

NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS -
MARION BRANCH, BUILDING NO. 18
(Barracks)
1700 East 38th Street
Marion
Grant County
Indiana

HABS IN-306-AL
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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

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NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS – MARION BRANCH, BUILDING No. 18 (Barracks No. 9)

HABS No. IN-306-AL

Location: 1700 East 38th Street, Marion, Grant County, Indiana.
Building No. 18 faces northeast towards Building No. 24 and Chapman Avenue.
Building No. 18 is also southeast of the main entrance gate on 38th Street.

The coordinates for Building No. 18 are 40.520099 N, -85.631508 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. 18 was constructed as barracks no. 9 for the Marion Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS) during 1895.

Description: Building No. 18 is a Colonial Revival institutional building two-and-a half stories tall. It has a five-part plan with center and end pavilions connected by recessed hyphens. The Colonial Revival features include red brick walls, contrasting limestone foundations and quoins, box eaves with curved brackets and neoclassical door surrounds. Originally, Building No. 18 had a mixed Queen Anne/Colonial Revival appearance with cupolas, dormers, and ornate wood porches, but removal of these features and renovations have emphasized the Colonial Revival aspects of the structure (Figure 1). Building No. 18 is nearly identical to Building No. 24 which is located across the road to the north.

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, but the porches were removed and a one-story kitchen added to the southeast corner by 1944 (Figure 2). Starting in 1976, Building No. 18 and the three other Franklin Court buildings (Buildings No. 7, 10, and 11) were converted from open ward into four-bed semi-private rooms. 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 1979.¹ The corridor connects to Building No. 18 at the rear elevation of its southeast end pavilion. The exterior elevator shaft was built on the northeast façade at the east hyphen in 1981.

History: The NHDVS was a federal institution authorized by Congress in 1865 and

¹ 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.

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. 18 was built as Barracks No. 9 during 1895 and was one of two barracks with matching Queen Anne/Colonial Revival designs. The barracks was completed and occupied on November 6, 1895.² 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. 18 is also attributed to this firm because of its complementary design and early construction date. It is nearly identical to one other building, Barracks No. 8, now known as Building No. 24 and also built 1895-96. Building No. 18 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. 18. 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. 18 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. 18 was designated “Continued Treatment” with 69 beds. Building No. 18 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. 18 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.

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

² NHDVS Board of Managers, “Marion Branch Report,” *Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1896* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1897), 161.

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: Company No. 9 in front of Barracks No. 9, c. 1908
 Source: *National Military Home Indiana*, c. 1908, Marion VAMC files

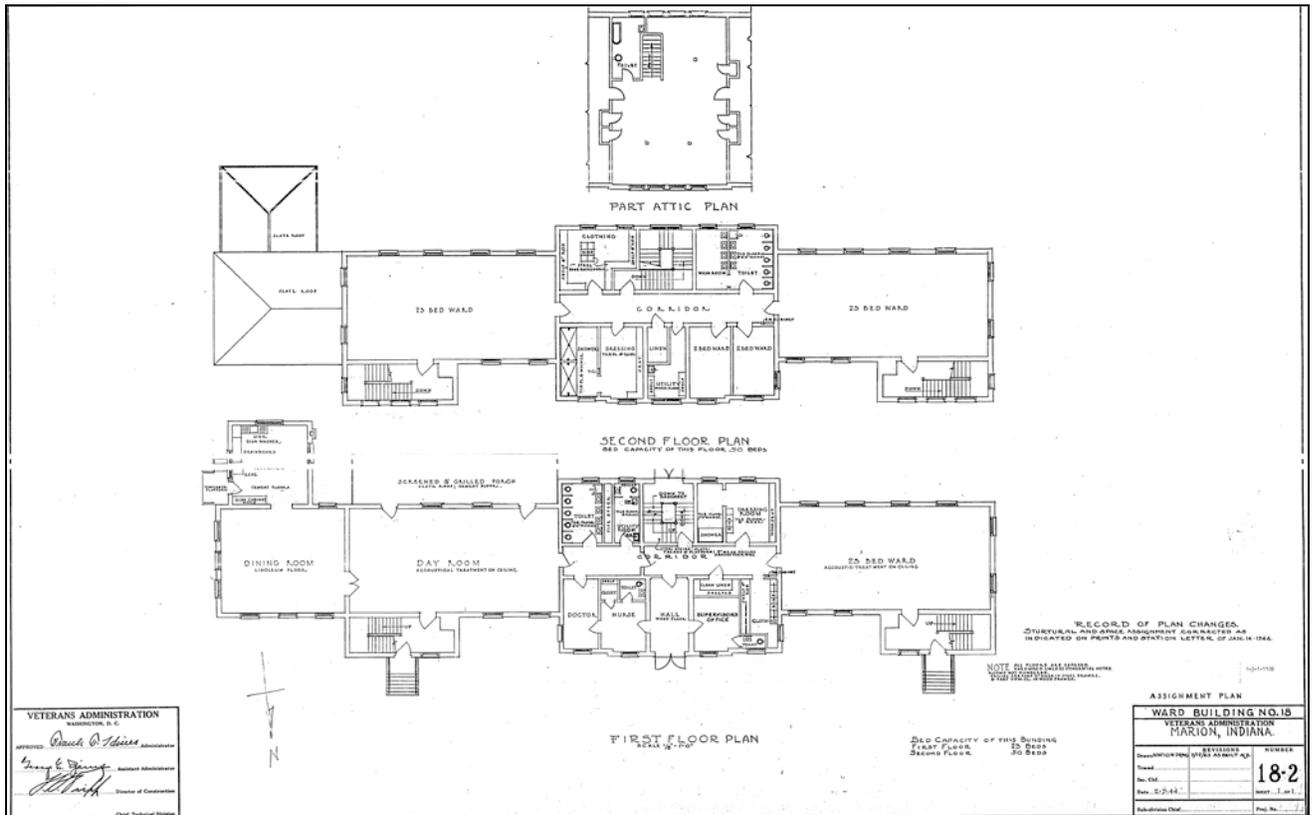


Figure 2: Building No. 18 Floor Plans, 7 February 1944, revised 17 July 1963
 Source: PLIARS database, VACO