FLORENCE NATIONAL CEMETERY, LODGE
803 East National Cemetery Road
Florence
Florence County
South Carolina

HALS SC-2-A
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

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HALS No. SC-2-A

Location: 803 East National Cemetery Road, Florence, Florence County, South Carolina.

The coordinates for Florence National Cemetery are 79.754334 W and 34.185092 N, and they were obtained in August 2012 with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Present Owner: National Cemetery Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Prior to 1988, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs was known as the Veterans Administration.

The Veterans Administration took over management of Florence National Cemetery from the U.S. Army in 1973 (Public Law 93-43).

Date: 1906, razed 1976.

Builder/Contractor: Unknown.

Description: Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General reveal that Francis D. Smith constructed a temporary frame lodge on the cemetery grounds in 1867. The wood lodge was privately built and was used until late in 1868. In 1869 a one-story, brick lodge on a linear plan was erected. In 1906 a two-story, frame Four-Square was built; this building was demolished in 1976.

The Four-Square lodge built in 1906 was lit by kerosene, not receiving electricity until 1929-1931, when maintenance ledgers kept by the Veterans Administration reveal that the property also was connected to water and sewer lines. In 1929 the basement was completed. Throughout the 1920s and 1940s cemetery staff regularly attended to the lodge. They maintained the building by painting it inside and outside, refinishing and varnishing the wood and linoleum floors, replacing the screens and gutters, upgrading the bathroom fixtures and mechanical systems. In 1952 the building was overhauled, primarily addressing the porches or verandas and shoring up the foundations beneath them. The bulkhead entrance to the basement cellar was closed and asbestos siding was put on the walls at that time as well.

The lodge was razed in September 1976. The photographs from shortly before its demolition show a two-story building with double porches on the front and rear facades. The first-floor porches were screened and the second-floor porch on the front elevation was left open. The main elevation appears to be three bays wide, and the door and window openings framed in simple surrounds. The windows look to be double-hung sash, and the exterior doors are glazed above the lock rail. The foundations were brick, the exterior walls were wood (until re-sided with asbestos in the 1950s), and there was a brick chimney. The maintenance ledgers noted the

interior floors were maple, although the flooring in the bathroom, kitchen and office was changed to linoleum.

Site Context: The lodge built to the Four-Square plan in 1906 and razed in 1976 was located in the southeast section of the cemetery and near to the entrance. The lodge faced west to the drive leading into the grounds from the entrance gates. It was placed near East National Cemetery Road, with its south side elevation facing the roadway and its east (rear) elevation facing the supporting structures, that historically included a well, cistern, toolhouse, and cellar. The low wall made of brick that marks the boundaries of the cemetery also separated the lodge premises from East National Cemetery Road. Today, the lodge site hosts a Carillion and smattering of graves as well as modern utilitarian buildings. The roadway curves around the northwest corner of the lodge site and provides access to the remaining structures. The principal axis is north-to-south from the entrance gates to the flagpole.

History: Please see the contextual report for an analysis of the architectural development of the lodge as a building type for the national cemeteries and its place within this prescribed landscape (HALS No. DC-46).

In 1862 Congress authorized the appropriation of land for use as national cemeteries so that the Union soldiers who perished in service to their country could be buried with honor. These became the first cemeteries in the national cemetery system; by the end of the decade almost 300,000 men were buried in seventy-three national cemeteries. By that time the Office of the Quartermaster General, and the Quartermaster Montgomery C. Meigs in particular, had developed an architectural program for the cemetery. The program created for the national cemeteries included an enclosing wall demarcating the grounds and ornamental iron gates cast to instill reverence to those who entered and calm the wrought emotions of a nation in mourning for its lost sons. Specific plantings, such as the Osage-orange hedge and various trees, were selected to give a pleasing appearance and, likely, to screen outbuildings - the business of cemetery maintenance - from public view. Less a commemorative architectural statement, the superintendent's lodge combined practicality with a respectful presence.

Lodge plans first evolved from expedient wood-frame "cottages" to masonry buildings one-story in height and with a three-room floor plan. Construction of the temporary wood-frame lodges took place in the years 1867 to 1869, and overlapped with the construction of the first permanent masonry lodges built to a standard, single-story design from 1868 to 1871. Officers in charge of the cemeteries soon found the floor plans of the temporary wood lodges and the first permanent masonry lodges inconvenient and, increasingly, unattractive.

Moreover, representatives from the Quartermaster General's Office noted these three-room models were often too small for a superintendent and his family, and so in 1869, plans for a six-room, one and one-half story type were acquired from Edward Clark, Architect of the Capitol Extension. The design was refined over the next two years and in 1871 drawn for the Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs's approval. This standard plan featured a mansard roof and so became associated with the French or Second Empire style. Contemporary buildings, domestic and civic, exhibited this aesthetic and so the choice of the Quartermaster for a Second

Empire style lodge is in keeping with national architectural trends as well as the personal taste of Meigs whose house also was erected in the Second Empire style. On the national stage, Alfred Mullet designed the Old Executive Office building in Washington, DC, a building whose construction in the 1870s coincided with the building of lodges in the Second Empire style in many of the national cemeteries.

