

MOUNTAIN HOME, CHAPEL
(Mountain Home VA Medical Center, Building No. 13)
Lamont & Veterans Way
Johnson City
Washington County
Tennessee

HABS TN-254-F
TN-254-F

PHOTOGRAPHS

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

ADDENDUM TO:
NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS,
MOUNTAIN BRANCH, CHAPEL
(Mountain Home Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Building No. 13)
(James H. Quillen Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Building No. 13)
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
FIELD RECORDS

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NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS – MOUNTAIN BRANCH, CHAPEL (James H. Quillen Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Building No. 13)

HABS No. TN-254-F

Location: Lamont and Veterans Way, Johnson City, Washington County, Tennessee

The coordinates for the Chapel are 36.310252 N, -82.375237 W, and they were obtained through Google Earth in November 2011 with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Present Owner: Department of Veterans Affairs, James H. Quillen Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC)

Present Use: Classroom/Storage, Quillen College of Medicine, East Tennessee State University

Significance: The Chapel was constructed in 1904-05 as part of the original Beaux-Arts campus ensemble for the Mountain Branch the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS). The NHDVS was a federal institution authorized by Congress in 1865 and charged with caring for Civil War veterans disabled by their military service. It held a competition for the design of its ninth branch, to be located in Washington County, Tennessee at the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains. The location was chosen at the urging of local Congressman Walter P. Brownlow for its healthful climate and proximity to underserved veterans in Tennessee and other southern states. Although founded for Civil War veterans of the Union Army, the NHDVS membership had expanded over the decades to include veterans of the Mexican, Indian, and Spanish American Wars. By 1930 the system had eleven branches and became part of the new Veterans Administration.

The winning design for the Mountain Branch by New York architect Joseph H. Freedlander incorporated the latest ideas of comprehensive design and Neoclassicism as taught by the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris. Freedlander created a hierarchy of communal buildings, barracks, and service functions arranged along a central avenue with views south to the nearby mountains. Smaller scale social support buildings such as the chapel, theater, and library were located on a secondary axis.

The Mission Revival Chapel for the Mountain Branch is finely detailed and a complementary part of the campus design. Its L-shaped plan includes separate but nearly identical sanctuaries, with the Catholic wing oriented north/south and the Protestant wing oriented east/west. The two wings are connected by small vestibules and a large corner tower. Each Soldiers' Home branch had some sort of chapel to accommodate religious services for various Christian denominations. The Mountain Branch Chapel has a singular appearance among all the branch structures, while offering a functional type important to the complete residential life of a NHDVS branch.

Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, HABS Staff Historian

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: June 1904 – June 1905
2. Architect: J. H. Freedlander, New York, NY
3. Original and subsequent uses: The Chapel was designed with two nearly identical wings to accommodate Protestant and Catholic services for the Mountain Branch members. The Protestant wing is no longer in use due to structural cracks, but most recently contained the Veterans Administration Medical Center upholstery shop. The Catholic wing is now used for nursing education by Quillen College of Medicine, East Tennessee State University.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Unknown.
5. Original plans and construction: Copies of J. H. Freedlander's original plans are located in the Veterans Administration Washington, DC central office (VACO) drawings database (PLIARS). The exterior form and materials seem to conform closely the original plans and construction, as does the interior layout. Each shallow T-shaped wing housed a sanctuary, loft, and altar flanked by a study and vestry for the clergy. Situated at right angles to each other, the two wings were linked by small connecting vestibules and a large corner tower.
6. Alterations and additions: The Chapel has experienced only minor alterations over the years in spite of changing uses. The small study and vestry rooms flanking the Catholic altar have been subdivided into new bathrooms and closets. Organs were inserted into the loft of the Catholic side and the altar of the Protestant side in 1922. Additional basement excavation was completed under the north end of the Catholic wing and a small brick shed attached at the northwest side of the Protestant wing. The pews are no longer in place.

B. Historical Context: See overview historical context HABS No. TN-254 for additional information on the Mountain Branch and the NHDVS.

