

FORT WINGATE, BARRACKS  
(Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17)  
(Fort Wingate, Building No. 46)  
(Boys' Dormitory, Wingate Elementary School)  
East of Main Street (North-South) and between  
Bearline and Main Street (East-West)  
Gallup  
McKinley County  
New Mexico

HABS No. NM-194-B

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY**  
**Southwest System Support Office**  
**National Park Service**  
**P.O. Box 728**  
**Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504**

FORT WINGATE, BARRACKS  
(Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17)  
(Fort Wingate, Building No. 46)  
(Boys' Dormitory, Wingate Elementary School)  
(Wingate Elementary School)

HABS No. NM-194-B

**Location:** East of Main Street (North-South) and between  
Bearline and Main Street (East-West)  
Fort Wingate Elementary School  
Gallup  
McKinley County  
New Mexico

USGS 7.5' Fort Wingate NM Quadrangle, 1963, PR 1979  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:  
Zone 12, Southwest Corner N 39.27.402, E 7.23.180

**Date of Construction:** 1906

**Present Owner:** Wingate Elementary School  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Navajo Area Office  
Gallup  
New Mexico  
87301

**Present Occupant:** Abandoned

**Present Use:** None

**Significance:** From the National Register Nomination Form the  
significance of Fort Wingate is: "Until the late 1950s one of  
the best preserved military establishments in the southwest .  
. . . the importance of the fort is primarily its role in  
southwestern frontier history and because of the individuals  
at the fort who later achieved military prominence" (Cook  
1978:3). The Fort Wingate Barracks is one of the few  
remaining expressions of that era.

PART 1. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1906<sup>1</sup>
2. Architect: U.S. Army Quartermaster<sup>2</sup>
3. Original and subsequent owners:

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Original: | U.S. Army<br>Fort Wingate<br>New Mexico  |
| Current:  | Wingate Elementary School<br>Bureau of Indian Affairs<br>Navajo Area Office<br>Gallup<br>New Mexico<br>87301 |
4. Original and subsequent occupants: Same as 3 above

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<sup>1</sup> On an early military map of Fort Wingate, (Fort Wingate 1874), structures at this location are labelled "Company Quarters" (Company Quarters 1873). These buildings, however, burned in 1896. On a later map (Fort Wingate 1904) the location of the "Company Quarters" is vacant. On maps from 1907 and 1908 (Fort Wingate 1907, 1908) the replacement structures are labelled "Barracks" and not "Company Quarters". According to HABS guidelines, the historic name of a property is ". . . defined as the name of the original owner . . . or the name or designated use of a public or commercial building" (HABS/HAER Guidelines: n. d.:6). This property, then is designated "Fort Wingate Barracks" as originally assigned.

<sup>2</sup> Two buildings currently being documented are both situated within the Fort Wingate Complex: the Fort Wingate, Subsistence Storehouse (Fort Wingate, Building No. 34; Fort Wingate, Building No. 61) and the current building, the Fort Wingate Barracks (Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17; Fort Wingate, Building No. 46). The former has been assigned HABS No. NM-194-A and the latter, HABS No. NM-194-B.

5. Builder, Contractor, Suppliers:      Builder:      U.S. Army Troops, some locally hired laborers  
   Contractors:      Various local tradesmen  
   Suppliers:      Locally cut timber, locally quarried limestone, locally made adobes and various local businesses
6. Original plans and construction:      Not Available
7. Alterations and additions:      Built on a squared C-plan, the Fort Wingate Barracks measures 130'-0" north-south x 183'-8" east-west (Hogan #46, First Floor Plan n. d.). A central addition to the building changed the squared C-plan to a squared E-plan. The central addition is 98'- 2" north-south x approximately 37'-0" east-west. Additions also were made to the north end of each of the outer wings of the building. These measure 21'-11" north-south x 37'-0" east-west.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The Fort Wingate Barracks are situated within the previously defined Fort Wingate National Register District (Cook 1978) which includes (Project N34-20:n. d.):

A. Barn, No. 72, built 1930  
C. Officers' Club, No. 64, built 1883  
E. Public School, No. 51, built ?  
G. Residence, No. 55, built 1933  
I. Residence, No. 59, built 1935  
K. Residence, No. 64, built 1883

B. Barracks, No. 46, built 1906  
D. Power Plant, No. 84, built 1927  
F. Residence, No. 52, built 1940  
H. Residence, No. 57, built 1932  
J. Residence, No. 62, built 1935  
L. Shop, No. 88, built 1931

## B. Historical Context

### Introduction:

The activities that led up to the establishment of Fort Wingate occur in the Southwest in the 1830-68 period culminating in the fort's establishment. From 1868 to 1925, Fort Wingate served a military function policing the frontier and maintaining order. The buildings created for this purpose were conceived and designed by the Quartermaster General of the Army for utilitarian functions; these are some of the buildings inherited by and used by Wingate Elementary School beginning in 1925 when the facility became a BIA sponsored boarding school. During this period, and especially in the New Deal era, buildings were handcrafted in a Southwestern style and function. After WWII, new construction drifted away from both the military and the New Deal philosophies and became more utilitarian in a modern sense: mass produced and standardized. In its history, Fort Wingate has the distinction, at least at Navajo<sup>4</sup>, of representing many phases of Indian-Anglo relationships in the Southwest. To understand the role of the Fort Wingate Barracks, this narrative begins on the Southwestern frontier.

#### 1. The Southwest in the 1840s-50s

The situation in the Southwest in the late 1840s to early 1850s was unsettled. The westward expanding United States was warring with Mexico over boundary disputes. There were sporadic Indian uprisings focused mostly against the Mexican settlers in territory which would ultimately become parts of Arizona and New Mexico. Settlements in the area were dispersed over great distances, were situated in resource poor conditions and were hard to protect, and, in the Southern United States, rumblings of Civil War were heard.

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<sup>4</sup> Threinen (1981a:28) notes that the first government sponsored Indian school was “. . . established in 1860 at the Yakima Indian Reservation in Washington. . . . as many Indian schools were to be [it] was located at an abandoned military post”. Considering this option, in 1882, Congress passed “An Act to provide additional industrial training schools for Indian youth and authorize use of abandoned military barracks for such purposes” (Jackson and Galli 1977:151 quoted in Threinen 1981a:29-30).

General Stephen Watts Kearney's primary mission in the west was to wage a war of expansion against Mexico (Higgins 1960:3). The story of Fort Wingate begins in 1846 when, on August 15, Kearney, proclaimed that he would be the "protector" of the New Mexican population then beset by Navajo raiding (James 1967:151). On September 18, he dispatched three Missouri Volunteer companies under command of Lt. Colonel Cosgrove Jackson to Seyboyeta, approximately ten miles north of present day Laguna. His strategy, however, did little to deter raiding. New approaches were needed.

In November 1846, Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan, representing Kearney, met with Navajo leaders at Shush B'Toh (Bear Springs). After long negotiations, Doniphan and fourteen Navajo chiefs (Higgins 1960:4; Simmons 1970:3) signed a treaty on the 22<sup>nd</sup> that stipulated that the Navajo would recognize allegiance to American settlers and travelers (and now military) in the territory; that attacks on residents of New Mexico would cease; that stolen goods and livestock would be returned, and; that Mexican captives would be released (James 1967:152). The intent of this approach was to quell hostilities between the Navajo and Mexican populations in the area and to open a new relationship between ethnic factions.

## 2. 1847-59: Fort Defiance

Not apparent to Kearney, the presence of a "foreign" military garrison in Diné Bikeah (homeland of the Navajo people) led to further distrust. From 1847 to 1862, the Kearney treaty, and other subsequent agreements, failed to gain control (James 1967:152). As hostilities increased between 1847 and 1859, Colonel Edwin Vose Sumner devised a plan to move the existing garrison at Fort Marcy (Santa Fe) to Fort Union and on September 18, 1851, he authorized construction of Fort Defiance (at Tse Hot Sohik, meadows between the rocks) nearer the center of Navajo activities (James 1967:153). Fort Defiance would garrison five companies. Using a strategy of moving posts into Navajo territory, Sumner sought to develop a friendship with the Navajo by entering into trade with them. He established quartermaster stores which provided much needed goods and foodstuffs during difficult winters. Although the next decade or so saw sporadic incidents of raiding, Sumner handled them tactfully without resort to warfare (James 1967:153).

3. 1860-64: Fort Fauntleroy

Several treaties (Meriwether 1855, Bonneville 1858) attempted to demarcate the territory of the Navajo. While traditional Navajo lands were included within these boundaries, the attempt to restrict activities to specified areas was not a Navajo belief; they were nomadic and adapted to freedom of movement (Simmons 1970:6). This action, combined with the harsh winters and difficult conditions, resulted in an attack on Fort Defiance on April 30, 1860, by an estimated 1000<sup>5</sup> warriors. Fighting continued all day until evening when the Navajos retreated to the hills (James 1967:153). This prompted movement of additional troops -- companies E, F, and K, Third Infantry (Higgins 1960:4), into the area and on August 31, 1860, establishment of Fort Fauntleroy<sup>6</sup> at Shush B'Toh (named for Department Commander Colonel Thomas Turner Fauntleroy). The fort was sited at the location of a series of springs in a small valley on the north slopes of the Zuni Mountains, the site of the signing of the 1846 treaty (Tiller 1987:9). Initially, Fauntleroy served as a tent camp outpost of Fort Defiance. A full scale campaign to control the Navajo continued into early 1861.

4. 1861: A Horse Race and Hostilities

In September of 1861, conflict erupted between Navajos and the New Mexico Volunteers. Both groups, bored and starved for amusement, enjoyed horse racing. On ration day, September 22, a great race was staged between a horse belonging to Dr. Kavanaugh<sup>7</sup>, the post surgeon, and a horse belonging to a Navajo, Pistol Bullet (Higgins 1960:6; Simmons 1970). Shortly after the race began, the Navajo horse developed trouble, possibly because of a partially severed rein. Arguments that ensued over the origin of the slashed rein escalated into a riot with gunfire and several deaths. As Higgins (1960:7) writes: "Thus were treaties destroyed".

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<sup>5</sup> According to Threinen (1981a:9) there were 2000 warriors.

<sup>6</sup> Higgins (1960:5) lists companies C, D, F and G of the Fifth Infantry at the post in January 1864.

<sup>7</sup> Higgins identifies Kavanaugh as a "Confederate spy" who "swore secret allegiance to the Confederacy" (1960:9). She also notes that later Kavanaugh and three other conspirators took over a garrison at Cubero on March 3, 1862, holding it until March 5, until the arrival of Confederate soldiers.

Other events, however, were tugging at the military's attention: the South had seceded from the Union and there were rumors of a Confederate invasion of the desert southwest. On April 25, 1861, Department Commander Colonel Edward S. Canby abandoned Fort Defiance, dispatching the garrison to Fort Fauntleroy, thereby concentrating his troops nearer to the Rio Grande, which was the suspected route of Confederate attack.

On February 14, 1862, Confederate troops led by General Henry B. Sibley began a march up the Rio Grande Valley. On the 21<sup>st</sup> they met Union forces at Fort Craig in the Battle of Valverde. Encouraged by victory, they marched into Albuquerque on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and Santa Fe on the 23<sup>rd</sup> (James 1967:154). But, on March 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, they were stopped at the Battle of Glorietta Pass (southeast of Santa Fe). Defeated, they marched back toward Texas.

Another military problem arose as seasoned officers quit. Fauntleroy resigned his commission to join the Confederates in 1861<sup>8</sup>; Fort Fauntleroy was renamed Fort Lyon on September 28, 1862 (James 1967:154; Higgins 1960:7; Tiller 1987:10).

5. 1863-68: (Old) Fort Wingate

Taking full advantage of the military's diversion caused by the Confederate invasion of the desert Southwest, Navajo raids increased markedly. Once disengaged from the Confederates, Brigadier General James H. Carleton devised a plan to move all the Navajos into a central location and end the Indian problem once and for all. He proposed to name this outpost in the Zuni Mountains Fort Wingate (RG 393: n. d.)<sup>9</sup>. The site was Ojo del Gallo (Chicken Springs) near San Rafael. The purpose of this post was to serve as headquarters to round up Navajos for the "Long Walk" to Fort Sumner (Tiller 1987:10).

Commissioned on October 22, 1862, construction of the new fort progressed slowly using salvaged materials from Fort Lyon. Historian Higgins described construction during the early part of 1863 (1960:10):

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<sup>8</sup> Higgins recounts this date as May 13, 1861 (1960:5).

<sup>9</sup> The post was established on October 22, 1863, pursuant to special orders No. 176, Headquarters Department of New Mexico, September 27, 1862.

During May and June of 1863, the troops were engaged in erecting buildings, cutting timber, making roads, etc. During May there were 25 citizen employees, and about 75 or 80 extra-duty men engaged in the various departments such as Carpenters, Millwrights, Masons, Timber Cutters, Road Makers, Adobe makers, and the like. A contract for making 380,000 adobe bricks was awarded to Messrs. Pool and McBride, to be used for erecting the Officers and Company Quarters, Quartermaster Storehouse, and Hospital. The target date for completion of the fort was late summer or early fall.

In November of 1862, Carleton authorized another post, Fort Sumner, to serve as the holding facility for the Navajos. It would be located about 165 miles south of Santa Fe at Bosque Redondo (James 1967:155).

6. 1863-64: Kit Carson

In early 1863, Ft. Wingate included four companies of the Fourth New Mexico Mounted Rifles, one company of California Volunteers commanded by Lt. Colonel Jose Francisco Chavez, and three companies of the First New Mexico Volunteers commanded by Col. Christopher "Kit" Carson. Old Fort Defiance was the staging area for Carleton's round up of the Navajo<sup>10</sup>. On July 28, 1863, he dispatched Carson on the first sortie. Some 180 Navajo surrendered<sup>11</sup> but many had not.

