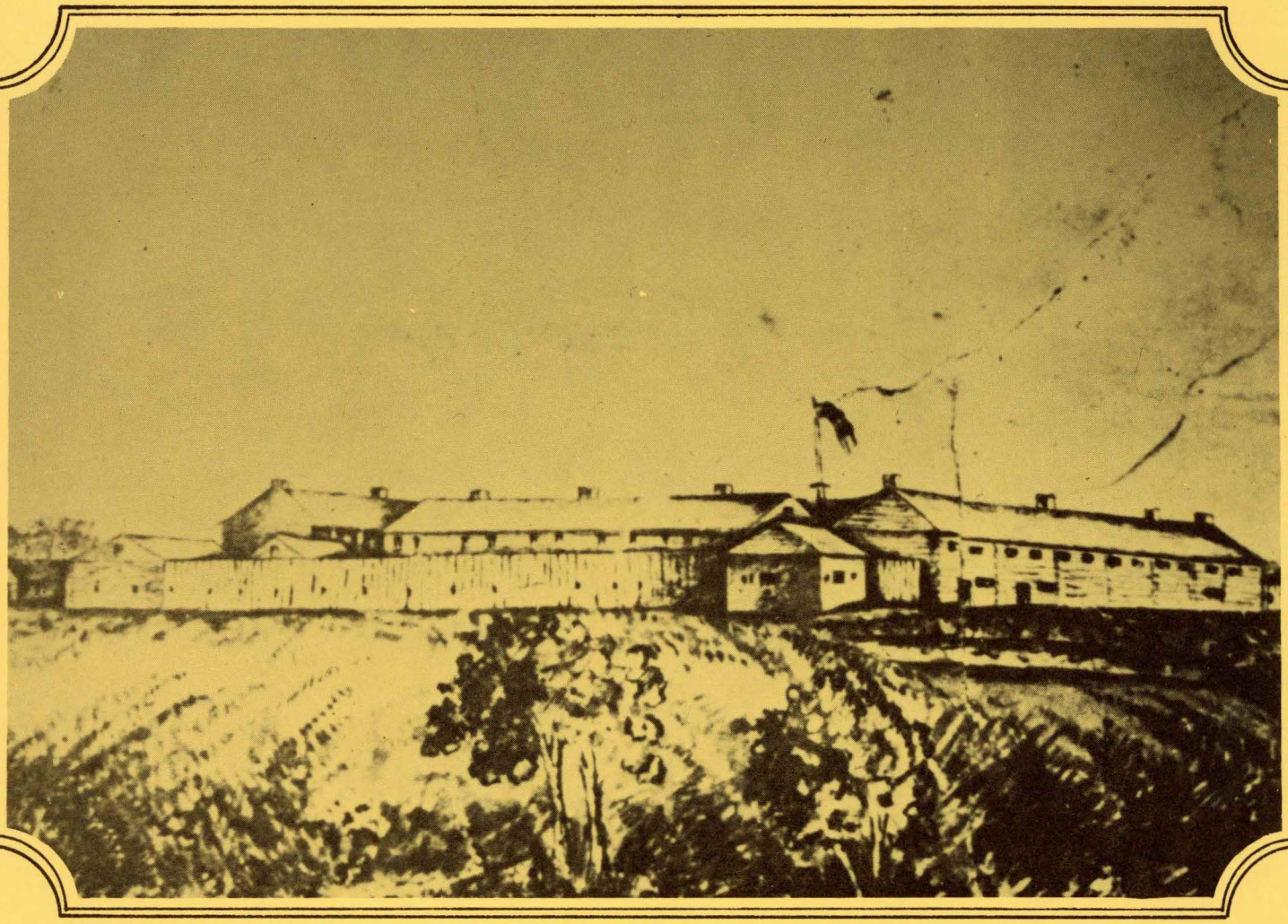
FORT ATKINSON

HISTORIC PRESERVE



TECHNICAL REPORT

HISTORIC ANALYSIS AND PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

FORT ATKINSON STATE MONUMENT PRESERVE

TECHNICAL REPORT

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

prepared by

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for

Iowa State Preserves Advisory Board

funded by

Iowa Development Commission

and

Iowa Conservation Commission

1980

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Location

Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve is located within the corporate limits of the town of Ft. Atkinson, Winneshiek County. The site is in Section 8, Township 96, Range 9, and encompasses an area of 4.67 acres. State Highway 24 and county roads B32 and W14 pass through the town while State Highway 150 and U.S. Highway 52 are within 5 miles of the preserve. (See Map 1.) Access to the preserve is over unpaved city streets. The site is owned by the State of Iowa and has been maintained and managed by the Iowa Conservation Commission since it was dedicated on September 23, 1968, as an historical, geological, and archaeological preserve. The notable features of the site are the buildings and ruins of Ft. Atkinson, a 19th century United States Army post, and the limestone quarry, the location of a regional variation of the sedimentary rock Maquoketa Shale.

Objectives & Goals

Under the provisions of Chapter 135, Act of 61st General Assembly, it is the duty of the State Preserves Advisory Board "to recommend acquisition of areas for dedication as preserves by the state conservation commission;" "to make surveys and maintain registries and records of preserves and other areas of educational or scientific value and of habitats for rare and endangered species of plants and animals in the state;" and "to promote research and investigations, carry on interpretive programs and publish and disseminate information pertaining to preserves and related areas of educational or scientific value."

N. E. IOWA REGION MAP

FORT ATKINSON
HISTORIC PRESERVE

NORTH

SCALE
1in = 30mi

This study is within the boundaries of these general objectives. Its special objectives are to present the known history of Ft. Atkinson and to provide a plan for future management of the site. Management and maintenance of Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve shall be according to the "General Rules of Management for State Preserves." Use of the Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve shall conform to the known history of the site.

Value of Preserve

Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve has geological, archaeological, and historical value. Geologically, the preserve is valuable for the presence of the "type section" Fort Atkinson Limestone. Archaeologically and historically, the preserve is valuable as the site of a 19th century military post.

The preserve is geologically significant as the location of the Fort Atkinson Limestone Member of the Maquoketa Shale. In 1870, C. A. White named the shale beds along the Little Maquoketa River in Dubuque County, Iowa, "Maquoketa Shale." These beds of sedimentary rock were created by deposits left about 430 million years ago when the region was part of a marine environment. A regional variation of Maquoketa Shale was identified by Samuel Calvin in 1906 and designated the "Fort Atkinson Member." The location selected by Calvin as the place where the character of this particular rock formation was most typically exposed--the type section--was the quarry west of the fort buildings in the town of Ft. Atkinson. The Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve, then, is valuable geologically as the location of

the type section of the Fort Atkinson Limestone Member of the Maquoketa Shale.[1]

The preserve is archaeologically and historically significant as the site of Ft. Atkinson, a United States Army post garrisoned from 1840 to 1849. Archaeologically, the preserve is significant for the subsurface remains of the military occupation. Two separate archaeological investigations have been conducted at the site. Between 1939 and 1941, Sigurd S. Reque directed an investigation focused on locating and identifying the foundations and other remains of the buildings that once stood within the stockade of the fort. In 1966, investigations by the Office of State Archaeologist, under the direction of Marshall McKusick, uncovered a variety of artifacts, principally china and glassware, from excavations of officers' privies and also located the line of buildings that once stood outside the stockade. These two widely spaced investigations have shown that the Ft. Atkinson site is a potentially rich resource for future archaeological study. These early investigations have only partially exploited the site. Further investigation of the subsurface remains could yield information about the fort's structure and about the people who lived there. The foundations and artifacts already uncovered are significant as examples of the interpretation of archaeological sites.[2]

The preserve is historically significant as a military post built on the frontier to effect the Indian removal policy of the United States government. Ft. Atkinson was built as a temporary post to keep the Winnebago Indians west of the Mississippi River on land

then known as the Neutral Ground after their removal from Wisconsin. The post is often referred to as "the only fort in the country built to protect one tribe of Indians from another tribe."[3] In fact, this is only partially true. Until a permanent new settlement could be agreed upon between the Winnebago people and the United States government, the troops stationed at Ft. Atkinson were to perform several functions.

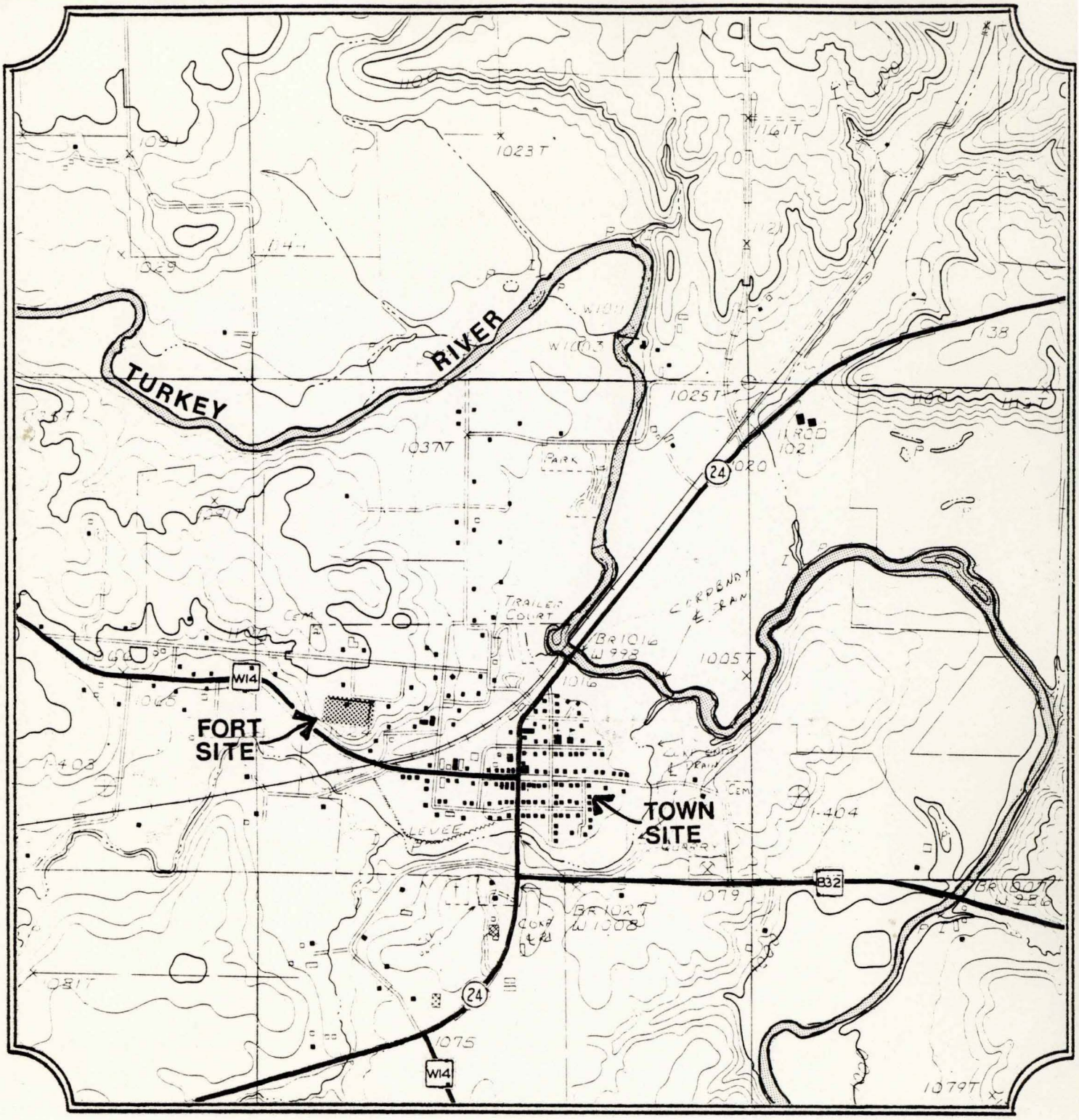
First, and foremost, they were to prevent recalcitrant bands of Winnebagoes from returning to their ancestral homes east of the Mississippi. Force had been necessary to remove most of them from Wisconsin and force was necessary to keep most of the Winnebagoes in their temporary home. The Neutral Ground was intended to be a buffer zone between the Sioux on the north and the Sauk and Fox Indians on the south. When the Winnebago were moved into the area, it became the duty of the Ft. Atkinson troops to maintain peace among these potentially hostile tribes. Since the Neutral Ground was reserved for the exclusive use of Indians, patrols were routinely sent out from the fort to prevent white traders and settlers from illegally entering the region. The post also helped to reinforce the authority of the Indian agent who operated a school, a model farm, and provided supplies for the displaced Winnebagoes at the Turkey River Subagency located about five miles downstream from the fort. The historical significance, then, arises from the interaction of the U.S. Army and the Winnebago people.

Surrounding Environment

Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve lies near the western corporate limits of the town of Ft. Atkinson along a bluff overlooking Rogers Creek. (See Map 2.) The preserve is within the Paleozoic Plateau landform region close to its western boundary. This landform region is characterized by extensive outcroppings of bedrock, particularly limestone, dolostone, shale, and sandstone. Quarries in dolostone and limestone formations, like the one at the Ft. Atkinson preserve, are common in this region. The bedrock so completely controls the surface that the influence of loess and glacial drift is minimal on the landscape.[4]

According to geologist Charles S. Gwynne, "there is no evidence of glacial action" at the preserve site. He quickly points out, though, that the occupancy of the site over the years has disturbed the ground. Much of the subsoil of northeastern Iowa, Gwynne observes, is residual, formed by the weathering of the bedrock. "Practially all of the soil at the park [preserve]," notes Gwynne, "may be the residue left by the weathering of the limestone."[5]

The presence of bedrock so close to the surface worked both to the advantage and the detriment of the builders of Ft. Atkinson. The quarry was opened shortly after the site was occupied to provide a cheap alternative to expensive sawn lumber hauled from the Mississippi, and limestone became the principal building material for the fort. Attempts to dig a well, however, proved to be time-consuming and expensive, so much so, that the project was abandoned and the shaft used as a cistern to hold water carried from nearby springs.[6]



LOCAL FEATURES MAP

FORT ATKINSON
HISTORIC PRESERVE

NORTH

SCALE
1in = 500yd

MAP 2

The land surrounding Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve is presently occupied by several single family dwellings and a commercial nursery. (See Map 3.) Buildings that once stood outside the stockade were probably located on what are now Blocks 9, 10, 20, 21, and 22. Thus, the sites of all buildings located outside the stockade are now privately owned.

Administrative History

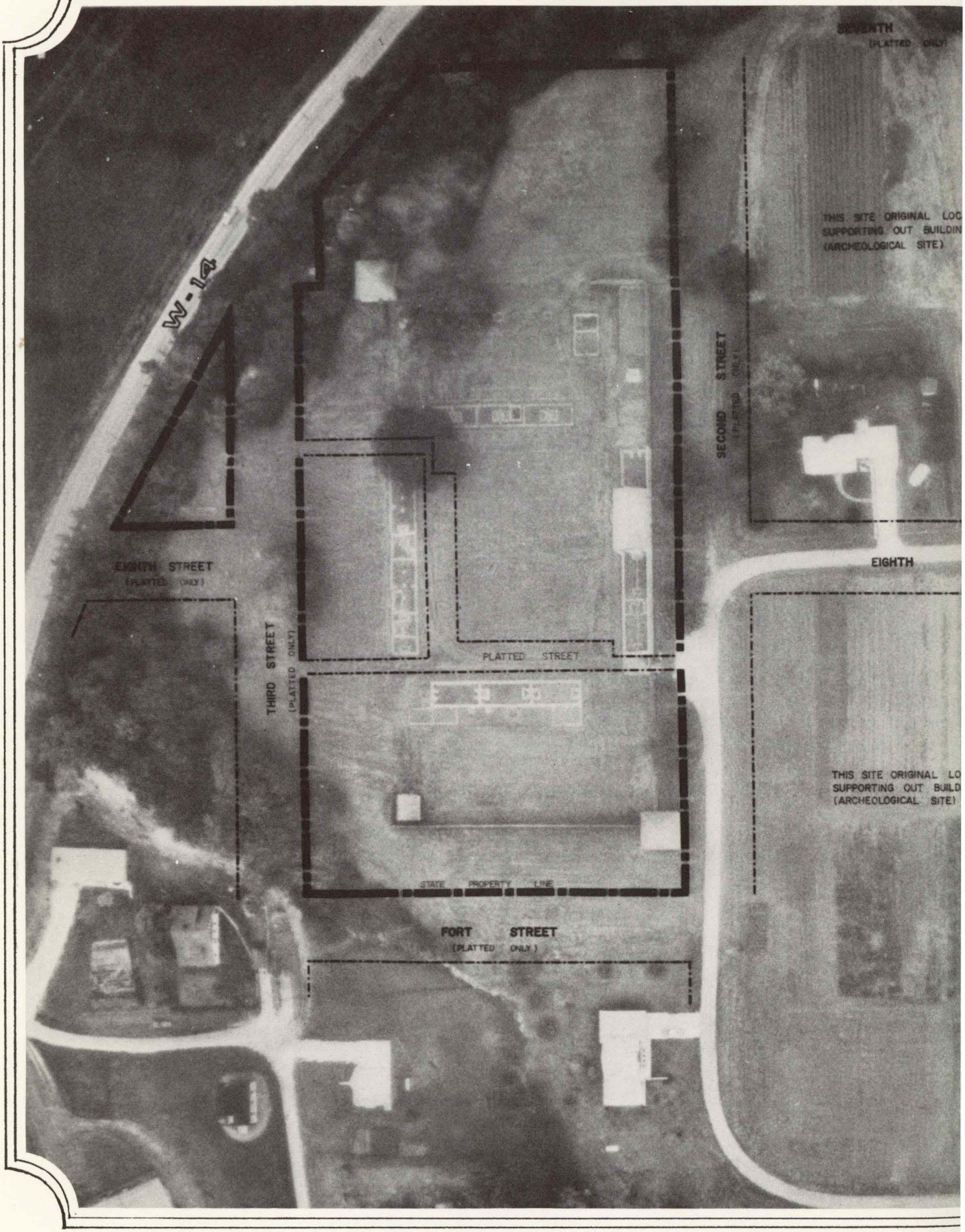
Ft. Atkinson was officially abandoned by the U.S. Army on February 24, 1849 when the last company of soldiers was withdrawn. Several years would pass, however, before the War Department disposed of the property. The State of Iowa became interested in acquiring all of Ft. Atkinson shortly after its abandonment. But when the federal government failed to give the property outright to the state, the fort slipped into private hands. It was not until the early 20th century that the State of Iowa began to acquire the land it presently owns, and this action was spurred on in large measure by the local community.

With the removal of the Winnebago to Minnesota in June of 1848, there was no longer any need to station troops in the Neutral Ground. The following February Company "C" of the 6th Infantry, the last group of soldiers stationed at Ft. Atkinson, left the post for Ft. Crawford at Prairie du Chien. The surplus supplies and subsistence stores were sold at auction in March, and the care of the buildings at the post was entrusted to a custodian.

