

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Second Fort Crawford Military Hospital

AND/OR COMMON

Second Fort Crawford Surgeon's Quarters

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Rice Street at South Beaumont Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Prairie du Chien

VICINITY OF

Third

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Wisconsin

55

Crawford

023

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Charitable, Educational and Scientific Foundation

STREET & NUMBER

State Medical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Madison

VICINITY OF

Wisconsin

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Crawford County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Prairie du Chien

Wisconsin

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

none known

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	(reconstructed, 1934)	

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present Fort Crawford Military Hospital was constructed in 1934 by a Works Projects Administration team around the old foundation and north wall--all that remained of the c. 1835 hospital.

The reconstruction apparently was designed based on the style of the original fort hospital--with native stone walls and a shallow pitched, shingled gable roof with wide eaves protected a columned porch, with a wooden floor, raised above the ground, which ran along the long sides of the L-shaped structure.

\* However, comparison of the present building with the original, seen in historic photographs, indicates that the orientation of the structure is quite different from the original. The c. 1835 hospital building had the long side of its L-shape running at right angles to the river (roughly parallel to the present Rice Street). However, the 1934 reconstruction was built with its longer section parallel to S. Beaumont Street, and its shorter section parallel to Rice Street. The buildings, apparently, have only the north wall in common.

The interior of the building is modern museum space. In 1962 a 96' by 40' building with metal siding, Stovall Hall of Health, was built at the end of the three acre site; which slopes rapidly downhill towards the west. A small administration building is located between the hospital (east) and Stoval Hall (west). The three structures are connected by a roofed walkway.

The following is a description of the Second Fort Crawford, none of which is extant:

The location for a new fort was selected on the plateau a mile southeast of the old one, on land purchased from James H. Lockwood, a prominent trader, overlooking the prairie and commanding any approach by river. Work was begun under Major Stephen W. Kearney, who was succeeded as commandant in July, 1829, by Col. Zachary Taylor. The material used was granite from the nearby hills, and in the fall of 1829 Col. Taylor sent a body of seventy men to the pineries on the Menomonee River to cut logs, hew square timbers and make planks and shingles to be floated down in the spring.

The new Fort Crawford consisted of a rectangular enclosure, the north and south walls of which were a stout stockade of hewed pine logs, each one foot square by sixteen feet high. The east and west walls were each formed by two barracks, 35 x 175 feet, built of stone and separated by a twenty-six foot sally port. These joined the officers' quarters and store rooms 35 x 242 on the north and south just inside the stockade, all being one story high with elevated basement. A shingled, gable roof covered each of these buildings and these roofs projecting inside the fort formed the roof of a paved porch ten feet wide, facing an enclosed parade ground 250 x 400 feet.

(Continued)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

C. 1835-56; 1864-65

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Fort Crawford Military Hospital, reconstructed from ruins in the 1930's, is all that remains, except for a small military cemetery, of the Second Fort Crawford built at the south end of the town of Prairie du Chien, 1829-35.

This Second Fort Crawford was a large fortification, the strongest of a chain of forts built along the upper Mississippi after the War of 1812, and its strategic position at the western terminus of the Fox-Wisconsin route between the Mississippi and the Great Lakes made Fort Crawford the center of federal authority in the northwest.<sup>1</sup> The fort was abandoned in 1856, reactivated during the Civil War, permanently abandoned in 1865, and sold in 1872. The site was redeveloped by a private school and nothing remains of the fort itself.

The Fort Crawford Military Hospital was a separate building, located a short distance outside the fort walls. The fort complex was not completed until 1835 and it is believed that the hospital was one of the last elements built. The post hospital was reopened for a period late in the Civil War, after the fort was reopened as a recruiting station.

Dr. William Beaumont, famous physiologist who had conducted very significant experiments in digestive processes c. 1822-25 at Fort Mackinac, arrived at Prairie du Chien August 5, 1828 to take up duties as post surgeon at Fort Crawford. He continued his work at Fort Crawford, recording 56 experiments made there between December 6, 1829 and April 9, 1831. In all he made 208 experiments before publishing his book.<sup>2</sup> It is unclear exactly where Dr. Beaumont did his work, whether at the first or second Fort Crawford, or both. However, since the hospital building was completed last (c. 1835), it is very doubtful that Dr. Beaumont was ever associated with the structure.

In 1934 the hospital was reconstructed by a Works Progress Administration team, around the old foundation and north wall--the only original elements extant.<sup>3</sup> C. 1960 rebuilding and furnishing of the old hospital as a museum of medical history was completed and it was opened to the public. In 1962 an additional exhibits building and office was constructed west of the hospital structure, and connected to it by covered walkway.

<sup>1</sup>Constance M. Evans, and Ona B. Earll, La Prairie des Chiens (Prairie du Chien, 1937) p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Evans and Earll, pp. 16-17.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Don C. Kleinhesselink, Curator, Museum of Medical Progress, May 23, 1975.