As Hall notes, at that time there were more than 8,000 Navajos thinly scattered over an area of approximately 280,000 square miles (1994:104). He also notes that the government was in error in not understanding that there were several different bands; the government believed that when they ". . . had an agreement with the leader of one band, they had reached an understanding with all the rest". As he relates the story, they sent Kit Carson to ". . . round up the eight thousand Navajos and incarcerate them at a place called Fort Sumner (or Bosque Redondo), along the Pecos River in eastern New Mexico". He continues:

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<sup>10</sup> Smith, et al. visited the site of Old Fort Wingate in 1959 but did not comment on the condition of the fort site or the possible existence of subsurface archaeological deposits (Smith et al. 1959:25).

<sup>11</sup> For details on this pre-round up effort, see Higgins 1960:11.

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Having lived in the country [southwest] and driven, walked, and ridden on horseback and muleback over major portions of that immense and rugged land, I found it inconceivable that Colonel Carson could accomplish what he had set out to do – namely, rounding up Navajos, who were thinly scattered over 280,000 square miles of impassible terrain. The big question was ‘How did he do it’?

During the summer of 1935 I climbed Navajo Mountain. Above the heat, . . . I climbed into the cooler Hudsonian life zone characterized by Englemann spruce and fir trees, a Canadian zone type of vegetation. There I discovered that the summit, a vast round area of several square miles, was covered with a dense aspen forest. Aspens, white barked trees with flat-stemmed leaves that flutter in the wind, are pioneers. They occur after a heavy burn or a clear-cutting and over the years are usually squeezed out by the sturdy Engelmann spruce. Looking more closely, I could see that the ground was littered with the remains of felled spruce trees scattered . . . on all sides. These trees had not been felled by a windstorm nor had they been burned, because the branches were intact. A close examination of the stumps told me that the trees had been cut down with axes. . . . Judging by the amount of bark left on the tree trunks as well as the growth of the aspen, I estimated the job had been done more than fifty years before my visit and probably not less than sixty to seventy five years.

Why was this done? Hall (1904:104) continues his narrative:

A photograph of a soldier standing among newly cut timber in a book owned by Ben and John Wetherill provided the clue. Kit Carson had ordered that the summit be clear-cut, not for timber but to provide open space for a heliograph – a signaling device made with mirrors by which sunlight could be used to transmit coded messages over enormous distances. There had been heliographs as well at Fort Defiance and the eastern edge of the Grand Canyon. Whenever Carson's Ute trackers (among the best trackers in the West) found a concentration of Navajos, word would be transmitted quickly and the troops would arrive.

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By the end of 1863, the Navajos approached desperate straits. Crops were destroyed, winter arrived, food was in short supply and they were nearly homeless. On January 12, 1864, Carson captured many remaining Navajo at Canyon de Chelly (James 1967:156) and sent them to Bosque Redondo<sup>12</sup> on the "Long Walk". The effect on the Navajo was immense. Threinen (1981a:10) summarizes:

Although few Navajos were killed in the roundup itself, many died from the hardships of the Long Walk. Perhaps worse, the roundup and Long Walk were culturally devastating to the Navajos because they were transformed overnight from the strongest, richest group in the Southwest, to a straggling, starving band.

Carson's actions tied up men and equipment (McNitt 1972:31), men who otherwise would be engaged in mounting Patrols into Navajo country. Those Navajo who surrendered as well as those who were rounded up had to be escorted to Bosque Redondo. The corrals and provisions of the fort had to be guarded. These activities severely depleted men available to work on construction at the post (McNitt 1972:31). Despite this, ". . . as many as fifty civilian carpenters, masons, and laborers worked on Wingate's buildings from May through December of 1865; then, as though admitting defeat, construction all but ceased" (McNitt 1972:31-32).

On assuming command in 1864, Major Ethan W. Eaton commented on the camp's deficiencies noting that the "companies were in tents that were so old and torn from use that . . . they could hardly be made to stand".<sup>13</sup> On wet ground, the adobe walls of the buildings were melting. Eaton recommended that if Fort Wingate were to be a permanent facility, its location be moved and construction started over from scratch (McNitt 1972:32). Carleton disagreed. After repeated complaints, Carleton finally sent Captain Asa B. Carey to Wingate for an inspection. Carey noted the low, wet conditions and, assuming Carleton's authority, issued orders to refocus work efforts and reroute drainage to insure drier conditions. Reduced crews of civilian workers continued sporadically to work on construction (McNitt 1972:33) but in the Post Returns of January 1866, they are no longer listed (Post Returns

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<sup>12</sup> Hall notes that some 500 Mescalero Apaches already were interned there (1994:109).

<sup>13</sup> Eaton to Carleton, June 13, 1864, NA, Record Group (RG) 98, "Fort Defiance Letter Book," Letters Sent 1864-1864 (Eaton to Carleton 1864).

1866). At that time, a Captain Butler was in command and he and his garrison were engaged primarily in rounding up the Navajo.

By that time, Carleton had been replaced by Major General George W. Getty. Butler formed a board of inquiry from his own officers and forwarded their report to Getty who requested details from Butler. Obliging, Butler sent details of the alkaline soils and their effect on adobe walls, of wet conditions that permeated the grounds and of the general poor state of buildings. He recommended that a new fort be built from local stone (McNitt 1972:34). Getty, in turn, recommended to his superiors at the Military Division of the Missouri that Butler's recommendations be implemented. General William T. Sherman agreed and Getty moved swiftly. The new site was to be Shush B'Toh (Bear Springs<sup>14</sup>); on June 9, orders were issued to move over half the existing garrison to the new location to begin preparations to receive some 7000 Navajos and the troops for the new garrison (McNitt 1972:35).

7. 1868-1911: (New) Fort Wingate

Conditions at Bosque Redondo were poor and complaints issued forth from many quarters (see Threinen 1981a:10-11)<sup>15</sup>. Finally a Congressional investigation resulted in the June 1, 1868<sup>16</sup>, negotiation of a treaty with the Navajo which stipulated their return to traditional lands (James 1967:157). The boundaries established by the treaty were as follows (Treaty 1868):

bounded on the north by the 37<sup>th</sup> degree of north latitude, south by an east and west line passing through the site of old Fort Defiance, in Canon Bonito, east by the parallel of longitude which, if prolonged south, would

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<sup>14</sup> This is the location of the signing of the original treaty. Its strategic orientation was more central to Navajo activity.

<sup>15</sup> Hall (1994:111) writes: "While the Navajos were interned at Bosque Redondo, an active attempt was made to destroy the Navajo lifestyle. Their food was handed out in inadequate stores of raw, uncooked flour, which they didn't know how to prepare. Potatoes, coffee, lard, and slabs of bacon were all unfamiliar. They were crowded together in a strange land in unsanitary conditions, suffering epidemics, living in pit houses, and told to become like Pueblo people".

<sup>16</sup> Concluded June 1, ratification advised July 25, 1868, proclaimed August 12, 1868, (15 Stat. 667).

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pass through Old Fort Lyon or the Ojo-de-oso, Bear Spring, and west by a parallel of longitude about 109 degree 30' west of Greenwich, provided it embraces the outlet of Canon-de-Chilly, which canon is to be included in this reservation . . .

The treaty further specified that the Navajos were to stop raiding and send their children to school; the government would provide schools and teachers. The treaty reads (Treaty 1868):

the United States agrees that for every thirty children between said ages [six to sixteen] who can be induced or compelled to attend school, a house shall be provided, and a teacher competent to teach the elementary branches of an English education shall be furnished, who will reside among said Indians, and faithfully discharge his or her duties as a teacher.

Further, once situated on their reservation, the government would supply breeding stock. In addition, rations would continue for ten years. The key elements of this treaty - creation of reservations and education - are at the center of the assimilation philosophy to “. . . integrate Indians into Anglo-American society as quickly and inexpensively as possible” (Threinen 1981a:28).

Shortly after signing the treaty, some 8,000 Navajos walked back home<sup>17</sup>. They went first to Fort Wingate and after several months went north to Fort Defiance (Threinen 1981a:36). But with the Navajo back in their homeland, a military presence would be required, at least for the treaty years (1868-77). In a letter concerning Fort Wingate, Bvt. Mjr. Gen. Pope (Pope to Whipple 1880) summarizes the threat on the frontier:

[I] need not point out to the Division Commander that in view of the great strength of the Navajoes, and the narrow escape we [recently] had from a serious outbreak [illegible] to which we may at any [time] again be exposed, a sufficient [garrison] should be permanently stationed at Wingate to secure us against [illegible] peril in which that post and [illegible] were so recently placed.

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<sup>17</sup> According again to Hall (1994:111): “Once back in familiar territory, with a vitality bred from overcoming hardships, they rebounded with an astonishing vigor”.

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It is not likely that the Navajoes, [if] let alone, will themselves begin hostilities but the foolish theories and conduct [of] any overzealous and inexperienced [Indian] Agent, such as the one we have recently displaced, may at any moment jeopard peace with them.

The 1868 treaty stipulated that the Navajo will “. . . make no opposition to the military posts or roads now established, or that may be established” (Treaty 1868). With the return of the Navajo, (Old) Fort Wingate was too far removed to be effective as a police force (Higgins 1960:14) and Fort Canby was in ruins. General G. W. Getty decided that the most suitable location for such a force would be Fort Lyon - old Fort Fauntleroy. He further decided to call it Fort Wingate and decreed that the post at Ojo del Gallo would henceforth, be known as “Old Fort Wingate” (James 1967:158). (New) Fort Wingate would become the only fort in Navajoland. It served to maintain order on the Navajo Reservation, to protect travelers in the area and to provide general security in the region.

In this effort, a letter by James A. Sheridan, Deputy Q M Genl., Brvt Brig Genl U. S. Adj (Sheridan to Meigs 1869) quotes from a correspondence by Bvt. Lieut. Col. M. J. Luddington which states in part:

In compliance with the instructions of the Bvt. Maj. Genl. Commanding, I have the honor to submit herewith plans with estimates of materials and cost for building a Post at the Ojo del Oso on the site known as New Fort Wingate (and near the Reservation for the Navajo Indians) to accommodate two (2) companies of Cavalry and two (2) Companies of Infantry.

On the larger issue of necessary supplies to construct the facility, he inventories the resources, equipment and labor on hand to process raw materials and to do the actual work. He writes (Sheridan to Meigs, June 16, 1869):

A Government Steam Saw Mill with Shingle Machine attached to same power is now in perfect operation at the proposed site of the Post and all the lumber, shingles and lath required can be had at a very cheap price, and in the manufacture of the adobes and certain other work the labor of the Navajo Indians at a low rate per diem is available.

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With the advantage of stone in close proximity while all the lumber, shingle and lath required, can be obtained near and sawed at the post it is thought that a neat and suitable Post can be constructed most advantageously for the Government and possibly at a less figure than stated in the enclosed estimate of cost.

To this proposal, Bvt. Maj. Genl. S. C. Easton Dpty. QM Genl. makes the following endorsement:

If it is the intention of Major Genl. Commdg. the Dept. that a Post of 4 Companies should be built at Ojo del Oso, I recommend that the plans and estimates herewith be approved, and that orders be given at once for the construction of the Post so that work can commence as soon as Spring opens.

Maj. Genl. Sheridan adds the following endorsement:

Approved and respectfully returned the Chief Quartermaster of the Department.

The plans and estimates should be forwarded to the Quartermaster General of the Army thru Std. QM Div. of the Missouri for approval of the Secretary of War.

The foregoing was complied with March 20<sup>th</sup> 1869.

I respectfully submit the subject to the Quartermaster General for instructions.

Very Respectfully  
Your Obedient Servant

James A. Sheridan  
Deputy QM Genl.  
Brvt. Brig. Genl. U.S. Adj.

On February 18, 1870, President Grant set aside 100 square miles on which to construct the fort (Higgins 1960:5; Judge Advocate General 1916:258; Outline Descriptions 1876:149); thirty additional square miles were added on March 26,

1881. The new site was sixty five miles from the old post and the garrison had already moved to the new site on July 22, 1868 (RG 393:n. d.). The original plan for the fort included a circular ring of buildings inside a square encampment. It was drawn up by economy experts who neglected to consider future expansion of the facility and it was rejected in favor of a more standard military style layout (Higgins 1960:18).

Although not dated, Figures 1 and 2 depict a conception of what Fort Wingate would look like prior to its construction. Both figures are from the same original image, the former a plan view and the latter a perspective of the same idea. The probable date is around 1868. On Figure 1 (Fort Wingate Concept Plan-1: n. d.), the text surrounding the north arrow reads "Plan of fort Wingate, NM, New Fort, United States Quartermaster Department" thereby identifying its authors. To the left of the north arrow are the Officers Quarters. Directly above it to the north is the Hospital. To the right from top to bottom are: the Laundress' Quarters, two Company Quarters, the Guard House, and two additional Company Quarters. To the south from right to left are: the Blacksmith, Saddler, Wheel Right, Carpenter, Granary and the Quartermaster Storehouse all housed in a single long rectangular structure. In a separate building on the same axis again from right to left are: a Store Room, Kitchen, Milk Room and Employees' Mess (?). All of these structures surround the parade ground. Beyond the parade ground complex are several other buildings including corrals, mule shed, officers' quarters and other support facilities. Curiously, the words "Old Fort" appear near the center of these buildings.

