

Fort Sam Houston National Historic Landmark
Officer's Quarters (Building #109, Artillery Post)
San Antonio
Bexar County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3303-17

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Architectural and Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
FORT SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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OFFICER'S QUARTERS
(Building #109, Artillery Post)

HABS No. TX-3303-17

Location: 109 Artillery Post Road, Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio,
Bexar County, Texas

Present Owner
and Occupant: United States Army

Present Use: Officer's Quarters

Significance: This two-and-one-half story, buff brick residence is a good example of officer housing provided on Post during the first decade of the twentieth century. Built in 1905 from standardized plans issued by the Office of the Quartermaster General, it is one of three similar plans used for officer housing at the Cavalry and Light Artillery addition to the Post. The house is virtually unchanged from its original appearance.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: 1905
2. Architect: Office of the Quartermaster General; Plan #164.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: U.S. Army from date of construction to the present.
4. Contractor: Unknown
5. Original Plan and Construction: Quarters #109 is a two-and-one-half story, three-bay by three-bay, buff-brick structure with a rear, one-story kitchen/servants-quarter wing. There is an intersecting gable roof with gray slate shingles on the main two-and-one-half story block. The rear wing has a slate-covered gable roof with the ridge running north-south. A two-tier front porch, ten feet wide with classical detailing, wraps around the south side of the main two-and-one-half story portion, continuing as a one-story porch along the rear one-story wing. The cost of the original construction was \$11,582.94.

6. Alterations and Additions: Only minor changes have been made on both the interior and exterior. Aluminum frame screens were recently added. Porch floors recently have also been replaced, and structural tie rods were added in the 1950's. Bathrooms have been added and the kitchen cabinets and fixtures modified.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The Artillery Post Quarters #109 is one of ten identical officer's quarters built c. 1905 from standardized plans of the Office of the Quartermaster General. More than thirty similiary residences were built between 1905 and 1912 along Artillery Post Road; varying only slightly in plan and materials. While vernacular in form, these houses display Palladian gable-end windows, classic porch detailing, and denticulated cornice lines; all suggesting influences of the Georgian Revival Style popular at the time of construction.
2. Condition of Fabric: The fabric is in good to excellent condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: The main two-and-one-half story center block measures approximately 39' by 28' with 10' wide porch on the south front and east sides. Center block is three-bays by three-bays with a six-foot setback on the west end of the front facade. The one-story rear wing measures 33'-4" by 20' with east side porch continuing along side. The rear wing has a finished basement below. An unfinished crawl space under the main block is accessible from the rear. All rooms run off a center hallway.
2. Foundations: The foundations are coursed limestone ashlar 22" in width, raised above grade approximately three-and-one-half feet in front to eight feet in the rear.
3. Wall Construction, Finish and Color: The walls are smooth-surface buff brick finished in all stretcher bond on the first floor and 5-1-5 bond pattern, stretcher-to-header, visible in the attic. The mortar joints are narrow red-yellow joints. The brick walls are 16" wide.

4. **Structural System, Framing:** The structural system is composed of brick load-bearing walls.
5. **Porches, Stoops, Balconies and Bulkheads:** There is a two-tier porch across the front continuing around the east side, and changing to one story alongside the one-story rear wing.

The porch is supported by modified Tuscan columns and is enclosed by a turned balustrade with molded hand rail on the first and second levels.

The front entryway is more elaborate. A prominent dentiled gable with heavy return ends projects from the porch cornice over the entryway. The first-floor portion juts forward approximately 2'-6" under this gable, and has three columns set forward on either side of the first-floor doorway. A free standing balcony-like projection results at the second-floor level, with coupled newel posts capped with urns aligned over the first-floor columns. The porch rests on stone piers at each column, with latticework between.

The rear one-story porch is screened and has a nine-step, poured-concrete, north side entrance. A shallow open bulkhead on the northwest end of the main block is four steps below grade, and leads to the basement.

A small screened porch area is enclosed on the east side of the second floor.

6. **Chimneys:** Three chimneys project from the main block of the house, one exterior chimney rises along the north two-story gable, and projects above the peak with a simple corbelled cap; similar interior chimneys rise from the south (front) side of the east gable servicing the living room fireplace and the north (rear) side of the west gable, servicing the dining room. A projecting metal air vent is found on the ridge line of the one-story rear bay.
7. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways and Doors:** The double front entrance and second-floor porch entrance have upper rectangular glass panes with two lower molded horizontal panels. The doors are accented by four pane transoms above and by side lights.

French doors onto the side porch on the first and second floors are off the second room (dining room and second bedroom) to the north on the east side of the house.

A rear (south) bulkhead basement entrance on the west side of building has narrow double doors. The doors have upper glass panes with horizontal panels below.

- b. Windows: Most windows are two-over-two, double-hung sash set in segmental arch openings, inset approximately six inches. Each window has double rowlock segmental arched lintels and limestone lug sills.

Prominent gable windows in Palladian form have double-hung sash as well. The center arched window has a flush double rowlock lintel with keystone detail. Smaller flanking one-over-one windows have gauged brick flat arch lintels above.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, Covering: Intersecting gable roof covers the main two-and-one-half story block and an attached gable roof covers the rear bay with a ridge running north-south.

The roof is slate covered with inset gutters of galvanized iron along the edge of the cornice line.

