

Fort Riley,
Building # 16
16 Forsythe Avenue
Fort Riley
Riley County
Kansas

HABS No. KS-54-G

HABS
KANS
81-FORIL,
2-G-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HABS
KANS,
81-FORIL,
2-G-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. KS-54-G

FORT RILEY, BUILDING # 16

- Location: 16 Forsyth Avenue, Fort Riley, Riley County, Kansas
- Present Owner: U.S. Department of the Army
- Present Occupant: 16-A is temporarily vacant, 16-B is occupied by Lieutenant Colonel Henry E. Durarte
- Present Use: Double Family Officers Quarters
- Significance: Building # 16 is architectually similar to Buildings # 13, # 14, # 15, # 16, and # 17, on Forsyth Avenue, and to Buildings # 95, # 97, # 99, # 103, # 105, and # 106 on Schofield Circle. Built from 1889-1903, these double officer's quarters vary slightly only in ornamental woodwork and window detailing. Their rock-faced ashlar limestone walls contrast markedly with the smooth-faced walls of the fort's early, 1850's buildings. Building # 16, unlike many of its neighboring buildings, retains its ornamental wooden gable truss and small center gable end on its porch roof. It also is distinguished by rock-faced segmental arch lintels with keystones.

Historically, Building # 16 was constructed during a boom period in the fort's growth following the establishment of the school for the cavalry and light artillery in 1886. All the buildings on Forsyth Avenue were erected for field officers who taught at the school. Local contractors and laborers, many of whom lived in Junction City, erected the buildings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The date 1893 is given in the Real Property Cards and the Engineer's Historic Record Book, both in the Directorate of Engineering and Housing (D.E.H.), Fort Riley, Kansas.
2. Architect: William Goding, who arrived at Fort Riley in April of 1887, worked with Capt. George E. Pond, the constructing quartermaster at Fort Riley, and drew plans for all quarters except those on Sheridan Avenue and the 1887 quarters on Forsyth Avenue. Pond, Goding, and a civil engineer named W.H. Stair planned and supervised Fort Riley's expansion during the 1880's (Junction City Union, July 4, 1891). He designed a plan in 1890

which included all present quarters on Forsyth and Barry Avenues, several of which were constructed after he left in 1891. Washington army officials sent Pond, who worked independently of all local commanders to the post to oversee the construction of new buildings.

3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Department of War, since 1947 known as the Department of the Army.
4. Builders, contractors: Building # 16 was built of stone quarried locally, (See Davis and Geary County, Clippings, Vol. 2, 1883-1896, p. 170, Kansas State Historical Society). One source indicates the six double officers quarters "have been ordered built. Two are to be built on the 'avenue' in the cavalry, and one in the artillery post. This will give employment for many local men." (Junction City Union, Sept. 9, 1893, p. 3) Construction was supervised by Quartermaster, Capt. Miller. The construction contract was granted to builders John Oberg, John Holmgreen, H.J. Pratt, and C.E. Bently. (See the Junction City Union, Oct. 14, 1893, p. 3).
5. Original plans and construction: The original plans of the building may be located in Record Group 92 at the National Archives, Washington, D.C. Copies of the original plans are available at D.E.H. and include a longitudinal section and floor plans for the first and second floors. Also included are front and side elevation drawings (see Supplemental Materials # 1 & # 2). Updated floor plans of the building at D.E.H. include proposed alterations dated June 1930, February 1937, May 1945, and June 1948. A photograph at the Fort Riley Cavalry Museum shows buildings along Forsythe Avenue nearly completed, awaiting finishing touches (see Supplemental Material # 3).
6. Alterations and additions: Plans for alterations and additions are available at D.E.H. In February, 1937 proposals for removing a bathroom in the servant's room were submitted. In May of 1945 proposals were submitted to add a bathroom in the basement's laundry room, along with closets in the servant's room. In January of 1948 plans were drawn up to add closets in the front, second floor bedrooms and to remodel their bathrooms. These alterations are present today. Also, these plans included a complete remodeling of the kitchen and the addition of a half bath in the butler's pantry. The Engineer's Historical Record Book notes the installation of a garage in February of 1930. Finally, there are several alterations for which there is no documentation. The rear pantry was converted

into a kitchen nook, the old porch with rounded posts was replaced with the current squared post porch, and the slate roof, which covered the house during the 1930's according to a picture in the Engineer's Historical Record Book, has been replaced with composition shingles. Also, the window shutters have all been removed, and the rectangular rear frame entry was added. Finally, old decorative chimneys have been replaced.