The perspective view is mounted such that north is again to the top of the rendition (Figure 2, Fort Wingate Concept Plan-2: n. d.). To the left of the image as mounted is a single building at the location of the Officers' Quarters on the plot map. To the top are the Hospital and the Laundress Quarters. To the right are two banks of company quarters flanking a central guard house. To the bottom are the two long buildings that house the Blacksmith, Saddler and other support utilities and to the left is the kitchen/employees mess complex. To the bottom of the perspective are the buildings beyond the parade ground complex.

Construction at the fort began soon after lands were appropriated using adobe (early construction), sandstone (later construction) and locally available wood<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Smith *et al.* illustrate and enumerate the different sandstone formations surrounding Fort Wingate Vocational School (1959:35) many of which were suitable for building materials.

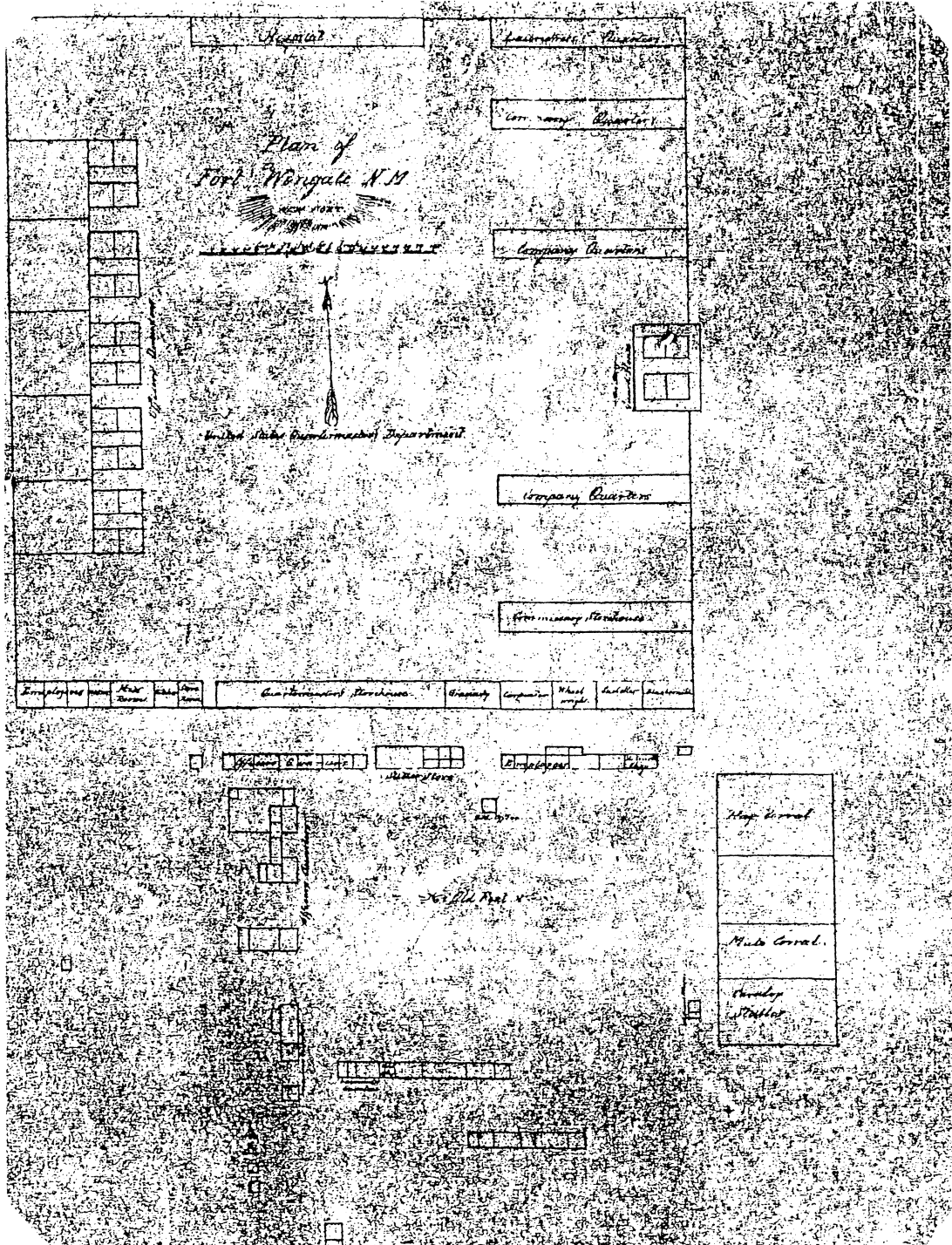


FIGURE 1: Photocopy, Fort Wingate Concept Plan-1. United States Quartermaster Dept. Circa 1868. Original on file at National Archive, Record Group 77, Fortifications file, Miscellaneous.

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FIGURE 2: Photocopy, Fort Wingate Concept Plan-2. United States Quartermaster Department. Circa 1868. Original on file at National Archive, Record Group 77, Fortifications file, Miscellaneous.

Construction utilized doors, sashes and vigas from the location of the old fort (Higgins 1960:14). As the fort was finally built, the central parade ground survived and the Officers' Quarters were constructed in the location depicted on the concept map. The Hospital was situated to the north but the Company Quarters did not conform to the original concept. While at the original location, their footprint was altered. Instead of being linear and rectangular, the barracks were built on a C-plan. An 1874 map of the facilities at Fort Wingate (Figure 3) shows four square C-plan structures labelled "Company Quarters" on an east-west alignment along Main Street on the northern edge of the parade ground<sup>19</sup> (Fort Wingate 1874). Behind each is a "Wash House" and a "Sink" apparently for the use of the garrisoned troops. This group of buildings is immediately south of the parade ground facing the Officers' Quarters across its expanse<sup>20</sup>. The easternmost is at the location where the Fort Wingate Barracks would be built in 1906. At this date there are no numbers assigned to the structures.

To the immediate east is the "Q M & Company Storehouse" and to the southeast is the "Guard House". Although not indicated on the map, Main Street separates these two structures from the bank of "Company Quarters". At the bottom of this map is an illustration labelled "Front Elevation of Company Quarters, One Bay" (Figure 3: Fort Wingate 1874) providing a rare depiction of the original wooden Company Quarters" at Fort Wingate. Equally rare is a depiction of the "Company Quarters ca. 1873" found on the Internet (Figure 4: Company Quarters 1873).

Fort Wingate is described in the "Outline Descriptions" of the posts of the Missouri in an 1876 publication (Outline Descriptions 1876). It is described as located twenty three miles west of the "Dividing Range" (Continental Divide) near Bear Spring. Mail arrived at the post from Santa Fe once a week. A map within the description shows the plan of the fort around the parade ground. Of the buildings in the compound, the authors write:

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<sup>19</sup> Main Street approaches the military compound from the north and upon reaching the parade ground, forms a loop around it; buildings and other features were built around this landscape feature.

<sup>20</sup> It is interesting that during this period, 1881-2, (later) General Douglas MacArthur lived at Fort Wingate as an infant when his father was stationed there in command of Company K, 13<sup>th</sup> United States Infantry (Higgins 1960:22).



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Quarters for four companies; quarters for officers of three companies, hospital, guard house, adjutant's office; the foregoing buildings are new, constructed of pine lumber and adobe, and in good condition; storehouses, bakery, stable, laundress' quarters, etc., built principally of adobe, in fair condition.

The "Quarters for four companies" includes the Fort Wingate Barracks on the eastern end of a set of four barracks buildings. As noted, they are relatively new, made of lumber and adobe, and are in good shape. Of the surrounding Indians, the authors write: "The Navajoes, with the agency at Fort Defiance, distant 45 miles, number between nine and ten thousand, and are at present, peaceable" (Outline Descriptions 1876).

On July 2, 1896, fire swept through Fort Wingate, destroying many of the structures and appurtenances including three of the four "Company Quarters". A map prepared in 1904 (Figure 5: Fort Wingate 1904) indicates that the eastern "Company Quarters" had not yet been replaced. This 1904 map illustrates the Q M Storehouse, No. 33 and the Guard House (number not legible<sup>21</sup>) in the same position as on the 1874 map, suggesting that they survived the fire that razed the original "Company Quarters". Just across Main Street to the west and north, three of the original Company Quarters buildings are missing; only the westernmost is illustrated. Apparently the rest of these burned in the fire. Just north of the "Guard House" and the "QM Storehouse" is building 34, the "Subsistence Storehouse" which later is renumbered as Building 61, the Officers' Club (HABS No. NM-194-A). Further to the north is Building 42, the "Bakery" which later is known as Building 64, a cottage/residence. With general construction dates of 1883, these also apparently survived the fire of 1896.

On a map dated 1907 (Figure 6: Fort Wingate 1907), the "Guard House (No. 70)", the "Q M Storehouse (No. 33)", the "Subsistence Storehouse (No. 34)" and the "Bakery (Number 42)" are all illustrated in the positions indicated in 1904. However, across Main Street, at the location of the easternmost original company quarters are four buildings labelled Nos. 14, 15, 16, and 17. The western most two, 14 and 15, occupy the space indicated by the Company Quarters building that survived the fire. The eastern most two, 16 and 17, are at the former location of the

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<sup>21</sup> On both 1907 and a 1908 map versions of the Fort, The Guard House is labelled "70" so it is assumed that the illegible number on the 1904 map is "70" as well.

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FIGURE 5: Photocopy (partial), Fort Wingate, New Mexico, Water, Sewer and Irrigation Map, 1904. National Archives, Record Group No. 92, Post and Reservation Files, Blueprint File No. 2.

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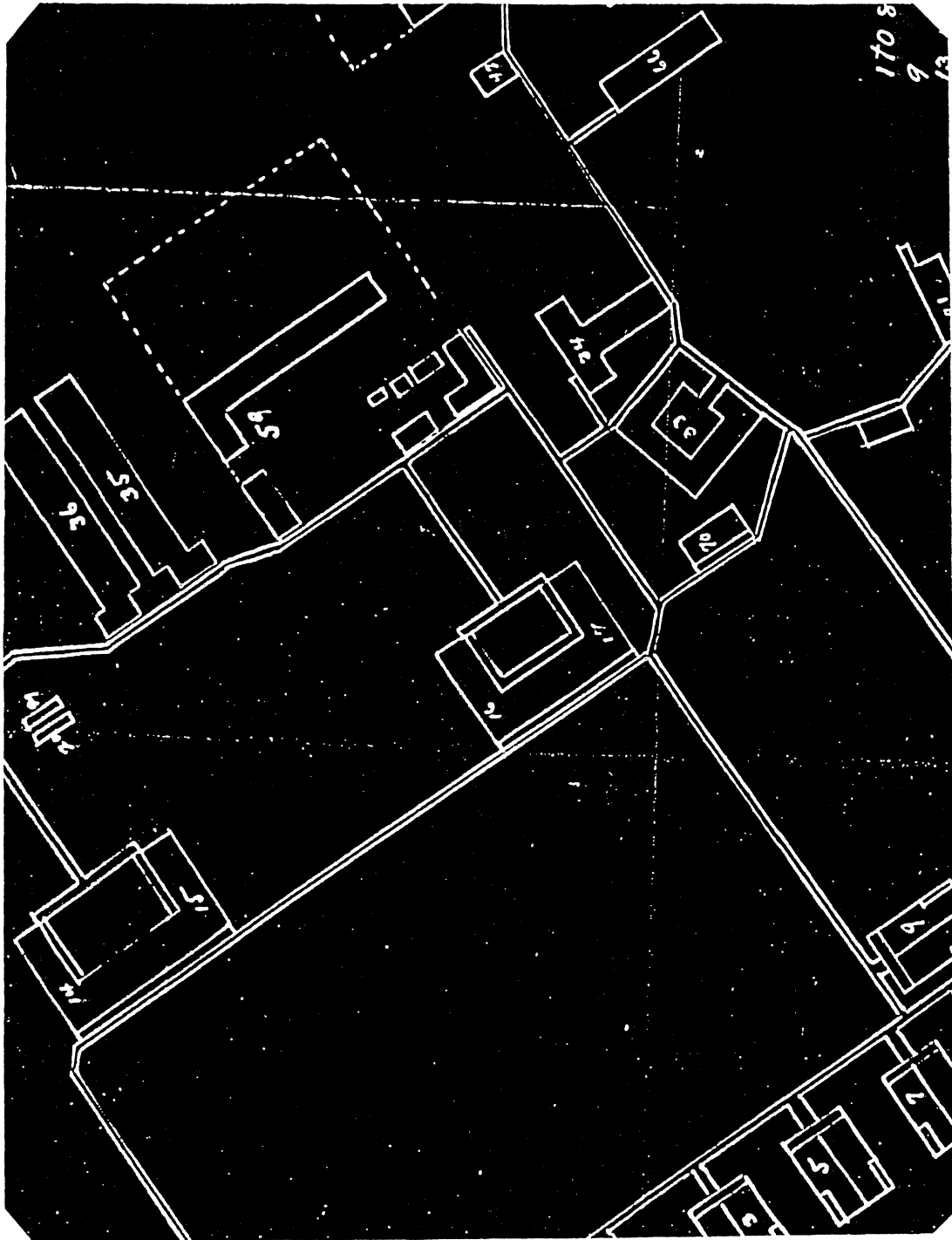


FIGURE 6: Photocopy (partial), Fort Wingate, N. M., Proposed New Sidewalks, 1907. Original on file at National Archives Record Group 92, Post and Reservation Files, Blueprint File #9.

eastern Company Quarters. This map was created to show the locations of proposed new sidewalks. It shows a new walk in front of buildings 16 and 17 (south side, parallel to the parade ground) and walks around the inside of the C-plan at the rear of the building. It also indicates a walk to the north from the rear of the building toward the stable areas and, on approach to the stables, walks east and west to the various stable facilities. The Fort Wingate Barracks cornerstone reads 1906, and the 1904 and 1907 maps neatly bracket the construction of Buildings 16 and 17, the Fort Wingate Barracks.

