

U.S. Military Academy - Officer's Quarters No. 48

HABS No. NY-5708-36

(Family Housing)

North side of Wilson Road, east of Intersection
of Wilson, Mills and Fenton Roads

U.S. Military Academy

West Point

Orange County

New York

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY - OFFICER'S QUARTERS NO. 48
(FAMILY HOUSING)

LOCATION: North side of Wilson Road, east of Intersection of
Wilson, Mills and Fenton Roads, U.S. Military Academy,
West Point, Orange County, New York.

USGS West Point Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 18.586860.4581380.

PRESENT OWNER
AND OCCUPANT: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.

PRESENT USE: Family Housing - Colonel

SIGNIFICANCE: Quarters No. 48 is an example of the highly successful
officers' quarters designed for the U.S. Military Academy
by the office of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson. Its character,
a neo gothic, reflects the general theme of their work at
the Academy with exceptional American Arts and Crafts
interiors.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1905 - 1910.
2. Architect: Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, Architects,
Boston and New York.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Military Academy,
Department of the Army.
4. Builder: Broderick & Wind Engineering and Construction
Company. The construction was completed by the U.S. Fidelity
and Guaranty Company, a bonding company, after a default and
delay. The bonding company contract is dated September 20, 1906.
The Mitchell Vance Company supplied the original light fixtures
(Annual Report 1908).
5. Original plan and construction: Quarters No. 48 was part of
a group consisting of Quarters Nos. 21, 25, 34, 42, 45, and 48.
The total cost of these quarters was \$270,292.70.
6. Alterations and additions: There have been no major alterations
or additions.

- B. Historical context: Quarters No. 48 was one of many sets of quarters designed by Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson as part of the early twentieth century expansion at the Academy. These particular quarters were intended for Captains and Lieutenants and were approved in 1904.

For the historical and architectural context of this building within the overall development of West Point, see HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 2: "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy".

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Quarters No. 48 is representative of the work of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson at the U.S. Military Academy in the first decade of the twentieth century. The brick exterior walls, with limestone detailing and painted wood trim, were designed to create a Tudor Gothic appearance that would be distinctive on a campus that, at that time, was composed of a wide variety of styles. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson were, without doubt, the most prominent architectural firm at West Point in this century. Their major building campaign at the Academy is a clear reflection of the "medievalist" craftsman philosophy of Ralph Adams Cram. This is seen not only in their other buildings at West Point, but also in their work nationally.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Quarters No. 48 is essentially a rectangular building with "L" shaped additions at either end and a projecting one-story veranda and two-story gable end in the center of the facade (south). The overall length is 179'-8" and the width is 42'-8" at its widest point (along the "L" projections), while the basic rectangular mass is 30'-4" wide. The tall, narrow cross gable masses, the two-story window units on the front facade, and the flat roofed one-story buttressed verandas combine to create an irregular facade whose main emphasis is verticality. The elevation of the building on a terrace, created by a 10' retaining wall in front, heightens the impressiveness of the exterior of the quarters. The building has fourteen window bays on the front facade and three on the end elevations.
2. Foundations: Concrete was used for the footings, while the foundation walls are stone below grade and brick above.
3. Walls: The exterior walls of Quarters No. 48 are red brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern with brick, limestone and bluestone detailing. The wall surfaces are crisply defined.

Limestone is used for the sills of the windows, while splayed brick lintels composed of both headers and stretchers complete the exterior window detailing. Additionally, limestone is used as a capping element for the buttresses of the chimneys and verandas, while bluestone is used to cap the chimneys, the parapet of the verandas, the projecting parapet at the end of the gable sweep and for the exterior front stair treads.

4. Structural systems, framing: The walls are load-bearing brick faced with brick on the exterior and non-load-bearing wood stud partition walls covered with plaster and/or wood paneling on the interior. Floors are supported by wood joists, and the roofing system is composed of wood rafters. Steel beams are used where unusual loading conditions exist, primarily, to transfer loads to the exterior walls.
5. Porches, verandas, buttresses, chimneys: There are three verandas: one on the southeast and southwest corners, and one in the center of the facade. These are 2 x 1 bays, flat roofed and measure approximately 12'-6" x 26'0". Inside the two end verandas, and tied into the gable front unit, is a covered entryway. "Buttress" elements with limestone capping add to the "medieval" character of the building. The verandas have recently been converted to screen porches through the addition of aluminum screens. The floors are of concrete, and the ceilings are 1" x 3" wood beaded tongue-and-groove paneling.

The three raised rear porches correspond to the rear entries and are composed of heavy chamfered posts, solid brackets supporting a metal covered low hipped roof, and square handrails and balusters.

Quarters No. 48 has six brick chimneys along its main ridge line, each having vertical, limestone capped "buttress" elements on all four sides.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: There are 10 doorways: three main entries on the south, three rear entries on the north, and two French doors each off the north and south verandas. All doors are set within brick openings with wood trim. The north and south doorways are recessed within a two-story gable front projection.

The principal doors measure 3'-6" x 7'-8" x 2 1/2" and are wood with three panels below and leaded quarrel light glazing above.

The French doors are 1'-6" x 7'-0" x 2 1/2" with four panels arranged vertically, the top three being a single light and the bottom one wood.

The rear doors measure 3'-0" x 7'-2" x 2" with two long panels below and two lights of glass above.

