



Quarters One  
Built in 1871

Known as the inventor and developer of the Rodman Gun, General Thomas Jefferson Rodman was welcomed by area citizens. The “Father of the Rock Island Arsenal” designed the 10 stone shops which line Rodman Avenue and the Officers’ quarters built along the north shore of the island.

Quarters One was used as the home of the most senior officer stationed on Rock Island Arsenal. Designed by General Rodman, the home is a superior example of High Victorian Italianate style architecture. The Quarters symbolized the importance of the Arsenal as a major government installation and set an architectural standard for Quarters Two, Three, and Four which were constructed during 1871-1874.

Unfortunately, General Rodman never lived in the completed quarters. He did reside for a time in a two-story wooden structure, a part of the old Confederate Prison, located near the site of Quarters One. The prison buildings were razed when Quarters Two, Three and Four were constructed. General Rodman died in 1871, leaving much of his grand design of the Arsenal to be completed by his successors. Martha Ann and General Rodman are buried in the Rock Island National Cemetery.

Next to the White House, Quarters One was the second largest single-family government residence with 51 rooms and approximately 20,000 square feet. The shingled gabled, hipped roof with flat deck and skylights, plus its tall, square observation tower are prominent architectural features. The main block and wings are three stories tall; the tower is four stories, with an extremely tall third story. It has 10 fireplaces with four on the first floor and six on the second floor.

The north porches facing the Mississippi River are spectacular features. Many eagles can be seen perched on the trees during the winter and early spring months. A full porch extends across the main entrance of the quarters. Cut limestone piers support elaborate, cast-iron columns typically grouped in pairs or in sets of three at corner piers. Between the column bases are ornate cast-iron railings with elaborate filigree cast-iron brackets at the column tops. D. C. Thompson, master molder, supervised the foundry's recycling of Civil War relics (mainly horseshoes) for iron used in the porch grillwork, columns, and fencing.

The main double doorway centered in the tower bay is walnut with a leaf pattern. The exterior doorknobs and the knob adjacent to the pantry doors from the dining room have a dog's face cast onto them. A silhouette of a Renaissance soldier is on the interior doorknobs, the vestibule and central hall doors on the first floor, and the exterior door into the stairway north of the main staircase.

The first-floor plan revolves around a central hall in the main block of the quarters. Opening to the main floor is a pair of parlors with 16-foot ceilings, each having its own rectangular bay windows. The twin parlors were designed to allow men to retire for cigars after dinner and the ladies to gather for conversation. Each parlor fireplace has a cut and polished light gray marble mantelpiece and hearth. The dining room has a beautiful octagonal bay window with the original walnut shutters. A library, study, powder room, large pantry and kitchen are also on the first floor. At the rear entrance behind the kitchen is a small office.

The second floor corresponds closely with the first-floor plan. It currently has five bathrooms. There are six bedrooms and a sewing room in the tower at the front of the house. Two guestrooms had names, the "Rose Room" for its color and the Lindbergh Room in honor of Charles Lindbergh. In 1927, on a flight across the U.S. to promote commercial aviation, Lindbergh landed in Moline. His visit caused such rivalry between Iowa and Illinois that the Commanding Officer invited him to stay in Quarters One which was a welcome compromise. He spoke to an overflowing crowd

of local citizens in the Arsenal Cafeteria. A plaque commemorating this historic visit was placed on the bed where he slept. The Lindbergh Bed has been moved to the Museum and the Rose Bed is in Quarters 6.

There are seven rooms and two baths on the third floor. Beautiful wood floors and views of the Mississippi are featured. A stairwell leads to the tower which contains a staircase leading up to the fourth floor. The Quad City area can be seen from the tower exit to the roof of the house.

The basement contains 16 rooms. The old butlery has limestone counters for rolling dough, special ovens for baking bread, and niches for the butter churns. The rooms are basically unfinished except for the trunk room located at the southeast corner of the main section of the house.

Beautiful and ornate ceiling moldings are featured all throughout Quarters One. The main hallway has particularly elaborate ceiling molding with scrolled medallions. Elaborate cornices are found in the parlors, library, and dining room and in their respective bay windows. Additional running plaster moldings are found on the ceilings of the parlors and the dining rooms. The ceiling of the third floor in the main hall has steeply curving sides with plaster panels framed with plaster waterleaf molding. Elaborately painted plaster ceiling rosettes are in pairs on the ceilings of all three main halls.

Between the window and library doorway in the north hall is a built-in walnut coat tree with a cabinet base which is flanked by two umbrella stands.

The dining room retains a built-in china cabinet set in a shallow niche in the masonry wall. The flat-walled niche has a semicircular arch at its top. The base contains two sets of three drawers above a larger bottom drawer. Above the base is a shallow china case with a pair of glazed doors set in the semi-circular opening. The opening has a heavily molded walnut detail. Also in the dining room, the doorway formerly opening to the adjacent storage room has been filled with a china cupboard with a lower set of drawers surmounted by a pair of glazed doors fronting the open shelves. The dining room is adorned with a beautiful marble fireplace like the ones in the front parlors.

The original set of varnished walnut bookcases remain in the library and a built-in walnut desk is on the east wall. The library has a non-original, red brick fireplace with molded egg-and-dart upper edges and a red brick hearth.