- B. Historical Context: Building # 16 Forsyth Avenue was built in 1893 during the boom in construction at Fort Riley after the reservation became a school for the training of cavalry and light artillery enlisted men in 1886. Building # 16 is located on Forsyth Avenue and named after Col. James W. Forsyth who was instrumental in securing the congressional appropriation for the school. Constructed specifically for a cavalry "field officer," its residents over the years have included cavalry colonels, lieutenants, and majors.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Building # 16 is architecturally identical to Buildings # 9, # 10, # 13, # 14, # 15, # 17, and # 18, all of which are duplexes on Forsyth Avenue, constructed at various years from 1889-1903. Three photographs from the Pennell Collection show Building # 16, or one of those identical to it, dating from 1895-1897 (see Supplemental Materials # 4- # 6). They are made of rock-faced, machine-cut, ashlar limestone which was quarried locally. Their rock-faced, machine-cut walls contrast markedly with the smooth-faced, hand-cut walls that graced the early, 1850's buildings. Building # 16 is distinguished by its segmental rock-faced limestone arch lintels with keystone, its wooden arches below the lintels, and its decorative wooden truss in the facade gable and the small gable porch roof. Only two other buildings on the avenue currently have all these features.
2. Condition of fabric: The exterior is in excellent condition and there have been few alterations besides the addition of two limestone garages and new front and rear porches. While 16-B's interior has old moldings and old decorative hardware throughout, along with old built-in telephone niches and fireplaces, 16-A only has old moldings and fireplaces. In both halves there are new pine floors throughout and new linoleum floors in the kitchen. The bathrooms have tiled floors and have been completely remodeled.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Building # 16 has a two and a half story rectangular main block, three bays wide, a front facade four bays by one bay, and a rear wing, three bays by four bays.
2. Foundations: The foundation is rock-faced limestone and varies in thickness from eighteen inches under the porch to twenty-four inches under the house. The foundation piers rest on stone blocks which are two and half to three feet wide.
3. Wall construction: The unadorned exterior limestone walls are eighteen inches thick and are made of rock-faced, machine-cut, ashlar limestone. The partition walls are six inches thick.
4. Structural system and framing: The limestone walls are loadbearing and wooden joists and beams are supported by masonry walls. The first and second floors are ten inches thick while the attic floor is eight inches thick. The floors have a wooden truss frame. The 2" x 3" ceiling joists rest on 4" x 8" beams and are "hips and valley braced." There is a collar beam for rafters in front of the chimney.
5. Porches: Building # 16 has a U-shaped porch across the facade and down either side to the main block. The porch has a concrete floor supported by rock-faced limestone piers, framed ceilings, squared posts, and raised-seam tin shed roofs, cement steps, and wrought-iron handrails. It also has a small central frame pedimental gable (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-1, 2 & 3).
6. Chimneys: The west chimney is an interior, brick, corbelled chimney which serves either parlor. The north and south chimneys on the main block are the same, serving the reception and dining rooms. The chimneys are located above and slightly behind the dormers. Finally, old photos indicate that originally the chimneys had parallel indentations running their length and corbelling at the top. The current chimneys are post-World War II replacements.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Building # 16 has a frame entry vestibule on the north and south elevations of the facade with variegated woodwork (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-5). The "B" side has an old, wood four panel door with a single-light transom above. The "A" side has a plain, modern front door. To either side of the rear frame addition (north and south) is

an entrance and a wooden door with a screen. The basement door, located below the middle bay of the main block, has three horizontal panels and a three-light window and a plain lintel.

- b. Windows: The windows on the first floor all around and the second floor facade are two over two sash with a wooden arch above and a rock-faced sill. There are no shutters, but hardware is still visible. Gable end windows in the facade are two over two sash, slightly shorter, without an arch but with plain rock-faced limestone lintels (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-2). All second story windows, other than on the facade, are like the gable windows just described. To either side of the front wing there is a double window with a wooden arch and a rock-faced segmental arch with a keystone. In the frame vestibule there is a small one over one sash window (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-5). On either side of the main block, the west window is one over one sash with four-light sidelights, but with the same wooden arch and rock-faced limestone lintel with a keystone (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-3). Basement windows on the side elevation of the main block and facade are two over two sash with arched limestone lintels and limestone wells. Windows on the rear wing follow the same design as those on the main block only scaled down slightly, except on the first story where the west window is full size. The rear wing's second floor, four bays wide, has one over one sash windows with frame arches and segmental rock-faced limestone lintels without keystones. In the rear gable end are two quarter-round casement windows, side by side with rock-faced limestone segmental arches and a plain rock-faced limestone sill (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-4).

8. Roof:

- a. Shape and covering: There are low-pitched gable roofs on all four sections of Building # 16. Currently, the roof is composition shingles, though the Engineer's Historical Record Book indicates that the structure originally was covered with a slate roof.
- b. Cornice and eaves: The building has a plain raking return box cornice with a cyma reversa crown molding above a plain fascia. Plain eaves over-hang slightly all around the house. In the facade's gable end there is a decorative wooden truss made of one vertical and one horizontal board and a half-round frame arch that contains a wooden sunburst pattern (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-2).

- c. Dormers: At both side elevations of the main block is a three sided dormer with a pair of two over two sash windows (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-3).