- b. Windows: The windows are one-over-one double-hung wood sash throughout, except for leaded quarrel light casement windows in the main stairways, and pivoting wood three light windows (front), and six-over-six double-hung wood sash (rear) in the basement.

The window arrangement is in vertical bays along the facade, while the rear windows have a definite horizontal arrangement.

Projecting two-story bay windows exist on the east and west elevations.

All windows have a limestone sill, a splayed brick lintel and wood trim.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof is covered with multi-colored slate placed in a random pattern.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The eaves are made of wood. A narrow brick cornice is created by two projecting brick courses below the connection between roof and walls.
- c. Dormers: There are five dormers: three to the rear flanking the center gable (two to the west, one to the east), and two on the front, also flanking the center gable. The two western dormers have gable roofs and slate siding, while the eastern dormer has a shed roof and slate siding. The two front dormers have gable roofs and slate siding.

All dormers have paired one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: Quarters No. 48 is a triplex with three conceptually similar units attached by two north-to-south party walls. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson created units that have two rooms to either side of a central hall/stairway that extends from the front to the rear of the building on the first floor, and from the center to the rear on the second floor. A parlor, dining room, library and kitchen are on the first floor; four bedrooms and two baths on the second floor; two bedrooms, a bath, a trunk room and a storage room on the third floor. Quarters No. 48C was surveyed for the purposes of this report.

There is a generous flow of space between the main hall and the parlor and dining room. There are openings (5'-0" x 7'-0") between these three spaces with sliding paneled pocket doors 2" thick used for separation. The passages to the library and to the rear hall/kitchen from the main hall are through 2'-10" x 7' doorways. A swinging door also connects the dining room with the kitchen.

The second and third floors, with smaller doorways that do not open directly onto one another, are much more private in plan.

2. Stairways: There are two stairways servicing Quarters No. 48C. The main stairway connects the first and second levels only. This is a "U" type stair in an 8'-10" x 10'-0" space with a square newel post, square balusters rotated at 45°, a machined handrail, and oak risers and treads. The rear stairway, also a "U" type running from the basement to the third floor, is situated in a 6'-0" x 7'-0" space and has plain wood posts, square balusters, rectangular handrail and wood risers and treads.
3. Flooring: Oak is used for the flooring on the first floor, heart pine on the second and third floors, and concrete in the basement.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: There is a great variety in wall finishes on the first level. The vestibule, main hall and library have a 7' wainscoting with vertical 1" x 4" oak boards below on 18" centers, and a 5' horizontal 1" x 4" oak railing over plaster walls covered with an off-white vinyl wallpaper. The parlor has a 7' wainscoting with 1" x 4" vertical oak boards below on approximately 4' centers over white plaster walls. The kitchen has been remodeled and has linoleum flooring.

The second and third floors have off-white vinyl wallpaper over plaster, while the basement has plaster, brick and stone walls painted white.

Ceilings are plaster throughout.

5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Quarters No. 48C has four-panel wood doors with plain trim on the first floor, and beaded wood trim on the second, third and basement levels. These doors measure 2'-10" x 7'-10" x 1 3/4".
6. Built-in features and hardware: The most distinctive features exist in the parlor. The fireplace surround is oak with pilasters on the edges rising to 7' where they are capped with a molded cornice. Five oak panels fill in between the pilasters above the fireplace opening. An original built-in seat is to the left of the fireplace.

7. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. Heating: Steam radiators provide heat for the building.
- b. Lighting: Incandescent lighting is used throughout.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Quarters No. 48 is at the south end of a grouping of three Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson triplexes along the hillside and fronted by Wilson Road. Quarters No. 48, however, is oriented to the south where the slope drops off perpendicularly to the other two units. A 10' granite retaining wall exists to the south, creating a terrace in front of the unit. To the west a stream runs perpendicular to the long axis of the building, flowing downhill and eventually turning east toward the Hudson River. The land drops off moderately across Wilson Road from the unit and is heavily covered with deciduous trees. The land rises gently to the north across a service road. To the north and west is a small brick, flat roofed garage. To the east is Wilson Road. Quarters No. 48, being located in the bend of the road, follows the contours of the hill. A few deciduous and coniferous trees are scattered about the site, with the land around the brook to the west moderately covered with deciduous trees.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings: Original ink-on-linen working drawings are in the Facilities Engineer's office, Directorate of Engineering and Housing, U.S. Military Academy. Subsequent alteration drawings are also found there.

B. Early Views: Early photographs can be found in the U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. Some of these are reproduced in the Grashof and Lange's volumes of this project.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Records, U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. See bibliographic essay in the Lange volume of this project for a listing of record groups.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Annual Reports, U.S. Military Academy Archives.

Grashof, Bethanie C. - "Building Analysis and Preservation Guidelines for Category I and Selected Category II Buildings at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York", Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983, HABS NO. NY-5708.

Lange, Robie S. - "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy", Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983. HABS No. NY-5708.

- D. Likely sources not yet Investigated: The Records of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation is part of a multi-year project sponsored by the National Park Service and the United States Military Academy, explained in the United States Military Academy, HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 1, "Methodology". This written documentation was prepared by Travis C. McDonald, Jr. and Timothy Lindblad, architectural historians, in 1982-1985 based on fieldwork conducted in 1982 and 1984.