

NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS -  
MARION BRANCH, BUILDING NO. 11  
(Barracks)  
1700 East 38th Street  
Marion  
Grant County  
Indiana

HABS IN-306-AJ  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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 – MARION BRANCH, BUILDING No. 11 (Barracks)

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Location: 1700 East 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Marion, Grant County, Indiana.  
Building No. 11 faces northeast towards Building No. 7 and Franklin Court.  
Building No. 11 is also southeast of the main entrance gate on 38<sup>th</sup> Street.

The coordinates for Building No. 11 are 40.518994 N, -85.632279 W. These coordinates were obtained in January 2012 and with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Significance: Building No. 11 was constructed as a barracks for the Marion Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS) during 1896-98.

Description: Building No. 11 is a two-and-a-half story red brick Queen Anne institutional building with a symmetrical form and regularly spaced fenestration. It has a long five-part plan with a tall center pavilion connected to end pavilions by hyphens. It is approximately 218 feet long and 50 feet wide. Queen Anne decorative features include patterned brick in the upper section of the center pavilion gable, a corbelled arcature under the center pavilion cornice, and pairs of windows in the end pavilion gables with elliptical arch fanlights. The overall Victorian appearance is diminished by the loss of several key features such as porches at the center entrance and wrapping around the end pavilions, chimneys, most of the original wood window sashes, and a cupola (Figure 1). There are replacement aluminum window sashes on the first and second floors. The elaborate Queen Anne porches with decorative turned balustrades and spindle screens have been replaced by modest neoclassical porticos or surrounds at the doorways.

The original interior floor plan and finishes have been entirely altered. The original floor plan included a grouping of communal spaces and bathrooms in the center pavilion (later medical offices) and a transverse corridor leading to large open ward dormitories in each wing. These spaces were still intact by 1944, but the porches were removed and a one-story kitchen added to the southeast corner (Figure 2). Starting in 1976, Building No. 11 and the three other Franklin Court buildings (Buildings No. 7, 10 and 18) were converted from open ward into four-bed semi-private rooms. Building No. 11 was renovated by 1980 (Figures 3 and 4). Acoustic tile drop ceilings and built-in cabinets were installed to update the space here and the replacement windows were installed. The four Franklin Court buildings were linked by a one-story brick corridor with ramps designed in 1979.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interconnecting Corridors, Buildings 7, 9, 10, 11, & 18, (20 August 1979) Anatoli Boschenko, Architect and Robert Wilson, Engineers. Drawings in Engineering Services files, Marion VAMC.

The corridor connects to Building No. 11 on its northeast, or front, façade at the east end pavilion. The exterior elevator shaft was built on the northeast façade at the west hyphen in 1981.

History: The NHDVS was a federal institution authorized by Congress in 1865 and charged with caring for Civil War veterans disabled by their military service. Founded in 1889 as the seventh NHDVS branch, the Marion Branch featured a picturesque campus of winding avenues and red brick Queen Anne buildings with wide porches and ornamental balustrades. Building No. 11 was built during 1896-98 and was one of seven barracks with matching Queen Anne designs. By 1930 the NHDVS system had eleven branches and became part of the new Veterans Administration.

The original Marion Branch buildings were designed by the Dayton, Ohio architectural firm of Peters and Burns. Building No. 11 is also attributed to this firm because it has the same Queen Anne design as six other barracks -- Buildings No. 2, 4, and 6 (built 1889-90), Building No. 7 (built 1895-96), and Buildings No. 10 and 12 (built 1896-98). Building No. 11 is one of four barracks grouped around a loose quadrangle called Franklin Court. By 1900 the Marion Branch had twelve large brick barracks including Building No. 11. In 1921, the Marion Branch became the Marion National Sanitarium, a facility dedicated to the treatment of World War I neuropsychiatric cases, including what was then called shell shock and other mental disorders. The emphasis throughout the NHDVS had been shifting from residential campuses to more sophisticated medical care for veterans. Building No. 11 was renovated at this time.