In January of 1853, the Iowa General Assembly proposed that the federal government donate the buildings and property of Ft. Atkinson to

the state. In a joint resolution, the legislators called for the establishment of a "normal manual and military institute" at the abandoned post to be run by the state.[7] But the request was apparently ignored, and state interest in acquiring the Ft. Atkinson site subsided. Two years later, the buildings were purchased at public auction by one Caroline Newington. The land of the military reservation, which totaled some 1,920 acres, had been taken up by settlers since the post's abandonment, and in 1860 congressional action permitted these people to secure title to their claims.[8]

Interest in state acquisition of the site of Ft. Atkinson resurfaced early in the 20th century. About 1900, local businessmen began a campaign for the establishment of a state park at Ft. Atkinson. The Decorah Public Opinion on February 6, 1900 called for a memorial to honor Brigadier General Henry Atkinson for whom the fort was named. "The old fort at this place has one of the finest locations of any of the old western forts," the paper said, "and the site and buildings should be purchased by the state, rebuilt, and the grounds turned into a State Park, to be called Atkinson Park, in honor of that famous Indian fighter."[9] After this article was reprinted in the Fort Atkinson Times, the businessmen of Ft. Atkinson began circulating petitions in Calmar, Cresco, Decorah, and other local communities in hopes of persuading the state legislature to take action. Their proposal had a practical side. In a pamphlet explaining their views, they asked that the park be used as a meeting place for the state militia. "The buildings could be used as arsenals and for a museum of Indian war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(PLATTED ONLY)
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SUPPORTING OUT BUILDIN
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M-14
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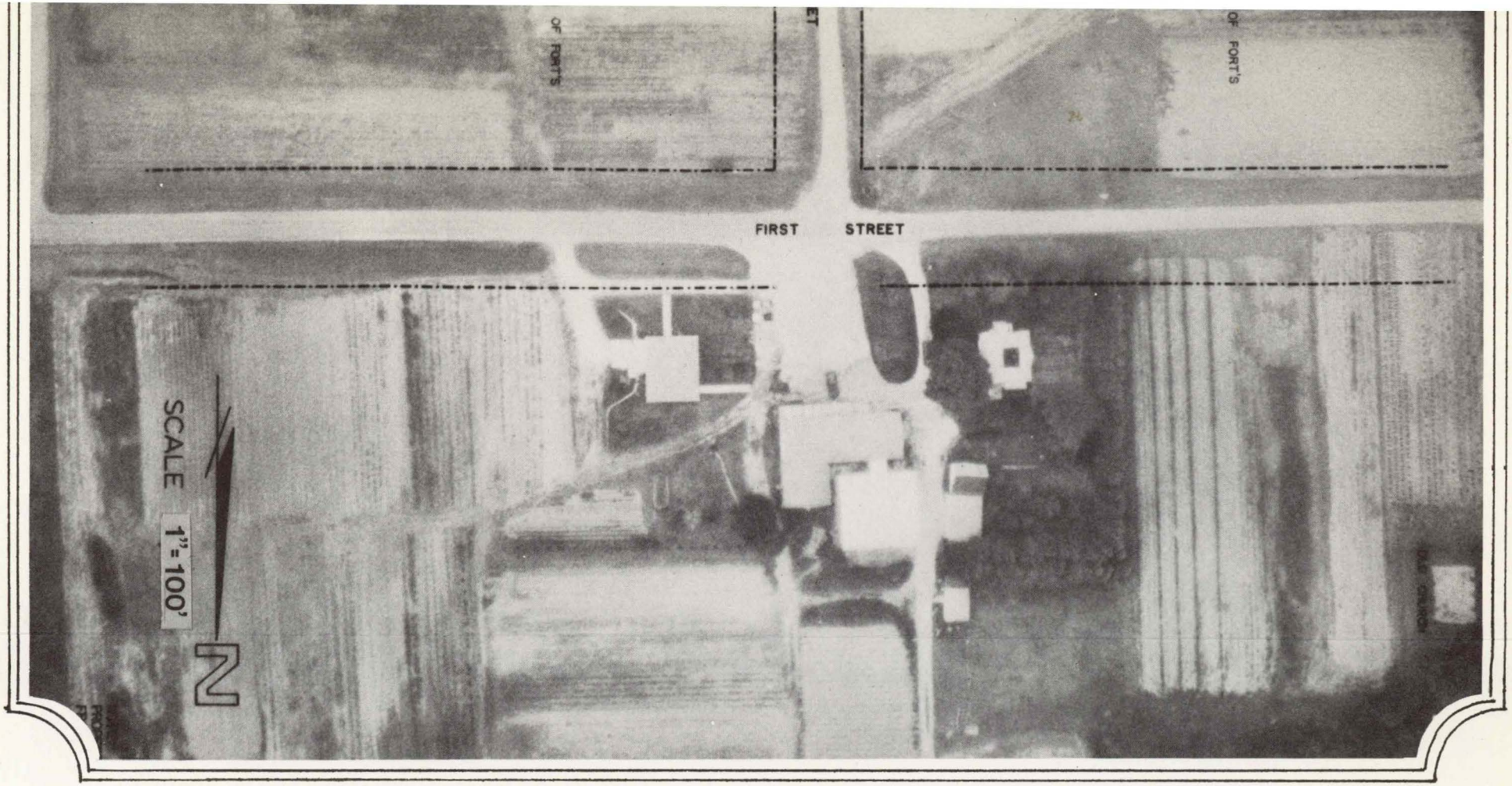


SITE MAP

FORT ATKINSON

HISTORIC PRESERVE

MAP NO. 3

relics," the pamphlet said, "and the improvements could be made gradually." In discussing the financing of the proposed park, the businessmen tried to head off a familiar criticism. "Don't think that this would raise the taxes, as so many do," their argument went. "The entire grounds can be purchased at the average price of farm lands in this part of the state."[10] Local response to the petition drive was good, but action at the state level stalled. A state park for Ft. Atkinson was still twenty years away.

A new initiative for a state park at Ft. Atkinson, like the original one, came on the heels of an article published about the fort. In September 1919, the Iowa Magazine published a piece by Woodworth Clum entitled "Fort Atkinson, a Pig Sty." Clum had visited the site and was appalled at discovering the grounds of the fort planted in crops and the old blockhouse, powder magazine, and barracks used as farm buildings. With slightly inflated rhetoric, Clum challenged this use of the historic site. "Is there nothing sacred--or even interesting--in the physical history of Iowa?" Clum asked. "Is it fair to the memory of those who blazed the first trails west of the Mississippi, that pigs should now inhabit their blockhouses and chickens roost upon their crumbling monuments?"[11]

Clum's article struck a responsive chord. Several newspapers around the state reprinted it, and the local community of Ft. Atkinson again began to organize their efforts. About $2,000 was raised by the town toward the purchase of the fort site. And hopes were raised about reconstructing the northeast blockhouse. It was a few more years before this work was carried out.[12]

The State of Iowa's interest in a Fort Atkinson park was revived too. On February 17, 1921, the Executive Council approved the purchase of Ft. Atkinson for a state park.[13] That summer the state purchased parcels totalling 2.809 acres. In April of 1922, the purchase of lots 1 to 6 in Block 32 added 1.367 to the state's holdings. Negotiations for the last parcel within the fort square dragged on for several years. Finally, in 1939, the state bought this last parcel of .494 acres bringing the Ft. Atkinson site to its present size of 4.67 acres.[14]

In the acquisition of this last parcel, the local community was again much involved. The Greater Winneshiek County League, a booster group organized to relieve unemployment in the county through promotion of the area's historic and scenic assets, aided the State Conservation Commission in reaching agreeable terms with the owner of the property.[15]

The president of this organization, Sigurd S. Reque, conducted historical and archaeological investigations of the site for the Conservation Commission under the joint sponsorship of Luther College, beginning in 1939. Reque, who was also curator of the Norwegian-American Historical Association, was aided by Rolfe Haatvedt, an archaeologist from the Department of Classical Languages at Luther. A centennial celebration was held at the site October 6, 1940, but the interest in reconstructing the fort was stifled by the outbreak of the war.

The next important study of the fort was conducted in 1956. That year historian Merrill J. Mattes visited the site to make recommendations to the State Conservation Commission for its preservation and development. Mattes recommended that the north barracks be converted into a museum; that the southwest blockhouse be open to visitors while the northeast one be used as a storehouse and workshop; that the powder house be open to visitors; that a farmhouse at the southeast corner of the grounds and another stone building near the northeast corner be removed; and that the log stockade be partially restored. Mattes' recommendations became the basis for the present appearance of the site.[16] In 1962, a dedication ceremony was held to celebrate the completion of the recommended work.

Four years later, in 1966, the Office of State Archaeologist conducted excavations to supplement the work done by Reque and to bring that earlier work to a conclusion. In 1968, Donald L. Koch of the Geological Society of Iowa prepared a study of the geology of the Ft. Atkinson site for the State Preserves Advisory Board.

On September 23, 1968, the State Conservation Commission dedicated the Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve to be used and maintained as an historical, geological, and archaeological preserve.

Visitor Use

Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve is located far from any major metropolitan area. The closest large city is Waterloo, about 65 miles to the south. Dubuque is 100 miles to the east while Mason City is some 75 miles to the west. Although the region is noted for

its scenic beauty, it is far from an interstate highway. The relative isolation of the preserve may account for the low attendance figures. (See Table 1.) Although attendance has been rather stable over the last decade, given the dramatic increases in the cost of gasoline recently it seems unlikely that attendance at the preserve will increase sharply.

Table 1

VISITOR USE

FORT ATKINSON STATE MONUMENT PRESERVE[17]

Year	Number of Visitors	Out of State Visitors
1967	3,123	379
1968	9,927	1,750
1969	8,154	1,296
1970	9,374	1,778
1971	8,821	1,605
1972	6,663	1,302
1973	5,867	1,040
1974	6,268	1,122
1975	5,976	1,017
1976	6,726	1,525
1977	8,220	1,328
1978	10,041	1,664
1979	8,728	1,567

Notes to Part I

[1]Donald L. Koch, Fort Atkinson Limestone Member of the Maquoketa Shale, Development Series Report 2 (Iowa City: Iowa State Advisory Board for Preserves, 1968), pp. 1-2.

[2]See S.S. Reque, "History of Fort Atkinson, 1840-1849," unpub. mss.; Marshall McKusick, "Tale of Two Forts: Exploring Old Fort Madison and Old Fort Atkinson," Iowa Magazine 15(Fall 1966), 10-13, 50-51; McKusick, "Fort Atkinson Artifacts," Palimpsest 56(Jan.-Feb. 1975), 15-21.

[3]See for example: Upper Explorerland Resource Conservation and Development Project, Project Plan (Des Moines: Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1973), p. 3; see also interpretive sign in front of the entrance to Ft. Atkinson.

[4]Jean Cutler Prior, A Regional Guide to Iowa Landforms, Iowa Geological Survey Educational Series 3 (Iowa City: State of Iowa, 1976), pp. 28-31.

[5]Charles S. Gwynne, "The Fort Atkinson State Monument," Iowa Conservationist 13(August 1954), p. 64.

[6]See: Capt. Issac Lynde to Brig. Gen. George M. Brooke, 26 January 1841, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; "Contract for Digging a Well at Ft. Atkinson," 18 June 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Lt. S. Hamilton to T.S. Jesup, 3 December 1842, Records of the Office of Quartermaster General.

[7]Laws of Iowa 1852-53, p. 202.

[8]Reque, p. 104.

[9]Quoted in Ft. Atkinson Business Men, History and Views of Old Fort Atkinson (Fort Atkinson, Iowa: Old Fort Press, n.d. [c. 1900], p. [2].

[10]Fort Atkinson Business Men, History and Views of Old Fort Atkinson (Fort Atkinson, Iowa: Old Fort Press, n.d. [c. 1900], p. [4].

[11]Woodworth Clum, "Fort Atkinson, A Pigsty," Iowa Magazine September 1919, p. 7.

[12]Woodworth Clum, Old Fort Is Used as Home for Pigs (reprint ed. Fort Atkinson: State Park Committee, n.d. [1922?], p. [6].

[13]Proceedings of the Executive Council, Iowa Official Register 1923-24, p. 612.

[14]State Conservation Commission, "Master Property Plat of Ft. Atkinson Historic Area," August 12, 1968.

[15]Sigurd S. Reque to M.L. Hutton, 19 April 1939, Records of the Iowa State Conservation Commission.

[16]Merrill J. Mattes, "Historian's Report on Preservation of Fort Atkinson, Iowa," State Conservation Commission Files.

[17]Compiled by Jack Galliart.

II. HISTORY OF THE FORT

The story of Fort Atkinson is not the stuff of which legends are made. No famous battles were fought there. No glorious victories or ignoble defeats occurred in its vicinity. No great decisions were made within its walls. In this way, the story of Ft. Atkinson is like that of most of the army posts in the Upper Mississippi Valley. In this sense, Ft. Atkinson was like most of the posts the United States Army built on the trans-Mississippi frontier.

The post was built in order to carry out the policy of the United States government to remove Indians who lived east of the Mississippi to new homes selected for them west of the great river. The troops at Ft. Atkinson played a significant part in the removal of the Winnebagoes, a drama which unfolded in Wisconsin and crossed over to the Iowa country. Without the removal of the Winnebagoes, there was no reason to build Ft. Atkinson. The Winnebagoes are central to the story of the fort. This report tells a small portion of the full story of the removal of the Winnebagoes. The Winnebagoes would move at least three more times after leaving Iowa until their forced migration ended on the plains of Nebraska. This report puts the participants, the Winnebago and the U.S. Army, into historical perspective, and relates the decisions and events which led to the Winnebagoes' removal to Iowa in 1840. It also sketches the building of Ft. Atkinson on the Turkey River and describes the activities of the garrison stationed at this post until it was abandoned in 1849.

The Winnebagoes

In 1840 the Winnebagoes were living in Wisconsin Territory in a roughly triangular area bounded on the west by the Mississippi, on the north by the Wisconsin and Fox rivers, and on the south by the Rock River, with the apex of the figure at Lake Winnebago. They had lived in the woodlands of Wisconsin before contact with Whites in the 17th century, but in the 19th century the ever increasing pressure of Americans for more land forced the Winnebagoes to make treaties ceding their ancestral home. By 1840, the Winnebagoes had ceded all of their land east of the Mississippi in return for vague promises of a new home somewhere west of that river.

The first contact the Winnebago had with Whites was in 1634. In that year Samuel de Champlain, governor of Quebec, sent Jean Nicolet with a group of Huron Indians to find the nation known then only as "gens de mer," people of the sea. The purpose of the expedition was to conclude a peace treaty between these people and the Hurons. Nicolet found the Winnebago in the summer of 1634 living along Green Bay. The Frenchman was warmly received and the news of his visit spread to the surrounding tribes until some 4,000 to 5,000 Indians converged on Green Bay for the peace council. Nicolet returned home with a report of his successful expedition the following year.[1]

When the Winnebago were first contacted by Nicolet, they occupied a unique position in that they were surrounded by tribes that spoke languages unrelated to their own. The Winnebago language belongs to the Siouan linguistic family. In 1634, the tribe was hemmed in on

all sides by tribes that spoke Algonquian languages. With the Menominee to the north, the Miami to the southeast, the Sauk and Fox to the southwest, and the Chippewa to the west, the Winnebago could communicate with their neighbors only through interpreters. The Winnebagoes' nearest linguistic relatives were the Ioways who inhabited the rolling prairies west of the great river. The Ioways' neighbors, the Oto and the Missouri, were Siouan speakers, too. The Winnebago, Ioway, Oto, and Missouri spoke dialects that were mutually intelligible. Anthropologist James Owen Dorsey was told by Ioway chiefs that "their people and the Oto, Missouri, Omaha, and Ponca 'once formed part of the Winnebago nation.' According to the traditions of these tribes, at an early period they came with the Winnebago from their priscan home north of the Great Lakes, but that the Winnebago stopped on the shore of a great lake (Lake Michigan), attracted by the abundant fish."[2]

Nor surprisingly, the Winnebagoes share cultural traits with both their geographical neighbors as well as with their linguistic neighbors. For example, the gable lodge, one type of building used by the Winnebago, was reportedly still used by the Sauk and Fox living near Tama, Iowa, as late as 1910. Other types of lodges the Winnebago apparently had were the round lodge, the long lodge, the grass lodge, the platform lodge, the ceremonial lodge, the sweat lodge, and the reed-covered tipi. The round lodges and long lodges were sometimes made with sides of bark and a roof of reed mattings, though generally they were covered entirely with either bark or reed mattings. All three types of round and long lodges were still found in use among the

Winnebagoes in the early 20th century, but they were storehouses then, not habitations. (See Illus. 1 & 2.) According to anthropologist Paul Radin, "these bark and reed matting lodges are in all probability of Central Algonquian origin."[3]

In 1718 Sieur de la Mothe Cadillac, the commandant of the French post at Michillimackinac, wrote of the Winnebago that "in their persons and their habits they are the cleanest among the Savages; and their women are the least dirty, and are exceedingly careful to keep their cabins very clean and tidy--not a very common quality among other Savage women."[4] These habits must have persisted to the 19th century. Juliette Kinzie, the wife of an Indian agent, was struck by the appearance of a Winnebago village she and her husband visited in 1831 enroute to Ft. Dearborn from Ft. Winnebago. "How beautiful the encampment looked in the morning sun!" she wrote. The appearance of the reed-covered lodges made a lasting impression on her. "The matted lodges, with the blue smoke curling from their tops--the trees and bushes powdered with a light snow which had fallen through the night--the lake, shining and sparkling, almost at our feet--even the Indians, in their peculiar costume, adding [sic] to the picturesque!"[5]

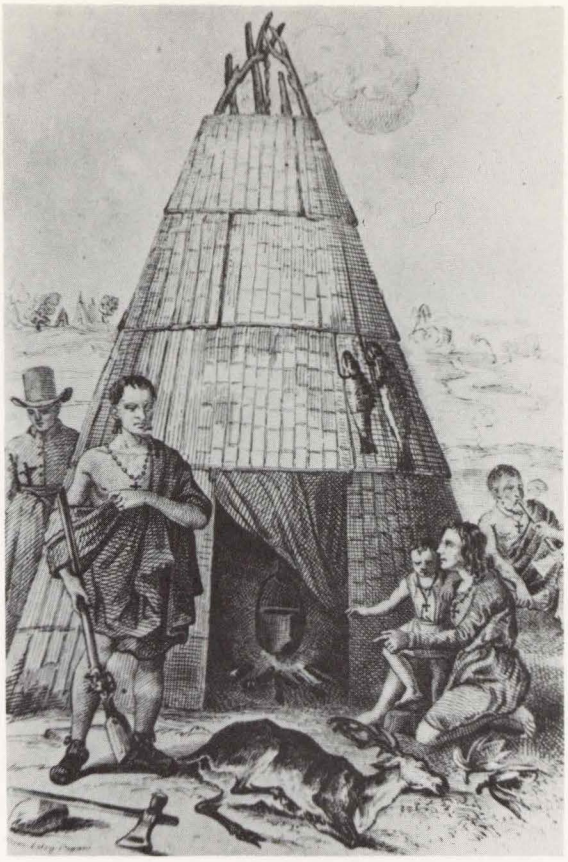
The "peculiar costume" of the Winnebagoes was generally made of cloth with ribbon work or plain buckskin. Men and women wore buckskin shirts fringed at the seam of the sleeve and shoulder and along the length of the arm. A man's shirt was beaded about the collar and over the shoulders down the front. A woman's shirt was similar but longer. Men's leggings were of either cloth or buckskin

and worn skin-tight. Cloth flaps at the bottom of the leggings were decorated on the outside with ribbon-work. A boy's buckskin leggings had fringe only at the top, while an adult's was fringed at all edges. A woman's leggings were considerably different from a man's. There was no flap to fall over the moccasin. The legging consisted simply of a piece of buckskin folded about itself with a cuff at the top.[6]

Breechclouts were often three strips of plain material slipped over a belt with beaded cloth flaps front and rear, or simply two apron-like ornamented pieces of cloth with no material passing between the legs. The skirt worn by women was one piece of broadcloth wrapped around the body with the ends in front to show the meeting of horizontal bands of ribbon applique. The skirt was worn tucked over a woven belt. Outside the belt women wore a short shirtwaist decorated with ribbon-work. More handsome ribbon-work decorated the shawl or cloth blanket women wore over their shoulders. Footwear for men and women both was the moccasin, though there was a different pattern for each sex.[7]

Earrings, bracelets, and arm bands were usually made of beadwork or silver. Various things including seeds and elk's teeth were strung together as necklaces. Garters and bandoliers, long sashes with bags attached, were beaded, though at one time only woven buffalo hair was used for bandoliers and cross belts while animal skins, preferably skunk, were used to make garters. It was common for two or three bandoliers to be worn at one time.[8]

Both men and women braided their hair, the women in one long braid which was encased in beaded cloth on special occasions and the



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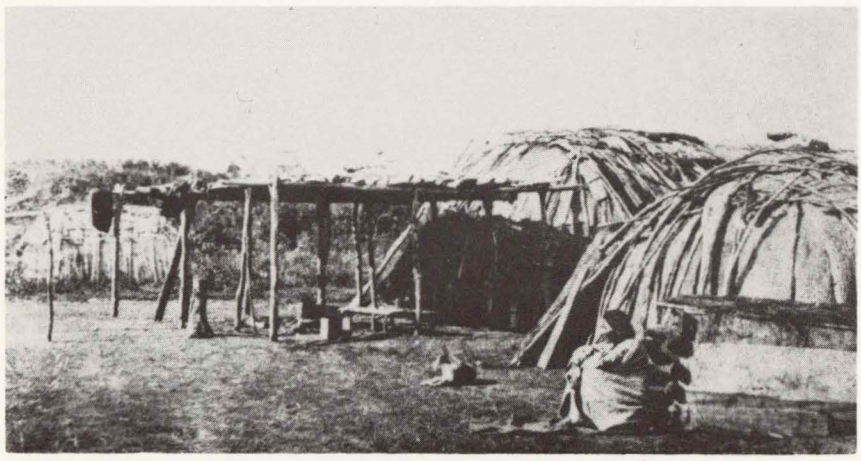


ILLUS. 2 WINNEBAGO LODGES c. 1860

men in two. Men colored the part in their hair. Some men adopted the style of their neighbors, the Sauk and Fox, and wore a roach woven from deer hair, dyed red, and stretched over a triangular carved bone frame. An eagle feather was inserted in one of the bones which was sometimes decorated also with rattlesnake rattles and dyed horsehair.[9] (See Illus. 3 & 4.)