Reinforcing these conclusions, a map made a year later in 1908 (Figure 7: Fort Wingate 1908) illustrates the same buildings in the same locations and with the identical numbers assigned to them. At this date the stone construction Fort Wingate Barracks is illustrated as a square C-plan with the back of the C (the front of the building) facing the parade grounds. On Figure 8 (Street Map, Fort Wingate n. d.), the parade grounds are to the right (south) of the illustration and the barracks is labelled "46", situated at the intersection of Main and Bearline streets. Note the building labelled "61" across Main Street; this is the "Fort Wingate Subsistence Storehouse" (HABS No. 194-A). Although shown on the Street Map (no date) there are no additions to the rear of the Fort Wingate Barracks on the 1908 map nor is there a central addition to the property.

A review of information to this point reveals that the original barracks was built before 1863, apparently using a combination of wood and adobe. A photograph dating to this period confirms this construction (Figure 4 above, Company Quarters ca. 1863). These were used until 1896 when at least two and possibly three of the four barracks were destroyed by fire. From 1896 until ca. 1905, or for approximately nine years, the Fort was forced to operate on at best half and at worst, only twenty five percent of its original allotment of Company Quarters. It can safely be assumed that much thought and planning went into reconstruction of this critical element of the facility. Plans obviously were drawn up and approved and construction of the new facility appears to have begun in approximately 1905. An interesting document dated March 1<sup>st</sup> of that year sheds light on the construction of the Fort Wingate Barracks (Quartermaster General's Report 1905). Obviously prepared by the military as owners, this document describes the Barracks in detail. Shown as essentially complete on the outside in March, 1905, the inventory indicates that it was completed, instead, in June of 1907; the cornerstone reads 1906. The photograph on the inventory form shows the building with fencing on at least the west side, perhaps used to demarcate a construction site. It is

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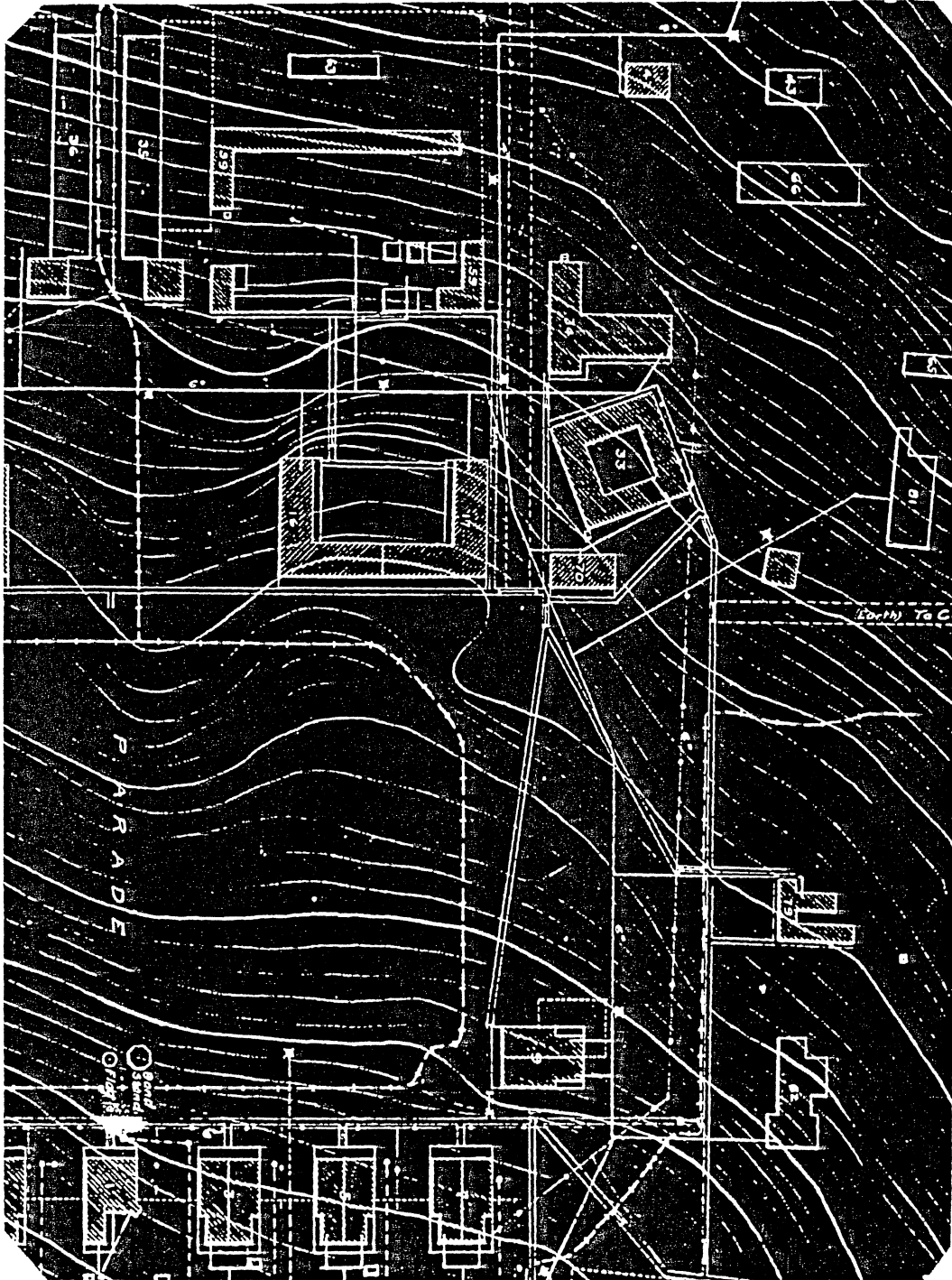


FIGURE 7: Photocopy (partial), Map of Fort Wingate, New Mexico, September 1908. Original on file at National Archive Record Group 92, Post and Reservation files, Blueprint file No. 15.

speculated that the building was started either in 1905 or shortly before, that the cornerstone was ordered in anticipation of completion in 1906 but that internal furnishings were not completely installed until 1907.

The inventory form contains much more information. The Barracks is labelled "Building No. 16 & 17" and is listed as a "Double Barracks" with a capacity of 170 men. Its value at the time was \$54,738.26. The walls and the foundation were both stone; it had a shingle roof and the floors were a combination of wood and cement. It contains 18,130 square feet and measures 31'-3" x 183'-6". Each of the wings measures 31'-3" x 76'-9". It was lit by mineral oil and heated with stoves. It had both water and sewer connections and the following hardware:

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| water closets | 8  |
| urinals       | 4  |
| wash sinks    | 2  |
| washbasins    | 10 |
| laundry tubs  | 4  |
| shower/bath   | 4  |
| bathtubs      | 1  |

Room dimensions are listed as follows:

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Basement      | (overall dimension - not listed)        |
| lr            | 26'-7" x 74'-1"                         |
| hall          | 11'-9" x 26'-7"                         |
| toilet        | 26'-7" x 40'-5"                         |
| lr            | 26'-7" x 32'-4"                         |
| First Floor   | (overall dimension - 27'-11" x 38'-10") |
| lr            | 12'-1" x 20'-5"                         |
| lr            | 20'-5" x 23'-0"                         |
| hall          | 12'-6" x 27'-11"                        |
| hall          | 7'-0" x 35'- 7"                         |
| lr            | 27'-11" x 41'-5"                        |
| hall          | 7'-0" x 11'-10"                         |
| 2 pantries ea | 9'-11" x 11'-4"                         |
| kitchen       | 21'-11" x 27'-11"                       |

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|              |                                  |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Second Floor | (overall dimension - not listed) |
| lr           | 9'-6" x 12'-8"                   |
| hall         | 12'-8" x 18'-3"                  |
| lr           | 28'-3" x 75'-3"                  |
| lr           | 28'-3" x 74'-11"                 |

Notes attached to the building dimensions read: "Each side equipped with plumbing fixtures as above. Floor area is of the whole building. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors, wood, maple. Basement floors, toilet room, hall, storeroom under kitchen are cement. Building equipped with 130 wall lockers". Under the "Additions and Installations" are the following

|    |                           |
|----|---------------------------|
| 2  | bathtubs                  |
| 12 | closets and tanks         |
| 2  | heaters, "Tabasco"        |
| 6  | laundry tubs              |
| 21 | lavatories                |
| 4  | sinks - drainboards       |
| 8  | stalls, urinals           |
| 8  | stalls, showers           |
| 2  | tanks, GI and stands      |
| 1  | tank, "Tabasco" installed |

Apparently used as a running inventory of the property, the following repairs are listed;

|             |        |          |
|-------------|--------|----------|
| Expended to | 3-1-09 | \$ 2.78  |
| Year Ending | 3-1-10 | \$300.00 |
| Year Ending | 3-1-20 | \$302.00 |
| Year Ending | 7-1-21 | \$108.00 |
| Year Ending | 3-1-24 | \$ 98.90 |
| Total       |        | \$811.68 |

This inventory form provides a very detailed description of the building from 1905 until 1924, or the entire military life of the building. It was transferred to the Indian Service (Bureau of Indian Affairs) in 1925 for continued use as a Boarding School.

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In the margin of the inventory form is a note that reads "F. Boys Dorm", a note obviously made shortly after the transition as BIA personnel made building re-assignments for use as a school.

Other documents provide additional information. Constructed in 1905-7, the building does not appear up on the 1904 map of the fort (Figure 3 above) but it does appear on the May 1907 map (Figure 6 above, Fort Wingate 1907). On the 1907 map, it is depicted with a squared C-plan with no central extension to create an "E"-plan footprint. In the legend, it is grouped with several other buildings and they are labelled as "N. C. Officers And Employees Qts" [non-commissioned officers and employees quarters]. New walkways are planned across its width in the front on the parade ground side and extending around the interior of the C joining in the rear with walk way to the stables area.

The Fort Wingate Barracks next appears on a map prepared in September of 1908, again listed as Buildings 16 & 17 (Figure 7 above, Fort Wingate 1908). Still illustrated in a C-plan with no central addition, it is shaded indicating stone construction. Sidewalks appear across the front of the building and inside the "C" at the rear of the building. Water mains are shown entering each of the wings of the building from a main water line striking east-west just north of the property. As illustrated on this map, it is identical in footprint to the barracks to the west.

8. 1911-25: Interim Fort Wingate/Wingate Depot

Fort Wingate was deactivated on February 4, 1911 (RG 393: n. d.)<sup>22</sup> and was abandoned except for a small garrison which remained in place until March 19, 1912 (Tiller 1987:11). The facility was placed in charge of a caretaker. It saw brief duty from 1914-15 housing 4000 Mexican Federalist troops fleeing from the Pancho Villa uprising in northern Mexico (Lebeck 1984:1). They were guarded by Infantry from Fort Bliss who probably used the abandoned Fort Wingate Barracks to house their garrison.

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<sup>22</sup> Per General Orders No. 213, War Department, November 16, 1910. JAG (1916) note that per Executive Order (May 31, 1911) and consequent General Order 80 (June 14, 1911) "the entire reservation was made part of the Zuni National Forest: but to remain subject to the unhampered use of the War Department".

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In 1918, the Ordinance Department took over Fort Wingate, converting it into a storage facility for high explosives<sup>23</sup>. The Ordinance Depot was moved to new facilities closer to the railroad (DeMarcey 1990:n. p.).

The initial, permanent military construction at Fort Wingate began in the 1870s. Its plan focused on a central parade ground with Officers' Quarters to the south and Company Quarters to the north. Following the 1896 fire, only a few of the original buildings remained including (as numbered on period maps) 61, 64, 66, 98, 110 and 111 (Threinen 1981a:104)<sup>24</sup>. In 1925, the grounds which contained the barracks, parade field, enlisted and officers' quarters and other administrative facilities were transferred to the Indian Service (Bureau of Indian Affairs) for use as a boarding school (Higgins 1960:29; Lebeck 1984). The surviving buildings above, as well as structures built following the fire, including the Fort Wingate Barracks, were among those transferred. At the time of transfer, these were the surviving military style buildings and landscape that came into BIA holding. At this point there are two Fort Wingate facilities, the Ordinance Depot and Wingate Boarding School. The Depot played only a minor role in the development of Wingate School which is the focus of the remainder of this narrative.

9. 1925: Wingate Elementary School<sup>25</sup>

When it began, Wingate Boarding School was one of eight schools in Navajo Land. Initially it was the primary vocational high school for Navajos and, ironically, it was the only one off reservation (Threinen 1981a:58). When the school took over the

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<sup>23</sup> Lebeck (1984:1) quotes Paul Merrill that "From 1900 to 1915 the fort was used to store TNT" and that in the latter year it was moved (Merrill 1984).

<sup>24</sup> During this period, from approximately 1911 to 1912, John J. (Blackjack) Pershing was stationed at Fort Wingate as a lieutenant (Higgins 1960:24).

<sup>25</sup> Several repositories were visited in connection with field investigations at the Wingate Elementary School. Alice Yazzie, a former student at the school and currently a teacher there was interviewed on April 13, 2000. The next day, April 14, Dave Thompson, the Facility Manager at the School, provided additional information and Diane Owens, the Principal, also spoke with the field staff about the school. BIA offices in Gallup and in Gamerco were checked for maps and/or other data and the Eastern Agency office in Crownpoint was contacted. Finally, photographs and artifacts on display at the local trading post were examined.

property, the Fort Wingate Barracks became the boys dormitory (#46 on Figure 9, Wingate Elementary School Campus n. d.) and the west barracks was for the girls (Yazzie 2000, Personal Communication). Figure 10 shows the floor plan of the facility (Hogan #46, First Floor Plan n. d.).

