



# UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY WEST POINT.®



## STONE ART OF WEST POINT

# STONE ART OF WEST POINT

*by Sherman Fleek  
USMA Command Historian*

*Photography by Paul Hudson  
Cultural Resources Manager, U.S. Army Garrison West Point*

*Through consultation with the New York State Historic Preservation Officer and the National Park Service, the U. S. Army Garrison West Point has developed this pamphlet to describe and illustrate the artistic engravings and other iconographic features of historic buildings in the Central Area within the U. S. Military Academy National Historic Landmark District.*

*This pamphlet will also provide an overview of the history of each building, including information on the prestigious architects who developed the conceptual design of these buildings and many of the associated iconographic features.*

*November 2022*



# Bartlett Hall

## 1913

### History

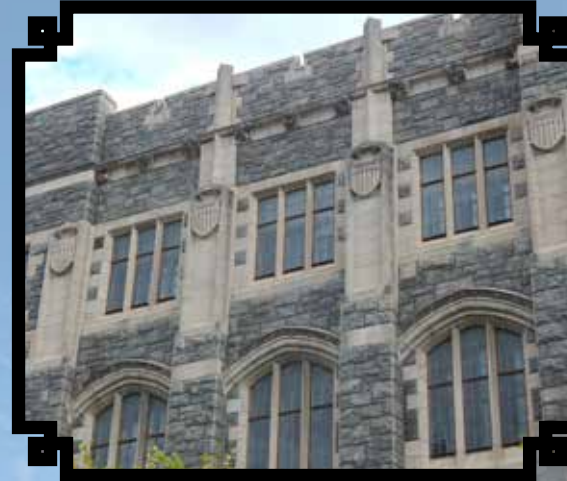
Bartlett Hall was part of the major building expansion boom of the early 1900s. In 1906, the War Department awarded a contract for \$11 million to the architecture firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson several new buildings were built in the old Central Area along with many other buildings. Built between 1911 and 1913, the building was memorialized in 1966 as Bartlett Hall, in honor of William H. C. Bartlett, long-time professor of engineering and natural and experimental philosophy at West Point as well as a pioneering and nationally renowned scientist and author of textbooks on physics and chemistry.

For many years, the building was known as the East Academic Building to distinguish it from the West Academic Building, now Pershing Barracks. In 1936, the architect Paul P. Cret designed an addition to the east side of Bartlett Hall that approximately doubled its size. In 1962, the 1841 Delafield library was razed so the new library, now the north side of Bartlett Hall, could connect to Bartlett Hall and the Cret addition, enclosing a small courtyard within a right triangle.

Over the years, various renovations of the building have occurred, the latest an extensive effort from 2010 to 2016 that upgraded Bartlett Hall to host the Science Center, home to the Departments of Chemistry and Life Science, and Physics and Nuclear Engineering.

### West Façade

Facing Thayer Walk, the west façade of the original 1913 building features a series of grotesques along the roof line below the parapet. These reflect the academic pursuits of cadets in the neo-Gothic style of the USMA architecture [far left]. Union shields are located below the grotesques adjacent to windows. A unique version of the USMA crest is located above the main entrance and includes the motto above the eagle as well as shields that likewise reflect the academic functions of the building [left].

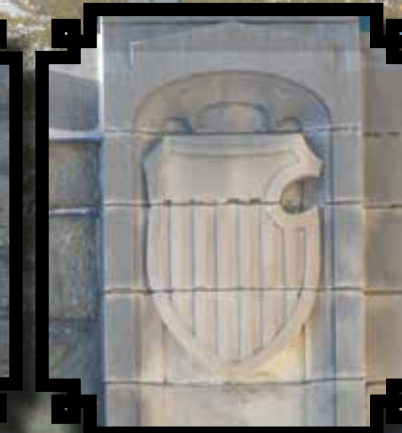


Overlooking the Cadet central area is Pallas Athena [right], the Greek goddess of war, wisdom, and the arts. Sitting on a throne she is surrounded by the Academy's motto, DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY, the Shield of the United States and a globe of the world.