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Building # 16 is a duplex. In 16-B one enters into a rectangular vestibule (4' x 7'6"). East, through a set of double doors, is the reception room (14'6" x 18'0") which opens to the west into the parlor (16' x 16") and to the east into the dining room (16' x 18'), through another set of sliding doors, (which do not exist in 16-A). To the east, the dining room opens into a small hall leading to the kitchen. To the north is a half bath, and to the south is a closet. East of the kitchen (14' x 16') is a kitchen nook (8' x 8'). South of the dining room is the back stair which leads to the basement and attic. The main stair opens into a second floor hallway. The second floor room layout follows that of the first floor. South of the stairs is the middle bedroom, (14' 4" x 14' 6"), over the reception room. Down the central hall to the west is the front bedroom (14'18" x 16') which opens to the south into a full bathroom. East, down the hallway, is the rear room (12'2" x 16'0"), located over the kitchen. The back stairway opens into the unfinished attic space. to the west is a servant's room (no dimensions available). The remainder of the attic is open, storage space. In the basement the back stair opens in into a boiler room to the south, to the west is an unfinished room, while to the east is a laundry room with a partition running down the middle (east to west). The plan for 16-A is the reverse.
2. Stairways: Building # 16 has two open stairways, a main front stair and a back stair. The front stair is a triple flight with the back stair going from the attic to the basement. Both have a square fluted wooden (ash) newel post resting on a square block with a round bull's eye pattern near the top, and a short curved pyramidal newel cap. The newel cap and the handrail are painted white. The front balustrade is turned while the rear one is squared. The front (butternut) stairway has a rounded first step, and a one step flight at its second landing. Around the front stairway, across the ceiling and down the side walls, is a decorative, beveled (yellow pine) beam with three connecting squared, beveled posts. There are ogee wooden brackets, decorated with a central sunburst pattern at the corners (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-7).
3. Flooring: Building # 16 has all new yellow pine narrow-width flooring, except for the linoleum kitchen floors, the tile bathroom floors, and the concrete basement floor.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls and ceilings are plastered and painted white, with no decorative features except for a picture molding (about sixteen inches below the ceiling) in all rooms other than the kitchen and bathrooms.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Building # 16 has fluted moldings with rounded edges around doors and windows and corner bull's eye patterns. The surrounds are painted white (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-6). The "B" side has an original front four-panel door with an old door bell in the center. The original wooden double-doors into the reception room survive, with two panels below and one light above, with an etched glass operable transom (see HABS photo # KS-54-G-8). The "A" side has post-World War II doors and no central transom in the vestibule.
 - b. Windows: Building # 16's first floor windows have the same moldings around the windows as around the doorways. All have broad flat plain sills with parallel groove molding below. The "A" side's vestibule window has plain broad molding and a narrow sill. All second floor windows begin about three feet above the floor and have the same sills and moldings but lack a corner bull's eye pattern. The rear servant's bedroom has no window moldings.
6. Decorative features and trim: Building # 16 has baseboards in all rooms. The "A" side has post-World War II plain flat boards about five inches high, with ovolo moldings at the base. The "B" side's baseboards are original and are about eight inches high with a flat board sandwiched between a ovolo molding at the floor and a round molding with two parallel grooves at the top. This baseboard appears in all first floor rooms except the kitchen and bath. Second floor baseboards are stepped at the bottom with an ovolo molding against the floor and three parallel squared grooves at the top. The "A" side has modern flat plain boards on the second floor. In all rooms but the kitchen and bath there is a picture molding about sixteen inches from the ceiling. In 16-B the second floor back stairs to the attic have two rounded corner board moldings on the wall's edge. Also in 16-B there is a telephone niche on the first and second floors opposite the main stairway on the east wall. The reception room fireplace for 16-A has a plain board architrave mantel and the tile below has been plastered over. The opening has a brass border, a limestone fireback, and a concrete hearth. The parlor fireplace has a plain, clear-varnished hard-wood mantel supported on either side

by posts with decorative repeating, round rings. Below the mantel is a three-panel wood carving and in the square center is a diamond shape pattern of diagonal lines with dots at the points of intersection. The opening has the same brass boarder, back, and hearth. The dining room fireplace has a wide flat mantel with rounded edge, supported by wooden brackets and squared, pilasters with a centered fluted pattern that runs through the brackets. There is a square molding above the mantel and against the wall. Below the mantel there are horizontal grooves with one circular medallion with a sunburst pattern on the north side (the southwest medallion is missing). In 16-B the reception room fireplace has glazed red tile, the dining room fireplace has both medallions and in the top two corners there are greek heads in purple glazed square tile. The parlor fireplace has been remodeled with the addition of an square box mantel shelf which covers the area between the opening and the mantel.

7. Hardware: Building 16-B has brass doorknobs, plates, hinges, and door locks, all with decorative scroll patterns throughout. Its front door has a round doorbell, and there are pre-1900 old window locks in the vestibule. In 16-A the hardware is modern post-World War II. Both sides have operable transoms above the bedroom doors, but 16-B also has a wide, operable transom over the vestibule's doors. In the basement of 16-A there is a clawed foot tub in the cellar.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating : Building # 16 is steam heated by radiators located in each room. The "A" side has plain radiators, while the "B" side has decorative radiators. Steam heating was introduced to Fort Riley in 1889. The steam system included a battery of seven boilers and a pump-room, and it served eighty-three buildings, and consumed sixteen to twenty-five tons of coal each day. Later, around the turn of the century, this system was abandoned and all the buildings were equipped with individual boilers ("The Cavalry Post at Fort Riley," p. 118).
 - b. Lighting: Electrical lights were introduced to Fort Riley around 1903 to 1904. In 1903, the Electric Railway, Light and Ice company of Junction City was contracted by the army to provide current for the fort's buildings. The army laid wires under the ground and the quarters and barracks were lit with a total of 6,000 incandescent lamps. (Junction City Union, January 30, May 1, 1903).

