

NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS -
BATTLE MOUNTAIN SANITARIUM, DUPLEX QUARTERS
(Hot Springs Veterans Administration Medical Center, Building No.
29)
(VA Black Hills Health Care System - Hot Springs Campus, Building
No. 29)
500 North Fifth Street
Hot Springs
Fall River County
South Dakota

HABS SD-24-Y
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

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

NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS –
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(Hot Springs Veterans Administration Medical Center, Building No. 29)
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Location: 500 North 5th Street, Hot Springs, Fall River County, South Dakota

The coordinates for Building No. 29 are 43.434553 N, -103.476744 W, and they were obtained through Google Earth in December 2014 with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Significance: The Duplex Quarters was built in 1920 to house two Assistant Surgeons and their families. It was built using standard Veterans Bureau plans for staff housing that were modeled on popular Colonial Revival suburban house types. The same plan was used next door for Building No. 28 (built 1927). These new duplex quarters were placed along the residential loop road near the original officer's quarters for the Battle Mountain Sanitarium. They represent the expansion of medical services for veterans in the 1920s.

Description: The Duplex Quarters is a two-and-a-half story wood frame dwelling with a one story hipped roof porch across the front. The front steps are framed by a flat roof section at the center of the porch with a balustrade around the edge. The dwelling has a hipped roof of moderate pitch with open eaves and exposed rafters. The roof is sheathed with asphalt. A central brick chimney is shared by both units with additional rear chimneys for each. The interior contains two mirror image housing units comprised of living room, dining room and kitchen on the first floor and three bedrooms and a bath on the second. The second floor rear corner of each unit included a sleeping porch. Modifications to the right unit for handicap accessibility include adding a exterior ramp, converting the kitchen into a wheelchair accessible bedroom, and adding two interior doorways between the units for shared kitchen access.

History: See overview historical context HABS No. SD-24 for additional information on the Battle Mountain Sanitarium and the NHDVS. For photographs see HABS No. SD-24-S, East Campus Residential.

Battle Mountain Sanitarium, the tenth expansion of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, was built between 1903 and 1907 in Hot Springs, South Dakota. Omaha-based architect Thomas Rogers Kimball designed a striking Mission Revival hospital complex built with local red sandstone. He also designed a set of four officer's quarters in addition to other support structures such as the powerhouse and conservatory. During 1910 two additional structures were

added along the residential loop. A boarding house for the nurses was built facing the original quarters row along the U-shaped drive. The final single family residence in the loop was the Chaplain's Quarters (Building No. 27) placed next to the Quartermaster's Quarters (Building No. 26).

Designating Battle Mountain a sanitarium rather than another branch residential home indicated the growing emphasis on medical care by the NHDVS.¹ The aging of the member population and the steady decrease of their numbers presented a particular challenge to the NHDVS. More costly medical care was needed, increasing per capita costs. This situation persisted and grew more urgent with the advent of World War I. Now rather than slowly becoming obsolete through age and deferred maintenance, the Homes would need to serve a new generation of disabled veterans, many with tuberculosis caused by trench warfare conditions. The new conflict would create unprecedented veteran demand for medical care and an expansion of the medical facilities and staff at Battle Mountain.

Col. James Mattison, former Governor and Head Surgeon at Battle Mountain, was now Chief Surgeon for the reorganized Medical Service of the NHDVS. He noted in a January 1923 article for *Modern Hospital* that in addition to plans for new hospital construction, all the NHDVS branches were receiving up-to-date laboratory and x-ray equipment. The previous two years had also seen the addition of many visiting specialist consultants and an increase of regular personnel including doctors, nurses, and dieticians.² Construction of the Duplex Quarters in 1920 was the result of this expanded approach to veterans health care. The Colonial Revival house was built using standard plans from the Veterans Bureau and would accommodate two Assistant Surgeons. At this same time five of these duplexes were built at the Mountain Home Branch in Johnson City, Tennessee, which had recently been designated a national tuberculosis sanitarium

In 1925-26 the Veterans Bureau built a tuberculosis hospital at Battle Mountain just northeast of the original hospital complex. The new hospital and the ongoing growth of medical specialties created a need for even more staff housing. Another standard plan duplex was built in 1927 (Building No. 28) and the Treasurer's Quarters was converted into a duplex. Additional nurses' quarters were placed around the residential loop in 1926. An *Inspection Report* issued after this work was completed estimated that two sets of quarters for married officers, and four sets of quarters for married noncommissioned officers were still needed. The increase in staff during the 1920s, due to the demand for new in-

¹ Suzanne Julin, "National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers – Assessment of Significance and National Historic Landmark Recommendations." (2008), 32-33. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, DC.

² James A. Mattison, "The Development of the National Soldiers' Home Service," *Modern Hospital* 20, no. 1 (January 1923): 60.

house specialties as well as the new tuberculosis hospital drove this on-site housing shortage.³

In 1930, NHDVS was reorganized into a new Veterans Administration. The NHDVS was no longer an autonomous agency; now their primarily domiciliary services were just one of many offered by the Veterans Administration. The original hospital now functioned as a 548-bed domiciliary, while the 1920s hospital was a 255-bed medical/surgical facility. Now designated Building No. 29, the Duplex Quarters are still used by the VA Black Hills Health Care System.

Sources: Suzanne Julin, “National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers – Assessment of Significance and National Historic Landmark Recommendations.” (2008). U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, DC.

Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, Ph.D., HABS Staff Historian

Project

Information: Documentation of the Duplex Quarters/Building No. 29 at the Battle Mountain Sanitarium of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was undertaken in 2013-14 by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Documentation Programs division of the National Park Service, Richard O’Connor, Chief. The project was sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), Office of Construction and Facilities Management, Kathleen Schamel, Federal Preservation Officer. Project planning was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS; and by Douglas Pulak, Deputy Federal Preservation Officer, DVA. The field work was undertaken and the measured drawings were produced by Project Supervisor Mark Schara, AIA, HABS Architect, HABS Architects Paul Davidson, Daniel De Sousa, and Ryan Pierce, Jobie Hill (University of Oregon) and Emma Greenberg (Louisiana State University). The historical reports were written by HABS Historian Lisa P. Davidson. The large format photography was undertaken in 2008 by HABS Photographer James W. Rosenthal and in 2013 by HABS Contract Photography Renee Bieretz. Vital assistance was provided by Dena Sanford at the Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, and by Patrick Lyke, Douglas Sprinkle, and other VA staff members at the Hot Springs Campus.

³ Inspector-General’s Office, *Inspection Report – National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1929), 71.