The Mountain Branch, the ninth expansion of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS), was built between 1901 and 1905. The campus featured over thirty masonry buildings arranged in a formal hierarchy around a central avenue and secondary axes. The chapel was one of the last buildings completed, constructed during 1904 and 1905. Montgomery Schuyler, the venerable critic for *The Architectural Record*, reviewed the design accomplishments of the latest branch of the NHDVS in an article entitled, “Fortunate Treatment of a Group of Institutional Buildings.” Schuyler was frankly amazed with the quality of the East Tennessee campus compared with his dim view of other similar institutions, stating “until the erection of the Home in Tennessee... there was no Soldiers’ Home in the country worthy of much architectural consideration or having much claim to be noticed and illustrated in an ‘Architectural Record.’”¹ While Schulyer approved of the ornate designs for the “Brownlow” barracks (no. 1 and 2), Hospital, and Mess Hall, he reserved his highest praise for the more modest red brick buildings such as barracks no. 3 through 6, the Administration Building, and particularly the Chapel:

Those of the least architectural pretension are apt to strike the spectator as of the highest architectural success, those of which the treatment is least ornate; and among these, rather curiously, is the chapel, which one would expect to find among the most elaborate. It has in fact a vernacular and home bred air, beyond almost any other edifice on the grounds.²

The architect, J. H. Freedlander of New York, created a design vocabulary that unified the more ornate French Renaissance Revival structures with plainer red brick cousins, most buildings sharing unusual bracketed eaves, mansard roofs, and symmetrical plans. For the chapel Freedlander employed a plainer Arts and Crafts design sensibility, mainly communicated by red brick walls, bracketed eaves, and a Mission Revival-inspired robust square tower with a roof platform sheltered by a hipped roof. The “double chapel” had two nearly identical wings arranged at right angles and joined by the bell tower and two small vestibules. The north/south wing was designated for Roman Catholic worship and the east/west for Protestant.

Each Soldiers’ Home branch had some sort of chapel - often constructed as part of the early development of the site - that would accommodate religious services for various Christian denominations. Religious observance and spirituality were encouraged as part of good citizenship, although chapel attendance by members tended to be rather low. The chaplains also visited the sick in the hospitals and officiated at the regularly occurring funerals and interments at nearby cemeteries. Each of the NHDVS branches had a nearby National Cemetery; here the National Cemetery adjacent to the north boundary was established concurrently with the Mountain Branch’s construction. Ecclesiastical structures built by the Federal government were, and are, fairly unusual, with chapels like those at the NHDVS branches and on active military installations providing the most common exceptions. The connected but distinct wings of the

¹ Montgomery Schuyler, “Fortunate Treatment of a Group of Institutional Buildings: The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers,” *Architectural Record* 30, no. 2 (August 1911): 138.

² Schuyler, 145.

Mountain Branch Chapel were a particularly elegant solution to the need to accommodate different denominations. Approaches varied greatly across the NHDVS branches. Some of the other home branches, such as the Southern Branch in Hampton, Virginia, also created separate interior spaces within a single building specifically dedicated for Protestant, Catholic and, in this case, Jewish services. The two-story Southern Branch chapel stacked the two main sanctuaries and provided separate exterior entrances. At the Northwestern Branch in Milwaukee both Catholics and Protestants (or Episcopalians) shared a single worship space. The Central Branch in Dayton, Ohio provided entirely separate Catholic and Protestant chapel buildings for its large population.

Freedlander's original drawings for the Chapel are dated May 4, 1904, with additional detail drawings of the bell tower dated June 6, 1904 (Figure 1). Ground breaking for the chapel took place during June 1904. At that time services were being held outdoors on Sunday afternoons.³ On September 1st, the "Soldiers' Home Notes" column in the *Johnson City Comet* reported:

The combination church is under way and will quite an ornament to the grounds when completed. All the barracks, library and other buildings will be completed before Jack Frost makes his appearance.⁴

When Branch Governor Col. John P. Smith filed his fiscal year 1905 report with the Board of Managers on July 19, 1905, the chapel was in use. He noted that there was good attendance at the Protestant services, which were held twice on Sundays, in addition to one mid-week prayer service. Additional weekday prayer meetings were held in the small morgue chapel. Smith also mentioned that the Catholic wing was not yet complete for "full" Catholic services, probably meaning that it had not yet been supplied with required religious fittings such as a tabernacle.⁵ The Administration Building, six barracks buildings (nos. 3 through 8, including guard barracks), the governor's residence and four officers' quarters, ice plant and refrigerating system, greenhouses, stables, gates and gate lodges were all completed during the same fiscal year. Only the nurses' cottage and theater were still under construction during the summer of 1905.⁶

