FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters No. 1) (Building No. 1) Fort Belvoir Historic District 10125 Fairfax Drive Fort Belvoir Fairfax County Virginia HABS VA-1391 HABS VA-1391

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

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1)

HABS No. VA-1391

Location: 10125 Fairfax Drive Fort Belvoir Historic District (U.S. Army Garrison Fort Belvoir) Fort Belvoir, Fairfax County, Virginia.

> USGS Fort Belvoir Quadrangle UTM Zone 18 314951E 4283580N

<u>Present Owner:</u> United States Department of Defense

Present Occupant: Fort Belvoir Residential Communities LLC (FBRC)

Present Use: Military Housing

Significance: See HABS No. VA-1390, Fort Belvoir Historic District, Narrative Format report, for additional contextual information.

Construction of the Commanding Officer's Quarters, Quarters 1, was completed in August 1935. Located within Belvoir Village, the housing area designed for Fort Belvoir's senior officers, Quarters 1 is sited on the Belvoir peninsular with grand views of the Potomac River. The building, which features elements reminiscent of high-style Georgian prototypes, is the most prominent residence on Fort Belvoir.

The entire senior officers housing area, Belvoir Village, is an important part of the Fort Belvoir Historic District. The village signifies the Army's transition from the traditional, regimented system of laying everything out in straight lines toward the incorporation of vistas and irregular lines in site planning. Belvoir Village also illustrates the use of standardized plans for the construction of single-family homes. The homes in Belvoir Village were constructed from the same materials and designed in the same Colonial Revival style of many buildings located within the Fort Belvoir Historic District. The similarity of materials and design provides the entire district with a sense of unity.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

- 1. Date of erection: 1935. Drawings were issued on November 29, 1933. Revisions are noted with varying dates through 1934. Construction was completed on August 30, 1935 (Completion Report, National Archives at College Park).
- 2. Architect: Quartermaster General.
- 3. Original and Subsequent Owners: United States Government.
- 4. Contractors: Records from the National Archives at College Park, Maryland (Record Group 77, records of the Chief of Engineers) list R. B. McDanel Company of New Brighton, Pennsylvania, as the contractor.
- 5. Original Plans and Construction: Constructed from a standardized plan, the Office of the Quartermaster General identified the plan for Quarters 1 as Plan No. 6144-260. Quartermaster records further identify the building as Field Officer's Quarters.
- 6. Alterations and Additions: A comparison of the 1933 construction documents and recent, 2004, floor plans indicate that only minor alterations to Quarters 1 have occurred (ENRD). The original footprint of the building remains intact; no additions have been constructed to the building. Additionally, the majority of the buildings original materials and trim are still intact (although the wood floors are currently covered with carpeting).

Fort Belvoir records indicate that the kitchen was renovated in 1985. Other minor alterations to the interior include the removal of a second floor bedroom closet (in order to increase the size of the adjacent bathroom), the addition of laundry facilities to the former second floor linen closet, and the addition of a small bathroom in the basement. Also, evident from the exterior of the building, the original sliding garage doors have been replaced with electric overhang doors.

Apart from the kitchen renovation, documentation does not indicate the dates when alterations occurred.

B. Historical Context:

Quarters 1 is considered the most prominent residential building at Fort Belvoir. Completed in August 1935, the building was home to the Commanding Officer. The first Commanding Officer to occupy Quarters 1 was either Colonel George Spalding, commandant of the Engineer School 1933 - 1935, or Colonel Laurance Frazier, commandant of the Engineer School 1935 - 1936. Records could not be located to determine which Colonel was the first to occupy the residence.

Quarters 1 has frequently been used to entertain prominent individuals. For example, photographs document a visit by First Lady Mamie Eisenhower on March 10, 1953 (FBA).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

- 1. Architectural character: Completed in August 1935, Quarters 1 features elements reminiscent of high-style Georgian prototypes. For example, the front-centered gable extends slightly forward from the façade and is further accentuated with quoins and an elliptical window, features uncommon on Colonial Revival houses. Additionally, the first-floor windows are topped by flat arches and limestone keys. A two-story porch extends across the main portion of the rear elevation.
- 2. Condition of fabric: The overall condition of the building appears to be good.