Winnebago social organization was based on two divisions. The Upper or Air division was made up of the Thunderbird, War People, Eagle, and Pidgeon clans. There were eight clans in the Lower or Earth division: the Bear, Wolf, Water-spirit, Deer, Elk, Buffalo, Fish, and Snake clans. Descent was reckoned patrilineally, and people were expected to marry outside their clan and their division. In other words, people of the Earth division were expected to marry people of the Air division and vice versa. Each clan had specific customs governing birth, naming feasts, death, and funeral ceremonies. The Bear and Thunderbird clans were the most important clans of their respective divisions. The Bear clan performed policing and disciplinary duties and punished or executed prisoners and offenders in their clan lodge. The lodge of the Thunderbird clan was the peace lodge where disputes were arbitrated by the chief of the tribe.[10]

When Jonathan Carver visited Lake Winnebago in 1766, he reported that a "queen" presided over the tribe living there. This was Hopokoekau, or Glory of the Morning. Actually, she was the sister of the head chief of the village and the mother of two prominent chiefs. Her place in Winnebago history is significant. In their pursuit of the

fur trade, French traders had lived and trapped among the Indians since the 17th century, and it was not uncommon for these men to take Indian wives. Sabrevoir De Carrie, a former officer in the French army, had traded among the Winnebago since 1729 when he married Glory of the Morning a few years later. De Carrie lived with the woman some seven or eight years, and Glory of the Morning bore him three children. The two sons had Indian names but were also known by their father's name. The eldest son, Choukeka, was also known as Spoon Dekaury, or Decorah, a variation of the spelling of De Carrie. Choukeka's brother, Cha-post-kaw-raw, was also known as Buzzard Decorah. When Sabrevoir De Carrie left his wife to return to Montreal, he took their daughter with him. There he re-enlisted in the French army and was mortally wounded while defending Quebec against the British onslaught in 1760. The daughter married a Quebec merchant and returned to her homeland with her husband who set up a trading post at Green Bay. The union of De Carrie and Glory of the Morning was the beginning of the Decorah family, whose contemporary members number well into the hundreds. Several of the grandsons of De Carrie and Glory of the Morning, including Waukon Decorah whose name was affixed to two towns in northeastern Iowa, were prominent figures among the Winnebago in 1840 when Ft. Atkinson was founded.[11]

Through alliances such as that of Glory of the Morning and Sabrevoir De Carrie and through trading partnerships, the Winnebago and the French remained on friendly terms until the latter were expelled from the North American continent in 1763. The Winnebago

ILLUS. 3 WINNEBAGO WOMAN

ILLUS. 4 WINNEBAGO MAN

managed fairly good relations, too, with their neighbors the Menominee, the Miami, and the Chippewa. The Menominee and the Winnebago combined gave shelter to the Ottawa and the Pottawatomi when these tribes were driven westward by the Iroquois. The Sauk and Fox also found a friend in the Winnebago when they were forced out of southern Michigan. Despite the near constant hostility between the French and the Sauk and Fox, the Winnebago were able to maintain relations with both groups, although there were occasional flare-ups with their Indian neighbors.

Loyalty was strong among the Winnebago. When the British conquered New France in 1763, the Winnebago only slowly gave their allegiance to the victors, but once they did it was firm. They remained faithful to the British Crown through the American Revolution to the end of the War of 1812 when they again reluctantly changed their fealty, this time to the United States.[12]

The Frontier Army

Except for a few brief months in the 30 years between 1816 and the start of the Mexican War in 1846, the frontier army in the Upper Mississippi Valley was a peacetime army. Charged with the responsibility of defending America's borders and protecting the people within them, the United States Army often found itself in the contradictory position of providing security for frontiersmen while attempting to safeguard Indian rights from encroachment by the lawlessness of the very frontiersmen who demanded protection. Service in the frontier army was dull and monotonous. To be sure, the army was nearly always in

the vanguard of the frontier, but this meant not that the troops were constantly engaged in warfare against Indians. Rather, soldiers in the frontier army did battle against the wilderness with shovel and broad-ax, hammer and nail, trowel and mortar. Like other pioneers, the frontier army spent much of its time bringing human order to the chaos of Nature by felling trees, planting crops, and building roads, bridges, and forts.

The first United States military expedition in the Upper Mississippi Valley took place in 1805 when Lt. Zebulon Pike traveled to the Falls of St. Anthony commissioned to obtain rights to establish military posts and trading houses from the Indians he encountered. One of the most important discoveries Pike made on his trip was the strong British presence in the region. To counter this influence, the United States built military posts at strategic points: Ft. Dearborn near the head of Lake Michigan, Ft. Mackinac between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan, and Ft. Madison near the junction of the Des Moines River and the Mississippi. Each of these posts was abandoned to the British during the War of 1812.

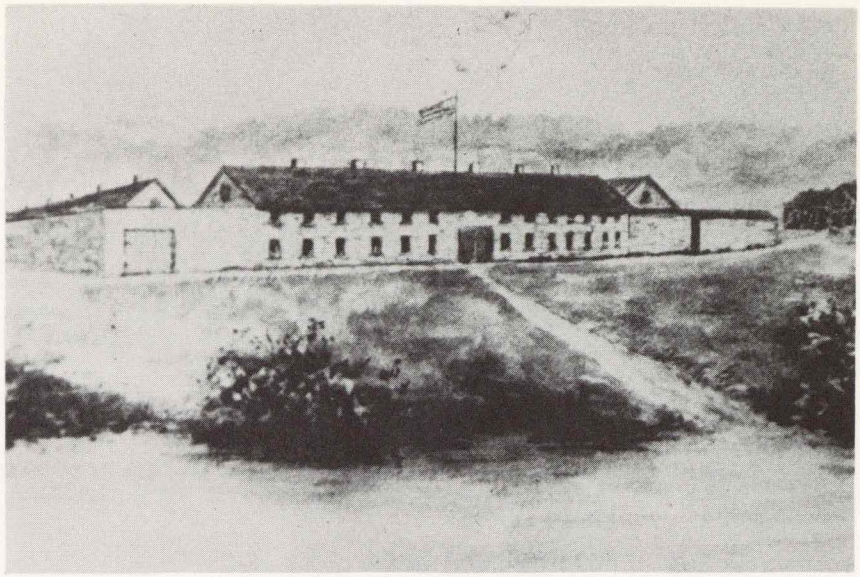
Following the war, the United States undertook to re-establish sovereignty in the Upper Mississippi Valley by building a chain of forts along the Mississippi. Ft. Edwards at the Des Moines rapids was begun in 1815 as the first in a series of posts intended to prevent British encroachment and to encourage Indian and American commerce. The following spring, troops landed at Rock Island and started Ft. Armstrong. Located at the southern end of the island, Ft. Armstrong

provided protection for new settlers in Illinois from the Sauk and Fox who still showed signs of British allegiance. Ft. Armstrong was an important link with the key frontier post at Prairie du Chien. In July of 1816, U.S. troops arrived at the sleepy French village and reoccupied a post abandoned during the war. The post was renamed Ft. Crawford after the Secretary of War. Strategically located at the crossroads of the Mississippi and Fox-Wisconsin river highway, Ft. Crawford became a supply depot for other frontier posts and after 1840 was Ft. Atkinson's main link with the outside world. (See Illus. 5.) Located at the eastern end of the Fox-Wisconsin riverway, Ft. Howard was established at Green Bay. Farther down Lake Michigan Ft. Dearborn was re-established. The final link in this chain of military establishments was forged in 1820 at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers. High on a bluff overlooking these two rivers, a stone fortress was constructed and named Ft. St. Anthony after the falls seven miles upstream. Later the fort would be renamed Ft. Snelling to recognize the accomplishments of the post's commander and principal engineer.[13]

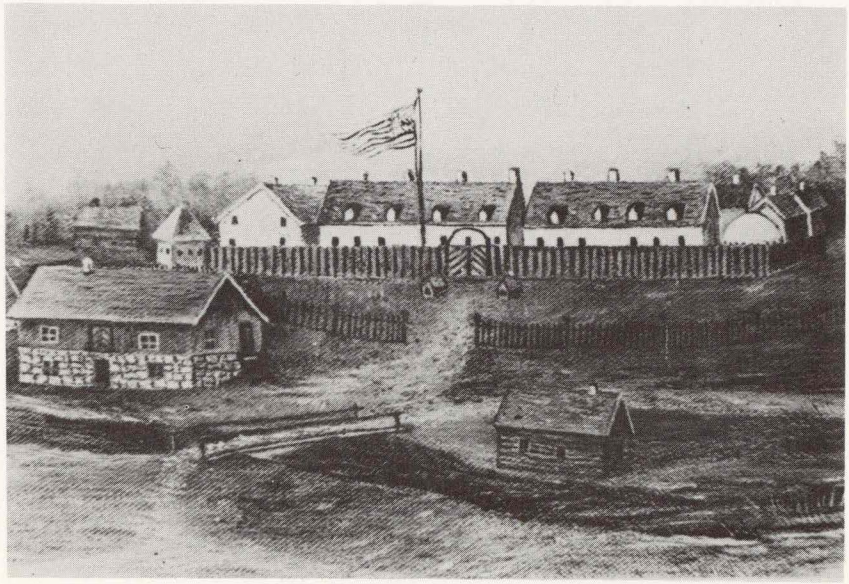
The War Department's plans for frontier defense extended well beyond the Upper Mississippi Valley. Posts were originally planned for the headwaters of the Minnesota and along the Missouri as far north as the mouth of the Yellowstone. But the United States' venture up the Missouri hit a snag in congressional opposition to the cost of the undertaking and got only as far as Council Bluffs. There, on the Nebraska side of the Missouri, the first Ft. Atkinson was established in 1819.[14]

Often the exigencies of the frontier necessitated the postponement of long range military plans in favor of short-term solutions to immediate problems. Many frontier posts, like Ft. Winnebago for example, were built to meet specific problems. (See Illus. 6.) In 1827, the Winnebago became disturbed with the increasing encroachment on their lands by miners in search of lead. That summer the tension reached a climax when a band of Indians led by Red Bird killed three Whites and shot at a party of soldiers descending the Mississippi by keelboat. This Winnebago uprising caused more hysteria than bloodshed. Fears of an Indian war were so great that more than 700 soldiers coverged on Prairie du Chien with about a third of the troops coming from Ft. Snelling and the balance from St. Louis commanded by General Henry Atkinson. Red Bird gave himself up in the face of so numerous a force. Ft. Winnebago was established a year later at the portage between the Fox and Wisconsin rivers so the army could keep a watchful eye on the Indians in the middle of Winnebago territory.[15]

Prior to the Mexican war, the actual size of the frontier army was small. At the end of the War in 1812, the army had an authorized strength of 10,000 men, but in 1821 Congress slashed this number by nearly half, limiting the army to 7 regiments of infantry and 4 of artillery. Many frontier posts had no more than a few companies of 50 or 60 men each stationed at them for any length of time. With so few men at each isolated fort, post commanders seldom enforced the strict discipline called for in General Regulations and often neglected drilling the troops. Military exercises were often shunned in favor of



ILLUS. 5 FT. CRAWFORD



ILLUS. 6 FT. WINNEBAGO

work on fortifications and even such unmartial duties as building roads and plowing fields.[16]

The isolation and drudgery of life at the frontier posts were hardly inducements to joining the army. Low pay and lack of opportunity for advancement contributed to recruitment problems. An enlisted man earned but 5 dollars a month and even a civilian laborer could make more under better conditions. The natural result of these conditions was two fold: low caliber recruits and a high desertion rate. Problems in the American army were compounded by the fact recruits were often not American citizens at all. While Americans generally spurned the low pay, recent immigrants found the promise of steady employment the army offered attractive. A British traveler on the frontier, Charles Latrobe, remarked that the regular army was a "rag-tag-and-bob-tail herd" composed of English, Irish, and German emigrants. Frederick Marryat, traveling across Wisconsin in 1838 shortly after an ill-starred rebellion in Canada, fell in with a group of recent recruits on their way to Ft. Winnebago. "The detachment consisted of about one hundred recruits," Marryat observed, "nearly the whole of them Canada patriots, as they are usually called, who, having failed in taking provinces from John Bull, were fain to accept the shilling from uncle Sam."[17]

In 1833 Congress attempted to solve some of the problems of the army by increasing the pay slightly, offering a bonus for reenlistment, and restoring whipping as punishment for desertion. Nevertheless, the problems of recruitment and desertion remained. "The fact that the army was composed largely of men of meager training, limited ability,

and low morals was itself a hindrance to recruiting," observed historian Francis Paul Prucha, "for the better classes of Americans hesitated to engage in a disreputable occupation."[18]

By contrast, officers were usually from the higher ranks of society and were almost always American citizens. Trained at the Military Academy in mathematics and engineering and disciplined in the military arts, officers accepted the difficulties of frontier existence through their devotion to service to their country. While they lacked many of the luxuries of contemporary society, the officer's lot was an improvement over that of the enlisted man. The pay was better and servants were often employed to make life easier for the officer and his family. Still, this was little consolation for having to endure the criticism and prejudice of a society that viewed the discipline and subordination of the military as contrary to the principles of freedom and individualism. A standing army had been anathema to Americans since the Revolution.[19]

This, then, was the frontier army that was responsible for defending the thousands of miles of America's frontier borders and with carrying out the federal government's Indian policy.

Federal Indian Policy

The Constitution gave Congress the power to regulate commerce with the Indian tribes, and beginning in 1790, Congress interpreted this power broadly. Laws were enacted to designate Indian territory, to license traders on Indian land, and to establish a system of government trading houses called "factories." In addition, the

government advocated the eventual assimilation of the Indian into White society. To this end, the government supplied the Indian with agricultural implements, livestock, looms, and spinning wheels ignoring that some tribes had their own techniques for farming and weaving. The War Department, which had responsibility for Indian affairs, hoped the Indian would accept White notions of private ownership of land and settle down on their own tracts to become yeoman farmers. But in the 1820s several important changes took place in the government's attitude toward the Indian.

In 1822, the United States government ceased its direct economic partnership with Indians by abandoning its system of fur trading posts to private enterprise. Part of the reason for this shift in policy was due to the increasing costs of maintaining government factories. The center of the fur trade had long since moved out of the Upper Mississippi Valley to the Rocky Mountains of the Far West. There, the independent trapper became increasingly important in the dying years of the trade, supplanting direct company or government trade with Indians for furs. In the Central Rockies, William Ashley in 1825 initiated the "rendezvous system" for supplying the independent mountain men. More important to this shift in policy was the pressure on Congress applied by the private fur trading concerns like John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company who insisted that the government get out of the fur business. With the factory system abolished in 1822, the American Fur Company was in firm control of the trade in the Upper Mississippi Valley, and the old system of direct trade with Indians continued on a smaller scale.

The number of fur-bearing animals in the region had diminished sharply by the 1820s. Along the trapped out streams and rivers of the Upper Mississippi Valley there was little room for the independent trapper and his rendezvous. He could fare much better in the unexplored Rockies, far from encroaching farmers.[20]

The second important change in Indian-Government relations was administrative. The Secretary of War was relieved of some of the tedium in the administration of Indian Policy in 1824 with the creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Secretary continued to direct overall policy, while the clerks of the new bureau shuffled the paper since jurisdiction remained within the War Department.[21]

The third and most important change occurred in the government's attitude toward the future of the Indian. Secretary of State Henry Clay in an 1825 meeting of President John Quincy Adams' cabinet stated this new attitude uncompromisingly. Clay argued, "It was impossible to civilize Indians." And he was quoted as saying "that there never was a full-blooded Indian who took to civilization. It was not their nature."[22] Rather than attempt to assimilate Indians into White society, the government now tried to persuade tribes to migrate west of the Mississippi. Despite efforts by some tribes to adopt White ways, the government insisted that removal to west of the Mississippi was in the best interests of the Indian, and if necessary, removal would be undertaken with force. Actually, Adams had inherited the policy from his predecessor James Monroe who had proposed the policy to Congress, and Monroe had in turn formalized an idea Thomas Jefferson had first

proposed in 1803. Congress finally acted in 1830 and passed the Removal Bill, and President Andrew Jackson, who had pushed hard for the bill, became the removal policy's staunchist proponent. Treaty after treaty was negotiated with eastern tribes to establish boundaries to Indian land, to extinguish title to that land, and to prepare Indians for immediate or future removal.

Winnebago Land Cessions

By the time Ft. Atkinson was established in 1840, the Winnebagoes had ceded all of their land east of the Mississippi. Pressured by the government, the Winnebagoes participated in negotiations ceding land 7 times before 1866. Of special significance to the founding of Ft. Atkinson are the 5 treaties negotiated between 1825 and 1837. A sixth treaty signed in 1846 led to the removal of the tribe to Minnesota and the abandonment of the post on the Turkey River.[23]

In 1825, the United States called a conference to establish peace among the tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley. Representatives of the Sioux, the Chippewa, the Sauk and Fox, the Menominee, the Ioway, and the Winnebago met at Prairie du Chien with the United States commissioners, William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, and Lewis Cass, Governor of Michigan Territory. Among those representing the Winnebago were Wan-ca-ha-ga, also known as Waukon Decorah, his brother, Watch-kat-o-que or Big Canoe, De-ca-ri or Old Gray Headed Decorah, Chon-que-pa or Dog's Head, Co-ra-no-nee or Walking Turtle, and 6 others. Boundaries that followed natural features like streams were drawn up by Cass and Clark in hopes that

the tribes would respect territorial rights. The concept of borders between tribes was foreign to the Indians. Co-ra-mo-nee told the commissioners the Winnebago position:

> My fathers, what has been said coincides with my feelings --I am glad you have met us here to make peace & give us good advice. I have a small tract of Country of which I wish to tell you. It is where I was born & now live. It commences at our village on Lake Winnebago. The Lands I claim are mine and the nations here know it. [It] is not only claimed by us but by our brothers and Sacs & Foxes Menominees Iowas, Mahas (Omahas) & Sioux they have used it in common--it would be difficult to divide it--It belongs as much to one as the other.[24]

The commissioners, however, forged ahead. They drew a straight line on the map from the mouth of the Upper Iowa River to the second fork of the Des Moines, a line that followed no natural barrier. They hoped this "Neutral Line" across rolling prairies would separate the Sioux on the north and the Sauk and Fox on the south.

The boundaries established by the Treaty of 1825 became the boundaries the Winnebagoes claimed in later years, but the lines were hardly dry on the map when the boundaries were violated by lead miners. Joseph M. Street, the Indian agent, explained to Governor Edwards of Illinois some of the reasons for the Winnebago uprising in 1827. Street wrote Edwards that the Winnebago were upset that "the vast number of adventurers flocking to and working the lead mines of the Fever River" were doing so in "open violation of the treaty" and that the miners showed "great contempt" for the Indians.[25] The result of the uprising was the cession of the mining district to the United States in the Treaty of 1829 and the building of Ft. Winnebago.

The Winnebagoes were not the only ones having difficulties with the newly drawn boundaries. The Neutral Line had not prevented the Sioux from attacking and killing a large delegation of Sauk and Fox on their way to Prairie du Chien. In 1830 the friends and relatives of the slain Indians balked at meeting with the Sioux to resolve their differences, but the United States commissioners, William Clark and Colonel Willoughby Morgan, commander of Ft. Crawford, persuaded them to join the treaty council. In the Treaty of 1830, the Sauk and Fox and the Sioux agreed to cede to the United States 25 mile wide strips of land on either side of the Neutral Line creating a demilitarized zone between them that was called the "Neutral Ground."