Within a year, Catholic Chaplain Walter F. Gottwalles reported that the Catholic wing had been "completely furnished and decorated for the proper celebration of divine services, at a cost of \$1,400, without expense to the Home." Chaplain Gottwalles also explained:

The regular daily morning service has been held and very considerable number of men visit the chapel during the day. The special evening services were held during the seasons of Advent and Lent. A 'mission' conducted in February has

³ E. D. Haynes, "Soldiers' Home Notes," *Johnson City Comet*, 23 June 1904.

⁴ E. D. Haynes, "Soldiers' Home Notes," *Johnson City Comet*, 1 September 1904.

⁵ NHDVS Board of Managers, "Mountain Branch Report," *Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1905* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1906), 216.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 216.

quite doubled the Sunday attendance and the reception of the church's ministrations.⁷

During an inspection visit in late September 1905, it was noted that an average of 150 Protestant and 75 Catholic members attended services, which represented 32.2 percent of the total membership. The inspector remarked that this was a much larger percentage than any of the other branches.⁸ A 1907 inspection placed average chapel attendance throughout the Home branches at 21.51 percent.⁹

A few years after completion the Chapel was listed with an appraised value of \$33,800.¹⁰ Photographs from early souvenir books show that ivy was encouraged to grow on the walls and quickly covered them (Figure 2). Records on later changes to the Chapel are scant. During fiscal year 1922, the pipe organs were installed in each chapel. Executive Officer Captain F. A. Cleveland remarked in his annual report that these additions “greatly improv[ed] the appearance of the chapels and the quality of the music provided for religious services.”¹¹ The 1929 *Annual Report* contains a brief mention of spending \$222.40 to replace chapel windows, but it is unknown exactly what this work entailed.¹² When the NHDVS became part of the Veterans Administration in 1930, the Chapel was designated Building No. 13. A set of plans from 1953 indicates that each sanctuary had 32 pews for a total of 192 seats. The concrete wheelchair ramp was added to the tower vestibule entrance at this time.¹³ A 1965 guide to the Mountain Home explained that religious services were available for Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish members. A total of fifteen services were offered each week in the chapel, hospital conference room, various wards, and in the domiciliary (barracks) building.¹⁴ It appears that both wings of the Chapel continued to be used for religious services up through the 1980s. Most recently the Protestant wing was used as an upholstery shop, but it is now closed due to structural cracking. The Catholic wing is currently used by ETSU for nursing education. The Mountain Home, including the Chapel, was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2011, the highest recognition for a historic site in the United States.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

⁷ NHDVS Board of Managers, “Mountain Branch Report,” *Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1906* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1907), 298.

⁸ Inspector-General's Office, *Inspection Report – National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1905), 70.

⁹ Inspector-General's Office, *Inspection Report – National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1907), 10.

¹⁰ NHDVS Board of Managers, “Mountain Branch Report,” *Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1910* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1911), 255.

¹¹ NHDVS Board of Managers, “Mountain Branch Report” *Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1922* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1923), 16.

¹² NHDVS Board of Managers, “Mountain Branch Report,” *Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 1929* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1930), 193.

¹³ “As-Built Floor Plans – Chapel, Building No. 13,” (31 August 1953, revised 1 October 1957), PLIARS database, VACO.

¹⁴ *Veterans Administration Center Mountain Home, 1903-65*, (1965), 16. Mountain Home Collection, Archives of Appalachia, ETSU.

