a training base, and its first major expansion towards a mission not connected to the Mounted Service School. This was occasioned through selection by Congress of Fort Riley as the site for the 14th National Army Cantonment in early 1917 (Andros et al. 1993:23). This camp was designed as a division-level training camp, developed as the United States Army moved towards this larger and more integrated form of military organization to fight a modern, foreign war (Andros et al. 1993:23–24).

Between the First and Second World Wars, Fort Riley's training mission continued, albeit on a much reduced scale. In 1919, the Artillery School was demobilized, and the remnant Mounted Service School was reorganized as the Cavalry School (Andros et al. 1993:24). This school continued to offer first class cavalry training and fielded the noted U.S. Equestrian Teams of the 1920s and 1930s (Andros et al. 1993:24). After 1930, the U.S. Cavalry gradually adopted motorized vehicles in support

and combat roles, eventually developing tactics and operational policies for the armored divisions that would become vitally important in World War II. Airplanes from the field simulated support roles (reconnaissance) for cavalry during Cavalry School training exercises in the 1920s and 1930s, an example of the gradual transformation of the cavalry service discussed above (Andros et al. 1993:24; KHQ 1959:342–343).

Also during the late 1920s and 1930s, many new buildings were constructed in the Main Post Area, principally brick quarters for officers and their families (Andros et al. 1993:25–32). Sixty-five of these buildings were constructed as part of the WPA program during WPA involvement in military construction between 1935 and 1939 (Andros et al. 1993:30–32). Civilian Conservation Corps and WPA camps were located southeast of the Artillery Parade. Buildings from both camps no longer exist. Construction in the Main Post area took place within the area covered by the Barr and Rowlison (1977) survey.

A major effect of World War II on Fort Riley and the area was the 1942 purchase of approximately 31,720 acres, mostly in Township 10 South, Range 6 East, north of the original reservation established between 1854 and 1867 (Andros et al. 1993:34). Land in the 1942 purchase was used to support the greatly increased amount of mechanized and armor training that began at Fort Riley during mobilization for World War II and continued through the war. Many World War II structures (e.g., 14RY3178, the concrete bunker overlooking Mallon/Engineer Road) were constructed in support of training and around the firing ranges established in the training area at that time. During the war, the center of the 1942 purchase began to be used as Fort Riley's artillery impact area (Andros et al. 1993:34). This use has continued to this day and expanded through approximately 25 square miles of the 1942 purchase tract. Sites in the Impact Area could not be visited by the Cooperider (1979) or USACERL Inventory Surveys, due to the severe personnel hazard presented by unexploded ordnance in this area following fifty years of shelling.

A major change at Fort Riley immediately following World War II was deactivation of the Cavalry School in 1946 as part of elimination of horse cavalry in the U.S. Army (Andros et al. 1993:35). As the heavily mechanized combat of World War II made clear, horse cavalry were increasingly irrelevant to modern armies (Andros et al. 1993:34). Fort Riley was not immediately threatened by this change, however, and continued to train troops. During the Korean War in the early 1950s, the fort trained personnel replacements for casualties and for soldiers returning from combat tours (Andros et al. 1993:35). Following the Korean War, Fort Riley trained infantry divisions on a rotating basis until 1955 (Andros et al. 1993:35).

In 1955, the First Infantry Division adopted Fort Riley as its headquarters. The First Division, known as "The Big Red One" from its insignia, moved to Fort Riley from West Germany. It exchanged places with the 10th Infantry Division, which had been formed at Fort Riley in 1948 (Andros et al. 1993:35). The First Infantry Division, as its number implies, was created in 1917, the first division in the U.S. Army during the move

to division-level organization for World War I. The First Division served with distinction in World War I (first American unit to engage the enemy), World War II (first American unit to reach England, Sicily, Normandy Beach, and the Siegfried Line), Vietnam, and the Gulf War (Andros et al. 1993:35). The First Infantry Division also participated in extensive U.S. deployments in West Germany during the Cold War, including several NATO training exercises (Andros et al. 1993:35). Headquarters of the First Division remained at Fort Riley until 29 March 1996 when it was moved back to Germany as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process. Present plans call for Fort Riley to remain active, to continue to conduct training and be a major base for the First Division, and to fulfill missions as required by the Army in the post-Cold War period. One such mission is the joint exercises held at Fort Riley in the autumn of 1995 by elements of the First Division and the Army of the Republic of Russia, the first joint exercises held by these former opponents on United States soil (Brooke 1995).