### Cret Addition (1936)

This wing has several stone carvings or grotesques on the east façade facing Cullum Road that reflect academic and patriotic themes, such as [from left to right] the lamp of knowledge; a mortar and pestle; the Union shield; and a beaker and compass.





# Taylor Hall

## 1910

### Headquarters & Administration Building

The budget of 1906 authorized a new administrative building for a cost of \$519,437. The style was Tudor/military gothic in keeping with the architectural concept of the firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, who envisioned a fortress-like motif for the Academy central area.

The resultant building is a free-standing, solid masonry structure resembling a castle, with a tower rising 160 feet above Cullum Road below. The tower is 10 stories: three below the level of Thayer Walk and seven above. The first three above-ground stories form the southeast corner of the building's interior courtyard.

Since 1910 every Superintendent has had an office in this building, popularly known as the Headquarters Building. In 1990, it was memorialized as Taylor Hall, honoring General Maxwell D. Taylor (USMA Class of 1922), former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and famed commander of the 101st Airborne Division during World War II.



### Exterior Carvings and Symbols

One of the grand features of Taylor Hall is the amazing stone carvings on all four exterior elevations and the interior walls of the interior courtyard. The main entrance to the courtyard is through a sally port and portcullis similar to a medieval fortress, of which Taylor Hall would be the castle keep, or the last bastion of defense.

Above the main entrance on the west façade are engravings of the United States eagle under an intricate graved canopy and flanked by two significant U. S. Army emblems [left]. On the left is the Army Emblem and Seal (initially the War Department but now the Department of the Army), with the breastplate or Roman cuirass with flags and arms of pikes, muskets, mortars, flags, and cannon balls. On the right side is the Army Corps of Engineers insignia, which was adopted before the Civil War. Below these two major symbols are a dozen state emblems in vertical rows.

Within the courtyard, carvings represent all 50 states of the Union and federal territories; the Washington Family coat of arms, and the Great Seal of the United States [far right, top]. Also included are some of the great contributors to the Academy, namely Superintendents Jonathan Williams, Joseph Swift, Richard Delafield, and Sylvanus Thayer; U.S. Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe; and Joseph Totten, the Army's longest-tenured Chief of Engineers, serving from 1838-1864.

Insignia on corbels at the end of arches and vaulted works represent the U.S. Army branches of 1910, as well as the administrative and logistical departments and branches, thus collectively embodying the Headquarters sphere at West Point.

In a line across the lower interior wall of the courtyard are the emblems of the states that comprised the original thirteen colonies. While some elements have been added since the building was completed, most of the iconography is the work of Lee Lawrie, a prominent German-born, American architectural sculptor of the pre-World War II era.





# Thayer Hall

1911

## Riding Hall

The main academic hall on campus for half a century has been Thayer Hall, named after Sylvanus Thayer (1808), the longest serving and most influential superintendent in the academy's history. Thayer Hall has four floors of classrooms, offices, labs, and workshops, including major auditoriums at each end of the structure for larger audiences and instruction.

The Riding Hall was part of the major construction program awarded in 1906 to the architectural firm of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson. Initially, the building served as the indoor arena for cadet training on horseback, for equestrian events, and indoor polo matches. Commenced in 1910 and completed the following year, this building saw thousands of cadets develop and hone their horsemanship skills under the supervision of cavalry officers for more than forty years.

## Thayer Hall

By the end of World War II, the horse cavalry was no more, and the need for an indoor riding hall was no longer necessary. Beginning in 1957, the Riding Hall was converted into an academic building with some 100 classrooms, at a total cost of \$10 million. During construction officials decided to memorialize the building as Thayer Hall, and the building soon hosted multiple academic departments, a bookstore, and several learning centers, as well as vehicular parking on the roof. From 1959 to 1989, the West Point Museum was located on the first floor.