A pair of maps executed in December of 1925 provide useful information. The first (Plot Plan, 1925a) shows the "Boys' Dormitory" at the location of the Barracks. It is labelled Building "14" and water mains are shown entering the building, one into each wing of the C-plan. The walkways planned in 1907 are in place. But, instead of describing the original C-plan, a central addition, also stone, has been made to modify the footprint to an E-plan. A narrow hallway leads from the center of the building northward into a rectangular addition. The addition shown on the 1925 maps does not extend the full length of either of the wings on the east or west of the building so that the central arm of the E-plan is shorter than the exterior arms. From modern documents, this is known to be sleeping quarters added for students of the school. As a note, a very similar addition was shown onto the Girls' dormitory to the west.

The second map (Plot Plan, 1925b) is very similar to the first showing the existing walkways in place. It illustrates the central addition with the same footprint but it indicates that the "water mains" on the companion map as steam supply lines. Branching from a 6 inch east-west main supply line, 2 ½ inch lines enter both the east and west wings and 2 inch return lines are drawn. Unlike the companion map, however, this version illustrates a third 1 inch supply and ¾ inch return line entering and exiting the central addition. It is reasonable to assume that this additional line supplied heat to the addition to the property. Interestingly, this map also shows many of the cavalry stable buildings as "to be removed" perhaps reflecting the emergence and utility of the automobile.

The former Officers' Quarters housed the staff and teachers of the school. The parade ground became an athletic field. Other buildings were utilized as class rooms, administrative facilities, maintenance shops, residential units and for other functions. Following the transfer and before the New Deal changes were initiated, Fort Wingate School built additional structures for diverse functions. These include:

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| Building name | No. | Const date | Comments |
|---------------|-----|------------|----------|
| Power Plant   | 84  | 1927       | stone    |
| Shop          | 88  | 1931       | stone    |
| Barn          | 72  | 1930       | stone    |

Built in utilitarian styles, these structures neither echo the previous military architectural style nor foreshadow the New Deal Construction to come.

The next useful map of the Fort Wingate Barracks was prepared in 1931 (Figure 11, Fort Wingate 1931). Labelled "ca. 1931", the production date is approximate. Shading on the representation of the property indicates stone construction throughout. The floor plan is shown as the squared C-plan as seen on earlier version except now there is a central addition creating a squared E-plan instead. This addition must have been constructed between the 1908 illustration and about 1931. Across the street is a building labelled "Employees Mess" (also known as the Old Officers' Club or the Subsistence Storehouse (HABS No. 194-A) which is shaded differently than the Barracks. In the field, it was verified that this building is a combination wood and adobe structure. The Girls' Dormitory to the west of the Fort Wingate Barracks is shaded the same, indicating it, too, was an adobe structure. Between the two dormitories is a new stone "Mess Hall".

10. 1931-45: The New Deal and Wingate School

Beginning in about 1931, the BIA added buildings using random ashlar style masonry construction. Records indicate that the following were constructed between 1931-45:

| Building name | No. | Const date | Comments              |
|---------------|-----|------------|-----------------------|
| Residence     | 57  | 1932       | wood                  |
| Residence     | 55  | 1933       | wood                  |
| Garage        | 56  | 1934       | wood                  |
| Storage       | 58  | 1934       | wood                  |
| Residence     | 59  | 1935       | wood                  |
| Residence     | 62  | 1935       | wood                  |
| Offices       | 31  | 1937       | stone, Pueblo Revival |

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|           |    |                    |                       |
|-----------|----|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Garage    | 53 | 1937               | wood                  |
| Residence | 94 | 1939               | stone, Pueblo Revival |
| Residence | 95 | 1939               | stone, Pueblo Revival |
| Residence | 52 | 1940 <sup>26</sup> | wood                  |

As buildings were added, the campus grew. Describing its layout in 1931, Holmes (1988:3) writes:

The 1931 campus included two stone classroom buildings, one on the east side of the campus for academic subjects and one on the west side for domestic science; one stone administration building on the northeast corner; a stone kitchen-dining hall between the two dormitories; a stone laundry behind the girls dormitory; a brick hospital to the southeast corner; and a stone power plant, barn, and industrial arts classroom to the northeast, behind the main classroom building on the campus quadrangle.

The map prepared in 1931 (Figure 11 above) shows the relative positions of the Girls' and Boys' dorms, the Mess Hall and the "Employees Mess". On this map, the Boys' Dorm (Fort Wingate Barracks) has a central addition that is coded as being made of stone, similar to the original building. The Girls' Dorm on this map is coded as adobe with a stone addition in the center. Perhaps the two stone additions, one to the Boys' and one to the Girls' dormitories were added at the same time, some time between 1908 and approximately 1931. Few other architectural, structural or mechanical details are presented on the 1931 map.

The election in November of 1932 put Franklin D. Roosevelt in the White House. He immediately began his New Deal program focused on easing or ending the depression. The influence of this initiative effected nearly every segment of the federal government. Roosevelt selected Harold Ickes to serve as the Secretary of the Interior and Ickes, in turn, chose John Collier as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Collier took office on April 21, 1933.

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<sup>26</sup> Holmes (1988:10) dates this structure to 1942 stating that based on personal communication (Paul Merrill), it was ". . . built as emergency war time duplex housing for officers of the nearby Fort Wingate Depot" (Merrill 1988). Note the construction of officers' quarters during the operation of Fort Wingate as a school.

Collier was a reformer. In the early 1920s he worked in the New York tenements championing the idea of "communal existence" (Threinen 1981a:39). During a visit to New Mexico he saw the plight of the Navajo people and decided that their lives could be improved by adopting a communal lifestyle, about which he was familiar. He worked on several Indian rights committees and came to better understand the Navajo and the Pueblo tribes. As head of the Indian Rights Welfare Committee (Philp 1977:27) he was well known among legislators and representatives of the government's New Deal, including the BIA.

To Collier, the Navajo, already as recipients of federal assistance in several capacities, provided the ideal testing ground for his reform movements. Following his taking office as Commissioner, Collier developed two major goals. First, he would provide modern education to the Navajo through establishment of day schools to replace the then operational boarding schools. These were to allow ". . . children . . . to benefit from a modern education near home and . . . not to be isolated at boarding schools away from their culture and heritage" (Hamilton 1997:8,8). Second, he intended, through the appropriate handling of curricula, to reawaken pride in being Indian and to improve Indian lands (Threinen 1981a:39; Philp 1977:118). These were not new ideas but through New Deal programs like the Public Works Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps, Collier was able to actually provide funding to address these particular goals as part of his general notion of self government and self sufficiency for the Navajo.

Collier took action on self governance by promoting the building of the Navajo capitol at Window Rock. Completed in 1936, this construction laid the foundation of the soon to emerge Navajo Nation Council (Hamilton 1997:7, 3-6). In the realm of education, Collier utilized the tenets of Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act designed to put construction workers back on the job. This, combined with a shortage of adequate schools for Navajo children, resulted in a new day school program. Collier considered day schools preferable to boarding schools; Threinen (1981a:63) summarizes this logic:

He considered day schools to be more suitable than boarding schools because they were cheaper to operate and they allowed education within the Indian's cultural milieu.

Upon receipt of funding, the BIA engaged the New York firm of Mayers, Murray and Phillip to design plans for buildings to comprise the day schools.

In developing architectural styles for New Deal buildings, administrators and designers stressed the use of the “. . . prevailing type of architecture in the immediate vicinity; suitability of the plan to the surrounding landscape; the availability of native building materials; . . . simple design; and maximum opportunity for Indian employment” (Collier 1937:35 in Hamilton 1997:8, 20). The selected style at Navajo was Pueblo Revival, often rendered with heavy massing in the walls and external features, exposed lintels, supporting vigas and redwood canales. Because of the fragile nature of adobe, construction at Navajo frequently used Dakota sandstone instead, a much more durable medium (Hamilton 1997:8, 21). Most of the buildings observed Navajo tradition with doorways facing east and windowless north walls. Given the need to spend money expeditiously, two general formats were designed for the boarding school buildings: a flat roof type with an overhead or a flat roof version with a parapet. The themes were repeated across the reservation.

Altogether forty six schools were planned and BIA representatives R. M. Tisinger and Alan Hulsizer used demographic and other data to select their locations. Because of the widespread settlement pattern of the Navajo, and because trading posts were notable as gathering locations, preference was given to locations near these posts (Threinen 1981b:n. p.) Using local materials and labor, the day schools were to provide much needed income for Navajo workers and, at the same time, create schools for the Navajo children.

Based on the tenets of self sufficiency and self governance, the day schools developed a curriculum focused on crafts and skills. The curriculum was pragmatic. As Threinen (1981a:41) writes, courses were offered in “. . . health, use and control of reservation resources, civic participation and use of manual skills” all with a direct element of self sufficiency and an indirect overtone of self government. Other courses included such things as weaving, arts, sheep husbandry, irrigation and farming, all geared at teaching Navajo children how to be self sufficient (Holmes 1988:6).

Collier's physical influence can be seen across Navajo land in the form of construction of new buildings for day schools. Administered by the BIA, the influences of his philosophy, although less tangible, are visible in the curriculum and focus of the schools, including Wingate Elementary. Addressing this, Holmes (1988:1) reports that in the 1930s, the Wingate School staff took pride in their character as a boarding school and made great efforts to supply quality education to

the Navajo children under their tutelage. Self sufficiency was a lesson both in the in the operation of the school and in the classroom. The physical school was constructed from locally available resources in styles reflecting Native American culture and the curriculum offered secondary education in practical fields. Holmes (1988:6) writes:

Among the best known courses of instruction . . . [was] . . . silversmithing, taught by Ambrose Roanhorse, a well-known artist, and weaving, taught in conjunction with an experimental sheep breeding station near the school.

The staff sponsored annual craft shows and a craft guild for the students. Some other courses offered at Wingate Vocational School included agriculture, stock raising and breeding, leatherworking, plumbing, homemaking, child care, etiquette and Indian art.

Valuable insights into the use of the school during this period were gained on April 13, 2000, in an interview with Mrs. Alice Yazzie. She was a student at Wingate School from 1940 to 1950, the end of the New Deal influence. She returned in 1960 as a teacher and is still on staff. September, 2000, marked 40 years service for her. She agreed to an interview about the school.

At the time she attended, Wingate was a vocational school where girls learned weaving and cooking and domestic skills. She recalled personally participating in the collecting of plants to be used for preparation of dyes. She also remembered fields to the north and barns with milk cows, pigs, chickens and other domestic animals. The older boys harvested crops and cared for the animals; she used to help with harvest.

Young (1978) highlights dyeing and weaving, offered at the school through the Home Economics Department. Nonabah G. Bryan, a Navajo weaver, employed her skills to experiment with dyes used to color wool for weaving (Young 1978). Using techniques she learned early in life and exercising her naturally experimental nature, she reconstructed or created a range of dye colors using plants and minerals that occurred naturally on the reservation. Working with the school, these experiments were recorded and passed on to other weavers and to students.

Ms. Yazzie also remembered that in the 1950s, the emphasis of the school changed from the primarily vocational New Deal thrust to a more academic and college

preparatory curriculum. When she returned to the school in 1960, the fields and the livestock that she remembered were gone and the school had abandoned this element of the curriculum. Records indicate that the farm equipment was sold in 1958, the fields were left fallow and the irrigation systems were abandoned (Paul Merrill, Personal Communication, cited in Holmes 1988:9; Yazzie, Personal Communication, 2000).

Ms. Yazzie related that when she was in school, "Building 46" (the Fort Wingate Barracks) was the boys' dorm and the girls' dorm was on the other end of the row of buildings. Situated between the dormitories was a building with an upstairs dining room a downstairs bakery. The cook, formerly of the Navy, made good bread and baked goods. When the boys' dorm was in use there was a bowling alley under the under the middle wing. Later it was a canteen. The extensions on the ends were bathrooms with rows of showers and toilets.

Several photographs (on file at Navajo Nation Museum) depict aspects of life at the boarding school when it was in full operation. The first (Girls' Dormitory 1940, Sekaer) shows the Girls' Dormitory<sup>27</sup> looking from the southeast. It is on the west end of the stretch of sidewalk from the Fort Wingate Barracks (Boys' Dormitory). Opposite it on the east end is the Boys' Dormitory (Boy's Dormitory 1940, Sekaer) seen from the southwest.<sup>28</sup> Between the two is the "Mess Hall" described by Alice Yazzie. Another view shows Navajo students resting on the parade ground/athletic field in 1940 (Navajo Students 1940, Sekear). A final photograph from this period

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<sup>27</sup> The original caption reads "Girl's Dormitory at the Federal Indian Boarding School, Fort Wingate, N. M. Boarding schools are now used by students who are not within reach of the day schools and by those who desire educational training beyond the day school level, Navajo Indian Agency, Window Rock, Arizona". This photo illustrates the twin of the Boys' Dormitory or Fort Wingate Barracks building as it appeared in 1940 during the hey day of the school. Note the hogan to the right of the picture. Finally, note the vertical ballisters in the porch railing, the louvered vents in the gables, and the window placement on the east side of the structure.