D. Site:

Building # 16 is located on tree-lined Forsyth Avenue which is a flat straight street that runs north to south from the Cavalry Parade Field to the commanding officer's quarters. These houses along the street face each other. The street resembles a suburban neighborhood with extensive lawns shade trees, and decorative flower beds. The uniformity of the residences in design, color, and ornamentation, and their lack of physical alteration suggests the controlled influence of the military nature of the avenue. The small rear street that functions as a service road for garage collection and garage access also helps allow Forsyth Avenue to maintain its neat and orderly appearance. Forsyth Avenue was not part of the fort's original plan, drawn up in the 1850s. This plan only included the cavalry parade surrounded in a square pattern by the six original quarters. The new street required the army to raze the middle set of officers quarters on the cavalry parade's north side. The building of Forsyth Avenue, begun in 1887, symbolizes the fort's physical expansion in the late-nineteenth century (see Supplemental Material # 6).

PART II: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural Drawings: Copies of the original plans are available at the DEH Office, Fort Riley, Kansas, and include a longitudinal section drawing and plans for the first and second floors. Updated floor plans of the building at DEH contain proposed alterations dated June 1930, February, May 1945, and June 1948. These plans include bathroom and kitchen modernizations and roof repairs.
- B. Early Views:
1. Photograph of 16 Forsyth Avenue ca. 1893 at the U.S. Cavalry Museum, Fort Riley.
 2. Photograph, ca. 1930 in the Engineer's Historical Record Book, DEH.
 3. Photograph of Forsyth Avenue, Pennell Collection, Spencer Library, University of Kansas. This photo is a streetscape of Forsyth Avenue.
- C. Bibliography:
1. Primary and unpublished sources:
 - a. Engineer's Historical Record Book and Real Property Cards, DEH.
 - b. Junction City Union, bound copies at the Geary County Museum, micro-film copies at the Junction City Public Library.

2. Secondary and published sources:

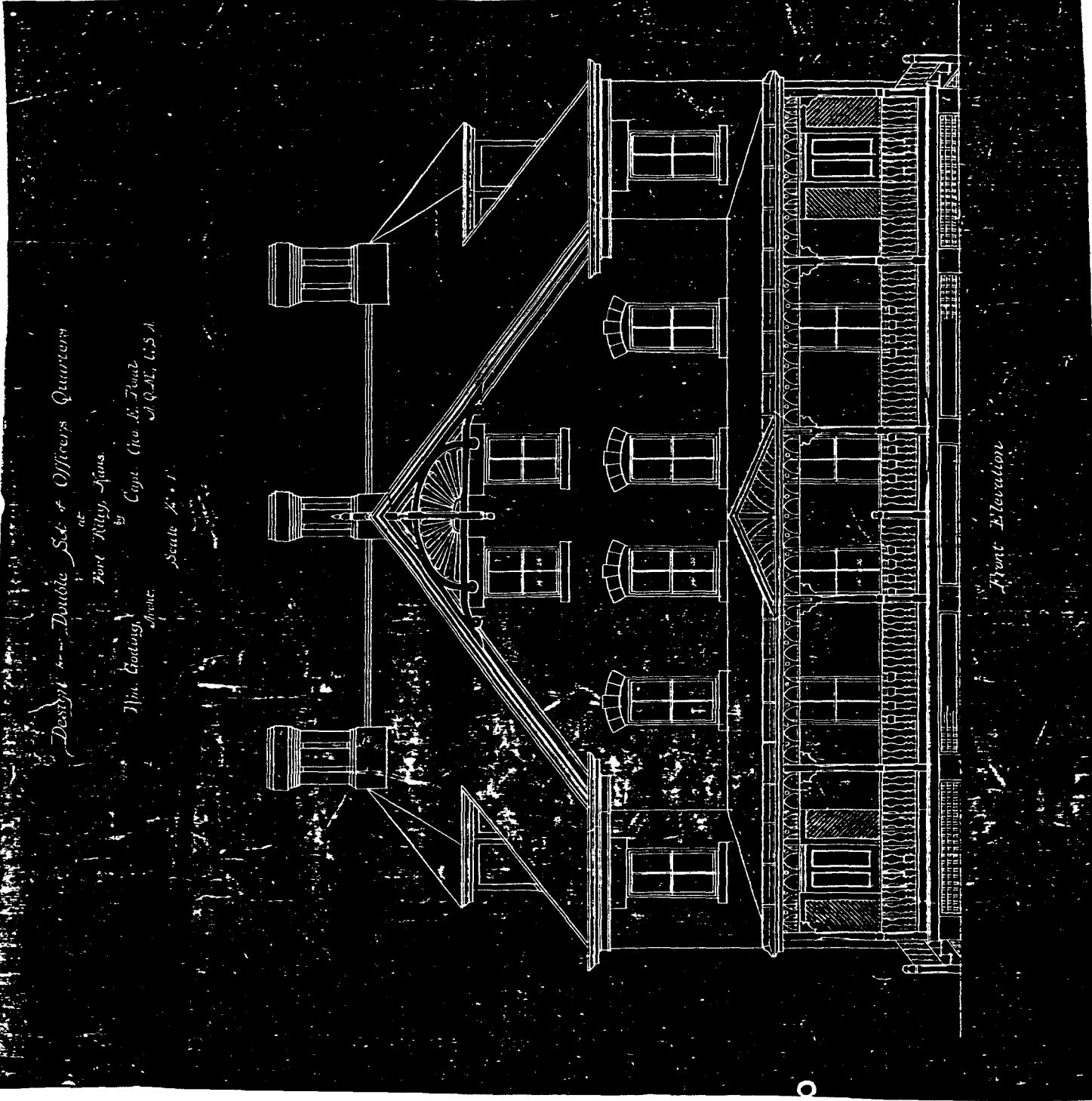
- a. "The Cavalry Post at Fort Riley," Journal of the United States Cavalry Association, Vol. 13, 1902-1903, pp. 118-128.
- b. Cyril M. Harris, ed. Dictionary of Architecture and Construction, New York, 1975.
- c. ----- . Historic Architecture Sourcebook, New York, 1977.
- d. W.F. Pride, The History of Fort Riley, 1926.