After 1930 the Marion Branch continued to specialize in psychiatric care as part of the Veterans Administration. In 1936, Building No. 11 was designated “Continued Treatment” with 74 beds. Building No. 11 was last used for a Geriatric-Psychiatric Nursing Unit after renovation into smaller four-bed rooms. The structure is now part of Marion Campus of the VA Northern Indiana Health Care System. Since vacated during the 1990s, Building No. 11 has fallen into disrepair and is slated for demolition.

Sources:

Board of Managers – National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, *Annual Reports*, various years starting in 1867; many volumes include *Proceedings* of the Board of Managers meetings.

Hubbard, Nancy J. “Marion Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Historic District,” Grant County, Indiana. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1999. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

Inspector General. *Annual Report of Inspection - National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers*. Washington, DC: GPO, (annual – 1894-1925).

*Marion Branch NHDVS – National Military Home, Indiana, c. 1916, Marion VAMC files.*

Miller, Jerry. “VA’s Building 10 Gets a New Look,” *Marion Chronicle-Tribune*, 29 December 1976.

*National Military Home Indiana. Wabash, IN: Press of the Plain Dealer, c. 1908, Marion VAMC files.*

Typescript, Marion VA Hospital Inventory (29 April 1936), Marion and Grant County File, Marion Public Library.

Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, HABS Historian, 2011

Project

Information: Documentation of selected buildings at the former Marion Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was undertaken in 2011 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 development was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS and by Douglas Pulak, Deputy Federal Preservation Officer, DVA. The field work was undertaken and the written histories were produced by Lisa P. Davidson and Virginia B. Price, HABS Historians. The large-format photography was undertaken by HABS Photographer Renee Bieretz; an initial photographic survey was completed by HABS Photographer James Rosenthal in 2008. Valuable assistance was provided by James A. Broyles, Project Engineer, Engineering Services, Marion Campus, VA Northern Indiana Health Care System.

Illustrations:

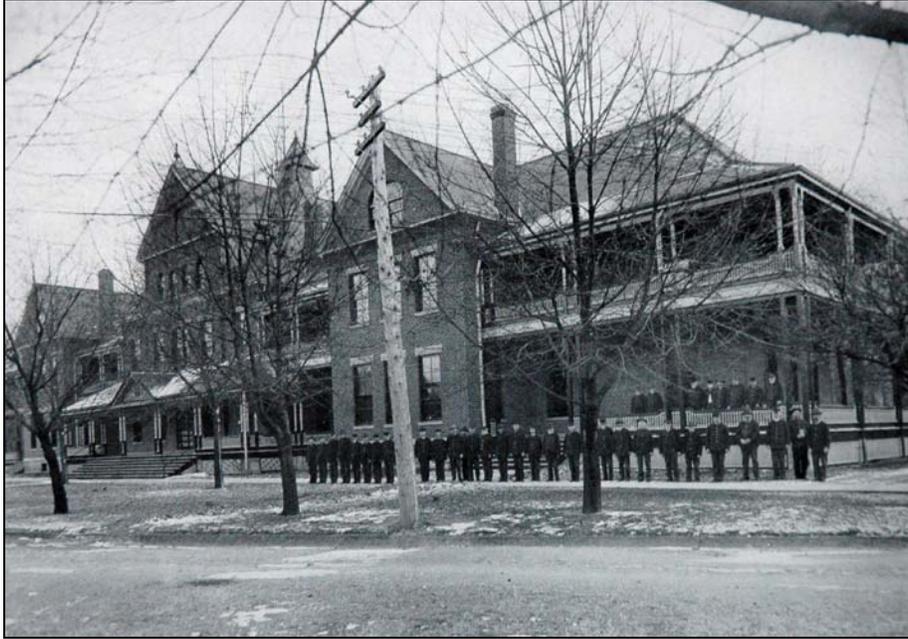


Figure 1: Barrack No. 11, c. 1916

Source: *Marion Branch NHDVS – National Military Home, Indiana, c. 1916*, Marion VAMC files