<sup>28</sup> Original caption reads "Boys Dormitory at the Federal Indian Boarding School, Fort Wingate, N. M. Boarding schools are now used by students who are not within reach of the day schools and by those who desire educational training beyond the day school level, Navajo Indian Agency, Window Rock, Arizona". This photo illustrates the Fort Wingate Barracks as it appeared in 1940 during the hey day of the boarding school. Note the hogan to the left of the picture. Also note the crossed treatment of the ballisters in the porch railing and the 2 x 2 window in the gable.

shows school activities in the 1950s (Wingate Vocational High School 1950). In the background to the left is the Fort Wingate Barracks and to the right is Fort Wingate, Subsistence Storehouse (HABS No. 194-A), both in use as school facilities in the late 1940s to early 50s, the time Ms. Yazzie was in attendance. When she was a student, building 42 (64, previously a bakery located just to the north) was a house and she remembered people, probably staff, living in it. Fort Wingate, Subsistence Storehouse, was the Employees Club providing apartments for single teachers. When she returned in 1960 both buildings were boarded up and no longer in use.

Unlike the day schools with modern (1930s) structures, Fort Wingate inherited military style buildings designed by Quartermaster General architects in the 1880-1910 period including the Fort Wingate Barracks and the Subsistence Storehouse.

Collier's day schools were only moderately successful for several reasons. First, the Navajo were nomadic, moving from summer to winter homes as the seasons dictated. Many children, therefore, could not attend a day school all year round.

Second, the day schools provided only one meal a day and no clothing allowance. The boarding schools, however, offered a full diet and they also supplied clothing and other forms of support to the children. These were important amenities to those Navajo with limited financial assets.

Third, those schools built in a traditional Hogan style were not popular. The Navajo wanted modern, progressive schools, not dirt floor traditional buildings (Hamilton 1997:8, 22; Threinen 1981a:41). The Navajo preferred "modern facilities and a disciplined atmosphere within which to teach their children" (Philp 1977:198 in Hamilton 1997:8, 22).

Fourth, Threinen (1981a:15) explains that, even as recent as 1945, many Navajo lived in isolation; they knew very little about the modern, outside world. As one result, ". . . the Navajos were reluctant to send their children to school because they saw no need for formal education". She continues that to the Navajo all things are acts of the gods and they could not understand the Anglo logical or scientific connections between events, the things that were taught at school.

Finally, an anti-government faction formed in opposition to the federal closing of two boarding schools. Under the leadership of Jacob Morgan, this group (educated

FORT WINGATE, BARRACKS  
(Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17)  
(Fort Wingate, Building No. 46)  
(Boys' Dormitory, Wingate Elementary School)  
(Fort Wingate Elementary School)  
HABS No. NM-194-B  
(Page 37)

in boarding schools) recognized the regimentation of the schools and saw the use of the English language as essential to future success (Holmes 1988:6). Holmes further writes that (1988:6):

Perhaps because of the strong support found within the Navajo Tribe for the BIA boarding schools, Fort Wingate during the era of the New Deal, 1933-1941, became the showcase boarding school for the Navajo.

In sum, as a traditional and oral culture, the Navajo changed their ways slowly. A bureaucracy suddenly flush with funding and a directive to spend it quickly changed their ways rapidly. These differing philosophies, in combination with mandated stock reduction<sup>29</sup>, fostered a mistrust on the part of the Navajo and one reaction was to boycott federal programs like the day schools. Overall, enrollment in the day schools was lower than expected. During WWII, there were funding cuts that adversely effected the schools. Transportation systems broke down and teachers could not be found. During the war, Threinen (1981b:7,2) writes, “. . . parents built dormitories at some of the schools because the transportation system broke down” thereby effectively changing the day schools into boarding schools. By the end of WWII, many had closed and were boarded shut; many of those that remained open were converted to boarding schools (Threinen 1981a:43) For all these reasons, misunderstandings and reluctancies, the New Deal philosophy quickly dissipated as Roosevelt finished his third term and his Indian Commissioner of twelve years, John Collier, departed in 1945.

During the New Deal era, Wingate School continued to modify existing structures and to build new structures to serve a variety of uses. A 1936 map (Topographic Map 1936) illustrates the “Boys Bldg” as # 7. It is coded as “Rock” construction. The walkways are shown but the feeder lines from the main steam supply are not indicated. Sewer lines, however, approach the central addition from both the east and west, indicating a need for removal of waste water from that portion of the Fort Wingate Barracks. The central addition to the E-plan shown in 1925 is again illustrated as ‘shorter’ than the east and west wings but there is yet another addition -- to the addition -- causing the central arm of the E-plan to extend beyond the exterior arms. Both sewer lines attach to the second extension suggesting generation of wastewater from this area. According to Alice Yazzie, at the time she

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<sup>29</sup> For an insightful treatment of the stock reduction issues, both sheep and horses, see Hall 1994, Chapter 8, pp. 1215-141.

FORT WINGATE, BARRACKS  
(Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17)  
(Fort Wingate, Building No. 46)  
(Boys' Dormitory, Wingate Elementary School)  
(Fort Wingate Elementary School)  
HABS No. NM-194-B  
(Page 38)

attended the school (1940-50), in the boys dorm there was a bowling alley under the middle wing; later it was a canteen. The extensions were bathrooms and showers with rows of toilets and showers. No conclusions can be drawn, however, about the 1936 function of this area. A similar addition to the central arm of the E-plan is shown on the Girls' Dormitory to the west. Notably, many of the stable complex buildings are not shown, probably removed between drawing of the complex in 1925 and the rendition later in 1936.

One of the new structures added to the campus was the Administration Building<sup>30</sup>, #31, built in 1937 and executed in a classic Pueblo Revival style, very reminiscent of the New Deal construction (see Table above). Two other residential buildings, 94 and 95, also were built in a Pueblo Revival style. Holmes (1988:7) notes that several 'hogans' were added as "demonstration buildings for the home economics program". These additions, she writes, ". . . reflected a new building ethic which permeated the BIA at this time, which was to build school buildings in regional styles". Threinen (1981a:58) adds that there are another twenty two structures built before 1945 which are described as ". . . simple wood frame cottages and garages" which do not, like 31, 94 and 95, reflect the New Deal influence. As Holmes notes (1988:7) these additions maintained the original military plan of building around the central parade ground, and, when space became short, the school continued to build in concentric rings more or less in a similar orientation.

Toward the end of the New Deal era, in 1942, the Department of the Interior commissioned another map of the facility (Figure 12; Department of the Interior 1942). The central extension appears just as it did in the 1936 rendition of the property, reaching beyond the extent of the wings of the building. The function as a dormitory, however, has not changed. There do not appear to be additions to the outer wings of the building at this time. Just outside between the Fort Wingate Barracks and the Dining Hall is a structure labelled "Hogan Boys". The Girls' dormitory also appears as it did previously. As a note, the Master Plan for the building indicates that it was used into the 1950s as a dormitory, or only for another eight or so years (Master Plan 1997:3).

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<sup>30</sup> Holmes (1988:7) writes of the addition of a ". . . new stone economics building (building 31)" ascribing a slightly different function to this property. Later in the same paragraph she refers to this as the "home economics" building.

11. 1945-68: Post-WWII and Recent Construction

Little construction occurred on the Navajo Reservation during WWII with the exception of rare war related facilities. Even so, both Crownpoint and Shiprock saw the development of tract housing for war industry employees. Threinen (1981a:81) makes an interesting point comparing contemporary construction: "The Navajos built simple, indigenous stone structures for themselves. The war related projects made use of mass-produced, industrial materials and forms". The only war time construction at Fort Wingate occurred at the Helium Plant in the Ordnance Depot.

The war time introduction of mass produced and prefabricated construction replaced the hand crafted stone building style of the New Deal era. New structures did not use the cut stone of the earlier era but were made with cinder block and new modular or mobile structures were employed instead of stone and wood bungalow residences. The new architectural style that originated with the war ". . . was no different from the inexpensive, standard building found elsewhere" (Threinen 1981a:81).

As above, in the 1950s, the emphasis of the school changed from the primarily vocational New Deal program to a more academic and college preparatory curriculum. An interesting photograph shows campus life in the 1950s (Figure 15 Above). In this image, school children are seen returning from a field trip. The Fort Wingate Barracks, in use at the time as the Boys' Dormitory, is visible on the left in the medium distance. Across the street in the medium distance on the right is the Subsistence Storehouse (HABS No. 194-A) used at the time as staff quarters and/or an Employees' Mess.

In the 1960s, a new boarding high school, dormitories, and teachers' quarters were constructed in the now fallow fields and the old boarding school was made into an elementary school, thereby dividing the upper and lower grades. New building took on a changed, utilitarian appearance and the older orientation centered on the parade ground began to diminish. Holmes writes that in 1988, there remain scattered structures dating to the early military period, including Fort Wingate Barracks and the later New Deal period (1933-41) structures; at that time they were no longer in use. Buildings constructed in the decades after the New Deal era were more utilitarian and were of ". . . standard CMU construction. Their utilitarian aspect contrasts sharply with the handcrafted PWA day school buildings" (Threinen 1981b:7,2). Slowly the sense of order and symmetry centered on the

parade ground dissipated. Finally, in 1968, Fort Wingate Barracks was abandoned (Noe 1984:2) after nineteen years as a military barracks and sixty two years as a dormitory.

## 12. 1968-Present: Modern Wingate School

Two relatively recent maps provide useful information. Done in 1970 (Topographic Map 1970) a Department of the Interior map illustrates the "Boys' Dormitory", Building 46, shortly after the closing of the structure. The central addition is shown with the second addition as depicted on the 1942 rendition. However, each of the exterior wings is also shown with an addition to the rear (north) terminus of the wing such that the footprint of the E-plan extends to the same length of the central two additions. Each addition is slightly narrower than the original wing and each indents slightly inward from the outside edge of the wing. From both interviews (Yazzie, Personal Communication 2000) and from on site inspection, these were added to increase the lavatory capacity of the dormitory. Clearly they were added between 1942 and 1970 by the BIA staff as means to upgrade facility usefulness. The footprint of the Girls' Dormitory to the west is altered drastically (a T-plan) as if rebuilt.

The second map dates to 1988 (Utilities Plot Plan 1988). The same additions are shown although with a slightly more emphatic rendering. Steam, water and power lines are shown into each of the three arms of the E-plan. The representation of the Girls' Dormitory is the same as on the 1970 map, reinforcing the conclusion that it has been rebuilt.

The modern history of Fort Wingate and the Barracks can be viewed from a general and a particular perspective. The general perspective focuses on the disposition of the school as a compound and examines its use from approximately 1968 to the present. The particular view focuses on the Fort Wingate Barracks as an individual historic property.

### A. The General Perspective: Wingate School

In recent years, a number of inspections and examinations have resulted in preparation of a fair body of information about the Fort Wingate compound. Some of the resulting reports have been generated within the cultural resource framework and others have to do with safety.

First, several reports focused on Fort Wingate have been prepared in response to cultural resource management legislation. Among others, these include:

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| Bradley   | 1987,     |
| Brandt    | 1988,     |
| DeMarcay  | 1990,     |
| Henderson | 1986,     |
| Kakos     | 1986, and |
| Stewart   | 1983      |

Recognizing the importance of the military element of Fort Wingate, researchers have defined and nominated portions of the original garrison and parade grounds to the National Register of Historic Places District including 160 acres with discrete boundaries set on May 26, 1978 (Project N34-20 n. d.:2; Cook 1978:supplemental map). Although some work has been done with the Fort Wingate District, there has been no concentrated effort to understand the wealth of information potentially available. Even so, in generally managing the property, the BIA and the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department (NNHPD), Facility Management Program, developed four Research Topics useful for site related studies (Treatment Plan n. d.:3) including:

1. a study of the contrast of military and education facility architecture and artifacts;
2. the possibility of subsurface historic archaeological deposits;
3. the presence of design and construction flaws as compared to maintenance problems, and;
4. archaeological monitoring during construction activities at the compound

Also in recent years, there have been several inspections of the Fort Wingate buildings from a safety standpoint and to determine the presence/absence of asbestos and other contaminants. In 1989, FKW Inc., and again in 1994, EMC Inc. inspected and reported on the condition of Fort Wingate properties, including the Fort Wingate Barracks. In 1996, IHI Environmental prepared a report on the asbestos problem in, among others, the Barracks. In their report, they identify and describe the locations of hazardous materials and recommend precautions to be taken when entering the properties (Ahearn 1996). According to the Master Plan (1997:3) for both buildings (including the Barracks), the asbestos was abated in 1997 by the Navajo Area BIA Demolition Crew.

## B. The Particular Perspective: Fort Wingate Barracks

By way of summary, the Fort Wingate Barracks was designed by engineers and/or architects of the Quartermaster General of the Missouri; records indicate that it was constructed between 1905 and 1907. From the official dedication date of 1906 it served as Company Quarters for non-commissioned officers and the garrison of Fort Wingate until the fort was deactivated on February 4, 1911, or for about five years. The small contingent of troops that remained there until March 19, 1912, may have used the building for their quarters. Fort Wingate then was left to a caretaker until 1914-15 when it saw brief duty guarding Mexican Federalist troops. Nineteen years after its official construction, it was transferred to BIA and became a dormitory for boys, a function it served until abandonment in 1968. In 1975 it was listed as an historic property in New Mexico; in 1978 it was placed onto the National Register of Historic Places. In 1979 it was fenced for safety reasons and in 1984 the building was sealed, also for safety reasons.

A consideration of the Fort Wingate Barracks is included within a recently assembled (ca. 1993) dateline memorandum listing significant dates of actions on properties at Wingate Elementary School. Using this as a background and adding details as appropriate, the following time line focuses on the Fort Wingate Barracks in particular (Dateline ca. 1993:1-2):

1997

April, Master Plan (1997) reports that asbestos has been abated in the Barracks

1996

July 30, IHI report on Asbestos in Fort Wingate Barracks (Ahearn 1996)

1994

May, EMC report of inspection at "Building #46" (EMC 1994)

1993

April 13, NNHPD/BIA condition report of buildings 46, 61, & 94.  
May 4, Meeting regarding buildings 46 and 61 including representatives of School Board, NNHPD, Congressman Richardson's office, New Mexico Senate, BIA, Navajo Nation office of the President and Vice President, Red Rock Chapter, Iyanbito. The Wingate Elementary School task force was formed to consider the future of subject buildings.