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From a tall staff in the southwest corner of the parade ground floated the Stars and Stripes. In the northeast corner was a huge well, six feet in diameter and sixty feet deep. The stone powder magazine was located underground in the southwest corner of the fort proper. Its walls, three feet thick, each rock matching another like flooring, were the work of four men laboring for ten months.

The large stone hospital, built last, part of which is now being restored as an historical museum, stood south of the fort, and the Commandant's home was on the north, a spacious frame dwelling built in 1826 by Mr. Lockwood. It was torn down in 1838 and a new Commandant's residence built on the same foundation by Gen. Brooke. This later building is now the service wing of the Prairie du Chien Sanatarium. North of the Commandant's headquarters was located a new cemetery for officers, still preserved. A wide, level drill ground extended from the fort to the bluffs.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Evans and Earll pp. 19-20.

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History

The site of the First Fort Crawford, near the Indian mound on St. Ferirole Island (later site of two Dousman mansions,) proved subject to flooding. In 1822 the garrison was driven out by high water for over a month, and in 1826 the fort was for a time abandoned, due to flooding, the troops being sent upriver to Fort Snelling. The Winnebago uprising of 1827, beginning with scalpings near Prairie du Chien, caused the reoccupation of the fort. However, with the need for a strong garrison at Prairie du Chien, the old log fort was found to be too small and very poorly located. In 1829 a new Fort Crawford, of stone, was begun about one mile southeast of the first site.

It was the First Fort Crawford, on St. Ferirole Island, that had been the scene of important Indian council and treaties in 1825 and 1829. Dr. Beaumont was assigned to Fort Crawford c. 1829-33 and it is unclear where he conducted his experiments.

\*The Second Fort Crawford, while not completed until 1835, was occupied by some troops in 1831, by all the troops by summer of 1832, and continuously garrisoned until 1856.

During the Black Hawk War of 1832, the garrison, composed of the First Infantry under Colonel Zachary Taylor, served in the field, though no action took place at Prairie du Chien. Black Hawk himself, captured by Winnebagoes after his final defeat at the Bad Axe River, was brought to Fort Crawford where he was turned over to Taylor. He was shortly sent downriver to St. Louis, under the charge of Lieutenant Jefferson Davis. In 1835 the garrison built a military road from Fort Crawford to Fort Winnebago, at the Portage. Other troops completed the road from that point to Fort Howard, at Green Bay. This road, used for a time for military purposes, soon became an important emigrant route. The garrison also built other small forts, but most duty was in controlling Indian disturbances.

With the outbreak of the Mexican War, regular garrisons were withdrawn from Fort Crawford in the summer of 1846 and the post was manned by volunteers from Wisconsin and Iowa. Late in 1849 the last garrison left Fort Crawford and government goods from the post were sold. After a short occupation due to an Indian scare, the fort was abandoned in 1856. The State of Wisconsin leased the property at the outbreak of the Civil War as a site for enlistment and quartering of troops and the Forty-first Wisconsin Infantry was enrolled there. 1864-65 was the last time the post served any military purpose.

The site was sold by the government in 1872. The buildings rapidly disappeared, much of the stone being used in the construction of St. Mary's School which occupied

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the larger part of the site (now Wyalusing Academy). Besides the old hospital (sometimes called surgeon's quarters,) the only other part of the complex is a small military cemetery, about one-third mile north.

Preservation History<sup>4</sup>

During the early 20th century, the Daughters of the American Revolution bought the old hospital, then in ruins, with only the foundation and one wall standing. The DAR combined efforts with a Works Progress Administration team who reconstructed the exterior shell of the hospital in 1934, and some work was never completed until the 1960's. From the 1930's through the 1960's the Beaumont Foundation, interested in a Beaumont Museum, was also involved in plans for the structure.

In 1956 the DAR deeded the property to the State Medical Society. The Historical Society of the State of Wisconsin collaborated with the Charitable, Educational and Scientific Foundation of the State Medical Society to open a museum of medical history there in 1962. The State Historical Society designed and built the exhibits and actually operated the museum 1960-65. The Medical Society foundation funded the project, in 1962 built the new Stovall Hall, and presently operates the museum.

<sup>4</sup>Information from Don C. Kleinhesselink.

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Evans, Constance M., and Earll, Ona B., La Prairie des Chiens (Prairie du Chien, 1937).

Mahan, Bruce E. "Old Fort Crawford" series of articles in The Palimpsest, published by the State Historical Society of Iowa, October 1961, condensed from his book, Old Fort Crawford and the Frontier (Iowa City, 1926).

Pitkin, Thomas M., N. P. S. "Special Report on Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, prepared for the Region II Office, Omaha, May 28, 1937.

Interview with Don C. Kleinhesselink, Curator, Museum of Medical Progress, May 23, 1975.