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Chapel is an L-shaped brick structure with a tall corner tower. It is executed using decorative elements characteristic of Mission Revival/Arts and Crafts architecture such as round arch openings, overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and decorative brackets, and a tall corner tower with a low pitched pyramidal roof. The Chapel also shares a design vocabulary with the red brick barracks and more ornate Mess Hall, making it a distinct yet harmonious part of the designed campus ensemble.
2. Condition of fabric: Good/Fair. There is serious structural cracking at the west end of the Protestant wing. An April 2011 tornado caused minor roof damage and removed the tower cross.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Each wing is 46 feet, 1 1/8 inches wide and 99 feet, 9 1/8 inches long, including the corner tower.
2. Foundations: The Chapel has a red brick exterior foundation walls laid in a Flemish bond. The foundations are approximately four feet high at the southeast corner and much higher on the northwest where the site slopes sharply downward toward the adjacent National Cemetery. The brick is topped by a wide (approximately twelve inch) smoothly dressed limestone block with a cavetto curve at the top edge.
3. Walls: The exterior walls are composed of red brick laid in a Flemish bond. They are corbelled up to a round arch recess at each sanctuary window bay. These recesses are outlined around the arch by three courses of header bricks.
4. Structural system, framing: The Chapel has load bearing brick walls and piers with wood interior beams and roof trusses.
5. Porches, stoops: Two small front gable porches project from the southeast corner of the Chapel and include decorative features characteristic of early-twentieth-century Arts and Crafts design. One faces south and provides access to the tower vestibule and Protestant wing. The original steps have been encased by a splayed concrete ramp with metal hand rails at each side. The front gable porch roof is supported at the front corners by square red brick columns with a limestone base and capital. Each base extends to the pilaster on the Chapel wall flanking the doorway. A chunky wood balustrade with thin slits between square balusters sits on the limestone base between each column and pilaster. The porch roof has exposed rafters with notched rafter ends. The roof structure sits on a frame of wood beams with curved and notched decorative ends. The gable is open with only a vertical bracing, enhancing the view of the decorative beams. The other porch extends from the east elevation just behind the tower, providing access to the Catholic sanctuary entrance foyer. This porch is deeper, with the stacked limestone staircase intact. The columns, balustrade and roof structure match the other entry porch. Each porch roof is sheathed with slate

shingles. The porch floors have a square section of herringbone pattern red brick at the center surrounded by bands of alternating tan and red bricks.

There are stoops near the altar end of each wing, allowing access to one of the small vestry rooms. The Protestant stoop consists of six limestone steps rising parallel to the south wall of the Protestant nave. The Catholic stoop consists of eleven steps rises parallel to the east wall of the Catholic nave. The doorways at these stoops are sheltered by the overhanging eaves of the projecting wings. A brick and limestone knee wall is located at the outer edge of each stair and a metal hand rail is mounted on each inner wall.

6. Chimneys: None.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Exterior doorways are located at the two entry porches, two stoops, and the below-grade basement stairs. The two entry porch doorways are round arch openings set directly into the masonry wall. The varnished wood two leaf doors are six inches thick with raised panels in a Latin cross with circle design. The metal doorknobs and escutcheons have raised foliage and scroll ornamentation. The round arch above has been infilled with brick. The Protestant doorway has a deep reveal while the Catholic doorway has a more modest reveal with a thick stone lintel.

The two stoop doorways are rectangular openings with a simple jack arch above. Plain wood door frames with a wood frame screen door and a wood panel door are set directly into the masonry wall with a deep reveal. The doors are one leaf, painted versions of the same thick Latin cross and circle panels. The hardware on these doors is a plain metal knob and rectangular escutcheon with a keyed lock above. The basement doorway is a segmental arch opening with a wood panel door with six divided lights in the top two thirds and a rectangular recessed panel in the bottom. The glazing here is wire glass. The basement doorway is located down a flight of stairs parallel to the east side of the tower.

Two additional exterior doors provide access to the small storage room added on the north side of the Protestant nave and the partial basement excavated under the north end of the Catholic nave. The wood panel door for the Catholic nave basement has nine divided lights in the top half; the other door is solid.

- b. Windows: The typical windows are tall round arch openings with replacement metal frames and sash set directly into the brick wall with a moderate reveal. The replacement sash is twelve over twelve with a fixed fanlight above. Historic drawings show French windows with a two light fanlight above while decorative glass in a simple geometric pattern is visible

