

NATIONAL HOME FOR DISABLED VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS -
MARION BRANCH, BUILDING NO. 42
(Supply Service Building)
1700 East 38th Street
Marion
Grant County
Indiana

HABS IN-306-AM
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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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Location: 1700 East 38th Street, Marion, Grant County, Indiana. Building No. 42 faces northeast towards Orchard Avenue. Building No. 42 is also south/southeast of the main entrance gate on 38th Street.

The coordinates for Building No. 42 are 40.518794 N, -85.635277 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. 42 was built in 1907 as a mess hall for the non-commissioned officers and clerks at the Marion Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS).

Description: Building No. 42 is a two-story red brick building with a hipped roof and a one-story hipped roof ell located at the rear. This modest structure is domestic in scale and resembles foursquare dwellings of the period. It has a one-story hipped roof porch across the first floor on the front elevation with a small second floor porch just at the center bay. In addition there is a porch at the south elevation of the rear ell and a small side entrance porch on the east elevation.

The interior of Building No. 42 generally had one large room on each floor of the main block with the straight run of stairs rising from the southeast corner of the main block towards the north side of the building. The rear ell was divided into three rooms including a bathroom. In 1936 Building No. 42 was being used as a duplex quarters, suggesting that interior partitions were added for this use. Floor plans drawn in 1958 and revised in 1966 show additional interior walls for office use (Figure 1). The existing interior finishes such as commercial grade carpet, acoustic tile drop ceilings, and faux wood paneling probably date to this period.

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. Congressman George Steele of the 11th Indiana Congressional District successfully promoted the creation of this Branch in Grant County with the promise of an on-site natural gas well for free heating and lighting. 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. By 1930 the NHDVS system had eleven branches and became part of the new Veterans Administration.

Documentary evidence suggests that Building No. 42 was built as a noncommissioned officers' and clerks' mess in 1907. The Marion Branch *Annual Report* for 1906 noted that "it is altogether desirable that what is known as the clerks' mess should be removed from the basement of barracks no. 1, from whence the stench of cooking goes through the barrack, and is not agreeable."¹ An inspection report shortly after stated that a noncommissioned officers' and clerks' mess building had been constructed using special appropriations.² No further description of this structure has been located. However Sanborn Fire Insurance maps in January 1920 and 1931 label Building No. 42 as "officers' mess".

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. After 1930 the Marion Branch continued to specialize in psychiatric care as part of the Veterans Administration. By 1933, Building No. 42 was designated a quarters. By 1958, Building No. 42 had been converted into offices for the supply department. It continued to be the "Supply Services Building" through the 1980s. Plans were made in 1987 for renovations and an addition to the rear, but these were never executed. The structure is now part of Marion Campus of the VA Northern Indiana Health Care System. It is currently vacant and 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).

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

Historian: Lisa Pfueller Davidson, HABS Historian, 2011

¹ 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, 1906* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1907), 242.

² Inspector-General's Office, *Inspection Report – National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1908), 42.

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:

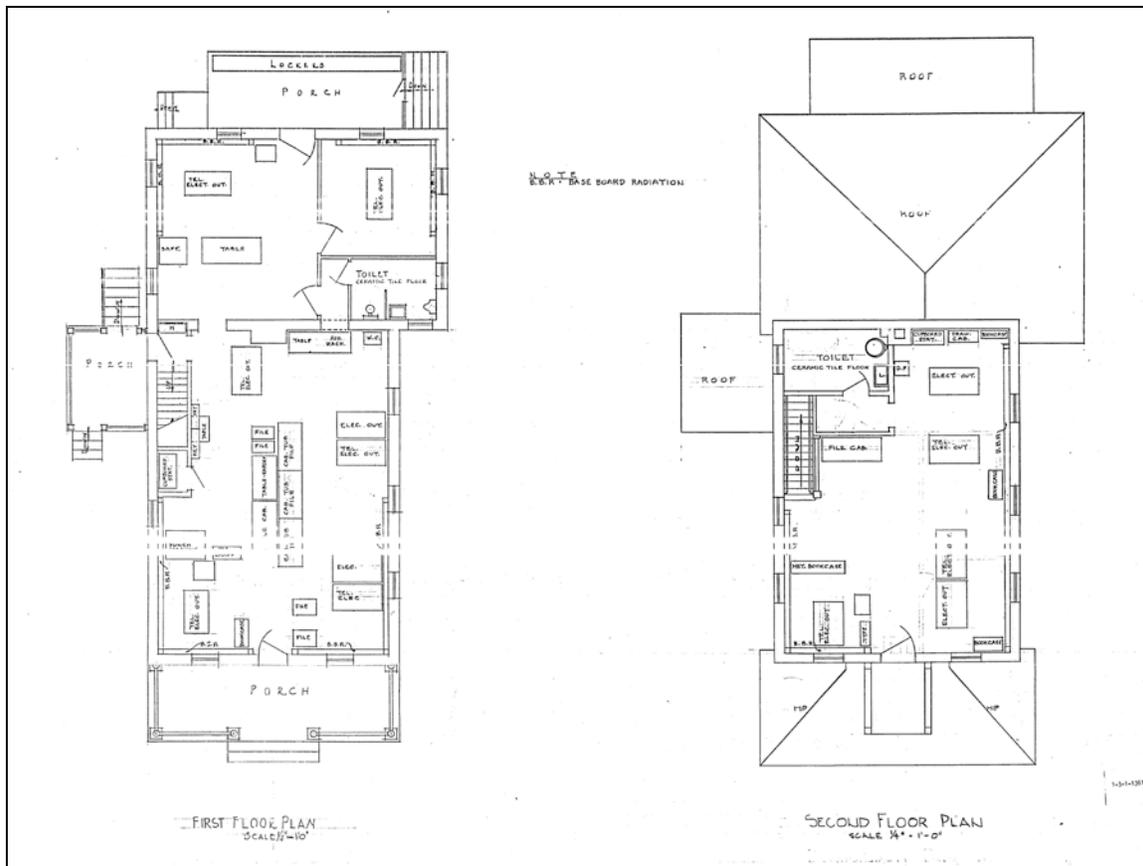


Figure 1: Plan of Building No. 42, Supply Services Building,
(16 November 1958, last revised 19 July 1966)
Source: PLIARS database, VACO