Two years later the Black Hawk War broke out. The Winnebagoes feigned neutrality during the brief war, although their sympathies were clearly with the Sauk warrior Black Hawk. Despite Winnebago aid in the eventual capture of Black Hawk after the Battle of Bad Axe, the Whites in the mining country and in the settlements of northern Illinois clamored for the Winnebagoes' removal at the war's end. The war had given several thousand militia men and volunteers a good look at the Indians' bountiful land. In September 1832, the government forced its removal policy on the Winnebagoes. At a Ft. Armstrong meeting with the U.S. representatives, Major General Winfield Scott and Governor John Reynolds of Illinois, Walking Turtle, Waukon Decorah, Old Gray Headed Decorah, Mo-rah-tshay-kaw or Little Priest, and 36 others signed a treaty ceding all Winnebago land south and east of the Winsconsin and Fox rivers. In return, the Winnebago were given a

portion of the Neutral Ground from the Mississippi to the Red Cedar River and promised annual payments of 10,000 dollars for 27 years. The Winnebagoes were also promised a school to be built near Prairie du Chien, 6 farmers to teach them White farming methods, and a blacksmith shop.[27]

The Winnebago had agreed to move to the Neutral Ground by June of 1833, but they were reluctant to do so, fearing retribution from the Sauk and Fox for having handed Black Hawk over to the Whites and fearing attacks from their sometime adversaries the Sioux. Instead, some of the nearly 4,500 Winnebago stayed on the ceded land, while other bands drifted north of the Wisconsin River intent on starting new villages. Then, in 1834, a small pox epidemic swept the tribe. Close to a quarter of the tribe were stricken and died. Moses Paquette, a Winnebago interpreter who was just a child at the time, recalled the horror of the epidemic for an interviewer in 1887. "The medicine men soon abandoned their futile attempts to stay the ravages of the pest," Paquette remembered, "and the survivors simply fled before it like a herd of stricken deer, leaving their dead and dying behind them, unburied." Paquette's father, who was also a Winnebago interpreter, saved his family by having them vaccinated by the army surgeon at Ft. Winnebago, but most of the tribe scattered over the countryside in panic.[28]

In 1835 the Winnebagoes were on the verge of starvation. One band on the Baraboo River had 70 acres of land under cultivation, but the Winnebagoes still depended heavily on trade with agents of the

American Fur Company to supplement government annuities. The hunting that year was poor. By 1836, the president of the fur company, Ramsay Crooks, saw the end of the Upper Mississippi Valley fur trade and recognized that the days of the Winnebago east of the great river were numbered. Crooks wrote a business friend that "the game has disappeared like snow before a summer sun" in the region and that "for what little remains we find an opponent in almost every farmer, so that the trade is not worth pursuing, especially as the Government will in 1837 complete the removal of the Indians to the West of the Mississippi, where they must till the ground or starve."[29]

The fur company president's prediction of the complete removal of the Winnebago was premature, but in 1837 the federal government did persuade a delegation of Indians to negotiate again. This time Big Canoe, Co-ra-mo-nee, Little Priest, Waukon Decorah, Yellow Thunder, and 15 other Winnebagoes, including Ma-hee-koo-shay-nuz-he-kah whose father Old Gray Headed Decorah had died the previous year, journeyed to Washington with their agent, interpreters, and representatives of the American Fur Company to meet with Commissioner of Indian Affairs Carrie A. Harris. There, in November, a treaty was signed ceding all Winnebago land east of the Mississippi to the United States. The Winnebago also gave up the right to occupy that portion of the Neutral Ground granted to them in 1832. In return, the United States agreed to pay certain debts owed to traders at Prairie du Chien, some of whom coincidentally had accompanied the Indians to Washington, and to provide the Indians with provisions, horses, and a grist mill. The Indians

would be allowed to stay on the Neutral Ground until a permanent settlement could be found for them, preferably one beyond the Missouri River. With this final land cession, the stage was set for the removal of the Winnebago to the Iowa country.

Founding Ft. Atkinson

Ft. Atkinson was built to keep the Winnebagoes on the Neutral Ground after their removal from Wisconsin and to provide protection for them from the Sioux and the Sauk and Fox as well as from White intruders on Indian land. The War Department had planned on another location for the fort, but Brigadier General Henry Atkinson persuaded his superiors to accept the Turkey River location for the temporary post.

Although the Winnebago had agreed to move to the Neutral Ground in the Treaty of 1837, it became clear to the War Department that most of the tribe would not go peaceably. The commander of Ft. Crawford, Brevet Brigadier General George M. Brooke, wrote Washington about the tribe in February of 1839. He located their villages at Lake Winnebago, at the Portage of the Fox and Wisconsin, at Fond-du-lac and Rock rivers, and near the White settlements at Sheboygan, Racine, and Milwaukee. In what was probably an overestimate, Brooke placed the population of the tribe near 5,000 of whom he guessed 2,000 were warriors. As to the Winnebagoes' pledge to move to the Neutral Ground, Brooke told his superior that they "will not remove without coercion." To counter Indian resistance, the general recommended that reinforcements be sent to the area to aid the 5 companies of the 5th Infantry stationed

there. He suggested that they be sent in three groups--one up the Mississippi to Ft. Armstrong, one from Chicago to the upper Rock River, and one from Ft. Howard to the Fond-du-lac River--to cover any possible retreat by the Indians. A show of force of about 2,000 troops, he felt, would coerce the Winnebago into moving to Iowa.[30]

The Winnebago, for their part, had good reason to continue to balk at moving to the Neutral Ground despite their promises to do so. While hunting along the Wapsipinicon in the fall of 1839, the camp of a group of Winnebagoes was attacked by a war party of Sauk and Fox. Two Winnebagoes were taken captive and 4 men, 6 women, and 10 children were killed. This was the third attack since 1834 on the Winnebagoes by people who were to be their neighbors on the Neutral Ground.[31] The government was going to have to act to prevent such attacks in the future if they expected the Winnebago to remain on the west side of the river.

The following spring the government resolved to force the removal. Brig. Gen. Atkinson arrived at Ft. Crawford in April 1840 to take charge of the operation. The War Department agreed to commit just over 1,000 troops. The plan was a scaled down version of the one suggested by Gen. Brooke. Troops from Ft. Howard at Green Bay would sweep east, escorting the Winnebago to the Mississippi. Upon his arrival at Prairie du Chien, Atkinson was told that nearly half the Winnebagoes were now willing to move, but that the bands living at the Portage were refusing to leave. In order to force their compliance, Atkinson ordered an interpreter to invite the leaders of

the Portage bands, Yellow Thunder and Little Soldier, to Ft. Winnebago on the pretense of giving them provisions. When they arrived, the Indians were arrested, chained, and thrown in the guardhouse. When Atkinson arrived a few weeks later with 240 men of the 5th Infantry, the Winnebagoes were in a conciliatory mood.[32]

Meeting in council with the Portage bands, Atkinson promised the Indians that he would provide protection for them if they moved to the Neutral Ground. What Atkinson had in mind was the posting of a few troops at a site on the Turkey River. The War Department had been contemplating for some time building a permanent post on the Red Cedar River about 50 miles to the southwest of the Turkey River site near the middle of the Neutral Ground. Atkinson had even assigned an officer to superintend the construction of the post before he left St. Louis. But at Prairie du Chien, the Indian agent, David Lowry, had told him that the Winnebago refused to move farther west than the Turkey River. Faced with the recalcitrance of the Indians, Atkinson ordered the barracks planned for the Red Cedar to be constructed at Turkey River. In the meantime, the War Department changed its mind and decided to shift the permanent post from the Red Cedar site to the western end of the Neutral Ground at the second fork of the Des Moines River. As soon as Atkinson heard this change in policy, he cancelled plans for a permanent post on Turkey River. Instead, he advocated a temporary post for the site to be built by troops, not contract labor. "I propose erecting by the labor of the troops, log cabins at a position on Turkey river [sic] thirty miles west of Prairie du Chien

for the accommodation of one company of Infantry, and if I have time for one Company of Dragoons," he wrote the Secretary of War. "This arrangement will satisfy the Winnebagoes and cost the government less than to erect the temporary huts on the Des Moines which you propose to be constructed this season." Before he received a reply, Atkinson ordered Capt. Isaac Lynde to proceed from Ft. Crawford to the Turkey River site to begin construction of the temporary post. By the time Gen. Atkinson's proposal was accepted in Washington, log buildings were already rising on the bluff overlooking Spring Creek.[33]

The Winnebagoes were less than satisfied, and they accepted removal reluctantly. A large number traveled down the Wisconsin River from the Portage to Prairie du Chien in two boats provided by the army. Patrols were sent out to round up the more reluctant Indians. John T. De La Ronde was the interpreter for one such patrol. De La Ronde described the break-up of a Winnebago camp along the Fox River. The Indians were told to put their belongings in the wagon for transport to Prairie du Chien. Then the Indians started off in the wrong direction. "The captain bade me to ask them where they were going," De La Ronde remembered. "They said they were going to bid good bye to their fathers, mothers, and children. The captain directed me to go with them, and watch them; and we found them on their knees, kissing the ground, and crying very loud, where their relatives were buried."[34]

When the Winnebagoes reached Prairie du Chien, the army provided 3 dollars per person for them to find their own way across the Mississippi. Satisfied that the removal was complete, Gen. Atkinson returned to his

home at Jefferson Barracks near St. Louis. In fact, there were still bands of Winnebagoes east of the Mississippi who refused to cross over to the Neutral Ground. The troops of Ft. Crawford and Ft. Atkinson would be kept busy rounding up recalcitrant Indians who slipped back into Wisconsin. Yellow Thunder, who had been imprisoned by Gen. Atkinson, was able to avoid removal permanently. With the help of John T. De La Ronde, he entered 40 acres of land about 8 miles above Portage, and settled down to farm his homestead.[35]

As the Winnebagoes crossed over into the Neutral Ground in late June, they discovered that the military protection Gen. Atkinson had promised them was already in place. Capt. Lynde, in command of Company F, 5th Infantry, had left Ft. Crawford on May 5th with orders to proceed to the Turkey River. The sites for the post and the Indian agency 5 miles downstream had been selected by David Lowry, the Indian agent, and two officers, Lt. Whipple, who was to superintend construction, and the Assistant Surgeon, William S. King. On May 31, 1840, Company F arrived at the Turkey River site and established Camp Atkinson, named in honor of the general. Capt. Lynde had arrived at the site with orders for his men to build log cabins to house subsistence stores sent from Ft. Crawford. Before he returned to Jefferson Barracks in June, Gen. Atkinson had given Lt. Whipple orders for the construction of the new post. There were to be a barracks and an officers' quarters, both 2 stories high and made of logs hewn flat on two sides. The barracks would also house a temporary hospital. The two log buildings were to be sited at a right angle to each other with

picket work enclosing the spaces at the corners of the buildings. The building of the fort proceeded apace that summer, but indecision and bureaucratic snafus would delay the completion of the buildings for more than two years.[36]

Building the Fort

On July 22, 1840, Lt. Whipple reported on the progress at the fort to the Quartermaster General in Washington. With the 81 men of Company F and 7 carpenters he hired, Whipple announced optimistically that he planned to have the buildings up and roofed with the logs chinked, interior walls built, and the ceiling plastered before winter set in. He was also planning to have stables constructed before the first snow. The officers' quarters, he told Quartermaster General Thomas Jesup, was 120 feet long by 19 feet wide and divided into 12 rooms, 6 on each floor. The other building, intended originally to be the soldiers' barracks and the hospital, was 140 feet by 20 feet and was now going to do extra duty as a commissary and sutler's store. Whipple closed his report with an innocent enough request. "Should we find ourselves backward in completing work in view, will it meet your approval to increase the number of mechanics to a greater extent than we at present contemplate?" he asked.[37]

Whipple hardly anticipated Jesup's response. "No appropriation has been made by Congress for the work constructing at your post," the Quartermaster General wrote back in August. "Consequently the employment of hired mechanics cannot be sanctioned." The work of building Ft. Atkinson, Whipple discovered, would have to be conducted by regular

troops who volunteered to do the extra duty for the small additional pay they could earn. The carpenters Whipple had hired would have to be dismissed. Thus the pattern for the construction of Ft. Atkinson was set. It would be a start-and-stop operation with some of the work performed by hired mechanics while the balance was done by troops on extra duty. Financing would be erratic too. Some funds would come out of the general appropriation for frontier defense with special amounts granted by Congress to settle long overdue accounts. The problem of finances would continue to plague quartermasters throughout the existence of the post.[38]

Winter came quickly to northeastern Iowa in 1840, and the work on the new post was halted sooner than expected. In late October, Capt. Lynde reported to the Adjutant General in Washington that his men had moved into the new quarters, although the interior work on the buildings that Lt. Whipple had planned was not yet complete. The plans called for accommodations for two companies, but by November only Capt. Lynde's company was in residence at the post. That month, the Quartermaster General reported on the progress of the work to Congress. "Barracks and other buildings for the accommodation of a company have been erected under the orders of General Atkinson," Thomas Jesup reported, "and it is proposed to provide, during the next season for the accommodation of another company." He went on to comment on the temporary nature of the post. "The presence of the white population, however, will compel the Winnebagoes, in a few years, to seek a home farther west or north," Jesup pointed out. "I propose,

therefore, that as little expense as possible, having due regard to the comfort, health, and security of the garrison, be incurred."[39]

No doubt it was the health and comfort of the garrison Capt. Lynde had in mind in January of 1841 when he suggested a change in construction materials to be used in the additional buildings at the new post. "The Buildings are very uncomfortable this winter," Lynde complained to Gen. Brooke of Ft. Crawford, "and three times the Government allowance of Fuel would not make them inhabitable." Only interior plastering and exterior weatherboarding would make these log buildings comfortable, and these steps would add considerably to the buildings' cost. Instead, Lynde suggested that stone be used for all future buildings. Adequate building stone, he pointed out, was much more abundant than good timber. "There is as good a quarry for buildingstone as could be wished, within fifty yards of the nearest point of the Garrison," he told Brooke, "and which [sic] can be quarried with as little expence [sic] as any I ever saw." He argued that the stone could be quarried by enlisted men without the use of blasting powder, but he also pointed out that workmen would have to be hired to do the masonry and carpentry work "as I have only three very indifferent Carpenters in my Company and only one Stone Mason." Still, he argued that stone buildings would be cheaper to erect than more log ones. "From a thorough examination into the comparative expences [sic] of building with Stone & Logs, in this prairie country," Lynde argued, "I am thoroughly convinced of the cheapness of the former."[40]

Lynde's suggestion was forwarded on to Thomas Jesup in Washington with Gen. Brooke's approval. By March, the War Department had decided that the additional company to be stationed at Ft. Atkinson would be a company of dragoons. But in order to accommodate the additional men and their horses, additional officers' quarters, barracks, and stables would have to be erected at the post quickly. Gen. Atkinson wrote Jesup advising him of the necessity for the new buildings at the Turkey River post. He requested that Jesup order the quartermaster in St. Louis to make preparations for the new buildings, and in April a contract was let that would turn Capt. Lynde's suggestion into a reality. On April 27th, Augustus A. Blumenthal contracted "to quarry Stone and put up a Block of Stone Barracks at Fort Atkinson Iowa Territory in a plain, substantial, workmanlike manner."[41]

While work began on the stone barracks, the log buildings remained unfinished. In June, Capt. Lynde requested permission to finish the work. That part of the log barracks used as the hospital was only partially floored, and both buildings were in sore need of plastering and weatherboarding. "Every driving storm comes in between the Logs," he told Jesup, "and, at this time, my quarters are wet with a rain storm of last night." Jesup relented the following month, and authorized the work, including the hiring of a carpenter and a plasterer, provided that the weatherboards were obtained from the sawmill at the Indian Agency and that the troops aided in the plastering.[42]

The winter of 1841-42 was passed in the still incomplete barracks and quarters. To complicate matters, there were nearly half

again as many men at the post this winter than the previous one. In June 1841, Company B of the 1st Dragoons had arrived to take up a 5 years' residence at the post. Then, in September, the 5th Infantry, including Capt. Lynde's Company F, was ordered to Florida under the command of Brig. Gen. Brooke. Replacing Brooke in command of Ft. Crawford was Col. William Davenport of the 1st Infantry who ordered Capt. J.J. Abercrombie of Company K to garrison his men at the Turkey River post.

The spring of 1842 found Ft. Atkinson "in a very rough state." Capt. Edwin Sumner, who arrived at the post in June from a recruiting tour in the east to take charge of the mounted troops, reported that the stone officers' quarters was still at least a month away from completion while the stone barracks had as yet no roof. In Washington, Quartermaster General Jesup was anxious to have the work at Ft. Atkinson completed. Jesup directed Capt. S.M. Plummer, the Acting Quartermaster at Ft. Crawford, to superintend the construction at Ft. Atkinson, and asked that he make a detailed estimate of the amount of money needed to finish the work. When he arrived at Ft. Atkinson, Plummer discovered outstanding debts of nearly 8,000 dollars in the accounts of the post and estimated that the cost of completing the buildings would equal that sum.[43]

The work remaining at the post was reported by Capt. J.H. Prentiss who arrived on an inspection tour 2 days after Plummer. Prentiss observed that 57 mechanics and laborers were at work on the buildings and the picket work. "The Stone Block for officers quarters

was nearly ready for occupancy," he reported, "but that for the men is not yet covered in." He estimated that the stone barracks might be finished in 2 or 3 months if additional funds were provided. The post, he added, still lacked a powder magazine. The day Prentiss arrived, a contract was let for the digging of a well. Also under construction was a commissary storehouse.[44]

Under Capt. Plummer's direction, the work advanced rapidly. A little over 3 weeks after he arrived at the post, Plummer was able to report considerable progress. "Since my report of June 16th the block of Officers Quarters therein refered [sic] to have been very nearly completed," he wrote Thomas Jesup. "The block of Soldier Quarters will be covered in to-morrow. The Commissary Store house is two thirds up and the Magazine nearly as far completed. The Well has been placed under contract agreeable to the order of the Commanding Officer, and has been sunk about twenty feet. Nearly three sides of the works have been picketed-in and the remaining Side will probably be completed in the course of two or three weeks." Plummer estimated that the work would be finished, "including the covering in of the Blockhouses," in 2 and a half months.[45]

The summer of 1842 was one of the busiest at Ft. Atkinson. Not only were the buildings rising rapidly, but official visitors arrived in quick succession to inspect the works. Capt. Prentiss' June inspection tour was followed by a July visit from the Inspector General. Colonel George Croghan, a veteran with a record of lengthy service on the frontier, praised Capt. Plummer's work and that of

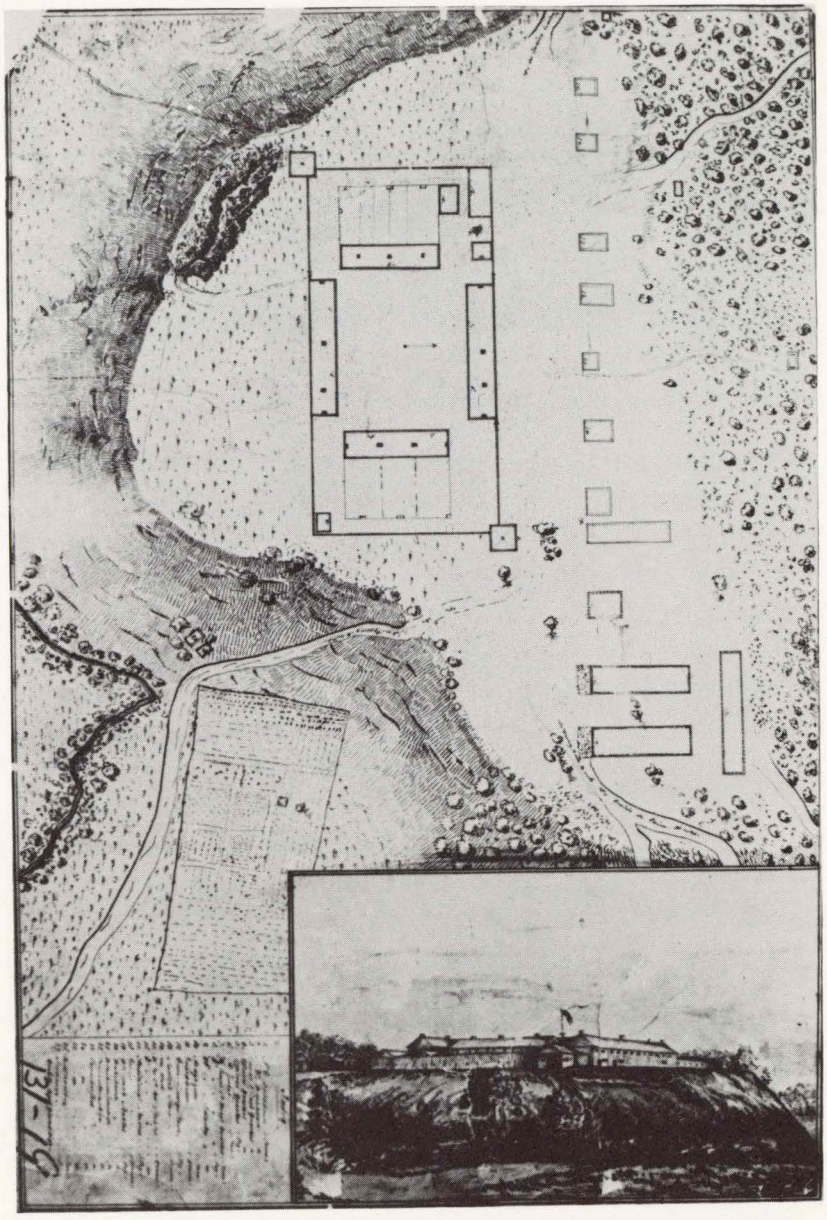
Lt. Schuyler Hamilton who was in charge of the Subsistence Department at the post. But Croghan was highly critical of the expenses incurred for what was ostensibly a temporary post. "Twenty eight thousand dollars & more have already been expended upon this post, nearly fourteen thousand beyond the amount appropriated by Congress, and five thousand dollars more are wanted to complete the work," the Inspector General pointed out. "No temporary work such as this ought to be, should cost more than five hundred dollars or require a longer time than a month in its erection."[46]