Prepared by:

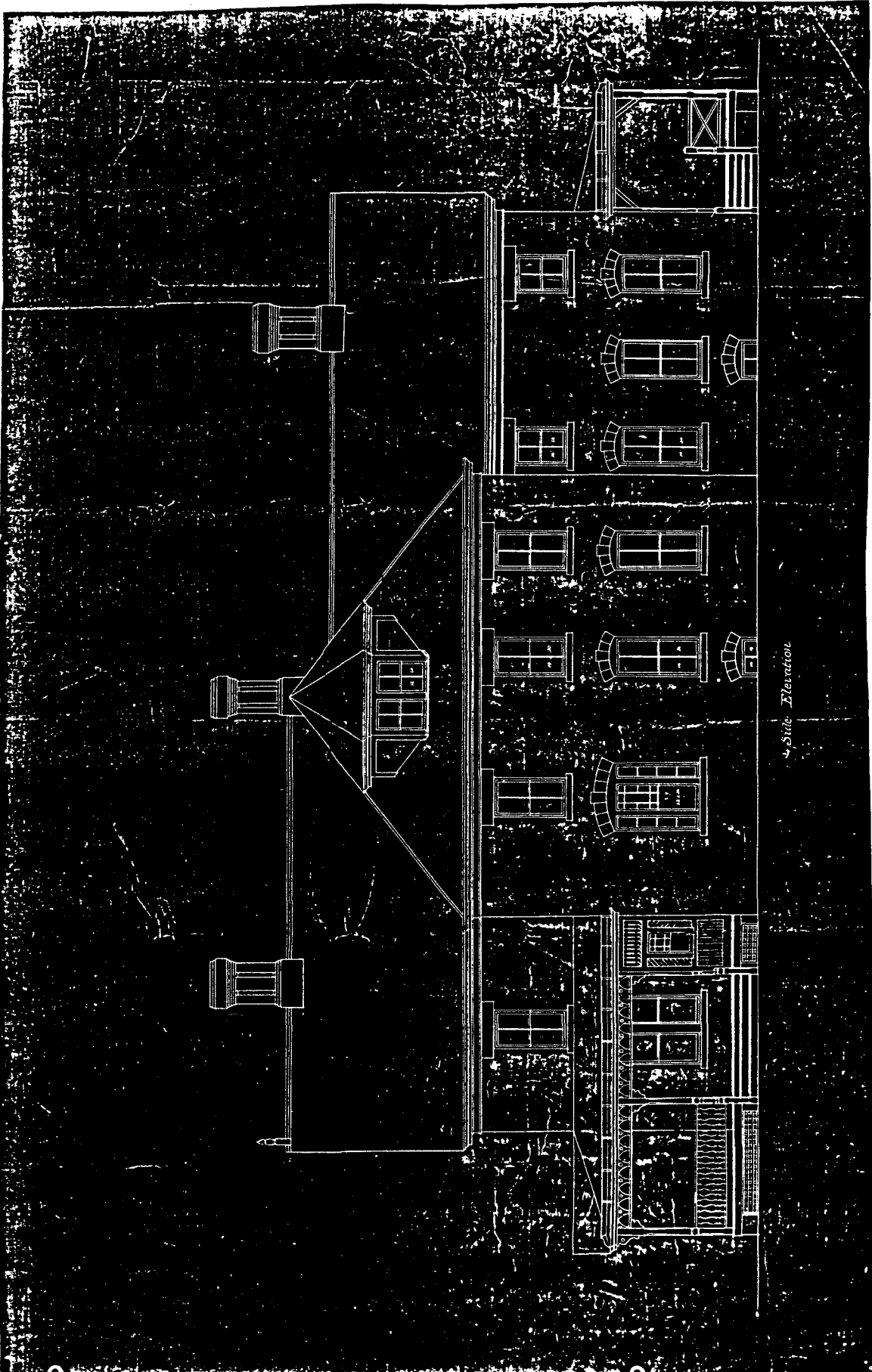
Joseph Rodriguez
Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
Summer, 1985