C. PHYSICAL HISTORY:

The floor plans for the Carpenter Court Apartments were developed by the Office of the Quartermaster General, and the first five buildings that comprise the Upper Carpenter group are from Standardized Plan No. 625-801-805. The next three buildings or Phase II construction within the Lower Carpenter group is from Standardized Plan No. 625-806-809. The last two buildings of the Lower Carpenter group and the final phase of construction were built from Standardized Plan No. 625-806-810.

Construction on the Carpenter Court Apartments was in three phases. Phase I or what is now called Upper Carpenter, is comprised of five building modules situated on Carpenter Avenue and Carpenter Place, bordered by State Highway 18 (Heubner Avenue) on the north. Buildings 444 (originally 301); 440 (originally 302); 438 (originally 303); 439 (originally 304); and 441 (originally 305) were built in 1928 at a cost ranging between \$33,888.46 and \$33,927.26 per unit.

Phase II, or what is now called Lower Carpenter, was started with three modules in 1930; buildings 437 (originally 306) on Carpenter Place; 436 (originally 307) and 435 (originally 308) both located on Carpenter Avenue, for a cost of \$41,666.66 per unit. (See Photo on Page 10).

Phase III, also within what is called the Lower Carpenter group, consisted of the two remaining buildings that were built between 1931 and 1934. Building 433 (originally 309) on Carpenter Avenue was built for \$38,137.74, and 432 (originally 310), on the corner of Carpenter and Godfrey Avenues was built at a cost of \$38,238.89.

Primary alterations to the modules include replacement of the original slate roof with composition shingle, and removal of the wood balustrade above the exterior porches in 1962. Upgrades to the electrical and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems

were initiated in 1987. The buildings have been maintained for the same occupancy type, and continuously occupied since their construction.

D. SITE:

There was no significant landscaping at time of construction. There is little evidence of any formal landscaping in the Carpenter Court neighborhood other than a free-lay stone wall constructed shortly after final construction of the buildings. There are no drawings or records to indicate an actual date when the wall was constructed, but it was built to provide visual separation from State Hwy 18 (Heubner Avenue). Trees were planted sometime shortly after construction of the final building, the first plantings included American Elms and Cottonwoods, many of which still exist at the site.

There are three limestone garages, buildings 434, 443, and 442 built in 1940. Building 434 is a twelve-car garage, building 443 is a seven-car garage, and 442 is a sixteen-car garage. All are one-story rectangular structures. The structural system is constructed of coursed ashlar limestone with a rock face. The roof shape is a gable type with low pitch. The roofing material is composition shingles. There are no windows and no doors in the garages. The original cost of the garages are as follows; Building 434 - \$6,741.49, Building 443 - \$4,522.56, and Building 442 - \$6,874.85.

Constructed in 1940 they were erected at the end of the Army building program that was initiated in 1927. Contributing to an understanding of the twentieth century historical development of the installation, these three garages were part of several detached garages built on the main post in 1940. Their construction was also part of the government work programs created during the Depression to relieve unemployment, with funds coming from the Works Progress Administration for their construction. The garages are contributing elements in the Main Post historic boundaries and associated with the Carpenter Court Apartments. These buildings are members of the 1927-1940 thematic group within the Main Post Historic District made up of permanent buildings constructed at Fort Riley during the Army building program of that period. The group contributes to an understanding of the twentieth century historical development of the installation.