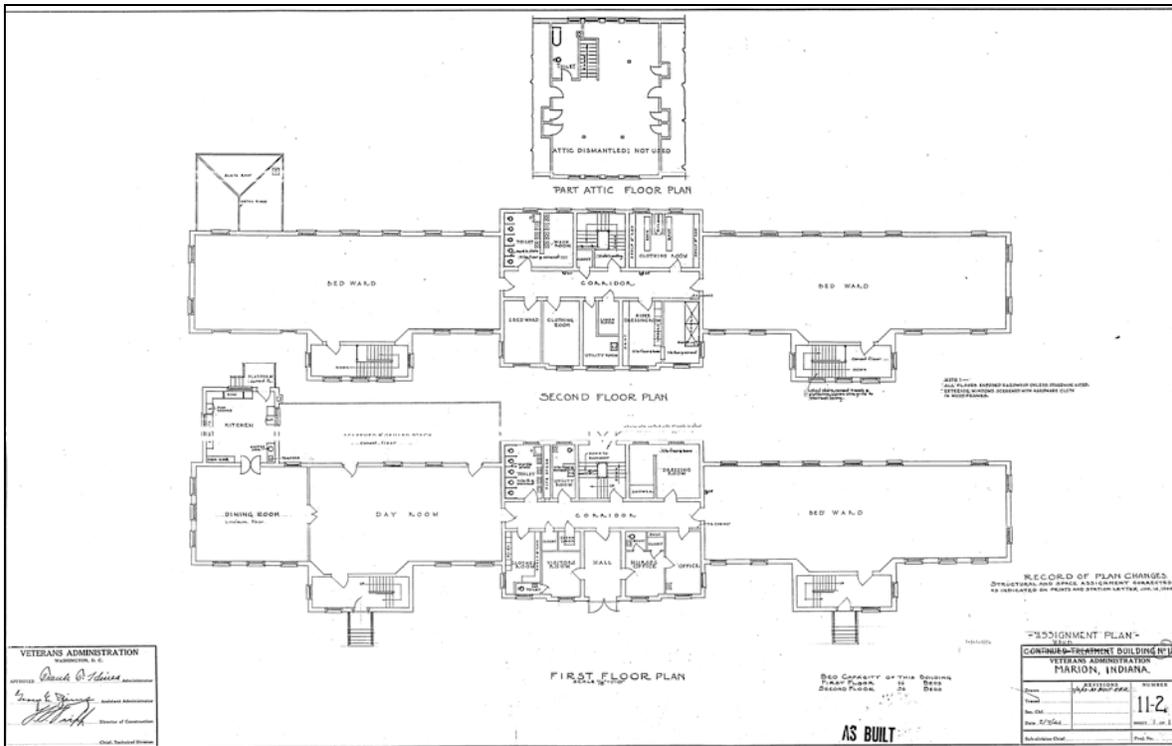


Figure 2: Building No. 11 Floor Plans, 7 February 1944, revised 16 July 1963

Source: PLIARS database, VACO

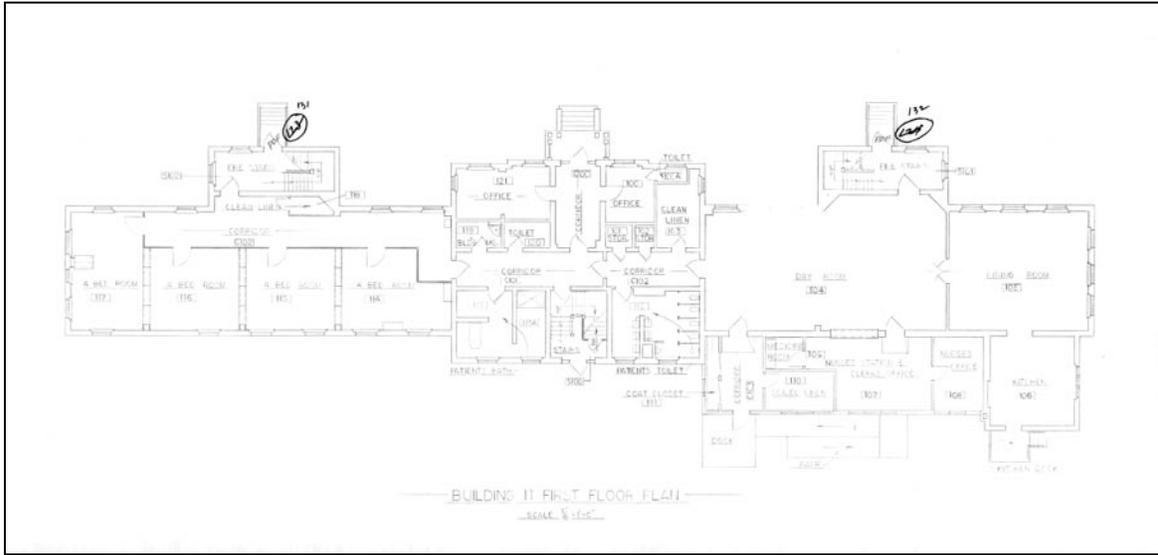


Figure 3: Building No. 11 First Floor Plans, 19 August 1980  