2790

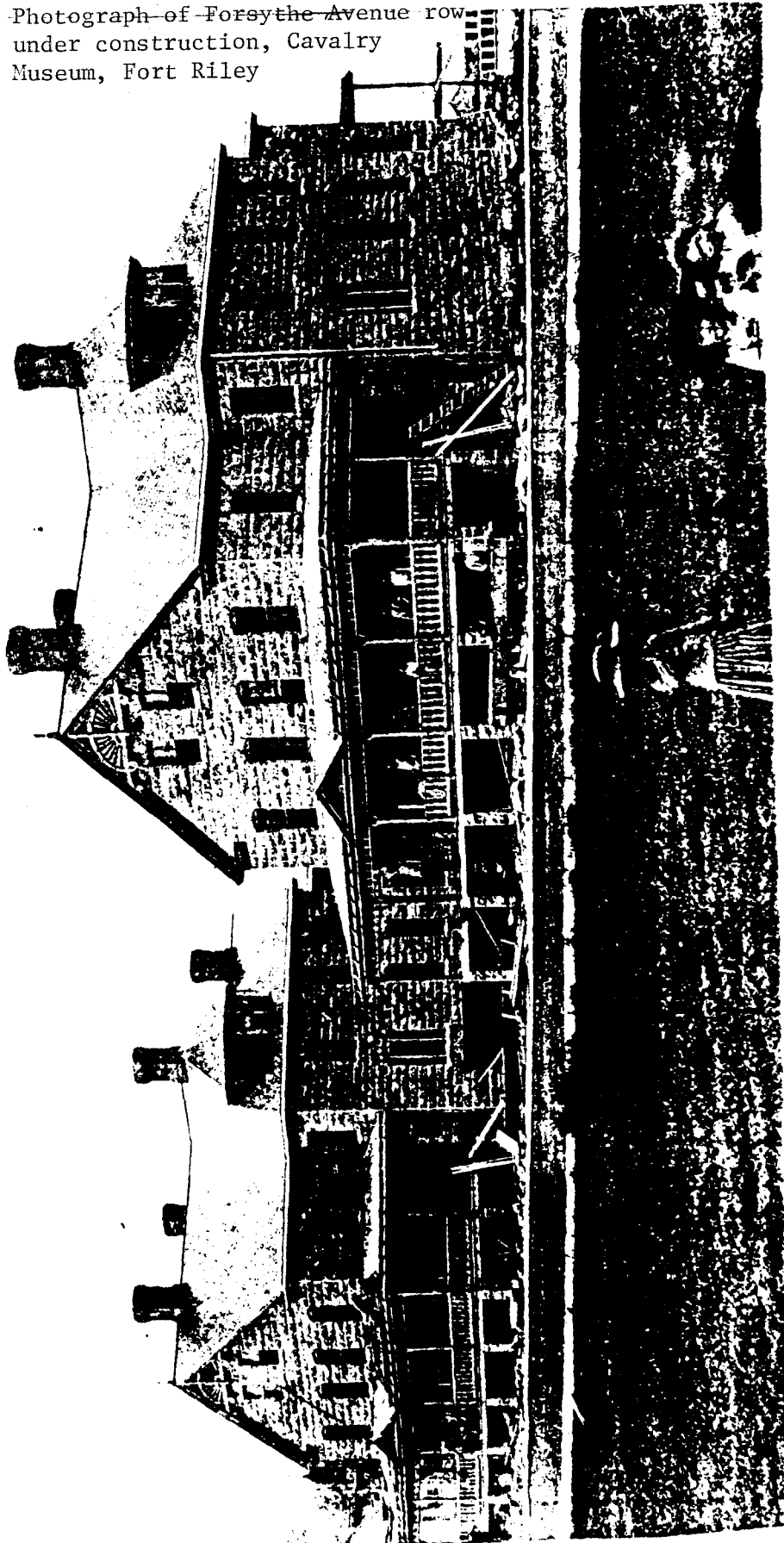
D. Supplemental Materials
1. Front elevation



2. Side elevation



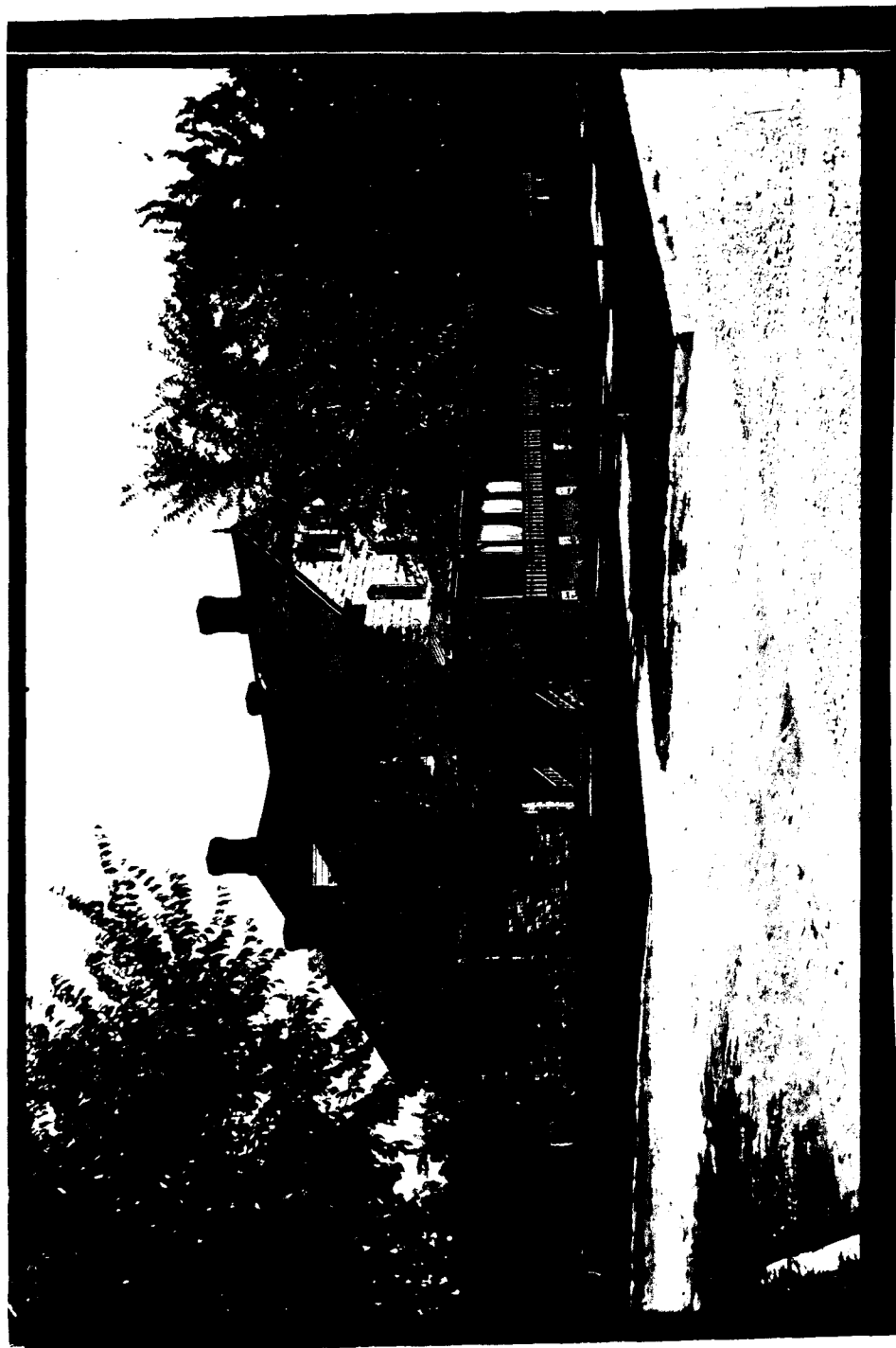
3. Photograph of Forsythe Avenue row
under construction, Cavalry
Museum, Fort Riley



