

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <u>Wisconsin</u>	
COUNTY: <u>Columbia</u>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
FEB 1	1972

1. NAME	
COMMON: <u>Old Indian Agency House</u>	Congressmen to be notified: <u>Sen. William Proxmire</u>
AND/OR HISTORIC:	<u>Sen. Gaylor A. Nelson</u> <u>Rep. Robert W. Kastenmeier</u>

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>NE end of Old Agency House Road (Route 1) near NE corporate limits</u>			
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Portage</u>			
STATE <u>Wisconsin</u>	CODE <u>53901</u>	COUNTY: <u>Columbia</u>	CODE <u>021</u>

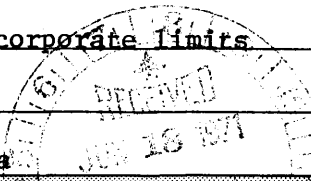
3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY		
OWNER'S NAME: <u>National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Wisconsin</u>		
STREET AND NUMBER: <u>C/O Mrs. W. H. Smythe, President</u> <u>2742 North Shepard Avenue</u>		
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Milwaukee</u>	STATE: <u>Wisconsin</u>	CODE: <u>53211</u>

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION		
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: <u>Columbia County Courthouse</u>		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Portage</u>	STATE: <u>Wisconsin</u>	CODE: <u>55</u>

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS		
TITLE OF SURVEY: <u>Historic American Buildings Survey</u>		
DATE OF SURVEY: <u>1941</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local		
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: <u>Library of Congress</u>		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN: <u>Washington</u>	STATE: <u>District of Columbia</u>	CODE: <u>11</u>

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)			(Check One)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Agency House, built in 1832, is a handsome structure of "Federal style showing New England Colonial influence."¹ Newcomb describes it as "a forth-right, two-story mass, with a two column porch over the door and a story-and-a-half wing at the rear. A recessed porch lets in at one side of this wing. The eaves are close-cropped, and the windows of twelve-pane sash are protected by (louvered) shutters. The framework is of heavy timbers, and the walls have an in-filling of brick, burned near by. Over this, white-painted clapboards were laid, to make a warm house. Hand-split lath were used, and these were covered with plaster made from clamshell lime."²

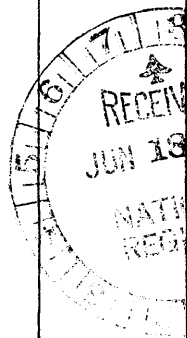
The pitch of the roof is shallow and a single massive square brick chimney rises through the ridge at the center. The porch at the front gable end is pedimented and the siding in the tympanum is flush. A similar porch is located at the right rear entrance. There is another large chimney at the gable end of the wing.

Indian Agent John H. Kinzie wrote of his house,..." 'The house is well built--the work inside is plain and substantial, and very convenient for a family. There^{are} on the ground floor, one room 19 x 19 ft; one 14 x 19; one 10 x 14 and a small Hall. On the upper floor there is a one room 19 x 19 ft.; one 14 x 19 ft.; two 10 x 10 and a small hall. The buildings are on Indian land, and well situated for an Indian Agency.' "³

A well-built house originally, the structure is a well-preserved survival which was purchased in 1930 by the National Society of the Colonial Dames in the State of Wisconsin and restored with the highest fidelity in 1931-32. It has since been operated as a museum and beginning in 1962, furnishings that dated later than 1833, when the Kinzies left, were removed and replaced with authentic period pieces so that it now represents the American Empire Period and is confined to that period only, its coverage ending before the arrival of machine-made articles of the 1840's and the beginning of the Victorian era.

1. Perrin, Historic Wisconsin Architecture, 21
2. Newcomb, Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory, 127-128
3. Quoted in Kellogg; "The Agency House at Fort Winnebago," 444

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SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1832

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Indian Agency House is significant as one of Wisconsin's oldest and finest survivals of frame houses and is an especially fine specimen considering its having been built on the frontier under adverse conditions. The designer is unknown but it seems probable that John H. Kinzie, the Indian Agent for whom it was built, had much to do with it, perhaps with the aid of West Point graduates garrisoned at Fort Winnebago whose education had included drafting and possibly some training in architecture.¹ Kinzie personally oversaw and kept very detailed records of the construction and costs as well as obtaining "mechanics"—carpenters and stonemasons—largely from St. Louis, and probably with the help of influential fur traders like Joseph Rolette and Hercules Dousman. The house was built at a time when the Black Hawk War made Fort Winnebago soldiers unavailable for such work.²

Since good lumber was scarce in the area, much had to be brought to Fort Winnebago from Green Bay and the rest from a rapids about 70 or 80 miles up the Wisconsin River. Brick was made and stone quarried near the site of present-day Portage some 2 1/2 miles away, and the lime came from Pierre Paquette's farm about 12 miles northeast of the fort.³ All of this, of course, made the cost of the completed house high, amounting to almost exactly \$3500—about twice the cost of a similar house had it been built in the east at that time. Nevertheless Governor Porter of Michigan Territory commended Kinzie for his judgment and economy in building so fine a house at the least possible cost to the government under the circumstances.