Source: Engineering Services files, Marion VAMC

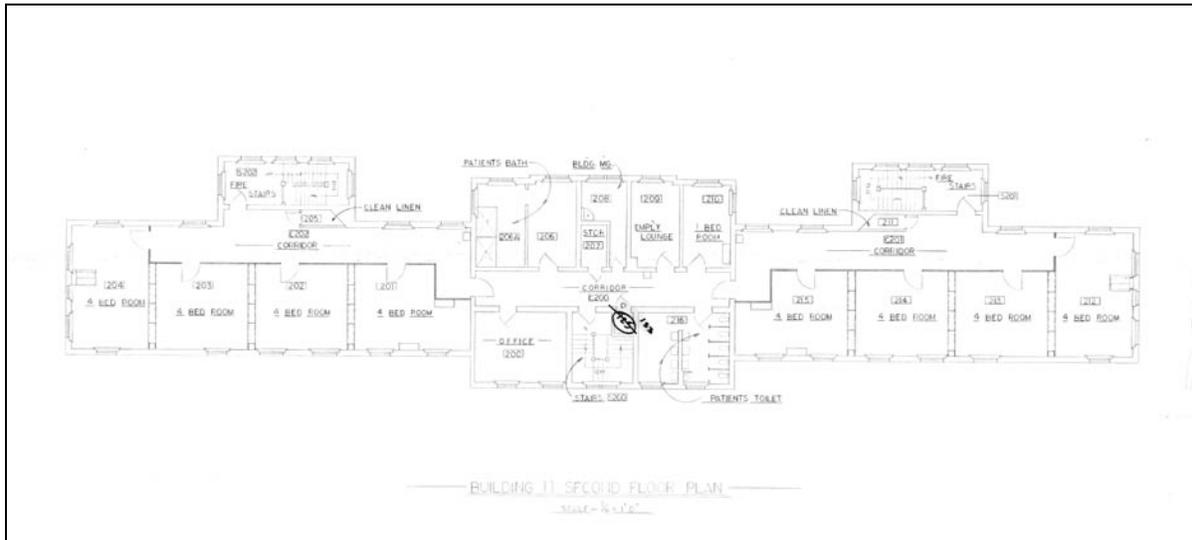


Figure 4: Building No. 11 Second Floor Plans, 19 August 1980  
Source: Engineering Services files, Marion VAMC