- 1989  
May 30, Initiated consultation with Advisory Council on Historic Places (ACHP) to secure buildings 46 and 61. ACHP concurred on June 19, 1989.
- 1988  
November 30, BIA meeting on short and long-term action plan for historic buildings at Wingate. Long term measures included feasibility study on reuse and recordation
- 1987  
December 9, Historical and Architectural Documentation sampling from the National Archives for Fort Wingate completed.
- 1984  
October 11, Congressional hearings of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, testimony on salvaging Ft. Wingate buildings.  
October 8, Iyanbito Chapter Resolution supporting preservation and restoration of buildings.  
n. d. Fort Wingate Barracks sealed for safety reasons
- 1980  
July 20, evaluation of old barracks and medical buildings at Ft. Wingate by Van Dorn Hooker, architect, University of New Mexico. Building suitable for restoration at that time. Estimated restoration cost \$1.5 and \$1.8 million, respectively (Hooker 1984)
- 1979  
Fort Wingate Barracks fenced for safety reasons (Noe 1984:3)
- 1978  
May 26, Fort Wingate listed on National Register (Cook 1988: Supplemental Map; Project N34-20 n. d.)
- 1975  
Fort Wingate placed on state register of historic places
- 1968  
Boys' Dormitory (Fort Wingate Barracks) is abandoned

In recent years there has been much concern and discussion about the future of the Fort Wingate Barracks. A review of available literature, correspondences, maps and studies reveals that generally there have been three main responses to this question: do nothing, demolish the building or renovate the building. These three options appear in a January, 1995 Worksheet prepared by the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department. In that document, NNHPD listed the options and

consequences of the three possible actions. A summary of their Worksheet follows (Worksheet 1995):

Option A - No Action

Problems

1. increased deterioration and vandalism
2. increased risk of exposure of students to hazards
3. increased liability
4. continuing demands for action by all parties
5. increased asbestos abatement costs later

Option B - Demolition

Requirements

1. asbestos abatement
2. public notification & hearings
3. memorandum of agreement document addressing mitigation of adverse effects
4. relocations costs to move bat community
5. physical demolition costs

Option C - Rehabilitation/Re-roofing

Requirements

1. asbestos abatement
2. no HABS/HAER
3. reroofing the structure
4. Building to remain boarded up

Option A - No Action

As NNHPD notes, one of the problems with taking no action is the continuing deterioration of the property itself, both through natural decay and through vandalism. Another problem stems from the curiosity of the school children. Those who want to get into the building will find a way regardless of security efforts which, in turn, continues to extend BIA's liability for the property as owners. Doing nothing also does not address the concerns of many individuals involved with the school including the staff and students, the public, the preservation community, etc. Finally, at the time of preparation of the Worksheet, NNHPD correctly notes that with the

passing of time, the cost for asbestos abatement will continue to increase.

Another problem, not itemized by NNHPD, is the continuing cost for security and low level maintenance on the property. A January 1989 letter (Merlan to Flores 1989) addresses some possible measures to increase security and decrease liability. Fencing the property is suggested to secure the building. Security patrols are discussed as is moving a unit of the tribal police into the building. Other measures include installation of exterior lighting, repointing the mortar, fixing the leaky roof and removal of vegetation.

A response to this correspondence came on March 9 (Sullivan to Wallace 1989) in the form of plans for security upgrades at the Fort Wingate Barracks. Plans and cost estimates were enclosed for blocking the windows and door openings, for adding secure chain link fence, for installation of security lighting, for cutting the trees, for roof repairs and for adding "No Trespassing" signs around the property. The estimate for this work was \$50 - \$55 thousand, a substantial cost for security and low level maintenance. On June 19, 1989, the Area Director wrote to the Advisory Council alerting them that the BIA was preparing to secure "Building 46" (Area Director to Fink 1989). Enclosing the SHPO comments, the BIA described the undertaking and the building, explaining that there would be no adverse effect as result of security modifications, other than the cost of continuing security and maintenance. Not mentioned in the correspondence was another potential pitfall of taking no action, the possibility of a determination of demolition by neglect.

#### Option B - Demolition

In 1979, a Facilities Evaluation Summary was prepared for the Fort Wingate Barracks (Facilities Evaluation 1979). In the Facility Summary Statement under the heading "Mechanical" the plumbing and heating systems are marked as "Abandoned" indicating the status of the property at that time. Not long after that, in 1987, Tiller writes: "Fort Wingate has at least four buildings that are abandoned military era buildings (61, 46 [Fort Wingate Barracks], 64, 66). These abandoned and deteriorating buildings have been identified as access [sic, excess] to the BIA's current needs" (p. 3). Based on the building being abandoned and excess to their needs, in 1984, on June

25, the BIA decided to seal the Barracks for safety reasons (Knowles 1984a). Not long after that the decision was further made to demolish the property. According to Gloria Howes testimony, in March of 1984, the Bureau of Indian Affairs made known their intention to demolish the Fort Wingate Barracks Building using the Environmental Defense Restoration Account funding. The cost of removing several buildings was to be \$1,600,000 with \$500,000 earmarked for the Fort Wingate Barracks.<sup>31</sup>

The first "problem" the NNHPD Worksheet (1995) sees with this alternative is with the asbestos in the building: it would have to be abated before demolition could safely be completed. A report dated May 12, 1994 (EMC 1994), indicates that asbestos is present and it is actively deteriorating in the building. Because of this, the report authors conclude that the level of friable asbestos will continue to increase in quantity with the passage of time. They recommend the use of protective respiratory devices when working in building and initiation of an immediate cleanup program.

The NNHPD Worksheet listed the second problem as negotiation of a memorandum of agreement to mitigate the adverse effects of demolition, an agreement which undoubtedly would stipulate the third problem - involvement of the public through notification and hearings. The logistics, administration and implementation of this stipulation (and others that might be negotiated) would be time consuming and, while working through these actions, the building would continue to be a safety and security problem. As Knowles (1984a:1) reports: "About five years ago [1979] children set fire in the inside and burned a hole in the floor".<sup>32</sup> Clearly vandalism and safety issues would continue to be a liability during this process.

The NNHPD Worksheet lists a fourth problem with demolition as "Relocation Costs for transporting an indigenous bat community to new habitat" (Worksheet 1995). Finally they list the physical demolitions costs

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<sup>31</sup> As it turned out, the Department of Defense, for their own reasons, did not fund the BIA's request for demolition.

<sup>32</sup> Ahearn (1996:2) writes "A fire occurred in the south-central part of the basement in 1992. A portion of the floor was pulled down during the extinguishing of the fire". While the two general descriptions of the fire sound similar, the dates do not match.

themselves. As above, demolition of the Fort Wingate Barracks would cost \$500,000 (Howes 1985).

#### Option C - Rehabilitation/Re-roofing

In 1981a, Threinen, in a publication titled "Navajos and the BIA" described the Fort Wingate Barracks as "reminiscent of military barracks of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with its E-shape plan and two story wood veranda". In a Table of Mitigation Recommendations and Chart of Structures Surveyed, she described the Fort Wingate Barracks as "significant, National Register" (1981a:104). There are others who also consider the property to be significant and, therefore, worth saving. However, not everyone agrees on the reasons that it is a significant. Some see structural features of the Barracks as a basis for this argument. Others use emotional arguments to make the same point. Still others see a functional element that to them makes the building worth saving.

#### Structural and Historic Arguments for Rehabilitation

On learning of the intent to demolish the property, local historians and supporters petitioned the Governor to establish a Task Force to look into the feasibility of restoring the property. Assessing the property, Van Dorn Hooker (1984) writes that "An addition was made to the north end of the east and west wings about 20 years ago [1964]. There is evidence of some partition changes and general repairs". Regarding mechanical systems he continues: "The building heating and electrical systems have been upgraded through the years . . .". He notes that "The walls are 18" to 24" thick with wood furring on the inside supporting wood lath and plaster". The building has ". . . copper shingle roofs which appear to be in good condition" and the walls, doors, and roof framing all in good shape even though the interior doors need replacement. Of the roof structure he notes that "The wood in the roof structure of these buildings would be better than the finest available today". Later he writes that "These buildings are structurally sound. Most of the timbers are in excellent condition. The walls of stone are almost as good today as when laid 78 years ago" (1984:3). He concludes "In is my opinion that this building is in good enough condition that it can be restored and

should be restored. There are many uses for it which the citizens are proposing that are quite reasonable" (1984:2).

Partially based on this assessment, the Governor's task force recommended restoration of the Fort Wingate Barracks. They consider the structure to be unique and the construction in good condition. Switching from a structural to a functional argument, the Task force suggests some compatible uses for the restored property including library, administration offices, counseling center, community historical center, recreation center and/or Head Start offices.

The Task Force argued for the structural integrity of the Fort Wingate Barracks; a Gallup resident, Sally Noe, argues for the historic significance of the same property. She forwarded her testimony to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs on October 13, 1984 (Noe 1984). After recounting the history of the military and later the school facility, she quotes from Van Dorn Hooker, stating that the building is ". . . the best example of construction methods used in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in New Mexico". She continues on her own:

The architectural design is very typical of the many barracks buildings constructed during this period, of which this is the last known to be remaining in the country.

The deliberate destruction of this significant 80 year old building, the last vestige of New Mexico's historic territorial past, would intentionally diminish the contributions of this area to a proud national heritage that we all hold in the highest regard.

Like S. Noe, Paul Merrill also argues for restoration of the Fort Wingate Barracks (Merrill 1984). He describes ". . . magnificent red sandstone buildings built in the early part of the century [which] surrounded the parade ground. There were two large stone dormitories, former cavalry buildings centered by a kitchen and a dining room" (Merrill 1984:1). He continues that "In 1978 the remaining double cavalry barracks building was placed on the National Historic Register". He concludes that ". . . preserving historical and beautiful buildings [like the Fort Wingate Barracks] is a worthy effort and money better spent than in demolition" (Merrill 1984:1).

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### Emotional Arguments for Rehabilitation

In response to the Task Force study, a series of individuals stepped forth with a different argument for rehabilitation of among other buildings, the Fort Wingate Barracks. Their arguments are based on life experiences at the school and/or in the Barracks. Jean Bogart Winslow of Costa Mesa, Ca., writes "To the Superintendent, the Faculty and Students of Fort Wingate Indian School, Past, Present and Future" sending a photograph album of days past at the school. Her father, Herman Bogart, was Superintendent from September 1, 1935 until February 1, 1940, and she fondly remembered her days there (Winslow to Superintendent 1983).

On the same day Howes submitted her testimony, Edward T. Begay submitted his (Begay 1985). Vice-Chairman of the Navajo Nation at that time, Mr. Begay writes of the location of Fort Wingate as a "traditional rendezvous for our people" (Begay 1985:1). He continues:

Since 1925 the military buildings of Old Fort Wingate have been used as dormitories and classrooms to educate our children. The Old Barracks Building itself housed soldiers for only 14 years, but served as a dormitory for Navajo boys for more than 44 years. For many decades, the grandparents, parents and now grandchildren of many Navajo families have started their education at Fort Wingate in the now historic facilities.

Given the importance of the Old Barracks Building to the history of the Navajo people, we would hope that the Bureau of Indian Affairs can . . . preserve the building and . . . put it back to use once again as a valuable asset to the Boarding School, the community of Fort Wingate, the Navajo Nation and the State of New Mexico.

Johnny R. Thompson (1984) offers some additional views on the fate of the Fort Wingate Barracks. As a Navajo Councilman for the local Chapter government, he has some Navajo concerns about Fort Wingate and the Fort Wingate Barracks. He writes (Thompson 1984:1):

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Fort Wingate is very important to the people which I represent, as almost all of them attended the Bureau of Indian Affairs School, and now send their children to the Boarding School. After the Army abandoned the old military post, the Old Barracks Building was used as the men's dormitory . . . As such, it brings back fond memories to many of the local Navajo people.

The Old Barracks Building, has helped many Navajo people as a school, and we feel that this old building can still be put to good use as a part of the school campus, as well as to serve the local community.

The Navajo Nation believes that the Old Barracks Building is well worth the money required for its restoration. . . The Old Barracks Building would also serve as an extremely important landmark of the past history of the Navajo people in the area.

#### Functional Arguments for Rehabilitation

In February of 1985, Gloria Howes summarized activities at Fort Wingate and the Wingate School up to that point in her testimony to the committee (Howes 1985). Using a functional argument she wrote that the Barracks should not be demolished, rather that it be restored as part of the School. She suggested a number of functions that a restored property might serve including (among others) a library, administrative offices, museum, etc. Her concluding remarks suggest that the BIA reconsider demolition and look at restoration options.

Various individuals have argued that the Fort Wingate Barracks is a structural and historical element of local importance. It represents the military use of the Fort Wingate area and stands as a classic reminder of the New Deal period on the reservation. It is structurally sound and is in fairly good condition; it is representative of an important period in history. Others argue that there is sentimental and emotional attachment between students, former students and their families. Important life events are associated with the barracks/dormitory, events that span several generations. Still others argue that there are realistic and functional aspects of the barracks that could be recovered and used positively in the school and in the community.

Structural, historical, emotional and functional arguments have been made for the rehabilitation of the Fort Wingate Barracks.

