

U.S. VETERANS HOSPITAL, JEFFERSON BARRACKS, DUPLEX
PERSONNEL BUILDING NO. 1
(Veterans Administration Facility, Jefferson Barracks, Building No. 27)
(Veterans Administration Hospital, Jefferson Barracks)
(Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks
Division)
VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division
1 Jefferson Barracks Drive
Saint Louis
Independent City
Missouri

HABS MO-1943-N
MO-1943-N

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

U.S. VETERANS HOSPITAL, JEFFERSON BARRACKS, DUPLEX PERSONNEL BUILDING 1 (BUILDING 27)

HABS No. MO-1943-N

- Location:** Building 27, VA Medical Center, 1 Jefferson Barracks Drive,
St. Louis, Missouri
USGS Quadrangle Oakville, Missouri
UTM Coordinates 16-----7258188 E-----9965185 N
Lat: 38.509198, Long: -90.289432, obtained
via Google Earth on 9 March 2012
- Date of Construction:** 1929
- Designer:** U.S. Veterans Administration (VA)
- Contractor:** Unknown
- Present Owner:** Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery
- Present Use:** Vacant
- Significance:** The U.S. Veterans Hospital, Jefferson Barracks, was part of the early 1920s effort to build modern hospitals for U.S. military veterans. Duplex Personnel Building 1 (Building 27) was built in 1929, along with the Medical Officer in Charge Residence (Building 28) and Duplex Personnel Building 2 (Buildings 29), to provide on-site housing for higher-ranking employees at the hospital. Duplex Personnel Building 1 continued to serve as a government dwelling for high-ranking hospital staff into the 1990s. The facility has been acquired by the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery and is scheduled for demolition; the site of the duplex will become part of the national cemetery after demolition has occurred.
- Project Information:** This project was sponsored and funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as mitigation for the demolition of buildings at the St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, a property that has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places via consensus determination of eligibility between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources State Historic Preservation Office.

Description:

Duplex Personnel Building 1 (Building 27; hereafter Duplex 1) is a one-story wood-frame double house with an asphalt-shingle hipped roof. The facility features replacement double-hung windows and vinyl siding and trim on the exterior. The duplex is situated on a hill on the east edge of the medical center campus, is surrounded by trees and a grass lawn, and faces an asphalt road. The building is part of a group of three residential buildings that also includes the Medical Officer In Charge Residence (Building 28) and Duplex Personnel Building 2 (Building 29). The interior of Duplex 1 is fairly intact and retains many original interior finishes and many aspects of the original floor plan. Duplex 1 is now vacant and in a somewhat deteriorated condition, and is slated for demolition in order to clear the site for expansion of the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery.

The facade of Duplex 1 faces south and is composed of two gabled bays and a porch bay in between the gables. Each gabled bay has a double set of double-hung replacement windows and an arched ventilator located in the gable. The gabled bays also have raking cornices and returns that have been covered over with metal. The central porch is screened in and has two bays that contain vinyl siding, each of which also features an aluminum screen door. The rest of the porch is composed of four metal-clad wood posts, and there is metal railing in a Neoclassical design between each of the posts. Concrete steps lead up to the screen doors, and the remainder of the porch foundation is clad in vinyl siding. The central porch shelters two front doors and four double-hung replacement windows.

The west wall of Duplex 1 has a replacement double-hung window, a sunroom with a flat roof, and a smaller shed-roofed back porch that is also glassed in. The back porch has a storm door and shelters a wood door and a single replacement window on the east wall of the house. The east wall of Duplex 1 is largely identical to the west wall. The north (rear) wall is composed of two gabled bays with a projecting shed-roof bay in between, forming a symmetrical composition. The gabled bays each have two small double-hung replacement windows, an arched louvered ventilator, and a metal-clad raking cornice with returns. The center bay has two sets of triple replacement double-hung windows and a metal-clad cornice and gutter.

The interior of the house is divided down the center, with each side of the dividing line containing an apartment; the two plans of the apartment units are mirror images of each other. Painted wood floor moldings survive throughout most of the house, and most rooms also retain original oak flooring and plaster walls and ceilings. Each unit contains a living room with a white-painted wood and brick Neoclassical Revival fireplace mantel, plaster walls, and oak floors. In each unit, a plaster segmental arch leads north into the dining room space, which in each unit has plaster walls and oak floors. A doorway in the dining room leads to the kitchen in each unit. Both kitchens in this building had been remodeled and had cabinetry that has been installed within the last forty-five years.