in early historic photos (see Figure 2). Later photographs appear to show simple French windows with plain glazing (Figure 3). Each opening has three courses of header brick outlining the arch and a tall, sloped limestone sill. The large round arch opening at the altars have been plastered over on the interior. On the exterior of the Catholic wing the wood sash and stained glass is still visible. The sash is divided by thick mullions into a central round arch section, sidelights, and two curved sections of upper arch lights. On the Protestant wing the sash has been boarded over except for upper arch lights, which still contain stained glass. There is a smaller variation on the typical round arch window located in the vestry wings.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The Chapel roof has two gables arranged at a ninety degree angle, with lower sections linking to the tower and at the altar ends, and additional lower cross gables at the vestry wings. Each gable end has a peaked brick parapet with limestone coping. The roofs are sheathed with slate shingles and copper flashing. Original plans show some tin sheathing at the top of the tower, and the inner section of the tower connector. The small shed roof addition on the north side of the Protestant wing has a standing seam copper roof.
- b. Eaves: The Chapel has wide overhanging eaves and exposed notched rafters characteristic of Mission style architecture. Thick decorative wood brackets with scrolled edges project from the wall below the eaves. A decorative cross beam is located at each bracket and joins it with the eave support beam above. Copper gutters hang on the outer edge of the eaves and connect to copper downspouts and cast iron drainpipes.
- c. Tower: The large square bell tower at the southeast corner of the Chapel rises from grade up three levels to a open platform covered by a pyramidal roof. Except for the entrance porch and a pair of thin round arch windows on the east façade, the lower section of the tower is largely unornamented. A shallow recess of the center third of the walls creates the appearance of thick piers at each corner, rising to corbels at the wood cornice below the open platform. Just below the cornice there is an identical oculus window on each elevation. These round openings are outlined with three projecting courses of header brick and accented with four equally spaced limestone blocks. The wood sash has thick muntins in the shape of a *cross formée* with flared arms and an open circle at the center. These muntins also stretch diagonally from each side of the *cross formée* to divide the window into four lights.

The tall wood cornice at the tower platform includes a plain frieze, only ornamented by raised rectangles within the recesses on each elevation. Flared molding above the frieze features two thick dentils below each corner. A curved cap, covered with sheet metal, on the top edge of the cornice helps

shed water. The brick corner piers supporting the pyramidal roof sit here on limestone bases and are topped with limestone capitals. A recessed round arch between each set of piers is outlined in three courses of header brick. The pyramidal roof has wide eaves with exposed rafters. A thick scrolled bracket projects from each corner pier to support the eaves. The remains of a cross finial (damaged in the April 2011 tornado) sit at the roof peak. A brass bell (see below) hangs on a metal wheel swinging apparatus mounted on a heavy wood frame at the center of the open platform. The scuttle hatch for access from below is located at the northeast corner and a galvanized ventilation shaft penetrates the platform floor at the northwest corner.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The Chapel consists of two nearly identical wings joined at a ninety degree angle at the shared bell tower. The east/west wing was designated for Protestant worship and the north/south wing for Roman Catholic. Each altar is flanked by small vestry rooms with doorways leading to the exterior and/or the sanctuary. Each sanctuary has a small narthex or foyer located in the tower connections and a loft. The vestibule at the base of the tower provides access to the Protestant foyer. The partial basement under the tower and the south end of the Catholic wing is divided into three spaces.
2. Stairways: There is a wood winder stair rising counterclockwise along the tower walls starting at the northeast corner. The stair has a short tread return and square post balustrade. The underside of the carriage is sheathed with beadboard. A landing provides access to the choir loft before proceeding to the upper level. The stair is supported by a decorative wood bracket. A ladder provides access from the upper level to the tower platform through a scuttle; the current aluminum ladder is a replacement for a wall mounted ladder.

Another narrow wood winder stair is located at the inner junction of the two wings and leads from the first floor to the partial basement. It has a short tread return and simple square post balustrade with newel posts. The square newel on the upper landing has a drop with a square cap. A beadboard partition encloses the area under the stair in the basement. The same staircase continues from the first floor landing to the Catholic loft.

The altar/vestry area at the end of each nave is raised a few steps.