By the end of the summer the stress of rushing the work to completion was beginning to take its toll. Capt. Plummer's eyesight was failing under the burden of reading and preparing the mountain of paperwork and he returned to Ft. Crawford "to put myself under the care of Dr. McDougall." His successor, Lt. Hamilton, was faced with new overcrowding at the post. In August, a new company of dragoons, Company I of the 1st Dragoon Regiment, arrived from Ft. Gibson. With 3 companies at the post, the barracks and quarters were once more taxed to their limit. In addition, new stables would have to be built to accommodate the new company's horses and mules.[47]

Despite the crowded conditions, the fort was essentially complete by the end of the summer of 1842. In September, Lt. A.W. Reynolds sketched the post for the War Department's records. (See Illus. 7.) His plat showed the location of 24 buildings at the post. Inside the picket work were 2 blockhouses, a powder magazine, 2 barracks, an officers' quarters, a non-commissioned officers' quarters, a commissary

storehouse, a sutler's store, and the guard house. Outside the 11 foot 9 inch stockade were 14 additional buildings. These included 4 large stables, a granary, a bakehouse, a blacksmith shop, a carpenter shop, 3 laundresses' huts, a root house, and an ice house. A few buildings were not yet entirely finished, but by October Lt. Hamilton was able to report that "the 3 Co. one of which is now absent can be Quartered here very well."[48]

One year later, in October 1843, Hamilton wrote the Quartermaster General "the Garrison is entirely completed and the only expense that can arise during the ensuing year will be the pay of a few men on Extra duty to keep [the buildings] in repair and a small expenditure of plank nails & Glass &c." During the previous year, Hamilton had directed the final major work on the buildings, the roofing of the blockhouses and the finishing of the exterior stairs on the men's barracks. He had also saved one major construction project from total failure. In December of 1842, the contractor for the well gave up in despair after having dug over 70 feet through solid rock without finding water. Hamilton turned the abandoned shaft into a cistern and kept it at a nearly constant level of 40 feet of water hauled from nearby springs. Other work at the post since October 1842 was largely cosmetic. The officers' quarters were spruced up with paint, railings were put on the porches, and venetian blinds were hung to give the officers more privacy. A flag staff was erected as a kind of capstone to the project.[49]



ILLUS. 7 FT. ATKINSON 1842

Small improvements were made on Ft. Atkinson during 1844. In May of that year, Company E, 1st Infantry, replaced Company K, 1st Infantry, at the post, and Lt. Joseph B. Plummer relieved Lt. Hamilton of his duties as Acting Assistant Quartermaster. Despite being only 4 years old, the log officers' quarters and men's barracks, which were never completely satisfactory, were in almost constant need of repair. "The morter [sic] between the Logs had fallen out to some extent, thus leaving them open and exposed to the weather," Plummer reported. "They require finishing to render them comfortable." Incidental repairs were done on other buildings as well. Hearths, fireplaces, and chimneys were fixed, 17 rooms were painted, and doors were made for the slaughter-house and the root cellar. In addition, lattice work was added in front of the doors of the officers' quarters to protect the rooms from wind and rain. The last major building was built this year. Capt. Edwin V. Sumner, the commanding officer, ordered the addition of a kitchen onto his quarters. The work of putting up the log structure, roofing it, and plastering the interior was carried out by men on extra duty while the materials were paid for by the other officers of the garrison.[50]

Although the expense of the commanding officer's new room was met by the officers of the post, their motives may have been less than altruistic. Kitchens and room assignments became a major bone of contention the following year. According to the General Regulations, every officer of captain rank was entitled to 2 rooms plus a kitchen. Other commissioned officers below that rank were entitled to 1 room

and a kitchen. On a return visit in August of 1845, Inspector General George Croghan noted the possibility of a shortage of rooms at the post. The post was in good repair, but "there will be a want of suitable rooms to furnish the regulation allowance to the Chaplain, who I am informed is shortly to join, provided the two compn [sic] when met together again have their compliment of officers," Croghan observed. A brevet 2nd lieutenant, Rankin Dilworth, who succeeded Lt. Plummer as Acting Assistant Quartermaster, had a solution. Before Croghan had arrived on his inspection tour Dilworth had requested clarification from the Quartermaster General on the proper allowance of rooms for officers since "we will soon be very limited in our quarters on account of the probable return of two absent officers and the appointment of a Chaplain for this post." In his report, Col. Croghan noted that Dilworth suggested "the propriety of building a kitchen to add to, or rather to complete accommodation for another comp. of officers." Actually, the eager lieutenant had in mind the building of not 1 but 3 new kitchens to bring the allowance of rooms up to regulations. However, the War Department, sensitive to the large expenditures already made on what was considered a temporary post, was finished building Ft. Atkinson. The question of new kitchens or new buildings of any kind for the post was settled by no less than the Secretary of War. Henry Stanton wrote Lt. Dilworth on August 30, 1845, "it is not deemed expedient to authorize the construction of any additional buildings at Fort Atkinson." There would be no more building at Ft. Atkinson.[51]

Daily Life at Ft. Atkinson

"This command in all that may relate to good living," Col. Crogham wrote of Ft. Atkinson in 1842, "is upon a par with the garrison of Fort Crawford for it has good gardens, the same liberal government ration, and officers equally attentive to see that the cooks perform their duties properly."[52] Life at Ft. Atkinson was similar to life at other frontier military posts, but "good living" at the Turkey River post seems dull and routine by today's standards. Because the post was garrisoned for such a brief time, much of the activity there centered on the construction of the buildings, but soldiers found themselves engaged in other activities as well. There were regular military duties such as standing guard and going on patrol, but it is important to remember that much of a soldier's time was taken up in simply helping sustain the post by working the gardens, cutting firewood, caring for livestock, hauling water and stores, and similar chores. Not everybody who enlisted considered this "good living" even by 1840s standards; as at other posts desertion was a constant problem. The regimentation of army life was not for everyone.

The basic rules of army life were spelled out for every recruit who could read in the General Regulations for the Army. Officers were responsible for carrying out the regulations, and they were familiar enough with the routine of army life that they didn't need to constantly refer to the book. The book, in fact, was not always readily available on the frontier. "I would respectfully ask that a copy of Army Regulations be furnished me," wrote a 2nd lieutenant at Ft. Atkinson to the

Adjutant General. "I have been in the service over two years and have never had one. And am often so situated that it is impossible to procure one." Usually, the regulations were consulted to settle disputes, as in the case of the officers' room allowance at Ft. Atkinson, but the regulations were not the final authority. As in the room allowance dispute, specific questions were referred to Washington for clarification. While he was stationed at Ft. Snelling in 1835, Capt. Isaac Lynde requested clarification on an issue that might not have been all that uncommon. "A difference of opinion exists at this Post as to the meaning of the 10 paragraph Article 16 Genl. Regulations," he wrote. "Is it the meaning of that part that a Deserter's pay between his apprehension and trial shall only be withheld by the Pay Master till after the trial or is it forfeited?"[53]

From sun-up to sun-down the soldier's daily life was regulated by orders from his superiors and the routine of the post. One of the most important men at Ft. Atkinson was the company bugler for it was he who sounded the calls, at times specified by the commanding officer, that were the basic regulation--the clock, in essence--for the soldier. "Reveille," sounded at daybreak, was the signal for the men to rise, and this was immediately followed by "stable call" which ordered the men to water, feed, and attend to their horses.[54]

"Stable call" was heard two additional times each day: about 40 minutes before noon and at sunset. Care of the animals at the post was one of the most important tasks of the soldier. The dragoons depended on their mounts, and each trooper was expected to care for

his animal by keeping it watered, fed, and shod. Officers in the dragoons often had more than 1 mount and were occasionally fussy about the care their horses received. The distinctions of rank and social class between officers and enlisted men sometimes even extended to their mounts. The Quartermaster General allowed officers at Ft. Atkinson to have their own horses shod at the post blacksmith, but declined to permit the construction of a separate stable for those mounts unless the troops provided the materials and labor for the building without expense to the government.[55]

In addition to dragoon horses, there were teams of mules and oxen to be taken care of. The number of teams kept at Ft. Atkinson depended on the quartermaster. When the cost of hiring local teamsters was high, more teams were kept at the post. When the cost was low, the public teams were sold and contracts were let for hauling forage, firewood, and the like. There were, however, always a few teams kept at the post for general drayage. In December of 1842, for example, the quartermaster's department kept 2 six-mule teams and 2 six-ox teams for general work and a four-ox team for hauling water up the bluff. The cost of maintaining these teams was a major expense at the post. In 1845, Lt. J.B. Plummer estimated that for the coming year he would need over 1,900 bushels of oats, more than 1,300 bushels of corn, and 74 tons of hay to feed 17 oxen and 12 mules in his care, and that the bill for this would approach 3,000 dollars. And he estimated that a quarter of the time the animals would be in pasture, feeding on grass. Feed and supplies were usually obtained locally giving farmers

preparation was one of the more time-consuming tasks at the post. Privates, working in rotation, did the cooking in the company kitchen on a cooking stove shipped from St. Louis. Much of the food the soldiers ate came from the vicinity of the fort. A herd of beef cattle was pastured nearby, so boiled, not roast, beef may have been a prime ingredient in the soup the soldiers ate. Fresh vegetables were an important part of the diet, and if peas were eaten, they too were probably in the soup. Good company gardens were a source of pride as well as an important source of food. A good garden was important enough to Company B, 1st Dragoons, that Private John Putnam, who must have had a green thumb, was sent to Ft. Atkinson to prepare the ground and plant a company garden two months before the company arrived at the post.[58]

Food and provisions that were not available near the fort were purchased on contract. A year's supplies purchased for the post in 1844 consisted of 125 barrels of pork, 160 barrels of flour, 40 bushels of beans, 1,150 lbs. of soap, 500 lbs. of candles, 15 bushels of salt, and 500 gallons of vinegar. These supplies were delivered at a warehouse on the Mississippi owned by H.L. Dousman, a Prairie du Chien entrepreneur, and Henry Rice, the sutler at Ft. Atkinson who later became a U.S. Senator from Minnesota. From the Dousman and Rice warehouse the supplies were hauled to the fort by wagon to be stored in the commissary. To supplement his diet or to obtain amenities that the "good living" of the post somehow overlooked, the soldier visited the sutler's store at the fort. Henry Rice stocked a range of goods from

cooking utensils to household furniture that the soldier could purchase at prices set by a council of administration composed of officers. The army took care that the supplies received at its posts arrived in good condition. A board of survey was appointed to inspect all questionable provisions which if found tainted could then be declared "unfit for issue."[59]

At the sound of "troop" the men assembled each morning for duty. The duty to which a soldier was assigned depended to some extent on the type of work he had done in civilian life. Since much of the work in the first few years revolved around the construction of the post, skills in the building trades and crafts were especially sought after. Carpenters, brick masons, stone masons, and plasterers all worked at Ft. Atkinson. If men with these skills were not available in the ranks, civilians were hired to do the jobs. Capt. Lynde complained in 1841 that his company had "only three indifferent Carpenters," "only one Stone mason," and no plasterers or brick masons. Workmen were often hired in St. Louis by the Quartermaster Department there and transported up the Mississippi by steamboat. If a soldier lacked specific skills, he might find himself carrying stone from the quarry for the masons, or felling trees for picketwork and buildings. Whip-sawyers were employed at the post to cut logs into boards. If a soldier had previous experience as a blacksmith, his skill was in great demand. Not only were there at times as many as 100 horses and mules at the post that needed to be shod, the blacksmith also made much of the hardware for the buildings. The demand for hinges and latches kept him particularly busy in the first few years.[60]

With all these trades and crafts practiced at the fort, it is good to keep in mind that some crafts that would have been useful at the post were not practiced there. Harness-making, for example, would be especially useful at a dragoon post, but apparently all horse equipment for the entire regiment was made by one supplier. "It may be some time before the Horse equipments are ready to be forwarded," the Quartermaster General replied to an 1842 inquiry by Capt. Sumner, "as orders have but recently been given to enter into contracts, at Philadelphia, for a supply of those of the new pattern."[61]

Much of the work at Ft. Atkinson was simply the routine of sustaining life at the post. A soldier who knew the techniques of baking bread could be kept busy on duty in the bakehouse. Other duties pertaining to food preparation included tending garden, slaughtering and butchering beef, cutting ice in winter for the ice house, and, of course, duty as cook. Water had to be hauled to the cistern from nearby springs. Men also found themselves assigned the duty of hauling supplies. With the severe winters of northeastern Iowa and the drafty log barracks the men lived in, soldiers were assigned to cut firewood. The construction at the post used much of the available nearby trees, and the soldiers were sent farther and farther from the post for fuel. If supplies of fuel ran low, soldiers would find themselves performing this duty even in the dead of winter. January of 1843 found 1 non-commissioned officer and 25 privates on detached service cutting wood. Fuel supplies must have been low because the following month an officer and 20 privates were away from the post cutting more wood. One task

enlisted men probably did not perform, but which had to be done nevertheless, was laundering clothes. Regulations allowed each company to employ 4 women as laundresses, and these women were usually the wives of enlisted men. The women and their husbands lived together in quarters supplied at the post, like the 3 huts built at Ft. Atkinson. With 2 families per house, it is possible there were 6 laundresses at Ft. Atkinson, which with 2 companies stationed there, was below the number permitted by regulations.[62]

Among the more military duties at the fort were patrol duty, sentinel or guard duty, and policing the fort. According to General Regulations, an officer of police, directed by the officer of the day, was "to make a general inspection into the cleanliness of the camp or garrison; to suffer no fires to be made in camp, except in the kitchens;" and "to cause all dirt or filth to be immediately removed, and either burnt or buried." After "reveille" each man was expected to put his bunk and quarters in order. While it seems likely that Ft. Atkinson was kept in good police, the historical record seems to suggest that inspection of the post, while formalized by written orders, may have been infrequent. On February 27, 1845, Major Greenleaf Dearborn, the commanding officer, issued post orders number 11: "The Council of Administration consisting of Capt. E.V. Sumner, Capt. A.S. Miller, and Asst. Surgeon W.S. King will assemble to morrow [sic] at half past 8 o'clock a.m. for Inspection and muster will commence at half past nine." In April, post orders number 22, Major Dearborn ordered the Council of Administration to make an inspection commencing at 9:00

A.M. the following day. Then, in June, by orders number 38, the council was directed to conduct an inspection the next day "at half after 8 a.m." No records exist for other commands, and it is possible that Major Dearborn's seemingly infrequent inspections were idiosyncratic. It is also possible that less formalized, but equally important, inspections were the order of the day when the men were mustered for duty.[63]

The number of guards at any fort depended on the extent of the post to be defended and the size and strength of the garrison. It is not clear how many guards were posted at Ft. Atkinson. The threat of attack at Ft. Atkinson was slight, so slight in fact, that the principal defensive positions of the fort, the two blockhouses, were among the last buildings completed and were used to house commissary stores while that building was finished. Generally, sentinels were stationed at principal points to be guarded such as the main gate, the guard house, and the magazine, but it may also have been necessary to post guards at the commissary and quartermaster's stores to prevent pilfering and in the hospital to maintain order. It is also possible that a sentinel's beat was built along the south wall of the stockade extending fifty feet from a shelter in the southeast corner. This position would have afforded a good view of any movement below the bluff. Officers of the guards were responsible for the security and general order of the post. Discipline was not a major problem at Ft. Atkinson. Men might be confined to quarters as a disciplinary measure or in severe cases arrested and imprisoned in the guard house.

For more than half the 103 months troops were stationed at the post, however, no one was confined to quarters or under arrest. On the other hand, in September 1842 there were 8 men either under arrest or confined to quarters, and in August of 1843 there were 17. These were exceptional though; it was more common to find from 1 to 4 soldiers each month facing disciplinary action. Out of 2 companies of soldiers, this was a rather small percentage. In an unusual month, July 1843, 13 men faced discipline, yet they represented only about 8% of the 169 men stationed at the fort.[64]

Because Ft. Atkinson was built to maintain order among the Indians on the Neutral Ground, to prevent Whites from trespassing on Indian land, and to keep the Winnebagoes from returning to Wisconsin, patrol duty was an important part of military life at the post. Although the removal of most of the Winnebagoes to the Neutral Ground was complete in the summer of 1840, the problem of the Indians slipping back across the river to Wisconsin was apparent as early as fall. In November, Brig. Gen. Brooke went so far as to suggest that another fort be built, this one at Prairie La Crosse, but the suggestion was rejected in favor of frequent patrols on the Neutral Ground and in Wisconsin. The problem of the Indians returning to their ancestral home was acute enough by spring to provoke Gen. Atkinson's anger. "I have to direct that should any further incursions of the Winnebagoes be made across the Mississippi, that you will arrest the principal men of the Bands and confine them at Fort Crawford till [sic] further orders, and I should like to see them well whipped with a cowhide on

their bare backs," Atkinson wrote Brooke. "This, however, I will not for the present order, but say to them that it will be the result if they repeat their aggressions."[65]

The record does not mention if Brooke passed on Atkinson's threats to the Indians, but despite the threats the Winnebagoes continued to cross over to Wisconsin. Patrols were sent out from Ft. Atkinson to bring them back to the Neutral Ground. In September 1843, Lt. Jenkins left the fort with 21 men of Company B, 1st Dragoons, "to keep the Winnebago Indians within their proper limits." From November to December of the same year, Capt. Sumner led a detachment of dragoons "in pursuit of Winnebago Indians." The dragoons were not the only soldiers sent on patrol. On January 21, 1844, Company K, 1st Infantry, under the command of Capt. J.J. Abercrombie, left Ft. Atkinson "for the purpose of removing Winnebago Indians from the West bank of the Mississippi River west of the 20 mile line."[66]

Patrols were not always in pursuit of Indians. Sometimes they were sent out to demonstrate the army's presence on the Neutral Ground. Such was the case with the small mounted force--1 captain, 1 brevet 2nd lieutenant, 2 corporals, 1 bugler, and 9 privates--that left the fort on May 8, 1843 for the Raccoon forks of the Des Moines River and returned three weeks later. At other times patrols were sent to be on hand at the payment of annuities to Indians. One subaltern and 32 men of B and I companies, 1st Dragoons, were on hand at the Sauk and Fox Agency, for instance, in August of 1842 when payments and goods were distributed to the Indians there.[67]

The Neutral Ground was closed to all except Indians, Indian agents, and the U.S. Army, but this did not prevent some Whites from being attracted to the bountiful land that was to be Iowa. In 1839, H.H. Sibley, then a fur trader for the American Fur Company and later the first governor of the State of Minnesota, led a hunting party out for sport into the Neutral Ground. "Game was extremely abundant," Sibley reported. "Deer were to be seen at all times of the day, standing in groups of three, four, or a half a dozen, gazing at us without much alarm, these solitudes having long been undisturbed by the visits of the hunter." Sibley's group bagged a lot of game, and even returned a year later to try again. Not everyone was so fortunate. Willard Barrows, a sometime surveyor who also hunted the Neutral Ground surreptitiously, told of what might happen to trespassers. "We felt secure so long as the Winnebagoes were away. We had no right on their lands without their permission, or that of the Indian agent," he told readers in his book of 1869. "When whites were caught hunting or fishing there, their property was considered by the Indians as lawful prize." When caught by the army, trespassers were escorted out of Indian territory. Some people, attracted by the fertile soil, even tried settling on Indian land. Three officers and 34 dragoons were sent from Ft. Atkinson in June 1842 "to remove Citizen Settlers from the Indian Country." With the Neutral Ground closed to all but authorized people, visitors to Ft. Atkinson were few. The shortage of room at the post helped to discourage visitors, but those who did travel to the fort were treated well. Willard Barrows visited the

fort in 1842. "The first night we were entertained within the walls to our full comfort," he wrote. The unfinished state of the post may have contributed to his decision to move to the Indian agency downstream. "The agent then provided for us during the ten days that we remained," Barrows added. Patrol duty was probably not unpleasant. It was most likely considered a welcome relief from the drudgery of the routine of the post, though troopers may not have looked on winter patrol too favorably.[68]

