

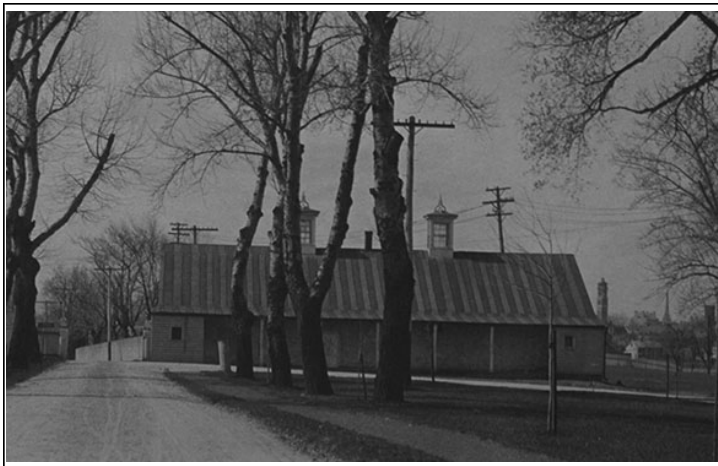
New series takes a look at Carlisle Barracks history

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‘What’s the story with...?’ is a phrase commonly heard at Carlisle Barracks. With more than 50 buildings in the National Historic Register, the post has a history unlike many others.

This is the first in a series that will take a look at historic buildings, photos and more that tell the story of Carlisle Barracks. Throughout it’s nearly 260 years of history, the post has been the home to many pioneering schools, events and leaders that have helped shape our Nation. Want to learn more? Check out the Carlisle Barracks history page at <http://carlislebarracks.carlisle.army.mil/history.htm> or visit the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center at <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ahec/index.cfm>

Kicking off the series is a look at the oldest building on post, the **Hessian Powder Magazine**.



During the Revolutionary War, the British government hired Hessian soldiers from German speaking states in Europe to fight in America. Following the American victory at the Battle of Trenton in December 1776, General Washington and his men took several Hessian soldiers prisoner. Some of these Hessian prisoners were sent to Carlisle to provide labor. It is thought that about 40 of them built the Hessian Powder Magazine in 1777.

The structure is 70 feet x 22 feet and is made of limestone with brick-lined interior walls which are four feet thick. It has a vaulted stone roof covered by timbers and tin. Within the building are three main rooms and four cells on the west end of the building. The doors to the cells are thought to be from around the late 1700s.

Though this building was constructed for the purpose of storing sulfur, brimstone, and other explosive materials, the building has served many purposes throughout its history. After the War of 1812, this original usage continued, but the building was refitted with vaulted brick ceilings, traversed entrances, ventilation shafts, and lightning rods, to make it safer to store highly flammable supplies.

By the 1830s, the Hessian Powder Magazine took on its new name of “Hessian Guardhouse,” along with its new function as a guardhouse for the Cavalry School, which operated on Carlisle Barracks from 1838-1871.

During the Carlisle Indian Industrial School days selected students received law enforcement training at the guard house and eventually used those skills at the new entrance to post, located on Pratt Ave, near the Letort Spring Run.



In 1948, the Hessian Powder Magazine became the Hessian Powder Museum and was opened to the public, a function it still holds today. Inside you will find static displays that highlight all of the major eras of Carlisle Barracks history.

What buildings would you like to learn more about? Send an email to usarmy.carlisle.awc.mbx.atwc-cpa@mail.mil with the Subject Line: “What’s the story with?” and we’ll include in an upcoming edition.

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