3. Flooring: The tower vestibule has a tan brick herringbone pattern floor outlined with red brick. The sanctuaries and choir lofts have wood floors. On the Protestant side, the bathroom has a terrazzo floor and the study has vinyl tile. The basement floor is concrete.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The foyers and naves have plaster walls with low painted wood wainscot and high baseboards. A round arch niche frames the loft at the rear of each nave. The ceiling of each loft and altar areas is a plastered barrel vault. The nave ceilings have exposed wood trusses, rafters, and roof decking. Six trusses are visible in each nave, each with a sawn decorative bracket under the bottom corners. The undersides of the lofts are sheathed with beadboard. The interior walls of the tower vestibule are red brick. A drop ceiling was added at the tower stairway landing.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and Doors: Interior doorways include two-leaf openings between the foyers and naves and one-leaf openings at the vestry rooms, lofts, and between the Catholic foyer and winder stair. The doors have been removed from the wide opening between the tower vestibule and the Protestant foyer. The typical door is heavy wood with raised panels in a Latin cross with circle pattern. The two-leaf doors between the foyer and sanctuary have Blount auto closing mechanisms. Another door is located at west side of the Catholic entrance foyer, leading to the winder stair and then the Protestant entrance foyer. The doors to the lofts have two trimmed recessed panels of unequal size (larger on bottom). Typical door trim throughout is wide wood molding with mitred corners and a thick bead of trim on the outer and inner edges.
 - b. Windows: Although the windows have been replaced, the interiors windows in the vestibule and offices have wide wood molding with a thick bead on the outer edge and mitred corners. In the sanctuaries the windows are set directly into the masonry wall with a wide, sloped bottom sill formed by the wall surface. There is a small window in the south wall of the Protestant loft. The altar windows are no longer visible from the interior.
 - c. Skylight: There is a small skylight above the stairwell to the Catholic choir loft with a glazed cover divided by thick wood muntins. The inner skylight well is sheathed with beadboard.
6. Decorative features and trim: The lofts have a curved wood balustrade around the outer edge with two square posts with recessed panels. The projecting loft base is supported by two large and two small sawn wood brackets. These wide brackets are formed from numerous thin boards fastened together, as are the brackets at the ceiling trusses.
7. Hardware: Early fire hose hanging brackets appear in several locations, including the Protestant loft and in the stairwell outside the Catholic loft. The exterior doors have large pin hinges visible from the exterior. Round plain metal knobs

with rectangular escutcheons appear on door interior, often with a latch bolt above the knob. The doors at the loft end of the Protestant nave have spring loaded door stops marked with a patent date of August 5, 1890.

8. Mechanical equipment:

- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: A heat exchanger for the central steam system is located in the center basement space. This space also contains more recent HVAC equipment and ductwork. A patented “The Kinetic Blower” from the Kinetic Engineering Co., Philadelphia, PA (Chicago, New York, Boston) and electric motor is located under the basement winder stair and connected to round ducts. A metal plate specifies the patent dates as May 7, May 28, and June 4, 1907 and March 16, 1916. There is a large square galvanized duct running along the northwest corner of the tower and venting at the tower platform. There are three wall mounted radiators in the tower on the north wall.
- b. Lighting: The Chapel retains many historic bronze lantern ceiling fixtures and wall sconces with pointed arch filigree, quatrefoil motifs, and crown-like scalloped edges.
- c. Plumbing: Small water closets are located in one of the vestry wing rooms in each wing. The Catholic wing has two additional recent bathroom additions. There is a vitreous china utility sink located in the basement.
- d. Organs: The Protestant organ fills the rear wall of the altar apse. The wood organ case has round arch and quatrefoil motifs. While the wood case looks original, the keyboard and controls appear to be 1960s replacements. The manufacturer name “ALLEN” is located on a metal plate over the keyboard. The Catholic organ is located in the loft. One enters the loft behind the organ case and passes through a door in the case to access the controls at the front of the loft. This organ case is plainer, but similar to the one in the Protestant sanctuary. The works and controls appear to be older than the Protestant organs, but not original. Handwritten inside the case is the note “Major J. O. Donnelly, c/o Catholic Chaplain, NHDVS, Johnson City, Tenn., #3356.”
- e. Bell: A large brass bell in a movable swinging metal frame is mounted on a wood beam frame in the open platform at the top of the tower. The bell pull was intended to hang down through the floor into the tower. The bell and its hanging frame were cast by Henry McShane Manufacturing Co., Baltimore, Maryland in 1908.