B. Description of Exterior:

- 1. Overall dimensions: Rectangular in plan, Quarters 1 measures 61 feet 2 inches wide by 30 feet 8 inches deep. The garage wing is 16 feet wide by 24 feet deep, while the basement is 39 feet 8 inches wide by 14 by 9 inches.
- 2. Foundations: The foundation is concrete.
- 3. Walls: Red brick load-bearing walls; brick laid in common bond pattern with quoins.
- 4. Structural systems, framing: Load-bearing brick walls with wood framing.
- 5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The front entry portico is covered by a flat roof and supported by paired Tuscan columns. The portico roof features an ornamental balustrade. An enclosed two-story porch is located on the rear; the upper portion of the porch was historically used as a sleeping porch. A small, shed-roofed entry porch delineates the location of the side door; the porch is supported by square columns.
- 6. Chimneys: Two interior end, brick chimneys.
- 7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Three-panel, double wooden, front doors, are located in the center of the main rectangle with a molded architrave surrounding sidelights. Side entrance is a wooden door with glazed upper pane and solid lower panel. The rear porch is accessible by three pairs of wooden French doors. A pair of screen doors provides access from the porch to the garden.

- b. Windows and shutters: Wood, six-over-six, double-hung, with limestone sills.
- 8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The side-gable roof is covered with slate shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: A narrow, molded, wooden cornice is painted white.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Two dormers are located on the front facade of the main, central portion of the house, while three dormers are located on the rear. Two, smaller, dormers are also located on the front facade of the garage wing and one dormer is located on the rear of the garage.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: See attached sketch plans.
- 2. Stairways: There are two staircases, one in the central hall and one between the garage wing and the main house. The stair in the central hall is a large U-shaped stair with decorative wooden balusters and newel. The secondary stair, originally providing access to the Maid's Room, is a U-shaped winding stair.
- 3. Flooring: Hardwood floors on the first and second floors are currently covered by carpet. The bathrooms have tile floors. The screened-in back porch (rear elevation) has a brick floor. The basement floor is concrete.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster. Bathrooms originally featured tile wainscot.
- 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Wood panel doors and some cased openings. Cased arch between the hall and reception room.
 - b. Windows: The typical window trim is wood; the size and style of the trim varies.
- 6. Decorative features and trim: There is a cased arched opening between the hall and reception room. A decorative chair rail is located in living room, dining room, and reception room. The primary rooms (public rooms of the residence used for entertaining) feature a plaster cornice. The dining room fireplace is flanked by built-in cupboards.
- 7. Hardware: Not known; some of the hardware appears to be original, while other pieces are more modern replacements. No records have been located to document any of the changes to the hardware.
- 8. Mechanical Equipment:

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- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Historically heat was transferred through radiators; the hot water was processed through a Buckwheat system, domestic, hot water heater.
- b. Lighting: Traditional lighting and electrical plan for a residential building.
- c. Plumbing: This building has indoor plumbing. The hot water is currently supplied by a modern hot water heater located in the basement.
- 9. Original furnishings: Apart from the built-in cupboards, located in the Dining Room, there are no original furnishings.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Quarters 1 is located within Belvoir Village.

Belvoir Village is sited at the southeastern tip of the Belvoir peninsula, which stretches into the Potomac River. The curvilinear street plan of the village follows the natural contours of the site. The plan was influenced, in part, by the natural, topographical irregularity of its riverside bluffs; helping reduce construction costs while providing grand views toward the river.

Belvoir Drive, the primary roadway through the village, terminates at Quarters 1.

- 2. Historic landscape design: The landscape design for Belvoir Village embodies site planning principles of the period, bringing Fort Belvoir's family housing into closer alignment with civilian cultural landscapes during that time. When developing the layout for Belvoir Village, the landscape designers embraced aesthetically pleasing designs with open spaces and curving avenues.
- 3. Outbuildings: Quarters 1 has no associated outbuildings.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural Drawings: Construction drawings are located at the National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records). The drawings are dated November 29, 1933.
- B. Historic Views: An historic photograph of Quarters 1 is attached to the Completion Report. The Completion Report is located at the National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Record Group 77, records of the Chief of Engineers). There are also historic images of Quarters 1 located within the collections of the Fort Belvoir Archives.