Not every man was able to report for duty each day. At the sound of "surgeon's call," men who had become sick during the night were led to the post hospital by the 1st sergeant of the company. The amount of health care available to soldiers, undeveloped as it was, was considerably better than that available to the general public on the frontier. A doctor was always on hand at Ft. Atkinson. A member of the army, the post surgeon was considered an officer, and the assistant surgeons who served at Ft. Atkinson ranked as equals of captains if they had served 5 years or as 1st lieutenants if they had served less. Despite the attention to good health that the army tried to foster, or perhaps because of it, the number of men at Ft. Atkinson responding to "surgeon's call" was relatively high. There were only 6 months out of the entire time the post was garrisoned that no one reported to the hospital. Months with from 8 to 11 men reported sick were not uncommon. Nearly a third of the months the post was occupied 8 or more men reported sick. Most of the men must have recovered because between June 1840 and February 1849, only 7 deaths were recorded at the fort.[69]

Leisure activity at Ft. Atkinson was probably limited. With so much of the work in the first 3 years focused on the construction of the fort, it is hard to imagine that the soldiers had much leisure. Of the 6 years Ft. Atkinson was garrisoned by regular army troops, half were spent constructing the fort. When a soldier was off-duty, he could earn extra pay working on the buildings as an extra-duty man, and many men took advantage of this opportunity. Once the buildings were completed, men could still supplement their pay with extra-duty painting and making general repairs. At some frontier posts there was rather well-organized recreation. Ft. Snelling and Ft. Crawford, for example, had a long history of staging dramatic productions for the amusement of visitors and the rest of the garrison. Ft. Snelling was 20 years old and Ft. Crawford 13 years by the time Ft. Atkinson was founded and the dramatic societies at the older posts were well-established. The relatively short time Ft. Atkinson was occupied, the lack of visitors at the post, and the cramped quarters which prevented room for making and storing props and scenery make it unlikely that any budding thespians trod the boards at the fort.[70]

More likely were informal recreational activities. The commanders at some frontier posts complained that officers passed their off-duty hours smoking, drinking, and playing cards. Considering the army regulations' admonition that officers comport themselves as gentlemen, it is not too far fetched to assume that these were even more popular pursuits for the enlisted men who felt no such strictures. Whiskey had ceased being a part of a soldier's daily rations in 1830,

so drinking by enlisted men at Ft. Atkinson was probably done on the sly. Vice was not the only recreation at military posts, however. Ft. Snelling and Ft. Crawford both had post libraries, and it is possible that Ft. Atkinson had one too since a library would not take up much space. Even if there was no library, officers probably lent books among themselves and possibly to the men. Newspapers received in the mail no doubt made the rounds. Although it was a job ordered by the commanding officer, mail duty may have been considered by the men as a welcome, even desirable, relief from the routine of the post. A soldier who left on Monday spent his first night at Joel Post's half-way house and arrived at Prairie du Chien late Tuesday, and was not expected back at Ft. Atkinson until Thursday. While hardly a city, the settlement at Prairie du Chien offered a variety of life unavailable on the Neutral Ground. The weekly mail duty was assigned to all ranks from private to captain. Officers, however, were assigned exclusively to duty that would take them farther from the post. Trips to buy horses for the dragoons, like Lt. P.R. Thompson's 1843 trip to Springfield, Illinois, gave officers a chance to visit more settled areas. Other extended duty away from the post, such as service at a general courtmartial or recruiting service, broke the monotony of army life. For example, 2nd Lt. Leonidas Jenkins of the 1st Dragoons spent 6 months away from Ft. Atkinson on recruiting service in St. Louis, a duty that had obvious rewards. Still, most soldiers had to content themselves with informal leisure at the fort.[71]

Recruiting new soldiers and preventing desertion were continuing problems for the army. Roll calls were taken 5 times a day--after reveille, before breakfast, before dinner, at sunset, and after "tattoo" when no one was to be out of his quarters--as a check on the men. This did not always stem the problem of desertion. At Ft. Atkinson there were desertions 36 months out of the 72 months regular troops were stationed at the post. Usually the deserter went alone; only one deserter is reported for each of 16 months. In the most unusual month, December 1840, 17 men "went over the hill." It was especially difficult to predict who would desert. While on detached service in Wisconsin pursuing Winnebago Indians, "an old and experienced Sergeant" of the dragoons, "whose character stood high and in whom every confidence was placed," deserted on horseback taking the company funds totaling $170 with him. To counter the number of men lost from desertion or discharged at the end of service, new soldiers were sent sometimes from the recruiting depots in Louisville and St. Louis. In August 1840, for example, 13 new soldiers arrived at Ft. Atkinson. Eighteen men joined the garrison in August of the following year. From December 1841 to April 1843, however, no new recruits arrived at the post. In the same period, 17 men deserted.[72]

When "retreat" was sounded at sunset each day, the men of Ft. Atkinson assembled to hear the orders for the following day. The soldier might then reflect on the work of that day, contemplate the next day's duties, and perhaps look forward to an evening of smoking, cards, or perhaps even reading in the barracks. When "tattoo" sounded

The previous October a group of Winnebagoes had traveled to Washington and were persuaded to cede all claims they held to the Neutral Ground. In return, they were given about 8,000 acres in Minnesota north of the St. Peter's River and west of the Mississippi. In June 1848, the Winnebagoes were removed from Iowa just as they had been from Wisconsin. The forced migration of the Winnebago did not end in Minnesota. They would be moved once more in Minnesota, then removed from that place to South Dakota in 1862, and then finally to a reservation in Nebraska. But with the removal of the Winnebago from Iowa, the reason for Ft. Atkinson was removed as well. Morgan's company of mounted volunteers was disbanded in September of 1848 when they were relieved by Company C of the 6th Infantry, Capt. T.L. Alexander commanding. Capt. Alexander's troops were the last to serve at Ft. Atkinson. On January 23, 1849, the Adjutant General issued the following order: "Fort Atkinson, being no longer required for military purposes, will be abandoned, and the garrison assigned to some other station by the commander of the 6th Military Department." The last company of infantry marched out of the gates of Ft. Atkinson on February 24, 1849.[74]

The army did not forget about Ft. Atkinson altogether. For the next 6 years, the care of the post was in the hands of a custodian. Actually, the position of custodian passed through several hands as the job became something of a political plum. It was not, however, a particularly easy job. People had begun to settle near the fort, and pilfering of government property was difficult to control. Stone by

stone and log by log the buildings decayed or were destroyed. In 1851, the caretaker of the fort, Lewis Harkins, sent to the War Department this statement of the condition of the buildings:

> The buildings outside the Fort or Picketing are -
>
> 1st. Two large frame Stables one hundred and twenty feet long, by thirty two feet each - each one sound and good.
> 2nd. One large and Commodious Granery, sound and good.
> 3rd. One Bake house in a far gone state of decay.
> 4th. One blacksmith's shop - sound.
> 5th. One Carpenter's shop Sound and in repair.
> 6th. One Quarter Master's house in a decayed state.
> 7th. Two small Stables, one Sound, the other very much decayed.
> 8th. Three small houses occupied by Soldiers' families, two, Sound, one very much decayed---
>
> The buildings inside the Fort or Picketing are---
>
> 9th. Two block houses and Magazine built of stone in good and Sound repair---
> 10th. One Commissary Storehouse, Sound and good.
> 11th. One block of Officers Quarters Sound and good built of stone.
> 12th. One block of Officers quarters built of hewed logs - Sound and good except the lower parts, at the bottom and the lower Stoop floor, Some few decaying--
> 13th. One block of Soldiers' quarters built of hewed logs Sound and good, except that the floors of the lowerStoop, and the posts at the bottom, are decaying---
> 14th. One other block of Soldiers Quarters built of Stone, Sound and good except that the flooring of the lower Stoop, is much decayed, as well as the posts at the bottom.

Harkins also reported that the picketing was "in a very rapid and far gone State of decay," the fence around the gardens was "in a bad state of repair," and that about 70 panes of glass had been broken out of the windows around the fort. Three buildings were unaccounted for in Harkins' report: a log dragoon stable, the log ice house, and the stone root cellar.[75]

As the fort was rapidly falling apart or being dismantled, the government finally decided to sell what remained of the buildings. In 1855, the federal government sold the fort buildings at public auction. Five years later, the people who had settled on government land near the fort since its abandonment were permitted by congressional action to secure title to their claims. The Neutral Ground was no more, and with this action the history of the military at Ft. Atkinson came to an end.[76]

Notes to Part II

[1]Publius V. Lawson, "The Winnebago Tribe," Wisconsin Archaeologist 6(July 1907), 84, 86-87.

[2]Quoted in Paul Radin, The Winnebago Tribe (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 4.

[3]Handbook of American Indians, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 30, part 1, p. 612; Radin, p. 56.

[4]Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed. "Description of Michillimackinac; Indian Tribes of that Region," Wisconsin Historical Collections 16(1902), 360.

[5]Juliette Kinzie, Wau-bun, the Early Day in the Northwest (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1856), p. 137.

[6]Radin, p. 58.

[7]Radin, p. 58-60.

[8]Radin, p. 61.

[9]Radin, p. 61.

[10]J. Owen Dorsey and Paul Radin, "Winnebago," in Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico ed. Frederick Webb Hodge (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), II, 959-960.

[11]Lawson, pp. 136-142 passim; see also personal interview with Virginia Decorah Dixon, 16 November 1979. Mrs. Dixon knew this version of her ancestor's story, but also told me a variation on the origins of the family name.

[12]Dorsey and Radin, p. 959.

[13]Francis Paul Prucha, Broadax and Bayonet: The Role of the United States Army in the Development of the Northwest 1815-1860 (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1953), pp. 17-21 passim.

[14]Prucha, p. 20.

[15]Prucha, pp. 23-24; see also Bruce Mahan, Old Fort Crawford and the Frontier (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1926), pp. 100-119.

[16]Prucha, p. 31.

[17]Charles Joseph Latrobe, The Rambler in North America (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935), II, 230-231; Frederick Marryat, A Diary in America with Remarks on Its Institutions ed. Sydney Jackman (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), p. 172.

[18]Prucha, p. 37.

[19]Prucha, p. 53.

[20]For an excellent summary of the fur trade see Ray Allen Billington, Westward Expansion 4th ed. (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1974), pp. 379-391; see also Jacob Van der Zee, "Fur Trade Operations in the Eastern Iowa Country from 1800 to 1833," Iowa Journal of History and Politics 12 (October 1914), 479-567.

[21]The best discussion of Indian policy in this period is William T. Hagan, American Indians (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 66-91.

[22]Quoted in Reginald Horsman, "American Indian Policy and the Origins of Manifest Destiny," in Francis Paul Prucha ed., The Indian in American History (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1971), p.25.

[23]All of the treaties have been reprinted in "Treaties Between the Winnebago Indians and the United States of America 1816-1865," comp. George E. Fay, Colorado State College Museum of Anthropology, Miscellaneous Series, No. 1 (1967); see also Charles J. Kappler, comp. Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties 5 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903-41).

[24]Quoted in J.A. Jones, Winnebago Ethnology (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974), p. 127.

[25]Quoted in Jones, pp. 134-35.

[26]Jacob Van der Zee, "The Neutral Ground," Iowa Journal of History and Politics 13(1915), 311-12.

[27]Jones, pp. 156-57.

[28]Lyman C. Draper, ed. "The Wisconsin Winnebagoes: An Interview with Moses Paquette," Wisconsin Historical Collections 12(1892), 401-02.

[29]Quoted in Jones, p. 164.

[30]Bvt. Brig. Gen. George M. Brooke to Brig. Gen. R. Jones, 1 February 1939, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Sent.

[31]David Lowry to Henry Dodge, 8 November 1839, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received.

[32]H. Atkinson to J.R. Poinsett, 19 May 1840, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received; Roger L. Nichols, "The Founding of Fort Atkinson," Annals of Iowa 37(1965), 591.

[33]H. Atkinson to J.R. Poinsett, 19 May 1840, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received; S.S. Reque, "History of Fort Atkinson, 1840-1849," unpub. mss.; Nichols, pp. 592-93.

[34]John T. De La Ronde, "Personal Narrative," Wisconsin Historical Collections 7(1876), 363.

[35]Henry Merrell, "Pioneer Life in Wisconsin," Wisconsin Historical Collections 7(1876), 394.

[36]Reque, pp. 35-36, 41-42.

[37]Quoted in Reque, pp. 48-49.

[38]Th.S. Jesup to Lt. J.H. Whipple, 19 August 1840, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[39]I. Lynde to R. Jones, 25 October 1840; Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received; "Report of the Quartermaster General 28 November 1840," quoted in Reque, p. 54.

[40]I. Lynde to Brig. Gen. Geo. M. Brooke, 26 January 1841, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[41]"Articles of Agreement, Maj. S. MacRee with A. Blumenthal 27 April 1841," Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Register of Contracts.

[42]I. Lynde to Major General T.S. Jesup, 6 June 1841, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Reque, p. 61.

[43]Th.S. Jesup to Captain S.M. Plummer, 16 June 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; S.M. Plummer to T.S. Jesup, 16 June 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[44]"Inspection Report of Troops in the 1st Military Department by Captain J.H. Prentiss 1842," Records of the Headquarters of the Army.

[45]S.M. Plummer to T.S. Jesup, 8 July 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[46]"Col. G. Croghan Insp. General Report of His Inspection of Ft. Atkinson 27 July 1842," Records of the Office of the Inspector General.

[47]S.M. Plummer to T.S. Jesup, 13 August 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[48]Plan of Fort Atkinson, Iowa Territory, Cartographic Records Relating to the Territory of Iowa, 1838-1846, Department of War; S. Hamilton to T.S. Jesup, 6 October 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[49]S. Hamilton to Major Gen. Jesup, 13 October 1843, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[50]J.B. Plummer to Thomas S. Jesup, 10 October 1844, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[51]War Department, General Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1841 (Washington: J. and G.S. Gideon, 1841), p. 185; "1845 Inspector General George Croghan Reports: Fort Atkinson 9 August 1845," Records of the Headquarters of the Army; R. Dilworth to T.S. Jesup, 21 July 1845, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; R. Dilworth to Thomas S. Jesup, 10 August 1845, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Henry Stanton to Lieut. R. Dilworth, 30 August 1845, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[52]"27 July 1842 Col. G. Croghan Insp. General Report of His Inspection of Ft. Atkinson," Records of the Office of the Inspector General.

[53]J.A. Whital to R. Jones, 15 December 1840, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received; I. Lynde to Brig. Gen. R. Jones, 2 November 1835, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received.

[54]All the bugle calls may be found in General Regulations, pp. 61-62.

[55]Th.S. Jesup to Lieut. J.B. Plummer, 28 August 1844, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[56]S. Hamilton to T.S. Jesup, 3 December 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; J.B. Plummer to Thomas S. Jesup, 20 June 1845, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; S. Hamilton to T.S. Jesup, 13 August 1843, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[57]General Regulations, pp. 16-17.

[58]P.R. Thompson to R.B. Lee, 2 April 1846, Records of United States Army Continental Commands. Commissaries of Subsistence, Letters Received; Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, May 1841.

[59]Geo. Gibson to Mr. S.H. Bowen, 6 January 1844, Records of United States Army Continental Commands. Commissaries of Subsistence, Letters Received; Henry M. Rice to Maj. Genl. Jessup [sic], 1 June 1843, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Orders No. 33 4 June 1845 by Maj. G. Dearborn, Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands; Orders No. 37 June 1845 by Maj. G. Dearborn, Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands.

[60]I. Lynde to Brig. Gen. Geo. M. Brooke, 26 January 1841, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; "Contract between Lt. J.H. Whipple and Peter Hawes 9 November 1840," Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Register of Contracts; S.M. Plummer to T.S. Jesup, 8 July 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[61]Th.S. Jesup to Capt. E.V. Sumner, 21 September 1842, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[62]Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, January 1843, February 1843; General Regulations, p. 37.

[63]General Regulations, pp. 64-65; Orders No. 11 27 February 1845, Orders No. 22 29 April 1845, Orders No. 38 29 June 1845, by Major Dearborn, Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands.

[64]General Regulations, p. 48; "27 July 1842 Col. G. Croghan Insp. General Report of His Inspection of Ft. Atkinson," Records of the Office of the Inspector General; Reque, pp. 113-114; Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, June 1840-February 1849.

[65]Geo. M. Brooke to Thos. S. Jesup, 11 November 1840, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received; H. Atkinson to Brig. Gen. Brooke, 1 April 1841, U.S. Army Continental Commands, Western Division, Letters Sent.

[66]Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, September 1843, November 1843, December 1843.

[67]Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, May 1843, August 1842.

[68]H.H. Sibley, "Hunting in the Western Prairies," in Instructions to Young Sportsmen in All That Relates to Guns and Shooting (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1846), p. 405; I am indebted to Mr. Bill Furnish for bringing this article to my attention. Willard Barrows, The General, Or Twelve Nights in the Hunter's Camp (Boston: Lea and Shepard Publishers, 1860), p. 127, 135; Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, June 1842.

[69]Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, June 1840-February 1849.

[70]J.B. Plummer to Thomas S. Jesup, 10 October, 1844, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Prucha, pp. 204-206, 50.

[71]Prucha, pp. 206-208, 50; Orders No. 16 24 March 1845, Orders No. 31 25 May 1845, Orders No. 1 6 January 1845, Orders No. 5 21 January 1845, by Major Dearborn, Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands; A.R. Hetzel to Lieut. P.R. Thompson, 21 August 1843, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Returns of U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, October 1845 to May 1846.

[72]Returns of U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, June 1840-May 1846; Lieut. P.R. Thompson to Maj. Gen'l. Tho. S. Jesup, 12 March 1846, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

[73]Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, May 1846 to July 1846, September 1847, September 1848, January 1849.

[74]Quoted in Reque, p. 91.

[75]Quoted in Reque, pp. 97-98.

[76]Reque, p. 104.

III. PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

On September 23, 1968, Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve was dedicated as an historical, geological, and archaeological preserve as provided for in Chapter 135, Act 61st Assembly. This act calls for the maintenance of the features for which the site was dedicated. All future use and planning must take into consideration these features: the geological formations of the Fort Atkinson Member, Maquoketa Shale; the archaeological ruins and the subsurface remains; and the integrity of the 3 remaining historical buildings.

Ft. Atkinson Site at Present

The appearance of the Ft. Atkinson State Monument Preserve at the present is the result of the implementation of recommendations made by a consultant in 1956. In November of that year, historian Merrill J. Mattes visited the site to "make recommendations regarding its future preservation and development." When Mattes visited Ft. Atkinson there were 6 buildings at the site: the northeast blockhouse, the southwest blockhouse, the powder magazine, about one-third of the north barracks, a farmhouse in the southeast corner of the property, and a "recent vintage stone building near the northeast corner." Mattes' recommendations addressed the preservation and interpretation of the historic buildings and the removal of intrusions on the historic scene. He recommended that the powder magazine and the 2 blockhouses be kept intact. "The powder house," he wrote, "makes an excellent exhibit in its present form," and he suggested only that the roofing be replaced by shake shingling. Mattes recommended that only the southwest blockhouse be "used entirely for interpretive purposes," interpreted

as a "cannon house," while the northeast blockhouse "be retained as a storehouse and work shop." He did not mention that the northeast blockhouse was a reconstruction, not an original building. The farmhouse and the "recent vintage stone building" Mattes recommended be "obliterated."[1]

There were 2 major interpretive recommendations in Mattes' report. He suggested the partial reconstruction of the log stockade to give a sense of the size of the fort and to give a sense of the spatial relationship among the buildings. He suggested too the creation of a "museum" in the north barracks. "In replacing the palisades," wrote Mattes, "I would ignore historical methods, whatever they were, and base the palisades firmly by whatever engineering methods may insure their long life." The stockade, rather than enclosing the grounds completely, should be tapered off diagonally along the east and west sides, Mattes said. The "museum" Mattes proposed for the north barracks was not really a museum in the strict sense. Strictly speaking, a museum conserves and displays collections of artifacts of cultural or scientific significance for the purposes of education, study, and enjoyment. There would be no collections at the fort "museum." Instead, Mattes proposed what could be called a visitor center to tell the Ft. Atkinson story with panel exhibits and a "few historical objects" that would "be put in glass cases which also can be padlocked to prevent theft." Mattes further recommended that the open-end walls of the north barracks be "replaced by brickwork or cement blocks."[2]

Mattes' recommendations became the basis for the development of the site undertaken in 1958 and completed in 1962. The north barracks was gutted and the visitor center installed. The west end of the building was filled in with cement blocks (see Illus. 8), and the north wall of the building partially reconstructed in stone to show that the remaining portion of the building is just a fragment of a larger structure. The stockade was also partially reconstructed along the lines suggested by Mattes. The size of the site remained roughly synonymous with the perimeter of the stockade, the parcel of land acquired between 1921 and 1939.