D. Site:

1. Historic landscape design: The Chapel occupied a prominent location on the secondary axis of the Mountain Home campus. It is situated next to the theater and adjacent to the cemetery. The ground slopes down to the north toward the cemetery, exposed a large section on foundation on the rear elevation. Two noteworthy features were added to the chapel grounds after construction. A double metal frame box sign is labeled Protestant Chapel and Catholic Chapel on each respective half. The gable top of each sign has a small Latin cross inscribed above the chapel name. The glass covered boxes provided a weather proof place for posting announcements about services and other programs. A bronze plaque with the text of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is mounted on a tilted metal base a short distance from the chapel tower towards the theater. These plaques were installed at National Cemeteries throughout the country after the fiftieth anniversary in 1913. It is unknown whether this plaque was originally installed at this location or moved later.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings:

- A copy of Freedlander's original plan of the Mountain Branch chapel, dated May 4, 1904, is available in the PLIARS database administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office (VACO), Washington, D.C..
- Original plans, elevations, and sections of the chapel were published in *The Architectural Review* 13, no. 10 (October 1906): plates 64-67. These include overall plans, elevations, and sections dated May 4, 1904 and elevations and sections of the bell tower and other details, dated June 6, 1904.
- Later drawings indicating changes over time are also housed in the PLIARS database at the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office (VACO):
 - “As Built” Plans, August 31, 1953.
 - Elevations, September 17, 1975.

B. Early Views:

- One exterior and one interior photograph (and a small floor plan) were published in *The Architectural Review* 12, no. 10 (October 1905): 256.
- An exterior photograph of the “double chapel” was published in “Soldiers’ Home in Tennessee: A Noteworthy Example of a Group of Buildings Planned as a Whole,” *The Craftsman* 11, no. 3 (December 1906): 349.
- Exterior photographs of the Chapel, already with ivy covered walls, appear in several published souvenir books. See:

- Martin V. Brady, *Picturesque Mountain Branch National Soldiers' Home Tennessee*. Johnson City: Martin V. Brady, 1908.
- Charles Edwards, *Souvenir Book: National Military Home, Tennessee*. Johnson City: Charles Edwards, 1909.
- *Souvenir Book, National Soldiers Home*, Johnson City, TN: Muse-Whitlock Co., Printers, c. 1911.
- Lester Harris Post No. 98, American Legion. *The National Sanatorium*. Lester Harris Post No. 98, c. 1922.

C. Selected Bibliography:

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Johnson City, Tennessee -

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Drawing Files, Planning and Design Office, Quillen VAMC.

Microforms and Periodicals, Sherrod Library, East Tennessee State University [Johnson City newspapers].

Washington, D.C.-

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Published Sources and Reports –

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Julin, Suzanne. “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, D.C..

Schuyler, Montgomery. “Fortunate Treatment of a Group of Institutional Buildings: The

National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers,” *Architectural Record* 30, no. 2 (August 1911), 136-150.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation of the Chapel (Building No. 13) at the Mountain 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 planning was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS; by Douglas Pulak, Deputy Federal Preservation Officer, DVA; and by Kevin Milliken, Assistant Chief, Engineering Service, James H. Quillen Veterans Affairs Medical Center (QVAMC). The field work was undertaken and the measured drawings were produced by Project Supervisor Mark Schara AIA, HABS Architect; by HABS Architects Paul Davidson, Daniel De Sousa, and Jason McNatt; and by Architecture Technician Michael Ellingson (Hampton University). The historical report was written by HABS Historian Lisa P. Davidson. The large format photography was undertaken in 2008 by HABS Photographer James W. Rosenthal. Assistance was provided by Martha Whaley, Museum at Mountain Home, Quillen College of Medicine, East Tennessee State University; Aaron Prozak, Engineering Technician, QVAMC; and by the QVAMC facilities maintenance staff.

