

General Miles Residence
Fort Keogh
Miles City, Custer County
Montana

HABS No. MON-8

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Western Office, Division of Design and Construction
1000 Geary Street
San Francisco, California

PHOTOGRAPH-DATA BOOK REPORT
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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GENERAL MILES RESIDENCE

Fort Keogh, Miles City, Custer County, Montana

LOCATION: West of Miles City on Highway 10, on Eastern Montana
Experiment Station land.

OWNER: U. S. Department of Agriculture.

OCCUPANT: Supervisor of the Fort Keogh Experiment Station.

USE: Residence.

BRIEF STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This building was the personal residence of General Nelson A. Miles when it was first completed in 1877. The building had the first telephone in Montana and was the first to have a telegraph key, linking the Fort with other major installations in the northwest.

I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and Subsequent Owners: United States Army Post until 1900. Remount station for training army horses until 1924. U. S. Agricultural Experiment Station to date.
2. Date of Erection: July - September, 1877.
3. Architect: Individual unknown; designed by United States Army personnel, Washington, D. C.
4. Builder, Suppliers, etc.: Built by U. S. Army personnel. Supplies came from Bismark, North Dakota by steamboat and wagon train. Cost: \$4,000.

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5. Original Plans: Destroyed.

6. Notes on Additions and Alterations: Steam heat installed in 1912; electricity and electric lights in 1916; concrete walks, sewer and bathroom facilities, 1924.

7. Important Old Views:

a. Engraving reprinted in The Unregimented General, Virginia Johnson, New York - Alfred A. Knopf, 1958.

b. Photograph taken in 1915 in the Fort Keogh Building Record, Fort Keogh, Miles City, Montana.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

1. Personal residence of General Nelson A. Miles, influential and famous Indian fighter, who accepted the surrender of Chief Joseph.

2. First telegraph line in Montana installed here (1878).

3. First telephone in Montana installed here (1879).

C. References:

1. Brown, Mark H., The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone, New York - Little, Brown, 1956.

2. Fort Keogh Building Record, Fort Keogh, Miles City, Montana.

3. Johnson, Virginia, The Unregimented General, New York - Alfred A. Knopf, 1958.

II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The Mansard roof has become as familiar an architectural symbol of the period as the brownstone in the Italian Renaissance influence in the eastern section of our country. Plan representative of eastern models for Officers Quarters.

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2. Condition of Building: Good, but neglected recently.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: Main building 34' x 42' with wings 14' x 16'; 22' first floor to ceiling of second floor.

2. Foundation: Stone; brick has been added where stone deteriorated.

3. Wall Construction: Balloon framing with milled lumber. Fastened with nails.

4. Chimneys: Five original brick with paneled faces and corbeled caps.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: Main entrance door is 4 paneled with side lights and transom.

b. Windows: All windows are 6/6 double hung. No shutters.

6. Roof:

a. Shape: Mansard roof; eaves covered with copper, hand split shingles elsewhere. Upper portion is regular hip roof covered with hand-split shingles.

b. Framing: Wood rafters of 2x8s and 2x10s.

c. Cornice and Eaves: Crown and bed mouldings. Modern sheet metal gutters and conductors. All gable ends cased.

d. Dormers: Dormers with curved roof, original with the house and covered with hand-split shingles.

C. Technical Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans: Two stories and finished attic. Center stair hall with two rooms on each side. Fireplaces (three now closed in) in four principal rooms. Remainder of house added to and altered.

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2. Stairways: Original stairway similar to many in the area.
3. Flooring: Floor joists of 2x6s, 16" o.c. Flooring of oak; sub-floor of pine. Secured by nails.
4. Ceiling and Wall Finish: All walls and ceiling are plastered; cannot distinguish if original.
5. Doorways and Doors: Four paneled.
6. Trim: Wood trim with mouldings. No exposed beams.
7. Hardware: Replaced by modern.
8. Lighting: Modern electric fixtures.
9. Heating: Originally with fireplaces; now supplemented with steam radiators.

D. Site:

1. General Setting and Orientation: On Fort Keogh Experiment Station land. Occupies a site facing the old parade ground and parallel to the Yellowstone River. Front of the house faces east.
2. Outbuildings: None existent.
3. Walks: Concrete
4. Landscaping: Simple, not original.

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January 1964

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