Since these steps were taken a few other additions have been made to the site. Concrete steps were installed to the west of the southwest blockhouse. A privy was built near the bluff to the south and east of this blockhouse, and a fence was erected along the bluff above the quarry. (See Illus. 9.) These additions were made after the site was dedicated as a preserve in 1968.

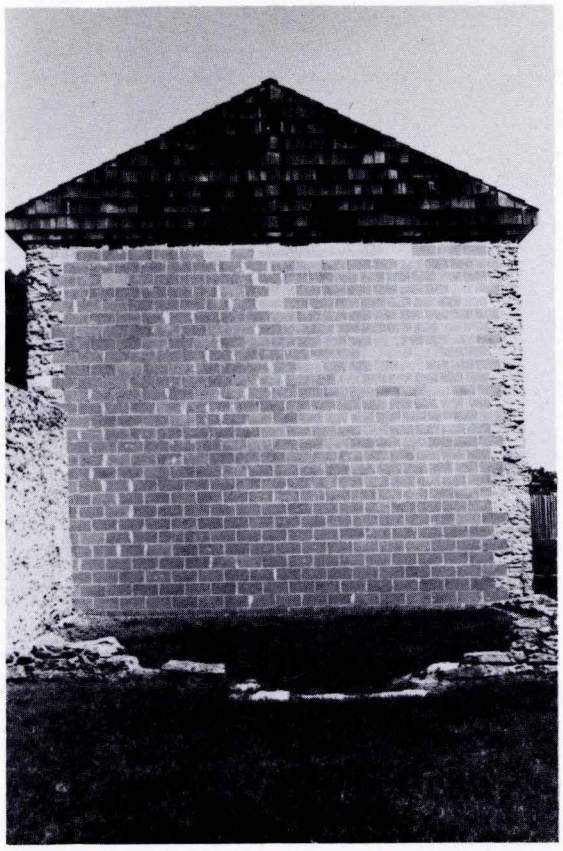
Planning Concept A

Due consideration should be given to keeping the site as it is. The 3 historic buildings--the southwest blockhouse, the powder magazine, and the north barracks--have been well-preserved. The ruins and the foundations of the other buildings are interesting examples of the interpretation of an archaeological site. The partially reconstructed walls and stockade give the visitor a sense of the space within the fort.

There are some distinct advantages to maintaining the status quo at Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve. With no substantial changes at the site, the present level of maintenance could continue with little increase in cost. There would be no need for new capital expenditures at the site. Under the act establishing the state preserves system, it should be noted, a preserve by definition is "put to its highest, best, and most important use for public benefit."[3]

At the present time, there are some problems at the site that ought to be recognized, too. Perhaps the most significant problem at this time is that less than half the site of the historic fort is preserved. Ten buildings of the fort were located within the bounds of the present preserve while 14 buildings once stood outside the stockade. The sites of these buildings are now in private hands.

A second major problem concerns historical accuracy. The reconstruction of the stockade not only ignored the original methods of construction, which under the circumstances is understandable, but also ignored the appearance of the original stockade, which is not. The visitor may indeed get a sense of the size and spatial arrangement of the interior of the fort, but he or she must also get an inaccurate notion of what the stockade looked like, indeed what the whole fort looked like in terms of size in the 1840s. The roof of the north barracks is another problem in historical accuracy. Lt. Reynolds' 1842 drawing (see Illus. 7) clearly indicates an overhang on the south side of the building creating a covering for the second story porch.



ILLUS. 8 WEST END OF NORTH BARRACKS

ILLUS. 9 SOUTHWEST BLOCKHOUSE

A third major problem with the site are the intrusions on the historic scene. The Conservation Commission endorsed the removal of intrusions on the historic scene at Ft. Atkinson when it removed the two stone buildings in the late 1950s following the recommendations of Mattes. The chain link fence along the bluff, the concrete steps, and the privy near the southwest blockhouse are similar intrusions and would be better removed. The privy should be relocated. In the case of the steps and the fence, the site existed quite nicely without them for over 130 years. The unfortunate use of concrete blocks to fill in the west end of the north barracks should be considered a distortion of the way the building looked in the 1840s, and therefore an intrusion on the historic scene.

The final major problem with the site at the present concerns the interpretation of the site. The signs now used at each building simply identify the building and give its dimensions. The visitor gets no sense of the activities that occurred within its walls. Far more significant are the limitations of the present visitor center in the north barracks. The building lacks the necessary space for telling the story of the fort in an interesting and effective way. The way the center is now divided it is impossible for people who cannot climb stairs to see half of the exhibits.

Concept A: Recommendations

A commitment to the preservation of the site as it is precludes the acquisition of the complete historic site. Short of an outright gift of that land to the state, there is no way to acquire the sites

of the buildings outside the stockade boundaries except by a capital expenditure. The problem of the historic inaccuracies of the stockade reconstruction and the roof of the north barracks can be more readily addressed. Interpretive signs could be placed at the appropriate places to indicate that the reconstructed roof and stockade do not reflect the 1840s appearance of the fort, and the same signs could even show how each structure might have looked. The problem of the intrusions on the historic scene could be corrected by a small expenditure of funds to remove or relocate each. The west end of the barracks could be faced with limestone to cover the concrete block. The limitations of the barracks as a visitor center must be endured if the site is to be maintained in its present condition. The displays and exhibits now in the building might be reworked at a relatively low cost.

If the site is to be maintained as it is at present, a minimum recommendation must be that repair work be done on the powder magazine. Some of the stones in the floor of this building have been dug up and ought to be reset. The eaves are rotting in the northeast corner of the roof and ought to be replaced.

Planning Concept B

A second option to consider is the complete reconstruction of Ft. Atkinson to its appearnace in the 1840s. The goal of such a recreation would be the education of the public concerning the role of the military on the Iowa frontier. The reconstruction of Ft. Atkinson

would have two basic components: the acquisition of the complete fort site and the rebuilding of the structures that existed in the 1840s.

The only document in the National Archives pictorially locating all the buildings at Ft. Atkinson in the 1840s is the drawing and plat of the post by Lt. Reynolds. (See Illus. 7.) There are no plans as such. According to Reynolds' index and plat, there were 14 buildings outside of the stockade. All but 3 of these stood in a row about 100 feet from the north wall of the stockade. From west to east these buildings were: 3 laundresses huts; a carpentry shop; a blacksmith shop; a bakehouse; a shed and stable for the quartermaster; a granary; and 2 stables for Company B, 1st Dragoons. Of these only 3 were frame buildings: the granary and the 2 dragoon stables. The rest were made of logs. Three buildings were not located along this row. An additional log stable stood to the north and at right angles to the dragoon stables. Two other buildings were about 200 feet from the southeast corner of the stockade. One was a stone roothouse; the other was an icehouse made of logs.

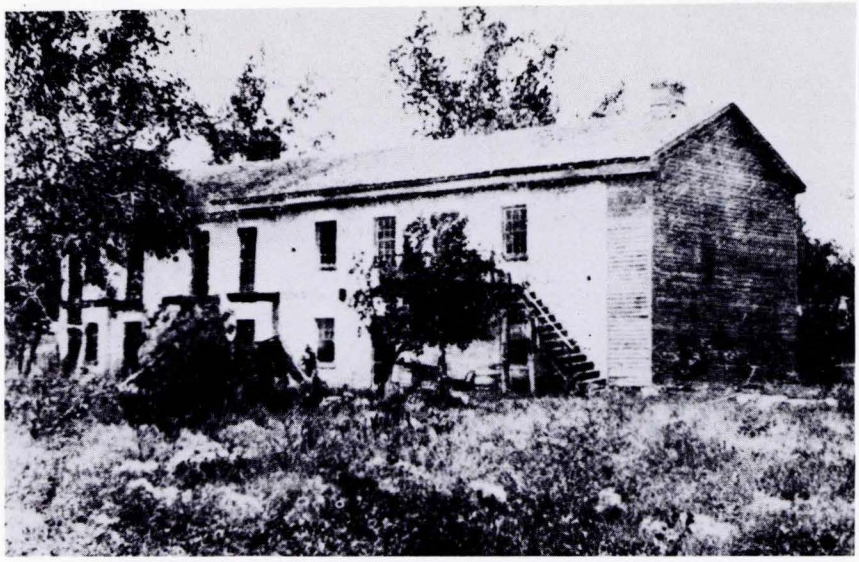
Lt. Reynolds' plat shows 10 buildings inside the stockade. Starting from the southwest and moving clockwise around the post these were: the southwest blockhouse; officers' quarters; the sutler's store; commissary stores; guardhouse; the combination dragoon barracks and hospital; the northeast blockhouse; the combined officers' quarters and commanding officer's quarters; the powder magazine; and an enlisted men's barracks. Of these 5 were stone: the north barracks, the blockhouses, the powder magazine, and the combined officers' quarters

and commanding officer's quarters. Three were made of logs: the south barracks, the west officers' quarters, and the commissary stores. The guardhouse and the sutler's store were frame buildings.

Of the total 24 buildings that made up the physical site of Ft. Atkinson in the 1840s, only 3 presently stand and these are all located within the boundaries of the stockade. Only about one-third of the north barracks still stands. One building on the grounds, the northeast blockhouse, has been reconstructed. To recreate the appearance of the 1840s post, it would be necessary to reconstruct the remainder of the north barracks and to reconstruct from the foundation up the stockade and 20 buildings.

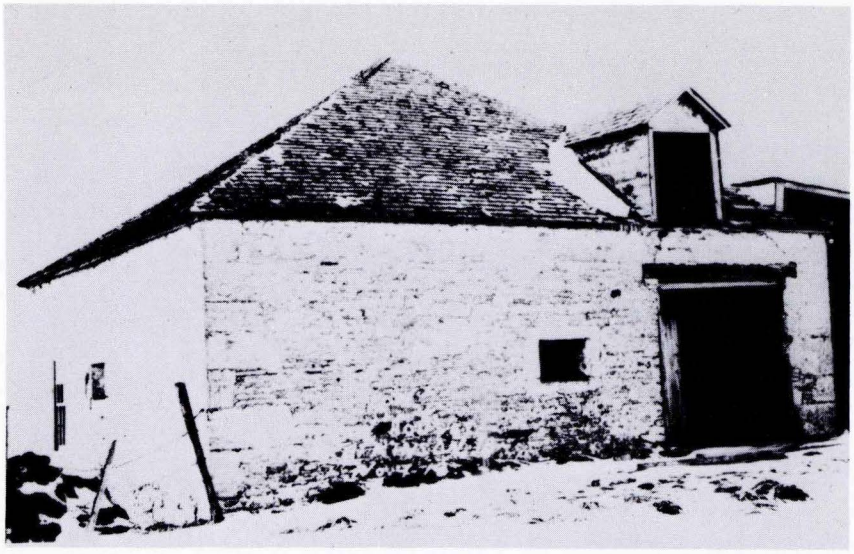
The best visual evidence we have of the architecture of the buildings is Lt. Reynolds' drawing. It should be noted that this was done in 1842, 7 years before the post was abandoned and before a number of significant changes were made in the buildings such as the addition of kitchens and the lattice work on the porches of the officers' quarters. Extant photographs show the deterioration of one building, the north barracks, and the southwest blockhouse. (See Illus. 10-14.) Two secondary sources exist for suggestions as to what the buildings might have looked like and how they were constructed: building manuals of the time and extant buildings at contemporaneous military posts.

Before any reconstruction could take place, the sites of the buildings outside the stockade would have to be identified and acquired. Most of the outbuildings were probably located in what are now Blocks 20 and 21 of the town of Ft. Atkinson. Actual location of the sites would have to be determined by an archaeologist. Some of this work



ILLUS. 10 NORTH BARRACKS

ILLUS. 11 NORTH BARRACKS



ILLUS. 12 SOUTHWEST BLOCKHOUSE

ILLUS. 13 NORTH BARRACKS

has already been done. The Office of the State Archaeologist conducted preliminary investigations of these outbuildings in 1966 uncovering the remains of the bakehouse. Similar work would have to be done on the other 13 buildings outside the stockade.

The reconstruction of Ft. Atkinson would create a site that would better lend itself to the "living history" method of interpretation. A staff of about 10 to 15 interpreters dressed in period costume and playing the "role" of a civilian laborer, a soldier, or a laundress could be on hand at the reconstructed site to give visitors an idea of what life might have been like at Ft. Atkinson in the 1840s. Since much of the activity at the post went on outside the stockade in work areas like the laundresses' huts, the carpentry shop, and the stables, it would be essential for these areas to be reconstructed for the living history method of interpretation to be accurate and most effective. This method of interpretation has been used successfully at the reconstruction of Ft. Snelling in St. Paul, at Ft. Wayne in Detroit, and at the recreation of Ft. Wayne in Ft. Wayne, Indiana among other historic forts and sites.

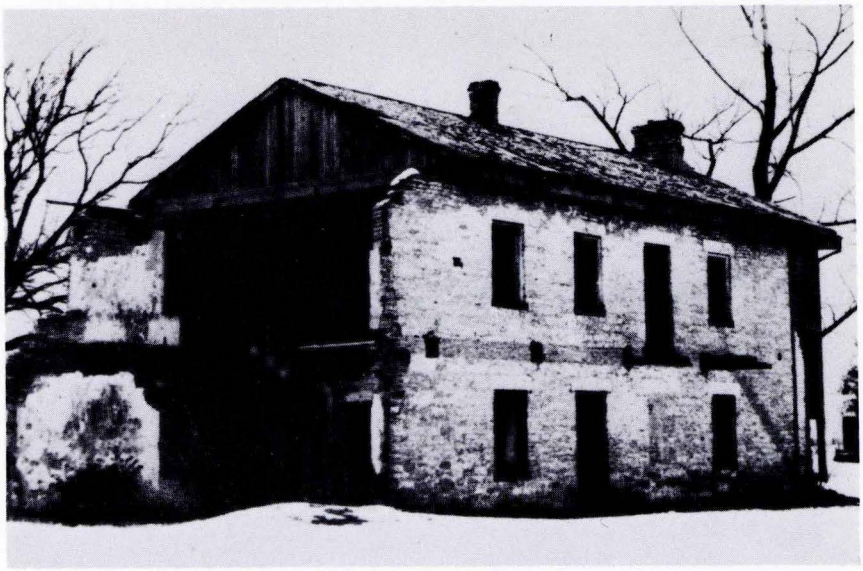
Concept B: Recommendations

There are some distinct advantages and disadvantages with the concept of acquiring the complete site of Ft. Atkinson and the reconstruction of the fort buildings. Among the issues that must be taken into consideration are the question of the viability of an historically accurate reconstruction, the question of continued preserve status for

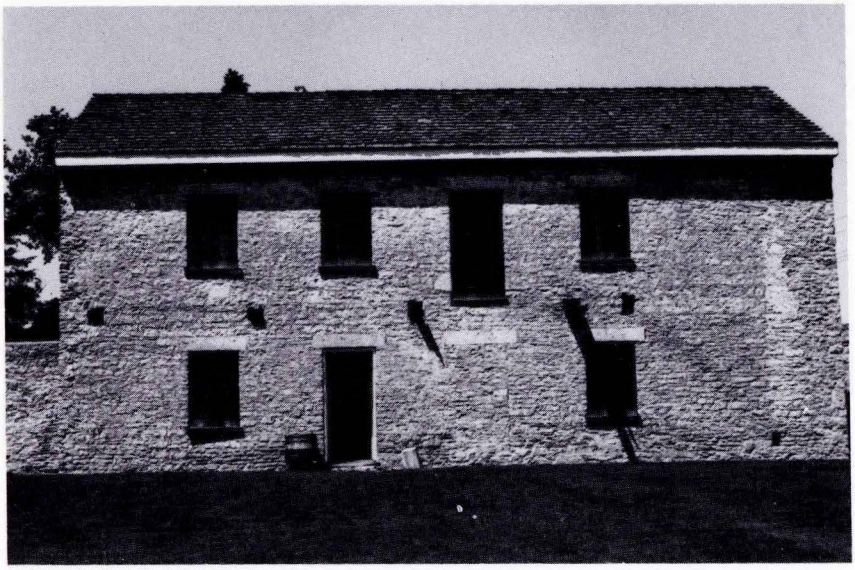
the site, the issue of the most effective interpretation of the site, and finally the issue of the cost of reconstruction.

The question of the historical accuracy of a reconstruction of Ft. Atkinson is a matter of debate. Unfortunately, there are no detailed plans of the post in the National Archives, but this is a common situation for pre-Civil War forts. The construction of most posts was the responsibility of the Quartermaster's Department and the appearance of the buildings was often left to the discretion of the quartermaster at the site and his commanding officer as in the case of Ft. Atkinson. A fragmentary sketch of the buildings can be developed from the written historical record (see Part II) and from the visual record left by Lt. Reynolds. This evidence could be augmented by study of extant buildings at contemporaneous forts such as Ft. Wayne in Detroit, Ft. Gibson in Oklahoma, and Ft. Scott in Kansas. There are stone buildings at two of these sites, Ft. Gibson and Ft. Wayne, and frame buildings at Ft. Scott. There is a bigger problem with the log buildings, however. Most of the buildings at Ft. Atkinson were log and there is very little evidence about the appearance of these structures.

Each building to be reconstructed should be researched in depth in terms of both architecture and function. In the case of the buildings outside the stockade, this would include archaeological investigations to locate the actual sites of the structures. All historical reconstruction involves a certain amount of supposition and conjecture. Research into contemporary building methods and



ILLUS. 14 NORTH BARRACKS c. 1940



ILLUS. 15 NORTH BARRACKS, 1979

other historical evidence for Ft. Atkinson can, at best, suggest what the fort might have looked like.

The issue of the cost of reconstructing and staffing Ft. Atkinson as a living history site ought to be studied in detail. The cost of historical reconstruction, like all building costs, has escalated rapidly in the last few years. The cost of reconstructing Ft. Snelling, begun in the 1960s, was about 4 million dollars.[4] More recently, the National Park Service proposed the partial reconstruction of Ft. Union, North Dakota, an 1829 post consisting of a stockade, 2 blockhouses, and the commanding officer's quarters. The estimate for this reconstruction is 8.5 million dollars.[5] These are initial capital outlays and do not reflect the cost of continuing maintenance on the reconstructed buildings nor the cost of providing trained, costumed interpreters, factors which must be taken into consideration. The cost of outfitting one interpreter, for example, as a soldier in period dress can easily approach 2,000 dollars.

The acquisition of the sites of the outbuildings at Ft. Atkinson is an important step in the preservation of the complete site and an obvious concommitant of reconstruction of the buildings. The cost of acquiring the land would be small in relation to the total cost of reconstruction of the fort. For example, the 1978 assessed valuation of all property in Blocks 20 and 21 totaled 32,933 dollars. There is one house on this land valued at 24,331 dollars; the rest of the land is either vacant or used by a commercial nursery.[6] Once archaeological investigation has located the outbuildings, the land should be

acquired. Options for the first right of purchase should be acquired on lands necessary as buffer zones. These should include land in Blocks 8, 9, 22, and 33. (See Map 4.)

The reconstruction of fort buildings calls into question the issue of the continuation of preserve status for the site. Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve is a geologic, archaeologic, and historic preserve. The reconstruction of the fort might seriously jeopardize the geologic and archaeologic provinces of the site in order to stress the historic element. It might be necessary, for example, to reopen the quarry to cut stone for the buildings unless a similar limestone can be located elsewhere. Perhaps more serious is the destruction of valuable sites of archaeological interpretation which necessarily would follow any reconstruction of the buildings. The Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve is an archaeological preserve because of the ruins located there. Take away the ruins by reconstructing buildings on them and this valuable resource is destroyed forever. If any reconstruction of the buildings is undertaken, the preserve status of the site should be altered or eliminated entirely.

Finally, the issue of the most effective interpretation of the site must be addressed. If the goal is the education of the public about the role of the military on the frontier and daily life at the fort, there is little evidence to suggest that a living history interpretation at a reconstructed fort is necessarily the best interpretation, the one that conveys the most information or the one

that is most cost-effective. Studies have shown that interpretive exhibits and displays can be effective ways of communicating ideas and concepts.[7] At Ft. Atkinson, improved exhibits and displays would be a relatively low-cost way of up-grading the interpretation of the site. Given the relatively high-cost of reconstruction and low visitor use (see Table 1) of the site at present it would appear that the creation of a living history situation is not the most cost-effective interpretation of Ft. Atkinson.

