

Frontier Forts

Nebraska was home to a plethora of frontier forts that were constructed in the latter half of the 1800s. Some were only active for a few decades and today are identified only by historical markers and reconstructions. Others extended their life beyond that of a typical frontier fort and were repurposed during the First and Second World Wars. No matter their lifespan, all frontier forts were constructed for the same general purposes: to safeguard the trails west to Oregon, Utah, and California and to create a buffer between the Native Americans and the incoming settlers who came to claim lands under the 1862 Homestead Act. Like the railroad, these forts encouraged the development of population centers and the growth of the state of Nebraska. As the usefulness of the forts came to an end, the troops were moved to other locations and the prairie reclaimed the site.



Fort Robinson, 1934.

Major Frontier Forts and Posts in Nebraska*

- Fort Robinson
- Fort Atkinson
- Fort Crook
- Fort Omaha
- Omaha Quartermaster Depot
- Fort Niobrara
- Old and New Fort Kearny
- Fort Hartstuff
- Fort Sidney

*This is not a comprehensive list. Feel free to research further to discover some of the lesser known, hidden gems of Nebraska. Frontier forts were constructed in every corner of the state!

Primary Source

History Nebraska's Fort Atkinson Collection

(<https://history.nebraska.gov/sites/history.nebraska.gov/files/doc/Fort%20Atkinson%2C%20Nebraska%20%5BRG502%5D.pdf>)

Secondary Source

Forts of the Northern Plains: Guide to Historic Military Posts of the Plains Indian Wars by Jeff Barnes