

Rabideau Civilian Conservation Corps Camp,
Forest Service Officer's Quarters (Building No. 2)
County Road 39
Blackduck Vicinity
Beltrami County
Minnesota

HABS No. MN-147-A

HABS
MINN
4-BLADU.V,
1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

RABIDEAU CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS CAMP,
FOREST SERVICE OFFICER'S QUARTERS HABS No. MN-147-A
(BUILDING NO. 2)

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Location: One-half mile west of Beltrami County Highway 39, six miles south of Blackduck, Beltrami County, Minnesota.

Significance: The Forest Service Officer's Quarters was constructed in 1935 as part of the Rabideau Civilian Conservation Corps Camp, which operated on the Chippewa National Forest until 1941. The camp was later used by the University of Illinois as a summer field school from 1946 to 1972.

Description: The Forest Service Officer's Quarters is a one-story, rectangular-plan frame building with overall dimensions of 20' x 62'. The building is covered with shiplap siding painted dark green and is capped with a low-pitch, trussed, gable roof covered with green rolled asphalt. A log-post foundation supports the building and consists of three sets of eight evenly spaced posts positioned along the north and south exterior side walls and the building's central axis. The posts are exposed along both the south and west facades due to the building's siting within a shallow hillside. The principal entrance is located on the west end wall and features a projecting entry covered by a gable roof. Three steps rise to a small porch with wooden railings attached to the entry. A second entrance is centered on the east end wall. Window openings consist of nine-lite casement sash which are typically hinged at the base. Single sash flank each entrance door and eight sash are spaced along the north facade. Three, square-shaped, nine-lite sash are grouped together as a single unit on the western portion of the south facade. The remainder of the facade features five evenly spaced single sash. One single six-lite sash is placed in each gable end. All door and window trim, as well as the corner boards, consist of plain wood planks painted white. Three metal chimneys project from the north slope of the roof.

The interior includes a 20' x 15' day room to the west with hardwood floors, vertical knotty-pine paneling, and a varnished plywood ceiling with a tent-like appearance achieved by angling a plywood section toward each of the north and south side walls. The room includes a free-standing wood-burning stove. A central hallway extends from the day room to the east entrance. Six bedrooms open off the hallway, as do toilet facilities. Each bedroom features one wall of built-in storage including closets, drawers, and cupboards. Walls and ceilings are finished similarly to the day room, although the ceilings are flat and the flooring appears to be plywood.

History: Constructed in 1935, the Forest Service Officer's Quarters primarily provided living space for the Camp Superintendent, Engineer, and Foremen, who were responsible for supervising the work projects undertaken by the CCC. The facility also accommodated visiting Forest Service inspection teams.

The current arrangement of the interior spaces apparently dates to about 1939. The main alterations in the original plan involved extending the day room the full width of the building and moving the principal entrance from the center of the south facade to the west end. The relocation of the entrance is verified by the oldest known site plan of the camp, which clearly indicates an entrance along the south facade. The presence of wood infill also marks the original entrance. The toilet facilities may have been added at this time as well. The building was also used for staff as well as guest quarters when the University of Illinois occupied the site.

Sources: An undated history of the Rabideau Camp by the Forest Service, in a file on the Rabideau Camp located at the Forest Supervisor's Office in Cass Lake, Minnesota; and the oldest known site plan of the camp while still occupied by the CCC, entitled "Rabideau Camp F-50" (ca. 1936), located at the University Archives, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in the Civil Engineering Subject File Record Series 11/5/1. See also HABS No. MN-147.

Historian: Rolf T. Anderson, 1994