Planning Concept C

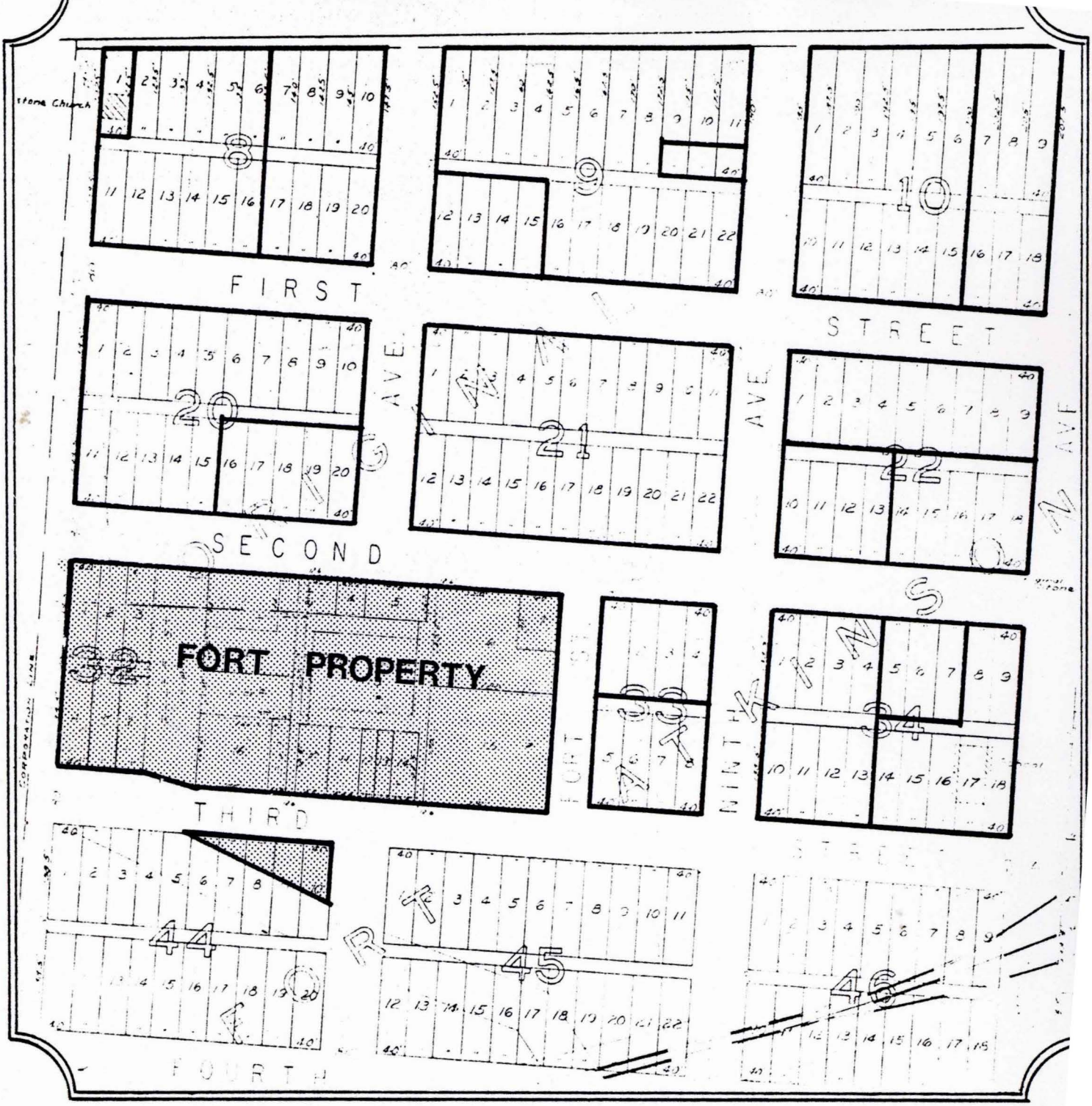
A third option to consider is the preservation of the complete fort site and the improvement of the interpretation of the site with better interpretive signs about the grounds and by means of exhibits and displays in a new visitor center. The goal of this concept is the preservation of an important geologic, archaeologic, and historic site within the preserves system and the education of the public concerning the significance of the site.

The acquisition of Blocks 20 and 21 could be achieved relatively inexpensively and would result in the preservation of the sites of most of the buildings outside the stockade at Ft. Atkinson. This land acquisition would be annexed to the present Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve to ensure the protection of these archaeologically and historically significant sites. Options for the first right of purchase should be acquired on land for buffer zones. These should include land in Blocks 8, 9, 10, 22, and 33. (See Map 4.)

Intrusions on the historic scene should be removed where possible. This would include removing the chain link fence near the quarry, removing the concrete steps below the southwest blockhouse, replacing the privy with restroom facilities in the visitor center, and facing the west end of the north barracks with limestone to cover the concrete blocks. The feasibility of removing other intrusions encroaching on the historic scene such as houses and power lines should be studied.

The interpretation of the site should be guided by the principle that Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve is significant geologically, archaeologically, and historically. Each of these provinces is important to the full interpretation of the site. Exhibits and displays would be constructed explaining each. There would be exhibits explaining the creation of the landforms of northeastern Iowa and displays explaining the significance of the geologic type section to the study of the earth with the Ft. Atkinson Limestone Member as an example. Exhibits with an archaeological theme would stress the research conducted at the Ft. Atkinson site and the importance of artifacts in the reconstruction of the human past. Exhibits concerned with the history of the military would stress the army's role in effecting government Indian policy using Ft. Atkinson as a case study. There would be exhibits explaining the routine of army life at a frontier post like Ft. Atkinson as well. These exhibits would be housed in a new visitor center.

The purpose of a visitor center is to educate people about the site, to orient them to the things they will see there, and to provide



ORIGINAL LAND PLAT
(WITH EXISTING LAND OWNERSHIP LINES)

FORT ATKINSON
HISTORIC PRESERVE

NORTH

SCALE
1in = 200ft

MAP 4

a place where they can find restrooms, a drink of water, and a place to sit down after their trip to the site. A narrated slide presentation would go a long way toward improving the interpretation of the site. The program would be about 8 to 10 minutes in length and ought to prepare the visitor for touring the ruins and sites of buildings at the fort. Artist's sketches of the different buildings would be mixed with photographs to explain the activities that went on in selected buildings. A trained interpreter would be on hand in the visitor center to greet visitors, to superintend the exhibits and provide security, and to operate the automated slide show. Brochures and booklets would be available here giving further information about Ft. Atkinson. The interpretive program of exhibits and slide show in the visitor center would prepare people for a self-guided tour of the site.

The present interpretive signs on the grounds would be replaced with metal-photo type signs on pedestals. The pedestals would be concrete shafts faced with limestone. The metal-photo signs would have a sketch of the particular building and text explaining its function. A similar marker would be used at the quarry.

Architecturally, the visitor center should be compatible with the site. A modern frame or concrete block structure should have a limestone facade, in keeping with the stone buildings of the fort. A total of 2500 sq. ft. would be adequate for the building, including restrooms, heating and cooling utilities, audio-visual area, and lockable general storage. The visitor center would be located near

the access road, First Street, in an area where parking can be provided without damaging archaeological sites. A location in Blocks 10 or 22 might be best.

Concept C: Recommendations

The acquisition of the sites of the outbuildings in Blocks 20 and 21 would be an important step in the preservation of the complete site. Ft. Atkinson has already been recognized as an area containing features of significant geological, archaeological, and historical value through the dedication of Fort Atkinson State Monument Preserve. It is important that the complete site be preserved for future generations. Blocks 20 and 21 could be acquired for relatively little expense. The 1978 assessed valuation of this land totaled $32,933. The acquisition of this land would more than double the number of building sites preserved from 10 to 21.

Studies should be undertaken to determine the feasibility of removing intrusions on the historic scene. Intrusions such as power lines and poles, chain link fences, and the like obscure the historic vista. They tend to make the fort site look like a creation of the 20th century, which it of course is not. The Conservation Commission endorsed the idea of removing intrusions at Ft. Atkinson in the 1960s when two buildings on the grounds were demolished on the recommendation of historian Merrill Mattes. Burying utility lines, removing the chain link fence, removing the concrete steps near the southwest blockhouse, and facing the west end of the north barracks with limestone would be an extension of this idea. A check of Lt. Reynolds'

1842 plat seems to indicate that the present privy is located where the original quarry at the site was opened. It should be replaced with restroom facilities in the visitor center.

The inadequacies of the present visitor center--poor location, shortage of space, inaccessibility to the handicapped--would be remedied by a new visitor center building located outside the fort proper near the access road. The most severe problem of the present visitor center is the building it is located in. It was designed to be a barracks, not a visitor center, and consequently the exhibits needed to tell the Ft. Atkinson story are forced into much too small a space. The exhibits in the present building are so cramped that the traffic flow is confused. The exhibits on the second floor are totally inaccessible to people confined to wheelchairs or to people unable to climb stairs. A visitor center should introduce people to the site and prepare them to tour it. The location of the present visitor center in the north barracks makes this difficult.

The concept of the visitor center has proven effective in the interpretation of historic forts and sites around the country. At Historic Ft. Wayne, Indiana, the visitor center is the first thing the visitor comes into contact with. Similarly, the visitor center at Ft. Adams in Newport, Rhode Island, is located outside the fort to prepare the visitor for his or her guided tour of the site. At Ft. Wayne in Detroit the visitor center is located adjacent to the fort and the visitor must pass through it before entering the grounds for a self-guided tour. Historic fort sites are not the only ones to

use the visitor center concept. The Wisconsin State Historical Society prepares visitors to Villa Louis, a house museum at Prairie du Chien, for touring the site in its visitor center.

The Concept C approach to Ft. Atkinson Monument Preserve would improve the site in significant ways at relatively low cost. The number of building sites preserved at Ft. Atkinson would be doubled. Inclusion of these sites in the preserves system would ensure their continued protection for generations to come. A new visitor center and new metal-photo interpretive signs would up-grade the present interpretive program for educating the public about the geologic, archaeologic, and historic significance of the site in a way that is cost-effective.

Notes to Part III

[1]Merrill J. Mattes, "Historian's Report on Preservation of Fort Atkinson, Iowa," 10 December 1956, unpub. mss., Records of the Iowa State Conservation Commission.

[2]Mattes, "Historian's Report"; G. Elllis Burcaw, Introduction to Museum Work (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1975), p. 9.

[3]Section 10, Chapter 135, 61st G.A.

[4]Interview with Stephen Osman, Interpretive Specialist, Historic Ft. Snelling, August 25, 1979.

[5]"Ft. Union, N.D., Replica Planned," Headquarters Heliogram February 1980, p. 4.

[6]Records of the Winneshiek County Assessor's Office.

[7]See, for example, Stephen F. DeBorhegyi, "Testing Audience Reaction to Museum Exhibits," Curator 8(1965), 86-91; C.G. Screven, "Exhibit Evaluation: A Goal-Reference Approach," Curator 19(1976), 271-290.

APPENDIX

Chronology

1825

19 Aug. Treaty of 1825, negotiated at Prairie du Chien, among United States, Sioux, Chippewa, Sauk & Fox, Menominee, Ioway and Winnebago establishing boundaries between tribal lands, including the Neutral Line from the mouth of the Upper Iowa River to the second fork of the Des Moines River separating the Sioux and the Sauk & Fox.

1830

15 July Treaty of 1830, among the United States, Sioux, and Sauk & Fox establishing two 20 mile wide strips on either side of the Neutral Line to be known as the Neutral Ground.

1832

15 Sept. Treaty of 1832, negotiated at Ft. Armstrong, between United States and Winnebago, ceding all Winnebago land south and east of the Wisconsin River and the Fox River in exchange for a part of the Neutral Ground and $27,000 in annuities.

1837

1 Nov. Treaty of 1837, negotiated at Washington, D.C., between United States and Winnebago, ceding all Winnebago lands east of the Mississippi, in exchange for payment of tribal debts, erection of a gristmill, payment of expenses incurred in removing to lands to be assigned to them, and hunting rights on the Neutral Ground.

1839

1 Feb. Bvt. Brig. Gen. G.M. Brooke reports to Brig. Gen. R. Jones that Winnebago will not be removed from east of the Mississippi except by force; requests reinforcements for Fts. Crawford, Winnebago, and Howard.

1 Nov. Sauk & Fox attack a hunting party of Winnebagoes on Wapsipinicon killing 4 men, 6 women, and 10 children.

8 Nov. Agent David Lowry reports attack to Gov. Dodge of Wisconsin; requests government to intervene between tribes to prevent war.

1840

13 April Gen. Henry Atkinson assigns Lt. J.H. Whipple, 5th Inf., duty to superintend construction of new barracks & quarters on Red Cedar River.

1840 cont.

5 May — Gen. Atkinson reassigns Lt. Whipple to superintend construction of barracks, quarters & defenses to be established on Turkey River.

5 May — Capt. Isaac Lynde, commanding Co. F 5th Inf., leaves Ft. Crawford and camps at Painted Rock.

18 May — Gen. Atkinson orders Lt. Whipple to discharge all laborers hired to construct barracks since a more temporary mode of construction will be built by the men of Capt. Lynde's Co.

19 May — Gen. Atkinson reports to Sec. of War Poinsett his promise to the Winnebago to construct a post on Turkey River and his consternation over the Dept.'s change of site from Red Cedar to the Des Moines; suggests Turkey River site be temporary.

24 May — Capt. Lynde and Co. F leave Painted Rock and camp at the ferry opposite Ft. Crawford.

28 May — Capt. Lynde and Co. F leave the ferry and proceed to Turkey River.

31 May — Capt. Lynde and Co. F arrive at Turkey River and establish Camp Atkinson.

9 June — Gen. Atkinson orders Lt. Whipple to superintend the construction of two-story log barracks, officers' quarters and picketwork at site on Turkey River.

22 June — Gen. Atkinson reports to Gen. Jones that Winnebagoes have been removed west of the Mississippi and that Gen. G.M. Brooke is now in charge of the district; requests approval of the Turkey River post.

22 July — Lt. Whipple reports to Quartermaster Gen. T.S. Jesup that he hopes to have the buildings up by winter; the officer's quarters are 120 ft. by 19 ft. with 6 rooms on each floor and the foundation for the combined soldier's quarters, sutler's store, and hospital is laid out at 140 ft. by 20 ft.

30 July — Gen. Brooke reports to Gen. Atkinson the reluctance of Winnebago bands led by Yellow Thunder, Little Soldier, Dandy and others to cross the Mississippi to the Neutral Ground.

1840 cont.

19 Aug. Q.M. Gen. T.S. Jesup informs Lt. Whipple that no Congressional appropriation has been made for the post on Turkey River.

5 Sept. Gen. Brooke suggests to Gen. Atkinson that Winnebagoes be given their annuities at the new post to induce them to cross the Mississippi.

7 Sept. Gen. Brooke leaves Ft. Crawford with Col. Croghan to inspect new post.

25 Oct. Capt. Lynde reports his command now in quarters though interiors not yet finished; requests name for the post and a chaplain.

1841

23 Jan. Gov. Dodge reports to Commissioner of Indian Affairs that 700 Winnebagoes have been removed to Turkey River.

26 Jan. Capt. Lynde suggests using stone instead of wood to construct post.

29 Jan. Gen. Brooke recommends that Q.M. Gen. Jesup accept Lynde's proposal for Cantonment Atkinson; requests a company of Dragoons for the post.

1 March Gen. Atkinson requests quarters and stables be built at new post for the company of Dragoons.

5 March Gen. Atkinson reports to Gen. Jones that he will station a company of Infantry at the mouth of the Black River to restrain Winnebagoes from returning to Wisconsin.

1 April Gen. Atkinson orders Gen. Brooke to arrest the principal men of bands that refuse to cross the Mississippi to the Neutral Ground.

27 April Maj. S. MacRee, Quartermaster at St. Louis, contracts with Augustus A. Blumenthal to quarry stone and put up "a Block of Stone Barracks at Fort Atkinson Iowa Territory in a plain, substantial, workmanlike manner."

6 June Capt. Lynde requests permission from Maj. Gen. Jesup to complete buildings begun last year; reports building for hospital only partially floored and upper rooms plastered on ceilings but not the walls.

1842

18 March — Lt. S. Hamilton reports to Maj. McRee that the sawmill was extensively damaged during a Spring storm.

3 May — Capt. S.M. Plummer ordered to take charge of quartermaster's dept. at Fts. Atkinson and Crawford by Col. Davenport; requests stoves for both posts.

14 June — Brig. Gen. Henry Atkinson dies at his home at Jefferson Barracks of "billious dysentary."

16 June — Capt. Plummer reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup that a block of men's quarters remains to be finished, the second block of officers' quarters still needs eight days' work, a magazine and commissary are yet to be erected, a well is still to be dug, and the blockhouses have only temporary coverings.

18 June — Capt. J.H. Prentiss arrives on inspection tour & reports that the stone block for officers is nearly ready, the one for the men lacks a roof, the picketing is under way, a small magazine needs to be built, and that 3 rooms in the log barracks are used for a hospital.

20 June — Capt. Plummer writes Maj. McRee that the picketing is 1/3 complete.

8 July — Capt. Plummer reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup that block of officers' quarters are nearly done, block of soldiers' quarters will be roofed in tomorrow, the commissary store and the magazine are 2/3 up, the well is sunk 20 ft., and the picketing is 2/3 done; expects the work to be completed by 15 Oct.

27 July — Col. George Croghan reports "It is mortifying to know that upon this place and Fort Crawford more than fifty thousand dollars have been unnecessarily expended within the last five years."

28 July — Q.M. Gen. Jesup sends Capt. Plummer $5000 for the erection of barracks, etc., and orders the cessation of operations when this amount is exhausted.

8 Aug. — Capt. Plummer reports the arrival of another company of Dragoons; 2nd block of officers' quarters will be finished this week or next except for the plastering; requests additional kitchens be built on officers' quarters to relieve crowding caused by additional company of Dragoons.

1842 cont.

13 Aug. Capt. Plummer reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup the joiner work on the 2nd officers' quarters completed, magazine to be finished in 3 or 4 days, but railings around quarters not finished.

6 Oct. Lt. Hamilton reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup that magazine has been roofed and the interior completed, 180 ft. stable for Dragoon horses completed, picket work finished, but gates not yet hung, and old barracks have been plastered.

3 Dec. Lt. Hamilton reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup that the contract for the well was withdrawn after contractor dug 72 feet without finding water and the well will now be used as a cistern; bridge over the Turkey River to be completed in a few days.

1843

16 June Lt. Hamilton reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup that "the only item which I can furnish any information is the Expenditure on account of the Shaft for well. . .As to the Stables Granary magazine &c. they were all of them built under the direction of other officers who having left no records at the Post it is impossible for me to make any Statement relative" to the cost.

6 Aug. Lt. Hamilton reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup that one of the blockhouses is now roofed and the other is 3/4 done.

13 Oct. Lt. Hamilton reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup that since Oct. 1842 a bridge has been constructed over Turkey River, two blockhouses have been roofed, flag staff erected, well made useful with 40 ft. of water, stairs on exterior of the garrison house have been made uniform, venetian blinds fixed to officers' quarters, quarters painted, railings put on porches, and hay scales erected.

1844

4 May Lt. J.H. Caldwell requests Q.M. Gen. Jesup to ask appropriation from Congress for the amounts due for construction of Fort Atkinson.

10 Oct. Lt. J.B. Plummer reports to Q.M. Gen. Jesup improvements made at Ft. Atkinson between 22 May and 30 Sept. 1844: one kitchen built for commanding officer, lattice work for officers' quarters, frequent repairs to block of log soldiers' quarters and to block of log officers' quarters, 17 rooms painted, and doors made for slaughter house, root cellar and company kitchen.

1845

21 July — Lt. R. Dilworth requests Q.M. Gen. Jesup to clarify what constitutes officers' quarters: "The Set of quarters at this post consist of two rooms, one immediately above the other. Every officer here who is entitled to 'two rooms or quarters and one as kitchen' occupies four. The lower rooms are used as kitchens, and should a junior officer be compelled to occupy one room of the four, a difficulty may arise as to which three constitute a Captains Set."

9 Aug. — Col. Croghan reports buildings in good repair, but says there will be a shortage of rooms should a Chaplain be appointed for the post.

10 Aug. — Lt. Dilworth writes Q.M. Gen. Jesup suggesting additional kitchens to bring the number of officers' quarters into compliance with regulations; "There are at this post, twelve Set of Officers quarters, consisting of two rooms to the Sete."

30 Aug. — Sec. of War Henry Stanton writes Lt. Dilworth telling him it is not "expedient to authorize the construction of any additional buildings at Fort Atkinson."

1846

29 July — Lt. P.R. Thompson ordered to muster volunteers for service at Fort Atkinson and Fort Crawford then join his company on the Santa Fe trail.

13 Oct. — Treaty of 1846, negotiated in Washington, between United States and Winnebago, ceding title to Neutral Ground in exchange for land north of the St. Peters River and west of the Mississippi.

1848

8 June — Removal of Winnebago to Minnesota begun.

30 July — Winnebago arrive at their new reservation.

1849

24 Feb. — War Dept. orders abandonment of Ft. Atkinson.

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