There is yet another facet to the future of the Fort Wingate Barracks - the involvement of the state, tribal, and federal offices of historic preservation. Some of the extensive correspondences that have been generated are on file at the respective offices involved. In a newspaper article, Knowles writes that on October 15, 1984, the Governor's Task Force reports to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and recommends funding for studies of the feasibility of restoration of the property (Knowles 1984b, c). Shortly thereafter, having heard of the issues at the Barracks, the National Trust offers support for the rehabilitation of the property in spirit although not in funding (Barker to Landolt 1985). Following up on the feasibility study, a September 1985 correspondence (Landolt to Crawford 1985) makes a request for \$35,000 to fund Historic Structures Report. The funding was not forthcoming. Other alternatives are suggested in a letter enclosed with the correspondence (Landolt to Railey 1985). From the state perspective, on May 4, 1993 (Merlan to Howes 1993) they (SHPO office) are willing to follow up with requests to BIA for information on their compliance activities.

In a correspondence dated May 15, 1996 (Cook to Arviso 1996) reference is made to a report prepared by Wyatt/Rhodes with regard to the Preliminary Structural Evaluation of Buildings #46 [Fort Wingate Barracks] and 61 [Subsistence Storehouse] at Wingate School, New Mexico. Echoing the prevailing thoughts at that point in time, the structural inspector wrote: "It is my understanding that building #46 is to be restored and that building #61 is intended to be demolished". The inspector notes that the building [Barracks] generally in good condition except where fire damage has occurred. It is recommended that shoring be added to provide interim support until final decisions are made about the structure.

A correspondence dated November 19, 1986. (Area Director to Zah 1986) requests that information on the property be transferred from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to Navajo Nation.

Additional correspondence dated May 16, 1996 (Hamilton to Sebastian 1996) affirms that Building 61 is unsound and dangerous. Noting that the

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BIA plans to demolish Building No. 61, the authors further state that Building 46 [Barracks] is in good shape and BIA “. . . plan[s] to proceed with a space needs assessment, feasibility study and renovation plans for this building”.

In 1997, the Master Plan (1997:3) also reports a meeting of the New Mexico SHPO office, the BIA, and the Navajo Nation HPD where it was concluded that the Fort Wingate Barracks and Building 61 (Subsistence Storehouse) should be documented with HABS/HAER process, followed by demolition of the Storehouse and renovation of the Barracks. It is recommended that the Fort Wingate Barracks could be used for “Administrative offices, Library, Conference Room, and classrooms for Music, FACE, Cultural, Computer, Art, Science, and others”.

Since preparation of this dateline summary, efforts have been made to develop a memorandum of agreement with regard to several of the structures dating to the military period. At this point, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has requested that the Fort Wingate Barracks be recorded using HABS level 1 documentation, the subject of this effort.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Information:

1. Architectural character: Although Ahearn (1996:2) writes that "The original construction of Building 46 is believed to date to 1902", the cornerstone of the building reads "1906 A. D.; Erected by Q M Dept". In addition, a study of historic maps shows no structure at this location in 1904 (Figure 5) but does indicate "Barracks" on site in 1907 (Figure 6). This precludes building in 1902 and brackets construction between 1904-7, very likely in 1906 as the cornerstone indicates.

Threinen (1981a:58) describes the Fort Wingate Barracks as: "A dormitory (#46) built in 1906 [which] is reminiscent of military barracks of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with its E-shape plan and two story wood veranda". The floor plan, covering some 45,538 square feet, describes an E-plan with the back of the E (the front of the building) facing south overlooking the parade ground with the Officers Quarters on the opposite side. The original "Company Quarters" were at the same location. An 1874 map (Figure 3) depicts these as one story buildings. They burned in 1896 and were replaced by the current building, approximately ten years later.

2. Condition of fabric: There has been a fire toward the front of the building on the first floor. A large hole attests to the efforts to extinguish it. Although it fell through to the basement, it fell on a dirt floor and caused no additional downward damage. There is some damage above but it is not serious. Other than some broken windows and falling plaster, the property is structurally sound.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: From the front (south) to the rear (north) the building is 130' deep. Across the front it is 183'-8".
2. Foundations: The foundations are made of locally cut stone. Photo NM-194-B-15 shows the interior of the building in the basement clearly showing the cut stone in place.
3. Walls: Exterior walls are also of cut stone (NM-194-B-3, 5 & 8). Ahearn (1996:2) notes that the "Exterior walls are cinder block construction". Clearly the original building was cut stone but the addition is cinder block.

4. Structural systems, framing: In the basement (NM-194-B-15) are stone pillars used to support the main framing of the building which is wood (NM-194-B-6 & 7).
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: Across the front of the building, spanning its entire width, is a two story wood frame porch with balcony above (NM-194-B-1, 5 & 7). It is braced by spaced wooden supports across the front. There is no railing on the first floor but on the deck above there is a decorative wood railing the length of the porch. Over the top is a wood frame roof topped with shingles.
6. Chimneys: There are at least five chimneys in the building that apparently function as a ventilation system allowing air flow through the building (NM-194-B-1-5). In several of the rooms there are ventilator openings at the floor and ceiling level (NM-194-B-13).
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: There are seven exterior doors. Four are on the front of the building situated toward the east and west ends. At each end are two doors, a double door that opens outward and a single door that opens inward. The outermost double doors (NM-194-B-5) are the main entrances. At the rear of each leg of the E are additional double doors providing rear ingress and egress from the building.
  - b. Windows & shutters: On each side of the building, on the outside wall, are eight sets of regularly spaced windows (NM-194-B-3). Each set consists of a pair of windows, one on the first floor and one on the second. Each individual window is double hung but, with the panes and sashes missing, it was not possible to discern a lite pattern. The windows have heavy rock sills and rectangular lintels that resemble the sills.
8. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: The main (east-west) roof is flat and each of the legs of the E has a low gable transverse to the main roof line (NM-194-B-9). "The middle wing roof is metal shingles on wood trusses, the U has asbestos shingles on wood trusses" (Ahearn 1996:2). Portions of the roof were

covered with metal rectangular shingles and portions appear to have composition shingles.

- b. Cornice, eaves: Two slightly different eave treatments are apparent (NM-194-B-6 & 7). The northeast corner of the central leg shows eaves that radiate around a corner like spokes of a wheel (NM-194-B-6). The other, taken at the southwest corner of the front of the building shows a feather like pattern in the eaves used to round a corner (NM-194-B-7).
  - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.
9. Additions/modifications: A 1907 map of Fort Wingate (Figure 6) illustrates a square "C"-plan structure with no additions; apparently the original building was built with that arrangement. A 1908 map (Figure 7) shows the identical footprint. A map prepared in 1931 (Figure 11) shows an addition to the property such that the square "C"-plan is now a square E-plan. An addition has been made to the interior of the structure (NM-194-B-10). This map further indicates that the addition is stone, similar to the original structure. Although the map is not clear, a 1942 rendition (Figure 16) shows the central extension protruding beyond the square plane of the rear of the building; apparently there has been an addition to the addition portrayed in 1931.

Ahearn (1996:2) addresses this: "The single story middle wing [read addition] appears to have been built at a separate time from the U-shaped [C-plan] part of the building". This is the addition that appears between 1908 and 1931. Describing this addition, he notes external cinder block walls and "Interior walls [of] plaster. The floors are concrete or ceramic tile on concrete. A built-up roof is on both wings. Heating was provided by tying into steam pipes in the basement. Steam and hot water pipes rise to the first and second floors" (Ahearn 1996:2).

He further notes that: "The final major renovation was to add rest room and shower facilities to the north ends of the dormitory wings. This was believed to have been done in the 1960's" (Ahearn:1996:2). If Ahearn is correct then there were at least two episodes of addition and modification of Buildings 16 & 17 (46).

Regarding these additions, the authors of the Master Plan (1997:24) write: "Since the 1950s additions are considered non-historical, and detracting from the historical value of Building 46, all plans include the demolition of these additions. The

additions are 2 story cinder block construction, and contain shower rooms and secondary exit stairwells. Stairwells, shower rooms, and, in addition, elevator shafts, will need to be provided within the historical footprint of the existing Building 46 . . . ”.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: A floor plan of the building is presented in Figure 10. The Fort Wingate Barracks has two main floors and a basement. “The basements generally have cement floors, though some dirt floors and crawl spaces exist” (Ahearn 1996:2).
2. Stairways: On the east and west ends of the buildings, along the inside of the outer walls, are the main stairways (NM-194-B-12). They led upstairs to the second floor and down into the basement. In addition, in the center of the building there is a stairway leading up to the second floor (Figure 10). On the exterior of the building, there are three sets of steps leading up to the porch level and two sets of stairs on either end leading up to the second level of the veranda. Finally, in each of the outer additions there are steps leading up and into the building from the ground level.
3. Flooring: The first and second floors are wood. A 1992 fire caused some internal floor damage. “A fire occurred in the south-central part of the basement in 1992. Extensive damage occurred to the floor trusses in the area. A portion of the floor was pulled down during the extinguishing of the fire. Some structural damage occurred in the area. Temporary shoring was placed in the area in June 1996” (Ahearn 1996:2).
4. Wall and ceiling finish: “Interior walls are mostly stone or plaster and ceilings are of plaster. Some drywall construction was used in the east and west stairwells or to replace former plaster which may have been damaged” (Ahearn 1996:2).
5. Mechanical equipment: Originally the building was heated using steam pipes that entered into the basement and rose to the upper floors. Water and steam came to the building through pipes that entered from the north side. Later, when bathroom and shower additions were added to the outer arms of the E-plan, additional plumbing was added.
6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Inside there are numerous doors linking the various parts of the structure. Of particular note is an arched doorway (NM-194-B-11) providing access from either main entryway into the central portion of the building. It is double wide and has chair rail emanating from either side of the opening.
  - b. Windows: At the time of inspection, the windows had been boarded for safety reasons. The floor plan, however, illustrates eight windows along the east side of the original building, each having an upper element, a lower element and at the ground level, a third "opening". The west side mirrors the east side. Along the front (south side) there are at least twelve sets of windows in an arrangement similar to those on the sides minus the lower "openings".
7. Decorative features and trim: There is a full porch across the front (south side) of the building on both floors (NM-194-B-1, 2, 3, and 4). It is done in milled lumber and has wooden rails and X-shaped detail. It has wood floors both on the first and second floor with wooden access stairways on either end. The roof continues from the main roof and provides cover over the front of the porch.
  8. Hardware: Figure NM-194-B-14 illustrates one of the ceiling treatments. The ceiling is metal covered in a concentric square decorative pattern and the lights are suspended from openings in the metal.
  9. Mechanical equipment: It is not clear what the original mechanical set up was but at the time of inspection, the bathroom, kitchen and storage facilities were in the extreme north ends of the added wings.
    - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: "The building was heated using radiators. Steam and condensate return pipes loop around the basement, with risers servicing the first and second floors" (Ahearn 1996:2). Photograph NM-194-B-13 depicts some of these louvers in a first story wall.
    - b. Lighting: Where observable, lighting other than through the numerous windows was supplied by light fixtures suspended from the ceiling.

- c. Plumbing: In the basement, plumbing pipes were noted throughout the accessible areas.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Fort Wingate is located near a group of springs known as Shosh B'Toh or Bear Springs on the northern slopes of the Zuni Mountains. The general area is in a shallow valley and the Rio Puerco of the West.
2. Historic landscape design: the Fort Wingate Barracks, the Non commissioned Officers and/or Enlisted Men's barracks, are (is) on the south side of a large parade ground. Across the way were the Officers Quarters and around the ends of the parade ground were facilities of Fort Wingate. As such, the building was at the heart of the military landscape. After transfer to the BIA as a school, the building function changed from Barracks to Dormitory and the Officers' Quarters were occupied by teachers and staff of the school. The Parade Ground became an athletic field. In general, the original military design was maintained until about the 1950s when newer construction began to drift away from the prior orientation.
3. Outbuildings, surrounding buildings: Today there are several buildings around the Barracks including a few original military structures and increasingly more school related facilities.

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FORT WINGATE, BARRACKS  
(Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17)  
(Fort Wingate, Building No. 46)  
(Boys' Dormitory, Wingate Elementary School)  
(Fort Wingate Elementary School)  
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Topographic Map 1936

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FORT WINGATE, BARRACKS  
(Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17)  
(Fort Wingate, Building No. 46)  
(Boys' Dormitory, Wingate Elementary School)  
(Fort Wingate Elementary School)  
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E. Photographs:

Boys' Dormitory 1940, Sekear

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Company Quarters 1873

1873. *Company Quarters ca. 1873*. Illustration of original Company Quarters (before 1896 fire). From: <http://www.huntel.com/~artpike/fort3a.htm>.

Girls' Dormitory 1940, Sekear

1940 Photocopy, National Archives Photograph Navajo 185. Photograph on file at On file at Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department, Facility Management Program.

Navajo Students 1940, Sekear

1940 Photocopy , Photograph on file at On file at Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department, Facility Management Program.

Wingate Vocational High School 1950

1950 Photocopy, "Wingate Vocational High School. Navajo Students Returning from Sherman Institute. 12 Greyhound Buses, 41 Students. May 23, 1950." Photo courtesy Navajo Nation Museum, Window Rock, Arizona, Image NF-18-196. Note southeast corner of Fort Wingate Barracks (HABS No. 194-B) on the left rear of the photo and the north-south wing of the Subsistence Storehouse (HABS No. 194-A) in the distance and to the right of center.

F. Supplemental Materials

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(Boys' Dormitory, Wingate Elementary School)  
(Fort Wingate Elementary School)  
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FORT WINGATE, BARRACKS  
(Fort Wingate, Buildings No. 16 & 17)  
(Fort Wingate, Building No. 46)  
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