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Carpenter Court buildings are red brick Colonial Revival Style, each with two-and-one-half stories with four apartments and a full basement. The basement includes a central, shared laundry that is flanked by separate storage rooms. The Upper Carpenter units have one finished bedroom and bathroom in the basement. The Lower Carpenter units have two, fully finished bedrooms with one full bathroom per dormer side, and were originally designed for the hired staff employed by the occupants living in

the units below. Built in three phases, the first building was completed in 1928, the last in 1934.

Building materials for all the Carpenter Court apartments are the same on each building. The foundation is concrete, tile and common bond (six stretcher rows to one header row brick walls). The shape is rectangular, overall dimensions are 96'-0" x 29'-0" for the Upper Carpenter buildings, and 100'-0" x 29'-0" for the Lower Carpenter buildings. All buildings have a ten bay front composed of main block and wing projections (sun porch) at sides 8'-0" x 16'-4". The final two buildings, numbers 432 and 433 received a sun porch that was 10'-0" x 16'-4". Each building has two and one-half stories with a full basement. Composition shingles now replace the original slate tiles, each roof is side-gabled with six hipped dormers per side, a low hipped metal-clad roof over side wings (sun porches), with an enclosed eave soffit and returns at gable ends. Each building has a single, central interior brick chimney and each apartment is served by a fully functional fireplace. There are two front entry porches at each side, each porch serving two units. The front porch is divided by a partial brick wall with wrought iron decoration above, brick corner piers with concrete bases and concrete capitals. Wood entablature has been used for decoration for the rear porches, with quarter-turn concrete steps, metal railing, platform porches and straight concrete steps.

The original wood balustrade above the porches have been removed. Four entrances located in pairs on the front, with six-paneled wood doors with four-light transoms and flat brick arches. Wood double hung sash windows are a variety of six-over-six light, single and paired four-over-four light, and paired three-over-three light. All windows have stretcher flat arches and concrete sills; round arched windows are in gable ends.

The interior of each building is comprised of four apartments, with a central shared laundry room and two separate storage rooms in the full basement. The apartments are in an over-under configuration with a central, winder stairwell from basement to dormer level, servicing all four apartments. Within each building, the first floor has two single level apartments, the second floor has two apartments which have access to the dormer level as well as the second floor. Street side doors lead to a central winder stairwell that goes down to the Basement or up to the second floor apartment. The first floor apartments contain a kitchen, dining room, living room, bathroom, study, master bedroom, second bedroom, and sun porch. Supporting spaces include an entry with closet, and a corridor with linen closet. Assigned space in the basement includes a shared laundry, and private storage room.

The interior of each building is comprised of four apartments, with a central shared laundry room and two separate storage rooms in the full basement. Floors on the upper levels are wood joists with ¾" thick oak wood plank flooring, and ceramic tile in setting bed in the Bathrooms. Basement floors are concrete. Walls and ceilings are plaster and wood lath, sun porches have some exposed brick, with all electric lights and

gas cooking ranges. Kitchens have been modernized to include new cabinets, sheet vinyl flooring, fluorescent lighting, and appliances. The secondary door to the passage has steam (one pipe vacuum), with a gas steam boiler, storage tank and coil.

Condition of the building fabric is in overall good repair. Exterior alterations include additional enclosure of sun porches, changing the original slate roofing to composition shingle, adding storm doors and windows, spot tuckpointing with a different mortar mix, and the removal of the wooden balustrade above the central, front porches.

IV. SOURCES OF PROJECT INFORMATION

The primary historical documentation and recordation of the Carpenter Court Apartments was collected from the Cultural Resources Management Plan-Fort Riley, Kansas, Section 4-Cultural Context; Mariani and Associates Report, dated 1986, Real Property Records, and Architectural Drawings and Specifications. All recordation, to date, includes photo-documentation. This report is the first known to photo-document the original drawings, and it must be noted that there are no known original drawings of the Upper Carpenter units, Plan No. 625-801/805. The recordation conforms to the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, U.S. Department of the Interior.

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