The National Cemetery Administration identifies the Second Empire style lodge, referred to in the 1880s as the "usual" type, or even the "full Meigs plan" likely in reference to the Quartermaster's endorsement of the design, as the first generation of permanent lodges. It reflects a concerted effort to standardize what a national cemetery, including the lodge, should look like. The last cemeteries for which the Quartermaster contracted for this style of lodge were for Mobile, Alabama, and Beaufort, South Carolina, in 1881.

The L-plan was revised in 1885 for the lodge in San Francisco, and then employed for the lodges in Mound City and Loudon Park. The revised plan was further improved for the construction of the lodge at Cypress Hills. The revision to the standard L-plan primarily included a change in roof form from the mansard to a cross-gable and the use of banded brick in the exterior walls. Cypress Hills was a simpler expression of the type, with segmental arches over the windows instead of stone lintels and having no banded exterior brick in the walls. In the 1890s, the plans called for an elongated office wing. This change to the L-plan accommodated an entrance hall in the middle of the building; the elongated L-plan was built in Santa Fe, Fort Smith, and Fort Leavenworth.

By the century's end, standards of living called for conveniences the L-plan lodges lacked. Advances in plumbing and heating technologies, in particular, made the L-plan outdated as expectations about the appropriate level of domestic sanitation that the government should provide to its employees changed. Even so, the Quartermaster omitted indoor toilets from the lodge floor plans until 1905. Maintenance of the existing lodges, as well as ell additions, addressed some of the inconveniences of the older buildings, and made the lodges more comfortable as living spaces. Between the 1880s and 1940s, improvements to the existing lodges included the installation of indoor plumbing and bathrooms, central heating, closets and cupboards; adding a kitchen ell and converting the original kitchen into a dining room; and maintenance of windows, shutters, and porches.

By 1905, the Quartermaster determined some lodges warranted a complete overall, rather than renovation, and the department began to replace some of the buildings in the national cemeteries. For the new lodges, it created a succession of twenty-two different plans between 1905 and 1960. Nine of these plans were used to build multiple lodges, but thirteen were unique designs, used only once. Compared to the extended popularity of the L-plan, which lasted from 1870 to 1881 in its mansard-roof form and to 1904 in its later variations, the rapid succession of designs in the twentieth century suggests a new awareness among those directing the cemeteries of the need to construct lodges that were aesthetically and technologically up-to-date. Over five decades, the Quartermaster endorsed a progression of plans from four-squares to bungalows to Colonial Revival designs and then to suburban ramblers. This progression paralleled the changes

in form, style, building materials, and construction practices that occurred in the private housing market.

Most of the lodges built in the twentieth century are indistinguishable from typical American middle-class and upper-middle-class suburban dwellings, with the exception of a second entrance for the superintendent's office. In some instances, such as in Hampton, Virginia, and in Annapolis, Maryland, the army made a particular effort to match new lodges to their local surroundings, usually by building period-revival designs in places where those designs would have particular resonance. In a nod to the colonial heritage of the Chesapeake, the Quartermaster built one-and-one-half-story brick lodges in a Colonial Revival style at these cemeteries in 1940. In another example, the desire to match designs to localities prompted the alteration of the L-plan lodge at San Francisco into a Spanish Mission Revival building in 1929 and the similarly extensive reconstruction of the Santa Fe lodge into the Pueblo Revival style in 1942.

The Four-Square plan used for the frame lodge in Florence National Cemetery in 1906 was also used in Barrancas, Florida, that same year. Like Florence's, the Barrancas lodge was a wood-frame building. The Quartermaster's department repeated the Four-Square plan in lodges made of brick in six other cemeteries between 1907 and 1910: Gettysburg, Knoxville, Camp Butler, Little Rock, Andrew Johnson, Tennessee, and San Antonio. The Four-Square plan provided space for the hall, office, parlor, dining room, pantry and kitchen on the first floor, and space for the hall, four bedrooms and bathroom on the second floor. The Florence lodge had these rooms, plus a screened lower porch or veranda for additional living space. The Four-Squares were nearly identical and their significance comes as a collective example of the type perpetuated through the Quartermaster's department.

Florence, South Carolina, was a transportation hub and a vital railroad center with lines to points in the North and the South. During the Civil War, a large prisoner of war camp was located near the present site of the cemetery. Between 7000 and 12,000 men (and one woman) were held here. Conditions were crowded, food was scare, shelter and beds nonexistent, and medical supplies were in short supply. Many died from diarrhea and scurvy, and the first interment is thought to have been on September 17, 1864. The burial ground was declared a national cemetery in 1865.