- b, Cornice, Eaves: A wide, heavy raked cornice line with gable end returns is found on each gable. The detail consists of modillions with standard size dentil trim below.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. Basement: A finished basement with stone and brick walls and poured concrete floor is located beneath the rear one-story bay with access provided from both interior and exterior stairs. This basement houses the heating system and hot water heater.

A door on the south wall leads to the unexcavated basement/crawl space beneath the main block.

- b. First Floor: The main block of the house has a center hall running north (rear)--south (front) with a 15' by 11'-6" library to the west, and a 14'-11" by 17'-10" living room and identical dining room space on the east. A two-run open well staircase is at the north end of the hall, with a small lavatory addition beneath the stair run. The rear one-story wing includes a pantry off the dining room, a 13' by 17'-4" kitchen and servants quarters in the rear, 10'-10" by 17'-4", including a servants room and full bath.

The servants quarters is only accessible from a rear side porch entrance.

- c. Second Floor: The second floor has a center hallway with two bedrooms (12'-5" by 17'-10" and 14'-11" by 17'-10") on the east side and one bedroom (15'-0" by 11'-6") on the west.

Two full baths are on the north end, one off the hallway and one off the northeast bedroom.

- d. Attic: A straight run stairway runs up to the unfinished attic with brick walls and exposed intersecting gable roof framing. The south, east, and west gables have modified Palladian gable windows.

2. Stairways: A wide main staircase at the north end of the hall is a two-run stairway with open well. The stairway has a simple varnished handrail attached to the side wall, up to the first landing. A two-over-two landing window lights the staircase. A balustrade begins at the landing and continues up to the second floor in an open string with a paneled square newel post at the landing at the head of the stairs. The landing newel is rectangular with chamfered corners and inset panels, and is painted white with a varnished wood square block cap. The turned balusters are also painted white with both risers and handrail of contrasting varnished wood. Simple brackets decorate the upper run.

An undetailed straight-run stair leads to the attic, just to the south of the main staircase. A two-run, dog-leg staircase runs to the basement off the rear first floor hallway.

3. Flooring: The first and second floors are primarily narrow hardwood boards. The kitchen and pantry have one-foot square tile flooring, and there are six-inch square tiles in the

bathrooms on the second floor. The attic has approximately five-inch wide unfinished wood floor boards layed diagonally. The basement has poured concrete.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: Eleven foot high ceilings and sheetrocked walls are on the first and second floors, all painted off-white. Picture rails are found in all front rooms. The ceilings are slightly dropped in the kitchen and pantry area.
5. Doorways and Doors: Sliding five-panel pocket doors separate the hall and living room and the living and dining rooms.

Narrow French double doors with five fixed vertical panes are off the northeast bedroom leading to the second-floor screened porch and also off the dining room onto the side porch on the first floor. Most other interior doors have five horizontal panels. Bedroom doors have two-pane operable transoms above.

6. Special Decorative Features: Two fireplaces are found on the first floor and one on the second floor with off-white painted wood frame mantels and embossed metal stove covers.

The bedroom fireplace has a very simple mantel with carved brackets at each end supporting the mantel. Square, light-blue glazed tiles surround a rectangular opening with a metal stove cover embossed with a wildlife (deer) scene in relief. The first floor fireplaces have mantels of varying detail, both with modified Ionic columns. Narrow green-brown glazed tiles surround an embossed stove cover with a floral design in the living room. The dining room fireplace has blue and white glazed tiles and an encased overmantel mirror above. The metal stove cover has another embossed floral design.

Later cabinet work with glass-pane cabinet doors is in the pantry.

7. Hardware: The dining room radiator has a built-in bun warmer.

Many doorknobs and window lifts are the original brass plates with simple beading on the outer edge.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

- a. Heating: Heating is provided by gas-fired, hot water, steam heat. Radiators are in every room.

- b. Lighting: Lighting is provided by incandescent lighting throughout with later chandelier and ceiling fixtures.
- c. Miscellaneous: The building is equipped with a smoke alarm system.

D. Site:

- 1. General Setting and Orientation: The residence faces south, southeast toward the open artillery post parade grounds on Artillery Post Road. The yard is landscaped with numerous surrounding shade trees. A rear access road runs behind the building. Directly behind the house is a frame garage, approximately 11' x 19'.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Maps:

1905 and 1922 maps of post held at Fort Sam Houston Military Museum (Bldg. #123). Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and Unpublished Sources:

Real Property Records, Directorate of Facilities Engineering, Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas.

Historical data of San Antonio and Fort Sam Houston, a donation of Col. M.L. Crimmins, held in vertical files of the San Antonio Public Library (main branch), San Antonio, Texas.

2. Secondary and Published Sources:

Fort Sam Houston Historic Tour, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977. (K-1866/22) no author identified.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Correspondence and other miscellaneous files relating to Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas. National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The detailed survey of eighteen (18) architecturally representative structures, and a group of streetscapes, at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas, was undertaken in 1980 by the National Architectural and Engineering Record (NAER) after a comprehensive inventory of the Post was conducted. Funding for the project was made possible through the cooperative efforts of the Department of the Army, Fort Sam Houston, and the San Antonio Conservation Society.

This project was under the general supervision of Kenneth Anderson, Acting Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey of the National Architectural and Engineering Record. Sally Tompkins of the NAER staff was project supervisor. Project Historian was Kathryn A. Burns, San Antonio, Texas. Photographic records were provided by David Kaminsky, Roswell, New Mexico.

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ADDENDUM TO
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