Each unit has two bedrooms: the south bedroom in each unit has oak floors and two symmetrically arranged closets, and the back (north) bedroom in each unit has one closet. Each of these bedrooms opens into a sunroom. The bathrooms in both units retained original 1920s-era black-and-white ceramic wall tiles, original white ceramic floor tile, and original white fixtures, including bathtub, toilet, and sink. The basement in both units is fairly plain with concrete walls and floors, and appears to have been intended for storage and laundry.

History:

As part of a campaign of additions and improvements to its Jefferson Barracks hospital facility in the late 1920s, the Veterans Bureau added three residential buildings to the hospital campus in 1929: two duplex quarters (Duplex Personnel Buildings 1 and 2 [Building 27 and 29]) and the single-family Medical Officer in Charge Residence, which was built to house the hospital director and family. These three buildings allowed five high-ranking hospital officials and their families to live on site. The hospital was at that time located in a fairly remote portion of St. Louis County that had not been heavily developed, aside from the U.S. Army development at Jefferson Barracks. Housing would likely have been difficult to come by in the area. The original 1922-1923 hospital campus had been built with extensive on-campus housing for the hospital's nurses and attendants, so it was logical to add housing for hospital managers and their families.

The three housing buildings were modest one-story facilities grouped close together on a curved drive, surrounded by trees and a grass lawn. For privacy, the site for the three residential buildings was positioned some distance away from the other hospital buildings, but the residential buildings were also within easy walking distance of the Main Hospital (Building 1). The buildings had a mixture of hipped and gabled roofs, front porches with wood posts and railings, and were constructed of brick and originally clad on the exterior in stucco, to match the other hospital buildings. The design of the buildings was fairly plain, reflecting Craftsman, Neoclassical Revival, and Colonial Revival stylistic influences. Exterior ornament was minimal and was concentrated mostly in the front porches. The original six-over-six double-hung wood windows of the buildings would have heightened the traditional Colonial Revival appearance of the three buildings. The exterior design of all three residential buildings was highly symmetrical and similar to one another.¹

The interior of Duplex 1 originally contained two identical apartment units, with a fire wall that split the building down the middle. Each apartment unit was the equivalent of a modest two-bedroom house. Each unit contained a 22'0" x 14'0" living room with wood

¹ U.S. Veterans Bureau, *Duplex Personnel Buildings Nos. 27 & 29, U.S. Veterans Hospital, Jefferson Barracks, Mo.*, 1929, on file at St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, Building 3T.

floors and a fireplace with a wood Neoclassical-style mantel. The kitchens measured 14'10" x 9'8" and each had space for a table, a range, and a small refrigerator. All of the bedrooms in the building measured 14'10" x 11'2" and each was equipped with two very small closets. In each apartment, between the two bedrooms, was a 10'8" x 6'0" bathroom equipped with a toilet, sink, bathtub, medicine cabinet, and linen closet. One small booth-like breakfast nook was also included in each apartment, next to the kitchen; the nooks had built-in seats and a table. Full dining rooms were not included in the original layout of the apartments. The building also originally contained a single 27'8" x 9'6" front porch.

The facilities of Duplex 1 were somewhat modest for the time period, compared with the many three-bedroom single-family houses that were being built in St. Louis and vicinity for the middle class. However, the two units would have provided much more living space than the small two-room apartments that were provided for the chief nurse and the chief dietician in Nurses' Quarters 1 (Building 3), which had been constructed as part of the original 1922-1923 hospital development.

The small size of the apartments in Duplex 1 was addressed by the VA by adding dining rooms, sunrooms, and porches to the units. A 1959 plan of the duplex personnel buildings shows that by then, the breakfast nook in both apartments had been demolished and replaced with a 12'8" x 14'0" dining room. The VA also added a 15'4" x 11'0" sunroom to each apartment, entered via double doors in the rear bedroom. Finally, a 15'4" x 6'0" enclosed back porch was added to each of the apartments.²

The interior finishes of Duplex 1, including wood floors and trim, and bathroom tile and fixtures, are original and were not updated by the VA. However, the kitchens in both units of the building were clearly remodeled with new cabinetry in the 1960s or 1970s. All of the original wood-double-hung six-over-six windows were replaced in favor of one-over-one vinyl windows in 1982.³ On a 1990 VA facilities list, Duplex Personnel Building 1 was still listed as duplex quarters.⁴ Vinyl siding was also installed on the exterior of the building at an unknown date in the 1980s or 1990s. The building has been vacant for several years now and is scheduled for demolition in 2010 or 2011 to make way for expansion of the adjacent Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery.