John H. Kinzie, who was born in Canada in 1803 and spent his youth in Chicago and Detroit, began his career in the fur trade on Mackinac Island in 1818 and later gained important experience at Fort Dearborn. He became an accomplished linguist and was one of the few white men ever to master the Winnebago language. He spoke other Indian tongues as well. In 1829, after serving as private secretary to Governor Lewis Cass of Michigan Territory, Kinzie was appointed Indian subagent at Fort Winnebago. He married Juliette Magill in Connecticut in 1830 and they moved to Fort Winnebago in September of the same year. Kinzie, a just and honorable man, was highly successful as an Indian agent and commanded the respect and trust of the Winnebago. His wife, a woman of culture, was equally popular with them. After living for a while within the fort, the Kinzies moved into the old log agency house for a time, often with more than their share of discomforts. Kinzie had earlier requested funds for a new agency house and approval came in 1831. Plans were drawn that fall and winter and the newly completed house was ready for occupancy in late 1832.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kinzie, Juliette A., Wau-Bun, the Early Day in the North-West, ed. by Milo M. Quaife, Lakeside Press, Chicago, 1932, passim.
 Kellogg, Louise Phelps, "The Agency House at Fort Winnebago," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 14:437-448 (June 1931).
 Newcomb, Rexford, Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1950, 127-128.
 Perrin, Richard W. E., Historic Wisconsin Architecture, Wis. Chapter, American Institute of Architects, Milwaukee, 1960, 21.

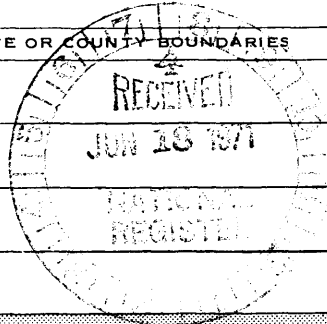
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
				N 43° 33' 33"	W 89° 26' 14"	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.4

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Donald N. Anderson, Assistant Director, Historic Sites & Markers Division
 ORGANIZATION: _____ DATE: _____
State Historical Society of Wisconsin May 7, 1971
 STREET AND NUMBER:
816 State Street
 CITY OR TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ CODE: _____
Madison Wisconsin 53706 55

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name James Morton Smith
 James Morton Smith
 Title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin
 Date June 15, 1971

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Connolly
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

FEB 1 1972

Date _____

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date January 14, 1972

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OLD INDIAN AGENCY HOUSE

8.

The Kinzies lived in their fine new house a scant eight months, having decided to go to Chicago in July 1833 both because the government refused to raise the sub-Agency to a full Agency or to increase Kinzie's pay, and because Kinzie felt that Chicago offered good opportunities in other pursuits. This happened at a time when there were more Indians than ever to care for and, accordingly, increased responsibilities for Kinzie,

Kinzie enjoyed success in numerous ventures, many of which were involved with governmental duties, and he became a paymaster during the Civil War. His wife Juliette, a gifted and skilled writer, wrote several books, both fiction and non-fiction, about life on the frontier based on her experiences at Fort Winnebago, Fort Dearborn and other places in the Northwest. Her most famous book, Wau-Bun, the "Early Days" in the North-West, a true chronicle of their frontier life, was first published in 1856, has undergone numerous reprintings, and remains a popular seller yet today.

Five years after leaving the Agency House, Kinzie returned at the request of his former Winnebago charges who, having been induced in 1837 to sell the government all of their lands east of the Mississippi and to promise to vacate them within the ensuing five years, asked that their former "Father" come to make their annual payment at Fort Winnebago in 1838. He did so and advised them to leave in peace. Their removal was completed in 1840.⁴

Both John and Juliette Kinzie, though they had spent less than three years at Fort Winnebago, occupy an important and permanent place in Wisconsin history. The Old Indian Agency House which they built and lived in is one of the state's most significant landmarks.

1. Kellogg, "The Agency House at Fort Winnebago," 439
2. Ibid., 441
3. Ibid., 443-44
4. Ibid., 447-8