PART V. ILLUSTRATIONS

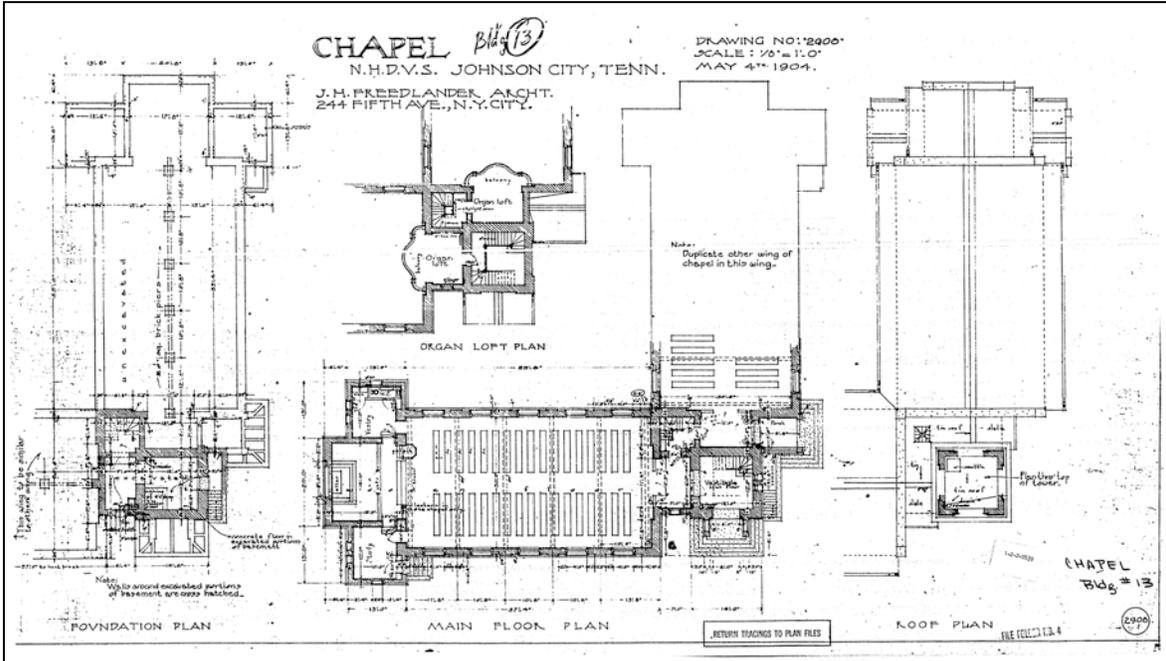


Figure 1: Mountain Branch Chapel Plans, (4 May 1904)
Source: PLIARS database, VACO

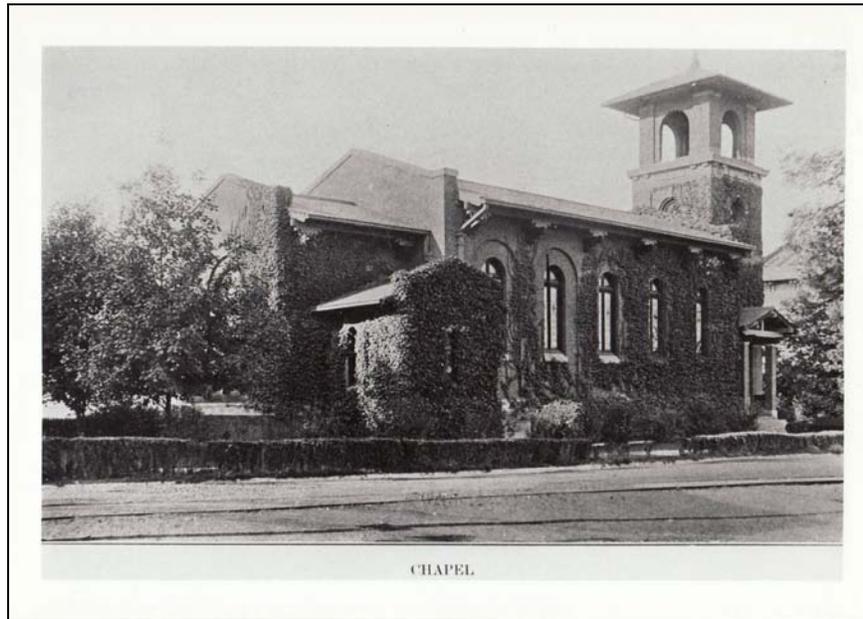


Figure 2: Mountain Branch Chapel, c. 1922
Source: Museum at Mountain Home



Figure 3: Mountain Branch Chapel, date unknown.
Source: Museum at Mountain Home