² U.S. Veterans Administration, *Duplex Personnel Buildings Nos. 27 & 29. Veterans Administration, Jefferson Barracks, Mo.*, 1959, on file at St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, Building 3T.

³ U.S. Veterans Administration, Construction drawing files for Building 27, 1929-2010, on file at St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, Building 3T.

⁴ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *Annual Real Property Survey Report, Building Numbers and Locations, Jefferson Barracks VAMC*, 1990, on file at St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, Building 3T.

Sources:

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. *Annual Real Property Survey Report, Building Numbers and Locations, Jefferson Barracks VAMC*. 1990. On file at St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, Building 3T.

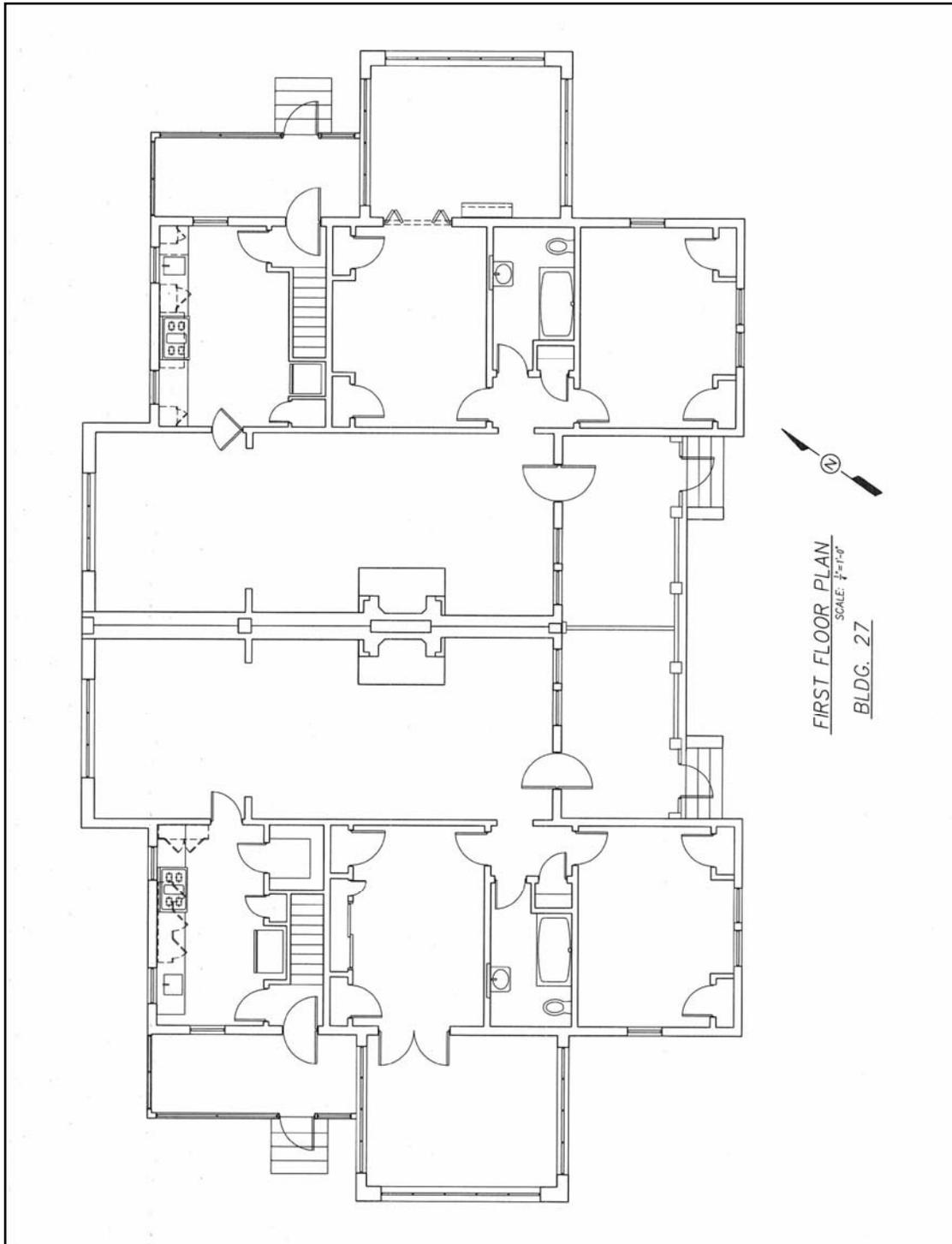
———. Construction drawing files for Building 27. 1929-2010. On file at St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, Building 3T.