## Exterior Art and Carvings

As might be expected, many of the iconographic elements on Thayer Hall are related to its former function as the Riding Hall. There are three primary entrances to the building from Cullum Road.

Over the central entrance are carvings representing the "Five Uses of the Horse" [left].

Above the north entrance is the American eagle as part of the Academy Coat of Arms and the name "Thayer Hall." [bottom, left] Around the doors are motifs of arms and artillery.

Above the south entrance is the American eagle clutching in its beak a ribbon on which is carved the United States motto "E PLVRIBVS VNVM." [bottom, center] This is flanked by busts of cadets [bottom, right] wearing the distinctive parade cap known as a shako, while a wood carving in between the doors displays emblems of the Academy and the building's academic function.





# Grant Hall

## 1931

### First Memorialization

Grant Hall was the very first building memorialized after a person on West Point. Former President and General-in-Chief Ulysses S. Grant was an 1843 USMA graduate and the great victor over the Southern Rebellion during the Civil War. During most of the 19th century, buildings at the Academy were known or referred to simply by their function, such as the library, administration building, hospital, or mess hall.

In 1887, the Superintendent, Colonel Wesley Merritt, memorialized the Cadet Mess Hall after his former commander, General Grant, thereby beginning an Academy tradition of honoring its most illustrious graduates. Eventually, two buildings would memorialize Grant: first, a Mess Hall, and later a combination visitor reception lounge and cadet barracks—called South Barracks for years—which stood on the same site.



### First Grant Hall (1852-1930)

The first Grant Hall, known for most of its existence simply as the Mess Hall, that was completed in 1852 at a cost of \$43,000. Its footprint was 170 feet long and 62 feet wide and had a ceiling height of 20 feet. The main hall, where some 300 cadets dined, was 100 by 50 feet. There was a large kitchen and bakery in the south end, and an officers' mess in the north. The Mess Hall was one of the main focal areas for cadet interaction and social aspects.

By the turn of the 20th century Grant Hall was no longer adequate for the needs of the Corps of Cadets. In 1903 an expansion was added that provided for an additional 1,200 cadets to dine, but eventually a larger mess hall was required. In 1929 the current mess hall, Washington Hall, was completed, and the following year Grant Hall was razed.

### Present Day Grant Hall (1931)

A second building, also named Grant Hall, with an attached cadet barracks was completed in 1931 adjacent to the previous Grant Hall. Designed by the firm of Gehron and Ross, the new Grant Hall was two parts: the visitors reception lounge made of granite and the barracks in the rear (west) made of brick.

The former area soon became one of the most important social venues at West Point. Since the new barracks was located south of what was then the Central Barracks (now Nininger Hall) and the North Barracks (located northwest of Washington Hall; no longer standing), the new barracks soon became unofficially known as South Barracks. In the 1990s, the visitor reception lounge was converted to a restaurant-style eatery, although it has continued to serve as an important social gathering place.

On the east façade, stone carvings at the upper corners of the large windows consist of profiles of cadets from different time periods with the distinctive headgear known as a shako [left, top and bottom]. Flanking the east entrance are lines of cadets in formation facing the doorway [below].





