

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the spot at which the St. Mary's and St. Joseph Rivers join to form the Maumee was one of the most important in the American Midwest. There were two French and three US military forts built along the rivers.

The Forts of the Three Rivers

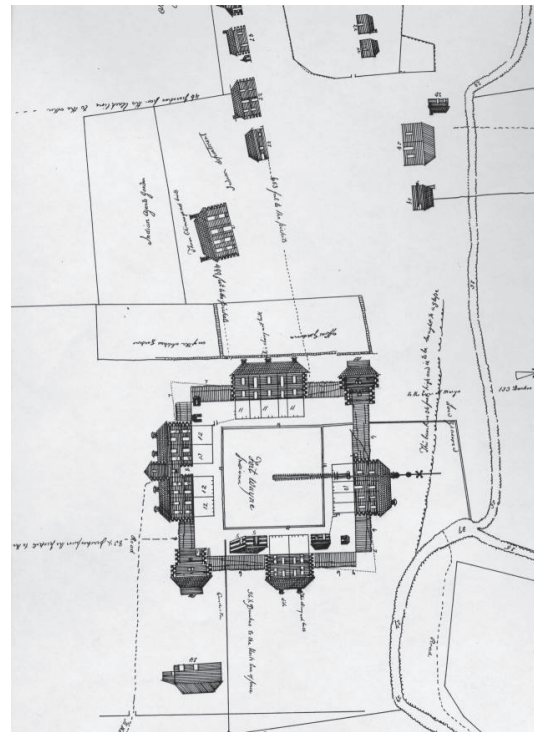
1) 1722 – Fort Miami, also known as Fort St. Philippe des Miamis, was the first of two French palisade forts built near the Miami Indian Village of Kekionga. The French built the fort to protect the lucrative fur trade with the Native American tribe from British control. It stood at Guildlin Park near the Sherman Blvd Bridge and West Superior Street on the St. Mary's River. It had a garrison of 20-30 men. In 1747, English-allied Huron warriors under Chief Nicholas found the fort undermanned and destroyed it.

2) 1750 – The French built a second Post Miami that stood at the intersection of St. Joseph Boulevard and Delaware Street. The French eventually surrendered this fort to the British after the French and Indian War in 1760. In 1763, the fort was captured during Pontiac's Rebellion and destroyed.

3) 1794 – The first of the American military posts was built in the autumn of 1794 following General Anthony Wayne's victory at Fallen Timbers. It stood at the intersection of East Berry and Clay Streets and overlooked the Three Rivers. Wayne wanted a strong fort built, capable of withstanding any kind of attack. This fort was under the command of Colonel Hamtramck. The garrison normally consisted of about one hundred men and their families. The fort was so crowded and hastily built that it had to be replaced by 1800.

4) 1800 – In 1798, Colonel Thomas Hunt became commander of Fort Wayne. Due to the poor condition of Wayne's original fort, Hunt erected a new fort one hundred yards north to the corner of East Main and Clay Streets. The new fort contained multiple guard houses. During the War of 1812, this fort survived a sustained siege and kept the frontier from falling to the British.

5) 1815-1816 – Major John Whistler constructed the third and last fort on the same site. This fort was designed so that a garrison of only 50-75 men could defend it against an attack. It was the most sophisticated all-wooden fort ever built in North America. After the War of 1812, a military post was no longer necessary. On April 19, 1819, the fort was decommissioned, and the last soldiers departed. The Junior Officer's Quarters was the last building still standing. It was finally torn down in 1852.



Courtesy of ACWI

6) 1976 – The current fort is a copy of the post built by Whistler in 1815-1816. This fort is located on a plot of ground less than a quarter of a mile from the original site.



Our Mission: To preserve and maintain the Old Fort as a historical education center for the Northeast Indiana area.

About: Historic Fort Wayne, Inc is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization founded in 2004. It provides for the routine maintenance and endowment for the preservation of the Old Fort. Historic Fort Wayne is dedicated to educating the community about the Old Fort and its significance to the Old Northwest Territory, the State of Indiana, and the United States through interactive programming. It is a 100% volunteer organization.