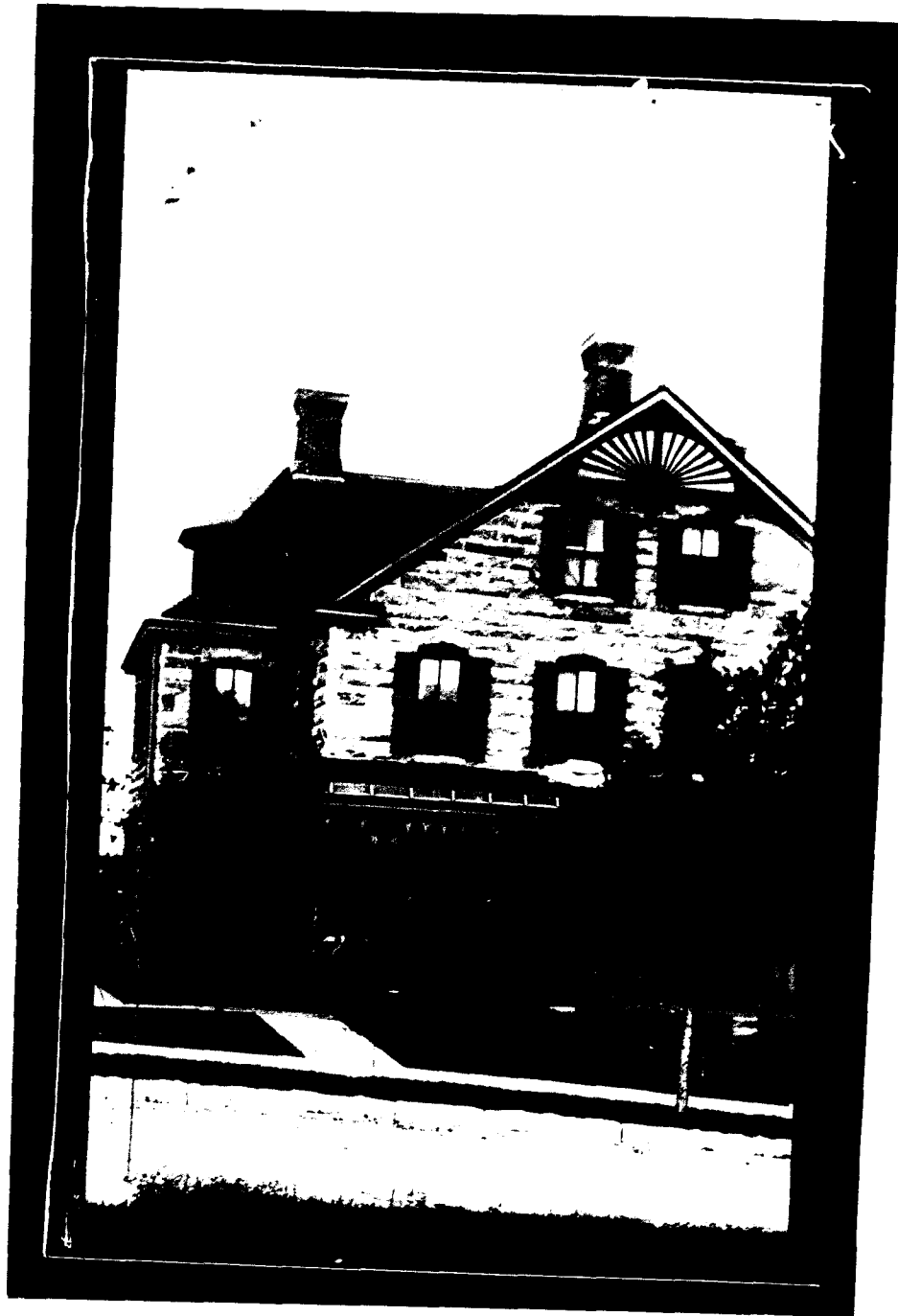
4. Pennell Photograph, "East Side
Forsythe Place" Fort Riley, 1895