———. U.S. Veterans Administration. *Duplex Personnel Buildings Nos. 27 & 29. Veterans Administration, Jefferson Barracks, Mo.* 1959. On file at the St. Louis VA Medical Center, Jefferson Barracks Division, Building 3T

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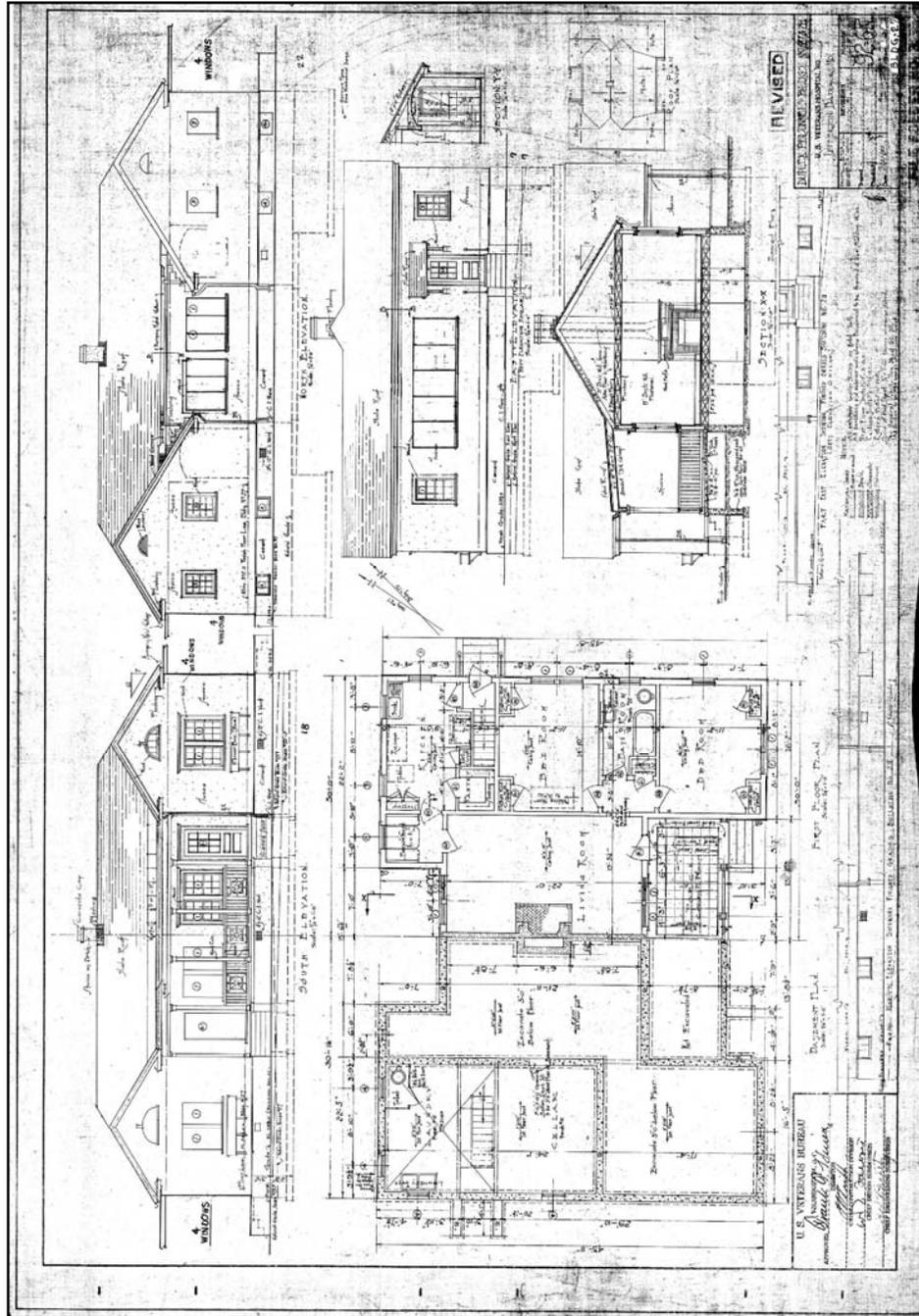
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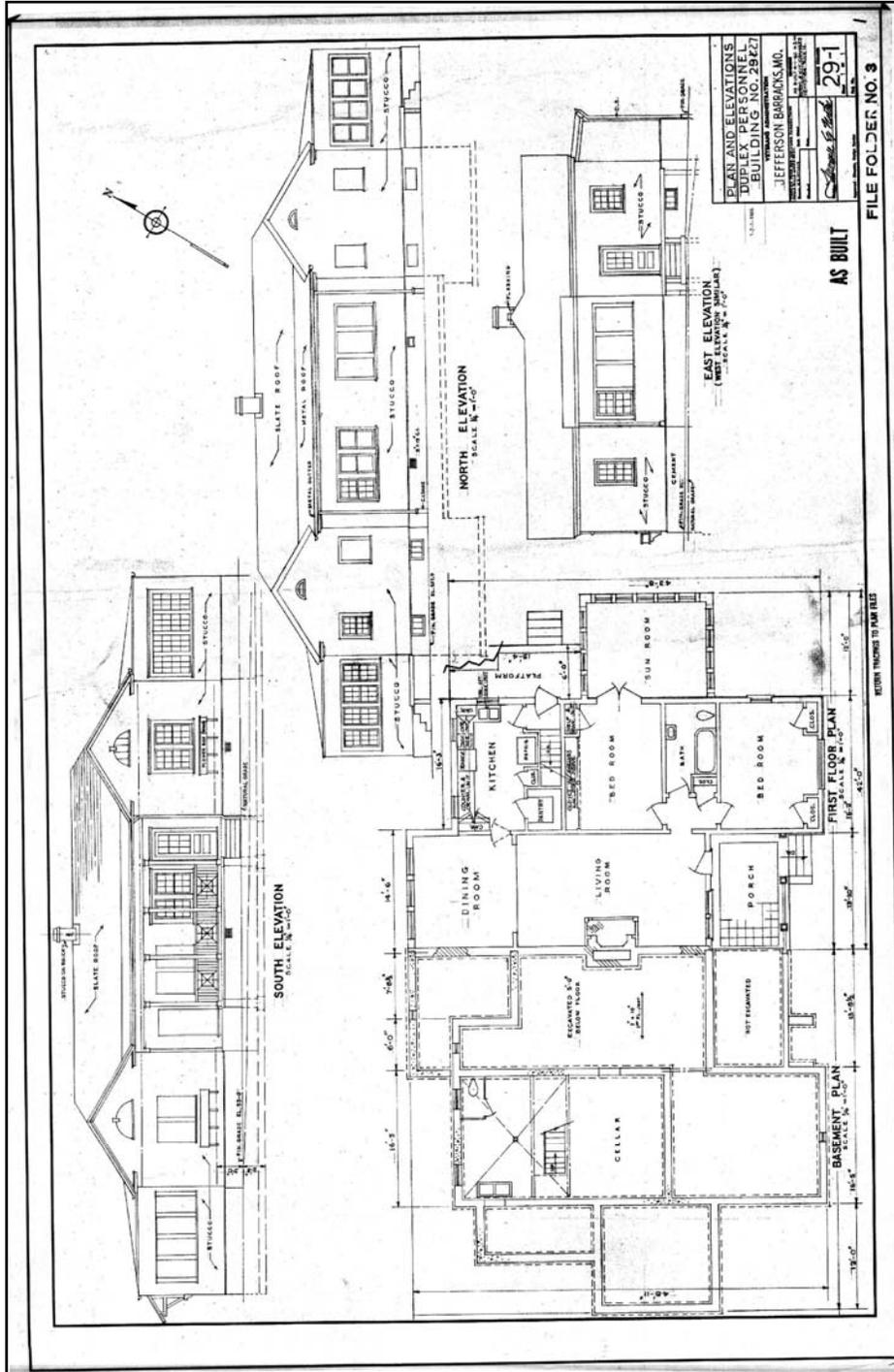


Duplex Personnel Building 1 (Building 27), current floor plan of first floor

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HABS No. MO-1943-N
(Page 7)



Original plans, sections, and elevations for Duplex Personnel Buildings 1 and 2
(Buildings 27 and 29), 1929



As-built drawings for Duplex Personnel Buildings 1 and 2
(Buildings 27 and 29), 1960