Support the Old Fort: Ongoing programming and maintenance of the Old Fort requires a great deal of funding. It does not receive any support from any state or federal agency. Most events are free to the public. Historic Fort Wayne, Inc relies on the local community for monetary and in-kind donations as well as volunteers. To learn how you can help, please visit:

www.oldfortwayne.org
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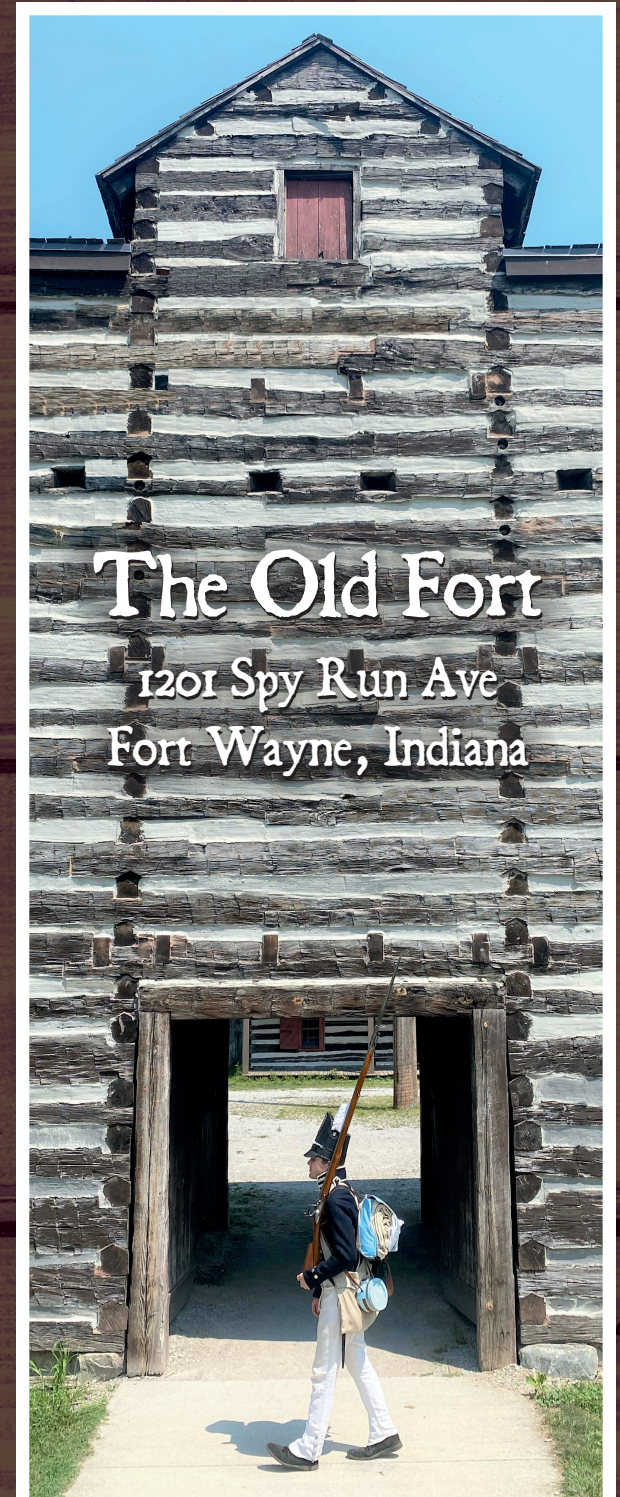
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The Old Fort
1201 Spy Run Ave
Fort Wayne, Indiana

The Old Fort

The reconstructed Fort Wayne is a faithful copy of the post built by American troops under the command of Major John Whistler in 1815-1816. The original complex was the most sophisticated all-wooden fort ever built in North America. It was designed so a garrison of only 50-75 men could easily defend it against an attack.