C. Bibliography:

Primary Sources:

Environmental and Natural Resource Division Library (ENRD). Construction Documents, As Built Drawings, Revisions, and Alterations. In addition to plans, elevations, sections and details; collection includes written and pictorial documentation. Directorate of Public Works and Logistics (DPWL), US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir, VA.

Fort Belvoir Archives (FBA). Written and pictorial documentation. Resources include: Aerial photographs, Aerial Views of Post (Box #2) and United States Army Engineer School (USAES) Building Inventory (1957). Collection of the Post Historian, Van Noy Library, US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir, VA.

National Archives at College Park. Resources included: Textural records and Cartographic and Architectural records. College Park, MD.

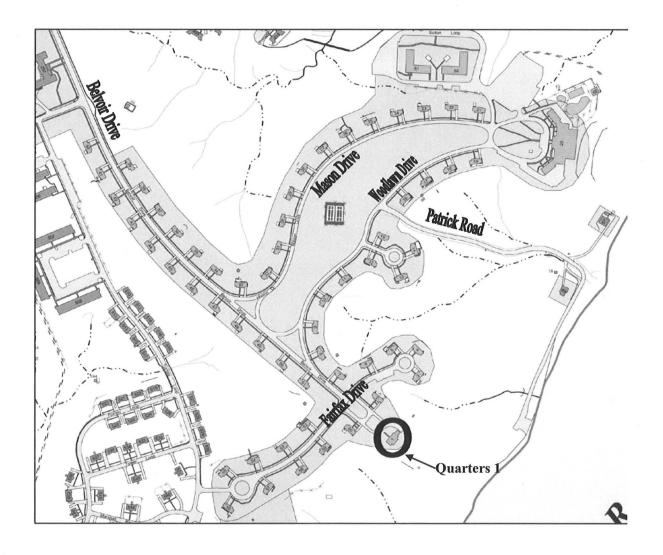
Secondary Sources:

Harvenson, James. "HABS/HAER Inventory: Building No. 1, Post Commander's Residence." Massey Maxwell Associates / Soil Systems, Inc., 1983.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

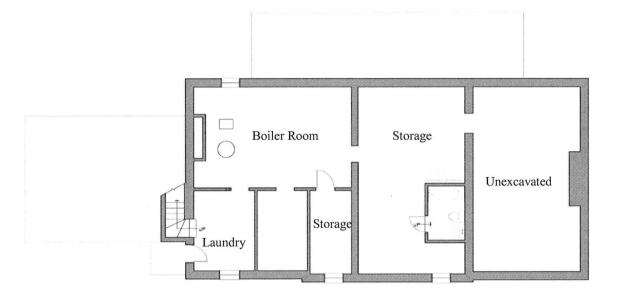
This documentation was completed in partial fulfillment of an agreement relating to the privatization of Fort Belvoir's family housing. As part of the privatization process, Clark Pinnacle entered into an agreement outlining stipulations considering the effects of privatization on historic properties. The agreement specified that, in coordination with Fort Belvoir Cultural Resource Management and the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Clark Pinnacle would prepare Historic American Building Survey (HABS) Level documentation of Fort Belvoir's historic housing neighborhoods.

Prepared by: Kirstin Falk and Joy Cecere Title: Architectural Historian and Architect Affiliation: JMA (John Milner Associates, Inc.) Date: 2004 FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 7)



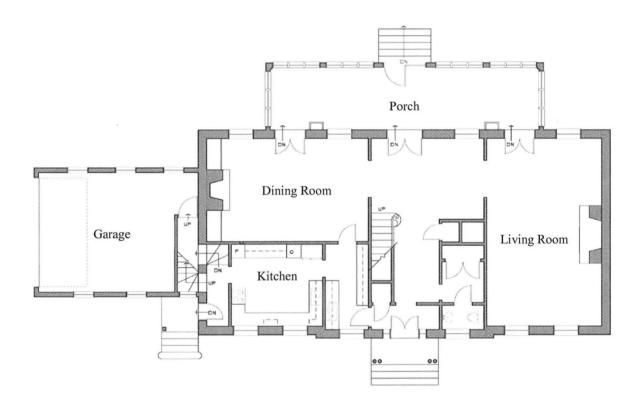


Site Plan Graphic by US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir, Fort Belvoir, Va., August 2003. FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 8)



