

CAMP WILLIAMS  
(Wisconsin Military Reservation, Officer's Club and Range House)  
(Camp Williams - Volk Field National Guard Training Center)  
101 Independence Drive  
Camp Douglas  
Juneau County  
Wisconsin

HABS WI-381-C  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CAMP WILLIAMS  
(OFFICERS' CLUB AND RANGE HOUSE)

Location: 101 Independence Drive  
Camp Williams-Volk Field National Guard Training Center  
Camp Douglas, Juneau County, Wisconsin

Significance: The Officers' Club/Range House was built in 1896 and was one of the first permanent buildings on the Wisconsin Military Reservation, which is now known as the Camp Williams-Volk Field National Guard Training Center. It was erected by the officers of the Wisconsin Army National Guard at their own expense and utilized as a combination officers' club and range house until World War II.

History: The subject structure was built in 1896 by a group of Wisconsin Army National Guard officers. Its intended use was as an officers' club, but the structure's ownership transferred to the state within a year of its construction. The state soon utilized the building as a range house, since it was better located than the camp's original facility. It was also used for meetings and arms storage. The building alternated use between an officers' club and range house throughout the period before World War I. In 1914, the log building's wood floor was replaced with concrete and much of its open, wrap-around porch was enclosed. The structure continued to operate in its dual capacity until at least World War II. Little is known of the building's use after the war and during the transition of the base into primarily an Air Guard facility. The log structure became in the 1960s the post's permanent officers' club, a role in which it served until it became in 1985 the Wisconsin National Guard Museum. The building was restored in 1990 to a more original appearance. Its wrap-around porch was reopened, while the roof was replaced.<sup>1</sup>

Description:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The former Officers' Club/Range House is a large, side-gabled, Rustic-style, one-story, log building with a wrap-around, shed-

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<sup>1</sup>*Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin, 1897-1898* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1898), 37; "Wisconsin Military Reservation Office Club/Range House," State of Historical Society of Wisconsin Determination of Eligibility form prepared by Elizabeth Miller (April 1999); Eric Lent, Wisconsin National Guard Museum Historian, Telephone conversation with Brian J. Faltinson, 15 July 2009, Notes on file at Heritage Research, Ltd., Menomonee Falls, WI.

roof porch supported by log posts. The west and south sections of the porch are open while the east and north portions are enclosed. A prominent brick wall chimney is situated on the building's east side. Windows are regularly placed and generally consist of paired, one-over-one, replacement, double-hung sashes.

2. Condition of Fabric: The overall condition of the building is fair. A renovation in 1990 reopened the south and west sections of the wrap-around porch, while the north and east porch sections were remodeled into administrative space for the museum. The roof, including its log trusses and plank ceiling, was also replaced. The interior walls were restored to their original log appearance.

B. Exterior Description:

1. General Description: This log structure is oriented on an east-west axis and faces to the south. The building is enclosed by a wrap-around porch, the east and north sections of which are enclosed. The west and south sides of the porch are open and supported by timber posts. The building originally consisted of two sections that were divided by a central, open area—which is now enclosed with plate-glass and forms the main entrance.

The south (main) facade features a central entrance section enclosed with plate-glass and framed by original log walls. Each log section contains a wood plank-infilled door opening flanked by paired double-hung sashes. The porch is open and exhibits timber posts without a railing.

The east gabled endwall is defined by a centered, large stone and brick wall chimney. A doorway infilled with wood is set near the southeast corner. The south half of the porch is open, while the north portion is enclosed with modern wood siding.

The north (rear) facade consists entirely of the enclosed porch. No original materials are visible. The exposure contains two large, modern casement windows and a continuous line of six double-hung sashes. A modern wood deck is attached at the centrally positioned entrance.

The west gabled endwall features an open porch supported by timber posts. It carries a central doorway infilled with wood. The doorway is flanked by double-hung sashes.

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2. Overall Dimensions: The building is 26' x 80'.
  3. Foundations: The original foundation was wood. It was replaced in 1914 by one of concrete.
  4. Walls: The walls are constructed of horizontally placed logs tied together at the corners. The logs are between 12" and 16" in diameter, the space between them being chinked with white mortar. The walls that enclose the east and north sides of the wrap-around porch are sheathed with wood siding.
  5. Roof: The roof is supported by 6" diameter log trusses with collar beams. The trusses are set on 40" centers. The trusses support an exposed plank ceiling. Both the trusses and ceiling are 1990 replicas. The wrap-around porch is topped with a shed-roof. The entire roof is covered with asphalt shingles and was installed in 1990.
  6. Chimney: A large wall chimney is attached to the east facade. The base is constructed with irregularly placed quarried stone and is 82" wide x 64" tall and projects 44". The remainder of the fireplace is brick. The chimney tapers to 34" x 41" after twelve courses. It tapers further at the intersection with the gabled peak before reaching its corbeled brick top.
  7. Openings:
    - A. Windows: Windows that pierce the log walls range between 61½" x 55" and 62" x 60". They are filled with modern, one-over-one, double-hung sashes.
    - B. Doorways: Door openings that are located on log walls are generally 42" x 90". All are infilled with wood. The only operational doors are located in the structure's once-open, central entry section.
- C. Interior Description:
- A. General Description: The main part of the building is divided by log walls into three rooms. The center section is primarily an open reception area. The flanking rooms consist of open space occupied by museum displays. The walls are log and the ceiling is open and consists of exposed timber rafters supporting wooden planks. The enclosed porch wing holds administrative

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space and is executed of modern materials.

1. Fireplace: A large fireplace constructed of red stone is situated on the east wall. It is 8' 10" wide x 6' 2" tall. The arched hearth is 30" deep, 27" high x 75" wide. The arch is constructed of stone voussoirs that generally are 16" x 4". The hearth is built of 9" x 4½" fire brick.

- D. Setting: The Officers' Club/Range House is located on the southern half of the Camp Williams-Volk Field National Guard Training Center—adjacent to the Post Headquarters. It is situated on a small rise surrounded by an open field. A partially wooded parcel containing static displays of military equipment is immediately west of the building. The south (main) facade of the structure is served by a semi-circular driveway that connects to Independence Drive. Two brick piers flank a sidewalk that leads to the main entrance. Those piers originally marked the main entrance to the base.

Sources: *Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin, 1897-1898.*  
Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1898.

Lent, Eric. Wisconsin National Guard Museum Historian. Telephone conversation with Brian J. Faltinson, 15 July 2009. Notes on file at Heritage Research, Ltd., Menomonee Falls, WI.

“Wisconsin Military Reservation Officer Club/Range House.” State of Historical Society of Wisconsin Determination of Eligibility form prepared by Elizabeth Miller (April 1999).

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