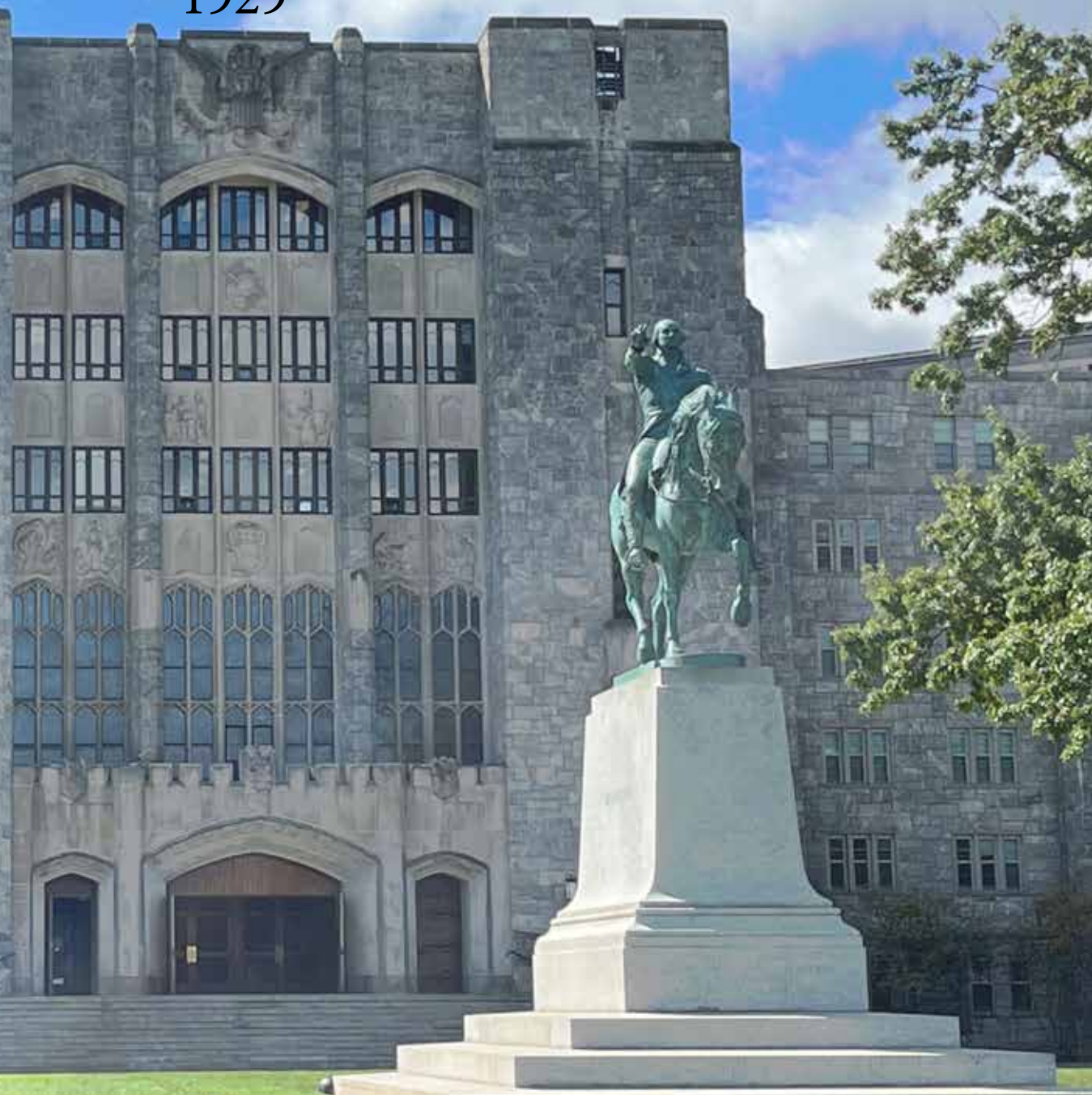
# Washington Hall (Mess Hall)

1929

## The Mess Hall

The construction of the original Mess Hall was completed in 1929, with the main entrance, known as the “Poop Deck,” now preserved on the interior of the current iteration of the Mess Hall. When the Mess Hall was completed, the Corps of Cadets numbered 1,500, which grew to 2,500 by 1962. During the Army/Navy football game that year, President John F. Kennedy asked the Superintendent, Major General William Westmoreland, why there were more Midshipmen present at the game than Cadets. General Westmoreland answered that USNA had an authorization of 4,000 while USMA was authorized only 2,500.

In 1964 Congress mandated an expansion of the Corps to 4,400, which required construction of new cadet barracks (Eisenhower, Bradley and MacArthur Barracks), as well as an extension of the Mess Hall, which enveloped the façade of the 1929 building. In 1972, the building was named in honor of General George Washington, and at that time the statue of Washington was relocated from the north end of Thayer Road to its present location in front of the Mess Hall.