The northwest and southeast bedrooms each have an elaborate white marble mantelpiece and hearth. The northeast and southwest bedrooms each have a simple dark gray marble mantelpiece and hearth. These mantelpieces have an arched, fire opening with a carved marble shield centered above. The two second-floor wing bedrooms have simple white marble mantelpieces and hearths that are flat slabs of marble with carved shields centered over rectangular openings.

The primary staircase is U-shaped and contains intermediate landings. The staircase is open in its center and cantilevered from the adjacent walls on the other sides. It is walnut with a molded railing, vertical beaded, tongue-and-groove rail infill and stringer facing the wall, and a paneled, octagonal, newel post. The newel post features a rare, original cast-metal statue of an armored soldier holding an electric torch, originally a gas light. The stairs are varnished except the vertical board infill areas are painted white.



Quarters One was originally plumbed. Of the original plumbing fixtures, only three marble sinks remain. They are in the northwest bedroom bathroom on the second floor and in the north and south bathrooms of the third floor. There is an old, but not original, toilet in the southwest room of the wing basement. The original wood water tank that collected rainwater from the roof survives in the attic.

The first story flooring is mostly alternating oak and walnut. The parlors have oak flooring with parquet borders in a diamond pattern. The second story main block

flooring is mostly varnished narrow oak. The central second floor has alternating walnut and oak flooring. The north bedroom in the wing has a maple floor (not original) and the west bedroom adjacent to it has an original pine floor. The third floor typically has wide, pine flooring. Maple floors were added in the northwest, northeast, and southwest bedrooms, with a storage room adjacent to the southwest bedrooms.

The handsome grounds surrounding these Quarters are enclosed by a wrought iron fence made on the Arsenal. The drive entrance is flanked by two large, rock-faced limestone piers. Each is topped with a cast-bronze outspread Golden Eagle.

The forged iron grill work on the porches, the brass doorknobs and ornate hinges, and the leather covered door to the butler's pantry were all made by Arsenal craftsmen.

The last occupants of Quarters One moved out in early 2008 and the building was formally taken off the Army's housing list. Quarters One became a victim of its own size and grandeur. Congress passed a law decades ago that no more funds could be spent proportionally on a general's house than on any other soldier's house. As both the largest house in the Army and a home on the National Historic Landmarks register, Quarters One required more funding for maintenance than any other house in the Army. For years, maintenance was deferred; in 2003, a survey indicated that the house needed over \$3 million in work to bring it up to code. Eventually, Congress wrote into a Defense Authorization Bill that no more funding would be allowed. Unable to bring the house to code, the Army decided in 2007 to close the building and no longer allow it to be used as a home.

The Rock Island Arsenal Garrison refurnished the first floor of Historic Quarters One in January 2012 to allow the Quarters to be rented for social events. The first floor and the grounds of Historic Quarters One are available to rent.

Occupants of Quarters One have experienced "paranormal activity" ranging from doors opening and closing themselves; windows opening and closing, hearing heavy footsteps and moving furniture, items moved in certain rooms, hearing people talking when they're the only one home, etc. Countless hours of investigations have been conducted inside the mansion documenting occurrences. If you're interested to see if you will experience any "activity," ghost tours are scheduled at different times.

Records indicate that Quarters One has been home to the following service members and their families:

BG T.J. Rodman 1870 – 1871	BG N.F. Ramsey 1937 – 1944	1975 – 1977
LTC D.W. Flagler 1872 – 1886	COL C. A. Waldmann 1944 – 1947	MG W.E. Eicher 1977 – 1981
COL T.G. Baylor 1886 – 1889	COL W.W. Warner 1947 – 1953	MG B.F. Register, Jr. 1981 – 1983
COL J.M. Whittemore 1889 – 1892	BG T.A. Weyher 1954 – 1957	MG P.G. Burbules 1983 – 1985
COL A.R. Buffington 1892 – 1897	BG W.K. Ghormley 1957 – 1959	MG F. Hissong, Jr. 1985 – 1987
COL S.E. Blunt 1897 – 1907	BG O.E. Hurlbut 1959 – 1961	MG M.D. Brailsford 1987 – 1990
LTC F.E. Hobbs 1907 – 1911	BG E.J. Gibson 1961 – 1962	MG P.L. Greenberg 1990 – 1994
LTC G. W. Burr 1911 – 1918	MG N.M. Lynde, Jr. 1962 – 1964	MG D.L. Benchoff 1994 – 1995
LTC L. T. Hillman 1918	BG R.B. Anderson 1964 – 1966	MG J.W. Monroe 1995 – 1998
LTC H.B. Jordan 1919 – 1921	MG W. J. Durrenberger 1966 – 1968	MG J.W. Arbuckle 1998 – 2000
COL D.M. King 1921 – 1932	MG O.E. Hurlbut 1968 – 1969	MG W.H. McManus, Jr. 2000 – 2004
COL H.W. Schull 1932 – 1934	MG H.A. Rasmussen 1969 – 1972	MG J. Johnson 2004 – 2007
COL A.B. Gillespie 1934-1937	MG J.C. Raaen, Jr. 1972 – 1975	MG Robert Radin 2007 – 2008
	MG B.L. Lewis	