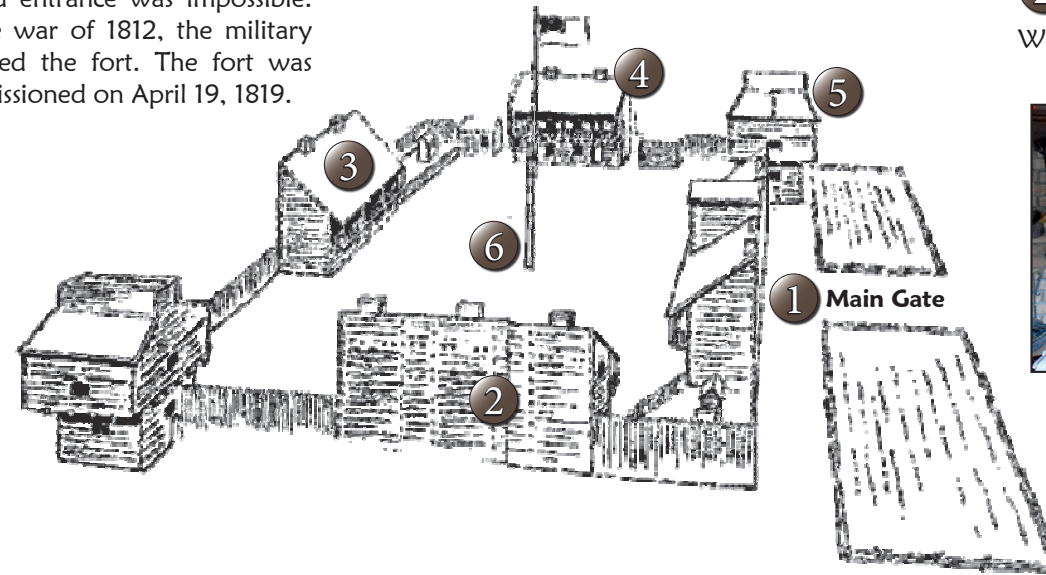
Two lines of pickets, heavy gates and well-placed blockhouses ensured that undesired entrance was impossible. After the war of 1812, the military abandoned the fort. The fort was decommissioned on April 19, 1819.



6 Flagpole: The flag flown above Fort Wayne in 1816 had fifteen stars and fifteen stripes. The flag represented each state at the time of its adoption in 1794.



Outside the Walls: There would have been a complex of buildings outside the fort walls to service the garrison. It would have included a blacksmith shop, a woodworker, a bakery, shops, and homes of traders. Vegetables were grown in garden plots. Corn, peas, turnips, and beans were especially common.



1 Main Gate/Enlisted Quarters/Quartermaster Office: The main gate passes through the building. The Quartermaster's Office, where soldiers would draw their supplies, is located on the lower floor on the eastern side of the building. The Guard Room is located on the lower floor on the western side. The remaining rooms each held eight to twelve men plus those women and children who had accompanied their husbands and fathers to Fort Wayne. Soldiers slept two to a bed. Like the other three main buildings in the fort, the barracks form part of the defensive wall. The solid log outside wall of the building is composed of eight-inch-thick timbers which could stop any musket ball. The only openings are tiny slits on the third floor. A lookout post perches above the main gate.

2 Officers' Quarters: This spacious building sheltered the fort's officers, though it was seldom full. In 1816, the daughter of Major Whistler, Eliza, lived here with her husband Lieutenant Daniel Curtis.



3 Commander's Quarters: This impressive building served as the home and headquarters of Major Whistler. The ground level housed both the Officer's kitchen and dining room. Fresh herbs were available in the garden right outside the kitchen.



The ground floor also served as the headquarters where daily orders were issued, and court martials were held.

5 North Blockhouse: One of two blockhouses that defended the fort walls, this building was armed with one six-pounder cannon and two small howitzers. From their positions in the blockhouse the guns could rake both lines of pickets, and fire on enemies near the river. The walls are pierced by musket slits. Soldiers could fire downward from loopholes in the floor of the overhanging second story. Major Whistler added a "cubicle" to the roof of the building. From here, water could be thrown to extinguish flames on the roof.



4 Hospital: This building served a variety of purposes. The hospital consisted of only one room on the second floor. The ward could accommodate six men. The soldiers' kitchen and the mess room were located on the lower floor. The soldiers were fed two meals a day. The last room was a typical barracks room which was home to eight men.