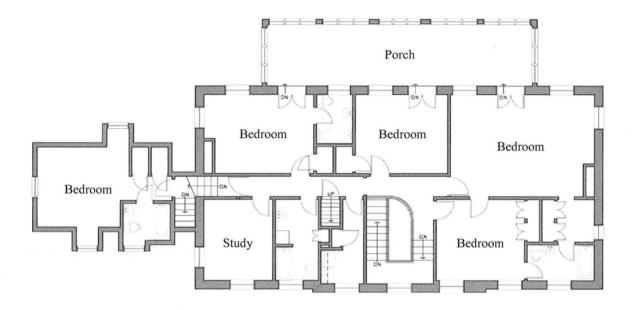


Commanding General's Quarters Basement Plan Graphic by John Milner Associates, Inc., Alexandria, Va., November 2008. FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 9)



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Commanding General's Quarters First Floor Plan Graphic by John Milner Associates, Inc., Alexandria, Va., November 2008. FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 10)

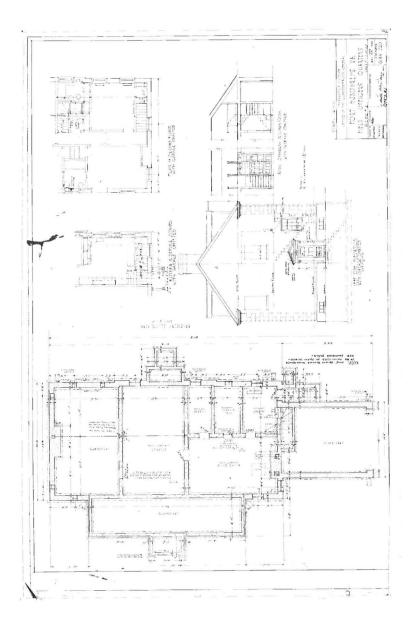




Commanding General's Quarters Second Floor Plan Graphic by John Milner Associates, Inc., Alexandria, Va., November 2008.

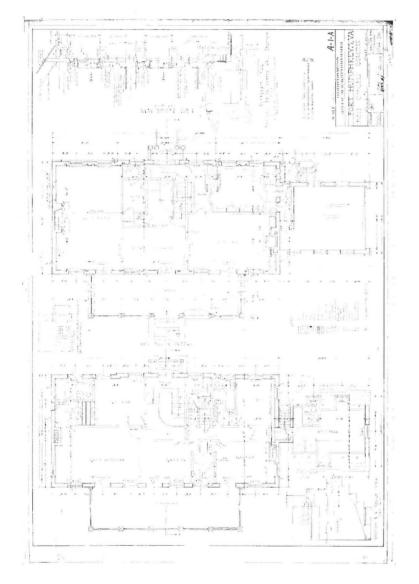
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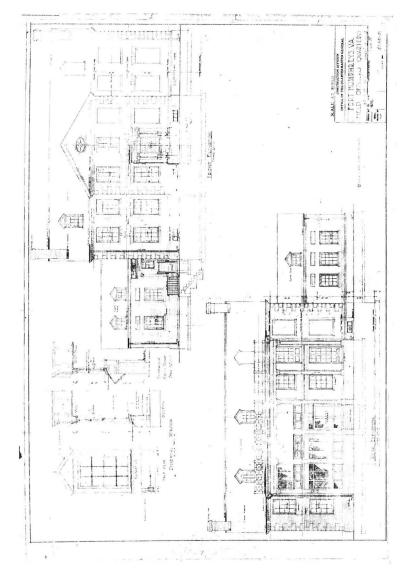
Construction Drawings, Sheet 1 of 13, November 24, 1933 National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records).