## Front Entrance

On the front entrance [left], dates on the shields above the smaller doors on either side of the main door represent the establishment of the Army garrison at West Point in 1778 and the founding of the Academy in 1802, and the USMA motto is located above the main door [below, left].

The Washington family coats of arms, consisting of a shield with two stripes and three stars on a scroll, is located in the center above the first row of windows. Scenes from George Washington’s life are depicted on either side and above the coat of arms, showing Washington as a youth planting a cherry tree [below], as a young man surveying, meeting with Native Americans, as a member of the Continental Congress, and as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army.





# Eisenhower Barracks

## 1969

Above the three sally ports on both sides of the building are engravings of names and images commemorating significant battles and campaigns led by General Dwight Eisenhower, commander of the European Theater of Operations during World War II and for whom the barrack is named. The names of three campaigns are inscribed above each sally port, with scenes representing battles engraved on shields above the ports.

The easternmost sally port features the Tunisia, Sicily, and Salerno campaigns on the limestone arch [below, left]. Above the arch is an image of an amphibious landing of troops of the 36th Infantry Division of the Texas National Guard storming ashore at Salerno. Additional shields portray the Italian Peninsula with a broken fascine crossing from Sicily to the toe of Italy [below, right].



The central sally port memorializes the battles of Arnhem, Bastogne, and Remagen Bridge and features a shield with a pentagonal fortress representing the German assaults against Allied forces [above, left]. The upper shields depict a glider, paratroopers, and a German tank; and the Remagen Bridge over the Rhine River in Germany that Americans soldiers captured and utilized until it collapsed in 1944.

On the east side of the building (above Honor Plaza) is the insignia [right] of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), which oversaw all Allied forces in northwest Europe from late 1943 through the end of World War II in 1945. Eisenhower served as SHAEF's Supreme Allied Commander throughout its existence.



The sally port next to Washington Hall commemorates D-Day, Normandy, and St. Lô [top]. On the lower shield is a Nazi swastika smashed by a lightning bolt representing the Allied attacks on the German-held Europe [above, left]. The upper shields, reflecting the D-Day invasion, feature the deck of a landing craft with American soldiers wading ashore at Normandy; and the chapel of Sainte-Mère-Église with parachutes of American paratroopers [above, right].



# MacArthur Barracks

1969

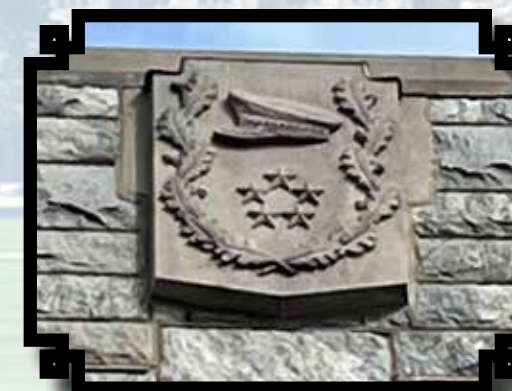


The sally port adjacent to the mess hall is inscribed with Bataan, Corregidor, and Luzon, campaigns in the Philippines Islands led by General Douglas MacArthur as Commander of the Southwest Pacific Theater [above]. On the lower shield [right] there is map of Corregidor Island and the Bataan Peninsula at Manila Bay, with a Medal of Honor in the upper corner representing the decoration that General MacArthur received for his "gallant leadership" at Bataan and Corregidor.



The center sally port is inscribed with Leyte, Buna, and Hollandia, with the bottom shield showing two soldiers shaking hands: an American GI and an Australian "digger," as the Aussie soldiers who fought in New Guinea were known [far left]. Additional engravings show leaves and trees representing the jungle war, and an aircraft carrier as a symbol of the naval war [left].

On the northeast corner of the barracks (above MacArthur Plaza), is a flag motif inscribed with the letters GHQ, referring to General Headquarters [right]. Engravings on the sally port on the north elevation represent the Korean War campaigns of Inchon, Pusan, and Taegu. The lower shield depicts a large sword cutting across the Korean Peninsula, the cut representing the division of North and South Korea [far right].