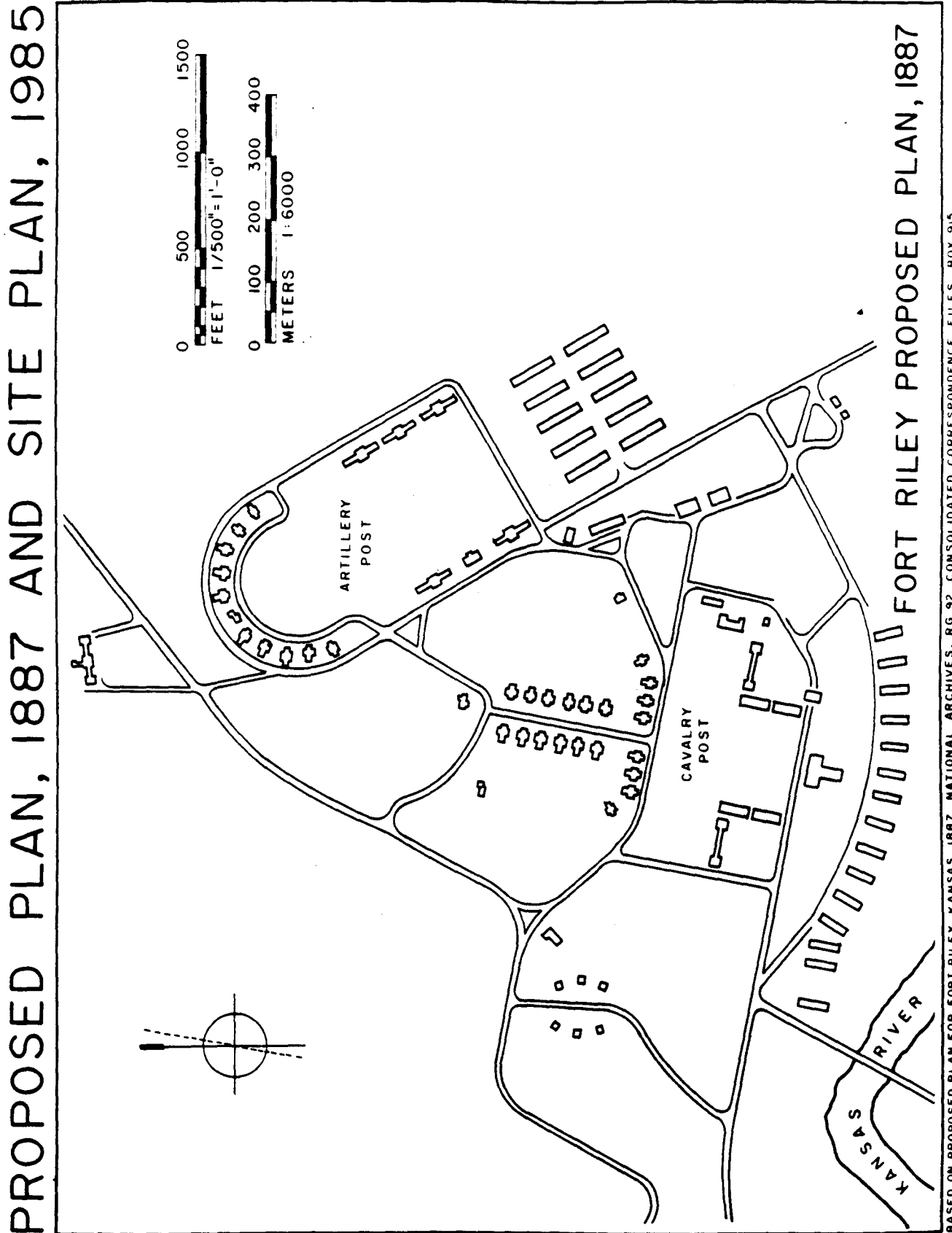
5. Pennell Photograph, "Kingsbury House," 1897



6. Pennell Photograph, "Capt. Grimes House," 1895



7. Fort Riley, Proposed Plan, 1887



BASED ON PROPOSED PLAN FOR FORT RILEY, KANSAS, 1887. NATIONAL ARCHIVES, RG 92, CONSOLIDATED CORRESPONDENCE FILES, BOX 915.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the National Park Service in agreement with the post commander of Fort Riley, Kansas and the headquarters of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, D.C. The project was completed under the general supervision of Robert J. Kapsch, Chief of the HABS/HAER Division. Sally Kress Tompkins served as Program Coordinator and Robie S. Lange as Project Leader. The field Supervisor was James A. Glass (historian, Cornell University). The project historians were Catherine Crawford (University of Maryland) and Joseph Ridriquez (University of California).