Conditions at the camp, essentially a large stockade built in response to a Yellow Fever epidemic, were dire. They were reportedly better than those at Andersonville and Macon in Georgia, and men from those prisons were transferred to Florence. Other camps in Charleston, South Carolina, and Salisbury, North Carolina, sent prisoners to Florence as well. New detainees arrived too quickly and adequate records were not kept. Thus, many of those who died in Florence cannot be identified. The first burials took place on property belonging to Dr. James Jarrott and the graves were marked with wood headboards. One known burial is that of Florena Budwin, a woman who disguised herself as man in order to accompany or find her husband then serving in the Union Army. The Budwins were from Pennsylvania, and Florena was captured near Charleston in 1864. Her gender was discovered when she became ill and needed medical attention. She died in January 1865.

Care of the national cemetery was initially entrusted to Francis Smith, a man of color. He constructed a two-room, wood lodge in early 1867 at his own expense with the tacit expectation that it would be his home. He took care of the grounds, worked hard and was considered "a worthy man." In a report dated September 1868 it was noted that Smith was discharged from the cemetery and that Superintendent Hughes replaced him. It also appeared that Smith continued to work on the grounds. By that time, the lodge Smith constructed was considered dilapidated. The roof leaked and the floorboards were loose. The report recommended that a permanent lodge be built. The inspector also requested that Smith be compensated for his work on building the wood lodge, and work about the cemetery, since he no longer had housing and was poor. The inspector asked for a compensation rate of $50 a month.

In 1874 the inspection report observed the brick lodge was then four years old, placing the construction date in 1869 or 1870 and shortly after the recommendation to replace the frame lodge that Smith erected with a permanent one was made. The walls of the new lodge had settled, producing some cracks but no new ones in the last two years. For this reason the proposal to add columns or supports to the roof was not pursued. Other improvements were made, however. These included Venetian blinds at the gable ends, painting the woodwork, and adding a closet to one of the rooms. Potentially the most complicated change addressed the need for a cellar. One option was to excavate under the kitchen, but this risked undermining the foundations of the building, and the other was to construct an outdoor cellar. The latter proposal was selected and was built 12' away from the main lodge to the northeast.

The enclosing wall, made of brick, was contracted to Brown and Rutherford in 1877 but no reference as to who built the lodge was made. In 1880 the cemetery wall was complete, and the domestic complex for the superintendent consisted of the lodge and two outbuildings, the brick cellar and a frame stable. The stable provided space for the tool house, wood shed, and water closet. The brick lodge was described as a one-story building that measured about 45' x 18' with piazzas on the north and south elevations. The piazzas were each about 6' wide and the main roof extended over them. There were three rooms inside, housing the office, sleeping room, and kitchen. In the 1889 inspection this description was augmented further. The three rooms were of equal size and measured 15' x 10'. There was a frame kitchen, sheathed in weatherboards, resting on brick piers and measuring 17' x 14'; plus a tool house which was a "rough board" structure measuring 10' square and recently repaired, an outside cellar some 4 ½' deep that was made of brick and covered in shingles, and a privy, also weatherboarded. The stable was moved to align with the tool house and kitchen in the yard.

In 1909 the survey of the cemetery grounds and facilities revealed that the one-story brick lodge had been replaced. Similarly, several of the outbuildings were removed, leaving only the exterior cellar that had been constructed between 1874 and 1880 and a new stable constructed in 1906. The stable housed the tool house, shop, coal bin, and an earthen closet for the public (i.e., a privy). The design of the lodge kept the two-veranda concept, but expanded it. Built in the same location as the former lodge, but turned to face west, the new lodge in a Four-Square plan was two stories and accommodated four rooms plus a pantry on the first floor, and four bedrooms plus a bathroom on the second floor. There was no basement or cellar in 1909. The verandas

were on the east and west elevations; the blueprint attached the 1909 survey for the Quartermaster notes the new lodge's orientation and updates the placement of the outbuildings.

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Historian: Virginia B. Price, 2012.

Project Information: The documentation of the lodges and rostrums in the national cemeteries was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), one of the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service, Richard O'Connor, Chief. The project was sponsored by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Sara Amy Leach, Senior Historian. Project planning was coordinated by

Catherine C. Lavoie, Chief of HABS. Historical research was undertaken by HABS Historians Virginia B. Price and Michael R. Harrison. NCA Historians Jennifer Perunko, Alec Bennett, and Hillori Schenker provided research material, edited and reviewed written reports. Field work for selected sites was carried out and measured drawings produced by HABS Architects Paul Davidson, Ryan Pierce, and Mark Schara.