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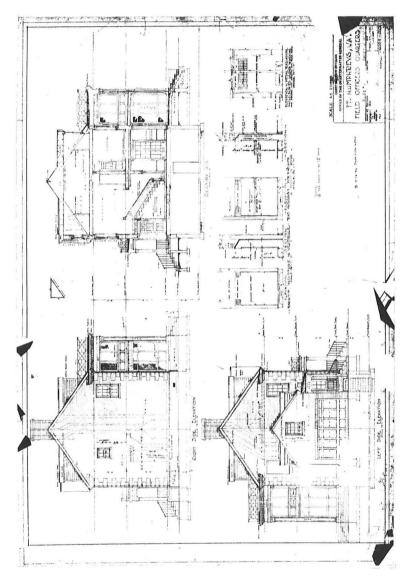


Construction Drawings, Sheet 2 of 13, November 24, 1933 National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records).

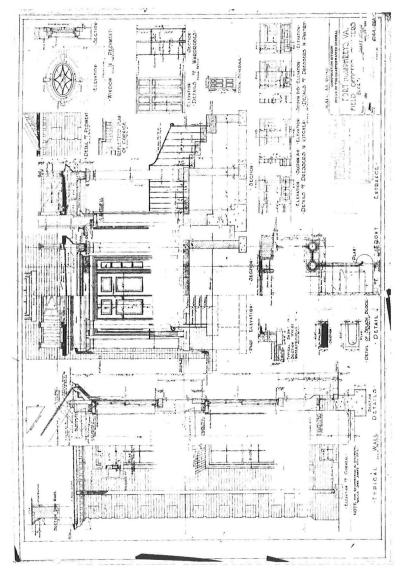
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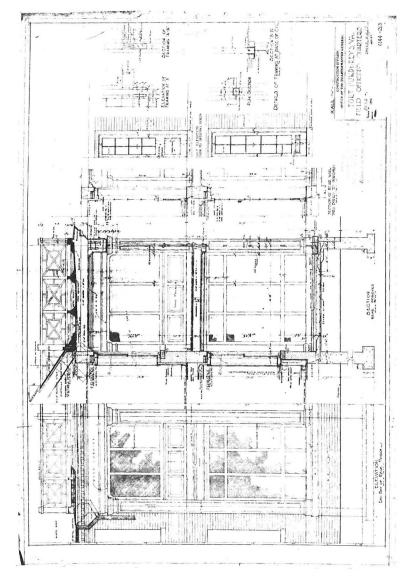
Construction Drawings, Sheet 3 of 13, November 24, 1933 National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records). FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 14)



Construction Drawings, Sheet 4 of 13, November 24, 1933 National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records). FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 15)

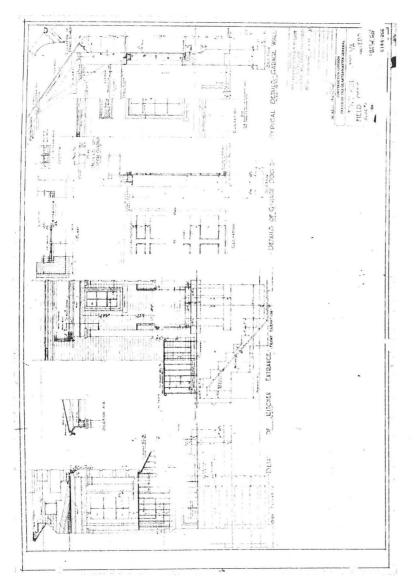


Construction Drawings, Sheet 5 of 13, November 24, 1933 National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records). FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 16)



Construction Drawings, Sheet 6 of 13, November 24, 1933 National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records). FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391





Construction Drawings, Sheet 7 of 13, November 24, 1933 National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Cartographic and Architectural Records). FORT BELVOIR, COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS (Quarters 1) (Building No. 1) HABS No. VA-1391 (Page 18)



Historic photograph, May 1936

Image attached to the Completion Report, located within the National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland (Record Group 77, records of the Chief of Engineers).

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Historic photograph, First Lady Mamie Eisenhower visits Quarters 1, March 10, 1953 The building behind Mrs. Eisenhower in the photograph is Quarters 60. Image from Fort Belvoir Archives (Collection of the Post Historian, Van Noy Library, US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir, VA.).