In the inner court of MacArthur Barracks high above the west entrance is an engraving of an oak victory laurel and General MacArthur's service cap he wore during World War II. In the center is the five-star insignia of the rank of General of the Army [left].



# Pershing Barracks

## 1895

### Former Academic Hall

Academy officials erected a new lecture and academic hall to meet the demands of modern education and the growing Corps of Cadets. The new hall had two large lecture rooms and housed all of the academic departments, the faculty offices, and classrooms. Designed by architect Richard Morris Hunt, who died the same year the building was completed. Subsequently, it was the only academic building at the Academy until the completion of Bartlett Hall in 1913. Soon they were referred to as East Academic (Bartlett) and West Academic (Pershing).

In 1956 construction began to convert the hall into cadet barracks. In 1973 officials decided to memorialize the barracks after General of the Armies John J. Pershing, Class of 1886, Commander of the American Expeditionary Force in World War I, later Army Chief of Staff, and one of the most distinguished graduates of West Point and most distinguished soldiers in American history.

What is unique about Pershing Barracks is that it is the only building at the Academy with gargoyles, a Gothic architectural element incorporated into the building and traditionally employed to ward off evil spirits [top]. The other notable iconographic element on Pershing Barracks is an engraving on the west entrance of the large sally port that incorporates several components, namely a sword, a Greek helmet [right], and the federal shield and a sword with a USMA ribbon, which was utilized prior to the adoption of the Academy's Coat of Arms in 1898 [far right].



# Scott Barracks

## 1938

Scott Barracks is the only Cadet barracks on West Point not named for a USMA graduate. Born in 1786, Winfield Scott obtained a commission as captain in 1808 in the light artillery, but during the War of 1812 he was promoted to brigadier general and became one of the battle commanders and heroes of the war against Great Britain. During the Mexican-American War, he conducted a textbook campaign to capture Mexico City in 1847 and win the war against Mexico. During this time Scott made a toast to the graduates of West Point that it was his "fixed opinion" that the war was won mainly because of the service and leadership of the Academy graduates. Thus, "Scott's Fixed Opinion" remains a tradition and verse of orthodoxy of the Long Gray Line.

General Scott championed the Academy and officer development through the 1850s, often staying at the West Point Hotel during the hot summer seasons. Though a Virginian, he elected to remain loyal to the Union in 1861 and afterwards devised the strategy known as the Anaconda Plan that eventually brought the North victory. Scott retired in 1861 at age 75 and died at the West Point Hotel in 1866. He is buried in the Post Cemetery.

### Construction and Engravings

Scott Barracks was designed by the world-renowned French architect Paul Cret and was one of several projects he oversaw at West Point in the 1930s. After two years of construction, the building was completed in 1938 at a total cost of \$1.2 million.

Above the arch of the sallyport are engravings of Medieval griffins [top] and other similar figures [far left]. On the east elevation of the tower is the USMA Coat of Arms carved in stone. Above the covered walkway on the southern wing is an engraving of a Cadet shako headgear [left].





# Building 606

1923

## Administrative and Academy Offices

Assigned the military building number of 606 in more recent years, this building has had many prior functions over time. Originally built in 1923 as a wing to the 1884 Cadet Hospital, the building remained when the earlier hospital was demolished in 1960, upon which it assumed that function until the completion of Keller Army Community Hospital in 1977. Later, the Department of Law, the Staff Judge Advocate, and the Directorate of Admissions occupied the building.



Because of the initial hospital function, the main entrance has the Medical Corps caduceus engraved over the arch [top]. Along the ledge above the window arches are several interesting grotesque engravings. Some are obvious in meaning or representation. There are World War I American “doughboys” with their flat-rimmed helmets and a Napoleonic-era soldier wearing the French shako [right]. Other images are not easy to understand. These include faces with wide-open mouths, flowers, and leaves.





